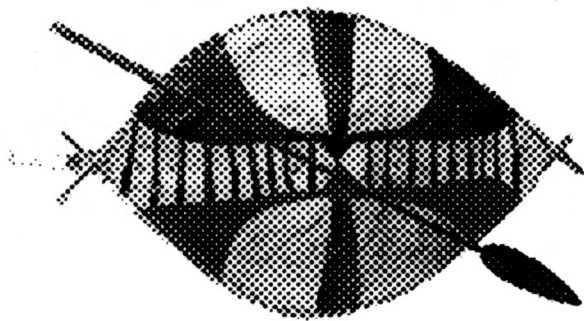


# FOREWORD: FORESHADOWINGS IN THE MAKING OF AN "AFRICAN RENAISSANCE"

Ntongela Masilela



The extraordinary power of the essays by Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane assembled in this anthology exemplify the kind of research and analysis the New African intellectuals and political leaders of the African National Congress Youth League would have found commendable, if we can judge from a series of newspaper articles in 1947 calling for the founding of an African Academy of Arts and Sciences. With this suggestion in their political and intellectual forum, *Inkundla ya Bantu* (Bantu Forum), Anton Lembede, Ellen Kuzwayo, Albertina Sisulu, Walter Sisulu, Jordan Ngubane, Nelson Mandela, A. P. Mda, Congress Mbata, Oliver Tambo and others sought through the ideology of New Africanism to put forth new agendas, new perspectives, new histories, new purposive actions by means of which the oppressed African people could overthrow white settler colonialism and European (British) imperial domination. In this wish to establish an Academy, the Youth League New Africans were attempting to do on an intellectual and epistemological plane what the first generation of New African intelligentsia, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Solomon T. Plaatje, R. V. Selope Thema, H. Selby Msimang, John Dube, Richard Msimang, Alfred Mangena, Silas Modiri Molema and others, had achieved on the political and philosophical plane by founding the African National Congress in 1912: *The Regeneration of Africa*.

Pixley ka Isaka Seme, the principal force behind the founding of this political organization as a response to the disenfranchisement of Africans by Europeans (British and Afrikaners) with the coming into

being of the Union of South Africa in 1910, in a major and historic essay of 1905, wrote the following arguing for the historical necessity of realizing New Africanism as a means of bringing about the Regeneration of Africa: "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 [Africans] a clear perception of their elemental needs and of their underdeveloped 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."<sup>1</sup>

Appropriating the idea of the Regeneration of Africa from African American intellectuals of the nineteenth-century, specifically from the first Pan-Africanist Martin Delany and the incomparable educator Alexander Crummell, Pixley ka Isaka Seme called for the emergence of a new historical consciousness among Africans (i.e. New Africanism) to enable them to make proper choices and decisions at the moment of entrance into modernity. In his estimation, the fundamental mission of New Africanism was to invent African Nationalism, consequently the monumental event of 1912. For Seme the following was axiomatic: New Africanism + African Nationalism + African National Congress = Regeneration of Africa and Liberation of the African People.

Aware that the founding of the ANC Youth League in 1943, as a way of re-invigorating the parent body, was not by itself sufficient in furthering the historical and political vision of Pixley ka Isaka Seme and that of the first generation of New African intelligentsia, Anton M. Lembede; himself belonging to the third tier of this intellectual constellation, (the New African Movement), proposed the notion of the African Academy as a way of facilitating the production of New Knowledges and New Epistemologies: "We need science to assist us in our present stage of transition and we shall need it more increasingly thereafter. To the question: What knowledge is of most value—the uniform reply is: science... Art is indispensable to a nation in the process of being born. We need artists to interpret to us and to the world our glorious past, our misery, suffering and tribulation of the

present time, our hopes, aspirations and our divine destiny and our future; to inspire us with the message that there is hope for our race and that we ought therefore to draw plans and lay foundations for a longer future than we can imagine by struggling for national freedom so as to save our race from imminent extinction or extermination. In short, we need African Artists to interpret the spirit of Africa."<sup>2</sup> Jordan K. Ngubane, exercising his responsibility as editor wrote an Editorial in *Inkundla ya Bantu* in which he called for the involvement of as many of the New African Masses as possible in the actualization of the African Academy: "We should like to make it as comprehensive as possible and in this regard should be very grateful if our readers could furnish us with the names and addresses of authors, poets, historians, musicians, painters and other artists of our race in various parts of the country."<sup>3</sup> The traumatizing and unexpected death of Anton Lembede at a relatively young age of 33 years a few months after tabling this proposal seems to have scuttled the ANC Youth League New Africans from actually launching an African Academy.

