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The Conducive Environment: J.J.R. Jolobe's Innovative Work

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Abstract- J.J.R. Jolobe, Imbongi Yomnqamlezo[1], is one of the pioneering Xhosa writers who also expressed himself through translation (both from English to isiXhosa and vice versa). He proved himself not only to be a distinct *man* of letters but also as an innovator and pioneering linguist. Steeped in the foreign culture of British imperial mission work, a hand-maiden for both colonialism and apartheid in South Africa, he played many roles. Incrementally so, ranging from the much tribalised positive socio-economic impacts of the 14th May 1835 'Mfengu' milkwood covenant to the effects of mission education, Jolobe found himself in quite a fertile ground to prosper both spiritually and intellectually. He was not only a beneficiary of colonialism but also a protector of his culture and his people. This paper seeks to look at the flip side of colonialism; that is the positive role it played in developing Xhosa intellectual giants like Jolobe.

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Abstract- J.J.R. Jolobe, Imbongi Yomnqamlezo[1], is one of the pioneering Xhosa writers who also expressed himself through translation (both from English to isiXhosa and vice versa). He proved himself not only to be a distinct *man* of letters but also as an innovator and pioneering linguist. Steeped in the foreign culture of British imperial mission work, a hand-maiden for both colonialism and apartheid in South Africa, he played many roles. Incrementally so, ranging from the much tribalised positive socio-economic impacts of the 14th May 1835 'Mfengu' milkwood covenant to the effects of mission education, Jolobe found himself in quite a fertile ground to prosper both spiritually and intellectually. He was not only a beneficiary of colonialism but also a protector of his culture and his people. This paper seeks to look at the flip side of colonialism; that is the positive role it played in developing Xhosa intellectual giants like Jolobe.

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I. Introduction

It is a well - known fact that colonialism in the then Cape Province had devastating effects not only in the lives of the inhabitants but also in their socioeconomic welfare. Between the 1806 British imperialism's annexure of the amaXhosa territory to the extension of colonial boundaries in 1850, a quite significant move had been taken to entrench the settler movement within the amaXhosa self - sustaining agrarian economy. The nine frontier wars (1779 -1879) incrementally handed the mainly amaXhosa people and their indigenous economy into the hands of the British colonisers. The nail in the coffin was the massive slaughtering of livestock and burning of ripe crop (1856-1857) due to Nongqawuse's 'prophecy', the aftermath of which was the propelling of about 30 000 people to abandon their homes in search for employment. This was indeed the outcome of a much calculated move by Sir George Grey – the flamboyant Cape administrator- when through multi-pronged policies he sought to incapacitate the amaXhosa as far as self – sustenance was concerned. As much as the above-mentioned scenario was a defining factor, in this present paper it is my argument that British colonialism ushered in a new environment through which a certain segment of the amaXhosa people would prosper both spiritually and intellectually.

By stating this, it is not my intention to ignore Sir George Grey's convictions and thus ulterior motives when he introduced the 'civilising' policy for the natives (Ndletyana, 2008). As stated by the above - mentioned scholar, "Christianised and civilised, Grey believed, the Xhosa would cease being a British foe, and become a friend" (Ndletyana, 2008:4). However, as much as Sir George Grey and consequent administrators desired to infiltrate the colony, the missionary education and various institutions (mainly Lovedale college, missionary schools and various printing presses) left a lasting legacy in terms of education, religion and creative writing. Informing the crux of my main argument in this paper, Ndletyana (2008:4) observes,

> "Beneficiaries of the civilising mission they were, yet they refused to define themselves in the image of their colonial benefactors. Rather, they re-defined themselves, combining the best of the two worlds into what became a modern African identity and a unique contribution to South African modernity".

J.J.R. Jolobe, one of the torch bearers[2] of that era is a subject of the present paper. Through his work, he worked aggressively in innovating with form. This resulted in him bordering in new angles as not only as a creative writer but also as a theologian, historian and linguist. The moving around of his family as a result of his father serving in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland as a minister exposed him to different languages. His distinct knowledge of isiXhosa dialects (Bhaca and Hlubi) spoken at that time as well as Sotho, gave him a much needed advantage to break new grounds linguistically.

As raised by different sources, he was a unique personality as he was not only caught up with nostalgia for the amaXhosa past but also negotiated with the acceptance of the Christian present. He campaigned for the combination of traditional and Christian life which he strongly believed would lead not only to survival but prosperity in many forms. Within the isiXhosa writing canon, the theme of the conflict of tradition and the West was explored as from 1940[3] to 1972[4]. What puts

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[1] Poet of the Cross.

