

## Preliminary Periodizing of the New African Movement

A  
Synopsis

by

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*"Speculation is rife, and much misunderstanding perhaps obtains, misrepresentations have been made with regard to this movement, its aims and objects [objectives]. Perhaps, the fact that owing to a mistake the press was not efficiently represented at the gathering at Bloemfontein on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1912--and therefore [a] report of the proceedings was not given [to] the public, perhaps that fact has much to do with the attendant misunderstandings, and so the suspiciously disposed saw in an influential gathering of natives nothing but danger, and sinister designs were charged. It is for these reasons that the writer being at Johannesburg sought and obtained an interview with the initiator of the movement and the convenor of the Bloemfontein gathering. . . . The initiator of this movement P. ka Isaka Seme of Jesus College, Oxford and a B. A. of Columbia University U. S. America, is without doubt a man with a mission, and much in earnest"* (F. Z. S. Peregrino, "The South African Native National Congress: What It Is", *Ilanga lase Natal*, March 22, 1912, my emphasis).

*"The African National Congress is a new movement which is being implanted in the heart and blood of the Abantu people. All nations have national congresses of their own which help mould together the spirit and the good will of those nations. . . . We want to be able clearly to express our free will as a nation like all other peoples of the world today"* (Pixley ka Isaka Seme, "Leaders Of African National Congress Must Reconcile Differences", *Umteteli wa Bantu*, December 16, 1933, my emphasis).

*"There is a movement among Africans not only for the betterment of their economic conditions but for political freedom as well. If this movement is barred from its natural road of advance and deprived of its liberty of thought, expression and action, it will become a menace to the security of the white race, and a brake in the wheels of the country's progress"* (R. V. Selope Thema, "European Students And Race Problems", *The Bantu World*, August 10, 1935, my emphasis).

*"It only remains to consider the question of an African National Dramatic Movement. Should Africans develop their own exclusive National Dramatic and Theatrical Movement distinct from, competing with and opposed to the European Dramatic Movement? What does the evolution of African Opinion, Sentiment and Ideas point to in this direction? Does the African want to 'develop on his own lines' or to fall in the maelstrom of general progress? What of the Coloureds and the Indians in the country? And what of economic, cultural and artistic as distinct from colour considerations?"* (H.

I. E. Dhlomo, "Drama and the African," *The South African Outlook*, vol. 66, October 1, 1936, my emphasis).

*"Today that very boy has contributed that knowledge to Education departments and to the Union Government itself, and it is that same boy who at a time when most educated Africans in the Cape as well as Europeans controlling Native education looked down upon Xhosa, stood up for our language and by pen and word of mouth created a Renaissance in our literature . . . The man is a voluminous writer. He is a dramatist, essayist, critic, novelist, historian, humorist, biographer, translator and poet at the same time. I put 'Poet' last in the list not that poetry is the least of his accomplishments but for emphasis's sake as that is what the man really is. Every day of his life the public is thrilled by his sublime productions through the press, through his books and other publications. I can safely say that the present popularity of the Xhosa language owes much to this African genius and that many a budding author and journalist began writing through the influence of this great man" ("Notable Contribution to Xhosa Literature: Mr. Mqhayi Creates Xhosa Renaissance," Guybon Bundlwana Sinxo, *The Bantu World*, July 20, 1935, my emphasis).*

*"The influence of Zulu imaginative literature---poetry, drama, essays and fiction---is a recent and remarkable phenomenon. As recent as the early thirties, compilers of African bibliographies, reported that there was a singular dearth of Zulu creative writers, and in the fields of poetry and fiction, for example, showed some dozen Xhosa novels by some 7 Xhosa authors and some three verse publications by Xhosa poets against a nil in both cases in Zulu. Since then there has been a great Renaissance in Zulu imaginative literature---so remarkable indeed that it would take a brave and reckless layman or a research scholar to say whether it is Zulu or Xhosa today that leads the field. Parenthetically, I may say that Dr. Vilakazi's thesis on this subject---Oral and Written Literature in Nguni---will throw light on these and relative points, if and when it is published, as my informants say it will" (H. I. E. Dhlomo, "[R. R. R. ] Dhlomo's Indlela Yababi," *Ilanga lase Natal*, May 25, 1946, my emphasis).*

When I started working on this project of New African intellectuals beginning around 1995, it was as an *intuition* that I began speculating that it was a "Movement" of some kind. I had no empirical evidence to support this intuition. Since it was historically evident that the theoretical construct of "New African" was appropriately directly from that of the New Negroes of the Harlem Renaissance, and since the New Negroes of the 1920s were a continuation of the historical project of the New Negroes of the late nineteenth century, such as Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Dubois, Alexander Crummell and Fredrick Douglass posited themselves as constituting a "New Negro Movement", I thought it would be odd, if likewise, the New African intellectuals did not view themselves as part of New African Movement. I believed that it had to be so when I became consciously aware that Pixley ka Isaka Seme's essay "The Regeneration of Africa" (1904-6), which he wrote as a commencement address at

Columbia University in the midst of the New Negro Movement in Harlem, was in fact a *manifesto* of some kind calling on *all* Africans that the task of the twentieth century was *the construction of modernity*.

In actual fact, before becoming aware of the *seminal* nature of Seme's essay, I had already written a hundred-page essay, "A Self-Portrait of New African Intellectuals in Modernity: The New African Movement from *Imvo Zabantsundu* newspaper (1880s) to *Drum* magazine (1950s)" in which, on the basis of articles (empirical evidence) in many newspapers by these New Africans, I proved that these New African intellectuals *did* in fact discourse with each other about each other's intellectual, political and cultural practices. The central aim of the essay was to prove that the New African intellectuals were historically conscious of each other's existence as a process representing a particular historical moment. The research and the writing of the essay made me aware that the overarching historical problem or issue exercising their imagination and political practice was the *question of modernity*. My awareness of the historic importance of Seme's essay compelled me to abandon the aforementioned essay since it sought to prove what Seme had proclaimed so self evidently in the manifesto. "The Regeneration of Africa" was the document which I was subsequently to postulate as the founding or 'launching' manifesto of what I later designated as the "New African Movement".

The writing of the lecture "New Negro Modernity and New African Modernity" in late 2002 on the invitation of two South African scholars based at the University of Zurich and at the University of Basel necessitated a thorough study of the hundreds and hundreds of archival materials I had assembled in the course of the previous decade photocopying old New African newspapers. The lecture was presented at the University of Zurich in January 2003 (the lecture can be found on the first page of this website New African Movement at this URL: [www.pitzer.edu/New\\_African\\_Movement](http://www.pitzer.edu/New_African_Movement)). It was truly gratifying in the course of preparing this lecture to discover that what I had intuitively felt was a "movement" had been designated as such by some members themselves. The epigraphs of F. Z. S. Peregrino, Pixley ka Isaka Seme and R. V. Selope Thema are the case in point. Mark S. Radebe writing about music in 1930s and John Langalibalele Dube analyzing a political crisis within the Africa National Congress in the 1930s, also theorized a "movement" of some kind had occurred among "enlightened" Africans or was then occurring. It will be necessary elsewhere to examine why the notion of "movement" seemed to have emerged spontaneously in the 1930s when what I have retrospectively designated as "New African Movement" was in a deep political crisis. My modest contribution here was to transform their lower case notion of "movement" into an upper case overarching "Movement" in order retrospectively to designate a historical period

covering the first half of the twentieth century of South African intellectual and cultural history.

Although it was in the decade of the 1930s that the notion of “movement” was first theorized by *native-born* New African intellectuals, it was extraordinarily prescient of F. Z. S. Peregrino, a *foreign-born* New African intellectual, in actual fact a Ghanian who had lived in Rochester (New York area) in the late nineteenth century as the New Negro Movement was consolidating itself politically, to have had a historical consciousness that made him recognize that the founding of the African National Congress in January 1912 was *the birth of a movement* of historic proportions. His article of less than 200 words, written within a few weeks announcing the founding of the political organization is, without question, one of the great documents of South African modernity. Its importance is comparable to other manifestos of South African modernity: Mangane Maake Mokone’s manifesto of 1892 that launched the Ethiopianism; Pixley ka Isaka Seme’s aforementioned manifesto; R. V. Selope Thema’s numerous of the 1920s calling on New Africans to appropriate New Negroes’ practices in modernity; Clement Martyn Doke’s scholarly essays that repeatedly emphasized the importance of African languages in the making specifically of New African modernity; Anton Lembede’s manifestos of 1943 and 1944 calling for a new form of African Nationalism---a call that led directly to the formation of the ANC Youth League in 1944; Robert Sobukwe’s manifesto of 1959 that founded the Pan Africanist Congress.

In as much as the idea of “movement” was truly theorized in the 1930s, the notion of the “New African” was initially formulated by R. V. Selope Thema in the 1920s and reinforced by H. I. E. Dhlomo in the 1940s. Like Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Selope Thema was historically conscious that a new epoch of modernity had arrived or dawned. Whereas Seme was engaged with the *political consequences* of such an eventuation, Selope Thema sought to *construct a modern intellectual culture* that would give guidance and be synchronous with this new historical experience. Each drew particular conclusions from this. While Seme founded a *political organization* in 1912, the African National Congress, with the intent of *modernizing the political imagination* of New African masses and construction institutional forms of representation, Selope Thema wrote programmatic essays and articles in *Umteteli wa Bantu* (The Voice of the People) newspaper in the 1920s in which he spelled out the social and historical responsibilities of “Bantu intellectuals” (that is New African intellectuals). In this project of the 1920s Selope Thema was aided by his intellectual colleague and personal friend Henry Selby Msimang, who wrote brilliant articles on similar themes at this particular time in this newspaper. It is in this context that Selope Thema invented the construct of the “New African”. It is not accidental that in the 1940s H. I. E. Dhlomo should recollect and attempt to re-invent this notion of

“New African” because in the 1920s as a cub columnist for *Umteteli wa Bantu* he was enthralled with his older colleague. In fact the inaugural article by H. I. E. Dhlomo at the age 21 years announcing his arrival of national scene aligns itself thematically with historical issues that preoccupied Selope Thema in the 1920s (“Hardship and Progress,” *Umteteli wa Bantu*, October 18, 1924: “We are in dire need of men who can and will lead our people wisely---men who are elevated above others in sentiment rather in situation. Difficulties will gradually lead us to fraternity---and fraternity to peace, progress and prosperity”). The distinctive contribution of Dhlomo regarding the idea of the “New African” was to couple it with Du Bois’ concept of the “Talented Tenth”. He specifically invented the notion of the “New African Talented Tenth”. When R. V. Selope Thema left *Umteteli wa Bantu* in 1932 to found *The Bantu World* in the same year, H. I. E. Dhlomo was among the young New African intellectuals who joined the great Pedi journalist, including among others, R. R. R. Dhlomo and Jordan Ngubane. It was this plead of intellectuals that made *The Bantu World* the great newspaper of the 1930s.

Although the inventions of Seme and Selope Thema, respectively a *modern national political organization* and a *modern national intellectual culture*, seemed to have been non-synchronous with each other, hence the spectacular duel between them in the pages of *Umteteli wa Bantu* in the early 1930s, leading to the departure of the latter from the newspaper and the former exercising hegemony in its pages, by this time the center of New African Movement had shifted from Politics, Philosophy and Religion, to the Arts, Film, Music and Popular Culture. The famous unending political crises of the 1930s were partly a reflection of this dramatic alteration: a crisis classically exemplified by Albert Nzula’s unsuccessful attempt to *synchronize Marxism and modernity*. S. E. K. Mqhayi was responsible for this extraordinary shift, as it were from Politics to the Arts, whose consequences were immediate. His unyielding stand on the historic question of whether the *English language* or the *African languages* should be the instrument of representation in modernity defined in many ways the *literary issue* of South African modernity in the twentieth century. Whereas practically all of his predecessors, that is the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s (Elijah Makiwane, Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba, John Tengo Jabavu, John Knox Bokwe, William Wellington Gqoba) believed that the English language was the only *cultural facilitator of entrance* into modernity, Mqhayi dissented from his teachers by arguing through *actual practice* that Xhosa (or any other African language) was just as capable as any other European language in representing and articulating the complexities of modernity. This is elaborated in a particular section of this document. Following on the achievement of Mqhayi, other major Xhosa poets emerged in the 1920s: Nontsizi Mgqwetho and J. J. R. Jolobe. Mqhayi’s position was effective on the *creative literary* front of the New African Movement.

But on the *critical philosophical* front of the New African Movement the situation was otherwise. Silas Modiri Molema's *The Bantu: Past and Present* (1920) consolidated a position that was inaugurated by Isaiah Bud-Mbelle with *Kaffir Scholar* (1903) and continued on with Ezekiel Mphahlele's *The African Image* (1963) and Lewis Nkosi's *Home and Exile* (1965), that the English language would be vehicle of *critical expression* of New African modernity or New African MOvement. Just as Mqhayi's *Ityala Lamawele* (1914) was so momentous for the creative vector, so *The Bantu* has been equally critical for the critical vector. What perhaps turned the tide against Mqhayi beginning in the 1930s was that the Arts, Music and Popular Culture aligned themselves on the side of the English language. The determinant of this outcome was the social space of Johannesburg where the making of modernity was at its most complex and intense. It is possible to trace within the *creative literary* front itself the lineage of the struggle between the English language and the African languages for the imagination of New African intellectuals, writers and artists. A selective history indicates some interesting markers. William Wellington Gqoba, who was perhaps the first modern African poet, had the facility to write excellently in both Xhosa and English. Although he wrote long philosophical discourses in isiXhosa, as his intellectual career progressed, he began writing his longer work in English, especially an essay examining the dialectic between tradition and modernity in relation to witchcraft. His long poems began appearing in the English language.

The same pattern repeats itself with Guybon Bundlwana Sinxo. He moves from the serialization of his Xhosa novel in *The Bantu World* in the 1930s to the publication of his English short stories in the same newspaper in the early 1950s. Benedict Wallet Vilakazi's valiant attempt in the late 1930s to pull H. I. E. Dhlomo from the side of the English language to that of isiZulu turns out to be a lost cause. Dhlomo's ostensible reason for writing in the English language is that it makes it easier to find a publisher and attain a much greater audience. By the time of Mazisi Kunene, the English language was overwhelming the African languages as the creative outlet for literary creativity. Concerning journalism, while Jordan Ngubane could write both in English and in isiZulu, and similarly R. V. Selope Thema could express himself at least in English and in Sesotho sa Leboa (Pedi language), Lewis Nkosi, within the *Drum* circle of the 1950s, had only the facility of the English language. Practically all the writers of the Golden Age of Sotho Literature, largely and wholly, expressed themselves in Sesotho. Simon Majakathetha Phamotse was the exception among these intellectuals not only because he was educated in Lovedale but also because he moved with much frequency between South Africa and Lesotho (then Basutoland). The apparent explanation for the durability of Sesotho among these New African intellectuals is that European modernity never penetrated as devastatingly in Lesotho as it did in South Africa.

In the context of these literary and linguistic struggles, whose real nature was political, a book of major importance was published assembled by T. D. Mveli Skota: *The African Yearly Register* (1930). The book is an intellectual snapshot of "Old Africans" and "New Africans", temporally located within tradition and modernity respectively, and geographically situated from Southern Africa to West Africa, who were the principal actors in the making of *modern Africa*. Adjacent to the photograph each of them are their biographies. The organizing ideologies of the book are African nationalism and Pan- Africanism. The book begins with the Ghanian Dr. James Emman Kwegyir Aggrey (1874-1927). Of him the biography notes: "His arrival in the Union of South Africa came at the time when the natives had given up all hope of ever living in harmony with Europeans. As a result of Dr. Aggrey's teachings to both white and black in South Africa, Joint Councils of Europeans and Natives were formed, and these are today important institutions in almost every city of South Africa" (p.3). His sudden and unexpected death led to great mourning among many New African intellectuals. Solomon T. Plaatje and R. V. Selope Thema wrote obituaries in *Umteteli wa Bantu* praising him to the fullest; John Langalibalele Dube did likewise in *Ilanga lase Natal*.

Over twenty years after Aggrey's death, H. I. E. Dhloomo recalled in the pages of *Ilanga lase Natal* that his coming to South Africa had been a momentous occasion. This adulation of the man is a clear indication that the construction of New African modernity in South Africa had not been so much a *national project* as a *pan-African* one. Among the last figures the book closes with is Dr. Alfred Bitini Xuma (1893-1962). The book praises him with the following words:

Hearing of the return from England of Messrs. [Alfred] Mangena, [Pixley ka Isaka] Seme, [Richard] Msimang, [Geo D.] Montsioa and Poswayo, who had completed their studies in the legal profession, and Dr. Mahlangeni who had graduated in medicine, his ambition was fired. He left for America and entered school at Tuskegee, Alabama, where he studied agriculture and completed part of the university entrance requirements. Having assisted a friend with some money for school fees, Xuma had to attend night-school as he was left without sufficient money for the day-school classes. As Tuskegee Xuma ranked third in his class. When he left Tuskegee he was penniless and therefore went to work at Birmingham, Alabama, until he had discharged his obligation to Tuskegee. He then went to the State University of Minnesota where he matriculated, but again being without money he had to work at furnaces, coal yards, barns, stables, milking cows and grooming horses. At different periods he was waiter at hotels and restaurants and later joined the building trade . . . The degree of M.D. was conferred upon him in 1926 (p.283).

*Both Aggrey and Xuma embodied the philosophy of Booker T. Washington which a profound influence in South Africa from Solomon T. Plaatje to John Langalibalele Dube. The first part of the book closes with group pictures: the West African Students' Union in London; the African National Congress Leaders Who were Arrested in Johannesburg during the 1919 Strike; the African National Congress Officers, Johannesburg Local Branch, 1930; the 1909 Deputation to England Against Colour Bar in the Act of the Union; and the 1918 African National Congress Deputation to England.*

The second part of *The African Yearly Register* called "Organised Bodies" consists largely of a listing of various church organizations with the name of their members: European Churches Operating Among Africans; African Methodist Episcopal Church; Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa; Christian Catholic Church of Zion; The Congregational Union of South Africa (African Section); Dutch Reformed Church; Church of Sweden Mission; Finnish Mission; Hermannsburg Mission; National Baptist Church of South Africa; Joint Council of Representatives of Native Churches; The London Missionary Society; Order of Ethiopia; Moravian Mission; Norwegian Mission; Paris Evangelical Missionary Society; Presbyterian Church of South Africa; Wesleyan Methodist Church; Tembu Catholic Church; Swiss Mission; Primitive Methodist Church; and Temperate Society. Understandably, the book gives great prominence to Ethiopianism (James Dwane) and African Methodist Episcopal Church (African American Bishops H. M. Turner and Levy Jenkins Coppins). Three observations need to be made concerning the listing of these religious organizations. First, the prominence given to Ethiopianism was the historical recognition that this Independent African Christian Movement was among the first to collective organizations to search for independent pathways from European modernity in South Africa to the construction of New African modernity. Second, the celebration of the African Methodist Episcopal Church was another recognition that New Negro modernity held many vital lessons for the then emergent New African modernity in South Africa. Third, concerning the paradox of the violent entrance of European modernity into African history---the violent formation of modernity in European history was a process of secularization and rationalization, whereas its violent imposition and transformation in African history was a process of proselytizing. Modernity was or is by its very nature a secular process.

It would seem that a profound and dramatic change of one kind or another, as the change from *minority rule* to *majority rule* that occurred in South Africa in 1994, accompanied by the onset of *democracy* against *authoritarianism*, necessitates a reconceptualization and overturning of the historical periods that had been hegemonic in defining South African intellectual and cultural history. To a large extent, the construction of South African political and cultural history pre-1994



was determined by the imperatives of an imposed *European modernity* in our country. European modernity sought to dictate the imperatives of South African history rather than it being the outcome of these imperatives. Of course this was a historical impossibility. This is the reason that the periodizing of South African history before this historic date was largely partial rather than integrative. South African history was made synonymous with “white history” and hence the falsifications that accompanied this untenable undertaking and project. South African history was grafted to European history rather than being viewed for what it was: an organic part of African history. The dramatic events of 1994 liberated South African history from the confines of undemocratic dictates of minority rule and opened it to the democratic imperatives of majority rule. This is the fundamental reason for the *new periodization* of South African intellectual and cultural history. That is a major undertaking in our country today.

The postulation of the intellectual construct of New African Movement is partly an attempt to address the necessity of *a new rethinking* about the past demanded by an entrance of the nation since 1994 into a *new South African history*. The new history has compelled an intellectual reconstruction of the past. It seemed logical that the notion of the “New African” would be the fundamental concept around which this reconstruction had to happen. It was the same modernity that configured a new South African history in the early years of the twentieth that enabled the New African to emerge. It is not surprising that the New African intellectuals, political and religious leaders were preoccupied with *theorizing* and *understanding* modernity, the very historical process that enabled them into modern history, however simultaneously oppressive and liberating that enabling, that also opened a new continent of South African history. If *modernity* is what made a new South African history possible in the early years of the last century, it is clearly *democracy* that has ushered in a new form of new South African history in the early years of the twenty first century. The belated arrival of democracy a century later would seem to indicate that the modernity that eventuated a century ago was incomplete. It is still unclear or perhaps too early to know whether 1994 represents the beginnings of the completion of this modernity. It is apparent that democracy is essential to modernity, as it is to many other things. In a true sense the New African Movement was about the *democratizing of modernity* in South Africa. And 1994 is a symbol of this victory of the democratization process.

