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AFRICAN PROGRESS AND COLONIAL MODERNITY AS SEEN THROUGH THE ZULU PAGES OF THE *BANTU WORLD*, 1932-1952

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A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History by Research Report.



Supervisor: Dr. Maria Suriano

2018

DECLARATION

I, Portia Sifelani, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. This study represents an original work and has not been submitted in any form to another university.

____P. Sifelani_____

Candidate Signature

Date: 26 October 2018

Abstract

This study explores the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World* from 1932 to 1952. It focuses on how the Zulu-language contributors, in their letters and articles, engaged with the idea of the role that people of European descent had to play in the achievement of progress by Africans. This was mainly inspired by the fact that many Zulu articles that commented on the need for Africans to progress from a state of poverty and oppression, made constant comparisons between Africans and Europeans. There was a tendency to refer to the qualities of white people which had ensured that they achieved economic and political dominance, a feat which black people were yet to realise. An analysis of the discussions around this question reveals that the Zulu pages were a platform used by the Zulu-language writers to express ideas which were otherwise not expressed fully in English due to censorship and their preference of the Zulu language. I begin in chapter one by providing a historical background to the *Bantu World* by showing how the African languages press emerged from the late nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. This chapter also discusses the origins of the *Bantu World* and its intended purpose. Chapter two focuses on the ideological context which influenced the editors and the contributors of the *Bantu World.* I argue that it was the influence of Booker. T Washington on Selope Thema which predominantly became manifest in the paper and determined the themes that were discussed. In chapters three and four I then analyse some of the issues that were discussed in the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World* and these included the problem of disunity, perceptions about white people in relation to progress, self-help and entrepreneurship as well as the brief removal and return of the Zulu pages. The debates regarding these issues were to a large extent rooted in efforts to map a way forward as far as achieving progress was concerned. They also reflect a constant ambivalence with regards to the perceptions of the Zulu-language writers on the role that white people had to play in the achievement of this progress.

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Dedication

To the memory of my father Pheneas Muchena. My pillar of strength, inspiration and friend, you are sorely missed. Words will never be enough to express how much this means to me and how much this would have meant to you:

these are the things we dreamt about together

beamed with pride when we saw them in the intangible future

they will keep me sane forever

we will always be in this together.

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List of Abbreviations

ANC: African National Congress

BMSC.: Bantu Men's Social Centre

BTA: Bantu Traders Association

LMS: London Missionary Society

NAD: Native Affairs Department

NRC: Native Representative Councils

SAIRR: South African Institute of Race Relations

USA: United States of America

WNLA: Witwatersrand Native Labour Association

INTRODUCTION

This study is based on the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World*,[1] a South African newspaper launched in 1932 as a flagship of the Bantu Press Proprietary Limited, a company established in the same year.[2] Bertram Paver, a young white liberal entrepreneur, took advantage of the economic struggles that were being faced by African newspaper owners to launch the Bantu Press and the *Bantu World*. The Great Depression of 1929, coupled with heightening segregation, saw South African journalists being denied opportunities to accumulate capital for printing equipment, paper, buildings, skilled tradesmen and distribution networks.[3] In addition, as the urban African population grew and the African literacy rate gradually grew,[4] white entrepreneurs, like Paver, sought to use this opportunity to buy out independent African publications and establish other publications for the increasing African readership. The Bantu Press, which was the first white-owned black press organisation in South Africa, owned ten African weekly newspapers by 1945.[5]

According to Lynn Thomas, from when it was launched, the *Bantu World* was distinct from African language newspapers of its time because:

> In contrast to papers like *Ilanga laseNatal* (published in Zulu and English) and *Imvo Zabantsundu* (Xhosa and English), *Bantu World* sought to reach a wider audience by

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[1] In this dissertation I will be following the isiZulu orthography used in the Zulu texts of the *Bantu World* during the period of study (1932-1952). For more on shifts in isiZulu orthography see Clement Doke and B.W. Vilakazi. *Zulu-English Dictionary*. (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 1948); Clement Doke et al. *Zulu-English-Zulu Dictionary*. (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 1958).

[2] Les Switzer. '*Bantu World* and the Origins of a Captive Commercial Press in South Africa.' *Journal of Southern African Studies.* 14: 3, 1988, pp. 351- 370; p. 189. The Bantu Press Proprietary Limited is hereafter in this study referred to as the Bantu Press or the Bantu Press Pty Ltd.

[3] Les Switzer. 'Introduction: South Africa's Alternative Press in Perspective.' in Les Switzer (ed.) *South Africa's Alternative Press. Voices of Protest and Resistance 1880-1960.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 1. The Great Depression of 1929 which broke out as a result of the crash of the United States stock market caused a slump in economies across the world. See K.A. Manikumar. *A Colonial Economy in the Great Depression, Madras 1929-1937.* (Mumbai: Longman, 2003), p. 4.

[4] Timothy Couzens. 'A Short History of The World (And other black South African newspapers).' *African Studies Seminar Paper.* 41. University of the Witwatersrand. June 1976, pp. 7- 8.

[5] Switzer. '*Bantu World*', p. 189.

publishing portions in Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Tswana and English, and, to a lesser extent, Venda, Tsonga and Afrikaans.[6]

The inclusion of a wider variety of African languages in the paper ensured that it appealed to a broader audience and as a result became more popular than other African language newspapers. In addition, the *Bantu World* had a 'looser editorial policy' which distinguished it from *Umteteli waBantu*, the Chamber of Mines paper which also published in several languages.[7] The early circulation figures of the *Bantu World* doubled those of contemporary newspapers like *Imvo Zabantsundu* and *Ilanga laseNatal*. In 1933, while *Ilanga laseNatal* and *Imvo Zabantsundu* averaged about 3,000 in circulation, the *Bantu World* had reached a circulation figure of over 100,000 per week.[8] As a commercial newspaper mainly for the urban market in the Witwatersrand, the *Bantu World* had no competitors for around two decades.[9] The paper also circulated in other colonies such as Swaziland and as far as Northern Angola in the 1940s, as can be gathered from some articles.[10] Due to its wide circulation and influence, the *Bantu World* became 'the arbiter of taste in urban African politics and culture and by far the most important medium of mass communication for the literate African community'.[11] Thomas asserts that although this community consisted of only 12% of a total African population of 6.6 million in 1936, 'it was a vocal and visible group'.[12]

The Zulu language writers of the *Bantu World* were an important part of this community and played a central role in shaping the narrative of the paper. Through the perusal of Zulu letters and articles in the *Bantu World* between 1932 and 1952, this dissertation seeks to unpack the key perceptions of both the readers and the editors regarding the idea of African progress and how it was to be achieved. This interest in how progress and success was to be realised was mainly a result of the fact that most of these contributors and journalists who wrote in the *Bantu World*

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[6] Lynn M. Thomas. 'The Modern Girl and Racial Respectability in 1930s South Africa.' *Journal of African History*. 47: 3, 2006, pp. 460-490; p. 465.
[7] Thomas. 'Modern Girl', p. 465.
[8] Timothy Couzens. 'A Short History of *The World* (And other black South African newspapers).' *African Studies Seminar Paper*. 41. University of the Witwatersrand. June 1976, p. 9.
[9] Switzer. '*Bantu World*', p. 354.
[10] Petrus Z. Dhlamini. 'Nase Swazini Uyafundwa *Bantu World*.' *Bantu World*. 16: 13, 1949, p. 3. See also Couzens. 'A Short History', p. 12.
[11] Les Switzer. '*Bantu World* and the Origins of a Captive African Commercial Press' in Switzer (ed.) *South Africa's Alternative Press*, pp. 189-212; quotes from 190-191. See also Thomas. 'Modern Girl', p. 465.
[12] Thomas. 'Modern Girl', p. 465. See also Switzer. '*Bantu World*'; Couzens. 'A Short History of *The World*'.

and the Zulu pages in particular belonged to the nascent bourgeoisie who sought to achieve economic success. Their debates focused on the 'civilising mission', self-help and entrepreneurship, unity, black thought and the role that white people were to play in aiding the African's journey to progress. In addition, I will argue that the Zulu pages offered some space for subversive ideas by giving contributors an opportunity to explicitly express controversial views about people of European descent in spite of censorship. I will also argue that the use of the Zulu language offered black journalists and contributors in general a chance to express emerging ideas about black consciousness and nationalism, notions constantly linked to progress.

The conversations contained in the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World* from 1932 to 1952 raise a number of interesting issues that can help us to understand broader ideological developments in the first half of twentieth century South Africa. Although one cannot assess the extent to which these debates infiltrated the everyday lives of Zulu language readers and contributors, there is substantial evidence that the use of this language in the *Bantu World* played a central role in showcasing writers' intellectual capacity, emerging nationalism and race consciousness, things which may not have been anticipated by the owners. The nagging question of how African progress was to be achieved and the role that people of European descent were to play in its realisation were a thread which ran through many of these conversations on the achievement of progress, unity and modernity. The writers' discussions in the Zulu language pages of the *Bantu World* reveal that ideas of progress were always linked to white people, who were seen by many as having to play a role as benefactors and as an inspiration. This relationship, however, was always contested and complex.

A quick look at the women's pages, introduced six months after the launch of the *Bantu World* (and not featured in other black publications), represent a good example of this complex relation. In an important article on the 'modern girl and racial respectability', Lynn Thomas has discussed how the *Bantu World* featured photographs of beautiful African women and ran a beauty contest not only to boost commercial circulation and include middle-class female readership, but also to advance race pride and a respectable notion of urban femininity that differed from the figure of the prostitute and 'skokiaan queen' that had long been associated with urban South Africa.[13] Thomas adds that this beauty contest which also promoted the use of cosmetics by African

women was an attempt to combat racist denigrations and promote racial upliftment and black Christian respectability.[14] However, while the editor of the women's pages in the 1930s, Rolfes Robert Reginald (henceforth, R.R.R.) Dhlomo, advocated for the 'advancement' of African women and celebrated their 'educational and professional achievements', he and other male contributors shunned cosmetics that they saw as a distortion of the original black beauty: black women using cosmetics, especially face powder, were criticised as betraying their race by promoting the idea that beauty was equal to whiteness.[15] For Dhlomo and some writers, young African women wearing cosmetics were seen as 'prostituting' their sex and race by emulating white, coloured and Indian women.[16] At the same time, for some, cosmetics seemed to be closely related to modernity, which middle-class Christian black South Africans aspired to, giving African women a cosmopolitan look which complemented their education and professional accomplishments. Thus, on the one hand the use of cosmetics was seen as a sign of black female progress, while on the other hand it was accompanied by constant debate about the implications of accepting western standards of progress, therefore revealing the ambiguities of colonial modernity.

The broader debates examined in my dissertation demonstrate that this was a struggle that African writers grappled with throughout the newspaper. For example, as I will show, many Zulu writers sought to promote their language in order to cement their embryonic nationalist ideas. Simultaneously, they often situated white people as role models and seemed to find it difficult to discuss progress without mentioning the fact that their white counterparts had already achieved it. While passionately promoting African pride, some writers still found themselves tilting towards promoting white paternalism. In view of this, the constant mention of white people in the Zulu pages is to be used in this dissertation to probe the historical links between black progress, black imaginations of white people, and colonial modernity.

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[13] Thomas. 'Modern Girl', p. 468.
[14] Thomas. 'Modern Girl', pp. 468- 471.
[15] Thomas. 'Modern Girl', pp. 477- 482. There have been many debates about cosmetics, as scholars have argued that they were not used by African women to achieve whiteness. See Shane and Graham. J. White. *African American Expressive Culture from its Beginnings to the Zoot Suit.* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1998).
[16] Thomas. 'Modern Girl', pp. 477- 482.

Definition of key terms

Progress

The term progress is used in this dissertation in a pragmatic way, to define the desire of Zulu language writers to move forward or to advance with the hope of reaching a particular condition which was better than someone's current one. My intention is to uncover what the contributors to the Zulu pages as well as the editor and owners of the paper perceived as moving forward or advancing. I will argue that this partly consisted of adopting certain ways of thinking and behaving which were associated with white people. How the latter had progressed, as was shown by their wealth, political control, high level of unity, among other things, was mostly discussed as an antithesis to the lack of progress, unity and success among black people. However, this was also contested in various letters and articles, as there were some who did not subscribe to the European or Victorian middle class[17] definition of what progress was and tried to argue for a more African centred view which focused on seeking inspiration from the African past and from the current achievements of fellow Africans and African Americans.

White people

In this dissertation I will use the terms 'white people' and 'people of European descent' interchangeably for the period in question. Obviously, there is no generic definition of whiteness (or white people), which is situational and can be defined according to the eyes that are gazing at it.[18] In other words, far from being a fixed constant, throughout my dissertation I will use the term white with an awareness that whiteness - like blackness - is a social construct based on different meanings which can be deconstructed and contested.

Within Nguni languages, there are different words that are used for whites. In the *Bantu World*, the word *abelungu*, a generic Zulu term for 'white people', is the one most commonly used in Zulu language articles. This term was used whenever an editorial or a letter was focusing on the

[17] The last quarter of the eighteenth century in Britain saw the rise of the British middle class which challenged the economic and political dominance of the aristocracy. They believed that anybody could succeed and attain wealth through their own efforts in spite of a humble or disadvantaged background. It was this attitude and financial success and status that many Africans through interaction with missionaries and Europeans who came from this Victorian background sought to achieve in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

particular issue which was meant to show that black people were the antithesis of white people in terms of thinking, tenacity, progress, innovation and dedication.[19] An interesting dimension which enhanced this binary view was the regular contribution of a mysterious man in a supplement of the *Bantu World* which appeared in the first year of its existence. Known as 'Our white friend', he was supposedly a wise and knowledgeable white contributor who offered black readers valuable advice on good manners and etiquette among other things.[20]

It seems to me that far from homogenising whites, African writers in the *Bantu World* were quite aware of the differences that existed among the different white ethnicities living in South Africa. There were several instances where a specific category of Europeans was named, especially if a story was about a particular event. A letter to the editor in 1936 was entitled, '*Okwehlela Umfana weBhunu Owadelela Ikehla Lomuntu*' (What happened to a young Boer boy who disrespected an old black man).[21] The word *amaNgisi* was also at times used to refer to English people, for instance W.B. Mkabise's discussion of the battle of the Blood River in 1949.[22] This suggests that the contributors were rather aware of the differences among Europeans, but only articulated them when they thought it was necessary, for example when describing a specific historical event. Sometimes the words *abelungu* (whites) and *amaBhunu* ('Boers' or 'Afrikaners') were used interchangeably in the same article to refer to the same group of people. Despite some awareness of internal differences, as far as economic and political status is concerned, white people (both the English and the Afrikaners) were predominantly presented as a homogenous group which had achieved progress or symbolised a state of progress, civilisation, unity, innovativeness and intellectual standing.

On the other hand, other regular contributors such as Makhandakhanda and Maqondana presented white people as *abezizwe* ('foreigners' or 'those from other nations'), representing invasion of the African space, oppression and a tendency to belittle black potential and

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[18] Teresa J. Guess. 'The Social Construction of Whiteness: Racism by Intent, Racism by Consequence.' *Critical Sociology*. 32: 4, 2006, p. 653.
[19] Selope Thema. 'Umqondo Womuntu.' *Bantu World*. 6: 3, 1939, p. 6.
[20] The supplement known as the *Bantu Weekly Reader*, started appearing on the 7th of May 1932 and contained words of advice and admonition from a 'concerned white friend.'
[21] Maqondana. 'Okwehlela Umfanyana weBhunu Owadelela Ikhehla Lomuntu.' *Bantu World*. 14: 3, 1936.
[22] W. B. Mkhabise. *Bantu World*. 8: 5, 1949.

abilities.[23] This act of 'othering' of these nations, as I discuss in this dissertation, is a sign of the contributors' tendency to use the Zulu pages as a platform to develop race consciousness and nationalistic ideas that excluded other (non-black) communities.

An emerging black nationalism

What emerges from my analysis of two decades of newspaper debates is that many of the Zulu language writers, either intentionally or unintentionally, formulated a push towards an emerging African nationalism.[24] While the Zulu writers showed their pride in the Zulu language and to an extent promoted an exclusive Zulu nationalism, they also emphasised the need for a broader perspective which advocated for unity among Africans from different ethnic backgrounds. This is emphasised in the promotion, by the Zulu language writers, of the need for Africans to unite as a 'race' and fight for their upliftment. This was accompanied by a constant awareness that blacks were the most oppressed and disadvantaged of all the races in South Africa, therefore somehow conflating ethnic consciousness and Zulu nationalism with race consciousness.[25] Reverend Mahemane, a contributor who wrote to the paper in 1935, advised:

> Uma sibona umuntu olebala elimnyama simtandisise njengoba sizithanda. [When we see a black person, we should love him just as much as we love ourselves].[26]

Although the moderate stance of this newspaper advocated for cooperation with other races, to writers like Mahemane, when it came to self- and mutual- respect the priority needed to be a fellow black person. In relation to this, unity was almost always emphasised within the 'black nation'. This was even more evident when the 'Abyssinian crisis' of 1935 was being discussed (see Chapter Three), and some writers expressed their support for the Ethiopians as they fought oppression and sought to establish an independent African state.

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[23] Makhandakhanda. 'Nathi Sasinazo Izihlakaniphi.' *Bantu World*. 18: 21, 1949, p. 3. See also Makhandakhanda. 'Savuka Kwabafileyo IsiZulu.' *Bantu World*. 8: 5, 1949.

[24] Shula Marks. *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth-Century Natal*. (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986). In this key study, Marks examines the complexities and ambiguities associated with identity formation and nationalism in South Africa. She does this by discussing the historical figures of Zulu King Solomon kaDinizulu, early nationalist leader John L. Dube and ICU trade unionist George Champion.

[25] I use the term race consciousness with the awareness that issues around race are complex and contested, and race is a social construct.

[26] J. K. Mahemane. 'Amazwi Omvangeli U J.K Mahemane.' *Bantu World*. 3: 46, 1935, p. 3.

C. Danibe, writing in January 1952, commented on the celebration of 300 years of white rule in South Africa. Showing the resentment that he had for these celebrations, he wrote:

> Loku kusho ukuthi iminyaka yezinyembezi nokugqilazwa kwezizwe ezimnyama ngabelungu. Thina asikho lapho. Babengabizwanga muntu kuleli lika Mjokwane. Akekho owayethe ufuna impucuko nenkolo yabo. Akekho ojabule ngempatho abasiphethe ngayo. [This means years of grief as a result of the enslavement of black nations by whites. We will not involve ourselves in these celebrations. No one invited them to our country. No one said they wanted their civilisation and religion].[27]

This is just one of the examples where writers referred to themselves as belonging to 'isizwe esimnyama' (the black nation). Danibe's argument that the Europeans were never invited to rule Africans shows a political awareness which had the potential to spark nationalistic sentiments. Although the phrase 'thina sizwe esimnyama' (us, the black nation) was used many times, I refer to this as *emerging* nationalism because the result of race consciousness, African unity and oneness of purpose was never explicitly described as being meant to turn into the creation of a politically sovereign South African nation.

It was an emerging nationalism rooted in the consciousness of the Zulu language contributors to their race (i.e., the African/black race), its economic and political state as well as the need for it to be uplifted to a better position in the context of South Africa. This emergence of a black intelligentsia transmitting nationalist sentiments could also be seen in colonies such as Kenya and Zanzibar. Though articulated in different ways, in the decades between the 1930s and 1950s there was a development of nationalist consciousness spearheaded by the African intelligentsia through newspapers. In late 1930s Zanzibar, as independent publishers emerged, Britain tightened censorship laws. Newspapers such as *Al Falaq*, an Arab publication, were banned by the colonial state for sedition, based on the grounds of the illegality of publishing anti-government material.[28] A similar situation can be seen in Kenya, where in the 1950s African and Indian newspapers overtly reported on anti-colonial resistance throughout the empire, leading to much worry by the government over one of the first vernacular newspapers, *Muigwithania*,

[27] C. Dandibe. 'Umnz Danibe Ubeka Owakhe Ngokugujwa Komkhosi wabeLungu.' *Bantu World.* 19 January 1952.
[28] Jonathan Glassman. 'Sorting out the Tribes: The Creation of Racial Identities in Colonial Zanzibar's Newspaper Wars.' *The Journal of African History*. 41: 3, 2000, pp. 395- 428.

edited by Jomo Kenyatta.[29] Although from 1932 to 1952 the *Bantu World* was not as overtly nationalistic and seditious as these other newspapers, a closer study of the Zulu pages shows that there were nationalistic sentiments based on race consciousness even though the owners of the newspaper intended for it to steer away from politics.

Theoretical Framework

African languages in the *Bantu World* and the Zulu pages in particular, have been given little attention by historians. Their historical significance and contribution to the newspaper, as well as the overall history of the black press, have not been fully explored.[30] This research seeks to give more attention to African languages by analysing the Zulu-language pages of the paper and how they contribute to our understanding of the *Bantu World* and the ideological developments expressed in the paper from the 1930s to the early 1950s. These ideological developments will be analysed as an example of intellectual ideas which spread across Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, asserting the fact that every piece of writing in whatever form is a representation of not only the socio-economic conditions, but also of the spirit of its time. In general, African intellectuals who were largely responsible for writing in African-language newspapers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries formed what Toyin Falola called an 'intellectual tradition' which was grounded in 'cultural nationalism', later to develop into 'radical nationalism and Pan-Africanism.'[31] Guided by the ideology of race pride, they sought to understand themselves, gain respect as well as political, social and economic influence.[32] In my view, the Zulu-language contributors of the *Bantu World* were also part of this intellectual tradition. Although there is no way of determining whether they directly influenced more radical forms of nationalism or Pan-Africanism, I seek to show that the Zulu-language writings are evidence of such ideas in their foundational phase.

The influence of African American thinkers was also an important part of this intellectual tradition. Although there were many influential African American thinkers in the twentieth century, such as Marcus Garvey and William E. B. Du Bois, the ideas of Booker T. Washington

[29] Bodil Folke Frederiksen. 'Print, Newspapers and Audiences in Colonial Kenya: African and Indian Improvement, Protest and Connections.' *Africa*. 18: 1, 2011, p. 155.
[30] Switzer. '*Bantu World*. See also Couzens. 'A Short History of *The World*'; Thomas. 'Modern Girl'.
[31] Toyin Falola. *Nationalism and African Intellectuals.* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2001), p. 56.

are key to this research. This is primarily because they were echoed in Thema's own writing as well as in the *Bantu* World. Washington's book *Up from Slavery*, published in 1901, can be seen as a direct inspiration to Thema's autobiography, *Out Of Darkness*.[33] In *Up from Slavery* Washington expressed his appreciation for the education and assistance that he got from Mrs Ruffner, for whom he was a servant. He spoke of how education helped him to progress and escape from the 'ignorance of my race'.[34] He also expressed his beliefs in self-help and emancipation of the black man through education, unity, attainment of the same level of knowledge and understanding as whites as well as collaboration with them, an argument which is very prominent in the *Bantu World*.[35] Reading *Up from Slavery* is almost like reading the very theoretical foundation of the *Bantu World*. These ideas are the main themes upon which the Zulu pages in particular are founded. One of the purposes of this dissertation is to clearly show this connection and assess how ideologies of black progress and emancipation were transmitted and manifested themselves in the form of a newspaper such as the *Bantu World*.

Scholarship on the *Bantu World*

Works by scholars who have written on the *Bantu World* are of great importance to this study. Les Switzer has argued that the black press in South Africa, because of the segregationist policies and control by white businessmen, was in a state of captivity and 78.6% of the *Bantu World* therefore focused on 'black news of general interest' which was apolitical and diverted black people from ideas of protest.[36] However, there is evidence of journalists, in the vernacular and sometimes even in the English pages, pushing a black progress and emancipation agenda on a considerable scale. This may prove that in spite of the idea of the civilising mission of the white man being promoted, there was constant encouragement for black people to be emancipated and not to remain in a state of subservience. That the news were apolitical, as Switzer argues, also depends on the type of political news that was expected. In the Zulu pages there were several instances where contributors did campaign for the revival of the ANC which

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[32] Falola. *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*.
[33] Booker T. Washington. *Up From Slavery*. (Massachusetts: Corner House Publishers, 1989); R.V. Selope Thema. *Out of Darkness: From Cattle Herding to the Editors Chair* (Unpublished autobiography). AD 1787. Wits Historical Papers.
[34] Washington. *Up from Slavery*, p. 71.
[35] August Meier. *Negro Thought in America 1880-1915: Racial Ideologies in the Age of Booker T. Washington.* (New York: University of Michigan Press, 1963), p. 100.
[36] Switzer. '*Bantu World* and the Origins', pp. 198-200.

was to an extent a departure from the perceived apolitical nature of the *Bantu World*. Les Switzer's argument for a 'captive' press will be used to show how in spite of restrictions, black journalists were by no means in a captive state, totally prevented from expressing their views.

In a more recent study, Bhekizizwe Peterson has highlighted that the *Bantu World* was a newspaper which was meant to initiate 'cultural retrieval and reconstruction' through the writings of Africans; this publication also played a role in creating imagined social networks and a sense of community.[37] As I discuss in this dissertation, the Zulu-language writers created an imagined community of their own through their writings.

There has also been a fair amount of discussion around the issue of race and representation in the *Bantu World*, based mainly on the representation of black people, understandably so because this paper was supposed to represent the world of black people. In her study of the representation of women in the *Bantu World*, Lynn Thomas has argued that the image of the emerging modern girl was projected as challenging the patriarchal and colonial ideas of respectability and domesticity. In her view, this newspaper helped create the image of the emerging modern girl in African society and this was shaped along the lines of the debate of racial respectability.[38] Thomas's discussion of the conflicting ideas regarding beauty contests and cosmetics as symbols of colonial modernity help enhance one's understanding of how the Zulu-language contributors grappled with the same complexities with regards to different topics.

While this scholarship provides valuable theoretical framework and ideas for my research, I will seek to add a different angle to the debate around respectability, colonial modernity and the contribution of African intellectuals. I will do this by bringing in the question of how writers expressed their ideas on emancipation, respectability and modernity in relation to the role of white people in the attainment of these. In other words, notwithstanding the importance of previous studies on the *Bantu World*, the representations of white people and other races in these publications are yet to be analysed. Although the paper was considered to be a mirror of black lives, the constant mention of white people in the Zulu articles, together with the special supplement written by a 'white friend', call for more research into what the black journalists and

[37] Bhekizizwe Peterson. 'The *Bantu World* and the World of the Book: Reading Writing and Enlightenment.' in Karin Barber. *Africa's Hidden Histories, Everyday Literacy and Making the Self.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), p. 251, p. 259.

writers thought the role of white people was in the achievement of progress and how they imagined and consequently presented it. Such as examination can enhance our understanding of what race meant in the *Bantu World* from the 1930s to the early 1950s.

Letter Writing

In my dissertation I also draw from studies of the practice of letter writing, which have contributed significantly to an understanding of broader historical developments and the emergence of ideas. Using Isaac Schapera's earlier study of letter writing in Bechuanaland (present-day Botswana), Keith Breckenridge's 2000 article on letter writing amongst migrants in Southern Africa has claimed that such study is essential to an understanding of popular culture as well as of the politics of democracy.[39] Letter writing was also an important means of self-expression and as such also created a private sphere of communication. New Christian converts in the Eastern Cape, for example, enthusiastically composed love letters in the latter half of the nineteenth century.[40] Migrant workers, though they have been generally labelled as illiterate, used letter writing as a means of communication and expression of 'love and desire.'[41] Keith Breckenridge provides evidence of early twentieth century 'unschooled migrants', for example Xhosa boys in the West Rand mines, who were fond of letter writing.[42] The letters generally expressed pressing economic, social and emotional issues. Thus, letter writing was from the onset not only the exclusive realm of the educated elite. In his discussion of Ekukhanyeni letter writers, Vukile Khumalo has shown how the practice of letter writing 'built a network of letter writers and readers who shared similar thoughts and dreams.'[43] These networks grew into a sphere in which the writers shared their thoughts on issues that were of concern to them.[44] In the latter half of the nineteenth century, a nascent intelligentsia in South Africa developed letter

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[38] Thomas. 'The Modern Girl'.
[39] Keith Breckenridge. 'Love Letters and Amanuenses: Beginning the Cultural History of the Working Class Private Sphere in Southern Africa, 1900-1933.' *Journal of Southern African Studies.* 26: 2, 2000. See also Isaac Schapera. *Married Life in an African Tribe*. (London: Faber, 1940).
[40] Keith Breckenridge. 'Reasons for Writing: African Working Class Letter Writing in the Early Twentieth Century South Africa' in Karin Barber (ed.) *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making the Self.* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), p. 144.
[41] Breckenridge. 'Reasons for Writing', p. 152.
[42] Breckenridge. 'Reasons for Writing', p. 145.
[43] Vukile Khumalo. 'Ekukhanyeni Letter Writers: A Historical Inquiry into Epistolary Networks and Political Imagination in kwaZulu-Natal South Africa' in Karin Barber (ed.) *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making the Self*. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), p. 113.
[44] Khumalo. 'Ekukhanyeni Letter Writers'.

writing networks and then created their own regional newspapers such as J. T. Jabavu's *Imvo Zabantsundu* and A. K. Soga's *Izwi Labantu* (Voice of the People).[45] Africans soon used these publications to communicate and to organise politically. As Vukile Khumalo claims, writing in Zulu helped the *Ekukhanyeni* letter writers in Zululand to 'pass codes that were not easily discernible by the authorities'.[46]

The significance of the practice of letter writing - in the case of this dissertation, letters to the editor rather than private letters - will be furthered here, as the dissertation will show that the Zulu language writers formed their own imagined community by continually writing to the *Bantu World*. I will also show how, in contrast with Vukile Khumalo's observation of similar thoughts and dreams being shared through letter writing networks, the Zulu-language writers were far from being a monolithic group. Instead of sharing similar thoughts and dreams regarding the achievement of progress, they expressed conflicting perceptions in their debates.

Language and community creation

The creation of a community cannot be separated from the issue of language. The importance of language in the cementing of relationships within imagined communities was discussed by Benedict Anderson in 1983, who argued that it was print-capitalism which gave a 'new fixity to language' and created languages of power which formed the foundation of national consciousness.[47] Imagined communities were thus created through the use of vernacular languages in print-media, leading to the formulation of a common discourse which would then give rise to the idea of a nation and the emergence of nationalism.[48] In line with Anderson's argument, Bhekizizwe Peterson argues that the *Bantu World* created a sense of community.[49] It seems to me that this community was broken down into several communities and spaces to an extent created as a result of the use of various languages. I will argue that a sub-community of Zulu contributors was formed, discussing issues that many times did not appear in the English

[45] Peter Limb (ed.) *The People's Paper: A Centenary History and Anthology of Abantu-Batho*. (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2012), p. 3.
[46] Limb (ed.) *The People's Paper,* p. 121.
[47] Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* (Verso: London, 1983), pp. 40-45.
[48] Anderson. *Imagined Communities.*
[49] Bhekizizwe Peterson. 'The *Bantu World* and the World of the Book', p. 259. See also Limb (ed.) *The People's Paper,* p. 14.

pages. This is made more evident when one reads the emotionally charged articles written by the Zulu contributors bemoaning the removal of the Zulu pages from the newspaper (around late 1948, early 1949) which left them in a state of suspension and loss.[50] Although the owners of the *Bantu World* might have felt that the Zulu language was less important than English, after the complaints by the Zulu writers in the late 1940s, it was commercially viable for Zulu to remain as it evidently had a market. Readers' pressure to some extent might be the reason why the Zulu language retained a fairly permanent spot in the newspaper while other languages like Xhosa and Afrikaans featured erratically so as to serve the commercial interests of a publication which had a passionate and persistent Zulu language audience.

This passion was also closely tied to the belief by the Zulu-language writers, as I argue in Chapter Four, that their language was more important than the English language, which some felt was unjustifiably being allocated more space in the *Bantu World* than their own languages. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, who has written extensively on African languages and their centrality to Afrocentricity and decolonisation, echoes these views by arguing that African languages should be enriched as they better express the African experiences and cultures.[51] This demonstrates how the Zulu-language writers of the *Bantu World* expressed views on Afrocentricity and decolonisation long before these views were to be theorised by scholars.

The idea of the use of language as a method of subversion of the colonial state in these communities has been applied by scholars such as Liz Gunner and Sekibakiba Lekgoathi. Gunner argues that Zulu radio drama, through the 'multi-accentual nature of language', though seeming or meant to endorse apartheid, actually offered 'resistant alternatives' to it.[52] A similar argument is made by Lekgoathi in his analysis of Northern Sotho radio between the 1960s and

[50] There was a period of time around 1949 when the Zulu pages were removed from the *Bantu World* and contributors were advised to send their stories to *Ilanga laseNatal* (see chapter four). Many articles were written during and after this period, which shows frustration on the part of the contributors because of this. See Makhandakhanda. 'Savuka Kwabafileyo IsiZulu.' *Bantu World*. 8: 5, 1949; Article by Dabulamanzi. *Bantu World*. 18: 4, 1949; Letter by the editor entitled 'Kubabhaleli BesiZulu.' *Bantu World*. 18: 1, 1949.

[51] Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams; Towards a Critical Theory of the Arts and the State in Africa*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Ngugi waThiong'o. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. (London: James Currey, 1986); Ngugi waThiong'o. *Moving the Centre: The Struggle for Cultural Freedoms*. (London: James Currey, 1993).

[52] Liz Gunner. 'Resistant Medium: The Voices of Zulu Radio Drama in the 1970s.' *Theatre Research International.* 2002, p. 3.

the 1980s, whereby black announcers, though very few, deliberately used idioms as a cover for the subversive messages that they were conveying to their listeners.

In the 1950s two black announcers on Umsakazo (diffusion radio) played the song 'Hlanganani mawethu' which encouraged Africans to unite.[53] While these views have been presented extensively in relation to radio during the apartheid era, they have not been applied as much to the print media. An exception is represented by Peter Limb's analysis of *Abantu-Batho*: as the flagship of the ANC, *Abantu-Batho* was from the early period of the Union central in anti-segregation protest. The use of the Zulu language to express similar views is discussed in this dissertation. The Zulu language writers of the *Bantu World* addressed potentially subversive topics such as critiquing and debating race relations, the civilising mission and many other controversial issues which they could not discuss in the English pages as openly as in the Zulu language.

Studies of African newspapers in other colonies

For this dissertation I have also considered various studies of African newspapers in other contexts. These studies have shown that during the colonial period African journalists managed to express ideas of progress and subvert the colonial aim of using media to transmit imperialistic views. They have also shown the pivotal role played by newspapers as a space for public debate, engagement and refinement of intellectual ideas as well as creation of imagined communities. Karin Barber has widely discussed how the audience plays a role in giving texts meaning and how texts shape society and individuals.[54] In a more recent publication, she presents an interesting case study on the Lagos newspaper *Akede Eko* (Lagos Herald), whereby the editor published letters by a fictional female character called Segilola, drawing readers in and convincing them of her existence.[55] Stephanie Newell has also written extensively on this world of texts in her study of literary culture in colonial Ghana. She argues that 'through books and newspapers, African readers in the colonial period engaged in debates about education, literature

[53] Sekibakiba Lekgoathi. 'Bantustan Identity, Censorship and Subversion on Northern Sotho Radio under Apartheid' in Liz Gunner, Dina Ligaga and Dumisani Moyo (eds.) *Radio in Africa: Publics, Cultures, Communities.* (New York: James Currey, 2011).
[54] Barber. *The Anthropology of Texts.*
[55] Karin Barber, *Print Culture and the First Yoruba Novel: I. B. Thomas's 'Life Story of Me, Ṣẹgilọla' and Other Texts.* (Leiden and Boston MA: Brill, 2012).

and literacy'.[56] By discussing a novel which was published in two Gold Coast newspapers between 1886 and 1888, Newell shows that the West African press played a major role in shaping the 'political and literary culture of the coastal elite' in the nineteenth century.[57]

Jonathan Glassman has shown how in colonial Zanzibar newspapers sparked public debate and how editors deliberately used newspapers such as *Afrika Kwetu* to steer public opinion in a particular direction.[58] Maria Suriano's discussion of the Swahili governmental magazine *Mambo Leo* (Current Affairs) in post-1945 Tanganyika shows that, despite the editors' guidelines and government control, Tanganyikan correspondents made extensive use of Swahili rhyming poems and letters to the editor as a key platform for debating issues that concerned them, and to communicate with each other, creating a network for the exchange of ideas.[59] Through their letters to the Swahili press, including poetic competitions, Tanganyikan writers expressed their concerns and ideas on the issues of civilisation, modernity and respectability, which would later influence postcolonial public debates.[60] This was also evident in the *Bantu World*, where the Zulu-language writers used letters to the editor to express similar concerns. Civilisation, modernity and respectability in relation to progress were thus themes that characterised many African writings in the twentieth century. Bodil F. Frederiksen has studied the figure of Henry Muoria in Kenya, who had a passion for Kikuyu language and for African progress and independence, and who started the Kikuyu language newspaper *Mumenyereri* (May 1945-October 1952).[61] He is an example of African intellectuals across Africa using the press to transmit their political ideas.

