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Providential Design

American Negroes and Garveyism in South Africa

ROBERT VINSON

The Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA) was the largest and most widespread black movement ever. At its height in the early 1920s, the UNIA had an estimated 2 million members and sympathizers and more than 1,000 chapters in forty-three countries and territories. Founded and led by the Jamaican-born Marcus Garvey, the New York-based UNIA's meteoric rise resulted from an agenda that included shipping lines, corporations, and universities; a Liberian colonization scheme; a resolute desire to reconstitute African independence; and a fierce racial pride. Outside North America and the Caribbean, these aims and ideals—generically called Garveyism—had their greatest impact in South Africa, as reflected in that country's eight official and numerous unofficial UNIA chapters. Garveyism, furthermore, pervaded black South African political, religious, educational, and socioeconomic movements throughout the 1920s and 1930s.¹

In this essay I make three arguments. First, Garveyism in South Africa was related to notions of "Providential Design" and modernity, which were central to the racial interface between black South Africans and "American Negroes," a category that encompassed black West Indians as well as African Americans. Second, an international black sailing community played a crucial role in transmitting Garveyism from the Americas into South African political culture. Third, in South Africa, as elsewhere in the black world, religion was an important aspect of Garveyism.

The conclusions here offered contrast sharply with interpretations that confine the UNIA to South Africa's national boundaries, only to assert in the end that Garveyism was a "rather remote model" in that country's black freedom struggle.² Far from being peripheral, I argue, Garveyism was a central

aspect of black South Africa's political culture in the interwar years. Besides charting a transnational dimension of the black South African experience in the twentieth century, I also seek to call attention to the relative neglect of Africa and Africans in African Diaspora studies. In short, I make the case for a "homeland and diaspora" model that bridges the study of Africa and the African Diaspora.³

Segregation, Black Modernity, and Providential Design: The Making of a Transnational Relationship

Britain's conquest of various independent African states in the nineteenth century, along with its war against the Afrikaner Republics between 1899 and 1902, culminated in the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. The Union of South Africa was part and parcel of a crystallization of segregation, in both thought and legislation, into a race-based political and socioeconomic program that would spur rapid industrial growth. The discovery in the late nineteenth century of gold and diamonds made South Africa the world's largest producer of both commodities, setting the stage for its transformation from a rural, agricultural society to an urban, industrializing one that relied on cheap African labor. Ultimately, segregation aimed to make the agricultural self-sufficiency of many Africans virtually impossible, thus compelling them to sell their labor to white-controlled mines, farms, and industry.⁴

As official government policy, South African segregation was implemented through a coordinated set of racially discriminatory legislation, the most significant of which included the Natives Land Act of 1913 and the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923. The Natives Land Act rendered millions of Africans landless, forcing them to sell their labor cheaply to white-owned mines, farms, and other industries. The architects of South African segregation were hardly bashful about their objectives. Jan Hofmeyr, one of the most prominent among them, stated, "It is inconceivable that the white man should be able completely to dispense with the black man's labor on his farms, in his mines, in his factories; it is just as inconceivable that there should be set aside for the black man's occupation land sufficient to provide for all his needs independent of the white man's wages."⁵ The Natives (Urban Areas) Act was the urban equivalent of the Natives Land Act. The Urban Areas Act undergirded a policy that sharply controlled and restricted the movement of Africans from country to town, allowing them into the urban centers only insofar as their labor was necessary to "minister to the white man's needs." Africans were also denied the right to

vote, were condemned to the lowest-paying jobs by “color-bar” legislation, and had little judicial recourse against their systematic subordination.

The rise of segregation in South Africa paralleled the emergence of Jim Crow in the United States, and there was a direct relationship between the two systems of racial oppression. In this context Garveyism arrived and flourished in South Africa. Indeed, the black South African encounter with Garveyism merely continued, and deepened, a decades-long transatlantic relationship. Since the late nineteenth century, at least, black South Africans had seen African Americans as quintessential modern black people and as models. African Americans, for their part, engaged black South Africa as part of Providential Design, a divinely ordained mission to forge a decolonized “Africa for Africans.” This transnational relationship, which became particularly close during the period of Garveyism, challenged an international color line that denied both groups full citizenship rights in their respective societies and also manifested itself in European colonialism of Africa.

The African American presence in southern Africa began as early as the 1780s, with a trickle of sailors, traders, and adventurers.⁶ In 1890 the Virginia Jubilee Singers, an African American theatrical troupe, began a five-year tour of South Africa. This launched a period of intense black South African admiration for African Americans that laid the groundwork for South African Garveyism and a wide array of other transatlantic institutional and personal linkages. Orpheus McAdoo, the leader of the college-educated Virginia Jubilee Singers, had been born into slavery. He often opened performances with a Booker T. Washington–esque “Up from Slavery” recitation of African American history and culture, beginning with the degradation of slavery and ending with an impressive catalog of achievements during the first generation of freedom. Black South African journalist Josiah Semouse typified the rapturous African reaction to the Jubilee Singers: “Hear! Today they have their own schools . . . and also universities. They are run by them without the help of the whites. They have magistrates, judges, lawyers, bishops, ministers, and evangelists, and school masters. Some have learned a craft such as building, etc. When will the day come when the African people will be like the Americans? When will they stop being slaves and become nations with their own government?”⁷

In late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century South Africa, the Jubilee Singers and other African American visitors and residents were treated as “honorary whites,” exempt from the segregationist legislation that hobbled the lives of black South Africans. Such a status was a tacit admission by the South African authorities that African Americans possessed the supposed character-

istics of modern, “civilized” citizens.⁸ The concession was important, coming as it did at a time when European colonialism was becoming entrenched in Africa and Asia and South African whites were justifying the denial of citizenship rights to black South Africans on the ground that blacks were an inferior, backward race that lacked the attributes of modern Western civilization. Such attributes included Christianity, Western education, Western dress, English language skills, an industrious work ethic, and an abiding faith in capitalism.

White South Africans further rationalized their dominance over blacks as the culmination of a 2,000-year European ascent from barbarism to a position as the world’s most “civilized” race. It was the “White Man’s Burden,” they claimed, to uplift the lesser race by “civilizing” the Africans. In 1884 James Stewart, South Africa’s most famous missionary and educator of the late nineteenth century, responded to African demands for equality by invoking a social Darwinist “racial time,” an argument popular among white South African politicians, colonial officials, and scholars: “Starting but as yesterday in the race of nations, do you soberly believe that in the two generations of the very imperfect civilisation you have enjoyed and partially accepted, you can have overtaken those other nations who began that race two thousand years ago, and have been running hard at it for a thousand years at least?”⁹ African Americans, including the members of the Virginia Jubilee Singers, debunked such claims because they seemed to possess all of the characteristics that defined modern, “civilized” people, as acknowledged by their “honorary white” status. More importantly, they had “civilized” themselves in *just one generation out of slavery, not two thousand years*. Black South Africans eagerly pointed to African Americans as proof that the attributes of modern civilization, far from being racially exclusive, were a universal human heritage, and that such attributes could be acquired in a relatively short span, even a lifetime. With the acquisition of modernity, particularly Western education, there could be no justification for relegating Africans to the status of hewers of wood and drawers of water. Western-educated Africans, inspired by African Americans, would demand full participation in society and perhaps even seek to regain their lost independence in a modern, regenerated continent of “Africa for Africans.”