Periodizing the structure of the New African Movement has always been a challenge. There are several issues that can be considered here, ranging from how to situate Solomon T. Plaatje at all within the Movement, when though he was perhaps the quintessential New African intellectual denied being a “New African” aligning himself with the Chiefs, to the question of the complex structure of the *types* of New African *modernizers*. In all essentials, it would seem

that the intellectual history of the New African Movement *began* with the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s. Although they were not fully conscious of the historical construct of modernity, they were very much conscious of the beginnings of a *new history* in which they were compelled to participate given the defeat and destruction of traditional societies. These Xhosa intellectuals were located inside the fault-line separating tradition from modernity. They were grappling with something *new* that was happening around them. There are many indications that although these intellectuals had no immediate concept to define their historical moment, they had a good understanding of its essential nature or its qualities. For instance, there is an essay by William Wellington Gqoba in which in effect he says that “witchcraft” and “superstition” no longer had any serious functioning role in the new historical experience that the Nation of Phalo (Xhosa nation) had just entered (“Notes from the Transkei upon Witchcraft”, *The Kaffir Express*, January 6, February 7, 1874). Likewise, Elijah Makiwane expressed frustration that the Pondomise Nation clung desperately to the *old ways of life* when only the *new ways of life* which had just began would assure the survival of the Xhosa Nation (“Native Educational Association”, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, July 28, August 18, 1886). Corresponding to this essay, Makiwane wrote another one in which he lamented the way in which *urban* life styles were upturning and shattering the *rural* life styles and in the process causing much suffering and alienation (“Natives in Towns”, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, July 19, 1888). Both Gqoba, arguably the first African modern poet, and Makiwane, a political philosopher, were priests in the Christian Church and consequently very much committed to the new ways of life against the old ways. Given that both of them and their colleagues lacked the *concept* through which to define their historical moment, i.e. modernity, does one exclude them as the beginning point of the New African Movement, which was very much preoccupied with this concept and its consequences, or does one designate them as the *origination* of this intellectual movement. How about Tiyo Soga who is anterior to them! They could not have been aware that they were “New Africans” since this construct was formulated by R. V. Selope Thema in the 1920s. In my own work I have vacillated between designating them as the founders of this intellectual and cultural movement and excluding them within its historical parameters. In the earlier years of my research work I excluded them, but in recent years I have included them.

Can the New African Movement be said to have truly begun only with the publication of the essay “The Regeneration of Africa” (in *African Affairs: Journal of the Royal African Society*, July 1906) in which Pixley ka Isaka Seme proclaimed that the fundamental task of that moment *all over the continent* was the construction of modernity in Africa! One could possibly argue that Seme’s manifesto would not have been possible without the historical conditions of possibility being made realizable by the intellectual practice of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s, and more importantly, by the rapid industrialization of

the country. Perhaps! But it is highly unlikely that Seme was aware of the intellectual culture of Xhosa intellectuals before being taken in his teens in the early 1890s by American missionaries to United States. In some sense Seme's manifesto was an expression of a *desire* rather than *actuality*. It would seem that before the founding of the African National Congress in 1912 it was very difficult if not impossible for intellectuals based in a particular ethnic area to be aware of intellectual practices being achieved in another ethnic area other than their own. For instance, it would seem also that the intellectuals and writers of the Golden Age of Sotho Literature of the 1890s and the 1900s were not aware what had been effected by Xhosa intellectuals a decade earlier. It would seem again, as it was also the case, of mutual incomprehension, with intellectual groups that were separated by less than hundred miles in the same decade, as was the case between the intellectuals, Indians and non-Indians (Henry Saloman Leon Polak, Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar, Mandajit Vyavahark) around Mohandas Gandhi and *Indian Opinion* newspaper, and the intellectuals (Josiah Mapumulo, Robert Grendon, A. H. M. Ngidi) around John Langelibalele Dube and *Ilanga lase Natal* newspaper. Both newspapers were launched within months of each other in 1903 and their intellectual constellations were dominant in the 1900s and 1910s.

Two observations can be made of the situation of mutual incomprehension by intellectual constellations adjacent to each other in the same decade. First, since a reconstruction of intellectual history is only possible through concepts and critical principles in a longitudinal study, there is an inbuilt tendency to establish direct connections between intellectual constellations when none were there at all or very tenuous at the most. Reconstructions are driven by an inbuilt desire for unity, comprehensiveness and completeness, which is the very opposite of the intellectual constellations themselves which are incomplete, discontinuous and in some ways disconnected. Second, politics or political practice is what would seem to forge unity across the different temporalities of different constellations. It was the *political practices* that emanated from the African National Congress that first and foremost established *intellectual bridgeheads* between the various intellectual constellations of the New African Movement.

Two intellectual careers within the New African Movement exemplify the correctness of this observation: Simon Majakathetha Phamotse and R. V. Selope Thema. Both were eminent intellectual bridgeheads. Both studied at Lovedale, in the late nineteenth century or in the early twentieth century the cradle center of Xhosa intellectual culture. Given the difference of a decade between them regarding their respective debuts as journalists in newspapers, it would seem that Phamotse was a decade older than Selope Thema. Having studied together at Lovedale under the guidance of some of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s, a long lasting friendship seemed to have developed between Phamotse and S. E. K. Mqhayi, as evident in the threnody the great Xhosa poet wrote on the death of

the brilliant Sotho political leader (“Umfi u Simon M. Phamotse, *Umteteli wa Bantu*, April 21, 1928). Selope Thema seems to have studied a decade after Phamotse at Lovedale, when the intellectual leadership of the Xhosas had passed from the group of the 1880s to the younger generation around *Izwi Labantu* newspaper, which included among others, Mqhayi himself, Walter Benson Rubusana and Cyrus Mahala. In many ways Lovedale transformed all the students who came to study by enabling them to shed *ethnic identities* in order to transform themselves into *New Africans* and thereby becoming *proselytizers of modernity*. Whereas Phamotse seems to have been an intellectual bridgehead between the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s and the *Izwi Labantu* Group on the hand, and the intellectual and writers of the Golden Age of Sotho Literature on the other, R. V. Selope Thema passed the intellectual legacy of Lovedale to the young New African intellectuals who were his protégés in the 1930s in *The Bantu World*, some of whom became major intellectuals in their own right as well as outstanding editors of newspapers (Jordan Ngubane was responsible for *Inkundla ya Bantu* in the 1940s; R. R. R. Dhlomo and H. I. E. Dhlomo were editors together of *Ilanga lase Natal* in the 1940s and in the 1950s; Henry Nxumalo and Todd Matshikiza were excellent journalists of *Drum* magazine in the 1950s).

It was R. V. Selope Thema who brought Xhosa intellectual traditions to Johannesburg in the 1920s by being the dominant intellectual signature in the pages of *Umteteli wa Bantu*. If we can be allowed to symbolically designate Alice as the hub of these intellectual achievements, Johannesburg was the cultural space in which these intellectual traditions were delineated and disseminated by Henry Selby Msimang and Selope Thema through this newspaper. From this moment onwards, that is from the 1920s, until the destruction of the New African Movement in 1960, practically all New African intellectual and cultural achievements had to be *transacted* through Johannesburg. This may be the reason that Selope Thema in one or two essays celebrated this city as the hub of modernity in South Africa. What made this city the enabler of historical possibilities was the discovery of gold and other natural resources in it and adjacent to it in the late nineteenth century. From the 1920s all the new things of the imagination and the mind began gravitating largely around Johannesburg. The launching of *Umteteli wa Bantu* in the early 1920s and *The Bantu World* in the early 1930s *in this city* adduces many examples in support of this thesis.

First, with the emergence of African intellectual traditions among the Xhosas in the 1880s, it became possible in the 1920s for Henry Selby Msimang and R. V. Selope Thema in *Umteteli wa Bantu* to argue that the political practice of the African National Congress must be informed by new modern intellectual thinking and creations that found its point of origin among Xhosa intellectuals forty years earlier. This was at the center of their dispute with Pixley ka Isaka Seme who wanted the Old to determine and give direction to the New, rather

than the New transforming the Old. Although all three were *conservative modernizers*, Msimang and Selope Thema's thinking about history was based on the principle of progress, whereas that Pixley ka Isaka Seme, paradoxically, seems to have been based on the belief in processes remaining permanently the same. Their particular brands of intellectualism are what made their political disagreements so fascinating.

Second, although Solomon T. Plaatje contributed quite extensively to the *Kimberley Diamond Advertiser* newspaper, the Kimberley and Thaban Nchu Circle, which included among others Silas Modiri Molema, Mina Soga, Isaac Bud-Mbelle, found recognition and legitimacy through *Umteteli wa Bantu*, to which Plaatje contributed regularly before his death in 1932. In fact, the mining interests who owned and controlled the newspaper, had wanted Plaatje to be its first editor, but upon his refusal, they contended themselves on listing him on the newspaper mast-head, by the newspaper as one of the conjoint editors with John Langalibalele Dube. Plaatje never challenged or contested this false claim or designation by the newspaper. The interesting question is why! My contention is that Plaatje saw the advantages and benefits of being held in high esteem by arguably the largest circulation newspaper among Africans.

Third, by resigning from *Umteteli wa Bantu* in the early 1930s in order to launch *The Bantu World* and becoming its editor, R. V. Selope Thema was able to achieve certain things that he may not have been able to do had he remained in the former newspaper. He gave ample space to S. E. K. Mqhayi in the last phase of his productive life to publish poems and prose. Selope Thema commissioned Guybon Bundlwana Sinxo to write an appreciation extolling the genius of the great Xhosa poet ("Notable Contribution To Xhosa Literature: Mr. Mqhayi Creates Xhosa Renaissance", *The Bantu World*, July 20, 1935). This appreciation may indeed have been the first serious ever written on *Imbongi Yesizwe Jekелеle* (National Poet). Yet in publishing the last writings of Mqhayi, R. V. Selope Thema may have wished to signal and demarcate the end of the dominating role of Xhosa intellectuals in the history of the New African Movement. The young Zulu intellectuals, H. I. E. Dhlomo, Jordan Ngubane and R. R. R. Dhlomo, who were working under his guidance in this newspaper, were in the following decade to establish the spectacular achievements of the Zulu intellectuals of the 1940s. In other words, Selope Thema stood in between the *endings* of the lineages of Xhosa intellectuals representing a particular historical moment and the *beginnings* of the tracings of the emergent Zulu intellectuals at a particular phase of its historical development. The Dhlomo brothers moved to Durban in the early 1940s to editorially supervise *Ilanga lase Natal*, and Ngubane also moved closer to Durban, specifically to Verulam, to editorially guide *Inkundla ya Bantu*, also in that decade. Nevertheless, in a real sense, the emergence and gestation of the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s constellation occurred in *Johannesburg*, not in

Durban, as one may possibly have expected. At the beginning of this formation, Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, Anton Lembede, Walter M. B. Nhlapo and Jacob Nhlapo, who were to become members of this pleiad, were all residing in Johannesburg. Temporality and socio-cultural space tempered and mediated the vagaries of ethnic identities in the formation of intellectual constellations in the history of the New African Movement.

Fourth, given Selope Thema's pronounced influence on Jordan Ngubane, who in the 1950s was to defend the intellectual and nationalist legacy of Anton Lembede, it is plausible to argue that Thema was one of the influential forces in the emergence of the ANC Youth League. While Lembede emerged from the tradition of Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Ngubane himself has written on the imprint of Selope Thema on his intellectual formation. This is important because both Selope Thema and Seme were *conservative modernizers* and consequently imparted to their younger colleagues a virulent strain of African nationalism that was reactionary, fixated on *race* and innocent of the historical category of *class*. The outbreak of an intellectual war in the pages of *Liberation* magazine and *Indian Opinion* newspaper in this decade between Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo on one side and Jordan Ngubane on the other, was about this dialectic between race and class. The intervention of Ruth First with her *Fighting Talk* review, of which she was the editor, on the side of Mandela and Tambo speaks for itself. While Mandela and Tambo sought to construct a *progressive* form of African nationalism, thereby going beyond Anton Lembede, Ngubane defended a *retrogressive* form of African nationalism that had been the ideological principle of the ANC Youth League at the moment of its founding in 1944. For Ngubane and Lembede African nationalism was synonymous with *black nationalism* and this nationalism viewed itself as in a Manichean struggle with Marxism and Communism. In another context, the question of regressive African nationalism or progressive African nationalism, was at the center of the long Open Letters directed against each other, between Albert Luthuli and Jordan Ngubane, which appeared in the mid-1950s in *Indian Opinion*. This exchange constituted a irreparable break between them. This break between these New African intellectuals and political leaders could be viewed as the end moment of the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s constellation which had begun around 1940 with Ngubane's literary appreciation of H. I. E. Dhlomo's *Valley of a Thousand Hills* ("Story Of Feeling, Hope And Achievement," *Ilanga lase Natal*, November 29, 1941) and H. I. E. Dhlomo's review of Benedict Wallet Vilakazi's novel ("*U-Dingiswayo ka-Jobe: An Appreciation*," *Ilanga lase Natal*, December 14, 1940) and appreciation of Vilakazi's M.A. thesis ("*The Conception And Development Of Poetry In Zulu: An Appreciation*," *Ilanga lase Natal*, August 20, 1938). Here one could argue that R. V. Selope Thema damaged Jordan Ngubane politically with his conservatism and reactionary cast of mind as much as he enabled him intellectually. These few words on the 1950s make clear the unacceptability of

identifying this decade with *Drum* magazine; this monthly covered only a portion of a complex intellectual and cultural reality.

Fifth, the important role of *newspapers* in periodizing our cultural and intellectual history cannot be overestimated. Nearly all the intellectual constellations of the New African Movement were associated with a newspaper or magazine or journal of one kind or another: The Era of Tiyo Soga with *Indaba* and the *Christian Express* missionary newspapers; The Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s with *Imvo Zabantsundu* and *Isigidimi Sama Xosa* newspapers; the Gandhi School with *Indian Opinion* newspaper; The Kimberley-Thaban Nchu Circle with *Tsala ea Becoana* and *Tsala ea Batho* newspapers; African Political Organization Intellectuals with *A. P. O.* newspaper; African Marxism and the Labour movement with *Umsebenzi* and *Inkululeko* newspapers; Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s with *Ilanga lase Natal* and *Inkundla ya Bantu* newspapers; the Golden Age of Sotho Literature with *Leselinyana* newspaper; the Voorslag Writers with *Voorslag* magazine; European Friends of the Natives and Missionaries with *Bantu Studies* (later incarnated as *African Studies*) and *Race Relations Journal*; New African Scholars principally with *African Studies* and an assortment of other publications; Sophiatown Renaissance with *Drum* magazine, *Liberation* journal and *Fighting Talk* review. The only constellation that does not seem to have been associated with any publication was the Petersburg Art movement of the 1930s; and this is not strictly true, because the emergence of this configuration coincided with the first writings on art which appeared in *The Bantu World*.

Given this close association between the metamorphoses of intellectual constellations and publications, it is not surprising that the two important books written by New African intellectuals themselves in the first half of the twentieth century that synthesized the trajectory of the *New African force field* in South African intellectual history, emphasized the importance of newspapers in facilitating the making and consolidating of intellectual groups: H. Isaiah Bud-M'Belle's *Kafir Scholar's Companion* (1903) and S. V. H. Mdhuli's *The Development of the African* (1933). Dedicating his book to John Tengo Jabavu, this is what Bud-M'Belle wrote:

In 1870 the Lovedale Missionary Press issued a newspaper called the *Isigidimi sama Xosa*. It ran for seventeen years, Rev. Dr. Stewart being the Editor. There were associated with him at different times Revs. Messrs. Mzimba, Elijah Makiwane, the late Wm. Gqoba and Messrs. Tengo Jabavu, Knox Bokwe, and others. In 1884, November, Mr. Tengo Jabavu started the *Imvo Zontsundu ne Liso Lomzi* (Native Opinion and Guardian) at King William's Town. It is a Kafir-English weekly. In 1897, a copy of this journal was presented to and graciously accepted by Her late Majesty Queen Victoria. In 1898 he was joined by Mr. Knox Bokwe as a partner, who in 1900 retired from partnership. The paper is now run by

Messrs, Jabavu & Co., Ltd. For over a year, during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, *Imvo* was suppressed by the Military Authorities for having published an 'objectionable (sic) article.' The paper reappeared on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 1902, as *Imvo Zabantsundu Bomzantsi Afrika* (South African Native Opinion). . . In November 1897 a tri-lingual (Kafir, Sesuto, and English) weekly paper called *Izwi Labantu*, *Lentsoe la batho*, and the *Voice of the People*, respectively, was issued at East London, by the Eagle Printing Company. Its first editor was Mr. N. C. Umhalla, and he was succeeded by the present Editor Mr. Allan K. Soga. The South African Spectator is published and edited by Mr. F. Z. S. Peregrino at Cape Town. It is issued fortnightly and occasionally contains Kafir columns. It is exclusively the organ of the coloured people, i.e. those who are not 'white.' It began publication in 1900 (pp.10-11).

Most of the figures mentioned by Isaiah Bud-M'Belle were to become important New African intellectuals of the New African Movement.

Thirty years later S. V. H. Mdhluli was to concur with Isaiah Bud-M'Belle on the importance of newspapers and other forms of print culture in facilitating the emergence of New African intellectual culture. He made the following observations:

*Among the factors that will lift us from our ignorance is the affair of reading our newspapers. Native newspapers have been in circulation before the dawn of the twentieth century. The late Mr. J. T. Jabavu should be rightly called a pioneer in the Native newspaper world. His paper, Imvo zaba Ntsundu (Native Opinion) is still in active circulation. Today South Africa has many Native newspapers, chief among them being Imvo, Ilanga, Umteteli and Um-Afrika. These are concerned with the circulation of news connected with the development of the Native race. What causes our people not to read these is very hard to explain and yet we often speak of progress when we do not care to know about our political, religious, and social viewpoints. What are these papers for? Our hopeless way of indulging in village gossips will not lift this veil of ignorance. We believe that in order to move with the times we must first of all build a strong wall round our homes so that as we tread the way to better areas everything we have will not betray us resulting in a prodigious breakdown of our efforts. These papers besides containing Native views also give us in no uncertain ways what other races in our midst are doing. Everything in these papers contains all the necessary particulars connected with our development. Native teachers are great sinners in not reading these papers. The percentage of Native ministers who read these papers far exceeds the percentage of Native teachers. The teachers claim to be leaders of their race but how are they going to cope with the ever-changing conditions of life? This is a malady. Things ought not to move*



to that direction. Let us fill this gap by reverting to the reading of our periodicals. Let us not ignore our own enterprises (pp.27-28, my emphasis).

Mdhluli is clear that modern New African intellectual culture can only be realized through *reading* and *print culture*. The spectacular intellectual efflorescence of the New African Movement in subsequent decades was to conform the prescience of this understanding.

Aligning himself with the achievements of Lydia Umkasetemba, S. E. K. Mqhayi, R. R. R. Dhlomo, Thomas Mofolo, Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, Nontsizi Mgqwetho, among others, Mdhluli argues that this *modern New African intellectual culture* must or should be realized by means of *African languages*:

*Good friends of the human race, let us live for the preservation of our culture chiefly our mother tongues.* One pitiable factor connected with this lamentable affair is that we are considered by other races as a race that has not contributed anything to the world of literature. The Occidentals and the Orientals have produced masses of literature. Most of these books written in Zulu, Xosa and Sesuto have been written by white people. What has brought about this lapse in our development? Even the Xosas are sinners in this respect although the Sogas have proved their worth by writing a few Xosa books. *We need writers, men who will preserve our mother tongues.* Look at what Shakespeare, Milton, and others did for the English language. These men died many years ago but their thoughts are still enshrined in many books read today. However, it gives us a good---pleasure to see works in the vernacular of such men like Rev. John L. Dube, Messrs. Sol. T. Plaatje and S. H. Mqayi. These men have already given us a good introduction in this direction. We pray that they should not rest on their oars and claim that they have finished. Books written in our African languages by Africans are easily understood. *At the time of writing there is a movement on foot seeking for a re-construction of native languages chiefly Xosa and Zulu* (p.31, my emphasis).

This claim of the relevance of African literature in the African languages is still relevant in the early years of the twenty first century in the context of the call for the making of an African Renaissance.

Given authoritative voices of Bud-M'Belle and Mdhluli, as well as others in later years such as that of S. E. K. Mqhayi, R. V. Selope Thema, H. I. E. Dhlomo, Jordan Ngubane and Z. K. Matthews, it is not accidental that the construction of *this* New African Movement *website* is modeled on their understanding and articulation of South African intellectual history in the twentieth century.

