

# **The King and the Honeybirds.**

**Cyprian Bhekuzulu kaSolomon, Zulu nationalism and the implementation of the Bantu Authorities System in Zululand, 1948-1957.**



Cyprian Bhekuzulu and his horse. (Photograph courtesy of the Campbell Collections, University of KwaZulu-Natal.)

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<sup>1</sup> The University of Natal and the University of Durban-Westville have since been merged into the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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Leon: this is for you. Particularly the end of it.

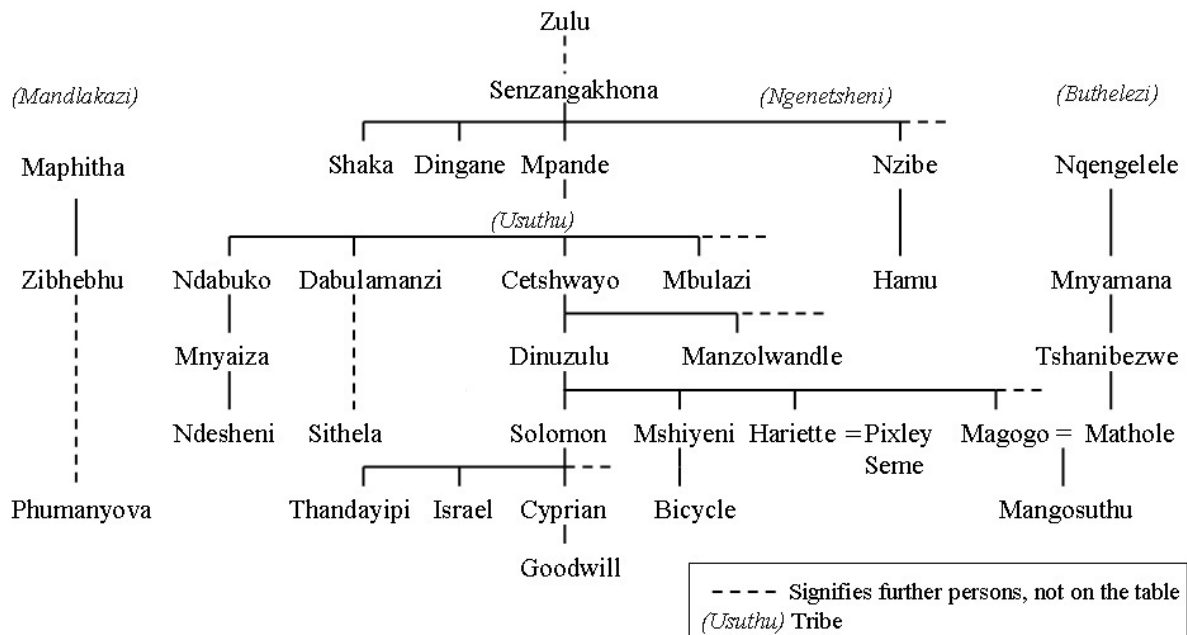
## Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
CNC	Chief Native Commissioner (Natal)
MNA	Minister for Native Affairs
NAD	Native Affairs Department
NC	Native Commissioner
NCN	Native Commissioner at Nongoma
SNA	Secretary for Native Affairs

## Glossary

<i>hamba kahle</i>	(lit. ‘go well’, ‘tread carefully’) A term used to describe the moderate and/or conservative Zulu policy in the early and middle 20 <sup>th</sup> century.
<i>induna</i>	(pl. <i>izinduna</i> ) An office that traditionally included heading an army regiment and being advisor to and executive officer of the inkosi, or, later, king.
<i>ingonyama</i>	Lion; commonly used for ‘king’.
<i>inkosi</i>	(pl. <i>amakhosi</i> ) Chief, lord.
<i>isibongo</i>	(pl. <i>izibongo</i> ) Praise poem.
<i>kholwa</i>	The Christian and/or Westernized (usually educated elite among the) Zulu.
<i>KwaZulu</i>	The land of (lit. ‘place/house of’) the Zulu .
<i>lobolo</i>	A specified amount of cattle given to the bride’s father from the groom’s family, formalising the marital union and ensuring the groom’s right to the bride’s future children. Today, lobolo is usually paid in cash.
<i>umnumzana</i>	(pl. <i>abanumzana</i> ) Homestead-head, headman.
<i>umntwana</i>	(pl. <i>abantwana</i> ) (Royal) children, princes or princesses. In Zulu proper this term is used exclusively about children and adults directly descending a king.
<i>umuzi</i>	(pl. <i>imizi</i> ) homestead; term including the people living there and the animals and territory belonging to them. The term can also be used to signify a lineage.
<i>zulu</i>	Heaven, sky.

## List of Zulu kings



- Ca. 1709 – ? **Zulu kaNtombhela**, founder and chief of the Zulu clan.
- ? **Gumede kaZulu**
- ? – 1727 **Phunga kaGumede**
- 1727 – 1745 **Mageba kaGumede**, brother of Phunga.
- 1745 – 1763 **Ndaba kaMageba**
- 1763 – 1781 **Jama kaNdaba**
- 1781 – 1816 **Senzangakhona kaJama** (ca. 1762-1816)
- 1816 – 1828 **Shaka kaSenzangakhona** (ca. 1787-1828)
- 1828 – 1840 **Dingane kaSenzangakhona** (ca. 1795-1840), half-brother of Shaka and Mpande.
- 1840 – 1872 **Mpande kaSenzangakhona** (1798-1872), half-brother of Shaka and Dingane.
- 1872 – 1884 **Cetshwayo kaMpande** (1826 - February 1884)
- 1884 – 1913 **Dinuzulu kaCetshwayo** (1868-1913)
- 1913 – 1933 **Solomon kaDinuzulu** (1891-1933)
- 1933 – 1947 (regent) Arthur Mshiyeni kaDinuzulu (1897 – 1953) brother of Solomon.
- 1947 – 1948 (regent) Sifile Sibiya (? - ?), parentage unknown.
- 1948 – 1968 **Cyprian Bhekuzulu kaSolomon** (4 August 1924 – 17 September 1968)
- 1968 – 1971 (regent) Israel Mcwayizeni kaSolomon (1932 – 1999) brother of Cyprian.
- 1971 – **Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu** (b. 14 July 1948)

## PART ONE

# Introduction



King Cyprian at the Shaka Memorial Service, 24 September 1954. (Photograph: S. Bourquin)

*'It was not the intention of those who first came into the world  
that there should be several kings equal in power,  
but that there should be one great king.'*

*Dingiswayo, Chief of the Mthethwa and Shaka Zulu's mentor  
(S. Taylor, Shaka's Children, p. 65)*

## The Unknown King

*‘Do not throw honey on the honeybird!’* the Minister for Native Affairs warned the Zulu and their king. It was 6 October 1955, and the Minister, Dr H.F. Verwoerd, had summoned more than three hundred chiefs to a meeting at Mona in the Zulu native reserves. He was there to acquire their endorsement of the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act, as its implementation required the consent of the tribal leaders.<sup>2</sup>

The Act was a cornerstone of the new apartheid policy. It introduced the establishment of *bantustans*, a new structure for the native reserves with the professed aim of making them independent from the South African state. Dr Verwoerd had spoken long, attempting to convince the chiefs of the blessings of apartheid’s separate development (a concept of which he was one of the main architects). He had tried to appeal to their personal ambitions by pointing out that their power over the people would be greater as soon as they embraced the measures of the new Act – but to no avail. The chiefs refused to decide on the matter until they had seen how the policies worked in other areas, and their king would do nothing to make them change their minds. The Minister’s warning (clearly inspired by the extensive use of symbols and idioms in the Zulu language) refers to the belief that the honeybird, that leads people to the hives of wild bees, will revenge itself if not rewarded for its efforts: now the Minister was offering them a ‘land of honey’ and they turned their backs at him.<sup>3</sup>

The Zulu king, Cyprian Nyangayezizwe Bhekuzulu ka Solomon, had been officially appointed ‘Paramount Chief of the Zulu’ less than four years earlier. The government had emphasised that the title only reflected the recognition of him as a ‘social head’ of the Zulu.

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<sup>2</sup> *New Age*, 3 November 1955.

<sup>3</sup> *New Age*, 3 November 1955. For a short explanation on the traditional beliefs regarding the honeybird, see for instance Elwyn Jenkins, ‘Tradition and innovation: fairy and folk tales as social and cultural agents’, available at this web page, <http://www.childlit.org.za/traditionjenkins.html>.



He was not recognized as a Zulu *king*, and his formal authority was no greater than that of any other Zulu chief.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, it was an official acknowledgement of the traditional head of the Zulu people, something which had not happened since the fall of the Zulu kingdom in 1879.

The British government, through its local representative Sir Garnet Wolseley, had then divided the kingdom into 13 smaller territories, and the king had been relegated to the position of chief of the Usuthu.<sup>5</sup> Ever since, official recognition of the Zulu monarchy had been the main ambition of the Zulu royal family.

In spite of the destruction of the Zulu kingdom, pre-colonial structures prevailed in the Zulu reserves. Although subordinate to the native commissioners (the local representatives of the South African government), traditional chiefs were still supervising the daily life of most rural Zulu, and the traditional religious beliefs ensured to a large extent the continuous respect for the royal house. Cyprian's father, Solomon, had made use of these structures and the wide-spread traditionalism in the rural areas in his efforts to reunite the Zulu nation and build a sense of 'Zuluness' among all Zulu speakers. This focus on tradition and history was praised in Solomon's *izibongo* (praise poems), likening him to 'the honeybird that drinks from deep pools'.<sup>6</sup>

The 'flurries of hysteria to which Natal was prone'<sup>7</sup> when confronted with the influence of the Zulu kings, had waned over the years. During the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several of the province's leading segregationist politicians reached out to the Zulu royal

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<sup>4</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Drafted letter titled 'Chief Cyprian Zulu', 11 January 1952.

<sup>5</sup> For more information about the fall of the Zulu kingdom, see for instance Jeff Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom. The Civil War in Zululand, 1879-1884*, Longman, London (1979).

<sup>6</sup> Nicholas Cope, *To Bind the Nation. Solomon kaDinuzulu and Zulu Nationalism, 1913-1933*, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg (1993), p. 270. For the ambitions of the Zulu kings and their allies, see also Shula Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion. The 1906-8 Disturbances in Natal*, Clarendon Press, Oxford (1970), and Nicholas Cope, *To Bind the Nation. Solomon kaDinuzulu and Zulu Nationalism, 1913-1933*, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg (1993), p. 270.

<sup>7</sup> Shula Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', in W. Beinard and S. Dubow (ed.), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, Routledge, London and New York (1995), p. 97.

house, seeing it as a bulwark against the growing radicalism among the black population of Natal.

At the same time, though for rather opposite reasons, the *kholwa* ('modernized' Christian Zulu) allied themselves with the king and his followers. They were seeking rural support for their fight for equal rights for all South African citizens, and recognised the need to have the king on their side if they were to succeed in this.

The South African government was well aware that the chief of the Usuthu was the king in the eyes of most Zulu and would occasionally use him as a mediator in conflicts in the Zulu reserves. Still, for more than half a century it stubbornly refused to acknowledge this status in public.

Then, in 1948, the Nationalist Party won the general election with a promise of apartheid – 'the total separateness of the races'. The segregationist principles of the apartheid policy – and the ideas of a Bantu Authorities System in particular – gave ample space for traditional leadership, or, rather, for such traditional leaders who were willing to cooperate with the state. Cyprian, who had been appointed chief of the Usuthu earlier that year, was initially seen as a potential troublemaker with connections to the opposition movements. However, as the Bantu Authorities System took form, it became clear that the post-colonial organization of Zululand was very similar to the apartheid designs. A swift and easy transformation of the native reserves into the 'bantustan nations' seemed within reach, if only the chiefs would concede to this policy.<sup>8</sup> Like the *kholwa* and the white segregationists in Natal, the apartheid state began to believe that the cooperation of the Zulu king was crucial for the success of their plans.

After just three years in power, the government decided to elevate the chief of Usuthu to the prostrate position of Paramount Chief. It was made clear from the very beginning that his powers and future position could increase significantly, depending 'upon the development

which will take place in terms of the Bantu Authorities Act and also upon Chief Cyprian's own wisdom and leadership'.<sup>9</sup>

At the Mona meeting in 1955, referred to at the beginning of this chapter, the Minister for Native Affairs tried to force Cyprian to accept the propositions of the Act and to persuade his 'socially subordinate' chiefs to do the same.<sup>10</sup> This did not work – Cyprian just turned to his chiefs with the words, 'As I am your child and can therefore not speak on your behalf, I ask you to consider this request and decide for yourselves.'<sup>11</sup>

Yet only two years later, Cyprian was presiding over the first steps of the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act in Zululand and, to the regret of the opposition movements, endorsing it.

### **The aim of the thesis**

The title of the thesis, 'The King and the Honeybirds', is not only chosen for its poetic qualities. In the following chapters, I will show that there were two 'honeybirds' guiding Cyprian towards the support of a Zulu bantustan: the apartheid government, which alternately tried to tempt, convince and threaten him to accept its policies;<sup>12</sup> and the legacy of his father, which compelled him to strive for a self-governed Zululand and the resurrection of the Zulu monarchy. Above all, however, it is an account of the previous Zulu king and his struggles to meet the demands of both the state and his people at the dawn of apartheid – and as such, it is the first of its kind.

Cyprian Nyangayezizwe Bhekuzulu ka Solomon, the *Ingonyama* – Lion – of the Zulu, was heading the Zulu nation during some of the most crucial years of South African history.

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<sup>8</sup> See for instance David Welsh, *The Roots of Segregation. Native Policy in Natal (1845-1910)*, Cape Town (1971).

<sup>9</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Notes of Meeting, 20 March 1952.

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Durban, 14 February 2000.

<sup>11</sup> *New Age*, 3 November 1955.

<sup>12</sup> The term 'honeybird' eventually became a derogatory term for 'men who talk the sweet, honeyed words of the government'. See Govan Mbeki, *The Peasants' Revolt*, IDAF (1984), p. 96.

He began his reign in the year the Nationalist government introduced the apartheid system, and died as the plans for a KwaZulu bantustan were being made. He was friendly with – even related to – some of the most prominent members of the African National Congress (ANC) of the time. His cousin and chief advisor, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, built his claim to the premiership in the later KwaZulu bantustan on the position he held during Cyprian’s regency. It seems only natural that Cyprian’s life should have been subject to numerous studies of South African and Zulu history, the way the lives of his ancestors, his contemporaries and even his son have been.

It has not. Indeed, it is rare to find his name in any book about Zulu history, and when he is mentioned, it is normally briefly and in derogatory terms, as a figurehead ‘reduced by alcohol’ and ‘intellectually dull’.<sup>13</sup> It is certainly not possible to avoid the fact that Cyprian was an alcoholic: it eventually killed him. Yet history has repeatedly shown (for instance in the case of Winston Churchill, who happened to be a great admirer of Cyprian’s grandfather, Dinuzulu) that an inappropriate affection for alcohol is no excuse for bad statesmanship. Moreover, such characterizations do not match the accounts of those who knew Cyprian, who have described him as intelligent, modest and patriotic.<sup>14</sup>

Why, then, has Cyprian been all but forgotten by the academic world? One writer, at least, has pointed at a general lack of interest in history among young South African intellectuals and professionals, suggesting that they may be ‘regarding it as a dead weight at the present that is best discarded’.<sup>15</sup> More importantly, I believe, is it that those who *are* interested in the early history of the apartheid period, generally and strongly sympathize with the opposition movements. As much as I share this view, it seems to me that it has created a blind zone that obscures the interest in and understanding of some of the most central

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<sup>13</sup> See for instance Stephen Taylor, *Shaka’s Children. A History of the Zulu People*, HarperCollins, London (1994), p. 309. **More examples, particularly opposing modest and patriotic!**

<sup>14</sup> **Borquin – who else?**

historical actors of the time. Those opposed to the bantustan policy labelled the chiefs who supported it ‘government stooges’, and the official model of chieftaincy arising in the early apartheid years was seen as ‘a creation of, and creature of, the state’.<sup>16</sup> Certainly, in the climate created by the growing popular opposition to the South African state from the 1950s onwards, a Paramount Chief’s support to the state’s segregationist policy represented a threat to the pan-African unity necessary to defeat it. Perhaps it has simply been more convenient to dismiss such a chief as someone of so little significance, so drunk and so much a puppet in the hands of the apartheid state, than to explore other possible motives for his political stance.

Nevertheless, as Geoffrey Barraclough has stated, ‘contemporary history begins when the problems which are actual today first take visible shape’.<sup>17</sup> The roots of the so-called ‘faction fights’ in KwaZulu-Natal in the 1990s – particularly the Zulu nationalism that was evoked by representatives from both sides – can be found in the political developments in KwaZulu during Cyprian’s rule. They reflect his political aims, as well as those of his peers and of his ancestors. Cyprian was all but inconsequential in his time, and an understanding of the background and possible motives for his actions is necessary for a broader understanding of more recent Zulu history.

Since the fall of the Zulu kingdom, Cyprian’s predecessors had fought relentlessly to rebuild Zulu unity and win governmental recognition for the Zulu royal house. Is it unlikely that Cyprian had inherited his forefathers’ ambitions? Is it not possible that, in the early days of Africa’s decolonization and surrounded by a growing fear of communism, gradual self-government through the Bantu Authorities System appeared to be a plausible and peaceful path to Zulu independence? According to the historian William Beinard, ‘segregation was in some senses a route which followed the line of least resistance. For it seemed to promise a

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<sup>15</sup> Stephen Ellis, ‘Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa’, *Journal of African History*, 43 (2002), p. 9.

limited local autonomy to Africans.’<sup>18</sup> For a king brought up with the ‘lessons of Bambatha’<sup>19</sup> and obviously aware of the ongoing independence wars further north on the continent, the concept of ‘least resistance’ may well have seemed like the wisest choice when confronted with an infinitely superior state.

### **Reconstructing the past**

In this first chapter, I discuss the aim, structure and methodology of my thesis. I present an overview of my sources, as well as such sources I have not been able to get hold of, and analyze their value and faults. I have also included a note on the use of certain terms.

The second part of the introduction gives a short historical background to the thesis. It includes a short description of Zulu traditional culture, with particular focus on the role of the monarchy. As William Beinard has pointed out, “‘legitimate’ chieftaincy did not necessarily die with the conquest of the great African polities of the nineteenth century’.”<sup>20</sup> Among the Zulu, particularly in the rural areas, traditional leadership was intrinsically linked with traditional religious beliefs and cultural practices. A basic understanding of the development of this connection is therefore necessary to make sense of more modern times. Included in the chapters throughout the thesis are references to the Zulu kings from Shaka and his expansion wars around 1820, to the reigns of Dinuzulu and Solomon, the two ‘unrecognized’ kings, and their struggle to regain the position of the royal house. Solomon is given relatively more

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<sup>16</sup> William Beinard, ‘Chieftaincy and the Concept of Articulation: South Africa circa 1900-50’, in W. Beinard and S. Dubow (ed.), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, Routledge, London and New York (1995), p. 177.

<sup>17</sup> Geoffrey Barraclough, *An Introduction to Contemporary History*, New York (1964), p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> W. Beinard, ‘Chieftaincy and the Concept of Articulation: South Africa circa 1900-50’, in W. Beinard and S. Dubow (ed.), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, Routledge, London and New York (1995), p. 187.

<sup>19</sup> The Zulu uprising in 1906, named after its leader, led to some 4,000 killed Zulu and the deposal of king Dinuzulu, Cyprian’s grandfather. I have borrowed the term ‘lessons of Bambatha’ from Shula Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism, and the State in Twentieth-Century Natal*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London (1986), p. 119. See also Shula Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion. The 1906-8 Disturbances in Natal*, Clarendon Press, Oxford (1970).

space, since I attempt to show that his influence was central to the choices Cyprian made, and that the drive for independence was already present in the Zulu royal house when Cyprian assumed the throne. The background chapter and other references to the previous Zulu kings are entirely based on previous research. I am particularly indebted to the works of historians Jeff Guy, Shula Marks and Nicolas Cope; and to Stephen Taylor for his book on general Zulu history.

The main part of the thesis is a chronological presentation of Cyprian's life, his rule and the Zulu royal house during the first decade after he became chief of the Usuthu. This history is seen in the light of the change in South African politics and the growing popular resistance against the politics of separate development. As indicated, it was the lack of literature about Cyprian kaSolomon that inspired me to start this project. My thesis is therefore to a large extent based on primary sources. As far as I have been able to discern, the only scholarly research on the subject are two dissertations, both written by South African students of history: Anthony Costa of the University of Witwatersrand wrote his BA Honours thesis about the succession dispute following Solomon's death; Gcina O. S. Nene, of the University of Durban-Westville, researched the role of Cyprian and the state of the Zulu monarchy for his Master's degree.<sup>21</sup> In Costa's case, I have not used the thesis itself, but a paper based on his research that he later wrote for a seminar at the University of Witwatersrand. Nene's dissertation had the particular advantage of including interviews with members of the royal family. A few other books about Zulu kings has also provided some information, particularly one written by M.Z. Shamase, which contained translated phrases of Cyprian's *izibongo*,

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<sup>20</sup> W. Beinard, 'Chieftaincy and the Concept of Articulation: South Africa circa 1900-50', in W. Beinard and S. Dubow (ed.), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, Routledge, London and New York (1995), p. 187.

<sup>21</sup> Anthony Costa, 'Custom and Common Sense: The Zulu Royal Family Succession Dispute of the 1940s', Seminar Paper, Institute of Advanced Social Research, University of Witwatersrand (1996), and Gcina O.S. Nene, "A Critical Evaluation of the Role of the Zulu Monarch, Cyprian Bhekuzulu ka Solomon, 1948-1968, in the History of KwaZulu-Natal", MA Thesis, Dep. of History, University of Durban-Westville (1999).

‘praise poems’ made for important men in the course of their lives.<sup>22</sup> The *izibongo* of Cyprian has, to my knowledge, yet to be published in a translated version, and my thesis would but for Shamase been entirely void of such contemporary (and often sharp-witted) commentary on his character and the years of his rule.

The literal silence encloses the majority of Zulu chiefs in the early years of apartheid, with the very notable exceptions of Albert Luthuli, president of the African National Congress (ANC) during most of the 1950s, and Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who became Chief Minister of the KwaZulu Bantustan after its inauguration in 1972. I have drawn on their biographies to fill in gaps that my research could not provide substance to. Albert Luthuli was chief of the Groutville amakholwa tribe until 1952, when he was deposed by the government because of his political activities. His autobiography has a strong focus on the introduction of the Bantu Authorities System, and includes several personal references to ‘The Paramount’. Ben Temkin’s biography of Mangosuthu Buthelezi has been a source of numerous details about daily life in the royal household, as well as to the on-going conflict with the government. For background on the development of the segregationist policies, I have relied largely on the works of William Beinard and Saul Dubow.

The most important sources, however, have been the state and provincial archives, newspapers and interviews with people who were working with or close to Cyprian.

### **Written primary sources**

The archives of the Native Affairs Department are found in the Central Archives Depot in Pretoria. Mainly an archive of correspondence between the Department and other parts of the central government, and between the Department and the Chief Native Commissioners in the South African provinces, it also contains copies of correspondence on the lower

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<sup>22</sup> M.Z. Shamase, *Zulu Potentates from the earliest to Zwelithini KaBhekuzulu*, S.M. Publications, Durban (1996).



administrative levels, to the extent that this was brought to the attention of the Department. Also archived is correspondence by local informants, companies and others who have felt it prudent to address the Department directly. Of particular interest are memos, notes and drafts that often include the department officers' personal comments to the political processes and individual cases.

The provincial archive in Pietermaritzburg contains the archives of the Chief Native Commissioner (CNC) in Natal. Including the correspondence between the CNC and his subordinate Native Commissioners in the districts, this has also been one of my main sources for letters written by Cyprian himself.

A substantial part of the files were handwritten in Afrikaans, which I have translated into English in the text. I have also made use of a number of newspapers and magazines from the period.

## **Interviews**

Numerous books have been written about Mangosuthu Buthelezi, particularly about his role as Chief Minister of the KwaZulu bantustan and leader of the *Inkatha yeZizwe*. The Inkatha was created as a 'cultural organisation' intending to foster a sense of Zulu unity, but soon erupted into so-called 'faction fighting' with ANC-friendly organisations – political and physical fights that has continued up to today, although the contenders now aim to represent the political parties ANC and Inkatha Freedom Party. One of the most controversial characters in contemporary South African politics, as well as in the history of apartheid, Buthelezi has been accused of having had 'his own agenda' since he took up the chieftaincy of the Buthelezi tribe, and of orchestrating the history of his ancestors as well as his relationship with king Cyprian to consolidate his own political platform.<sup>23</sup> At the time of our interview, he was Minister of Home Affairs in the central government of the Republic of

South Africa. He generously shared memories of Cyprian and the years spent in his service, but it would be imprudent to rely on his evidence without keeping the controversies in mind.

