



AFRICAN HISTORIES  
AND MODERNITIES



# **Social Justice at Apartheid's Dawn**

**African Women Intellectuals and  
the Quest to Save the Nation**

Dawne Y. Curry

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# African Histories and Modernities

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Dawne Y. Curry

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African Women Intellectuals and the Quest  
to Save the Nation

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*To five South African women who showered me with laughter and love  
during my Fulbright year (2017–2018) and beyond:*

*Gloria Bosman*

*“Rev.” your music and humor have always been medicine to my soul!*

*Refilwe Kgare*

*“Ref” we’ll always be ‘Funkin for Jamaica!’*

*Mamagowa Letaba*

*“Weirdoo” u were an unexpected, treasured gift!*

*Keketso Petlane (Keke)*

*“Road dawg” you never fail to humor the “Tina” in me!*

*Brenda Sisane*

*“Dr.” Sisane, Sundays at Kaya FM were always spiritually uplifting!*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is the fulfillment of an incredible journey into South Africa's past. Researching the intellectual histories of African women during the country's segregation era pushed me to new scholarly limits and exposed a rich corpus of political thought generated by an important cadre of African women who dared to envision a new societal order in their quests to save the nation. A year-long US Fulbright Scholar Award to South Africa (2017–2018) afforded me the opportunity to continue necessary and engaging research and build upon University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL)-funded internal grants, but also to really think about how the archival documents and the testimonies interconnected. The Hallmark House in Doornfontein, Johannesburg, provided me the space for rumination. I often occupied the seat in the lounge near the corner in front of the big picture window where I journaled, took notes from articles and books, and thought deeply. I was such a resident 'occupant' of that seat that people literally asked me if it was okay to sit there! And if someone else was sitting there, friends told the 'trespassers' to get up, that's Dawne's seat! Thanks to all of the residents and staff at the Hallmark House that I met—Tsholo, Sihle, Ntobeko, Shylet, Enge, Ayanda, Zandisile, Lawrence, and others who made my stay more pleasant. Of course, I cannot leave out Hakeem Adewumi who was also on a Fulbright. I adopted him as my son and he adopted me as his mother. Thanks, son, for all of our adventures especially the Mpumalanga trip, the flat tire, and the potholes!

I also wish to thank several people within and outside the historical profession for their support. First and foremost, my mother deserves all the recognition for instilling the value of education in me at a young age. I never knew that a daily ritual—coming home from school, putting on my play clothes, and doing my homework at the kitchen table—would lead to this path I continue to embark upon. Nwando Achebe, Iris Berger, Robert R. Edgar, Robert Trent Vinson, Cherif Keita, and Holly Y. McGee, I have benefited immensely from your scholarship and collegiality of which I admire. University of Nebraska-Lincoln colleagues have enriched my experience since joining the Department of History. My current chair James Le Sueur—our journey started long before UNL. We originally met at the National Archives of South Africa in Pretoria; little did I know then in 2001 that we would be colleagues five years later! Special thanks also goes to Margaret Jacobs for our many discussions over lunch! Kenneth J. Winkle, the first Chair of the Department of History at UNL I ever had—thanks for your willingness to offer sound and judicious advice during my nearly sixteen years at Nebraska. Amelia Montes, my deepest gratitude to you for your careful review of my Fulbright proposal. We rendered harsh critiques that helped us both to land Fulbright Awards the very same year!!! Our weekly conversations while you were carrying out your research in Serbia and I in South Africa were spiritually and intellectually beneficial. Breana Garretson, what a pleasure knowing you. You continue to be a bright spot at the University. Thanks for the laughter, girl; we have plenty of memorable moments! Looking forward to more from our ‘favorite’ place!

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Special thanks to the archivists and librarians at the University of the Witwatersrand, the National Archives of South Africa, the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Hampton University Archives, Spelman College archives, and those at other repositories.

My undying gratitude also belongs to Nomvula Sikakane and Mpumelelo Bhengu for their industry. They enhanced the women’s narrative through their translation skills.

