

J S H U T T L E W O R T H

'Sons of Shaka' or Sons of Umslopogaa.

In order to maintain its multi-class appeal the Kwa Zulu 'petty bourgeoisie' has sought to idealize their motives, minimize the appearance of self interest in their rise to power and prestige and mystify their relationship to the apartheid regime. To achieve this Inkatha's activities have been portrayed as an attempt to retrieve the dignities and glory which the Zulu people have lost. The movement's cultural activities are designed to achieve a vivid recreation of the Zulu past in order to endow the community with an appealing ethnic identity. The resources and authority of the Kwa Zulu "homeland" have been used to promote a form of Zulu ethnic nationalism.

Inkatha has become the model for rapid political growth and effective organization, that other 'homeland' leaders have tried to emulate. However these other leaders have failed to achieve Buthelezi's international prominence. Despite the resources and authority of the Bantustan system, which they like Inkatha have at their disposal, they lack Inkatha's sizable and devoted following. The ethnic identities, myths and traditions that the other 'homeland' leaders have at their disposal do not appear to have the same resonance with Africans.

When leaders of the Ciskei faced a crisis of legitimacy during the late 1970s and the 1980s they attempted to develop loyalty to their administration by promoting a

sense of ethnic nationalism. Ciskeian national consciousness failed to take root and the regime was forced to rely upon brute repression.(1) When compared to Inkatha attempts to establish ethnic nationalism in the Ciskei, the Transkei and other 'homelands' must be deemed to have failed.

Why do some ethnic nationalisms thrive while others refuse to take root? A.D Smith's study of ethnicity suggests that the more striking and well known an ethnic group's identity and myths are, the greater the chance that it will survive and endure, and conversely the more shadowy and obscure its identity and myths, the less vivid its sense of uniqueness and the greater its likelihood of dissolution.(2)

The important point about ethnic, as opposed to other kinds of groupings is the rationale that sustains the sense of group uniqueness. That rationale is to be found in the history of the group and above all in its myths of group origins.(3) However, it is not common descent that is the basis of ethnic attachments, rather it is the myth of a common and unique origin in time and place that is essential. Like most ethnic groups the boundaries of Zulu ethnicity have been very fluid and the people who have come to make up the inhabitants of Kwa Zulu have diverse origins. But, without this sense of common

origins and history, however garbled or mythical, no ethnic community can subsist.(4) The so-called Shakan revolution and the rise of the Zulu Kingdom have provided the myths of ethnic origin used by Inkatha.

The 'great man' history of Zulu oral traditions (praise poetry) as well as the work of a number of scholars from the western tradition concentrate upon Shaka as the founder of the Zulu Kingdom. In many ways Shaka personifies the myths of Zulu ethnic origin. According to these myths it was Shaka's innovations with regard military matters which allowed the Zulu Kingdom to rise and dominate neighboring black societies. Shaka is said to have modified the Nguni throwing spear into a shorter weapon to be used like a bayonet rather than flung. He is often credited with the development of the large cow-hide shield used by Zulu impis. The age-mate system of regimentation and practice of delayed marriage, it is claimed are Shaka's innovations. The innovative battle formation shaped like a charging buffalo where the main body of the impi suggest the chest while two flanks imply the horns is also credited to Shaka's military genius.

Inkatha has been able to call upon a striking array of ethnic symbols from the old Zulu Kingdom including the monarchy, politico-religious traditions and festivals as well as a military tradition of tremendous spectacle.

However the sorts of traditions used so effectively by Inkatha in the Kwa Zulu-Natal region are not absent from the historical reality of the other "homelands". The Xhosa like the Zulu are an Nguni-speaking people. They have military traditions, oral poetry and ritual very similar to those of the Zulu.