The two state officials that I interviewed, Mr Niels Otte and Mr S. Bourquin, knew Cyprian from rather different positions. Mr Otte, a Native Commissioner at Mahlabathini from 1961 to 1965, and at Nongoma between 1965 and 1977, is the last living commissioner who served in Cyprian's district.<sup>24</sup> Not surprisingly, Otte was strongly in favour of the governmental 'betterment schemes' he was set to administer by the state, insisting that these would have improved the agriculture in the area had they been allowed to be implemented in full, and he had little patience with those who opposed it. His views of Cyprian were at times rather sharp, which may be in part explained by the fact that he served in Nongoma during the king's last, and most inebriated, years. It is also imaginable that his relationship with Cyprian was influenced by the fact that they were directly involved, as superior and inferior officers, in the administration of the district.

The late Mr S Bourquin was the Director of Bantu Administration in Durban from 1950 to 1973. While in this position, he was directly involved in arranging most of Cyprian's official visits to Durban, and went with him to numerous functions, official meetings as well as weddings, funerals and other social gatherings. Possibly because of knowing him from 'happier' and more relaxed circumstances, Mr Bourquin's views of Cyprian was much more positive and less formal. It is perhaps also worth noting that he criticized – even made jokes about – the apartheid system much more freely than Mr Otte.

The Norwegian Bishop Lislrud, whom I interviewed only months before his death, was working as a teacher at the mission station at Mapumolo, not far from Nongoma, for several years during Cyprian's reign. He maintained quite close relations with the royal family ever

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<sup>23</sup> See e.g. Daphna Golan, 'Inkatha and its Use of the Zulu Past', *History in Africa* 18 (1991), pp. 113-26.

since and repeatedly mentioned during our interview that he would rather not say anything that could possibly offend the family.

### **The past in the present**

As might have been expected, a couple of challenges have presented themselves during the research. Foremost, of course, was the language barrier, preventing me from making use of both oral and written sources in Zulu, such as most contemporary articles in the newspaper *Ilanga lase Natal*. For such information, I have therefore had to rely on the references made by others. Using any South African newspapers and magazines in the 1950s as sources, one should bear in mind that press freedom was seriously curbed by the apartheid legislation. Although some of these were more closely connected with the government than others, such as the state's own magazine *Bantu*, it seems wise to follow Stephen Ellis' advice on the use of the African press: to treat it as 'an outstanding source for analyzing the nuances of politics but a generally poor source for anyone seeking an impartial view of events'.<sup>25</sup>

The archives of the Native Affairs Department were made available to the general public in 1994, presumably as a part of the policy changes after the general elections that year. Unfortunately, at the time when I visited the archives (1999-2000) the files were already deteriorating. The pages are all numbered, and I found several pages to be missing or misplaced. I have thus found copies of files, originally from the early 1950s but duplicated for the attention of a Secretary for Native Affairs in 1969, which originals had been removed. Similarly, I have come across letters written in 1952 while searching for missing files from 1948.

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<sup>24</sup> Mahlabathini was the district where the Buthelezi tribe was situated. Accordingly, Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Mr Otte knew each other well, and Mr Otte had the opportunity to meet with Cyprian several times during his period there. Nongoma was the district where the Usuthu tribe, which Cyprian headed, was located.

<sup>25</sup> Stephen Ellis, 'Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa', *Journal of African History*, 43 (2002), p. 18.

Yet, for these material shortcomings, I have found the available sources conclusively pointing in the same direction – that Cyprian did not just passively give in to the policies of the apartheid. He participated actively in the political discussions of the day, and he would even openly criticize the government, particularly when interfering in traditional Zulu life, although he knew that opposition to the state might well be detrimental to the recreation of a Zulu monarchy. Continuing the *hamba kahle* – ‘go carefully’ – policy<sup>26</sup> of his predecessors, when he decided to support the Bantu Authority System, he did so knowingly and decisively.

### **Black tribal king – questionable terms in a sensitive language sphere**

I have chosen to use the terms *Black* and *White* (as well as *Coloured* and *Indian*) about the main ‘racial categories’ of the apartheid state. Though possibly controversial, the terms make sense to the extent these superficial characteristics were the single most important tool in the apartheid state’s categorization of its inhabitants. They are also accepted terms in post-apartheid South Africa. The Nationalist government’s insistence on using the term *Bantu*, rather than *African* or *Black*, was resented by the opposition as ‘an essential element of the abusive racist vocabulary of apartheid’, similar to the previous, segregationist government’s insistence on using the term *Native*.<sup>27</sup>

*Tribe* is also understood by some as a derogatory term, supposedly hinting at an ‘uncivilised’ society and possibly expressing a subliminal sympathy with the apartheid rhetorics. Still, as this term was used by the authorities as well as the people themselves during the years I write about, and no adequate alternative terms seem available, I use this throughout the text. Specifically, the term describes a large traditional unit of more or less distantly related people that saw (and to a certain extent, still see) themselves as somewhat

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<sup>26</sup> *Hamba Kahle* – go carefully – was coined as the term for the moderate Zulu policy.

<sup>27</sup> Saul Dubow, *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*, Cambridge University Press (1995), p. 105.

politically connected by this genetic bond. The term *clan* is, likewise, used to describe smaller and more closely related groups.

Even more derogatory is the term *race*, upon which, of course, lay the foundation of the apartheid policy. When I use the term, occasionally without apostrophes, it does certainly not signal any support to such arbitrary categorization of people. I simply use the term because avoiding it would make the text less precise.

What title to use on Cyprian, his father and his grandfather, could be debated. Although Cyprian was elevated to the position of Paramount Chief, none of them were officially accepted as kings by the South African government. Many have therefore refrained from using the term ‘kings’ on these three unrecognised monarchs. Again, I disagree. The constitutional recognition of Cyprian’s son, Goodwill Zwelithini, as king of the Zulu within the post-apartheid South African republic, should provide sufficient recognition for the Zulu monarchy as a whole.

The Zulu language has not one word that can be directly translated into the European term ‘king’. Instead, there is a range of names and titles that may be used. *Nkosi* – ‘lord’ – is probably the best known substitute. However, this is also used as a form of address to chiefs on all levels, to show respect to any man, and as a word for the almighty. It would easily create confusion if I should occasionally use it when speaking about the king in the text. For the sake of simplicity, I also refrain from using several other titles particular to the king, such as *Inkulundhlovu*, ‘Great Elephant’. I have chosen to limit the use of Zulu royal titles to the one Cyprian himself wanted the government to bestow upon him: the term *Ingonyama* – the ‘Lion’ of the Zulu.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> See Chapter 7.

## Abantwana ka Zulu<sup>29</sup>

The old kingdom of Zululand lasted for less than seventy years. Founded on the conquests of Shaka kaSenzangakhona, it was repeatedly shattered by internal strife and civil wars, yet its independence withstood the pressures of European advance in South Africa for decades. A sense of national, or ethnic, unity is still visible among the Zulu today, and several parts of Zulu culture has not changed significantly since the emergence of the kingdom around 1820.

The authority of the chiefs, however, has undergone serious changes. From the Zulu introduction of one king to rule above all chiefs, through the various 'Native Laws' giving the chiefs a semblance of authority under the superiority of white governments, and up to our days' demarcation disputes between democratic and traditional leaders has the balancing of power between the Zulu chiefs and their superiors been a permanent cause of political friction.

### Before the king

At the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there lived between the Drakensberg mountains and the Indian Ocean hundreds of clans that spoke dialects of the same language.<sup>30</sup> They were polygamous pastoralists with a patrilineal lineage system and a strong sense of the dominant role of the patriarch.

Tens of thousands of *imizi*<sup>31</sup> – homesteads – were scattered across the country, each headed by an *umnumzana*<sup>32</sup> – headman – presiding over his wife and children. Labour was rigidly divided between the genders; livestock being the responsibility of boys and men while

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<sup>29</sup> 'The (Royal) children of Zulu, or heaven.'

<sup>30</sup> Shula Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion. The 1906-8 Disturbances in Natal*, Clarendon Press, Oxford (1970), p. 27. See also Stephen Taylor, *Shaka's Children. A History of the Zulu People*, Harper Collins, London (1994), p.41. For the discussion of the use of European terms like 'clan', 'chiefdom', 'king' etc., see previous chapter.

<sup>31</sup> (Sing. *umuzi*.) Number of *imizi*, see Jeff Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom. The Civil War in Zululand, 1879-1884*, Longman, London (1979), p. 10.

women took care of crop production and the household duties. Their huts, specifically assigned to each according to difference in age and status, were made of wattle and thatch and surrounded the cattle kraal.

Cattle were more than just a source of milk, hides and (on special occasions) meat; they were central in the religious life as well as being the only visible wealth. As potential *lobolo*<sup>33</sup> – used to pay for a wife – cattle were the main means of increasing production in the homestead. The larger the number of cattle, the more wives could be obtained, who in turn could produce more food, more sons to tend the cattle and more daughters who eventually, through marriage, would bring in even more cattle. Unmarried sons were, in general, dependant of their father's cattle to pay their first lobolo and establish an umuzi of their own. Thus the system effectively stressed the necessity of treating the unnumzana with due respect.

The religious beliefs were centred around the *amadlozi*<sup>34</sup>, the spirits of the forefathers, whose goodwill was assumed to be a prerequisite for a good life. The amadlozi could communicate with all of their descendants through dreams, but would normally be approached by their heir, the unnumzana. This interceding with the ancestors confirmed his superior position in the umuzi.

Other imizi were situated in the neighbourhood, all belonging to the same clan. One lineage within the clan would be dominant, the head of which would be the clan's chief, or *inkosi*<sup>35</sup>. He was responsible for the common welfare of the clan, deciding over such matters as the allocation of land and making sure that laws were followed and tradition upheld. As

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<sup>32</sup> (Pl. *abanumzana*) Homestead head, headman.

<sup>33</sup> A specified amount of cattle given to the bride's father from the groom's family, formalising the marital union and ensuring the groom's right to the bride's future children. Today, lobolo is usually paid in cash.

<sup>34</sup> (Sing. *idlozi*)

<sup>35</sup> (Pl. *amakhosi*) Translates reasonably well into English *lord*; particularly as a term of address, whether to a gentleman, a king or the Christian god.

inkosi, he had the right to collect fines through his courts and tribune from the members of his clan, judicially on behalf of the clan, though the received cattle were generally to his disposal.

The inkosi's authority was both secular and religious. His ancestors, the previous chiefs, were the *imzimu*, the godlike 'great tribal spirits'.<sup>36</sup> As the *imzimu*'s living representative and thus the mediator between them and the people, the inkosi was the clan's high priest, greatest healer and ultimate rainmaker rolled into one.<sup>37</sup> This office eventually gave the *amakhosi* an air of divinity, and the well-being of a chief became synonymous with the well-being of his people.<sup>38</sup>

According to common practice, the eldest son would inherit the father. However, experience had shown that this was not a satisfactory system for men of rank. Not even the importance of maintaining good relations with the ancestors was a sufficient deterrent for adult sons with personal ambitions, and a chief with a chosen heir ran the risk of premature death. To curb the temptations, a system had evolved where the heir was the eldest son, not of the first wife, but of a 'great wife' who was usually chosen late in an inkosi's life. She would normally come from another family of rank, and her designated role as bearer of the next inkosi was made evident by her lobolo being paid by the entire clan.<sup>39</sup>

The inkosi's power was absolute and his decision on any matter, whether of a judicial, legislative or administrative nature, was final. Still, a wise chief would regularly consult with his council, composed of senior members of the clan, and important discussions were generally open to all members of the clan. The council's advice, or consensus among the people, was not lightheartedly ignored, as the inkosi was not entirely irreplaceable. A tyrant

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<sup>36</sup> (Sing. *umzimu*) 'almost always worshipped *en bloc*, so the term is almost exclusively used in plural form'. See Bryant, A.T., *The Zulu People as they were before the white people man came*, Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg (1949), pp.523-4.

<sup>37</sup> See Bryant, *The Zulu People*, p. 523; Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 28.

<sup>38</sup> Taylor, *Shaka's Children*, p. 34.

<sup>39</sup> Bryant, *The Zulu People*, pp. 416-21.



inkosi could be killed, the clan might split, or discontented members of the clan would simply seek the refuge of another, more agreeable, chief.<sup>40</sup>

In the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century all clans in the area had become part of larger tribal alliances; chiefdoms bound by political and territorial circumstances rather than kinship. One clan would still be dominant, its inkosi the head of the entire chiefdom and its members making up the majority of the ruling council. Nonetheless, as the amakhosi needed to delegate the daily control of the different parts of the growing chiefdoms, personal attributes such as leader skills became more important than lineage connections. A military talent could become an *induna*<sup>41</sup> and draw on the loyalty of his warriors, and wealthy men could use cattle gifts to increase their political support.<sup>42</sup>

The tribal alliances were in part caused by population growth.<sup>43</sup> As the numbers of clan members and cattle multiplied, pressure on the environment increased, leading to limitations in production. The area was haunted by a series of wars over grazing and arable land, and smaller clans were compelled to seek protection by aligning themselves with more powerful chiefs. Three clans were dominating the coastal belt: The Ndwandwe controlled the northern parts between the Pongolo and Mfolozi rivers, the Mthethwa clan were in command in the central area and the Qwabe ruled further south, around the Tukela river. Struggling to supply their power-bases, these chiefdoms were continuously trying to increase their individual territories. These fights were the early tremors of a demographical earthquake that was to change the political structure of the entire coastline. The Sotho people called it the *difaqane*, ‘the forced migration’ of those clans that refused to be included into a larger chiefdom. Its

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<sup>40</sup> Max Gluckman, *Analysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand*, Manchester University Press, (1971), p. 29.

<sup>41</sup> (Pl. *izinduna*) An office that included heading an army regiment and being advisor to and executive officer of the inkosi, or, later, king.

<sup>42</sup> Jeff Guy, ‘The destruction and reconstruction of Zulu society’ in Shula Marks and Richard Rathbone (ed.): *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa. African class formation, culture and consciousness 1870-1930*, London (1982), p.171.

<sup>43</sup> Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p. 9.

unlikely protagonist was Shaka, the illegitimate son of Senzangakhona, chief of the insignificant Zulu clan. The Zulu named the turmoil *mfecane*, ‘the crushing’ of all opposition.

### **The stamping of the thorns**

Thrown out of his father’s umuzi, Shaka spent his childhood moving from one clan to another, always living with relatives not too eager to take responsibility for the disgrace of a Zulu chief. It has been argued that these experiences made him indifferent to clan loyalty and thus more able to grasp the concept of nationhood.<sup>44</sup> He certainly became familiar with this concept as a young man, while in the service of the powerful Mthethwa chief Dingiswayo, who were heading and constantly expanding one of the greatest tribal alliances in the area. Shaka eventually became an induna among the Mthethwa and led his own regiment for some time before returning home to seize the Zulu chieftaincy upon his father’s death.

Shaka immediately started reorganising the feeble Zulu army by the principles he had learned and developed while in Dingiswayo’s service. Discipline was harsh: The assegai should be short and used for stabbing, not thrown, and coming home from battle having lost the assegai meant death. Wounds should be taken in the chest – receiving one in the back was synonymous to a death sentence. Units should move in close formation and attempts to flee were punishable with death. Heroism was the highest of all virtues. Men who had distinguished themselves in battle were rewarded with special decorations to add to their fighting gear. The appraisal of bravery was collectively organized through the *uxoxa impi*, the regularly arranged ‘talk about war’, and repeated in the practice of *ukugiya*, the competitive and demonstrative ‘war dances’, both used to highlight any individual act of martial courage to ‘sharpen the heroes’. Cowards were denounced – and summarily executed.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Taylor, *Shaka’s Children*, p. 53.

<sup>45</sup> Taylor, *Shaka’s Children*, p. 51-60.

One of the most notable military improvements was the banishing of the loose ox-hide sandals used to protect the feet against the sharp *nkunzana*<sup>46</sup> thorns that hide in the grass. The sandals effectively counteracted any attempt of swift movement, and Shaka had early discarded them himself. Soon after he became inkosi, Shaka ordered the Zulu warriors to stamp barefoot across a field covered with thorns. The immediate killing of a few hesitators ensured the frantic obedience of the rest, who threw themselves into a regular stampede, chanting ferociously as they danced.<sup>47</sup> Forecasting their pre-eminent swarming of the country, the episode clearly demonstrates Shaka's principles for maintaining discipline and dealing with opposition.

By 1824, Shaka was king over one hundred thousand people and his kingdom covered almost 50,000 square kilometres.<sup>48</sup> Resistance was practically extinct – the thorns had been stamped flat. The king was literally lionized, addressed as the *Ingonyama yeSizwe* – ‘The Lion of the Nation’. The Zulu clan set the standard for a common language and customs, and eventually gave its name to the entire amalgated culture. Yet there was one major division in the country: The Tsekela river, being impossible to cross during the rainy season, created both a natural and cultural border. With few exceptions only the clans north of the river were considered ‘Zulu proper’. Those further south, contemptuously known as the *amalala* because of the way their tongues lay ‘flat’ in their mouths when they spoke, not only sounded different but were socially ousted as culturally inferior. The commoners of the southern periphery of the Zulu state were generally known, among the northerners, to be dirty, disrespectful of authority and ‘did not distinguish between what was good and what was bad’.<sup>49</sup> They were not fully accepted as Zulu, nor did their loyalty to the king ever run as deep.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Lat. *tribulis terrestris*.

<sup>47</sup> Taylor, *Shaka's Children*, p. 25.

<sup>48</sup> ‘Roughly 18,000 miles’ according to Taylor, *Shaka's Children*, p. 66.

<sup>49</sup> Carolyn Hamilton and John Wright, ‘The Making of the AmaLala: Ethnicity, Ideology and Relations of Subordination in a Precolonial Context’ in *South African Historical Journal* 22 (1990), p. 19-20.

<sup>50</sup> See Hamilton and Wright, ‘The Making of the AmaLala’, pp. 3-23.

## **The swallows arrive**

In 1824, only two years after rumours of ‘a formidable tribe, governed by a chief named Chaka’ reached the young British settlement in Cape Town, the first Europeans arrived in Zululand. Lieutenant Francis Farewell and Henry Fynn were given a spectacular welcome in Shaka’s capital kwaBulawayo. The ceremony, dance and splendour demonstrated by the 80,000 Zulu, including some 12,000 warriors literally dressed to kill, thoroughly impressed the guests. Farewell obtained Shaka’s signature on a paper that should grant him the land rights of the area surrounding their settlement; thereafter known as Port Natal. To the Zulu, the European concept of land ownership was unheard of, and it seems likely that Shaka, though well-disposed to the newcomers, saw this transfer as no different than the access to land that he granted any man who had served him.<sup>51</sup>

Shaka’s growing infatuation with the white ‘semi-gods’ was not shared by his council, who repeatedly urged him to kill the whites. Between 1824 and 1828, around one thousand Zulu sought refuge from the kingdom in the growing settlement of Port Natal, and the Europeans’ contribution towards the availability of trading goods, previously hallmarks of the aristocracy, was believed to undermine the position of the ruling classes.<sup>52</sup>

Worse than the distrust of the Europeans, was the growing discontent with Shaka’s increasingly erratic behaviour. The summary executions that previously took the form of deliberate efforts to maintain discipline in the country were turning into massacres.<sup>53</sup> But not even Shaka could not do entirely as he pleased. Henry Fynn later commented that ‘even

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<sup>51</sup> Taylor, p. 83-6.

<sup>52</sup> Taylor, p. 98.

<sup>53</sup> A certain amount of executions were seen as necessary to upkeep discipline and thereby the wholeness of the nation. In the early days of Shaka’s rule, examples were made of the cowards. Later, victims were regularly chosen by random and in greater numbers. To kill or be killed on his command was apparently just another way of serving the country – some victims of arbitrary executions are even said to have welcomed the decision because Shaka himself chose them. JSA, v. 3, p.26.

Shaka [was] perfectly aware that his reign would soon terminate if he opposed the general will of the people'.<sup>54</sup>

At the night of 23 September 1828, Shaka was assassinated by two of his half-brothers, Dingane and Mhlangana. The conspiracy to kill him was reputedly arranged by his powerful aunt Mkabayi, praised as the 'the opener of all the main gates', whose support once had secured Shaka's own ascendancy to the Zulu chieftaincy.<sup>55</sup> According to tradition, Shaka's last words was a prophecy predicting the future rule of Zululand by white men: 'The whole land will be white with the light of the stars, and it will be overrun by swallows'.<sup>56</sup>

If Shaka was killed for his cruelty, the Zulu fared no better with Dingane as head of the nation. He is remembered as even more of a tyrant, even among the Zulu themselves, yet without the redeeming qualities of bravery in war and great statesmanship.<sup>57</sup> At the same time, a new wave of swallows was arriving from the south.

The abolition of slavery in the British Empire was the last straw for the Boer population of the Cape Colony. Inspired by vaguely shaped ideas of their being 'God's chosen people', the Boers set out to find the Promised Land, where they would set the laws. Rumours of the bountiful Zululand had reached them, and by 1838 they had taken part in the first serious conflict between the Zulu kingdom and the white population of southern Africa.

In the following decades, the white population managed to collect gradually more land while the Zulu population withdrew towards and across the Tukela. Dingane was eventually killed by his own, because his cruelty grew into madness.<sup>58</sup> He was replaced by another half-brother, Mpande, who led the Zulu people into a long period of relative peace. However, the fear of the Zulu eventually caused the white population in Natal to force the Zulu into war. By

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<sup>54</sup> Taylor, p. 74.

<sup>55</sup> Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, p. 37; Taylor, *Shaka's Children*, p. 98. Fuze implicates Mkabayi on pp. 71 and 97 (her reason being that Shaka was 'killing them [his father's people] for nothing and for no reason', p. 97), and refers to her support of Dingane over Mhlangana on pp. 72 and 97.

<sup>56</sup> Taylor, *Shaka's Children*, p. 102. JSA, v. 3, p. 155; v. 4, p. 200.

<sup>57</sup> Taylor, p. 111.

the middle of 1879, the Zulu king, Cetshwayo kaMpande, was captured and sent in exile. Zululand was divided into thirteen chieftaincies, and a civil war broke out. The Zulu kingdom was destroyed, but the dream to reunite it, lived on in the kings' descendants.

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<sup>58</sup> Taylor, 151.

## PART TWO

# The King and the Honeybirds



Cyprian Bhekuzulu (right) and Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 1957. (Photograph courtesy of the Campbell Collections, University of KwaZulu-Natal.)

*‘Under the Bantu Authorities which you constitute  
you will be able to lead the people in a true sense.  
You will be able to tell them, not ask them, what to do.  
That is an important point.’*

*The Secretary for Native Affairs to the first Territorial Authority in Transkei  
(Randolph Vigne, The Transkei: South Africa’s Tragedy, p. 10-11)*

## The Lion's Pride

Solomon kaDinuzulu, the Ingonyama<sup>59</sup> of the Zulu, died 4 March 1933. While chief of the Usuthu, he had been the driving force behind a growing Zulu nationalism that not only enjoyed the support of Zulu traditionalists, but also that of the (largely Natal based and urban) kholwa<sup>60</sup> establishment and the liberal white segregationists. Yet Solomon's continuous fight for official recognition of the Zulu kingship had failed; he was bankrupt; and he had not, it seemed, appointed an heir.

After Solomon's death, his sons grew up under the guardianship of their uncle Mshiyeni. He was acting chief of the Usuthu during the sons' minority, until the question of succession was resolved. Far more agreeable and cooperative towards the government than his brother, the State decided after a few years to confer upon Mshiyeni the title 'Acting *Paramount* Chief'. This was the first official step towards recognizing the chief of the Usuthu as head of the Zulu people since the days of the Union.

It seemed quite clear that Mshiyeni's obliging attitude had been a decisive factor in the government's resolution to take this step. Solomon's successor would have to obtain the same recognition on his own merits, which made the choice of an heir even more of a challenge than usual. Although the decision primarily would be made by the elders of the Zulu royal family, it would have to be approved by the government and acknowledged by the Zulu people. The people, it would appear, were much less impressed with Mshiyeni's manners than the State officials were.

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<sup>59</sup> Lion; i.e. king.

<sup>60</sup> The Christian Zulu – and/or those dressed like Europeans.