Last, but certainly not least, I give thanks to the South African women whose courage, foresight, and legacy made *Social Justice at Apartheid’s Dawn: African Women Intellectuals and the Quest to Save the Nation* a reality. In the words of South African multi-award winning poet, actress, presenter, and producer Lebogang Mashile, “the book’s female subjects told their stories”. Mashile explains why Africans needed to ‘Tell [Their] Story’:

After they’ve fed off of your memories  
 Erased dreams from your eyes  
 Broken the seams of sanity  
 And glued what’s left together with lies,  
 After the choices and voices have left you alone  
 And silence grows solid  
 Adhering like flesh to your bones  
 They’ve always known your spirit’s home  
 Lay in your gentle sway  
 To light and substance  
 But jaded mirrors and false prophets have a way  
 Of removing you from yourself  
 You who lives with seven names

You who walks with seven faces  
None can eliminate your pain  
Let it nourish you,  
Sustain you  
And claim you  
Tell your story  
Let it feed you  
Heal you  
And release you  
Tell your story  
Let it twist and remix your shattered heart  
Tell your story  
Until your past stops tearing your present apart  
“Lebogang Mashile: Tell Your Story”

<https://www.lyrikline.org/en/poems/tell-your-story-4123> date  
accessed 29 May 2021

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Adelaide Casely Hayford	ACH
Adelaide Charles Dube	ACD
African Democratic Party	ADP
African Methodist Episcopal	AME
African National Congress	ANC
African National Congress Women's League	ANCWL
African Political Organisation	APO
All-African Convention	AAC
Alexandra Bus Owners Association	ABOA
Alexandra Emergency Transport Committee	AETC
Alexandra Health Committee	AHC
Alexandra Standholders Protection and Vigilance Association	ASPVA
Alexandra Tenants Association	ATA
Alexandra Women's League	AWL
Alexandra Workers Union	AWU
American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions	ABCFM
American Council of Learned Societies	ACLS
American Committee of the Bantu Youth League	ACBYL
American Missionary Association	AMA
Bantu Purity League	BPL
Bantu Tenants Association	BTA
Bantu Women's League	BWL
Bantu World	BW
Bantu Youth League	BYL
Booker T. Washington	BTW

British East India Company	BEIC
Cecilia Lillian Tshabalala	CLT
Champaign County Ministerial Association	CCMA
Civil Rights Movement	CRM
Comparative Black History Program	CBHP
Communist Party of South Africa	CPSA
Congress of Racial Equality	CORE
Daughters of Africa	DOA
East London	EL
Elizabeth Rheinallt-Jones	ERJ
Executive Committee of the Comintern	ECCI
Federation of South African Women	FSAW
Food and Canning Workers Union	FCWU
Fourth International	FI
Free African Society	FAS
Garment Workers Union	GWU
Highlander Folk School	HFS
Historically Black Colleges and Universities	HBCU
Ilanga lase Natal	ILL
Industrial Commercial Workers Union	ICU
International Workers of the World	IWW
James Weldon Johnson	JWJ
James Yapi Tantsi	JYT
John Rosamond Johnson	JRJ
Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford	JECH
Katie Makanya	KM
London Missionary Society	LMS
Madie Hall Xuma	MHX
Michigan State University	MSU
Natal Native Congress	NNC
National Association of Colored Women	NACW
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People	NAACP
National Council of African Women	NCAW
National Council of Negro Women	NCNW
Native Advisory Boards	NAB
Native Affairs Commission	NAC
Native Affairs Department	NAD
Native Economic Commission	NEC
Natives Representative Council	NRC
New African Movement	NAM
Orange Free State	OFS
Pan Africanist Congress	PAC

Pietermaritzburg	PMB
Phelps-Stokes Fund	PSF
Port Elizabeth	PE
Public Utility Corporation	PUTCO
Social Science Research Council	SSRC
South African Indian Congress	SAIC
South African Institute of Race Relations	SAIRR
South African Police	SAP
Stallard Commission	SC
Transvaal African National Congress	TANC
Transvaal	TRV
<i>Umteteli waBantu</i>	UWB
United Nations	UN
United Negro Improvement Association	UNIA
United States	US
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	UNL
University of the Toilers of the East	KUTV
Women's Brigade	WB
Women's Political Council	WPC
Women's Social and Political Union	WSPU
World Council of Churches	WCC
Young Women's Christian Association	YWCA

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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction: The Journey, the Genealogy, and the Historiography