H. I. E. Dhlomo, a member of the second intellectual generation of the New African Movement, did not belong to the national body of the ANC Youth League, but was affiliated to its regional body in Natal, traced the history of an earlier attempt to found the African Academy in 1936 when an organization called African Authors Meeting was founded in Bloemfontein involving both Africans and Europeans. Dhlomo observed that in the 1940s a specifically African organization was called for: "Meanwhile the spirit of African nationalism, independence and self assertion had gone on apace. Some Africans felt that the initiative for a movement or institution of this kind should come from the Africans themselves. In a way it was in response both to this new call and the old necessity for such a body that Dr. [Benedict Wallet] Vilakazi decided to convene a meeting for the purpose."<sup>4</sup> The tragic death of Benedict Bambatta Vilakazi a few months after that of Anton Lembede in 1947, also seems to have prevented the realization of an African Academy in this instance. Given these tragic unfoldings, it would not be too extravagant to claim that the essays, other writings and columns of H. I. E. Dhlomo in *Ilanga lase Natal (Natal Sun)* from 1943 to 1955, were a symbolic representation of what an African Academy of Arts and Sciences would have been intellectually capable of achieving in the Humanities, had its founding been realized.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to Anton Lembede and Benedict

Vilakazi, who seem to have articulated the necessity of an African Academy in relation to African creativity, H. I. E. Dhlomo emphasized its possible principal task of facilitating research by African intelligentsia, given that at the time premier 'white' research universities were *verboten* to Africans for undertaking such a task. This necessity of establishing an African Academy was a central preoccupation of New Africanism before the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960 destroyed this philosophy of the new invented by a modernizing new African intelligentsia in the first half of the twentieth-century.

From 1960, when the African National Congress, the Pan-Africanist Congress and the South African Communist Party were banned and forced into exile, to the Soweto Uprising of 1976, the struggle to overthrow white settler colonialism and break its linkages to imperial centers in United States and Europe was largely based abroad among South African political and intellectual exiles. It was during this interregnum or period that the scholarly essays of Professor Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane began making their dramatic appearance: the first one, "Crisis in African Sociology," appeared in a Kenyan cultural and literary review of high repute.<sup>6</sup> Although Magubane's prodigious work written in exile is a post-New African Movement phenomenon in South African intellectual and cultural history, it is fascinating and entrancing to see how it continues certain thematic patterns, yet in many instances going beyond them, epitomized by many New African intellectuals, be it R. V. Selope Thema or S. E. K. Mqhayi or Solomon T. Plaatje or B. M. Khaketla.<sup>7</sup> Since the name of H. I. E. Dhlomo, arguably the most vital force of the New African Movement together with R. V. Selope Thema, has already been mentioned, it is instructive to juxtapose his name with that of Magubane in tracing the patterns of convergences and divergences between the New African intellectual preoccupations and the post-New African Movement experience.

In appropriating in the 1940s W. E. B. Du Bois' construct of 1903 about the New Negro Talented Tenth to forge the concept of the New African Talented Tenth in theorizing a new historical phase of New Africanism, H. I. E. Dhlomo was continuing an intellectual tradition in our country of seeing parallelism or 'adjacency' between the historical experience of new negroes in United States modernity and that of new Africans in South Africa modernity.<sup>8</sup> Beginning with the Xhosa cultural renaissance of the 1880s around *Imvo Zabantsundu* (*African Opinion*) newspaper with John Tengo Jabavu, Elijah Makiwane, and

Walter Rubusana, when Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba argued for the importance of George Washington Williams' *History of the Negro Race in America, 1619-1880* for their intellectual discourses, through R. V. Selope Thema writing an autobiographical essay called "Up From Barbarism" modelled on Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery*, and Solomon T. Plaatje modelling his *Native Life in South Africa* on W. E. B. Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk*, to Richard Wright's *Native Son* profoundly influencing Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy*, and Richard Rive modelling his collection of short stories *African Songs* on Langston Hughes' poetry, the two historical "Black Atlantic" experiences across the ocean have seemed inseparable from each other. From the 1880s to the Sophiatown Renaissance of the 1950s this inseparability has been astonishing; in fact it continues in the 1990s between, for instance, music of the late Thelonios Monk and that of the brilliant South African jazz pianist, Bheki Mseleku.