Although the intellectuals and historical figures assembled under this designation of "The Era of Tiyo Soga" were not the first to feel the impact of

imperialism and colonialism in the form of European modernity in South Africa, they were the ones to witness the last Frontier Wars of the 1860s and of the 1870s in which this colonial modernity defeated and largely destroyed indigenous traditional societies, especially the Nation of *Phalo* (Xhosa). Their parents were the first to confront the trinity of colonial modernity in the form of Christianity, modern Education and 'Civilization'. Ntsikana [1783-1820], who symbolizes the political dilemma and the historical choices of the parents of these historical figures, is historically acknowledged as the first African to convert to Christianity. Ntsikana's Christian Hymn (*UloThixo omkhulu ngosezulwini*: He, the Great God, High in Heaven) was designated by the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s as the first modern written document in Xhosa by an African (it was written down eight years after his death). John Knox Bokwe, a member of these 1880s intellectuals, wrote a biography of this first Christian Converter. The father of Tiyo Soga converted to Christianity at nearly the same time as Ntsikana. One distinction characterizing Tiyo Soga is that he was the first African to receive a thorough European education, in Europe no less, albeit in theology. Tiyo Soga's generation was the first to come to the historical consciousness of the necessity of posing a counter-response to colonial modernity. This response was formulated in religious terms rather than through political practice. Although they were ambivalent about colonial modernity, they nevertheless willingly embraced as well as coerced into accepting modernity over tradition. This ambivalence and contradiction is apparent in Tiyo Soga's historical project: his attempt to use Christianity to salvage the advantages of modernity against the rapacious nature of capitalism.

The genius of Tiyo Soga is in having recognized that although capitalism was the enabler and carrier of modernity, hence seemingly inseparable from each other, they were nonetheless not reducible to each other. This group of thinkers, artists and intellectuals was a generation of 'firsts' in many ways. Not all of them were of Xhosa origin by any means. Soga enabled the 'last' Xhosa Chief Sandile to be conscious of the *historical divide* between modernity and tradition. Sandile was perhaps the first Chief to be conscious of his inability to cross this historical divide; consequently he gave his daughters to Tiyo Soga to take to modernity while retaining his sons with him in tradition. Lydia Umkasetemba was the first Zulu writer of the modern era not Magema M. Fuze as is usually supposed. She was not only a great writer, she was also the originator of modern Zulu literature. Fuze's achievement is to have written the first book on the mythological and historical origins of the Zulu Nation by an African. Nongqawuse made this historical divide an actual existential experience for the Xhosa Nation, not as a matter of historical attitude or theoretical formulation, by bringing the Nation of Phalo to the brink of 'national suicide' through her apocalyptic visions. Olive Schreiner, a European woman, was the first major novelist to come from colonial 'South Africa'. In writing the 'manifesto' of

Ethiopianism (the formation of independent African Christian churches from the hegemonic European Christian churches), Mangane Maake Mokone opened the first political pathway towards the creation of New African modernity in opposition to European modernity. Mokone pointed in the future direction of Pixley ka Isaka Seme who formulated the manifesto of New African modernity: "The Regeneration of Africa". Sara Bartmann, the Hottentot (Khoi-Khoi) woman, was among the first Africans to encounter, paraphrasing Walter Benjamin, the barbarism of modernity as opposed to its 'civilizing' mission. The remains of Bartmann were returned from Europe to South Africa nearly two hundred years after her death. The victory of 1994, represented by the greatness of Nelson Mandela, made this possible. All of these historical figures were remarkable in their lucidity regarding the historical choices that had to be made in view of the violent entrance of European modernity into African history. The consequences of this shattering entrance are still evident as the contemporary 'African crisis' continues to unfold onto the twenty-first-century.

Many of the "Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s" were taught by Tiyo Soga in their young days at Lovedale missionary school. Like their great predecessor they sought to preserve and consolidate the modest gains they had achieved within colonial modernity while at the same time seeking to retrieve whatever they could from the cultural sphere(s) of traditional societies. These intellectuals took to heart Soga's article in the first issue of the missionary Xhosa newspaper *Indaba* (News, August 1862) which said in part: "What are the skin skirts' pockets, and the banks for the stories and fables, the legends, customs and history of the Xhosa people and Fingo people? This is a challenge, for I envisage in this newspaper a beautiful vessel for preserving the stories, fables, legends, customs, anecdotes and history of the tribes. The activities of a nation are more than cattle, money or food." Like Soga, these intellectuals were men of religion, studied theology in order to practice as reverends of the Scottish Protestant Church.

Following on the footprints of Soga in other directions, some of them were editors of the missionary newspaper, *Isigidimi Sama-Xosa* (The Xhosa Messenger): this was true of Elijah Makiwane, John Tengo Jabavu and William Wellington Gqoba. Conflicts with European missionaries led Jabavu to launch the newspaper *Imvo Zabantsundu* (African Opinion) in 1884. This was a major breakthrough in that the pages of *Imvo Zabantsundu* became an intellectual forum for these Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s in which they could express their thoughts freely without the interference of European missionaries. Many of the essays that subsequently appeared in the newspaper had been originally presented as lectures at the Native Education Association that they launched in 1879. The Association was founded in opposition to the Lovedale Literary Society, which though was the cultural society in which they emerged as intellectuals, was controlled by and had been founded by missionaries in 1867.

The first hallmark of these intellectuals was that they were the first to launch institutional forms of representation in the context of modernity: newspapers, associations, societies, political and social organizations.

A second distinguishing feature of this group of thinkers was that they were first Africans to experience major ideological conflicts among themselves regarding Ethiopianism: with James Dwane supportive while John Tengo Jabavu adamantly opposed to it.

Third, they were proselytizers for modernity primarily through religion rather than through cultural politics. In this regard, the effect of Elijah Makiwane's preaching on the sixteen year old Pedi teenager R. V. Selope Thema in the hinterlands of Transvaal in 1902 or 1903 was historic in view Selope Thema's subsequent profound influence on later generations of New African intellectuals across the first half of the twentieth century through his writings and columns in *Umteteli wa Bantu* (The Mouthpiece of the People) in the 1920s as well as by his editorship of *The Bantu World* from 1932 to 1952.

Fourth, they were the first to grapple with modern literary culture and linguistic matters among the African people. William Wellington Gqoba was the first important modern African poet to write poetry about secular matters while his essays attempted to construct an intellectual bridgehead between tradition and modernity. From Gqoba there is a straight line to the great Xhosa poets in the early part of the twentieth century such as S. E. K. Mqhayi and Nontsizi Mqgqwetho. Gwayi Tyamzashe was involved in contentious arguments with European missionaries concerning the proper orthography of isiXhosa. Tyazamshe's interest in African orthography was anticipatory of Solomon T. Plaatje's regarding Setswana orthography and H. I. E. Dhlomo's fascination with Zulu orthography.

Fifth, Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s were the first Africans to have premonition of the possible historical relevance of New Negro modernity for the then incipient forms of New African modernity as it was unfolding. Elijah Makiwane, Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba, Walter B. Rubusana and John Tengo Jabavu appropriated the thoughts of New Negro intellectuals such Alexander Crummell and George Washington Williams into their navigation and negotiation of the construction of South African modernity. The intellectual disagreement between Makiwane and Mzimba in the pages of *Imvo Zabantsundu* as to whether Williams' *History of the Negro Race in America, 1619-1880* (1883) which advocated that black people should temporarily disengage from political activity in the process of constructing their particular brands of modernity in order to appease the hegemonic forces of white people, is exemplary in this regard. Makiwane

debated the merits of Crummell's view that the English language (i.e. European languages) and English literary culture (i. e. European civilization) were the only practical facilitators of Africans' entrance into modernity. Makiwane was at best skeptically ambivalent about Crummell's proposition.

Sixth, Isaac W. Wauchope, the first politically conscious African man of letters, seems to have been the one to be *historically conscious* of the historical divide between forging an African literature in the African languages or in the European languages. Wauchope chose the instrument and medium of the English language. Although Wellington wrote both in English and in isiXhosa, it was Wauchope who made the decisive choice. It may have been Wauchope who provoked S. E. K. Mqhayi into constructing his monumental literary achievement in the Xhosa language. Lastly, the conflict among these intellectuals regarding the choice between a *conservative modernity* (the position of Jabavu) or a *progressive modernity* (the choice of Walter Benson Rubusana) led to the fracturing of political and cultural unity of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s. In this context, the founding of *Izwi Labantu* (The Voice of the People) newspaper in 1897 in competition against *Imvo Zabantsundu* brought to an end one chapter of African intellectual history and opened another. In a real sense, by stewarding *Izwi Labantu*, Allan Kirkland Soga, Walter Benson Rubusana and S. E. K. Mqhayi opened the way towards superseding European modernity with the making of New African modernity in the early years of the twentieth century.

The New African writers, intellectuals, artists, religious and political leaders who were really at the center of the construction of New African modernity in the early years of the twentieth century emerged in vastly different historical circumstances than those that had coalesced together Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s. Whereas Xhosa intellectuals had not numbered more than fifteen members at the very most, this coterie of intellectuals easily surpassed a hundred. This exponential increase and their dispersal all over the country, in the context of the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, was made possible by industrialization of the country and the consequent spread of capitalism into the far corners of the territory. The discovery of the immense reservoirs of natural resources, especially gold in 1886 in Johannesburg and diamonds in Kimberley in 1867, triggered the accelerated modernization of the country. The effect of this was the upturning of the countryside and the uprooting of the people from the rural areas to the cities that were still in the state of formation. This dramatically changed the spatial location of intellectual formations. Although the phenomenon of Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s occurred in small towns such as Alice (where Lovedale is located) and King Williams' Town, it was still a 'rural affair', whereas this group of intellectuals were situated in cities, the classic locale in the formation of modernity. Although it could not be otherwise, the formation of the intellectuals of the Nation of Phalo

was a provincial occurrence in the sense that it was confined to a particular ethnic group, whereas the making of these intellectuals across the whole geographic space of the country was not only national phenomenon, in the sense of pulling all the ethnic groups into the big cities, it was also an international affair, pulling Mohandas Gandhi from India by way of Edwardian England to Durban, attracting F. Z. S. Peregrino from Ghana by way of United States to Cape Town, enticing Max Yergan from United States to Queenstown.

A fundamental change occurred: whereas with the 1880s' intellectuals religion was primarily at the center of their 'modernistic' vision, culture and politics were viewed through the prism of theological disputations in one form or another, with the emergent New Africans of the dawning new century, politics displaced religion, despite the fact that many of the latter intellectuals were still beholden to religious issues. Secular ideologies supersede religiosity as a vector of identification. Cosmopolitanism and internationalism enter the country simultaneously with the arrival of the émigrés and immigrants. The spectacular emergence of so many New African newspapers between 1890 and 1910 was a dramatic expression of these incomparable changes: *Ipepa Lo Hlanga* (The Paper of the Nation), published in both English and Zulu, was launched in Pietermaritzburg in 1894 by the members of the Natal Native Congress, which included among others, Mark S. Radebe, James Mjozi and Isaac Mkize; *Ilanga lase Natal* (Natal), bilingual in Zulu and English, was founded by John Langalibalele Dube in Durban in 1903; Mohandas Gandhi, a few months later in 1903, also in Durban, published the first real Indian newspaper in South Africa called *Indian Opinion* in four languages---English, Gujarati, Hindi and Tamil; Simon Majakathetha Phamotse, on behalf of the Transvaal Native Vigilance Association, founded in Pietersburg in 1903 *Leihlo La Babathso* (The Native Eye) which was published in English and Pedi; Solomon T. Plaatje's newspaper was published in 1910 called *Tsala ea Batho* (The People's Friend) in Kimberley in five languages---English, Tswana, Sotho, Xhosa and Pedi.

Also in this period two books were published which were fundamental in determining the nature and the scope of the then still emergent New African modernity or New African Movement: Isaiah Bud-Mbelle published in 1903 *Kafir Scholar's Companion* which was dedicated to John Tengo Jabavu; Walter Benson Rubusana in 1906 compiled his anthology *Zemk' inkomo Magwalandini* (literally The Cattle Are Departing, You Cowards but in actual fact Preserve Your Culture) which consisted of Xhosa poems and short prose pieces that had appeared in the missionary and African newspapers in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The fundamental point of *Kafir Scholar's Companion* was in indicating the importance of New African newspapers in the construction of New African modernity. *Zemk' inkomo Magwalandini* was not only important in bringing to the fore the still very young great Xhosa poet S. E. K. Mqhayi, but perhaps much

more importantly, in making possible the construction of New African intellectual history as evident in books such as S. V. H. Mdhuli's *The Development of African Culture* (1933), Benedict Wallet Vilakazi's dissertation *The Oral And Written In Nguni* (1946), and A. C. Jordan's *Towards An African Literature* (1973; consisting of essays that had appeared in the 1950s in the *Africa South* journal). Among the political and cultural forces that made the achievements of these emergent New African intellectuals possible were the Pan Africanism of F. Z. S. Peregrino, the African Nationalism of Pixley ka Isaka Seme, the Marxism of Albert Nzula, the impeccable scholarship of Clement Martyn Doke, the great poetry of Nontsizi Mgqwetho, etc.

As part of the construction of New African modernity, these New African intellectuals of the early years of the twentieth century were compelled by necessity in realizing modernistic forms of institutional representation. On the political plane, this led to the formation of the African National Congress (1912) as an instrument for forging a national consciousness and national unity among Africans in the process of transcending their tribal or ethnic identifications. Besides a *political organization*, there was also a need for a *political ideology* that would spell out the *historical objectives* of New African modernity and the *historical vision* of the New Africans. In concurrence with this, there was a need for creating a national culture and a national literature that would singularize the distinctiveness of New African modernity in the process of replacing and superseding the transplanted European modernity in South Africa. Since literature was more conducive to interlinking and creating the passageways of transition or transformation between tradition (from oral forms of representation) and modernity (to written forms of representation), rather than say music or art or philosophy, it was one of the contested terrain in the making of the New African Movement. Literature was an artistic form with far greater traction for ideological contestations than any other because of its linguistic and metaphorical transparency.

The other reason was that literary forms of representation *in modernity* were falling under the way of the hegemonic power of the English language. Was the hegemonic force of the English language *in the African context* due to its linguistic excellence or to its political alignments with capitalism, imperialism and colonialism! The great Xhosa poet S. E. K. Mqhayi felt this issue or problem most acutely than any other New African intellectual of his historical moment. Already in 1914 in the Preface to his classic novella *Ityala Lamawele* (The Case of Twins) he clearly stated that African literature in the unfolding twentieth century should be written in the African languages and not in the European (i. e., English) languages. There can be no doubt that Mqhayi was reacting against his predecessors, the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s, who had fallen under the hegemonic power of the English language, be it the essays of William Wellington

Gqoba or those of Elijah Makiwane or of Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba. Specifically, he was reacting against the Xhosa poets who wrote their poetry in both isiXhosa and in the English language: Gqoba in the 1870s and in the 1880s and Wauchope in the 1890s.

In writing his voluminous poetry *only in isiXhosa* (an African language), beginning in *Izwi Labantu* in the late 1890s, continuing in *Imvo Zabantsundu* in the 1910s and in *Umteteli wa Bantu* in the 1920s, and bringing his project to completion in *The Bantu World* newspaper in the 1930s, Mqhayi sought to construct a different historical vision. *His historical vision sought to marry African literature in the African languages with African nationalism in the construction of New African modernity and in the making of national literature.* This monumental undertaking seems not to have succeeded or succeeded in ways unanticipated by him.

Perhaps the poet who could have succeeded in this momentous realization was Nontsizi Mqgwetho in her poems which appeared in *Umteteli wa Bantu* in the 1920s. But Mqgwetho disappeared from New African cultural history in the late 1920s before the *ideological structures or principles* of African nationalism were formulated and implemented by, among others, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Solomon T. Plaatje, R. V. Selope Thema, Anton Lembede, Jordan Kush Ngubane, in the 1920s and in the 1930s. But what Mqhayi succeeded in doing, perhaps beyond his expectations, was that the major poetry written by Africans across the twentieth century would be that in the African languages: Mqhayi himself opened the century, Mqgwetho dominated the 1920s, J. J. R. Jolobe and Benedict Wallet Vilakazi were the supreme poets of the 1930s and of the 1940s, the still unknown Stanley Nxu displayed his enormous talent in the pages of *The Bantu World* in the 1940s, and the century closes with the majestic voices of Mazisi Kunene and David Livingstone Phakamile Yali-Manisi. Continuing on the historical vision of Mqhayi, Mazisi Kunene attempted in exile to forge a synthesis between African literature in the African languages and African nationalism. For different historical reasons, Kunene too succeeded in a problematical manner.

While the failure of Mqhayi could be attributed to *temporality*, that of Kunene was due to *politics*. Just looking at some of the names of the New African intellectuals such as Z. R. Mahabane, Roseberry Bokwe, Mark S. Radebe, R. R. R. Dhlomo and T. D. Mveli Skota certain critical issues emerge that distinguish the complexity of New African modernity. Regarding Mahabane, his name signifies the fact that not only was the first elected General-President of the ANC was a reverend of the Church, John Langalibalele Dube, quite a few other political leaders in subsequent years were men of religion; politics and religion were intertwined in the early political history of the New African Movement. As a consequence of this unholy unity, which contradicted the history of the



formation modernity in European history where there was absolute separation of state and religion, several habits and customs were invented as though they were a natural process. In his opening speech at the founding inauguration of the ANC Pixley ka Isaka Seme invented a *conservative political modernity* for the organization by arguing that the Chiefs should have veto power over New African intellectuals. He instituted a mechanism to achieve this. This invented tradition of conservatism was to hold sway in the organization for many subsequent decays. In a speech read in his absentia, Dube reinforced this invention of a conservative political modernity by proclaiming that he will pursue a politics that was inspired by the political ideology of Booker T. Washington; by his silence ignored the political philosophy of W. E. B. Du Bois.

It was the massive entrance of Marxism into the organization in the late 1920s and in the 1930s that challenged the hegemony of this conservative political modernity. The name Roseberry Bokwe signifies the role of *New African medical doctors* in shaping and determining the politics of New African modernity in a *secular* direction. The list of medical doctors who played a remarkable role in this singular achievement is quite impressive: Abdullah Abdurahman, Yusuf Dadoo, Gonarathnam "Kesaveloo" Goonam, Monty G. M. Naicker, William Nkomo, James L. Z. Njongwe, and Alfred Bitini Xuma. Mark S. Radebe who was the first important music critic of the New African Movement, and a close intellectual colleague of H. I. E. Dhlomo, brought a deep critical musical culture to New African modernity. The culture he infused in the Movement was one inherited from European missionaries: Christian choral music and classical music. This tradition of music was what practically all New African intellectuals learned from European modernity in South Africa. It was this culture of Christian choral music and classical music which inhibited practically all these intellectuals from making a rapprochement with New Negro jazz, the classic music of modernity par excellence, when it began entering South Africa in the 1920s. As late as the early 1950s H. I. E. Dhlomo was still fulminating against jazz. Still more, this inherited music tradition from Europe also prevent these brilliant intellectuals from appreciating *marabi music*, which was an internal organic cultural response to the development of New African modernity.

It was only in the 1950s, during the period of the Sophiatown Renaissance and the waning days of the New African Movement, that rapprochement was achieved between jazz and New African modernity. The name of R. R. Dhlomo, a remarkable journalist and Zulu novelist, is a semaphore of the fact that the center of intellectual productivity of New African modernity had shifted from of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s to the Zulu intellectuals of the 1940s. These intellectuals of the 1940s were the last to produce a voluminous African literature in an African language before English established its complete dominance as New African modernity was approaching its point of defeat in

1960. Lastly, T. D. Mveli Skota assembled and edited *The African Yearly Register* (1930), a book that was an intellectual snapshot of the New African Movement at the moment of its highest achievement. H. I. E. Dhlomo had praiseworthy things to say about this extraordinary book in *Umteteli wa Bantu* ("The African Yearly Register," I, II, II, October 17, 24, 31, 1931).

The collocation of these thinkers, writers, artists, political and religious leaders gives one an opportunity to broach an issue concerning the organizational structure of the website. Although the website is mainly organized chronologically from "The of Era of Tiyo Soga" (1860s) to the "Sophiatown Renaissance" period (1950s), that is laterally or horizontally, given that spatial and geographical principles also informed its conceptualization and structuring, it is also organized vertically or perpendicularly. The website is organized *historically* and *thematically*. The consequence of this is some New African intellectuals appear in more than one categorization. Each instance has its own particular reasons. For example, Walter Benson Rubusana is situated in both categories of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s and in *Izwi Labantu* Group. Born in 1858, that is approximately twenty years younger than the other members of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s, it would seem that it was precocity and being at the right place at the right time that enabled him to be a member of this group.