For African Americans, the engagement with South Africa centered on Providential Design, which assigned diasporic blacks a divinely ordained role in the “redemption” of Africa. Henry McNeal Turner was a leading exponent of Providential Design. A bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, an African American denomination founded in the late eighteenth century, Turner inaugurated his church’s mission in South Africa in 1896. In typical

Providential Design fashion, he argued that God had willed the enslavement of diasporic blacks so that they would be taught the “civilizing” traits of Christianity, the Protestant work ethic, thrift, and moral rectitude, qualities they would then return to Africa to promulgate. In other words, diasporic blacks would transmit the “light of civilization” to a slumbering “Dark Continent” that would be regenerated as a modernized, independent Christian Africa resplendent in God’s favor. For diasporic blacks, an independent “Africa for Africans” would be a “Promised Land”: an emigrationist homeland that would provide historical and cultural grounding and serve as a source of protection.¹⁰

The claims of Providential Design, along with notions of black modernity, cohered African-descended peoples across a wide spectrum, including many African Americans and black South Africans. In the diaspora, even such political adversaries as Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey were linked by a common belief in various strands of Providential Design and black modernity. In the interwar period, those providential and modernist ideals were most powerfully expressed in Garveyism, which exploded across South Africa’s political landscape during those years.

Black Sailors and the Transmission of Garveyism to South Africa

A combination of black sailors, ships, and newspapers—the era’s most effective means of pan-African communication—transmitted Garveyism into South Africa. In May 1919, Garvey announced the UNIA’s plans to operate the Black Star Line, a steamship corporation.¹¹ By September 1919, the UNIA had purchased its first ship, the *Yarmouth*, which was promptly renamed the *Frederick Douglass*.¹² Before the commonplace usage of airplanes, ships were quintessential symbols of modernity and nationhood. Black South Africans, relentlessly told by white segregationists that they were outside the realm of modernity, saw the Black Star Line as evidence to the contrary.

Black sailors, particularly from the Caribbean and North America, were especially effective pan-African vectors, disseminating news of Garveyism throughout the black world, including South Africa. In 1920 a Jamaican sailor, identified only as “Ennis,” proclaimed, “We all come out to South Africa to free our brothers and sisters out there.”¹³ Subsequently, the Natal branch of the African National Congress (ANC), black South Africa’s leading political movement since its founding in 1912, convened a meeting in Durban that reportedly attracted more than 1,000 people. The highlight of the affair was an unsched-

uled appearance by an “American Negro” sailor known only as “Moses,” who had recently arrived from New York, site of the UNIA headquarters. Moses told his audience that “Marcus Garvey was the man they relied upon, and [that he] would free Africa: that the first vessel of the fleet was named ‘Frederick Douglass,’ and this vessel had been sailing to different places. . . . Africa would be freed . . . by Marcus Garvey.”¹⁴ Vectors of Garveyism like Ennis and Moses had an important advantage over resident Garveyites: as sailors they could enter and leave South Africa before the authorities, who were openly hostile to Garveyism, even became aware of their presence.

Garveyism spread quickly in South Africa. In the port city of East London, there were persistent rumors that the “Americans” would arrive in ships with weapons to help Africans kill whites.¹⁵ Kenneth Spooner, a West Indian missionary, joyously proclaimed that “his people were now on the seas coming to South Africa with a view to beating the European people here, and that in about six months time changes would be observed.”¹⁶ Addressing a meeting of the Transvaal branch of the ANC, an African known only as “Mgoja” raised the emphatic cry that “America had a black fleet and it is coming.”¹⁷ In neighboring Basutoland (now Lesotho), ardent nationalist Josiel Lefela editorialized, “Let us look forward to his Excellency Marcus Garvey the President of Africa, and the Americans, with anxious anticipation.”¹⁸ These prophecies were also proclaimed in the Eastern Cape and the Transkei. Gilbert Matshoba, a young African clerk, reported rapturously to his uncle, Enoch Mgijima, the leader of a religious group called the Israelites, that Garvey had predicted that the “blood of all wars is about to arrive” and that the UNIA would soon force European colonizers to leave Africa. “Father, that is the news of our black countrymen. It is published in the newspaper.”¹⁹

West Indian Sailors and Garveyism in Cape Town

As transmitters of Garveyism, black sailors enjoyed a mobility that made it difficult for the authorities to apprehend them. But the peripatetic nature of their work also precluded the sailors from transforming rhetoric into sustained political organization. In South Africa, that task was assumed by, among others, a 200-member “American Negro” community in Cape Town.²⁰ Actually, most of these “American Negroes” were West Indians, who, beginning in the 1880s, had fled the economically depressed Caribbean for the relatively brighter prospects of South African port cities, especially Cape Town, where they formed distinct communities. According to a 1904 Cape Colony census, there were 298

black West Indians in the region, many of whom worked in the dockyards.²¹ The West Indians had a reputation as “tough, hard back-boned Negroes . . . of the he-man type, aggressive and daring,” and they displayed pan-African sensibilities, fostering “notions of Combination and Co-operation amongst the disparate ethnic groups” of Africans and mixed-race people called “Coloureds” in the Cape Town dockyards.²²

The West Indians were especially attracted to Cape Town, the site of South Africa’s earliest European settlement, because of its employment prospects, its large English-speaking population, and its racially liberal reputation in relation to the rest of the country. Cape Town, as part of the Cape Province, had a nonracial franchise that accorded voting rights to blacks who met certain property requirements, unlike South Africa’s other three provinces, which totally excluded Africans from the political process. By the early twentieth century, Cape Town had developed into an industrial town of approximately 80,000 inhabitants, most of whom were Africans and Coloureds. The Africans lived mainly in segregated townships outside the city, while the majority of black workers were subjected to the industrial color bar, which excluded them from many lines of work.

West Indians in Cape Town, many of whom were Garveyites, were prominent in the leadership of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa (ICU), South Africa’s first major black trade union, which claimed 100,000 members at its peak in 1927.²³ In January 1920, ICU members elected “out and out Marcus Garvey” West Indians A. James King as president and James Gumbs as vice president.²⁴ Gumbs, a shipwright and former chemist, would later become an executive officer of the Cape Town UNIA branch. Another Caribbean, Emmanuel Johnson, an agent for the *Negro World*, the UNIA’s official organ, and the future organizing president of the Cape Peninsula UNIA branches, also served as an ICU vice president.²⁵ Clements Kadalie, the ICU founder and general secretary, came from Nyasaland (now Malawi), and he, too, exemplified the movement’s cosmopolitan character, including at the leadership level. By his own account, Kadalie’s “essential object is to be the great African Marcus Garvey and I don’t mind how much I shall pay for that education.”²⁶ These men, along with the mercurial Samuel Bennett Ncwana, suffused Garveyism into the *Black Man*, the ICU’s official newspaper, which proclaimed that “we should show our cordial appreciation of the very first step taken by the Hon. Marcus Garvey to show his solidarity with us. . . . Liberty and freedom calls upon . . . Africans to respond.”²⁷