[2] He combined all three aspects of missionary education: religious, educational and literary.

[3] A.C. Jordan's Inqqumbo Yeminyanya (later translated to The Wrath Of The Ancestors).

[4] Z.S. Qangule's Izagweba.

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Jolobe's work in the category of its own is that the theme of his literary works is not only concerned with the inherent conflicts with African traditions and the West. As much as he strongly spoke out against the oppressive colonial system of the time, he openly encouraged his people to embrace "Western civilisation".

II. From Colonialism to Apartheid: A Brief History of the AmaXhosa of the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa

Mlisa (2009) divides the history of the Eastern Cape into three major periods: the pre-colonial era (before the 17th century); the colonial era (the 17th to the 20th century) and the apartheid era (the 20th century). She further argues, "[the pre-colonial era] focus was on the Southern Nguni style of life before encountering the influence of the Eurocentric lifestyle" (Mlisa, 2009, p. 37). As Peires (1976) reveals, even prior to the arrival of missionaries, the amaXhosa cosmology was not necessarily pure. The interaction with both Khoi and San people meant hybridisation of some sort. To this effect, the influence of both Khoi and San religion prior to Christianity must be acknowledged (Peires, 1976).

Bundy (2004, p.10) has the following to say about the pre-colonial era:

> This physical divide had profound implications for the human geography and history of the region. Hunters and herders - Bushman (sic) and Khoi - had long traversed the more arid territory of the Karoo and southwestern coastal reaches; and from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Xhosa clans had begun to test the westerly limits of the 500 mm annual rainfall zone, running their herds, sowing their crops, establishing larger scale polities and denser settlement. Hunters, herders and mixed farmers traded, fought, and inter-married. The extent of their interaction can be traced in linguistic borrowings and in the genetic make-up and pigmentation of some Xhosa (sic) clans.

The arrival the Dutch settlers in the Cape on the 6th of April 1652 would not only serve as a pioneering initiative for the establishment of a refreshment station for the Dutch ships *enroute* to the East but would also initiate a centuries long adventure in usurping both livestock and land of the original inhabitants of the land, both the Khoi - San and the amaXhosa. Following the frontier wars stretching between 1779 and 1880, the colonial period in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa was entrenched by the 1820 settling of Europeans originally from England, Scotland and Ireland. Bundy (2004, p.10) summarises the progression of the colonial project in the Eastern Cape as follows:

> Subsequently, these patterns of contact were disrupted and overlaid by others: by the pressures of trekboers in the eighteenth century on Khoisan peoples and then by competition over water, grazing land and cattle between boer and Xhosa. Finally, of course, British settlers and troops unleashed forces - cultural, economic and military - that shattered Xhosa society west and immediately east of the Kei river.

The 1778 agreement between Governor Van Pletternburg and two minor amaXhosa chiefs would affect the amaXhosa people living west of the Fish River in many ways. Prior to that, there had been peaceful co-existence with the Boers, who had enslaved the Khoi people in previous encounters. The first British occupation from 1795 to 1803 and that of the Batavian Republic between 1803 and 1806 was a sign of terror. All of the above attempted to propel the Xhosa people towards the East of the Fish River.

Peires (1988, p. 161) adding to the above sentiments reveals, "in the shade of the house of Phalo, every man had a ridge for his homestead and a stream for his cattle. When his sons left home after circumcision, they never feared that they will fail to find land and water of their own". He continues, "By 1847 things were very different. The Xhosa kingdom had shrunk, and in shrinking it had lost vast tracts of its most fertile territory. The Xhosa were driven across the Fish in 1812, out of the Kat River Valley in 1829, and right past the Keiskamma in 1847" (Peires, 1988, p. 162). The indigenous economy that this community utilised as means of livelihood was negatively affected by the arrival of industrialisation and large-scale migrant labour.

The rise of two main personalities in the 19th century, Nxele (Makhanda) and Ntsikana, within the amaXhosa socio-political landscape had an effect on both Xhosa religion and way of life. As stated by Peires (1979, p. 51):

> The hundred years war (1779-1880) of the Xhosa people against the white colonists of the Cape of Good Hope produced not one but two historical traditions. One, originating with Nxele, was war-like and nationalist, embodying African beliefs and African culture. The other, originating with Ntsikana, was pacifist and Christian, enjoining salvation through obedience to the will of God.