It was principally Rubusana's disenchantment with John Tengo Jabavu's reactionary politics in the early years of the 1890s that made him break with the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s. But in actual fact, it would seem that by the early 1890s the three principal figures of this group, Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba, Elijah Makiwane and James Dwane, had already broken with John Tengo Jabavu. By this time William Wellington Gqoba, the first modern African poet and the last editor of *Isigidimi Sama Xosa* (Xhosa Messenger), was already dead, having died in 1888. This missionary newspaper did not survive his death. Gwayi Tyazamshe was no longer in the Cape area; he was largely in the Kimberley area and going as far as the Northern Transvaal preaching. Isaac W. Wauchope is the only member of this group whose short articles and poems continued to appear in John Tengo Jabavu's newspaper throughout the 1890s. This is somewhat of an enigma because Wauchope seems to have been the most radically political member of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s yet seems to have tolerated the longest Jabavu's turn towards reactionary politics. John Tengo Jabavu had enormous *political power*, not *intellectual originality*, within the Xhosa Intellectuals of 1880s because the newspaper he edited, sponsored by white liberal interests, *Imvo Zabantsundu* (African Opinion), had been from the moment of its founding in 1884 the *intellectual forum* for this group of intellectuals. It was the *conceptual power* of the essays of these intellectuals that appeared in the newspaper, which had originally been presented to the Native Educational Association, that

defined the progressive and the avant-garde nature of the newspaper, not the *editorial vision* of John Tengo Jabavu. Jabavu contributed no essays to the newspaper and his editorials were short and largely unoriginal.

There are two reasons that seem to have caused the fracturing of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s: one was Jabavu forming alliances with reactionary white political organizations, and in a certain sense displaying a dependency complex; the other was Jabavu's increasingly irrational hostility to the emergence of the Ethiopianism, the development of Independent African Christian Churches in opposition to the white Christian Churches. *In actual fact Ethiopianism was the first major ideological struggle waged by Africans towards transforming European modernity in South Africa into New African modernity.* While many of these Xhosa intellectual equivocated concerning Ethiopianism, they were uniformly hostile to Jabavu's unholy alliances. While the older members of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s were by this time morally exhausted to launch an effective political opposition to Jabavu, Walter Benson Rubusana was still young enough to align himself with younger intellectuals such as S. E. K. Mqhayi, Allan Kirkland Rubusana and others in founding *Izwi Labantu* newspaper in opposition to *Imvo Zabantsundu*. Rubusana's political opposition to Jabavu was prescient and prophetic given Jabavu's later catastrophic blunder in opposing the formation of the ANC in 1912; Solomon T. Plaatje devoted a whole chapter in *Native Life in South Africa* (1916) to this political tragedy.

This explains the double belongingness of Walter Benson Rubusana. This double belongingness also explains the historical positionality of Jordan Ngubane, but for different reasons. Ngubane belonged to two intellectual constellations simultaneously by virtue of the fact that he was a founding member of the African National Congress Youth League in 1944 together with Anton Lembede, Nelson Mandela, A. P. Mda, Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu. Another factor that situates Ngubane in this Johannesburg group is that like, R. R. R. Dhlomo, Guybon Bundlawa Sinxo, H. I. E. Dhlomo, Peter Abrahams, Henry Nxumalo, Todd Matshikiza and Peter Segale, he got his grounding in journalism through *The Bantu World* newspaper under the editorial guidance of R. V. Selope Thema. Ngubane also belonged to the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s together with C. L. S. Nyembezi, H. I. E. Dhlomo, Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, R. R. R. Dhlomo, Walter M. B. Nhlapo, Selby D. B. Ngcobo, Jordan Ngubane, Anton Lembede, Albert Luthuli and others by virtue of having been the editor of *Inkundla ya Bantu* from 1943 to the demise of the newspaper in 1951, as well as having written multiple columns in the *Indian Opinion* in the 1950s, becoming briefly the editor of the newspaper in the late 1950s.

It was in the context of the African National Congress Youth League that Ngubane reinforced his commitment to African nationalism which became his

life long passion especially during the exile period. In all probability it was during his apprentice with Pixley ka Isaka Seme in Johannesburg in the early 1940s that awakened his first stirrings of African nationalism. Seme was the founder of the African National Congress in 1912 and the author of the manifesto that proclaimed the necessity of modernity in Africa in the twentieth century. Ngubane acquired his formidable journalistic skills from R. V. Selope Thema during his *The Bantu World* days; it is not accidental that when he was editor of *Inkundla ya Bantu* he wrote a remarkable portrait of Selope Thema. The milieu of the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s enabled Jordan Ngubane to intervene in the national politics of the African National Congress from a strong regional base of Natal. Ngubane in the pages of *Inkundla ya Bantu* secretly colluded with H. I. E. Dhlomo in the pages of *Ilanga lase Natal* in destroying the political career of A. W. G. Champion and extolling that of Albert Luthuli. Having succeeded in assisting the election of Luthuli to the regional presidency of the African National Congress in Natal, they were in a position to successfully help him in being elected a few years later to the national presidency of the organization.

Thelma Gutsche was a remarkable New African intellectual whom it is difficult to situate chronologically within the trajectory of the New African Movement. She in many ways revolutionized the ideological perspectives of the New African Movement through her magisterial book *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa 1895-1940* (written by 1946 and only published in 1972) arguing by implication that film is just as crucial as literature or music in the creation and construction of modernistic sensibilities. Gutsche, who seems to have been a close friend of Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, succeeded in making film culture as a central part of New Negro modernity, as the emergence of the Sophiatown Renaissance in subsequent years was to confirm.

The "Gandhi School" presents a particular set of unique circumstances. This is practically the only group of New African intellectuals in which Africans did not feature at all. The Gandhi School consisted of Indians and Europeans. The only African who could remotely be considered a member of this constellation is Jordan Ngubane who wrote multiple columns in the 1950s in the *Indian Opinion*, a newspaper founded by Mohandas Gandhi in 1903. Ngubane in this decade was a close political ally of Manilal Gandhi, the son of the great man and editor of the newspaper. It may have been of their close political proximity to each other that a few years following the death of Manilal Gandhi in 1956, a sad event that elicited from Ngubane a moving obituary, that Ngubane became for a short time an editor of the newspaper. In a deep sense, Ngubane could not possibly have been a member because all the members of this group subscribed to the political philosophy of *satyagraha* (Passive Resistance) invented by Mohandas Gandhi. *Satyagraha* was invented from the synthesis of the natural philosophy of Henri Thoreau and the ideas that Tolstoy developed later in life regarding the lived

experience of the Russian peasantry. In this achievement, Gandhi brought to South Africa a different kind of cosmopolitanism than that of the African members of the New African Movement. This cosmopolitanism is apparent in the Europeans (Joseph J. Doke, Albert H. West, Henry Saloman Leon Polak) and the Indians (Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar, Mandanjit Vyavahark) who came together in the Gandhi School.

The philosophy of life that Gandhi expected his 'School' to reflect and articulate can be glimpsed from an obituary notice that he wrote on the occasion of the sudden death of Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar in 1906, whom he had recruited as the founding editor of his *Indian Opinion* when he launched the newspaper in 1903:

Without him this journal [*Indian Opinion*] would never have come into being. In the initial stages of its struggle, Mr. Nazar took up almost the whole of the editorial burden, and if it is known for its moderate policy and sound views, the fact is due, to a very large extent, to the part that Mr. Nazar played in connection with it. An Indian reading this account will understand thoroughly that Mr. Nazar was, when I state that he was a real Yogin, a cosmopolitan Hindu, knowing no distinction as to caste or creed, recognizing no religious difference. His one solace in life was the *Bhagavad Gita*, the 'Song Celestial.' He was imbued with its philosophy. He knew the Sanskrit text almost by heart, and the writer of this memoir is personally aware that, amid his sorest trials---and he had his full share of them---he was in a position to preserve fairly perfect equanimity under the inspiration of that teaching. To an orthodox Hindu some of his ways would appear to be strange, but Mr. Nazar was undoubtedly a strange mixture. It is not the writer's purpose to scrutinize the character of the dead man. Indians will have to search far and wide before they will be able to find Mr. Nazar's equal. He disdained praise and never wanted any, and whether he was blamed or praised, he never allowed his public work to be affected. We do not stumble upon such selfless workers anywhere and everywhere. They are few among all communities. Time alone will show what the Indian community and, shall I say, even the European community, has lost in Mr. Nazar ("Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar", *Indian Opinion*, January 27, 1906).

This is what Gandhi wrote of his Indian compatriot and intellectual friend.

He wrote similarly of his European friend, Joseph J. Doke, the father of the great New African scholar Clement Martyn Doke, in his autobiography of 1928 *Satyagraha in South Africa*:

Mr Joseph Doke was a Baptist minister then 46 years old and had been in New Zealand before he came to South Africa. Some six months before this assault, he came to my office and sent in his card. On seeing the

word 'Reverend' before his name, I wrongly imagined that he had come, as some other clergymen did, to convert me to Christianity or to advise me to give up the struggle or perhaps to express patronizing sympathy with the movement. Mr Doke entered, and we had not talked many minutes before I saw how sadly I had misjudged him and mentally apologized to him. I found him familiar with all the facts of the struggle which were published in newspapers. He said, 'Please consider me as your friend in this struggle. I consider it my religious duty to render you as such help as I can. If I have learnt any lesson from the life of Jesus, it is that one should share and lighten the load of those who are heavily laden.' We thus got acquainted with each other, and every day marked an Advance in our mutual affection and intimacy. The name of Mr Doke will often recur in course of the present volume, but it was necessary to say a few words by way of introducing him to the reader before I describe the delicate attention I received at the hands of the Dokes. Day and night one or other member of the family would be waiting upon me. The house became a sort of caravanserai so long as I stayed there. All classes of Indians flocked to the place to inquire after my health, and when later permitted by the doctor, to see me, from the humble hawker basket in hand with dirty clothes and dusty boots right up to the Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association. Mr. Doke would receive all of them in his drawing room with uniform courtesy and consideration, and so long as I lived with the Dokes, all their time was occupied either with nursing me or with receiving the hundreds of people who looked in to see me. Even at night Mr. Doke would quietly peep twice or thrice into my room. While living under his hospitable roof, I never so much as felt that it was not my home, or that my nearest and dearest could have looked after me better than the Dokes. And it must not be supposed that Mr Doke had not to suffer for according public support to the Indians in their struggle and for harbouring me under his roof. Mr. Doke was in charge of a Baptist church, and depended for his livelihood upon a congregation of Europeans, not all of whom entertained liberal views and among whom dislike of the Indians was perhaps as general as among other Europeans. But Mr. Doke was unmoved by it. I had discussed this delicate subject with him in the very beginning of our acquaintance. And he said, 'My dear friend, what do you think of the religion of Jesus? I claim to be a humble follower of Him, who cheerfully mounted the cross for the faith that was in Him, and whose love was wide as the world. I must take a public part in your struggle if I am at all desirous of representing Christ to the Europeans who, you are afraid, will give me up as punishment for it. And I must

not

complain if they do thus give me up. My livelihood is indeed derived

from them, but you certainly do not think that I am associated with them for living's sake, or that they are my cherishers. My cherisher is God; they are but the instruments of His Almighty will. It is one of the unwritten conditions of my connection with them, that none of them may interfere with my religious liberty. Please therefore stop worrying on my account. I am taking my place beside you in this struggle not to oblige the Indians but as a matter of duty. The fact, however, is that I have fully discussed this question with my dean. I gently informed him, that if he did not approve of my relations with the Indians, he might permit me to retire and engage another minister instead. But he not only asked me not to trouble myself about it but even spoke some words of encouragement. Again you must not imagine, that all Europeans alike entertain hatred against your people. You can have no idea of the silent sympathy of many with your tribulations, and you will agree with me that I must know about it situated as I am.' After this clear explanation, I never referred to the subject again. And later on when Mr. Doke died in the pursuit of his holy calling in Rhodesia, at a time when the Satyagraha struggle was still in progress, the Baptists called a meeting in their church, to which they invited the late Mr. Kachhalia and other Indians as well as myself, and which they asked me to address. About ten days afterwards I had recovered enough strength to move about fairly well, and I then took my leave of this godly family. The parting was a great wrench to me no less than to the Dokes (p.171-173).

Both Doke and Nazar exemplified the philosophy of humanism that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi imparted to the New African Movement. The bearer of this Gandhian philosophy in the closing years of the twentieth century was none other than Nelson Mandela, the first democratically elected President of South Africa in 1994.

Nelson Mandela's allegiance to Gandhi's philosophy of *satyagraha* (non-violence resistance), which he first practiced in the Defiance Campaign of 1952, has continued beyond his assuming the presidency of South Africa in 1994, as made evident in a chapter he contributed to a book of 1995 celebrating the unending nature of the legacy of the great Indian nationalist. With his contribution, "Gandhi The Prisoner A Comparison", Mandela traced the history of the deeply rooted nature Of Gandhi's philosophy in South African political history with the following words:

Gandhi threatened the South African Government during the first and the second decades of our century as no other man did. He established the first anti-colonial political organization in the country, if not in the world, founding the National Indian Congress in 1894. The African People's Organisation (APO) was established in 1902, the ANC in 1912, so that both were witnesses to and highly influenced by Gandhi's

militant *satyagraha* which began in 1907 and reached its climax in 1913 with the epic march of 5000 workers indentured on the coal mines of Natal . . . So in the Indian struggle, in a sense, is tooted the African. M. K. Gandhi and John Dube, first President of the African National Congress were neighbors in Inanda, and each influenced the other, for both men established, at about the same time, two monuments to human development within a stone's throw of each other, the Ohlange Institute and the Phoenix Settlement . . . When apartheid was still in its infancy, we too, like Gandhi, organized arrests in our own time through the Defiance of Unjust Laws of Campaign, but by the end of the sixties, the violence of the State had reached such intensity that passive resistance appeared futile . . . Gandhi taught himself Tamil in prison, I taught myself Afrikaans. Gandhi writes that one of the most important benefits he derived from being in prison was that he got the opportunity to read books. He read voraciously, whenever he could, even standing below the dim globe, snatching whatever light he could. In three months, he read 30 books, ranging from works by European philosophers like Thoreau to religious scriptures, like the Koran, Bible, Gita, and Upanishads. He read in English and Gujarati. Books were also my refuge, when I was allowed them . . . So endured Gandhi the prisoner at the beginning of our century. Though separated in time, there remains a bond between us, in our shared prison experiences, our defiance of unjust laws and in the fact that violence threatens our aspirations for peace and reconciliation (in *Mahatma Gandhi 125 Years*, (ed.) B. R. Nanda, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi, 1995).

This has to be one of the profoundest reflections on the complex historical experiences that went into the formation of New African modernity in the early years of twentieth century South Africa.

The smallness of the membership of the "Kimberley-Thaban Nchu Circle" belies its extraordinary importance in the history of the New African Movement. Isaiah Bud-Mbelle, Solomon T. Plaatje, Silas Modiri Molema and Griffiths Motsieloa were precocious in their reading and understanding of modernity. Bud-Mbelle was in many ways a pioneer in the construction of New African modernity. His book of 1903, *Kafir Scholar's Companion*, is the first book by an African that attempted to formulate the *cultural history* of the then emergent New African modernity. Given that the book was dedicated to John Tengo Jabavu, and given that nearly two decades later he wrote a laudatory two-part obituary notice regarding his recent death ("Ngomfi J. T. Jabavu," *Imvo Zabantsundu*, June 18, July 4, 1922), this member of the Xhosa Intellectual of the 1880s, seems to have had the most profound influence on him. In separate chapters, he wrote about the cultural history of literature, the cultural history of the African newspapers, the cultural history of African words, the cultural differentiation between African



languages and the European languages, the cultural history of time as reflected in seasonal variation and in the days of the week. Given the brevity of the book, many of these cultural histories were postulated in a largely diagrammatic notations. By seeking to establish the linguistic unity of the African languages, Bud-Mbelle sought to achieve on the cultural plane what Pixley ka Isaka Seme realized in the founding of the African National Congress in 1912, the political unity of the African people. Both in their separate ways recognized that the historical experience of modernity demanded unity beyond particularistic differentiations. While Bud-Mbelle sought to establish this unity through *culture*, Seme thought its primacy lay in *politics*. Though Bud-Mbelle profoundly engaged himself with linguistic and cultural matters, he was not averse to politics as evident not only in the fact that he was a member of the African National Congress from its inception, he also served as secretary-general of the organization from 1916 to 1919. His role in politics *qua* politics was short-lived.

An overall appraisal of the achievement Isaiah Bud-Mbelle would have to consider him as having been the first cultural historian of the New African Movement. In this majestic tradition, he was followed in later years by some major New African intellectuals: S. E. K. Mqhayi, H. I. E. Dhlomo and R. V. Selope Thema. Besides this intellectual connection to the New African Movement, Bud Mbelle was also ensnared in unusual familial ways to it: he married the daughter or the niece of Josiah Semouse (1860-1893); his sister was married to Solomon T. Plaatje; and his daughter was married to Richard W. Msimang. These familial connections make clear that Isaiah Horatio Bundlwana Bud-Mbelle was a member of the Xhosa intellectual aristocracy. Perhaps this aristocratic connection explains the huge funeral he received following his death in 1947. R. V. Selope Thema, as editor of *The Bantu World*, commissioned in all probability Giffiths Motsieloa to write an obituary notice. A two-part article, appearing in successive weeks under the authorship of 'Griff', emphasized the following points about the intellectual trajectory of Bud-Mbelle: that although Bud-Mbelle was born Burghersdorp, in the Cape Province and died in Pretoria, he spent his most productive intellectual part of his life in Kimberley; that he was an African pioneer court interpreter to the High Court of Griqualand West at Kimberley (on his retirement after a 22-year service, there appeared in *Imvo Zabantsundu* a major synonymously article praising his achievements: "A Bantu Benefactor," August 22, 1916); that in 1892 he was the first African to pass the Cape Civil Service Examination in English, Dutch (Afrikaans), Xhosa, Sesotho, Tswana and Zulu; although he qualified as a Magistrate in 1906, he was denied this position because he was an African; in 1908 he visited Britain; in 1915 he participated in the First World War; in 1916 he was one of the founders of Fort Hare, together with John Tengo Jabavu and others; in 1923 he passed the Native Law and Administration Examination at the University of South Africa; a no lesser figure than Dr. James Moroka, president-general of the African National

Congress from 1949 to 1952, gave a key eulogy at his funeral ("A Short Review Of Bud-Mbelle's Life Story", *The Bantu World*, August 16, 23, 1947). Given these achievements, there can be no doubt that Isaiah Bud-Mbelle was an important figure in the history of New African modernity. His brother-in-law, Solomon T. Plaatje, was to attain greater things.

The political and intellectual achievements of Plaatje regarding the construction of New African modernity towered over the first half of the twentieth century. Within days of his passing H. I. E. Dhloomo wrote the following in an obituary notice:

A great, intelligent leader; a forceful public speaker, sharp witted, quick of thought, critical; a leading Bantu [African] writer, versatile, rich, and prolific; a man who by force of character and sharpness of intellect rose to the front rank of leadership notwithstanding the fact that he never entered a secondary school; a real artist, passionate, assiduous, alert, keenly sensitive---Such were the qualities of the late Mr. Sol. T. Plaatje whose death will be deeply mourned in literary, social, political, and religious circles throughout British South Africa ("An Appreciation", *Umteteli wa Bantu*, June 25, 1932).

While Dhloomo gives prominence to Plaatje's intellectual brilliance, R. V. Selope Thema, in his obituary notice, brought to the forefront his incomparable journalism and unmatched political acumen:

During the Anglo-Boer War [1899-1902], beside serving as a correspondent, he rendered valuable services to the British during the siege of Mafeking. After the war he settled down in Kimberley where he established a newspaper known as *Kuranta Ea Becoana* and *Tsala Ea Batho*. It was as editor of this paper that he exhibited his journalistic abilities and proved himself a champion of the rights of his unfortunate people. With his facile pen he made *Tsala Ea Batho* a thorn in the flesh of the oppressors and exploiters of his race. He criticized the unjust legislator and eulogized the benefactor of his race irrespective of his station in life. When the African National Congress was established in 1912, Mr. Plaatje was unanimously elected its secretary. It was he who drafted its first constitution. The position of secretary for an organization such as Congress, demanded a man who was devoid of tribalism and was capable of seeing beyond the boundaries of his tribal environment and visualise a united Bantu race. Such a man was Mr. Plaatje. Without his broad-mindedness, it is doubtful if the Congress would have made any headway in those days when tribalism reigned supreme in the hearts of our people. But Mr. Plaatje, who had subdued his tribal feelings by marrying a Hlubi [Xhosa; Plaatje himself was Tswana] woman, conquered the tribal feelings of others and piloted Congress through the darkness of misunderstanding and tribal differences into the light of

race-consciousness which now prevails . . . Some people at the time did not understand why he did not return with the others; but today, there can be no doubt, that they realise as never before the good that his book, *Native Life In South Africa*, has done for the Bantu [African] race . . . As a writer Mr. Plaatje has made a notable contribution to Bantu literature. He was a lover of Shakespeare and translated *Comedy of Errors* into Sechuana. At the time of his death he was engaged in translating other Shakespeare's works. His novel *Mhudi* is being read with interest by all lovers of books ("Mr. Sol. T. Plaatje's Death Removes Prominent Figure in Bantu Life", Anonymous [R. V. Selope Thema], *The Bantu World*, June 25, 1932).

Without question, Selope Thema's own remarkable journalism, exemplified especially in his editorship of *The Bantu World* from 1932 to 1952, was schooled in the great journalism of Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje.