Cape Town Garveyites established the earliest and largest number of South

Africa's UNIA chapters (five), and they also subscribed to claims of Providential Design.²⁸ West Indians founded the first two chapters, but the leadership and membership included West Indians, Africans, and Coloureds—a demographic mix quite unusual for segregationist South Africa. The branches generally held weekly Sunday meetings that were an eclectic mix of Christian worship and political exhortation. Branch chaplains and officers led the membership in religious songs and made fiery sermons that cast Garvey as a new Moses, poised to lead his people from the Pharaoh's Egypt that was South Africa. William Jackson, the Cape Town UNIA president and a native of Jamaica, appealed to the Providential Design motif that linked blacks in Africa and the diaspora. For Jackson, Africans of the diaspora had been enslaved in the Western Hemisphere as a necessary prelude to acquiring the technological, economic, and educational skills to liberate Africans: "Ethiopia will be taken naked from Egypt to a foreign country, there to be lynched, whipped, gimcrowded (jimcrowed), killed and finally, after experiencing many vicissitudes of torments and misery, will return to Africa and impart the civilization and knowledge obtained in the foreign country to his people."²⁹ The agents of African liberation, according to Jackson, were the "15,000,000 negroes of America who have to-day reached the highest scientific attainments in the world. Those Negroes are now preparing to come back to the land of their forefathers and impart the knowledge gained in foreign countries to their brethren in Africa. Your slogan must be 'One Aim, One God, and One Destiny.'"³⁰ UNIA branch meetings were also occasions to collect membership dues, to sell stocks in the Black Star Line, and to promote the *Negro World*.³¹

The religious character of the UNIA in Cape Town was broadly similar to that of the U.S.-based parent body, the religiosity of which remains underappreciated. Clergy constituted one-fifth of the signatories to the UNIA's "Magna Carta," the 1920 "Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World."³² Garvey's speeches, reprinted in the *Negro World*, often employed a sermonic character that utilized biblical references and imageries. In the United States, UNIA Sunday meetings featured processional, recessional, and missionary hymns, sermons, and benedictions, while the organization's official motto was "One God, One Aim, One Destiny." Predictably, Psalms 68:31 ("Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hand unto God"), a passage much beloved by the exponents of Providential Design, was also a UNIA favorite. But other biblical verses were popular with the UNIA, too, such as Acts 17:26 ("He created of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth"), which appeared on the group's stationery.³³ In short,

providential religious language suffused the political objectives of the UNIA, and its self-described “missionaries” set out to “convert” unbelieving blacks to the project of African “salvation” and “redemption.”³⁴

The Cape Town UNIA branches responded to Garvey’s 1925 incarceration for alleged mail fraud by inaugurating Garvey Day mass meetings on the first Sunday of each month. These meetings often included processions through the streets of Cape Town, and members donated monies to their leader’s legal defense fund.³⁵ The UNIA, in conjunction with the ICU and the ANC, also organized against segregationist legislation, low wages, and massacres of blacks by the security forces in Port Elizabeth and Bulhoek, both in South Africa, and in Southwest Africa (now Namibia), the former German colony ceded to South Africa after World War I. Reaching out to other oppressed racial groups in South African society, the UNIA, ICU, and ANC made links with the Cape Indian Council and the Indian nationalist and poet Sarojina Naidoo, who visited South Africa. James Thaele, president of the ANC’s Cape Town branch and recipient of two degrees from Lincoln University, an African American institution, was a key player in all of these endeavors. Thaele, along with Jamaican Arthur McKinley, replicated the stepladder speeches that West Indian immigrants like Garvey had made famous in Harlem. Open-air political speeches, Thaele’s Garveyite newspaper the *African World*, and the frequent translation of *Negro World* articles into African languages all were instrumental in spreading Garveyism.³⁶

The Cape Town UNIA branches also distributed Garveyite literature to other parts of South Africa, creating an internal black communication network beyond the reach of white authorities. In 1920, for example, Cape Town Garveyites placed copies of the UNIA’s classic manifesto, the Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World, in packages of goods to be shipped to stores in the country’s interior. Black workers who opened these packages would remove the documents and further disseminate them. Cape Town Garveyites also sent Garvey’s books and pamphlets and copies of the *Negro World* to the diamond-mining town of Kimberley, where Garveyism found fertile ground in the House of Athlyi, a religious organization with internationalist links to the United States and Jamaica.³⁷

Garveyism in Kimberley: The House of Athlyi

Joseph Masogha, the founder of the South African branch of the House of Athlyi, was the key disseminator of Garveyism in the diamond-mining town

of Kimberley. Masogha distributed UNIA books and pictures, the *Negro World*, and other “American Negro” newspapers throughout South Africa and in his native Basutoland. Educated up to Standard IV (grade five), Masogha’s Garveyite activities earned him the enmity of government officials, who considered him a “notorious agitator.” He was dismissed from his jobs as a postman and a constable for “drunkenness,” presumably from the intoxicating ideology of Garveyism.³⁸ White postal workers regularly pummeled Masogha with “kicks, punches, sneers, [and] insults” as he collected *Negro World* shipments from the Kimberley post office, threatening ominously that he would soon be a “dead nigger.”³⁹ Yet the indefatigable Masogha persevered, telling the UNIA headquarters in New York that he made professional and personal sacrifices to disseminate Garveyism in order to “spread this spirit of the New Negro. I have given my heart as an offering for this land of ours. I quite follow that there must be a sacrifice. I hope the UNIA will guide me.”⁴⁰

Masogha’s efforts were instrumental in making Kimberley a Garveyite stronghold. South Africa’s diamond center, Kimberley was an early model of urban segregation, with its townships, restrictive pass laws, closed compounds, migrant-labor system, and color-bar policies. De Beers Consolidated Mines, the world’s largest diamond company, was headquartered in Kimberley, giving it the feel of a “company town.” Correspondents to the *Negro World* attested to the paper’s extensive circulation in Kimberley, and they railed against the town’s segregationist practices; one writer asserted that “the time has arrived for the black races to assert themselves and throw off the white yoke.”⁴¹ James Charles Diraath, a Kimberley hospital worker and amateur photographer, noted of the *Negro World* that “every copy is carefully preserved and passed from hand to hand so that as many as possible may hear the truth.” He concluded, “Thousands of our native people here . . . are greatly encouraged by the efforts of the Hon. Marcus Garvey and the splendid work of the UNIA.”⁴²

Such were the circumstances in which Masogha, in 1924, established a branch of the House of Athlyi.⁴³ Headquartered in Newark, New Jersey, the House of Athlyi was founded by Richard Athlyi Rogers, who hailed from the Caribbean island of Anguilla. Rogers articulated a version of the Providential Design ideal, and he assumed the title of shepherd, watching over his Ethiopian flock. God, he asserted, had commanded him to become a modern-day Moses to lead “Ethiopia’s generations from the oppressive feet of the nations” and to transform them into a “nation among nations.”⁴⁴

In 1922, after they both addressed a UNIA meeting in Newark, Rogers “anointed” Marcus Garvey as his chief apostle. Impressed by Garvey’s mes-

sage, Rogers proclaimed him “an apostle of the Lord God for the redemption of Ethiopia and her suffering posterities.” He commanded his congregation, estimated at 500, to join the UNIA, asserting further that he and Garvey “were anointed and sent forth by the Almighty God to lay the foundation of industry, liberty and justice unto the generations of Ethiopia that they prove themselves a power among the nations and in the glory of their God.”⁴⁵ Defending Garvey against his detractors, Rogers commanded, “Raise not the weight of your finger on Marcus Garvey, neither speak ye against Him.”⁴⁶

Rogers and Garvey agreed on a number of issues, spiritual and material, including a belief that black people should conceive of God in their own image and seek economic empowerment. Garvey believed his program of economic self-reliance, which included the Black Star Line, the Negro Factories Corporation, and the Black Cross and Navigation Company, was a necessary complement to spiritual prophecies of African redemption. Rogers concurred: “For as much as the children of Ethiopia, God’s favorite people of old, have turned away from his divine Majesty, neglecting *life economic*, believing they could on spiritual wings fly to the kingdom of God, consequently became a dependent for the welfare of others.”⁴⁷

