

# COSAW

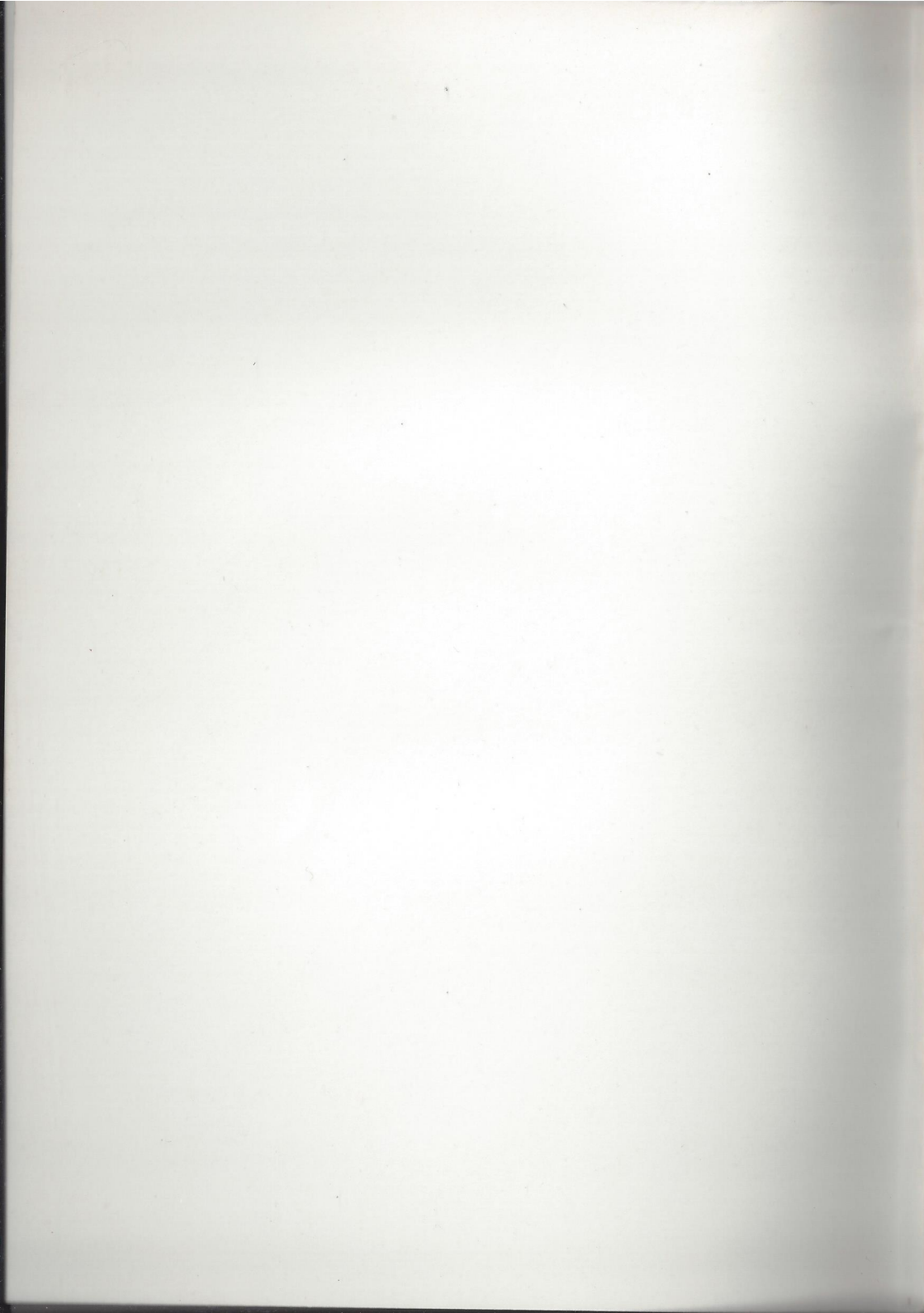
Transvaal region

# JOURNAL

November 1988



Freedom for writers, writers for freedom



# What's inside?

**4****Editorial****7****Khulumani  
Makhosikazi**

Cosaw's conference on  
women and writing

**8****Cosaw countrywide**

National round-up of activities

**11****Letsatsi la kutlwisiso**

A short story by An Pitso

**16****Liberating language**

Discussion paper  
by Mafika Gwala

**20****Scrutinising literature**

A poem by Bertold Brecht

**21****Prison poems**

*Darkie, Teachers, Parents*

**24****Young poets**

*They said it, Listen to our  
demands, Tsotsi, The New  
World, No-one can substitute  
my mother.*

**28****Teraloyna**

A short story by  
Nadine Gordimer.

**34****More poems**

from Nondumiso, Willie, Them-  
ba, Thani, Sem and An Pitso.

**44****Against  
pamphleteering  
the future**

Paper by Njabulo Ndebele

## **Our first publication**

*This is COSAW Transvaal region's first publications since its launch on 12 November 1987. The journal aims to provide a forum for progressive and critical writing and debate, publishing a wide range of cultural works such as poetry, short stories, discussion papers and so on, in any language spoken in South Africa.*

*Many have found that the big, establishment publishing houses are only interested in the famous and the "big names" with several published books behind them. Many works which reflect the experiences and aspirations of the oppressed and exploited majority are never published - their ideas are not acceptable to the profit-seeking publishers.*

*We have a wealth of writers in SA. But only a handful have had access to resources which allow their works to be seen by a wider audience. This journal aims to publish works of writers and other cultural workers who have been denied these resources.*

## **Khulumani Makhosikazi**

*One of the groupings whose voice is most seldom heard is that of the Women. The theme of our first conference - to be held alongside our AGM - is Khulumani Makhosikazi! Women Speak! Buang Basadi!*

*This is in line with our stated policy of non-sexism and our resolve to combat sexism wherever and whenever it raises its head. We must ensure that the conference contributes to making sure that women's issues occupy a more prominent place in the democratic movement and struggle.*

## **Resisting censorship**

*One of our founding principles is to "resist all forms of censorship". This brings us to the sorriest and saddest blow to have been inflicted on the progressive cultural movement and the broad democratic movement in general: The banning of Salman Rushdie and his book "The Satanic Verses". Those who have ensured that he and his book are banned in SA were directly or indirectly doing apartheid's dirty work. A special publication on the issue is to be published soon.*

*COSAW will continue to oppose any form of repression and censorship in defense of freedom of expression.*



# The Friendly Executioner



# Khulumani Makhosikazi

Buang Basadi/Khulumani Makhosikazi/Women Speak is the theme of Cosaw Transvaal region's conference on women and writing to be held from 25th - 27th November.

WHY A conference on *women* and writing?"

An easy answer is perhaps to trot out the old cliché - "there can be no free men without free women".

Many people have heard and accept that statement. But is it being put into action in the reality around us?

Of the members of the Congress of South African Writers in the Transvaal, 25% are women and 75% are men. Of these, 19% are white women, 19% are white men, 56% are black men and only 6% are black women.

Clearly there is an imbalance here. This is particularly distressing in the light of the fact that in many black societies women traditionally played a very important role as custodians of culture.

It seems as though there are times when the issue of the oppression of women is pushed to one side in the primary battle against the apartheid state. But it is an issue that we have to deal with if we hope to achieve

true liberation in South Africa.

We need to understand why there are so few women in leadership positions in mass organisations like the trade unions and the democratic movement as a whole.

We need to understand why there are so few black women writers, actresses, musicians and artists in South Africa. And when we understand these things, we need to find ways of changing them so that women play an equal role in the development of South Africa.

It is for this reason, and because our own membership so clearly reflects the inequalities between men and women that we have chosen to focus on women and writing.

The conference will run from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon. In this short time one can hardly do justice to the many issues related to gender and writing that could be dealt with, but at least it is a start.

Hopefully the conference will provoke both an ongoing debate and a positive programme of action.

# COSAW across the country

*Cosaw's national organiser outlines some of the organisations views, goals, and activities around the country.*

THERE ARE those who hold the myopic view that art is sacred - above and beyond politics. But art cannot exist in a vacuum - in isolation from the interplay of the political and economic, intellectual and technological aspects of society.

COSAW believes that cultural workers have a responsibility to serve the community. It has resolved to "participate actively and creatively in the transformation of our society" together with the mass democratic movement. Recognising the central role of the working class, Cosaw believes that the development of our culture must reflect this central role.

COSAW aims to help build a true people's culture and encourages the development of cultural forms that bear progressive social content. It is a springboard for both established and aspirant writers. With a membership of authors, poets, playwrights and journalists, COSAW strives to ensure that the production and dissemination of literature reflects the cultural heritage of all South Africa's people.

## Immediate Goals

Some of COSAW's immediate goals are:

- to build and encourage media structures that will critically manifest the aspirations of the majority of our people;
- to strive to ensure that the production and dissemination of literature - written and oral - reflects the cultural heritage of all the people of South Africa;
- to publish in all the languages of South Africa;
- to create workshops in writing, print, visual arts and performance and to facilitate the training and growth of cultural workers both in urban and rural areas;
- to promote non-racial and non-sexist literature;
- to develop libraries that will recognise the rich cultural diversity of the country;
- to initiate and co-ordinate research into aspects of literature, such as publishing and vernacular writing

## REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Launched in July 1987,  
COSAW has three regional  
offices - Transvaal, Natal  
and the Western Cape.

### ● TRANSVAAL

COSAW's Transvaal region was launched in November last year and elected writer Achmat Dangor as its chairperson. It recently employed a full-time regional organiser. Activities include:



- Numerous workshops in creative writing, poetry and drama.
- COSAW members have read their works at public gatherings and have participated in panel discussions such as those during the Weekly Mail Book Week in Johannesburg.
- Assisting local cultural organisations in Eldorado Park, Alexandra and other townships and helping the Educational Support Programme with literature and poetry workshops for Standard 9 and matric pupils.
- Translating the COSAW constitution into several African languages. This has met with incredible demand from members and supporters.
- Initiating and co-ordinating research into publishing.
- Producing a publication to contribute to the development of grass-roots literature. The works of both established and other writers will be published - particularly those which are ignored by the establishment press and publishing houses. Issues and debates around culture will also be highlighted.

### ● NATAL

Cosaw's Natal region held its launch and first general meeting in September last year in Durban.

This region has conducted over 30 workshops - averaging 50 participants each - in townships, towns and rural areas of Natal.

These have dealt with topics such as the teaching of prose, play-writing, the use of theatre and imagery in the analysis of short stories and novels, creative writing and so on.

COSAW participated extensively in the University of Durban Westville Cultural Festival - the biggest alternative cultural festival in South Africa.

Other activities include:

- Publishing its first magazine - *Natal Arts Quarterly* - which covers short stories, poetry, cartoons and a paper on culture.
- Launching the Can Themba Library, situated in Durban's Ecumenical Centre. Speaking at the launch in September 1988, COSAW Natal chairperson, Mewa Ramgobin said the collection was named after Can Themba because "in the field of literature and resistance he is of national symbolic significance" and "laid the foundation for universalism that will make South Africa take its place with dignity in the community of nations".
- Initiating and co-ordinating research into Third World writing.

### ● WESTERN CAPE

This region has a wide range of activities and projects:

- organising and hosting readings of works by both published established writers and aspirant ones;
- hosting art and sculpture exhibitions;
- implementing the Outreach Programme which involves "reaching out" to outlying (rural) areas.
- Schools Creative Workshops - working with interested students and teachers. The aim is to slowly broaden out to work with youth, teacher, women and other organisations and committees.
- The Publications Project has produced a magazine AKAL which covers both visual works and differ-

ent kinds of writing from a range of people including workers, children and academics.

A Poetry/Prose Publication publishes monthly readings of poetry and prose at readings organised by COSAW. The publication has served to inspire budding writers who read on those occasions.

● **Research Into Vernacular Writing.** This is in line with the COSAW declaration to "produce and disseminate literature that reflects the cultural heritage of all the people of South Africa".

## COSAW NATIONAL

### ● Alex La Guma/Bessie Head Fiction Award

This award of R5 000 is to be granted for a South African novel or collection of short stories (not less than 50 000 words). The works must be original and unpublished. All South Africans at home and abroad can enter.

If you want to enter, send a copy of your work to one of the addresses below. The work must be in English and double-spaced type-written.

