

AFRICAN JERUSALEM: THE VISION OF ROBERT GRENDON

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DECLARATION

Unless indicated to the contrary in the body of the text, or in footnotes, this thesis is entirely my own work.

Grant Christison

ABSTRACT

This thesis discovers the spiritual and aesthetic vision of poet-journalist Robert Grendon (c. 1867–1949), a man of Irish-Herero parentage. It situates him in the wider Swedenborgian discourse regarding African ‘regeneration’. While preserving the overall diachronic continuity of a literary biography, it treats his principal thematic preoccupations synchronically. The objective has been to show the imaginative ways in which he employs his rich and diverse religio-philosophical background to account for South Africa’s social problems, to pass judgement upon the principal players, and to point out an alternative path to a brighter future.

Chapter 1 looks at Emanuel Swedenborg’s mystical revelations on the heightened spiritual proclivity of the ‘celestial’ African, and the consequences of New Jerusalem’s descent over the heart of Africa, which Swedenborg believed to be taking place, undetected by Europeans, around 1770. It also examines how those pronouncements were received in Europe, America, and—most particularly—in Africa.

Chapter 2 examines the circumstances surrounding Grendon’s birth and childhood in what is today Namibia. It takes note of a family tradition that Joseph Grendon married a daughter of Maharero, a prominent Herero chief, and it looks at Robert Grendon’s views on ‘miscegenation’. **Chapter 3** deals with Grendon’s schooling at Zonnebloem College, Cape Town. **Chapter 4** describes his cultural, sporting, and political activities in Kimberley and Uitenhage in the 1890s, bringing to light his editorship of *Coloured South African* in 1899. It also considers his conception of ‘progress’.

Chapter 5 looks at some early poems, including the domestic verse-drama, ‘Melia and Pietro’ (1897–98). It also contextualizes a single, surviving editorial from *Coloured South African*. **Chapter 6** treats Grendon’s *tour de force*, the epic poem, *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (1902), as well as his personal involvement in the South African War, and his spiritualized account of the ‘Struggle for Supremacy’ in South Africa.

Chapter 7 relates to Grendon's fruitful Natal period, 1900–05: his headmastership of the Edendale Training Institute and of Ohlange College, and his editorship of *Ilanga's* English columns during the foreign absence of the editor-in-chief, John L. Dube, from February 1904 to May 1905. **Chapter 8** analyzes some of the shorter and medium-length poems written in Natal, 1901–04. **Chapter 9** is a close examination of the poem, 'Pro Aliis Damnati', showing its Swedenborgian basis, and how it dramatizes Swedenborg's concept of 'scortatory' love.

Chapter 10 describes Grendon's early years in Swaziland from 1905. **Chapter 11** deals with his period as editor of *Abantu-Batho* in Johannesburg, 1915–16. **Chapter 12** describes his last years in Swaziland, and his relationship with the Swazi royal family.

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My foremost indebtedness is to my supervisor, Dr Catherine Woeber, who supported me unstintingly while I researched and wrote up this thesis. She has been throughout an assiduous mentor and a loyal colleague. It was Dr Woeber who introduced me to Grendon in the first place, and it was with her that I regularly shared the thrill of my Grendon ‘discoveries’. In numerous ways she facilitated my work, curbed my excesses, assuaged my anxieties, and—from a very imperfect documentary and oral record—helped me to reconstruct the life and thought of this extraordinary African. Dr Woeber shares my fond hope that this project will bring to Grendon some of the acclaim he so richly deserves, but which he has so long been denied.

I also take pleasure in acknowledging, with high esteem, the pioneering work on Grendon performed by Timothy Couzens during the 1970s. Through meticulous archival retrieval and interviews with African seniors who remembered Grendon, Couzens snatched a literary reputation from the jaws of utter obscurity.

Andrew Dibb shared with me significant material on early Swedenborgian activities in Durban. Most importantly, he supplied a copy of J. J. G. Wilkinson’s *The African and the True Christian Religion*—a rare Swedenborgian text that made a deep impression on Grendon. Christopher Lowe and I never actually met, but through an exchange of emails, he offered me kindly assistance relative to Grendon’s involvement with the Swazi royal family, and his editorship of *Abantu-Batho* newspaper. Wolfram Hartmann and Dag Henrichsen shared their expert knowledge of precolonial conditions in Namibia. I only regret that I did not make their acquaintance sooner. Had I, their input might have made more of an impact on Chapter 2 of this thesis. Richard Patricks of Lobamba, Swaziland, shared with me some of his vast knowledge on the traditions and genealogies of the Swazi.

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After this thesis was submitted for examination in December 2007, I had opportunity to visit Swaziland, where I located descendants of George Dlamini, Grendon's brother-in-law. Seraphy Resting, Dlamini's granddaughter, ferried and fed me, and was kindness itself. Samson Sicelo Dlamini at Ekush, outside Manzini, was also helpful, as were other members of the George Dlamini family. They put me in touch with Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Grendon's daughter, living in Diepkloof, Soweto.

I visited Kuku twice in mid-2008 at her daughter, Isabel Tshabalala's Vanderbijlpark home. Sadly, she had suffered a stroke just days before my first visit, but to the extent that she was able, she answered all my questions. Mrs Tshabalala was particularly helpful, and recalled several of the anecdotes her mother used to relate about her childhood. Just months after I met Kuku, she suffered a further stroke, and died.

Others whose courteous, capable, and consistent service should be acknowledged are: the interlibrary loan department and subject librarians of the Cecil Renaud Library, UKZN, Pietermaritzburg; librarians at the Alan Paton Centre, Pietermaritzburg; the Bessie Head Library, Pietermaritzburg; the Natal Diocesan Archives, Pietermaritzburg; Killie Campbell Africana Library, Durban; the Africana Library, Kimberley; manuscripts librarians and reading room assistants at the University of Cape Town and at the National Library of Cape Town; Special librarians at UNISA Library, Pretoria, and the Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg; the staffs of the Pietermaritzburg, Cape Town, and Pretoria repositories of the South African National Archives. In Swaziland, I was assisted by staff of the National Archives and the National Museum, Lobamba, and the University of Swaziland, Kwaluseni. Lucy McCann of Rhodes Library, Oxford, furnished me with photocopies of two clippings from *Abantu-Batho* that were published during the period of Grendon's editorship.

My parents have offered me exceptional support—material and moral—throughout the past four years of full-time study. They have patiently put up with clutter on the dining-room table and creaking floor-boards in the small hours of the morning. Thank you for making this thesis possible, Mum and Dad.

DEDICATION

do-dare-dedi-dum-te-dum-te-dum

To my supervisor, the homage of a benighted post-classicist

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ABBREVIATIONS

AME	African Methodist Episcopal Church
BA	British Archives
CSO	Colonial Secretary's Office
<i>DFA</i>	<i>Diamond Fields Advertiser</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>DSAB</i>	<i>Dictionary of South African Biography</i>
<i>DSAE</i>	<i>Dictionary of South African English</i>
GWCRFU	Griqualand West Coloured Rugby Football Union
ISL	International Socialist League (based in Johannesburg)
KAB	South African National Archives, Cape Town depot
'M&P'	'Melia and Pietro'
NAB	South African National Archives, Pietermaritzburg depot
NNC	Natal Native Congress
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
'PAD'	'Pro Aliis Damnati'
<i>PKD</i>	<i>Paul Kruger's Dream</i>
s.a.	no publication year shown.
s.l.	no place of publication shown.
<i>SABIB</i>	<i>South African Bibliography to the Year 1925</i>
SACRFB	South African Coloured Rugby Football Board
SANAC	South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903–05
SANNC	South African Native National Congress
<i>SESA</i>	<i>Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa</i>
SNA	Secretary for Native Affairs
SwNA	Swaziland National Archives
TAB	South African National Archives, Pretoria depot.



frontispiece: Aurora
(Kuku) Malumisa,
Grendon's daughter (1925
to 2008)

Aurora (Kuku) Malumisa
Grendon's daughter
1925 to 2008

CHAPTER 1

SWEDENBORG'S AFRICA

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.¹



What follows is the first full-length account of the life, thought, and literary production of Robert Grendon (c.1867–1949). I propose to excavate the foundations of his spiritual and aesthetic imagination, and to attempt to reconstruct his expectations for Africa's 'regeneration'. Swedenborg's philosophy and mystic revelations concerning Africa vitally influenced this extraordinary African. They inspired much of his poetry and journalism, which have hitherto received nothing approaching the attention they deserve.