Rather than borrowing a concept in order to construct a map of intellectual history as H. I. E. Dhlomo did, or a historical perspective for the composition and structuring of a book as Solomon T. Plaatje had earlier done, surpassing the ingenuity of New African intellectuals' modernist practices, Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane comprehensively appropriates W. E. B. Du Bois' Marxist *philosophy of history*. It is this philosophy of history which is preoccupied with the dialectics of transformation and transcendence, that informs the majority of essays in this anthology. Informed by the dialectics of history, Magubane continually makes reference to Leninism in his critique of imperialism in Africa. Consequently, a central distinction has to be indicated that whereas the New African intelligentsia believed that New Africanism should be driven by the ideology of African Nationalism, be it of the variant of Anton Lembede or Jordan Ngubane or H. I. E. Dhlomo, in the post-New African Movement, Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane has postulated Marxist dialectics as the driving instrumentarium. This brings forth another observation that the epistemology of these essays is informed of the happenings within European Marxism, by way of the English Marxism of Perry Anderson and the Western Marxism of the Hungarian Georg Lukacs. Within the structure of South African intellectual history, Magubane counterposes African Marxism to African Nationalism.<sup>9</sup> It is perhaps appropriate to point out here that Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane was among the first African intellectuals to appreciate and critically absorb the significance of the great African Marxist from Cape Verde, Amilcar Cabral.

One of the most captivating essays in the anthology is on Cabral, which Magubane presented in Cape Verde itself in 1983, on the tenth-year commemoration of his assassination by the fascist agents of Portuguese imperialism: "Toward a Sociology of National Liberation from Colonialism: Cabral's Legacy." The essay concludes with these stirring words: "This is the legacy of Amilcar Cabral which inspires the African National Congress in its struggle against apartheid." It is greatly exhilarating reading these words in the context of the recent defeat of apartheid in 1994, the abominable system that was an obstacle to Harold Cressy, Charlotte Manye Maxeke, and Yusuf Dadoo and others in achieving more exemplary things than the enormous achievements they have bequeathed to us. Not surprising, it is Cabral's Marxism that informs the conception of African history theorized and realized in these formidable essays.<sup>10</sup>

Another innovativeness that continues the legacy of New Africanism yet surpasses it in the context of the historical problematics of the post-New African Movement, is that whereas the intellectual compass of the New African intelligentsia was specifically pointed to the United States within the black world, that of Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane's leads to the exploration of the complex intellectual topography of the whole Diaspora. Reflecting the central concerns of the New African intellectuals, Benedict Wallet Bambatta Vilakazi noted the following in his doctoral dissertation, *The Oral and Written Literature in Nguni*, a document which held a high reputation among these intellectuals: "In prose it should be easy to follow the example of Langston Hughes, who, though dealing with a Negro colour bar, race-discrimination and lynching, yet writes without bitterness or vituperation, and such simplicity and restraint that few readers of any race are able to put down his books unmoved... While there is much to be learnt from Negro artists by our African writers in English, we may nevertheless praise them for what they have achieved, for most of them have gained their knowledge of journalism from mere reading."<sup>11</sup> Rather than confining himself to United States for the lessons to be had, Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane constructs a canon of radical political and cultural outlook that encompasses both Africa and the Diaspora: *The World and Africa* by W. E. B. Du Bois, *Capitalism and Slavery* by Eric Williams, *The Black Jacobins* by C. L. R. James, *Discourse on Colonialism* by Aimé Césaire, *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* by Walter Rodney and *The*

*Shaping of Black World* By Lerone Bennett. This listing appears in one of Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane's essays of synoptic synthesis: "The Political Economy of the Black World — Origins of the Present Crisis," a title which alludes to the forged synthesis of Perry Anderson's European Marxism and the Pan-Africanism of W. E. B. Du Bois.