This scholarship on the press is instrumental in helping one understand the role and the power of the print media especially in African colonies during the first half of the twentieth century. I

[56] Stephanie Newell. *Literary Culture in Colonial Ghana*; 'How *to play the game of life.'* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).
[57] Stephanie Newell. *Ghanaian Popular Fiction: Thrilling Discoveries in Conjugal Life and Other Tales.* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000). See also Stephanie Newell. 'Entering the Territory of Elites: Literary Activity in Colonial Ghana' in Karin Barber (ed.) *Africa's' Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making the Self.* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006).
[58] Jonathan Glassman. 'Sorting out the Tribes: The Creation of Racial Identities in Colonial Zanzibar's Newspaper Wars.' *Journal of African History*. 41: 3, 2000, p. 395.
[59] Maria Suriano. 'Letters to the Editor and Poems: Mambo Leo and Readers Debates on Dansi, Ustaarabu, Respectability and Modernity in Tanganyika, 1940s-1950s'. *Africa Today*. 57: 3, 2011.
[60] Suriano. 'Letters to the Editor', p. 39.

situate my own research in this body of work, contributing to the argument for the power of print but focusing more on the politics behind the production of the texts as well as the complex conversations that were happening within the *Bantu World*. Also, in line with Les Switzer's argument, I claim that the African language press mediated social realities that differed substantially from the social realities mediated by the white-controlled commercial press.[62] In this dissertation I will further this argument by showing that, although the *Bantu World* was white-owned, through the Zulu pages it did present social realities that contrasted with what its owners wished to portray in the newspaper.

Changing narratives of whiteness

In the last ten years, several scholars have built on the insight that while whiteness is situated as the silently normative dominant identity position, it is those races that are not white that are considered to be racialized subjects. Some have written about white representations of whiteness in South Africa, though not much has been done on the history of the African imagination of people of European descent. Representations of whiteness in South Africa have been the focus of various recent studies (a few in the field of literature), which have looked at imaginations of whiteness among white people in post-apartheid South Africa, when the end of apartheid brought with it fears of losing their privileged status. These works include Scott M. Schonfeldt-Aultman, Antoinette D'amant, Cecilia Rodhen, Mary West and Melissa Steyn.[63] Steyn, who has written extensively on whiteness, argues that it is the colonial imagination which created the binary approach to looking at race and this is what informs many white South African narratives of race. In this research I extend this claim by arguing that a similar binary is applied in black narratives of race.

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[61] Bodil Folke Frederiksen. 'The Present Battle is the Brain Battle': Writing and Publishing a Kikuyu Newspaper in the Pre-Mau Mau Period in Kenya' in Karin Barber (ed.) *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making the Self.* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006).

[62] Les Switzer (ed.) *South Africa's Alternative Press. Voices of Protest and Resistance 1880-1960.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[63] Scott M. Schonfeldt-Aultman. 'Whiteness Attacked, Whiteness Defended: White South African Rhetorics of Race in JULUKA Newsletter'. *Critical Race and Whiteness Studies.* 11: 1, 2015; Antoinette D' amant. 'Remembering My Whiteness/ Imagining My Africanness.' *The European Conference of Arts and Humanities*. University of KwaZulu-Natal. 2013; Cecilia Rodehn.' Displaying Anglophone Whiteness: A Case Study of a South African Exhibition.' *Nordic Journal of African Studies.* 20: 4, 2011; Mary West. 'Responding to Whiteness in Contemporary South African Life and Literature: An Interview with Njabulo S. Ndebele. English in Africa. 37: 1, 2010; Melissa Steyn. *Whiteness Just Isn't What it Used To Be; White identity in a Changing South Africa.* (Albany: University of New

Developing Gayatri Spivak's argument that hegemonic discourses should be de-hegemonised and take the 'subject position of the other', calls have been made for a reversal of the gaze by placing black representations of white people and their understanding of whiteness under scrutiny.[64] Work needs to be done on how black people have in different historical epochs perceived whiteness.[65] In this dissertation, the black journalist is the one who is in a subaltern position, and instead of looking at how the white stakeholders in the *Bantu World* chose to represent blackness, I wish to turn the gaze and analyse the representations of whiteness in the *Bantu World* as reflective of how whiteness was imagined in the minds of black journalists and contributors of letters and articles. This is not to suggest that these journalists, especially Selope Thema, who edited the *Bantu World* from 1932 to 1952, represent the whole imagination of South African black people at the time, but as influential intellectuals, their ideas influenced their readers and may have been influenced by the readers.

Though a number of scholarly works have focused on how white people imagine whiteness to a greater extent, it is equally important to look at the historical changes in views about whiteness before and during apartheid. An important note that Schonfeldt makes is that not all black journalists assumed that white privilege was natural or God given. Some, like Selope Thema, believed that privilege was the result of white people's hard work, enterprise and unity. However, I wish to analyse this further by also looking at the role of the state in promoting ideas about racial cooperation, the benevolence of Europeans towards Africans and their civilising mission, which fit perfectly into its agenda of avoiding incitement of political resistance in the *Bantu World*. bell hooks, David Roediger, Mia Bay and Cheryl Harris are some of the major scholars who discuss black imaginations of whiteness in different historical contexts. Their focus is mainly on the impact of the slave trade on the way in which black American people see whiteness and though my study is based on the South African context, their approaches are useful in problematizing the very idea of whiteness in the eyes of black people. bell hooks argues that because of the horrors of the slave trade in the USA, whiteness in the black imagination

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York Press, 2001); Melissa Steyn. *Under Construction: 'race' and Identity in South Africa Today*. (Sandton: Heinemann, 2004).

[64] bell hooks. *Black Looks: Race and Representation.* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 177. See also Rosalind C Morris. *Can the Subaltern Speak: Reflections on the History of an Idea*. (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2010).

[65] Cecilia Rodhen. 'Displaying Anglophone Whiteness', p. 276. See also Mary West. 'Responding to Whiteness'; Antoinette D'amant. 'Remembering My Whiteness'; Scott M. Schonfeldt-Aultman. 'Whiteness Attacked'.

represents 'terror'.[66] Roediger and Bay follow the same line of thought, portraying whiteness as representative of oppression and cruelty as a consequence of the slave trade.[67] However, Bay insightfully observes that African American discussions of whiteness are embedded within the larger history of resistance to white racism which results in most black thinkers painting unflattering portraits of white people.[68] She goes on to quote Winthrop Jordan, who has argued that 'the primacy of colour in the white man's mind, the long standing feeling that the most Negro thing about the Negro is his blackness, is not echoed in black thought about white people.'[69]

These arguments seem to belong to what I feel has been a long existing orthodox school of thought which claims that periods such as the slave trade, colonialism, segregation and apartheid left black people in a state of permanent loathing of whiteness as it represented these repressive phenomena. I am of the belief that through further historical research one might find that the black imagination of whiteness was not as simplistically negative as has been suggested. I would like to further problematize this in view of how people of European descent were discussed in the *Bantu World*. The relationship between views of whiteness and black progress that I have suggested challenges Jordan's argument that white people are much more conscious of race than black people. There is evidence that educated black people in the 1930s onwards did show an acute awareness and consciousness of what whiteness and the role of white people in their lives meant.

Research methodology

This research is archive-based, the primary source being the *Bantu World* from 1932 up to 1952. I have analysed the *Bantu World* not as an unadulterated source of historical facts but as an aid to our understanding of the changes that the black press underwent from 1932 to 1952 and how the newspaper was a reflection of the ways in which black journalists expressed themselves in a considerably oppressive environment. I will substantiate my arguments by providing brief

[66] hooks. *Black Looks*, p. 177.
[67] David Roediger. *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. (London: Verso, 1991); Mia Bay. *The White Image in the Black Mind: African American Ideas about White People, 1830-1925*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
[68] Bay. 'The White Image', p. 5.
[69] Bay. 'The White Image', p. 78.

comparisons with other newspapers such as the *Bantu Mirror* (1936-1962) of Southern Rhodesia, *Umteteli waBantu* (Mouthpiece of the People; 1920-1956) and *Ilanga laseNatal* (The Natal Sun; 1903), which were also Bantu Press newspapers. This helps to reveal the similarities and differences between these publications and how the ideas expressed in the Zulu pages were not produced in isolation, but were characteristic of many other writings in the twentieth century.

The *Bantu World*, which is accessible at the Wits Historical Papers in the Cullen Library, University of Witwatersrand, has been digitised and is available in microform, with most of its copies available between the first year of its publication (1932) to 1952, when this study ends. Most of the newspaper is legible and very few pages have been torn, but this was not a hindrance to the research, as I managed to gather enough evidence from elsewhere in the newspaper to substantiate my argument. However, there are some years which were missing from the library and could not be sourced from any other library that I had access to. This represented a drawback when I was trying to work out the exact dates when the Zulu pages were briefly removed as I could not find the 1948 volume. Although the exact date could not be determined, I could infer from the 1949 issue that they had been removed sometime in late 1948.

In addition, the unpublished handwritten autobiography of R.V. Selope Thema, contained in the same archive, gives a personal account of the life of this prominent journalist and offers a deeper understanding of his ideals as an intellectual. Given the period examined, which made impossible to conduct interviews, Selope Thema's account has been an invaluable source.

I also explored other archival documents such as government reports on the black press and correspondences between stakeholders in the *Bantu World* to show how the politics behind the production of the paper played out. These sources, sometimes in the form of private letters, help to enhance our understanding of the extent to which the state was interested in what was written in these newspapers and therefore help measure the amount of freedom that writers could potentially have or be denied. Some of these archives, for example the correspondence between Paver and Pim, are also available at the Wits Historical Papers. Other files, such as the Native Commissioner's reports on the readership of the African newspapers, can be found in the South African National Archives in Pretoria.

The *Bantu World* also contained cartoons and advertisements, which were very important in forming the very structure and message transmitted by the newspaper.[70] When I first attempted to include them in my analysis, I became aware that the scope of my research would be too wide. I therefore decided to reduce the analysis of these to a perusal of the Bantu Weekly Reader, which was the most relevant in showing how racial attitudes and ideas were being formulated in the *Bantu World*.

Moreover, as discussed in the previous paragraph, arguments made in secondary sources have been furthered and at times challenged although they have largely been used to complement my findings and ideas.

Translation was an important aspect of my analysis of the Zulu pages, and sometimes I found it challenging to adequately capture and articulate in English what had been said in Zulu and make this material accessible to an English-speaking reader unfamiliar with Zulu. In order to substantiate my arguments on the uniqueness of the Zulu pages, I also had to employ the critical appreciation that is used in the field of literature. This was mainly done by analysing the diction and at times the literary devices such as metaphors and idiomatic expressions which were used by the Zulu language writers.

Chapter Outline

The main themes discussed in this dissertation have been selected according to the extent to which they best addressed the topic of this research. Although the Zulu pages discuss a plethora of issues, such as religion, violence and marriage, I have only focused on letters and articles that address the writers' perceptions regarding progress and the role of white people: self-help, entrepreneurship, unity, the oppressive system, race relations, the civilising mission are among the most relevant issues addressed by writers. Expanding the discussion beyond these themes would have made the scope too wide.

In Chapter One I discuss the African language press before 1932 and the context in which the *Bantu World* was formed, showing how missionaries in the nineteenth century were pivotal in

[70] Genette Gérard. *Para-texts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. (Cambridge: CUP, 1997).

laying the ideological foundation for black intellectuals by encouraging the Victorian middle class culture. I also discuss how the *Bantu World* was a product of economic challenges faced by the black press as a result of the Great Depression. This resulted in white liberals being the main stakeholders of the newspaper and to an extent determining its content. This chapter also discusses the importance of the Zulu language to its contributors in spite of the fact that its owners saw the *Bantu World* as a primarily English newspaper. In their letters and articles, writers asserted the centrality of the Zulu language to their identity and promotion of national unity and race consciousness. Many articles promoted the use of African languages and discouraged the imitation of white people through the use of English. This, I will argue, was pivotal in the formation of an imagined community of Zulu language writers in the *Bantu World*.

Chapter Two provides insights into the main ideological foundations of the issues that contributors raised in the *Bantu World*. Many African intellectuals, in seeking ways to uplift themselves as individuals and as a community, engaged with the ideas of African American philosophers such as Booker T. Washington, William E. B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey. However, due to the radical thought of Du Bois and Garvey, mission educated black South African intellectuals were encouraged – and partly decided - to engage more with the moderate Washington. This chapter also discusses writers' perceptions about the 'civilising mission' of the white man in relation to their pursuit of progress. It shows that there were two main factions, those who believed in the importance of the white contribution to their success, and those who refused the idea. However, most mission-educated black intellectuals like Thema, showed some level of ambivalence as they promoted pride in African identity yet at the same time constantly comparing themselves with the white model whom they seemed to acknowledge as superior. Selope Thema's editorship is also an important factor that is discussed in this chapter as he had considerable influence on the content of the paper. I have highlighted that Thema was quite moderate as both editor and political thinker, though he had been more radical in his youth. However, many who did not agree with his ideas were also given an opportunity to air their views in the Zulu language pages.

Chapter Three focuses on some of the main themes seen in the Zulu pages. These themes bring to the fore the varying ideas that contributors had regarding progress and how it was to be achieved. The Bantu Weekly Reader supplement is discussed as representing white paternalism

and promoting the idea of white people as wiser and as benevolent benefactors to Africans. Some Zulu-language contributors agreed with this idea and seemed to subscribe to the belief that success could not be achieved without the assistance of people of European descent. This chapter also presents evidence that some writers were more concerned with race pride and consciousness: this, I will argue, suggests a developing black consciousness which predated that which was to be conceptualised by Steve Biko in the 1970s. Although the whites were used as a role model, there were also efforts to celebrate and bring African achievements to the fore so as to prove that black people were also capable of achieving great things. Chapter three also unpacks the promotion of unity as part of the efforts to assert African pride and encourage oneness of purpose, something which was furthered in the discussions about the 'Abyssinian Crisis'.

Chapter Four addresses the themes of self-help and entrepreneurship as central to the achievement of African progress. In an atmosphere of economic competition with white, Indian, Chinese and several other communities, the Zulu-speaking writers used the Zulu pages as a platform to market and promote black business. This further put into question the idea of racial cooperation as the Zulu language contributors sought to ensure that they promoted African business, African unity and African progress which was to be achieved by them first being conscious of their unique needs and disadvantages which contrasted with those of other races. I conclude chapter four by emphasising the importance of unity through the promotion of the Zulu language by analysing the effects of the brief period in late 1948 when the Zulu pages were removed. The heated debates that resulted from the removal and return of Zulu will be used to show Zulu-language writers' sense of ownership and the fact that they greatly valued this language as central to the life of the *Bantu World.* More than just a symbol of Zulu and African identity, this language seems to be an instrument to emphasise the theme of national unity amongst the black populace.

1 CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Historical Background of the *Bantu World*

Introduction

This chapter attempts to provide a brief background to the *Bantu World* in order to give insight into the historical foundations of the issues that influenced the paper. This is done through a discussion of the African languages press before 1932,[71] the circumstances surrounding the formation of the paper as well as the purpose which it was meant to serve. The central role which the missionaries played in introducing language orthographies, reading and writing will also be highlighted as the kind of literacy introduced by the missionaries prompted African journalists to establish their own printing presses. Missionary work, with its Christian teachings and promotion of western modernity, also played a significant role in shaping the ideologies of African intellectuals. I will also discuss the formation of the *Bantu World* as a result of the collapse of the black press in the early 1930s and of the emergence of an increasingly literate black middle class which made this newspaper enterprise possible. This inspired Bertram Paver, a young liberal entrepreneur, to venture into the newspaper business and establish the Bantu Press and launch the *Bantu World* in 1932. In relation to this, a brief discussion of the state and commercial interest in the *Bantu World* will seek to show how the paper was subject to some level of censorship and control in view of the great influence that it was perceived to have on the African reading public. The Zulu pages thus existed against a background of restrictions rooted in the aim of making the *Bantu World* a paper that was to divert black readers from political debate and avert political subversion in a climate of oppression and inequality.

According to Jürgen Habermas, print media is an important part of the public sphere of discussion and engagement with issues, and it is fundamental to gain an understanding of a particular group of people at any point in time.[72] This chapter thus also provides an overview of

[71] I use the term 'African languages press' because in the early nineteenth century it was mainly white missionaries who controlled and at times wrote in African languages together with black contributors. In some instances I refer to it as the black press, especially after the mission period and beyond, when black people launched their own publications.

[72] Jürgen Habermas. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), p. 87.

the contributors of the Zulu pages, showing the importance of print journalism in creating 'imagined communities'. This argument has been made not only by Habermas, but by numerous other scholars, through the use of case-studies about non-European contexts: Karin Barber for the case of Nigeria and colonial Africa; Peter Limb, Isabel Hofmeyr, Keith Breckenridge and Vukile Khumalo for South Africa; Mark Emmanuel for Malaysia, and so on.[73] In relation to this, this chapter will discuss the minor role that the founders of the *Bantu World* intended for African languages to play in the paper, claiming that the Zulu-speaking contributors attributed to their language a much more important role than the owners and some editors had initially envisaged. In fact, they continuously emphasised the need to value one's African language more than the English language. Moreover, through letter writing in the Zulu pages, African writers, some of whom used pseudonyms, created important networks for themselves, thus giving birth to their own sub-community of Zulu readers and writers who understood the language. The foundation for this had been laid by a generation of South African intellectuals like Pixley ka Isaka Seme, who at the turn of the twentieth century believed that their 'sophistication' could be best demonstrated through cultural production which included the use of vernacular languages.[74]

1.1.2 The early African languages press in South Africa and in other African contexts

It was the missionaries in South Africa who initiated publication in African languages and laid the foundation for papers such as the *Bantu World*. Publications meant for Africans were produced by missionaries from the early nineteenth century and later written and edited by African converts.[75] Some of these early publishers included the Glasgow Missionary Society among the Xhosa as well as the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society who founded *Ikwezi* (Morning Star; 1844-1845) in the Eastern Cape.[76] William Kobe Ntsikana, the son of Ntsikana,

[73] Barber. *The Anthropology of Texts*; Limb (ed.) *The People's Paper*; Breckenridge. 'Love Letters and Amanuenses'; Khumalo. 'Ekukhanyeni Letter Writers'; Mark Emmanuel. 'Viewspapers: The Malay Press of the 1930s.' *Journal of South East Asian Studies.* 41: 1, 2010, p. 1; Suriano. 'Letters to the Editor and Poems'.
[74] Tsitsi Ella Jaji. *Africa in Stereo: Modernism, Music and Pan-African Solidarity.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 23.
[75] Les Switzer (ed.) *South Africa's' Alternative Press, Voices of Protest and Resistance 1880-1960.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 1.
[76]Ntongela Masilela. 'The Vernacular Press and African Literature.' Pzacad.pitzer.edu/NAM/general/essays/vernacular.pdf. (Accessed 8 March 2016: 11:00am). Last Updated 16 November 2009.

who is believed to have been the very first Christian convert among the Xhosa, apparently wrote for the paper until the end of its publication.[77]

However, these newspapers were mainly controlled by missionaries and therefore thematically leaned towards religious themes with the aim of converting readers to Christianity. According to Karin Barber, in many colonial contexts Christian missionaries saw reading as 'an instrument of conversion' which was going to help spread the gospel.[78] She further argues that printed texts were agents of 'proselytisation' as the written word could spread much further and have a more lasting impact than the spoken word of preachers.[79] In addition, as Leon de Kock argues, print was a means of cultural persuasion and of education transmission, as well as an instrument of colonial governance.[80] He also shows how this was the foundation of the 'orthodoxy of English as both a means of cultural transfusion and a discourse of power.'[81] The missionaries thus laid the foundation for the widely accepted belief that English was superior to local African languages. In light of this, education, conversion to Christianity and enlightenment were closely linked. Most intellectuals who were educated in mission schools became Christians and believed that they were more enlightened than the rest of the African populace.

However, the missionaries were also instrumental in transforming African languages into written orthographies. In various colonial settings, 'literacy and the printing press arrived together.'[82] As a result, for many Africans, the first encounter with the skill of reading and writing was inextricably tied to mission education and Christian teachings. For example, the London Missionary Society (LMS) of Robert Moffat printed texts in Setswana at Kuruman in the Northern Cape in the early 1800s.[83]

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[77] Timothy Couzens. 'History of the Black Press in South Africa 1836-1960.' Seminar Paper. University of the Witwatersrand Institute for Advanced Social Research. A15, 1984, p. 2.
[78] Barber. *The Anthropology of Texts*, p. 143.
[79] Barber. *The Anthropology of Texts*, p. 150. See also John L. and Jean Comaroff. *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa.* Vol 1. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); John. L and Jean Comaroff. *Of Revelation and Revolution: The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier.* Vol 2. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Vukile Khumalo. 'Ekukhanyeni Letter Writers'.
[80] Leon de Kock. 'Metonymies of Lead: Bullets, Type and Print Culture in South African Missionary Colonialism' in Andrew van der Vlies (ed), *Print, Text and Book Cultures in South Africa*. (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2012), p. 50.
[81] De Kock. 'Metonymies of Lead', p. 51.
[82] Barber. *The Anthropology of Texts*, p. 143.
[83] Andres van der Vlies. 'Print Text and Books in South Africa' in Andrew van der Vlies. *Print, Text and Book Cultures in South Africa.* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2012), p. 19.

Although the ability to write, publish and spread news was for a long time the monopoly of the missionaries, from the late nineteenth into the early twentieth century, mission educated intellectuals, mainly the petty bourgeoisie, also began to found their own newspapers which also promoted Christian values but in addition had space for 'secular political, social and cultural issues.'[84] As Peter Limb argues, the rise of the black owned press in South Africa allowed for ideas to spread more freely.[85] This was an opportunity for African writers and readers to engage in issues beyond the confines of Christianity and mission control. Notably, the transition from a mission to an African owned press was not seamless. For many mission educated intellectuals, Christianity was closely tied to submission to colonial authority and modernity. In his study of Zulu ethnicity and nationalism, Paul La Hausse examines the *kholwa* (Christian Africans) who until the late nineteenth century saw their destiny as closely tied to that of the British Empire.[86] Their belief and status caused them to be alienated from their traditional societies who felt that they were betraying African culture.

In addition, Christian Africans were caught in between the traditional past and the 'unstable modernity of the present', which led to the emergence of a new nationalist sentiment expressed in the early black-owned newspapers.[87] These African converts who formed a large part of the nascent African middle class also developed a positive inclination towards the 'fair minded' British and their Christianity and parliamentary democracy, in contrast with the lesser favoured Afrikaners whose Calvinist religion was seen as racist.[88] Tiyo Soga, a journalist and the first missionary among his people, the Xhosa, after being ordained in 1857, once argued that 'British conquest was legitimate because it was a vehicle for civilisation ordained by God for the salvation and elevation of the blacks.'[89] As a result of such attitudes, the Victorian middle class culture which was promoted by the missionaries was often aspired towards by the African nascent bourgeoisie. This desire was sometimes expressed in their writings and had an important influence on political ideology and on the development of race consciousness.

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[84] van der Vlies. 'Print Text and Books in South Africa', p. 152. See also: Les Switzer. '*Bantu* World', p. 352.
[85] Limb (ed.) *The Peoples Paper*, p. 2.
[86] Paul La Hausse de Lalouviere. *Restless Identities, Signatures of Nationalism, Zulu Ethnicity and History in the Lives of Petros Lamula (c. 1881-1948) and Lyman Maling (1889-c.1936).* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 2000), p. 9.
[87] La Hausse de Lalouviere. *Restless Identities*, pp. 9-14.
[88] Ime Ukpanah. *The Long Road to Freedom: Inkundla yaBantu (Bantu Forum) and the African Nationalist Movement in South Africa, 1938-1951.* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2005), p. 2.
[89] Ukpanah. *The Long Road*, p. 3.

Some African intellectuals, however, founded the papers out of frustration with the mission newspapers, for instance John Tengo Jabavu, who founded the *Imvo zabaNtsundu* (Black Opinion; 1884-1998) in King Williams Town in the Eastern Cape.[90] This was a consequence of his displeasure at the fact that missionaries were determining the content of the newspaper *Isigidimi samaXhosa* (The Xhosa Messenger; 1870-1888). This desire to be free from mission control thus gave rise to the black-owned press, which was also inspired by the desire to bring about change and challenge injustice and oppression using the pen with less control by white authorities.[91] Isabel Hofmeyr highlights that African newspaper owners invested so much in these enterprises to the point of being bankrupt.[92] This shows the extent to which they sought to establish their own independence.

As Tsitsi Jaji argues:

> The generation of black South African intellectuals who came of age at the turn of the twentieth century confronted the double challenge of colonised modernity and racial expropriation, [and] they saw cultural production as a way to raise collective consciousness.[93]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Sol Plaatje owned seTswana paper *Koranta ea Becoana* (Bechauana's Gazette; 1901-1908), John Tengo Jabavu's Xhosa paper *Imvo zabaNtsundu* (Black Opinion; 1884-1902), John Dube's *iLanga laseNatal* (The Natal Sun; 1903), among others were products of this cultural production, which was both a form of literary and political expression.[94] Although they had been mission educated and exposed to modernity, these writers attempted to encourage the preservation of African identity in the midst of change, yet at the same time seeking to prove that they qualified for a place among the 'civilised' according to western standards.

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[90] Couzens. 'A Short History', p. 2.
[91] Barber. *The Anthropology of Texts*; see also Khumalo. 'Ekukhanyeni Letter Writers'; Limb (ed.) *The People's' Paper*.
[92] Isabel Hofmeyr, Sarah Nuttal and Cheryl Ann Michael. 'The Book in Africa.' *Current Writing, Text and Reception in Southern Africa*. June 2011, p. 6.
[93] Jaji. *Africa in Stereo,* p. 23.
[94] Jaji. *Africa in Stereo*. See also Ntongela Masilela. 'New African Movement.' http://pzcad.pitzer.edu/NAM/. (Accessed, 10 June 2017).

This process of literary production did not unfold in isolation: the upsurge of literary production, first inspired by pan-African ideas, and later on by anti-colonial and nationalist sentiments, occurred in Africa and all over the world from the early nineteenth into the twentieth century.[95] Stephanie Newell has discussed how the West African press played a major role in shaping the 'political and literary culture of the coastal elite' by discussing a novel which was published in two Gold Coast newspapers between 1886 and 1888.[96] Bodil F. Frederiksen has studied the figure of Henry Muoria in Kenya, who had a passion for Kikuyu language and for African progress and independence, and who started the Kikuyu language newspaper *Mumenyereri* (May 1945-October 1952).[97] Maria Suriano's discussion of the Swahili governmental magazine *Mambo Leo* (Current Affairs) in post-1945 Tanganyika shows that, despite the editors' guidelines and government control, Tanganyikan correspondents used letters to the editors and rhyming poems as a key platform for debating issues that concerned them, and for creating community networks.[98]

In South Africa it was not only the African press which became a platform of debates about progress and everyday issues, and which would acquire a nationalist consciousness. The Indian press began to develop in the late nineteenth century. Newspapers such as *Indian World* (1898) and *Colonial Indian News*, established by P.S. Aiyar in 1901, and Mohandas Gandhi's *Indian Opinion* (1903), confirm the close relationship between the press, imagined communities and the development of political ideas.[99] The 1930s and 1940s were a time when many Afrikaner intellectuals were also grappling with issues that affected their communities as they sought to theoretically formulate Afrikaner nationalism. Usage of Afrikaans instead of Dutch was encouraged and promoted through publications such as the journal *Koers*, magazines such as *Huisgenoot* (May 1916 to present), and newspapers such as *Die Afrikanise* (Patriot newspaper;

[95] Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood. *Pan African History, Political Figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787*. (London: Routledge, 2003).
[96] Stephanie Newell. *Ghanaian Popular Fiction: Thrilling Discoveries in Conjugal Life and other Tales.* (Oxford James Curry, 2000) See also Stephanie Newell. 'Entering the Territory of Elites: Literary Activity in Colonial Ghana' in Karin Barber (ed.) *Africa's' Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making the Self.* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006).
[97] Bodil Folke Frederiksen. 'The Present Battle is the Brain Battle': Writing and Publishing a Kikuyu Newspaper in the Pre-Mau Mau Period in Kenya', in Karin Barber (ed.) *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making the Self.* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006).
[98] Suriano. 'Letters to the Editor'.
[99] Isabel Hofmeyr. *Gandhi's Printing Press: Experiments in Slow Reading*. (London: Harvard University Press, 2013).

January 1876-1904), *Volksblad* (People's Journal; 1904 to present) and *Die Burger* (The Citizen; 1915 to present).[100]

It would be beyond the scope of this dissertation to analyse in greater detail why there was such an increase in nationalist sentiment across race and class in South Africa from as early as the late nineteenth century. What is relevant to this study is that the press quickly became more than just an agent of colonial authority and missionary preaching. It became a key platform used by different communities and groups to promote their vernacular languages as symbols of their identity, pride and unity.

1.1.3 The Formation of the *Bantu World*

African journalists dominated the black press since its inception in the nineteenth century until the 1930s. However, the purchasing power of African readers was low and there were very few black entrepreneurs who had surplus capital to use to advertise in these publications.[101] Most independent African publications did not survive the decade of the 1930s. The economic depression, worsened by the loss of the African franchise in the Cape and renewed efforts by the state to institutionalise segregation, were factors that worked against the black press.[102] This saw African journalists being denied opportunities to accumulate capital for printing equipment, paper buildings, skilled tradesmen and distribution networks.[103] As the urban African population increased and the literacy rate gradually grew, white entrepreneurs sought to take advantage of this opportunity to buy out independent African publications and establish other publications for the increasing African readership.

Bertram Paver was a white liberal who sought to not only take advantage of the economic crisis but also provide the 'native' people with a 'platform for fair comment and the presentation of

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[100] Dan O'Meara. *Volkskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner nationalism, 1934-1948.* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983); Tiffany Willoughby-Herard. *Waste of a White Skin: The Carnegie Corporation and the Racial Logic of White Vulnerability*. (California: University of California Press, 2015); Lindi Koorts. *DF Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism.* (Cape Town: NB Publishers, 2014).
[101] Switzer. '*Bantu World* and the Origins', pp. 351-352.
[102] Switzer. '*Bantu World*, p. 352. The Great Depression of 1929 which broke out as a result of the crash of the United States stock market caused a slump in economies across the world. See Ben Bernanke. *Essays on the Great Depression.* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000); K.A. Manikumar. *A Colonial Economy in the Great Depression, Madras 1929-1937.* (Mumbai: Longman, 2003).
[103] Switzer. *South Africa's Alternative Press*, p. 1.

their needs and aspirations.'[104] He leased business premises in a small shop at number 12 Von Weilligh Street, Marshalltown (Johannesburg), which was an area 'favoured by traders doing business with the Bantu.'[105] A failed farmer and advertising salesman, Paver founded the Bantu Press Proprietary Limited and launched the *Bantu World* in 1932. The *Bantu World* began circulating as a national weekly in April 1932.

The first white-owned black press organisation, Bantu Press, was able to swallow almost the entire black-owned press in only a few years, owning ten African weekly newspapers by 1945. A memorandum written by Paver in 1932 shows the reasons behind the formation of the paper. He noted how the literacy rate had increased between 1921 and 1931 among black South Africans from 9.89 % to 12.4%, which called for a black newspaper that could guide public opinion.[106] He sought black investors, and by the end of 1932 more than half of the 38 shareholders in the company were African. Richard Victor Selope Thema, who was editor of the *Bantu World* in the first twenty years of its existence, and Isaiah Bud-Mbelle, who had supported the Chamber of Mines African newspaper *Umteteli waBantu* (Mouthpiece of the People; 1920-1956) was on the board of directors.[107] Paver also convinced J.D. Rheinalt-Jones and Howard Pim who were both involved in the Institute of Race Relations, as well as the Maggs family to buy into the idea.[108] From its formation, the *Bantu World* accounted for about 25% of African newspaper circulation and influenced the structure as well as content of other African newspapers.[109] It became the most important platform and medium of communication for literate Africans from the 1930s, providing readers with a 'model' of what was seen as acceptable and relevant for Africans to read as well as to purchase.[110] However, it was also influenced thematically by other newspapers.

In a 1932 letter to Major Fred Rosdeth, the Inspector of Native Affairs and later the Under-Secretary for Native Affairs, Bertram Paver discussed the circulation of 'native papers' and the

[104] Switzer. *South Africa's Alternative Press.*
[105] Manoim, 'The Black Press'.
[106] Couzens. 'A Short History of the *World*' p. 7.
[107] Les Switzer. '*Bantu World* and the Origins of a Captive Commercial Press in South Africa.' *Journal of Southern Africa Studies.* 14: 3, 1988, p. 189.
[108] Couzens. 'Short History', p. 7.
[109] Switzer. 'The *Bantu World'*, p. 190.
[110] Switzer. 'The *Bantu World'*, p. 191.

importance of prioritising the most 'influential publication.'[111] The *Bantu World* and *Ilanga laseNatal* had the highest circulation rates at 25, 500 copies per week, followed by *Imvo Zabantsundu* at 12, 500.[112] These statistics thus influenced the prioritisation of the *Bantu World* and *Ilanga laseNatal* by the Bantu Press.

The *Bantu World* mainly circulated in the Transvaal as well as in Swaziland, as can be gathered from some of the articles in the paper.[113] It also circulated as far as Northern Angola in the 1940s.[114] As a commercial newspaper mainly for the urban market in the Witwatersrand, the *Bantu World* had no competitors for around two decades.[115] This meant that it was an extremely important medium of communication and had a tremendous amount of influence that could be used by the owners as well as the contributors to spread and shape the ideas of its readers. Before the Second World War, the Bantu Press also opened printing works in Bulawayo and established the *Bantu Mirror* which was printed in English, Ndebele, and Lozi, circulating in Matebeleland and Barotseland.[116]

However, fourteen months into its launch, the *Bantu World* was taken over by the Argus Printing and Publishing Company, the largest white-owned conglomerate in South Africa.[117] The Bantu Press had reached a point where it faced financial challenges. Advertising revenue was insufficient and the company had to be assisted by bigger companies.[118] As a result of this, African and most white shareholders were removed from the board of directors.[119] The Bantu Press company's shares were taken over by corporations such as Anglo-American as well as the Argus Printing and Publishing Company.[120]

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[111] National Archives of South Africa, NTS 9715. 803/400. See also Ivan Evans. *Bureaucracy and Race: Native Administration in South Africa. Vol.53 of Perspectives on Southern Africa.* (California: University of California Press, 1997).
[112] NTS 9715. 803/400.
[113] Petrus Z. Dhlamini. 'Nase Swazini Uyafundwa *Bantu World.*' *Bantu World.* (16: 13, 1949), p. 3.
[114] Couzens. 'Short History', p. 12.
[115] Switzer. 'The *Bantu World*', p. 354.
[116] A.J Friedgut. 'The Non-European Press' in Ellen Hellman and Leah Abrahams (eds.). *Handbook of Race Relations in South Africa.* (New York: Octagon Books, 1975), p. 500.
[117] Switzer. 'The *Bantu World'*, p. 190.
[118] Irwin, Manoim. 'The Black Press 1945-1963: The Growth of the Black Mass Media and their Role as Ideological Disseminators.' Master of Arts Thesis. (University of the Witwatersrand. 1983.), p. iv.
[119] Manoim. 'The Black Press', p. iv.
[120] Manoim. 'The Black Press', p. iv.