Rogers wrote the *Holy Piby: The Black Man’s Bible*, the preeminent sacred book of the House of Athlyi. The *Holy Piby* articulated an aggressive black liberationist theology, and it would later become a foundational text of Jamaica’s Rastafarian movement.⁴⁸ Rogers’s narrative included Twelve Commandments, otherwise known as the doctrine of Athlicanity. These commandments shared the Holy Bible’s injunctions to observe thriftiness, cleanliness, and honesty but made several significant departures. The *Holy Piby* interpreted the Battle of Adwa, in which Ethiopia defeated Italy in 1896, as a sign of impending black liberation.⁴⁹ Rogers also claimed that blacks could only attain the “Kingdom of God” if they demanded social justice on earth, instead of passively waiting for heavenly rewards.⁵⁰ The *Holy Piby* advocated the establishment of a powerful black nationality through unity and self-reliance and forbade blacks from fighting one another. Rogers’s text further refuted the “Hamitic Hypothesis,” said to be a biblical curse on blacks as the supposed descendants of Ham, a claim long used by white Christians to justify the oppression of African peoples. Rogers warned black Christians to eschew such biblical interpretations: “Woe be unto a race of people who forsake their own and adhere to the doctrine of another. They shall be slaves to the people thereof.”⁵¹ Rather, blacks should use the *Holy Piby* as their guiding religious text, as it contained “all worthy prophecies and inspirations endowed by God upon the sons and daughters of Ethiopia.”⁵²

The House of Athlyi, according to Rogers, had been established to provide “a real religious and material brotherhood among the children of Ethiopia” and to combat the “confusion and hatred” practiced by white Christians. Resorting to the language of Providential Design, Rogers asserted that God would “tear down the walls” of oppression he had “permitted to hold Ethiopia in bondage, that she may know the devil and his unrighteousness.” “Now I shall send forth an army of Athlyians who shall redeem my children and deliver them again to my arms.”⁵³ “When the Lord God of Ethiopia is with us in the battle for that to which we are entitled, show me the foe so powerful to set us down? Verily I say unto you there is none.”⁵⁴

In South Africa, such doctrines predictably met with strong official reproof. The local authorities in Kimberley denied Masogha land on which to build a church and school, while the national government refused to grant him and his ministers marriage licenses, denying them the right to marry congregants.⁵⁵ Considering the movement subversive, the authorities speculated that the term “Gaathly” was a contraction of Garvey and Athlyi, which “proved” that the “notorious Marcus Garvey” was a prime instigator of the House of Athlyi. Somehow, Masogha and his coworkers apparently managed to weather the storm of hostility: the House of Athlyi, or some remnants thereof, is reported to have been in existence as late as the 1980s.

“Dr. Wellington” and the Promise of American Negro Deliverance in the Transkei

Garveyism in South Africa took a particularly fascinating twist in the mid-1920s in the Transkei, when an African named Wellington Butelezi claimed the alternate identity of Dr. Butler Hansford Wellington, an “American Negro” and Garvey disciple. A largely rural area, the Transkei was quite different from Cape Town and Kimberley, the other two major centers of Garveyism in South Africa. Africans in the Transkei (and other rural districts) were subjected to a dizzying array of taxes, restrictions on landholding and cattle, economic exploitation by white traders, and pass laws that controlled their movement.

Wellington became an “American Negro” to legitimate his crusade against oppression in the Transkei and, not coincidentally, to advance his personal interests. Taking advantage of the high esteem in which many Africans held African Americans, he found fertile ground for his millenarian prophecies of imminent liberation, the agents of which would come from the other side of the black Atlantic. Wellington’s ingenious, if opportunistic, use of existing

African American liberatory myths created a brief but electrifying Garveyism in the Transkei, a movement that featured millenarian prophecies, churches and schools, and an increased identification with African Americans.

Wellington was an outsider to the Transkei, which is populated largely by Xhosa-speaking Africans. Wellington, by contrast, was a Zulu-speaker from the neighboring province of Natal. The oldest of five children, he was born on January 26, 1899, and named Wellington Elias Butelezi.⁵⁶ After attending a Lutheran mission school, he enrolled briefly at Lovedale Institute, a training ground for those aspiring to become members of the small African elite. On leaving Lovedale, Butelezi worked variously as salesman, clerk, teacher, and herbalist.⁵⁷

Then, in 1923, Butelezi took an important step toward becoming an “American Negro.” He petitioned the government to “alter or conceal my name as Elias Butelezi and put it for Butler Hansford Wellington,” a “Homeopathic Medical Practitioner and Specialist in Pediatric Diseases.”⁵⁸ The nomenclatorial transformation apparently was associated with an increasing interest in Garveyism. Wellington subsequently became acquainted with the Caribbean-born Ernest Wallace and other “American Negroes,” who had established UNIA branches in various parts of South Africa.⁵⁹ Soon, Wellington was organizing under his own UNIA banner, but he would achieve his greatest success in the Transkei.

“Dr. Wellington” attracted numerous followers with an intriguing tale. African American troops under the command of “General Garvey,” he told transfixed audiences, would descend on South Africa in airplanes. Armed with flaming balls of charcoal—the imageries were drawn from the Book of Revelation—the Americans would destroy the whites, along with those Africans who had refused to join the UNIA, or Wellington’s version of it. A modern black state would replace the segregationist regime, ushering in a new dispensation: “You are not going to pay taxes nor dip cattle. . . . Forces are coming, armies coming from America to drive the white people from Africa, to go to their own country. . . . People who did not register their names with him in his book will die together with the white people.”⁶⁰ The transatlantic black liberators, according to Wellington, were motivated by pan-African racial affinities, by a desire to return to their African homeland, and by a determination to redeem a promise, made by the British during World War I, to cede South Africa to the United States in exchange for military assistance.⁶¹ As if to give credibility to these fantastic assertions, Wellington claimed personally to have been wounded in the war while serving as a general in an exclusively African American army.⁶²

Wellington further maintained that the UNIA had sent him to Africa, along

with forty other men, to ascertain African interest in African American emigration. Those in favor of the return of transatlantic blacks would take out UNIA membership, which would offer them protection during the coming invasion.⁶³ The UNIA's shipping line, plus Garvey's stated intention to establish an aerial fleet to liberate Africa, seemed altogether consistent with Wellington's assertions that a "new and powerful race from the sea . . . dreaded by all European nations . . . will end tyranny and wrong."⁶⁴

So as to not be confused with unbelievers, who would perish with the arrival of the Americans, Wellington's followers took steps to distinguish themselves. They sported badges with red, black, and green (the colors of the UNIA), symbolizing a determination to "pull down the British Empire"; painted their houses black; and slaughtered pigs, white goats, and white fowl.⁶⁵ Wellington proclaimed the killing of pigs, which he said represented degradation, decay, and death, a necessary precondition for liberation.⁶⁶ On his account, the indiscriminate eating habits of the swine and its unsanitary ways made it an ideal carrier of tapeworms, which gave consumers of pork parasitic illnesses. Furthermore, the despised whites had introduced pigs and chickens into the region.⁶⁷ For good measure, Wellington announced, the American liberators would set pigs on fire with burning coals, using the animals as conduits to spread the fatal flames to unbelievers and their properties alike.⁶⁸ These apocalyptic predictions unnerved some unbelievers, whose public disavowals of Wellington did not prevent them from hiding in the forests to avoid detection by the coming Americans.⁶⁹

Wellington's American persona was crucial to his attempts to establish his legitimacy. He benefited from the fact that few Africans in the comparatively remote Transkei had ever met an "American Negro" and thus had difficulty uncovering his fraudulence. He also took advantage of the image of African Americans as quintessential black moderns, individuals with both the ability and the will to liberate their African fellow blacks. "Dr. Wellington" reinforced his modernist image by speaking only English at his meetings, by changing suits several times a day, and by touring the Transkei in a chauffeur-driven, American-made Dodge sedan. His supposed American medical degree further added to his allure.⁷⁰ These modernist means of deliverance seemingly confirmed a widespread belief that African Americans possessed the requisite educational, technological, and military capabilities to overthrow white supremacy in South Africa.