Here it needs to be observed that Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane and Ngugi wa Thiong'o were among the earliest African intellectuals in the late 1960s to incorporate Frantz Fanon into African intellectual discourse, the Kenyan on the cultural plane and the South African on the political plane.<sup>12</sup> Frantz Fanon, Amilcar Cabral and W. E. B. Du Bois have left the most significant imprints on this anthology of essays. "The Political Economy of the Black World—Origins of the Present Crisis" belongs on the high level of achievement like the other essays which quest for various forms of syntheses: "Crisis in African Sociology" (1968), "The Evolution of Class Structure in Africa" (1976), "Urban Ethnology in Africa: Some Theoretical Issues" (written with Amelia Mariotti, 1978), "Toward a Sociology of National Liberation From Colonialism" (1983), "Imperialism and the Making of the South African Working Class" (1983), "Engels: *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844 and The Housing Question* (1872) Revisited: Their Relevance for Urban Anthropology" (1985).

Since the New African Movement was concerned with the construction of modernity in South Africa, it is logical that many of its intellectuals were preoccupied with theorizing the roles of the city in the making: Solomon T. Plaatje on Maseru and London; H. I. E. Dhlomo on King William's Town, Durban and Bloemfontein; Z. K. Methews on Florence; Ezekiel Mphahlele on New York City (Harlem) and Maseru; R. V. Selope Thema several times on Johannesburg; Nat Nakasa on Johannesburg and New York City (Harlem); and Lewis Nkosi on Johannesburg, New York City (Harlem), and Paris. (The last two figures represent the last and forth tier of this intellectual constellation.)<sup>13</sup> While they were primarily concerned with the making and construction of these cities and the politics of racial oppression encountered in them, Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane in several essays in this anthology examines the urban space as a cite in which the exploitative social relations of capitalist production are reproduced infinitesimally, and also interrogates the social relationships of these cites where the working class continually forges the politics of resistance. For Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane, much more than had been

the case with New African intellectuals, the urban space is a contestatory and dynamic zone.

The achievement of Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane is impressive on yet another level when it is noted that his essays can be situated in continuity with other South African intellectual traditions: that of 'native' Marxism and of the political essay. The two principal predecessors in this context are Albert T. Nzula and Govan Mbeki. The nature and the depth of this influence is perhaps best captured in a poem by Mazisi Kunene, our greatest poet this century, who himself has left an indelible mark on Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane:

Path in the sand,  
 Whose feet are these that lead to the shade  
 Criss-crossed in all directions?  
 Each time I follow them they end in the forest.  
 Then I look up to the sky  
 Searching their mystery.  
 I see shadows returning home in the afternoon.  
 When I am left alone with the night,  
 I hear voices babbling  
 With the wisdom of other nations.  
 I approach them:  
 Suddenly they stop with the wind -  
 Then I hear footsteps striking the hours.<sup>14</sup>

For Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane, the "Path in the Sand" was that of Albert T. Nzula and Govan Mbeki who appropriated the "wisdom of other nations" in the form of Marxism and *nativized* it, the former by making it reveal the political action of worker mobilization that would have to be taken to overcome the horrendous consequences on Africans of the Natives' Land Act of 1913, and the latter by making it forge class political unity across ethnic barriers in response to Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 which established the Bantustans. It is perhaps this essay of Albert T. Nzula, which invokes Lenin's *Imperialism: The Last Stage of Capitalism* several times, and expresses Nzula's gratification with Lenin's passionate identification with the Bambatta Rebellion of 1906, which most impressed Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane for he himself invokes this classic Marxist book several times in some of the essays assembled in this anthology.<sup>15</sup> Govan Mbeki on the hand imparted to Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane, the principle

that a political essay must be informed by historical imagination.<sup>16</sup> Rather than writing political essays per se, Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane incorporated this brand of Marxism and this form of the historical imagination in his scholarly essays.

