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1 *The ICU, the Mines and the State in South West Africa, 1920–1926: Garveyism, Revolutionary Syndicalism and Global Labour History*

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Introduction

The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa (ICU), formed in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1919, was not just the largest black and coloured ('mixed race', 'brown') protest movement in 1920s South Africa, it was also a transnational movement in aim and fact.¹ Resolving at its July 1920 congress at Bloemfontein, South Africa, on 'one great union of skilled and unskilled workers of Africa',² it spread into South West Africa in 1920, Swaziland around 1926, Southern Rhodesia in 1927, Basutoland in 1928 and Northern Rhodesia in 1931. As Henry Dee notes in this volume, it also had enthusiasts in Nyasaland and Mozambique,³ although apparently no organised presence.

The ICU articulated a range of ideas, visions and grievances. It blended a class-based socialist language, directly derived from revolutionary syndicalists like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, 'Wobblies') later buttressed by some Marxism, with Pan-African nationalism (notably Garveyism) – and Christian, liberal, Marxist and social-democratic influences.

The ICU in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia developed into mass movements.⁴ The other sections in the subcontinent were more modest: for example, there were two delegates from Basutoland at the ICU's July 1920 conference in Bloemfontein, and two again at its December 1927 conference in Durban, but branches were only founded in 1928, and proved short-lived.⁵ The South West African ICU was another of the smaller sections. It operated in a large but sparsely populated territory, claimed by the German empire in 1884 but conquered by its southern neighbour, South Africa, during the First World War. Following military occupation in 1915, South Africa – a British Dominion and the most powerful, developed state in the region – ruled the colony under a League of Nations mandate.

The South West African ICU was centred on relatively cosmopolitan Lüderitz,⁶ a small port town linked to local diamond fields and the fishing industry. However, from 1922, it also had a presence to the east in Keetmanshoop, around 330 kilometres inland by rail, a small administrative centre and railway hub in the midst of sheep farms; by 1926, to the south in Elizabeth Bay, a diamond mining town 25 kilometres from Lüderitz; and that same year in Walvis Bay, 750 kilometres to the north, a South African exclave that dated to the 1790s.⁷

It was tiny in comparison to the two big ICUs, but the historical significance of an organisation is not simply an outcome of its size. The South West African ICU was the first labour union based amongst black Africans and coloureds in that colony. It was also one of the first unions with a large membership of workers of colour in Southern Africa outside of South Africa.⁸ It was preceded only by the 1911 *Associação das Artes Gráficas de Lourenço Marques* in Mozambique.

Thirdly, the South West African ICU appears in a different light when located within regional processes of class formation and struggle, rather than viewed in isolation. It was, after all, part of a larger ICU movement that aspired (in the words of an ICU organiser in Southern Rhodesia) to burn 'like veld fire' across and beyond the subcontinent.⁹ As the global labour history approach notes, the 'methodological nationalism' of traditional labour (and political) history – where the nation-state's territory is taken as the self-evident unit of analysis – ignores transnational processes.¹⁰ An examination of cross-border connections, and the development of multi-country comparisons, can shed new light on labour movements in Southern Africa, including the ICU.¹¹ The full story of the ICU requires not just fuller attention to the nuances of its complex politics, but a reframing of its history around a regional rather than a national framework, and a fuller account of the history of its smaller sections.¹²

This chapter, besides providing a partial reconstruction of the history and politics of the South West African ICU, is particularly interested in explaining why the union emerged when and where it did, and the factors that enabled and shaped, as well as limited its activities, spread and concerns. It was the first ICU outside of South Africa by far, emerging within two years of the mother body, which was founded in Cape Town in January 1919. It proved far more durable than the small ICU sections established in Basutoland, Northern Rhodesia and Swaziland, lasting over five years. Yet, it shared with them an inability to develop a mass base, or a countrywide character, unlike the South African ICU and the ICU *yase* Rhodesia.

Besides contributing to the larger study of the ICU movement, this chapter also contributes to the history of labour and protest in Namibia, and to a fuller understanding of the complexities of well over 150 years of connections, overlaps and entanglements between South Africa and South West Africa. The analysis draws heavily on the global labour history approach, in rejecting nationalist narratives, in paying close attention to cross-border connections and processes, and in using comparisons to identify some key issues.

This chapter argues that the ICU was an important pioneer of labour unionism and socialist ideas in South West Africa, intersected with the local Garvey movement in important ways, and can only be adequately understood by taking its connections with South Africa seriously. The South West African ICU championed the interests of a diverse range of people of colour, including South African coloured and local black African migrants, local workers, Afro-Caribbeans and West Africans, and not just proletarian, but also small business, interests. It intersected with the Garveyite

movement in important ways but was a distinct formation. Its rise and fall cannot be understood outside of the context of a rapidly growing, highly concentrated but small, multi-racial and multi-national working class in southern South West Africa, centred on primary industries, in a repressive, racist colonial context.

Historiography and the South West African ICU

There is a significant, if largely dated, body of literature on the largest ICUs, those of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. While the South West African ICU makes occasional appearances in studies of the South African body, it has received little attention. This is partly because of the paucity of work on the history of labour and the larger left in South West Africa: labour studies centre on an exposé of grim colonial (more recently, post-colonial) labour markets and working conditions, or studies of the new union movement established from the late 1970s, and linked to the (illegal) nationalist South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), which was founded in 1960.

Yet unions emerged sixty years earlier, around 1914: later than Mozambique or South Africa, but contemporaneously with the rise of unions in the Rhodesias, and slightly ahead of Angola. A trade union was established in the port of Lüderitz by 1914,¹³ by the small and then largely German-speaking white working class that emerged in the German period.¹⁴ White workers were concentrated in harbours, mines and railways, with 702 whites and 8,740 black Africans employed in mining and prospecting in 1924.¹⁵ By 1920, there was a small union federation, stretching all the way to the Tsumeb copper mines in the far north near Angola, with its own weekly, the *Volksblatt*.¹⁶

Black African workers went on strike as early as 1893, and first unionised in 1920 with the ICU. At this time, socialist literature was also readily available, from Germany (including the social-democratic *Freiheit* and communist *Rote Fahne*) and South Africa, whose revolutionary syndicalist International Socialist League was also active in the colony.¹⁷ Around 1928, the *Arbeiterverbandes für Südwestafrika* applied to join the International Federation of Trade Unions (as did the South African ICU);¹⁸ it also sought to affiliate to the multi-racial South African Trade Union Congress.¹⁹ Numerous other unions emerged from the 1930s onwards, and there was a strike wave in the 1950s. A South West African Labour and Farmers' Party was formed in 1931, with W.H. Fischer of the *Arbeiterverband* winning the seat for Kolmanskop, a mining town near Lüderitz.

There is, nonetheless, very little in the way of a labour or social history of the working class in Namibia. Such gaps are partly the result of the very limited literature on many elements of Namibian history and society. This does not, however, quite explain why some periods and themes rather than others have been largely ignored. Several other factors need to be noted.