This is not a biography, as such. The reader will soon discover *lacunae* in the overall chronological sequence. The most conspicuous of these is the period of three decades leading up to Grendon's death, about which comparatively little is currently known. My focus has been upon his most active years as a poet and journalist—from the early 1890s until the close of the First World War.

Son of an Irish father and a Herero mother, Grendon had to contend with racial prejudices of both whites and blacks. In the face of innumerable enemies and the false principles operative within South African society, he became instinctively combative. The imaginative ways in which he deploys his ideological weaponry make for absorbing study. His deep spirituality sustained him through his darkest days. Acceptance of Swedenborg allowed him to syncretize Christianity with precolonial African belief systems, and to find merit in the traditions and ideologies of both his mother's and his father's race.

Throughout his poetry and prose, Grendon dissects South Africa's social problems, passes judgement upon the principal players, and points out an alternative path to a brighter future. In the final analysis, although it fuses potent ideologies, his vision is

¹ Rev. 21:2.

Plate 1a: Baron Emanuel
Swedenborg (1688 to 1772)



Emanuel Swedenborg (1688 - 1772)

uniquely his own. Within this vision, New Africa and New Jerusalem assume a common identity.



On the Aegean isle of Patmos, ‘John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven’.¹ In 1757, over sixteen centuries later, Emanuel Swedenborg witnessed the Last Judgement then occurring. He ‘was permitted to see the whole process of this work’,² and did so ‘with [his] own eyes, when [he] was broad awake’.³ In his Writings—believed by his disciples to be inspired—he links this cosmic occurrence with the descent of the New Jerusalem, otherwise known as the ‘New Church’.

Swedenborg (plate 1a) was born in 1688, the son of a Lutheran bishop. The first half of his life was given over chiefly to scientific pursuits and to the service of the Swedish Crown, but in 1744 ‘there commenced that open contact with the spiritual world which continued without interruption’ until his death in 1772.⁴ In *Arcana Cælestia*, published in London from 1749–56, Swedenborg begins by proclaiming his credentials as a revelator:

Of the Lord’s Divine mercy it has been granted me now for some years to be constantly and uninterruptedly in company with spirits and angels, hearing them speak and in turn speaking with them. In this way it has been given me to hear and see wonderful things in the other life which have never before come to the knowledge of any man, nor into his idea. I have been instructed in regard to the different kinds of spirits; the state of souls after death; hell, or the lamentable state of the unfaithful; heaven, or the blessed state of the faithful; and especially in regard to the doctrine of faith which is acknowledged in the universal heaven.⁵

Regarding John’s ‘holy city, New Jerusalem’, Swedenborg insists that this does not mean ‘any Jerusalem coming down, but the church, and the church on earth comes down from the Lord out of the angelic heaven, because the angels of heaven and the men on earth in all things of the church make one’.⁶ Swedenborg believes the

¹ Rev. 1:9; 21:2. In ‘South Africa’s Future’ (*Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4), Grendon refers to the vision ‘witnessed by the Apostle on the island in the Aegean Sea’.

² Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 115.

³ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 772.

⁴ Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg’s Religious Thought*, 15.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cælestia*, n. 5.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Apocalypse Revealed*, n. 876.

collective Christian Church of his day, with all its schisms and aberrant creeds, to be spiritually spent—or ‘vastated’, to use the expression found in English translations from his Latin texts. He declares that the last two chapters of Revelation teach ‘that at the end of the former church a new church is to be established’ of which ‘the chief doctrine’ will be ‘that God is one both in person and in essence, and in Him is the Trinity, and that this God is the Lord’. This new church is ‘the New Jerusalem into which only one who acknowledges the Lord alone as God of heaven and earth can enter’.¹ A ‘tripersonal’ Trinity is replaced with a Trinity of divine aspects, in which ‘Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are the three essentials of one God, which make a One, like soul, body, and operation in a man’.² Acknowledgement of ‘the exclusive Divinity of Jesus Christ’ is the *sine qua non* of New Church membership.³

With the science of ‘correspondence’ opened to him, Swedenborg decodes John’s vision of New Jerusalem, as he does other books of the inspired Word. According to this decipherment, John

describes in vivid symbols the beauty and consistency of the doctrines of a True Christian Religion. The foundations of precious stones are the great fundamental principles of religion, full of light and beauty; the wall great and high, truths that protect from the assaults of evil; the gates of pearl, introductory truths, like the two great commandments, that lead the soul to the heavenly state represented by the golden streets of the holy city; the river of the water of life flowing from the throne through the street of the city, the continual influx of living truth from the Lord: and so with all the other objects described; each has its inherent signification.⁴

The English poet, William Blake (1757–1827)—whose Swedenborgian indebtedness is well-attested⁵ though little-understood—declares in his introductory poem to *Milton* that he ‘will not cease from Mental Fight’ until Jerusalem is built in ‘England’s green & pleasant Land’.⁶ Blake does not follow Swedenborg slavishly, but freely adapts the revelator’s system of spiritual-natural ‘correspondences’ to his own poetic purposes. In *Milton*, ‘Jerusalem is Liberty’, who has fallen upon hard times and

¹ Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, n. 263.

² Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 166.

³ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 104.

⁴ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 149.

⁵ Frye, *Fearful Symmetry*, *passim*; Paley, ‘A New Heaven is Begun’, *passim*; Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried*, *passim*.

⁶ Blake, ‘And Did Those Feet...’, from *Milton*.

THE AFRICAN
AND THE
TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION
HIS MAGNA CHARTA

A Study in the Writings of
Emanuel Swedenborg

BY
JAMES JOHN GARTH WILKINSON
FELLOW OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

JAMES SPEIRS
36 BLOOMSBURY STREET, LONDON
1892

Plate 1b: Title-page of Wilkinson's
book, which Grendon read closely.

Title page of Wilkinson,
The African and the True Christian Religion
(1892)

‘been forced to become a harlot’. But ‘the time is coming when Jerusalem shall return and overspread all nations’.¹

Since the late eighteenth century, disciples of Swedenborg have repeatedly looked, not to ‘England’s green & pleasant Land’, but to Africa as the aptest nuptial chamber of the New Jerusalem. They have been guided by the seer’s visionary pronouncements on the exceptional ‘celestial’ receptivity of the internal African. Swedenborg declares that in the spiritual world, the ‘Gentiles are ... distinguished according to their genius and their capacity to receive light through the heavens from the Lord’. Of them, the ‘Africans are a more interior people than any other’.² In consequence of this special capacity to receive angelic influxes, ‘they have at this day [c.1770] a revelation, which is communicated from the place of its commencement round about, but does not extend to the countries bordering on the sea’.³ As one of its earliest works in facilitating the regeneration of the human race on earth, the New Jerusalem began in the late eighteenth century to direct its revelatory influxes into a remnant of the Most Ancient African race. This work is seen to be ongoing.

In 1892, a book was published in London, the first part of which is a compendium of all Swedenborg’s statements concerning the celestial Africans and their Continent. It is entitled, *The African and the True Christian Religion: His Magna Charta* (plate 1b). The author, James John Garth Wilkinson (1812–99), states that ‘the African is the only remainder whose genius supplies the peculiar first receptivity needful for the descent of the New Jerusalem’.⁴ He was expressing a view many Swedenborgians had had held throughout the course of the previous century.

Wilkinson was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons who practised as a homœopathic doctor in Wimpole Street, London. Early in life, his maternal uncle introduced him to Swedenborgianism, and Wilkinson became one of its leading nineteenth-century exponents. He was also keenly interested in William Blake, whose *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* he edited for publication in 1839. His own

¹ Damon, *Blake Dictionary*, 207.

² Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 835.

³ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 840.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 52. I take this early opportunity to acknowledge my great indebtedness to Dr Andrew M. T. Dibb for introducing me to this rare Swedenborgian text, by which I have been able to identify the source of several of Grendon’s unreferenced quotations in *Ilanga lase Natal*.

poetry, published as *Improvisations from the Spirit* (1857), shows evidence of Blake's influence. Over many years, Wilkinson devoted himself to translating Swedenborg from the Latin into English. An authority on Scandinavian and Icelandic literature, he also assisted in translating one of Swedenborg's texts into Icelandic. The *Dictionary of National Biography* describes him as 'intimate with Carlyle, James Anthony Froude, Dickens, Tennyson, and the Oliphants'. Having read Wilkinson's prefatory discourses to his translations of Swedenborg, Emerson stamped them as 'throw[ing] all contemporary philosophy of England into shade'.¹



The African and the True Christian Religion made a profound impression on Robert Grendon. We know this because of the extent to which he engages with its text in his editorials of 1904.² Wilkinson anticipates 'the conversion of the Black Race in America to the doctrines of Swedenborg'. These will oversee the repatriation of blacks to Africa and ensure that the civilization arising from the encounter between New Africa and the celestial heartland of Old Africa, remains truly African—truly 'celestial'—and not sabotaged by Europe or by European materialism.³ Grendon had full faith in that emergent civilization. As these pages will show, he waged unceasing 'Mental Fight'—to appropriate Blake's phrase—on behalf of the incipient New Jerusalem in Africa.

Grendon's literary stature has already been acknowledged.⁴ Ignorance of the Swedenborgian wellsprings of his imagination has however caused more than one reader to baulk a little at his seeming bombast or at his style, which strikes the uninitiated ear as inflated and ornate. One scholar refers with mild disparagement to a 'purple passage'⁵ of his, and another to his 'florid and romanticized' prose.¹ While

¹ *DNB*, xxi:271–72.

² Conspicuous examples are: 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904)–2:57 (13 May 1904); and 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3–4.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, vii.

⁴ I am indebted to Tim Couzens whose own doctoral researches in the 1970s uncovered Grendon's exceptional talent, which had gone unrecognized for decades. The article that came out of Couzens's research has been, until now, the most substantial account of Grendon's contribution to South African letters ('Robert Grendon: Irish Traders, Cricket Scores and Paul Kruger's Dreams', *English in Africa* 15:2 (Oct. 1988) 49–91). However, as a mere introduction to Grendon, it lacks analytical depth and suffers from a dearth of available primary materials. My own archival retrieval has significantly extended Grendon's known poetic and journalistic corpus, and discovered—amongst other pieces—two 'lost' epic-length poems, as well as dozens of prose pieces, dating from 1892 to 1916.

⁵ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 82.

these appraisals are not categorically wrong, they require modulation: Like Blake, Grendon's richly figural language and his repeated resort to oppositional pairings, derive largely from Swedenborg's striking 'correspondences', and his system of 'contraries'. For the first time, it is possible to account for the 'Blakean' stylistic qualities of much of Grendon's poetry and prose, by pointing to spiritual and aesthetic borrowings that he shared with Blake.² As regards his seeming bombast: even when Grendon appears to pontificate, he speaks with the utter sincerity of a prophet discharging a divine commission.

Following Swedenborg, Grendon bears witness to the fact that 'the First Christian Church ... has declined or is in the last stage of its consummation'. It is 'to be succeeded by the ... Second Christian Church, which is the New Church, or the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven'.³ Africans, he claims, 'look forward to the restoration of the True Christian Religion—the religion as preached by Christ, not that *materialism* expounded by Europe'.⁴

Even as Africans 'look forward' to the New Jerusalem, so New Jerusalem longs to unite with Africans. Wilkinson states 'that the African has a revelation lying in him, and waiting for the Word and the True Christian Religion'—*i.e.*, those books of the biblical canon which Swedenborg decrees to be 'inspired', together with the revelations of the New Jerusalem, made through him. The 'New Jerusalem ... wants and welcomes [the African] for its heart'.⁵ In the *Maximus Homo* to which Wilkinson here alludes, Africans who remain true to their aboriginal 'celestial genius' constitute the warm, responsive heart, while 'other races, and particularly the Anglo-American, meaning that race on both sides of the Atlantic, have receptivity in the head, though not at first in the heart'.⁶

Grendon fully accepts the reality of the 'revelation' that Swedenborg declares in *The True Christian Religion* (1771) to be then occurring in innermost Africa. In an editorial in *Ilanga lase Natal* (1904) he describes that 'flood of oratorical light with all

¹ Lowe, 'The Tragedy of Malunge', 36n.

² Both men held Swedenborg and Milton in high regard, although Blake's interaction with Swedenborg is more complicated than Grendon's.

³ 'God With Us', *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4. *True Christian Religion* (1771) is the title of the last of Swedenborg's books published during his lifetime.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 81.

⁶ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 52.

its penetrating, and convincing power [which] flashed upon, within, and around' the 'Ethiopian', comforting him in 'his dire misfortunes', and reassuring him with a gleam of 'some mighty transformation that was soon to come'—the imminent abolition of the African slave trade in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and the subsequent 'true' Christian enlightenment of Africa.¹

New Jerusalem's descent is prelude to the 'regeneration' of Africa. Because it has a spiritual basis, regeneration cannot be legislated—and yet it is bound to come. Grendon is persuaded that polygamy and other objectionable traditional usages will simply lapse into disuse 'among the Africans when the time for their social regeneration has arrived'.² This is the inexorable destiny of Africa, as he reveals in verse: 'Providence Almighty ... hath decreed | That darkness unto Light should yield.' When that decree is carried out, then even the Swazi people—most resilient heathens—will be 'Regenerated—and prepar'd | To take 'mongst Men a nobler place!'³ Despite appearances to the contrary, halcyon days lie before Africa.

While it is clear that early Swedenborgians participated enthusiastically in contemporary discourse on the spiritual rebirth of Africans, this thesis does not argue that they held a monopoly on that discourse. Grendon himself quotes the Irish orator and judge, John Philpot Curran (1750–1817), who, in his famous defence of Jamaican slave James Somerset (early 1770s), links regeneration with emancipation:

No matter in what language [a slave's] doom may have been pronounced: no matter what complexion incompatible with freedom an Indian or an African sun may have burnt upon him; no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty may have been cloven down; no matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery; the first moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, the altar and the god sink together in the dust: his soul walks abroad in her own majesty; his body swells beyond the measure of his chains, that burst from around him; and he stands redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation.⁴

Like Curran, Grendon sees the emancipation of slaves as integral to the plan of 'Providence Almighty' to 'redeem' and 'regenerate' spiritually all those who hitherto

¹ 'Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.

² 'Polygamy', *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3.

³ 'The Tragedy of Malunge', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁴ Curran, quoted by Grendon, in: 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3.

have been enthralled, both literally and figuratively. Grendon's hopes for Africa are inspired by Swedenborg—but not exclusively by him.



Swedenborg's prophetic and exegetical pronouncements fill thirty volumes. His complex teaching is a sometimes bewildering maze of mystical visions, rationalist philosophy, psychology, and correspondential hermeneutics. Those adults who come to Swedenborg from some other position—of faith or doubt—often have first to wrestle with almost insuperable difficulty before they can comprehend and give full credence to the entire system. In the 1820s, a young Scottish emigrant, lately arrived in the United States, was introduced to the *Arcana Cœlestia*, which he 'regard[ed] at first as a most extraordinary production' before becoming 'a willing and zealous receiver of the doctrines of the New Church'.¹ Three decades later, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who in a private letter styles herself a 'Swedenborgian', states that she 'cannot doubt' that 'there are deep truths in [Swedenborg ...], though I can't receive everything, which may be my fault'.² And a prominent Swedenborgian describes how, when he first read Swedenborg, he 'found difficulties, obscurities, and sometimes what seemed like absurdities, on almost every page. Sometimes, [he] was inclined to throw the book down and read no more.'³ That there are so few New Church people in the world probably indicates that many others have yielded to that impulse. Yet, this man discerned some indefinable quality that continued to claim his attention. Ultimately, persistence paid off, he relates, and the scales fell from his eyes.