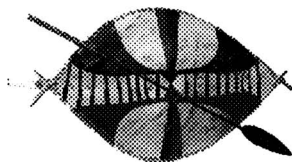
Govan Mbeki and Albert T. Nzula were not the originators of the African political essay in South Africa. This genre was arguably founded by Richard Msimang's pamphlet *Natives Land Act 1913: Specific Cases of Evictions and Hardships* and Solomon T. Plaatje's *Native Life in South Africa*—a generic form necessary as an immediate response to a particular historical conjuncture. What Albert T. Nzula and Govan Mbeki seem to have done is to have infused it with a materialist philosophy. The synthetic strength of this 'Marxist political essay' is evident in this passage by Govan Mbeki: "The Bantu Authorities Act is a demonstration of the contempt of the Nationalist Party for the masses of common men, and for the African people. With blind faith in the magical powers of a handful of chiefs and their hangers-on, they hope to turn back the wheel of history and to see the African people revert to a state of tribal innocence, at war among themselves and an easy prey to exploitation and oppression. But Verwoed and his men are due for a rude awakening from their dream. They know not with whom they are dealing: the children of mine and factory, with over a century of bitter lessons of the need for African unity, with minds open to the invigorating experiences of working people at home and abroad, who have hearkened to the inspiring call of the African National Congress."<sup>17</sup> One can only imagine the effect of such a passage on an undergraduate student like Magubane at the University of Natal in the mid-1950s, who was later to write some of the penetrative post-colonial African scholarly essays.

The uncompromising combativeness of the many essays could best be characterized as what the French Marxist philosopher, Louis Althusser postulated as "class struggle in theory." Profoundly influenced by Georg Lukacs, many of the essays are principally concerned with methodologies, conceptual frameworks or structures and historical verification. They undertake an ideological critique of all that is perceived as a misrepresentation of Africa in Western epistemological thought. The most devastating critique is launched against British and South African social anthropology, whose ideological perspective are governed by Functionalism, Pluralism and Empiricism: all three are enamored to description thereby dispensing with explanatory and ana-

lytical systems. Arguably, the effectiveness of this critique is one of the most devastating ever launched in post-colonial Africa. One measure of the success of Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane's essays written over a quarter of a century is that Functionalism, Pluralism and Empiricism have all collapsed as *orientalist* representation of Africa. This epistemological and ideological critique of orientalism in Africa by a South African in exile has helped to establish the historical conditions of possibility that enabled such books as V. Y. Mudimbe's *The Invention of Africa*, Kwame Anthony Appiah's *In My Father's House*, Nwachukwu Frank Ukadike's *Black African Cinema* and Simon Gikandi's *Maps of Englishness* to emerge in the 1980s and in the 1990s: brilliant epistemological constructions by Africans representing themselves.

A 'definitive' appraisal of the achievement of Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane may still be too early, but it is possible that he may turn out to have been the most vital intellectual force within the African National Congress during the Exile Period, as much as H.I.E. Dhlomo has begun to emerge as having been the most vitalizing intellectual force within the upper echelons of the ANC in the 1950s before the catastrophe of 1960.<sup>18</sup>

# NOTES



## FOREWORD

1. Pixley ka Isaka Seme, "The Regeneration of Africa", *Royal African Society* (London) 5 (1905-6): 404-8 [my emphasis]. The essay was in effect calling for the creation and invention of African modernities. Seme's essay was subsequently reprinted in a book of essays — *The Black Man: The Father of Civilization*, James Morris Webb, ed. (Seattle, 1910) — published in the memory of Paul Laurence Dunbar, that included W. E. B. DuBois' "Education and Civilization", Bishop H. M. Turner's "The Black Man" and Prof. W. S. Scarborough's "Race Integrity."
2. A. M. Lembede, "An African Academy of Art and Science", *Inkundela ya Bantu* 31 (July 1947). This call was governed by the realization on his part that without epistemological institutions the construction of African modernities would be incomplete.
3. Editorial [Jordan K. Ngubane], "African Academy of Arts", *ibid.*
4. X [H. I. E. Dhlomo], "Academy of Arts and Research", *Ilanga lase Natal*, 10 September 1949.
5. cf., *The Modernity of H. I. E. Dhlomo (1903-56): South Africa in the Modern World* (forthcoming, 1998), with a Foreword by Lewis Nkosi, and an Afterword by Ezekiel Mphahlele. Benedict Wallet Vilakazi held the essays of H. I. E. Dhlomo in high reverence: "Among contemporary Nguni writers Dhlomo is the only one who has achieved success himself as a literary critic, and his essays published in the *Ilanga lase Natal* show maturity of treatment...I have selected Dhlomo for special comment, because he belongs to *pure literature* as distinguished from *applied literature*, to which all other Nguni writers who employ English belong". (*The Oral and Written Literature in Nguni*, doctoral dissertation, University of Witwatersrand, 1946, p. 279, Vilakazi's emphasis).
6. *East African Journal*, December 1968. This author still remembers reading this breakthrough and electrifying essay, while in High School in Kenya nearly thirty years ago on the same month of its appearance. Upon conveying this