Although the impact of the takeover by this conglomerate does not seem quite clear when one analyses the paper, especially the Zulu-language pages during these years, the removal of Africans from the board of directors might have been a deliberate attempt to cement white control over the paper. However, the African-oriented themes and rhetoric of the Zulu articles and letters do not seem to have changed in spite of this takeover.

1.1.4 The key aims of the *Bantu World*

In the first year of the publication of the *Bantu World*, the Bantu Press had a section where it outlined the purpose of the paper. Part of the stated purpose was to:

> Print without prejudice or bear all the news that will be interesting to the Bantu people in order that the reading public may be fully and truly informed as an aid to clear thinking and logical action, to be independent of party politics, encourage the development of the Bantu as an agricultural people and to combat illiteracy.[121]

The paper was to be in favour of the idea of self-help and racial self-respect, harmonious race relations and the development of the 'Bantu' as a people rooted in the rural areas, pursuing agriculture as their central economic activity.[122] One of the key aims of the *Bantu World*, which was to promote the idea of black people as an agricultural people rather than urbanites, was a critical point to make at a time when land dispossession was the main root of oppression which relegated Africans to an inferior position, both economically and socially. The idea of promoting agriculture and moving black people to the rural areas as the solution to unemployment and lack of space in the urban areas appeared repeatedly in the *Bantu World*. In the first issue of May 1932, its supplement, the Bantu Weekly Reader highlighted the same point:

> We hear that the government has sent several white men to Bechuanaland to survey the land which should be cut into farms for our people. At present there is no work in the

[121] *Bantu World.* 1: 2, 1932, p. 4. A list of the main aims of the paper can be found in most issues of the 1932 volumes on page 4.
[122] Ibid.

> towns and many Bantus go hungry in the street. People should therefore stay on the land and till the soil.[123]

As the Bantu Press stated when it outlined the purpose of the paper, the *Bantu World* was to be used to direct black opinion towards cooperation with the white man and discourage radical resistance.[124] Africans were being urbanised at a fast rate and the idea was to channel African thought 'away from politics and into safer pursuits.'[125] The owners were thus wary of the fact that the press could potentially lead to political agitation and inspire Africans to challenge the oppressive system. As Leon de Kock has stated, 'the politics of colonial power relied on print culture as a means of dissemination and decree.'[126] This shows how important the *Bantu World* was to its owners as well as to the state in influencing public opinion. It is no surprise that while the demise of *Abantu-Batho*, the radical official mouthpiece of the ANC from 1912 to 1931, left a gap which needed to be filled by a paper such as the *Bantu World*;[127] the *Bantu World* took a more officially conservative approach from the beginning.[128] Furthermore, in South Africa, the establishment of some specific institutions from the 1920s onwards was partly meant to direct black thought in a moderate direction, one which promoted racial cooperation and accommodation in the white system rather than attempts to overthrow it. These institutions included the Joint Councils established in 1921, the creation of the Bantu Men's Social Centre (BMSC), established in 1924, the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) created in 1929, as well as the *Bantu World*.[129]

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[123] Bantu Weekly Reader. *Bantu World*. 1: 5, 1932. See also 'Chaos in Unions' Labour Market: Tribal Native Competes with Urbanised Bantu.' *Bantu World.* 1: 7, 1932; Bantu Weekly Reader. *Bantu World.* 1: 8, 1932; Philip Bonner. 'The Politics of Black Squatter Movements on the Rand, 1944-1952.' *Radical History Review.* 46: 7, 1990. pp. 89-115; Phillip. Bonner. 'African Urbanisation on the Rand between the 1930s and 1960s: Its Social Character and Political Consequences.' *Journal of Southern African Studies.* 21: 1, 1995; William Beinart and Saul Dubow (eds). *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth Century South Africa*. (London: Routledge, 2013).

[124] Friedgut. 'The Non-European Press', p. 493.

[125] Richard Butsch and Sonia Livingstone (eds). *Meanings of Audiences: Comparative Discourses.* (New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 83.

[126] de Kock, 'Metonymies of Lead', p. 50.

[127] Friedgut. 'The Non-European Press', p. 500.

[128] Peter Limb. *The ANCs Early Years: Nation Class and Place in South Africa before 1940.* (Pretoria; UNISA Press, 2010), p. 371.

[129] Bhekizizwe Peterson. *Monarchs, Missionaries and African Intellectuals: African Theatre and the Unmaking of Colonial Marginality*. (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2000), p. 17.

In line with this view, Switzer argues that the *Bantu World* de–emphasised negative and political news that highlighted discriminatory policies and activities.[130] This was the case in many other newspapers in colonial Africa during this time. Colonial governments discouraged politics in the writings so as to avoid sedition and revolt. In colonial Ghana, those educated Africans who in the 1920s and the 1930s started several newspapers and literary clubs deliberately avoided party politics and political debates. They focused on education, literature and literacy.[131] However, a closer analysis of the *Bantu World* shows that the paper was in every sense political and therefore did not follow the blue print which had been laid-out.

1.1.5 Commercial and State Interest in the early Black Press

Tim Couzens highlights how black editors and writers struggled to be independent and freely express their ideas from the nineteenth century. He gives an example of an article published in *The Christian Express* as early as 1876, which stated how the paper had for a long time been edited by a 'superior native' who was under supervision.[132] The state always felt a need to closely supervise black writers by giving the impression that they were not experienced or intelligent enough to control editorials by themselves.

African-owned newspapers were from the onset often seen as seditious and closely censored. The Zulu newspaper *Ipepa loHlanga* which was founded in 1900 was regarded as an organ of propaganda and was overtly critical to white perceptions.[133] This subsequently led to its closure in 1901. *Ilanga laseNatal* was also regarded with suspicion and copies were frequently sent to the Native Affairs Department.[134] State censors in South Africa closely monitored newspapers such as *Abantu-Batho*, with the government at one time pressing the then editor Selope Thema to explain the anti-imperial wartime editorials.[135] The state was thus comfortable with editorials that were not too radical but could be used to deliver messages from the state as well as to control, allay, or even discourage political opposition. The dominant economic and social

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[130] Switzer. 'The *Bantu World*', p. 198.
[131] Stephanie Newell. *Literary Culture in Colonial Ghana; 'How to Play the Game of Life'.* (Manchester; Manchester University Press. 2002), p. 32.
[132] Tim Couzens. 'The Struggle to be Independent: A History of the Black Press in South Africa 1836- 1960.' Wits History Workshop. 6-10 February 1990, p. 9.
[133] Andre Odendaal. *VUKANI BANTU!: The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics in South Africa in 1912.* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1984), p. 61.
[134] Odendaal. *VUKANI BANTU*, p. 61.

institutions of white South Africa were off limits to scrutiny by African journalists, who were harassed even in their coverage of African community news.[136]

In a December 1905 letter from the Maseru Resident Commissioner's office to Howard Pim, one of the stakeholders at the Bantu Press, Manama Molapo was mentioned as being the subject of the various exchanges that had been happening between Pim and the Commissioner. He was rumoured to have been 'bitten with this excessive forward courage which is affecting so many otherwise estimable educated natives of the present moment.'[137] He was also said to be writing anonymously to newspapers. The Commissioner advised Pim to keep the conversation about Molapo secret. This is an indication of the interest that the various stakeholders had in the activities of the educated Africans and in this case there seems to be concern over their ideologies and being 'forward'.

In the same letter, the Commissioner seemed to say in essence how interested the government was in the black publications. He wrote:

> I think I allude in my last report (1906-7) to the native press and its attitudes. I felt it necessary to do so but did not want to make too much of it. The native press in South Africa is going to be always with us and they are certain to criticize the white man as freely as he criticises them. It is not an unmixed evil, it is quite as well to know what they are thinking about.[138]

This shows that the white stakeholders were very much interested in knowing what the 'natives' were discussing and whether it was a threat to their power. As a result, they sought to exercise control over them. This also shows that they were very much aware that as white people in power they were bound to be a topic of discussion in these newspapers.

In another letter written in February 1933, this time from Bertram Paver to the liberal Howard Pim, Paver thanked Pim for advising him about Pixley Ka Isaka Seme. Paver promised that he would 'watch him very carefully in future', and wrote that he had 'enclosed the cutting that Pim

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[135] Limb (ed.). *The People's' Paper*, p. 3.
[136] Limb. *The People's' Paper*, p. 3.
[137] Howard Pim Papers. Political Native Affairs 1905-1934. A881/BL 2. Wits Historical Papers.
[138] A881/BL 2. Wits Historical Papers.

sent him to read.'[139] This is evidence of the fact that Pim and Paver, and most probably the rest of the stakeholders of European descent, were reading the African language papers closely. I also found cuttings of *Imvo Zabantsundu* dated 1 April 1924 and *Umteteli waBantu* dated 1 October 1932 in the Pim files which further show that they did discuss the writings and share copies of them in their correspondences.

In the same collection of letters written by Howard Pim to Paver between 1933 to 1934, one contributor to *Umteteli waBantu*, known as 'Enquirer', suspected of being 'one of the Mbeles', was said to have been critical of the Joint Councils for having destroyed 'native leadership'.[140] Paver went on to say that the statement was not dangerous but made him want to think more about the Joint Councils. Therefore, the owners of the Bantu Press newspapers either just assumed they knew who was writing under a pen name or had actual access to information regarding the identity of its contributors.

While the editors and contributors to the various vernacular newspapers might have felt that the use of African languages protected their views from censorship, there was clearly a deep level of interest in what they were writing which could have been evidence of some level of censorship. Paver was quoted in an interview with Tim Couzens as having once warned the *Bantu World* writers that someone who was proficient in their languages was bound to read their writings. Several repressive laws were enacted from the late nineteenth century which showed the desire by the state to control the media. The Obscene Publications Act of 1892, Customs Management Act of 1913 and the Entertainments Censorship Act of 1931 are examples of how the state sought to institutionalise censorship.[141] The Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 marked the height of censorship as individuals and organisations which were thought to promote communist ideas were banned.[142] These were meant to ensure that the voices of dissent were muzzled. However, in spite of these laws, print continued to be used as an instrument of subversion.

[139] A881/BL 2. Wits Historical Papers.
[140] Pim Letters. Joint Council 1933-1934. A881/DL 4/ 56-185. Wits Historical Papers.
[141] Rachel Matteau. 'Real and Imagined Readers: Censorship, Publishing and Reading under Apartheid.' Doctor of Philosophy Thesis. University of the Witwatersrand. 2011.
[142] Matteau. 'Real and Imagined', p. 12.

1.1.6 The Zulu language contributors: an overview

The *Bantu World* was authored and edited by influential actors in the twentieth century literary field. Individuals such as T.D. Mweli Skota, P.D. Segale, S.E. Mqhayi, B.W. Vilakazi, A.C. Jordan, Jordan Ngubane, R.R.R. Dhlomo, H.I.E. Dhlomo, Peter Abrahams and Henry Nxumalo among others, with Selope Thema as the chief editor from 1932 to 1952.[143] The Zulu language writers were predominantly men. Thabo B. Khunyeli also notes that white writers who mainly consisted of government officials and cabinet ministers, liberal politicians, educationists and members of the clergy - especially those who were involved in the Native Affairs department - also contributed articles in the *Bantu World*.[144]

The Zulu language writers of the *Bantu World*, who included some of these individuals, were pivotal in shaping the narrative of the paper. As I will show in the course of this dissertation, they used letter writing as a tool to try and express their views in the midst of repression, censorship and the restrictive purpose of the paper that was laid out by the owners. The Zulu pages, as can be gathered from the *Bantu World*, created a key public platform for discussion.

The letter writing practice in the *Bantu World* created a private sphere of its own, one which was not impenetrable since the door of knowledge of the Zulu language could be opened. The writings in the paper, according to Bhekiziziwe Peterson, provided 'a sense of common background and created social contacts', thereby creating a sense of community.[145] The Zulu language writers are a good example of these imagined communities. According to M. T. Moreone, who was the editor of the *Bantu World* in 1953, the aims of black writers in the early days of black journalism were to be a forum for opinions, protest and education.[146] The letter writers in the *Bantu World* created a culture of conversation which resulted in relationships being formed between the editor, the writers and the reader.

Another interesting issue is the use of pen names: in the Zulu letters of the *Bantu World*, one finds writers such as Maqondana, Africunus, Nkungwini, Mashiyabaleka, Heavy Drinker,

[143] P. Mbonambi. 'Digging up Aggrey Klaatse's Life' in Berold R and Wessels P. (eds.) *Institute for the Study of English in Africa.* Rhodes University. 2013).
[144] Thabo B. Khunyeli. 'The Portrayal of History by African Writers in the *Bantu World*, 1932-1936.' M.A. Thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal. 1994, p. 9.
[145] Peterson. 'The *Bantu World*', p. 14.
[146] Couzens. 'A Short History', p. 16.

Makhandakhanda, Mahlokoma, Butterfly and Hlubi among many others who never revealed their full identities. Some of them might have been fictitious figures, and some letters might have been written by the newspaper editors or journalists. What is most important is that, either fictitious or real, these letters reveal both individual and collective perceptions that circulated in the 1930s and 1940s.[147]

As I mentioned earlier, in his early 1930s correspondence with Betram Paver, Howard Pim stated that he suspected one contributor to *Umteteli waBantu* known as the 'Equirer' was one of the Mbeles.[148] The use of pen names was thus not completely fool proof, as on the basis on their known political inclinations and perhaps their writing style, one could get a sense of who the actual writer could be. The fact that there was such a possibility of the real writer of a letter or article being recognised, might have been the reason why many writers preferred to send as little of their personal details as possible. Recognition had the disadvantage of making them known to censors and limiting their freedom of expression.

The use of pen names was not welcomed: on several occasions, from 1932 to 1952, the editors of the *Bantu World* requested contributors to include their real names. Thema, in a July 1938 issue, asked writers to include their real and full names as well as true addresses so that their letters would be published or else they would not.[149] In a 1942 letter to a contributor, Mehlo Mabili, Thema said:

> Umhleli ucela igama lako lempela nekeli lako njengomteto wamapepa onke lizogodhlwa igama lelo, kuvele lona lelei lika Mehlo Mabili. [The editor asks for your real name and your real address, according to the policies of all newspapers that name will be withheld and the name Mehlo Mabili is the one that will be published].[150]

The same message was repeated in the next issue, with the editor appealing to the readers, emphasising that it was a requirement that writers send their real names and addresses, but also saying that if they did not want those details to be published, he would not publish them.[151]

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[147] Suriano. 'Letters to the Editor', also discusses the use of pen names.
[148] Pim Letters. Joint Council 1933-1934.
[149] Selope Thema. 'Kubalobeli Bethu.' *Bantu World*. 10: 15, 1938, p. 6.
[150] Selope Thema. 'Mehlo Mabili'. *Bantu World*. 10: 85, 1943, p. 2.
[151] Selope Thema. 'Kubalobeli.' *Bantu World.* 10: 86, 1943, p. 2.

However, many stuck to their letters being published under their pen names and still preferred not to include their addresses.

The *Bantu World* writers and contributors were mainly freelance African writers, but some were employed as reporters and editors. Some letter writers were just 'ordinary' people who had received enough literacy to be able to compose letters. The *Bantu World* provided them with a unique platform of debate. The Zulu letters were intelligently written, mostly direct and unapologetic. R.R.R. Dlomo, assistant editor of the *Bantu World* from 1933 to 1943, was a well-known Bantu Press editor in the 1930s and 1940s and worked as an editor in most of its newspapers. According to H.I.E. Dhlomo, these African journalists were underpaid, overworked, worked under restrictions and were not free to speak out and be bold.[152] They had to be bilingual and played the roles of editor, reporter, proof readers, all at once, and they were supposed to write on a wide range of topics.[153] African journalists were given permanent employment in a few of these white-owned newspapers only from the 1960s and 1970s. They worked on subordinate, segregated, and paternalistic inserts or supplements targeted at black audiences.[154] However, they still saw themselves as important mediators of African grievances and organisers of public discourse who gave ordinary Africans a voice.[155]

Some of the Zulu letter writers did not specify their professions but others used the letters to air their views and also promote their businesses. Titus Mabaso, a cameraman who was also a frequent contributor, advertised his business in one of his articles, urging fellow black people to support him.[156] Maqondana encouraged people to come to his store and try his traditional medicine.[157] Alfred Matibela promoted the idea of going back to using wooden spoons and opening a factory to produce these.[158] The promotion of entrepreneurship seemed a widespread interest among the contributors. This was a result of the fact that most contributors, journalists and readers, belonged to the African elite who sought to achieve economic success. What this also shows is that they were determined not just to be uplifted by the white man, but to succeed

[152] Switzer. 'The *Bantu World*', p. 360.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Switzer (ed.) *South Africa's Alternative Press*, p. 2.
[155] Ukpanah. *The Long Road*, p. 2.
[156] Titus Mabaso. 'Uqinisile Umatibela Ngodaba Lwezinkezo Alutintayo Lapa.' *Bantu World*. 3: 46, 1935, p. 3.
[157] KwaMaqondana. *Bantu World*. 7: 42, 1940, p. 6.
[158] Alfred Mathibela. 'Mkudliwe Ngezinkezo.' *Bantu World*. 3: 45, 1935, p. 6.

independently and prove that they were capable of innovation. This represents in my view an indirect challenge to the belief in the civilising and redeeming mission of the white man that was sometimes openly promoted in the paper.

The geographical location from which the letters were sent indicated that writers were mainly urbanites and many of them were most likely of Zulu origin. Although some Zulu letter writers did not specify where they were writing from, others did show that the letters came from various parts of South Africa and even beyond. Letters came from KwaZulu-Natal towns such as Ladysmith, Mgungundlovu, Dundee, Nellie Valley, Eastern Township as well as from other places like Middleburg (in Mpumalanga), Pietersburg (in present day Limpopo) Johannesburg, Kimberly (in the Northern Cape), Benoni (in the East Rand), Vereeniging, Krugersdorp (in present West Rand), Pretoria, and even from Swaziland. As indicated before, this shows how wide the writing networks were and that the paper was popular even outside South Africa.

One of the most significant factors in the survival of the Zulu pages was that the contributors encouraged each other to create a conversation. In 1935, one contributor, J.L Nhlapo, wrote,

> Nxa umuntu ebuza makaphendulwe bo! Noma umbuzo kungaba omubi kuhle axwayiswe….lamazwi ngiwalobiswa ungaboni izimpendulo zemibuzo eyabonakala ku *Bantu World* wangomhlaka January ekhasini lesi 5. Oh bakiti ngisizeni ngalezompendulo hle!.' [When a person asks may they please be answered. Even if the question is inappropriate it is good that they be corrected…I am writing like this because I did not see answers to the questions that appeared in the *Bantu World* of January of page 5. Oh my people help me with those answers please!].[159]

The Zulu letter writers created their own world of conversation and sustained it by consistently writing, questioning the editor and each other and raising contentious issues.

1.1.7 The significance of the Zulu language in the *Bantu World*

In his proposals for the languages to be used in the Bantu Press newspapers, Paver made it clear that the *Bantu World* was to be 'principally English, Afrikaans where necessary and individual

[159] J. L. Nhlapo. 'Ezase Petrus Steyn.' *Bantu World*. 3: 45, 1935, p. 8.

vernaculars when essential'.[160] The Rhodesian *Bantu Mirror* (1936-1962), one of the Bantu Press papers, is an example of the implementation of this policy. It was mainly in English with smaller sections of isiNdebele, Shona and Chinyanja. Readers of the *Bantu Mirror* were constantly encouraged to 'send news' to the paper and if they could not write in English, they could send in vernacular languages. This meant that the vernacular was to be a second option although it was commercially viable to include these African languages so as to reach a wider readership.

Most Bantu Press newspapers were mainly in English with smaller vernacular sections: in a typical 20 page newspaper, the front page was predominantly in English. Seven pages were dedicated to African languages which included Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana, later Venda and siSwati. The Zulu pages became much more formalised and were given more space - two to three pages - in October 1932, with a typical page being entitled 'Umqondo Wetu Nowababhaleli' (Our Opinions and Those of the Contributors). In this period the Women's pages were also introduced.[161]

In spite of Paver's approach, there was a long history of advocacy for African languages in the black press, which became manifest in the *Bantu World* as well. Solomon T. Plaatje was one of the most prominent early proponents of African languages in South Africa who influenced the move towards a greater recognition and use of local languages. He believed that the Tswana language was under threat from Western 'civilisation' and did much to ensure that its original pronunciation and phonetics were preserved.[162] As editor of *Koranta ea Becoana* (Bechuana Gazette; 1901-1909) and *Tsala ea Becoana* (Friend of the People; 1910-1915) he went to great lengths to even use his own orthography which he believed was the original one. All this was part of the desire to preserve Tswana culture and promote pride in Tswana customs.[163] His translation of Shakespeare's plays proves how he sought to show the high quality of African languages to the effect that it could be used to translate such highly esteemed literary works.[164]

[160] National Archives of South Africa, NTS 9715. 803/400.
[161] *Bantu World.* 1: 26, 1932.
[162] Brian Willan. *Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876-1932*. (London: Heinemann, 1984), p. 324. See also Ngugi waThiong'o. *Decolonising the Mind.*
[163] Willan. *Sol Plaatje*, p. 327.
[164] Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, p. 332.

This also happened in other parts of Africa. For example, Julius Nyerere, president of Tanzania (1964-1985) also translated Greek tragedy and numerous plays into Swahili.[165]

In twentieth century South Africa, with the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, language became more and more of an instrument of power. An interesting article in the *Rand Daily Mail* (1902-1985) dated October 1932 speaks about Mr H. G. Lawrence, a parliamentarian who opened his speech in Afrikaans and stated that it was the 'duty of every South African to speak 'both the languages of the union.'[166] The languages that he was referring to were English and Afrikaans which made this a very telling statement which shows a nationalism which excluded African languages and promoted the idea that South Africa consisted of the English and the Afrikaner people.

On the other hand, the black intelligentsia and writers in general during the colonial era considered the use of African languages as a way of maintaining African authenticity, identity and originality.[167] The Zulu language writers in the *Bantu World* at times discouraged the use of English and Afrikaans by black people, feeling that the Zulu language defined their identities; this language was thus an identity marker and promoter of an early Black Nationalism and consciousness.[168] This has been conceptualised further by scholars such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o who argues for the recognition of African languages as central to decolonisation.[169] The argument on the centrality of language in articulating national identity and formulating an Afrocentric struggle is also made by the Zulu writers of the *Bantu World.*

Tsitsi Jaji argues that the promotion of vernacular in print in the twentieth century 'might easily have fractured rather than unified the literate black body by sharpening ethnic differences into linguistically isolated…reading publics.'[170] However, while this is evident in some cases, in the Zulu letters of the *Bantu World*, there seems to have been an attempt to use Zulu to promote African unity beyond linguistic and ethnic differences.

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[165] Andrew Simpson. *Language and National Identity in Africa.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
[166] 'No Need for Racialism: Home Truths from S.A.P. Railways off the Rails: Mr Lawrence Hits Out.' *Rand Daily Mail*. 28 October 1932, p. 11.
[167] Peterson. *Monarchs, Missionaries and African Intellectuals*, p. 67.
[168] The kind of nationalism that I refer to is elaborated by Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities.*
[169] wa Thiong'o. *Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams*; waThiong'o. *Moving the Centre*; waThiong'o. *Decolonising the Mind.*
[170] Tsitsi Jaji. *Africa in Stereo,* p. 25.

Many African intellectuals and contributors to the *Bantu World* debated the issue of the importance of African languages. Professor Edgar Brookes, a political activist, lay preacher and member of the Liberal Party, one the most frequent contributors to the *Bantu World* in the early 1930s encouraged its readers to follow Sol Plaatje's example. He argued that Africans should be masters of their own language as this was pivotal to their upliftment.[171] He also encouraged them to learn Afrikaans. On the other hand, another contributor in 1944, discouraged the idea of people learning the language of another race, stating that it would disempower Africans. He criticised white people who learnt Zulu, arguing that this would lead to job losses for Africans who were court interpreters.[172] This is evidence of the fact that although African languages were valued in the paper in general, contributors had different perceptions with regards to ownership and preservation of those languages.

One letter published in 1936 addressed the issue of the importance of the use of African languages, and Zulu in particular, to some readers of the *Bantu World*. The author, E. S. Msimang, said:

> Yebo Kumnandi ukuti twi-twi-twa ngesilingu kepa uma utula nje kancane ukubheke kahle phandle lapo, kawusoze uzwe iNgisi likuluma ngolunye ulimi nom Afrikana ukuluma angesakubo. Kangibeki cala Zulu, ngaloko ngiti nje ukuba uyazi ukuti ulwimi lwakho lumnandi kangakanani ngabe kawuzikatazi kangaka. [Yes it is nice to speak in English but if you keep quiet for a while and observe closely, you will never hear an English person speaking in another language, even an Afrikaner speaks his own language. I am not blaming you, by this I just mean if only you knew how good your language was you would not trouble yourself this much by trying to speak in English].[173]

Msimang was one of the many contributors who urged readers to value African languages and converse in them more frequently than they did in English. The main reason he gave was that by not trying to learn any African language and by speaking in their own languages, English and Afrikaners were proud of their heritage. The writer used the comparison with the English and

[171] Professor Edgar. H. Brookes. 'Africans Should Develop Their Own Languages; They Must Be Masters of Their Own Mother Tongue.' *Bantu World.* 1: 42, 1933, p. 2. Professor Edgar Brookes was also a New African scholar, see, Ntongela Masilela. New African Movement.pzacad.pitzer.edu/NAM.
[172] 'Abelungu Abafunda isiZulu.' *Bantu World.* 11: 40, 1944, p. 2.
[173] E.S Msimang. 'Isizwe EsiQoto'. *Bantu World.* 4: 41, 1936, p. 4.

Afrikaners as well as the alliteration 'twi-twi-twa' to mock those who 'troubled themselves' by speaking in English. The message was meant to provoke the readers and make them realise how important their own languages were. At the same time this proves how some contributors highly valued vernacular in spite of the fact that it was only recognised as a minor language by the owners of the paper.

One of the most interesting articles in the *Bantu World*, commenting on the importance of African languages was published in January 1936. Writing in English, a writer known as the 'Linguist' expressed the following view:

> About those who despise their languages there need little be said. All enlightened people know that a language of a race is as important as the race itself and it is the cultivation and the pride taken in it that will determine the future of that race. In this, the Dutch Africans have given the Bantu a fine lead. Today the Dutch Africans rule South Africa and everyone knows that most of its achievements are due to the pride they take in their language.[174]

This statement is remarkable since, in comparing Africans with other 'races' it implies that other races were ahead in terms of progress and success, and Africans needed to follow suit. The tone was almost patronising and manipulating, meant to make Africans feel pressured and compelled to follow the example of other races. Just like Msimang's' letter, the main message behind this article was that, for Africans to be able to progress, African languages needed to be promoted much more than English. The idea was that mental upliftment evidenced by the use of their vernacular language was the reason why the Afrikaners or 'Dutch Africans' had gained dominance.

A similar comparison had been made by John Dube much earlier: in the first issue of *Ilanga laseNatal* in 1903, he encouraged African people in Natal to 'wake up' and support African newspapers because white people were so wise that they read the same newspapers. He stated,

[174] The Linguist. 'Use of the English Language by Africans.' *Bantu World*. 4: 39, 1936, p. 6.

> Aniboni yini abelungu akade bakanyiswa. NomRoma, nomChurch, nom Congregation bafunda pepa linye.[Can't you see white people who were enlightened a long time ago, a Catholic, a Church, a Congregation all read the same newspaper].[175]

This is evidence of an interesting trend of comparison with people of European descent which characterised many African writings, resulting in a complex connection between black consciousness and perceptions about white people.

Herbert Dhlomo, staff member of the Bantu World in the 1930s and editor of *Ilanga laseNatal* in the 1940s, argued that the Zulu section of the paper was the most important since it reflected the thoughts and desires of the people more clearly.[176] On the contrary, Jacob Nhlapo, who was the editor of the *Bantu World* between 1953 and 1956, just after Selope Thema, stated that the most important news in newspapers were written in English, and educated young writers rarely wrote in the vernacular languages.[177] This suggests how in the early 1950s, the struggle to lift African languages to a position of importance in African writing, was far from having been won.

Notably, as I discuss in chapter four, due to financial constraints, by the early 1940s only one page was dedicated to Zulu and the Zulu pages were briefly removed for these financial reasons. Consequent complaints by contributors over the removal show how important Zulu was to them as a channel through which they could express themselves, and through which they shaped the history of the *Bantu World* as well as their own history and were active agents in the process.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the African language press before 1932 and the context in which the *Bantu World* was formed. Missionaries in the nineteenth century were pivotal in laying the foundation for the press in South Africa. They also laid the ideological foundations for black intellectuals by encouraging the Victorian middle class culture. However, the literary production that evolved after the missionary era, sought to try and retain aspects of African identity while at the same time keeping true to the pursuit of western modernity. I have also tried to show how the

[175] John L. Dube. *Ilanga lase Natal*. 1: 1, 1903, p. 1.
[176] Tim Couzens. *The New African: A Study of the Life and Work of H.I.E Dlomo*. (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985), p. 351.
[177] Couzens. *The New African*.

Bantu World was a product of economic challenges faced by the black press as a result of the Great Depression. This resulted in white liberals being the main stakeholders of the paper and to an extent determining the content of the paper. From the onset, it was made clear that the paper was to be non-partisan, promote harmonious race relations, and promote the idea of black people as an agricultural people. There was also a considerable level of censorship which is evidenced in how the owners of the Bantu Press often expressed concern at what African writers were discussing in its publications.

However, in spite of all these limitations, the Zulu language contributors still managed to form their own imagined community which to some extent conformed to these ground rules but also managed to deviate from them. They asserted in their letters and articles the centrality of the Zulu language to their identity and promotion of national unity and race consciousness. Many articles promoted the use of African languages and discouraged the imitation of white people through the use of English: this suggests that the Zulu language gave writers a platform to form an imagined community of Zulu writers and readers which had the potential to cement unity and nationalism in the midst of segregation.

The following chapter discusses the main influences that I believe determined the content, perceptions and the kinds of discussions seen in the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World*. The socio-economic conditions, prevailing ideologies of the twentieth century and the contribution of Selope Thema as the editor are presented in Chapter Two as some on the major factors that shaped the discussions and debates that were seen in most of the Zulu letters and articles.

2 CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Siqonde ngaphi thina ndhlu emnyama?[178] Socio-economic conditions, ideological influences on the writers, debates on the 'civilising mission' and the editorship of Selope Thema (1932-1952)

Introduction

The question, 'Siqonde ngaphi thina ndhlu emnyama?' (where are we as the black nation headed?) is the title of an anonymous letter to the editor published in the 7 May 1932 issue of the *Bantu World*. The question was a source of heated debate in the paper. In this chapter I examine how the 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s were characterised by such discussions in the *Bantu World* whereby the writers sought to come up with a clear vision of the future of the African people. I begin by discussing the largely unfavourable economic, social and political conditions that black people faced, which led to feelings of despondency and a deep desire to improve these circumstances. Unemployment, racial segregation, crime, land dispossession and rural poverty were among just a few of the challenges that were discussed in the Zulu pages, with contributors agreeing that Africans needed to have their living conditions improved.

I also attempt to show that these discussions were also preceded by a long history of engagement with various ideologies which were partly designed to help answer the question of the direction of the black man's journey. South African and African intellectuals at large adopted ideas that were being propounded by figures such as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois in the twentieth century. Because of his more moderate stance, authorities favoured and promoted Booker T. Washington's ideas which in essence encouraged racial cooperating and gradual rather than radical change It was partly as a result of this that intellectuals such as John Dube, Pixley ka Isaka Seme and Selope Thema among others subscribed to Booker T. Washington's thought. However, the moderate approach to resistance was probably already in place outside of Washington's influence, perhaps as a result of mission education. Black South African thinkers therefore might have followed his ideas because they overlapped with theirs. In spite of this, however, the Zulu contributors to the paper were not always bound by these ideologies. Through

[178] 'Siqonde Ngaphi Tina Ndhlu Emnyama.' *Bantu World.* 1: 5, 1932, p. 2.

their discussions, they made the Zulu pages a centre of black or race consciousness, debate and provocation of the passion and the desire of the black man to rise above his circumstances. Some of their writings can be said to be evidence of the emergence of nationalism in the paper in spite of the moderate and cautious ideas of its owners.

In line with this, I also discuss how these ideas were manifested in the discussions concerning what the writers perceived to be the best way for them to achieve success while noting that the role of the white man in this needed to be ascertained. The main argument centred on some believing in the need for racial cooperation and accommodation, while some challenged the 'civilising mission' of the white man. Selope Thema's position as editor is also discussed as his contribution was pivotal in shaping the paper. What one can infer from his political and intellectual career is that although he was a moderate, his openness to the Zulu contributors engaging in debates and sometimes disagreeing with his ideas ensured that to an extent there was a balanced approach to what could be published.

2.1.1 The economic, political and social milieu of the *Bantu World*'s readers and writers

In the *Bantu World*, the proverb, 'itshe limi ngothi' (literally, a rock is balancing on a small stick), was sometimes used to describe the bad state that South Africa was in and how this was affecting black people.[179] It meant a state of instability and trouble for the black person. Issues such as unemployment, segregation, landlessness, rural poverty, crime and migration among others featured in the Zulu stories from the 1930s into the 1950s.

The theme of suffering was one of the most discussed, echoing across the borders in other regions of Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The *Bantu Mirror* (1936-1962) of Southern Rhodesia carried many stories almost similar to those in the *Bantu World*. This could have been because these were the prevailing ideas of the time or there was a lot of interaction between editors and writers of Bantu Press newspapers. In a 1936 article entitled 'Inhlupheko' (Troubles) and published in the *Bantu Mirror*, the writer bemoaned low wages that were being

[179] Selope Thema. 'Kuyantwela eZantsi!' *Bantu World.* 3: 40, 1935, p.3. See also 'Itshe Limi Ngothi Bakithi.' *Bantu World*. 3: 46, 1935, p. 2.

offered to Africans and encouraged the reader to consider the suffering being faced by 'abantu bakini' (your people).[180] The writer went on to say:

> Akenihlale pansi nisebenzise inqondo zenu maAfrica nikangela nibone ukuhlupheka nobunzima obukulu pezu kwabantu bakini amaAfrica kuleli lomzansi we Rhodesia. [Can you sit down and use your minds Africans, look and see the great suffering and the hardships that are upon your fellow Africans here in Southern Rhodesia].[181]

From this, one not only sees the prevailing idea of suffering and struggle that Africans were very much aware of, but the perception that the vernacular articles were basically being read by Africans and hence they needed to address readers directly with phrases like 'your people', 'can you sit down', 'your fellow Africans'. This method of addressing the readers made them feel that they were a part of this imagined community.