Plaatje's relevance in the second half of the twentieth century was taken up by intellectuals, writers and scholars such as Richard Rive, Njabulo Ndebele, Ezekiel Mphahlele, in Solomon T. Plaatje Memorial Lectures which were presented at the University of Bophuthatswana [now University of the North-West] from 1981 to 1982. In his lecture, "Literature: A Necessity of a Public Nuisance: An African View", Mphahlele made the following observation:

When Thomas Mofolo published *Chaka* (completed in 1910, printed in 1925) and Sol Plaatje his *Mhudi* (completed about 1917, printed 1930) they embarrassed the missionaries and other whites who were the chief publishers of the time, and other circles where the novels were known, because they invested their African heroes with nobility. Whites generally did not credit Shaka the man with any qualities higher than savagery and barbarism. The hero and heroine of Plaatje's novel, like Shaka, were makers of history, whereas it was generally believed that the European alone made history and the African merely reacted to it (in *A Collection of Solomon T. Plaatje Memorial Lectures, 1981-1992*, University of Bophuthatswana, 1993).

*Taking the cue from Ezekiel Mphahlele, one can postulate that Solomon T. Plaatje's fundamental contribution to the construction of modernity in South Africa was to transform the consciousness of Africans into being the subjects of their own making of contemporary history and modern society from being the objects of European colonial and imperial history. Although this project was undertaken by all the New African intellectuals of the New African Movement, the uniqueness of Plaatje within this collective effort was to have combined the political, the literary, and the intellectual to achieve this objective with unmatched determination. Few New African intellectuals have surpassed Plaatje in this historical task.*

It may be because of this singular focus that Plaatje displayed in his struggle to liberate the oppressed people of South Africa that led Nelson Mandela to designate him as the best South African intellectual of the twentieth century. Silas Modiri Molema in all probability would have concurred with this estimation of Mandela had he lived long enough to see a democratic South Africa, given that he wrote a short unpublished intellectual biography in the Setswana language of his mentor sometime in the 1940s or 1950s, full of praise of his New African friend. Molema himself was a formidable New African intellectual as his list published books make evident: *The Bantu: Past and Present* (1920); *Life and Health* (1924); *Chief Moroka: His Life, His times, His Country and His People* (1951); *Montshiwa 1815-1896* (1966). He was also author of pamphlets such as: *Healdtown, 1855-1955: A Scrap of History* (1955). Silas Modiri Molema exemplifies the contributions of African medical doctors who were also simultaneously serious intellectuals and politicians. He acquired his intellectual seriousness and political awakening while pursuing medical studies at the University of Glasgow as president of African Races Association of Glasgow and Edinburgh, bringing together students from the colonial territories. The bringing together of these approaches resulted in his most renowned work *The Bantu*. Ethnographic in approach, the book is a complex assortment of interdisciplinary perspectives: it is archaeological in its reconstruction of the first people in Africa; it articulates anthropological perspective in analyzing the moral and metaphysical ethos of different ethnic groups in South Africa; it examines the political history of the then emergent African nationalism and the role of New African newspapers such John Tengo Jabavu's *Imvo Zabantsundu*, Solomon Plaatje's *Tsala ea Batho*, Abdullah Abdurahman's *A. P. O.*, Pixley ka Isaka Seme's *Abantu/Batho*; a historical appraisal of the enforced marching of Africans into modernity by way their being compelled to participate in the English-Boer War of 1899-1902 and in the First World War; the essential nature of education in modernity; a sociological analysis of slavery in modern history; an encapsulated reflection of the role of missionaries in South Africa. This is only a short-listing of the perspectives and epistemological approaches embodied in the book.

What is equally impressive is the bibliographical protocol Silas Modiri Molema had assembled in the writing of the book. Here is a selection from this remarkable bibliography that is reflected in the complex arguments articulated in the book: in the South African context, Plaatje's *Native Life in South Africa*, Rubusana's *Zemk' Inkomo Magwalandini*, Theal's historical works (*The History of South Africa*, *The Ethnography of South Africa*, *The Beginning of South African History*); from the context of New Negro modernity, W. E. B. Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk* (strangely, Modiri seems not to have consulted Du Bois, book of 1915---*The Negro*); from the context of European modernity, Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Hume's *Human Nature*, Machiavelli's *The Prince*, Kant's *Theory of Ethics* and *Metaphysical Elements of Ethics*, Rousseau's *Social Contract*,

Nietzsche's four books (*Beyond Good and Evil*, *The Twilight of the Gods*, *Anti-Christ*, *Zarathustra*). Without a doubt, *The Bantu* is one of the early great books to have emerged from New African Movement. The dismissal of this book by Christopher Saunders of the University of Cape Town and George Fredrickson of Stanford University lacks merit and is not worth considering here. What is intriguing, perhaps unfortunate, is that Molema's practice of medicine interfered with his intellectual vocation. *The Bantu* is a formidable book. The one book he wrote in the field of medicine, *Life and Health* (1924), is more about public health issues rather than, as one would have expected from such a brilliant mind, a consideration of the relationship between Western (European) medicine and African medicine. Nonetheless, *Life and Health* is written in very beautiful prose. The importance of the book partly resides in being the first book concerning medical issues written by a New African medical doctor. The inauguration it initiated was never taken up in the following years of New African modernity. A. B. Xuma's *Charlotte Manye Maxeke, Or, What An African Educated Girl Can Do* (1930), an excellent pamphlet rather than a book per se, is in the realm of pedagogical biography instead of dealing with issues concerning medicine.

In pointing out that modernity facilitates the making of a healthy individual or that only a healthy person can participate fully in modernity, *Life and Health* was an important instructive manual of the entrance into modernity, which in many ways opened the way for New African newspapers such as *Umteteli wa Bantu* in the 1920s and *The Bantu World* in the 1930s to devote columns in its pages to public health matters. The predecessor of Molema in this was the great medical doctor Neil Macvicar who wrote on public health issues in one of the New African newspapers, probably in *Imvo Zabantsundu*, in the early years of the twentieth century. Mentioning the name Macvicar reminds one of the dire need of a book on outstanding South African medical doctors in the twentieth century. One fundamental reason that Silas Modiri Molema did not continue on the breakthrough on the path of the future of modernity represented by *The Bantu*, but diverted in the direction of the celebration of tradition indicated by books like *Chief Moroka* and *Montshiwa 1815-1896*, was that he aligned himself with the *conservative political modernity* of Pixley ka Isaka Seme and R. V. Selope Thema against the *revolutionary political modernity* of Albert Nzula and J. B. Marks, a distinction which is much more crucial than that between Communism and Christianity. Solomon T. Plaatje was very much fascinated by Chiefs and distrustful of the perceived opportunism of New Africans; this was declared openly by him in the pages of *Umteteli wa Bantu* in the late 1920s. There seems to have been a deep fascination with chieftaincy among some New African intellectuals of The Kimberley-Thaban Nchu Circle: this explains their political conservatism.

The last New African figure to consider under this grouping is Mina Soga. Her singular distinction is to have been the only New African intellectual who had a 'biography' about her life written by a foreigner during the course of the New African Movement itself. The 'biography' was called *Daughter of Africa* by Ruth Isabel Seabury published in Boston in 1945. The book is more in the genre of 'reportage' than 'biography' as it related her journey throughout United States in early 1939 talking about the role of the church in South Africa, her work as a teacher and as a social worker. Mina Soga worked closely with Charlotte Manye Maxeke at Wilberforce Institute in Kilnerton, South Africa. This Institute was named after the Wilberforce College in Ohio where Maxeke had studied in the 1890s. One of Maxeke's teachers there was W. E. B. Du Bois. Given that she wrote very little in the form of essays and articles, this reportage cum biography is important partly because it quotes extensively her thoughts about the nature of South Africa and the form of its political crisis. The only known article by her is called "The Need for the Missionary Today: His Place and Function" (in *International Review of Missions*, no. 28, 1939). Like many other New African intellectuals, she was in awe of what New Negro modernity could impart to New African modernity: "I love to watch Negroes in America walk in the streets. They walk as if the streets belonged to them! They look as if they were free. In South Africa we must always carry a permit in our pockets, allowing us to be on the street after curfew, except in certain sections that we call 'locations.' Your freedom feels good!" (p.20) The 'biographer' mentioned that she had deep empathy for and identified with African Americans.

Also like other New African intellectuals, Mina Soga was concerned with understanding the relationship between tradition and modernity. She articulated her reflections in particularly religious and personal terms:

Behold me in this awkward dress of the West. It doesn't become me particularly, or go with me, yet the white man led us to believe when he came to Africa that everything African was heathen, and without intending to do so, he confused us. We began to believe that everything Western---even the *things* of the white man---was Christian. If we could speak the language of the white man so as never to make a mistake, we would be more civilized---and perhaps more Christian. So millions of my people have assumed that by changing their dress they could take on Christianity. They have changed the exterior, but the heart is not changed. Christianity must be based on a changed heart. And for that the African must be at home with his God. Our people knew God before the white man came or before Jesus was introduced to us. We worshiped him on altars of stone and by sacrifice to our ancestors, who could speak to the great God as we could not. Then came the missionary. He told us of Jesus, who had made the ultimate sacrifice so that no longer need we present the slaughter of goats and cattle on the altar. It was blessed by his

eternal sacrifice, by his blood shed for all. We could find in him what God was like. White men built churches for us, but we did not feel at home in them. We had worshiped God out of doors or in round African huts. I went into one of those churches to find God. As I looked around at the strange-shaped building, so unlike our own houses, and the walls that went up so straight and angular, I said to myself: 'Is God there? And if he is, can he speak to me in African?' I struggled, because I wanted to find him; but it was not until one of my people took me to round, thatched church with a stone altar in it that I felt at home in my very soul. Then I said, 'Ah, God is here, and he speaks to me in the tongue of my people' (p.78-79).

Mina Soga's acute observations on Christianity provide fundamental lessons about modernity.

Following her cue that the acceptance and understanding of Christianity must be based on a changed heart, *it is clear that modernity can only be understood and its principles or philosophy practiced or applied on the basis of a changed historical consciousness*. Likewise too, when she demands that Christianity must be made to speak in the African languages, *it is clear that modernity cannot be Africanized until it is made to speak in and through the African languages. The present hegemony of the English language in South Africa is merely a reflection that modernity up to the present is an imposed historically experience, and the majority of the African people have not as yet been organically integrated into it as a lived experience*. Lastly, her observations on the ethos of life experience are equally seminal:

Sometimes I am proud very proud of my people [African Americans] in your land and sometimes I am terribly ashamed. Sometimes they are noble, and by their nobility they set an example to the very people who persecute them. Sometimes they are too smart or lazy or irreligious, and then I feel ashamed of them! For God can help them to find their way if they will let him. It doesn't take just white people, you know. And he can help them to teach even the white people the meaning of love. (p.111)

Here Mona Soga poses the question whether being a Christian makes one an ethically better person than a pagan or an atheist, or a Buddhist for that matter! Or, in other words, does oppression automatically noble an oppressed person? Reading between the lines of her reflections, the answer is No! Nonetheless, the oppressed do have much to teach the oppressors or the ruling class about ethics. This explains her nuanced position as to the possible relations between the New Negroes and the New Africans. What kind of historical lessons are to be had across the Atlantic divide! In her preoccupation with this issue, Mina Soga showed herself to have been truly a traditional New African intellectual in line with John Langalibalele Dube, Allan Kirkland Soga, Charlotte Manye Maxeke and others.

Solomon T. Plaatje was one of the first New African intellectuals to recognize the moral seriousness of Abdullah Abdurahman's political and intellectual commitment to the struggle against colonial and white domination. The first one was Mohandas Gandhi who, within three years of the launching of his *Indian Opinion* newspaper in 1903, was already contemplating of how his Indian Congress could work closely with African Political Organization, a Coloured's political organization that Abdurahman joined in 1903. Within two years of joining it, in 1905 Abdurahman became the president of the organization until his death in 1940. The measure of the importance that Plaatje accorded Abdurahman can be seen in the fact that one of the chapters in *Native Life in South Africa* (1916) is entitled "Dr. A. Abdurahman, M. P. C.", which consists partly of a verbatim presidential speech given by Abdurahman in 1913. What captivated Plaatje about the speech was its reasoned articulation of Abdurahman's political opposition to the 1910 Union of South Africa and the Natives' Land Act of 1913. Abdurahman correctly viewed them as political acts perpetuating white domination and the oppression of Africans, Indians and Coloureds.

Although it was the Europeans coming with European modernity who transplanted Marxism into South Africa, it was New Africans such as Albert Nzula who brought Marxism into the New African Movement in the late 1920s. It was Europeans who were South Africans who formed the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in 1921. Reflecting the ugly side of European modernity, the Communist Party refused the Africans and other blacks into its membership on the basis of white superiority and white exclusivity. But within a short time it recognized that its alignment with the ideology of white supremacy contradicted the fundamental Marxian edict that the workers of the world should unite. The subsequent inclusion of Africans into the Communist Party began the process of Africanizing the organization, which had the direct consequence of transforming "European Marxism" in South Africa into "African Marxism": this transformation from Europeanism to Africanism was part of the construction of New African modernity. This process of transculturation or nativization took on a particular form. The early black entrants into the Communist Party were already members of the African National Congress (ANC) and/or of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU). The ICU was founded in 1919 by the Malawian New African Clements Kadalie.

By the very process of entrance into the Communist Party, the New Africans such as Albert Nzula necessitated the articulation of the conflict between capital and labor in the context of the contradiction between modernity and tradition as defined by the imperatives of African history. It is this contradiction between tradition and modernity that Africanized Marxism in South Africa. It was Albert Nzula and his colleagues who brought this Africanized Marxism into the ANC and into ICU. Nzula was on the national executive Committee of the ANC and a



secretary of the local branch of the ICU in Aliwal North at this time in the late 1920s. The importation of African Marxism into both New African organizations by Albert Nzula unleashed a profound ideological crisis within each of them that led to their subsequent demise. The crisis in the ANC in effect took the form of the overthrow through a 'democratic process' of the progressive leadership of Josiah Tshangana Gumede and replaced by the conservative leadership of Pixley ka Isaka Seme. From the moment of inception of the ANC in 1912 both Pixley ka Isaka Seme and John Langalibalele Dube through the inspiration of Booker T. Washington, the New Negro conservative, had succeeded in constructing a *conservative political modernity* in the organization as its guiding sacred principle. By bringing African Marxism into the ANC Albert Nzula sought to construct a counter-modernity of a revolutionary nature: a *revolutionary political modernity*.

These conflictive modernities constituted the first real ideological crisis of the ANC. Earlier attempts to import ideologies into the organization had not provoked such a strident resistance. F. Z. S. Peregrino, the Ghanian New African, in the early years of the ANC had expected and wanted the ANC to espouse the philosophy of Pan-Africanism which he had brought to South Africa on his arrival in 1900, and had propagated it in his newspaper *South African Spectator*, which he had launched in 1901. In view of the fact that Peregrino was the first historian of the ANC, having written the first document announcing its founding and outlining its principles in John Langalibalele Dube's *Ilanga lase Natal* and in Solomon T. Plaatje's *Tsala ea Becoana* within weeks of its launching, his attempt to bring the black ideology of modernity par excellence, was at best treated with caution. When James Thaele attempted in the mid 1920s attempted to bring the ideology of Garveyism to the organization, of which he was its president-general at the provincial level of the Cape Province, he was resisted, particularly by R. V. Selope Thema in the pages of *Umteteli wa Bantu*.

It was the founding of Ethiopianism, pre ANC days, that launched a major ideological crisis within the ranks of the New African Movement. Ethiopianism was the historical break represented by the founding of Independent African Churches in opposition to the hegemonic European Christian Churches. The founders of the New African Movement such as Solomon T. Plaatje, John Langalibalele Dube, John Tengo Jabavu, Pixley ka Isaka Seme opposed the emergence of Ethiopianism. Although they proclaimed the purpose of launching the New African Movement was the construction of modernity in South Africa, this quartet of leaders seems to have been oblivious of the fact that Ethiopianism, founded in 1890 by Mangane Maake Mokone with the assistance of James Dwane, was the first historical breakthrough towards transforming European modernity in South Africa into New African modernity. Scarred by the ideological battles within the New African Movement, when Seme, Plaatje and Dube (in absentia) launched the ANC they made certain that the dominant

ideology of the organization would be a Christianity informed by the critical reason of the Enlightenment. On taking over the leadership of the ANC in 1930 from Gumede, Pixley ka Isaka Seme obviated Albert Nzula's attempt to import *African Marxism* to organization by writing a series of articles in *Umteteli wa Bantu* calling for the unity of the African people within the ANC through the invention of *African nationalism*. Although from the moment of the birth of each of the 'movements', the New African Movement in 1904, and the ANC in 1912, had been *separate* but parallel and adjacent to each other, with the defeat of African Marxism and revolutionary political modernity (i.e. Albert Nzula, confirmed by his death in Moscow in 1933) by African nationalism and conservative political modernity (i. e. Pixley ka Isaka Seme), the African National Congress and the New African Movement begin to be *fused* together. In fact, African National Congress became the political *instrumentarium* of the New African Movement under the guidance of a conservative political modernity.

The 1930s being a decade of 'fusions' of all kinds in South African history, the intertwining of the African National Congress and the New African Movement led to the attempted fusion of *Christianity* and the incipient *African nationalism*. The coming back to presidency of the ANC by Zaccheus Richard Mahabane from 1937 to 1940, a continuation of his leadership from 1924 to 1927, which was broken by the *radicalism* of Gumede from 1927 to 1930, was a classic expression of this unseemly marriage. It was this fusion of these ideologies that made the 1930s the most reactionary and the most tragic decade in the history of the ANC. This 'Christian' African nationalism of Seme, Dube, Mahabane was broken ideologically within the leadership of the ANC in 1944 by the emergence of the *secular African nationalism* of the ANC Youth Leaguers such as Anton Lembede, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, A. P. Mda, William Nkosi, Jordan Ngubane and others. This secularized form of African nationalism had been made possible by the *secularization* and *modernization* of the ANC effected by A. B. Xuma during his presidency of the organization from 1940 to 1949. Although aligned to the conservative political modernity of Seme and others, Xuma revolutionized the governance structure of the African National Congress by streamlining it by means of his own personal finances. Through secularization, the African nationalism of the Youth Leaguers in the 1950s accommodated the African Marxism and *internationalism* of Albert Nzula and Edwin Thabo Mofutsanyana now represented by Moses Mabhida, Moses Kotane, J. B. Marks and others within the organization. This accommodation made the 1950s one of the most progressive decades in the history of the ANC and the New African Movement as made evident by the collaborative work of the ANC with the South African Indian Congress, the South African Coloured Congress and the banned South African Communist Party around the Defiance Campaign of 1952 and the Congress of the People of 1955.

Although Albert Nzula's conception of African Marxism was arguably the most dominant in the history of Communist Party in South Africa, in exile continued, among others, by Yusuf Dadoo, Joe Slovo, Michael Harmel and others, it was not the only political philosophy of Marx that had relevance in South African history across the twentieth century. The Trotskyism of the Non-European Unity Movement as articulated by I. B. Tabata, Ben Kies and others can also claim legitimacy. The defeat of Trotskyism in South African history, as made evident by the historic results of 1994, was because of its incomprehension of the intersection of the vectors constituted by modernity and tradition on the one hand, and capital and labor on the other. It was these vectors that were at the center of the conundrum of South African history in the twentieth century. Although the New African Movement was unable to survive the historical rupture that the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960s represented, the African National Congress emerged victorious in 1994 because it had the historical acumen at this conjuncture to realign itself with the African Independence Movement in which African nationalism proved more durable than African Marxism. 1994 is fundamentally the victory of the African nationalism of Nelson Mandela and the defeat of the African Marxism of Albert Nzula. Both were the dominant ideologies of the African National Congress across the twentieth century.

John Langalibalele Dube could not have anticipated that his founding of the Ohlange Institute of education in 1901 and the launching of the *Ilanga lase Natal* newspaper in 1903 would fundamentally change the Zulu Nation in the twentieth century by ushering it into modernity. These two dates coincide with the birth of Zulu brothers who were to make the newspaper four decades later as co-joint editors the great newspaper it was in the 1940s: R. R. R. Dhlomo born in 1901 and H. I. E. Dhlomo born in 1903. R. R. R. Dhlomo, like other members of the "Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s" such as Rueben Caluza, was educated at Ohlange Institute. Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, a formidable poet who wrote in isiZulu and the author of the first and still unsurpassed South African literary history of African literature in the African languages (*The Oral And Written Literature in Nguni*: dissertation of 1946), awakened to his intellectual vocation through reading the columns and articles of A. H. M. Ngidi and Josiah Mapumulo in the pages of *Ilanga lase Natal* newspaper. Another brilliant member of the group, Jordan Ngubane, the great editor of *Inkundla ya Bantu* in the 1940s and intellectual maverick possessing a prodigious political imagination, began his journalistic career by writing a column by the name of "Jo the Cow" from 1939 to 1941 for *Ilanga lase Natal*. All of these intellectuals were in many ways the unpredictable result of the *conservative political modernity* that John Dube forged as president-general of the African National Congress from the moment of its founding in 1912 to 1917. Although Dube was the editor of the newspaper from 1903 to 1917, it was during the editorship of Ngazana Luthuli from 1917 until the

Dhlomo brothers assumed editorial responsibility in 1943 that *Ilanga lase Natal* had the deepest impact on the generation of the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s.