## Cyprian's early years

Cyprian Bhekuzulu Nyangayezizwe kaSolomon was born on 4 August 1924. The names given to a Zulu child are believed to convey significant messages, and the man and the meaning of his name are thought to be inseparable.<sup>61</sup> It was the mother, Christina, who chose the European name *Cyprian*, and also *Nyangayezizwe*, 'the healer of nations', to signify that a healer had arrived 'to cure and rescue them at a time when everyone was worried and confused on what to do'.<sup>62</sup> Solomon named the child *Bhekuzulu*, apparently to announce that 'he will look after the Zulu nation'.<sup>63</sup> The names suggest that both Christina and, more significantly, Solomon anticipated the child to play an important role in the defunct Zulu kingship. Dr. Moses Cooper, circumcised Cyprian in 1925, later stated that Solomon at that occasion repeatedly referred to the child as his heir.<sup>64</sup> However, Christina had already given birth to another son, Hezron, a few years earlier, and Solomon had fathered several sons besides hers. It is therefore rather unlikely that Cyprian should have been named as the heir at the time of his birth – such a thing is unlikely to have happened until after his elder full-brother died in 1927, at the very earliest.

Christina Sibiya, also known as okaMathathela, was the first of Solomon's fifty-eight wives.<sup>65</sup> She was raised by kholwa parents at Nhlazatshe, a Norwegian mission station in the Mahlabathini district. In 1915, at the age of fifteen, (but already a qualified and working

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<sup>61</sup> See Adrian Koopman, *Zulu Names*, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg (2002), particularly p. 17 and Chapter 3. This understanding of the meaning of names is widespread in South African cultures. For example, Nelson Mandela was named *Rolihlala* – lit. 'pulling the branch of a tree', but colloquially understood as 'troublemaker'. Although he himself denounces the belief 'that names are destiny', he recalls that 'friends and relatives would ascribe to my birth name the many storms I have both caused and weathered.' Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Abacus (1995), p. 3.

<sup>62</sup> Gcina O.S. Nene, "A Critical Evaluation of the Role of the Zulu Monarch, Cyprian Bhekuzulu ka Solomon, 1948-1968, in the History of KwaZulu-Natal", MA Thesis, Dep. of History, University of Durban-Westville (1999), p. 58, from *Ilanga yase Natal*, 21 Sept. 1968.

<sup>63</sup> Solomon's words were '... uyobhek' uZulu'; *ibid*.

<sup>64</sup> 1/NGA N/3/1-iv/3/3 N/3/2, p. 3-4.

<sup>65</sup> A thorough, if somewhat biased, account of the life of Christina Sibiya is given in her biography *Zulu Woman*, written by R.H. Reyher, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg (1999).

teacher,) she married Solomon.<sup>66</sup> One source says that her lobolo<sup>67</sup> was paid with ‘the cattle belonging to the nation’, i.e. cattle collected from Solomon’s tribe.<sup>68</sup> If true, this would have been a strong indication that she was to be Solomon’s chief wife, the one who was expected to deliver the heir. The general opinion, however, appears to have been that her lobolo was never paid: a critical point in the succession dispute after Solomon’s death.

Nevertheless, oral evidence suggests that Solomon had declared that the okaMathathela was his chief wife.<sup>69</sup> Described as ‘a notable character, regal almost to a fault’,<sup>70</sup> Christina was well received by the royal family as well as the Zulu people in general.<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately, her European-style upbringing had done nothing to prepare her for the traditional life of the royal household, and even less for a polygamous marriage. According to her biographer, Rebecca Reyher, Christina was constantly struggling with her conscience, as she found her life in the royal kraal to be gradually more demeaning. She eventually left the king for good in 1931.<sup>72</sup>

Cyprian was raised at KwaDlamahlaha, Solomon’s main homestead. He was given a traditional upbringing, herding the royal cattle together with his half-brothers and cousins, of which the later Minister of Home Affairs, his cousin Mangosuthu Buthelezi, became among his best friends. When Solomon died in 1933, Cyprian and all his brothers were still minors. Solomon’s full brother, Arthur Edward Mshiyeni, was appointed Acting Chief of the Usuthu and became the guardian of the young princes.

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<sup>66</sup> Reyher, *Zulu Woman*, chapters 5-6.

<sup>67</sup> ‘Bride price’.

<sup>68</sup> Interview with Mr. Reggie Khumalo, quoted in Nene, ‘A Critical Analysis’, p. 38.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with umntwana William Zulu, quoted in Nene, ‘A Critical Analysis’, p. 34.

<sup>70</sup> Peter Becker, *Trails and Tribes in Southern Africa*, Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, London (1975), p. 146.

<sup>71</sup> Nene, ‘A Critical Analysis’, p. 34.

<sup>72</sup> Reyher, *Zulu Woman*, p. 186.

In his *izibongo* (praise poems), Cyprian is praised as ‘the rabbit with beautiful legs’, meaning that he was a swift runner,<sup>73</sup> and he was a good horseman like his father and grandfather. He was well built and excelled at the soccer field, where he was given the nickname ‘uBusha’ – the butcher – because he ‘sliced the opposition into little pieces’.<sup>74</sup> Although shy, modest and prone to moodiness, he smiled easily and was said to laugh ‘from the hollows of the heart’.<sup>75</sup> Another trait that was noted in his *izibongo*, was his good looks and popularity with women:

They say block its way boys  
So that it cannot enter the palace  
It will, on entering the palace  
Spoil the heifers<sup>76</sup>

Apparently, Cyprian got himself into trouble because of a woman while still a teenager. Regent Mshiyeni was a stern man, with a keen eye for royal etiquette and no qualms about emphasizing his opinions with a whip. When he discovered that Cyprian had flirted with a girl at a local school, he saw to it that the young prince got *sjambok*’ed.<sup>77</sup>

Some writers have seen the strict discipline as an explanation for Cyprian’s gentle and apparently subdued personality.<sup>78</sup> Although this is a possibility, there were certainly others among those he grew up with, such as his cousin Mangosuthu, who were not deprived of any innate tendencies towards rebelliousness. Perhaps Cyprian was simply born, as one of his later Native Commissioners described him, ‘a retired personality’.<sup>79</sup> Even so, he had inherited

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<sup>73</sup> The Zulu words are: “uNogwaj’ omhle ngemilenze”; see M.Z. Shamase, *Zulu Potentates from the earliest to Zwelithini KaBhekuzulu*, S.M. Publications, Durban (1996), p. 104-5.

<sup>74</sup> Becker, *Trails and Tribes*, p. 157; also Shamase, *Zulu Potentates*, p. 104.

<sup>75</sup> Becker, *Trails and Tribes*, p. 157.

<sup>76</sup> Shamase, *Zulu Potentates*, p. 105. A heifer is a young cow over one year old that has not produced a calf. In Zulu, the words are: ‘Bath’ivaleleni bafana/ Ingangen’ekhaya/ Iyoth’ingangen’ekhaya/ Ifik’izon’izithole’.

<sup>77</sup> Whipped with a *sjambok*, a heavy whip made of rhinoceros or hippopotamus hide: Becker, *Trails and Tribes*, p. 157.

<sup>78</sup> Nene, ‘A Critical Analysis’, p. 78; Becker, *Trails and Tribes*, p. 157.

<sup>79</sup> Interview with Nils Otte, Native Commissioner of Mahlabathini 1961-65, and Nongoma 1965-77, at his home in Eshowe, KwaZulu-Natal, 15 March 1999.

his father's pride in the history of the Zulu, and was said to have aimed for the reestablishment of the Zulu monarchy as it had been under Cetshwayo.<sup>80</sup>

### **The elevation of Mshiyeni**

Enthusiastically stressing the contrast to Solomon, Harry Lugg, the Chief Native Commissioner of Natal (CNC), characterized the Prince Regent Mshiyeni as 'agreeable [...], abstemious, particular about his appearance and polished in manner. As a man and as a Chief, his conduct has hitherto been entirely satisfactory'.<sup>81</sup> Another, less flattering, account portrays him as 'most anxious to obtain the good opinion of the government and most amenable to the control of the Native Commissioner'.<sup>82</sup>

In Natal, meanwhile, the old fear of the powers of the Zulu king was gradually giving way to an even greater, and very real, concern: the detribalisation and politicising of the black population all over South Africa. Increasingly segregationist legislation under the Hertzog government<sup>83</sup> had caused the leaders of the different black organisations to arrange an All African Convention in December 1935, the first sign of a more coordinated resistance towards the government and its policies. Still, although the convention had strongly condemned the proposed removal of black voters from the common-vote roll, there were visible disagreement between the delegates – differences which became even more apparent when these so-called *Hertzog Bills* became Acts in 1936. Younger men were inclined to boycott the new Native Representative Council (a body of black representatives, some elected, some chosen by the state, attended by the five Chief Native Commissioners and presided over by the Secretary for

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<sup>80</sup> Interview with Mr. S. Bourquin, Director of Bantu Administration in Durban 1950-1973, at his home in New Germany, KwaZulu-Natal, 18 March 1999. Also Shamase, p. 108.

<sup>81</sup> NTS 250 78/53/3, CNC to SNA, 18 June 1934.

<sup>82</sup> Heaton Nicholls Papers, KCM 3303 d, Carbon fragment, Folder 2, nd., quoted in Shula Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', in W. Beinart and S. Dubow (eds.), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, Routledge, London (1995), p. 92. Marks' article was first published in *Journal of Southern African Studies* 4 (1978).

<sup>83</sup> From 1933 to 1939, General J.B.M.A Hertzog led the so-called 'Fusion Government', a coalition between Hertzog's National Party and Smuts' South African Party.

Native Affairs) and all elections of white representatives. The older men, however, appeared to be more accommodating. Albert Luthuli, the Zulu chief, later recalled their view like this: 'Let us try to milk this almost dry cow. Let us once more put to the test the white man's declared good faith.'<sup>84</sup> This view seemed to be widespread also among the older Zulu who, when discussing the policies, mainly focused on a proposed increase of the size of the native reserves, and showed little interest in questions about the franchise. Furthermore, most Zulu chiefs appeared to support the Native Representative Council, presumably because Mshiyeni was to be a member of it.<sup>85</sup>

Mshiyeni and the royal house continued to enjoy the support of the majority of the kholwa (the Christian and/or educated Zulu), who kept appealing to the government for the official recognition of the 'Principal family of the Zulu'.<sup>86</sup> Still, the views of the younger men prevailed in the cities, and although the African National Congress (ANC) in Natal remained conservative, its national leadership were showing signs of becoming increasingly more radical.

Worried about this development, CNC Lugg argued in favour of the royal house: 'It is necessary that we should have a powerful weapon to counter the insidious propaganda which is being disseminated amongst our urban Natives, and this can best be secured by strengthening our tribal system in Natal,' he wrote in a letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs.<sup>87</sup> This point, of course, had long been propagated by Natal's segregationist politicians. And so, in 1939, Mshiyeni's official status was elevated to Acting Paramount Chief of the Zulu People. His willingness to cooperate with the government was rewarded after only six years of regency.

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<sup>84</sup> Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, Collins, Glasgow (1987), p. 87.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Shula Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation', in W. Beinart and S. Dubow (eds.), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, Routledge, London (1995), p. 111.

<sup>87</sup> NTS 250 78/53/3, CNC to SNA, 5 Aug. 1939.

## **The Usuthu succession dispute**

Mshiyeni's regent status was only temporary, until an heir to the Usuthu chieftaincy was found and had reached maturity. The first to be nominated by the royal elders, right after Solomon's death, was Victor Phikokwaziwayo, the late chief's eldest son. He had, however, not been chosen by a full meeting of the royal family, and his candidacy was withdrawn after some years because he was found to be 'unsuitable'.<sup>88</sup>

Then, in 1940, the Native Affairs Department accepted the royal house's nomination of Mshiyeni's preferred candidate, Thandayiphi Absalom, as heir to Solomon's chieftaincy.<sup>89</sup> One source claimed that Solomon had appointed Thandayiphi's mother, MaButhelezi, as his chief wife, thereby automatically placing her eldest son in the heir's seat.<sup>90</sup> This claim seems doubtful, since Thandayiphi then surely would have been the first candidate nominated by the royal elders – and he was not. Nevertheless, a candidate was chosen, and CNC Lugg wrote to Douglas Smit, the Secretary for Native Affairs: 'I know you will be greatly relieved to hear that this troublesome matter has been so satisfyingly disposed of.'<sup>91</sup>

The Zulu people, however, were neither relieved nor satisfied. Mshiyeni and Thandayiphi were increasingly unpopular because of their accommodating attitudes towards the government.<sup>92</sup> In early 1944, rumours started circulating in Zululand that the regent and the appointed heir had usurped the rights of the true heir to the Usuthu chieftaincy, who would soon come forth to claim what was rightfully his.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> BAO 4898 54/1467/1, letter from CNC to SBAD, 31 Jan. 1969, enclosure C. See also Nene, 'A Critical Analysis', p. 49.

<sup>89</sup> NTS 250 78/53/3, CNC to SNA, 16 April 1940, and BAO 4898 54/1467/1, letter from CNC to SBAD, 31 Jan. 1969, enclosure C.

<sup>90</sup> Interview with Mr. R. Khumalo, quoted in Nene, 'A Critical Analysis', p. 37 and 39.

<sup>91</sup> NTS 248 78/53/2 (Part I), CNC to SNA, 9 March 1940.

<sup>92</sup> BAO 4898 54/1467/1, undated memo to 'Sy Edele die Minister', signature unreadable, pp. 197-8. See also Nene, 'A Critical Analysis', p. 45.

<sup>93</sup> Anthony Costa, 'Custom and Common Sense: The Zulu Royal Family Succession Dispute of the 1940s', Seminar Paper, Institute of Advanced Social Research, University of Witwatersrand (1996), p. 5. Also BAO 5/351, 54/1467/4, P.N. Hansmeyer to the personal clerk of the Chief Commissioner in Nongoma, 14 March 1963.

Some years earlier, a primary school textbook by the Zulu writer R.R.R. Dhlomo, *Izikhali zaNamuhla*, had named Cyprian as Solomon's heir.<sup>94</sup> The relevant passage had been expunged from the later editions of the book, after it was brought to the attention of the Chief Inspector of Native Education.<sup>95</sup> It is possible that this was done at the request of Mshiyeni who, it was rumoured, censored and confiscated all books and popular literature that stated that Cyprian was the heir to the Zulu kingship.<sup>96</sup> However, Christina had secured for her son a copy of the first edition.

Jeff Guy has demonstrated how, in South African history, the written word has been 'inextricably linked with conquest [...] and the exercise of power'.<sup>97</sup> Cyprian, upon discovering that he had been 'nominated by the books', approached Mshiyeni with a claim to the chieftaincy.<sup>98</sup> According to Cyprian himself, Mshiyeni's reaction was fierce: the regent promptly reminded him of the bloody history of Zulu successions, and apparently threatened to have him shot on the spot.<sup>99</sup>

Apparently unperturbed by this incident, Cyprian continued to insist on his claim to the chieftaincy, and his support among the Zulu increased over the next six months. Still, the Native Affairs Department was reluctant to put up for discussion the candidature of an officially nominated heir that had already proved that he was as cooperative as his regent uncle. Cyprian, on the other hand, was believed to enjoy the ill-boding support of 'urban elements and the ANC'.<sup>100</sup> Then, on the morning of 23 September 1944, Cyprian and more than a hundred of his supporters turned up at the office of Hjalmar Peder Braatvedt, the

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<sup>94</sup> Apparently Mr. Dhlomo referred to a 1933 edition of the Zulu newspaper *Ilanga yase Natal*, published immediately after Solomon's death. See Nene, 'A Critical Analysis', p. 53.

<sup>95</sup> Costa, 'Custom and Common Sense', p. 5 and footnote no. 40, p. 19.

<sup>96</sup> Interview with the umntwana Nonhlanhla Zulu, quoted in Nene, 'A Critical Analysis', pp. 46 and 53. It must be noted that she is the daughter of Cyprian.

<sup>97</sup> Jeff Guy, 'Making Words Visible', *South African Historical Journal*, 31 (Nov. 1994), p. 25.

<sup>98</sup> NTS 248 78/53/2 (Part I), Mshiyeni to NNC, 8 May 1944.

<sup>99</sup> NTS 248 78/53/2 (Part I), Cyprian to NNC, 3 April 1944.

<sup>100</sup> BAO 4898 54/1467/1, undated memo to 'Sy Edele die Minister', signature unreadable, pp. 197-8.

Native Commissioner in Nongoma (NNC). Braatvedt was left with the distinct impression that unless the government acted quickly, civil war would again break out in Zululand.<sup>101</sup>

In late 1944, a Board of Advisers to the Government was set up to enquire into the matter. The Board was chaired by the acting Chief Native Commissioner of Natal, Colonel Benjamin Martin, and flanked by Vivian Addison and H.P. Braatvedt, the Native Commissioners of Pietermaritzburg and Nongoma respectively. All of them spoke fluent Zulu and were considered by the Department to be experts on Zulu culture.<sup>102</sup> Colonel Martin opened the enquiry 7 February 1945 with the words: 'It will be no good trying to bluff us.'<sup>103</sup>

Tradition allowed a chief to purposely avoid appointing an heir, if he had reason to fear that a nomination could lead to the death of the heir, or that the heir could become a threat to the chief's own life. The Natal Code, therefore, included clear specifications on how to appoint an heir, had a deceased chief failed to announce one.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, the Board found it reasonable to assume that the royal house was 'governed by special rules'.<sup>105</sup> As Anthony Costa dryly comments: 'The irony of making exceptions for kings who were not recognised by the Department, never struck the Advisers.'<sup>106</sup>

Over the next months, the Advisers heard the evidence of both parties. Cyprian's being circumcised, a fact that was strongly emphasized within the royal family and attributed to an alleged statement by Solomon that his heir would be 'marked', failed to impress the Board.<sup>107</sup> On the other hand, Christina's being the first wife and of the Sibiya clan was given considerable weight, since this was (although probably by coincidence) two common features

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<sup>101</sup> NTS 248/53/2 (Part I), NNC to CNC, 24 Sept. 1944.

<sup>102</sup> Costa, 'Customs and Common Sense', p. 6.

<sup>103</sup> Department of Traditional Authorities, Pretoria, File 13-918, 'Notes of Evidence', p. 2. See Costa's 'Customs and Common Sense', which provides a more detailed treatise of the dispute and the Board's enquiry than I present here.

<sup>104</sup> Section 104 (4); Proclamation No. 168 of 1932.

<sup>105</sup> Costa, 'Custom and Common Sense', p. 6.

<sup>106</sup> Costa, 'Custom and Common Sense', p. 8.

<sup>107</sup> Costa, 'Custom and Common Sense', p. 11. Circumcision, being a common part of young boys' *rite de passage* among other Nguni-speaking people, was abolished by Shaka Zulu. Hence, Cyprian being circumcised was exceptional in Zulu culture.



of all chief-bearers since Shaka.<sup>108</sup> Also, reports of Solomon's 'extraordinary expressions of grief' upon the death of his and Christina's first son were believed to support Cyprian's claim.<sup>109</sup> What eventually convinced the Board, however, was a typed letter allegedly written by Solomon to Christina, dated 26 March 1930. In the letter, Solomon wrote:

"I give this letter to you to be cared for and kept in your custody so that if I die before putting my house in order, you would reveal it so that everyone would know that my successor is Cyprian Bhekuzulu".<sup>110</sup>

The letter was signed, and a technical expert determined that the signature was Solomon's. The Board also accepted Christina's explanation that she had kept the letter secret for so long because she had feared for her son's life.<sup>111</sup> Consequently, the Board recommended that Cyprian Bhekuzulu Nyangayezizwe should be recognized as successor to Solomon. The recommendation was approved by the Prime Minister's Office on 27 August 1945.<sup>112</sup>

The Minister for Native Affairs, Major Piet van der Byl, came to Nongoma 15 September 1945 to announce the government's decision. He used the occasion to reaffirm the state's support of Mshiyeni, and warned those who were no longer showing the Regent respect, of the repercussions that would follow unless they changed their ways. He then turned to the chosen heir:

'I would also advise you, Cyprian, to prepare yourself diligently for the great office you will hold in the near future, and which you will only be able to fill as long as you prove yourself worthy. You must realise that if you are later to rule your people, you must first learn to obey, and I charge you during your minority that you show respect and listen to the advice of your uncle, the regent. Remember always that the eye of the Government is on you.'<sup>113</sup>

It is reasonable to assume that the recognition of the accommodating Mshiyeni, compared with the unsuccessful struggles of the more headstrong Dinuzulu and Solomon, had already given Cyprian a clear indication of the government's preferences. After the Minister's speech

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<sup>108</sup> With the exception of his sibling successors, Dingane and Mpande.

<sup>109</sup> BAO 4898 54/1467/1, letter from CNC to SBAD, 31 Jan. 1969, enclosure C.

<sup>110</sup> Nene, 'A Critical Evaluation', p. 54, quotes the original text as it was referred in the newspaper *Ilanga yase Natal*, 21 Sept. 1968: 'Ngikunika lencwadi ukuba uyigcine kahle ukuze kuthi uma ngifa ngingakawulungisi umuzi wami, uyiveze ukuze kwaziwe ukuthi iNdlalifa yami ngu Cyprian Bhekuzulu.'

<sup>111</sup> BAO 4898 54/1467/1, letter from CNC to SBAD, 31 Jan. 1969, enclosure C.

<sup>112</sup> URU 2279, Minute, PM's office, 27 Aug. 1945; The final approval by the Executive Council, is stamped onto the document, dated 31 Oct. 1945, Minute No. 2785.

<sup>113</sup> BAO 4898 54/1467/1, letter from CNC to SBAD, 31 Jan. 1969, enclosure C.

there could be no doubt: Cyprian had to follow the obedient example set by Mshiyeni, if he, too, were to achieve official recognition as the head of the Zulu.

### **Waiting to ascend**

‘The affairs of the Royal House are at present in a state of chaos’, wrote Commissioner Campbell in February 1946.<sup>114</sup> No previous attempt had been made to take an inventory of the assets of the estate after Solomon’s death. Now, Cyprian wanted to see what he had inherited, and he had already expressed some doubts as to whether the funds had been properly used.<sup>115</sup> Cyprian had no reason to cherish a regent who had so vehemently opposed his claim to the chieftaincy. Mshiyeni, on the other hand, was insulted by this ‘lack of gratitude shown to him for the care he had bestowed on Solomon’s family’, and eventually resigned before Cyprian was ready to assume the chieftaincy.<sup>116</sup> It is possible that the general decline in his popularity may have strengthened Mshiyeni’s resolve to resign, and even expedited the installation of Cyprian.<sup>117</sup> Meanwhile, another umntwana<sup>118</sup> took Mshiyeni’s place: Sifile Sibiya, who had supported Cyprian’s claim during the succession dispute.<sup>119</sup>

The process of handing over Solomon’s estate from Mshiyeni to Cyprian became a painstakingly thorough affair. Although Mshiyeni claimed that he bore his nephew no ill will, he refused to enter into any kind of reconciliation effort: all he desired, he said, was to hand over his brother’s estate and seek some spot far removed from the tribe where he could end his life in peace.<sup>120</sup> But first, he insisted on accounting for ‘every beast and penny’ that had been spent during his rule, and made himself (to the Nongoma Native Commissioner’s horror)

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<sup>114</sup> IBAD file 7, NNC memorandum, 7 Feb. 1946.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> BAO 2660 2078/307, NNC to CNC, 24 Feb. 1947.

<sup>117</sup> BAO 5/351, 54/1467/4, P.N. Hansmeyer (Private secretary – to the Minister?) to the personal clerk of the Chief Commissioner (?Kommissaris-generaal) in Nongoma, 14 March 1963. See comment above.

<sup>118</sup> (Royal) child, i.e. prince or princess.

<sup>119</sup> BAO 2660 2078/307, NNC to CNC, 24 Feb. 1947. Also *Ilanga yase Natal*, 21 Sept. 1968, see Nene, ‘A Critical Evaluation’, p. 48.

<sup>120</sup> BAO 2660 2078/307, NNC to CNC, 24 Feb. 1947.

available for interrogations by ‘all and sundry, whether members of the Royal Family or not’.<sup>121</sup> Exasperated, NNC Campbell complained to the Chief Native Commissioner in Pietermaritzburg: ‘I find myself unable to employ the same methods here [as in other parts of Natal] because I am told that the Royal House is on a footing entirely different to that prevailing amongst other tribes.’ Even the NNC’s appointed izinduna<sup>122</sup> were unable to help him in the present situation, as they ‘had been taught to regard as sacred’ matters concerning the Royal House.<sup>123</sup>

One of the less sacred matters, at least in the eyes of the elders, was the love affair between Cyprian and one of his former schoolteachers, Joyce Clementine Thoko MaJali. She was a divorced commoner almost twice his age, and their liaison was generally regarded as scandalous. The royal elders were unyielding in their rejection of her, and would never miss an occasion to reprimand Cyprian for this association. It is said that the relationship at one stage even threatened his chances of becoming Solomon’s heir, and that it was one of the main reasons for the conflict between him and Mshiyeni.<sup>124</sup> Cyprian initially withstood the pressure, showing a determination that he is not otherwise remembered for, and his relationship with Joyce seems to have grown stronger in spite of the scandal. However, the relationship has been said to be the cause of his own decline, both physically and in how he appeared in the eyes of others: he apparently became seriously depressed during this period and he started to drink heavily.<sup>125</sup>

Cyprian, who had passed his standard six<sup>126</sup> at the Nhlophenkulu School and now studied at the Umphumulo Training College in Vryheid, decided to stay in Nongoma while the estate changed hands. He apparently hoped that the government would allow him to study at the

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<sup>121</sup> BAO 2660 2078/307, NNC to CNC, 24 Feb. 1947.