In reading these accounts of conversion, an approximate pattern begins to emerge: A spiritual vacuum or disenchantment with existing creeds precedes a chance encounter with one of Swedenborg's texts. There is initial—almost immediate—rejection, either on account of the seer's stylistic opacity or the extraordinariness of his claims. But something holds the attention, and the volume is taken up once again. Gradually the pieces begin to fit, and the reader begins to appreciate the whole. In order to accept unconditionally all that Swedenborg writes, the receiver has to jettison his or her existing presuppositions about the very nature of reality—or the reality of nature—and recognize that humans exist simultaneously in twin worlds.

¹ Kinmont, *Natural History of Man*, 19.

² Quoted in: Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 288.

³ Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg's Religious Thought*, 12.

Swedenborg's is truly a system of systems, such as postmodernists are apt to dismiss as 'Grand Narrative'. It seeks to give an account of absolutely everything, subsuming every other area of thought—indeed, even overturning conventional models on how the mind functions. As with every other complex and far-reaching system, it cannot easily be understood piecemeal, but must somehow be swallowed at a gulp.

I am not a disciple of Swedenborg, and feel no inclination to undertake that suspension of disbelief that seems almost always to pave the way to conversion. The experiences of others in their encounters with Swedenborg have been mentioned only because I recognize that my own readers may never have occasion to delve into his works, and still a passing appreciation of the immensity and overwhelming difficulty of those works is crucial to all that follows here.

Two of the most impressionable years of Grendon's childhood were spent in the household of a severely puritanical missionary in what is today Namibia. In youth, he was exposed to the more liberal Anglican environment of Zonnebloem College in Cape Town. Coming from this mixed religious background, his own acceptance of Swedenborg cannot but have been attended by great difficulties. He may have found Swedenborg's thought liberating, but he will also have had to discard much that he had taken for granted in childhood and youth.

We gain an inkling of such difficulty in one of Grendon's elegies, in which he addresses a female colleague who has lately died. Swedenborg teaches the poet that Michal lives on in the spiritual world, fully intact, fully female, with all her former senses, faculties, and delights preserved—'the whole | And only Michal'. But the poet's grief still wells up unbidden, because from infancy he has been coached to believe that death represents a fundamental and mysterious change. If he yields momentarily to such grief, Michal is please to make allowance for the errors of his early religious upbringing:

So marvel not that I my grief rehearse
Which tho' acute cannot abiding be.
And if corroding for a season brief,
It is because we're disciplin'd from youth

To yield unto an old, and strange belief,
Which construes error into Gospel Truth—

Belief, that would degrade us to the plane
Of beasts, whose stooping nature scorns all thought
Of life beyond the tomb; and would maintain
That our existence is but vain, and fraught
With sorrow from beginning to decline;
That in our sojourn here no guiding star
Directs this mortal to the Life Divine;
And that we're not what we suppose we are.¹

‘What we suppose we are’ is undying spirit—undying man or woman—but flying in the face of this instinctive self-conception we are ‘disciplin’d from youth’ to believe that we are mortal. Even after having learnt the heavenly doctrine, that ‘Death constituteth not | A part of Michal’s immaterial state’, the poet finds himself still dogged by a forsaken creed that equates death with a fundamental change to those who suffer it.

It might be mentioned at this point, that while the difficulties of Swedenborg’s system are hugely challenging, Grendon rarely retreats from a challenge. Perhaps it is the very difficulty and otherness of the Writings that he finds most arresting. In an *Ilanga* editorial, he professes to accept the encyclopaedic ‘internal’ signification of the Scriptures as revealed to Swedenborg. To apprehend such *arcana*, a purely rational function is insufficient, he remarks, because ‘it is the spiritual or internal, and not the worldly natural or external eye, that perceives, and comprehends the secrets, that lie infolded in every letter of the Word’.² Mastery of Swedenborg’s complexity and challenging alterity is for Grendon an achievement of especial merit—one of which he is unabashedly proud.



During his lifetime, Swedenborg declined to establish a separate fellowship, or to dictate the precise mechanics by which the New Jerusalem would advance in the world. Some disciples were content therefore to remain in isolation, while scanning

¹ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

² ‘The Old Year and the New’, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

the correspondential horizon for indications of New Jerusalem's advent. Not a few of these remained within the nominal ranks of Orthodoxy. In the 1870s, C. Maurice Davies, a non-Swedenborgian who made a study of non-conformist groups in London, was told 'that many clergymen hold the doctrines of the sect whilst retaining their position in the Established Church'.¹

A few years after Swedenborg's death, however, small groups who avidly 'received the Writings' began to organize ecclesiastically. As a result, Swedenborgians may be differentiated into two broad camps: those separatists who belong to the denominational 'New Church', and those non-separatists who seek to advance the new gospel within the framework of pre-existing mainstream churches. At least during the nineteenth century, it seemed feasible to some believers in Swedenborg's New Jerusalem to remain independent from the organized New Church.

One Swedenborgian text denies that the New Church is 'a sect in the sense of being a division, or offshoot, of some other body'. It is rather 'a gathering together, from within and without the Churches of men who have found a new faith'.² Be this as it may, those who hold Swedenborgian views cannot in any way be described as a homogeneous grouping. If not itself a 'sect', the New Church has nonetheless shown a propensity to splinter into smaller communions, which differ chiefly with regard to the precise weight they place upon the Writings.³ Swedenborg's divine inspiration is however never called into question.

The combined international membership of the several Swedenborgian affiliations has never exceeded a few thousand. Nonetheless, Swedenborg's influence has worked through divers channels—some of them occult—to influence even those who did not espouse his entire heterodox theology and psycho-philosophical system. Swedenborg's concepts are so radical and so all-embracing that they could hardly have failed to make an impact when first he proclaimed them to the world. His

¹ Davies, *Unorthodox London*, 93.

² Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 225.

³ 'The Writings' distinguishes Swedenborg's texts from 'the Word', which latter term describes those books of the biblical canon in which he discerns an 'internal' significance.

membership of the Swedish nobility, as well as his already-established reputation as a theoretical scientist and engineer may have strengthened his claim to an audience.¹

From time to time, members of the denominational New Church comfort themselves in the belief that, although their membership has always been very small, the influence of Swedenborg's teaching extends far beyond the narrow confines of their little fold ('Johnny Appleseed was one of us').² There cannot be many non-separatist Swedenborgians today, but historically they could always explain away their apparent ambivalence by pointing to the fact that Swedenborg's spiritualizing exegesis is superadded to 'the Word' and does not gainsay its surface meaning. The seer himself states that 'the doctrine of genuine truth can also be drawn in full from the sense of the letter of the Word'.³ In their view, there was still advantage to be derived from fellowship within pre-existent churches. Grendon appears to have fallen into this category.

Blake stands pre-eminent among the host of poets, novelists, essayists, and other authors who did not adopt Swedenborg's system, but allowed themselves to be influenced and inspired by aspects of it. He is on record as having written that 'the works of this visionary are well worthy the attention on [sic] of Painters and Poets'.⁴ Other writers who drew on Swedenborg include Lavater, Goethe, Coleridge, Emerson, Balzac, Baudelaire, Whitman, Melville, and the elder Henry James.⁵ The Swedenborgian George Trobridge adds to this list: Tennyson, Coventry Patmore, Ruskin, George Macdonald, Henry Drummond, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Thoreau, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Heine, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning.⁶ He also claims that '*Aurora Leigh* is full of thoughts culled from' Swedenborg.⁷ The hell in William Beckford's monstrous Gothic-Orientalist fusion, *Vathek* (1786), seems to me to parody Swedenborg. The 'philosophy of Transcendentalism is indebted to

¹ Since his earliest theological writings were published anonymously, the above would not apply until he identified himself as their author.

² John Chapman ('Johnny Appleseed', 1774–1845), nurseryman of the American frontier, remembered for his propagation of apple orchards throughout the Middle West, was indeed a disciple of Swedenborg. According to his fellow believers, he supplied not only apple seedlings to frontier folk, but also the message of the New Jerusalem.