Nonetheless, all of these intellectuals were very much aware that John Dube had opened and established for them a pathway to modernity. Two obituary notices on the death of this great man in 1946 indicate the indebtedness and gratitude bestowed upon him by young New African intellectuals. H. I. E. Dhlomo, from the same editorial chair that had been occupied by his predecessor, acknowledged and assessed his greatness with the following words:

The test of greatness consists, not on how and where a person ended his life, but in their having conceived and executed greatly. Failure or success in the mouth of the grave, means little or nothing. He who during his sojourn on earth has influenced and changed the habits and thoughts of his contemporaries (or of men and women to come), or has contributed to knowledge, ideas, beauty, goodness and progress, has achieved distinction and greatness whether or not the brief candle of his life flickers out in obscurity, exile or oblivion on the one hand, or on the other, goes out in glory. The death of an individual is not the end of his career or influence: 'The evil that men do,' says Shakespeare, confirming this law negatively, 'lives after them. The good is oft interred with their bones.' True, but not wholly true. The good of a Jesus, a Socrates, a Joan of Arc, a Nightingale, an Addison, etc., endures and speaks out loud and bold long after the individual's personal death. It is true that because 'a prophet is not great in his own country,' the achievements and ideas of the great may temporarily be eclipsed, only to shine forth, like stars after nimbus skies, more brilliantly than ever before. Even while the ignorance and prejudice of jealous and purblind men, the obscurity and contempt, opposition and frustration, bred by familiarity of a great man who moves amongst us with no special sign of greatness on his brow---even as these things operate, the seeds of a great soul penetrate, germinate, grow and take root ("Dr. J. L. Dube: A Tribute." *Ilanga lase Natal*, February 23, 1946).

These are splendid words by any measure. Indeed, John Dube planted the seeds that germinated into the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s. Ngubane made these observations regarding the historical legacy of John Langalibalele Dube:

If Dr. Dube towered as a giant over his countrymen while he lived, now he stands out as a spokesman of the whole race before the world. Things which the African was believed incapable of learning or doing, Dr. Dube learnt and did; he did more, he taught others as well to learn and do. Unlike most men who find themselves suddenly leading people, he started at the bottom, having certain clearly defined ideals in mind. Throughout his life, he spared no effort to see those ideals take material form. In other words, he set out to show that the African millennium will

not come as a free gift from Providence or the rulers, but that it will come the moment the African people rise up, determined that it must come. For him it came while he lived, because he was determined that this should be so. If this could be true of him, working for the whole nation, it could also be true of the whole nation working for its own good. This was the moral from Dr. Dube's example ("Editorial: Dr. John L. Dube," *Inkundla ya Bantu*, February, First Fortnight, 1946).

One remarkable characteristic of the Zulu Intellectuals of 1940, like John Dube, is that they had the fortitude, a determination and an uncanny ability to transform their ideals into material form or concrete historical practices. Interestingly enough, it was in Johannesburg, rather than in Durban as one might have expected, that the largest contingent of these intellectuals learned their craft of *intellectual practice* in modernity. It was from the great Pedi editor of *The Bantu World*, R. V. Selope Thema, that a quartet from the quintet of most renowned members of this group learned the cultural and intellectual protocols of modernity as his assistants or reporters in the 1930s: H. I. E. Dhlomo, Jordan Ngubane and Walter M. B. Nhlapo and R. R. R. Dhlomo. The exception was Benedict Wallet Vilakazi who was protégé and subsequently colleague of the great scholar Clement Martyn Doke. What one observes here is that within the metropolitan context of Johannesburg, the process of entrance into modernity was marked by the dilution of tribal or ethnic identification. All four had learned enormously from the columns and articles of R. V. Selope Thema that had appeared in *Umteteli wa Bantu* in the 1920s. Also the columns of Henry Selby Msimang which appeared in this New African newspaper and in this decade had many lessons for these younger New African intellectuals. Selope Thema's influence on these intellectuals cannot be overestimated: H. I. E. Dhlomo made explicit his admiration of him in the 1930s, while Jorgan Ngubane in the 1940s spelled out his intellectual homage to him. R. R. R. Dhlomo was responsible for the Zulu pages of *The Bantu World*, while Walter M. B. Nhlapo wrote extensive columns on the emergent popular culture of New African modernity for the newspaper. When the Dhlomo brothers departed from Johannesburg in 1943 to give editorial direction to *Ilanga lase Natal* located in Durban, there is no doubt as to who they sought to emulate; likewise, when Jordan Ngubane moved to Durban in the same year to assume the editorial responsibilities of *Inkundla ya Bantu*, there is no doubt as to who was the major inspiration. Ngubane who was to become a major ideologue of African nationalism in the 1940s and in the 1950s forged his perspective from the synthesis of the views of R. V. Selope Thema and Pixley ka Isaka Seme; even his hatred of Communism is borrowed unreflectively from the former.

The influence of R. V. Selope Thema on the formation of Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s through *The Bantu World* is extraordinary when it is recalled that although

practically all of H. I. E. Dhlomo's writings, both creative and critical, were written in the English language, it is remarkable to discover that the very few journalistic pieces written by H. I. E. Dhlomo in isiZulu appeared in this newspaper. On the occasion of the golden anniversary of the founding of *Ilanga lase Natal* in 1953 the Dhlomo brothers commissioned R. V. Selope Thema to write a major article for the special issue of the newspaper. The importance of *The Bantu World*, which was edited by Selope Thema from 1932 to 1952, in the historical moment of the formation of the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s is not surprising if this New African newspaper is situated in the context of the role of other newspapers in the history of the New African Movement. *The New African newspapers were the forums in which intellectual duels took place concerning the form, shape and process New African modernity should take. The Bantu World* was in many ways the culminating point of a particular eventuation in the formation of this modernity. Previous to *The Bantu World* all New African newspapers had sections published in at least two African languages: multilingualism was at the center of their modernist project. For instance, Solomon T. Plaatje's *Tsala ea Batho* had three and sometimes four sections in the African languages. In its initial stages, *The Bantu World* embraced this historical legacy Plaatje, appearing in four languages and sometimes five when on rare occasions R. V. Selope Thema decided to include a section in the Afrikaans language. The New African magazines that emerged after *The Bantu World*, such as *Drum* and *Zonk*, driven by market forces, disdained multilingualism in preference for monolingualism. Invariably that monolingualism was the English language, the *lingua franca* of modernity in South Africa. The battle between multilingualism and monolingualism was fought in the pages of *The Bantu World*, which gradually through attrition over many years the newspaper drifted towards monolingualism. While *The Bantu World* shifted from multilingualism to the English language, moving in the opposite direction, and in the process changing its name to *Ilanga*, *Ilanga lase Natal* moved from multilingualism to the Zulu language. This question of language(s) in historical representation in modernity was also fought out within the echelons of the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s between the two great friends H. I. E. Dhlomo and Benedict Wallet Vilakazi in the 'Great Debate' of 1938-9.

The matter of language, among other things, is perhaps what made *The Bantu World* and the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s the summit or in a real sense the culminating point in the history of the New Negro modernity; with the Sophiatown Renaissance of the 1950s, which follows on the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s in the history of the New African Movement, appeared as perhaps an afterthought rather than something original. Sophiatown Renaissance and its venue or forum for artistic and intellectual expression *Drum* magazine were wedded to the monolingualism of the English language. The 'Great Debate' between Vilakazi and Dhlomo was about the language of literary expression: the

former advocating the medium of the African languages and the later the English language. Vilakazi wrote all of his creative work, the poems and novels, in the Zulu language, reserving the English language for journalism and scholarly work. As already indicated, Dhlomo wrote everything in English: plays, prose poems, poems, essays, columns and journalism. This duel between Benedict Wallet Vilakazi and H. I. E. Dhlomo within the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s makes this cultural movement of the New African Movement the most contentious and perhaps the most important in the history of New African modernity concerning cultural matters. Concerning poetry, Vilakazi defeated Dhlomo, despite the fact that the latter was joined by another member Walter M. B. Nhlapo, in that the outstanding African poets in South Africa across the twentieth century wrote in the African languages: beginning with S. E. K. Mqhayi and Notsizi Mqgqwetho, followed in the mid-century J. J. R. Jolobe and Vilakazi himself, closing the century with Mazisi Kunene and David Livingstone Phakamile Yali-Manisi. Perhaps this victory was a forgone conclusion given that poetry is much closer to the voice and music of the nation than prose is.

Regarding the novel (and short stories), Dhlomo fought Vilakazi to a standstill, despite the fact that other members of the 1940s joined the great Zulu poet. Joining Vilakazi in writing Zulu novels were Jordan Ngubane and C. L. S. Nyembezi. It was the Sophiatown Renaissance which turned the tide in subsequent years by writing their short stories and novels in the hegemonic language of English. About theatre, despite its affinity and proximity to the voice of the nation, Dhlomo defeated another 1940s member Nimrod Njabulo Ndebele who wrote the first African play in an African language (in Zulu). The many plays of Dhlomo overwhelmed Nimrod Ndebele to such an extent he never again attempted to write another play. Again, because it invented the musical theatre in the history of the New African Movement, the Sophiatown Renaissance completely turned the tide against Nimrod Ndebele. Lastly, the great essays of H. I. E. Dhlomo overwhelmingly defeated isiZulu essays of Emman Made. Interestingly enough, Dhlomo wrote an appreciative essay on Made after defeating him. In fact Dhlomo and Made collaborated on an important literary project: Dhlomo translated into English Made's elegy in homage to Vilakazi written in isiZulu.

It is not only in matters regarding *culture* that the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s occupy such a prominent position in the history of the New African Movement. Concerning *politics*, these intellectuals in this decade were in the forefront of most other New African intellectuals. This was especially true of H. I. E. Dhlomo and Jordan Ngubane who, as already indicated, were respectively editors of *Ilanga lase Natal* (he was deputy to his senior brother) and *Inkundla ya Bantu*. Ngubane, who was a founding member of the ANC Youth League in 1944, turned his

newspaper into an intellectual forum of the 'New' African nationalism of these New African intellectuals. Ngubane was also a brilliant exponent of African nationalism. Both of them were unequalled among New Africans in the analysis of international politics. Both were major *literary stylists* in journalism. Of the young New African intellectuals who worked with R. V. Selope Thema in *The Bantu World* in 1930s, Jordan Ngubane seems to have aligned himself closely with the master and supported him as well as the other Old Masters in their construction of a conservative political modernity which was absolutely reactionary.

The reactionary mode of this modernity had dire consequences in the 1950s as illustrated by the acrimonious falling out between Ngubane and Albert Luthuli, then president-general of the ANC and member of the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s, a tragic event that was portrayed in the bitter exchanges of long accusations in the pages of *Indian Opinion*. After all it was the combined political action of both Dhlomo and Vilakazi, in a secret understanding, revealed in and Vilakazi's unpublished autobiography written in exile in the 1960s, and verifiable in the copies of *Ilanga lase Natal* and *Inkundla ya Bantu* of the late 1940s and early 1950s, that enabled Albert Luthuli defeat A. W. G. Champion for the provincial presidency of the ANC in Natal, and with unanticipated consequence that with forced resignation of James Moroka in 1953 Luthuli assumed the leadership of the organization at the national level. The basic cause of the disagreement was Ngubane's false accusation that Luthuli was naïve to the supposed control of the ANC by Communists. Despite his reprehensible reactionary political attitudes, the political journalism of Ngubane, written in English and isiZulu in *Inkundla ya Bantu* in the late 1940s and only in English in *Indian Opinion* in the 1950s, was perhaps the most extraordinary to come from any New African intellectual at this time. While Ngubane dabbled in acrimonious reactionary politics, Dhlomo was serene in his commitment to cosmopolitanism and internationalism.

All in all and in likelihood, the political and cultural achievements of Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s may be judged by posterity to have been among the highest attainments of the New African Movement. Any group that included an Anton Lembede in its midst must have been remarkable by any measure. Lembede's review of one of Benedict Vilakazi's Zulu novels was an important occasion in the emergence African literary criticism, similar to Ngubane's perceptive review of H. I. E. Dhlomo's *Valley of a Thousand Hills* in the early 1940s. Again, it was the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Johannesburg that incubated the formation of the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s and not the hinterlands of Zululand. Equally, it was the *cosmopolitanism* of this *urban area*, not the *tribalism* of the *backward areas*, which made this achievement possible.



It was the great South African scholar of African languages Clement Martyn Doke who designated the historical moment of Sotho writers and New African intellectuals Azariel M. Sekese, Zakea D. Mangoela, Thomas Mofolo and Everitt Lechesa Segoeete and others as “Golden Age of Sotho Literature,” which dominated the decades of the 1890s and 1910s. When I mentioned this in a telephone conversation in passing to Professor Daniel Kunene sometime in 2003, the biographer of Thomas Mofolo and the leading authority on Sotho literature in the world, asked me as to when had the “Bronze Age of Sotho Literature” and the “Silver Age of Sotho Literature” occurred! I responded by laughing and laughing. I eventually responded feebly that Nhlanhla P. Maake, in a 1993 commemorative issue of *African Studies* celebrating the centennial of the birth of the great missionary, had written that the period after 1953 could be termed “the Doke era” (“C. M. Doke and the Development of Bantu Literature”, *African Studies*, vol. 52 no. 2, 1993, p. 79). Daniel Kunene deflected my non-response by launching into a fascinating narrative about the relationship between A. C. Jordan and Clement Martyn Doke. Without centrally disputing Daniel Kunene’s objection to this designation, one can recognize valid historical merit in viewing these group of Sotho New African intellectuals as having constituted the “Golden Age of Sotho Literature.” Daniel Kunene’s own excellent *Thomas Mofolo And The Emergence Of Written Sesotho Prose* gives validity and credence to this designation. The three novels of Thomas Mofolo, *Moeti oa Bochabela* (1907, Traveller to the East)---an allegorical novel, *Chaka* (1925, but written and completed in 1910)---a historical novel and *Pitseng* (no date)---an ethnographical novel, were seminal creations that altered the emergent New African culture in a fundamental way that could not have been possible in the era of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s, a mere thirty years before.

The Xhosa intellectuals functioning in a milieu that was still dominated by European missionaries in which allegorical literary forms were seen as the only legitimate mode of religious expression could not have reinvented or appropriated a secular form of literary representation as the novel. The dominant forms of literary expression among the intellectuals of the 1880s were the essay and poetry: the essay a generic form closely related to religious texts of disputation; and a poetry a mode of expression still intimately connected to oral forms of expression, even if written in a different language. The essay and the poetic form in this context still belabored under the hegemony of the *myths* of Christianity and tradition, whereas the novel genre in its formation and in its expressive intent was aligned with *history* invented as it was in the Enlightenment as an artistic instrument of secularization. Even though Thomas Mofolo and his contemporaries belonged to the same ideological world as many Xhosa intellectuals of the preceding generation, the logic of the European literary form he appropriated or reinvented forced him in a secular direction, even if against his ideological wishes. The novel, rather than the essay or the poem, was

par excellence a literary form of *modernity*. The historical moment of the Sotho writers, who wrote wholly in an *African language* (Sesotho) as opposed to a European language (English) which was a preferred mode of expression by Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s, was the same as that S. E. K. Mqhayi and his *Izwi Labantu* colleagues. The similarity in intellectual affinities between Mqhayi and the brilliant journalist Simon Majakathetha Phamotse, a member of the Golden Age of Sotho Literature, was more than a mere coincidence: they were among the most conscious of the New African intellectuals of this era of their choice of aligning themselves with *modernity* against *tradition*. The elegy written by Mqhayi in *Umteteli wa Bantu* in 1928 on the death of his great friend Phamotse is more meaningful than it would seem. This is what fascinated a later generation New African intellectuals such as H. I. E. Dhomo and Jordan Ngubane about Mqhayi who was viewed as a transitional figure between tradition and modernity.

As already indicated, in the preface to *Itywala Lamawele* Mqhayi wrote explicitly that his choice of writing in isiXhosa was made by his historical awareness (*political* and *cultural*) that the English language was beginning to dominate and colonize African languages as vehicles of literary expression. In other words, by writing in an *African language* (isiXhosa) Mqhayi was in effect writing against the tradition of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s and thereby consciously or consciously aligning himself with the Golden Age of Sotho Literature. That Mqhayi held these Xhosa intellectuals in high esteem is self evident, made more apparent by his two lost biographies of Elijah Makiwane and Walter Benson Rubusana. In many ways they were his spiritual teachers made evident by his deep affection for Makiwane and his deep enmity towards John Knox Bokwe. Nonetheless, the matter of language choice made for a historical divide on the *cultural plane* between Mqhayi and his predecessors of 1880s, whereas for his colleagues such as Allan Kirkland Soga the historical divide was on a *political plane*. But a more fundamental issue here is that the quality of the literary work of Mqhayi and that of the Golden Age of Sotho Literature is much higher than that of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s. This is another affinity across an ethnic divide. Even though most New African intellectuals of earlier generations designated Mqhayi as *Imbongi Yesizwe Jikelele* (National Poet), a more appropriate person to designate as the *first modern African poet* is William Wellington Gqoba, a member of the 1880s 'generation', rather than the great Xhosa poet. This is a view that A. C. Jordan seems to have concurred with, if one is reading correctly between the lines, his book *Towards An African Literature*. In fact, the young Jordan was very critical of Mqhayi (see the obituary essay: "Samuel Edward Krune Mqhayi," 1945) in the same way that the young Mazisi Kunene was hostile towards Benedict Vilakazi (see the 1958 masters thesis: *An Analytical Survey of Zulu Poetry: Both Traditional And Modern*). Both in later years revised their historical evaluations. Gqoba dealt with more frightful things in the

struggle between tradition and modernity than what Mqhayi had had to confront. *From all of these complicated cultural and political inter-crossings one important observation needs to be made. Although one would have to agree with R. V. Selope Thema's thesis of the 1930s that the intellectual origins of New African Movement emanate from the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s, the literary history of New African modernity, a matter Selope Thema did not concern himself with, began with the African literature written in the African languages by the writers of the Golden Age of Sotho Literature and Mqhayi within his circle of the Izwi Labantu group. The correctness in the location of these origins is confirmed by the fact that within the history of the New African Movement across the twentieth-century the literature written in the African languages is qualitatively and uniformly superior to that written in the English language.*

The anthologies on New African cultural and literary history presently being assembled by the H. I. E. Dhlomo Center for African Intellectual History at Pitzer College in Claremont [Los Angeles] will prove the soundness of this historical judgment. Thomas Mofolo is not the only figure who constituted the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the Golden Age of Sotho Literature. For instance there is Azariel M. Sekese who has not as yet been appreciated as he deserves to be. The names of Sekese and Mofolo reminds one how vitally important *Leselinyana la Lesotho* newspaper was in facilitating the emergence and sustenance of Sotho Literature in early years of the twentieth century. In actual fact, the Golden Age of Sotho Literature begins in the late nineteenth-century, in probability the exact date would be 1892 when a series of 213 articles by Azariel Sekese began appearing in the newspaper until 1932. Sekese passed away in 1928, so the last four years of the serialization was done posthumously. The serialization was a reconstruction of the Basotho nation within the context *mfecane* upheavals unleashed by the expansion of the Zulu nation under the leadership of Shaka.

This social upheaval is intersected with the impact of the arrival of European modernity in Southern Africa in the form of English imperialism and the missionaries. Consequently, the articles were about the 'enlightenment' of (European) *modernity* in conflict with the 'barbarism' of (African) *tradition*. This was the theme that preoccupied Thomas Mofolo in first novel *Moeti oa Bochabela*, which was also serialized in *Leselinyana*. His great historical novel *Chaka* encapsulated this theme at a profound level. The problematic nature of this representation inspired Mazisi Kunene to write his monumental epic *Emperor Shaka The Great* (1979). Sekese's articles from 1892 to 1899 appeared under the title of "Buka ea Taba tsa Basotho" (A Book of Basotho Affairs), and subsequently from 1900 to 1924 under the title of "History ea Basotho" (Basotho History), and in the last eight years reverted to the original title. The shattering impact of European modernity on African traditional societies compelled the first and second generation of New African intellectuals to reconstruct the

historical lineages of their nations or societies before the deluge. Sekese's historical writings are similar to Magema M. Fuze's *Abantu Abamnyama: Lapa Bavela Ngakona* (1922, *Black People: Whence They Came*; translated into English in 1979) which was also written in the late nineteenth-century. There was a fundamental distinction between them: whereas Sekese was historical in approach, Fuze was cosmological in his undertaking. These two books formed a quartet with two other books: Modiri's *The Bantu* and John Henderson Soga's *The Ama-Xosa: Life and Customs* (1932). The later two books are ethnographical and scholarly. By no means, does this gainsay anything against the other books. Written documentation was not necessarily and intrinsically better than oral documentation. The imagination of the writer was equally important. In contrast to the other three books which were readily available in English, some of the Sekese's historical articles have recently been translated into English by a young historian, Andreas Tebelo Elias, in partial fulfillment of his BA degree at the National University of Lesotho in 1987. Like Thomas Mofolo, Azariel M. Sekese had a prodigious imagination as illustrated by several books he wrote in the course of his long life: *Mekhoa le Maele a Basotho* (1893, *Sesotho Customs and Proverbs*); *Pitsoa ea Linonyana* (1928, *Meeting of the Birds*). There were two other members of the Golden Age of Sotho Literature. Zakea D. Mangoaela who was at one time an editor of *Leselinyana* and author of a short story collection, *Hara Libatana le Linyamatsane* (1912, *Among Wild Animals and Buck*) and a compilation, *Lithoko tsa Marena a Basotho* (1921, *The Praise-Poems of the Chiefs of the Sotho*). The other was Everritt Lechesa Segoe who wrote the novel *Monono ke Moholi ke Mouoane* (1910, *Wealth is like Mist and Fog*) and *Raphepheng* (1915).