As a result of being displaced by the English from Zuurveld (the present day Makhanda area and the surroundings) the amaXhosa experienced some kind of "national stress" (Peires, 1976). However, as argued by the above mentioned scholar, the interaction with the Boers was different. As stated by Peires (1976, p. 31), "mutual acculturation – many Boers even adopted Xhosa religious beliefs - reduced the difference between the two cultures".

As much as the amaXhosa were in awe in the presence of a European civilisation propagated by Christianity, they were not completely rendered helpless. To some extent, they did resist and thus were able to retain some of their indigenous institutions that pre-existed the late 19th century English missionaries. To this effect, Peires (1976, p. 145) observes,

> Thus it was largely in vain that the missionaries, most of whom equated Christianity with European civilisation and behaviour, attempted to persuade the Xhosa (sic) to

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abandon trusted practices which they regarded as essential to their earthly prosperity and well-being in favour of a doctrine which was abstract and explicitly devoid of material benefits.

To the Xhosa people, these cruel encounters with the British meant the invention of the word *imfazwe* (destruction of the soil as the British destroyed food, gardens and people). To a large extent, they also stole cattle. In response, the Xhosa and the Khoi formed a joint war. Peires (1979, p. 54) observes, "the expulsion created a set of problems which the chiefs were unable to solve. Thus, in the years immediately following 1812, political leadership was passed from the hands of chiefs into the hands of prophet-figures". As already alluded to, Nxele and Ntsikana, at approximately the same period of ten years served two different Xhosa chiefs in offering a spiritual dimension to the already threatened cosmology of war and daily existence.

After almost a century of wars in the Eastern frontier of the Cape Colony, "when the last frontier war – the War of Ngcayechibi – ended in 1879, the colonial forces shifted their focus to labour" (Ngcukaitobi, 2018, p. 19). As a result of the discovery of gold and diamond in the Free State and Kimberley, the Anglo-Boer war erupted. The English settlers felt they also had a stake in the minerals plundered by the Boers in these two areas. This infighting did not only claim many lives in both sides but left the economy in tatters. Thus, after the Anglo-Boer War it was mandatory to build a new country and a new economy.

As Ngcukaitobi, (2018, p. 25) keenly observes, "although Africans had been kept out of the political system, the mining bosses were actually aware that they had to be brought into the economy for the system to function". This period can be characterized by a number of events that would shape the future of the Union. These are the 1903 formation of the South African Native Affair Commission; the conversion of Africans into labour units in the colonial economy and a deliberate attempt to 'civilise' Africans. As observed by Khabela (1996) and Ngcukaitobi (2018), the civilization of Africans would be a smokescreen for ulterior motives such as creating labour reserves for the Cape Colony.

On the above sentiments Ngcukaitobi (2018, p. 27) declares, "having conquered by military means, the colonial state aimed not only to turn the black masses into a large pool of semi-skilled labourers, but also to create a docile educated class that would not question the economic and cultural hegemony of Empire". In the long run, this strategy would work against the state. Ngcukaitobi (2018, p. 28) declares, "but ten years after Britain's final military assaults of the late 1870's in Xhosaland and Zululand, a new form of resistance employing the institutions of colonialism emerged". The above-mentioned scholar continues, "not only did they use education as a basis of self-awareness and self-reliance, they saw it as a means of waging new struggles for emancipation." (Ngcukaitobi, 2018, p. 36).

The establishment of the Union in 1910 was a direct response to the imperial government to resolve the native question (Ngcukaitobi, 2018). The "Bantustan" system which was implemented after the 1948 apartheid election paved the way for new policies like separate development widely known as apartheid. The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 offered a legal arm through which the Bantustan system could be established. In 1956, the former Transkei was the first 'homeland' to be created. This followed the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, through which 87% of land was allocated to the white minority. As stated by Bank and Southall, this was driven by a philosophy of "a multi-national state", ironically bearing resemblance to the post-apartheid so-called rainbow nation, which was based not on 'history' but 'past conquest' (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 412)

The apartheid era, a policy or system of segregation or discrimination on grounds of race, was defined not only by removals from ancestorial areas but urban infrastructural planning which by nature was destructive to the "kinsmen" or "tribesmen" lifestyle that the individuals were categorised as such to (Bank, 2001). The impact of social engineering policies in some of the newly established townships, both in the custody of the Republic and the apartheid homeland (areas that were preserved as reserves for most African people during the apartheid era), created "apartheid subjects" from the amaXhosa people in the Eastern Cape.