Many of the traditions which are central to the appeal of Inkatha's ethnic identity were also features of the Xhosa past. The spectacle and rituals of the Zulu, made so much of by some western writers and Inkatha ideologues were part of Xhosa military tradition. Like the Zulu, the Xhosa believed all human activities and especially war were influenced by magic.(5) Xhosa war doctors would administer medicines derived from the bodies of fierce animals such as snakes and bulls, that would help the warriors in battle. As with the Zulu these medicines were rubbed into incisions made in the body. Every healthy adult male was a warrior in Xhosa society and war played a prominent role in Xhosa history.(6) Oral traditions enshrined the deeds of war heroes and warriors often assembled at the Great Place to feast, dance and compose praises. Like the Zulu, at the scene of a battle Xhosa warriors would respond to the exhortations of their leaders by chanting and striking their shields with spears.

Many features of warfare that are often attributed to

Shakan innovation were common to most Nguni-speaking people -including the Xhosa. The short stabbing spear which has taken on the significance of Excalibre in the myths of Zulu ethnic origin was used by the Xhosa, and became their most effective weapon against the European invaders during the Frontier Wars.(7) The Xhosa battle formation of centre flanked by wings was the equivalent of the famous charging buffalo formation of the Zulu.(8)

However during their long history of conflict with European settlers, the Xhosa modified traditional Nguni methods of warfare and at times completely abandoned them. To resist European domination they developed guerilla tactics.(9) They learned to make little open resistance and concealed themselves in bushes and Kloofs only leaving cover to harass the enemy's rear guard. Like so many guerillas since, they were expert at living off the land and developed systems of spies to gather information and signal fires to pass information between scattered war-bands. They used firearms when they had them, but more often relied upon spears and at times stones and agricultural tools become weapons. During the Fifth Frontier War (1818-1819) Nxele invaded the colony and attacked Grahamstown itself. The success of Xhosa guerillas forced the British to recruit Khoi and Mfengu auxiliaries and to adopt Xhosa tactics. The seventh

Frontier War (also known as The ~~Battle~~ of the Axe, 1846) saw Xhosa guerillas virtually prostrate the British. Sandile was forced to pull back on the brink of victory in order to avoid the famine that the British armies scorched earth policies threatened to produce.

The Xhosa, through their long history of resistance, developed guerilla tactics capable of neutralizing the technological superiority of the Europeans. There is evidence that the Zulu began to adopt similar tactics following the invasion of the Zulu Kingdom in 1879.(10) However the Zulu tactic for facing guns that is emphasized in ethnic myth is the mass onrush. The fiercest battles fought by the Xhosa were against European invaders. In contrast the Zulu army of mythic memory concentrated its efforts on dominating neighboring black societies. There is little doubt that Xhosa military traditions and history of guerilla warfare could provide a source of pride for black South Africans. Why then, has emphasis upon the Xhosa war leaders of old like Nxele and Sandile in the Ciskei and the Transkei not achieved the same success as Inkatha's ethnic mobilization in Kwa Zulu? Why do Xhosa leaders lack the heroic stature of Shaka, Dingane and Cetshwayo?

It may be true, as Peires suggests, that attacks by dispersed Xhosa war-bands do not capture the imagination in the same way that the massed onrush of the Zulu and their victory at Isandlwana do.(11) However it is more a matter of emphasis and of the ways that these events have subsequently been portrayed, rather than any intrinsic qualities of the events themselves which has led them to capture the imaginations of subsequent generations. The tragic and self destructive events of the Xhosa cattle-killings (1856-1857) cannot explain the failure of attempts at ethnic mobilization amongst the Xhosa of Transkei and Ciskei. For in other societies, it is just this kind of tragedy which has often provided the powerful symbols around which ethnic mobilization has taken place.(12)

Why has it happened that the image of the Zulu as a proud and disciplined warrior race is almost universally known while the military traditions of the Xhosa and others have been ignored and forgotten? One vital difference between the two groups is the way their pasts have been portrayed by white culture. White culture has perpetuated myths of Zulu military superiority while Xhosa military traditions have been virtually ignored. It should come as no surprise that white culture should glorify images of the Zulu, as a black nation that preyed upon and

dominated other black nations, while Xhosa waging a guerilla war upon white invaders has been ignored. World capitalism in general and white South Africans in particular have very little interest in glorifying black guerilla fighters.