● **Cape Province:**

P.O Box 130, Retreat 7945

● **Natal:**

P.O Box 331, Verulam 4340

● **Transvaal:**

P.O Box 11046, Johannesburg 2 000

The closing date for entries is 30 December 1988 and the award winners will be announced on 30 March 1989.

COSAW is also investigating the possibility of a Vernacular Writing Award for 1989. COSAW Western Cape region is co-ordinating research into this.

### ● Meetings

Five comprehensive national executive committee (NEC) meetings have been held. As COSAW is a fairly new organisation, much of the discussion at the NEC has centered on suggestions and recommendations, self-criticism and devising methods for COSAW operations.

Consultations have also taken place with a broad spectrum of writers and other cultural workers and such deliberations are continuing.

### ● New Regions

COSAW is presently concentrating on opening branches in the Orange Free State/Northern Cape, the Eastern Cape and Border. There are a vast number of cultural workers in these regions.

COSAW's aim is to take root in these regions and the whole of the country so as to become a truly national body and carry cultural work countrywide.

### ● National General Meeting

The second national annual general meeting will take place during the Easter weekend 1989 and will be hosted by Cosaw's Natal region.

Plans for the AGM include a review of COSAW since its formation, election of a new NEC, working out the way forward for the organisation, and performances by writers and other cultural workers.

# Letsatsi la kutlwisiso

by An Pitso

"Thabile, o tswa kae?", Margaret o botsa ka ho kgena.

"Mma, ke tswa kopanong ya rente, kganthe hao tsebe ka yona?", o araba a hemela hodimo jwaleka motho ya neng a matha.

Margaret a mo supa ka monwana: "Le ha ebe ke tseba, empa ke lebelletse hore ka nako eo bana ba ba felletse ka tlung, le dijo di be di butswitse, oa utwa, nke se phethe ke etsa mosebetsi ona o ntse o le teng, tswaya o late bana kantle!".

Ho utwahala modumo wa sethunya kantle le lerata la batho.

Margaret le Thabile ba betseha ho lo sheba Solly, Eric le Mpule. Ba kopana le bona ba baleha ba bile ba lebile hae. Mpule ebile a lla, o bua le ho lla haa bona Margaret.

O supa kgodumodumo ya koloi e e tlang e mathile e shebile ka ho bona:

"Mama, ba re lelekisa, bona hipopo ke yeo", batho le bona ba a pahlalla ka matthakore ohle ho dubehile ka hara motse.

Ntho ya pele eo Margaret ae hopolang ke tshireletso ya bana ba hae: "kenang ka tlung, kenang!", a kwala monyako ebile a ntlela, "tsamayang le llo hlapa! Thabile! loketsa bana metsi!".

Thabile o ya le bona kamoreng ya ho hlapela.

"Siyaya ePitoli, siyaya siyaya, ePitoli...", lerata la mantswe a batho kantle

Thabile o a ba hlapisa empa moya wa hae o kantle modumong wa batho le dithunya.

Ho utwahala ba bang ba re: "Ha re yeng, lea ba tshaba na?", mokgupi o arabela hong: "Ha re ba tshabe, a re yeng!". Ba ya ba bina ho ya dikela le seterata.

"Luister hierso mense", ho tjho emong ya kang o phahametse ba sepolesa kapa sesole, "ek gee julle net vyf minute daan is julle weg hier-so weg, anderster, drastiese aksie sal bevolg... nou, weg is julle!" Empa ha ho a feta le metsotso e meraro teargas e be e se e tletse lekweishene kaofela.

Moraonyana hwa utwahala diqi tsa batho ba hohlolang: "ekgang metsi! ekgang metsi ho bolaya matla a teargas!" Thabile o tliša bana ntlong ya ha jela.

"Thabile, ngwanaka, ha ke batle o ntse o itshunya-tshunya dinthong tse kang tsena. Bona, ntao o hloka-hetse o sa le monnyane. Ke sebetsa ke le mong hore le kene sekolo, le hloka dijo le diaparao, ka mona jwale ke shebile hore o qete materiki a hao o tle o nthuse..." "o bua ka ho hlomoha le ho tiya ho litseng jwaleka motswadi. Thabile le yena o ma-



By exiled artist Thami Mnye who was killed by the SADF during the raid on Gaborone, Botswana in 1985.

metse ka hloko empa mahlo a hae a bontsha ho se utlwisise.

"Empa, Mama, wena ekare se et-sahalang ha se ho ame. Kopanong ya kajeno ho bontshitswe hore re lefa tjhelete e phahameng ka ho fetisisa empa dikolo di pedi feela, matlo a rona aa nela hlabula, serame sa mariha ho tshwana le ha re se ka matlong. Matlo ana a manyane ho feta malapa a a leng ka hara ona!" Thabile o ne a jwetsa mmahle e se e kare ke modula-setula wa mokgahlo wa baahi.

"Qeto e bile hore rente e the-  
oswe!, e bang selo seo se sa nkuwe, baahi ba seke ba lefa rentel e kaba o ntse o mametse lentswe la baahi, Mme? ka di-3 tsa September baahi kaofela ba tla koloka ho ya dikantorong tsa rente le ho fana ka ditlotebo le dillo tse-na, ke qeto ya kajeno eo!" Thabile o bua a sa kgefutse le ho qaqisa hantle hore Margaret a utlwisise.

Margaret ha esale a tonetse moradi mahlo: ke nka hatle ka kelelong, kapa moradi o se a sa nke hantle? A tsitsinya hloho kgafetsa kgafetsa.

"Empa tsatsi leo re tshwanela re be re le mesebetsing!", o botsa a bontsha ka ho makala, a ntse a tsitsinya hloho.

"Ho jwalo Mama, baahi kaofela ba koptjwa ho sa thehele ka tsatsi leo, a re felleng kaofela dikantorong le ho fana ka dillo tsa rona, letjho jwalo lentswe la baahi!"

Thabile a thola ha nnyane a sheba mmahle o tla mo fetola a reng.

"Bona mona, Thabile, "Margaret a seke a senya nako, ebile a halefile," ke sebeletsa bana baka nna, ha kena nako ya bosawana!"

Thabile a batla a fellwa ke matla, a lakatsa hore e mong wa dibui kopanong ekabe a le pela hae ho hlalosa botebo ba taba ho Mme. Empa hobane a shebane le qaka ena, a tshwara kgomo ka dinaka:

"Ekaba ke mang ya sa sebelet-seng bana ba hae?", Kgalefo le bonnete ba potso ho tswa ho ngwana ya motswetseng ya tlatla Margaret naha, a batla karabo.

"Mamela mona ngwanana, e re ke ho bontshe mona.....ke mang a kokotang monyako?"

Thabile a ema, "ke tla bula, Mama.....Oh! ke ausi Grace."

"Mosadil o utlwile?", Grace o botsa Margaret le pele a dumedisla: "Molato ke eng, Grace?" O botsa ka ho hloka thahasello: "Kopanong kajeno....."

Margaret a mo kena hanong: "... hore ha ho thehelwe hosane? Ee, Thabile o qeta ho ntjwetsa hona jwale. Joo! Grace! re tla tebelwa mesebetsing! Ke tlo etsa jwang?"

"O tlo etsa jwang? utlwang mohlo-lo basadi", Grace a mo haruma, "Nna ha ke batle ho siya bana baka ba le bang. Batho ba bontsha ho lla ha bona ka ho romela dillo tse ngotsweng empa karabo ke di-hippo, di-rubber bulete le teargas, Grace o makalla Margaret, o mo tonetse mahlo: Mosadi towe o bua jwang na?"

Margaret o bonahala a tille ta-beng ya hae: "Nna kea thehela, le Thabile ke mmoleletse hore a dule ka tlong le bana ka tsatsi leo. Grace, le tla ntshwarela nna ha ke na mona."

Thabile, ho elellwa maemo a ditaba, a kena: "Mama, ha ho thuse o tjho jwalo hoba Solly ke e mong wa

maloko a Action Committee ya baahi e filweng matla a ho etsa hore tsohle di tsamaye hantle ka tsatsi leo le boletsweng. Ho e meng ya mesebetsi ya yona e tla ba ho buisana le bo-radipalawang hore ba se ke ba sebetsa ka tsatsi leo haholo ho ya toropong. E tla ba taba empe haholo hore kamona Solly o thibela batho ho ya mosebetsing, wena mmae kamona o ya mosebetsing".

Margaret ha a sa hlola a emetse hore moradi a qetelle seo a neng a se bua: "O kae yena Solly eo? Solly! Solly!", o mo hoeletsa tjena ebile a kena dikamoreng kaofela a mo sheba. "Solly!"

"Mama, o a mpitsa?", Solly o arabela ka ho makala ha a utlwa bitso la hae le bitswa.

"O re nywa-nywa nywampitsa. Ke eng se ke se utlwanng. Bual".

"Mama, nna ha ke utlwe hore ke bue ka eng."

"Ke re na o le-comrade?" mmae o a mmotsa. "Mama dula fatshe ke o hlalose tse", o leka ho theosa maikutlo a mmae. Mmae a mo hasa ka mpama pele Solly are o a bua: "Ke tle ke utlwe mohlolo ona hape. Ha kea o hodisetsa hore o tlo ba le-comrade!"

Solly a tswela kantle a kgenne.

Grace a kgalemela Margaret: "Ha se tsela ya ho kgalemela Solly eo, e se e le mohlankana hape o etsa mesebetsi o moholo hara setjhaba, nka thaba nna ha e ne ele ngwanaka."

"Grace, ke bana baka bana, ebile nna kea theohela hosane, ha ho motho ya tla nithibela. A ko ye hahao le wena ke bosiu, ekare o se o tla ntena jwale! Thabile, robatsa

bana, ke sekolo hosane", Margaret o bua ka ho kgena empa hape ekare o ithokisa kutlwisiso kaboomo hore ho seke ha hlola ho bana le motho ya ka mo bontshang bothotho ba maikutlo le maikemisetso a hae.

Grace a tsitsinya hloho ekare ha a kgolwe se a se utlwanng are: "Margaret, kea o eletsa, se ke wa romela bana seko long hosane, ho hobe kantle ka mona." A be a sentse a sadisa hantle, a ya hahae.

E se e le hora ya leshome, Margaret o jwetsa Thabile hore a hlapise bana a ba robotse. Ho utlwahala modumo wa dihippo le ho thunya ha teargas. Ho utlwahala hape le maoto a batho ekare ba lelekiswa.

Thabile a leka hape ho eletsa mmae haholo hobane ese e kare tse mpe di tla le ho utlwalang kantle. "Mama, nna ha ke ye seko long hosane, ebile ha ke ise le bana bana seko long. Hape kea o eletsa hore le wena o seke wa ya mosebetsing. Tse mpe di ka nna tsa o hlalohela hosane, rona ha re batle hore ha re lebelletse hore oa tla re be re behelwa ka lefu la hao. Kea ho kopa hle Mama, a o ke o mmamele hang feela".

"Thabile, kea utlwa mantswe a hao, ebile kea utlwisisa hore ho bohlokwa ha kakang hore re be ntho e le nngwe tjeka setjhaba re bontshe bahetelli le madinyana a bona, jwalo ka ha o hlola o tjho, hore ha re a kgotsofalla kgatelelo ena e kana ya rente e hodimo ha kanakana. Hape mabaka a mang a mangata ao o a bontshang, jwaleka mokgolo o tlase oo re o fumanang oo ho ona re tlamehileng ho reka dijo, re patale di-school fees, re palame yona, le tse

ding tse ngata feela. Kea utlwisisa hoo kaofela, empa ntho enngwe feela e njang moyeng: ke tlo etsa jwang hosane mona ha ke se ke te-betswe mosebetsing ka baka boitseko bona?".

Thabile: "Hoo ho ke se etsahale ha baahi ba seboka sena ba ka ba ntho e le nngwe, ke netefatsa hore hoo ho tla etsahala. Ebile boitseko bona bo kenwe hape ke basebetsi le di-unione tsa bona, bana basekolo, baruti le mekgatlo ya bona. Qeto e nkuweng ke hore ha hona motho ya tla nkang mosebetsi wa motho ya tebetsweng ka baka la ho sa ye mosebetsing hosane. Hape kana Mama, kaofela re re: ho lemala ha a le mong ke ho lemala ha bohle."