Wellington's success was due, in part, to his ability to weld the unfamiliar with the familiar. Thus he framed his prophecies in ways that resonated with

existing religious conceptions of the colonial state, to which many Africans attributed malevolent spiritual qualities. Africans believed Europeans to be “possessed of powerful materials for sorcery. . . . All *ubuthi* (magical substances) comes from Europeans. They are the real *amagqwira* (witches).”⁷¹ For the colonized Africans, taxation was a primary means by which the government demonstrated its tyrannical power. Payment of hut taxes allowed Africans access to land; poll taxes facilitated the acquisition of the passes needed by prospective migrant workers; and livestock levies allowed one’s cattle to graze freely and enabled one to borrow money against the cattle’s value.⁷² By the same token, nonpayment of taxes could mobilize the state’s powerful *ubuthi*, which partly explains why the vast majority of Africans paid the onerous levies that contributed to their material deprivation. This mindset also explains why Africans referred to the poll tax as *impundulu*, the common term for the destructive lightning storms that regularly killed people and livestock and burned homes. Tellingly, an alternate name for the poll tax was *inkosi*, or chief, a term that recognized the state’s dominant position.⁷³

Wellington, the respected herbalist with reputed magical powers, was now arguing that the *impundulu* of African Americans would overwhelm that of the Europeans. In this context, the fact that the Mpondo, an ethnic group in the southern Transkei, visualized the *impundulu* bird as red, white, and blue, the colors of the U.S. flag, is significant. Wellington beckoned his followers to gaze into a crystal ball that showed American airplanes, ships, and flying automobiles ready to attack, once Africans demonstrated their receptiveness to the plan. His magic mirror, reputedly an American invention, would turn British bullets into water. To alleviate widespread hunger exacerbated by recent droughts, Wellington held out to his followers the prospects of American ships loaded with cornmeal, which bounty could be supplemented by the harvests left by the vanquished unbelievers.⁷⁴

Some of Wellington’s lieutenants claimed to have actually seen the Americans and their military fortifications, and they repeatedly promised liberation on a date certain.⁷⁵ Forsaking the theme song of the British Empire, “God Save the King,” Wellingtonite children’s choirs now sang “Nkosi’ Sikeleli Afrika,” the anthem of African liberation, and other freedom tunes.⁷⁶ Other Wellingtonites boldly informed shocked magistrates that they would pay their movement’s membership dues instead of state taxes, and they refused to submit to mandated vaccinations.⁷⁷ One flabbergasted magistrate exclaimed, “I have never known any man to get such an influence over the natives in such a short time.”⁷⁸ Another official concurred: “The natives who to some extent resent the

increased taxation, firmly believe this man's saying and look to a happy time of release from European rule which the American Government will bring."⁷⁹

Wellington acolytes did not wait passively for the American liberators. They established some 200 churches and nearly as many schools as alternatives to white-controlled religious and educational institutions.⁸⁰ These independent churches and schools formed the institutional bedrock of Wellington's movement.⁸¹ The churches allowed members a religious space to articulate a liberationist Christianity and a setting in which to perform such functions as marriage ceremonies, thereby avoiding the onerous fees, burdensome documentation, and other alien requirements demanded by the colonial state and European ministers.⁸² Wellington also established a pair of more ambitious educational institutions, which he generously dubbed universities. And while the number of his most ardent adherents is impossible to ascertain, incessant complaints by government officials and other detractors suggest that his churches and schools were relatively, if perhaps fleetingly, well-attended. South African white supremacy ensured as much. As Wellington himself noted, "In schools you are taught to say Boss to any white man young or big all the same. Your names are Jim, John, George, Jack, etc. You go to Church but they won't mix with you."⁸³

Wellington's institutions featured a political, religious, and educational content that reaffirmed Garveyite principles and had an overt Africanism. Walter Sisulu, a onetime secretary general of the ANC and mentor to Nelson Mandela, attended one such school. His mother also taught at a Wellington institution. Sisulu remembered that African cultural values infused a curriculum that was otherwise similar to the one approved by the government. At the Wellington schools, for instance, the pupils prayed to "the God of Mtirara, or Langalibalele," precolonial African political figures, not to "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because they were white people."⁸⁴

Wellington's schools were subsidized by a portion of the dues paid by the members of his movement. Additional collections were supposed to pay for new schools, textbooks, and teachers from the United States. School fees provided yet another source of income. Most teachers came from the surrounding communities. Few of them, however, were educated above the eighth-grade level or had undergone teaching training. The problem of poorly educated and poorly paid teachers was exacerbated by inadequate facilities and equipment. Some teachers, left without formal school buildings, resorted to scribbling lessons on the walls of huts.⁸⁵ Harassment by the state, the missionaries, and other opponents of Wellington constituted another set of challenges. In time,

Wellington's own supporters became increasingly frustrated with his unfulfilled promises, especially of American teachers and textbooks.

Still, many of the Wellingtonite schools and churches persisted for many years, and they contributed greatly to a generalized unrest that characterized much of the Transkei in the late 1920s.⁸⁶ The missionary-run educational centers suffered drastic declines in enrollment during this period, as students defected to the Garveyite schools, sometimes in the face of physical attacks by the "Americans," as Wellington's followers called themselves. Government officials who sought to forcibly close the alternate schools were met with "assegais and sticks as though the enemy had approached." Some Wellingtonites even turned the tables, using boycotts and intimidation to force the closure of several white-run schools.

Yet, by the late 1920s, Wellington was under increased scrutiny from both friends and foes. His failure to produce the American liberators and promised American teachers and textbooks caused much disillusionment. Support faded, as "the Americans were said to be coming to Africa and people will not join the movement as they don't see the Americans."⁸⁷ Members increasingly resented Wellington's incessant demands for monies, much of which seemed only to line his pocket. External attacks joined the growing internal dissent. In 1927 the South African authorities banned Wellington from the Transkei. Henceforth, followers had to journey to the Cape Colony, a considerable distance for many, to see him.

To add insult to injury, Wellington's claims to be tied to the UNIA were exposed as fraudulent. Garvey himself disavowed the "Doctor," warning in the pages of the *Negro World* that Wellington was not a UNIA officer and had no authorization to collect money or establish chapters on its behalf.⁸⁸ Meanwhile, detractors inside South Africa disproved Wellington's other claim to fame, that is, his Americanness. Hecklers mocked Wellington by calling him Butelezi, his Zulu surname.⁸⁹ A Zulu headman noted Wellington's "Zulu tribal mark, a cut in the right ear, which he has sewn up."⁹⁰ Samuel Bennett Ncwana, formerly an ardent Garveyite, spoke of his personal knowledge of Wellington's Zulu birth.⁹¹ Wellington's own father delivered the coup de grace, affirming his son's Zuluness.⁹² Forced to abandon the charade that "nobody knows me in this country,"⁹³ Wellington fell silent on his origins. He subsequently confined his pronouncements to the familiar themes of white injustice, black institution building, and black liberationist Christianity.