In the thick of the South Africa's segregation era in the 1930s, Natal native Cecilia Lillian Tshabalala submitted two editorials, "Our Great Women Where Are They?" and "Arise, O Ye Daughters!" to a prominent print medium. These calls to arms captured the immense political moment at which she, and her other female contemporary leaders, stood during the insurgency of African nationalism. This pioneer, who even wrote her own hymns which became a mainstay of her organization, the Daughters of Africa (DOA), possessed an interesting résumé. She was a member of Alexandra's Women's Brigade, the Alexandra Women's League, and the African Democratic Party (ADP), and was a reappearing columnist in the *Bantu World*, one of the country's most popular Black presses. Whites mostly owned and edited African newspapers, however as Les Switzer points out, the mediums had a large Black readership. In the case of the *Bantu World*, it operated as a training ground for fledgling African journalists and those who gained skills in printing, typing, clerking, and advertising among other knowledge that the paper offered.<sup>1</sup> For Tshabalala, and other African women, the *Bantu World* provided a platform for them to proselytize on a larger scale.

Social Justice at Apartheid's Dawn is their intellectual coming-out party. This much-needed work addresses how this important female cadre devised different strategies to wade through South Africa's segregationist waters. From 1910 to 1948, they established political organizations, wrote

editorials, composed hymnals, traveled, created poems, established schools, and lectured throughout the country. By undergoing these activities, African women contributed to existing theories on race and nation and expounded on them. They also played prominent roles in interrogating South Africa's historical past and shaping its contemporary present. In a study that brings their ideas to the fore, and to highlight their greatest bequeath, a blueprint to save the nation, these activist intellectuals coalesced around the transnational currents of race, gender, and nation to challenge segregation, to define notions on nationhood, to marry street politics with written and oral commentaries, to interpret South African society's racial politics, and lastly, to speak to other men and women across Africa.

Of all the book's featured women, Tshabalala interrogated the term nation as a social, racial, and geographical construct openly at a meeting in Pimville, Soweto. Tshabalala did more than theorize as this narrative shows; she created the DOA to serve as a model for the democratic, egalitarian nation that she envisioned using a syncretic blend of traditional African cultural practices and western ideologies. Tshabalala wanted her community, the baby race, she describes in 'Arise, O Ye Daughters!' to emulate other nations or, as Tshabalala put it, walk like them.<sup>2</sup>

Newspapers often provided snapshots of Tshabalala, the organizational founder, and member of several Alexandran organizations; however, these images added to my growing confusion. Printed mediums capture her seemingly innocuous in dresses draped by pearls while the autobiography of former Johannesburg Senator and lawyer describes her as militant who donned a tight-fitting black beret when she commanded the church women, and beer brewers that comprised the Women's Brigade (WB).<sup>3</sup> Both images seared an indelible impression in my mind. "Who would I meet during my research—the classy, refined, and respectable woman, '...[the] boisterous [person] who could at any moment burst into laughter or a loud command'<sup>4</sup> or the descendant of Zulu royalty of the Mshengu clan?" Like the contestants on the popular multi-year run game show, *Truth or Consequences*, I wanted the real Tshabalala to stand up.

Tshabalala grew up near Durban; spent eighteen years in the United States; attended Hampton University; established two women's organizations; pursued studies at the New Britain Normal School in New Haven, Connecticut; and wrote editorials in the *Bantu World*. Despite having this information several facts eluded me. I did not know her parents' names nor her birth and death dates. That changed when I consulted the section

of ‘At Home and Field’ in the *Southern Workman*, a monthly journal that Hampton’s founder and former president, Union army officer General Samuel Armstrong had established in 1872, which read: “one girl [who] (Tshabalala) comes to Hampton direct from Zululand (Kleinfontein) is a former student of Fanny Mabuda who ... [teaches] at the Umzumbe Mission Station [in] South Africa. She came to Hampton with four other African males in 1912.”<sup>5</sup>

In 1868, following the American Civil War, Black and White leaders of the American Missionary Association (AMA) established the fabled institution situated on a former plantation called ‘Little Scotland’ not far from Fort Monroe. Hampton University had as its motto, “The Standard of Excellence, An Education for Life”.<sup>6</sup> Prominent graduates included the likes of Booker T. Washington (BTW), who learned the nuts and bolts of industrial education from its principal proponent Armstrong. When my brother Ricky, my cousin Bobby, and I walked from the parking lot to the Huntington Building where Hampton houses its African Art Gallery and its Archives, I kept wondering if Tshabalala had taken this same path over a hundred years ago. My thoughts were soon interrupted when we entered the Huntington Building and marveled at the art. Amid the beautiful displays of artifacts, an ominous sign read, “no photos allowed.” Our trepidation heightened so much that we aborted our thoughts. I viewed the room for the next fifteen minutes and then bid Ricky and Bobby farewell to approach the reading room.