One is the long-established tendency by writers across the intellectual and political spectrum to analyse the country primarily in terms of inter-group relations between

racess and ethnicities e.g., ‘the whites’, ‘the Herero’, ‘the Nama’, and ‘the people’. Divisions within these neatly bounded groups are then typically reduced to differing views on what the group should and could do. In more left-wing and nationalist accounts, the inter-group relations approach remains, but framed by an emphasis on the evils of German and South African colonial rule, and a teleological story of ‘popular resistance’ developing into that of an emergent Namibian nation.

There is not much scope, within these essentially pluralist approaches, for attention to structured internal conflicts and cross-cutting divisions on class lines. The reduction of ‘resistance’ to a vaguely defined anti-colonialism makes it difficult to consider issues like class struggles between African aristocrats and commoners, or workers’ opposition to capitalism as such. Working-class struggles matter here only as purported examples of national struggle; there is no real place here for things like white trade unions, readers of *Freiheit*, anarchists in 1920s Windhoek,²⁰ or local Black Consciousness and Trotskyism.²¹

The conflation of labour activism and nationalist politics, a recent survey notes, has profoundly ‘inhibited our ability to conduct meaningful studies of labour relations, labour policy and the history of workers’.²² It has led, *inter alia*, to misunderstanding the timeline and complexities of the labour movement. Thus, the SACP’s South West Africa expert Ruth First would claim, in 1963, that unions first emerged with two short-lived efforts in Lüderitz in 1949–1952, after which there were supposedly ‘no unions’.²³ Even in the early 1980s, the main labour organisations in the country were long-established white or formerly white unions, not SWAPO-linked bodies.²⁴

Further, perceptions of Namibian history have been deeply structured by the crudest variant of the preceding approach: the assiduously promoted patriotic history that presents the rise of SWAPO and the start of its armed struggle in the north in 1966 as the inevitable and obvious culmination of a century of resistance.

But this effort at naturalising nationalism and SWAPO cannot explain why mass nationalism was absent for most of the colonial period, or why SWAPO’s influence was always so limited in the southern half of Namibia. In South West Africa, as elsewhere, nationalism is demonstrably only one of many responses to colonial and national oppression, and indeed, just one current within national liberation struggles – consider, for example, the role of anarchism in Korea or Ukraine, or Marxism-Leninism in Angola or Vietnam. It also rests, obviously, on a methodological nationalism that assumes the borders of South West Africa constitute the container of the Namibian story, with activities understood as exile, international solidarity, or as South African colonialism.

The SWAPO nationalist narrative is a significant obstacle to labour history in its effacement of class divisions, its presentation of workers and unions as simply adjuncts to nationalism, and its heavy focus on older rural uprisings, presented as antecedents of its own largely rural armed struggle, concentrated near the Angolan border.

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that the South West African ICU is substantively discussed in only three works: Gregory Piro’s 1982 paper on Garveyism in the making of Namibian nationalism, the notes in the published Marcus Garvey papers, and Tony Emmett’s pioneering 1987 PhD on ‘The Rise of African Nationalism in South West Africa/Namibia, 1915–1966’.

Pirio, working on the Marcus Garvey Papers Project, focused on demonstrating the influence of Garveyism on 1920s South Africa and South West Africa, especially on the ICU.²⁵ Despite fundamentally incorrect claims that the ICU was the ‘labour wing of the Garvey movement’, and Garveyism the ‘ideological underpinning’ of 1920s mass black politics in both Namibia and South Africa,²⁶ Pirio provided the first analysis of the ICU in Lüderitz, and its connections to South African-based ICU activists including J.C. Gumbs, Clements Kadalie and S. Bennet Ncwana, editor of *The Black Man* from 1920, which was (briefly) an official ICU organ.²⁷

The Africa volumes of the published Marcus Garvey Papers, which appeared in 1995 and 2006, include notes on the Lüderitz ICU.²⁸ Like Pirio, the editors were primarily interested in the ICU (and other formations) only insofar as they intersected with Garveyism and seemed to affirm its influence. For example, the discussion of the Watch Tower movement skipped over almost all its religious doctrines in order to hone in on a few Garveyite traces.²⁹

Emmett’s work on Namibian resistance history, on the other hand, had a far wider scope, and provided a more balanced view of the ICU.³⁰ It had two main limits. First, the work on the ICU was narrowly concerned with the early years of the Lüderitz ICU. Secondly, it was framed by Emmett’s interest in finding ‘the origins of Namibian nationalism’ within earlier struggles against ‘colonial authority’, which were retroactively dubbed an ‘early and “underdeveloped” expression of nationalism’,³¹ as if these were self-evidently ‘nationalist’ or invariably led to ‘modern’ nationalism.

A new approach to the South West African ICU

Thus, key approaches to the study of Namibian history struggle to deal with the South West African ICU, which had a multi-national membership, preceded the SWAPO unions by 50 years, was southern and urban, was highly political but independent of parties, emphasised class rather than a Namibian nationalism, and which was so firmly embedded in the regional ICU that its branches sent delegates to ICU congresses in South Africa rather than hold their own national congresses (see below).

By moving away from methodological nationalism and nationalist histories, it becomes possible to construct a richer and more balanced account of the ICU movement, including in South West Africa. This requires rejecting general accounts of colonial oppression in favour of class analysis, dispensing with nationalist teleologies, in order to understand the rise, durability and limitations of the union.

The brute fact of oppression simply cannot explain why the ICU emerged when and where it did, what it did and why, or why it was not able to move beyond a fairly

narrow zone of southern and coastal Namibia. This requires, at the least, attention to transnational processes and movements, and avoiding selective, often anachronistic and sometimes false nationalist mythologies.

It is useful to consider the ICU in a different way. In what follows, I suggest that the following factors must be considered in explaining its rise and characteristic features: the consolidation of a stratified, urban working class in the colony; the importance of transnational processes of class struggle as well as cross-border connections through immigrants and the circulation of dissident ideas, news and papers; and the peculiar characteristics of the urban enclaves in which the ICU operated. These self-same factors, which enabled the ICU in important ways, also limited it profoundly, accounting in substantial part – but not entirely – for its failure to develop a mass base and colony-wide presence.

Working-class formation: A basis for the ICU

The lush north of South West Africa, towards the Angolan border, was home to large Bantu-language-speaking black African farming societies: the Ovambo alone accounted for over half the colonial population of 200 000 in the 1910s. It was largely barred to whites outside of a few mining concessions. In the east, there was a small Tswana-speaking population, with connections to neighbouring Bechuanaland.

The arid central and southern region of South West Africa, or *Polizei-Zone* (later, the 'Police Zone'), was far more sparsely populated, largely by San (so-called 'Bushman') hunter-gatherers, pastoralists both Bantu-speaking (like Herero) and Khoi (so-called 'Hottentot', like Damara); the latter blurred into Afrikaans-speaking Baster,³² coloured, Oorlam and Nama pastoralists who trekked from South Africa from the 1700s. Windhoek, the German colonial capital, was actually founded by Oorlam in 1840.