Through the Native Affairs Act of 1909 and the Native Land Act of 1913, "a system of direct rule was imposed upon the formerly autonomous chiefdoms, the legitimacy of chiefs was deliberately undermined, and subaltern authority was widely – but not uniformly – developed upon headmen" (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 410). Furthermore, through the Native Administration Act of 1927, "systematic powers to appoint, recognize and remove chiefs" was solely vested on the Governor-General of the Cape Province (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 411). The arrangement was designed in such a way as "to compel their services as administrative functionaries" (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 411).

This all formed a foundation to the effect of reinventing of the former Bantustan areas rural government. The Freedom Charter, a document which culminated from the 1923 Bill of Rights of South Africa, was adopted in 1955 (Ngcukaitobi, 2018). It is Ngcukaitobi's contention that the development of the two above documents, that he terms as the African's Claim Document, was a statement against five decades of attempts of colonial administration (Ngcukaitobi, 2018).

The crafting of the constitution, a document which was a culmination of difficult negotiations spanning the periods 1990-1994, allowed for re-

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integration of the ten former 'homelands'. For both administrative and political purposes, these were further delineated into new nine new regions or provinces. The notions of liberal and consociational democracy were originally intended to be major tenants of the constitution. Also, existent legally constituted traditional authorities are 'recognized' and the indigenous laws and customs are supervised. However, "… some question whether the constitutional framework was in fact the correct response to colonialism and apartheid" (Ngcukaitobi, 2018, p. 1).

As observed by the above mentioned scholar, racial segregation can be traced back to the late-nineteenth-and early-twentieth century. As such, Victorian politicians offered a blue print. The former Transkei had already been a piloting ground for the implementation of the above within which the English colonial system had been enacted as early as 1894 (Bank & Southall, 1996; Ngcukaitobi, 2018).

Although there was more influence of Western culture in the former Transkei and Ciskei than anywhere in South Africa through mission-funded education, the ulterior motive was the transformation of the African peoples of South Africa from self-sufficient and autonomous through political subordination. Consequently, they were turned "into either communities of peasants, living on attenuated tribal lands which became increasingly dependent upon the export of migrant labour, or wage labourers who worked for firms and farms and lived in areas owned by whites" (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 411).

The above mentioned situation was culminated in the chiefs' relative control of land through the Union 'Native policy' which allowed them to collect taxes partially for their financial gain, especially in Pondoland where colonial administration was enacted as early as the 19th century. At least, the policy of communal land tenure left the inhabitants of the late 19th century and 20th century 'homelands' better off as compared to those trapped in "the landless condition of the African population of the white areas of South Africa" (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 412). The chiefs were not only stripped of the authority over their ancestral land but also in presiding over legal matters within their respective constituencies. Through a colonial system designed Customary Law, they were only granted powers to arbitrate only in civil cases and not criminal ones.

Through being *ex officio* members of "local governments within whose jurisdiction they fall", traditional authorities can conversely be used as state apparatus for both direct and indirect rule (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 409). Historically, the recognition of traditional authorities in South Africa never came by default but was due "to a threatened boycott of the first democratic elections by the Zulu based Inkatha Freedom Party" (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 409). This further emphasizes the concept of ambiguity as far as the roles of chiefs in local, provincial or national governance is concerned.

With more power progressively vested on them, the 1963 Transkei homeland first election directly translated into an outnumbering of the new 45 member legislative Assembly by 64 *ex-officio* chiefs (Bank & Southall, 1996). Presentation of the overall symbolism of post-apartheid South Africa (flags, bureaucracies and armies) by separate development architects was argued as "providing for a synthesis between tradition and modernity" (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 413).

Not all chiefs necessarily allowed the scenario of being used as apartheid state apparatus within their respective "reserves". Some chiefs were part of the 1912 African National Congress (ANC) founding meeting. Also, Chief Poto of Western Pondoland who in 1963 opposed the imposition of separate development upon that territory in the Transkei's first election is another example (Bank & Southall, 1996). King Sabata Dalindyebo from the former Transkei took the baton and consequently was exiled in Zambia. The resistance of chiefs to both colonial and apartheid oppression was enacted in the coronation of Chief Albert Luthuli as the African National Congress (ANC) president in 1952. Lastly, Nelson Mandela, the first president of a democratic South Africa, himself was a son of a chief deposed by a colonial magistrate. With time, through the machinery of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (CONTRALESA) traditional leadership was also coerced by the ANC to serve its political purposes just before the first democratic elections were held in April 1994.