<sup>122</sup> Traditional Zulu advisers,

<sup>123</sup> BAO 2660 2078/307, NNC to CNC, 24 Feb. 1947.

<sup>124</sup> Becker, Peter, *Trails and Tribes*, p. 157.

<sup>125</sup> Interview with Mangosuthu Buthelezi (cousin, childhood friend and chief advisor), in Durban 14 February 2000. See also Nene, ‘A Critical Analysis’, pp. 80-1, and Becker, *Trails and Tribes*, p. 157.

Witwatersrand University, even though the Department had already rejected this idea. The officials thought he lacked the necessary level of education. NC Campbell was most unhelpful. He wrote to the Chief Native Commissioner:

‘I find it difficult to believe that [Cyprian] is sincere when he professes to be anxious to complete his education [...] His desire to be sent to the Witwatersrand University is in my opinion in no way prompted by a desire to improve his education but rather to give him an opportunity of tasting the flesh [illegible] of Johannesburg and at the same time moving in circles which he has been foolishly told are more appropriate to his position’<sup>127</sup>

Campbell’s indignation seems to have been aggravated by the fact that Cyprian, rather than returning to school, ‘got married without advising me of his intention until the eve of the event and is now amusing himself by going round the district attending weddings and beer drinks’.<sup>128</sup>

Cyprian had not married his beloved Joyce. His first wife was Priscilla ukaMasuku. Soon after his first marriage, he also married Jezangeni Thomo Ndwandwe, also known as ukaThayisa.<sup>129</sup> It is unclear why Cyprian so suddenly entered into married life. It could be that he grew impatient while waiting to assume the chieftaincy – according to tradition, one had to be 25 years old and married to ascend, and he was still just 23.<sup>130</sup> He might have hoped that the marriages would make the age issue less important. Also, according to Zulu tradition, ‘a man’s wealth is judged by the number of wives he marries’,<sup>131</sup> and as the future Head of the royal house, Cyprian might have felt it prudent to establish himself. It is possible that he had succumbed to the pressures of the elders, and married to officially sever the scandalized bond with Joyce. And, of course, enjoying the polygamous prerogative, he might have married the two queens simply because he loved them, too.

Whatever his motives were, the marriages might have helped expediting his ascension: the following March, in 1948, the Prime Minister’s Office sent the Governor-General its

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<sup>126</sup> Grade eight.

<sup>127</sup> BAO 2660 2078/307, NNC to CNC, 24 Feb. 1947.

<sup>128</sup> BAO 2660 2078/307, NNC to CNC, 24 Feb. 1947.

<sup>129</sup> Shamase, *Zulu Potentates*, p. 105; Becker, *Trails and Tribes*, p. 157; Nene, ‘A Critical Analysis’, pp. 78-9.

<sup>130</sup> *The Star*, 10 May 1969.

official recommendation that Cyprian was to be appointed chief of the Usuthu section of the Zulu tribe. The request was approved by the Governor-General in Council on 2 July 1948.<sup>132</sup> A bull-killing ceremony, known as *ukuphahleka uswella*, was held to celebrate the installation of Cyprian.<sup>133</sup> However, he was only installed as Chief of the Usuthu, not Paramount Chief of the Zulu. As the Minister for Native Affairs had pointed out three years earlier: to be allowed to rule his people, Cyprian had to prove himself worthy and learn to obey.<sup>134</sup>

Meanwhile, the Nationalist Party had won the South African general election of 26 May 1948.

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<sup>131</sup> Nene, 'A Critical Analysis', p. 24.

<sup>132</sup> URU 2525, 15 March 1948, with stamp of approval dated 2 July 1948.

<sup>133</sup> Becker, Peter, *Trails and Tribes*, p. 190.

<sup>134</sup> BAO 4898 54/1467/1, letter from CNC to SBAD, 31 Jan. 1969, enclosure C.

## **New Rulers, New Rules**

To 'heal the nation' by uniting the Zulu people under their traditional king, had been the ultimate ambition for both Dinuzulu and Solomon. They both failed.

In 1928, the Chief Native Commissioner in Pietermaritzburg had listed four main reasons why the State should not recognize Solomon as head of the Zulu people: that it would be strongly opposed in white Natal; that there were signs that the wounds from the Zulu civil war was not healed; that the idea of Zulu monarchy was 'antiquated'; and finally that he suspected that Solomon, inspired by 'Native political bodies' and 'certain small sections of the Europeans', was aiming to be recognized as king of all Zulu in Natal, not only in Zululand.<sup>135</sup>

The 1939 elevation of Mshiyeni as Acting Paramount Chief showed that the government had changed its position – it was willing to recognize the chief of the Usuthu as a leader of the Zulu people, at least as long as the said chief was cooperative. One of the main reasons for this change in attitude was the growing politicising of the black population of Natal: the government, supported by the local administrators, hoped that strengthening the tribal system would counteract the growing popularity of 'revolutionary' movements such as the African National Congress (ANC).<sup>136</sup>

After the 1948 election, the victorious Nationalist Party was determined to physically separate all population groups in South Africa, by creating separate 'homelands' for each cultural group. To succeed, they needed the support of traditional chiefs who (if amenable to the South African state) were to rule the new homelands. Suddenly, the idea of Zulu monarchy was no longer antiquated, it was titillating. Furthermore, the Natal opposition to the royal cause had died, and it seemed clear that the wounds of the Zulu civil war had been

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<sup>135</sup> Nicholas Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg (1993), p. 223.

<sup>136</sup> NTS 250 78/53/3, CNC to SNA, 5 Aug. 1939.

sufficiently healed during Solomon's rule – not least due to his efficient use of political marriages.

The only real worry appears to have been a suspicion that Cyprian, the new Chief of the Usuthu, quietly supported the very same opposition that the Nationalist Party wanted to create a tribal bulwark against. The government, therefore, apparently tried to secure Cyprian's support to their policies by withholding the 'Paramount Chief' title until he had proven himself as an ally.<sup>137</sup>

### **The apartheid ideology**

The Nationalist Party won the 1948 general election with the promise of *apartheid* – the full and final segregation between all South Africa's ethnic groups.<sup>138</sup> The policy's potential for blatant white supremacy, found in such slogans as '*Die kaffer op sy plek*' ('the nigger in his place') and '*Die koelies uit die land*' ('the coolies – a derogatory term for Indians – out of the country'), was used for all it was worth, and was particularly popular among certain groups of poor Afrikaaner voters.<sup>139</sup> Nevertheless, to view the ideas and success of the apartheid policy only in the light of its most bigot exponents will obscure, rather than illuminate, the subject.

The apartheid ideology was influenced by the peculiar interpretations of the Bible that Afrikaaners had developed while searching for a land of their own: that the Afrikaaners were 'God's own people'; their country was 'the Promised Land'; and that the story of the Tower of Babel was a divine message that 'what God has joined together, man must not separate.'<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Interview with M.G. Buthelezi in Durban, 14 February 2000.

<sup>138</sup> Newell M. Stultz, *Afrikaner Politics in South Africa 1934 – 1948*, University of California Press, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London (1974), p. 151.

<sup>139</sup> Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Abacus, London (1995), p. 127.

<sup>140</sup> And conversely, 'What God has divided, man must not join together'.

Such religious convictions were well suited to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century eugenic theories of race and racial degeneration.<sup>141</sup> Some of these theories were clearly supremacist. Others would juxtapose the potential and ‘value’ of each ‘race’, but still insist that mixing the races was equivalent to corrupting them. By the end of the World War II, eugenic theories were thoroughly discredited in the international scientific environment, and to a certain extent also in the English-speaking societies of South Africa. The Afrikaaners, however, stuck to the principles of degeneration, although the Dutch Reformed Church<sup>142</sup> ‘began to back away from the vocabulary and argumentation reminiscent of Nazi variants of Christian-nationalism.’<sup>143</sup>

Leading apartheid ideologues and politicians, such as HF Verwoerd and WWM Eiselen, did not make use of racist arguments. Insisting that there were ‘no demonstrable differences in the intelligence of blacks and whites’, they consistently portrayed the apartheid ideology as a ‘positive’ policy that merely recognized and made provisions for cultural differences.<sup>144</sup> According to the historian Saul Dubow,

Idealism [...] convinced many adherents that apartheid was a genuinely just way of solving South Africa’s racial conflict. For, unlike partial *ad hoc* segregation which was held to be intrinsically exploitative, it was believed that total segregation would provide Africans with full opportunities to develop according to their own cultural norms.<sup>145</sup>

Similarly, parts of the Zulu royal family and the *kholwa*<sup>146</sup> establishment in the 1930s had supported segregation policies as a way of preserving the Zulu culture.<sup>147</sup> The apartheid concept of separate development may therefore – at least initially – have looked like a feasible plan to ensure the preservation of the traditional Zulu culture and Zulu unity, at least to those who considered this to be more important than political participation in the rest of

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<sup>141</sup> See Saul Dubow, *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*, Cambridge University Press (1995), for a comprehensive discourse of the subject.

<sup>142</sup> The largest, and strongly conservative, Afrikaaner church.

<sup>143</sup> Dubow, *Scientific Racism*, p. 276.

<sup>144</sup> Dubow, *Scientific Racism*, pp. 231, 276-8.

<sup>145</sup> Dubow, *Scientific Racism*, p. 283.

<sup>146</sup> I.e. the Christian and/or modern, educated elite among the Zulu.

<sup>147</sup> See Chapter 2.



South Africa. It is therefore not entirely impossible, what was later claimed by the newspaper *The World*: that Cyprian ‘was one of the first African chiefs to support the Nationalists.’ The newspaper supports this claim by stating that, ‘Shortly after his installation, [Cyprian] issued a pamphlet urging Zulus in Natal to vote for the Nats [Nationalist Party] when they voted for the Native Representatives in the Senate in 1948.’<sup>148</sup>

This allegation was printed two days after Cyprian’s death, but I have not found any evidence to support it. Quite the contrary: state officials believed that his verbal support to the government was ‘mere lip service’, and they expressed concern that Cyprian, if appointed Paramount, should become a puppet for ‘undesirable elements’.<sup>149</sup>

### **Organizing Zulu rule**

Besides the doubts whether Cyprian would turn out to be cooperative, the government also wanted to ensure that an ‘efficient tribal organisation’, was in place before appointing a Paramount Chief of the Zulu.<sup>150</sup> Such an organisation, however, should be designed by the government. As early as 1947, an article in the Zulu newspaper *Ilanga yase Natal* had advocated the creation of a national organisation to assist the Paramount Chief. The article nonchalantly disregarded the fact that Cyprian had not yet been installed as chief of the Usuthu, much less recognized as Paramount, and the Native Commissioner of Nongoma (NNC) immediately warned the Chief Native Commissioner in Pietermaritzburg. He pointed out that if such a Zulu national organisation were to develop independently, the Department would not be able to influence its [sammensetning]. He therefore urged the Department to immediately review and recognize the Paramount Chief title, appoint a council for the chief,

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<sup>148</sup> *The World*, 19 Sept. 1968.

<sup>149</sup> BAO 5/351, 54/1467/4, P.N. Hansmeyer to the personal clerk of the Chief Commissioner in Nongoma, 14 March 1963.

<sup>150</sup> BAO 5/351, 54/1467/4, P.N. Hansmeyer to the personal clerk of the Chief Commissioner in Nongoma, 14 March 1963.

and create a constitution to regulate and control this.<sup>151</sup> The government, however, was reluctant to hurry into this matter.

Then, three years later, in 1950, the Chief Native Commissioner came across a constitution for a 'Zulu National Development Corporation', which aimed to 'promote, foster, and encourage the spirit of self-help, self reliance and the power of collective efforts in all undertakings for self-improvements' for the Zulu people. The constitution was written by a man named Msimang – probably the same Msimang that had written the 1926 constitution for Solomon's discredited organisation *Inkatha kaZulu*.<sup>152</sup> Possibly alarmed by the likeness to the old Inkatha constitution, and particularly worried about the paragraphs outlining the role of the royal house, the Chief Native Commissioner wrote to the Native Commissioner in Nongoma: was Cyprian trying to establish a national Zulu organisation similar to that of Solomon, without informing the government?<sup>153</sup>

The local commissioner immediately summoned Cyprian and his uncle Mshiyeni, who denied having any knowledge about the corporation and expressed surprise that Msimang had initiated this without the consent of the 'leaders of the Zulu'. The constitution stated that the head of the Zulu royal house should be 'Life President' of the corporation; a notion Cyprian flatly rejected. 'In his opinion the project appears to be too big', the Nongoma Commissioner reassured the Chief Native Commissioner.<sup>154</sup>

The government, meanwhile, was looking into the necessary legal provision for the appointment of a Paramount Chief within the Bantu Authority System: the main legislative system of the apartheid policy. It was made quite clear that Cyprian could not expect to be

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<sup>151</sup> BAO 2660 2078/307, NNC to CNC, 24 Feb. 1947.

<sup>152</sup> Nicholas Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg (1993), p. 171. See also Chapter 2.

<sup>153</sup> 1/NGA 3/3/4/2/10 N. (or IV) 1/14/3/1, CNC to NNC, 17 Oct. 1950. Enclosed 'Constitution' of the Corporation.

<sup>154</sup> 1/NGA 3/3/4/2/10 N. (or IV) 1/14/3/1, NNC to CNC, 1 Nov. 1950.

appointed Paramount Chief until the system was in place.<sup>155</sup> In a letter to the Chief Native Commissioner in July 1951, the Acting Secretary for Native Affairs wrote:

The matter shall have to wait until the Department can review the whole question of Bantu Authorities. It is possible that the Department shall have to test Cyprian first, as to whether he is prepared and capable to work with a recognized council in his own (the Usuthu) tribe.<sup>156</sup>

The recognition of a Paramount Chief of the Zulu was not only a matter of increased personal status for the chief himself – it meant (at least to the Zulu royal house) an official recognition of the Zulu nation. Previous governments had refused to acknowledge anything reminiscent of the old Zulu kingdom, mainly out of fear that the Zulu people would again unite and rise against them. The appointment of Mshiyeni as ‘Acting Paramount Chief’ showed that this argument had lost weight. The conclusive factor in Mshiyeni’s case, however, seems to have been that whereas Solomon was extravagant, wilful and arrogant, Mshiyeni had been modest, accommodating and co-operative towards the authorities.<sup>157</sup>

The Nationalist government, with its aim of total segregation, believed that a strong sense of tribal unity combined with compliant tribal leaders was a prerequisite for the success of the apartheid policy.<sup>158</sup> However, Cyprian initially seemed inclined to assume his father’s lifestyle, rather than that of his uncle. The Native Commissioner in Nongoma wrote in 1947 that he had ‘repeatedly warned Cyprian against extravagance, but he shows no signs of improvement and I am satisfied that he will follow in his fathers foot-steps unless severely pulled up.’<sup>159</sup> S. Bourquin, on the other hand, who worked closely with the Zulu royal house while he served as Director of Bantu Administration in Durban, described the young chief as being ‘not very flamboyant, [rather] a little bit *too* meek and mild’.<sup>160</sup> Irrespective of the

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<sup>155</sup> BAO 5/351, 54/1467/4, P.N. Hansmeyer to the personal clerk of the Chief Commissioner in Nongoma, 14 March 1963.

<sup>156</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Acting SNA (F. Rodseth) to CNC, 13 July 1951. The SNA was referring to a letter of 12 June 1951 which I have not been able to find in the files.

<sup>157</sup> See Chapter (?).

<sup>158</sup> NTS 250 78/53/3, CNC to SNA, 5 Aug. 1939.

<sup>159</sup> BAO 2660 2078/307, NNC to CNC, 24 Feb. 1947.

<sup>160</sup> Interview with Mr. S. Bourquin, Director of Bantu Administration in Durban 1950-1973, in New Germany, KwaZulu-Natal, 18 March 1999.

personal opinions of the state officials, a comment from the Chief Native Commissioner shows that they were well aware of the position the Chief of the Usuthu held among his people:

Cyprian's character and unsuitability remain unchanged but, whether the Department allows him to assume the title of Paramount Chief or not, he is now in the eyes of the Zulu their Paramount Chief and they shall concede to him the privileges of such a rank.<sup>161</sup>

If the state was reluctant to officially recognize Cyprian's status, its officials did not hesitate to make use of the influence he had on the Zulu people when necessary. During the 'Indian Riots' in Durban in 1949, for instance, when the Indian population was attacked by the Zulu, the Chief Native Commissioner called upon Cyprian in an attempt to pacify the mob. Cyprian spoke to a gathering of thousands of Zulu at the Smith Hostel in Durban, asking them 'to forget about their anger, not to take the law into their own hands and to leave it to the authorities to settle the trouble'. According to the Commissioner, this 'was the turning point in the riots and thereafter order was soon restored'.<sup>162</sup>

Cyprian undoubtedly saw himself as the head of the Zulu nation. A letter from Cyprian to the Native Commissioner in Nongoma in April 1951 shows that he was even willing to take the risk of criticizing the government when they interfered with the traditional Zulu lifestyle. In the letter, Cyprian refers to a meeting with A. W. G. Champion, member of the Native Representative Council and, at the time, president of the ANC in Natal. They had been discussing a gazetted amendment of the Native Code that restricted traditional healers from moving about as freely as before; from sending their medicine to patients by post; and preventing their 'messengers' to treat patients on behalf of the 'licensed medicine men'.<sup>163</sup> Cyprian argued that the amendment would create problems for the people as well as the

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<sup>161</sup> Quoted in BAO 5/351, 54/1467/4, P.N. Hansmeyer to the personal clerk of the Chief Commissioner in Nongoma, 14 March 1963.

<sup>162</sup> Letter to the Editor, *The Daily News*, 18 Sept 1969. The so-called *Indian Riots* were offset by a quarrel between an African and an Indian employee on 13 January 1949. The violent interference of their employer, watched and interrupted by a large group of African bus-queueers, escalated into a massive riot that left 142 people dead and thousands injured, and for a while threatened to destroy relations between African and Indian political leaders.

medicine men, who 'have established their business on the civilised lines which is same as done by European Chemissts [sic].' He asked 'on behalf of the Zulu Nation that the Government should consider the withdrawal of this notice and allow Natives to continue helping us in the usual way as before. Our Zulu culture in this respect should not be disrupted.'<sup>164</sup>

The letter was written at a time when official recognition of a Zulu Paramount Chief still seemed far away. Nevertheless, he was on this occasion not afraid to express his association and agreement with the Natal President of the ANC, even though he must have known that the government might hold such connections, as well as any kind of political involvement, against him.<sup>165</sup> However, it is typical that the complaint was caused by a legislative attack on an important part of Zulu culture: the Zulu people's belief in, and opportunity to receive, health care from traditional practitioners. It has been written that 'it was early clear that Cyprian would rule in a traditional fashion', and this complaint is certainly in line with the focus on Zulu traditions and history that he kept to his death.<sup>166</sup> It is not noted, however, if his complaint was successful.

### **Family affairs**

In 1948, Cyprian's second and 'chief' wife, MaNdwandwe, had given birth to his first son, who was named Goodwill. The boy's second name, Zwelithini ('What does the world have to say?'), clearly signifies the young father's pride in producing a potential heir. However, neither this event nor the two marriages had put an end to his relationship with his former teacher. Extramarital affairs were not necessarily considered improper for a Zulu king. The relationship with Joyce MaJali, however, was seen as a breach of Zulu royal etiquette: she

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<sup>163</sup> *The Gazette*, 16 February 1951, no. 364.

<sup>164</sup> 1/NGA 3/3/4/2/9 N. (or IV) 1/12/3, Cyprian to NNC, 21 April 1951.

<sup>165</sup> Interview with Mr. S. Bourquin, Director of Bantu Administration in Durban 1950-1973, at his home in New Germany, KwaZulu-Natal, 18 March 1999.

was a divorced commoner twice Cyprian's age, and it was commonly acknowledged that she had a bad influence on his drinking habits. The general disapproval of the affair seems to have been shared by Cyprian's wives: he reportedly became estranged from them both within the first year of his chieftaincy.<sup>167</sup>

Not long afterwards, his first wife, OkaMasuku, died, leaving behind two young daughters.<sup>168</sup> The 'chief' wife, MaNdwandwe, 'after having been neglected for the latest acquisition [i.e. Joyce], misconducted herself with her brother-in-law', wrote the Chief Native Commissioner in a confidential letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs.<sup>169</sup> One can only speculate what scandal such an act would have caused – and what would have caused the king's Chief wife and heir-mother to risk such a scandal. According to Rebecca Reyher, the biographer of Cyprian's mother, MaNdwandwe received a three-month jail sentence for her impropriety: 'Her plea of neglect and loneliness was disregarded'. Questioning the harshness of such punishment, Reyher was told by the Native Commissioner: 'We must uphold respect for the King.'<sup>170</sup> MaNdwandwe left the royal homestead, only to die from an 'unspecified illness' soon afterwards.<sup>171</sup>

Joyce was no more popular with the Chief Native Commissioner than with the Zulu establishment. He claimed that she 'had led a doubtful early life as a teacher, [and] in her ambitions clamouring for position and the limelight, is exerting an evil influence upon [Cyprian] and is leading him away from his tribe, thus causing considerable pain to those anxious for his welfare.'<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Interview with M.G. Buthelezi at the Royal Hotel in Durban, 14 February 2000; also Ben Temkin, *Gatsha Buthelezi. Zulu Statesman*, Purcell, Cape Town (1978), p. 116.

<sup>167</sup> Interview with Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi, Durban, 14 February 2000; Gcina O.S. Nene, 'A Critical Evaluation of the Role of the Zulu Monarch, Cyprian Bhekuzulu ka Solomon, 1948-1968, in the History of KwaZulu-Natal', MA Thesis in History, University of Durban-Westville (1999), pp. 80-1; Peter Becker, *Trails and Tribes in Southern Africa*, Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, London (1975), p. 157.

<sup>168</sup> Nene, 'A Critical Evaluation', p. 81.

<sup>169</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Confidential letter, CNC to SNA, 9 September 1954.

<sup>170</sup> Reyher, *Zulu Woman*, p. 198.

<sup>171</sup> Nene, 'A Critical Evaluation', p. 81.

<sup>172</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Confidential letter, CNC to SNA, 9 September 1954.

Cyprian, however, seems to have taken little notice of such criticism. Instead, according to one government informer, he married Joyce in secret.<sup>173</sup> Then, presumably to emphasize that he was making his own choices, he left the Dlamahlahla homestead, and moved together with her into a new place he had built close to Nongoma, naming it Khethomthandayo: *Choose Whom You Like*.<sup>174</sup>

Family scandals notwithstanding, to the Zulu people Cyprian was the *Ingonyama* – the lion, or king – and the Native Affairs Department was receiving countless appeals from the people to recognize him as their head.<sup>175</sup> In the end, their prayers were heard, but only after the Bantu Authorities Act no. 68 of 1951 had passed through parliament.

### **The politics of separate development**

Since its victory in the 1948 general election, the Nationalist Party had introduced a number of laws that aimed to keep contact between the different population groups in South Africa to an absolute minimum. First, Acts that prohibited marriage and extra-marital sex between the races were passed. This was quickly followed by an Act that provided for the registration of every person in the country by race; an Act that ensured physical separation between them by the creation of different residential areas; and an Act that permitted the government to forcibly move people to the areas the government saw as fitting. There came Acts that limited full voting rights to whites only and outlawed all calls for radical change in these policies (defining such dissent as ‘communism’).<sup>176</sup>

The cornerstone of the apartheid system, however, was the Bantu Authorities Act, No. 68 of 1951. Its proponents claimed that they were doing their ‘utmost to save what can still be

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<sup>173</sup> IBAD file 2/Z/30, Letter from TWS Mthembu to the Native Affairs Department, 30 August 1954.

<sup>174</sup> Becker, Peter, *Trails and Tribes*, p. 160.

<sup>175</sup> BAO 5/351, 54/1467/4, P.N. Hansmeyer (Private secretary – to the Minister?) to the personal clerk of the General-Commissioner in Nongoma, 14 March 1963. See comment above.

