South Africa, like any other African country, responded to European colonialism in a unique and distinct manner necessitated by the imperatives of its own particular history. From the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century the country experienced three differential phases of colonial domination: Portuguese intrusion, then Dutch colonisation, and lastly and most profoundly, British imperial domination. The consequences of English colonialism have radiated across the nineteenth century through the twentieth century to the present. It was English capitalism, imperialism and colonialism that brought European modernity to South Africa. From the moment of its entrance in the early nineteenth century, the English imperial project of constructing European modernity in the country was contested in one form or another by Africans and indigenous people (the San and the Khoe Khoe). English imperialism eventually defeated these African, including indigenous traditional, societies and positioned them in a state of permanent cultural and political crisis. The defeat of traditional societies enabled English imperialism to implant capitalism throughout the country. The implantation of this system of exploitation imposed challenges to African people while paradoxically and simultaneously providing pathways for African people to overcome these challenges through appropriation of modern European intellectual, political and cultural inventions. European modernity constituted itself as a great historical enigma in oppressing African people, yet at the same time providing them—however unintentionally—with the tools for their own liberation. The missionaries were at the centre of this modern paradox.

Though European missionaries were undoubtedly complicit with European imperialism in oppressing African people, the missionaries themselves facilitated the establishment of the conditions that enabled Africans to overthrow the hegemonic forms and structures of European modernity. By providing Africans with the English language, modern education and Christianity, the missionaries created
and established the cultural and political catalysts that enabled Africans not only to overturn their oppression and domination, but also to transform themselves into *modern agents* through political praxis. Through their own particular volition, African intellectuals and political leaders, representing the interests of African people, appropriated European ideas of nationalism, justice, liberty, freedom (in all its multivalent forms of complexity), association, party, and ideology with the intent of defeating European racism, exploitation and domination. They also transformed moribund customs and practices within African traditional societies. This monumental process started in the second half of the nineteenth century among the Xhosa people, the first African Nation to encounter European modernity.

The tradition of intellectual resistance to colonialism began in the mid nineteenth century with Tiyo Soga, the first African to obtain his education in Europe. Although Soga initiated African intellectual engagement with European modernity, it was the following generation of African intellectuals, the Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s, some of whom had been his students, who laid the foundations for the transformation of European modernity into New African modernity. This monumental transformative process was the *raison d’être* for the existence of what we may term the “New African Movement” which arched across South African cultural history from Tiyo Soga in the 1860s and terminated in 1960 with Ezekiel (Es’kia) Mphahlele (a member of the Sophiatown Renaissance of the 1950s).1

The following Xhosa Intellectuals of the 1880s were members of this first constellation of the Movement: William Wellington Gqoba, Gwayi Tyamzashe, James Dwane, Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba, Elijah Makwane, Isaac W. Wauchope, John Tengo Jabavu, Walter B. Rubusana and John Knox Bokwe. In an essay written at the zenith of this constellation, in effect representing its historical vision and intellectual mission, Gwayi Tyamzashe argued that the various Associations and

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