Various white groups have had an interest in promoting an image of Zulu military superiority. Nineteenth century accounts detailing the events surrounding the rise of the Zulu Kingdom emphasized violence and the depopulation of Natal. Those who first wrote about the consolidation of Shaka's Kingdom and the accompanying violence known as the Mfecane were the very traders, settlers and missionaries whose material interests were served by such an image of the Zulu. As Julian Cobbing has pointed out the timing of this alleged depopulation of Natal, just prior to the white invasion of the area is no mere coincidence.(13) White settlers and traders in Natal who were interested in establishing rights to large tracts of land in Natal were responsible for the promotion of an empty land myth. Their claims to land could not be questioned, if Natal had been cleared of population by Shaka's impis. They also used this as a justification for their domination over the African population on the grounds that the coming of white rule had inaugurated an era of peace and stability.(14)

Evidence is mounting which suggests the cause of conflicts

in African societies during the early 1800s lie ultimately not in the expansion of the Zulu Kingdom, but with "the imperialist attentions of merchantile and early industrial capitalism."(15) Demands for labour and cattle by the Delagoa Bay region, the Eastern Cape and bands of armed Griqua horsemen resulted in the raiding and sequence of attack and counter attack of the 'Mfecane'. Cobbing believes literate whites used the documents to provide themselves and their Griqua raiders with an alibi. The Zulu became the scape-goat for violence which emanated from capitalism's demands for labour and cattle.(16)

At times Cobbing appears to get carried away with the significance of his work as a metaphor for the causes of black on black violence in the late twentieth century and occasionally his arguments fly in the face of empirical evidence.(17) However despite this and his occasional tendencies to treat black people as passive objects in need of whites to initiate action, Cobbing's work provides powerful insights into the rise of the Zulu Kingdom. Regardless of whether, as Cobbing suggests the 'Mfecane' is a complete myth that should be abandoned or has some basis in historical reality, the significant point regarding this paper is that the image of the Zulu as an all powerful, all conquering warrior race has been

promoted in order to serve the interests of white traders and settlers.

Another source of these sought of images of the Zulu was the missionaries. Missionaries had very little success in their attempts to convert the Zulu. Most Zulu commoners were not eager to join the capitalist political economy that the mission stations represented or to become christians. Zulu Kings opposed conversion because it meant the withdrawal of converts' labour power from the kingdom, their services from the army and allegiance to the Zulu state.(18) Disappointed and embittered missionaries mounted a public campaign designed to encourage British intervention in the affairs of the Kingdom. They portrayed the Zulu as war-like savages and a threat to the white settlers of Natal.(19) Tales of dark and bloody deeds inside the Kingdom emanated from missionary sources.

The central role played by the Zulu in Afrikaner myths of ethnic origin has also ensured the perpetuation of myths about the military capabilities of the Zulu. Myths of Boer ethnic origin emphasize that they were forged as a people on the frontier. These myths tell us that it was the adversities faced on the frontier that forged the Afrikaner national character. A crucial element of

these adversities was provided by the Zulu. Portrayal of the Zulu as a serious military challenge is indispensable to Boer myths of ethnic origin. These myths demand images of the Zulu as a warrior race with tremendous military skills. The massacre of Piet Reteif and Blood River were central tests faced by the Boers on their journey. It was by facing and defeating the challenge of the Zulu at Blood River that gave the Boers "access to the promised land." (20) Myths surrounding the assegai and Zulu military virtues are as important to Africaner nationalists as they are to Inkatha ideologues.