Tsatsi le latelang hoseng ka hora ya leshome hwa utlwahala lerata la mokoloko wa batho ba binang ba feta pela ntlo.

"Mama, Mama, batho ba se ba tsamaya ho ya dikantorong tsa ho lefa rente, mohlomong Solly o moo", ke Thabile o jwetsa mmae. Ba tswa ho ya lebella batho ba entseng mokoloko ho ya dikella ka seterata.

Kamora metsotso e se mekae, batho ba baleha, ba tlalatlala. Ho utlwahala modumo wa dithunya le batho ba hoeleditseng. Ke bana ba hlaha ba tswheremajwe le makoti-koti a metsi. Ba lelekiswa ke dihippo. Mang le mang a kena moo ho butsweng teng, le ha Margaret ba kena ba setswe morao ke yena le bana. Solly ha a bonahale. Ka mora tsena hwa thola tu ka hara motse. Ho se motho seterateng le dintja di sa utlwahale.

Margaret oa hlodisa, o bona mo-

tho a tla a matha ka lebelo le leholo a lebile ntlong ya hae. O nahana hore ke Solly, empa ha a atamela o bona hore ha se yena: "Ausi Margaret! bula, ke nna Sello, bula-a-a-a hle..." Margaret o a bula, o a botsa: "Ke eng, Solly o o o?" Empa pele a qeta potso ya hae, Sello: "mphe metsi!" Margaret a phetha a botsa hore Solly o kae. Sello a mo araba ha a qeta ho nwa metsi: "Solly o wele maane pela posong, o thuntswe ke maponesa."

Etse ha a utwa taba ena, Margaret le Thabile ba betseha ho ya bona Solly. Ba fihlela ambulense e se e mo nkile. Ba ya sepetle moo ba ileng ba utwa ha Solly a bolailwe ke kulo tsa maponesa.

Kamora beke, Solly a patwa. Lefu la hae le ne le le holo haholo, e le di-ketekete tsa batho le ha mokomishinara wa sepolesa a ne a itse batho ba se ke ba feta makgolo a mabedi, le tse ding tsa dithibelo tse ileng tsa behwa ke ba sepolesa ka mehla mafung a batho ba bulailweng ke sona sepolesa sena.

Ho bolawa ha mora hae, ho ile ha fetola bophelo ba Margaret ho makatsang. Mosebetsing o ile a kenela unione, motseng a ba lelolo la mokgatlo wa bomme, a kgothalletsa bana ba hae hore ba nke karolo mekgatlong ya bana ba sekolo, ho ne ho se sena lefu la sepolotiki le a neng a sa ye ho lona; le dikopano di ne di sa mo fete. O qetitse e se e le yena mongodi lekaleng la bo-mme la mokgatlo wa baahi motseng, ntlo ya hae e se e bitswa palamente hobane ke teng moo ho neng ho tshwarwa dikopano tsa mefuta-futa.

# Towards the liberation of the African languages

by Mafika Gwala

African languages have been subjected to such colonialist, imperialist overshadowing that, within the present context of an African quest for liberation from white minority rule, there is a growing need for a cultural re-instatement of the role that African languages can be made to play within the liberation struggle.

Whereas some African writers and political leaders came to see this need for cultural re-instatement after the achievement of political freedom in the various African countries, it can now be categorically stated that such realization brought about some kind of co-option of indigenous language for the more effective control of the masses against the true liberation in those countries that undertook such ventures. On the other hand we cannot dismiss the role that language plays to affect our thinking about the world around us. So that the extension of expression in modern African language reflects the following:

- the discrepancy between school and home education.
- the economic level of the black community,
- the interaction between the African languages and the language of the dominant white group on a broader cultural basis; and
- the political effort by some reactionary forces to permeate all sections of the population by means of negative cultural and ideological content.

The extension of expression has brought definite approaches from those who seek an alternative content to the conformist language of dominance, be that language of African, Afrikaans or English origin. However, I shall confine my talk to the African languages.

- Firstly, there is the stylistic approach which is bent on more effective communication, especially amongst the younger generation.

There are examples such as:  
"Ngithe ngijika ngakwesakhe nga-



thola amakgatha eviviyela" - I turned into his place and found the fuzz swarming around his place".

● Secondly, there is the conceptual - the use of words in the metaphorical or figurative sense, e.g. ibhulukwe (trousers) - ingxasa umbese (knife) - ifaso

● Thirdly, there is the populist approach as exemplified by Mi Hlatshwayo when he says in "Black Mamba Rising":

"Cosatu Cosatu  
Namhlanje fumuka"

"O gwadule sithelo"  
E sijule kuphela  
Ngezimpande ezimilayo

"Cosatu today be wise  
in the desert  
Only the fruit trees  
With long and sturdy roots  
Survive:"

It calls upon us not to remain outside the struggle that is taking place on the factory floor and in the countryside. Alfred Qabula draws attention to the countryside when he says in the poem "I Africa":

Ekuseni ehlobo lapho izinkungu  
zimboze amagquma  
Izintaba, amathafa, amaqele  
Izihosha, izigodi, isikhisi  
Kuthi lapho liphuma ilanga  
Sezi hamba zimuka izinkungu  
Zishiye izimila, izihlahla, utshani  
Izimball,  
Konke kusindaba amazolo"

"In summer mornings  
When mist is covering the hills  
the mountains

hovering over the plains, the land  
scape,  
and valleys at the moment,  
when the sun rises  
as the mist begins to lift  
leaving the trees  
the grass and flowers  
soaking in dew"

Unofficial culture works against the culture of the oppressor. Oppression is a political manifestation or character of our society. Our attempt to reach out to the people shall mean alternative perspectives in the arts. It means fighting against high-brow art individualism. This can be achieved by looking closely into the psychological implications of the language of domination, its military implications, our resistance consciousness and its naturalist, implications for the understanding of our fauna and or flora as understood originally by the majority of the people.

There is a need for the urban youth to pursue the social, political and cultural experience of the rural population, for the drawing of alliances between the urban and rural populace. Thus a literature that advances the interests of the rural population by enhancing their African language expression, without bottling it up as the FM media and the education department have done, shall be furthering the interests of the struggle.

Revolutionary ideas have always come from the educated group; but the transference of those ideas to the level of understanding of the urban and the rural workers, shall have to be through the medium of those groups. Only alienation can come

out of using the language of domination be that language English or Afrikaans. Or is it an historical accident that the Asiatic community in Natal and the coloured community have structured their own English and Afrikaans respectively?

Tactics of struggle are often contradictory, ever changing, but with a certain, and rather definite, unity that comes by means of interruptions and jumps.

If we, today, are going to have writers from the working class bringing out their own literature it is because no matter how one defines the African languages, they also remain related to their ability to explain and change the reality of apartheid oppression.

African languages are being stifled by SABC TV and radio and by newspapers such as *Ilanga* and *Imvo*. This brings about the need for a fight against a non-committal vocabulary. The Inkatha take-over of *Ilanga* is a bid to impose a false consciousness upon the Zulu-speaking workers. This necessitates the galvanizing of vernacular expression as a potential instrument of political change.

This is perhaps how literature can bring about understanding; and not defy it. The people's expectations need to be raised through the disrupting of official expression as innovative language becomes prepared for a state of tension and confrontation.

We shall continue to use English out of social need. Those who do not look seriously into the problems of expression are often those who do not give a thought to the expect-

tations of the railway worker, the miner, the farm labourer. There are those among us who would rather understand French, Latin, or German than another South African language.

We thus come to the question whether cultural engagement does or does not preclude political engagement. It is a question whether today's literature should or should not focus on the forces and modes of production, as is the case with "*Black Mamba Rising*", the SARHWU workers and the workers of Clover Dairies.

If we are agreed on that aspect then how can people be culturally organised as broadly as possible? For this we do not need an abstract class consciousness. A consciousness that looks into the nature of power and power structures along practical terms calls for the widening of horizons of awareness alongside the working class. It becomes imperative that we look into the terms and educational standards of the urban and rural workers and compare these with the accepted and non-accepted standards of political domination. Only a culture of resistance holds the hope. But how are those interests that are rooted in existing language directions to be countered?

With the greater chances of literacy in the post liberation period, the people shall learn to express themselves in either English or Afrikaans, and the problem will perhaps gradually, resolve itself. Until then it is an intellectualist view to expect the masses to know language group interaction. This way we shall be

viewing the need for an official language as an external factor, at the same time separating the "external" pressures contained within any of the official languages from the internal social struggles that exist in a unitary system that has political separation imposed on it.

If we maintain, therefore, that apartheid is reversible, the call for the liberation of the African languages should not be misinterpreted out of context, as a slanted rejection of the universalist call: "Workers of the world unite". We are here dealing with the South African context of struggle and survival. Even on a long term basis within a changed society, we shall remain with the languages we have at present. It becomes the solemn function of African languages to challenge the ruling political ideology of "homelands" rule and the imposed linguistic control on the indigenous languages e.g. Zulu: "isisebenzi" is "umsebenzi". Much trial and bitter experience have taught us that the working class does not see itself through the lenses of tribalism. The problem becomes: how do we make tactical gains out of the diversity of one language structure?

If we accept that white writing, English or Afrikaans, can be treated as being South African then we shall have to value literature during the struggle - the situation and the message, as to: whom do they serve? For we shall be viewing the history of our struggle as both a cultural and an economic burden.

In our history we have had Sol Plaatjie, R.R.R Dhlomo, W.B Vilakazi,

J.J.R. Jolobe, Soga, Nyoka, Ndelu, Mofolo, Mazisi Kunene and others. These authors wrote about fellow South Africans. They did not confine themselves to tribe.

They became national eye openers to the quest for a South African humanity. Through these writers we find that the African languages remain related to their ability to explain and challenge the reality of apartheid oppression. Their literature projects crucial insights into the political arena, raised the issues of white power and imperialist control.

We can also not ignore the revivalist role being played by African song at mass rallies and at funerals. There is a liberation expression that the oppressor does not fully understand. Yet the message gets clearly across to the people, across tribal and language barriers.

For the oppressed to be able to fight for their cultural right they are forced to learn not to dismiss the ideas that the oppressor imposes on their consciousness as a mere language fixation. Our communication levels are within an ideological orbit, since no language exists apart from the economy of a particular community or society.

Within all this I wish to conclude that there is no such thing as "academic neutrality". Just as with "Swiss neutrality" which accomodates economic banding, "academic neutrality" benefits the status quo.

It would serve the purpose of struggle if we affirmed that language, any language, is spoken from different dimensions. This way we shall be liberating all the languages spoken in this country.

# Literature will be scrutinised

1.

Those who have been set on  
golden chairs to write  
Will be questioned about those who  
Wove their coats.  
Not for their elevated thoughts  
Will their books be scrutinised, but  
Any casual phrase that suggests  
Something about those who wove  
coats  
Will be read with interest,  
For it may involve characteristics  
Of famous ancestors.

Whole literatures  
Couched in the choicest  
expressions  
Will be examined for signs  
That revolutionaries lived too where  
there was oppression.  
Pleading appeals to immortal  
beings  
Will prove that at that time mortals  
sat over other mortals.  
The delicious music of words  
will only relate  
That for many there was no food.

11.

But at that time will be praised  
Those who sat on the bare ground  
to write  
Those who sat among the lowly  
Those who sat with the fighters.  
Those who reported  
the sufferings of the lowly

Those who reported the deeds of  
the fighters  
With art. In the noble words  
Formerly reserved  
For the adulation of kings.

Their accounts of abuses and  
their manifestos  
Will still bear the thumb-mark  
Of the lowly. For to these  
They were transmitted; and they  
Carried them on under their  
sweat-soaked shirts  
Through the police cordons  
To their fellows.

Yes, a time will come when  
These clever and friendly men  
These angry and hopeful men  
Who sat on the bare ground to write  
Who were surrounded by the lowly  
and the fighters  
Will be publicly praised.