The Bantu Weekly Reader, a supplement of the *Bantu World*, in 1932 also portrayed black people as being a suffering race. Families of those who were unemployed in the urban areas were said to be starving and funds needed to be sought to save them from starvation.[182] In relation to this, a letter published in 1942 discussed how black people were the epitome of suffering, summarising the general underlying theme of suffering which most contributors continued to put forward:

> Masifunda iHistory ngezinyembezi zomhlaba, sifumanisa iAfrika iwadhlula amanye amazwe ngokuhlupheka nangezinyembezi zayo. Ukuhlupheka kwanamhla kwedhlula okungapambili. [When we study the History of the tears of this world, we find that Africa is ahead of other nations in suffering and in terms of its tears. The suffering of today is worse than ever before].[183]

The land crisis which was causing discontent in Natal and was worsened by the depression of 1930 and drought which had lasted for many years was another cause for concern in the Zulu

[180] 'Inhlupheko.' *Bantu Mirror*. 1: 2, 1936, p. 3.
[181] 'Inhlupheko.' *Bantu Mirror*.
[182] Bantu Weekly Reader. *Bantu World*. 1: 16, 1932. See also *Bantu Weekly Reader*. *Bantu World*. 1: 18, 1932.
[183] C. Mvusi. 'Izinsizi Zase Afrika.' *Bantu World*. 10: 43, 1942, p. 3. See also Thabo B. Khunyeli. 'The Potrayal of History', p. 12-13. Khunyeli also shows how *Bantu World* writers discussed the history of the suffering of Africans due to racial segregation.

pages.[184] The resultant increased number of migrants to the towns led to growing urban tensions due to poor living conditions and low wages among other things. As a way of justifying the pushing of black people out of towns, the authorities blamed them for high crime rates, violence, squatting, prostitution, illegal beer brewing and other vices. One finds many articles in the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World* where violence and crime are constantly highlighted, and black people are blamed for engaging in such and hindering their own progress.[185] This is also seen in articles highlighting the fear of black urbanisation by the white government.[186]

Such issues were often highlighted even in the early years of the *Bantu World,* especially in the front page. In the 9 April 9, 1932 issue, an article entitled 'Slum Housing Conditions Unfit for Human Beings', criticised the poor housing conditions for Africans in Johannesburg.[187] Another article discussed the building of Orlando Township which would provide housing and 'all modern convenience for 80,000 people.'[188] The juxtaposition of these two articles perhaps was an attempt to show that although there were challenges, the authorities were coming up with solutions. Another article entitled 'Ukungabiko kwendawo ngokwaneleyo eRautini kuyinto embi' (The lack of space in Gauteng is a bad thing), which was criticising lack of space for the blacks in towns, also addressed how space had become a problem.[189]

The problem of urban space was further seen in the Zulu pages, with W.A.E.G. Manyoni writing in 1936 about people being forced out of Edendale in 'Yideni'. He said:

> Wo ilukuni inhlalo yomuntu bakiti! Uma amadoda ase Yideni engemi ngezinyawo acishe umlilo opembekayo, ungaze upembeke uze uvute ngeke basakwazi ukuwucisha. [Oh the life of a black person is difficult, my people! If the men of Edendale do not stand up and put out the fire that is starting, if it starts and burns they will not be able to put it out].[190]

[184] Shula Marks. 'The Ambiguities of Dependence: John L. Dube of Natal'. *Journal of Southern African Studies.* 1: 2, 1975, p. 176.
[185] Butterfly. 'Ezakwa Machibise.' *Bantu World*. 7: 9, 1939, p. 2.
[186] 'Europeans Afraid of Swamping By Africans Says General Hertzog.' *Bantu World*. 4: 47, 1936, p. 1.
[187] 'Slum Conditions Unfit For Human Beings.' *Bantu World*. 1: 1, 1932, p. 1.
[188] 'Johannesburg Plans New Homes'. *Bantu World*. 1: 1, 1932, p. 1.
[189] 'Ukungabiko kwendawo ngokwaneleyo aRautini kuiyinto embi.' *Bantu World.* 1: 7, 1932, p. 2.
[190] W.A.E.G Manyoni. 'Umgungundlovu Onduku Zibomvu.' *Bantu World*. 4: 43, 1936, p. 2; See also Sheila Meintjies. 'Property Relations amongst the Edendale Kholwa 1850-1900.' *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*. 1984.

In a letter to the editor published in 1939, a correspondent named Hlubi asked:

> Baholi betu ngicela keningivezele loku ukuti kanti koze kube nini sifumane umhlaba? Ingabe kutiwani ngati tina sipakati nendawo abazitandayo ngabe kutiwa siyolahlwa pi? [Our leaders, I ask that you show me this, for how long will it be until we get the land? What will become of us since we are in places that they like, where do they say they will take us to?].[191]

Not only letters, but also numerous articles discussed the problem of unemployment and low wages. In the third issue of 1932, one of the headlines read, 'Bantu Teachers complain of Meagre Salaries and Inadequate Equipment.'[192] This was addressed repeatedly in the paper. In 1935, one contributor called Manyoni wrote:

> Kunzima kakhulu kumuntu onsundu ukuthola isinkwa ngezikhathi zamanje umsebenzi ukhona, awuko kodwa konsundu. [It is very hard for a black person to get bread in these times; jobs are there, but they are not available to black people].[193]

The problem of poor whites was also debated in several editorials: in 'Poor whites and poor blacks', in 1932 the editor emphasised that it was not the aim of the black man to 'come into the life of the white man', as he was forced to abandon his peaceful existence due to European encroachment.[194] He argued that the problem of poor whites was not more urgent than the poor black problem and it was the duty of the state to solve black unemployment as much as white unemployment.[195] The emphasis was that as much as some white people also suffered economically, the conditions of black people were supposed to be handled with as much urgency as those of white people.

This writer's stance on unemployment becomes more interesting when he suggested that the best way to solve the problem of the influx of black people into urban areas was to provide them with

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[191] Hlubi. 'Obuzayo Kubaholi.' *Bantu World.* 7: 6, 1939, p. 7.
[192] 'Bantu teachers complain of meagre salaries and inadequate equipment.' *Bantu World*. 1: 3, 1932, p. 1.
[193] W.A.E.G Manyoni. 'Amaqiniso ngaBantu Amazwi Nezenzo Zabo.' *Bantu World.* 3: 48, 1935, p. 3.
[194] Selope Thema. 'Poor Whites and Poor Blacks.' *Bantu World*. 1: 2, 1932, p. 4. See also Fourie, Johan Fourie. 'The South African poor white problem in the early 20th century: Lessons for poverty today.' Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers: 14. 2006.
[195] Thema. 'Poor Whites'.

more land.[196] While this fits well into one of the key aims of the *Bantu World*, which was to promote the idea of black people as an agricultural people, it was a critical point to make at a time when land dispossession was the main root of oppression which relegated Africans to an inferior position, both economically and socially.

In 1950, two years after the beginning of apartheid, one of the most passionate contributors known by the pen name Makhandakhanda (literally, Heads Heads), criticised the intensification of oppression and the colonial government's prevention of Africans from moving to towns:

> iAfrika yonke isebunzimeni nase zinhluphekweni ngenxa yokuvinjelwa ukuyakwamadoda ukuba ayefuna umsebenzi emadolobheni. [The whole of Africa is going through hardships and suffering because men are being hindered from going to look for jobs in the urban areas].[197]

Another topic highlighted and criticised since the first months of the existence of the paper was police brutality. In 1932, an unnamed 'special contributor' to the paper condemned the use of the phrase 'keep the nigger in his place', which was often used by law enforcers arguing that it actually meant that the black man should be treated like a slave, forever in a position of subservience.[198] In a 1935 issue, one writer, presumably a man, declared himself pleased that black police officers were being trained and expressed hopes that this would lead to better treatment for black people.[199]

However, with the political situation becoming greatly restrictive in the 1930s, the growing black middle class was becoming increasingly disillusioned with the promises of equality that they hoped would be fulfilled by the white government.[200] The passing of the Hertzog Bills of 1936 was one of the ultimate signs that there was little or no hope for African universal suffrage or equality with other races. The *Bantu World* criticised the bills in both its English and Zulu

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[196] Thema. 'Poor Whites'.
[197] Makhandakhanda. 'Koze Kubenini Sinhlakanhlaka.' *Bantu World*. 8 April 1950, p. 8.
[198] 'Keep the Nigger in His Place: Grave Charge Against S.A Police Force; Alleged Inhuman Treatment of Natives by 'Guardians of Law and Order'. *Bantu World,* 1: 5, 1932, p. 1.
[199] W.A.E.G Manyoni. 'Umgungundlovu Onduku Zibomvu Ngabantu Bawo.' *Bantu World.* 3: 46, 1935, p. 3.
[200] Bhekizizwe Peterson. 'Monarchs, Missionaries and African Intellectuals; Redemption and Revolution in South African Theatre 1900-1940.' Doctor of Philosophy Thesis. University of the Witwatersrand. 1997, p. 266.

articles.[201] According to Bhekizizwe Peterson, the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 crystallised the frustration that the African elite felt.[202]

The introduction of Apartheid in 1948 worsened the conditions of Africans as racial segregation and oppression were intensified. The *Bantu World* continuously highlighted these worsened conditions. In 1949, in a letter entitled, 'Sihlupeka Nabantwana Betu Bakiti' (We are suffering with our children), Lina Mabhena wrote in the Zulu pages about how he was suffering together with his children. His frustration with racial segregation which had been exacerbated by the introduction of Apartheid in 1948 becomes apparent in his question about when segregation was going to end:

> Mina sengidiniwe kuhlupheka kwala iminyaka emininginingi futhi ngibuze ukuti ikhalabhayi iyaphela nini? [I am tired of suffering of this place, for so many years and I want to ask when is the colour bar going to end?].[203]

In the April 8, 1950 issue, Makhandakhanda wrote about the evils of apartheid, outlining how the laws were not only bad but had dehumanised the black man:

> Lemithetho mibi impela. Abantu sebephenduke izilwane …bathuthelwa emajele ngenxa yemithetho engafanele umuntu ophefumula umoya kaNkulunkulu …imizi yamadoda iyachitheka ngenxa yamakhosikazi aphumileyo emakhaya ukuyosebenzela imizi yamadoda awo, ngob amadoda avinjelwe ukuyofuna umsebenzi emadolobheni. [These laws are very bad. People have been turned into animals…they are packed into jails because of laws that are not fit for a human being who breathes the breath of God…families are being broken because of women who have left their homes to work for their families because their husbands are hindered from looking for jobs in the towns].[204]

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[201] Peterson. 'Monarchs, Missionaries', p. 246.
[202] Peterson. 'Monarchs, Missionaries', p. 18.
[203] Lina Mabena. 'Sihlupeka Nabantwana Betu Bakiti.' *Bantu World.* 16: 12, 1949, p. 3.
[204] Makhandakhanda. 'Koze Kubenini Sinhlakanhlaka.' *Bantu World*. 16, 1950, p. 8. See also International Labour Office. Apartheid and Labour: A Critical review of the effects of Apartheid on Labour Matters in South Africa. (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1983); Saul Dubow. *Apartheid 1948-1994.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Alex la Guma (ed) *Apartheid; A Collection of Writings on South African Racism*. (New York: International Publishers, 1971); Brian Bunting. *Apartheid: The Road to Poverty*. (Cape Town: Real, 1958); Pheko Motsoko. *Apartheid the story of a dispossessed people.* (London; Marram 1984).

In such a repressive environment, the hunger for progress and to stand out of the crowd was great and there was also an increasing desire to be respectable.[205] With opportunities so limited and the dignity of the black man at stake, even in the Zulu pages there was a constant need to conscientise readers about the urgency of the issue of progress.

2.1.2 South African intellectuals and the emergence of the New African

The ideas that influenced African language writers sprung from a long history of black thought which grew into what came to be known as the 'New African movement' from the early twentieth century. They were triggered by intellectuals such as Pixley kaIsaka Seme, who as early as 1906, in an article entitled 'The Regeneration of Africa', expressed the following view:

> Oh, if you could read the letters that come to us from Zululand - you too would be convinced that the elevation of the African race is evidently a part of the new order of things that belong to this new and powerful period.[206]

He spoke of the elevation of the African and that it was time for the 'African race' to enter into a 'higher, complex existence' which was to be achieved through an 'awakened race consciousness.'[207] These calls for newness in the African way of thinking, a fresh appreciation for the self, were carried over into the next decades and further developed by intellectuals such as H.I.E. Dhlomo. These ideas show that black consciousness was taking a different turn, hence leading many writers, including those in the *Bantu World*, to talk about the need for charting a clear vision of where the black man was supposed to be headed.

Writing in the 1940s, H.I.E. Dhlomo presented interesting insights into what he defined as the 'New African' or the progressive African. He classified the African into three types: the 'tribal African', the 'neither-no African' and the 'New African'.[208] According to Dhlomo, the new African was the intellectual who had a clear sense of direction, knew what he was entitled to and

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[205] Thomas 'The Modern Girl', p. 478.
[206] Pixley kaIsaka Seme. 'The Regeneration of Africa -5 April 1906.' Speeches and Public Statements. http://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/regeneration-africa-speech-pixley-seme-5-april-1906. (Accessed 01 February 2017).
[207] Seme. 'The Regeneration of Africa'.
[208] Timothy Couzens. *The New African: A Study of the Life and Work of H.I.E. Dhlomo.* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985), p. 33.

how to obtain it.[209] The new African was also against institutions such as the Native Affairs Department (NAD) and Native Representative Councils (NRC) because they could not 'represent African thought, attitudes and progress.'[210] This was, as Tim Couzens argues, a more radical stance than that of his companions such as T.D. Mweli Skota, as many believed in the necessity to cooperate with these institutions. Dhlomo's definition of the 'neither-nor African' is remarkable: standing in the middle ground, unsure of himself and caught in-between being African and Europeanised.[211] An important point made by Dhlomo is that the neither–nor African used European measuring rods for success and believed that success was determined by the level of Europeanisation.[212] It seems as if most intellectuals during this time were in a similar ambiguous position as the neither-nor African. Couzens claims that most of these black editors were chosen by white newspaper owners because of their 'innate conservatism'.[213] Shula Marks has called it the 'ambiguities of dependence', whereby black leaders had to compromise between collaboration and resistance to white oppressors.[214] She also argues that 'psychological conversion' or colonisation took place due to mission education, and most intellectuals held contradictory views; therefore, they knew that they wanted to be in a better place, but a place still located within the very system that was oppressing them.[215]

D.D.T. Jabavu, one of the most renowned and early twentieth century South African intellectuals of his time, tried to answer the question of where the black man was going through a collection of papers entitled *The Black Problem*.[216] The foreword of the collection says a lot about Jabavu's approach. Part of it reads:

> Mr Jabavu writes with moderation. Himself a man of European culture … he states with moderation the many slights and indignities to which in this country, of which we are so proud, he and his like are subjected.[217]

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[209] Couzens. *The New African,* p. 33.
[210] Couzens. *The New African,* p. 34.
[211]Couzens, *The New African.*
[212] Couzens, *The New African.* .
[213] Couzens. 'A Short History', p. 2.
[214] Shula Marks. 'The Ambiguities of Dependence: John L. Dube of Natal'. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 1:2, 2007, p. 173.
[215] Marks. 'The Ambiguities', p. 173.
[216] Davidson. D.T. Jabavu. *The Black Problem; Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems.* (Lovedale: The Book Department, 1920).
[217] Jabavu. *The Black Problem*, p. 1.

This 'moderation' is a perfect description of the prevailing approach to the question of black advancement in the 1930s and 1940s. Another example is that of the attempts by the All-Africa Convention to oppose the Native Bills which were summarised in the *Bantu World* with the Latin term '*festina lente*' (make haste slowly) which meant progress was to be achieved through careful deliberation and cautious actions.[218]

The idea of the New African can be said to have been similar to that of the New Negro movement in 1920s USA. Although they had conflicting views, intellectuals such as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. du Bois agreed that the black 'race' was in need of being uplifted from his downtrodden state.[219] Selope Thema, writing in the 1920s, described the 'American Negro' as an 'elder brother' to whom he looked 'for guidance and inspiration.'[220] In the 1930s T.D. Skota argued that men like John Dube, Professor Jabavu, Selope Thema, Sol Plaatje and Reverend Mahabane were pivotal in leading the road to progress that they hoped was to be at the same level as that of black Americans.[221] This was echoed in the *Bantu World* where, for example, Paul B. Xiniwe argued in 1935 that African intellectuals needed to take the lead in guiding fellow Africans.[222] In one of the Zulu letters in the *Bantu World*, one writer stated:

> NamaNegroes pesheya asesimeni esingcono kunesethu, kanti ambalwa kunaba mhlophe kona, enziwa kusebenza. [Even the Negroes overseas are in a better position than us; although they are fewer than whites, it is because they work hard]. [223]

Turning to African Americans for inspiration could have been a way of resisting the idea of white people being the ultimate symbol of civilisation and progress.[224]

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[218] Selope Thema. 'Cape Native Franchise Must Be Abolished Says General Hertzog.' *Bantu World.* (4: 44, 1936), p. 1. The All African Convention was formed in 1935 in Bloemfontein by more than 400 delegates from the ANC, CPSA, various ICU's the Native Advisory Boards, African Vigilance Associations and African religious groups so as to create a unified body across the political and religious divide, representing African grievances and opposing unjust legislation.

[219] Nathan Irvin Huggins. *Harlem Renaissance*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 114.

[220] Couzens. *The New African*. p. 354.

[221] T. D Mweli Skota. *The African Yearly Register: Being an Illustrated Biographical Dictionary (Who's Who) of Black folks in Africa.* (Johannesburg: R.l. Esson, 1931), p. 55.

[222] Paul B. Xiniwe. 'Amakosi kanalo Neze Nje Icala: Akuvele Izifundiswa Zihole Amakosi Ngemfundo.' *Bantu World.* 3: 51, 1935, p. 6.

[223] 'Sebenzani Niyeke Ukulala.' *Bantu World*, 1: 3, 1932, p.3. See also 'Let Us Do What Negroes Did: Grievances Should Not Stop Bantu from Making Good.' *Bantu World.* 1: 22, 1932, p. 1.

[224] A similar argument about inspiration versus aping is made by scholars who have written about Sophiatown and the role of African American music and popular culture in inspiring black South Africans. See Rob Nixon.

According to Peter Limb, because of its fear of Marcus Garvey's 'Africa for Africans' motto, which was becoming increasingly popular among African intellectuals, the South African government of the early to mid-twentieth century, promoted the more moderate Booker T. Washington as the preferable 'Negro' idol.[225] Garvey's ideas were considered by the government as too radical with the potential to incite radical Africanism.

The adoption of and debates about his ideas were not always sparked by the government but developed through the circulation of literature, travel and direct interaction with African American intellectuals. Born a slave, Washington worked hard for his education and afterwards started the Tuskegee College, at which he promoted the spirit of progress, self-help and cooperation.[226] These ideas featured quite prominently in the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World.*

The idea of self-help had emerged in the late nineteenth century among African Americans. Frederick Douglas as well as the Rochester Convention of 1853 argued that 'economic progress based on mutual self-help and racial cooperation, was a practical program for racial elevation and the achievement of citizenship rights.'[227] The belief was that for 'Negroes' to gain respect from other 'races', they needed to help themselves and each other. The establishment of trade schools was to help them to attain practical skills. These ideas were later taken up by Booker T. Washington who strongly advocated for industrial education as well as entrepreneurship so that the black man could be able to compete with the white man.[228] In his famous Atlanta Exposition,

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Homelands, Harlem, and Hollywood: South African Culture and the World Beyond. (London: Routledge, 1994); James R. S. Harvey. *African City: Drum Magazine and the Sophiatown Renaissance.* (Brown University, 2002.); Lara Allen. Music, Film and Gangsters in the Sophia town imaginary: Featuring Dolly Rathebe. *Scrutiny 2, Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa.* 9: 1, 2008; Shane Graham. Cultural Exchange in a Black Atlantic Web: South African Literature, Langston Hughes, and Negritude. *Twentieth-Century Literature*. 60: 4, 2014.

[225] Peter Limb. *The ANC's Early Years: Nation, Class and Place in South Africa before 1940.* (Pretoria; UNISA Press, 2010). See also, Colin Grant. *Negro with a Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey and His Dream of Mother Africa.* (London: Vintage, 2009); Edmund David Cronon. *Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey and the Negro Improvement Association.* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1955).

[226] August Meier. *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915: Racial Ideologies in the Age of Booker T. Washington.* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988; Booker T. Washington. *Up From Slavery: An Autobiography*. (Cape Town: Maskew Miller, 1958); Robert J. Norrel. *Up from History: The Life of Booker T. Washington*. (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009.); Selope Thema. 'Once Slaves Now Rich and Free: Amazing Feet of Negroes to Inspire Bantu; A Booker T. Washington Needed.*' Bantu World.* 1:20, 1932, p. 1. See also. Bantu Weekly Reader. *Bantu World.* 1: 21, 1932; Selope Thema. 'Let Us Do What Negroes Did: Grievances Should Not Stop the Bantu From Making Good.' *Bantu World*. 1: 22, 1932, p. 1.

[227] Meier. *Negro Thought,* p. 86.

[228] Meier. *Negro Thought,* p. 98.

Washington encouraged 'Negroes' to stay in the South of the United States since they had a better chance of succeeding as business people there.[229]

From the 1920s onwards many intellectuals across Africa and the world came under the influence of Washington. In the early twentieth century, Ghanaian Black Nationalist leader, Casely Hayford, wrote to Washington concerning his ideas about race. Hayford's paper, The *Gold Coast Nation* (1912-1920), praised Washington as the 'Moses' who was going to lead black people out of the land of white oppression.[230] A few South African intellectuals at the time were greatly influenced by Washington. For example, John Dube wrote to Washington informing him of the opening of Ohlange Institute which was modelled after Washington's own Tuskegee Institute.[231] Between 1901 and 1909 Kirkland Soga, editor of *Izwi Labantu* (Voice of the People), also wrote to Washington about the establishment of an industrial school in South Africa similar to the one established at Tuskegee. Likewise, Sol Plaatje wrote to Washington in 1913, inquiring about the operation of a linotype machine.[232] Davidson D. T. Jabavu was also very much influenced by Tuskegee. After graduating from the University of London, the South African Minister of Native Affairs commissioned him to study the methods used at this famous College so that they would be used to educate Africans in the future.[233] In his book *The Black Problem*, his admiration for Washington was openly expressed.[234]

In his address at a Bantu studies club meeting at Wits University in May 1932, Alfred B. Xuma closed with the words of Washington, 'They are rising, all are rising, the black and the white together.'[235] Another indication of how Washington was influencing many intellectuals at the time is that Pixley kaIsaka Seme, president of the ANC between 1930 and 1936, was seen as a champion of Washington's ideas.[236] Seme condemned strikes as retrogressive and even Thema

[229] Meier, *Negro Thought*, p.100.
[230] Andrew Zimmerman. *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.), p. 185.
[231] R. Hunt Davis. 'Qude Manikiniki,' John L. Dube. Pioneer Editor of *iLanga laseNatal*' in Les Switzer. *South Africas' Alternative Press.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 83.
[232] W. Manning. 'Booker T. Washington and African Nationalism.' *Phylon*. 35: 4, 1974, p. 400.
[233] Manning. 'Booker T. Washington', p. 402.
[234] Jabavu. *The Black Problem; Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems*, p. 1
[235] Simangaliso Kumalo. 'AB. Xuma and the Politics of Racial Accommodation versus Equal Citizenship and its Implications for National Building and Power Sharing in South Africa'. University of KwaZulu-Natal. Unpublished Paper. p. 1.
[236] Limb. *The ANC's Early Years*, p. 364.

among other members of the organisation criticised Seme for 'culpable inertia'.[237] In 1932 Thema criticised the inertia of the organisation and how African leaders were disappointing fellow Africans who looked up to them for inspiration and failed to live up to the standards of ancient African chiefs and Kings.[238] This explains why even in the *Bantu World* there was a lot of celebration, especially in the early years, of old African chiefs and kings such as Moshoeshoe.[239] There was a widespread belief that they had been good at leading their people and thus they were remembered with admiration and nostalgia. In spite of these criticisms, Thema himself would suffer the same condemnation when he became more moderate later on in his career.

Although there is no evidence of direct correspondence between Washington and Thema himself, it is clear in his autobiography that Thema also admired Washington. In the *Bantu World* there are several references to Washington. An article published in August 1932 praised the progress that was being made by the 'American Negroes.' The caption of Washington's photograph in the front page reads: '[t]he real pioneer of the 'Negro's progress.'[240] The article glorified Washington for having managed to 'win the sympathy of the white man' and opening channels of cooperation which 'enabled the Negro to help himself.'[241]

It is also worth noting that while black intellectuals were coming up with these new ideas and being inspired by African Americans, a not so dissimilar kind of intellectual engagement was occurring in the Afrikaner community. In the early 1930s there was an intensification of ideological debates within the Broderbund mainly concerned with dealing with the problem of the Afrikaner being reduced 'to a slave in the land of his birth' and seeking to emancipate the Afrikaner politically and economically and resist domination by the British.[242] This was closely linked to efforts to legitimate Afrikaner indigeneity by promoting origin theories suggesting that

[237] Limb, *The ANC's Early Years*, p. 363.
[238] Limb, *The ANC's Early Years.* p. 365.
[239] Limb, *The ANC's Early Years.* p. 365.
[240] 'Once Slaves, Now Rich and Free', p. 1.
[241] Once Slaves, Now Rich and Free', p. 1
[242] The Afrikaner Broederbond was a secret society of Afrikaner nationalists formed in May 1918, initially known as Jong Suid Afrika (Young South Africa), See Dan O'Meara. *Volkskapitalisme: Class, capital and ideology in the development of Afrikaner nationalism, 1934-1948.* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983), pp. 59-116; William Henry Vatcher Jr. *White Laager: The Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism.* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1965), pp. 76-88.

they were also 'one among many ancient 'tribes.'[243] It is no surprise that one finds some Zulu writers who subscribed to the notion that Africa was for Africans commenting on these claims in the *Bantu World*. In 1940, a writer known as Makhandakhanda declared:

> Abelungu bafika kule lizwe kuna ma Africa wodwa. Kodwa bona bangena ngodlovu – kuphendulwa ngoba bethi badalwa ngophawu lobukhosi kunazo zonke izizwe zemhlabeni…umbedo lowo wokuthi afikisana nabamhlophe amaAfrika. [Whites arrived in this land when there were only Africans occupying it. They entered forcefully because they claimed that they were created to be rulers more than any other race/nation in the world…it is nonsense that Africans arrived in Africa at the same time as whites].[244]

Arguing that since Africans were the original occupants of the land, they were the rightful owners of the territory was a very bold statement for the time. It seemed like a clash of two different nationalisms claiming territorial indigeneity and ownership of the same space.

2.1.3 Selope Thema as editor

Selope Thema, who was the editor of the *Bantu World* from 1932 to 1952, was greatly influential in shaping the paper. According to Ntongela Masilela, although Selope Thema had not yet visited the United States by the end of the 1920s, he seemed to have a deeper historical intuition than some of his fellow black intellectuals [245] in recognizing the exemplary nature of 'New Negro modernity' for the creation of the 'New African modernity'.[246] Unlike his peers who sought a compromise between tradition and modernity, he 'unreservedly championed modernity.'[247]

Once again, Booker T. Washington was one of the most important influences on Thema's thought. In his autobiography, Thema openly expressed his admiration for Washington and

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[243] Tiffany Willoughby-Herard. *Waste of a White Skin: The Carnegie Corporation and the Racial Logic of White Vulnerability*. (Carlifonia: University of Carlifonia Press, 2015), p. 5.
[244] Makhandakhanda. 'Nathi Sasinazo Izihlakaniphi Abelungu Bengakafiki Lapha.' *Bantu World*. 18: 21, 1949, p.3. See also Boehmer, Elleke. 'Where we belong: South Africa as a Settler Colony and the Calibration of African and Afrikaner Indigeneity.' *Studies in Settler Colonialism*. (Palgrave: Macmillan, 2011).
[245] John Dube, Solomon T. Plaatje, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, D. D. T. Jabavu, Charlotte Manye Maxeke, A. B. Xuma and a few other intellectuals had been to the USA by then.
[246] Ntongela Masilela. 'New African.' http://pzacad.pitzer.edu/NAM/newafrre/writers/thema/themaS.htm. Accessed 30 July 2017.
[247] Masilela. 'New African Movement'.

stated that he had always aspired to be like him and that this had become 'the burning passion' of his life.[248] The very title of Thema's autobiography, 'Out of Darkness', seemed to have been inspired by Washington's own account, entitled 'Up from Slavery'. This shows the extent to which Thema identified with the experiences and ideas of Washington. However, in spite of his moderate views, Thema allowed various contributors to express themselves and in some cases even to disagree with him. This ensured that the Zulu pages became a platform on which various views were expressed.

Prior to his editorship of the *Bantu World,* Thema was a correspondent for *Umteteli waBantu* in the 1920s. Writing in both English and Pedi, and under the pseudonym 'Wayfarer', he had written widely about the progress that the 'New Negroes' were making in the United States of America. He also wrote in *iLanga laseNatal, Abantu-Batho* and wrote essays in various publications.

Thema's writings greatly inspired fellow journalists like H.I.E. Dhlomo and Jordan Ngubane, who was his assistant editor from 1941. Ngubane described Thema as a 'good MoPedi and a good African nationalist' who, unlike other intellectuals of his time, was 'the only one who was practical as well as realistic in his approach.'[249] However, Ngubane was critical of Thema, arguing that he was very difficult to understand because of his uncommunicative and shy nature,[250] and going as far as to argue that Thema's taking up of the editorship of the *Bantu World* 'was the beginning of his steep and tragic decline.'[251] Ngubane attributed this to the fact that Thema grew more conservative and moderate over time; at the same time, white ownership of the *Bantu World* increased restriction and control and might have affected his writing.

In addition, although from 1937 to 1939 Thema was actively involved in reviving the ANC, he emphasised that he did not favour 'direct action' against the oppressive system.[252] He also spoke against those who were promoting an 'anti-white policy and believed in 'race consciousness and

[248] Thema. 'Out of Darkness'.
[249] Jordan Ngubane. 'Three Famous African Journalists I Knew: Richard Victor Selope Thema.' *Inkundla yaBantu.* Second Fortnight. July 1946 in Ntongela Masilela. 'New African Movement.' Pzacad.pitzer.edu/NAM. See also Ukpanah. The Long Road, pp. 63-65.
[250] Ngubane. 'Three Famous Journalists'.
[251] Masilela. 'New African', p. 398.
[252] Ibid.

'Bantu nationalism' on a broader scale.[253] Towards the end of his political career, he became a leader of the National Minded Bloc in the ANC, which soon became unpopular and caused him to fall from grace.[254] Using the *Bantu World* as a platform to promote the 'Bloc', Thema opposed the launch of the Defiance Campaign of 1952 which resulted in him losing popularity and being seen as retrogressive.[255]

According to Peter Limb, Thema is an example of many ANC leaders who had divided loyalties.[256] He was an integral part of what had the potential to become a revolutionary organisation but was also a member of the Joint Councils, the Bantu Traders Association (BTA) among other organisations which opposed the use of mass protest against oppression.[257] Thema also believed in forming alliances with white liberals in promoting racial harmony, and was active in the conferences between Europeans and Africans, sponsored by the Dutch Reformed church and the South African Institute of Race Relations. In addition, Thema was also a leading participant in various African consultative bodies sponsored by the government in an effort to collaborate with the African elite. In a petition against the Colour Bar Bill in 1934, Thema asked for Pim's support and urged African leaders to 'please unite with those European people who wish to save us from danger.'[258] Educated at Lovedale, he believed that the economic interests of the black and white people were interconnected, that Africans must 'organise as a race and not as workers…as a nation and not as labourers' and this was going to strengthen the ANC. [259] According to Jordan Ngubane, the *Bantu World* was so much under the control of the Bantu Press that Selope Thema became 'little more than a glorified clerk.'[260] However, this criticism seems too harsh, as there is evidence that he did publish articles that stood for black progress and black labour, entrepreneurs and the African middle class which makes the 'glorified clerk' description rather reductionist. Social control in the newsroom did not have to be communicated officially because Thema, like other editors of the Bantu Press publications, conformed to the

[253] Limb. *The ANC's Early Years,* p. 398. See also Ukpanah. *The Long Road,* pp. 5-6.
[254] Thomas Karis and Gwendolene Margaret Carter. *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*. (California: Hoover Institution Press, 1977), p. 155.
[255] Thomas Karis and Gwendolene Margaret Carter. *From Protest to Challenge,* p. 157.
[256] Limb. *The ANC's Early Years, p. 398.*
[257] Limb. *The ANC's Early Years.p. 399.*
[258] Pim Letters. Joint Council 1933-1934. A881/DL 4/ 56-185. Wits Historical Papers.
[259] Limb. *The ANC's Early Years*, p. 398.
[260] Limb. *The ANC's Early Years*, p. 399.

policies of the newspaper proprietors.[261] Paver called him 'the most balanced of a whole crowd of what one might call the intelligentsia of that day.'[262] Paver also underlined that he never interfered with the writing of the news, which did give Thema some leeway regarding what he could write in the paper. However, his correspondences with Howard Pim, as discussed in chapter one, show a high level of interest in what was being written as well as concern over controlling it. However, Thema still had considerable freedom to pursue his own policies without direct interference from white management.[263]

Thus, it becomes apparent that a close look at Thema's beliefs and writings shows that many of his perspectives shaped the content of the *Bantu World*. Although the contributors were aware of the contentious issues of the day, Thema's influence can be seen in the themes that dominated the paper. Although contributors submitted ideas which were sometimes not in agreement with Thema, he clearly determined the issues that were to be discussed: Washington's themes of self-help, racial cooperation, hard work and progress were the main focus of the discussions in the paper.

There was one particular Zulu letter which questioned Thema's editorship of the *Bantu World*. Adam J.N. Mbhuyisa's letter was published in the April 13, 1935 issue. Airing his views about the question of 'Okobuyisa I Afrika' (What will return Africa), he said:

> Mngani Othandekayo. Ngikulekela indawo epepeni lako noma wena ungumuntu ojabisayo ngoba ngesinye isikati ungayifaki indaba yomuntu. Ipepa lako lingumlomo wetu esikala ngawo noma sijabile noma simemezela izinto. [My beloved friend. I ask for a place in your paper although you are a person who disappoints because sometimes you don't present a black person's story as it is. Your paper is our mouthpiece that we use to air our concerns, when we want to air our grievances or when we want to make announcements].[264]

The writer accused Thema of not adequately representing Africans. Such an accusation might have cast a shadow of doubt on one's perception of Thema and the extent to which he used his position to misrepresent the African voice. However, this also suggests that, despite overall

[261] Switzer, 'The *Bantu World*', p. 353.
[262] Switzer, 'The *Bantu World*'.
[263] Switzer, 'The *Bantu World*'.
[264] Mbhuyisa. 'Okobuyisa iAfrika', p. 2.

control and censorship, there was a certain degree of freedom of expression in the paper, which allowed some contributors to feel quite unrestricted when it came to criticising the editor. They felt that Thema was responsible for representing them and needed to be held to account when they felt he was not doing so. Most importantly, some of their concerns did find space in the newspaper.

Though Thema seemed to have been such a moderate leader, while he was sub-editor of *Abantu-Batho* (1920-1931) he blatantly rejected the government approach, arguing for African self-determination. In *Abantu-Batho* he wrote, 'we certainly refuse, and that most emphatically, to be 'within the ambit of oppression and exploitation.'[265] This was in response to the government advising the ANC in the 1940s that African interest could be separated from the 'ambit of the government.' This shows that despite his moderate stance he was always comfortable with the status quo or with the governmental views.