The role of the chiefs was also very crucial in forging socio-political relations in the former "homelands" of Transkei and Ciskei just after the apartheid government installed Chief Ministers were overthrown through military coups. In the former Ciskei where Gqozo had taken over from Dr. Lennox Sebe, there were conflicts between traditional leaders and civic organizations. Contrary to Gqozo, Holomisa never removed chiefs from their positions but rather removed political enemies (Bank & Southall, 1996, p. 423).

The apartheid era is defined by not only removals but urban infrastructural planning which by nature is destructive to the lifestyle that the individuals are used to (Bank, 2001). The impact of social engineering policies in some of the newly established townships, both in the custody of the Republic and the apartheid homeland, sought to create "apartheid subjects" from the amaXhosa people in the Eastern Cape. According to Bank (2001), the amaXhosa people who were subjected to such in the East London area lost touch with some of their traditions and the essence of who they were. The housing system was further used as a tool for control, argues Bank.

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According to the above-mentioned scholar, if individuals did not qualify for housing, they were not kicked out of the system but instead were further referred for counselling (Bank, 2001). This clinical treatment of a social ailment enforced the subjectivity agenda in terms of Bantu administrators who in turn were acting for the apartheid state (Bank, 2001). This was also used to depoliticise the black masses. Creation of violence, gangsterism and unemployment was also a defining factor (Bank, 2001).

III. J.J.R. Jolobe's Missionary Background and Ouvre

As stated by Attwell (1999:268), "in what has been called the `comedic' vision of missionary education, post- Darwinian notions of progress and Christian eschatology were easily combined". As implicated, the main question "is whether the intellectuals of Dube's class, the *kholwa*, converted and merely accepted the metaphorics of the civilising mission or whether they appropriated them to serve their own interests" (ibid). The above- mentioned scholar further insinuates, "In all probability, the answer cannot be either-or: as products of the mission system they had been interpellated by its language, values and ethos, but at the receiving end of colonial racism and the limitations it imposed on their social, political and economic ambitions, they were aggrieved by the contradictions between their ideals and actual experience" (Attwell, 1999:268).

The Glasgow Mission Society's Reverand John Bennie's inscription, deliberately superimposed over "a stoic looking cow", Christian or secular, appropriated not only the amaXhosa cosmos but both their land and livestock (Peires, 1980). In essence, by declaring that "All cattle come from God", on behalf of the settlers, he was offering both justification and propaganda as a vehicle for both usurping and appropriation of the fore mentioned 'indigenous' property. By default, if the statement was indeed true, as he claimed, as agents of the British Empire and thus God they had a stake in both the Khoi-San and amaXhosa livestock. Between 1823 and 1915, focal institutions like Chuma mission station (that later changed to Lovedale) and the South African Native College (now Fort Hare) were formed. The two above mentioned institutions would play a significant role in not only reducing the South African indigenous languages to a quasi-status of written text but would help to 'civilise' a large number of African middle class.

James Ranisi Jolobe was born on the 25th of July 1902 at Indwe, roughly 67 years after the famous 14th May 1835 milkwood covenant. Led by John Ayliff from Butterworth to Peddie, the 'Mfengu'[5] tribe gathered and convened under a milkwood tree. They made a covenant to serve not only God but the Empire. They also made a solemn promise to educate their children. Jolobe was born to amaHlubi, one of the sub-groups that belong to the 'Mfengu' tribe. I am raising this now for two major reasons. Firstly, in terms of the socio-economic vantage and the aesthetic this background would assist the young Jolobe. His father (a minister in Presbyterian Church of Scottland) and mother (a primary school teacher) would instil a love for both God and education to the young Jolobe, just as promised by his ancestors. Secondly, this would haunt his career later in his life at Lovedale as there was a tribal feud then between the former and the 'Xhosas'. This feud was so immense as it would even affect giants like D.D.T. Jabavu, as he himself was classified as a 'Mfengu'.

After qualifying and practising as both a teacher and a minister, he would eventually graduate with a B.A. degree (Ethics and English) from the University of Fort Hare in 1932. Married to a professional nurse, they had three children. His classic novel, *Elundini Lothukela*, was published in 1959. At a certain point in his career he was invited to be a tutor at Lovedale by Reverand Grant. It may be around this time that the tension was heating up between 'Mfengus' and 'Xhosas' as Peirres records that at a certain point Lovedale authorities were much concerned about this rivalry as somehow "it would affect the church" (Peirres, 1980). Nkosi (1981, unpaginated) observes. "By the 1920s in South Africa the Scottish missionaries had firmly laid the groundwork for the literary activity which would culminate in that first flowering of African literature the most notable representatives of which were Mqhayi, Jolobe, Bereng, Vilakazi and H. I. E. Dhlomo. . . ." (Lewis Nkosi, 1981).