The Anglo Zulu war of 1879 resulted in changes in the ways whites perceived the Zulu. Three main views developed during and in the years following the war. Firstly there was the view of the Zulu "devised by imperial agents in South Africa to justify their invasion of the Zulu Kingdom". (21) This view drew heavily upon the images and history which land hungry settlers and embittered missionaries had presented over the last half century. A second view was championed by Bishop Colenso of Natal and those who opposed the invasion of Zululand. While this view aimed to demonstrate the falsehood of the charges of murder and atrocity against King Cetshwayo it did very little to debunk the myths of Zulu military

superiority. The third and most important view as far as this paper is concerned was activated by the Zulu victory at Isandlwana. Press reports of the victory fired the reading public's imagination-especially in Britain. Russell Martin points out that after this opening phase of the war "[r]espect and even admiration were now expressed for the military qualities of the Zulus who had measured themselves against British might and not been found wholly wanting."(22)

In the decades following the war the image of the Zulus as heroic savage warriors that had been popularized by the press, was taken up and elaborated upon by the novelist Ryder Haggard. Haggard's work celebrated Zulu military virtues, bravery, discipline and sense of duty, as well as what he saw as their savage and sensual culture. Many of his books dealing with the Zulu were enormously popular. Haggard's portrayal of Zulu society is a world "in which all taboos are abolished. Incest, polygamy, cannibalism, nudism, necrophilia, patricide, fratricide and general homicide are everyday occurrences." In these Romances "the beasts Victorians feared to encounter in themselves could be contemplated at a safe remove."(23) The narrator and namesake of Allan Quatermain explains the appeal that the Zulu of Haggard's imagination possess as follows:

... "no man who has for forty years lived the life I have can with impunity coop himself in this prim English country, with its trim hedgegrows and cultivated fields, its stiff formal manners and its well dressed crowds. He begins to long-ah, he longs! for the keen breath of the desert air; he dreams of the sight of Zulu impis breaking on their foes like surf upon the rocks, and his heart rises in rebellion against the strict limits of civilized life."(24)

The Africa of Haggard's imagination provides a contrast to the order and restrictions of "civilized" England. It is a wild and alien landscape where anything is possible. The Zulu characters as inhabitants of this terraine represent that side of Haggard's psyche which longs to escape an existence where the rules of "civilized" conduct have been laid out like so many hedgegrow bordered fields.

In Allan Quatermain Haggard portrays his most famous Zulu character-Umslopogaas. Umslopogaas is the real hero of this adventure.(25) This "great warrior of royal blood"

lives only for the fray. He possesses super human martial skills, stamina and bravery. All other Africans with whom we come into contact in this book are found seriously wanting in contrast to Umslopogaas. The narrator tells his readers that he was "in his own savage fashion, the finest general I ever knew."(26) All these characteristics add up to Umslopogaas being the personification of Zulu martial virtue and traditions. On the old warrior's death Haggard pays to him what to Haggard (in many ways the quintessential Victorian Englishman), must be the ultimate tribute: "We had only done our duty, as is the fashion of both Englishmen and Zulus to do."(27) Of course, the great irony here is that in Allan Quartermain the Zulu military traditions, personified in Umslopogaas have been harnessed and put to work, to serve the ends of his white masters. An irony that will not be lost upon anyone who has studied the activities of Inkatha.

Haggard's romances entered the market place when for the first time in history a mass reading public existed. Haggard's portrayal of the Zulu has a parallel in the images of the Plains Indians which emanated from the United States. At around the same time Umslopogaas, Blood River and Isandlwana filled the pages of Haggard's novels, the myths of the 'savage' plains 'Tribes' like

the Sioux and their Battle of Little Bighorn were being portrayed in a plethora of pulp fiction. Just as the Sioux leader Sitting Bull toured the capitals as part of "Buffalo" Bill Cody's Wild West Show, so troupes of Africans billed as "Zulu warriors who had fought at Isandlwana" toured Britain exhibiting their martial skills and re-enacting attacks. (28)

These myths about the Plains Indian and perhaps to a lesser degree the Zulu have become central images in the popular culture of the twentieth century. Through books, movies and television Haggard's portrayal of the Zulu as "the bravest savages in the world"(29) whose motto was "kill till you are killed"(30) have become almost universally known. As in the past these images are being perpetuated to fulfill white fantasies of black savagery and to advance the interests of whites at the expense of black South Africans.