In a recent study of Selope Thema, Sifiso Ndlovu analyses Thema's portrayal of King Dingane in his writings from 1916 to the late1940s.[266] He shows how as a young radical writer, Thema was one of the first in his generation to portray King Dingane in a positive light. This was an attempt to challenge what he believed were the prejudiced histories of African people.[267] To affirm this, in an editorial which appeared in the *Bantu World* in 1939, Thema showed his admiration for the chiefs and Kings. Entitled, 'UShaka UDingane NabeLungu; Amabhunu' (Shaka Dingane and the whites; the Boers), he bemoaned how on the day of the commemoration of Piet Retief, who was killed by Dingane, 'igama lake [uDingane] lithelwa udaka'[268] (Dingane's name is smeared with mud). This meant that white people were dishonouring Dingane's name. He then called on the leaders to ensure that Dingane was remembered on the seventeenth of February.[269] This editorial presents a very polemic attack on white nationalism as Thema proposed that the event be remembered in a totally different way, to celebrate rather than criticise Dingane for the massacre. As highlighted earlier, references to King Dingane and other African

[265] Limb. *The ANC's Early Years: Nation*, p. 290.
[266] Sifiso Mxolisi Ndlovu. *African Perspectives of King Dingane kaSenzangakhona the Second Monarch of the Zulu Kingdom.* African Histories and Modernities Series. (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2017), pp. 167-168.
[267] Ndlovu. *African Perspectives*.
[268] Selope Thema. 'UShaka, UDingane NabeLungu; AmaBhunu: Nitini Ngomhla we 17 February, 1837).' *Bantu World*. 6: 38, 1939, 7. See also, Jackie Grobler. 'The Retief Massacre of 6 February 1838 revisited.' *Historia*. 56: 2, 2011, pp. 113–132.; Jay Naidoo. 'Was the Retief-Dingane Treaty a Fake?' *History in Africa*. 12, 1985, pp. 187-210.
[269] Thema. 'UShaka, UDingane NabeLungu'.

chiefs and Kings like Shaka and Moshoeshoe were a recurring theme in the *Bantu World*, confirming that Thema's ideas were indeed influential.[270] Thema thus saw heritage as an important aspect which could be used to define African people and help them redeem their pride and dignity. Such passionate calls for heritage to be valued could be said to be contradicting the belief in the white civilising mission that Thema at times expressed. In his editorial, he went on to criticise the labelling of black people as 'future Dingaanas.'[271] He also stated that the 'civilised' races who should 'know better' than the 'uncivilised Zulu', were 'devoid of moral consideration for the weak and the small.'[272] Such an effort to redeem the dignity of black leaders and to suggest that the same day used by white people to celebrate their own victories be rather used to celebrate black victories was a clear push towards black consciousness and nationalism. The mention of historical events proves to be an aspect that was used to encourage race pride and an understanding of how the black 'race' needed to continue to fight repression, just like the forefathers did.[273] However, the fight was not to be militant: in line with Washington's views, it was to be rooted in racial cooperation, self-help and hard work.

2.1.4 The Zulu-language writers on the 'civilising mission'

The process of applying Washington's ideas to the *Bantu World* cannot be understood without an understanding of how the contributors viewed the question of the white man's 'civilising mission'.[274] The notion of the civilising mission greatly influenced ideas of race consciousness among black intellectuals of the twentieth century. In his unpublished biography, Selope Thema wrote:

> I am going to tell you how Lovedale lifted the veil of darkness from my eyes and made me see the glory of God's creation… how it made me realise that the African race was created

[270] Selope Thema. 'Wanted: A leader like Moshesh: Bantu May Look to Their Past for Inspiration.' *Bantu World*. 1: 16, 1932, p. 1. See also *iLanga laseNatal*. 22 and 29 December 1916.
[271] Thema. 'Wanted: A leader like Moshesh'.
[272] Thema. 'Wanted: A leader like Moshesh'.
[273] Khunyeli. 'The Potrayal of History by African Writers', p. 12.
[274] The civilising mission refers to the claim by colonial powers that colonialism was partly inspired by the humanitarian motive of spreading civilisation to conquered territories. In Africa they claimed to have been mandated by their own conscience and by God to bring Africans from darkness into the light of western civilisation. This was largely based on the belief that the white race was superior to the black and other races. See Sebe Berny. *Heroic Imperialists in Africa: The Promotion of British and French Colonial Heroes, 1870-1939.* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

> after the image of God to occupy a nobler place than that of servitude in the affairs of mankind.[275]

While he was acknowledging that mission education had enlightened him, he also noted that his eyes had been opened to the right of Africans to be uplifted from an inferior position inspite of their adoption of Western religion. This was the case with many African intellectuals who appreciated the positives of colonialism but condemned the racial oppression that came with it.

In his discussion on two Tanzanian newspapers, *Tanganyika Opinion* (1923-1955) and *Tanganyika Herald* (1929-1962) which were both Indian-owned newspapers, James Brennan shows how the press expressed conflicting ideas.[276] While some writers expressed nationalist sentiments, there was a general desire for self-improvement through the 'civilisation that came with colonial rule.'[277] In the late 1920s Kenya, both African and Indian newspapers became a source of great concern to the colonial authorities. The first African vernacular newspaper in Kenya, *Muigwithania*, edited by Jomo Kenyatta, was greatly discouraged by the Governor because of its seditious messages.[278] It was an outlet for the Kikuyu Central Association, one of the first revolutionary groups, conflicting with the idea of the superiority of the white man.[279]

When he became president of the ANC in 1940, A.B Xuma pushed for Africans to be given full citizenship, to be accommodated in the system and to be treated as equal to whites.[280] However, his aim was not to radically overthrow white rule. Despite the existence of a very different type of colonial rule, in 1930s and 1940s Tanganyika (a British Mandate) African intellectuals found themselves in a somehow similar position and were also in the process of articulating African racial nationalism. Here the African nation was to be distinct from the European and Asian nations as African intellectuals had already crafted their own localised notion of civilisation known as 'ustaarabu' which did not fully match white civilisation.[281]

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[275] Thema. 'Out of Darkness' See also Harlan, Louis R. 'Booker T. Washington and the White Man's Burden.' *The American Historical Review.* 71: 2, 1966.
[276] James R. Brennan. 'Politics and Business in the Indian Newspapers of Colonial Tanganyika', *Africa.* 81: 1, 2011, p. 42.
[277] Brennan, 'Politics and Business', p. 42.
[278] Bodil Folke Frederiksen, 'Print, Newspapers and Audiences in Colonial Kenya: African and Indian Improvement, Protest and Connections.' *Africa.* 18: 1, 2011, p. 155.
[279] Frederiksen, 'Print, Newspapers and Audiences'.
[280] Simangaliso Kumalo. 'AB. Xuma and the Politics of Racial Accommodation', p. 1.
[281] Brennan, 'Politics and Business'. See also Suriano, 'Letters to the editor'.

In South Africa, the nascent mission educated middle class which was at the forefront of discussions around black advancement and nationalism was to a greater extent into the 1930s against race consciousness as it was seen as in contradiction to Christianity.[282] In relation to this, Davidson D.T. Jabavu commented on the idea of segregation and civilisation and the introduction of the Native Bills of 1935 in South Africa by saying,

> Yes we all practice social separateness but we blacks do not desire to be cut off from developing in such a way that we may not inherit the blessings of modern comforts...We have already tasted of the advantages of these things and can never be persuaded to go back to the darkness from which we have been dragged out by the white man.[283]

He seemed to have been less interested in the segregation that resulted from the Bills than in the 'comforts' that black people could have been deprived of because of the Bills. The *Bantu World* reported on Jabavu's call for Africans to come together in a 'united front' against the Native Bills, although this call was not really to revoke the Bills, but to urge the government to consider black people's concerns.[284]

While some African leaders like Jabavu were concerned about African rights and their accommodation within the segregatory system, others, such as John Dube through the 'Mayibuye iAfrika' early cry of the African National Congress, leaned a bit more towards the Africanist and radical side.[285] From the early twentieth century, even before the formation of the ANC, there were several calls for Africans to rise. According to Andre Odendaal, the term Vukani Bantu! (Rise up you people) was used by the early educated African elite to make people more politically aware.[286] However, this awareness was going to lead many intellectuals to an evolutionary rather than revolutionary change as a result of their moderate stance.[287] This call can also be found in the Zulu articles of the *Bantu World*, sometimes expressed openly, other

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[282] Ukpanah. *The Long Road to Freedom*, p. 4.
[283] G. Heaton Nicholls. *The Native Bills and Native Views on the Native Bills by D.D.T Jabavu and others.* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1995), p. 51.
[284] Selope Thema. 'The Native Bills Should be Translated; Professor Jabavus' Message to All African Leaders.' *Bantu World.* 4: 21, 1935, p. 1.
[285] Couzens. 'A Short History of *The World*', p. 10.
[286] Odendaal. *VUKANI BANTU*, p. 1.
[287] Tim Couzens. *The New African: A Study of the Life and Work of H.I.E. Dlomo.* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985), p. 31.

times through a suggestion that people should awaken. There was always a relationship between the coming of this freedom and the need to promote a different way of thinking for Africans.

The first article to discuss this need for an awakening in line with a recognition of the unique needs of Africans is found in an October 1932 issue of the *Bantu World* entitled 'Nisalele Na?' (Are you still asleep?).[288] The writer stated:

> Vukani bakiti izwe limi ngoti…Siyahlala sithi kusizani ngoba simnyama? Akupikeki loko kodwa kona lapo uTixo kasenzanga ngobulima sibe nje. Wabona ukuba kufanele sidlule kulolu bhabhadiso lokuhlupheka ukuze silibone iqiniso lake lothando lwakhe. [Awake! Oh my people, things are not well in this country. Should we sit and say of what benefit is it because we are black? God was not foolish in making us. He saw it fit for us to go through this baptism of suffering so that we can see his truth and his love].[289]

The contributor went on to argue that white people were actually fearful of black people because they outnumbered them and were getting more educated and were increasingly acquiring wealth.[290] This was an interesting argument to make as, unlike other articles which focused on criticising the weaknesses of African people, this one elevated their strengths and suggested that they were feared by the whites. This shows that the paper did at times offer lessons in black consciousness that readers could learn from the Zulu pages. The Zulu language gave the readers an opportunity to openly discuss the need to realise that the whites were not to be feared or followed and that their superiority and power over the Africans needed to be questioned.

The author of an article entitled 'Siqonde Ngapi Tina Ndhlu Emnyama?' (Where are we headed us the black house/nation?), stated that it was of no use to blame anyone for the position that black people found themselves in. In his words:

> Koze kube nini ukalela uSaul na? Nati kunjalo koze kube nini sikala ngosekwadhlula, siyeke ukuqondisa esinako. Vukani bantu nisebenzele ukuzikipa kulolu daka olungaka.' [Until when will you mourn for Saul? It is the same with us, until when will we mourn for

[288] 'Nisalele Na.? *Bantu World*. 1: 27, 1932, p. 5.
[289] 'Nisalele Na.?
[290] Ibid.

what has passed, instead of fixing what we have? Arise you people and work so as to redeem yourselves from this great mess].[291]

There was no clear sense of what this particular writer meant by *udaka* (literally, mud), or the mess that the black person was in but it was in my view referring to the struggles that Africans were facing. The biblical allusion of mourning for Saul had the effect of showing just how stagnant the way of thinking of Africans had become and perhaps the use of a highly solemn language was deemed more effective in awakening Africans from their self-pity.

In 1933 Edgar Brookes, a regular contributor to the English section of the *Bantu World,* argued that extreme nationalism was not good as the interests of black and white people were intertwined.[292] Another contributor went on to criticise the 'Africa for Africans' idea and non-cooperation.[293] However, given the constant references to the black 'nation' or 'house' in the Zulu pages, and the need for black people to unite, there were obviously conflicting messages being sent by the paper. It emerges quite clearly from the Zulu pages that the interests of the black and white people were not intertwined as Edgar Brookes suggested.

This was also well captured in Titus Mabaso's 1935 letter:

Niti ingabuya iAfrika uma izingqondo zenu zizimfisha kangaka? Vukani bantu nizisize. No National Congress lowo wenu bobaba muvuseni ngobusha nikete abantwabenu [Do you say Africa will come back when your minds are this limited? Rise up you people and help yourselves. Revive your National Congress and choose a better future for your children].[294]

The rhetorical question in the first sentence was meant to provoke the reader into challenging his own way of thinking, as well as re-evaluating and changing it. However, the answer to where this revival was supposed to take the black person was not clearly provided. The reader was continuously invited to think differently, and this process of changing the mind-set might have prompted black intellectuals to develop a vision of where exactly they wanted to find

[291] 'Siqonde Ngapi Tina Ndhlu Emnyama.' See also 1Samuel 16:1. King James Bible on the story of Saul.
[292] Professor Edgar Brookes. 'Extreme Nationalism is a Curse.' *Bantu World.* 1: 40, 1933, p. 1.
[293] Professor Edgar Brookes. 'There Must Be Unity in Diversity.' *Bantu World.* 1: 40, 1933, p. 1.
[294] Titus Mabaso. 'Uqinisile Umatibela Ngodaba Lwezinkezo Alutintayo Lapa.' *Bantu World.* 3: 46, 1935, p. 3.

themselves. Such comments also revealed how the paper was not as non-partisan as its owners had intended it to be.

In 1935, one of the *Bantu World* Zulu contributors, Adam J.N. Mbhuyisa, brought a whole different understanding to the phrase 'Mayibuye iAfrika' (Let Africa Return). He argued that Africa would be brought back by the practice of love, respect for parents and unity. The coming back of Africa was not a return to a time when black people ruled in Africa, but a return to the values that held African society together.[295] Therefore, the return and the revival of Africa did not always bear political connotations. Another writer stated:

> Sesikatele ngo Siyaziwa thina, Kanye no Ayibuye iAfrika! Kusasa uhlangana nabo sebedakiwe zikokiaan abasakwazi nokuzisho ukuba bangobani…Nansi into ezovusa IAfrika imisebenzi.' [We are tired of 'We are known' and Let Africa return! The next day you meet them drunk after drinking skokiaan and they don't even know their names, here is what will revive Africa: work].[296]

The regeneration of the African that Seme had spoken about in 1906, regardless of the fact that his name is not mentioned in these letters, clearly remained one of the subjects of discussion in the Zulu pages. What seems to stand out is that the Zulu writers perceived the revival of Africa as something that should begin with a revival of the individual, a change in his way of thinking and behaviour. The revival of Africa was a return or transition to a deeper way of thinking which to an extent was also evidence of individualism, itself a by-product of the colonial mentality.

Notably, not all the Zulu letters in the *Bantu World* universally embraced the so-called 'civilising mission'. One finds writers who did claim complete freedom and their rights in totality and were not only interested in being accommodated. Dan B. Mahalabe, responding to a letter by D. Sibanyoni in 1940, where the latter suggested that people ask the government for more representation of black people in parliament - argued that, 'kodwa siwafuna onke amalungelo'

[295] Adam J.N. Mbhuyisa. 'Okobuyisa IAfrika.' *Bantu World.* 4: 1, 1935, p. 2.
[296] 'Sekelani Abantu Bakiti Abasenzela Izinto Ezinhle.' *Bantu World.* 4; 1, 1935, p. 3.

(but we want all the rights).[297] He expressed an understanding that Africans were not inferior to Europeans and thus deserved a full set of socio-political rights, and these were unconditional.

Some writers in the paper criticised the idea of the 'civilising mission' of the white man arguing that Africans were now capable of worshipping on their own and being led by their own African preachers.[298] Titus Mabaso wrote in 1942 saying, 'nathi sesisebangeni lokuzisontela sodwa, siholwe ngabomdabu.' (We are now also at a stage where we can worship on our own and be led by black people).[299] Some other writers felt that it was time to be weaned from white leadership and guidance and take a more Africa-centred stance. In view of this, the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World* did to an extent offer a reflection of an African man who knew who he was and where he wanted to go despite the disagreements on how to get there. The continuous references to white people were partly due to the fact that they were to an extent looked up to. However, it was not the impossible pursuit of whiteness that interested the black writers, but rather the idea that they could improve themselves by following the example of the whites. They could be even better than the white oppressors who had, according to Selope Thema, lost their sense of reason by being blind to the need for equality with blacks.[300]

There was a political awakening in the mid-1940s with the formation of the ANC Youth League. The Youth League articulated and pushed for a more overtly radical nationalist approach to resistance which transformed the ANC, causing it to depart more from its traditional conciliatory approach.[301] The discussions in the Zulu pages show a growing frustration with the condition of Africans which was to eventually manifest itself in more radical approaches to upliftment, progress and resistance being adopted.

Conclusion

[297] Dan B. Mahalabe. 'Uyindoda Ngegama Kawaziwa Enkundleni.' *Bantu World*. 7: 58, 1940, p. 7. See also D. Sibanyoni. 'Inkulumo KaMnumzana S.M Nkonde.' *Bantu World*. 7: 58, 1940, p. 7.
[298] Titus Mabaso. 'Osekela UMkabise.' *Bantu World*. 10: 49, 1942, p. 3.
[299] Mabaso. 'Osekela UMkabise'.
[300] 'Keep the Nigger in his place: Grave charge against S.A police force; Alleged Inhuman Treatment of Natives by 'Guardians of Law and Order'. *Bantu World*. 1: 5, 1932, p. 1.
[301] Robert Edgar. 'Changing the old Guard: A.P Mda and the ANC Youth League 1944-1949.' in Saul Dubow. *South Africas' 1940s, World of Possibilities*. (Cape Town: Double Storey, 2005), p. 149. See also Ukpanah. *The Long Road*, pp. 20-21.

This chapter has discussed the ideological foundations of the issues that contributors raised in the *Bantu World*. The difficult conditions that Africans found themselves in warranted efforts to come up with solutions that would help them improve their living conditions. Many intellectuals, in seeking ways to uplift themselves as individuals and as communities, engaged with the ideals of African American philosophers such as Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey. However, due to the radical nature of Du Bois and Garvey, mission educated black South African intellectuals were encouraged – and partly decided - to engage more with the moderate Washington. Favouring Washington might have been of their own accord as they already harboured moderate ideas which overlapped with those of Washington. Many articles in the *Bantu World* exhibited the Washingtonian approach even if not all contributors subscribed to it.

This chapter has also addressed how writers discussed the 'civilising mission' of the white man in relation to their pursuit of progress. It is evident that there were two main factions, those who believed in the importance of the white contribution to their success, and those who refused the idea. This became a thread which ran through many discussions regarding the pursuit of progress and was rooted in the fact that for the New African model to be achieved, black people needed to figure out if the 'civilising mission' was relevant or true to them. Race pride, socio-economic upliftment, nationalism and success in general were rooted in efforts to wean themselves from dependency on the white model. This could partly have been the reason why they found inspiration from African Americans who they viewed as befitting role models since they had suffered similar conditions to black South Africans. However, most mission-educated black intellectuals like Thema, showed some level of ambivalence as they promoted pride in African identity yet at the same time constantly comparing themselves with the white model whom they seemed to acknowledge as superior.

Selope Thema's editorship is also an important factor to consider as he had considerable influence on the content of the paper. I have highlighted that Thema was quite moderate as both editor and political thinker, though he had been more radical in his youth. Lastly, I have argued that his editorship of the *Bantu World* did not mark a 'tragic and steep decline' of the newspaper, as Jordan Ngubane wrote. Allowing various contributors to express their views, which sometimes contradicted his own, made the *Bantu World* a valuable platform for engagement.

The next chapter is a discussion of some of the main themes found in the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World*. I present the debates regarding progress and the role that various contributors believed Europeans needed to play in its achievement. I also show how disunity was seen as a major hindrance when it came to the achievement of success by Africans and there was an emphasis of the importance of unity. This unity was further encouraged when the contributors discussed the 'Abyssinian crisis', with some displaying a level of pan-African solidarity while others saw it as an opportunity to emphasise the message of unity within South Africa.

3 CHAPTER THREE

3.1 The Bantu Weekly Reader, perceptions about Europeans in relation to progress and discussions about lack of unity and the 'Abyssinian Crisis'

Introduction

Umqondo womuntu wahlukile kakulu kowomlungu; kulapo nje kuvela kona ukuti ibanga elahlukanise umuntu lomlungu lingango Tukela ubude balo. [The mind of an African is very different from that of a European; there is a disparity in the intellectual levels of these two races which is as wide as the Tugela River].[302]

This statement is found in a 1939 editorial whereby Selope Thema compared and contrasted the African mind and intellectual abilities to the European ones. Here, Thema seemed to elevate Europeans to a position of superiority which would be hard for Africans to match. It is also a provocative statement which might have been intended to prompt the reader to question his/her own thought process and also wonder how and why Africans and people of European descent had come to be at such different intellectual levels. This statement is used to introduce this chapter as this kind of idea featured prominently in the Zulu-language articles and letters: the contributors sought to unpack the necessary journey to African progress and addressed how white people were to participate in its realisation. This chapter first discusses the Bantu Weekly Reader as an apt representation of the racial attitudes that informed the debates about progress and the overall role of Europeans in this achievement. As has been alluded to in chapters one and two, this progress was largely defined according to Christian, middle class and western European standards. I will then discuss the different and sometimes contradictory ways in which the Zulu writers perceived white people and how this was a reflection of their consciousness and aspirations in the 1930s and 1940s. These ideas can be linked to the black thought propounded by intellectuals such as Booker T. Washington. Notably, similar views would be promoted by Steve Biko in the 1970s. This chapter seeks to show how an analysis of the discussions around these themes reveals that the question of progress was almost always tied to the role of Europeans in the lives of the black populace. Simultaneously there were constant attempts to

[302] 'Umqondo Womuntu.' *Bantu World.* 6: 38, 1939, p. 6.

bring the achievements of black people to the fore as proof that they were just as capable as white people of succeeding. Ultimately, although writers had differing perspectives with regards to these issues, the constant question of how progress was to be achieved remained an issue of contention among the writers into the early 1950s.

Debates around the problem of disunity will also be discussed in this chapter. Although the *Bantu World* aimed at promoting racial cooperation, Thema and some less famous contributors clearly challenged this, by highlighting that black people were in a far worse position than other races and advising them to proceed with caution when it came to racial cooperation. I will conclude by discussing the 'Abyssinian crisis' which was used by some Zulu language contributors to promote unity among Africans and cement the idea of an emerging African nationalism rooted in solidarity with other African nations whose sovereignty was being threatened. I also discuss how Thema, together with other contributors, felt that the war in Ethiopia needed to be used as motivation for black South Africans to fight their own struggle. However, constant emphasis was put on the need for this struggle to not be fought in the militant manner used by the Ethiopians but primarily through unity and self-help.

3.1.2 The Bantu Weekly Reader

The Bantu Weekly Reader was a supplement of the *Bantu World* which started appearing in the April 1932 issue and only for seven months. Although this was mainly written in English, and therefore it is beyond the scope of this dissertation, an examination of the Bantu Weekly Reader helps to add to our understanding of the predominant views expressed in the Zulu articles, especially as far as the relationship between Europeans and progress is concerned.[303] In the first issue, the anonymous author of the editorial stated that the main aim of the supplement was to teach 'those who cannot read and write well in order to make them useful citizens.'[304] This implied that those who were educated were encouraged to read to those who were illiterate and use the supplement to teach them to read and write. However, the text used in the supplement was minimal, with short phrases used to deliver information in a style similar to that of advertisements. Most of the issues of the supplement contained words of admonition, advice on

[303] I refer to it as The Bantu Weekly Reader and at times shorten it as The Weekly Reader, supplement or the Reader.
[304] Bantu Weekly Reader. *Bantu World*. 1: 1, 1932, p. 7.

good manners, health and publicising the efforts that the government was making to improve the lives of the black populace.

From the onset, the supplement was said to be written by a 'white friend' or a certain white man who was more knowledgeable than the average black reader. The implication of describing the advisor as white is that this would give the supplement more legitimacy and value, and the paper was therefore more likely to be heeded by its readers. Although the reason for the use of the white voice was not given, this suggests that the editors or the owners of the paper thought that a 'white' voice would be more audible and authoritative. In the third issue of the supplement, the reader was informed that the government had asked 'certain white people' to inquire about the living conditions of the 'Bantu people' and gather evidence from both blacks and whites across the country.[305] The inquirers were reported to have found that the living conditions of black people were bad and needed to be addressed. In addition, in the fourth issue, the 'white friend' was described as a 'famous white man' who had a 'keen interest in the welfare of the 'Bantu people'.[306] The use of the term 'famous white man' seems to have been a further attempt to legitimise the voice behind the Weekly Reader and to give an impression that the government was concerned about the conditions of Africans. The constant mention of the skin colour and the concern that white people had for the 'Bantu' might have also been a promotion of racial harmony and cooperation, creating a sense of unified interests between Africans and Europeans. The supplement also used the omnipresent figure of the white person to symbolise paternalistic authority and hope for progress, and therefore assure the reader that as long as white people were looking into the conditions of black people, their future was secure.[307]

Good manners as taught by the wise 'white friend' were often promoted through the Weekly Reader. The first issue of the supplement criticised the making of noise in the streets caused by 'shouting, talking loud and laughing.'[308] It went on to advise that 'people should not crowd the pavements or walk about in numbers.' In a September 1932 issue, the 'Bantu' were advised to make less noise in the streets and to use the 'Bantu Sports Grounds' instead for socialising.[309]

[305] *Bantu World*. 1: 8, 1932, p. 5
[306] *Bantu World*. 1: 9, 1932, p. 5.
[307] For more on the ideology behind white identity and constructed superiority see Scott. M. Schonfeldt-Aultman. 'Whiteness Attacked, Whiteness Defended'; bell Hooks. *Black Looks: Race and Representation*.
[308] Bantu Weekly Reader. *Bantu World*. 1: 6, 1932, p. 5.
[309] Bantu Weekly Reader, p. 5.

This advice reflects how the presence of black people in the urban space was increasingly being frowned upon by the government from the 1930s. Their behaviour was portrayed as 'indecent' and in order to fit into the urban space black people needed to make adjustments in line with Victorian ideas of decency and respectable behaviour. The tendency to give black readers advice on good manners is also present in other Bantu Press papers. In *Umteteli waBantu*, one of the advices given to the readers as early as 1920 was, 'Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Therefore dear reader, the bath.'[310] This is another example of condescending guidance. Giving the impression that Africans were not aware of the importance of bathing, the implication was that they needed to be taught the basics of civilisation.[311] In line with this, it is interesting to note that, as one *Bantu World* writer reported in 1932, certainly with some degree of admiration, Booker T. Washington was travelling in various black neighbourhoods in the USA, teaching people about sanitation, cleanliness, health, thrift and other issues.[312] The editor might have therefore been inspired by Washington to promote such teachings through the Reader.

Similarly, Zulu language writers also discussed good habits which some believed were to be learnt from Europeans. Other contributors believed that Africans needed to practice manners which they felt comfortable with. Manyoni, a frequent contributor, argued in 1935:

> Kuyatokozisa ukuba lomkuba wokwesaba ukubamba itambo lenkukhu ngesandla etafuleni usuphela, nokushiya ukudla umuntu engakeneliswa ngenxa yokungazi. [It makes me happy that this habit of being afraid to hold a chicken bone by the hands, as well as leaving food when a person is not full – [both] due to ignorance - is no longer being practiced by many].[313]

By encouraging Africans not to be shy to use their hands at the table, this contributor gave advice which was remarkably contrary to the table manners dictated by Victorian culture.

The Bantu Weekly Reader also commented on health issues through the 'well known white man' who acknowledged that Europeans had done bad things to Africans, but emphasised that the bad

[310] *Umteteli waBantu*. 1: 1, 1920, p. 5.
[311] For a discussion on the issue of modernity and civilisation, manners, respectability and the colonial state, see La Hausse de Lalouviere, *Restless Identities*; John. L. and Jean Comaroff. *Of Revelation and Revolution*; Barber. *The Anthropology of Texts*; Suriano. 'Letters to the Editor'.
[312] 'Having a unique Opportunity: Bantu Teachers Urged to Serve the Community.' *Bantu World.* 1: 15, 1932, p. 1.
[313] W.A.E.G. Manyoni. 'Amaqiniso ngaBantu Amazwi Nezenzo Zabo.' *Bantu World*. 3: 48, 1935, p. 3.

habits of the black man in destroying his own health far exceeded the cruelty of the white man.[314] Therefore, in spite of the injustices suffered by the blacks, there was a constant reminder that they too had played a huge part in finding themselves in a disadvantaged position. The Reader also portrayed the European as a benevolent benefactor to the African and as a great source of support. For example, the second issue carried a story about the hunger that people in Zululand were facing and highlighted that 'white people are helping them, giving them many many bags of corn.'[315] This was in reference to what became known as 'The Great Drought' which struck wide areas of Natal and Zululand in the 1931, 1932 and 1933 season. Exacerbated by the Great Depression, it led to an increase in food prices, massive deaths of livestock and left the region on the verge of famine.[316] In November 1931, the authorities had to donate food supplies and subsidise food costs so as to try and contain the disaster using volunteers and missionaries to distribute them.[317] The very fact that the benefactors are identified as white people and nothing else is said about them was meant to reinforce the idea that the white man was the saviour of the black man.

It is worth noting that in the eleventh issue, the 'white friend' was said to have written a letter asking the government to do away with pass laws in order to help the black people, therefore criticising this government policy.[318] This served to show the genuine European concern for the black populace. The letter was described as a 'long letter' to 'urge' the government to change its policies, a message which was more of an appeal or a friendly request rather than a demand. This resonates with the black political approach of appeal rather than protest which prevailed in the 1930s.

In most instances the Weekly Reader seemed to glorify the Europeans, and this constant praise was often juxtaposed with mockery of urban Africans, seen as incapable of adapting to the urban environment and therefore justifying the state's belief that they belonged in the rural areas. This view is suggested by the amusing story of a black man who could not read the traffic lights on the road. It concluded by informing readers that a traffic light was a sign used to control traffic

[314] *Bantu World*. 1: 7, 1932, p. 5.
[315] Weekly Reader. 1: 2, 1932, p. 5.
[316] J. B. Brain. 'But only we Black Men Die: The 1929-1933 Malaria Epidemics in Natal and Zululand.' *Contree* 27, 1990, p. 1.
[317] Brain, 'But only we Black Men Die'.
[318] Weekly Reader. 1: 11, 1932, p. 5.

on the road.[319] It is obviously very unlikely that the educated and self-perceived modern black readers did not know what a traffic light was. Therefore, this may have been a humorous way of mocking the rural black man, suggesting that the latter was so unfamiliar with the urban environment that he needed to be taught such things. On the other hand, this story may be read as an exaggeration, a way of ridiculing the extent to which the rural African was deemed ignorant by both the government and African urbanites who were the majority of newspaper readers.

In the sixteenth issue of the Weekly Reader, Africans were also advised to be kinder to animals because they 'also have feelings'.[320] The writer stated that he was not suggesting that black people were crueller to animals than white people, but they just needed to be gentler, even though they themselves had suffered from the cruelty of their white masters.[321] This seemed belittling, as the comparison with animals suggests the lowly state the black person was in. However, rather than being about animals, the story might be construed as a metaphor of the cruelties that black people, Africans and African Americans alike, had suffered throughout their history. The July 1932 issue also mentioned Sol Plaatje's death, praising him as having set a good example by advising his fellows to stop drinking. This represents in my view a conscious editorial effort to focus less on the political aspects of his life and give attention to his social contribution.[322]

The last issue of the Weekly Reader appeared in the first issue of October 1932.[323] As stated earlier, this supplement only lasted seven months and stopped being published for unclear reasons. Despite its short life, this publication serves as a very interesting point of reference with regards to discussions around racial relations and the dominant perceptions that the newspaper's owners and African writers had about Europeans. Though it is not clear who wrote the articles, the Reader was used as a platform to discuss social issues in a slightly less formal way than the main paper.

[319] Weekly Reader. 1: 3, 1932, p. 5.
[320] Weekly Reader. 1: 16, 1932, p. 5.
[321] Weekly Reader. 1: 16, 1932, p. 5.
[322] Weekly Reader. 1: 16, 1932, p. 5.
[323] Weekly Reader. 1: 26, 1932, p. 5.

3.1.3 Zulu language writers discussing the African mind and progress

While the Weekly Reader often implied that Europeans knew better or were superior to Africans, and in line with this view some writers argued that the European needed to constantly guide the African, many Zulu language writers whose voices found space in the *Bantu World* did not subscribe to this argument. Discussions about the mind or the intellectual abilities of the African were often accompanied by the importance of introspection and race consciousness, and by comparisons with European perceptions. These debates were closely linked to the question of the 'civilising mission'.

Marcus Garvey, one the most influential leaders in African American thought of the 1920s and 1930s, acknowledged that one of the problems with black people which determined the extent to which they could achieve progress was their perception of white people as superior.[324] In the *Bantu World*, the use of the white man or the white mind as a point of reference in the discussions of the black man resonated with Garvey's concerns. This is not surprising, as Garvey's works circulated horizontally in British-speaking African colonies at that time. In South African history, the Black Consciousness movement of the 1970s represents the crystallisation of all these ideas, yet there has been little recognition of the existence of a black consciousness before the rise of Steve Biko. In defining black consciousness in 1977 Biko pointed out that for a long time, black people had only been conscious of two classes: the white conquerors and the black conquered.[325] His famous quote, 'The most potent weapon in the hand of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed' sought to awaken black people to the need to change their mind sets. In asserting this, he argued that being black had nothing to do with the colour of one's skin but had more to do with his 'mental attitude.'[326] Biko's movement was a formalised push for blacks to value themselves and for white superiority to be challenged by encouraging black people to change their thinking and question the status quo. Interestingly, the importance of questioning race relations had been addressed by the Zulu language writers much earlier. Although there has been little recognition of the existence of black consciousness before Biko, the contributors of the *Bantu World* were keenly aware of the glaring racial divide between

[324] Colin Grant. *Negro with a Hat: The Rise and fall of Marcus Garvey*. (London: Vintage Books, 2009), p. xiii.
[325] Steve Biko. Interview with Bernard Zylstra, July 1977, p. 1.
[326] Steve Biko. 'The Definition of Black Consciousness' in C.R Aelred Stubbs. (ed.) *I Write What I Like: Selected Writings*. (London: Heinneman, 1979), p. 52.

black and white people, sought to challenge those mental attitudes that hindered their development as a people, and exhibited a desire to uplift themselves intellectually.

Several articles in the *Bantu World* between 1932 and the late 1940s spoke of how black people needed to be proud of themselves and how they were not intellectually inferior to white people. One of the contributors who called himself Africanus, which was most probably a pen name, wrote in 1932 about how important it was for the black man to realise the significance of 'race pride' which would lead him not to be a victim of circumstances.[327] Advocating for black pride and self-respect, many Zulu writers offered glimpses of what Biko was to conceptualise decades later. This black consciousness in the making was expressed through the promotion of the Zulu language and through the constant reference to the need for Africans to think differently and stop feeding off the negative narrative of their inferiority that was being promoted by their oppressors. It is no surprise that when the Zulu articles of the *Bantu World* discussed the issues of progress and success, they focused on the mind of the black person and how it was supposed to be awakened; they discussed the importance of hard work, self-help though entrepreneurship, self-awareness and consciousness of the living conditions that differentiated the black man from other races. However, in many instances the contributors seemed to subscribe to the notion that they needed to be aided by the white man in their pursuit of progress and to an extent accepted the civilising mission of the white man.

Moreover, one of the aims of the *Bantu World* when it was formed was for the reading public to be 'fully and truly informed as an aid to clear thinking and logical action.'[328] It was not clarified what this 'clear thinking' and 'logical action' entailed. One can only speculate that the very content of the paper would explain what these phrases meant to the Bantu Press. In relation to this, a 1936 article in the *Bantu Mirror*, one of the Bantu Press newspapers, written by the Governor of Southern Rhodesia, Sir Herbert Stanley, said: 'If this paper helps the Bantu to look into their own minds and to express what they see there, it will become in fact as well in name a mirror of their thoughts.'[329] In the case of *Ilanga laseNatal*, one of the benefits of this paper to the European Community was made explicit as early as 1903, and was 'to keep in touch with

[327] Africanus. 'Help Ye One Another.' *Bantu World*. 1: 18, 1932.
[328] *Bantu World*. 1: 2, 1932, p. 4.
[329] *Bantu Mirror*. 1: 3, 1936, p. 1.

Native thought.'[330] These European aims seem very much befitting when one looks at the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World*, a true mirror of the ideas of black intellectuals that were not as obviously and passionately expressed in the English pages. These thoughts also had the potential to spark a new social order and prepare the terrain for prominent black thinkers like Biko.