A mixture of diplomacy and war opened the Police Zone to white settlement, especially a brutal German imperial war against Herero and Nama rebels in 1904–1908 that killed off more than half these populations. This war was followed by devastating land and livestock expropriations. By the end of German rule, half of the total land area was opened to whites on a freehold basis. The Namib desert made up much of the zone, and the dry, hot climate and limited vegetation of the remainder helped ensure that sheep farming on vast ranches was predominant.

Many white farmers, even in the early South African period, were under-capitalised and relatively poor: given low wages and a shortage of labour, it was common for workers – predominantly Nama – to also receive grazing rights for their own herds.³³ Although several reserve areas were declared in the Police Zone, notably the Berseba Hottentot Territory (later 'Namaland') north of Keetmanshoop, these were overcrowded and highly stratified. With farm labour unattractive and reserve life precarious, many sought urban jobs in the southern towns, especially Keetmanshoop and Lüderitz.³⁴

Given absolute labour shortages, as well as specific gaps in key jobs, other labour supplies were tapped. German workers, especially artisans, were brought in on a large scale before the South African occupation. By 1914, there were 14, 000 whites in the colony, of which 12, 000 were Germans, with most of the rest Afrikaners.³⁵ Afrikaners started to arrive in the ill-fated *dorsland* treks of the 1870s – pastoralist migrations that reached into Angola – while others came as transport riders in the 1900s. Given that the number of whites involved in agriculture was tiny – there were just 500 white farms in the Police Zone in 1907, rising to 1 300 in 1913 –³⁶ it is obvious that most whites were urban, and a great many were reliant on wage labour.

While around half the German population was (mostly forcibly) repatriated after the occupation, provision was made for the rest to access South African citizenship and white South African immigration was meanwhile encouraged, partly to shift 'poor whites' to the new territory, and partly to fill empty posts on the mines and elsewhere. By 1926, the white population had almost doubled to 24 000, of which half were Afrikaans-speaking, and 10% English-speaking, including Jews.³⁷

Secondly, under German rule there was also substantial use of black African and coloured workers from outside the colony in a range of jobs. Coloured and black workers were actively recruited in Cape Town from 1904, including men from the Eastern Cape, Xhosa-speaking areas.³⁸ The Cape Coloured population was substantial enough to sustain cultural associations and a local version of the Cape Town Carnival.³⁹ This sort of recruitment continued to some extent under South African rule;⁴⁰ coloureds from South Africa were a mainstay of Lüderitz crayfish operations into (at least) the 1950s.⁴¹

South West Africa was, at the time, one of the most attractive labour markets in Southern Africa,⁴² and these non-Namibian workers were able to secure rights and wages substantially better than locals employed on the farms, or the migrant labour recruited in the north. Increasing use was made in the south of black men recruited north of the Police Zone. Most were from Ovamboland, followed by adjacent Kavongo, but a few came from Angola; Walvis Bay also used migrants, but drew heavily from South Africa itself. These men were 'migrant labourers' in the Southern African sense: men whose families maintained rural homesteads, while they worked elsewhere on fixed contracts, especially in mines and rail as, in South Africa and the Rhodesias, such men were increasingly housed in closed compounds and under contracts that amounted to indenture.⁴³

It is essential, when understanding this growing working class, to note, first, that South West Africa was, and remains extremely sparsely populated. With the local or indigenous population estimated at 200 000 in the 1910s, the total population was 214 000 on the eve of the First World War. This was less than the population of Johannesburg at the time,⁴⁴ although South West Africa was two-thirds the size of South Africa. Only a third of the total was in the Police Zone, either near the coast or in the scrublands of the east.

These South Africans were prominent in ports like Lüderitz and Swakopmund, along with Afro-Caribbeans, Cameroonians and Liberians (the latter were so-called 'Kroo-boys', or 'Kru'). Many were employed by German shipping companies, which relied heavily on West Africans, but many Liberians moved into jobs in finance, government, mining, railways and restaurants.⁴⁵ Liberians and black and coloured South Africans were the largest groups of 'foreign' workers, after Germans and South African whites.⁴⁶

Not only were the rural areas of the zone sparsely populated overall, but its towns were also tiny by South African or Rhodesian standards. In 1916, Lüderitz had just 1 600 white residents, predominantly Germans.⁴⁷ Lüderitz, founded in 1883 as a trading post, was the colony's only harbour besides Swakopmund before 1920. It was also a railway hub, with a line running east through the surrounding Namib desert completed in 1908 when it reached Keetmanshoop, the key town in the sheep farming region in interior.

But Lüderitz really took off when diamond fields were opened in the desert to the south from 1908. This led to the declaration of a large *Sperrgebiet* for the exclusive use of diamond companies and the establishment of a line of mining towns in the desert, running from Kolmanskop through Elizabeth Bay, Pomona and Bogenfels, linked up by a private railway line. These were company towns, not municipalities with power over large rural hinterlands like Lüderitz and Keetmanshoop. Kolmanskop, the largest and richest, had a population of just 1 100 in the late 1920s, including 800 black migrant workers.⁴⁸

The diamond boom was not the start of capitalist mining in South West Africa, as this started at Tsumeb in 1900, but it made the colony profitable for the first time.⁴⁹ It made Lüderitz an extremely important town, and it seemed possible that it would displace Windhoek as the capital.⁵⁰ It became a crucial adjunct to the diamond industry, the site of a local Chamber of Mines, the first stock exchange, of engineering and ship repair works, and a key place for importing machinery, food and fresh water. It became the 'the major industrial enclave in Namibia' at the time,⁵¹ although it should also be seen as a key node in the complex of diamond mining towns and the colonial transport infrastructure in the Police Zone, and as closely connected to Keetmanshoop in the interior. There was also a growing fishing industry (including processing and canning).

These small urban centres that accommodated the working class were crucial to the formation of a stratified working class in South West Africa. This was concentrated in large private capitalist operations, like mines, or state operations, like railways, harbours and municipalities. Migrant labourers, as well as the local people of the Police Zone, were enmeshed in a labour relations system rooted in restrictions on land ownership and livestock and centred on coercion and a system of registration books (under the Germans) and passes (under South Africa).⁵² By contrast, most of the Caribbean, West African and South African white workers were more-or-less free labour in the classic sense, but were further divided by race, skill and nationality.

Like Lüderitz and Keetmanshoop, the mining towns were typically segregated into three: a white area, an out-of-sight 'location' for black and coloured people – usually a grim slum – and compounds for migrant workers. The residential parts of the white area, in turn, were divided between the homes of the elite, more modest family housing, and hostels for single working men.

The South African take-over had some effects but did not fundamentally affect the social structure. German investments were fairly rapidly displaced by South African private capital, notably the diamond mines where Consolidated Diamond Mines, an Anglo American Corporation operation, established a monopoly from 1919. The South African state took control of state lands, engaged in a renewed round of land seizures, and its state corporations expanded across the colony. Thus, SA Railways and Harbours (SAR&H) took over the Lüderitz docks as well as the railways through its South West African division, and further integrated the railways into the South African grid with a new line running from Upington to Keetmanshoop. The South African state retained some demarcations and regulations like the Police Zone and *Sperrgebiet* in the colony, but made some reforms, such as replacing the registration book system with an internal passport ('pass law') system, and increasingly ruled South West Africa as a fifth province.