E.A Ritter's Shaka Zulu is a striking example of the continuation of the Haggard tradition. The author describes the book as a biography and claims it is based upon oral tradition (31) However his explanation of how these sources were transmitted to him is totally inadequate. The book dwells upon superstition, witchcraft, torture, slaughter and Zulu sexual practices.

He tells his readers that Zulu warriors possessed

... "a profound knowledge of female physiology... and delicate art of pre-coition excitation or love play." Shaka we are told "...was as outstanding in love as battle"...able to impart "full satisfaction to all his partners" and able to "deflower a reasonable number...in the first three hectic days of his sexual marathon"...(32)

To Ritter the impis formed a picture "of sinister military beauty."(33) His many battle scenes emphasize Zulu savagery.

"The gaping wounds caused by the broad Zulu blades practically drained the Ndwandwe corpses of their blood, which, with the Zulu quota, was now flowing or in pools in the confined area of the fighting, and its odour intoxicated the fighters."(34)

These descriptions do not resemble any of the oral sources. What they do resemble is Haggard's fiction and they seem to be designed to titilate readers with a fantasy of black savagery.

It is perhaps the films like Zulu and Zulu Dawn and the television series Shaka Zulu which have had the biggest

impact upon the mass consciousness. Zulu and Zulu Dawn are based upon two novels of the same names by Cy Endfield. The films like the books that inspired them, present striking images of the Zulu enmasse. Images that call to mind Haggard's intoxicating imaginings:

"It was a splendid sight to see them, their assegais glittering in the sunlight as they rose and fell above their blackshields, their war-plumes bending upon the wind, and their fierce faces set intently on the foe, while the solid earth shook beneath the thunder of their rushing feet."(35)

Images of bare-breasted maidens and brave warriors engaged in 'tribal' dancing also call to mind Haggard. Of course the martial virtues of the Zulu warrior is a central theme of both films.

Zulu depicts a small group of whites isolated from outside help who must defend themselves against a vast horde of black 'savages' in order to survive. The analogy with the way white South Africa has often depicted itself as an outpost of 'civilization' fighting against the forces of violence and chaos is obvious. The attitude to race relations in South Africa presented in Zulu Dawn is a more ambiguous one. Early in the film Cetshwayo

addresses a gathering of his warriors and explains to them that they are about to go to war in order to protect the fruits of their labour from the English invaders. The clear intention here is to point out that we are not dealing with mindless savagery. The Zulu are fighting to protect their way of life. However, in both film and book form Zulu Dawn displays an extreme paternalism which most black leaders would reject.(36) Buthelezi played the role of his ancestor Cetshwayo in the film Zulu and Endfield dedicated Zulu Dawn to "a great man and a dear friend, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi". Buthelezi was prepared to ignore the subtexts and other objectionable aspects of these works because they glorified Zulu military traditions provided vivid images of the Zulu ethnic past and helped him stress his own special relationship to that past.

Buthelezi's rather precarious position in relation to the portrayal of the Zulu past by white culture was highlighted by his response to the South African Broadcasting Corporations television series - Shaka Zulu. This truly dreadful series depicts all the bloodlust, superstition and savagery of Haggard's novels. At first Buthelezi seems to have found the series an embarrassment and publicly attacked it for portraying Shaka as a bloodthirsty tyrant and for distorting Zulu history.