In many ways these New African intellectuals were extraordinary and unique. There is one inescapable conclusion that should be drawn from the instance of the Golden Age of Sotho Literature that has deep implications for South African cultural and literary history in the twentieth-century: given that much, if not most, of the prose works and novels written by the New African intellectuals in the African languages has not been translated into the imperial language of English in order to make a comprehensive evaluation of its contribution to the imagination of South Africa in the last century, it is absolute folly to presume *apriori* that the novels written in the English language in our country from Olive Schreiner through Peter Abrahams to Nadine Gordimer and K. Sello Duiker are intrinsically better than those written in the African languages which appeared in the first half of the twentieth-century. Until translation plays a fundamental role in our literary culture, we will never grasp the complex nature of our national culture.

The role of *European missionaries* in ushering African people into *European modernity* through proselytizing for Christianity is an incontestable fact of South Africa history, or for that matter, of African history. The was effected through the

mission stations which invariably arose in the wake of imperial and colonial defeat, and in some instances decimation, of indigenous people. This 'enlightening' and 'civilizing' of the natives was realized through racism and the imperializing and inferiorizing of the African people in the name of progress and justice. Despite or because of the imperializing gesture of the missionaries, perhaps it could not have been otherwise, African history was forced to confront the issue of European modernity. Violence, oppression, racism, domination, exploitation, and in some instances extermination, were the means by which non-European people were introduced to modernity by European people. These means of domination were accompanied by theoretical pronouncements on liberty, brotherhood, fraternity, freedom and justice. It is in such a historical context that Walter Benjamin's formulation that civilization and barbarism are inseparable from each other took on absolute resonance. The formation of modernity in *European history itself* was a combination of civilizing and barbaric practices. The Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the War of the Roses, civil wars, religious wars, the oppression of the Irish by the English are a testament to this complex process. *This combination of barbarism and civilization was progress itself.*

The missionaries of various European religious denominations introduced this Janus-faced nature of modernity in Southern Africa and in South Africa under three principles: European civilization, Christianity and European education. These principles presumed and presupposed the absence in African civilizations, of African philosophies, of religious and spiritual beliefs, and of cultural narrative forms. This presumed absence was illogically based on the historical fact that Africans had not invented modernity. Indeed modernity was a European invention, and could only have been invented by Europeans. This lack of the capacity to invent modernity was seen as the index of the inferiority of the African people and other colonized people. Because Africans were still struggling within tradition, in absence of the awareness and the wherewithal to make a transition to modernity, African societies were postulated as existing in the cesspool of barbarism, heathenism and backwardness. To be sure, the dialectic or the binarism or the contradiction between modernity and tradition was the invention of European history and European modernity. Since modernity was and is inseparable from capitalism, precisely because capitalism invented modernity, a new form of *temporality* was introduced to world history.

The violent entrance of European modernity into African history imposed on the African people *a new sense of temporality*. This temporality was predicated on the basis of the lived experience of Europeans. The imposition of a new temporality lead to the destruction of African societies. This temporality was introduced through capitalism. The European missionaries introduced this new sense of temporality by means of the institutional constructs of civilization, education and

Christianity. Through these institutional practices, the missionaries created the conditions that made possible the *first* generation of New African intellectuals: the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s. The Christian missionary James Stewart (1831-1905) was the major historical force here. He was principal of Lovedale for nearly forty years beginning in 1867. The formation of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s within the institution precedes his coming to Lovedale. The progenitor of these New African intellectuals, definitely within missionary context, was Tiyo Soga, the first modern African intellectual. Nonetheless, Stewart defined and constructed the missionary project that was at the center of the making of arguably the first generation of New African intellectuals. In a 1878 General Missionary Conference in London, Stewart defined his understanding of the mission of Lovedale with these words:

The ultimate aim of Lovedale, or that to which it might grow, has not yet been stated. The aim is, that the place may become a Christian College, largely for missionary purposes at first, but afterwards to expand into something broader. The proposal has never been uttered before; it may well be uttered now in the Missionary Conference. It is this, that Lovedale or some other such place may gradually develop into a Native University---Christian in spirit, aims and teaching. I wish it were possible to secure that by some great united effort of the different missionary bodies labouring in this country (quoted in *Lovedale South Africa 1824-1955*, R. H. W. Shepherd, Lovedale Press, 1971, p. 65).

With his intent of founding a fully-fledged College, he assembled some of the members of the Xhosa intellectuals of the 1880s, including Isaiah Bud-Mbelle, John Tengo Jabavu, John Knox Bokwe, Isaac W. Wauchope, Thomas Mapikela, into the Executive Board of Interstate College, with the aim of founding such an institution. The Board also included remarkable missionaries like Neil Macvicar, James Henderson, Hobart Houghton. The end product of this collective effort was the founding of Fort Hare in 1916.

Despite the fact that the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s worked collaboratively with James Stewart and their alma mater Lovedale, there were very serious disagreements among them. The disagreements were in regard to *proper education* for Africans rather than concerning *religious matters*. The European missionaries and the majority of the Xhosa intellectuals were in agreement in their opposition to the emergence of Ethiopianism, the development of African Independent Churches. They viewed this religious ideology in search of independent pathways to modernity as a form of recidivism. Before the arrival Stewart in 1867, all the Xhosa intellectuals had studied Classics (Greek and Latin) at Lovedale. This *classical education* made many of these intellectuals formidable thinkers that they were. With time, perhaps because of the fact that English Studies were beginning to replace Classics as the core of the Humanities in English universities, and the example of Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee

Institute, James Stewart came to believe that *industrial education* was a more suitable education for Africans as South Africa was accelerating its industrialization and construction of modernity. In an address to the Lovedale Literary Society, an intellectual and cultural forum which had been founded by white Christian missionaries, Stewart defined his conception of education that he thought was better suited to the new era that had arrived or was in the process of arriving:

From this broad necessity, arising from the existence of various and quite different faculties, it would appear that Education is something different from filling the mind with knowledge, whether it be the knowledge of languages or of sciences; that there are many faculties to be brought into use and exercised and strengthened before a man can say of himself, or before others can say of him, that he is educated. And here comes the true view of Education as the cultivation not of Memory only, but of the Intellect, of the Conscience, of the Will, and even of another faculty that of Taste---or the sense of what is beautiful in all its forms ("The Experiment of Native Education," *The Christian Express*, June 2, 1884).

The constant refrain of the presentation was that *practical education*, not an education preoccupied with what he perceived to be *philosophic and abstract matters*, was the essential education for the Africans. Continuing with his contentious perspective, he pressed on:

With little or no accurate knowledge of either English or Kaffir Grammar, many are anxious to go on to the study of Latin or Greek; and he who opposes them is regarded with unfriendly feeling, as defrauding the native of his rights and unduly relegating him to an inferior education . . . People will not ask when you leave this place what *you know*. They will only ask one question *What can you do?* If you can do something---even one thing---well and rapidly you are safe, and remunerative occupation will come to you if you stick to your work . . . By labour not by Latin, by the Gospel and not by Greek you will rise. Educate yourselves in perseverance---that will cure you of your fitfulness and changeableness.

These were very contentious formulations.

So contentious indeed that many of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s like Elijah Makiwane, John Knox Bokwe, Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba, James Dwane distance themselves from working closely with European missionaries, without necessarily bringing the previous relationships into a complete break. All these intellectuals aligned themselves with John Tengo Jabavu when he launched his own newspaper *Imvo Zabantsundu* (African Opinion) in November 1884. The matter of "Native Education" was very serious when it is recalled that Makiwane, Bokwe and Jabavu had been editors of the European missionary newspaper *Isigidimi Sama-Xosa* (The Xhosa Messenger; the Xhosa vernacular

section of *The Kafir Express* whose editor was James Stewart himself and founded by him in 1870; in 1876 *The Kafir Express* becomes *The Christian Express*). Indeed, it was in all probability because they believed that the Lovedale Literary Society was dominated by European missionary perspectives that many of these intellectuals abandoned the Society and founded the Native Educational Association in 1879. The presentations made by these intellectuals to the Association subsequently appeared as essays or articles in the pages of *Imvo Zabantsundu*. The brilliance of these essays and the high level of the debate among themselves were a clear indication that the missionaries had given them a solid classical education. This explains the complex relationship between the European missionaries and the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s.

The Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s launched *Imvo Zabantsundu* with the express purpose of challenging *The Christian Express* concerning the allegiance of the newly emergent New African intellectuals and masses. Rightfully perceiving the threat of *Imvo Zabantsundu* to the *Christian Express*, James Stewart launched a bitter polemic against the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s regarding the “Native Education” question:

During the past month there has been a very considerable expenditure both of writers’ and of printers’ ink on the question of Native Education. We have no intention of referring to that discussion, or of dealing further with the subject, chiefly because from the phase it has now assumed, the controversy is as profitless as spilt ink. There is also the fact that the word *education* is simply being used in two widely different senses. On one side it means the entire training of the man for practical duty; on the other, it is narrowed apparently to the question whether certain subjects, and certain school books in certain languages, shall be used and included in a curriculum for natives are not. We should be sorry to put the slightest obstacle in the way of any native acquiring any language living or dead, if he himself chooses to take the trouble of learning it, and paying the cost of teaching. But we may, in taking leave of this subject, be allowed to offer a single suggestion to the *Imvo Zabantsundu*, which is the great champion of classical education for natives, and also of the higher education, as it understands that question. It has the ear of that not very large portion of the native people who read. What should it tell them, if it really desires their welfare, if it loves them both wisely and well? *Tell them this---that the life and death question of the native people in this country now, is not classics nor even politics---but industry; that the foothold the natives will be able to maintain in this country depends almost entirely on the habit of steady conscientious work; and that it is of more consequence for them to understand this, than to be able to read all lore of the ancients. Tell them that each day’s performance of honest conscientious work is the seed or root from which two days further*



employment will grow; and that each day's indifferent work destroys the probability, and often the possibility of further work. Tell them as a fact, that employers of labour value a faithful conscientious black workman---whether he works with brain or hand---as they do a faithful, conscientious white workman. Tell them as a fact that conscience has no colour, and quality of work no hue, except that of goodness and fitness, that it needs no argument but its own existence to speak for it; and that excellent quality bespeaks the true workman and the true man, whether his colour be white or black or brown or yellow. Assure them of the fact that most intelligent white men---certainly all who are friends of the native race---when they see faithful work of a high quality, even though it be digging with a spade, become colour blind as regards the workman. Inform them, that an adjustment of values is likely to take place all over the world, and that the price of native labour may fall, and that it may be needful to work for low wages, if high cannot be got. Direct their attention to the fact that without steady, persistent industry, even Christianity will fail to raise them---or be slower in doing so, or will succeed only with a smaller number. If the *Imvo Zabantsundu* will direct the attention of its native readers to these views, and to this vital question---if it will return to them again and again, and preach them in season and out of season---along with some other equally or more important truths, it will perform an essential service, and be a true friend to the native races it professes to love, and aspires to guide. If it has any doubt of the soundness of these views, because of the source whence they come, let it make inquiry at all true friends of the native people, or for proof, abide the teachings of experience. But these may come too late ("A Suggestion to the *Imvo Zabantsundu*," *The Christian Express*, August 1, 1885).

Recognizing his moral seriousness and the deep commitment he had made to Africa as well as his strong intelligence made evident by his many published books, the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s choose not to respond in kind polemically to James Stewart, but rather, shifted their alignments to the late nineteenth century New Negro intellectuals, Alexander Crummell and Frederick Douglass, both of whom believed in classical education.

When James Stewart banished classical education from Lovedale, the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s nurtured the intellectual tradition of classical education in the pages of *Imvo Zabantsundu* by emulating the example of the black theologian Alexander Crummell who argued that Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton (and Christianity in the form of a strict interpretation of the Bible) represented the classical intellectual culture that facilitated any people an entryway into modernity (see: the essay "New Negro Modernity and New African Modernity" on the front page of the website). The younger Xhosa intellectuals of the *Izwi*

*Labantu* group (S. E. K. Mqhayi, Allan Kirkland Soga, Walter Benson Rubusana) reacted against such an appropriation from their senior elders of the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s.

European missionaries had other matters of central concern to them regarding their 'civilizing mission' other than those pertaining only to theology (proselytizing) and education (pedagogy). The question of *African languages* and *literary culture* also engaged their intellectual imagination, especially since it touched singularly on the translation of the Bible into many *African linguistic systems*. Without a doubt, the European missionaries' preoccupation with African languages was with the intent of colonizing them to being appendages of European philosophic and metaphysical thought, be it secular or religious. Yet paradoxically, the *imprisoning* of African linguistic systems was also a process of *liberating* them to new historical experiences. This is the fundamental paradox of European modernity or colonial modernity or capitalist modernity: it imprisons a national culture or a society with the intent of facilitating the acquisition of instruments for liberation into a higher or better social order. This was Tiyo Soga's extraordinary understanding of modernity; an understanding that was more historical or more profounder than that of many subsequent generations of New African intellectuals.

The monumental missionary project in South Africa, involving translation, orthography, lexicology, reducing the African languages into written form, was an extraordinary achievement to which the earlier generations of New African intellectuals payed homage from Elijah Makiwane to H. I. E. Dhlomo. Although critical of certain aspects of this undertaking, all of them were in agreement that it had brought progress, enlightenment, development to the African people. Despite Solomon T. Plaatje's bitter quarrels with governments "experts" regarding Setswana orthography, he subscribed to the progressive nature of this scientific enterprise. The gratitude of the earlier generations is a constant refrain in the New African newspapers from John Langalibalele Dube's *Ilanga lase Natal* to Mark S. Radebe's *Ipepa lo Hlango*. During his twenty years of editing *The Bantu World* newspaper from 1932 to 1952, R. V. Selope Thema now and then mentioned the gratitude he felt for the 'enlightenment' and 'civilization' that the missionaries had brought to South Africa.

In two extended reflections on the development of South African culture in the context of modernity, on the occasion of the golden anniversary of *Ilanga lase Natal* in 1953, H. I. E. Dhlomo made mention of the contributions the missionaries had rendered to the African people. In one, he had this to say:

As in several other spheres of African progress, the missionaries were the pioneers in the field of written Bantu literature. We say 'written' because there was already a vast and rich body of living oral literature, not only

handed down from generation to generation, but constantly and persistently being created---folklore stories from history, animal and tales of Nature, sagas and even epics of heroes, kings, battles and tribes. These types of epic narration took the form of the mystical and moving *izibongo*---a kind of Zulu poetry that students of art-forms have found intriguing and about which much has been written in the three past decades. So that when the missionaries came, they found a rich mine of ready if not recorded material. The works of missionaries were, therefore, mostly religious, linguistic, historical, anthropological and about folk tales and customs. Another advantage the missionaries had was to find a mature, virile and growing language ("Developments and Achievements in the Field of Culture and Literature," *Ilanga lase Natal*, June 13, 1953).

In another commemorative article, in the same anniversary issue of the newspaper, Dhlomo examined the complicated relationship between the *modernity of the missionaries* and the *tradition of African people* at the moment of the historical encounter between African and Europe:

As with Bantu written literature, so with music, in a sense. The missionaries were the pioneers. The difference was that instead of preserving, recording and developing the virile and varied forms of traditional music then extant, the missionaries despised and condemned, and introduced hymns and 'easy' popular choral works. One reason why they condemned and despised indigenous music was their ignorance in failing to recognize the genius and distinctiveness of tribal forms of art, and regarding new exotic sounds, scales and combinations as cacophony. Another was that a large body of tribal music was associated with ceremonies and customs that the missionaries considered unchristian and uncivilised, while the charming and innocent instrumental music by herd-boys and others, was regarded as so much froth and bubble. Thus mission and other Africans were compelled to cut themselves off from traditional forms of music which they gradually regarded as discordant, strange and beneath their consideration in proportion as they were initiated into hymnology, sacred choral music and, here and there, into ballads ("Development of African Music", *Ilanga lase Natal*, June 20, 1953).

These reflections are among H. I. E. Dhlomo's last serious considerations on the relationship between modernity and tradition on the cultural plane just before the disease that incapacitated and overtook him and subsequently took his life three years later.

What is so remarkable about these late reflections of H. I. E. Dhlomo is that they echo those of Tiyo Soga approximately a century earlier: *how to salvage and accentuate the positive aspects of modernity from its negative aspects. The question of*

*how was the real historical project of the New African Movement.* Tiyo Soga had desperately attempted to use the ethos of Christianity to disengage the positive qualities of modernity from the rapaciousness of capitalism. Tiyo Soga profoundly despised and hated the system capitalism. This is the *political Tiyo Soga* we never talk about yet we are constantly preoccupied with the *religious Tiyo Soga*, that is if we talk at all about Tiyo Soga in the twenty first century. H. I. E. Dhlomo's African nationalism never blinded him to the fact that modernity and capitalism should be distinguished from each other despite the fact that they are inseparable from each other in world history, at least as far as we post-colonials have known it. The struggle against imperialism and colonialism made the African nationalism of the African National Congress Youth Leaguers waver on this fundamental historical point: witness Anton Lembede's flirtation with fascism. But a proviso must be made here given his extenuating context: Lembede was in the cauldron of the fascism of Afrikaner nationalism in the Orange Free State. He wanted to fight fascism through fascism.

H. I. E. Dhlomo's engagement with the role of missionaries was a preoccupation with another complex aspect of modernity: that the many creative (positive) aspects of modernity, in the African context, were predicated on the destruction of *both* the positive and negative aspects of tradition. Even worse, there was no way to rationally control or give a sensible historical ordering to the dialectical nature of the destructive and creative processes of the relationship between modernity and tradition. This is what put many New African intellectuals in a state of *moral crisis* about the intrusion of modernity into African history. The classical case in New African history was Solomon T. Plaatje: witness his ambivalence and suspicion about the ethics of New Africans while at the same time viewing them as representing the necessary political future, while at the same time being emotionally attached to the chiefs whose political bankruptcy he was very much aware of. In contrast to Plaatje, R. V. Selope Thema and Simon Majakathetha Phamotse had absolute contempt for everything traditional societies represented. There were many complexions of African nationalism in the New African Movement as there were many "counter-modernities" or "alternative modernities" in the twentieth century.

When one is engaged with the issue of missionaries in South African history, one inevitably comes across the name of Clement Martyn Doke, the greatest South African scholar in the twentieth century. Doke viewed himself as first and foremost a *Christian missionary* and secondarily as a *modern scholar*. Clement Martyn Doke logically and directly leads one to S. E. K. Mqhayi, Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, A. C. Jordan, and Sophania Machabe Mofokeng, all of them major figures of the New African Movement, and all held him in high esteem.

Clement Martyn Doke was a *European Christian missionary* and *New African intellectual* and *European Friend of the Natives*. He was all of these things simultaneously. He was the historical force of the complicated missionary role in South African history. He desperately tried to stem the deluge of the English language against the African languages.

The very fact that Clement Martyn Doke is one of the very few New African intellectuals who could be fitted into practically any of the 'Schools' or 'Movements' or 'Constellations' periodized for the New African Movement, with the exception of Native Marxism and Labor Movement, bespeaks not only to his genius, which was in many ways incomparable, but also that through his commitment to the *African languages* situated himself at the intersecting point of the Movement. His transformation of himself from being a European Christian missionary into a leading New African intellectual was undoubtedly what made him so attractive to other New Africans such as H. I. E. Dhlomo, D. D. T. Jabavu, Rueben Caluza, and R. V. Selope Thema. All four participated in a famous Conference of 1936 in northern Transvaal that Doke organized together with J. D. Rheinallt Jones under the auspices of the journal they conjointly edited *Bantu Studies* (later known as *African Studies*). This self-transformation was realized by implementing into epistemological practice a philosophical position he articulated in an essay of 1925 called "A Call to Philological Study and Research in South Africa," which appeared in *The South African Quarterly Journal* of July 1925/February 1926. Here is this extraordinary statement:

Many centuries ago was propounded the old saying *Semper novum ex Africa* [something new always comes from Africa]. This has proved a true saying down to the present day, and, if South Africans would only realise it, it will prove true for many a long day to come . . . It may be asked: What are the particular subjects of study which are of such importance? I would suggest the following: the study of native habits and customs, psychology, religious beliefs, law, industries and social systems---all these would come under the general heading of Social Anthropology. Then there is the study of the numerous native languages, with attention to the phonetics, grammar, lexicography, proverbs, songs and folklore---these would come under the general heading of Philology. Further, there are the important subjects of Native History and Native Music. Here surely is a wide field of research, and one the mere fringe of which has hitherto been touched. But I am concerned here with Philological Research only, and that in the Union of South Africa alone. And yet, though this greatly narrows both the area to be covered and the subjects to be undertaken, there still remains a wide field of research to be explored . . . *I would digress here to make a plea for the recognition of the Bantu language family as one which can hold up its head with any other language family on earth. Bantu languages are extremely rich in*

vocabulary, and in grammatical, phonetic and syntactic structure, and their study presents a theme as noble as that of Semitic, Romance or Teutonic. But they have a unique grammatical system---one which it is impossible to treat adequately except according to its own genius. Hitherto investigators have come to the Bantu languages with the readymade moulds of European or classical grammar, and have endeavoured to fit the Bantu languages into these moulds. The result is that much of the intrinsic beauty has been lost, and seeming exceptions abound throughout this type of treatment (my emphasis).