³ Swedenborg, *Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture*, n. 55.

⁴ Quoted in: Paley, 'A New Heaven Is Begun', 78.

⁵ Rix, 'William Blake and the Radical Swedenborgians' (online); Hart, *Oxford Companion to American Literature*, 739.

⁶ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 287.

⁷ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 288.

Swedenborgianism for its prophetic optimism and doctrine of correspondence'.¹ The foregoing catalogue could be extended.



Although Grendon's discovery of Swedenborg was deeply influential upon his mature thought, research has yet to uncover *when* and *how* that initial discovery first took place. This question is perhaps the most challenging that will engage the attention of future Grendon researchers.

I am consoled and cautioned by an analogous difficulty encountered by scholars of William Blake. Few poetic corpora in the English language have been so intensively mined by critics and literary biographers as that of Blake. No-one disputes the existence of a complex relationship between the visionary theology of Swedenborg and the visionary imagination of Blake. And yet, what appears to be a fundamental question to Blake studies—'When and how did Blake encounter Swedenborg?'—has not been answered to everyone's satisfaction. Morton D. Paley states the case as he sees it in 1979:

The formative influence of Emanuel Swedenborg on William Blake was once an article of faith among Blake scholars and enthusiasts. Blake was supposed to have come from a family of Swedenborgians; William Allingham imagined the fourteen-year-old Blake meeting the eighty-four-year-old Swedenborg in the streets of London; Alexander Gilchrist declared 'of all modern men, the engraver's apprentice was to grow up likest to Emanuel Swedenborg'. We now know that the story of Blake's Swedenborgian background is a myth supported by no verifiable facts, yet there can be no doubt that Swedenborg's writings and doctrines are of unusual importance in relation to Blake's.²

More recently, however, Marsha Keith Schuchard has put forward the fruits of fresh archival discoveries made *circa* 2001, in which she not only reveals Blake's spiritual and aesthetic indebtedness to a radical element in London's Fetter Lane Moravian Church—to which his mother was attached prior to his birth—but also attempts to reinstate the view that Blake was acquainted with Swedenborg, at least by reputation,

¹ Hart, *Oxford Companion to American Literature*, 739.

² Paley, 'A New Heaven Is Begun', 64.

even in youth. By an intriguing coincidence, Swedenborg associated with the Fetter Lane Moravians as early as the 1740s.¹

We may confidently assert that Grendon, like Blake, was constitutionally touched by Swedenborg. We have strong grounds for believing that he encountered the doctrines of the New Jerusalem by the age of thirty (see below). Beyond this, we are unable to do more than speculate about when and how the first contact was made. Regrettably, Grendon himself does nothing to facilitate our enquiry. He seldom lapses into autobiography, and with the stubborn secrecy of an illuminato, he refuses to account candidly for the striking otherness of his world view. Swedenborgian references—direct and oblique—abound in his poetry and prose, but not a single instance of Swedenborg’s name has yet been traced—not even in the most strident sermons of 1904–05. On occasion, Grendon quotes verbatim from the Writings, even signalling his intertextual borrowing with quotation marks—yet even then, he omits mention of the seer’s name.²

A substantial proportion of what Grendon penned from 1903 to 1905, while headmaster of the Zulu Christian Industrial School at Ohlange, is impregnated with the doctrines of the New Jerusalem. On first sight, this proselytizing zeal might appear to betoken recent conversion to New Church theology, but such an impression would be mistaken, since some of Grendon’s earlier poetry, dating from the 1890s, indicates that he had already imbibed key Swedenborgian concepts when he lived in Kimberley and Uitenhage.

Chapter 5 will show, for instance, that ‘Melia and Pietro’ (1897–98) is informed by Swedenborg’s concept of ‘conjugal love’ (*amor conjugiali*). Furthermore, one of the characters in that epic-length poem, the ‘aged Brower’, speaks remarkably like a New Churchman. On his deathbed he assures his mistress—the maiden Melia—that in passing to ‘brighter worlds’ (plural), he suffers nothing, since

¹ Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried*, 13, 83, 85, 125, 345.

² For instance, Grendon quotes directly from Swedenborg (*Conjugal Love*, n. 457, n. 531), when he states that ‘conjugal love is the “jewel of human life”, and bliss, and the “repository of the Christian religion”’ (‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3). In a polemic with L. E. Hertslet (‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6), Grendon quotes *Conjugal Love*, n. 18, when he writes that ‘uses are the bonds of society; and these bonds or uses are infinite in number’. In this latter instance, Grendon does not indicate his borrowing, even with quotation marks.

THERE IS NO DEATH! A child can scan
 Where passing spirits go;
The Grave is not the End of Man!
 They dream who tell us so!¹

‘THERE IS NO DEATH!’ is the sentence that especially draws our attention. Swedenborg categorically rejects the reality of death. He states that ‘the man does not then die, but is only separated from the bodily part, which he had for use in the world; for the man himself lives’²—or, as Brower comforts Melia, Death is ‘not the End of Man!’ Swedenborg insists that the internal, undying ‘man’ (*homo*) suffers nothing from the death of the body. He or she survives intact, fully-gendered, with all the faculties formerly enjoyed—at least to his or her new-found spiritual perception. So familiar does the spiritual world *seem* to those who have departed the flesh that they often imagine themselves to be still in the natural world.

It is noteworthy that the assurance that ‘There is no death’—this precise collocation, in fact—occurs several times in Grendon’s later poetry. It appears in the elegy for Michal Nkosi (once),³ for ‘Mrs Sydney Strong’ (twice),⁴ and for Elias Tshabalala (twice).⁵ Related expressions are found in ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’.⁶ The Swedenborgian tenor of most of these later poems can be demonstrated, and in all of them the refrain, ‘There is no death’ has clear Swedenborgian overtones. It seems almost certain that when Grendon first employs the formula ‘There is no death’ in ‘Melia and Pietro’, it carries the same Swedenborgian connotations that it has in the later elegies.

Chapter 5 will also show that Grendon’s two-part poem, ‘A Dream’ (1897–98), gives early evidence of his fascination with Swedenborg-like correspondences, with angelic visitants, and with supernatural powers of prediction. In this poem, a mysterious ‘aged sire’ petitions ‘Heav’n’ to bless the poetic speaker:

¹ ‘M&P’, Pt XXIII, *Citizen* 2:80 (17 Dec. 1898) 3.

² Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 445.

³ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘In Memoriam: Mrs Sydney Strong’, *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

⁵ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁶ *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

Prolong his days
 To show thy ways
 To mortals on this earth;
 And shed thy grace
 Around his face
 Until his second birth.¹

It appears that by ‘second birth’, Swedenborgian regeneration is referenced. According to Swedenborg, ‘a man, in respect to the first nature which he derives from his birth, is a hell in miniature, and as to that other nature which he derives from his second birth, he is a heaven in miniature’.² Man’s ‘whole selfhood ... is evil from his first birth, and becomes good by a second birth: the first birth is from his natural parents, the second from the Lord’.³ Grendon’s ‘aged sire’ calls upon Heaven to attend upon the poetic speaker while he undergoes the metamorphoses of regeneration.

We may speculate that ‘A Dream’ describes in allegorical terms the poet’s earliest encounter with Swedenborg, as well as his receipt of a divine commission to ‘show [Heaven’s] ways | To mortals’. A poem published in 1904—when read in its historical context—suggests that Grendon includes himself amongst the ‘prophets’ who were ‘sent to warn’ one of Natal’s black mission communities.⁴ Does Grendon perhaps see himself as an African Swedenborg, or as one of Swedenborg’s African lieutenants? If the answer to this question be affirmative, it will account for a great deal of Grendon’s adult life and work, as should become apparent during the course of this thesis.

Grendon’s Ohlange writings display a mature grasp of the niceties of Swedenborg’s complex system. In light of this, as well as of Grendon’s evident pre-existent exposure to Swedenborg, the forthright manner in which Grendon expounds Swedenborgian ideas in the *Ilanga* poetry and journalism of 1903–05 needs to be ascribed to a cause other than the mere enthusiasm of a recent convert. A clue to such a cause appears to lie in Ohlange’s proximity to Durban, which at the start of the twentieth century held the largest and longest-established (white) Swedenborgian society in Africa. As chapter 7 will show, Grendon appears to have fallen under the

¹ ‘A Dream’, Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

² Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 613.

³ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 658.

⁴ ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’, *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

spell of Harold Attersoll (1849–1922), a maverick Swedenborgian, spiritualist, and socialist of Durban, whose all-consuming vocation—at least for the last two decades of his life—appears to have been to bring black Africans into touch with the doctrines of Swedenborg.

Here is not the place to argue at length the question of Grendon's earliest encounter with Swedenborgianism. My purpose is merely to raise the question, and to confess partial ignorance of the answer. It is to be hoped that further archival research, together with intensive close reading—not merely of Grendon's corpus, but also of Swedenborg and of nineteenth-century Swedenborgian apologists—will eventually furnish the answers we seek.



Swedenborg expounds a dispensational view of world history that comprises a succession of five 'Churches' or religious epochs: Adamic, Noachic, Israelitish, and First Christian Churches,¹ followed after 1757 by the New Jerusalem. During the first dispensation—'Adamic' or 'Most Ancient'—men 'were of so heavenly [or 'celestial'] a genius, that they conversed with angels, and ... had the power of holding such converse by means of correspondences'.² For Swedenborg, the many religious systems of the world did not arise spontaneously or in isolation, but represent a falling away from what God communicated in earliest times. His first communion with his creatures was immediate and conducted entirely through non-verbal influxes into the inner man. This earliest race exercised the 'celestial' capacity to apprehend influxes through their divine centres. When the First or Adamic Church was 'vastated' because of gradually stopping up its own inner well, God in mercy resorted to the contingency of communicating through texts—initially through the 'Ancient Word', which describes lost or mislaid texts that precede the extant biblical canon, and then through the 'Israelitish Word':

The prevalence of religious worship from the most early ages of the world, and the universal knowledge of a God among the inhabitants of the globe, with some notion of a life after death, are not to be ascribed to men, or to their self-derived intelligence, but to the ancient Word ..., and in succeeding times to the Israelitish Word. From those two religious knowledge was

¹ Swedenborg, *Coronis*, Summary, n. 1–n. 8.

² Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 202.

propagated through all parts of India, with its islands; through Egypt and Ethiopia into the kingdoms of Africa; from the maritime parts of Asia into Greece, and from thence into Italy. ... The religious notions of the gentiles were changed into idolatry, and in Greece were turned into fable; and the divine properties and attributes were considered as so many separate gods, governed by one supreme Deity.¹

According to this schema, even African animism emits the afterglow, albeit obscured, of an original splendour. Relics of mankind's lost 'science of correspondence'—by which all things natural bear a mystic causal relationship with antecedents in the spiritual realms—are, so to speak, captured in amber through the worship of such entities as heavenly bodies, trees, and animals. Correspondences 'first became objects of worship, and afterwards were adored as deities: hence came idolatry'.²

Even before the Ancient and Israelitish Words, members of the 'First, or Most Ancient Church' were able to access the ceaseless influxes of 'goods' and 'truths' with which God sustained their innermosts. Grendon describes how

Jehovah God manifested Himself to Man through both spirits and angels, as well as by means of visions and dreams. The characteristic of this [Most Ancient] Church was its *perception* of good, and thence of truth from the Lord. This Church in its nature was *celestial*. By gradually losing the celestial nature it declined and came to an end, or judgement.³

According to Swedenborg, Mankind's 'Fall' from grace was gradual and not the solitary disobedient act performed by a single first human pair of which Milton invites his 'Heavenly Muse' to sing. Man fell by stages, as he formed a '*proprium*' or secondary self, like an abscess closing off his divine centre, so that he could no longer freely access the celestial influxes of which Grendon writes. Since sin cannot arise out of Man's divine centre, it follows that its origin is located in this self-made *proprium*.

When because of Man's swelling *proprium*, unstudied 'perception' of infused 'goods' and 'truths' could no longer be sustained, God intervened by introducing a Second, or 'Ancient Church', to supplant the 'Most Ancient'. Grendon remarks that 'Divine communication with this Church was not internal as with the Most Ancient Church, but external'.⁴ But, providentially, residual pockets of the Most Ancient

¹ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 275.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 78.

³ 'God With Us', *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'God With Us', *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4.

Church held out in remote parts of Africa, and became the fertile ground for the ‘revelation’ of the New Jerusalem which began in the closing years of Swedenborg’s life. Grendon declares that ‘Africans alone have the most ancient African seed, and genius in them’.¹ What he means is that as respects their ‘genius’ or inherent ethnic personality, Africans are remnants of Swedenborg’s first epoch—the ‘celestial’, ‘Adamic’, or ‘Most Ancient’ Church.

Not all Africans remain true to their ‘Most Ancient’ genius. Wilkinson describes those that do as ‘Good Africans’ or ‘Best Africans’, and states that they ‘are a remnant of the most ancient church or religion. When it destroyed itself, the seed of it was still left among the simple in the land of Canaan and towards the East and the West, in Asia and towards Africa.’² The ‘humility and mildness of the best Africans are the ground and reason of their receptivity to the New Revelation’—the truths of New Jerusalem.³

The pristine spiritual capacity of the first humans survived longer in Africa than in other parts of the Globe. Favoured with his special window on the invisible world, Swedenborg declares that ‘among the Gentiles [‘heathen’, in another translation] in heaven, the Africans are most beloved, because they receive the goods and truths of heaven more easily than others’.⁴ He follows this up with one of his boldest claims: it is on account of the good Africans’ receptivity that ‘a revelation has been made among them at the present time’—*i.e.*, c.1770. The reason that Europe’s slavers, explorers and missionaries have not yet encountered these special, internal Africans—Swedenborg explains—is that the revelation ‘has not yet reached the coasts’, or ‘does not extend to the countries bordering on the sea’.⁵ And, of course, these European intruders look only with natural eyes.

In an *Ilanga* editorial, Grendon writes of this ‘revelation ... at the present time’ that Swedenborg informs Europeans is taking place in the midst of Africa:

Whilst the Ethiopian patiently endured his dire misfortunes, cursing often times his very existence, and reproaching the author of his existence, a flood of oratorical light with all its

¹ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4. Without attribution, Grendon quotes Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 152.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 187.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 51.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 326. Much the same appears in *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 2604.

⁵ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 840. These are variant translations from the Latin.

penetrating, and convincing power flashed upon, within, and around him; and as he stood with suppliant hands outstretched, his iron fetters fell with clanking echoes to the ground; the scales of serfdom dropped from off his ages [sic]; and he beheld himself prepared, and destined for some mighty transformation that was soon to come.¹

Significantly, the ‘flood of oratorical light’ that ‘flashed upon, within, and around’ the ‘Ethiopian’ did so while he was yet in bondage. The ‘mighty transformation ... soon to come’ describes the suppression and final abolition of the African slave trade by Britain (1807–34). As Swedenborg describes a ‘revelation’ occurring around 1770, that ‘mighty transformation’ was only decades off. Wilkinson assures readers that ‘we rest in the revealed fact that in Swedenborg’s day, and in his participation, there was an Angelic communication of the New Church [read ‘New Jerusalem’] to the best Africans. If this were so, and of the Lord’s Providence, the revelation could not but diffuse itself in its pulses and respirations far and wide wherever any African good was extant, and reach slavery itself, and comfort it.’² The ‘suppliant hands outstretched’ to which Grendon refers, is a phrase that mirrors Psalm 68:31—the signature text of the Ethiopian or independent African church movement: ‘Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.’

Grendon shares Wilkinson’s belief in the miraculous survival in the heart of Africa of a people who retain the ‘celestial *indoles* or disposition’, by which they distinguish themselves as ‘the last people of the most ancient Church’.³ In accordance with this conviction, Grendon appeals to ‘you, abantu, *dwellers in the inland regions* [to] take up the [Swedenborgian] message though as yet the messenger [in context, Attersoll] be to you unseen’.⁴

As late as the first decade of the twentieth century, the ‘best’ Africans still manage to elude detection by the European vanguard, and Grendon still looks forward to an unprecedented spiritual revival amongst the native inhabitants of inner Africa. They are out there in the interior, and he fully expects that as the independent church movement

¹ ‘Slavery or Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 161.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 160.