The rise of the South West African ICU

Clearly, objective conditions now enabled the emergence of something like the ICU. However, the rise of the ICU, as an actual working-class movement, required something more, and here it is essential to take account of both local dynamics and transnational processes.

Exactly how, or when, the Lüderitz ICU was established remain murky but its emergence was closely linked to the great wave of strikes that rocked Southern Africa from 1917–1925, including in South West Africa.⁵³ As elsewhere, post-war inflation was an important cause of this transnational working-class rebellion, although of course this intersected with local dynamics.⁵⁴ The diamond industry was closed down during the early part of the First World War, leading to substantial wage losses. Workers like the Kru were also aggrieved by losses incurred due to being conscripted into the German war effort, and by declining wages and employment under South African rule.⁵⁵ From 1917, South Africa detailed German abuses and racism as part of its war-time propaganda and in order to buttress its post-war claims on the territory.⁵⁶ There were hopes that its rule would lead to real improvements, and the dashing of this hope contributed directly to strike action on the mines of the south.⁵⁷

In July 1919, white workers won a strike on the diamond fields in the face of martial law,⁵⁸ doubtless inspiring other workers to similar actions. In 1920, rumours of a general strike swept Lüderitz. On 3 May, 'Ovambos (about 250 of them) and 5 Cape Boys [i.e., coloureds] struck work at Charlottental, and marched to Lüderitzbucht with all their kit and chattels', followed by strikes at Bogenfels, Ponomia and

Stachslager, again including compound and daily workers, among the latter coloureds, 'Hottentots' and Liberians.⁵⁹

At this point, the importance of cross-border connections through immigrants and the circulation of a dissident press becomes important. While the Ovambo went back to work (and their compounds) at Ponoma, 30 daily-paid workers – coloureds, Kru and Khoi (most probably, Nama from the east) – refused to return without concrete wage gains. They were then expelled to Lüderitz on a special train.

The Lüderitz magistrate believed that South African coloureds 'had fomented the trouble all along the line' and identified one 'Laguma' as an instigator at Ponoma; he recommended he be deported, an opinion shared by the local police. 'Laguma' was Jimmy La Guma, a young coloured worker from Cape Town with some familiarity with socialist literature, who had worked in South West Africa since 1910, on a farm, the railways and then the diamond fields.

La Guma's own account of the Ponoma events matches that of the Lüderitz magistrate, although it gives the year of the strike as 1918.⁶⁰ It provides important details that fill out the story and underline the importance of radical immigrants: apparently, he helped initiate a workers' committee including (South African) Xhosa, local Khoi and Ovambo; he was secretary while another coloured, William Adriaanse, was chair. The committee issued a letter of demand to management and, receiving no response, workers downed tools. La Guma, in taking such actions, drew on his 'mainly theoretical knowledge of the class struggle and the trade union movement'.⁶¹

Adriaanse and La Guma were among those shipped off to Lüderitz, where they would help found the ICU a few months later. La Guma was not deported from the colony, but he was 'black-balled' on the mines. He survived by working on ships at the harbour and threw himself into protests by coloureds against efforts to put them under the pass laws and was arrested as a ring-leader.⁶² Among others arrested was a certain Pieterse, described by La Guma as a 'one-armed school teacher', also a coloured, who authorities suspected of being an ICU agent from Cape Town.⁶³

Much of the initiative to form an ICU section came from these immigrants. According to La Guma, white workers did show some sympathy with black and coloured strikers, who marched to the trains under a tattered red flag cobbled together from a stick and a borrowed neckerchief. As 'the trains steamed slowly away' from Ponoma, the 'German artisans working in the machine-shops looked up ... lowered their tools and raised their clenched fists in salute'.⁶⁴ But these workers, the best paid and best treated, and predominant in the skilled jobs, seem to have shown little interest in organising across the colour line.

But why, then, did Adriaanse and La Guma not form a completely new union of their own? Here the transnational circulation of dissident ideas, news and publications was crucial. La Guma was deeply impressed by reports of the joint December 1919 strike on the Cape Town docks by the ICU and the syndicalist Industrial Workers of Africa (IWA), against the SAR&H as well as the private shipping and stevedoring firms.⁶⁵

These were the very same types of employers who predominated in Lüderitz. It also worth noting at this point that many ICU struggles in South Africa in the early years, including at Bloemfontein, Cape Town, East London and Port Elizabeth, involved workers in municipalities or on the state-run harbours and railways. Interest in the ICU's anti-capitalist rhetoric has tended to obscure the extent to which it was, at least before the mid-1920s, a union substantially based in the state sector. The ICU would surely have seemed a good fit for Lüderitz, and for La Guma himself, with his railways background and current employment at the port.

Copies of the ICU's *Black Man* also circulated in Lüderitz at the time, with John de Clue, Afro-Caribbean and owner of one of four black businesses in the Lüderitz 'location',⁶⁶ listed as its local agent; evidently, he corresponded with Ncwana.⁶⁷ The paper carried enthusiastic reports on ICU progress, including details of the July 1920 congress which saw the IWA and other unions merge under the ICU banner. Its programme, insisting on coloured/ black unity, abolishing pass laws, and organising all workers regardless of sector, sex or sector,⁶⁸ would have spoken directly to the experiences and concerns of men like Adriaanse, La Guma and Pieterse.

The ICU's 'one great union' model probably also seemed ideally suited to Lüderitz, which was not based on a large concentration of workers facing a single employer like the diamond towns. Rather, the workforce was split between employees of shipping and stevedoring firms, the SAR&H, the municipality, the fishing companies, and small firms, such as engineering workshops and restaurants.

Emmett asserts the ICU was founded in December 1920.⁶⁹ The leadership included Adriaanse, De Clue and La Guma; Pieterse and one Hannibal, also an Afro-Caribbean storekeeper, were also founder members; a Nama, Jacob Jantjes, would serve on the committee.⁷⁰ The secretary post was a paid one, held by La Guma and after his return to South Africa in 1921, by Adriaanse.⁷¹ Adriaanse remained active for some time, as did a Mr Wood.⁷² Unlike the ICU in the Rhodesias, Kadalie's Nyasa compatriots provided neither agitators nor a communications network for the union in South West Africa. The immigrants that counted in spreading the union to the northern colony were coloured South Africans.