impression in a private conversation with Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane while he was attending the 1995 American Sociological Association in Los Angeles, Magubane indicated that the inspiration behind it was the first military encounter in 1967 between Umkhonto We Sizwe, the military force of the ANC and the military wing of ZAPU on the one side, and the combined South African and Rhodesian military forces in Wankie, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

7. Magubane's books, *The Political Economy of Race and Class in South Africa* (1979), *Proletarianization and Class Struggle in Africa* (edited together with Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1983), *The Ties that Bind Afro-Americans and Africa* (1987), *Whither South Africa?* (edited with Ibbo Mandaza, 1988), *From Soweto to Uitenhage* (1989), and *The Making Of A Racist State* (1996) will be considered in detail elsewhere.
8. Editor [H. I. E. Dhlomo], "Bantu Culture and Expression", *Ilanga lase Natal*, July 24, 1948; "Personal and Cultural Achievement", *Ilanga lase Natal*, 14 August 1948.
9. It is clear from the nature of referencing in the voluminous writings of Bernard Makhosezwe Magubane that Frantz Fanon within the context of the Algerian Revolution and Amilcar Cabral within the Guinean Revolution were the founders of African Marxism. For some inexplicable reasons Belinda Bozzoli has argued that African Marxism was founded by white radical South African scholars working in British Universities ["Intellectuals, Audiences and Histories: South African Experiences, 1978-1988", *Radical History Review*, 46/7 (January 1990): 237-263]. This was the Special Issue of the journal called: "History from South Africa". Although the essay was somewhat modified on the occasion of the publication of the Special Issue in a book form, the incorrect thesis itself was retained: *History From South Africa*, Joshua Brown, Patrick Manning, Karin Shapiro, Jon Weiner, Belinda Bozzoli, Peter Delius, eds. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991).
10. One of the first intellectual appreciations of the work of Cabral was written by Bernard Magubane: "Amilcar Cabral: The Evolution of a Revolutionary Thought: A Review", *Ufahamu*.
11. Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, *The Oral and Written Literature in Nguni*, op. cit., 283-5.
12. Magubane beginning with "Crisis in African Sociology" (1968); and Ngugi wa Thiong'o starting with "Chinua Achebe: A Man of the People" (1966), In *Homecoming* (London: Heinemann, 1972).
13. In a long essay we examine, among other things, how the New African intellectuals have theorized the nature of the modernist city: "The TransAtlantic Connections of the New African Movement", in *United States and South Africa: A Discourse on Modernity*, Ntongela Masilela, ed., forthcoming, Africa World Press, 1998.
14. Mazasi Kunene, "Feet of Men", *Zulu Poems*, (New York: African Publishing Corporation, 1970), 46.
15. Albert T. Nzula, "The Struggles of the Negro Toilers in South Africa", *The Negro Worker*, vol. 5, no. 2-3, (1935) pp. 4, 5, 6, 10.