In 1935 Wellington sought to reverse his declining fortune by capitalizing on widespread African revulsion to Italy's threats to, and eventual invasion of,

Ethiopia. Attendance at his meetings increased dramatically. He demanded a South African economic embargo on Italy and urged black South Africans to embark to “East Africa to defend your own people.”⁹⁴ Despite the popularity of the cause he now espoused, however, Wellington could not live down his past. Considering him untrustworthy, at least where money was concerned, his newfound listeners rebuffed his requests for funds, allegedly to support the Ethiopian resistance.⁹⁵

Throughout the 1930s Wellington repeatedly appealed to the government to reverse its ban and allow him to enter the Transkei and other prohibited areas for “educational and spiritual purposes only” and to visit his wife and child. He disavowed any political intent. The hostility of many white (and some black) churchmen toward him, he argued, was due to jealousy, notably the defection of African parishioners and schoolchildren to Wellingtonite churches and schools. He also invoked America to support his claims, stating that “there are lawful private schools in the U.S.A.”⁹⁶ The government, however, adamantly rejected his requests. Instead, the authorities jailed Wellington several times between 1937 and 1944 for, among other offenses, entering the Transkei without a pass, nonpayment of taxes, theft, and possession of alcohol.⁹⁷

An increasingly frustrated Wellington saw no end to government persecution and unsuccessfully attempted to leave the country. In the 1940s he resurfaced in various parts of South Africa, including the industrial center of Johannesburg. A somewhat sheepish sister, embarrassed by her brother’s infamy, admitted to one researcher that Wellington had visited her in the early 1950s, but she claimed no knowledge of his subsequent whereabouts. Wellington, who had electrified followers and vexed government officials in the 1920s and 1930s, simply disappeared from the public record, with no indication of his final fate.⁹⁸

In the end, however, Garveyism in the Transkei transcended Wellington. Many of the churches and schools established during the heyday of his movement continued to operate after his personal demise. Wellington’s decline and fall also opened the door for the emergence of an official Garveyite presence in the Transkei. Paul Gulwa, in direct communication with Garvey, established UNIA chapters in the Transkei, repeatedly donated monies to the international UNIA, and enrolled in Garvey’s School of African Philosophy. Furthermore, the prophetic tradition of externally driven liberation, which Wellington had exploited so well, survived him. During World War II, for example, UNIA adherents improbably put out word that the “Americans,” in conjunction with, of all forces, Hitler’s Germany, would overthrow the South African state.⁹⁹ The

Wellington phenomenon may also be seen as representing, at the rural and popular levels, a culmination of the intense reverence black South Africans had for their black American cousins, a feeling that had been in the making for decades, since the time of the Virginia Jubilee Singers, if not before. Most fundamentally, perhaps, the considerable currency given to the mythic promises of “American Negro” liberation reflected the profound alienation of the black South African masses from the segregationist state and their desperation for salvation from white domination.

Conclusion

“American Negroes” as models, metaphors, political icons, and disseminators of political thought were central to black internationalist politics in South Africa between 1890 and 1940. Garveyism was the culmination of this dynamic between the two world wars, and its pan-Africanist race-conscious ideals would remain important to successive African political groupings, such as the ANC Youth League of the 1940s and the Pan-Africanist Congress of the 1950s. The pan-Africanism and self-determination ethos of Garveyism are also reflected in the ideologies of the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s and 1980s and, later still, in former president Thabo Mbeki’s African Renaissance. Garveyism itself surfaces in eclectic geographical and cultural spaces in postapartheid South Africa. The country’s expanding Rastafarian communities are impassioned followers of Garvey, and there is a Rasta squatter settlement named Marcus Garvey near Cape Town’s airport. A mural at the University of Cape Town bears Garvey’s image, while South African musical icons from Kwaito groups like Bongo Maffin to reggae superstars like the late Lucky Dube articulate Garveyite perspectives. The recently revived Johannesburg-based UNIA has sought to harness this diffused energy in organizational politics. In a state visit to Jamaica, Mbeki took time to lay flowers at Garvey’s tombstone.

African Americans, exemplified most prominently by the Council on African Affairs in the 1940s and 1950s and the Congressional Black Caucus and TransAfrica in the 1970s and 1980s, were at the forefront of the antiapartheid movement in the United States. Today, thousands of African American entrepreneurs, corporate employees, diplomats, religious personnel, exiles, and tourists flock to South Africa. African American entertainers are a particularly ubiquitous presence in South African theaters, television and radio programs, and newspapers, thereby complementing the physical presence of American blacks. Though a dwindling number of South African octogenar-

ians remember the Garveyite-dominated interwar years as “the time of the Americans,” it is clear that the time of the Americans has not yet passed.

NOTES

1. See Vinson, “In the Time of the Americans” and “Americans Are Coming.” See also the important work of Edgar, “Garveyism in Africa,” and Hill and Pirió, “Africa for the Africans.” A recent article on Garveyism in southern Africa is West, “Seeds Are Sown.”

2. Rich, *State Power*, 39, 43. Standard texts on black South African politics include Walshe, *Rise of African Nationalism*; Odendaal, *Black Protest Politics*; and Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa*.

3. The general lack of focus on Africa in African Diaspora studies is reflected in the “African Diaspora” special issue of *African Studies Review* 43 (2000) and in the recent “transnational black studies” issue of the *Radical History Review* 87 (2003). Manning invokes the term “homeland and diaspora model” in “Africa and the African Diaspora.”

4. Beinart and Dubow, *Segregation and Apartheid*.

5. Hofmeyr, *South Africa*, 313–14.

6. Atkins, “Black Atlantic Communication Network,” 6–11.

7. *Leselinyana*, October 1, 1890, cited in Erlmann, *African Stars*, 44.

8. After 1902, South African governments became increasingly concerned that “American Negroes” were fomenting political discontent amongst Africans. The popularity of Garveyism contributed greatly to the virtual ban of African Americans from South Africa and was the death knell of their “honorary white” status. The apartheid-era South African government would revive the “honorary white” designation for visiting African Americans, including Max Yergan, Roy Wilkins, Arthur Ashe, and Eartha Kitt. See Vinson, “Citizenship over Race?” On Yergan, who had an especially long and complex history of engagement with South Africa, see Anthony, *Max Yergan*.

9. Cited in Moeti, “Ethiopianism,” 155.

10. For the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in South Africa, see Campbell, *Songs of Zion*. For historical context to the notion of Providential Design, see Moses, *Alexander Crummell*, and Blyden, *Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race*. For Henry McNeal Turner, see Redkey, *Respect Black*.

11. Stein, *World*, 64; Martin, *Race First*, 152. Other essential texts on Garveyism include Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions*; Hill, *Marcus Garvey*; Lewis and Bryan, *Garvey*; Vincent, *Black Power*; Cronon, *Black Moses*; and Tolbert, *UNIA and Black Los Angeles*.

12. Martin, *Race First*, 153.

13. South African Government Archives (hereafter SAGA), Papers of the Union Department of Native Affairs, Transvaal Archive Depot (hereafter NTS), Interior Department, Reports on Bolshevism 168/74B, vol. 2, file 7/168/74, “Ennis” to Marcus Garvey, May 9, 1920.

14. *Ibid.*, Secretary for Justice to Secretary for the Interior, December 8, 1920.

15. SAGA, Cape Province Depot (hereafter CA), 1/KNT 40 N1/9/2, affidavit of “Golifli” to Kentani Assistant Magistrate, December 14, 1920.