The mind of the black person was a subject of discussion even in other African language newspapers. In *Ilanga laseNatal* several articles discussed this topic as early as 1903. It is interesting to note the extent to which the arguments resonated with those made in the *Bantu World* about the very character of the black person which was the main cause of his inability to progress. The title of the first page in the 1903 April issue of *Ilanga laseNatal* was a scripture from the bible which read:

> Ubusuku sebuya dlula, ukusa sekusondela, ngako masiyityiye imisebenzi yobumnyama, sihlome izikali zokukhanya Rom xiii v12. [The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light. Romans xiii v 12].[331]

This was authored by the editor, John Dube, who went on to write in the same article entitled *Ilanga laseNatal*:

> Aniboni yini abelungu akade bakhanyiswa, NoMroma, nomChurch, nomWesili, nom Congregation befunda pepa linye? Kubangwa yini ukungezwani kangaka emakolweni?' [Can't you see the whites who were enlightened a long time ago, a Roman Catholic, a Church, a Wesleyan and a Congregation all read the same paper? What causes such division among believers?]. [332]

The example of white people reading the same paper metaphorically standing for European unity was for Dube a way of encouraging Africans to read and continue reading his paper. Given that Europeans were seen as having been 'enlightened' that is, exposed to Christianity, education and progress well before Africans, the implication was that they knew better. The use of European

[330] *Ilanga laseNatal*. 1: 2, 1903, p. 2.
[331] John L. Dube. 'Ilanga laseNatal.' *Ilanga laseNatal.* 1: 1, 1903, p. 1.
[332] Dube. 'Ilanga laseNatal'.

civilisation as a model was thus not only common in the *Bantu World*, but in other African papers as well.

The mind of the African was not only 'mirrored' but analysed and contested in the Zulu articles of the *Bantu World*. This analysis began in the very first issue of the newspaper, which had an article about the writer's perception of African mentality. Entitled 'Abantu bayacabanga manje kudingeka basizane emsebenzini.' (Black people think but now it is needful for them to help each other with work).[333] The unnamed writer noted how in many communities one would find people who did not want to think, yet emphasising that black people were capable of reasoning and coming up with good ideas.[334]

As this thought process unfolded, some writers in the *Bantu World*, in contrast with those who promoted white superiority, pointed out the inability of some white people to progress, thereby defining civilisation as more than just an adaptation to the European ways. The 'Special Contributor' who wrote about police brutality in 1932 spoke about the 'class of white men' who were still 'primitive and uncivilised', and were therefore failing to appreciate the fact that the black man had become civilised and thus had reached a point where he deserved better treatment.[335] However, in an attempt to criticise these conservative unprogressive white people, the writer implied that there was a time when Africans did not deserve good treatment and when they were still 'uncivilised'. A particularly interesting editorial by Selope Thema published in 1932 which resonated with this addressed the fact that the white man needed the labour of the black man in industry, while the black man needed the guidance of the white man in his journey from darkness to civilisation.[336] Both articles suggest full acceptance of the evolutionist colonial mentality and of the European civilising mission in Africa.

The question that one should pose at this point about the contributors and editors of the *Bantu World* is what the meaning and purpose of progress were for them. It remains unclear whether they sought progress to further prove their worth to themselves, or whether they did so with the white coloniser in mind, to demonstrate they had reached a point where they appeared as

[333] 'Abantu bayacabanga manje kudingeka basizane emsebenzini.' *Bantu World.* 1: 1, 1932, p. 6.
[334] 'Abantu bayacabanga'.
[335] 'Keep the Nigger in his place: Grave charge against S.A police force; Alleged Inhuman Treatment of Natives by 'Guardians of Law and Order'. *Bantu World.* 1: 5, 1932, p. 1.
[336] *Bantu World.* 1: 5, 1932, p.2.

acceptable to the eyes of the whites, and therefore, be treated better. This might also have been a way of making the European authorities aware that they were capable of proving their ability to meet western standards which was to eventually be achieved by all black people at some point.[337]

One of the most significant articles in this discussion of black progress, the black man's thinking and the comparison with white people was one editorial published in 1939. Entitled 'Umqondo Womuntu', the editorial served as almost a summary of all the ideas expressed by contributors who had negative attitudes towards the way in which Africans thought and behaved. The author argued that the difference in the intellectual level between the black and the white man was as wide as the Tugela River.[338] Black people were described as cowards who were not innovative and lacking in commitment, while white people were the complete opposite, which was the main reason why they were more successful than black people. This is seen for example in the statement, 'Umuntu omnyama uthi konje lokhu kwake kwenziwa ngubani lapa kiti?'[339] (A black person will say: who has ever done this here in our hometown?), meaning that if no one else had tried something, black people would not be daring enough to try it.

The article went on to attack black people for being violent and unafraid to commit murder, yet white people feared to commit such acts, as expressed by 'Umlungu uyesaba ihlazo' (a white man is afraid of shame).[340] As much as the article was brutally critical of the black man, it was also painting a picture of a perfect white man who could do no wrong. The white man thought better, knew better and represented a role model that should constantly be looked up to. While this article sounds painfully critical and may pass off as condescending towards black people and as fully promoting the idea of the civilising mission, it might also have been a strategy to spark in the readers a feeling that they could actually challenge themselves into becoming better. Once they felt that they were being belittled, the readers (and the less educated people whom the readers were supposed to educate) would enter into some deep self-introspection and consider changing their way of thinking.

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[337] For more on the idea of proving a point to the white man see Christopher Ballantine. 'Music and Emancipation: The Social Role of Black Jazz and Vaudeville in South Africa between the 1920s and 1940s.' *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 17: 1, 1991.
[338] 'Umqondo Womuntu'.
[339] Ibid.
[340] Ibid.

During the 1930s and 1940s, the ultimate solution given by many writers to the inability of Africans to equal Europeans in terms of intellect was education. Education was emphasised in almost every issue of the paper. For example, the front page of the 23 March 1935 issue carried the story of B. W. Vilakazi, who had been appointed at the Rand University.[341] The article outlined his achievements as a poet, novelist, and trendsetter in African writing. While the English article discussed his achievements, the Zulu version of the article was much more detailed and went to great lengths to emphasise that Vilakazi was going to assist a 'white' Professor in teaching African languages at a University which was more prestigious than any other 'white' University,

> Efundisa izilimi zabantu esikolweni esikulu kunazo zonke zabamhlophe lapa eGoli iUniversity of the Witwatersrand. [He will teach African languages at the greatest school among white schools in Johannesburg, the University of the Witwatersrand].[342]

It was a great achievement for a black intellectual to be admitted to a white University. The association of the University with whiteness was not emphasised in the English article, which focused on describing Vilakazi's personal attributes, such as the fact that he was 'gifted with a keen brain.'[343] The Zulu article emphasised:

> Kuyaqala ngqa, umuntu omnyama apiwe isikhundla esikulu kangaka kulelizwe. [K]asikhohliwe nempela ukubona umoya omuhle ovezwe abamhlophe balesisikolo esikulu kababhekanga ibala lakhe, ababhekanga buzwe bakhe babheke kuphela ukusifanela kwakhe leso sikhundla. [This is the very first time for a black person to be given such a prestigious position in this country. [We] have not truly forgotten to recognise the good spirit that has been shown by the whites of this great school. They did not look at his skin colour, they did not look at his nationality; they only looked at his suitability for the position].[344]

In the Zulu article, the victory was not just about the qualities and achievements of Vilakazi, but also about how for once, white people had chosen to be blind to race. This is a good example of

[341] R.R.R Dlomo. 'Mr. B.W. Vilakazi B.A Appointment at the Rand University'. *Bantu World.* 3: 49, 1935, p. 1.
[342] Selope Thema. 'Kuyantwela Ezantsi.' *Bantu World.* 3: 49, 1935, p. 6.
[343] R.R.R Dlomo. 'Mr. B.W. Vilakazi'.
[344] Selope Thema. 'Kuyantwela Ezantsi'.

how, although the paper was not meant to focus on sensitive matters such as racism and its pitfalls, the Zulu pages pointed out how race was a key factor that could not be ignored. The success of a black person and the significance of his rising in spite of his race were greatly emphasised, showing the readers that they could also progress notwithstanding the socio-political circumstances. At the same time, the key role of the white man in this achievement was also asserted. The writer's emphasis on how grateful black people should be when white people chose not to consider race when appointing them to prestigious positions echoed the then widespread idea of white benevolence.

The key reason behind the need to stress black achievements is explained in an earlier article published in the same year, on the occasion of the celebration of Mr Luthuli's 20 year stay at Ohlange Institute.[345] The writer stated:

> Kwabaningi bakiti kakuluto nje loko. Thina sikubona kuyinto enkulu leyo esazi kahle kamhlophe ukuthi uma ibiyenzeke kubelungu ibiyoba nedumela elikulu itatwe zintateli zonke zamapepa. [To many this is nothing. However, we see this as a great thing, we know very well that if it had happened among white people it was going to be known widely and be published by all newspaper journalists].[346]

The fact that the achievements of white people were publicised and many journalists were interested in publishing them, was meant to prompt African writers to make sure that they praised each and every achievement of a black person, in order to show that just like white people, black people were also attaining notable things. Thus the views on the African mind were by no means similar among the Zulu contributions to the paper: while the *Bantu World* contains several statements about black people not being as innovative and ambitious as white people, there were also attempts to show that there were many notable black role models to look up to. The criticisms levelled against black people are thus in my view not necessarily ultimate judgements but ways of awakening the mind of the reader. The parallel use of prominent black

[345] The Ohlange Institute was the first school in South Africa to be established by a black person. It was founded in 1901 by John L. Dube, the first President of the ANC at Inanda, north of Durban, in kwaZulu-Natal. Initially named the Zulu Christian Industrial School, it was modelled after Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute in the United States of America. Its main focus was the encouragement of self-reliance among its students.
[346] 'Siyahalalisa Luthuli!' *Bantu World*. 4: 23, 1935, p. 6.

men as role models shows that the contributors did not see white people as the only model, but rather used them to provoke the reader.

Fourteen years later, Makhandakhanda strongly disagreed with the notion that the African was an inferior thinker to the white man. In an article entitled, 'Nathi Sasinazo Izihlakaniphi Abelungu Bengakafiki Lapha' (We also had intellectuals before the whites came here),[347] he presented a fiery attack on those who despised Africans and their territorial rights in Africa:

> Abelungu bafika kule lizwe kuna ma Africa wodwa. Kodwa bona bangena ngodlovu kuphendulwa ngoba bethi badalwa ngophawu lobukhosi kunazo zonke izizwe zemhlabeni. Umbedo lowo wokuthi afikisana nabamhlophe amaAfrika. [Whites arrived in this land when there were only Africans occupying it. They entered forcefully because they claimed that they were created to be rulers and to be superior to any other race/nation in the world. It is nonsense that Africans arrived in Africa at the same time as whites].[348]

The author went on to explain how conflicts had led Africans to constant migrations, which made whites think that when they arrived at a place it was vacant, when it was not.[349] This was a notably interesting argument to put forward in view of the various migration theories that were used to explain events such as the Great Trek and debates about the extent to which certain territories were vacant when the Afrikaners arrived.[350] Pride in self was thus enhanced by the awareness of their right to ownership and indigeneity in this article. It is also interesting that the contributor did not mention the Afrikaners, but used the general term *abelungu* which could refer to a larger group of foreigners. The article was published in 1949: this seemingly Africanist approach reflects the increasingly confrontational and radical approach to resistance after the radicalisation of the ANC in 1944.[351] Anton Lembede, one of the founders of the Youth League

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[347] Makhandakhanda. 'Nathi Sasinazo Izihlkaniphi Abelungu Bengakafiki Lapha.' *Bantu World*. 18: 21, 1949, p. 3.
[348] Makhandakhanda. 'Nathi Sasinazo'.
[349] Makhandakhanda. 'Nathi Sasinazo'.
[350] For more on the Great Trek and Afrikaner identity see Norman Etherington. *The Great Treks: The Transformation of Southern Africa, 1815-1854.* (New York: Longman, 2001); Mordechai Tarmakin. *Volk and flock: Ecology, Identity and Politics among Cape Afrikaners in the late Nineteenth Century.* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2009); Elleke Boehmer. 'Where we Belong: South Africa as a Settler Colony and the Calibration of African and Afrikaner Indigeneity.' *Studies in Settler Colonialism.* (Palgrave: Macmillan, 2011); Johann van Rooyen. *The New Great Trek: The Story of South Africa's White Exodus*. (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2000).
[351] Clive Glaser. *The ANC Youth League*. (Auckland Park, Jacana, 2012); Ben Turok. *The ANC and the Turn to Armed Struggle, 1950-1970.* (Auckland Park: Jacana, 2010).

and of the idea of Africanism, subscribed to the 'Africa for Africans' idea which Makhandakhanda was conveying.[352]

3.1.4 The Zulu articles on the problem of disunity

While the general aim of the paper was to promote racial harmony and cooperation, the very content and structure of the Zulu pages seemed to promote exclusive black unity which led to many contributors debating the necessity of cooperation with other races. It was clear that many Zulu writers saw themselves as different from other races, with unique needs, ideas and ambitions which people outside of their race would in their view not understand. In most letters the writers made it a point that all the characters in their stories were primarily described according to their race, and every article on progress and racial relations spoke of 'thina ndlu emnyama' (us the black house or black nation).[353] This speaks volumes about the intentional push for an understanding of the needs and desires of black people. The Zulu pages promoted unity among black people beyond ethnic differences and the use of 'indhlu emnyama', the general phrase to describe 'all black people' instead of specific ethnicities, emphasised this. For example, in 1935 Reverend Mahemane stated:

> Uma sibona umuntu onebala elimnyama simtandisise njengoba sizithanda. [When we see a person with a black skin colour we should love him just as much as we love ourselves].[354]

This further asserted the aforementioned point, as Mahemane implied that unity and love were to primarily be promoted within the black community and other races were to come second.[355]

In the same year, E. N. Mhlanga wrote about how he did not blame leaders such as P.W. Botha and O. Pirow because they were fighting for their own people:

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[352] The ANC Youth League was sometimes discussed in the *Bantu World*. See 'Sjambok on African Nationalism.' *Bantu World*. 18: 2, 1949, p. 2. Here the writer questioned the meaning of the nationalism which had been adopted by the Youth League, whether it was tantamount to radicalism, racialism or Garveyism.

[353] Selope Thema. 'Ubuholi Babansundu.' *Bantu World.* 11: 39, 1944; J. Chawana.' Safa Bantu Nezwe Lethu.' *Bantu World.* 16: 9, 1949, p. 3; Makhandakhanda. 'Koze Kubenini Sinhlakanhlaka.' *Bantu World.* 8 April 1950; C. Danibe. 'Ikakade Lika Mnz Thema.' *Bantu World.* 30 December 1950; C. Dandibe. 'Umnz Danibe Ubeka Owakhe Ngokugujwa Komkhosi wabeLungu.' *Bantu World.* 19 January 1952.

[354] J.K Mahemane. 'Amazwi Omvangeli U J.K Mahemane.' *Bantu World.* 3: 46, 1935, p. 3.

[355] Robert Fatton. *Black Consciousness in South Africa*; Biko. *I Write What I Like.* On the promotion of nationalism and consciousness see Anderson. *Imagined Communities*; Liz Gunner. 'Resistant Medium: The Voices of Zulu Radio Drama in the 1970s', *Theatre Research International*. 3, 2002; La Hausse de LaLouviere. *Restless Identities*; Barber. *The Anthropology of Texts*; Jaji. *Africa in Stereo*; Khumalo. 'Ekukhanyeni Letter Writers'.

> Balwela ibala labo nokuti batanda owakubo kakulu, yimfundiso leyo mfowethu. Bati kimi nawe asenze loko nati sifunde kubona isibonelo. [They are fighting for their race because they love their people a lot; this is a lesson my brother. They are saying to me and you: let us do the same thing and learn from their example].[356]

Although the segregationist government was oppressing them, some of the Zulu writers were of the view that this oppression was a sign that Europeans had acquired power and control and this power was something that black readers needed to aspire to. Notably, over time several articles and letters criticised the idea of interracial cooperation, both between Europeans and Africans and between Africans and other non-whites. In 1950, contributor C. Danibe emphasised that the struggles that black people were facing could never be understood by white people in spite of how knowledgeable they were:

> Okwaziwa uNkulunkulu nomuntu omnyama akusoze kwaziwa ngumlungu, noba esesebenzisa buphi ubuqili. [What is known by God and the black man will never be known by a white person, no matter how shrewd he is].[357]

In spite of the fact that from the early twentieth century Indian, Chinese and African organisations collaborated with each other as they felt that they had common grievances against the oppressive government,[358] most conservative ANC members frowned upon cooperation with Indians in the 1930s and 1940s. Leaders like Nelson Mandela, National President of the ANC Youth League in the 1940s, saw this cooperation as 'tentative' due to the unique grievances of

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[356] E. N. Mahlangu. 'Amazwi Asobala kaMnz E.N Mahlangu Asuswe uMnu Malinga.' *Bantu World.* 4: 21, 1935, p. 6.

[357] C. Danibe. 'Ikakade Lika Mnz Thema.' *Bantu World*, 30 December 1950.

[358] For a history of racial cooperation and multi racialism in the ANC see Arianna Lissoni et al. *One hundred years of the ANC: debating liberation histories today.* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2012); Jon Soske. 'Unravelling the 1947 'Doctors Pact', Race, Metonymy and the Evasions of Nationalist History' in Arianna Lissoni. *One hundred years of the ANC: debating liberation histories today.* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2012); David Everatt. *The origins of non-racialism: white opposition to apartheid in the 1950s.* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2009); Elizabeth M. Williams. *The Politics of Race in Britain and South Africa: Black British Solidarity and the Anti-Apartheid Struggle.* (New York: I.B Tauris and Co. Ltd, 2015); A Lesson in the ANCs History of Multiracialism and Non-Racialism.' https//:www.thedailyvox.co.za/anc-multiracialism-nonracialism-history/. Accessed 08 January 2018. Last updated 4 February 2017; The issue of racial cooperation is to this day still challenged by some individuals although anti-Indian sentiments are condemned as is seen in these recent articles; Brij Maharaj. 'Anti-Indian Statements are Racism of the Worst Order.' *Daily Maverick.* https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2015-11-15-anti-indian-statements-are-racism-of-the-worst-order/#.WlSQLo-CzDc. Last updated 15 November 2015. Accessed 09 January 2018: Kwanele Sosibo. 'Anti-Indian

the different races; others, like Walter Sisulu saw it as crucial as he believed that Indians, Coloureds and Africans were 'inextricably bound together.'[359] A. B Xuma's entrance into the Three Doctors' Pact with G.M. Naicker from the Natal Indian Congress and Yusuf Dadoo from the Transvaal Indian Congress in 1947 was greatly criticised. When the Pact was announced in the press, the executive committee of the Natal ANC is said to have protested against it.[360] Anton Lembede, the founding president of the ANC Youth League and a staunch Africanist, rejected the idea of Indians and white people taking a leading role in the struggle, arguing that Indians were only fighting for trading rights and to extract as much wealth from Africans as they could.[361] However, after his death in 1947 his successors took a less radical approach and were more accommodating.

In the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World* the question of cooperation with Indians was debated in line with the debates that were already taking place within the ANC concerning unity. Some Zulu contributors were especially critical of the leadership of South African Indians in African organisations, arguing that they were not qualified to lead Africans because they were much more privileged and did not understand the black struggle.[362] In spite of the fact that Indians and other minorities were also oppressed by the white government, some Zulu writers believed that they were better off than Africans. This was also due to the fact that most opponents of the idea of cooperation such as Lembede were greatly influential in Natal and most probably contributed to the Zulu language writers' ideas. Selope Thema himself opposed the idea of cooperation

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Lyrics Sow Seed of Hatred.' https://mg.co.za/article/2014-08-21-anti-indian-lyrics-sow-seeds-of-hatred. Last Updated 22 August 2014. Accesses 09 January 2018.

[359] Nelson Mandela. *Long Walk to Freedom. The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela.* (Randburg: McDonald Purnell, 1994), p. 142.

[360] Soske. 'Unravelling the 1947 'Doctors Pact', p. 179.

[361] Soske. 'Unravelling the 1947 'Doctors Pact', p.182. This is also asserted by David Everatt. *The Origins of Non-Racialism*, p.17, p. 49, p. 65.

[362] The following articles were critical of cooperation with Indians: Selope Thema. 'Ubuholi Babansundu.'; 'Sebenzani Niyeke Ukulala.' *Bantu World*, 1:3, 1932; Selope Thema. 'Non-European Front Yimbude.' *Bantu World*. 7: 83, 1941, p. 2; J.D.T. Mtembu. 'Non-European Front.' *Bantu World*. 7: 84, 1941; W.B Gumede. 'Nge-Non European Front: Opendula UJ.D.T Mtembu.' *Bantu World*. 7: 86, 1941, p. 3; W. B Mkabise. 'Ngabe AmaNdiya Kanti Asefuna Sithini Kuwo Na? Sithi Bayethe Manje?' *Bantu World.* 8: 5, 1949, p. 3; Meyiwa. 'Asikaze Siphakamiselane Izinduku NamaNdiya Ngaphandle KwamaBhunu.' *Bantu World*. 8: 6, 1949, p. 3; W.B Mkabise. 'Abaholi BamaNdiya.' *Bantu World*. 7: 87, 1941, p. 3; J.S Dhlamini. 'Singeke Siholwe NgumNdiya.' *Bantu World*. 7: 88, 1941, p. 2.

between Africans and Indians as he saw them as enemies of their economic and political progress.[363]

An article entitled, 'Sebenzani Niyeke Ukulala' (Work and stop sleeping) published in 1932 argued that Indians were in a much better position than Africans:

> Kulo leli amaNdiya asepetwe ngcono kunathi, enziwa kusebenza. Nama Negroes pesheya asesimeni esingcono kunesethu, kanti ambalwa kunaba mhlophe kona, enziwa kusebenza. [In this country the Indians are now being treated better than us, it is because they work hard. Even the Negroes overseas are in a better position than us although they are fewer than whites, it is because they work].[364]

While the emphasis was on the importance of work for self-improvement, the fact that the writer believed that Indians were being treated better than Africans is an indication of the racial divide that existed. An announcement of a Non-European Front[365] meeting made by Thema in 1941 furthered this by stating:

> uMnumzana Dadoo nabamnumzana bama Ndiya nabamnyama bebememe umhlangano eAlexandra Township ngesonto ekuseni ngo 9 eNo. 2 square. iLawu[366] neKula kabawapati amapasi kodwa omnyama uyawapata, kodwa omnyama kona eselele ubutongo angacabanga ukuti inkululeko kulemiteto uyoyitola ngoba ekulunyelwa uDr Dadoo? Miningi imisebenzi okwakishwa kuyo abantu kwafakwa amaLawu ngamaholo angeno, singasawabali amaNdiya wona, enemali enomnoto enonkulumeli wawo enezwe lawo pesheya. Buhlobo bokusizana kuni obungavela kulezizizwe zahlukane kangaka?'[Mr Dadoo and other Indians and black people have announced a meeting in Alexandra Township on Sunday morning at 9 at No. 2 square. A *Lawu* and an Indian do not carry passes but a black person does, however the black person is still asleep, does he think that he will get freedom from these laws by being represented by Dr. Dadoo? There are many

[363] Gail M. Gerhart, Thomas G. Karis and Gwendolen M. Carter. *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1990.* Vol. 4. (Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1977).
[364] 'Sebenzani Niyeke Ukulala.' *Bantu World.* 1: 3, 1932.
[365] The Non-European Front was an organisation that was formed in 1938 by Indians, Africans, Malays and Coloureds which sought to give support to all non-white oppressed groups who were victims of the segregatory policies of the white government.
[366] ILawu is a discriminatory word used by older generation Zulu speakers to address coloureds or an individual that they think is behaving foolishly regardless of their race. In view of the context in this case, the writer was referring to the coloured population.

> jobs were black people were removed and were replaced by *Lawu*'*s* with better pay; we will not even consider the Indians, they have money, wealth, their own government and their own country overseas. How can these races cooperate and help each other when their circumstances are so different?].[367]

Thema also spoke about a High Commissioner who had been appointed to represent Indians and their grievances to the government and that Africans did not have the same representation. He added that Indians were the greatest enemies of Africans in business and therefore harmonious relations between the two races were not possible.[368] He asked whether the National Congress had now become so weak that it needed to be led by Indians. This attack on racial cooperation and representation by other races is a clear indication that the idea of common needs and ideals of the two races was not seen as practical by the editor and by some contributors. This was a departure from the initial aim of promoting racial cooperation through the *Bantu World.*

A response to this article appeared in the next issue with J.D.T. Mtembu expressing his agreement with Thema. He asked:

> U Dr Dadoo angaze ahole abantu bakiti kwabakubo uxoshwa yini? Noma mhlaumbe ubona ukuti tina asinabaholi abapilile? [Dr Dadoo cannot lead our people, did his own people chase him away? Or maybe he sees that we do not have our own sane/living leaders?].[369]

He went on to ask for people to fight against such organisations.[370]

Other writers, however, defended Dadoo. For example W.B. Gumede explained what the Non-European Front was and reassures his fellow readers that it would never place Africans in trouble. He then wrote:

> Loko kubizwa ngama India nama Coloured ngokuti singama Kafula akusoze kwapela zonke izizwe nati siyasho ukuti amaKula nokuti amaBhastela. [Being called Kaffirs by

[367] Selope Thema. 'Non-European Front Yimbude.' *Bantu World*. 7: 83, 1941, p. 2.
[368] Thema. 'Non-European Front'.
[369] J.D.T Mtembu. 'Non-European Front.' *Bantu World.* 7: 84, 1941.
[370] Mtembu. 'Non-European Front'.

> Indians and Coloureds will not end, even we also call the Indians amaKula and the Coloureds Bastards].[371]

According to Gumede, racial tensions caused by name calling were unimportant and this would never end, but the most important thing was for racial harmony to be promoted.

In view of his, unity within the black nation excluding Indians and other races was seen by some Zulu writers as central in the achievement of progress. One anonymous contributor criticised black people for not being supportive of each other, hence the lack of progress. He stated:

> Kukona umoya wokuti ngeke ngicebise omunye umuntu, ngcono ngicebise esinye isizwe. Kungenjalo ati umuntu uma eqala umsebenzi bati 'siyayazi into yabantu izakuma isikasha iwe. [There is this belief that I can never enrich another black man, it is better to enrich another nation. If a black person starts a business the others will say: 'we know a black person's thing, it will work for a short while and fail].[372]

Lack of unity and support among black people was the reason why it was so difficult for them to succeed. Likewise, in 1940 Walter M.B. Nhlapho wrote:

> Thina amaAfrika nxa sibona omunye wetu epumelela ngomsebenzi asimtakazeleli, asitokozi kanye naye, asibongi ngepimbo lenyoni sipakamise amazwi etu siti 'inkosi ikubusise ukule wena waka sibanibani noma 'mayibuye I afrika. [When us Africans see some of us being successful in their business we are not happy for them, we do not rejoice with them, we do not give thanks or raise our voices to say: 'may God bless and increase you so and so or 'Let Africa return'].[373]

The idea of the African being his own enemy was also discussed in earlier issues of *iLanga laseNatal*. In 1903 John Dube, repeating the title of his book, argued that 'Isitha Esikhulu Somuntu Uqobo Lwakhe' (The greatest enemy of a person is himself) wrote an editorial entitled 'Isitha somuAfrika umuAfrika' (The enemy of an African is an African).[374] Dube was referring

[371] W.B Gumede. 'Nge-Non European Front: Opendula UJ.D.T Mtembu.' *Bantu World*. 7: 86, 1941, p. 3.
[372] 'Abantu bayacabanga', p. 6.
[372] 'Abantu Bayacabanga'.
[373] Walter. M.B Nhlapho. 'Yekan' Umona Kanye Nenzondo. '*Bantu World*. 7: 41, 1940, p. 3.
[374] M.B Nhlapho. 'Yekan' Umona'.

to divisions within the church, a subject which he touched on in many issues of the paper. He argued that when an African was promoted to a position of leadership, his fellows did not celebrate his promotion but rather became jealous.[375] He added that the European was not to blame for the lack of progress and success of the black man, neither was he responsible for lifting him out of that position, but the very promotion of one black man could lead to the upliftment of the rest.[376]

The June 1932 issue of the *Bantu World* entitled 'The enemy of the Bantu is Himself' conveys a similar view. It reads almost like a translation of the *Ilanga laseNatal* earlier article, but the criticism was now directed at African intellectuals who 'parroted' what others had already parroted from others, and did not want to think for themselves.[377] What is remarkable is that the article itself repeats what intellectuals like Dube had said decades earlier. Such a statement was meant to be direct and emotive and the use of rhetoric questions constantly forced the readers to question themselves. The *Bantu World* came in to continue with trend, although it did not include those who did not or could not read African languages.

One of the few instances where an English article was directly translated into Zulu and featured in the Zulu pages is a piece about Mshiyeni Dinizulu's (the prince of the Zulu) 1935 visit to WNLA. (Witwatersrand Native Labour Association), in which he urged black people to be united.[378] Notably, while the Zulu article emphasised the need for unity and how much of a great occasion the visit of the prince was, the English article was much more distanced from the event and focused on the backwardness and disunity among Africans. The Zulu article thus found it important to show reverence to the King and show his empathy towards his people. The English article gave the impression of a more confrontational and critical King who commanded his people to 'be respectable'. The Zulu version is not only more detailed, but this language is deliberately used to highlight and cherish the valuable relationship between the King and his people.

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[375] 'Yekan' Umona'.
[376] 'Yekan' Umona'.
[377] 'The Enemy of the Bantu is Himself.' *Bantu World*. 1: 9, 1932, p. 4.
[378] 'Sometimes you cause your own….Be Respectable Says Regent of Zululand: Stop Hooliganism, Lawlessness among Yourselves and Evils of the Pick-up and Rough Handling by the Police will cease.' *Bantu World*. 3: 38, 1935, p.1; 'Usuku Olukhulu E W.N.LA uMshiyeni kaDinizulu Nabantu.' *Bantu World*. 3: 38, 1935.

As the paper celebrated the 20 year stay of a Mr Luthuli at Ohlange Institute in 1935, the writer spoke of how black people did not honour each other but would rather respect a white man:

> Kuvamile ukuthi lapo sesifika kowakiti siti O, loku umnyama ufana nami nje kangina ndaba sikusho ngoba singathandi ukuthi kowakiti 'Nkosi. [It is common that when we see one of our own we say, 'Oh, this one is black, he is just the same as me, so I do not care if he succeeds. We say this because we do not want to call another black man 'boss' thereby admitting that another ordinary black person can be successful].[379]

This serves as yet another example of a writer who was frustrated by the promotion of white superiority at the expense of black dignity. He also saw lack of respect among black people as both a cause and result of disunity.

There was also a sense that this division caused black people to be despised by others and that unity would restore their dignity. In 1936 Manyoni argued that:

> Umuntu ufike akulume nabelungu esola into ezitile ezenziwa kubantu. Koti bengakaphenduli nabelungu se uphendulwa umuntu wakini esola inkulumo yakho. Mina loku ngibona ku upukupuku obumangalisayo kuhlangene nokuzihleba kwezinye izizwe sibe indaba egudwini. Wena uyaze eqekezeke ikanda uti uzama inqubeko wo, kumnyama bakiti. [A black person speaks to white people criticising certain things that are done to black people. Before white people even respond, a black person will respond criticising what the other has said. I see this as foolishness mixed with gossiping about ourselves to other nations so that they talk about us behind our backs. You end up cracking your head trying to achieve progress; there is darkness my people, and [the efforts at achieving progress become futile as a result of this].[380]

Three years later, another reader, called Mkabise, wrote:

> Omnyama kamlaleli omunye umuntu nongafundile wedelela sengati ufundile. Ingane yomuntu ihlezi neye Kula zitengisa zombili. Abantu batenga kweyeKula. [A black person does not listen to another black person, even an uneducated person is disrespectful as if he

[379] 'Siyahalalisa Luthuli.' *Bantu World*. 4: 23, 1935, p. 6.
[380] W.A.E.G Manyoni. 'Umgungundlovu Onduku Zibomvu.' *Bantu World*. 4: 44, 1936, p. 5.

were educated. When a black child is seated with an Indian child and both are selling goods, black people would rather buy from the Indian child].[381]

This shows that there was mistrust among Africans and perhaps hints at the ability of Indian communities to access better quality products due to their long standing financial networks. These writers share the view that what was hindering Africans from progressing was that they did not support each other.

The need for unity became more urgent when Apartheid was introduced in 1948. Makhandakhanda stated that South Africa was being governed by such an oppressive regime because black people were not united, 'isizwe siphathwa kanje ngoba sehlukene' (The nation is treated like this because it is divided).[382] These discussions about disunity thus fermented into stronger calls for people to unite and fight injustice into the late 1940s and early 1950s when it became clear that the alleged 'benevolence' of the white government was not as genuine as many black intellectuals had previously imagined.

3.1.5 The promotion of unity through the 'Abyssinian Crisis'

While the Zulu writers encouraged unity within the black nation in the 1930s and 1940s, over time the idea of black unity turned for some writers into pan-African solidarity mainly due to parallel historical developments in other parts of the continent. This was evidenced by the coverage of what was then known as 'the Abyssinian crisis'[383] from 1935 to 1936, which was used to further promote unity among Africans. The war had international implications and was covered by the media and scholars all over the world.[384] The Ethiopian struggle against Italian invasion was viewed as a source of inspiration and hope for the possibility of armed resistance to colonialism across Africa. This was especially a result of the Ethiopian defeat of Italy in the battle of Adwa in 1896 which made some believe that the same would be repeated in 1936.

[381] W. B. Mkabise. 'Umbiko Wonyaka 1939.' *Bantu World*. 7: 40, 1940, p. 7.
[382] Makhandakhanda. 'Koze Kubenini Sinhlakanhlaka.' *Bantu World.* 8 April 1950.
[383] Abyssinia is present day Ethiopia. The Abyssinian crisis is also known as the Second Italo-Ethiopian War (1935-1939) which led to the establishment of a short-lived Italian colony in Ethiopia which was however quickly overthrown in 1941. In the *Bantu World* the term 'Abyssinian Crisis' is predominantly used to refer to this war.
[384] Luigi Villari and E. Abraham. 'Abyssinia and Italy.' *Journal of the Royal African Society*. 34: 137, 1935. See also Brock Millman. 'Canada, Sanctions and the Abyssinian Crisis of 1935.' *The Historical Journal*. 40: 1, 1997; Cian McMahon. 'Irish Free State newspapers and the Abyssinian crisis, 1935-6.' *Irish Historical Studies*. 36: 143,

African Americans, for example, drew great inspiration from Ethiopia. Marcus Garvey entitled the official anthem of his Universal Negro improvement Association 'Ethiopia, Thou Land of Our Fathers.'[385] On a number of occasions Garvey and other intellectuals rhetorically used Ethiopia as a synonym for the African continent.

This event was widely covered in the *Bantu World* in both the English and African language articles mainly from 1935 to 1936, featuring as the headline on the first page of most issues.[386] The year 1936 was also the year when the ANC began to take practical steps to try and revive the organisation which had up to then been stagnant.[387] In addition, according to Bhekizizwe Peterson, the All Africa Convention - an organisation formed in 1936 under the leadership of D.D.T. Jabavu, Pixley ka Isaka Seme and others to advocate for African rights through boycotts - saw the invasion of Ethiopia by Italy as similar to the South African practice of segregation.[388] These developments thus coincided well with the crisis as African nationalists and resisters of segregation easily understood and empathised with the Ethiopians.