## **Bertold Brecht**

*Brecht was a German poet who always took up the cause of the oppressed and exploited. He was forced into exile during Hitler's Nazi rule. He died in East Germany where he had lived after the defeat of Nazism in the 1940's.*

## Darkie

After all the death-bells have tolled,  
After all the screams and faintings of  
sorrow

Have ravaged our souls,  
After all the shocks and wailings  
Have quietened,

The reality of your departure  
Still seem a bad sad dream  
To be quickly dismissed and  
forgotten:

To us the reality is seeing you  
Running the length and breadth  
Of Modder Bee playing field,  
To us the reality is seeing you  
Struggling for free dynamic  
And People's Education for all,  
Of you chairing our meetings  
In times of crisis,  
Walking in that style  
That reflected the fighting  
Spirit of youth:  
A true mirror of the Young Lion.

In you we have lost a soldier,  
Killed like a soldier in action.  
Among us a gap has opened,  
But as we say and sing:  
ANGEKE SIWULAHLE UMKHONTO  
WE SIZWE.  
Your place shall be filled  
By many more of your calibre.

It is hard to think of you  
In the past tense,  
To think of you as dead  
Is real hard:  
We still think of you a  
Freedom lover and fighter;  
A young lion rending this  
Dying apartheid monster.

A patriot hammering together  
Our divided land,  
A combatant for People's Power,  
A revolutionary to the end!  
Victory or death!  
We shall overcome!  
HAMBAKAHLE QHAWE LAMAQ-  
HAWE!

*Sem 27.12.86*

*On the death in detention of  
Kwathema Students Congress  
leader and fellow detainee  
Simon Marule*

## Teachers

You are hidden mines of gold  
In the land of false hunger and want.  
You are fountains of light that  
Can expell this poverty of  
knowledge,  
You are spears that can tear  
Asunder this dark blanket of forced  
ignorance;  
Live spokes in the wheel of history.

Raise high this flaming torch of wis-  
dom,  
Strip bare all its sweet fruits,  
Hoard not this host of wealth,  
Teach the children, teach the truth;  
Expose all the injustices of our land  
Instill love and hunger for more

knowledge,  
Open our eyes to the fruits of the  
rising dawn.

Stand education on its feet again,  
On its head no more,  
Stuff the children poison no longer,  
Teach the children, teach the truth.

The time is now,  
Better start now.  
Sleep no more.  
Wake up! :  
Lest the tide of victory  
Sweeps you along with the  
oppressor!

*Sem*

## Parents

We are your children  
Who but just yesterday were babes  
Crying spolledly on your laps,  
Who hid shyly behind your skirts  
From the slightest danger or  
stranger;  
Who clung to you for protection  
We are your children who today  
Are far away  
From the assuring fires of home.

Yes, it is we your children  
Who are mercilessly dragged  
Into the rigours of manhood and  
womanhood  
Before we are teenagers:  
Whose blood is spattered across  
The streets of our land;

Whose blood continues to drip  
From the hangman's gallows.

We are your children!  
We are the products of the  
Situation.  
Shaped and moulded  
By the march and demands of our  
time;  
We are the resisting and fighting  
Victims of the circumstances  
We aim to transform.

We cry no more.  
We fear no more.  
The agony of shock and pain steels  
Our determination even more;  
Death we face square,  
Death is part of the process.

No longer do we cry "Senzenina",  
For now we know the cancer  
Ripping our society apart.  
Our crime is our dream and fight  
For a free tomorrow,  
Of South Africa knocking heavily  
On the door of man's brotherhood  
To man.  
For South Africa progressive and  
non-racial,  
Where there'll be no rich idlers  
And hungry toilers.

We are your children  
Unceasingly and untiringly  
Marching on to a People's future;  
We have reached the point of no  
return.  
Ever forward, Never backward!  
The future is in our hands,  
The future is us!

*Sem 09.10.86*



## They said it

They said I must pay tax  
But yet our people are living in poor  
conditions

They said they rule democratically  
But when we the majority ask for an  
end to apartheid and inequality  
They shoot us  
Force us to go in exile  
And throw us in custody for years  
without trial

They said they are a Christian state  
But everyday they let millions of  
families starve and suffer  
Under oppression and exploitation  
Just because of the colour of their  
skin

They said at school I must receive  
corporal punishment  
Pay school fees  
Buy my own textbooks  
And then they have the nerve to let  
us learn about the  
Anglo-Boer oorlog and the Great  
Trek  
And they also try to tell us our  
forefathers were thieves  
Murderers and cowards  
And often all these hard days at  
school  
I find myself as a worker in a factory

**Tyrone**

## Listen to our demands

Listen to our demands for  
an end to all corporal punishment  
an end to all age restrictions  
Student Representative Councils in  
every school,  
and an end to Bantu Education.

Listen to our demands for  
maternity rights  
the right to strike  
the right to safe and healthy working  
conditions  
the release of all shopstewards  
and end to this capitalist society.

Listen to our demands for  
full political rights the release of all  
detainees  
the lifting of the state of emergency,  
the removal of the troops and  
police  
from our townships,  
the abolishment of the Group Areas  
Act and  
the New Labour Bill  
and an end to Apartheid

Listen to our demands for  
the people to govern and stop  
answering  
us with bullets.

**Tyrone**





## Tsotsi

So you marvel  
At a shining blade  
It works sharp  
Like a smile,  
With madness behind.  
A hundred words  
Escape from your mouth,  
All out of context.  
They cut no ice,  
Blunt, blunt, blunt.

*Tyrone Appollis*

## The New World

Take this soul of mine  
Take our land too  
Pour some wine  
And toast to the new world.

We shall go and find another world  
Where people can live in harmony.  
I have the master key  
We shall open the new world.

Let us go and find a new world  
Follow all the leaders  
And if they are unwilling  
We shall live and die, in this world of  
ours.

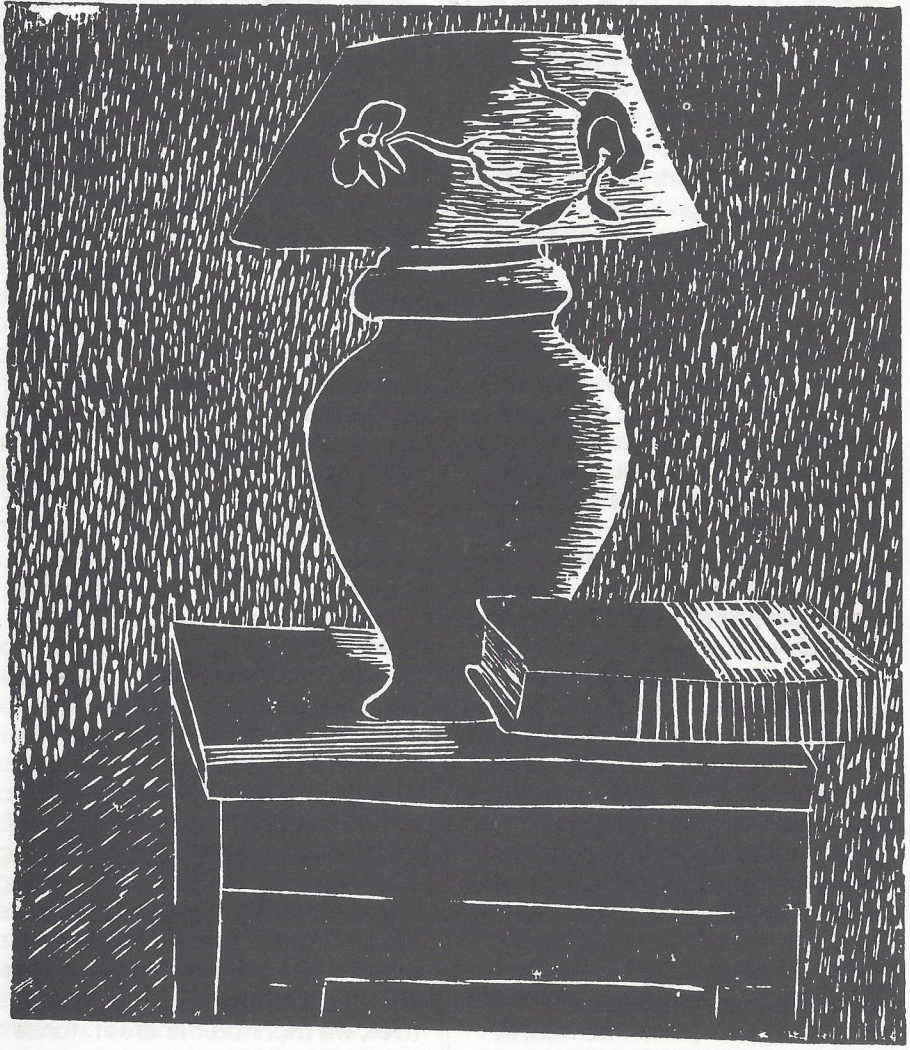
*Clive Peters*

## No one can substitute my mother

She is the most wonderful person in the world.  
She always cares for me.  
M - is for the million things she does for me.  
O - is because she is growing ever older.  
T - is for the tears she cried to save me.  
H - is for her holy heart which is kind to me.  
E - is for her eyes which shone on me.  
R - is for the right things she always taught me to do.  
I say, long live, Mother!

*James Letlhaku*

*First published in Upbeat*



The design of the lamp and shade is a classic example of the Arts and Crafts movement, emphasizing natural materials and handcrafted quality. The floral motif on the shade is a common decorative element in this style, often inspired by traditional patterns.

The lamp's design is a testament to the enduring appeal of simple, functional objects. The use of a square shade and a rounded base creates a balanced and harmonious composition, reflecting the principles of good design.

# TERALOYNA

by Nadine Gordimer

A place for goats—we all must leave.

Othello called here.

That's all it was fit for, our island. The goats. After how long we don't know; because we don't know how or when we got there: a shipwreck must have started us, we have one family name only—Teraloyna. But Othello stopped here; they came over in small boats, black men with spears. They did not harm us. We had always fished with nets woven of bark; they taught us to spear the great fish who broke our nets. They never went back wherever it was they came from. And so when we left we had among us only a child here and there who was raw-faced and blue-eyed; we were coloured neither very dark nor very light.

We don't know how the goats came. Perhaps there was a pair of goats on board, for the milk, and they swam ashore from the wreck. Ours were strong, large goats, they had a great many young. They had many more young than we had; in the end they ate up the island—the grass, the trees, at night in our houses we could hear those long front teeth of theirs, paring it away. When the

rains came our soil had nothing to hold it, although we made terraces of stones. It washed away and disappeared into the shining sea. We killed and ate a lot of goats but they occupied some parts of the island where we couldn't get at them with our ropes and knives, and every year there were more of them. Some remembered us—a sailor's tale of people who had never seen the mainland of the world?—and we were recruited. We took our grandmothers and the survivors of our matings of father and daughter, brother and sister (we never allowed matings of mother and son, we were Christians in our way. In custom brought down to us from the shipwreck) and we emigrated to these great open lands—America, Australia, Africa. We cleaned the streets and dug the dams and begged and stole; became like anybody else. The children forgot the last few words of the shipwreck dialect we once had spoken. Our girls married and no longer bore our name. In time we went into the armies, we manned the street stands selling ice-cream and hot dogs, all over the mainland that is the world.

The goats died of famine. They

were able to swim to survival from a ship, but not across an ocean. Vegetation and wild life, altered forever by erosion, crept back: blade by blade, footprint by footprint. Sea-birds screamed instead of human infants. The island was nevertheless a possession; handed out among the leftovers in the disposition of territories made by victors in one or other of the great wars waged on the mainland. But neither the United States, nor Britain or the Soviet Union was interested in it; useless, from the point of view of its position, for defence of any sea-route. The meteorologists of the country to which it had been found that position ideal for a weather station. It has been successfully manned for many years by teams of meteorologists and their supporting staff who, at first, made the long journey by ship, and more recently and conveniently by plane.

A team's tour of duty on the island is a year, during which the shine of the sea blinds them to the mainland as it did those who once inhabited the island. A long year. A plane brings supplies every month, and there is communication by radio, but—with the exception of the goats, the islanders must have kept goats, there are the bones of goats everywhere—the team has neither more nor less company than the islanders had. Of course, these are educated people, scientists, and there is a reasonable library and taped music; even whole plays recorded, someone in one of the teams left behind cassettes of Glend's Lear and Olivier's Othello—there is a legend that Othello was

blown in to anchor at the island. The personnel are subject to the same pests the original inhabitants suffered—ticks, mosquitoes, recurrent plagues of small mice. Supposedly to eat the mice, but maybe (by default of the softness of a woman?) to have something warm to stroke while the winter gales try to drown the weather station in the sea that cuts it adrift from humankind, a member of a team brought two kittens with him from the mainland on his tour of duty. They slept in his bed for a year. They were fed tidbits by ever-one at that table so far from any other at which people gather for an evening meal.