The formation of a South West African body was reported at the January 1921 conference of the ICU in Cape Town, and De Clue of Lüderitz attended the October 1921 ICU congress in Port Elizabeth.⁷³ In 1922, the ICU was established in Keetmanshoop, which, like Lüderitz, had a (relatively large) population of several thousand: these were the two biggest towns in the south. Keetmanshoop started as a Nama settlement and Rhenish mission station in the 1860s. In the 1900s, it was a growing town, benefitting from its role as a military centre, and its growing importance as an administrative centre, covering 34 farms in 1913.⁷⁴ Keetmanshoop had a larger white population than Lüderitz and a black population of 1 720 in 1929.⁷⁵ But like Lüderitz, its importance from the 1910s rested increasingly on its role as a transport hub. It connected the railway from Lüderitz to a north-south line running that reached Windhoek, 460 kilometres to the north, in 1912, under

the Germans; under South Africa, it was connected to Upington, South Africa, 470 kilometres to the south by the SAR&H.

The town was thus crucial to the railways – the main transport infrastructure in the southern interior – and to the growing number of sheep farms; it was also the site of shops and services and an important administrative centre. It was by rail and through Keetmanshoop that Ovambo and other migrant labourers from the north reached the mines of the south. In addition to the town 'location', home to coloureds, Herero, Nama and Ovambo,⁷⁶ there was a railway compound 'set apart for natives and coloureds, in which there were some hundreds of natives', some apparently with families.⁷⁷ It seems clear that the union spread along the railway line.

The South West African ICU was never designated a separate national section, unlike the ICU *yase* Rhodesia; rather, its branches sent delegates to ICU congresses in South Africa, as was the case with the ICU in Basutoland. The two early South West African branches had seats at the January 1923 congress in Cape Town, both represented by Jimmy La Guma, who was resident in South Africa from 1921. There do not seem to have been delegates at the January 1924 conference in East London, but De Clue was present at the April 1925 congress in Johannesburg.

In October 1922, the ICU's President-General, J.C. Gumbs, visited both Lüderitz and Keetmanshoop. He presumably met the Keetmanshoop branch when he visited the town in 1922.⁷⁸ Gumbs did not report on the branch at the 1923 ICU conference where La Guma, acting as its representative, also provided no details. The conference recorded, only, that it was donating £5 to the ICU's printing press fund (Lüderitz gave £10).⁷⁹ The Keetmanshoop local government, unlike that of Lüderitz which engaged in surveillance of the ICU, also paid little attention to the local ICU. Thus, there are few details available regarding the Keetmanshoop branch.

Urban peculiarities, private and state investments, and the ICU

It was in the small, southern urban areas that black and coloured unionisation started with the ICU. It was based on the larger, more concentrated workforces around large private operations, such as Anglo's Consolidated Diamond Mines, and big state operations, such as SAR&H. The ICU emerged in the two biggest municipalities in the south, Keetmanshoop and Lüderitz, both of which played a crucial role as transport hubs.

In these early years, the union was not structured around workplaces but in the locations. It also seems to have been centred in the urban strata lying between the mass of unfree migrant labourers and farm labourers at the bottom, and the white workers above. The available evidence suggests that the founder members in Lüderitz were fairly typical of that branch as a whole: mainly black and coloured workers and marginal petty bourgeois traders, resident in the town's location; it was there, too, that the union held its meetings.

Government officials recognised this situation and were demonstrably concerned that the ICU would break out into the farms and compounds.⁸⁰ Like German officials before them,⁸¹ they also feared South African coloured workers would incite locals. At Lüderitz, systematic efforts were made to block the union's access to compounds, and especially to the Ovambo workers, and to keep ICU emissaries off the diamond fields.⁸² Police found that Pieterse was trying to recruit Ovambo.⁸³ he was given a warning and placed under surveillance. After Gumbs' tour, which apparently included a visit to the railway compound at Keetmanshoop,⁸⁴ there was a *de facto* ban on ICU leaders from South Africa touring the colony.⁸⁵

Thus, the Lüderitz ICU was largely denied access to two of the major concentrations of workers – the compounds and the diamond towns – while operating in a town where the workforce was divided between numerous employers, some quite small. The densely populated, relatively small, segregated Lüderitz 'location', with its slum conditions, was the best concentration of workers available.

Compound managers were crucial to thwarting the union, but over time, the ICU made inroads into the compounds. In 1926, two black South Africans, named as Timothy and Naphtali in the records, held ICU meetings and collected funds in a compound at the South African exclave of Walvis Bay.⁸⁶ Walvis Bay was, from 1922, administered as part of South West Africa, but continued to draw on South African labour. The two men were deported, although Naphtali seems to have managed to return to the town later that year.⁸⁷

There was a more sustained ICU branch in the southern diamond town of Elizabeth Bay, which was based on deep diggings. It was led by Standright Mackenzie, Garnet Tshabalala and Kegapilee Moogoris, and active in 1926 and 1927.⁸⁸ These were black men, apparently South Africans,⁸⁹ who lived in the mine compound. In January 1927, the branch held a protest meeting where 'the local chairman and several Executive Committee members made strong speeches' against a rash of repressive and racist bills before the South African parliament.⁹⁰ This meeting, which resumed in the evening when the speakers again 'waxed hot', was part of a larger ICU campaign.

Again, we see that the ICU emerged where workers were concentrated – and again where workers lived, not the workplace itself. Perhaps these men were among the delegates from South West Africa that reportedly attended the December 1927 ICU congress at Kimberley, South Africa,⁹¹ easily reached by rail via Keetmanshoop and Upington.

The politics of the South West African ICU

These same conditions that enabled the rise and spread of the South West African ICU also shaped its activities and concerns. It is profoundly mistaken to suggest, as Pirio did, that the ICU was essentially, the 'labour wing of the Garvey movement', or that Garveyism presented as the 'ideological underpinning' of 1920s mass black politics in either South Africa or its colony.⁹²

Certainly, Garveyism and the UNIA were among the myriad influences on the ICU, including in South West Africa, and there was also some overlap in membership, the key example being De Clue, adherent of both. But the politics of the ICU were far more complicated, evolving and diverse than confluences like Pirio's admit.

There was little similarity between the programme of ICU in South West Africa and that of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). As elsewhere there was, for instance, a substantial influence from revolutionary syndicalism, including the IWA and the Industrial Workers of the World, and of class politics more generally.

The rules and regulations members adopted by the ICU in Lüderitz make no mention of any goals beyond improving the 'social, moral and intellectual interests' of members, including 'equitable rates of wages, and reasonable hours of labour, to regulate the relations between employer and employee'.⁹³ Whites could join, but not serve as leaders, unlike the UNIA, while the ICU also stressed class politics: the union would cooperate 'with the worker [sic.] of other unions for the advancement of the whole working class'.⁹⁴ This helps explain why the ICU did not engage in the UNIA's characteristic activities in South West Africa, such as selling rosettes, raising money for projects like halls and business schemes, benefit schemes, recruiting chiefs, requesting the colony be handed to Garvey, or spreading millenarian promises of liberation by black America.