Some of the Zulu letter writers of the *Bantu World* passionately commented on the 'Abyssinian crisis', discussing their desire to assist the Ethiopians in their struggle. The crisis provided an opportunity for them to fantasise, imagining themselves engaging in a warfare similar to that of the Ethiopians. An editorial by Selope Thema published in 1935 and entitled 'Udaba

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2009; 'Ethiopians attack Italians in Darkness, Killing Forty; Emperor Replies to League.' *The New York Times*, 29 July 1935; 'Mussolini's troops march into Abyssinia.' *The Guardian.* 3 October 1935.

[385] Amy Jacques Garvey (ed). *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* (London, 1967), p. 39. See also Robert G. Weisbord. 'Black America and the Italian-Ethiopian Crisis: An Episode in Pan-Negroism.' *The Historian.* 34: 2, 1972; Teshale Tibebu. 'Ethiopia: The 'Anomaly' and 'Paradox' of Africa.' *Journal of Black Studies.* 26: 4, 1996.

[386] 'Abyssinia faces her Hour of Destiny: Whole Nation Will Fight for Ethiopia.' *Bantu World*. 4: 22, 1935, p. 1. 'Will Go Ahead Says Mussolini.' *Bantu World.* 4:23, 1935; 'Ethiopia Mobilising and Italy Concentrating on Abyssinian Frontier.' *Bantu World.* 4: 26, 1935, p. 1; 'Italian Forces harassed at all fronts.' *Bantu World*. 4: 39, 1936, p.1. ; 'Victory for the Lion of Judah.' *Bantu World*. 4: 39, 1936; 'Ras Nasibou is Confident.' *Bantu World.* 4: 39, 1936, p. 1; 'Let Science Fight Says Italian Press.' *Bantu World.* 4: 40, 1936, p. 1; 'Signor Mussolini Faces Ugly Situation.' *Bantu World.* 4: 41, 1936, p. 1; 'Signor Mussolini Compelled to use Gas.' *Bantu World.* (5: 5, 1936), p. 1; 'Italian Advance on Addis Ababa.' *Bantu World.* 5: 7, 1936, p. 1; 'Abyssinia Faces Critical Hour: Empress of Ethiopia Makes Impassioned Appeal to Nations.' *Bantu World*. 5:6, 1936, p. 1; 'Italy Holds One Half of Ethiopia.' *Bantu World.* 5: 13, 1936, p. 1; See also; Harold G. Marcus. *Haile Selassie 1*: *The Formative Years, 1892-1936.* (California: University of California Press, 1987); Bereket Habte Selassie. *Emperor Haile Selassie.* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2014); Frank Hardie. *The Abyssinian Crisis.* (Edinburg: Willmer Brothers, 1974).

[387] Raymond Suttner. 'African Nationalism.' in Peter Vale etal. *Intellectual Traditions in South Africa.* (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2014), p. 135.

[388] Peterson. *Monarchs, Missionaries and African Intellectuals.* p. 18. See also I.B Tabata. 'The Awakening of a People'. www.sahistory.org.za-default-files. Accessed 31 August 2017; D.D.T Jabavu. 'The Findings of the All African Convention.' AD1715-23-1-1-001. 1935. Wits Historical Papers.

Olusematheni' (A matter which is on everyone's lips) spoke about how the war was the subject of many discussions:

> [F]uti abanye besho nokusho ukuti uma ituba lingavela bangajoyina baqonde kona e Abyssinia bayosiza lelozwe lapo lilwa nemikosi yase Italy. [Others are even saying that if they get an opportunity they will join and head to Abyssinia to help that nation as it fights against Italy].[389]

In the same editorial, Thema challenged those who wanted to go and assist the Abyssinians:

> Singaze sithumele amabuto eAbyssinia konje sake sawatumela yini amabutho okulwa nobubi obupete isizwe sakiti busihlehlisa emuva. Konje ikhona indoda engasuka emzini wayo ihlanzekile ingabazi abantabayo lapo belala khona? [We may send soldiers to Abyssinia but have we ever sent soldiers to fight the evil which is causing us to retrogress in our own nation? Is there a man who will leave his home not knowing where his own children will sleep?].[390]

The same year another writer, E.N. Mahlangu, supported Thema's opinion and discouraged readers from thinking that they could assist the Abyssinians. He argued that God would fight for them by raising another white nation to fight Italy.[391] One sees here an instance where a writer believed that only white intervention could save Africans from oppression.

While the editor and some contributors discouraged those who wished to assist the Ethiopians, others believed the contrary. Titus Mabaso responded to Thema's argument in 1936 by saying:

> Lamazwi anjalo ngiyatemba ukuti singeke siwavumele adlule ngaphandle kwempendulo ngoba sonke nje silapa e South Africa siyabazi ubulukhuni benhlalo yomnyama kulombuso ovala indlebe ungalaleli izinkalo zetu. Isizwe esimnyama sitintwa isibindi nobudoda benkosi yama Topiya ayati 'Siyokulwa sifele izwe letu nokuba litatwe sibhekile.' Uti singeke sitinteke ngalawo mazwi? [We cannot allow such words [Thema's argument] to be spoken without us responding to them because all of us in South Africa are aware of the

[389] Selope Thema. 'Udaba Olusematheni.' *Bantu World.* 4: 21, 1935, p. 6.
[390] Thema. 'Udaba Olusematheni'.
[391] E. N. Mahlangu. 'Amazwi Asobala kaMn E. N Mahlangu Asuswe uMn Malinga.' *Bantu World.* 4: 21, 1935, p. 6.

> hardships in the lives of black people under a government which ignores their concerns. The black nation is touched by the bravery of the king of Ethiopia who said 'We would rather fight and die for our country than allow it to be seized while we watch.' Can such words [Haile Selassie's declaration] not move us?].[392]

Another contributor, M. Zondi, also supported the idea of the armed struggle in Ethiopia. He argued that African leaders needed to fight the oppressive governments with weapons instead of just expressing their grievances verbally.[393] The Abyssinian crisis thus inspired some to have a more militant approach to resistance, something which the editor clearly discouraged. Thema had been influenced by the inclusive nationalist approach of the ANC which most ANC leaders agreed to adopt. This approach did not seek to expel the oppressors from South Africa but to attain freedom and equal rights for Africans in their land of birth.[394] Interestingly, the more radical ideas still found some space in the newspaper despite the editor's moderate stance.

Support for the Abyssinian crisis was also seen from religious groups. In a 1936 article, 'Amakosikazi Atandazela Itopiya ingacitwa ezweni layo' (Women pray for Ethiopia, that it may not be defeated in its own land),[395] African women were reported to be convening public prayers in solidarity with the Ethiopian struggle. The summoning of the spiritual to help Ethiopia shows the level of passion and grassroots solidarity that this fight evoked. The same article carried the story of a man who was told by a woman not to buy from an Italian shop:

> [U]te eya estolo e Vrybeid wezwa umfazi eti kuye hey wena mnimzane ungatengi kuleso istolo uzoboshwa! Hawu kwenzenjani ma? Yisitolo se Taliyane leso umuntu omnyama akasavunyelwa atenge kuso ngoba alwa nabanye abamnyama ama Bhisinia. [As he was going to a store in Vryheid he heard a woman saying to him: 'Hey, sir, do not buy from that store: you will be arrested!' [He answered:] 'What's wrong?' [And she answered:] 'That is an Italian store, a black person is no longer allowed to buy from it because they are fighting against other black people, the Abyssinians'].[396]

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[392] Titus Mabaso. 'UMabaso Upendula Umhleli Ngodaba Lwempi.' *Bantu World*. 4: 42, 1936, p. 5.
[393] A. M Zondie. 'UMnu E. Malinga Ukuluma Kakulu: Amazwi Ake Nami Ngiwasekela Kakulu.' *Bantu World*. 4: 22, 1935, p. 2.
[394] Raymond Suttner. 'African Nationalism'. pp. 138-139.
[395] Mahlokoma. 'Amakosokazi Atandazela Itopiya Ingacitwa Ezweni layo.' *Bantu World*. 4: 39, 1936, p. 2.
[396] Mahlokoma. 'Amakosokazi Atandazela Itopiya'.

Boycott of Italian shops was thus promoted as a way of showing pan-African solidarity. Ordinary African men and women seem to have played a key role in promoting this boycott, and in exercising daily forms of control on its enforcement. Although the full extent of the boycott and African awareness of the 'Abyssinian crisis' might never be fully explored, this was an interesting initiative, and many others may have accompanied it. However, the white government might not have encouraged this, as any form of boycott could have inspired Africans to turn the boycott into an anti-government protest.

In a February 1936 issue, a 'Frenchman' wrote (in English) about how Africans were not united and preferred to be led instead. Unlike African Americans, who were closely following the Abyssinian crisis as well as other events in Dahomey (Benin) and Dakar, according to him Africans were ignoring what was happening around them.[397] The comparison with African Americans was again used to encourage readers to take more interest in the events in Ethiopia. Furthermore, the alleged nationality of the contributor - a European man, not belonging to any community involved in colonising South Africa – may have been used to make the social reproach of African readers more effective. Finally, invoking African Americans also suggests that black South Africans were invited to follow the example set by Ethiopians by fighting oppression not by taking up arms but by acquiring knowledge.

The passionate references to the crisis showed the solidarity that some writers felt for Ethiopia but were not followed by any radical resistance within South Africa. The Zulu articles served as a platform to fervently express how they imagined they would help the Ethiopians. Although some referred to literally joining in combat, ultimately their desires were little more than fantasies and demonstrations of an imagined pan-Africanism which was confined to their letters and articles. As Thema argued, many readers dreamt of joining the Ethiopians yet in their own country they had never made efforts to fight their own oppressors in a militant way. The Zulu pages might also have been an outlet for them to vent their anger and frustration at their own inability to rise and fight oppression, choosing rather to discuss in their letters and articles how this international crisis was affecting them ideologically.

[397] 'Africans Lack Sense of Unity Says Frenchman'. *Bantu World*. 4: 44, 1936, p. 1.

For the purpose of this dissertation, the relevance of the discussions around the Ethiopian war lies in how these debates express the writers' conflicting ideas regarding pan-Africanism. It is not surprising that one writer would suggest that another white nation needed to rise and fight Italy so as to free the Ethiopians. While this might be superficially seen as mere promotion of white paternalism, this may well be a rather blunt and realistic view, as the writer might have assessed Italy's military superiority and doubted the ability of Ethiopia to overcome it.

In his study of *Inkundla yaBantu*, the only African-owned newspaper from its formation in 1938, Ime Ukpanah argues that the *Bantu World* was distinctly different from the African Nationalist press.[398] This is mainly because it was white-owned and was never meant to promote nationalist sentiments. However, the political discussions in the paper had the potential to arouse nationalism. The emergence of the African nationalist movements from the late 1930s to the 1950s was not only evidenced by overtly nationalistic newspapers like *Inkundla yaBantu*. Signs of an emerging nationalism can be also seen in the *Bantu World*, as demonstrated by the discussion of the Italo-Ethiopian war.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined various key issues discussed by the Zulu-speaking writers in the 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s. I have tried to show how the supplement called Bantu Weekly Reader, though it featured for only a few months, had a distinct style and tells us a lot about the degree to which the *Bantu World* promoted the idea of the white man as a benefactor and well-wisher. I have also discussed some of the ways in which the writers debated what they perceived as the mindset and key worldview of black people, putting them in constant contrast with that of the whites. In my view this is evidence of a developing black consciousness which predated that which was to be conceptualised by Steve Biko in the 1970s. This set of ideas was also developed against a background of a long history of black thought propounded by prominent intellectuals such as Martin Delaney, Aimé Césaire and Alain Locke in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In relation to this, what featured prominently in the newspaper under scrutiny was the issue of disunity as well as whether the Europeans had been and were beneficial to Africans, or rather responsible for their lack of social and economic achievements. These themes were deemed

[398] Ukpanah. *The Long Road to Freedom*, p. 7.

pivotal to the attainment of progress, which was a primary aspiration for black South African thinkers at the time. Although the white model was the constant yardstick of success, there were also continuous efforts to celebrate and bring African achievements to the fore, so as to prove that they were also capable of achieving great things. This was meant to inspire the readers and to assert the idea of unity through the acknowledgement and praise of other black peoples' successes.

The 'Abyssinian Crisis' has been discussed because it was a key historical event which was used by many contributors to promote unity amongst black people. Ethiopia was seen as a symbol of the African struggle for freedom with some contributors expressing a desire to even go there and materially assist the Ethiopians. This added a layer of pan-Africanism to the idea of unity. However, Selope Thema and other contributors thought that those who championed Ethiopian freedom needed to deal with their own problems within South Africa before they could concern themselves with Ethiopia.

This chapter has also shown that the main perceptions held by African writers were diverse and not monolithic, and sometimes ambiguous and contradictory. These discussions are key in showing that the *Bantu World* was not just a platform for promoting a moderate ideology meant to steer black people away from radical resistance. The Zulu pages gave writers space to openly engage with issues and promote identity formation and the crystallisation of a sense of African-ness as a homogeneous identity opposed to Indians, Chinese, Coloured and, of course, whites. Although the *Bantu World* was not intended by the owners to be a nationalistic paper, the discussions found in the Zulu pages prove that in the 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s there was an emerging and growing nationalist sentiment among its readers.

The next chapter is a discussion of the themes of self-help and entrepreneurship which were promoted by the editors and many writers as an essential step towards the achievement of progress. I show how Zulu-language writers used the Zulu pages as a platform to market and promote black business and further emphasise the need for unity. The removal and return of the Zulu pages is also discussed in this chapter as evidence of the passion that the Zulu-language writers had for their language and the increasingly important presence of the Zulu pages in the *Bantu World*.

4 CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Self-help, entrepreneurship and the removal and return of the Zulu pages

Introduction

This chapter discusses the themes of self-help and entrepreneurship in the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World* from its formation to the early 1950s. As a central ideal to Selope Thema and many South African intellectuals from the late nineteenth century, self-help through the pursuit of entrepreneurship was believed to be the most important strategy that would help black people to achieve progress. Many Zulu language contributors encouraged their fellow readers to pay less attention to their grievances and problems, championing the idea of hard work as the only means by which Africans could succeed. The belief in the uplifting effects of hard work was greatly championed by Booker T. Washington, whose teachings and example were often cited in the *Bantu World*. While many contributors subscribed to the idea of hard work, others used their letters and articles to lament their disadvantaged socio-economic conditions. Arguing that hard work on its own was not enough for them to uplift themselves; they called for more opportunities to be made available to Africans. According to them, hard work on its own was not to be of any effect as long as the white government oppressed and denied them the same economic opportunities that other races enjoyed. In view of this, one of the main contentious issues that will be highlighted in this chapter is the question of the extent to which self-help needed government's guidance.

The second section of this chapter discusses a brief period in the late 1940s when the Zulu pages were removed. The exclusion of this language sparked immediate debate around the motive behind its removal (the official reasons put forward were financial) as well as the issue of space for Zulu in the paper. Although other African languages like Xhosa, Sotho, Venda, Swati, Tsonga and Tswana still remained in the paper, they did not have a permanent space and appeared inconsistently in the mid- to late 1940s. Due to my inability to read these languages, I could not analyse the readers' reaction or whether there was a formal announcement that these languages were going to be excluded from some issues. The reaction of the Zulu language readers suggests that the latter were mostly concerned about the removal of their own language

and used written complaints in order to secure a permanent space for Zulu in the *Bantu World*. In spite of the contrasting views that were presented, there is a clear indication that some writers and readers were very passionate about their language. In the last part of the chapter, I will argue that the brief removal and return of Zulu can be used to highlight the importance of language as a creator of imagined communities and a sense of unity of purpose which was central not only to economic but also to socio-political upliftment. In addition, I will emphasise the importance of the Zulu language to the readers and writers of the *Bantu World* as a platform through which they could express their views and claim their space. This contributes to our understanding of the key ideas that were being produced in the newspaper.

4.1.1 Self-help, entrepreneurship and progress

The idea of self-help and entrepreneurship as a method through which progress was to be achieved has a long history in South Africa. Paul La Hausse offers an important discussion of the kholwa (Christian Africans) and how their passion for self-improvement and enterprise through farming, entrepreneurship, transport riding and printing among other activities was seen among the Zulu from the 1880s.[399] This desire for economic success was very similar to that which was expressed later on by the Zulu language writers in the *Bantu World.* It is worth noting that this pursuit of racial economic upliftment was not unique to the African community. Among the Afrikaners, in their pursuit of economic empowerment, nationalists sought to adopt volkskapitalisme (people's capital) that tried to take control from the British- or Jewish-dominated foreign economic system in the 1930s and 1940s. By developing Afrikaner businesses such as Sanlam and Volkskas into corporate giants, these nationalists aimed at improving the economic conditions of the Afrikaners who at the time were less well off than the English speaking South African whites.[400]

Echoing the ideas of Booker T. Washington, Selope Thema supported African business as is evident in many of the editorials and articles of the *Bantu World* which made constant references to the importance for black people of working hard and not merely focusing on their problems

[399] LaHausse deLaLouviere. *Restless Identities*. See also John L. and Jean Comaroff. *Of Revelation and Revolution,* pp, 6-8.
[400] Dan O'Meara. *Volkskapitalisme: Class, capital and ideology in the development of Afrikaner nationalism, 1934-1948.* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983).

and grievances.[401] According to August Meier, Washington often criticised black people for 'permitting their grievances to overshadow their opportunities'. In view of Washington's influence on Thema, it is not surprising that statements along these lines are often found in the *Bantu World*.[402] As expressed in many articles, especially those by Thema, ultimate responsibility for the progress of the black man lay in the hands of the black man and the white man was only there to assist him in his journey. However, while African intellectuals and writers were inspired by African American ideologies, it is also evident that the desire to succeed and progress was primarily a result of the disadvantaged socio-economic position that they found themselves in.

The theme of hard work also appeared in other newspapers - both African and European owned - in the early twentieth century. In an editorial in *Ilanga laseNatal* entitled 'Qonda Loku Muntu' (Note this oh African), John Dube, with a tone of anxiety and fearfulness, spoke of the end of the Boer war and of how someone called Mr Chamberlain[403] had expressed concern for the black people:

> Kepa nasegoli ngenxa yokuvilapa kwetu abelungu sebecabanga ukuleta ezinye izizwe. Nithini luhlanga olumnyama? Kuyiqiniso loku okutshiwo ngati? Abelungu batanda tina kunazo zonke lezi zizwe. Nga kube bayajabula uma sikutele. O! uma si yasazi isikatisetu…akube itina esihamba pansi kwezinyawo zabelungu sizuze ubuhlakaniphi babo [Note that even in Johannesburg because of our laziness white people are considering bringing in other nations. What do you say black nation? Is this true what they say about us? White people love us more than other nations. They would be happy if we were hard working. Oh! If we knew our time, we would walk under their guidance and gain their enlightenment].[404]

The rhetorical question, 'Nithini luhlanga olumnyama!' (What do you say black nation?), was meant to persuade and awaken the readers about the things that were happening around them. According to Dube, the fate of the black man was in the hands of the white man. The latter was to determine the position of the black man, who needed to work hard in order to prove that he

[401] Switzer. '*Bantu World*', p. 362.
[402] Meier. *Negro Thought in America 1880-1915*, p. 100.
[403] Dube did not state who Mr Chamberlain was or his political position.

was useful so as to avoid being replaced by 'other nations', perhaps in this case the Indian and Chinese workforce. The question of progress was not only to be answered by Europeans, but by the extent to which the black man was able to prove himself to be worthy of being uplifted by the white man. The article went on to state that it was also important that white people actually loved black people more than any other 'nation', a word writers often used to refer to themselves as a black community.

Many articles in African newspapers in the twentieth century expressed the idea that black people were lazy and needed to be encouraged to work harder. One of the aims of *Umteteli waBantu* in 1920 for example was 'Abantu bafundiswe imisebenzi' (People to be taught how to work).[405] This implied the perception that Africans simply did not know how to work hard. On the other hand, the scarcity of job opportunities for the black populace might have been the reason why there were such efforts to make them aware that they needed to create their own opportunities and even try to become entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship was a pivotal part of the struggle for both mental and economic progress and was continually encouraged under the banner of self-help in the *Bantu World*. According to Les Switzer, the *Bantu World* predominantly publicised products for white consumption as more space was given to European products while there was only one service advert for African herbalists, for example.[406] This in my view partly explains why the Zulu language contributors used their letters to promote black business and entrepreneurship, knowing that they would not enjoy as much exposure in advertisements as white businesses.

In a 1932 issue, one contributor argued that black people, unlike white people, not only looked down on each other, but were also not confident enough to start their own businesses. The common belief in his view was that:

> Umuntu wadalelwa ukuba phansi komlungu noma esenzani ngaphandle koku sebenza komhlophe uyazihleka. [A black person was created to be beneath a white person and

[404] 'Qonda loku Muntu.' *Ilanga lase Natal*. 1: 3, 1903, p. 2.
[405] *Umteteli waBantu*. 1: 1, 1920, p. 1.
[406] Switzer. '*Bantu World*', p. 370.

whatever he tries to achieve aside from working for a white man is a form of self-ridicule as will never succeed].[407]

The writer then encouraged black people to be confident in their abilities:

> Asifunde umsebenzi (Commerce) sifunde ukuphatha imali. Singa thengi lapo esingaqashwa khona. Yonke imali yethu siyihambise pakati kwabakithi, siyapuma nje. Izizwe ezinye ziyabona ukuthi siyisizwe. [Let us learn Commerce and learn how to handle money. Let us not buy where we are not employed. If we circulate all of our money amongst each other we will succeed and other nations will see that we are a nation too]. [408]

Another example of a passionate attempt to promote black entrepreneurship is Alfred Mathibela's 1935 contribution, who encouraged the use of wooden spoons instead of the Western ones, imploring the readers:

> Ake niyeke pantsi izipuni nidhle ngezinkezo koba kona I Factory yaBantu nama Merchanis no Retailer no traveller no agent. [May you please stop using spoons and use traditional cutlery, this will lead to the creation of a factory for black people with Merchants and Retailers, travellers and agents].[409]

This was later supported by the editor who suggested:

> Uma kungahlanganwa nje kutiwe izipuni pansi kusetshenziswe inkezo abantu banganotha. [If we unite and say spoons down and we use traditional spoons people may become rich].[410]

In the same issue Titus Mabaso also seconded this idea and even took the opportunity to advertise his own business: he was a cameraman who had studied at Ohlange Institute and his work was greatly admired by white people (uyababazeka kwabamhlophe).[411] Mabaso went on to complain that fellow black people did not support his business and preferred to go to

[407] 'Abantu Bayacabanga Manje Kudingeka Besizane Emsebenzini'. *Bantu World*. 1: 1, 1932.
[408] 'Abantu Bayacabanga'.
[409] Alfred Mathibela. 'Mkudliwe Ngezinkezo'. *Bantu World*. 3: 45, 1935, p. 6.
[410] Selope Thema. 'Itshe limi Ngothi Bakithi'. *Bantu World*. 3: 46, 1935, p. 2.
[411] Titus Mabaso. 'Uqinisile Umatibela Ngodaba Lwezinkezo Alutintayo Lapa'. *Bantu World*. 3: 46, 1935, p. 3.

Braamfontein where they allegedly received better service.[412] He urged them to support his business by saying, 'Thengani kwabakini nizotola impumelelo' (Buy from your own people and you will succeed).[413] This shows how some contributors went to great lengths to support African entrepreneurship, complaining about black people who preferred to seek services from other communities, thereby continually promoting the theme of unity and mutual support. It is also interesting to note that Mabaso promoted his business by mentioning that his work was admired by white people. Therefore, while discouraging his fellows from seeking white peoples' services at the expense of black business, he still used white people as a reference to legitimise his business, which was not uncommon among African entrepreneurs at the time.

Nevertheless, in many instances, black business was seen as in competition with white business and white people were suspected of sabotaging black businesses. In 1935 Thema argued that:

> [S]ibuye sizwe futi ukuti nabo laba abaquba izinqola ezitengisa ngetiye nekoti namakukisi kutiwa abasawatoli kahle amalayisense. Abanye bati yisenzo sabelungu abatile zezitolo zokudla njengamahotela abakala ngokuthi abantu badla kwabakubo bengazi kumahotela abo. [We have also heard that those who push carts and sell tea and cookies are no longer getting licences. Some say that the licences are the initiative of white people who have businesses such as hotels and complain that people are buying food from the carts instead of coming to their hotels].[414]

Furthermore, noting that there was suspected sabotage of black business shows that denial of fair opportunities was detrimental to black businesses. Black people were also encouraged to support each other's businesses not only in competition with white business but with Indians and the Chinese as well:

> Yiko ungabona abantu bakiti beshiya izitolo zabantu bakubo emalokishini bayotenga kubelungu, maNdiya noma amaShayina. Yiko loko okwenza izitolo zabantu zingami. [That is when you will see our people leaving their own peoples' shops in the locations to buy

[412] Mabaso. 'Uqinisile'.
[413] Ibid. Mabaso. 'Uqinisile'.
[414] Selope Thema. 'Itshe Limi Ngothi Bakithi'. *Bantu World.* 3: 46, 1935, p. 2.

from white, Indian or Chinese peoples' shops. This is what causes black peoples' shops not to flourish].[415]

At this point, it is important to note the tensions that existed between African and Indian entrepreneurs, especially in the 1940s. According to Jon Soske, economic rivalry was at the centre of these tensions as there was 'widespread resentment among Africans against Indian shopkeepers and other petty entrepreneurs, especially in Natal where the majority of Indians lived.'[416] The aspirant Zulu petite bourgeoisie competed with the more established Indian businessmen. The latter were accused of relying 'heavily on African patronage but Indians refused to buy from Africans.'[417] This is why the main opposition to the Doctors Pact of 1947 was led by the Zulu petite bourgeoisie.[418] The constant emphasis on the importance of Africans supporting each other's businesses was thus based on this challenge as it was felt that the African market was being unfairly exploited at the expense of black businesses. Although the Chinese are also mentioned in this extract, there was more criticism of Indians in the Zulu pages, perhaps because they were much more populous in Natal and their businesses were already well established.

This further reveals how, although the idea of self-help was promoted, there was an acute awareness of the role that other races and the repressive government were playing in perpetuating the disadvantaged state of the black man. In 1932, E. A. Tlakula argued that Africans were not completely to blame for the state in which they found themselves and hard work was not the only solution to their economic progress as it needed to be complemented by fair opportunities. He explicitly blamed the colonial system which viewed the black man as a 'menace' and 'uprooted' the African social organisation thereby disrupting African progress.[419] The writer then expressed appreciation to Dr Jesse Jones and James Aggrey who were prominent educationists, for 'giving Africans a chance at education.'[420] Tlakula emphasised his point by

[415] Walter. B. Nhlapho. 'Yekani Umona Kanye Nenzondo'. *Bantu World.* 7: 41, 1940, p. 3.
[416] Soske. 'Unravelling the 1947 'Doctors Pact', p. 164.
[417] Soske. 'Unravelling the 1947'.
[418] Soske. 'Unravelling the 1947'.
[419] E. A Tlakula. 'Africans Not Wholly To Blame'. *Bantu World*. 1: 2, 1932, p. 2.
[420] Tlakula. 'Africans Not Wholly To Blame'. James Aggrey (1875-1927) was a prominent and influential Ghanaian educationist. See also Bantu Weekly Reader. *Bantu World.* 1: 24, 1932; 'Follow Their Lead and Win.' *Bantu World*. 1: 25, 1932; Edwin W. Smith. *Aggrey of Africa.* 1875-1927. (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948.) Jones also promoted the education of Africans. See Thomas Jesse Jones 1873-. *Essentials of Civilisation: A Study in Social*

quoting Booker T. Washington's view that success was 'not so much measured by one's chances as much as one who attains it under great difficulties.'[421] This suggests that those who believed that the African was responsible for both his own downfall and upliftment were not necessarily the majority of the contributors to the *Bantu World.*

In a 1933 article entitled 'Sekelanani Kuko Konke Kwenu: Izwe Limi Ngoti Masi Sebenzelane Tina Bamnyama' (Support Each Other in Everything: Things are not Well, Let us Black People Work Together), the writer complained about how black people were being deprived of opportunities. [422] He cried out by saying:

> Awu Mlimu wami, abelungu bayale nomsebenzi, bayala bo,wo! Lafa elihle kakhulu, miningi imisebenzi abakiti abayivulile asiyipakamisele pezulu. Ngokwenze njalo sozipakamisa nati. [Oh! My God, whites are refusing to give us jobs, Oh they are refusing! A good nation has died, there are many businesses that our people have opened, let us support and lift them up. By doing so we will lift ourselves up as well].[423]

In line with this, some emphasised that the aid of the white man was crucial:

> Kasimboni noyedwa umuntu, ngisho oti seloku azalwa uyazisebenzela, ongapumelela engenabo ubuhlobo obutile nomlungu. [We have never seen a single [black] person who says that ever since he was born he has been working for himself and has succeeded without having some kind of relationship with a white person].[424]

This writer thus believed that since association with white people ensured success, one could not progress without a relationship with them. A frequent contributor, Manyoni, also bemoaned the

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Values. (New York: H. Holt and Co., c. 1929); Thomas Jesse Jones. *Education in East Africa: A study of East, Central and South Africa by the second African Education Commission under the auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, in cooperation with the International Education Board: report / prepared by Thomas Jesse Jones. Chairman of the Commission*. (New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, c1925).

[421] E. A Tlakula. 'Africans Not Wholly To Blame', p. 2.

[422] 'Sekelanani Kuko Konke Kwenu: Izwe Limi Ngoti Masi Sebenzelane Tina Bamnyama.' *Bantu World*. 1: 43, 1933, p. 3.

[423] 'Sekelanani Kuko Konke Kwenu'.

[424] 'Izihlakaniphi Zakithi'. *Bantu World*. 7: 43, 1940, p. 3.

lack of business opportunities for black people.[425] In 1936 he continued to promote black entrepreneurship:

> Yebo kuhle ukusebenzela abeLungu ipele inyanga kumbe isonto uhole kodwa koze kuti nhlo usebenza ufe umshiye umlungu. [Yes, it is good to work for white people until the month or the weekends and you get paid but you will grow old working until you die and leave the white man behind].[426]

In contrast with the writer who encouraged association with white people to ensure success, Manyoni argued that black people needed to wean themselves from the employee mentality and seek to establish their own independent businesses. However, even if here Manyoni encouraged independence, in an earlier article published in the previous year he had stated that white people were more enterprising than black people:

> Abelungu impela bapiwa umqondo wemali. Bheka ngoba ngisho nasemakemisi imiti ibekwa ngobukulu ubuciko nobunono emafasiteleni. [White people were surely given an enterprising mind. Look because even in pharmacies medicine is arranged in a very orderly way on the display].[427]

He however also suggested that the best way to help the black man in business was for opportunities to be opened for him:

> Akupele izitolo zamaNdiya nabe Lungu ezindaweni zabantu kunikwe abantu ituba. Okwesibili akupele izimoto zamaNdiya ezitwala abantu zibasa ezimishini zabantu kunikelezwe isizwe sakiti ituba- kunjalo loko na? [They should remove Indian and white shops in black areas so that black people are given a chance. Secondly, there should be an end to Indian cars transporting people to the missions so that our nation is given a chance - is that so?].[428]

On the other hand there was also the idea that black people needed to meet white people half way in order for them to progress. This is in reference to white liberals who wished to help Africans:

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[425] W.A.E.G. Manyoni. 'Amaqiniso ngaBantu Amazwi Nezenzo Zabo'. *Bantu World*. 3: 48, 1935, p. 3.
[426] W.A.E.G. Manyoni. 'Abantu namaBhizinisi.' *Bantu World.* 3: 50, 1936, p. 2.
[427] W.A.E.G. Manyoni. 'Umgungundlovu Onduku Zibomvu'. *Bantu World.* 4: 5, 1935, p. 7.

instead of the latter being slack and waiting to be helped, Africans needed to make an active effort.[429] However, some writers argued that the white man was not at all interested in helping the black man to progress. In response to a 1936 article by J. K. Mahemane suggesting that white preachers helped to uplift the black man, D. H. Dube argued:

> Ungeke umbone umuntu omnyama ngisho esepase incwadi yokugcina ongambona eshumayeze abelungu esontweni labo. Kodwa wena ngokwako uma ucabanga uti uNkulunkulu wabe esilima uma ekipa amaIsrael eGibite awayise ezweni lesithembiso. Wena ucabanga ukuti umlungu uzokungenisa ezweni lesitembiso. Ngeke ngiqinisile. Ingani namhla awungeni ngomnyango wangaphambili womlungu, awudli etafuleni naye, ngisho nasendlini encane engena umlungu ungengene wena, Ucabangake wena ngengqondo yakho emfishane ukuti uzokusa ezulwini akasoze.Vuka isikhathi sifushane masinyane uzokufa. [You will never see black people, even if they have attained the highest qualification, preaching to white people in their churches. Do you think God was a fool to deliver the Israelites from Egypt and take them to the Promised Land? Do you think that a white person will take you to the Promised Land? Never, I tell you the truth. Even today you do not enter through a white person's front door, you do not eat at the same table with him. You do not enter the same toilet that a white man uses. Do you believe with that parochial mind of yours that he will take you to heaven, he will not. Awake, the time is short, very soon you will die].[430]

Dube added that the whites who preached to Africans only did so for monetary gain and not because they cared about them. He made it clear that in his opinion all hopes for being uplifted by the white man were completely empty. The phrase, 'Vuka isikhathi sifushane masinyane uzokufa' had a sense of urgency which again points to the need for the African mind to be quickly awakened.

A. H. Mdhlalose, another contributor, responded to Dube's letter in the next issue, arguing that even those who had broken away from mission or white churches did not have genuine love for black people. He wrote:

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[428] Manyoni. 'Umgungundlovu'.
[429] Makhandakhanda. 'Emunye Umuntu Angakhokha Indibilishi Nje Vo!' *Bantu World.* 16: 13, 1949, p. 3.
[430] D.H. Dube. 'Opendula Umahemane Ngodaba Lwenkolo Aloba Ngayo ePepeni'. *Bantu World.* 4: 40, 1936, p. 2.

> Akusizi ukubona izono zabefundisi abamhlophe namabandla angaphansi kwabo singazibheki ezetu iziposiso. Bonke abafundisi bafuna imali, Imali ilungile ifunwe kupela uma inomsebenzi omhle. [It does not help to see the sins of white preachers and their congregations without looking at our own misgivings. All preachers want money, it is good to want money as long as it is for good use].[431]

By basing his argument on the issue of money, he did not fully address Dube's concerns about the willingness of white people to help black people to progress.

In spite of the debates about the role of white people and self-help in the achievement of progress, the general consensus was that black entrepreneurship needed to be promoted. Black businessmen were celebrated and their advancements shown in many issues in the Zulu pages. In February 1936 Manyoni praised Mr Zeblon Ngubane who had opened a Tea Room on Church Street in Johannesburg, wishing him well.[432] Similarly, in 1939 the newspaper praised Mr J. Mokoena for opening a fruit shop, and Mr Manana for also opening an independent business.[433] Such celebrations were featured frequently in the paper into the 1940s and 1950s, which suggests that black entrepreneurship was still being encouraged in spite of increased white repression.

The early 1950s saw a more active attempt at fighting economic oppression. M. S. Makubu for example encouraged vehicle owners to join the Impumalanga Taxi Owners Association so as to fight the laws against black taxis.[434] The idea of self-help was no longer concentrated on just self-improvement but included fighting injustices as well.