In a document linked to the first page of the website, *Language, Literature and Intellectual History in South Africa: A Conversation about the New African Movement*, conjointly realized with Sandile Ngidi, I have argued that this statement was as seminal as that proclaimed by Pixley ka Isaka Seme in 1904-6, "The Regeneration of Africa," that the task of Africa in the twentieth-century was the construction of modernity. Here I would like to make a relatively extensive quotation from this document by Seme:

I would ask you not to compare Africa to Europe or any other continent. I make this request, not from any fear that such comparison might bring humiliation upon Africa. The reason I have stated, ---a common standard is impossible! Come with me to the ancient capital of Egypt, Thebes, the city of one hundred gates. The grandeur of its venerable ruins, and the gigantic proportions of its architecture reduce to insignificance the boasted monuments of other nations. The pyramids of Egypt are structures to which the world presents nothing comparable. The mighty monuments seem to look with disdain on every work of human art and to vie with Nature herself. All the glory of Egypt belongs to Africa and her people. These monuments are the indestructible memorials of their great and original genius. It is not through Egypt alone Africa claims such unrivaled historic achievements . . . The giant is awakening! From the four corners of the earth Africa's sons, who have been proved through fire and sword, are marching to the future's golden door bearing the records of deeds of valor done . . . Ladies and gentlemen, the day of great exploring expeditions in Africa is over! . . . Yes, the regeneration of Africa belongs to this new and powerful period! By this term, regeneration, I wish to be understood to mean the entrance into a new life, embracing the diverse phases of a higher, complex existence. The basic factor, which assures their regeneration, resides in the awakened race-consciousness. This gives them a clear perception of their elemental needs and of their undeveloped powers. It therefore must lead them to the attainment of that higher and advanced standard of life . . . The regeneration of Africa means that a new and unique civilization is soon to be added to the world. The African is not a proletarian in the world of

science and art. He has precious creations of his own, of ivory, of copper and of gold, fine, plaited willow-ware, and weapons of superior workmanship. Civilization resembles an organic being in its development--it is born, it perishes, and it can propagate itself. More particularly it resembles a plant, it takes root in the teeming earth, and when the seeds fall in other soils, new varieties sprout up. The most thoroughly spiritual and humanistic---indeed a regeneration moral and eternal! (in *African Affairs: Journal of the Royal African Society*, July 1906).

The fundamental distinction the formulations of Pixley ka Isaka Seme and Clement Martyn Doke, was that while the one made by the Zulu intellectual was a *manifesto* defining a *political and philosophical position* calling for the formation of the New African Movement, that articulated by the Christian intellectual was a *programmatically* stating a *blueprint* for the transformation of European modernity, imposed by means of imperialism, capitalism and colonialism, into New African modernity, realized through democracy, justice and intellectual work. Having defined his vision through politics and philosophy, it was a logical step, surprisingly a revolutionary one, for Seme to launch the African National Congress in 1912. I say surprising because Pixley ka Isaka Seme was a *conservative modernizer*, and in many ways a political reactionary. Seme positioned the African National Congress in such a manner that it would be a political and philosophic guide of the New African Movement. Doke implemented his blueprint into great scholarship that was a central part in the realization of New African modernity. Doke contributed to the revolutionary transformation of constructing a democratic counter-narrative of New African modernity against the oppressive narrative of European modernity by situating the *African languages* at the center of his scholarly enterprise. The theoretical postulates of Seme and Doke were insufficient in themselves in consolidating the historical trajectory of the New African Movement. I would like to mention two others, among many others, that made this possible: those of S. E. K. Mqhayi and H. I. E. Dhlomo.

It was on the issue of African languages that there emerged a deep affinity between Clement Martyn Doke and S. E. K. Mqhayi. Doke studied the structure of African languages through linguistics to show that their complexity is equivalent to that of other languages in the world. Mqhayi was determined to produce literary works in isiXhosa that in their excellence would be second to none. Mqhayi was very much appreciative of the intellectual work Doke had undertaken as was made evident in a poem celebrating the great linguist's work. Like Doke, Mqhayi was centrally conscious of the importance of African languages in any intellectual enterprise within the New African Movement. Their relationship in its singular form could be characterized as the *theory* and *practice* of African languages. Mqhayi was determined that the African

languages, through his work, would be centrally imprinted on the intellectual history of the New African Movement. The implications of this he spells out in the preface to his major literary prose work, *Ityala Lamawele*, published in 1914:

Although I am no kind of expert on legal affairs, I have, however, the conviction that the legal system of the Xhosas is not in the slightest degree different from that of the enlightened nations. When the white races came to this country, they found that the people of this country are virtually experts---all of them---in legal procedure. Further they found that the customs of the Xhosas are based upon precedent. The white races took for themselves a considerable share of the customs and laws of the Xhosas. In this short tale I am endeavouring to show the efforts, the pains, and the time that the Xhosas take when they research into the origin of law, for they are trying to base it upon precedent. I am also trying to show that the king is not the final arbiter of affairs by himself, as foreigners believe is the case with us. *The language and culture of the Xhosas is gradually disappearing because of the Word and the enlightenment that have come among us---which things have come with the nations of the West, the sons of Gog and Magog. It is the duty of the youth of the Xhosas to examine conscientiously what will happen when this language and culture disappear completely. This, then, is a small effort in trying to stem that strong current which will sweep away the whole nation. Try also on your side to support this effort. I am yours in the effort of the nation*

(An abridged English translation of the novella and the preface by Collingwood August appeared in *The New African*, January 1966, my emphasis).

Several observations can be marked concerning this historic document. First, preceding the efforts of Clement Martyn Doke, Mqhayi's statement on the cultural plane was the first to formulate a position whose consequences was to lead to the transformation of European modernity into New African modernity. Whereas Pixley ka Isaka Seme's statement of 1904 was a *political manifesto*, the one by Mqhayi exactly a decade later was a *cultural manifesto*. Second, challenging the way of life imposed by European modernity, not questioning the necessity of the historical experience of modernity itself, Mqhayi argued that the *philosophy of life* imposed by imperial and colonial domination was not better than or superior than the one that was prevalent in African traditional societies. It would seem that what Mqhayi was engaged with here was similar to what Tiyo Soga was preoccupied with half a century earlier when sought to use Christianity to salvage modernity from capitalism. Third, Mqhayi was conscious that one of the consequences of the hegemony of European modernity was the marginalization of African languages and the logical valorization of the European languages. The subsequent logical outcome of this was the demeaning and suppression of African cultures. This critique was not only delimited to the



consequences of imperialism and colonialism, but was also directed at his teachers and predecessors, the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s. They had argued, with different nuances among themselves, that virtual success of the imposition of European modernity in African history made it imperative that the European languages (specifically the English language) would be the valid cultural facilitators of entrance into modernity. Moreover, they implied that the English language was the only credible linguistic system through which to represent and articulate the artistic forms of modernity. Without wishing to contest the validity of the point that modernity was a European invention, Mqhayi clamored for and strove within his capabilities, in alliance with other New African intellectuals, to subvert European modernity into New African modernity, thereby restoring the African languages into their primary role in African history. All of his literary efforts, across forty years in different generic forms, from the poems that appeared in *Izwi Labantu* newspaper in the late 1890s to those appeared in the late 1930s in *The Bantu World* newspaper, were devoted to this transformation and achievement. Fourth, that Mqhayi succeeded in many ways is made incontestable by the emergence of brilliant Xhosa intellectuals in his wake who wrote in isiXhosa: the epic poet J. J. R. Jolobe, the novelist and short story writer Guybon Bundlwana Sinxo, the novelist and literary scholar A. C. Jordan. In fact, Jordan was so emblazoned by the historical vision of Mqhayi that he wrote his dissertation *A Phonological and Grammatical Study of Literary Xhosa* (1956) as a challenge to Clement Martyn Doke, believing that a European missionary cannot have a better comprehension of the African languages than the African himself. Lastly, as the subject matter of the novella being *law* makes evident, it was not only on the linguistic plane that Mqhayi sought to challenge the hegemony of European modernity, but also on the epistemological plane. On the occasion of his death in 1945, the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s such as H. I. E. Dhlomo, Jordan Ngubane, Walter M. B. Nhlapo, memorialized the intellectual and cultural revolution he had initiated in their obituary notices.

It was on the epistemological plane that H. I. E. Dhlomo sought to understand European modernity as well as its possible transformation into New African modernity. He thought the historical conditions under which New Negro modernity was being realized in South Africa across the twentieth century were similar to those that had prevailed during the Elizabethan era that made the Jacobean drama of Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe and Ben Jonson possible. Made at the moment when Dhlomo was primarily a dramatist in the late 1930s, he was more prone to see similarities than a true objective appraisal of the different historical situations would have warranted. Nevertheless, his observations possess their own fascination:

We live under conditions in many ways similar to those that produced Greek dramatic literature and the immortal Elizabethan drama. What, then are some of the conditions under which great literature thrives? It is

a time of transition of migration of population, of expansion, of the rise of new horizons and new modes of thought and life. It is a time when an old indigenous culture clashes with a newer civilization when tradition faces powerful exotic influences. It is a time when men suddenly become conscious of the wealth of their threatened old culture, the glories of their forefathers, the richness of their tradition, the beauty of their art and song. It is a time when lamentations and groans, thrills and rejoicings find expression in writing. It is a time when men discover in their history, great heroes whose activities are near enough to be of interest and meaning, but remote enough to form subjects of great, dispassionately passionate creative literature. It is a time when men realize they can preserve and glorify the past not by reverting back to it, but by immortalizing it in art. It is a time when men embrace the old and seize upon the new; when they combine the native and alien, the traditional and the foreign, into something new and beautiful. It is a time when men become more of themselves by becoming transformed, when they retreat to advance, when they probe into their own life by looking outward at the wider world, when they sound the mute depths by gazing at the rising stars ("Why Study Tribal Dramatic Forms," *Transvaal Native Education Quarterly*, March 1939).

This is arguably the best articulation of the dialectic between tradition and modernity in the process of the formation of New African modernity ever formulated by any New African intellectual.

The "Sophiatown Renaissance" that spread itself across the decade of the 1950s was the *last* cultural movement of the New African Movement. The New African Movement was a political, cultural, and social *system* of New African modernity whose arrival was proclaimed in 1904 by Pixley ka Isaka Seme in the seminal essay "The Regeneration of Africa." The devastating repression that followed immediately on the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960 destroyed and put an end to the whole historical experience of the New African Movement. What followed was a political and cultural emptiness that lasted nearly two decades, that is until the Soweto Uprising of 1976 and the founding of *Staffrider* magazine which revived culture in South Africa. But this is a different historical narrative than the one at issue here. The historical purpose of the New African Movement was the construction or the making of New African modernity in South Africa. The singular aim of the New African Movement was the *transformation* of European modernity that had been *imposed* through imperialism and colonialism into New African modernity effected through a *creative process* synthesizing culture and politics. This attempted unity or realized combination of politics and culture in the making of New African modernity explained why until the emergence of the Sophiatown Renaissance the *politics* of the African National Congress was inseparable from the *culture* of the New African Movement. The construction of

New African modernity necessitated the unity of the African National Congress and the New African Movement. The intellectual project of H. I. E. Dhlomo, more than that of S. E. K. Mqhayi or of Solomon T. Plaatje for example, was a classical expression of the unity of politics and culture, and therefore that of the African National Congress and the New African Movement.

The monumental consequence of the repression of 1960 was the destruction of the New African Movement and the banishment of the African National Congress into exile. Perhaps the great historical trauma of the African National Congress in the initial years of exile can be explained by this enforced separation of politics and culture. A matter that will receive extended consideration elsewhere, is that a retrospective view of the New African Movement reveals the paradox of *African Marxism* seeking its realization through and within *African nationalism*. The seemingly invisibility in the 1950s of the political line separating these political philosophies of history was at the center of the conflict between Albert Luthuli and Jordan Ngubane. It is necessary to recollect that one of the primary aims of the African National Congress Youth League, at least as unrelentingly articulated by Anton Lembede, was the re-affirmation of African nationalism as the only legitimate ideology of the New African Movement. In the 1950s a split occurred within the Youth Leaguers, with Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo on the one hand proclaiming the *unimportance* of this political divide or political line given the urgency of overthrowing capitalism and defeating apartheid, with Jordan Ngubane, A. P. Mda and Robert Sobukwe on the other hand dissenting by re-affirming its essential importance. This split was the defining politics of the 1950s with *Liberation* journal (Michael Harmel, Duma Nokwe, Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki) and *Fighting Talk* (Ruth First) magazine on the side of African Marxism and *Indian Opinion* (Manilal Gandhi and Jordan Ngubane) on the side of African nationalism. Disengaged from the culture of the New African Movement which had just disappeared, in exile African Marxism and African nationalism became the Janus face of the inseparability if not necessarily the unity of the African National Congress and the Communist Party. When Mazisi Kunene attempted in exile in the 1970s to reconstitute the culture of New Negro modernity through writing of epics *Emperor Shaka The Great* and *Anthem Of The Decades* with the singular aim of redrawing the line between African Marxism and African nationalism, he was forthwith exiled from London to Los Angeles. The banishment of Mazisi Kunene by the African National Congress was made all the more easier by the perception that he was more concerned with glorification of the past against modernity rather than engaging himself with the present struggles with the aim illuminating its intractable blockages. In later years, realizing with a different purpose than that of Mazisi Kunene, his wisdom of attempting to bridge politics and culture, the African National Congress created a *performance space* for the arts rather than a place for *cultural production*.

The net effect of this was that no cultural production of any kind produced by a South African in exile equaled the genius of Mazisi Kunene. The recent (March 5, 2005) belated bestowal of the title of 'The South African National Poet Laureate' by our government is a recognition of his incomparable imaginative power. Posterity may designate the period of the African National Congress in exile the 'Age of Mazisi Kunene'. With his release in 1990, Nelson Mandela immediately redraw and reconstituted the political divide between African Marxism and African nationalism on his own terms, with the consequence that the great victory of 1994 was the defeat of the African Marxism of Albert Nzula and the triumph of the African nationalism of Nelson Mandela. The possible reasons for this will be postulated elsewhere. The issue here is how to understand and locate the Sophiatown Renaissance within this genealogy of the New African Movement that has already been mapped out in the previous sections of this document. An essential point of clarification is to indicate that although the *Drum* writers were the essential core of the Sophiatown Renaissance, they were not synonymous with its historical trajectory and cultural splay. This is because the Sophiatown Renaissance effected a profound *discontinuity* in the history of the New African Movement, making it *qualitatively distinct* from its preceding pedigree.

First, whereas all the previous political and cultural mutations within the New African Movement, from the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s to the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s, were engaged with the construction of *New African modernity*, the Sophiatown Renaissance announced on its arrival in 1950s that its singular purpose was the construction of *South African modernity*. While the previous particular configurations of the Movement had the historical agenda of replacing *European modernity* with *New African modernity*, the Sophiatown Renaissance sought the synthesis or marriage of the historical survivals or residues of *European modernity* with *New African modernity* in order to make possible *South African modernity*.

Second, and again in rupture with the tradition within the New African Movement, the Sophiatown Renaissance *ruptured the unity between politics and culture*. With this rupture, the Sophiatown Renaissance sought to banish from its living experiential moment the contentious struggle between African Marxism and African nationalism in order to bathe itself in *culturalism*. Paradoxically, this separation was effected at arguably the most politically successful decade of the New African Movement before the apocalypse of 1960. The Defiance Campaign of 1952 and the Congress of the People of 1955 were perhaps the highest political achievements of the New African Movement.

Third, the Sophiatown Renaissance *banished the African languages* from its creative process of making South African modernity in preference for the English language.

Fourth, whereas the previous cultural mutations largely found its expressiveness through Politics, Religion and Literature, the Sophiatown Renaissance added to the intermixture Music, Photography and Film.

These four moves made the Sophiatown Renaissance the most *inclusive* of all of the cultural mutations in the history of the New African Movement. Jews, Indians, Europeans, and Coloureds began transforming themselves through creativity on the *cultural plane* into New Africans thereby participating in changing New African modernity into South African modernity. Nadine Gordimer and G. R. Naidoo can be cited to stand for many other intellectuals, writers and artists. In relation to politics, the New African category had undergone inclusiveness many decades earlier as evident in Sol T. Plaatje in 1915 regarding Abdullah Abdurahman and Harold Cressy as New Africans (even as he was weary of this category) as apparent in his *Tsala ea Batho* newspaper and in his book *Native Life in South Africa* (1916); Abdurahman in the late 1920s and in early 1930s calling for political collaboration between Africans and Coloureds resulting in his working with D. D. T. Jabavu on Non-European Conferences; A. B. Xuma, Yusuf Dadoo, G. M. Naicker in the 1947 signing a 'Doctors' Pact' which facilitated a political relationship between Africans and Indians.

The inclusiveness of the Sophiatown Renaissance concerning cultural matters made possible the interweaving and intercrossing between the *Drum* and the District Six writers, intellectuals and artists. It was Lewis Nkosi's brilliant essay "The Fabulous Decade: The Fifties" (1965) that mapped out the inclusiveness of this historical moment. Since Nkosi was one of the youngest members of the Sophiatown Renaissance, who turned out to be an outstanding literary critic, a fact made evident by *Tasks and Masks* (1980), his retrospective essay has commanded respect as one of the most authoritative regarding this cultural moment. Among the things he gives prominence to is the importance of music, particularly jazz, and the contribution of Jewish writers, intellectuals and artists to the Sophiatown Renaissance. A case in point was the role of Nadine Gordimer through her literary works. In an interview, recollecting from a perspective of thirty years, Gordimer had this to essay:

Well, when I came to Johannesburg in 1949, it was a kind of revelation to me when I actually got to know journalists and musicians through friends, many of whom came from Sophiatown. Zeke Mphahlele was my first black friend. We got to know each other when we were both quite young and it was extraordinary thing for me to meet a black person who was not a servant or a delivery-man, but someone who was struggling

with the same problems of being a young writer. This is such a bond, yet it simply did not exist across the colour bar for most people. We would visit shebeens in Sophiatown. They were shabby, friendly places---just rooms where people gathered and drank . . . People like Kieppie Moeketsi belonged to two worlds, the world of musicians and the world of gatherings where class and colour didn't seem to count. Whenever anything went on there was somebody there playing" ("Nadine Gordimer," in *Sophiatown Speaks*, eds. Pippa Stein and Ruth Jacobson, 1986).

Sylvester Stein's autobiography/detective story/memoir *Who Killed Mr. Drum?* (1999) is one of the fascinating representations of the 1950s. The real importance of this book is its damning portrayal of the implosion of the *Drum* writers as they jealously reviewed each other's books in the early 1960s in the English Sunday newspapers like the *Guardian* and in African cultural reviews like *Transition* published in Uganda. In a long conversation with Lewis Nkosi in his apartment in Warsaw (Poland) a decade before (January 1989) the publication of this book, he postulated this factor of jealousy as the fundamental reason for the failure of the *Drum* writers in exile to reconstitute themselves as a cultural force, even if from different spatial locations. In emphasizing music, both Lewis Nkosi and Nadine Gordimer, give clue to another distinctiveness of the Sophiatown Renaissance in contrast to the preceding moments of the New African Movement. Whereas the preceding moments were largely preoccupied with the *mind*, the Sophiatown Renaissance attempted to combine *the dialectic of the mind and body*, with a stronger inclination for the latter. This passion for the body explains the extraordinary love affair of the 1950s with music and photography. But this shift from mind to body exerted a price, exorbitant or not, in that intellectually speaking, Sophiatown Renaissance was not on the same level as the preceding moments. The unequal intellectual achievements between the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s and the Sophiatown Renaissance are as different as day and night. Nevertheless, perhaps the most durable contribution of the Sophiatown Renaissance was *the secularization of the imagination* of the New African Movement, in contrast with the preceding moments which were cowered by the *proselytizing mission of the missionaries*. Between the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s and the Zulu Intellectuals of the 1940s it is interesting to note that *cultural expressiveness and religiosity* were inseparable in the historical project of many New African intellectuals. In rupturing this questionable unity, the Sophiatown Renaissance made a major contribution to New African cultural history. Given this, the achievement of the Sophiatown Renaissance was invaluable in that it reminds us of a historical issue which has still not been studied in its full implication, whereas in Europe the making of modernity was a process of secularization, in Africa modernity was constructed through a process

of religious proselytizing. This contrast may be at the center of the African crisis in modernity.

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