Before, I could even plug in my laptop, take out a pencil, or glance at my notes, one of the archivists, Mrs. Poston, greeted me. She explained the rules that governed Hampton University’s archives: no pens, no digitizing, no drinking, and no eating. The most important commandment dictated that I, other patrons, upheld was the wearing of latex gloves. I followed these rules to the letter, and with a pencil, I made my requests. Mrs. Poston reviewed the forms and then proceeded to ask me several questions about Tshabalala. I provided different iterations of her last name (Tshabalala, Chabalala, Shabalala) to assist with the research.

As quickly as Mrs. Poston had arrived to provide me the guides to conduct research, she left to wade through the selected documents. Mrs. Poston disappeared for a few minutes, but to be honest, her absence felt like an eternity. I thought that I was finally going to put to bed unanswered questions about Tshabalala’s personal details. I was so wrong on that note, and here is why! Mrs. Poston came back to the reading room with a file. Professional as ever she said, “Dr. Curry can you tell me more about this lady?” I said, “Yes, she was born in Kleinfontein, and she came

to Hampton University in 1912. She said, I think this is your lady, but she didn't graduate from here." "I said oh. May I review the file?" "No, we can't give out information on former students. You will need to get a notarized letter from a family member." "Seriously!! I thought how am I going to do that for someone who was a student over a century ago, and who has been dead presumably since the early sixties? I went home empty-handed, and crestfallen."

It took a year before I licked my wounds and mustered up the courage to submit another request. At the time, I was beginning my tenure as a US Fulbright Scholar to South Africa (2017–2018)—a year-long research award to address how African women were intellectuals who contributed to political thought before apartheid—this was the question that had its genesis going back to my grad school days at MSU. Twelve days after my original correspondence on 19 September 2017, another one of Hampton University's archivists, Ms. Andrese Scott wrote back and addressed some of my lingering queries. Eight years after the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, Daniel and Chandlia Tshabalala welcomed their daughter Lillian to the royal Mshengu clan from which she descended on 28 September 1888. They had no idea at the time that one of their children would travel the world and the African continent. Tshabalala registered as a junior, having already completed some of her necessary credits at Umzumbe College. Her tenure in Hampton, however, was short-lived. Tshabalala left the Tidewater area in her traveling wake just twelve months after matriculation (1912–1913).

Lures of a New England institution and the opportunities to conduct social work in African American churches in the same area possibly led to her abrupt departure. This part of her intellectual journey is annotated with photographs and articles that appear in the *Bantu World*, *Ilanga laseNatal*, *The Brooklyn News*, and *The New Amsterdam*, among other African and American newspapers. They typically immortalized the DOA founder with headshots; however, one visual provides a full body pose of Tshabalala in a knee-length dress with accoutrements of a smile, decorative jewelry, and a handbag. Another documents the leader with four African-American youth, two of whom are draped by her arms.

Tshabalala's quest for social justice gathered further momentum when she was seized by the desire to visit the Chautauqua's religious conferences in upstate New York. Like the Mary Church Terrell-led National Association of Colored Women (NACW), which Tshabalala modeled the Daughters of Africa (DOA) on their prominent example, these attendants



also influenced her political outlook and appreciation for cross-cultural alignment.<sup>7</sup> The conference represented what the Daughters became a mix between a democracy and a tradition built upon African oral, and religious culture.