While the Lüderitz ICU does not seem to have organised any workplace structures, nor negotiated with any employers, nor undertaken any industrial actions, this outpost of the 'one great union' focused on the sphere of social reproduction. It highlighted the lack of education and hospital facilities for blacks and coloureds, segregation on the trains, taxation and licensing fees, including for black businesses, pass laws and abusive police. De Clue gave a long, fiery report on these matters at the October 1921 ICU conference in Port Elizabeth,⁹⁵ which led directly to the decision to send Gumbs to the colony. Likewise, the ICU in Elizabeth Bay joined an ICU campaign against proposed new laws – but does not seem to have been able to engage in battles around wages and workplace conditions.

An alternative view of the ICU is presented by Emmett, who tended to dismiss the Lüderitz ICU as basically a vehicle for more elite interests, mainly concerned with 'privileged urban groups' and petty traders.⁹⁶ But while the union had little to do with the workplace, it raised issues affecting black and coloured residents in general, most of them working class. While centred on a stratum that was treated better than the migrants and the farm labourers, it hardly represented an elite. Even the best-off small traders like De Clue were on the margins.

It is true that ICU in both South Africa⁹⁷ and South West Africa often sent delegations to the authorities, seeking redress of grievances. This was less a sign of innate reformism than a result of its strategy. Since the ICU in South West Africa did not build workplace power, or show any ability to organise strikes from its bases in 'locations' or compounds, it had very little leverage, and was often fobbed

off with excuses and vague promises. Not much was gained, beyond a circular to municipalities in the early 1920s stating that Cape Coloureds were to be exempted from passes, curfews and various segregationist by-laws, and treated, as far as possible, 'on an equal footing with Europeans', including being allowed to live outside the locations.⁹⁸

The challenges of small town and farmlands

At the same time, the very factors that allowed the ICU to emerge in South West Africa – small towns with large workforces and segregated, concentrated residential areas, compounds that gathered hundreds of workers, large investments by private capital and the state – also created substantial obstacles to its operations.

Small municipalities and company-run diamond towns lent themselves to surveillance, harassment and controls over movement. This was evident in the ongoing monitoring of the ICU in Lüderitz, the ongoing and clearly effective measures taken to isolate the early ICU from the compounds and the farms, direct pressure placed on Pieterse, the deportations at Walvis Bay, and the capacity to block visits from South Africa. For example, following his address at the October 1921 ICU congress, which was reported in the press and attracted the ire of officials, De Clue was targeted 'by the local authorities in the Protectorate',⁹⁹ and subjected to threats like the revocation of his business licence.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, the Police Zone was not just sparsely populated, but most of the population was rural. Few farms had large workforces, and the different farms were isolated by the large size of the farms, the great distances between settlements, and the rudimentary transport infrastructure. Moreover, the rural sector of the working class was immersed in labour-repressive and paternalistic relations. There were occasional strikes, including in 1918, but unionisation never took place.

This alone cannot explain why unions (or the ICU) did not emerge in the rural areas. In South Africa and in Southern Rhodesia, the ICU developed into a mass movement, and in both, it grew explosively once it entered the countryside.

In South Africa from 1925, the ICU connected up with the tens of thousands of black tenant farmers on white farms, then being forced into wage labour by the final roll-out of the 1913 Land Act.¹⁰¹ The ICU *yase* Rhodesia, initially based in the black townships of Bulawayo and Salisbury, the two main towns, grew rapidly when it managed to penetrate the reserves from the end of the 1920s. Here, the peasants and chiefs were feeling the blows of the 1930 Land Apportionment Act, which drastically reduced black access to land.¹⁰²

But the conditions facing the South West African ICU were different. In South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, the large-scale development of white commercial farming in the 1920s centred on breaking peasant (including tenant) farming and was associated with rapid urbanisation. There was no major restructuring in South West African colonial agrarian relations in the Police Zone until the 1950s, despite

a massive boom in the karakul industry from the 1930s.¹⁰³ There was rural unrest in the early 1920s: mostly localised and small scale, it faded in the face of 'the preponderant power of the state'; the armed rebellion of the Bondelswarts, over 200 km south of Keetmanshoop, was triggered by an 'absurdly high tax' and crushed with overwhelming force, with 100 killed.¹⁰⁴

Conclusion: The importance of politics

This paper has tried to show how the ICU was shaped by, and operated in, the very specific conditions of 1920s South African-ruled Namibia. That said, it must be emphasised that while objective conditions enabled, shaped and constrained the union, they provide only a partial explanation of its evolution and features.

Due account must also be taken of the political choices made by the union and its militants. The UNIA – despite all its weaknesses and utopian character, and despite its manifest inability to do anything to change the conditions of farm labourers and reserve residents – was able to develop a short-lived presence in the rural areas around Keetmanshoop. The authorities were convinced, in hindsight correctly so, that the ICU could penetrate the compounds, yet there was not much achieved in this regard before 1926.

In part, the limitations reflected the weaknesses of the ICU everywhere. Its ideas were a *sui generis* and unstable mixture.¹⁰⁵ ICU discourse shifted between, and sometimes mixed, ideas of international class solidarity, black racial unity across classes, social revolution, constitutional reform and self-help business schemes. It drew, variously and to different degrees at different times, on Garveyism, Christianity, Marxism, liberalism, and revolutionary syndicalism; these influences jostled and overlapped, in an unstable and changing mix of ideas and politics.

This enabled a remarkable degree of flexibility in how the ICU could position itself and adapt to changing circumstances. Yet this also mitigated – as later unions in South Africa emphasised – against the adoption of any clear strategy, concrete, democratic and patient workplace organising, strikes and the careful building of a bottom-up, self-managed working-class counter-power, backed by education and a proletarian counter-culture.¹⁰⁶ Rather, the ICU relied on rallies, speeches, sweeping promises and raising great hopes, and increasingly, on personality politics. In the end, it could not be sustained. There is much to be admired in the ICU, as a pioneer of trade unionism, of black and coloured workers' unity, of political awakening, anti-colonialism and anti-racism, and of immense bravery and sacrifice – and, perhaps of especial interest today, of a working-class globalisation-from-below. But it is important, too, to honour its legacy by learning from its limitations.