<sup>176</sup> Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, No. 55 of 1949; Immorality Amendment Act, No. 21 of 1950; Population Registration Act, No. 30 of 1950; Group Areas Act, No. 41 of 1950; Prevention of Illegal Squatting

saved of the tribal life of the Bantu'. The Act, it was said, was intended to create 'a basis on which the Native will henceforth be able to give expression to his own inner self to develop his family life and his national life', and 'be a recipient of those human rights and privileges for which we are all yearning in this life'.<sup>177</sup> In other words, the black population should become natives of 'their own Bantustans', in specifically designed areas, and cease to be South African citizens. The Minister for Native Affairs, Dr H. F. Verwoerd, explained the government's views to the Native Representative Council on 5<sup>th</sup> December 1950:

"The more this intermixing develops [...] the stronger the conflict will become. [...] To avoid the above-mentioned unpleasant and dangerous future for both sections of the population, the present government adopts the attitude that it concedes and wishes to give to others precisely what it demands for itself. It believes in the supremacy of the European in his sphere, but, then, it also believes equally in the supremacy of the Bantu in his own sphere."<sup>178</sup>

Most of these Bantustans were to be located in areas where the different population groups traditionally lived, although not entirely so. The land set aside for this purpose was significantly smaller than these tribal areas had been in the past, and a patchwork of land areas, rather than geographically coherent ones. The size of the territories was carefully calculated, again according to Dr Verwoerd:

When one realises the difference in the standard of living of the European family and the Native family, then it is clear that for a family of five Europeans one should have on an average 105 morgen and Natives an average of 16 morgen.<sup>179</sup>

Another consequence was that the defunct Natives Representative Council<sup>180</sup> was dissolved – the black population should have no political influence in South Africa. Instead, the people should be ruled by their local chiefs. In smaller areas, a chief and his council would control

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Act, No. 52 of 1951; Representation of Voters Act, No 46 of 1951; Suppression of Communism Act, No. 44 of 1950.

<sup>177</sup> J.A.S.Nel and W.A.Maree, members of the Parliament, quoted in Gwendolen Carter, Thomas Karis and Nevell M. Stultz, *South Africa's Transkei: The Politics of Domestic Colonialism*, Evanston (1967), p.49.

<sup>178</sup> IBAD file ½, speech referred in *Izindaba*, pamphlet issued by the Senior Information Officer, August 1958, p. 3.

<sup>179</sup> Dr. H.F. Verwoerd, Minister for Native Affairs, Senate Hansard, 1 May 1951 (cols. 2832-3). One morgen equals 8565.3 m<sup>2</sup>. 105 morgen is equivalent to about 90 hectares, while 16 morgen equals about 14 hectares.

<sup>180</sup> The Natives Representative Council was an advisory body to the Minister for Native Affairs, consisting of African nominated members, African elected members and white officials from the Native Affairs Department. It was created as part of the 1936 removal of Africans from the common voters' roll. In 1946, the majority of its members decided to boycott the meetings as a protest to the increasingly discriminatory laws and their brutal enforcement. The council was never again assembled.



so-called 'Tribal Authorities'. A chief could be elected by the people living in the area, but it was more common that the chieftainship was inherited. Two or more tribal authorities could form a 'Regional Authority', which leadership would be elected by – and usually among – the tribal chiefs. Finally, a 'Territorial Authority' could be formed by two or more regional authorities, and its leadership elected by and from the leaders of the regional authorities. A territorial authority was supposed to control all members of one particular population group. Once a territorial authority was in place, its leadership could request the foundation of an 'independent homeland'.

Meanwhile, as the provisions of the Bantu Authorities Act were gradually being implemented, chiefs were installed and disposed of with the approval of the Governor-General in the Executive Council (since the 1927 Natives Administration Act, the Governor-General had held the title 'Superior Chief of all Natives'). The Governor-General would as a rule follow the recommendations of the Native Affairs Department, making the Minister for Native Affairs the *de facto* ruler of the native areas.<sup>181</sup>

The Bantu Authorities Act met with massive resistance from liberal and black political leaders, who considered this to be as retrogressive, patronizing legislation.<sup>182</sup> Eventually, the government had to concede to its implementation being subject to the approval of the black population. Walter Sisulu, the Secretary-General of the African National Congress (ANC), expressed hope that no chief would agree to being 'pushed back into tribalism'.<sup>183</sup> The Zulu chief and Natal ANC member, Albert Luthuli, stated that the government apparently had no intentions of leading the African people towards 'intelligent democracy'.<sup>184</sup>

However, AWG Champion, the president of the Natal branch of the ANC, was reluctant to boycott the Bantu Authorities: 'If we keep away from the established institutions at present

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<sup>181</sup> See Chapter 3. See also Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, p. 236.

<sup>182</sup> Jeffrey Butler, Robert I. Rotberg and John Adams, *The Black Homelands of South Africa. The Political and Economic Development of Bophuthatswana and KwaZulu*, Berkeley (1977), p. 28.

we shall be helping the government and no one else'.<sup>185</sup> A typical representative of the Natal kholwa, Champion apparently felt that the gentle *hamba kahle*<sup>186</sup> strategy that the Zulu establishment had followed over the past decades had a greater chance of success than open revolt.

### **Return of the King**

At a conference held at the Vuma Farm in the Eshowe district on the 12th December 1951, the Secretary for Native Affairs, WWM Eiselen, made an unexpected announcement: the government 'was pleased to confer' upon Cyprian Nyangayezizwe Bhekuzulu the title *Paramount Chief of the Zulu People*.<sup>187</sup>

In his speech, Eiselen told the assembled crowd that the government had felt that Cyprian was still very young when appointed Chief of the Usuthu, and had therefore wanted to see how he progressed before deciding to elevate his position: 'I place great trust and confidence in you in your new and responsible role,' he finished. The announcement was received with 'loud and prolonged acclamation'.<sup>188</sup>

Immediately thereafter – apparently rather surprisingly, and certainly not in accord with tradition – Simpson Isaac J. Bhengu rose to express his deep gratitude to the government for this appointment.<sup>189</sup> Solomon's private secretary and the secretary of his discredited organisation *Inkatha kaZulu*, Bhengu had been identified as one of the main culprits in the organisation's 1931 financial scandal. He had been banned from the Nongoma district soon afterwards – an action which Mshiyeni (who had become Acting Chief of the Zulu by then)

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<sup>183</sup> *The Guardian*, 14 June 1951.

<sup>184</sup> *The Guardian*, 28 June 1951.

<sup>185</sup> *Ilanga Lase Natal*, 28.06.51, quoted in i Mzala, p. 51-52.

<sup>186</sup> Lit. 'Go well' or 'tread carefully': a term used to describe the politically moderate or conservative fractions of Zulu politics.

<sup>187</sup> UG 37/1955, Report of the Native Affairs Department, 1951-2, p. 13.

<sup>188</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Excerpt from minutes of conference, undated, p. 11.

<sup>189</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Excerpt from minutes of conference, undated, p. 11.

had fully supported.<sup>190</sup> Now Bhengu had returned to the Zulu establishment, but it remains unclear whether he was welcome.

It was perhaps because of Bhengu's impropriety that Cyprian himself arose to address the Secretary for Native Affairs: 'I am grateful to you. It is difficult to give one's own thanks when there are others who could do it better. On an occasion such as this it is customary that the ones who should give thanks are the members of the tribe, but today, I break that custom.'

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'The ones who should give thanks' were apparently not present at the Vuma conference. One senior member of the royal house gave immediate instructions that the royal kraal should be informed of the announcement, and told the meeting that a deputation from the royal house would later proceed to the Chief Native Commissioner's office in Pietermaritzburg to express the thanks of the Zulu nation.<sup>192</sup> The new Paramount Chief was greeted with the traditional the Zulu royal salute: '*Bayete! Bayete! Bayete! Usuthu!*', before the conference closed with prayers and the singing of *Nkosi sikelela i'Afrika*.<sup>193</sup>

It seems clear that the announcement of Cyprian's paramount status came quite unexpected. In 1945, when Cyprian was recognized as Solomon's heir, the Minister for Native Affairs had travelled in person to Nongoma to convey the message. In 1969, after Cyprian's death, his brother was installed as Acting Paramount Chief in a great ceremony that included all the 280 chiefs of Zululand, and some 8000 spectators.<sup>194</sup> It is rather strange, therefore, that the first official recognition of a Zulu king by the South African Union was made public in such a modest and surprising manner: the royal house had clearly not been informed of the announcement beforehand, or all important members and chiefs would have been present; and it was not made in Nongoma – the district of the royal kraal – but during an

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<sup>190</sup> See Chapter 2; also Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, part 2.

<sup>191</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Excerpt from minutes of conference, undated, p. 11.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>194</sup> *Bantu*, July 1969, p. 13.

apparently irrelevant conference in the neighbouring district Eshowe. Furthermore, the archives of the Native Affairs Department have no records of such recognition being approved before the statement was made. It almost looks like the announcement was made as an afterthought, at the spur of an inspired moment by the Secretary for Native Affairs.

That, of course, is highly improbable. The recognition of a Paramount Chief would normally be recommended by the Minister for Native Affairs and the Prime Minister, before it was approved by the Governor-General in Council. Since the approval of the recognition cannot even be found in the files of the Native Affairs Department, it seems likely that the decision was made very quickly, and outside the regular channels. Why would the government go to such a step?

Less than three weeks earlier, on 23 November, AWG Champion had lost the presidency of the Natal branch of the ANC to the radical chief Albert Luthuli. The rather conservative Champion, who nursed close contact with the royal family, professed cooperation and carefulness when dealing with the government, while Luthuli was an outspoken critic of the entire apartheid policy.<sup>195</sup> It could be expected that the election of Luthuli would lead to the radicalisation of black politics in all of Natal and Zululand.

It seems probable, therefore, that the government decided to immediately recognise Cyprian's status to strengthen those parts of the Zulu leadership who still believed in the more moderate *hamba kahle* political strategy. This line was supported by most of the royal family and particularly the older kholwa establishment, and the majority – especially among the royalists – was believed to prefer increased self-government to greater political participation in the South African Union.<sup>196</sup> The recognition of a Zulu Paramount Chief would indicate that the government was sincere in its aim to propagate independent African homelands. Since

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<sup>195</sup> See for instance Shula Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism, and the State in Twentieth-Century Natal*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London (1986), for a short biography of Champion's political career.

most Zulu were still sympathetic to the royal house, this act of recognition could increase the support of the Bantu Authorities policy, at least in the traditionally-minded rural areas.

Yet in its haste to make the appointment, the government had not even waited to decide what powers, prerogatives and duties the Paramount title should incorporate. By recognising the chief of the Usuthu as the head of the Zulu people, the Zulu nation was 'healed', in the sense that it was again recognised as one nation. However, a growing conflict between radical ANC supporters and conservative royalists was threatening to split the Zulu people once more. Would Cyprian have enough power, formal as well as informal, to heal such a wound?

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<sup>196</sup> See Chapter 2; also Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation' and Cope, *To Bind the Nation*.

## The Concept of Subordinate Paramountcy

For the first time in the history of the South African Union, the government had officially recognized a Zulu king, and the Zulu royal family was eager to show its gratitude. On 28 December 1951, only a few weeks after the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA), WWM Eiselen, had made this surprising announcement, a delegation of more than twenty izinduna and dignitaries visited the office of Mr Ashton, the Native Commissioner in Nongoma (NNC). The delegation was headed by Cyprian himself; his uncle, the former regent Mshiyeni; and his grand-uncle, the powerful Mnyayiza Zulu. It was Mshiyeni who addressed the NC on behalf of the royal family:

We have come to you, who are in charge of us. We have brought our thanks because of the recognition of our child by the Government. Our minds are now clear on the Government's intentions regarding him. [...] We look to you, Sir, to look after this child of ours, to bring him up well, and if he does wrong to bring it to his notice. We are ready to assist you in this matter.<sup>197</sup>

Mshiyeni asked the Commissioner to arrange a meeting with the Chief Native Commissioner of Natal (CNC), Major M.L.C. Liefeldt, as soon as possible. It would be a rather large gathering: the royal family and all chiefs closely connected to them wished to be present to thank the government through its highest ranked local representative.

Arrangements for such a meeting, however, could not be rushed. Plans for the recognition of a Zulu Paramount Chief had been discussed by changing governments over the past decades. For the ruling Nationalist Party, such recognition was seen as a natural consequence of the recently introduced Bantu Authorities Act. However, although a Zulu Paramount Chief had been appointed, the Native Affairs Department in Pretoria (NAD) had still not defined what prerogatives and responsibilities the title should entail.

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<sup>197</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), minutes of meeting, 28 December 1951. The use of the word 'child' does not, as one might assume, refer to Cyprian still being rather young, nor to the fact that Mshiyeni and Mnyayiza, since they were related through the paternal line, were regarded as his father and grandfather. The Zulu word for prince or

## Recreating chieftaincy

The provisions of the Bantu Authorities Act, with its strong focus on traditional leadership, enabled the Native Affairs Department to give increased personal power to the traditional leaders of the different population groups, in exchange for their loyalty. Solomon, Cyprian's father, had repeatedly humiliated the government,<sup>198</sup> and the Native Affairs Department was determined to avoid such embarrassments in the future. When Cyprian was appointed heir to the Usuthu chieftaincy, the Minister for Native Affairs had stated quite bluntly that Cyprian would have to learn to obey before he could expect to lead his people.<sup>199</sup> However, the hasty recognition of Cyprian's paramountcy had happened without him proving such willingness to obey the government. It appears as if the Department solved this dilemma by curbing the contents of the title, to ensure that the promise of (and/or desire for) *real* power could still be used to control the head of the Zulu.

A handwritten letter marked 'Confidential', written by the Under-Secretary of the Native Affairs Department (NAD), stated clearly that with 'regard to the difficulties which were experienced with Cyprian's late father, it seems desirable to define Cyprian's position and to lay down the code of conduct which he will be expected to follow'. The letter appears to have been addressed to the Chief Native Commissioner (CNC) in Pietermaritzburg, as part of the CNC's preparations for the meeting with the royal family. The NAD official explained Cyprian's current status: 'The appointment is for the present recognition of Cyprian as the social head of the Zulus. As such he will be consulted by the Govt. and asked to assist in matters which are of concern to the Zulus. He has as yet no jurisdiction over Chiefs or Natives outside the Usutu tribe [*sic*].'

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princess is *umtwana* (pl. *abantwana*), meaning 'child'. A Zulu king, while often referred to as 'the father of the nation', is just as often referred to as the nation's child.

<sup>198</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>199</sup> See Chapter 3. BAO 4898 54/1467/1, letter from CNC to SBAD, 31 Jan. 1969, enclosure C.

Presumably fearing the opportunism his father was known for, the Department had decided that Cyprian should not be allowed to ‘summon or call upon any chief or attend any meeting outside his own tribe’ (i.e. the Usuthu), unless it was with the knowledge and consent of the government. It is possible that the Department felt that this restraint could be interpreted as a rather unsuitable infringement on civil rights, even for a ‘Native’, for it was added, somewhat apologetically: ‘It is in any case not fitting that he in his position should move about unheralded and risk being subjected to indignities by officials, local authorities and perhaps even Natives who may be unaware of his rank and the purpose of his visit.’<sup>200</sup>

Aside from mentioning that Cyprian would be consulted and asked to assist in matters regarding the Zulu people, it was made clear that he had no judicial authority above that of any other chief. Instead of obtaining a somewhat greater independence through the appointment, Cyprian now had to obey a new set of rules, without any indications of prerogatives or other benefits that would make the Zulu Paramount Chief superior to other Zulu Chiefs – rather the opposite. The Department must have been aware that this was far from what the royal house desired, because the letter ends rather awkwardly:

It is, of course, not intended that these conditions should be applied with undue restriction, the main object being to assist him [Cyprian] to maintain the prestige befitting his status. Before communicating the foregoing to Cyprian, I shall be glad of your comments + suggestions in regard to the suitability of the instruction. Should you deem this expedient there would be no objection to your first consulting Cyprian in the matter. This would of course have to be carefully + tactfully done, preferably by yourself.<sup>201</sup>

Apparently, the CNC did not ‘deem this expedient’, as there is no record of Cyprian being consulted about this matter.

### **Inkatha Revival?**

During the days of Solomon, the Native Affairs Department had unsuccessfully tried to convince the Zulu leaders to transform the *Inkatha kaZulu* into a ‘Zululand General Council’

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<sup>200</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Drafted letter titled ‘Chief Cyprian Zulu’, 11 January 1952.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*



similar to the one of Mpondoland in the Transkei.<sup>202</sup> These plans had been put on hold after the Inkatha financial scandal and Solomon's decline.

Within the Bantu Authorities system, it was a prerequisite that the chiefs should rule together with a council, although in the case of Cyprian, it had not yet been decided whether he should only have a council to help him with the affairs of the Usuthu tribe, or also someone to assist him in matters regarding the entire Zulu people. Only six months earlier, the Secretary for Native Affairs had written to the CNC, indicating that Cyprian might have to be tested 'as to whether he is prepared and capable to work with a recognized council in his own (the Usuthu) tribe' before he could be recognised as Paramount Chief.<sup>203</sup> Since then, the subject had apparently been a part of the Department's deliberations, but no progress had yet been made.

It was apparently with more than a little surprise, therefore, that the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA) received a letter from Simpson Bhengu – he who had spoken during the conference after Cyprian's appointment – in February 1952, indicating the revival of the *Inkatha kaZulu*. Calling himself 'General-Secretary of the Zulu National Council (Inkata [*sic*] ka Zulu)', Bhengu referred to 'their conversation' during the Vuma Conference, 'wherein it was arranged to accept Cyprian's request to make personal representations to the Honourable Minister for Native Affairs in order to pay his respects and appreciations for the honour that had been bestowed upon him by his great Chief.' It seems that such a request had in fact *not* been made – at least not through the proper channels, who had only asked to meet with the CNC. Bhengu, however, who now seemed to have assumed the role of Cyprian's secretary with or without Cyprian's consent, nevertheless urged the SNA to arrange a meeting between the Minister and Cyprian as soon as possible.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> See Chapter 2 [Make sure the point is made in ch. 2]; also Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, p. 226-7.

<sup>203</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Acting SNA (F. Rodseth) to CNC, 13 July 1951.

<sup>204</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), S.I.J.Bhengu to SNA, 11 February 1952.

Paying little heed to the request, the SNA was more concerned with the apparent revival of Inkatha. As late as in 1950, Cyprian had denied having any knowledge of a similar organisation: the 'Zulu National Development Corporation', where he – apparently unwittingly – was to be nominated 'Life President'.<sup>205</sup> A copy of Bhengu's letter was therefore swiftly sent over to the CNC, who in turn gave the Native Commissioner in Nongoma (NNC) the task of investigating whether the Zulu people were in fact trying to unite again under a king. Cyprian was summoned to the NNC's office, where he met the NNC on the 15 March, together with his uncle Mshiyeni. In a letter to the CNC, the NNC quotes a translated version of Cyprian's reaction to the letter:

'I hear the words written by Bhengu. His letter seems to me to be irregular, as it does not come from the family circle. It amounts to stealing something secretly. The representations he makes are unknown to me. So far as I am concerned there is no such association as the "Inkatha ka Zulu" although some people, like Bhengu, have asked me to resuscitate what was formerly known under that name. Bhengu has no authority to write on my behalf, and any representations I wish to make I make through the proper channel, namely, through my Native Commissioner.'

Mshiyeni had declared that it was 'impertinence on Bhengu's part to address the Secretary for Native Affairs as he did', and pointed out that Bhengu had been expelled from the royal kraal for his implication in the Inkatha scandal. The NNC, therefore, recommended that Bhengu was 'told politely but very definitely to refrain from interfering in matters pertaining to the royal kraal'.<sup>206</sup>

A note from an under-secretary in the Native Affairs Department praises Cyprian's flat rejection of Bhengu's letter: 'The reaction of Cyprian is in my mind not only correct, but speaks volumes for his desire to run a straight course + one which will be approved of by the Govt.[sic]'.<sup>207</sup>

The SNA, however, was not convinced that this was all that was to be said about Bhengu's present connection with the royal house. In his opinion, Bhengu had been

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<sup>205</sup> 1/NGA 3/3/4/2/10 N. (or IV) 1/14/3/1, NNC to CNC, 1 Nov. 1950. See Chapter 4.

<sup>206</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), NNC to CNC, 17 March 1952,

<sup>207</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), U/S (A) to SNA, 9 April 1952.

‘permitted to speak on Cyprian’s behalf’ in Vuma, which had made him assume that Bhengu ‘had again become a court favourite’. Perhaps more importantly, the fact that Bhengu had recently established a government-friendly Bantu National Congress, in opposition to the African National Congress, made him a possible ally: ‘He [...] appears to be useful enough in certain ways. I personally rather dislike what little I have seen of him. Nevertheless I do not want to antagonise him.’ The SNA, therefore, ordered an answer to be written to Bhengu that should reprimand him for writing unsolicited on Cyprian’s behalf, but taking care that they did not ruin the possibilities for future cooperation.<sup>208</sup>

In his reaction to Bhengu’s letter, Cyprian managed to emphasize his loyalty to the government while distancing himself from the most infamous episode of his father’s rule – possibly attempting to demonstrate the level of loyalty demanded by the Minister for Native Affairs in 1945.<sup>209</sup> By continuing to bring Mshiyeni with him to the NNC’s office, he further demonstrated that the wounds of the succession dispute had healed and that he was now relying on the advice of someone the government trusted. Cyprian may have hoped that his displays of loyalty and obedience would impress the government enough to trust him with more powers. For the moment, however, it had little impact.

### **The meeting at Umgeni Court**

On 20 March 1952, the royal family and ‘the chiefs closely connected to them’ finally had the opportunity to thank the Chief Native Commissioner in Natal, Major M.L.C. Liefeldt, for the government’s recognition of the Zulu monarchy. A large meeting was held at Umgeni Court in Pietermaritzburg. A number of white Natal officials were present. The Zulu delegation, consisting of some three hundred people, clearly reflected the alliance between Zulu traditionalists and Christian kholwa that had developed under Solomon’s rule. Cyprian and

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<sup>208</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), SNA to Smuts, undated.

<sup>209</sup> BAO 4898 54/1467/1, letter from CNC to SBAD, 31 Jan. 1969, enclosure C. See also previous chapters.

Mshiyeni were present, of course, as were their wives Joyce MaJali and MaKubheka, several Zulu princes, a large number of chiefs, the ANC veterans Selby Msimang and AWG Champion, and several Zulu reverends from the Anglican Church.<sup>210</sup>

In accord with tradition, it was Mshiyeni who first expressed the royal family's gratitude. He asked that Cyprian would be given a letter of appointment that would define his powers, and that his salary would be increased. 'I have now laid down the reins,' Mshiyeni ended his speech, 'and I, therefore, bring him to you, the Chief Native Commissioner. He is your child and if he is in difficulty we ask you to receive him and hear any representations he may wish to make on behalf of his people.'<sup>211</sup>

Several of the other elders expressed their agreement of Mshiyeni's words, and a rather large amount of people rose in turn to have their say. AWG Champion (who, unlike the others, spoke in English) stated, rather pompously, that he had arrived at the meeting because

I want to show that the Paramount Chief is in authority over both English and Zulu speaking Natives. I am a Zulu-speaking [*sic*] and I understand I am now a subject of the Paramount Chief. [...] I am speaking on behalf of the ordinary people [...] We wish that you convey to the Government the thanks of the ordinary people! I am their Leader!

The fact that Champion had recently lost the presidency of the ANC in Natal to Albert Luthuli had apparently done little to reduce his sense of leadership.

It was clear that several of the Zulu present hoped that the recognition of Cyprian's status represented a first step towards increased self-government. A descendant of the Mandlakazi, the arch-enemies of the Usuthu royal family during the 1880s civil war, even asked 'that the Paramount Chief be given full power so that he may have the same authority as the Zulu Chiefs in the early days'.<sup>212</sup>

The Chief Native Commissioner then addressed the gathering, assuring them that a document would be issued where the terms of the appointment would be set out in greater

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<sup>210</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Notes of Meeting, 20 March 1952.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>212</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Notes of Meeting, 20 March 1952.

detail, although ‘judging by what the speakers of the meeting have said it is apparent that the terms [will] fall short of what is desired.’ Cyprian was only appointed *social* head of the Zulu, he explained, and had no judicial powers outside the Usuthu tribe. He pointed out that these terms were temporary, and that ‘what [Cyprian’s] future position and jurisdiction will be, will depend upon the development which will take place in terms of the Bantu Authorities Act and also upon Chief Cyprian’s own wisdom and leadership’. <sup>213</sup> It may not have been stated clearly, but it was clearly enough implied: if the Zulu nobility were not happy with the present status of their king, they should encourage him to do the government’s bidding.