My visits to the National Archives of South Africa (NASA) in Pretoria unearthed several under-mined historical documents that chronicle the DOA's development and its evolution. This was not an easy task. Sometimes research on the DOA was filed under unsuspecting headings or obvious ones. 'Native Organizations' contain files like different pieces of correspondence; the DOA's push to become a charitable political body; its communication with South Africa's Native Commissioner and other officials or they possess flyers that announced the organization's celebration of 'Red Letter Day' or the hymns the leaders and membership sang or even wrote.<sup>8</sup>

My first scholarly introduction to Tshabalala's bus boycott activism came from political scientist Alfred Stadler and social activist Baruch Hirson. Stadler's rendition of the 'long walks' offers a brief homage to Alexandra's militant female citizenry and its stance during the forties with this observation, "the contribution of women can be scarcely exaggerated."<sup>9</sup> While Stadler does little to insert how women impacted each historic event, Hirson goes a little further with his work, *Yours for the Union*. Hirson heavily depicts male activism, but he also engages with women's involvement as this statement attests: "the activities of The Daughters of Africa, ... and the Alexandra Women's Brigade, formed at the time when Lilian Tshabalala [headed the body] are known."<sup>10</sup>

Discussions of how Africans intellectualized segregation, the economy, and transport are often left out of the well-cited Xuma Papers. When placed against the male voices of ANC President Alfred B. Xuma's memorandum, and novelist Modikwe Dikobe's short story, 'We Shall Walk', the Alexandra Women's League's treatise demonstrates even further how personal papers, secondary literature, and popular culture marry.<sup>11</sup> Even with Xuma's presence of mind to archive the memorandums, he falls short in this significant way. Like Hirson, Xuma fails to identify female participants linked to Tshabalala, the AWL, or the Women's Brigade. Parallels could have been drawn out had these groups been placed side by side. This study also challenges the secondary literature of Alfred Stadler (1979), Philip Bonner and Noor Nieftagodien (2008), Eddie Roux (1943), and John Nauright (1990) by treating women and men as intellectual actors, and contributors to broader discussions on the economy, and segregation.<sup>12</sup>

Mina Tembeka Soga also had worldly experience as an attendant at the international Madras conference held in India, and its post-session events in the United States and Europe. By the time, she had arrived on American soil in 1939, Tshabalala and, another contemporary, Sibusisiwe Violet Makanya had already returned to South Africa. During the year of the Chicago World Exhibition (1893), parents Philip Rulumente and Novili Aylmer Soga welcomed their daughter Mina into the world. She was one of fourteen children born onto them. Queenstown embraced this Christian family and offered it a highly, active commercial center at their reach. The closely knit community lay straddled in the middle of the Eastern Cape and situated on a large farming district. Soga's father served the community as an *induna* (Chief), a position that not only gave him authority but also welcomed income. His local role grew even larger when he, a firm believer in education, turned part of the family home into a makeshift school that welcomed youth from around the village.

Soga anxiously welcomed the opportunity to participate and learn, however, there was a problem, tradition dictated that the eldest child attain education.<sup>13</sup> This standard practice rankled Soga, who as a younger member of the family had to wait her turn. She made sure that opportunity arrived sooner rather than later. Bouts of crying, protestations, and displays of envy eventually earned her the much-coveted slate which she used to write the alphabet.<sup>14</sup> Soga went on to receive formal education at the Scottish Presbyterian Mission before stepping foot on the world stage at the age of forty-five. The South African lived well into her nineties, just missing the century mark by four years (1893–1989).

A conspicuous trail of presidential addresses, organizational minutes, and letters yet to be fully mined illuminate Soga's political life. Sometimes, these scholarly gems appeared in files dedicated to the National Council of African Women, a body she helmed from 1939 to 1954, under 'Urban Affairs' among other subheadings or featured in the personal archives of prominent men. John David Rheinallt-Jones (JDRJ), the former South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) Director, bequeathed his papers to the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). Of the many documents is Soga's interpretation of the 'Patterns of Segregation', and the letters she exchanged with the Rheinallt-Jones litter his file.