The island is not near anywhere. But as it is nearest to Africa, when the islanders left towards the end of the last century, some went there. Already there were mines down in the south of the continent and the communities of strangers diamonds and gold attract; not only miners, but boardinghouse- bar- and brothel-keepers, shopkeepers and tradesmen. So most of the islanders who went to Africa were shipped to the south and, without skills other than fishnet-making and herding goats—the first of which was redundant, since commercially-produced nets were available to the fishing fleets manned by people of mixed white, Malay, Indian and Khoikhoi blood, and only the blacks, who minded their own flocks, kept goats—they found humble work among these communities. Exogamous marriage made their descendants' hair frizzier or straighter, their skin darker or lighter, depending on whether they attached themselves in this way to

black people, white people, or those already singled out and named as partly both. The raw-faced, blue-eyed ones, of course, disappeared among the whites; and sometimes shaded back, in the next generation, to a darker colour and category--already there were categories, laws that decreed what colour and degree of colour could live where. The islanders who were absorbed into darker-skinned communities became the Khans and Abramses and Kuzwayos, those who threaded away among the generations of whites became the Bezuidenhouts, Cloetes, Labuschagnes and even the Churches, Taylors and Smiths.

The Teraloynas are an obscure curiosity in the footnotes of ethnologists. The surname survives here and there; the people who bear it are commonly thought, without any evidence but a vague matching of vowel sounds, to be of Spanish or Portuguese origin. Linguists interested in the distortion of proper names in multilingual, colonised countries have suggested the name probably derives from a pidgin contraction of two words the shipwrecked, presumably French-speaking, used to describe where they found themselves. 'Terre'--earth, 'loin'--far; the far earth.

The Teraloynas occupy no twig on the family trees of white people. Whites in that country have not yet acquired the far-sighted circumspection of claiming a trace of black in their genes, and blacks who, in pride of origin and search for unity among their different shades of black, claim an admix-

ture of the blood of non-negroid indigenes, the Khoikhoi and San, never bother to assert kinship with such scarcely-identifiable bastard groups as the St. Helenans (Napoleon had a forced stay on their island) or the Teraloynas. Those of Teraloyna descent whose blood is so diluted that no-one--least of all themselves--could learn from the shape of their mouths and noses, the lie of their hair, from their names or habits of speech that they have such ancestry, sometimes fly in Business Class over their island: down there, all wrinkled and pleated in erosion, all folds (the ravines where the goats held out so long) and dark inlets edged at the mouth by the spittle of the sea--it is not marked on the coloured route map in the flight magazine provided in each seat-pocket. Their island; and they emigrated from that unrecognized piece of earth, poked up out of the sea, to the great open lands--America, Australia, Africa. They doze in their seats.

**W**hen a certain black carpenter draws a splinter from under his nail, the bubble of blood that comes after it is Teraloyna.

And when a certain young white man, drafted into military service straight from school, throws a canister of teargas into a schoolyard full of black children and is hit on the cheek by a cast stone, the broken capillaries ooze Teraloyna lifeblood.

It is a mere graze, he is lucky, he might have lost a blue eye.

This year there are 600 cats on the island. An estimate: there may be many more, they breed in the ra-

vines. Their mating howls sound terrifyingly over the night sea. Othello would turn about in horror from an island of demons. Survivors from a wreck would rather go under than make for that other death.

But they are really only cats--the demons. Descendants of two kittens, a pretty black queen with a beauty patch of white on her cheek and a ginger tabby tom, who kneaded the pillows of a member of one of the meteorological teams in his lonely nights and were fed tidbits at the only dining table for thousands of sea-miles around.

The meteorologists have tried poisoned meat, and being scientifically-minded, infection with cat flu, so deadly to pets on any mainland. But these ferous creatures know no mainland. The soft beds and tidbits have disappeared in ancestral memory. They have forgotten the comforts and dependence on humans natural to them; to succumb to the forms of eradication devised by humans would be a form of atavism. Their howls are the only cries heard on the island; they have eaten all the eggs of the seabirds. They have caused the giant turtles to disobey, in amphibian wisdom, the imperative of their slow drag up the beaches to lay their eggs; the turtles have learnt something they did not need to know before in thousands of years in the chain of their existence: that cats, the claws of cats will dig up their eggs no matter how much breath--and how agonising it is to breathe, out of water!--is expended in burying them in the sand. The hares are fast being eaten out; and even the butterflies--

caterpillars are milky-bodied and nutritious.

The meteorologists have no trouble with mice, of course. But two kittens, so soft and small, have almost destroyed the ecology of the island, and this (apart from the infernal walls of feline rut) is an embarrassment to the team. When the SPCA protests against the cruelty of inflicting on animals a painful death by germ warfare, the meteorologists cite the near-extinction, by those non-indigenous animals, of wild life.

**B**ut this only emphasizes the careless disregard for ecological balance shown in the first place; why were the kittens not spayed, in the case of the female, and castrated, in the case of the male (a precaution against his mating with some kind of wild feline that might have existed on the island)? Well, they were pets, and nobody thought of it, nobody could have dreamt of the consequences: of such fierce fecundity in that place where there were no women. It was simply out of mind; out of the mainland.

A new solution is to be tried.

The fact is, there is an emergency on the island.

As the solution involves an element of sportmanship--who could be persuaded to carry it out, otherwise?--it was never intended to get into the papers, but due to another indiscretion on somebody's part, it has. Only a line or two: the cats are to be shot. If the hunters are good marksmen the death will be far quicker and less painful than death by arsenic or cat flu. The meteorologists are not the sort of men

who shoot for sport, of course, they don't handle firearms, so others must be found to do it. The army would be the obvious choice, but another sort of State of Emergency exists in the mainland country and all troops are required to man the borders, take part in pre-emptive raids across them, and install themselves with teargas, dogs and guns in the vast areas where blacks live. Every young recruit is needed: there are boycotts, strikes, stay-at-homes, refusals to pay rent, all of which bring blacks into the streets with stones and home-product petrol bombs and sometimes grenades and AK 47s that have somehow been smuggled past the troops on the borders.

But there are thousands of young white men outside the army who are proficient in handling firearms. Only temporarily out of the army: all these healthy males have done their initial period of military service, but they are called up for short periods whenever an emergency within the Emergency arises. No-one has had time enough in civilian life to lose his touch, handling an automatic rifle, or needs practise to get his eye in on target. Under command, and sometimes out of panic, they have shot chanting black school-children, black mourners dispersing from those children's funerals, black rioters fleeing, black men and women who happened to go out for a pint of milk or a packet of cigarettes and crossed the path of an army patrol in the streets. Pick them off. They're all black. There is no time--it is no time--to distinguish the bystanders from the revolutionaries.

A large party of these healthy young white men from a university in the capital city of the country has been invited on a holiday that will also serve a useful purpose. Not exactly a study vacation, although the students will be shown round the meteorological station and have its complex and sophisticated weather-satellite system explained. More like a spree, taking them abroad to an unusual and little-known destination. They are going to the island under orders to shoot cats. They are game for it. Among them is the young fellow who could have lost a blue eye by means of a stone thrown by a black, but was merely grazed to ooze a little of his Teraloy-na blood-line. He is going, soon, to see through the oval of the aircraft window (pushing and shoving among his pals)--Look! Look down there.

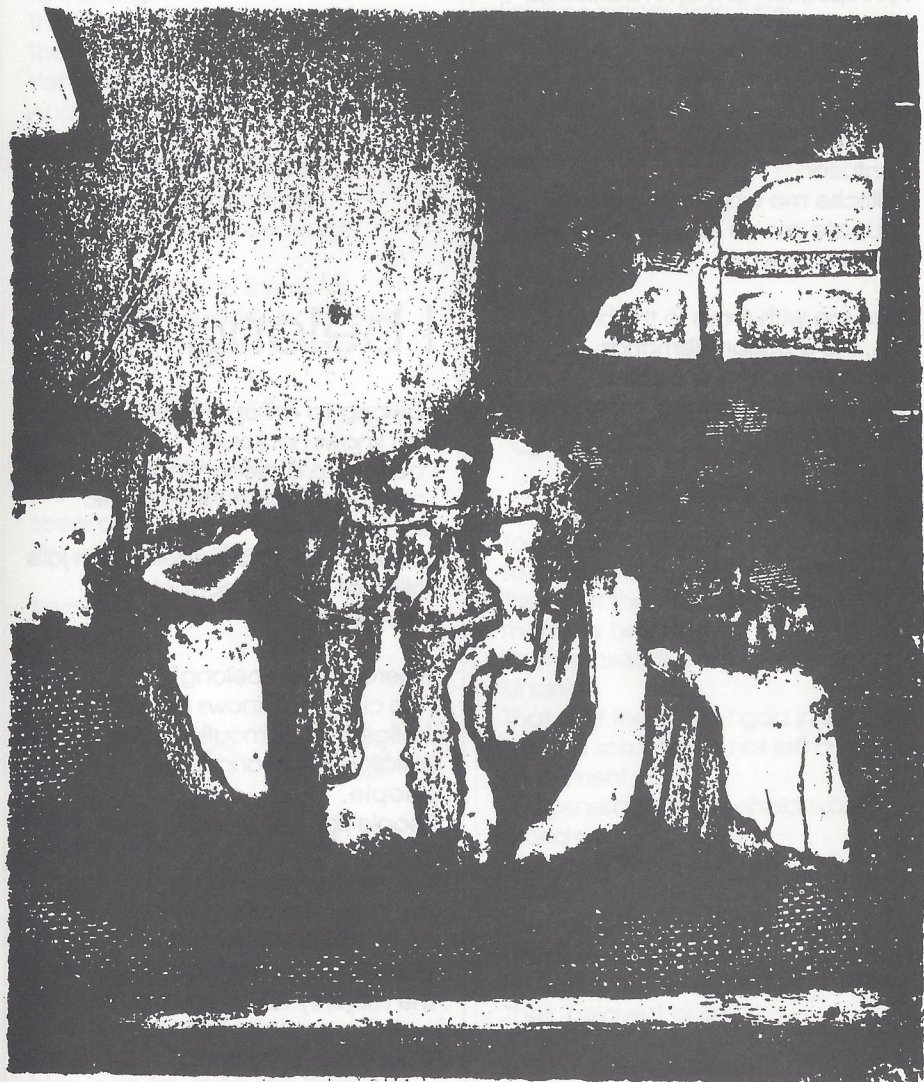
The island we left for the mainland, all wrinkled and plected in erosion, just topping out of the sea mists; the dark ravines where the goats held out long before felines did, the dark shores edged with bright surf, its movement frozen by the vertical distance of thousands of feet, before the aircraft slowly loses height.

He is going home to the island.

He is looking forward to the lo he and his mates will have, singing and stamping their army boots in the aircraft, the camp they will set up, the beer they will drink, and the prey they will pursue--this time grey, striped, ginger, piebald, tabby, black, white--all colours, abundant targets, doesn't matter which, kill, kill them all.







*My kitchen* by D.R. Malapane

## Identify me

Identify me with the majority  
 A flower in the house  
 An inspiration to men in battlefield  
 I have been called  
 Now identify me as your equal

Emancipate me from inferiority  
 Liberate me in ideological  
 confusion  
 Politicise me whilst time permits  
 Educate me to progressively see  
 the way forward

Take me with (you) to the bush  
 Yes, the situation demands,  
 Prepare me for the battle,  
 Yes, the battle against repression  
 and exploitation.

***Nondumiso Dingizwayo***  
**22.10.88**

## I belong

I belong to an oppressed society  
 That knows not luxury  
 I belong to a clear-minded society  
 Society that knows its authentic  
 leaders  
 Leaders that your leaders put in jails  
 Jails that breed apartheid and  
 discrimination

Where do you belong?  
 To a class that knows not justice  
 Justice that camouflages brutality  
 Brutality that kill and maim my  
 people,  
 People fighting for their rights

Where do you belong?  
 Yes, make up your mind  
 And if you know the truth  
 You would belong with the majority  
 The majority for a non-racial society

Where do you belong?