His parallel use of three languages (Bhaca, Hlubi and Sotho) initially posed a linguistic challenge as far as his literary outputs in isiXhosa were concerned. However, with the intervention of luminaries like S.E.K. Mqhayi, this would later prove to be a major development in the language. He also crossed boundaries as far as cultures and customs of these three main Xhosa sub-groups are concerned. This would later be an asset in his writing career as his major classic, *Elundini Lothukela*, owed its conception to such ethnographic inclinations. He wrote across all forms: that is journalism, novel, drama, poetry and essays. To prove this, in 1952 he was even awarded the Vilakazi

[5] 'Mfengu' is a generic term for the broken peoples who among the Xhosa in the wake of the Mfecane. They rallied around the sympathetic Wesleyan missionary John Ayliff, and during the Sixth Frontier War (1834-5) h instrumental in provoking them to desert across the Kei to the British.

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Memorial Prize for both preserving and developing Nguni languages.

As far as language is concerned, Jolobe proved himself to be a social developer. His whole oeuvre includes the following: two novels; four collections of poetry and eight translations. In total, he received five literary awards for different forms of writing. The colonial benefactors like Jolobe were not simple dormant recipients of the foreign 'civilisation' agenda brought by missionaries. As argued by Ndletyana (2008:5) "[they] re-defined themselves, combining the best of the two worlds into what became a modern African identity and a unique contribution to South African modernity".

As much as his primary language of writing is isiXhosa, he adopted bilingualism through translating both from isiXhosa to English and vice versa. Most of the work that he translated from English to isiXhosa were missionary documents and pamphlets published by Lovedale. To the same extent, he translated educational material aimed for schools. He also translated works of significance like Rider Haggards's 1885 *King Solomon's Mines* to *Imigodi ka Kumkani uSolomoni, Up from Slavery* by B.T. Washington as *Ukuphuma ukusuka ebukhobokeni* (1951). In 1972 he translated the Preface of John Knox Bokwe's Biography written by S.E.K. Mqhayi. In his own work, he translated his classic epic poem, "uThuthula" from isiXhosa to English. There is also a slim collection of his work originally translated by Z.S. Qangule and Robert Mshengu Kavanagh in 1971, *The Making Of A Servant And Other Poems*.

In seeking larger audiences, Jolobe translated some of his work, especially the award winning epic poem, *uThuthula*. *Thuthula* is still a subject interest judging from the 2003 Chris "Zithulele" Mann's adaptation of the epic into a play *Thuthula: Heart Of The Labyrinth* and its reception by the amaXhosa royal house. Xhegwana (2022) has also revisited the debate through publishing *A Letter To Thuthula* in the Institute for the Study of English in Africa published poetry journal, the *New Coin*. As a decolonising tool, Jolobe also translated a large corpus of work by other authors from English to isiXhosa. To this effect, Kwetana observes,

In his writings, Jolobe always tried to make readers aware of the statements and sentiments made by Europeans about Nguni African people [that] were derogatory in nature. Attitudes of Europeans towards African people were well captured in King Solomon's Mines (para 1.4.3, v). His translations thus ensured that those who were reading said work were aware of how Europeans were viewing them and how they regarded their status in society. At this time, he was engaging in the political awakening of African people (Kwetana 2000).

IV. Conclusion

The first generation of Xhosa intellectuals were a rare breed. With such a skill they negotiated the binary nature of their existence; old and new, traditional and modern, African and European. In being benefactors of the British missionary education, they were not passive recipients but somehow displayed a certain kind of resistance which was not easily detectable to the Empire. In doing so, they left a blue-print through which generations to come would develop. Although very much younger than these pioneers[6], Jolobe was put in the same category as the likes of Mqhayi, Jabavu and Bhokhwe. As already inclined to in the above argument, he adopted an aesthetic that had already defined itself in terms of mission education and the 'civilising' mission of the colonisers. This can be attributed both to the vintage point that both his lineage, the so-called Mfengus, and his very immediate family offered him. Indeed, his was a conducive environment that, with a lot of hard work of course from his side, allowed both his spiritual and academic pursuits flourish.

[6] Perhaps one could rightly point him out a belonging more to the second generation.

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