16. SAGA, NTS, Interior Department, Reports on Bolshevism 168/74B, vol. 2, file 7/168/74, Secretary for Justice to Secretary for the Interior, October 18, 1920.
17. Hill and Pirio, "Africa for the Africans," 211.
18. Josiel Lefela, article excerpt, *Naledi*, November 18, 1921, Public Records Office (England), Co 417/665/02597.
19. SAGA, GG 1728, file 51/6670, Gilbert Matshoba to Enoch Mgijima, August 1920. Matshoba was referring to the August 14, 1920, edition of *Umteteli wa Bantu*, which had reported on the 1920 UNIA convention in New York City, which took place that month.
20. The *Cape Argus*, a Cape Town newspaper, estimated the "American Negro" community at somewhat less than 200 persons; see *Cape Argus*, January 29, 1923.
21. "Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1904," cited in Cobley, "Far from Home," 358. For West Indians and black Americans in Port Elizabeth, see Kirk, *Making a Voice*.
22. James Ghazu in the *Negro World*, July 16, 1932. Ghazu was a black South African sailor who eventually became the president of the South African UNIA in the late 1930s. See Page, "Black America in White South Africa," 332.
23. The union's initials were ICU instead of the seemingly correct ICWU because the enunciation of ICU was an ominous threat by blacks to whites; "I see you" connoted the transparency and insecurity of white domination. The phrase has resonated in South Africa's black nationalist circles, being powerfully revived during Nelson Mandela's first speech after his February 1990 release from prison, when he rallied the crowd with the phrase, "I see you."
24. Kadalie, *My Life*, 220–21.
25. Wickins, *Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union*, 85. For Johnson, see *Black Man*, August 1920, and *Workers Herald*, March 27, 1926.
26. Killie Campbell African Library, University of Natal, J. S. Marwick Papers, Clements Kadalie to Samuel Ncwana, May 20, 1920, in Hill and Pirio, "Africa for the Africans," 215.
27. *Black Man*, August 1920.
28. The five branches were in Cape Town proper and in the city's suburbs of Woodstock, Claremont, Goodwood, and West London. The July 24, 1920, meeting of the Goodwood branch is the earliest documented Cape Town UNIA chapter.
29. SAGA, Transvaal Depot, 3/1064/18, Cape ANC meeting, 1923.
30. *Ibid.*, GG 1556, 50/1058, June 3, 1923. Of course, the slogan "One God, One Aim, One Destiny" was a UNIA invention; it was ubiquitous on UNIA printed material like the *Negro World*.
31. *Negro World*, June 20, July 18, 1925, April 24, 1926.
32. Burkett, *Black Redemption*, 5–6, 9–10.
33. Burkett, *Garveyism as a Religious Movement*, 33–34. AME ministers Richard Allen and Absalom Jones made the earliest documented articulation of Psalms 68:31, which AME-affiliated Ethiopianist ministers found so powerful a century later. See Jones and Allen, "Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People."
34. *Negro World*, February 19, 1921, 4. See also Burkett, *Garveyism as a Religious Movement*, 25.

35. *Negro World*, December 1, 1923, June 20, 1925.

36. *Negro World*, September 12, 1925, April 30, 1927.

37. Vinson, "In the Time of the Americans," 53; *Black Man*, November 1920; Hill, "Dread History"; Hill and Pirio, "Africa for the Africans," 219.

38. SAGA, NTS, 1455 file 128/214, memorandum of A. W. Richards, Divisional Inspector, Eastern Cape Division to District Commandants, South African Police, Eastern Cape Division, June 16, 1928; Superintendent, Native Locations, to the Chairman and Members, Locations Committee, October 3, 1925; Detective Constable J. D. Justus to Divisional Criminal Investigation Officer, Kimberley, May 14, 1928.

39. *Negro World*, April 18, 1925.

40. *Negro World*, September 13, 27, 1924, August 14, 1926.

41. *Negro World*, January 14, 1922.

42. *Negro World*, June 27, 1925, October 18, 1924, January 17, 1925.

43. The Afro-Athlican Constructive Gaathly Mamatic Church Hymn Book, published in 1926, listed "the House of Athlyi, World's Headquarters" at 253 Nyembane St., Kimberley, South Africa. See Hill, "Dread History," 34, 62 n. 18. For Masogha's address, see SAGA, NTS, 1455 file 128/214, Joseph Masogha to the Secretary for Native Affairs, June 30, 1925.

44. Rogers, *Holy Piby*, 10.

45. *Ibid.*, 6.

46. *Ibid.*, 54–55.

47. *Ibid.*, 25 (emphasis added).

48. There is virtually no scholarship on Rogers, an undeservedly neglected figure in pan-Africanist historiography. The notable exception is Hill, "Dread History." The *Holy Piby* was published on January 15, 1924. It and the Reverend Fitz Ballentine Pettersburgh's *Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy* were the foundational texts of the emergent Rastafarian religion in 1930s Jamaica. According to Hill, Leonard Howell's more famous text, *The Promised Key*, plagiarized heavily from the Pettersburgh book, which was reputedly published in 1926. There are few, if any, original copies of this work, though the text can be found online at <http://www.sacred_texts.com/afr/rps> (accessed February 1, 2008).

49. Rogers, *Holy Piby*, 9, 26–27, 30–31, 36–39, 42–46.

50. *Ibid.*, 9–10, 14, 22.

51. *Ibid.*, 45.

52. *Ibid.*, 7–10, 19.

53. *Ibid.*, 64.

54. SAGA, NTS, 1455 file 128/214, Application for Church Site, April 20, 1926.

55. *Ibid.*, Masogha to Secretary for Native Affairs, June 30, 1925; undated letter of R. A. Rogers to Secretary for the Interior; Secretary for Native Affairs to Secretary for the Interior, May 26, 1926; Superintendent, Native Locations, to Joseph Masogha, October 24, 1925; Superintendent, Native Locations, to Native Locations Department, May 20, 1926.

56. Another document gives his birth as January 1, 1899. See SAGA, Department of Native Affairs, 7602 file 25/328, pt. 2, R. D. Lyle, Pietermaritzburg Magistrate, to Natal Chief Native Commissioner, January 30, 1928.

57. Edgar, "African Educational Protest," 184–91 (esp. 184); SAGA, CA, 2/SPT 16 file NI/9/2, undated article by Rev. Allen Lea. In 1919, the Church of Sweden, which had baptized Wellington, excommunicated him for unexplained reasons. See SAGA, NTS, 7603 file 25/328, statement by J. E. Hallendorff, Church of Sweden missionary.

58. Wellington cited religious reasons for the requested name change and did so as part of an unsuccessful attempt to study medicine at Oxford University. See SAGA, CA, 2/SPT v. 16 file NI/9/3, P. Nkala, Secretary to B. H. Wellington, to the Secretary for Native Affairs, July 16, 1926.

59. SAGA, NTS, 7603 file 25/328, Matatiele Magistrate to Secretary for Native Affairs, August 14, 1928. The quote is reprinted from the *Matatiele Mail*, December 23, 1925.

60. *Umteteli wa Bantu*, January 15, 1927 in SAGA, CA, 1/TSO 5/1/19 file 3/16/6.

61. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 26/328, Rex vs. Albert Rulashe, Umtata, case no. 663/1928, June 11, 1928; Wilson, *Reaction to Conquest*, 371.

62. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 26/328, undated report of J. Z. Makongolo, court interpreter. The report details events that occurred on June 9, 1927.

63. *Ibid.*, affidavit of Daniel Dabulamanzi Mbebe, May 16, 1926; pt. 2, affidavit of Edgar Lonsdale, Tsolo Magistrate, March 12, 1927.

64. *Umteteli wa Bantu*, October 8, 1927.