***Nondumiso Dingizwayo***

## On the wall

Let them know  
 Them who kept us in bondage  
 To this length  
 That when writing is on the wall  
 The wall would hear  
 Yet their hearts if made of granite  
 And their ears donkey deaf

What will make them to hear  
 The groaning of a nation  
 Tripple centuries to this length

Yet the tears flood the rivers  
 And the blood reddens the sea  
 Unmoved the hearts remain

The writing on the wall  
 Spells it all  
 Resistance!! Resistance!!  
 The writing on the wall  
 Spells an end and beginning  
 Rebellion!! Rebellion!!

*Willie Mmokonyane*

## For the love of a nation

Let not your soul to break  
 Dear Mother: for whoever gave  
 The best of her sons to a nation's  
 aspirations  
 Has done a godly act  
 Times harsh and brutal gave to man  
 Man in brutal and harsh times has  
 cause

To seek to change his  
 circumstances.

I shall grieve not before tyrants  
 Who had in bondage kept black  
 man  
 For time longer than rope  
 The black man remains black  
 I seek not to change myself  
 For I was nurtured  
 Yet circumstances I shall spare  
 Not a moment to motivate.

*Willie Mmokonyane*

## For Julius Caesar

Let those who will behold me brutal,  
 To know that I loved would accept  
 to be loved  
 That I felt the warmth of love on my  
 mother's breast  
 That I sucked the milk of human  
 kindness  
 That I felt the love of god in sacrifice  
 Has the son of man not left a  
 monument  
 For generations to behold what  
 wonders  
 Can love impel in deeds

They who love shall spare not  
 Their lives to conquer  
 To conquer freedom for  
 Their beloved ones.

*Willie Mmokonyane*  
 On the birth of his son



On the left of the son  
with Minkovoyne

Man in fact and form  
come everyday

## Ghettos

Wounds inflicted  
on the mystic body  
of nymphal Africa  
by whirlwinds of laws  
tossing her babes  
as beguiled rags  
rotting on roads  
to nowhere.

*Themba Mhambi*

## Behold and beware

Yoke-oxen  
cart-horses  
ever embalmed  
by twillights  
of setting suns.

Mutilated hearts  
singing blues  
of crucibles  
in boiling sloughs.

Behold  
their teardrops  
falling  
thudding  
exploding.

*Themba Mhambi*

## We

We are bows  
from which words  
as arrows of life  
are released  
to stab the masses  
with consciousness  
of the aberrations here.

*Themba Mhambi*

## Bitter Memories

When present thoughts of freedom  
are tangible  
as a mess of porridge  
regretfully my land, regretfully  
some of your sons  
shall still be tasting  
bitter memories  
of the crucifixion of our humanity....

*Themba Mhambi*

# To Nelson Mandela

Forgive me for succumbing  
To a most  
counter-revolutionary of Ills:  
The cult of personality!  
I am a simple man  
Of flesh and dreams  
Hardened by dashed hopes  
And sore bones  
The callouses of our shared home

(The Pollsmoor land that unravels  
From Limpopo to Cape Point  
Day after day after day  
My windows open, yours shut)  
Don't blame me for succumbing  
when another simple man,  
African, father, poet like myself  
Comes strolling from a cesspool  
With an unbowed head  
Roaming like a lion  
With a smile as gentle as the dawn

Forgive me for succumbing  
To this most  
counter-revolutionary of Ills.

**Thani**

# Untitled

Groaning under the yoke of tinsel  
words  
Airtight strangulated for  
The packaging of my naked days  
Yearning for a cloth of meaning  
The private silence in the bustle of  
committee  
Yearning for the thunderclaps of  
revolution

O verily, verily I say unto thee:  
I have pledged and stated  
abhorred,  
deplored  
condemned  
combatted  
I've recognised and criticised  
acknowledged, resisted,  
promoted, consulted  
linked, emerged, striven, facilitated  
reflected, disciplined,  
democratised, manifested  
and structured

And now?  
I want to live

**Thani**

## Joburg

Who will define  
The lineage of march  
In whose name  
Do Wimpy burghers explode  
Among the papers on your desk  
What spirit lurks  
What music resonates  
In the clatter of your telex  
Between the nodding panel heads  
Whose history ghosts to voice  
What hunger is fed  
In the rise and fall  
Of the Barclay account  
Still, so many questions  
May they haunt  
And haunt  
And haunt...

*Thani*

## In solitary

The day shuffles lazily along;  
Seeming to stop whenever you  
think  
When comes tomorrow,  
Or when is the day of release.

Like a disturbed tortoise, the sun  
Sits nalled up there motionless  
Staring down intently as if  
Taking interest and pity on you.

Sunrise you never see,  
Only an officer with a  
well-rehearsed

"Alles regl!?" tumbling from his lips.  
Your watch is the sun's rays  
Stroking the tall jail walls  
You badly miss the crimson  
setting sun.

With nothing in your hands to  
Hasten the day on,  
With no book nor paper to shut out  
The stench of boredom and  
cloneness,  
You think, think, think till your nerves  
Are like over-stretched guitar strings.

Days pass,  
Weeks melt into months.  
When am I going home?  
No one tells, no one seems to know:  
After the troubles are over, some  
say.  
Hell, am I a prisoner of war?!

The mind takes wings to freedom,  
Free as a bird it flies across the seas  
and mountains  
Visiting lands free and friendly,  
Rejoicing and mingling with people  
merry and unfettered,  
Soaring high the mind goes,  
Taking me to the war streets of our  
bleeding land  
Where People's Democracy is  
hammered out.

Come! night my bosom friend!  
In you I take pleasure,  
Bring those sweet dreams once  
again!  
Let them caress me till the sun is up!  
Oh, night!  
My all-comfortable 'plane!  
Fly me fast to the day of my liberty!

*Sem June-July 1986*





# Mme motswadi

Mme motswadi waka, se ke  
Wa lla ha o utlwa  
Hore ke tjhankaneng hape,  
Se ke wa lahlehelwa ke tshepo  
Le ha nka hula dilemolemo  
Hape tjhankaneng.

Tia o fumane matla  
Le ha mmolai a tiisa  
Thapo molaleng waka,  
Madi a ka atla atometsa  
Qeto ya kगतello,  
Ho phalla ha madi aka  
E tia ba motswedi wa metsi  
Aa nwesetsang sefate sa tokoloho.

O seke wa utlwiswa bohloko  
Ke ditlhapa, Mme motswadi,  
A ho hlora le mantswa a kgobang  
A tiise pelo ya hao  
Se ke wa itlhorisa  
Se ke wa dumella ho utlwelewa  
bohloko  
Se ke wa tlhajwa ke ditlhong,  
Eba motlotlo o be matla  
tjeka one o le motlotlo  
kgweding tse robong  
ha ke ne ke ho imetse.

Eba le matla, Mme, eba le matla,  
Ikgantshe ka nna:  
O entse ho ho holo  
Ho ke se etsweng ke ba bangata;  
Mathata le bohloko  
Bo ke leng ho bona  
Ha se bo sa iseng kae,  
Ke lesole ntweng ee kgahlisang,  
Ke boitseko bo tla tlisang  
Kgotso, toka, le, tokolohol

# Letsatsi le letjha

Tswalo ya letsatsi le letjha  
Ea kganya mafubeng  
Monko o monate wa tokoloho  
O tlala naha ka bophara,  
O tliša thabo, o imolla  
Dipelo le meya ya rona.

Setjhaba se kgahlano le kगतello,  
Ditho tsa puso ke setjhaba  
Di a thunya tjeka dipalesa hlabula,  
Mantwana a kगतello aa rusa  
Hape a robeha le leng  
Kamora le leng,  
Re kgathetse ke kगतello!  
Matla a a kgutlele bathong!

Mafube a tsatsi le letjha  
A kgantshe hora le hora,  
Le tsamaya butle le ka maikemisets-  
so  
tjeka masole a tokoloho,  
Letsatsi la kगतello le ya phirima-  
neng,  
Le nyamela ka sekaja sa lehadima,  
Le nyamella leffing botshong.

**sem**

## Fountain

We used to float -  
 In a wave of dreams -  
 All the life-long days -  
 Full days with open skies,  
 Confined in the love we shared,  
 Oblivious of the outside world,  
 Life evolved 'round our selfish  
 feelings,  
 Driven by human nature,  
 Isolating the inner turmoil,  
 Suffering humiliation  
 And deprivation of human rights

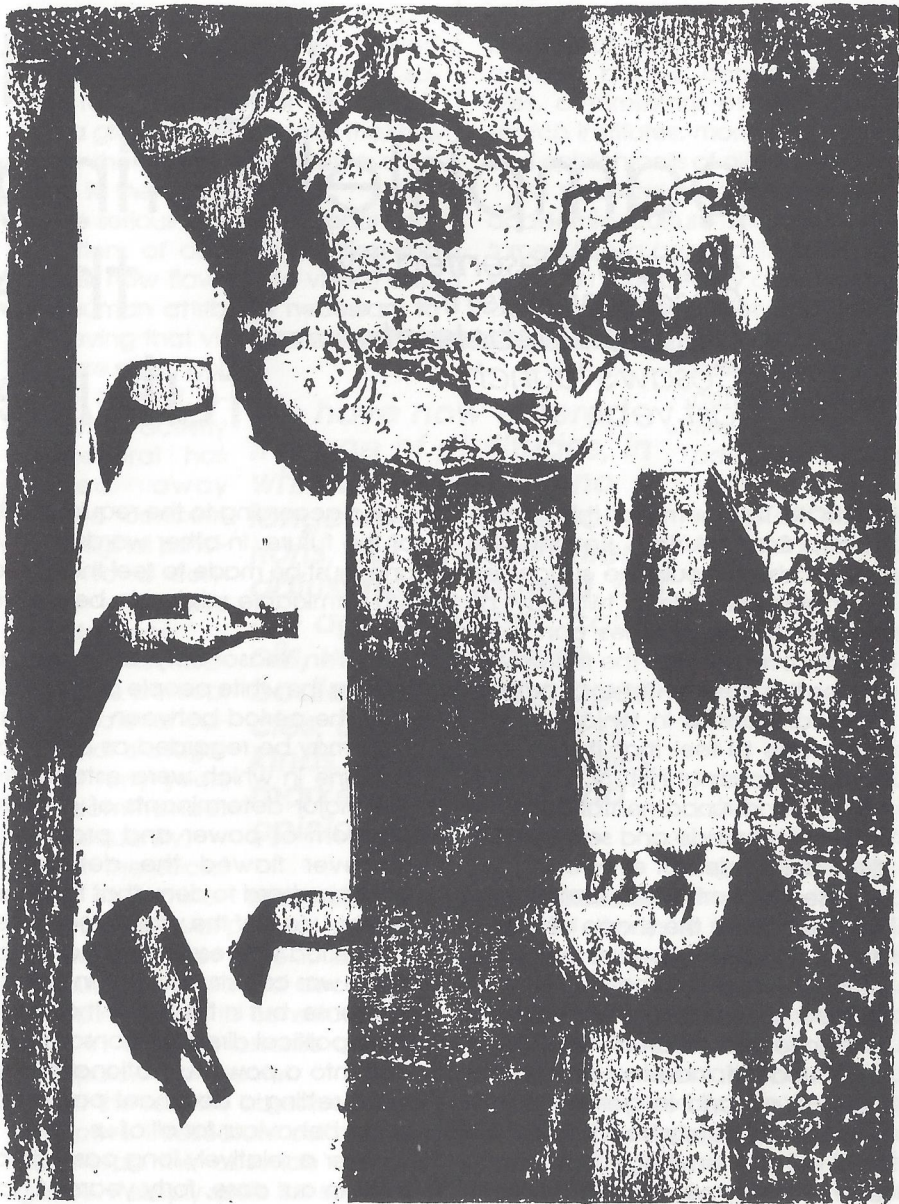
Our everyday turmoil,  
 Hunger, depression, oppression all  
 gone,  
 Ignoring the day to day suffering  
 Allowing a battlefield for love and  
 suffering,  
 Love turning into an enemy  
 of the masses, but -  
 Fountain - that is also fading  
 Like dead twigs in winter.

The strong under-current  
 Is waning like a moon,  
 Clouded by doubt and misgivings,  
 a mist slowly disappearing  
 with the rising sun  
 Like a horizon never reached  
 Slowly ebbing meaning  
 to life's only existence  
 All replaced by a vacuum never  
 filled.