Despite the plethora of archival materials that feature the NCAW, Soga's identity as a president is absent. Nombonisa Gasas makes several observations about this organization in her anthology *Women in South African History* with these remarks: male leaders feared that the body's

alliance with the National Council of Women (NCW) led to their increasing independence and radicalization; the body lessened its political impact by not connecting the dots between the anti-pass struggles and other issues; and lastly, people viewed the group as an ineffectual body, however there is no inclusion of the organizational paper trail that Soga left behind that this book illuminates. Another concern is the need to extricate Soga from the organization to concentrate on the person and her ideologies. Seabury's biography, the article by Nico Botha, 'Towards the Engendering of Missiology', and Keona Mashala's dissertation provides different accounts of the NCAW's long-term leader. Seabury traces her childhood, her travels to the international Madras Conference, and the post-meeting lectures that she conducted in the United States, Canada, and Europe, all of which took place from 1938 to 1939. Seabury also includes discussion on Soga's reintegration in South Africa. Botha concentrates on her religious and ideological philosophies; however, several items are missing from her chronicles. Mashala's dissertation fills in some important gaps as she delves deeply into Soga's performance as NCAW President during the apartheid era.<sup>15</sup>

Based on the extant corpus of organizational documents, personal correspondence, presidential addresses, Seabury's book, Botha's article, and newspaper coverage, the NCAW and Soga deserve their own respective monographs on par with Shireen Hassim's *The ANC's Women's League*, and Robert R. Edgar's account of *Josie Mpama/Palmer in Get Up and Get Moving* which both appear as part of the Ohio University Short Histories Series. Such studies propose to bear different interpretations of an African woman at the center of a burgeoning movement of African nationalism, at the nascent stages of Black internationalism, and at the crossroads of feminism, womanism, and pan-humanism at the same time. For example, in order for Soga to transcend and intersect these boundaries, she sought the financial help, and intellectual manpower of leading White figures at a time when the government worked hard to disenfranchise and exploit her people.

I first 'met' Nhlumba Bertha Mkhize at the Campbell Collections (formerly Killie Campbell); an archive housed in a Dutch-style home formerly called Muckleneuk situated along Gladys Mazibuko Road in Durban. This white-covered house set within a deep brown wooden trim stood on a sloping hill. Flora and fauna bounded the house, which was once owned by Sir Marshall Campbell, a sugar planter and Natal politician. Although both of Campbell's children, William and Killie Campbell, converted their

childhood home into a repository, it was the latter that maintained a vast archive that accounts for many of the site's holdings (photographs, indigenous newspapers, oral histories, manuscripts, and other sources) which she bequeathed upon her death in 1965. While the archives housed a digitized database, and published guides, the card catalog, an analog of the past became my very best friend.

I found so many notable entries on African women. Some of them I had never heard of before like Albertina Mnguni. She was at one time the Secretary of the Daughters of Africa. As a member of the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), Mnguni conducted piecework which entailed finding extremely impoverished individuals, particularly those suckling, to distribute milk to fortify their emaciated bodies. During her tenure as the DOA's secretary, Mnguni carried out similar projects, which along with the body's goal for the African nation to know one another was one of the reasons she joined Tshabalala's organization. Mnguni traveled the rural areas with Nhlumba Bertha Mkhize, the subject of another discovery I found on a typed note card.

Campbell Collections housed taped and transcribed versions (in English, and isiZulu) of interviews that historians Heather Hughes, Julia C. Wells, and D. Manson conducted independently with Mkhize in 1979. The two-part interview is layered with nuances of Mkhize's complexity as a person. She was an educator, a tailor, a leader, an activist, and a Ba'hi adherent. Discussion of Mkhize's political affiliations, her protest activities, the American Board missionaries, the activities of other leaders, and her family history takes center stage in this chronicle of her life. Mkhize controls the riveting narrative from the very beginning. A photograph of the family home ignites the discussion that she carried out with two westerners in her physical and metaphorical home.

Book chapters and articles offer short allusions to this important freedom fighter who used her positions as a DOA leader and an ICU member to effect change. Peter Limb's study on the African National Congress' early years provides some insight into this under-researched historical figure, but it fails to tease out the multiple philosophies that she espoused. Mkhize was a complex figure who understood the significance of forming female comradeships across the color line when she pursued labor politics with Ray Alexander or Helen Joseph, another struggle stalwart, whom she worked with collaboratively. The Africanism that Mkhize advocated for possibly represented the same principles that the ANC endorsed with the Freedom Charter that its leadership and members composed in Kliptown,

Soweto, in 1955. Of its many lines, this quote garners the most attention for the organization's daring led to the immortalization of this widely disseminated line of the Freedom Charter, "South Africa belonged to all who live in it, black and white." Mkhize held its principles close to her vest and in her arsenal when she partnered with some of the most prominent females of her politically, exciting time. Before Mkhize set the political stage on fire, this last born of two boys and two girls experienced tragedy at the tender age of four when her father passed away in 1893.