### **The concept of subordinate paramountcy**

The issue of Cyprian’s salary was dealt with a few months after the meeting in Pietermaritzburg. Upon his installation as chief of the Usuthu in 1948, Cyprian had been given a stipend of £500 per year, plus another £250 for ‘the maintenance of dependants of the previous Chief’. This sum had not been changed since. The CNC supported the king’s wish to increase the stipend, and suggested to the Native Affairs Department that it was brought en par with those of other Paramount Chiefs. In the Transkei, Victor Poto, who was chief of the Western Mpondo, received £600 per year, while Botha Sigcau, chief of the Eastern Mpondo and Paramount Chief of all Mpondo, received £900.<sup>214</sup> The Secretary for Native Affairs agreed, and had by the end of June ensured that Cyprian’s stipend was increased to £600 per year, ‘subject to review and further adjustment when the whole question of stipends for senior chiefs have been considered’.<sup>215</sup>

Although a 20% increase is significant, it is worth noting that this rise only brought Cyprian’s salary up to the same level as that of Poto, the chief of the Western Mpondo people,

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<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>214</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Undated memo addressed to ‘The Senior Clerk’, including 4 illegible signatures, dated between 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May 1952.

<sup>215</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), SNA to ST, 11 June 1952; NTS 249 78/53 (2), SNA to CNC, 29 July 1952.

not as high as that of the Paramount Chief of all Mpondo. In the Transkei, however, and in Mpondoland in particular, a system of Native councils, similar to the 'Authorities' introduced by the Bantu Authorities Act, had been in function for decades, and the chiefs' resistance to the Bantu Authorities system had so far been significantly smaller than that of the Zulu chiefs. Furthermore, the government was still operating with a rather strict division between the Zulu in Natal and the Zulu in Zululand. When all Zulus lived in areas subject to a Zululand Territorial Authority, Zululand would again be politically united for the first time since Dingane had lost control of the sub-Thukela areas in the 1830s. Until then, therefore, one could argue, that Cyprian was still only a lesser senior chief. In any case, by only giving Cyprian a stipend similar to that of a lesser senior chief, the Department efficiently demonstrated that his title at present only had a 'social' function.

A letter defining the terms of Cyprian's appointment was finally sent to him by the Minister for Native Affairs in August 1952:

1. At present you are recognised as Social Head of the Zulus. As such you will be consulted by the Government and asked to assist in matters which are of concern to the Zulus.
2. You have as yet no jurisdiction over Chiefs or Natives outside the Usuthu tribe and should not permit yourself to be drawn into tribal disputes or other matters outside your own tribe unless you are invited to intervene by the Government.
3. What your future position and jurisdiction will be, will depend upon the development which will take place in terms of the Bantu Authorities Act and also upon your own wisdom and leadership.
4. It is not fitting that you in your position should move about unheralded and risk being subjected to indignity by officials, local authorities and perhaps even Natives who may be unaware of your rank and the purport of your visit.
5. It follows therefore that, except for consultations and discussions with other members of the Zulu royal house, you should not leave the district of Nongoma, summon or call upon any chief to attend meetings or yourself attend meetings outside your own tribe, without the knowledge and consent of the Government
6. In order to facilitate the obtaining of such consent and the announcement to appropriate persons of an impending visit by you, the following will be procedure:-
  - (a) Where you wish to make an informal visit to a district adjoining Nongoma, for instance to Vryheid on business or to the royal kraal at Mahlabatini, it shall be sufficient if you notify the Native Commissioner, Nongoma.
  - (b) In the case of formal visits to adjoining districts, you should obtain the permission of the Native Commissioner, Nongoma, who will give such notice to the Native Commissioners of the districts concerned as he may deem necessary.

(c) You should not enter any district in Natal outside those adjoining Nongoma without the knowledge and consent of the Chief Native Commissioner.

(d) You should not make visits outside Natal without the knowledge and consent of the Secretary for Native Affairs, who should be advised timeously through the Native Commissioner, Nongoma, so that appropriate notice to Native Commissioners, local authorities and others may be given.<sup>216</sup>

To a young Zulu king, eagerly awaiting the new defined powers of his new elevated position, this must have been a disappointment. If anything, his powers were curbed. His 'paramountcy' was subordinate, not only to the country's leadership, but to all and any local Native Commissioner. Furthermore, it seemed clear that if he wanted to rise any higher, he would have to assume that the terms 'wisdom and leadership' mentioned in §3, would be defined by the government rather than by Zulu traditions or ambitions. The government left no doubt that the Zulu could receive the power to decide what 'future position and jurisdiction' their Paramount Chief would have only by accepting the principles of the Bantu Authorities Act. Obviously, the government had no intentions of improving his position without the acceptance of their policy. The concept of a 'Paramount Chieftaincy subordinate to the State' held no promises of any prerogatives, only the expectation to obey.

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<sup>216</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), MNA to Cyprian (copy), undated, but with 4 illegible signatures – three 5<sup>th</sup> August and one 7<sup>th</sup> August.

## **‘Hamba Kahle’ in the 1950s**

‘During the period 1950/51 Cyprian was an irresponsible young man, given to excessive drinking and generally behaving in an unsatisfactory manner. It then appeared as if he was turning over a new leaf,’ the Chief Native Commissioner reported to the Secretary for Native Affairs.<sup>217</sup> Cyprian seemed to be doing what he could to fulfil the expectations of the government, proving himself to be responsible, loyal and obedient. At the same time, he wished to consolidate the position of the Zulu monarchy as the apex of Zulu nationalism – something he was unlikely to succeed with if he was seen as a government errand-boy. The careful approach of the *hamba kahle* political strategy seemed necessary, avoiding conflicts with both government and opposition while gently insisting on greater independence for the Zulu people.

The attendance at the 1952 meeting in Umgeni Court showed that the conflicts that had marred the Zulu society since the 1880s civil wars were now amended. The main instigator behind this had been Cyprian’s father, Solomon, who had worked relentlessly to reconcile the different fractions – a precondition for any kind of recognition for the Zulu monarchy.<sup>218</sup> Solomon’s efforts had not brought him the recognition he aimed for from the government, although the Native Affairs Department in Pretoria, and to a certain extent also the local administrators in Natal and Zululand, had considered the possibility of including both the Zulu monarchy and the *Inkatha kaZulu* in the official ‘native’ policy.<sup>219</sup> His brother Mshiyeni had received recognition as Acting Paramount Chief, but in his efforts to make himself acceptable to the state officials, Mshiyeni had lost the support of the Zulu people.

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<sup>217</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Confidential letter, CNC to SNA, 9 September 1954.

<sup>218</sup> See Chapter 2; also Nicholas Cope, *To Bind the Nation*, particularly chapter 5.

<sup>219</sup> Cope, p. 222.



Furthermore, whereas Solomon's drive for increased self-government for the Zulu had created suspicion among the state officials, particularly in Natal and Zululand, such issues were now headlining the Apartheid State's rhetorics. With the growing division between the conservative *hamba kahle* supporters of self-government and the new generation of radicals advocating political rights for all within the Union of South Africa, it was no longer easy to use ideas of independence as a rallying point. By aligning himself too closely with the government, Cyprian risked losing the support of the people the way his uncle had done. Alienating the government, on the other hand, would mean losing the little influence the Zulu royal house had on the development of the 'native' policy. His predicament was further accentuated by the fact that the ANC was about to launch a nationwide attack on the government.

### **The Defiance Campaign**

The non-violent Defiance Campaign of 1952 was targeted as a protest against all unjust laws, and was a cooperation project between the ANC, the Indian Congress and various coloured organisations. AWG Champion, who had headed the Natal branch of the ANC in the early stages of the campaign planning, disagreed with both the campaign and the new direction of ANC politics that it signified. Albert Luthuli, however, the new ANC Natal leader, soon became a front figure for this new direction. He later wrote in his autobiography: '...the main force of the Defiance Campaign was directed against the national motto of white South Africa, EUROPEANS ONLY, which is found across the length and breadth of the country.' In a footnote, he adds dryly: 'The unheeded official motto is: "Unity is strength."' <sup>220</sup> Groups of volunteers, after being instructed in the non-violent methods, set out to use the white facilities on train stations, waiting rooms, post offices etc. Also, activists were instructed to disregard curfew and pass regulations. According to Luthuli, 'wherever possible, the authorities were

forewarned of the detailed intentions of each batch of volunteers – in some cases full lists of the names of the volunteers involved were politely handed in.’<sup>221</sup> By the end of September 1952, more than 5000 people had been arrested for their involvement in the campaign.

Cyprian had been present at a mass-meeting in Durban, presumably around the same time he and his followers visited the CNC in Pietermaritzburg. According to Mr Bourquin, who was present in his capacity as Acting Manager of the Durban City Administration Department, Mshiyeni had read out a statement urging Zulus not to take part in a planned boycott of the Van Riebeeck festival at April 6.<sup>222</sup> This boycott would signal the beginning of the Defiance Campaign. The present Press, however, apparently confused Mshiyeni with Cyprian, and wrote that Cyprian had made the speech.

Cyprian retorted by issuing a statement in the Zulu newspaper *Ilanga Lase Natal*, 29 March 1952, where he denied ‘ever making a statement regarding the protest to be held by the Congress [i.e. the ANC] on April 6. The European Press is confusing the minds of the people by the assertion that the Paramount Chief made an announcement in connection with this matter,’ he wrote, and continued: ‘The truth is that the Paramount Chief never dared to open his mouth at the reception in Durban.’<sup>223</sup> In a personal letter to the same newspaper a couple of weeks later, he elaborates on his desire to be kept out of the whole issue:

‘I am moved by a speech which has appeared several times in the European Newspapers to the effect that I spoke in Durban and warned the people not to take part in the protest which it was understood would take place on April 6th. I desire it to be known that I did not speak, nor did I have anyone who acted as my spokesman; I do not want to be pushed into matters which do not concern me. I am in no way connected with the protest of the people or any of the speeches directed against the Government. I have not given any opinion in regard to this matter, yet I find I am the one who has said a lot.

Those who cause friction between me and the Government are people who hate me and who do not wish me well in my position; it makes it clear that it did not please them that I was promoted and they are looking for some means of lowering my name.

It is clear to me that I am not yet settled in this position – that I am still at the start at the dispute that I thought was all over. I believe that it is those people who were opposed to my

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<sup>220</sup> Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, p. 117.

<sup>221</sup> Luthuli, *Let My People Go*, footnote, p. 119.

<sup>222</sup> *The Natal Daily News*, 15 April 1952.

<sup>223</sup> *Ilanga Lase Natal*, 29 March 1952; NTS 249 78/53 (2) Undated.

holding this position from the very start – they are accustomed to talking a lot while I am not used to doing so.’<sup>224</sup>

This urgent denial of having ‘any opinion’ about the Defiance Campaign caused some consternation among the state officials. Mr Bourquin told the European newspaper *The Natal Daily News* that they were ‘at loss to understand his present attitude’. He insisted that Cyprian had shown no sign of disagreement while Mshiyeni made the speech and that, in the following days, Cyprian had ‘expressed himself delighted with the meeting. At no time did he make any protests about Press reports.’<sup>225</sup>

Cyprian was summoned to the Nongoma Native Commissioner’s (NNC) office to explain himself. He did not admit to supporting the Defiance Campaign. Instead, he said that the letters he had written were evidence of his loyalty to the government: ‘I made the request because I am not to be drawn into matters outside of my tribe unless requested by the government to do so and also it was made to appear in the English Press that I had spoken personally whereas I had not.’<sup>226</sup>

The NNC was apparently satisfied with Cyprian’s explanation. However, several of the more interesting points in Cyprian’s letters, particularly in the second one, seem to have escaped the NNC’s attention. Cyprian stated that he neither spoke against the protest nor was in any way connected with it, and alleged that ‘people who hate me’ were trying to cause friction between him and the government. Yet, if he had made the speech Mshiyeni read, as the European Press had claimed, certainly this would have been proof of his loyalty to the government rather than the opposite? And these people, who ‘were opposed to my holding this position from the very start’, who were they?

The most obvious explanation is that Cyprian, upon realizing how damaging a rejection of the Defiance Campaign would be to his public image, was trying to create as much

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<sup>224</sup> *Ilanga Lase Natal*, 12 April 1952.

<sup>225</sup> *The Natal Daily News*, 15 April 1952.

<sup>226</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2) NNC to CNC, 18 April 1952.

distance between himself and Mshiyeni's speech as he possibly could, without antagonizing the government in the process. Mshiyeni had always been cooperative towards the State, and was critical to any action taken against it, while Cyprian had never, as he put it, 'given any opinion in regard to this matter'. Cyprian did not accuse him openly, but it was no secret that Mshiyeni 'from the very start' had been against the nomination of Cyprian as heir to the Usuthu chieftaincy. When Cyprian was nominated as heir to the Usuthu chieftaincy, the government had admonished him to stay on good terms with his uncle,<sup>227</sup> and he seemed to earnestly attempt to follow this advice. However, this letter indicates that the apparent reconciliation between them, demonstrated by Mshiyeni's presence whenever Cyprian met with the State officials, was possibly not quite as harmonious as it would appear.

It is worth noting that whereas Cyprian carefully avoided taking sides, thereby using a *hamba kahle* strategy bordering on evasiveness, Mshiyeni did not hesitate to warn the Zulu people against the Defiance Campaign. The traditional *hamba kahle* propagators had generally been against mass actions against the state, and the Zulu royal house during Solomon's days was 'inclined to be more forthright than the niceties of the *hamba kahle* posture would allow'.<sup>228</sup> As mentioned above, AWG Champion, the previous leader of ANC in Natal, was also against the campaign. It is therefore not Mshiyeni, but Cyprian who acted in an unexpected way. Although he tried to explain his evasiveness with a desire to follow the government's order 'not to be drawn into matters outside of my tribe', the refusal to criticize the campaign was easily construed as support to it. If so, this would undoubtedly have caused friction between Cyprian and Mshiyeni.

Whatever his motives, the episode also shows how Cyprian's struggle to find a balance between the expectations of the State and those of the Zulu people, could be further disturbed by a Press that more often than not operated on the side of the government. It was not a

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<sup>227</sup> See Chapter 3.

unique occurrence. In my interview with Mangosuthu Buthelezi, he recalled a similar event during the early fifties, when Cyprian was supposed to read a speech, prepared by State officials, in front of a large audience. Cyprian and Buthelezi had discovered that the speech was 'pure propaganda' for the government's policies, and quickly drafted a more moderate statement. The next day, however, the newspaper *The Mercury* referred to the original speech that the government had written, instead of the one Cyprian actually gave, showing that the government had already provided the newspaper with a copy of what they wanted the Paramount Chief to say. According to Buthelezi, it took a fair amount of time and persuasion before *The Mercury* agreed to print a rectification of their first article.<sup>229</sup>

### **Royal relations**

Apparently, the Defiance Campaign only strengthened the government's resolve to implement the Bantu Authorities system as soon as possible, to show that it had the support of the black population. Cyprian, however, was not willing to be portrayed as an advocate of apartheid. On the contrary, he was carefully maintaining his relationships with the ANC leaders, trying to ensure that the originally close bonds between the Zulu royal house and the ANC would not deteriorate as a consequence of the government's new imperatives. Selby Msimang, one of the authors of the ANC's new and radicalised 'Programme of Action', had been present at the March meeting with the CNC. Albert Luthuli, the Zulu chief and ANC Natal leader, paid regular visits to Cyprian, and always referred to him with respect; also after Cyprian eventually accepted the Bantu Authority System. Cyprian even occasionally visited the non-

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<sup>228</sup> Cope, p. 76.

<sup>229</sup> Interview with Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 14 February 2000.

Zulu leaders of the ANC, such as Nelson Mandela. Mandela would later refer to their relationship by stating that Goodwill Zwelithini ‘is my king, but he is also my child’.<sup>230</sup>

If the relationship between Cyprian and Mandela was not as close as this statement might seem to indicate at first glance, there was certainly a sense of being ‘brothers in arms’ – even if they did not agree on what arms to use. In fact, the concept of Zulu nationalism was not a controversial subject at the time. Although the ANC rejected the idea of tribal rule through the Bantu Authorities, Zulu unity and nationalism had been a goal for several of its leaders throughout the years, such as John Langalibalele Dube (the founding president of the ANC) and Pixley kaIsaka Seme. In his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Nelson Mandela recalls being asked what Chief Luthuli, who by then had become national president of the ANC, wanted. He had answered: ‘As I understand it, he wants our land returned, he wants our kings to have their power back’.<sup>231</sup> These goals were not much different from what Cyprian wanted.

For Cyprian, as for his forefathers, this contact with African leaders within and beyond the Zulu people was a natural part of the kingship, and he was received as the Zulu king even by his political opponents. The fact that the state did not concede to him the same reverence could be all the more painful, as exemplified by his failed attempt to be present at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The Zulu, and the Zulu royal family in particular, had always had a particular affinity for the British monarchy.<sup>232</sup> Shaka Zulu, the founder of the Zulu state, had fondly referred to king George IV as ‘umGeorge’, and entertained the idea that they should share the world between them, leaving Shaka to rule over all black people and ‘umGeorge’ as king of all whites.<sup>233</sup> Queen Victoria’s treatment of Cetshwayo when he was

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<sup>230</sup> *Weekly Mail & Guardian*, 22 - 28 April 1994, p. 3; quoted in S. Klopper, ‘“He is my king, but he is also my child”: Inkatha, the African National Congress and the Struggle for Control over Zulu Cultural Symbols’, *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1996), p. 56.

<sup>231</sup> Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 330.

<sup>232</sup> Cope, p. 132 – 133.

<sup>233</sup> Taylor, *Shaka’s Children*, p. 96.

sent to England had added to the perceived glory. Furthermore, during the years of the colony and after, the Zulu were left with the distinct perception that where the South African – and particularly the Natal – government was discriminating and harsh, the British authorities were understanding and just. Solomon had even decorated his main residence at KwaDlamahlahla with pictures of British royalty.<sup>234</sup> Cyprian, therefore, had a burning desire to be present at Queen Elizabeth's coronation, and pay his respect to the British royal family. He apparently felt that this would be a natural consequence of the historical relationship between the two royal families, and was prepared to raise the funds for the trip himself, if the government would not send him on an official visit.<sup>235</sup>

He thus contacted the Native Commissioner at Nongoma on Christmas Eve 1952, asking permission to be present for the coronation, which was to take place on 2 June 1953.<sup>236</sup> Months went by, while Cyprian repeatedly contacted the local authorities, anxious to receive a reply.<sup>237</sup> Finally, towards the end of April, the matter was treated in Cabinet. His application was denied on the grounds that 'the Prime Minister and his party will represent the South African Union and all the peoples therein' and 'the confusion that will arise if one or more Paramount Chiefs were allowed to represent their own tribe or people, is not acceptable'.<sup>238</sup> The Chief Native Commissioner (CNC) in Pietermaritzburg was asked to convey the message to Cyprian personally<sup>239</sup> and in a 'tactful manner'.<sup>240</sup> On 11 May, only weeks before the coronation, Cyprian was called before the CNC to be informed about the government's decision. Mortified by the rejection, Cyprian asked that his people should be made aware of

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<sup>234</sup> Cope, p. 132 – 133.

<sup>235</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), NNC to CNC, 24 December 1952.

<sup>236</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), NNC to CNC, 24 December 1952.

<sup>237</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), CNC to SNA, 3 March 1953.

<sup>238</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Memo to the SNA, 24 April 1953.

<sup>239</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), SNA to CNC, 4 May 1953.

<sup>240</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Memo to the SNA, 24 April 1953.

the reasons for the decision, but was brusquely told that there were no objections to why he should not do so himself.<sup>241</sup>

### **Governmental concerns**

In spite of Cyprian's attempts to live up to the government's expectations, the state officials were not convinced by his actions. In July 1954, Dr WWM Eiselen, the Secretary for Native Affairs, wrote a letter to the Chief Native Commissioner (CNC) in Pietermaritzburg, claiming to be 'a little perturbed about certain reports' about Cyprian's behaviour.<sup>242</sup> He listed his worries:

- a) He is drinking excessively
- b) He is (or was) under the influence of a Fort Hare graduate (or student) who is an agitator.
- c) He visited Vereeniging recently without permission from this or your office and apparently without even the knowledge of his own Native Commissioner.
- d) He wanted to call a meeting of chiefs to discuss the Bantu Authorities Act without inviting his own Native Commissioner or other European official to be present.
- e) According to your own reports he ignored the Department in regard to the cleansing ceremony.<sup>243</sup>

Eiselen added that he planned to invite both the CNC and Cyprian to Pretoria, to discuss the establishment of Bantu Authorities for the Zulu and the possible increase of Cyprian's salary, should such increased responsibility 'devolve under him'. In the final note, Eiselen asked the CNC 'whether something could not be done to give Cyprian a little more back-bone and guidance in the right direction. He appears to be in need of both'.<sup>244</sup>

The CNC could allay Eiselen's fears, although he, too, was less than impressed with Cyprian's behaviour: 'It is difficult to say what one can do to give Cyprian a little more backbone and guidance. He is certainly not facing up to the responsibility of leading his people.' Mshiyeni, who (in the CNC's opinion) was 'the only one who could really have

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<sup>241</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), CNC to SNA, 15 May 1953.

<sup>242</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), SNA to CNC, 26 July 1954.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*



guided him’, had died a few months earlier, and Cyprian was now ‘floundering rather badly’.<sup>245</sup>

The Native Commissioner at Nongoma had informed the CNC that Cyprian’s official position was ‘not a happy one’. He had been appointed chief of the Usuthu while still ‘young, arrogant, self-indulgent and quite untrained for his position. The elders of the tribe who were of any consequence were getting old and effete, and before he had put his tribe in order he was made Paramount Chief.’<sup>246</sup> Still, his behaviour had since – at least generally – changed for the better, according to the CNC. Assuming that the ‘Fort Hare agitator’ mentioned was Buthelezi, the CNC could reassure his superior that the ‘bit of trouble’ they had had with him was probably nothing to worry about. In fact, he thought it was ‘only natural’ that Buthelezi generally accompanied Cyprian wherever he went – probably referring either to their being closely related or to the fact that the chief of the Buthelezi over the years had often filled a position as ‘chief advisor to the king’. Furthermore, Cyprian had broken no law by staying away unannounced the way he did. As the chiefs needed to spread information about the Bantu Authorities Act between themselves and to discuss such matters over time, the CNC did not see the point in always having a state official present. And finally, as the cleansing ceremony (presumably following the death of Mshiyeni) was private, the Department had no reason to be involved.<sup>247</sup>

The CNC welcomed the decision to invite them both to Pretoria and discuss the implementation of the Bantu Authorities, but warned Eiselen not to expect too much of this, ‘as in all my interviews with him I have found him quite negative’. However, assuming that Cyprian would want to bring along Buthelezi and Bicycle kaMshiyeni, the CNC believed that

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<sup>245</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Confidential letter, CNC to SNA, 9 September 1954.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

their presence would help the government's case: 'I am quite sure a discussion with him alone would not be fruitful.'<sup>248</sup>

It seems likely that Cyprian's perceived 'lack of back-bone' and leadership qualities was somewhat connected with his negativity to the Bantu Authorities. The belief that his cousin Bicycle, son of the previous regent, could be of aid when trying to persuade Cyprian to change his mind about this is, perhaps, not so peculiar when one recalls his father's ardour on the government's behalf. Far more surprising is the contention that Buthelezi's presence, too, would be beneficial. Buthelezi has repeatedly insisted that he and his tribe only accepted the Bantu Authorities after it became clear that they had no choice; in the early 1960s. Although this is true as far as the Buthelezi tribe is concerned, the CNC's letter seems to show that Buthelezi himself supported the policy much earlier.

A letter sent to the CNC's office by Reverend TSW Mthembu supports this. Mthembu, an ardent supporter of the government's policies, had visited Buthelezi at his home in Mahlabathini. He reported back that Buthelezi was 'very cooperative to your work and is our greatest supporter although there are those who misunderstand him'. They had travelled together to 'win people for the government' and had succeeded to such an extent, that Mthembu felt that Cyprian's support was no longer necessary for the government's plans to prevail: 'In fact, we have no confidence in Cyprian, his wife is everything. We can do all without him [...] Anyway we shall do our best to show him the way.'<sup>249</sup>

Before jumping to the conclusion that Buthelezi was, in fact among the first supporters of the Bantu Authorities system, his official position at the time should be taken into consideration. He had previously been expelled from Fort Hare University for participation in a protest against the government, which had branded him a troublemaker. Now, his probationary period as acting chief of the Buthelezi had been extended with a year (although

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<sup>248</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Confidential letter, CNC to SNA, 9 September 1954.

the CNC believed this to be ‘largely due to his youth’).<sup>250</sup> Well aware that he might not be installed as chief if the government suspected that he opposed its policies, and more exposed to such suspicions because of the Fort Hare incident, Buthelezi might have found it in his own best interest to appear somewhat more cooperative than he actually was.