Oh, Fountain -  
 Where are the sunshine days  
 we used to know?  
 Planting seeds of happiness,  
 Letting everything grow,  
 All the phony talks we made,  
 Dreams in what we played,  
 Oh, where did they go.

All had come to a dead end,  
 Washed away by our daily suffering,  
 Engulfed by angry sea-waves  
 which are the masses we lead,  
 Fountain, give us direction,  
 Give us strength.

### *An Pitso*



# Against pamphleteering the future

*A paper presented by  
Cosaw president  
Njabulo Ndebele at  
Cosaw's launch  
last year.*

FROM THE theme of this conference, "South Africa: Beyond the Platitudes", it could be suggested that there are at least two ways by which ruling authorities can exert control over people. The first way involves the creation of a climate of political debate in which people are made to feel that they are at the crossroads of history, and that difficult and fundamental decisions have to be made and serious sacrifices demanded of everyone.

A series of principles are set forth as determining the shape of the future. It is on such principles the nature of the government may have to be altered, and new opportunities for the governed created in the fields of education, industry, commerce, agriculture, and in general social welfare. Ultimately, to facilitate the birth of the envisaged kingdom, even the way people think and behave will accordingly have to be altered drastically. A new, ideal person will have to be brought into

being according to the requirements of the future. In other words, everyone must be made to feel that there is a formidable mission to be undertaken.

It can reasonably be asserted that for the white people of South Africa, the period between 1910 and 1948 may be regarded as a formative one in which were established the major determinants of a white kingdom of power and prosperity. However flawed the debate, it would be hard to deny that from the point of view of the white electorate, this period was essentially constructive. It was constructive not in an ethical sense, but in the sense that a defined political direction consolidated itself into a powerful national movement setting a dominant pattern of social behaviour for all of us.

After a relatively long passage of time, in our case, forty years of Nationalist rule, we witness an historical transition to the second way of social control. For the vast majority of

whites the predominant social reality of apartheid was no longer something to be actively argued for or justified on moral, political, social, religious, or other grounds. It was a given universal reality that has been there and would always be there to the end of time.

The serious issues of national construction, of defining a vision (no matter how flawed the vision) and the human attributes necessary to

achieving that vision are no longer there. Instead, intellectual activity in general has shifted away from a concern with original principles, to a concern with the maintenance and consolidation of a political and material culture that is a legacy of forty years of dominance. Consequently, under the social habit of domina-

tion, the general political and intellectual culture of white South Africa has suffered a gradual decadence as it slowly shed its constitutive features in order to assume a purely manipulative character.

But the relative absence of a redemptive intellectual culture does not mean the absence of intelligence. It simply spells the social trivialization of the collective intellect. We have now entered the age of platitudes in which the search is no

longer for ultimate solutions, but for convenient adjustments. Indeed, it is the age of ad hoc councils, various advisory bodies, consulting agencies, commissions of all kinds, research institutes, marketing surveys, and opinion polls of all shades.

All these take advantage of an academic culture that has been turned into a commodity after having been subdued by a technological approach to society. Thriving on

the euphoria of the political and economic success of the last four decades, this age responds to the needs of both the whites and the oppressed by striving to suggest that all is well; that any problem can be efficiently taken care of.

To the whites, the age encapsulates them in a cloud of comfort-ing benevolence towards the op-

pressed. It says to them: "we are in charge; here to stay. But we must find a formula for letting them in. Our life-style is the supreme international standard. They are lucky to have us here. Let us educate them. Let us guide them carefully through the intricacies of our thought, our institutions, our customs. We are the way to their salvation. Let us turn them into ourselves. That way, we can ensure the continuation of our usual life-style. Nothing will really change. You'll be

***We have now entered the age of platitudes, in which the search is no longer for ultimate solutions, but for convenient adjustments. Indeed, it is the age of ad hoc councils, various advisory bodies, consulting agencies, commissions of all kinds, research institutes, marketing surveys and opinion polls of all***

CHAOS, DEATH STARVATION AND HATRED.

WE DO NOT WANT PEOPLE'S COURTS. WE DO NOT WANT TO BE RULED AND LASHED BY CHILDREN. WE WANT TO MAKE USE OF THE BUS SERVICE.

WE DO NOT WANT OUR GROCERIES DESTROYED BY CHILDREN.

LET US JOIN HANDS, LET US JOIN FORCES, LET US STOP FIGHTING AND LET US BUILD DUDUZA AGAIN. LET US BE QUIET AND THINK. THINK WHAT DAMAGES WAS DONE.

THINK WHAT WE ARE TO DO FROM NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE TO IM-

PROVE OUR TOWNSHIP, OUR LIVES, OUR HOMES, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES.

LET US NOT TEACH ONE TO DESTROY BUT RATHER LET EACH ONE REACH ONE FOR PEACE. DOWN WITH STRUGGLE, RATHER COMMUNICATE AND COOPERATE IN ORDER TO GET PROGRESS IN OUR TOWNSHIP.

LET US WORK TOGETHER  
LET US PRAY TOGETHER  
LET US STAY TOGETHER

DUDUZA PEACE MOVEMENT

The effect of this pamphlet depends less on what it says than on what it leaves unsaid. Behind the direct attack on identified targets, the "stooges of Russia", is the assumption that there is something of value

that has been threatened.

The pamphlet suggests that there is a community of interest that exists and has always existed in Duduza. This community of interest also implies a strong sense of collective responsibility on the part of the residents of Duduza. The pamphlet then conjures before the people a

***The effect of this pamphlet depends less on what it says than on what it leaves unsaid. Behind the direct attack on identified targets, the "stooges of Russia", is the assumption that there is something of value that has been threatened.***

seemingly unmistakable common sense of purpose, one that has always brought the people of Duduza together. It says that Duduza has always been a secure, well ordered community, centered around the family, the church, the

school, the community hall, shops and the administration offices.

Consequently, the people of Duduza have always happily boarded their buses to go to work; have always returned from work to enjoy a happy drink at the beer hall; have always done their shopping without problems, have worshipped with grace and sincerity, without any interference, have loved one another as fellowmen. Order, peace, love and plenty have reigned supreme in Duduza for as long as anyone can remember. Until the coming of the "stooges of Russia"!

Even more wonderful, this perfect state of social being appears to have been achieved without any kind of strife, struggle and sacrifice. The people of Duduza have always forged ahead effortlessly, and

everything just worked out: until the coming of "the stooges of Russia"! All these truths are self-evident: that since there has never been crime in Duduza, since there has never been a single incident of police harassment, since there has never been any alcoholism, since there have never been crowded, ill-equipped, un-

derstaffed schools, since there has never been anytime when there was no sewerage system, or water in every house; since there has always street lighting; no embezzlement of church funds, Duduza has no his-

tory of discontent. Therefore, there is absolutely no reason for any kind of discontent. Discontent is an irrational expression of ingratitude; and ingratitude must be stamped out resolutely. People of Duduza: "let each one reach one for peace".

But why does the pamphlet adopt an inherently disingenuous position? Why does it display no sense of irony whatsoever? Firstly, the writers of the pamphlet may actually believe in their illusion. Their collaboration with the status quo may have resulted in a package of personal benefits for them such that their capacity to differentiate between truth and falsehood became distorted.

They have so internalised the image of the oppressor that they

have become indistinguishable from him. Secondly, the pamphlet may have been a product of the people who were fully aware of the vast resources of the science of deception. These are the masters in the manipulation of human perceptions. These are the creative inventors of platitudes. One thing they have de-

pendent upon in this pamphlet, something of direct interest to this gathering, is the complex history of the written word, a history which they have thrown with great vigour at people who, by and large, have been deprived of the opportunity to understand that

***The writers of the pamphlet may actually believe in their illusion. Their collaboration with the status quo may have resulted in a package of personal benefits for them such that their capacity to differentiate between truth and falsehood became distorted.***

history.

They know that there will be many people in Duduza who will look at the pamphlet and doubt the evidence of their own experience. They know that these people, like the bewildered animals in Animal Farm, will look at the indisputable evidence of the written word, and agree that indeed, other animals have always been more equal. It has always been so.

People can be affected this way by writing because writing is essentially a subversive act. It has the powerful capability to invade in a very intimate manner the personal world of the reader. Whenever you read, you risk being affected in a manner that can change the course of your life. This power of subversion

lies in the seemingly infallible testimony of the written word. Consequently, its authority is potentially tyrannical. But then the source of this authority has a long history. It is a history that has surrounded the written word with awe, persuading us that what is written necessarily contains unalterable, profound wisdom.

The priests of Ancient Egypt long effectively established this awesome power when they prevented commoners from ever getting near the written word. This imbued it with magic, with the result that the written word loomed large in the imagination of the larger population as something mysteriously powerful, delivering unalterable judgements. Later, there followed religious texts of all sorts such as the Bible, the Koran and others which became texts containing ultimate and unquestionable wisdom. And so down the path of history, government proclamations, and a host of "official documents" became repositories of uncontested truth.

Indeed, where lies the authority of the school, the university? Certainly, and in large measure, in the presence there of textbooks, of the library, of written rules and regulations, and of the authenticated certificate of teachers. The certificate on the wall! There it is, on

special paper, decorated, signed and framed as the ultimate witness to an uncontested truth.

And so, in Duduza, the declamatory pamphlet soon gave way to something more permanent. It was followed by a newsletter. In the context of social strife, a context tactically denied by the system, a newsletter works on the assumption that

tremendous events are taking place and people need to be informed. It assumes an admirable democratic public spiritedness on the part of the producer of the newsletter. So, taking advantage of the fact that finally, a sewerage system was going to be introduced in Duduza, the Duduza administration re-

leased what was first called "Duduza Press", subtitled "A newsletter that tells you Everything that is Happening in your Township". However, a competition obviously meant to advertise the newsletter as well as to create public identification with it, the newsletter was renamed "Duduzani", and here is how the results of the competition were announced:

The competition announced in the previous edition to choose a suitable name for the newsletter, was won by Florence Sepenyane of 2170 Mala Street, Duduza. She suggested we call the newsletter

***The power of subversion lies in the seemingly infallible testimony of the written word. Its authority is potentially tyrannical. But then the source of this authority has a long history. It is a history that has surrounded the written word with awe, persuading us that what is written necessarily contains unalterable, profound wisdom.***



"DUDUZANI", and won herself R50.00. Congratulations Florence, you can collect your prize money from Mrs. Henning at the administration offices.

The character of this issue of "Duduzani" can be gleaned from the headlines of the various reports "News Received from the Apex Training Centre", "Urgent Notice to Parents", "Holiday Programme", "Free Shows", "Christmas Greetings", "Competition Time Again", "A Note from the CIRCUIT INSPECTOR", "GOOD NEWS for our Senior Citizens", "SADF vs Local Teachers", "Reunion: Hiking Trip", "Chess", "Soccer", "Sports Course: Zandspruit", and "Boxing".

The total picture presented is one of absolutely calm, peaceful and normal society. Moreover, it has always been like this. There is no conflict in Duduza, and there never has been any, really. If there is any conflict at all, it is of the friendly kind in the context of organised sports: what with the SADF playing soccer and chess against Duduza residents! The confusing ambiguity this kind of thing causes in people unsure of themselves, people who have not built up defenses against this kind of onslaught, may very well result in their grudging agreement that indeed, there have always been animals more equal than others. What we have is the quintessential, manipula-

tive politics of platitudes.

This publication "Duduza", coming in the wake of the laying of the long delayed improvement of the physical infrastructure in Duduza, brings up before us another kind of text, perhaps more menacing under the circumstances. The infrastructure represents another kind of pamphlet: it is the high-rise office buildings, houses

***The confusing ambiguity this kind of thing causes in people who have not built up defenses against this kind of onslaught, may very well result in their grudging agreement that indeed, there have always been animals more equal than others.***

of parliament, the complex network of roads, railways, and airports, military academies, white universities, private schools, hospitals, research institutes, chamber of commerce, banks, factories, hotels,

opera houses, sports arenas, in other words, all the visible symbols of capitalist achievement, all of which the oppressed would like to claim.