65. *Umteteli wa Bantu*, January 8, 1927; SAGA, CA, 1/NKE 58 file NI/9/3, undated correspondence from Enoch Mgushulu to one Mr. Nyembezi; NTS 7602 file 26/328, pts. 2 and 3, R. Fyfe King, Tabankulu Magistrate, to Chief Magistrate, September 13, 1927.

66. SAGA, CA, 1/ECO 6/1/99 file 2/16/12, Engcobo Magistrate W. J. Davidson to Chief Magistrate, December 31, 1927. See also NTS 7603 file 26/328, Mount Ayliff Magistrate W. H. P. Freemantle to Chief Magistrate, September 19, 1927; pt. 4, F. N. Doran, Qumbu Magistrate to Chief Magistrate, September 26, 1927.

67. Bradford, *Taste of Freedom*, 225.

68. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 26/328, statement by Benson Gcina, Harding Natal, January 12, 1928; Natal Chief Inspector of Locations to Natal Chief Native Commissioner, January 23, 1928.

69. Personal communication with Jeff Peires, August 3, 2000. Wellington's "American Negro" prophecies tapped into similar "outside liberator" mythologies that had circulated in central and southern Africa since the nineteenth century. See Ranger, "Myth of the Afro-American Liberator," and Higginson, "Liberating the Captives."

70. SAGA, NTS, 7603 file 25/328, affidavit of Samuel Nkwali, January 5, 1927; James Coombs, Qumbu Sergeant, to SAP District Commandant, January 18, 1927; statement by Milton Majola, Matatiele CID Detective, December 12, 1928; Allen Lea, "Bantu Leadership: The Escapade of Wellington," *East London Dispatch*, November 29, 1927.

71. Wilson, *Reaction to Conquest*, 316–17.

72. Redding, "Government Witchcraft."

73. Wilson, *Reaction to Conquest*, 302.

74. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 25/328, James Coombs, Qumbu Sergeant, to District Commandant, January 18, 1927; undated affidavit of Frank Nolan Doran; affidavit of Qumbu constable Robert John Waldeck, March 10, 1927; undated affidavit of Umtata CID Detective Joseph Mho; pt. 2, statement by Constable Obed Sigenu, August 8, 1928. Wellington

later claimed to be “the doctor in Israel that will heal you of your leprosy” (statement by Eliezer Mguni, Umtata, January 31, 1929).

75. *Ibid.*, pt. 4, Frank Brownlee, Butterworth Magistrate, to Chief Magistrate, October 14, 1927; D. W. Semple to Qumbu Magistrate, November 26, 1927; Ngqeleni Sergeant to SAP District Commandant, December 10, 1927; SAGA, CA, 1/NKE 58 N1/9/2, Nqamakwe Magistrate to Chief Magistrate, October 29, 1927. According to these documents, the actual day of apocalypse shifted from several dates in April and May to November 7, December 5, and the vague “before Christmas.”

76. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 25/328, affidavit by Ncanywa Giyose, Nqamakwe, May 27, 1927.

77. *Ibid.*, pt. 4, undated affidavit of Joseph Mho, Umtatata CID Detective; F. N. Doran, Qumbu Magistrate, to Deputy Commissioner of Police, July 5, 1927. In two Qumbu locations known for their strong Wellington allegiance, only 142 of 1,600 Africans submitted to vaccination.

78. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 26/328, pts. 2 and 3, affidavit of Edgar Lonsdale, Tsolo Magistrate, March 12, 1927.

79. SAGA, CA, 1/TSO 5/1/19, file 3/16/6, statement by Edward Chalmers Bam, March 12, 1927. Bam was an interpreter in the Tsolo court and a perennial Wellington critic.

80. Edgar, “African Educational Protest,” 187; SAGA, NTS, 7603 file 26/328, pt. 4, Nqamakwe Magistrate A. L. Barrett to Chief Magistrate, October 6, 1927; NTS, 7602 file 26/328, pt. 4, undated report of N. A. Mazwai.

81. SAGA, CA, 1/MFE 8/1/14, file 2/12/4, SAP Sergeant to SAP District Commandant, December 19, 1927. The sergeant concluded that “it is not the uncivilized native who is keen on joining the organization but the half educated dressed native.” However, Wellington did attract some non-Christian, nonliterate Africans.

82. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 26/328 (A), Umtata Police Report, July 6, 1932; Lady Grey constable to Aliwal North Commandant, January 29, 1929.

83. SAGA, CA, 2/SPT 16, CID Report, August 15, 1928.

84. Interview by Robert Vinson of Walter Sisulu, Cape Town, April 26, 1998; 47th Annual Report of the South African Missionary Society (1928), cited in Edgar, “African Educational Protest,” 187.

85. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 26/328, Magisterial Court documents of Albert Rulashe, June 11, 1928.

86. SAGA, CA, 1/ECO 6/1/99 file 2/16/12, Engcobo district, was but one example of these multiple difficulties. See C. C. Harris to Engcobo Resident Magistrate, November 10, 1927; Engcobo Magistrate to Chief Magistrate, March 27, 1928, and the affidavit of Chief Alex Mgudlwa, May 20, 1929.

87. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 26/328, statement by Eliezer Mguni, January 31, 1929.

88. *Negro World*, July 30, 1927. The government, after considerable deliberation, decided not to publicize Garvey’s denunciation, not wishing to give free publicity to Garvey himself. See SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 25/328, pt. 4, undated correspondence of the Secretary for Native Affairs to the Chief Magistrate. However, rival organizations like the Cape African National Congress utilized Garvey’s denunciation in their efforts to

discredit Wellington. See the article by E. Mdolomba in *Imvo Zabantsundu*, February 14, 1928, reprinted in SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 25/328, pt. 2, February 17, 1928.

89. SAGA, CA, 2/SPT 16 file N1/9/2, Native Constable Sigenu to Herschel Magistrate August 15, 1928; CA, 1/ELN box 86, South African Police Report, January 24, 1929.

90. SAGA, CA, 1/QBU 2/17, Frank Doran, Qumbu Resident Magistrate, to Robert Welsh, Mount Fletcher Resident Magistrate, February 15, 1927.

91. SAGA, CA, 2/SPT 16 file N1/9/2, statement of Samuel Michael Bennett Ncwana, August 23, 1928.

92. *Ibid.*, Tandinyaniso, "Concerning Herschel," *Umteteli wa Bantu*, April 21, 1928.

93. *Ibid.*, Native Constable Sigenu to Herschel Magistrate, August 15, 1928.

94. SAGA, NTS, 7603 file 25/328 (A), CID reports of April 6, September 5, December 6, 1935.

95. *Ibid.*, CID report, January 3, 1936.

96. SAGA, NTS, 7602 file 26/328 (A), Wellington to Minister of Native Affairs, November 4, 1936.

97. SAGA, NTS, 7603 file 25/328, pt. 4, Magistrate to the Secretary for Native Affairs, December 4, 1939; B. H. Wellington to Minister of Native Affairs June 23, 1944.

98. *Ibid.*, Secretary for Native Affairs to B. H. H. Wellington, December 8, 1947. The interviewer was Lwandle Kunene, who visited his sister, a nun, in Swaziland during the 1970s.

99. Beinart and Bundy, *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa*, 199; SAGA, NTS, 1681 file 2/276, pt. 2, affidavit of Melvin Hlamvana, June 13, 1940. The African American liberation myth also extended beyond Garvey. For example, in 1937 the Transkeian Bunga reported that an unnamed ex-Wellingtonite now followed "the Negro Father Divine, an American about whom there was something in the papers yesterday." See NTS, 7602 file 25/328, Minutes of the 1937 United Transkeian General Council.