However Buthelezi was not willing to completely disassociate from the series, because despite its tremendous flaws Shaka Zulu worked as a powerful endorsement for the Kwa Zulu leadership.(37)

All the myths of Zulu ethnic origin are vividly portrayed in the film. Single handedly Shaka reshapes Zulu warfare. The success of his innovations is dramatically depicted in battle scenes where the Zulu impis easily defeat their neighbors who cling to pre-Shakan methods of war. This portrayal of a glorious, if rather bloody Zulu past was of tremendous value to ^a political organization like Inkatha which draws so heavily upon the symbols and traditions of the ethnic past as a means of mobilizing support. Buthelezi traces his ancestry back to Shaka on the maternal line and could not afford to lose the opportunity of riding on the dramatic success of this vivid recreation of the life of the founder of the Zulu Kingdom.(38)

It would be difficult to think of an ethnic nationalism which has a set of images and myths at its disposal that are more striking and well known than those of Inkatha. However as recent investigation of the Zulu past by Cobbing, Wright and others has demonstrated these images of the Zulu as an all conquering warrior race are only very loosely based upon any historical reality. Rather

these images have largely been created and perpetuated by whites to serve white interests , usually at the expense of the interests of black South Africans. These images were performing similar functions in the 1980s.

Everytime Buthelezi or King Goodwill Zwelithini use a Pretoria sponsored rally to glorify Zulu military superiority and appeal for loyalty from "the sons of Shaka" they are using these images which were designed to serve white interests. Inkatha is being paid by white South Africa to conform to their version of black savagery. Zulu ethnic nationalism is being used to legitimate an Inkatha leadership which has been prepared to collaborate with a regime that has denied people virtually all rights of citizenship upon the grounds of skin colour. Ethnic symbols and loyalty are used to mobilize impoverished Zulu speaking peasants and migrant workers and to encourage them to attack those who carry out rent and consumer boycotts, strikes and other forms of resistance. Every time an Inkatha 'impi' dressed in leopard skins and using 'traditional' weapons carried out such attacks it provided ammunition for those who wished to demonstrate that handing the country over to black majority rule can only lead to inter 'tribal' war and that white rule must be preserved in order to keep the 'tribes' apart.

END NOTES

- (1) Anonymous "Ethnicity and Pseudo-Ethnicity in the Ciskei" in L.Vail (ed) THE CREATION OF TRIBALISM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA University of California, 1989 pp 410
- (2) A.D Smith THE ETHNIC RIVIVAL Cambridge, 1981 pp 65
- (3) Ibid. pp65
- (4) Ibid. pp67
- (5) J.B Peires THE HOUSE OF PHALO A HISTORY OF THE XHOSA PEOPLE IN THE DAYS OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE University of California, 1982. pp 136
- (6) Ibid. pp 138
- (7) Ibid. pp 141
- (8) Ibid. pp 138
- (9) For a more detailed account of Xhosa guerilla warfare upon which the account in this paper is based see Ibid pp 139-160.
- (10) E. Unterhalter "Confronting Imperialism: the people of Nquthu and the invasion of Zululand" in a Duminy and C Ballard THE ANGLO-ZULU WAR NEW PERSPECTIVES University of Natal 1981 pp 103-104
- (11) Pieres THE HOUSE OF PHALO op cit. pp 160
- (12) A good example of this phenomenon is found amongst the Sioux in the United States. In 1891 Sioux warriors road to their deaths against the United States army believing they would be protected from bullets by their "Ghost Shirts". The tragedy of the "Ghost Shirt Religion" is a central image in Sioux ethnic mobilization.