Devastated by her husband's passing, Mkhize's mother uprooted the entire family and moved them to her birthplace, Inanda. Inanda already enjoyed fame. American missionaries Daniel and Lucy Lindley had established the all-female Inanda Seminary going back to 1856. Having this highly reputed educational institution within her children's orbit allayed the concerned mother's fears since Mkhize's father's birthplace offered little in terms of education. Tshabalala and Makanya were both alums of this fabled institution. Other storied landmarks existed in Inanda, in fact, it was the home of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. John L. Dube, two prominent leaders who had established the Ohlange Institute and the Phoenix Settlement approximately fifteen miles inland from Durban respectively in 1901 and 1904. The children's education was so superior that Mkhize ended up teaching math, geography, and grammar. Her teaching came with a strongly held belief that Africans needed to learn English, the world's lingua franca so that they could attain jobs in Durban's thriving metropolis.

As much as teaching represented Mkhize's passion, the love to educate was not enough to pay mounting bills so she turned to tailoring. Not long after that, Mkhize began to understand the theories that governed labor politics, especially after the Latvian emigrant Ray Alexander turned her on to the mysteries of its nuts-and-bolts. Mkhize garnered another ideological home when she turned to the Ba'hi faith. She found its adherents' belief in the equality of all races, creeds, and sexes alluring and representative of what she professed as an activist, as a leader, and as a woman. Mkhize stayed true to her ideological form in that her politics represented and manifested the philosophies that she and the Ba'hi religion professed. Anti-pass demonstrations illustrated the ways in which Mkhize employed pavement politics to attain the Ba'hi faith's guiding principles. Not carrying the passes represented a push for equality in terms of Africans' ability to enter the urban areas without government-mandated documentation.

Tshabalala joined Mkhize by having her own ideological turn from being a diehard liberal to an ardent leftist when she joined Hyman Basner, Paul Mosaka, Gaur Radebe, and others in forming the interracial African Democratic Party (ADP) as an alternative and parallel organization to the ANC, in 1945. Josie Mpama/Palmer's dogma also shifted during the last decades of her life when she switched sociopolitical streams from the red-Marxist ideals of Communism to the monotheistic religion of Christianity. Sibusisiwe Violet Makanya went from indirectly endorsing the Adaptation Model in her capacity as the Purity League's secretary to doing a major theoretical shift following her travels throughout Natal, the Transvaal, and in the United States.

In the final analysis, all these different and disparate roads led to my life-long mission to unearth the experiences of African women by juxtaposing their achievements, and notions, alongside African men, and each other. *Social Justice at Apartheid's Dawn* demonstrates that African history does not end exclusively on the continent or within its various nations, instead it is a composite of holistic experiences woven together from different parts of the world where they made, chronicled, or defied history. Healy-Clancy, Iris Berger, Thozama April, Athambile Masola, and others have begun addressing the lingering underlying problem of African women's muted or partially recognized intellectual thoughts. My quest to save the nation began with Tshabalala, whom as the root of my genealogical tree led me to other unsung or well-known African women. Maybe this book secures as the modicum of equity and justice that my subjects fought for and in some ways failed to attain or partially experienced during the segregation era. These defiant women privileged religion, gender, and pan-humanism in their bequeathed instructions to the next generation. They lay out the problem and discuss resolutions that mirror some of the artistry of contemporary South African poets, and musicians. The theme of Mashile's opening poem, 'Tell Your Story,' is also contained in the work of not only Adelaide Charles Dube, but also Nonsitzi Mqwetho (Chap. 4). The former reminds her readers of the glorious African past and the symbolic, functional, and generational tie to the land while the latter expounds upon the discussion by focusing on the embodiment of a multi-composited African identity interrupted by outside colonial forces. They all yearn for a past and a future that is sentimental, representational, and afro-futuristic at the same time. Ordained by ancestral powers, these women all took an oath to serve as griots—the people's historical custodians. Mashile makes this point even clearer in 'You and I,' in which she writes, 'We are the keepers of dreams/We mould them into light beams/And weave them into life's seams.'<sup>16</sup>