The writers in the Zulu articles did not always agree on the relationship between self-help, entrepreneurship, the role of white people and progress. Their debates are a reflection of a consciousness that was developing and the desire to see themselves elevated from the disadvantaged position that they found themselves in. At the same time these discussions present several contradictions with regards to the black people's perception about white people and the role they had to play in their development. White people were seen as competitors but also

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[431] A.H Mdhlalose. 'Impendulo ku D.H Dube'. *Bantu World.* 4: 41, 1936, p. 5.
[432] W. A.E.G. Manyoni. 'Umgungundlovu Onduku Zbomvu'. *Bantu World*. 4: 43, 1936, p.2. For more on how various businesses were promoted in the *Bantu World* through advertisements see Switzer. '*Bantu World* and the Origins'.
[433] A.C Mhlakaza Tshabalala. 'Ezase Wesseton'. *Bantu World*. 7: 9, 1939, p. 2.
[434] M.S Makubu. 'Vukani Nizenzele Baphathi Bezinqola'. *Bantu World.* 2 December 1950, p. 4.

potential partners, benevolent benefactors but also oppressors. As they encouraged each other to be self-employed entrepreneurs, black people also recognised that they could not do so without white people: the latter held the keys to opening up opportunities for black people to be successful. Writers were very self-critical, sometimes sarcastic towards their community, at the same time they used every opportunity available to them to publicly celebrate each and every achievement made by their fellows.

4.1.2 The removal and return of the Zulu pages: late 1948-1949

The space for these celebrations of the achievements of black people in the Zulu pages was gradually reduced from the mid-1940s and early 1950s. This period also saw the removal of the Zulu pages for a short period in 1948. In its early years, in spite of the fact that the paper was born out of the financial struggles of the Great Depression, it seemed to be doing well. In September 1932, the editor announced the need to increase the number of pages in the paper so as to 'give more news to our readers.'[435] This shows that the paper was being received well. In August 1935, P. D. Segale, one of the journalists of the *Bantu World*, announced that as a result of its continuing success, the paper had acquired new and more spacious premises at 1 Polly Street in Johannesburg.[436] He stated that although the paper had faced economic difficulties, it had improved with its pages increasing from eight in 1932 to sixteen in 1935. At this point, an average of two pages were dedicated to each African language page and four pages to English articles. This remained the case into the early 1940s. In a March 1942 issue, Selope Thema wrote explaining how the material that was used for printing the newspaper was being imported from Canada and was transported via ships. Those ships were now needed to transport the army and weapons to Australia, India and South Africa as a result of the ongoing Second World War.[437] He then said:

> Kusukela namhlanje *iBantu World* izobe ibana makasi ayi 12 ngelinye isonto, ibe ne 14 ngelinye kuzosetshenziswa amatayipi amancane ukuze kungene izindaba eziningi. [From

[435] *Bantu World*. 1: 25, 1932, p. 10.
[436] P. D. Segale. 'Another Milestone of Amazing Progress: Opening of the *Bantu World's* New Premises.' *Bantu World*. 4: 17, 1935, p. 1.
[437] Selope Thema. 'Kubalobeli Betu'. *Bantu World.* 10: 48, 1942, p. 2.

now on the *Bantu World* will have 12 pages in one week and 14 pages in another week. We will use a small font for typing so that more stories fit into the pages].[438]

He went on to request that contributors send shorter letters and for people to share one copy of the paper which implied that fewer copies were going to be produced. The economic impact of the Second World War thus proved far reaching in terms of its effects on the production of the *Bantu World.* Another editorial in March 1943 announced that the pages of the paper would be reduced from 14 to 12 pages.[439] The editor again cited the country's participation in the Second World War as a reason for this reduction and encouraged readers to share the paper. In an April 1943 editorial, he asked contributors to write their stories on one sheet of a writing pad.[440] He stated that this would help in difficult times since the paper had been reduced in size.[441] In the same year R. R. R. Dhlomo, who had been assistant editor of the *Bantu World* since 1933, left the paper to join *Ilanga laseNatal.*

By late 1944 to 1945 there was much less space for the Zulu writers with only one page allocated for African languages. There was not only less space, but less substance in the content in contrast with the 1930s trends: the Zulu page was now largely dominated by environmental and agricultural issues, which seems like a retrogressive change as contributors no longer had the space to engage in issues they had discussed earlier.[442] Now an expert in agriculture or economics would sometimes write advising people on issues such as building toilets and farming methods.[443] There were articles such as 'Amanzi Amahle' (Pure Water) which educated readers on how to tell whether water was pure or impure.[444] The rest of the page consisted of one or two articles on different issues which seemed a shadow of what the pages once were. This is an indication of what the owners thought was most important to the Zulu reader, that is, advice on how he was to improve his conditions in his rural surroundings. This was in line with the aim of ensuring that the *Bantu World* promoted the idea of Africans as an agricultural and rural based people.

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[438] Thema. 'Kubalobeli Betu'.
[439] Selope Thema. 'Ukuncitshiswa kwe*Bantu World*'. *Bantu World.* 10: 93, 1943, p. 2.
[440] Mhleli *B.W.* 'Isicelo Kubalobeli'. *Bantu World*. 11: 1, 1943, p. 2.
[441] Mhleli *B.W.* 'Isicelo Kubalobeli', p. 2.
[442] 'Isithasiselo Sezasekhaya'. *Bantu World.* 12: 2, 4, 9, 1944.
[443] 'Isithasiselo Sezasekhaya'. *Bantu World.*
[444] 'Amanzi Amahle'. *Bantu World*. 12: 19, 1944, p. 2.

In the first issue of January 1949, the editor informed readers that their Zulu language letters had been sent to *Ilanga laseNatal*.[445] He also replied to Mr E. A. Kanyile of Orlando who had asked when the Zulu pages were removed, saying, 'Sekuyisikhathi sikhishiwe ku *Bantu World*.' (It has been a while since it [Zulu] has been removed from the *Bantu World*).[446] He advised Kanyile to send his letters to *Ilanga laseNatal* and also recommended loyal contributors to alternatively write in English.[447] It was very difficult for me to tell exactly when the pages were removed because I could not find the 1948 issue of the *Bantu World* which could have given a clearer indication of when the paper ceased to publish Zulu language stories. However, since the editor's statement that the Zulu pages had been removed 'a while' back was made in January 1949, from the conversations between the editor and contributors one can speculate that the pages were removed in late 1948. Encouraging Zulu language writers to instead write to *Ilanga laseNatal* shows how the Bantu Press to some extent treated its newspapers as if they were one. The owners believed that a contributor who had written to the *Bantu World* would easily move to *Ilanga laseNatal* since it offered space to write in Zulu. More importantly, after all the engagement and captivating contributions made by Zulu writers, Thema and the owners seemed to think that they could afford to remove the Zulu pages, a sign that the language did not have a permanent place in the paper: in fact, it was clear from the onset that African languages were not meant to be given much space in the paper anyway, as Paver had made it clear in his 1932 proposal.[448]

Although the Zulu language was removed for a brief period, the reactions of the contributors when the language was removed show how Zulu had gained importance over time. The Zulu pages could not be easily removed because the contributors had created a unique platform and a space in the *Bantu World* which they believed they owned and were proud of. To the Zulu-speaking readers and contributors, the removal of their preferred language from such a popular paper could have been tantamount to demotion and rejection. Readers' complaints proved successful as the Zulu pages were restored towards the end of January 1949 after having been removed sometime in 1948. In the first week of February 1949, 'The Manager' of the *Bantu World* wrote that the Zulu language was now back and that this was the third week since it had

[445] Selope Thema. 'Kubabhaleli BesiZulu'. *Bantu World*. 18: 1, 1949, p. 5.
[446] Thema. 'Kubabhaleli BesiZulu'.
[447] Thema. 'Kubabhaleli BesiZulu'.

returned.[449] This was met with great excitement as many contributors wrote to welcome the Zulu pages back.

In 'Savuka kwabafileyo isiZulu' (The Zulu language rises from the dead), a frequent writer, Makhandakhanda, the first to comment about the removal and the return of Zulu, complained about the previous removal of the Zulu pages, going as far as making speculations about what had caused it:

> Okwabangela ukuba isiZulu sikhishwe ku *Bantu World* akwaziwa muntu. Kodwa thinake esazi zonke iziphithiphithi zomhlaba sisola lokhu ikakhulu; ubuzwe, umona, inkani nobandlululo. [No one knows what caused the Zulu language to be removed from the *Bantu World*. However, those of us who know the affairs of this world, blame these things most of all: parochialism, jealousy, stubbornness and discrimination].[450]

He suggested that the removal was meant to sabotage the Zulu language and its contributors and had nothing to do with the commercial reasons that had been given by the editor in his explanation. He further hinted that the owners of the paper had been influenced by speakers of other vernacular languages to remove Zulu so that their languages could take over the space.[451] This suspicion might have been caused by the fact that other languages such as Sotho and Tswana, Venda and Swati had remained after Zulu had been removed. However, there was a general reduction of the paper which saw Xhosa, Afrikaans and Swati also being absent from some issues of the paper for the period when the paper began to face financial challenges. For example, in the January 15 1949 issue, seven pages were allocated to English while six were divided between Sotho, Tswana and Tsonga with no space allocated to the previously included Afrikaans, Zulu or Xhosa.[452] In the January 22 1949 issue, seven pages were allocated to English, two to Sotho, one to Tswana and one to Venda.[453] This might also have been an effort to accommodate less represented languages like Tsonga and in some cases Venda which were probably meant to target a new audience for the paper. However, in line with his suspicions,

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[448] National Archives of South Africa NTS, 9715/803/400.
[449] The Manager. 'Subuyile isiZulu'. *Bantu World.* 8: 5, 1949, p. 3.
[450] Makhandakhanda. 'Savuka Kwabafileyo isiZulu'. *Bantu World*. 8: 5, 1949, p. 3.
[451] Makhandakhanda. 'Savuka Kwabafileyo'.
[452] *Bantu World.* 18: 2, 1949.
[453] *Bantu World*. 18: 3, 1949.

Makhandakhanda emphasised that there was no need for tribalism which he believed had motivated some alleged opponents of Zulu and had led to its temporary exclusion from the paper:

> Leso senzo sokuthi uZulu kwaZulu, amaXhoza eXhozeni [sic], naBesuthu eluSuthu sinengozi nelangabi elibi kakhulu. Imizamo ebonakalayo yokwakha lezizizwe ukuba zibeMunye, zikhulume ngazwi linye lokuthi zingaMa-Afrika. [This belief that the Zulu belong to Zululand, the Xhosa to Xhosaland and the Sotho to Lesotho is very dangerous. There are efforts to build unity among these tribes so that they become one and speak with one voice and say they are all Africans].[454]

The fact that other African languages remained after the Zulu language had been removed to an extent shows that the removal of Zulu could not have only been caused by a general disdain for African languages or 'tribalism'. The fact that the Zulu letters were being sent to *Ilanga laseNatal* was an indication that the owners and editors of the paper might have thought that the removal of Zulu would not have much of an impact since *Ilanga laseNatal* was one the most popular of the Bantu Press (Pty.) Limited newspapers which published stories in Zulu. They might have believed that the Zulu letters and articles would enjoy equally good coverage and easily become a new home for the Zulu language writers.

However, the most important point to note is that the English pages were never reduced. In spite of the financial constraints that the paper was facing, there was actually more space allocated to English in 1949 at seven pages than the average of four to five pages which was allocated in the 1930s when the paper was prospering. The owners thus believed that it was better to reduce African languages and alternate between them in various issues as the *Bantu World* was to them primarily and English newspaper. As mentioned earlier, I am not certain whether there were complaints about the absence of Xhosa, Tsonga or Swati in some issues as I am not conversant in those languages and could not really tell if there were discussions with regards to this. However, even after the return of the Zulu pages in January 1949, the trend of excluding some African languages from some issues still continued. The May 21 1949 issue for example only featured

[454] Makhandakhanda. 'Savuka Kwabafileyo', p. 3.

English, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana and Venda with Xhosa not being included.[455] This might have been a result of the silence of the contributors who wrote in other African languages, in contrast with the Zulu language writers, who strongly and vocally advocated for the quick return of the language. In his editorial, 'Umhleli Ukhuluma Ngokubuya KwesiZulu' (The editor speaks on the return of the Zulu language), the editor stated that it was as a result of the complaints of the Zulu language contributors that Zulu had been restored:

> Sekungamasontshwana isiZulu sakhishwa kuzinhla ze*Bantu World*, kodwa kuthe ngokukhala kwabafundi besiZulu jikelele kwabuye kwaphuma izwi lokuthi ngempela kufanele isiZulu singene sibuyiselwe futhi kuzinhla zaleliphephandaba lesizwe. [It has been a few weeks since Zulu was removed from the *Bantu World* but as a result of the complaints by the Zulu language readers it was decided that Zulu needed to be returned to this newspaper of the nation].[456]

Although he did not speak about the other languages, in the editorial he did mention that there were still efforts to have a proper Swati language orthography and the *Bantu World* was encouraging Swati language writers to continue with these efforts as they were the ones who enriched their languages. In view of this, it could be that in contrast with some other languages Zulu was more popular and had more contributors who actively supported and backed its promotion. The Zulu language became a permanent feature in the *Bantu World* up to 1952, while other languages like Xhosa and Afrikaans continued to feature inconsistently in various issues during the same period. It is unclear to me whether it was solely economic considerations together with the complaints of the Zulu readers that led to this.

Notably, the editor responded to Makhandakhanda's allegations that the Zulu language was being deliberately sabotaged by explaining that he and the owners thought that the Zulu pages were not necessary in the paper. He conceded that they had been wrong in making such an assumption, which is why Zulu was quickly brought back:

> Sasicabanga ukuthi isiZulu ku*Bantu World* asidingeki kakhulu. Laphoke saphosisa ngakhoke isiZulu sabuyiswa ngokushesha. [We thought the Zulu language was not that

[455] *Bantu World*. 18: 21, 1949.
[456] 'Umhleli Ukhuluma Ngokubuya KwesiZulu'. *Bantu World*. 18: 3, 1949, p. 5.

necessary in the *Bantu World*. We made a mistake by thinking this, which is why the Zulu language was quickly returned].[457]

The editor however did not give an explanation regarding the other African languages which he might have done in those sections of the paper written in other languages. Makhandakhanda also very assertively asked the owners not to remove the Zulu pages ever again as this was a sign of disrespect for the language:

> Thinake esingavumi nakancane ukuba ulimi lukaPhunga noMageba ludelelwe ngokuhliselwa phansi kangaka singethule ukudonsa labo besenzo leso amadlebe ukuba lingaphindi lwenzeke lelo hlazo. I*Bantu World* lena ize ikhule ibe ngaka yakhuliswa yilolu limi nabalobeli balo okukhulunywa ngabo kuwo wonke amagumbi amane omhlaba yizizwe zonke. [Us, who are against the disrespect and denigration of the language of Phunga and Mageba [Zulu], would like to advise those who did this deed not to repeat this abomination ever again. The *Bantu World* has become so huge thanks to the [Zulu] language and its contributors who are spoken of in all the four corners of the world by all nations].[458]

Interestingly, he exaggerated the newspaper circulation by stating that readers were now known all over the world. Although Makhandakhanda may have been very aware of the limited newspaper circulation, this statement may be read as a sign of him showing pride and recognition of the importance of the Zulu language. His words also say something about this 'world' as corresponding to the readers' circle. He then listed some of the contributors who had played a key role in growth of the *Bantu World* through the Zulu pages, mentioning Titus Mabaso, Joe ne Zakhe, Xam' kaVinjelwa, Mahambangendlwana, Mazibuko and others.[459] He went on emphasising that fellow readers had been deeply disappointed by the removal of the Zulu pages and that the efforts of these individuals needed to be recognised.

In the February 12 1949 issue, space was given for several writers to comment on the return of the Zulu language under the heading 'Abafundi baphonsa Amazwi Ngokubuya KwesiZulu

[457] Makhandakhanda. 'Savuka' (editors' response), p. 3.
[458] Makhandakhanda. 'Savuka Kwabafileyo', p. 3.
[459] Ibid.

Ephepheni likaNtu' (Readers express their views on the return of Zulu to the people's paper).[460] These contributions show how important the Zulu space was to readers. J. Z. Tielima declared to be joyful that Zulu had returned, and thanked the editor for it.[461] J. Z. Tiella rose in defence of the editor (and most likely also responding to Makhandakhanda's previous accusation), emphasising that Thema had clearly stated that there was no conspiracy behind the removal of the Zulu pages. Tiella also encouraged new writers to contribute new stories to the paper so that the Zulu pages could be revived.[462] One letter by A. E Gumbo was entitled 'Isililo Siphelile' (The mourning has ended), further demonstrating the excitement and emotional reaction to the removal and return of Zulu.[463] Another contributor, Moses Shabangu, said that when the Zulu pages were removed, he had stopped reading the paper, but now that they were back he had started reading it again.[464] This constitutes evidence that some people did not read the whole paper but only some sections in line with their interests and perhaps with their linguistic skills. In other words, it is plausible that some African readers did not even read the English sections.

Some other readers not only celebrated the return, but also criticised the paper for not giving enough space to the Zulu language. In 1950 an unnamed writer decried the dominance of English by saying:

> Angilwi lesiNgisi kodwa masingabi siningi kangaka ephepheni labantu sivimbele izilimi zabantu ephepheni labo. [I am not fighting against the English language but may it not dominate in the people's paper and block African peoples' languages in their paper].[465]

Given the official financial reasons for the removal of some pages, it would have been better to remove English, this contributor seemed to say. Contrary to Paver's initial aim of including African languages only when essential, readers widely believed that African languages were supposed to dominate the paper rather than English. These contributors had a sense of ownership of the Zulu pages. To them, the *Bantu World* was their paper, therefore, when it came to editorial choices in terms of language, Zulu had to be given priority. When Michael Maisella, writing later

[460] 'Abafundi baphonsa Amazwi Ngokubuya KwesiZulu Ephepheni likaNtu'. *Bantu World.* 8: 6, 1949, p. 3.
[461] J. Z Tielima. 'Sishaya Izandla Ngesikubonayo'. *Bantu World.* 8: 5, 1949, p. 3.
[462] J.Z Tielima. 'Ngobani Abasebenzele Ukuba Sibuye IsiZulu?' *Bantu World.* 16: 12, 1949, p. 3.
[463] A.E Gembo. 'Isililo Sesiphelile'. *Bantu World*. 8: 6, 1949, p. 3.
[464] Moses. J. Shabangu. 'Ngiyathokoza Ngokubuya kwesiZuli'. *Bantu World*. 16: 9, 1949, p. 3.
[465] A. E Gumbo. 'Isililo Sesiphelile'. See also J.Z Tielima'. Osekela uMnz M. Maisella.' *Bantu World*. 30 December 1950.

in 1949, asked whether he should send his story in English or Zulu, Thema told him to rather send it in Zulu: he was now making an increased effort to promote people's preferences.[466]

Reader's cries in terms of more space given to Zulu, however, fell on deaf ears. Even after the return of the Zulu pages, there remained only one page in Zulu. For some readers whose views found space in the Zulu letters, the issue of language choice remained a problem well into the 1950s. J. Z. Tielima's views were published again in 1950: he asked the editor to pay attention to readers' complaints and do something about the lack of space for Zulu.[467] Yet some contributors did not think that space was a problem. Michael Maisella stated that he was happy that stories concerning Africans were seen on the first page, and encouraged the editor to continue with the one page, as this was sufficient.[468] Some efforts were thus being made to have vernacular stories feature in the front page.[469] Cecil Goba, another contributor, in December 1950 stated that he had read many letters written by people who wanted more space for the Zulu language and less for English. He bemoaned that this was a sign of ingratitude: it was thanks to white missionaries that Africans knew how to read, and now they wanted to reject English, the language of their teachers.[470] However, Goba's and Maisella's letters might have been deliberate efforts by the editor and owners to show that only a minority of readers wanted more Zulu pages. There is still no way of knowing what the majority of the Zulu language readers and writers thought.

Maisella wrote another article at the end of 1950 - this time in English - arguing that the removal of African languages would be unfair as not all Africans were educated enough to read English.[471] This was a reaction to early suggestions that the African languages be removed altogether, a sign that the promoters of such an initiative might not have been aware of the popularity of Zulu or deliberately ignored its popularity so as to continue promoting English as a more 'civilised' language.

[466] Michael. M. Maisella. 'Umbuzo KuMhleli'. *Bantu World.* 16: 11, 1949.
[467] J.Z Tielima.' Osekela uMnz M. Maisella'. *Bantu World.* 30 December 1950, p. 4.
[468] Muziwakhe Maisella. 'Isikhala sesiZulu Ephepheni'. *Bantu World*. 30 December 1950, p. 4.
[469] *Bantu World*. 25 November 1950.
[470] Cecil. L. Goba. 'Isilungu Emaphepheni Abantu'. *Bantu World.* 30 December 1950, p. 4.
[471] Mziwakhe. M. Maisella. 'Not all Africans are Educated'. *Bantu World.* 30 December 1950, p. 5.

J. Z. Tielima continued with the discussion of space for African languages up to 1952. Responding to C. Danibe's November 1951 letter of complaint about the lack of space for Zulu, Tielima replied:

> Vukani ebuthongweni, sesibone kaningi uma abamhlophe benza into kuhlangabezwa uningi. [Awake from your slumber, we have seen on several occasions that when white people do something they unite].[472]

He echoed the constant cry in the paper for Africans to awaken and unite in all their efforts to uplift their language and economic status.

Another interesting article which spoke of the removal and the return of the Zulu pages was that of A. Msuthu, who thanked all those who had fought for the return of the Zulu pages. He wrote about how some people had tried to suppress the language, but members of the Sons and Daughters of Zululand, an organisation which promoted tribal unity among the Zulu, had negotiated with the *Bantu World* and this had resulted in the return of Zulu.[473] He then invited readers to join the association as it was effectively representing the Zulu community.[474] This organisation therefore saw an opportunity to promote itself through the Zulu language section of the *Bantu World*. In a later issue of 1952, the National Secretary of the organisation described the purpose of this society as that of promoting and teaching Zulu culture and enhancing social interaction among the Zulu.[475] Giving space to these views does not mean that the *Bantu World* subscribed to the promotion of tribal associations. The newspaper rather encouraged inter-tribal unity: in the same year a letter by Raymond Mthembu strongly urged the Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho and other 'tribes' to unite as Africans.[476] As Makhandakhanda had done in 1949,[477] Mthembu criticised ethnic exclusivism and emphasised the fact that all black people belonged to one nation and needed to maintain that unity so as to succeed.

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[472] J. Z Tielima. 'Vuka Afrika!' *Bantu World.* 19 January 1952.
[473] A. Msuthu Madlala. 'I S.O.Z Inezwi Kubafundi'. *Bantu World.* 16: 11, 1949; On the S.O.Z see also W.B. Mkabise. 'Inhlanhla Enhle Kinina maZulu'. *Bantu World.* 5 January 1952; C. Danibe. 'Amadodana kwaZulu'. *Bantu World.* 12 January 1952; *Bantu World.* 15 April 1950.
[474] A. Msuthu Madlala. 'I S.O.Z Inezwi Kubafundi'.
[475] O. Theo Xulu. 'S.O.Z' Enyakeni Omusha'. *Bantu World.* 19 January 1952.
[476] Raymond. T. Mtembu. 'Zulu, Msuthu, NoMxhosa Nenzani?'. *Bantu World.* 19 January 1952, p. 4.
[477] Makhandakhanda. 'Savuka Kwabafileyo'.

In spite of all the debates surrounding the removal and return of the Zulu pages, the bottom line remained the importance of promoting Zulu as an agent of not only ethnic but national unity. However, despite the fact that the removal of Zulu-language debates only lasted for a short while, the removal and return of the Zulu pages to some extent disturbed the momentum with regards to the intellectual debates that dominated the 1930s and the 1940s. From the mid-1940s there was already an indication that the survival of the Zulu pages was going to be compromised for financial reasons. The costs of production also seem to have been coupled with a decline in the paper's market. In the April 8 1950 issue, readers were urged to buy the paper:

> Ngithi nisabelani ukuthenga iphephandaba na? Nisaba ngoba liloba izenzo zenu ezimbi na? Yeka kugcina imali yekhonsathi nemadansi uthenge iphepha leNkanyiso.' [I say, why are you afraid of buying this newspaper? Are you afraid because it writes about your bad deeds? Stop saving money for concerts and dances and buy the paper of enlightenment].[478]

This emphasis on 'enlightenment' was a promotion of the notion of 'respectability' in line with Victorian, middle-class European ideals. At the same time, the Suppression of Communism Act might have caused this decline as censorship also heightened and it became more difficult to criticise the government as it was banning publications that promoted allegedly 'communist' ideas.[479]

Conclusion

This chapter has firstly discussed the idea of self-help in relation to entrepreneurship which was promoted by the editors and many writers as an essential step towards progress. In an atmosphere of competition with white, Indian, Chinese and several other nationalities among whom there were prosperous business people, the Zulu writers used the Zulu pages as a platform to market and promote black business. The emphasis that African concerns were distinct from those of other races challenged the idea promoted by European liberals and some African politicians that racial cooperation needed to be rooted in common grievances and aspirations among the various races. In this chapter I have also attempted to assess the meaning of the contradictory views held by some contributors, arguing that on the one hand they aspired to imitate the Victorian middle-

[478] *Bantu World.* 8 April 1950.
[479] Saleem Badat. *The Forgotten People: Political Banishment under Apartheid.* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

class progress that white people had supposedly achieved, while on the other hand they desired to retain some aspects that defined their African identity such as language.

The significance of language was shown when the Zulu language was briefly removed from the *Bantu World* in late 1948. The brief removal and return of the Zulu pages had a great impact on readers: the fact that some of them stopped buying the newspaper while others were vocal about their concerns provides evidence that many considered the Zulu pages as the most important part of this publication. However, English was to the editor and owners seemingly the most important language in the paper: in spite of financial limitations, English still dominated the paper. This is unsurprising, as Betram Paver had from the very beginning emphasised that the *Bantu World* was primarily an English newspaper.

The heated debates that resulted from the removal and return of Zulu also show how the Zulu-speaking writers had a sense of ownership and greatly valued this language as central to the life of the *Bantu World.* More than just a symbol of Zulu and African identity, Zulu was an instrument by which writers encouraged unity amongst the black populace. Although other languages such as Afrikaans, Xhosa and Swati also ceased to feature consistently in the paper from the late 1940s, it was difficult due to language limitations and the scope of this research to tell whether the Afrikaner, Xhosa or Swati readers also complained about the issue of space. However, even after the return of Zulu which began to feature in all issues consistently until 1952, languages like Xhosa and Afrikaans, for reasons unclear to me, still featured in some issues but were excluded from others. The passion exhibited by the Zulu writers and the prompt response of the editor and the owners to demands for the return of this language shows that Zulu had become a pivotal part of the paper and was difficult to discard. This suggests that over time the Zulu language contributors grew to have great influence on the content of the *Bantu World*.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this dissertation was to analyse the relationship between colonial modernity, African progress and views about the role of white people in its achievement. This was done through a discussion of the Zulu-language letters and articles found in the *Bantu World* from 1932 to 1952, showing how they expressed contrasting and at times controversial views regarding the question of how they were going to advance and improve their lives as a people. I have mainly discussed the debates around the themes of self-help, the civilising mission, entrepreneurship, unity, the oppressive system and race relations, which were among the most relevant issues revealing the writers' perceptions regarding progress and the role of white people in its realisation.

I became interested in exploring this topic when I came across a 1939 editorial whose introductory statement I use to introduce chapter three, which reads:

> Umqondo womuntu wahlukile kakulu kowomlungu; kulapo nje kuvela kona ukuti ibanga elahlukanise umuntu lomlungu lingango Tukela ubude balo. [The mind of an African is very different from that of a European; there is a disparity in the intellectual levels of these two races which is as wide as the Tugela River].[480]

After reading the whole article, which argued that people of European descent were much better intellectuals, business people and innovators than Africans, I began to question the reasoning behind such perceptions and sought to gain a better understanding of the historical context in which these ideas were being formulated and shared.

In Chapter One, I have discussed the African language press before 1932 and the context in which the *Bantu World* was formed, showing how missionaries in the nineteenth century were pivotal in laying the ideological foundation for black intellectuals by encouraging the Victorian middle class culture. However, the debates presented by the Zulu-language contributors to an extent challenged this, asserting the importance of their language and creating an imagined community of Zulu-language writers in the *Bantu world*. This chapter also discussed the formation of the *Bantu World*, highlighting the economic and political context in which it was formed. In Chapter Three I have also underlined the fact that when it was formed, Bertram Paver

[480] 'Umqondo Womuntu'. *Bantu World.* 6: 38, 1939, p. 6.

stated that it was to primarily be an English newspaper and African languages were to play a peripheral role. However, the Zulu pages show that some Zulu-language contributors believed that African languages and the Zulu language in particular needed to be prioritised as it was central to African pride and identity. I also provided a brief discussion of the contributors who used letter writing as a tool to try and express their views in the midst of repression, censorship and the restrictive purpose of the paper that was laid out by the owners. These contributors created a key public platform for discussion.

Chapter Two provided insights into the main ideological influences behind the issues that contributors raised in the *Bantu World*. Many African intellectuals, in seeking ways to uplift themselves as individuals and as a community, engaged with the ideas of African American thinkers and civil rights activists such as Booker T. Washington, William E. B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey. However, due to the radical thought of Du Bois and Garvey, mission educated black South African intellectuals were encouraged – and partly decided - to engage more with Washington's moderate ideas. The idea of progress through self-help was popular throughout Africa at the time; this seems to have emanated from Washington who was its most fervent proponent. Selope Thema and other intellectuals like John L. Dube, founder of *iLanga laseNatal* and Dr J. N. Nhlapo, who succeeded Thema as editor of the *Bantu World* in 1953, also advocated for the idea.[481] The influence of Washington was evident in the paper.

However, I have also noted that as editor, Thema was sometimes ambivalent when it came to Washington's ideas. Mission educated, a nationalist and assistant secretary of the Joint Council of Europeans and Natives, he faced the same challenge of divided loyalties and ideological ambivalence that his peers faced.[482] He however accommodated ideas contrary to his own in the paper, giving space to some writers who challenged his ideas and, as I discussed in Chapter Two, even questioned his ability to represent African perceptions and aspirations in the *Bantu World*.

Chapter Three focused on some of the main themes discussed in the Zulu pages which bring to the fore the various ideas that contributors held regarding progress and how it was to be

[481] Heather Hughes. 'Doctor J. N. Nhlapo: Educationist and Editor'. *History Workshop*. Unpublished paper. 1978, p. 13.
[482] Scholars who have discussed the complicated position of black intellectuals include Couzens. *The New African*; Peterson. 'Monarchs, Missionaries and African Intellectuals'; Hughes. 'Doctor J. N. Nhlapo'.

achieved. I have discussed the Bantu Weekly Reader supplement as representing the newspaper owners' white paternalism: the supplement supported the idea that white people were benevolent benefactors to Africans. Some Zulu-language contributors agreed with this idea and seemed to subscribe to the belief that success could not be achieved without the assistance of people of European descent, seen as wiser than Africans. Chapter three also discussed the promotion of unity as part of the efforts to assert African pride and encourage oneness of purpose, and to some extent, pan-Africanism. This has been done through the writers' discussions about the 'Abyssinian Crisis'.

Chapter Four addressed the themes of self-help and entrepreneurship which were debated by the Zulu-language writers as central to the achievement of African progress. This was a practical application of the ideas of Washington, who as I argued in chapter two, was the main inspiration behind such ideas. In an atmosphere of economic competition with white, Indian, Chinese and several other communities, the Zulu-speakers made use of the Zulu pages as a platform to market and promote black business. I concluded this chapter by presenting the heated debates that resulted from the short removal and return of Zulu in the *Bantu World*, arguing that these debates show the Zulu writers' sense of ownership of space in the newspaper together with the fact that they greatly valued this language as central to the life of the *Bantu World*.

As I have highlighted in this dissertation, the perceptions that the Zulu-language writers exhibited were by no means uniform or always in agreement with those of Selope Thema. There was a lot of debate regarding the question of the role that people of European descent had to play in their achievement of progress. This was closely related to the question of the extent to which Africans had the agency to uplift themselves, in view of them being denied opportunities, as well as political and economic freedom by the oppressive government. For some writers, the need for European assistance was not necessarily about supporting white paternalism but seeking a workable and realistic solution, since people of European descent were in control of the reins of power and could potentially open doors to Africans. However, some contributors saw this as a utopia and advocated for more radical approaches to resistance, as is seen when they debated the 'Abyssinian crisis.' Many turned to their own African icons to assert the fact that they were equally capable of accomplishing great things with or without white people's assistance. Some argued that there was no need to constantly look up to whites for guidance, since Africans, even

before the arrival of Europeans, had their own sophisticated institutions and notable intellectuals. A 1949 article entitled, 'Nathi Sasinazo Izihlakaniphi Abelungu Bengakafiki Lapha' (We also had intellectuals before the whites came here),[483] has been used as an example of those writers who disagreed with the notion that white people were indispensable in the African journey to progress. In view of these discussions, in the Zulu pages of the *Bantu World*, black journalists and contributors in general were given a chance to express emerging ideas about black consciousness and nationalism, notions constantly linked to progress.

Nevertheless, radical writers like Makhandakhanda and Manyoni, who frequently contributed to the Zulu pages, seemed to form a minority as most writers, in trying to show African agency, still found themselves indirectly approving of white supremacy. When in 1935 cameraman Titus Mabaso, who had studied at Ohlange Institute, advertised his photography business, he underlined that his work was greatly admired by white people (uyababazeka kwabamhlophe).[484] The fact that white people admired his work was a stamp of approval which added to the marketability and legitimacy of his business.

Debate on progress also gave birth to several issues which were also contested in the Zulu pages. A number of contributors seemed to agree that the best way for them to achieve success was through tapping into their own abilities and being proactive. They thus promoted the idea of unity amongst Africans, entrepreneurship and self-help. The encouragement of these values seemed to discourage dependency on the white model. However, while the comparisons with white people might be seen as a reflection of an inferiority complex, I have argued that they were to a large extent meant to awaken Africans to the need to have agency and ensure that their future was determined by their own efforts. The letters and articles on white people were meant to provoke the readers and make them think differently.

The importance of Zulu to the Zulu-language contributors is evident in the *Bantu World*. In spite of the fact that Bertram Paver wanted this newspaper to be primarily an English newspaper, the Zulu-language contributors managed to establish an imagined Zulu-language community which

[483] Makhandakhanda. 'Nathi Sasinazo Izihlkaniphi Abelungu Bengakafiki Lapha'. *Bantu World*. 18: 21, 1949, p. 3.
[484] Titus Mabaso. 'Uqinisile Umatibela Ngodaba Lwezinkezo Alutintayo Lapa'. *Bantu World*. 3: 46, 1935, p. 3.

fought for space in the paper in the face of economic challenges.[485] Their reaction to the removal and return of the Zulu pages in the late 1940s, as I have discussed in chapter four, is evidence of the centrality of language in cementing and maintaining this imagined community. To them, the Zulu language was not just a token representation of African languages in the paper, but a symbol of their identity and voice. Together with a content analysis of the Zulu pages, these reactions have shown that a full understanding of the history of the *Bantu World* and African newspapers in general cannot be complete if the African language sections are not brought to the fore. Makhandakhanda's 1949 statement is key:

> I*Bantu World* lena ize ikhule ibe ngaka yakhuliswa yilolu limi nabalobeli balo okukhulunywa ngabo kuwo wonke amagumbi amane omhlaba yizizwe zonke. [The *Bantu World* has become so huge thanks to the [Zulu] language and its contributors who are spoken of in all the four corners of the world by all nations].[486]

This not only asserts the value that the Zulu-language writers placed in their language, but also shows their belief that the *Bantu World* would not have been as popular as it was had it not been for their contributions. Due to the absence of adequate evidence, I could not prove the exact extent to which this claim was accurate. However, I believe that there is more room for further research on the significance of African-language writers in the creation of imagined communities and the emergence of key ideas in African history.

[485] The creation of imagined community through print media has been discussed in detail by Peterson. 'The *Bantu World* and the World of the Book', p. 251, p. 259; Anderson. *Imagined Communities*, pp. 40-45; Khumalo. 'Ekukhanyeni Letter Writers', p. 113; Barber. *The Anthropology of Texts*; Limb (ed.) *The People's Paper*; Breckenridge. 'Love Letters and Amanuenses'.
[486] Makhandakhanda. 'Savuka Kwabafileyo', p. 3.

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