⁴ ‘The True European’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4. Emphasis added.

penetrates from the circumference to the centre of Africa, where the best Africans will be found [according to Swedenborg's prediction], the Ethiopian Church will rise to a higher and purer religious plane, with a high mission before her. We look forward to the restoration of the True Christian Religion—the religion as preached by Christ, not that *materialism* expounded by Europe.¹

Wilkinson describes this African remnant of the Most Ancient Church as a 'small society ..., unknown, and voiceless to without, beyond the ken of missionaries and explorers'. He asks rhetorically if they can 'be the acceptable basis of the New Heart which is now descending'—the heart of New Jerusalem.² A positive answer is implicit in his question.

Opposers in the Old Church might object that traditional African customs are in many respects offensive to Christian propriety and give the lie to Swedenborg's claim that any 'celestial' remnant is to be found in Africa. Grendon would then counter that all such customs must be viewed in context. Present-day African polygamy, he asserts, although in violation of Swedenborg's principle of 'conjugal love',³ is no more reprehensible than the polygamy to which Israel was so irresistibly drawn in its heyday. What is more, it was likely through early contact with Israel—Swedenborg's 'Israelitish Church'—that Africans acquired their 'delight' in polygamous unions:

Very probably the African inherits polygamy from the Hebrews, for the hardness of whose hearts the system was allowed (Matt. xix. 8). This system moreover was permitted for the sake of the external in the Jews who are known to have been an idolatrous race. The very fact of its survival in the African can be accounted for in no manner other than that it remains for the sake of the external in this race also. Among the Jews of the present time polygamy is a thing practically unknown. If such a change in the course of a few thousand years has taken place, among the seed of Jacob, what can hinder the same law from repeating itself among the Africans when the time for their social regeneration has arrived.⁴

Besides polygamy, Grendon tells us, the 'natives of Africa can put forward customs, and traditions &c., which find their parallels in the Jews, but we have never heard it admitted that they were kindred to the Chosen People, though of a truth there

¹ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 53.

³ The idiosyncratic spelling is favoured of Swedenborg's English translators, since the word is meant to reference a religious concept not covered by the more common 'conjugal'.

⁴ 'Polygamy', *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3.

is some distant relationship between the two'.¹ Israel's King Solomon 'by the Ethiopian Queen of Sheba became the ancestor of the present Royal House of Abyssinia'.² Grendon might not have 'heard it admitted'; yet such views were current in Natal at the time that he made these claims.³ What sets him apart is the fusion he makes between existing discourse on an early African-Jewish connection and Swedenborg's account of the origins and ancient migrations of religio-ethnic groups.

Grendon shares several ideas in common with West-Indian-born Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912) who lived his adult life in West Africa. Despite his European name, Blyden took pride in a 'pure' African identity. Like Grendon, he believed that the Jews, 'in their early history, and in their impressionable condition, were more closely related to Africa, and to the Negro race, than to any other country or people'.⁴ It is unclear whether or not he believed that direct contact between the two peoples occurred at an early stage in their respective histories, but he did find a natural affinity between the African and the Jew. Together, the 'primary contribution [of the African and the Jewish peoples] to world civilization must be to provide the spiritual element'.⁵

Grendon maintains that European materialism is unsuited to Africa. God tailors or accommodates religious systems to the collective genius of ethnic Africans. 'Amagunyana'—one of Grendon's poetic speakers—undertakes, subject to conditions, to pay 'homage' to the white man's 'Eternal One', but only 'in the manner He had fashioned me'.⁶ In another untitled verse fragment, the speaker—who is 'born black'—promises to 'strive'

By aid of my dim, flick'ring light
To strike a path whence to derive
The wisdom to lead life aright.
E'en tho' my sorrows prove acute—
E'en tho' I needs must pause, and plod—

¹ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

² 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:87 (20 May 1914) 6.

³ Chidester, *Savage Systems*, ch. 4. See also: Stuart, *James Stuart's Notes and Queries on Bird's Annals of Natal*, appendix 2, which covers much the same ground as Chidester's work. See also: 'Amazulu Awuhlanga Lwama Juda Na?' *Umsizi Wabantu* 8 (24 June 1893) 5.

⁴ Quoted in: Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 65.

⁵ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 64.

⁶ 'Amagunyana's Soliloquy', *Ilanga* 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4. Appendix 3 provides textual evidence in support of Grendon's authorship of this anonymous poem.

E'en tho' I'm reckoned but a brute—
At length I'll learn to know my God!¹

Amagunyana and the poetic speaker 'born black' will 'learn to know [their] God' because their ancestral genius is well-disposed to receiving Him. They will do so, not in response to crude European campaigns to 'convert' them, but because there yet burns within them a 'dim, flick'ring light'. The aboriginal, celestial blaze may have died down, but it is not extinguished.

In combing Swedenborg's writings for references to the internal African, Wilkinson discovers how consistently that saintly figure is depicted 'as the most willing recipient of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem' and 'as the inmost race in the New Religion which is descending on the earth, and which is founded there in the regeneration of individual men'. Though childlike now, they will 'wak[e] into men by keeping the commandments of God-Man'.² He assures his reader that the African's 'New Church or New Jerusalem will begin in his own Africa. Contrasted with the civilized races, his state is as a blank book of life waiting to receive the impressions of a pure doctrine of the Lord, where the old Christian mind is now as a palimpsest scored all over with contradictory dogmas by ruling ecclesiastics, and black with spots and blots of false theology'.³ Africans have two traits that count in their favour and which invite the approach of New Jerusalem: they are holding onto the last traces of the celestial disposition; and, because they have not been saturated with European creeds, they have almost nothing to unlearn. Africans will be first people of earth to be regenerated: Africa will be the first Continent regenerated.

In a 1904 editorial, Grendon quotes Alexander Kinmont (1799–1838), a Scottish-born Swedenborgian of Cincinnati, Ohio, as forecasting that the regeneration of Africa will produce 'a civilization of a peculiar stamp, not so much distinguished by art, as by a certain beautiful nature; not so marked or adorned by science as exalted and refined by a new and lovely theology—a reflection of the light of heaven, more perfect, and enduring than that which the intellects of the Caucasian race has ever

¹ 'Born black...', in: 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 239.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 14.

exhibited'.¹ Pixley Seme—celebrated founder of the South African Native National Congress—in his prize-winning oration at Columbia University (c.1906) almost certainly paraphrases Kinmont when he predicts that 'the regeneration of Africa means that a new and unique civilization is soon to be added to the world. ... The most essential departure of this new civilization is that it shall be thoroughly spiritual and humanistic—indeed a regeneration moral and eternal!'²

Kinmont, Wilkinson, and other nineteenth-century Swedenborgian thinkers believed that, in contrast with Africans, Europeans had come to place undue emphasis upon the intellect and upon external stimuli. Africans were seen as reflective and internal in temperament, whereas Europeans were active and external. This made it difficult for them to draw upon their own inner wells of divinity—the receptacles into which God himself constantly infuses 'goods' and 'truths'.

This is not to say that whites, because less 'celestial', are dispensable to the New Jerusalem. There is need for every ethnic disposition or genius within the New Church. Carl Berns Wadström (1746–99), a Swedish Swedenborgian who projected a Utopian colony on the West African coast and was intensely active in the British campaign for the Abolition of Slavery, describes in his published work 'the complementary natures of the European and African, with the European stronger in understanding and the African in feeling'.³ A century after Wadström, Wilkinson assures his readers that

the Church on earth needs all faculties. ... A Church wants many genera, species, and individuals. The function of no one of these supersedes or hinders, but completes and helps, that of the others. For the Lord's Church in heaven and on earth is a complete detailed human form with all its organs, members, and contents: with all its lives, loves, wisdoms, intelligences, sciences, senses, natures, and industries. No one of these can be absent, but each must be represented. The smallest dimmest representation of some, and especially of the highest, may be all that the earth affords, but it is necessary that it exist.⁴

¹ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3. This quote appears at Kinmont, *Natural History of Man*, 185, but Grendon almost certainly transcribes it from Wilkinson, who quotes it in *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 126.