- (13) J Cobbing "The Mfecane as Alibi: Second Thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolompo" JOURNAL OF AFRICAN HISTORY Vol 29, 1988 pp 488.
- (14) J Wright "Political Mythology and the Making of Natal's Mfecane" CANADIAN JOURNAL OF AFRICAN STUDIES. Vol 23 No.2 1989 pp 277
- (15) J Cobbing "The Mfcane as Alibi" op cit. pp 488-489
- (16) Ibid. pp 492-496
- (17) A good example of this is seen in Ibid pp 510, where he insists upon implicating the trader Henry Francis Fynn in Shaka's assassination by Dingane's supporters. For as Cobbing admits there is no direct evidence for this. It is safe to assume that black Africans are just as capable of committing deeds both good and bad as whites are; and few would dispute the existence of fratricidal tendencies amongst Zulu princes. These tendencies reach legendary proportions in Zulu oral traditions. See for example C de Webb and J B Wrights THE JAMES STUART ARCHIVE Vol 4, University of Natal Press, 1986 pp 93-96. Zulu folklore suggests that these fratricidal squabbles continued even after death. Shaka and Dingane returned to Zululand from "the world below" in the form of big snakes to continue their struggles. It is said they were fighting "because one had killed the other in the world above."
- (18) N Etherington. PREACHERS, PEASANTS AND POLITICS IN SOUTH EAST AFRICA, 1835-1880: African CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES IN NATAL, PONDOLAND AND ZULULAND. Royal Historical Society, 1979. pp 74-83
- (19) R Martin BRITISH IMAGES OF THE ZULU C. 1820-1879 Cambridge 1982 (unpublished thesis). pp 226
- (20) M de Villiers WHITE TRIBE DREAMING APARTHEID'S BITTER ROOTS MacMillan of Canada 1987 pp 13
- (21) Martin BRITISH IMAGES OF THE ZULU op cit. pp 253
- (22) Ibid pp 285

- (23) N Etherington RYDER HAGGARD Boston, 1984
pp 50
- (24) H R Haggard ALLAN QUATERMAIN Target
paperback, London, 1980
pp 9
- (25) Ibid pp 253
- (16) Ibid pp 64
- (27) Ibid pp 249
- (28) Martin BRITISH IMAGES OF THE ZULU
op cit. pp 279-280
- (29) H R Haggard ALLAN'S WIFE London, 1920.
pp 71
- (30) Ibid pp 92
- (31) E A Ritter SHAKA ZULU Middlesex England
1987 pp 401
- (32) Ibid pp 220-222
- (33) Ibid pp 177
- (34) Ibid pp 158
- (35) H R Haggard ALLAN'S WIFE op cit pp87
- (36) Zulu Dawn's paternalism comes in the form of an implied need for whites to help raise blacks to the level of 'white civilization'. The implication is made through the device of the "Sikhali Horsemen". The Sikhalis are Africans who have been educated by missionaries and trained by the British Army. They have proved to be competent soldiers and as Endfield puts it have "long ago earned full membership into the society which had modelled their behaviour and beliefs". C Endfield ZULU DAWN Lond, 1979 pp 277. The Sikhali's commander and the symbol of white paternalism is played by Burt Lancaster in the film. He is a character of considerable sympathy and the only white in the film who displays any real understanding of Zulu society. He tries to convince his superiors that the Zulu would rather avoid war, so they can carry out the agricultural activities upon which their survival depends. However the extremist white supremecists, represented by the British high command push the Zulu too far and war results. The Sikhali, their commander and hence all the good work that has been done to 'civilize' these 'natives' is wiped out in a holocaust of black violence at Isandlwana. This kind of paternalism provides support for so-called positive apartheid. This is very evident in book form where there are strong contrasts between various

groups of Africans. For example the clumsy clown-like Basutos who have deserted their 'traditional' lifestyle, but have not yet received the benefit of white paternalism compare very unfavourably with the disciplined and competent Sikhalis and the graceful majestic Zulu who cling to their 'traditional' ways. Ibid pp 68. The implication for modern South Africa is clear- blacks need to be raised by white leadership before they are ready for entry into 'white' civilization and until then, they are better off clinging to their 'traditional ways. An eloquent case in support of 'separate development' written by Buthelezi's "friend".

(37) C A Hamilton

"A Propositional Gambit:
Shaka Zulu and the Conflict
in South Africa" RADICAL
HISTORY REVIEW 44, Spring,
1989. pp 26

(38) Ibid pp 27