The CNC was also able to share some gossip about the royal house, which had been given him by the Native Commissioner at Nongoma: Cyprian had celebrated his wedding to Joyce MaJali on 28 August – thus making official a union they had secretly entered into in 1950.<sup>251</sup> Apparently, none of the old members of the Zulu royal house – whose rejection of Joyce was unanimous – had been present, and only two chiefs: Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Phumanyova of the Mandlakazi. The young girls of the royal house were kept away from the party, because Zulu tradition did not allow them to be present at the wedding of a divorcee. A few white people were there, although no government officials, as were the ever-present AWG Champion and a large number of teachers – possibly Joyce’s previous colleagues.<sup>252</sup> Still, it was not a spectacular event. If the secrecy surrounding their marriage had caused some friction because people believed they were living together out of wedlock, the celebration of their wedding seems to have been hardly better received.

### **Shaka revisited**

The legacy of the *Inkatha kaZulu* was hard to forget, and towards the end of July 1954, it seems that a new attempt to revive the organisation is on its way. The *Ilanga Lase Natal* had printed an announcement that appeared to have been written by Cyprian himself: ‘I make known to Chiefs, Indunas and Headmen that I throw open the door of the Zulu People’s Fund.

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<sup>249</sup> IBAD file: Inl. 2/Z/22, ‘Minutes’ by Reverend TWS Mthembu, 11 January 1955.

<sup>250</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Confidential letter, CNC to SNA, 9 September 1954.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>252</sup> IBAD file: Inl. 2/Z/30, Letter from Reverend TWS Mthembu, 30 August 1954. Mthembu also refers to a conversation he had at the wedding with the estranged wife of M.B. Yengwa, a prominent member of the ANC. She told him about a £6,000 donation the ANC had received from India, but the page where he writes who the money was shared between has been torn out of the file.

[...] I resolve that it must be built in all its entirety and its name, Zulus, is this: INTANDO yeNKATHA ka ZULU, indicating that it is the root of the Zulu People. This means that the nation is building itself.’<sup>253</sup> The Native Commissioner at Nongoma immediately called for Cyprian, who was told to ‘supply full details’ about the fund. Although he admitted to knowing about the announcement, Cyprian stated that he had not written it himself, and it had turned out differently than what he had intended. He said that he had only nominated a group of men that should trace organisations that pretended to collect money in the king’s name, and insisted that he had never mentioned a fund named ‘Intando yeNata ka Zulu’. However, he admitted that he wanted to resuscitate the old *Inkatha* fund that year, but it should be done on ‘sound foundations’, to assist the Zulu people and not the lifestyle of the Zulu king. When the fund was established, he would open a Trust Account in the Commissioners office.<sup>254</sup>

Towards the end of 1930, the original *Inkatha kaZulu* had established a special fund for the erection of a monument on Shaka’s grave.<sup>255</sup> Hoping to sustain a ‘respectable’ Zulu nationalism, part of the aim of the project was to ‘deflect attention away from recent political divisions and disappointments’ that had followed the discovery of the royal misappropriation of *Inkatha* funds.<sup>256</sup> The collection of funds was very successful, receiving money from all parts of Zulu society, and the initial plan of just making a monument for Shaka was soon expanded to include monuments of all the Zulu kings that followed him – with the notable exception of Dingane, who had killed Shaka. After a couple of years, however, control of the funds was given to Solomon, and the money vanished. Most of the monuments remained at the stonemasons’ workshops. The Shaka Memorial stone had been erected, but it was covered with sheeting that eventually rotted away, waiting in vain for an unveiling ceremony. For the

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<sup>253</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), ‘The word of the Paramount Chief to the Zulu people’, copy of a notice that appeared in the *Ilanga Lase Natal*, 24 July 1954.

<sup>254</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), ‘[Illegible] at Nongoma on 10/8/54’.

<sup>255</sup> Cope, p. 111.

<sup>256</sup> Cope, p. 258.

time being, both the *Inkatha* members and the state preferred to discreetly leave the whole issue behind them.<sup>257</sup>

Still, the campaign had helped to create a sense of ‘Zuluness’ that outlived the *Inkatha* itself. As the apartheid regime tightened its grip, the Shaka Memorial and the pride in a Zulu nationhood that it had evoked received new interest. The first sign was an article in *Ilanga Lase Natal* 5 September 1953, where AWG Champion – claiming to be the ‘Prince’s mouthpiece’ – appealed to the Zulu chiefs to send ‘fat cattle’ to Stanger for a commemoration of Shaka by the Memorial stone on 24 September, the day of his death. In the article, Champion writes:

‘Remember that Chaka [sic] was killed by our own people. [...] Up to this day my race is still having that cloud of misfortune hanging over it. For instance, if a Leader emerges from our people and indicates the path the race should follow, some members of our own race come into the surface too and join hands with enemies employing present-day methods of killing him.

‘Nowadays we find no spear employed to effect the murder of one (Native); other techniques are employed [...] injurious defamation is practiced which besmirches a man’s reputation in the eyes of the public and he therefore becomes dead alive.’<sup>258</sup>

Champion is probably referring to himself when speaking up for this ‘leader of the people’ who ‘becomes dead alive’ through ‘injurious defamation’, as he had lost considerable status after losing the Natal ANC presidency to Luthuli. When confronted with the article, Cyprian declared that he had not authorised it – a statement that surprised and troubled the Secretary for Native Affairs, WWM Eiselen. If so, Eiselen argued, Champion – rather than being the ‘Princes’ mouthpiece’ – is ‘in effect usurping Cyprian’s powers’.<sup>259</sup> In the end, it appears as if the announced arrangement never took place, perhaps because of the lack of support of either Cyprian or the state.

Nevertheless, the idea had taken shape. The following April Cyprian visited the Nongoma Native Commissioner, explaining that he wished to hold an unveiling ceremony and memorial

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<sup>257</sup> Cope, pp. 259-260.

<sup>258</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), A copy of the article is attached to a letter from SNA (WWM Eiselen) to CNC (Major Liefeldt), 26 July 1954.

<sup>259</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), SNA to CNC, 26 July 1954.

service at the Shaka Memorial stone in September.<sup>260</sup> His wish was granted, although both the Secretary for Native Affairs and the Chief Native Commissioner raised concern that Champion would try to turn the event into a political rally.<sup>261</sup> The Chief Native Commissioner thought that Cyprian had showed himself to be weak towards Champion, and noted that it ‘remains to be seen whether Cyprian will be able to restrain such persons as Champion from taking advantage of the occasion to make political speeches’.<sup>262</sup> It was, therefore, made a precondition that the programme would make ‘no provision for speeches by Native leaders’.<sup>263</sup>

According to the government-friendly magazine *Bantu World*, which delivered an enthusiastic account of the event, its main purpose was to ‘bring back to the minds of the Zulu and other Africans the days of the man who made the name of the Zulus spread to all corners of the world’, and secondly, to touch ‘the depths of African belief in the continued life of their departed souls and their influence on those who continue to live after them’.<sup>264</sup> A large number of Zulus, chiefs and dignitaries arrived for the occasion. As had been the plan for the previous year’s failed arrangement, everyone should donate cattle to the festivities – and Luthuli, on behalf of the ANC, apparently brought the largest ox of all.<sup>265</sup>

The senior members of the Zulu royal family began the celebration with a private function on 23 September, ‘to offer appeasement at the grave of the “Lion”, Shaka’.<sup>266</sup> Again quoting the *Bantu World*, ‘Paramount Chief Cyprian of the Zulus and many of his subjects felt it was necessary to go and pray to the son of Senzangakhona (Rightful Doer) [i.e. Shaka]

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<sup>260</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Memo titled ‘Copy’, 29 April 1954.

<sup>261</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), SNA to CNC, 26 July 1954; NTS 249 78/53 (2), CNC to NC, 19 August 1954.

<sup>262</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Confidential letter, CNC to SNA, 9 September 1954.

<sup>263</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), CNC to NC, 19 August 1954.

<sup>264</sup> BAO 2660, cutting from *Bantu World*, ‘Shaka remembered’, dated 25 September 1994.

<sup>265</sup> Temkin, p. 116. [Double-check this page number!]

<sup>266</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Cyprian to NC, 10 August 1954.

to look with compassion upon his children, and drive away whatever “blackness” had followed his dying-hour prophecies’.<sup>267</sup>

The formal unveiling of the Shaka Memorial stone was done by Cyprian on the next day, was followed by a Christian ceremony conducted by Rev. A.H. Zulu. Finally, on 25 September, the event was celebrated in a traditional Zulu manner, in which Cyprian and most of the other senior members of the royal house donned the traditional ‘tribal dress, with trappings of meerkat tails, monkey tails, beaded tapestries and various kinds of feathers’.<sup>268</sup> This day, Shaka (and, thereby, the Zulu royal house) was celebrated with organised traditional performances by the grave, including the ‘singing of Praises of Kings’.<sup>269</sup> It was a display of Zulu greatness, as it had once been, and, arguably, as it could again become.

S. Klopper has argued that this first Shaka Day celebration was ‘made in the wake of the Nationalist government’s recognition of King Cyprian as Zulu King’, and as thus a triumphant occasion far removed from the destitute *Inkatha* attempt to bring some pride back to the Zulu royal house in 1930. However, as the previous chapters have shown, Cyprian’s position was far from triumphant. It seems more reasonable to assume that he, trying to create a more stable base for the Zulu monarchy and a flailing sense of Zulu nationalism in the face of both the government and its opposition, used the occasion to bolster Zulu pride. Apparently, neither he nor most of the Zulu chiefs had ever before worn a traditional dress,<sup>270</sup> but in doing so, and participating in the old rituals that should secure the unity of the Zulu people, he paid his respect to the more traditional-minded of his people as well as reviving the

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<sup>267</sup> BAO 2660, cutting from *Bantu World*, ‘Shaka remembered’, dated 25 September 1994. According to Julian Mockford, *The Golden Land. A background to South Africa*, London (1949), p. 205, Shaka’s ‘dying-hour prophecies’ were uttered to his assassins: ‘You will not rule this land. I see the Whiteman coming like swallows over the waves of the ocean.’

<sup>268</sup> *Natal Mercury*, 27 September 1994; quoted in S. Klopper, ‘“He is my king, but he is also my child”: Inkatha, the African National Congress and the Struggle for Control over Zulu Cultural Symbols’, *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1996), p. 58.

<sup>269</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Cyprian to NC, 10 August 1954.

<sup>270</sup> S. Klopper, ‘“He is my king, but he is also my child”: Inkatha, the African National Congress and the Struggle for Control over Zulu Cultural Symbols’, *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1996), p. 58.

nationalist sentiments of all present. According to the Zulu traditional beliefs, '[T]he king is the only person who can approach the national ancestors'.<sup>271</sup> Therefore, by including the ceremony in which the king approached the Zulu nation's father, the Zulu people were thoroughly reminded of the king's religious functions. This point was emphasized by the insistence that the ceremony was 'necessary' to 'drive away whatever "blackness" had followed [Shaka's] dying-hour prophecies' – and by refraining to specify the nature of the 'blackness', all Zulu who adhered to the traditional beliefs could interpret this as he or she felt most prudent. Whatever they felt that this 'blackness' represented, it nevertheless was demonstrated that Cyprian was the one who could ask the ancestors to remove it.

### **Meeting at the Native Affairs Department**

The planned meeting between Cyprian and Dr Eiselen, the Secretary for Native Affairs, was set up in Pretoria on 2 November 1954. From the Department Dr Eiselen had brought with him Mr B Young, the Under-Secretary for Native Affairs, and Mr CT Cronje, the Chief Clerk. Also present were the Chief Native Commissioner Liefeldt (CNC), the Nongoma Native Commissioner GT Ackron (NNC), and, as the CNC had recommended, both Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Bicycle Mshiyeni.<sup>272</sup>

The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possible implementation of the Bantu Authorities System in the Zulu areas. However, the Secretary for Native Affairs also wanted to discuss directly with Cyprian the issues he had raised with the CNC in July<sup>273</sup>, as well as a number of other issues that his informers had brought to his attention.<sup>274</sup> Apparently, no subject was seen to be too insignificant for this rare opportunity to meet face to face.

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<sup>271</sup> D. Mck Malcolm, 'The Zulu', in A.M. Duggan-Cronin, *The Bantu Tribes of South Africa*, Vol. 3, Section III, p. 10; quoted in S. Klopper, ' "He is my king, but he is also my child": Inkatha, the African National Congress and the Struggle for Control over Zulu Cultural Symbols', *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1996), p. 57.

<sup>272</sup> See above, under 'Government concerns'.

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>274</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), 'Matters to be raised at discussion', 2 November 1954.



Eiselen opened the meeting by stating that the Department had ‘expected that important things would happen’ after Cyprian was recognised as Paramount Chief of the Zulu, but had been ‘disappointed in a number of ways’: Cyprian was partying too much, he travelled much too frequently to Durban for reasons the Department could not understand, and he had allowed AWG Champion, the former ANC leader in Natal, to speak on his behalf without proper control of what he said. Furthermore, he had not stopped his sister from marrying a deposed chief, a marriage that surely was well below the standards of the royal family. Now, Eiselen said, the Department had summoned Cyprian to teach him how he could become a true leader of his people, which was *not*, it was specified, ‘by drinking more beer than anybody else’.<sup>275</sup>

Cyprian answered that he was informed that he should move about among his people, which was why he was travelling so extensively, and attending so many parties. He denied having any involvement in the Champion incidents, explaining that he had not known about this until the officials had informed him of what had happened. Regarding his sister’s marriage, ‘he could not separate people who loved each other.’<sup>276</sup>

In the following discussion – which apparently became somewhat heated – the junior officials tried to appease Cyprian. The government was ‘fond of Native Chiefs’, Under-Secretary Young reassured him, and ‘the Minister and the Secretary [for Native Affairs] were thinking very much about the Zulu people.’<sup>277</sup>

They all agreed that Cyprian should have a council to support him in his work, although they disagreed on how this should be done. When Cyprian suggested the establishment of a council consisting of all district chiefs, Eiselen abruptly told him that he should build his own tribe before he built the Zulu nation. Again trying to calm the tempers, Under-Secretary

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<sup>275</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), ‘Notes of Interview with Chief Cyprian’, 2 November 1954.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*

Young explained how, if the tribes only had ‘duly constituted councils’ (i.e. within the Bantu Authorities System), they would be given the income from all sorts of revenue: ‘Government officials would help and advise the Bantu Authorities, without telling these bodies what to do. Under that system Chief Cyprian would have the power of telling the people what to do.’ Buthelezi informed the government officials that plans had already been made to constitute a council next July but, ‘as most people did not understand the Bantu Authorities Act’, they thought it better to create this ‘outside the framework of the Act.’ Eiselen replied that ‘the Zulu people and their leaders had too little faith in themselves’. This was a golden opportunity, he said, but they might lose it if they did not act soon. Again bringing up the point that the Bantu Authorities would give the chiefs more power, Eiselen tried to appeal to Cyprian’s ambitions: ‘Chiefs were generally *made* by the people, only a really great chief could *make* his people [my emphasis].’<sup>278</sup>

The two-hour meeting was not the success the Secretary for Native Affairs might have hoped for. Cyprian had been as negative as the CNC had feared he would be, and Buthelezi and Bicycle were of less help to the authorities than expected.<sup>279</sup> It is possible that part of the problem was what appears to be a flaw in the government’s argumentation when propagating the Bantu Authorities System: government officials were repeatedly drawing attention to the increased power and possible increased income that the chiefs could receive with the implementation of the system, whereas the Zulu appeared to want a chieftaincy model that med with wide popular support.

A month later, Cyprian met with the Native Commissioner in Nongoma to discuss the establishment of an *ibandhla* – council. He then elaborated on this need for popular support:

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<sup>278</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), ‘Notes of Interview with Chief Cyprian’, 2 November 1954.

<sup>279</sup> See above, under ‘Government concerns’. It may be worth noting that, when a disagreement arose between Buthelezi, Bicycle and government officials regarding the reimbursement of their travel expenses, the Secretary for Native Affairs personally got involved, explaining that their presence in Pretoria had been ‘essential to the Department’s objects’, see NTS 249 78/53 (2), SNA to the Secretary of the Treasurer, 26 August 1955.

If I have an opinion of my own it will not work alone, it must work together with that of others. With regards of the rehabilitation schemes some are in favour thereof and others are not. I believe that if I call a meeting and tell the people what to do [...], some will leave me sitting there before I have even finished speaking. They even now say if I agree to these schemes it will amount to the same as selling them to the Europeans. [...] If I say it is good when my people do not fully understand it, it will mean they are no longer under my control.  
<sup>280</sup>

He agreed that a council should have been in place long ago, but explained that it was a difficult and lengthy process to choose the right people for these positions. More importantly – at least for the government’s purposes, the people distrusted the Bantu Authorities and would not accept a council under this system: ‘The people’s view is that once the formation of these Councils comes from the Department then in the course of time the Chief will have no say.’<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Notes of interview, 1 December 1954.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*

## King or Pawn?

This chapter needs a red thread, and it seems logic that it should be a focus on how C. moves from yes to no, with a particular focus on pressure etc. from all sides.

### **The Mona meeting**

6th October 1955 some 300 chiefs and more than 200 headmen and *indunas* – councillors – were gathered to a three-day meeting about the new apartheid laws at Mona, close to Nongoma.<sup>282</sup> A number of officials from the Native Affairs Department were also present, to explain in detail about the rehabilitation and betterment schemes that were planned to increase agricultural production, and teach the chiefs about the new schooling system for black children. Most prominent among the white guests, however, was the Minister for Native Affairs, HF Verwoerd, who were there to describe the benefits of the new Bantu Authorities system. Through this, he said, the Zulu people would be able to regain their pride, and the chiefs would again be respected by their subordinates. For the policy to be implemented, however, he needed their support in creating the first Zulu tribal authorities, the smallest building blocks in the system. He wanted the answer immediately. The chiefs replied that they, as they had not been notified of the contents of this policy prior to the meeting, would need to confer with their tribes first.<sup>283</sup> Upset, the Minister then demanded a private meeting with Cyprian, apparently, according to Buthelezi, who were present, to pressurize him to accept the policy, or at least make him demand an answer from the chiefs. This, too, was denied him.<sup>284</sup> After a discussion between the government's representatives and several members of the royal house, Cyprian turned to the audience of chiefs and said:

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<sup>282</sup> *A Survey of Race Relations: 1954-55*, p. 62; also *New Age*, 3.11.55.

<sup>283</sup> *New Age*, 3.11.55.

<sup>284</sup> Interview with Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 14 February 2000.

MaZulu! I have been directed to inform you that the Minister will want a definitive decision from you about the Bantu Authorities Act, and that you are therefore required to take a decision. As I am your child and can therefore not speak on your behalf, I ask you to consider this request and decide for yourselves. When you have decided you will elect four men to represent your views to the Minister.<sup>285</sup>

After discussing the matter thoroughly, the elected spokesmen presented the views to the Minister. Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who was still a young chief on probation, was one of these. He thanked the Minister for making acceptance of the Bantu Authorities system optional rather than compulsory, and explained that the chiefs were concerned about the role of the king in the new law, and that the authority of chiefs would be undermined. Whereas they welcomed the decision to keep the office of chiefs, they knew that many chiefs had been deposed and others refused to take an office that was rightfully theirs, because the government had been listening to ‘gossip’ about them. Their rejection of the policy should not be construed as opposition to the government, Buthelezi added. The chiefs just wanted the opportunity to see how the policy was working elsewhere before committing to it.<sup>286</sup>

Verwoerd retorted by comparing their replies with water running down a river without benefiting anyone. His own words, on the other hand, were like water collected in a dam, to be used by people and animals alike. If anything, he explained, the Bantu Authorities system would ensure that the chiefs were given more authority than they presently had. Still not able to elicit any enthusiasm from the crowd, he shouted: ‘Do not throw honey at the honeybird!’ To no avail – the chiefs were not yet ready to decide on this matter.<sup>287</sup>

The meeting had not gone well, but had started worse. Cyprian had kept the Minister waiting, apparently because his car had broken down on the way to Mona the night before, and, being forced to spend the night along the way, had woken up too late. The incident caused considerable consternation among the government officials, who did not believe in his excuse, and spent the next couple of months discussing an appropriate penalty. The Chief

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<sup>285</sup> *New Age*, 3.11.55.

<sup>286</sup> Ben Temkin, *Gatsha Buthelezi: Zulu Statesman*, Purnell and Sons, Cape Town, 1976, p.51.

Native Commissioner in Pietermaritzburg suggested that they ‘in order to demonstrate that the Department most strongly disapprove of his behaviour’ withheld Cyprian’s salary for up to six months.<sup>288</sup> Other officials suggested more moderate fines.<sup>289</sup> In the end, the matter was settled by the Secretary for Native Affairs, WWM Eiselen, who informed the Minister that Cyprian would only be reprimanded. The main reason for letting Cyprian off the hook, Eiselen explained, was that they had just appointed a new Native Commissioner to Nongoma, whom they expected to ‘coax’ Cyprian in the right directions. It would be unfortunate if his first act in office was too negative.<sup>290</sup>

### **Family matters - MaJali**

If Cyprian was unpopular with the government, he fared better with other people. He was often invited to speak at formal functions organized by companies and academic institutions, and travelled extensively.<sup>291</sup>

On 11 November 1955, *The Golden City Post* published a large article about the ‘Ngonyama’ [sic] and ‘his charming wife, I-Ndlovukazi’ (the ‘she-elephant’, a respectful Zulu word for *queen*), who were visiting the city. According to the newspaper, ‘thousands of loyal followers’ wanted to know if Joyce would be proclaimed ‘Queen of the Zulus’, i.e. Cyprian’s first wife. Joyce answered the question herself: ‘The matter of proclaiming a queen for the Zulu Nation is the Chief’s own personal affair. He may choose the woman who shall be the nation’s first woman in the land, but he is not duty bound to make such a proclamation. His queen is his personal secret.’ The paper asserted that Joyce had ‘won many admirers for her personal charm and progressive outlook’, who were convinced that she had a ‘significant part to play in the development of the Zulu nation and its destiny. She is felt to represent the

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<sup>287</sup> See Chapter 1 for an explanation of the expression.

<sup>288</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), CNC to SNA, “Saamtrek van Zoeloe Kapteins te Nongoma”, 2 November 1955.

<sup>289</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Memo, ‘Opperhoof Cyprian Bekuzulu’, signature illegible, 24 November 1955; Memo addressed to ‘Die Senior Klerk’ (undated); Memo, titled ‘H.K’, 10 December 1955.

new trend in Zulu life as distinct from the more conservative and traditional ideas held by many of her councillors.’ In Johannesburg, where the traditional structures were weaker, Joyce might have been less controversial, and their marriage was perhaps met with greater interest. Asked about the modernization of the Zulu royal house, Cyprian said: ‘My people accepted tea and the customs that go with drinking tea. There is no going back [...] My father, Solomon, never wore tribal dress. The only time I, Cyprian, ever wore tribal dress was at the unveiling of the tombstone on Shaka’s grave at Stanger, Kwa Dubuza, in 1954’. Christianity had replaced the ancient Zulu tribal customs, he explained. ‘The only relic of tribal customs which he himself had retained was polygamy’.<sup>292</sup>

The royal family’s travels were, however, made increasingly more difficult by a stricter enforcement of the Pass Laws Act of 1952, that demanded that all blacks should be able to identify themselves. Although the royal family apparently were allowed to disregard this law, the police did not always recognise the family members. In September 1956, Cyprian and nine other members of the Zulu royal family were arrested in Durban for being out without passes, and forced to pay fines to avoid being imprisoned. A month later, in Johannesburg, Cyprian’s aunt was on her way home for a ball held in his honour when she was arrested on similar charges, and had to spend the night in jail. Although the fines eventually were returned and apologies were sent to the royal family, the cases caused ‘considerable ill-feeling’ among the Zulu.<sup>293</sup>

Consequently, the following November Sithela Zulu, a senior prince, visited Barry Steyn, the Senior Information Officer at the Chief Native Commissioner’s office in Pietermaritzburg. Sithela wished to discuss with him ‘Cyprian’s recent trouble with the police’. As far as the members of the royal house in Durban were concerned, he said, the matter was already

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<sup>290</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Memo, SNA to MNA, 12 December 1955.

<sup>291</sup><sup>291</sup> Shamase, p. 108.