Chapter 1

- 1 Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the European Social Science History Conference, the Southern African Historical Society biennial conference, and most recently, the Namibian and Southern African Studies Research Colloquium run by the Centre for African Studies, University of Basel, Basler Afrika Bibliographien and the University of Namibia (UNAM). I would like to thank everyone who has provided feedback and acknowledge funding by Rhodes University and the National Research Foundation (NRF).
- 2 'Bloemfontein Congress: Delegates Report', *The Black Man*, August 1920.
- 3 For example, Clements Kadalie apparently hoped that fellow Nyasa, Isa Macdonald Lawrence, then in Mozambique, would establish a branch at the Beira docks. See R. A. Hill ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers. Vol. 10, Africa for the Africans, 1923–1945* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), lxvi–lxvii.
- 4 See W. B. Lyon, 'From Labour Elites to Garveyites: West African Migrant Labour in Namibia, 1892–1925', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 47, 1 (2021), 52.
- 5 J. Kimble, *Migrant Labour and Colonial Rule in Basutoland, 1890–1930* (Grahamstown: Institute of Social and Economic Research/ISER, Rhodes University, 1999), 185–86; S. Neame, *The Congress Movement: The Unfolding of the Congress Alliance 1912–1961*, Vol. 1 (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2015), 168; S. Neame, *The Congress Movement: The Unfolding of the Congress Alliance 1912–1961*, Vol. 2 (Cape Town, HSRC Press, 2015), 244, notes 454, 357, 384–365, 486.
- 6 Lüderitzbucht until 1920.
- 7 This dated back to a Dutch claim in 1793.
- 8 Among which must be counted many of the *mestiços* of Angola and Mozambique.
- 9 Robert Sambo, quoted in A. Ewing, *The Age of Garvey: How a Jamaican Activist Created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 204.
- 10 M. van der Linden, 'Transnationalising American Labour History', *Journal of American History*, 86, 3 (1999), 1080–81.
- 11 L. van der Walt, 'The First Globalisation and Transnational Labour Activism in Southern Africa: White Labourism, the IWW and the ICU, 1904–1934', *African Studies*, 66, 2/3 (2007), 223–51.
- 12 See, for example, Van der Walt, 2007, 'The First Globalisation and Transnational Labour'; L. van der Walt, '"One Great Union of Skilled and Unskilled Workers, South of the Zambezi": Garveyism, Liberalism and Revolutionary Syndicalism in the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa, 1919–1949', European Social Science History Conference, Vienna, Austria, 23–26 April 2014.
- 13 National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek (hereafter NAN) A.0309, 'Trade Union Lüderitzbucht'.
- 14 There was also a small but significant number of Italian workers: B.C. Moore, S. Quinn, W.B. Lyon and K.F. Hertzog, 'Balancing the Scales: Re-Centring Labour and Labourers in Namibian History', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 47, 1 (2021), 3, note 40.
- 15 A. Cooper, 'The Institutionalisation of Contract Labour in Namibia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 25, 1 (1999), 124.
- 16 'The Labour Movement in South West Africa', *The Bolshevik* [Cape Town], January 1921.
- 17 'The Labour Movement', *The Bolshevik*, January 1921; E. Mantzaris, 'Radical Community: The Yiddish-Speaking Branch of the International Socialist League, 1918–20', in B. Bozzoli, ed., *Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectives* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1988), 167.
- 18 G. van Goethem, *The Amsterdam International: The World of the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU), 1913–1945* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 43.
- 19 Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA), Part 1, 1915–1954 Papers AH 646 Cc4.8, 'South West Africa, 1928–1930', Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand.
- 20 Personal communications, Giorgio Miescher, 1 October 2020, 18 October 2020 and 9 November 2020. Also noted in D. Henrichsen, 'Liberals and Non-Racism in Namibia's Settler Society? Advocate Israel Goldblatt's Engagement with Namibian Nationalists in the 1960s', in J. Silvester, ed., *Re-viewing Resistance in Namibian History* (Windhoek: University of Namibia Press, 2015), 129 note 5.
- 21 For example, O. Angula, *SWAPO Captive: A Comrade's Experience of Betrayal and Torture* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2018), 24–25, 33, 57, 78; S. Whittaker and H. Boesak, 'Tribute to Kenneth Abrahams', *The Namibian*, 28 April 2017.
- 22 Moore, Quinn, Lyon and Hertzog, 'Balancing the Scales', 3.

- 23 R. First, *South West Africa* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1963), 196–97.
- 24 G. Bauer, *Labor and Democracy in Namibia, 1971–1996* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press/London: James Currey, 1998), 69.
- 25 G.A. Pirio, *The Role of Garveyism in the Making of the Southern African Working Classes and Namibian Nationalism* (University of California, mimeo, 1982); reprinted in B. Wood ed., *Namibia, 1884–1984: Readings on Namibia's History and Society* (London: Namibia Support Committee and the SWAPO Department of Information and Publicity, 1984).
- 26 Ibid., 1, 14, 16–18.
- 27 Ibid., 259–267.
- 28 R.A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers: Vol 9, Africa for the Africans, 1921–1922* (Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press, 1995), lxxvii, 204, 269 note 3, 269–270 note 4, 278–279, 311 note 1, 391 note 1, 546, 588; Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers: Vol. 10*, 81–82, 122–23.
- 29 For example, see Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers: Vol 10*. lvi–lviii, 34–36 notes 9–15; 360 note 3, 619 note 3.
- 30 Emmett, *Popular Resistance*, 4, 125–134.
- 31 Ibid., 21, 22, 29, 32.
- 32 'Griqua' in South Africa.
- 33 B.C. Moore, 'Smuggled Sheep, Smuggled Shepherds: Farm Labour Transformations in Namibia and the Question of Southern Angola, 1933–1975', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 47, 1 (2021), 100. Also see J. Silvester, 'Black Pastoralists, White Farmers: The Dynamics of Land Dispossession and Labour Recruitment in Southern Namibia, 1915–1955' (PhD thesis, University of London, 1993), 110–111, 224–225, 240–241, 258, 307–310.
- 34 Silvester, 'Black Pastoralists, White Farmers', 315–316.
- 35 On the last point, see E. L. P. Stals, *The Afrikaners in Namibia: Who are They? A Collection of Historical Essays about the Afrikaner in Former South West Africa* (Windhoek: Macmillan, 2008), 46.
- 36 T. Dederling, 'Namibia, Struggle for Independence', in I. Ness et al., eds., *The International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001), 2391–94.
- 37 Stals, *The Afrikaners in Namibia*, 71; G.G. Weigend, 'German Settlement Patterns in Namibia', *Geographical Review*, 75, 2 (1985), 163–64.
- 38 W. Beinart, 'Cape Workers in German South-West Africa, 1904–1912: Patterns of Migrancy and the Closing of Options on the Southern African Labour Market', *The Societies of Southern Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 11 (London: University of London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 1981).
- 39 W. Hillebrecht, *Lüderitz: A Journey through Time* (Lüderitz: NovaNam, 2017), 21.
- 40 For example, South African National Archives, Pretoria (hereafter SANA) Native Affairs (hereafter NTS) 2054, 89/280, Recruitment of Labour for Diamond Mines in South West Africa; South West Africa, Native Labour Bureau, 1910–1924, Letter from Director of Native Labour to Secretary for Native Affairs, 23 October 1923.