16. Govan Mbeki, "The Transkei Tragedy: A Study in the Bantu Authorities Act", *Liberation*, no. 21 (September), no. 22 (November 1956), no. 23 (February), no. 24 (April 1957). The importance of this essay is indicated by the fact that it was the longest published ever, in the decade long history of this extraordinary political review. The essay and Nelson Mandela's were arguably the most important documents published by *Liberation*: "American Imperialism: A New Menace in Africa", no. 30 (March 1958).
17. Govan Mbeki, *ibid.*
18. In a grotesque formulation, which in effect propagates white supremacist ideas, the Swedish Marxist, Goran Therborn, in a Marxist journal, seriously argues that it was white South Africans in the ANC during the exile period who formulated the strategy that liberated South Africa: "Dialectics of Modernity: On Critical Theory and the Legacy of Twentieth-Century Marxism", *New Left Review*, 215 (January-February 1996), p. 78. On second thought, here is the whole paragraph of outrageous claims, which is a distortion and orientaling of contemporary African intellectual history:

Black African culture, very distant from the Marxian dialectic of modernity has not (yet) been able to sustain any significant Marxist intelligentsia. The most important Marxist intellectuals of Africa tend to be non-blacks, like Samir Amin, and Egyptian Dakar-based development economist of world fame; the two East African class analysts of politics and law of Indian descent, Mahmood Mamdani and Issa Shivji; and the core leadership of the politically sophisticated South African Communist Party—the think tank of the ANC—who are mainly white.

The qualifiers cannot possibly mitigate the disaster of such words. The Editorial Board of *New Left Review* (consisting, among others, of Perry Anderson, Robin Blackburn, Mike Davis, Mike Sprinkler) should not have allowed such ignorant and racist ideas to appear on the pages of this great journal. Perhaps this is a loss of nerve since 1989. Limiting myself only to South Africa: There have been/and there are many "significant [African] Marxist intelligentsia": *Albert Nzula* who died in his early thirties and was buried in Moscow in the 1930s; *I. B. Tabata*, was a leader of the Trotskyist movement, Non-European Unity Movement; *A.C. Jordan*, a great African novelist and literary scholar who wrote a great Xhosa novel, *Inggumbo Yeminyanya (The Wrath of the Ancestors)*, was a member of the Unity Movement; *Govan Mbeki* (father of Thabo Mbeki, present Vice-President of South Africa) who was imprisoned with Nelson Mandela in Robben Island for approximately twenty-seven years and is today lionized by relatively young, brilliant, white South African Communist intellectuals such as Colin Bundy (Chancellor of the University of Witwatersrand), the poet Jeremy Cronin and others; *Alex La Guma*, who as a Coloured perhaps would not qualify under Therborn's category of "Black African culture", was a very important novelist—died in Havana in the mid-1980s as ANC Ambassador to Cuba. Each of these South African Marxist intellectuals wrote many substantial and very significant books. I could also mention other 'significant' African Communist

intellectuals like *Moses Kotane*, *Moses Mabhida*, *Duma Nokwe*, *J. B. Marks*, *Chris Hani* (to whom Jacques Derrida has dedicated his most recent book *Spectres of Marx*) who were intellectuals in the mode of Palmiro Togliatti, rather than in the mode of Galvano della Volpe, as is the case with those designated in the first group. I refrain from mentioning Colored intellectuals of the 1930s like James La Guma (father of the aforementioned novelist), who made Trotskyism one of the strongest forces at this time in South Africa, while in Britain or Sweden it was still minuscule. One would have expected this to have been apparent to Goran Therborn and the Editorial Board of *New Left Review*, since they have been supporters of Trotskyism for decades. Still living today I could mention obviously *Bernard Magubane* and *Archie Mafeje* (an ardent supporter of Trotskyism)—each has written many substantial books. This only in South Africa. Turning to other regions of Africa concerning significant African Marxist intellectuals would be mind boggling: Kenya, immediately *Ngugi wa Thiong'o* and the late *Grant Kamenju* come to mind; Tanzania, a whole book could be written about this country's Marxist intellectuals of the 1960s and the 1970s who intermingled with Walter Rodney and Giovanni Arrighi at the University of Dar-es-Salaam; Ghana, what about the late work of *Kwame Nkrumah*, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, *Challenge of the Congo*, *Class Struggle in Africa*, *Revolutionary Path*. If I do not deign to mention other African countries like Nigeria, I hope the absurdity, not to mention its insulting nature, of Goran Therborn's statement is already apparent. Need I mention *The Journal of African Marxists!*