<sup>292</sup> *Golden City Post*, 11 November 1955, cutting in NTS 249 78/53 (2).

forgotten. However, he would like to propose that members of the royal house were provided with identification cards. Barry Steyn had used the opportunity to explain the increased powers the Zulu royal house could have within the Bantu Authorities system, and urged Sithela to try to convince Cyprian to accept the policies.<sup>294</sup> Steyn reported the incident to the Chief Information Officer in Pretoria, and soon received a reply. Although the Chief Information Officer was pleased with the way Steyn had handled the visit, he had to warn him about the use of such words as ‘royal’ and ‘king’ when referring to Cyprian and his family. ‘The Honourable Minister is very much against it. Use the words “paramount” or “house of the Paramount”.’<sup>295</sup>

### **Cyprian accepts the Bantu Authorities system**

On 27 January, Reverend Mthembu – the government informer that had previously had so little faith in the use of Cyprian to the government’s cause – visited Cyprian to follow him to a celebration of the installation of Ndesheni Zulu as deputy chief of the Usuthu. It seems as if Cyprian had grown to trust him.<sup>296</sup>

Before leaving for the party, Cyprian told Mthembu in private that people in Johannesburg had threatened to shoot his wife, and that she was not even safe at their home. He had also received an anonymous letter, insulting and threatening him. Apparently infuriated, Cyprian said that it was insulting to call him ‘Paramount Chief of the Zulu’, because it was only a social title with no legal bearing. Even worse, the ‘Ingonyama’ title had been misused about people who did not have the right position, even in the magazine *Bantu*, which was published by the government. ‘How would it be, if all Cabinet members were

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<sup>293</sup> *A Survey of Race Relations, 1955-56*, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, p. 84.

<sup>294</sup> IBAD file: Inl. 2/Z/30, Senior Information Officer to Chief Information Officer, undated. The Chief Information Officer’s reply dates the letter to 10 November 1956.

<sup>295</sup> IBAD file: Inl. 2/Z/30, Chief Information Officer to the Senior Information Officer, 5 December 1956.

<sup>296</sup> IBAD file: Inl. 2/Z/30, NNC to the Senior Information Officer, 26 February 1957.



called Prime Ministers?', he asked Mthembu: 'I have no power or authority over other chiefs, therefore to call me a paramount is a mockery'.

They went together to the home of Mnyayiza, Ndesheni's father, where more than 50 people, some of whom had travelled far, had begun the celebration. According to Mthembu, Cyprian had soon addressed the crowd: 'I have decided to abide and cooperate with government. Anyone trying to complicate me with government will be my enemy.' He stated that many tried to mislead him, who would rejoice if he failed to do his duties and was dismissed from his position. This had happened to his great-grandfather Cetshwayo, as well as his grandfather Dinuzulu: Those who had been misleading them 'became Kinglets or Chiefs. I do not want to fall in the same trap. I am determined to co-operate with government in all policies.' He ended his speech thus: 'The agitators must be punished. Let us [the Zulu] stand and do things for ourselves.'<sup>297</sup>

Cyprian's words gives the impression of a man that might have been under pressure for some time, but not of one that has been threatened to make the statement. It seems likely, however, that the threats to his wife and himself have made an impact on his decision. By insisting that the Zulu should make a stand for themselves, as opposed to all others, it is possible that he believed that the threats came from those who were against increased self-government for the Zulu, which would probably be those who opposed the Bantu Authorities. If so, that could explain the decision to make his stand on 'the other side'.

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<sup>297</sup> IBAD file: Inl. 2/Z/30, Letter by Mthembu (to the Senior Information Officer, Pietermaritzburg), 27 January 1956.

## ‘The Path of Peace and Progress’

One day during the 1950s, Cyprian Nyangayezizwe Bhekuzulu kaSolomon, Paramount Chief of the Zulu Nation, entered *Adam’s Store* in Eshowe, Natal, together with his wife. The white shopkeeper (who knew him well) threw one look at him and yelled, ‘*Get out, you bloody kaffir!*’<sup>298</sup>

I was told this story by the Norwegian Bishop Gunnar Lislrud who worked as a missionary in Natal and Zululand between 1949 and 1968, and was present when it happened. During the interview, Lislrud repeatedly referred to Cyprian’s ‘massive frustration’ by being ‘torn between the Zulu people’s great expectations to his as their king and the fact that his official power was no greater than that of any chief’. Upon telling the story, as an example of the impossible position Cyprian was placed in, Lislrud was reluctant to agree to it being retold in this dissertation, as he recalled the episode as being very embarrassing and was afraid it might offend Cyprian’s family – of which he still knew many. Apparently, the humiliation of the apartheid years could still be seen as too mortifying for some.<sup>299</sup>

Later, however, I discussed the story with Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Cyprian’s cousin, who urged me to retell the story anyway, for exactly the same reasons as Lislrud thought it better *not* to tell it: it shows just how frustratingly impotent the *Paramount Chief* title was – not even powerful enough to guarantee his entrance to a small-town general store.<sup>300</sup>

The apartheid government had bestowed this title upon Cyprian in 1951, apparently without his fulfilling any of the preconditions the Minister for Native Affairs had admonished

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<sup>298</sup> Interview with Gunnar Lislrud at his home in Oslo, Norway, 21 January 1998. Upon telling this story, the bishop was reluctant to agree to its being published in this dissertation, as he was afraid that this would still be too embarrassing for the royal family. I later discussed this with Buthelezi, who thought it should be told, because it is such a direct example of the humiliations Cyprian was regularly faced with. Bishop Gunnar Lislrud, Norwegian missionary in Zululand and Natal 1949-1968, in an interview 21.1.1998.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> Interview with Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 14 February 2000.

in 1948, when Cyprian assumed the position as Chief of the Usuthu. In fact, the decision to do so was made so quickly that it has not even been recorded in the archives of the Native Affairs Department.

The Minister for Native Affairs at the time, HF Verwoerd, was one of the chief architects of the apartheid policies. Soon to become the Prime minister of South Africa, he was apparently both strong-willed and independent, particularly regarding the bantustan policies. According to Newell M. Stultz, who has written several books on the development of the apartheid policies, Verwoerd would not involve other senior party politicians in developing the policy – nor even allow the National Party congresses to publicly discuss this.<sup>301</sup> It is not, therefore, altogether unlikely that the decision to recognize Cyprian as the ‘Social Head’ of the Zulu was made by him alone, without any prior discussions, to create a bulwark against the growing radicalization of the black population in Natal and Zululand. This would explain how the decision was made so fast, and without any prior notification. Although the decision would have had to be formally endorsed in Council, the Minister for Native Affairs had long been the *de facto* ‘Supreme Chief of all Natives’ in South Africa. Still, although the Paramount Chief title initially appeared to signify increased recognition for the Zulu monarchy, it was a title devoid of authoritative substance. Furthermore, the different interpretations of the position showed that the government and the Zulu did not agree on what a chief could (or should) do.

### **The role of kings and chiefs**

Although occasionally addressed and referred to as the father of the nation, a Zulu king would more often speak about himself as the child of his people.<sup>302</sup> Indeed, the entire royal family, all princes and princesses, were called ‘the children’ – *abantwana*. It seems, whether by

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<sup>301</sup> Newell M. Stultz, *Afrikaner Politics in South Africa 1934 – 1948*, University of California Press, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London (1974), p. 173.

chance design, that the term reflects the fact that Zulu kings (and chiefs) are not supposed to make wilful decisions on their own, but in accordance with the agreement of their council, while remaining the focal point of their political unit.<sup>303</sup> Traditionally, the Zulu people are not required to follow the advice of their king (or chief) – they are entitled to simply change their allegiance.<sup>304</sup> Cyprian referred to this when he explained to the Native Commissioner at Nongoma that he could not simply tell the people what to do, ‘some will leave me sitting there before I have even finished speaking’.<sup>305</sup> The tradition called for consensus.

The government officials’ arguments demonstrated little (if any) understanding of the need for consensus, but all the more trust in the promise of increased powers to the chiefs. Above all, they seem to have been fully aware that the role of the king was far more important to the Zulu people and the king himself than they were willing to officially acknowledge. The focus on Cyprian, which persisted even after their local informers confided that they had little trust in him, suggests that they were convinced that Cyprian’s support to the Bantu Authority policies would secure the support of numerous other chiefs. At the same time, this unofficial recognition of his role in Zulu society made it difficult to use the threats of dismissal that were otherwise available towards uncooperative chiefs. As the frustrated Native Commissioner in Nongoma had observed in 1947, the royal house was ‘on a footing entirely different to that prevailing amongst other tribes.’ Since dismissal was not an option, they apparently actively withheld privileges instead, ensuring that the Paramount Chief title had no real power, to persuade Cyprian and his councillors to cooperate.

This is clearly exemplified in the warning to Mr Steyn, the Senior Information Officer in Natal, not to use the words ‘royal’ or ‘king’ in correspondence referring to Cyprian – on the

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<sup>302</sup> See, for instance, Cyprian’s address to the chiefs at the Mona meeting, previous chapter.

<sup>303</sup> Temkin, p. 116.

<sup>304</sup> Temkin, p. 89.

<sup>305</sup> See Chapter 6.

Minister for Native Affairs' strict orders.<sup>306</sup> The government must have been aware that the lack of *real* recognition in the 'Paramount' title would, sooner or later, create a desire for full recognition of the Zulu monarchy. Nils Otte, Native Commissioner in Mahlabathini and Nongoma during the 1960s, explained the government's views very plainly: 'He was not called king. The argument went: "He can only be called king when he has his own country."'”<sup>307</sup> The full implementation of the Bantu Authority System was a precondition for the full recognition of the Zulu monarchy. Mthembu's description of Cyprian's outburst about the misuse of the 'Ingonyama' title, just hours before he first announced that he would accept the Bantu Authorities System, suggests that these tactics were effective.<sup>308</sup>

### **The views of the royal family**

Among the members of the Zulu royal family and those closest to them, there was – not surprisingly – a common understanding of the family's special place in Zulu society and a general acknowledgement of the role of the Zulu king.

It is worth noting how, on several occasions, people appeared to speak on Cyprian's behalf whereas he, when confronted with it, denied having given his permission to this. These incidents did not follow an easily recognizable pattern. Cyprian stated that he had nothing to do with AWG Champion's attempt to arrange a Shaka Memorial service in 1953, but presided over the first of what became an annual 'Shaka Day' celebration only a year later. Both Msimang and Bhengu, on different occasions, presented drafts for a revival of the Solomon's *Inkatha yeZulu*, the (misappropriated) fund once intended to 'encourage thrift amongst the Zulu'<sup>309</sup>, that Cyprian either denied any knowledge of, or insisted had been written different to what he had intended. All these men were his elders and had been active in the drive for

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<sup>306</sup> See previous chapter.

<sup>307</sup> Interview with Niels Otte, 15 March 1999.

<sup>308</sup> See previous chapter.

<sup>309</sup> Cope, p. 171.

Zulu nationalism that had been instigated during his father's years as Chief of the Usuthu. It is, therefore, possible that these men acted on their own accord, deciding that they would take charge of the political development in the Zulu areas since their 'child', Cyprian, appeared to be hesitating. However, it is also possible that these incidents took place with Cyprian's consent, to give him a chance to observe the government's reactions to the different propositions.

The fact that the men involved played a political role during Solomon's chieftaincy draws attention to the one pattern that *is* recognizable in these cases: it was similar to the predominant political actions and attitudes twenty-five years earlier. The plan to celebrate the founder of the Zulu nation resonated well with the Zulu nationalism evoked in the 1920s. And, of course, the proposed revivals of *Inkatha*, put forth by the men that had administered the fund the last time, can only be understood as their wish to continue what they once started.

However, the occasion when Mshiyeni declared that the Zulu people should boycott the Defiance Campaign, and Cyprian repeatedly insisted in public that he had neither spoken against or for the campaign, seems somewhat different than the other examples. Mshiyeni's warning reflected the traditional *kholwa* aversion to direct actions against the state, and his views were shared by Champion, who had just lost the presidency of the Natal branch of the ANC to the more radical Luthuli. On the other occasions, Cyprian had only responded to the fact that his name was used without his permission when confronted by the government officials. This time, however, his reaction was immediate and much stronger, even declaring that he was being framed by people who were conspiring against him.

Cyprian seems to have developed a *hamba kahle* strategy that was more careful than the most conservative *kholwa* had ever adhered to. Until he decided to support the Bantu Authorities system in early 1957, he appears to have gone to great pains – even enduring threats to himself and his family – not to antagonize any side in the escalating conflict

between the apartheid state and its opposition. Mshiyeni had no such qualms. He had consistently, ever since being installed as regent to the Usuthu chieftaincy, proved to be loyal to the government policies – almost irrespective of their contents.

The apparently comfortable coexistence between Mshiyeni and Cyprian in the early 1950s is puzzling if one remembers Mshiyeni's aggressive reaction to Cyprian's claim to the Usuthu chieftaincy and his subsequent withdrawal after Cyprian took office.<sup>310</sup> Cyprian's reaction to Mshiyeni's speech against the Defiance Campaign appears to be a reaction to this. Still, their main goal was the same: increased self-government for the Zulu people, with the Zulu monarchy as a rallying point for Zulu nationalism. This goal had been prevalent in the circle surrounding the Zulu royal house since the fall of the Zulu kingdom, and even more so since Solomon began his attempts to unify the Zulu people in the 1920s.<sup>311</sup>

Solomon's death and Mshiyeni's apparent willingness to accept all government policies had not put an end to this. Nor did the ANC's increasingly strong demands for 'equal rights for all within one nation' diminish the sense of 'Zuluness' that had grown from Solomon's endeavours, particularly among the people closest to Cyprian. His brother, Israel Mcwayizeni, who were to become Member of Parliament for ANC after the abolition of apartheid, was said to have an 'ardour for a Zulu state [that] was, if anything, even greater than Cyprian's'.<sup>312</sup> Bhengu, once Solomon's secretary, was certainly in favour of the bantustan policies, and even founded a 'Bantu National Congress' in opposition to the ANC.<sup>313</sup> The members of the royal family in Durban appeared to support it, too, as did apparently Bicycle, Mshiyeni's son and Cyprian's close friend. Champion, if not outspokenly supporting the Bantu Authorities, would not take action against it. Reverend Mthembu, whom Cyprian placed great confidence in, went as far as stating that the Bantu Authorities system was just a government version of the

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<sup>310</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>311</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>312</sup> Taylor, p. 344.

old *Inkatha kaZulu*, thus indicating that this was an excellent vehicle towards increased independence for the Zulu people.<sup>314</sup>

The most ambiguous – and possibly most important – position was that of Mangosuthu Buthelezi. Buthelezi's attitudes towards the apartheid state in later years have been subject to numerous studies. According to Mthembu, he was the government's 'greatest supporter'.<sup>315</sup> On the other hand, he never publicly urged the Zulu to support the Bantu Authorities system. On the contrary, he repeatedly insisted that the Zulu people wanted time to observe how the policy worked elsewhere, and his tribe was among the last to establish a tribal authority.

Compared to the majority of the Zulu elite, however, Cyprian appears initially to have been among those who were most reluctant to accept the Bantu Authorities system. Clearly aware of his position, for a several years he seems to have walked more carefully into the new political order than the majority of the *hamba kahle* proponents, trying to ensure that his people would follow.

### **Reactions to Cyprian's acceptance of the Bantu Authorities system**

As mentioned in the introduction chapter, when Cyprian is mentioned at all in literature about the apartheid era, it is usually in short and derogatory terms by writers who clearly ally themselves with the fight against apartheid. However, at the time of the introduction of the bantustan policies, the political inclinations of its critics were as complex and varied as those of its propagators.

It was the beginning of the cold war, and a growing fear of communism lent support to the government policies. It also created significant disruptions in the opposition movements, as communists gained increasingly more power within the ANC.<sup>316</sup> Similarly, the ANC's

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<sup>313</sup> Luthuli, 120.

<sup>314</sup> See previous chapter.

<sup>315</sup> IBAD file: Inl. 2/Z/22, 'Minutes' by Reverend TWS Mthembu, 11 January 1955. See also Chapter 6.

<sup>316</sup> See Mandela, particularly chapter 41 and 42.



insistence on a non-racial political platform was controversial throughout the decade. As the colonies in Africa gained independence, segregationist views were not uncommon, even among members of the ANC. In his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Nelson Mandela recalls an episode when he was asked what Chief Luthuli, the then leader of ANC, wanted. Part of his answer was: ‘As I understand it, he wants our land returned, he wants our kings to have their power back’.<sup>317</sup> As such, this was not much different from what Cyprian seems to have wanted.

Luthuli himself said the following about Cyprian’s dilemma, trying to combine the expectations of the people with the wishes of the government: ‘He has our sympathy throughout. His position is unenviable.’<sup>318</sup> Although he was severely disappointed when Cyprian accepted the Bantu Authority system, he would never reject the Zulu king: ‘The authority which he exerts by virtue of his place in the hearts of Zulus [sic] is great. Our loyalty is real and a force to be reckoned with.’<sup>319</sup>

The explanation for this support has deep religious and cultural roots, similar to those Adam Ashford referred to when insisting that ‘unless the dimensions of spiritual insecurity are understood, politics in Africa is incomprehensible.’<sup>320</sup> Even disregarding the Zulu nationalism that had been growing since the days of Solomon, the traditional belief that the kings on earth were the only ones who could address the powerful kings in heaven, ensured that the Zulu people would, almost invariably, treat their kings with the utmost respect.<sup>321</sup>

As soon as it became known that Cyprian had decided to accept the Bantu Authorities system, a large number of letters arrived at the Chief Native Commissioner’s office, asking

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<sup>317</sup> Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 330.

<sup>318</sup> Luthuli, p. 122.

<sup>319</sup> Luthuli, p. 67.

<sup>320</sup> Ashford, Adam, *Witchcraft, Violence and Democracy in South Africa*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London (2005), p. 12.

<sup>321</sup> See Chapter 2 and 6.

for more information about the policies.<sup>322</sup> One chief wrote: ‘I appreciate the Bantu Authority Act in so far as it purports to separate us from the Europeans and we will be able to work as we like in our own areas.’<sup>323</sup>

Invitations from chiefs all over Natal and Zululand were sent to Cyprian directly. They wanted to hear ‘from his own mouth’ that he wanted them to accept the policies and the reasons why. The Secretary for Native Affairs, WWM Eiselen, immediately contacted the Chief Accountant to ensure that he would be appropriately reimbursed for such trips, and even considered increasing Cyprian’s stipend to enable him to travel more. It was of utmost importance, Eiselen stated, to ensure that Cyprian visited these places as soon as possible. Besides the possible effect on the chiefs, he thought that the experience would build Cyprian’s confidence, including the Zulu paramount in the administration of Zululand for the first time since the 1906 Bambatha rebellion.<sup>324</sup>

Even the Zulu newspaper *Ilanga Lase Natal*, which could hardly be called government friendly, showed sympathy and respect for such chiefs who supported the Bantu Authorities system, although it did not mention Cyprian specifically:

‘An educated and progressive chief finds it even more difficult at times to convince his backward and conservative followers that the progressive steps he is adopting are for their own good. More often than not they are suspicious of him and think he will lead them away from the paths their fathers trod in the past. They think he is likely to be the good boy of the authorities and “sell” them.’<sup>325</sup>

### **‘The path of peace and progress’**

Cyprian died 17 September 1968, while the final plans for a Territorial Authority for the Zulu people – the basis for a Zulu bantustan – was being discussed. At the installation of his brother Israel as regent in 1969, the General Commissioner for the Zulu, Mr JJ Boshoff,

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<sup>322</sup> IBAD file ½, See for instance letters from: Luke Zondo, 21 September 1958; Chief Nganekwane Mqadi, 1 October 1958; Chief Myekeni Gumbi, 14 October 1958; Chief Bekayiphi Sibiya, 30 October 1958; J.M. Radebe, 12 November 1958.

<sup>323</sup> IBAD file ½, Chief Myekeni Gumbi to the “Chief”, 14 October 1958.

<sup>324</sup> NTS 249 78/53 (2), Teleks, SNS van O.S. (N.G.), signed 24 May 1957. It was placed, incorrectly according to the dates, between the file’s first and second page.

warned the Zulu against ‘following the manners of some of the African states in the north, turning to bloodshed and violence as soon as they are left to their own destiny’. They should rather cooperate with the government, he told them, which was aiming to give ‘help to self-help, in the course of time. This is the ideal of every people in the world; it is an inborn desire and longing for each people worthy of its name. [...] Lead the Zulu People along this path,’ he instructed the new regent. ‘This is the path of peace and progress.’<sup>326</sup>

Was the desire for a ‘peaceful path’ the main drive for Cyprian’s support to the Bantu Authorities system? Although I have not found evidence of this in the sources from the period prior to his decision to do so, a speech he held on New Years Eve 1959 suggests that he was thinking along these lines: ‘We have been living in a state of uncertainty for many generations. In terms of the present policy in this country the road before us is clear. Development on separate but parallel lines makes for orderly society.’<sup>327</sup> In Cyprian’s funeral, Bishop Zulu spoke of his efforts to create a new homeland for the Zulu people through peaceful means as one of his greatest achievements: ‘The Zulu nation died when it was conquered in battle. But your king adopted peace and humility so that your nation may not die again, but live on, through him.’<sup>328</sup>

At the time of Cyprian’s death, it seemed as if the dreams of the last, unrecognized Zulu kings were closer than ever, and that a measure of independence for the Zulu people was finally within reach. The legacy of his father was twofold: on the one hand, Solomon had established a sense of ‘Zuluness’ that had spread across the majority of the Zulu people, and encouraged Cyprian to continue the drive for Zulu independence. His continued efforts to build a Zulu nationalism on the illustrious history of the old Zulu kingdom, is reflected in the establishment of an annual ‘Shaka Day’.

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<sup>325</sup> IBAD file K/3, Editorial from *Ilanga Lase Natal*, 5 July 1958.

<sup>326</sup> *Bantu*, July 1969, pp. 18 and 20.

<sup>327</sup> Temkin, p. 74.

On the other hand, Cyprian had seen that the compliancy of Mshiyeni was far more effective than the obstinacy of Solomon and Dinuzulu when attempting to gain benefits from the government. It seems that this cooperative attitude was shared by the majority of the royal house, who apparently were willing to cooperate with the apartheid state long before he was, to acquire a larger degree of Zulu self-government and regain the pride of the people.

The government followed his actions closely, clearly aware that his collaboration would mean increased support from other Zulu chiefs. By alternately tempting and threatening him, the officers of the Native Affairs Department in Pretoria and Natal seem to have used every means available to the state to make him surrender to their plans for the Zulu people.

In the end, however, it seems that he made up his mind all by himself. Having sympathized with the cause of the opposition, he chose in the end to ‘make a stand’, as he put it, for the Zulu people. He followed the honeybirds, walking carefully down what he believed to be a path of peace and progress.

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<sup>328</sup> Temkin, p. 117.

## PART THREE

# Appendix



Joyce MaJali, Cyprian Bhekuzulu and Mangosuthu Buthelezi at the Shaka Memorial celebration, 23 September 1954. (Photograph: S. Bourquin)

*They are not to be thought away.  
Time has branded them and fettered they are lodged in the room  
of the infinite possibilities they have ousted.  
But can those have been possible seeing that they never were?  
Or was that only possible which came to pass?*

*James Joyce, Ulysses, p.30.*

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## INTERVIEWS

Interview with the Bishop Gunnar Lislerud at his home in Oslo, Norway, 21 January 1998. Lislerud worked as a missionary in Natal and Zululand from 1949 to 1968, and knew several members of the royal family well. He passed away some months after our interview.

Interview with Nils Otte at his home in Eshowe, KwaZulu-Natal, 15 March 1999. Mr Otte was the Native Commissioner of Mahlabathini in 1961-65, and of Nongoma in 1965-77. Through his office, he was well acquainted with Cyprian as well as the rest of the royal family and Mangosuthu Buthelezi. At the time of our interview, he was the sole reminding Native Commissioner that had served in Nongoma during Cyprian's time as Paramount Chief of the Zulu.

Interview with Mr S Bourquin, at his home in New Germany, KwaZulu-Natal, 18 March 1999. Mr Bourquin was the Director of Bantu Administration in Durban in 1950-1973, and hosted most of Cyprian's official visits to Durban.

Interview with Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, cousin, childhood friend and chief advisor to Cyprian, at the Royal Hotel in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, 14 Feb. 2000. As Chief Minister of

the bantustan KwaZulu from 1970 to 1994, Buthelezi became an increasingly more controversial figure in South African politics, particularly due to the conflicts that arose from the mid-1970s onwards between members of KwaZulu's 'cultural organization' *Inkatha yeSizwe* (today Inkatha Freedom Party) and the ANC. At the time of our interview, Buthelezi was Minister of Home Affairs in the central government of the Republic of South Africa.

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