- 41 S. Quinn, 'Scalar Claims, Worker Strategies, and "South Africa's Labour Empire" in Namibia, 1943–1979', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 47, 1 (2021), 63–64.
- 42 Lyon, 'From Labour Elites to Garveyites', 45 note 36.
- 43 For example, Cooper, 'Institutionalisation of Contract Labour', 121–38.
- 44 Johannesburg had a population of 250 000 by 1913: R. Krut, 'The Making of a South African Jewish Community', in B. Bozzoli, ed., *Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectives* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1988), 135–36.
- 45 Lyon, 'From Labour Elites to Garveyites', 37–38, 40–43.
- 46 Ibid., 45.
- 47 Weigend, 'German Settlement Patterns', 164.
- 48 Lüderitzbucht Museum, *Kolmanskuppe: A Journey into the Past* (Lüderitz: n.d.), 2.
- 49 U. Lindner, 'Transnational Movements between Colonial Empires: Migrant Workers from the British Cape Colony in the German Diamond Town of Lüderitzbucht', *European Review of History—Revue européenne d'histoire*, 16, 5 (2009), 683.
- 50 O. Levinson, *Diamonds in the Desert: The Story of August Stauch and his Times* (Windhoek: Kuiseb Verlag, 2009), 107.
- 51 Emmett, *Popular Resistance*, 125.
- 52 T. Emmett, 'Popular Resistance in Namibia, 1920–1925', in T. Lodge, ed., *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Societies* (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1986), 8–16.
- 53 For an overview, see Van der Walt, 'The First Globalisation', 229–31.
- 54 NAN IMW 24 6249/1, Strike Lüderitz Diamond Fields, Lüderitz Magistrate, 'Unrest among Natives', Letter to the Secretary for the Protectorate, Windhoek, May 1920.
- 55 Lyon, 'From Labour Elites to Garveyites', 47–50.
- 56 A.A. Watts, 'Capitalism and Native Races', *The Call*, 28 December 1918.
- 57 La Guma, *Jimmy La Guma*, 20–21.
- 58 NAN IMW 24, 6249/1, Strike Lüderitz Diamond Fields, Lüderitzbucht Chamber of Mines, 'Report on the Strike of the European Workmen of July 1919', 12 August 1919.
- 59 NAN IMW 24 6249/1, Strike Lüderitz Diamond Fields, Lüderitz Magistrate, 'Unrest among Natives', Letter to the Secretary for the Protectorate, Windhoek, May 1920.
- 60 An error that several writers, myself included, have reproduced.
- 61 La Guma, *Jimmy La Guma*, 21.
- 62 Ibid., 21, 23.
- 63 NAN ADM 152 C248, Industrial Coloured Workers Union, Lüderitz Magistrate, 'Activities of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union', Letter to Secretary of the Protectorate, 5 January 1921.
- 64 La Guma, *Jimmy La Guma*, 20–21.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 Emmett, 'Popular Resistance', 24, 31–32.

- 67 'Our Agents', *The Black Man*, December 1920.
- 68 'Bloemfontein Congress: Delegates Report', *The Black Man*, August 1920.
- 69 Emmett, *Popular Resistance*, 31.
- 70 Ibid., 126, 136; La Guma, *Jimmy La Guma*, 22.
- 71 Emmett, *Popular Resistance*, 127.
- 72 Pirio, *The Role of Garveyism*, 24–25.
- 73 Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa (ICU), *Third Annual Conference: Official Report of Proceedings* (Cape Town: A. Holder, 1923), 1, 14; Neame, *The Congress Movement, The Unfolding of the Congress Alliance 1912–1961*, Vol. 1 (Cape Town, HSRC Press, 2015), 266, 272–74. The ICU did not hold a conference in 1922. There is an unconfirmed claim that Lüderitz paid £48 into ICU funds in 1926: S.M.B. Ncwana (n.d.), *The ICU Activities: An Exhaustive Inquiry into the Affairs and Policy of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa, both to Trades, Squatters, Farm Labourers and the Manipulation of the Peoples Funds*, 8 (pamphlet held at Wits Sylvia Neame Papers A 2729).
- 74 Silvester, 'Black Pastoralists, White Farmers', 98.
- 75 Ibid., 125, 236.
- 76 For example, NAN SWAA, 1851 A396–10 (vol 1), Native Unrest: Lüderitz and Keetmanshoop (1922–1954), Keetmanshoop Acting Magistrate, 'Faction Fight', Letter to the Secretary for South West Africa, 28 January 1922.
- 77 ICU, *Third Annual Conference*, 38.
- 78 NAN LLU 4-3 1 1 W14, Native Societies, Native Unrest (1921–1925), Head Constable and Post Commander Lüderitz, South West African Police, Letter to Lüderitz Magistrate, 21 October 1922.
- 79 ICU, *Third Annual Conference*, 21.
- 80 For example, Letter from Gysbert Reitz Hofmeyer, Administrator of South West Africa, to Jan Christiaan Smuts, 18 June 1923, reprinted in Hill, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*, Vol. 10, 81–82.
- 81 Lindner, 'Transnational Movements between Colonial Empires', 687.
- 82 Emmett, *Popular Resistance*, pp. 132–34. Ncwana visited in 1922 but was then in an ICU splinter group, hostile to the Kadalie-linked Lüderitz and Keetmanshoop branches.
- 83 NAN ADM 152 C248, Industrial Coloured Workers Union, Acting Deputy Commissioner, SWA Police, 'Re: Secret Meetings held by an Educated Cape Boy named Pieterse in Lüderitz', Letter to Secretary of the Protectorate, 29 December 1920.
- 84 ICU, 1923, *Third Annual Conference*, 38.
- 85 Emmett 1999, *Popular Resistance*, pp. 132–134.
- 86 Emmett, *Popular Resistance*, 132–33.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Kegapilee Moogoris, 'Ezase Jamani (South-West Protectorate)', *Workers' Herald*, 15 November 1926. I would like to thank Henry Dee for drawing this article to my attention.

- 89 Moogoris, judging by the name, could have been from Bechuanaland or South Africa. A small number of 'Bechuanas' and Northern Rhodesians worked on the diamond mines: Moore, 'Smuggled Sheep, Smuggled Shepherds', 101 note 31.
- 90 'Elizabeth Bay Demonstration', *Workers' Herald*, 18 March 1927.
- 91 T. Emmett, *Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia, 1915–1966*, (Basel: P. Schlettwein Publishing, 1999), 132.
- 92 Pirio, *The Role of Garveyism*, 1, 14, 16–18.
- 93 NAN ADM 152 C248 Industrial Coloured Workers Union, J. La Guma, ICU 'Rules and Regulations', n.d., 1, 4.
- 94 Ibid.
- 95 NAN 152 C248 Industrial Coloured Workers Union, Press clippings for 25 and 29 October 1921, *Eastern Province Herald* (Port Elizabeth).
- 96 Emmett, 'Popular Resistance', 21–22.
- 97 ICU, *Third Annual Conference*, 35–37.
- 98 Emmett, 'Popular Resistance', 31.
- 99 ICU, *Third Annual Conference*, 26.
- 100 Hill, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*, Vol 10, 23, note 2.
- 101 The best analysis of these developments remains H. Bradford, *A Taste of Freedom: The ICU in Rural South Africa, 1924–1930* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).
- 102 I. Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 1890–1948: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle* (London, New York: Longman, 1988), 200–03; C. van Onselen, *Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1976), 214–18.
- 103 See Moore, 'Smuggled Sheep, Smuggled Shepherds', 93–125.
- 104 Emmett, 'Popular Resistance', 19, 31.
- 105 Van der Walt, "One Great Union".
- 106 'The Making of the Working Class, Part Eleven: The ICU Collapses', *FOSATU Worker News*, February 1985.