All these, as shown above, are suddenly available to the oppressed, there for the taking, provided they agree to be law-abiding, civilised oppressed people. With the sewerage, the newly tarred streets, new schools, the people of Duduza are well on their way. Clearly the activity of reading is not confined only to deciphering the written word, reading also takes place as we walk around absorbing the languages of architecture, and being affected by the various uses to which the art of building has been put to suggest the power of orderly society.

Looked at from a necessary historical perspective, if only to show how little the essentials of domination

have changed, we need to make the intriguing observation that the mirrors of old, together with those intoxicating bottles of whiskey, presented by European settlers to fascinated Africans, in exchange for cattle and vast tracts of land, are still as fascinating as ever.

The main difference, of course, is that today not only have we had a hand in their making, but also that this time, it will not be land and cattle we will be giving away, but something

indefinitely more valuable: our very humanity, acquired through our engineered compliance. And so, in this way, the attraction of "civilisation" is rendered more powerful in comparison to the need to revolt on behalf of something new and untested. Indeed, the pervasive power of technical efficiency, extended to an

array of government institutions, commerce, and industry can create the overwhelming impression that it is far better to be absorbed and conform, and utterly useless to resist. The culture of technical efficiency aims at creating a sense of social well-being which depends on the instant satisfaction of need. To be caught, it is necessary to be placed firmly in the cycle of need and instant gratification.

What are the implications of all this on South African writing? The power of the written word in the moulding of social perception should never be taken for granted.

The professional manufacturers of artificial social needs for commodities have never taken this wisdom for granted. Nor have they taken for granted the power of the surrounding reality as it presents itself to us as a vast social text sending complex, often competing messages. These texts complement each other closely. This close relationship suggests that the business of writing and that of defining and then transforming the world are more intimately related

than is usually granted.

Both texts are a visible manifestation of the history of the practical satisfaction of human needs. For this reason, therefore, the oppressed of South Africa will want to re-enter the contest for power in history with both their hands. They will accept

no assurances that the thinking and the doing have been done for them. They will want nothing less than writing of their own texts.

The path toward the new text should begin with the understanding that it is precisely where the official culture of South Africa oppression runs aground and becomes decadent and manipulative that the oppressed must come up with a reconstructive political and intellectual culture that will recreate and re-energise civilization in this country.

In practical terms, it means that a manipulative culture must be confronted squarely through a consistent

***The oppressed of South Africa will want to re-enter the contest for power in history with both their hands. They will not accept assurances that the thinking has been done for them. They will want nothing less than writing of their own texts.***

exposure of its emptiness, as well as through a radical substitution of that emptiness with restructure content. As far as the latter is concerned in particular, the oppressed will need to say: "we have thoughts we want to validate through the written word so that we too can participate in the historical contest of texts for authority.

In practical terms, our writings will be filled with answers to the following question, among others: what is the

real function of all these buildings? What is the meaning of the home for the aged? The designs of these cities, what needs are they intended to meet? What is the real purpose of all these laws? Why should we drive on the left of the road? Why should we only have two official languages? Why should we vote at the end of every four years? Why doesn't the airline menu include our favourite dishes? Why should we fill this form that demands the colour of our skin? What is the aim of all this research? Why should there be nuclear weapons? Why are we not there in all the things that really matter? Why is the "Great Trek" not the Calamitous Invasion?

There are thousands of texts to be written. The oppressor, who has deliberately left millions of people outside of all serious human activity, will definitely have to learn to live with the fact that there are going to be drastic revisions to his own texts.

In general, it means that since our interest is in fundamental issues, since we want to recreate the entire social order, we must avoid the way of the manipulative pamphlet. We must not pamphleteer the future. Nor should we pamphleteer the past. To pamphleteer the future is to reduce complex issues to simple formulation

such that understanding is prevented, or at best, clouded.

Pamphleteering the future means writing that establishes its

case without the onus of proof; writing that challenges without educating, that is heroic without being too convinced of its heroism. Pamphleteering the future might also mean conviction without knowledge. It is writing that is not conscious of the extent to which it may have internalised the textual strategies of the oppressor.

Specifically, it means that the common aim of all writers, at this point of our history, is to assail relentlessly the textual authority of oppression and replace it with the textual authority of liberation; and that the essential characteristics of the new text is its seriousness, its radical broad-mindedness, its inventiveness, its unbounded respect for the reader, and its understanding that no aspect of the life of the oppressed is irrelevant as a subject for artistic or expository treatment.

What are the practical implications of these observations? We

***The oppressed will need to say:  
"We have thoughts we want to validate through the written word so that we too can participate in the historical contest of texts for authority."***

need to realise, for a start, that, though this conference has brought together practitioners of a certain kind of writing, there are other kinds of writing that are equally important. In fact, I would submit that creative writing will not grow very much without the simultaneous flourishing of the writing of ideas, of fact and information giving, of genuine polemical debate.

We need to create a broad literary culture founded on the understanding that writing in all its various forms represents the attempt of the

human mind to reach out towards ever increasing intellectual refinement. It represents an attempt at disciplined reflection. Consequently, we want to aim for a future inhabited by highly informed

people. To move towards that society, we want to insist that as many opportunities as possible should be created for people to write, read and to study the word, to understand both its strengths and its limitations.

The aim of our writing should be to break the potentially repressive tyranny of the written word by emphasising the fact that texts are to be questioned and debated with. Here the power of creative writing is particularly relevant, for only there is language freed from association with a purely manipulative function. The truth is to be found in its power to allow readers to formulate insights independently of outside authority.

To allow them to recreate themselves by enabling them to freely write their own texts.

It may be wondered why I have put so much emphasis on the written word. What about oral literature? The central belief behind my emphasis is that the written word is an inescapable fact of modern life.

This is not to deny the importance of oral literature but merely to assert the fact that the relatively greater impact of the written word in the social contest for power is undeniable. To assert the contrary is to dangerously

romanticize the tradition. It is to deny the mass reader the opportunity to experience the efficacy of self-education through reading. The aim is to enable the ordinary

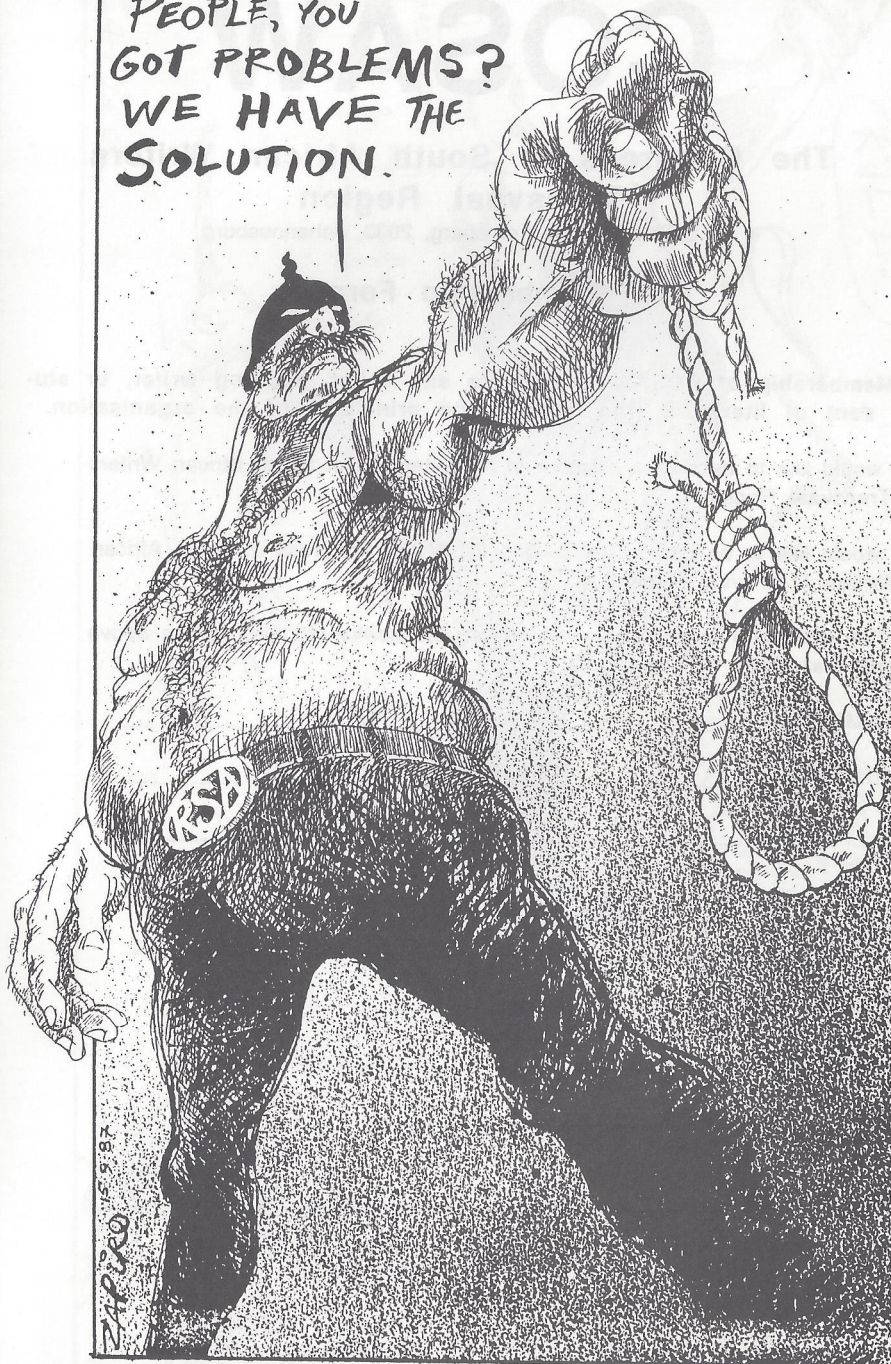
reader to domesticate the written word for his own liberation.

The people of Duduza have continued to press forward with their demands. They tell us that they have not bought the lie.

But they do need the assurance of written testimony that theirs is the way of truth. What are the elements of this truth?

The search for those elements and their definition through discussion and debate is what should replace the dead age of platitudes. One of the central challenges of this conference is to find ways of how to go about initiating the newness through the contribution of the art of the word.

PEOPLE, YOU  
GOT PROBLEMS?  
WE HAVE THE  
SOLUTION.



# COSAW

## The Congress of South African Writers Transvaal Region

P.O.Box 421007, Fordsburg, 2033, Johannesburg

### Membership Form

Membership of COSAW is open to any writer, aspiring writer, or student of literature who accepts the principles of the organisation.

I would like to become a member of the Congress of South African Writers (Transvaal Region)

I would like to be put on the mailing list of the Congress of South African Writers (Transvaal Region)

*(Tick whichever is applicable, and return the completed form to the above address)*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE Home \_\_\_\_\_

Work \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_



ARTIST'S NOTE: DUE TO PREVAILING CIRCUMSTANCES, WE ARE UNABLE TO DEPICT THIS DOG'S OWNER AS CLEARLY AS WE WOULD LIKE TO. WE WILL DO SO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WATCH THIS SPACE.





## Friday 25th November

Ipelegeng Centre, Soweto

### 7.30pm OPENING

Opening address by  
Amanda Kwadi

Poetry and prose presented by

Nisa Malanga

Miriam Tlali

Siphiwe Ngwenya

Antjie Krog

Cherry Clayton

Ndlaleni Radebe

Florence Shabalala

## Saturday 26th November

At Megamusic, 60 Pym Street,  
Newtown

### 2 - 5pm WOMEN WORKER WRITERS

Nisa Malanga,

Rozalin Napo,

Itumelang Mofokeng

Speak on the experience of working class women writers.

### 5.30 - 7.30pm RECEPTION AND SNACKS

### 8 - 10.30pm WE FIGHT WHERE WE STAND

A slide-tape show created by the  
History Workshop



## Sunday 27th November

At Megamusic, 60 Pym Street,  
Newtown

9am - 1pm  
**WOMEN AND LITERACY**  
The English Literacy Project (ELP),  
Use Speak and Write English (USWE),  
and SPEAK discuss some of the issues facing women learning to read and write.

### 1pm - 2pm LUNCH

### 2pm - 4.30pm IMAGES OF WOMEN IN LITERATURE

Nadine Gordimer,  
Achmat Dangor and  
Miriam Tlali

Speak about various  
images of women  
in literature.