² Seme, 'The Regeneration of Africa', 71.

³ Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 91. See also: Rix, 'Carl Bernhard Wadström' (online).

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 52.

As illustrated by these quotations, the pattern that emerges across two centuries of Swedenborgian discourse is that racial difference is ingrained, immutable, and vital to the functioning of a healthy world. The complementary character of the races of mankind persists into the spiritual world. For New Churchmen, somatic variation between the races is merely the outward correspondence of deeper spiritual variation. This would lead inevitably to rejection—or at least modification—of Lamarckian and Darwinian evolution.

Grendon subscribes fully to the Swedenborgian conception of the complementary character of the races of Mankind. He believes, for instance, that black Africans ‘constitute a member of the Body Politic of this Union’ of South Africa,¹ and he urges white and black South Africans to ‘Let your body politic command | That purity which bringeth peace!’² A body the organs of which prey one upon another is cancerous: all ethnic groups in the land should combine their faculties for the good of the ‘body politic’—for the good of the *Maximus Homo*. In the wake of the most devastating war ever fought on South African soil, he pleads:

Black muscle with white intellect
 Combine to reconstruct the frame
 By cank’rous discord well nigh wreck’d,
 Lest threat’ning ills clothe it with shame.³

Racial difference does not imply racial inferiority for Africans. They need to be guarded whenever they consider anything that Europe proffers for their acceptance. Grendon is consistently clear on this. The European is for the most part preoccupied with externals—with rank materialism. Materialism is a damning indictment when Grendon pronounces it. In his *Ilanga* journalism (1904–05) he observes ‘a world steeped in materialism’,⁴ a world in which ‘crass “materialism” and the “God of self” possess, and reign supreme in the hearts of men’.⁵ This materialist mindset pervades society so thoroughly that it even contaminates the clergy: ‘Often have we noticed the

¹ ‘Gen. Smuts Answered’, *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5.

² ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

³ ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

⁴ ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘The Mission Native’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

“gross materialism” which stifles religious feeling in other walks of life, entering, and corrupting the Priesthood.’¹

It follows too that if New Jerusalem’s descent began in the sixth decade of the eighteenth century—as Swedenborg asserts—then Europe’s missionaries in Africa have overstayed their welcome when they fail to take cognizance of the fact. Wilkinson makes this point:

If the first Christian Church, like the Jewish Church, has been consummated, and a New Church as the New Jerusalem is descending from God out of heaven, missions from the former or old Church have lost their sanction, and themselves require conversion, and a new Baptism in the name of the Lord, who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God in one Person.²

It is true that Grendon recognizes the valuable work performed by individual rightly-disposed white missionaries such as Edendale’s Wesleyan shepherd, William Cliff, whose ‘labours’ have been ‘Devoid of prejudice, and fear’.³ Furthermore, he acknowledges that no missionary can ‘be held responsible for the wrong doings of any of his flock’.⁴ However, ‘many people, black as well as white are Christians externally, but in spirit they are not Christians at all’.⁵ Clerics of the Old Church are not exempted from this charge. Repeatedly, Grendon remarks on the spiritually exhausted condition of the major Christian missions.

The ‘White Priesthood [is] in compact with the World Power’ when it colludes with secular authority to thrust upon Africans measures unsuited to their special genius, and out of tune with the new spiritual culture sweeping Africa.⁶ They think that they can convert by external means—by means of coercion—but ‘where natural force is resorted to [in order] to compel the spiritual there is no reformation at all’.⁷

Here Grendon displays the extent to which he has imbibed Swedenborg’s teaching. Throughout the Writings, it is emphasized that God does not compel anyone. To do so would be to violate the principle of Free Will. God ‘never violates free-determination

¹ ‘The Native Priesthood’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 221.

³ ‘Adieu to the Rev. W. Cliff and Family’, *Ipepa* 3:446 (22 May 1903) 3.

⁴ ‘The Mission Native’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘The Mission Native’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

⁷ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

by compulsion'.¹ 'The repentance that is done in a state of freedom avails; but that which is done in a state of compulsion avails not.'² 'If man could have been reformed by compulsion, there would not be any man in the universe who would not be saved.'³ 'That to which any one is compelled is not his, but belongs to him who compels, because although it is done by him, he does not do it of himself.'⁴

By employing 'natural force ... to compel the spiritual', South Africa's white missionaries betray abysmal ignorance of this fundamental principle. Regeneration cannot be thrust upon Africans. Because it implies the relinquishing of old 'delights' and the shaping of new ones, it has to be performed in complete freedom—in a state of volitional equilibrium, without fear or compulsion of any kind.

In July 1904, Johannesburg played host to the 'First General Missionary Conference' in South African record. It brought together representatives of no fewer than twenty-five religious bodies. Tellingly, the published list of delegates is entirely void of recognizably African surnames.⁵ The primary occasion for this unprecedented gathering was the alarm that white missionaries felt at the rapid spread of 'Ethiopianism'—or the secession of African Christians who opted out of white-controlled denominations, and formed new ones of their own.

Grendon watched the proceedings with keen interest. Any African who accepts Swedenborg's writings would have reason to distrust the motivations and methods of European missionaries of the Old Church. Swedenborg says that those Christians who come to the African coastlands 'bring in scandals; and are in fact in the forefront of those who believe nothing, and who lead impious lives'; they also 'hold a human and not a Divine idea concerning the Lord'.⁶

One of the resolutions passed at the Johannesburg conference was 'that in the education of the Bantu races, industrial training as contributing to the formation of native character, is of the greatest importance'.⁷ Grendon has nothing but scorn for those misdirected clerics who place 'industrial training' at the forefront of mission

¹ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 504.

² Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 8392.

³ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 2881.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 4031.

⁵ Missionary Conference, *Report of the Proceedings*, 210–13.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 38, 86.

⁷ Missionary Conference, *Report of the Proceedings*, 158.

work: '*Industrial training is an external, material, worldly training, the character resulting from such external, material, worldly training can be none other than external, material, and worldly.*'¹ Nor should those missionaries suppose that their absurd proposal does not reflect adversely upon their credentials as agents of the Kingdom of God. They and those like them 'are themselves external, material, and worldly'.²

If Africa is to be 'redeemed', Africans will have to facilitate this process, and not Europeans, who in general have failed in their mission. The aboriginal genius of the race exists only in its representatives: Europeans do not retain the Most Ancient, Adamic, celestial genius. They are therefore out of sympathy with the great movement afoot. Wilkinson, whom Grendon follows closely, states:

We cannot therefore see any escape from the necessity that full-blooded Africans principally—never excluding such men as Livingstone and Gordon—shall be employed in the redemption of Africa. The reason of which is that such Africans alone have the 'most ancient' African seed and genius in them, and can be in oneness with the Negro by a nearness that is possible with no other race.³

Grendon quotes verbatim from the last sentence in this passage, and reworks the rest, to support his contention that 'the Native Church cannot expect to flourish unless full-blooded Africans principally, be employed in the redemption of their own race'.⁴



Wilkinson prefaces his work, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, with a dedicatory letter to West African scholar Edward Wilmot Blyden, from whose *Christianity, Islam and the Negro* (1887) he draws heavily. The two men appear to have conducted a correspondence on the subject of Swedenborg's message for Africa. In this letter, Wilkinson claims that the 'writings of Swedenborg will for the most part be easily accepted by the perceptive minds of the best Africans; yea, ages before the learned have adjusted their spectacles to consider and discuss them'.⁵

¹ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

² 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 152.

⁴ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, viii: Wilkinson to Blyden, 2 Jan. 1892.

This introduces the distinctly Swedenborgian concept of the ‘best African’. In *Heaven and Hell*, Swedenborg writes concerning the ‘instruction of various heathen nations’, which takes place when once they have shed the flesh and are in the intermediate world of spirits preparatory to achieving their final state. Amongst those heathen who ‘have led a good life in the world in conformity with their religion’, Swedenborg identifies ‘the best’ as being ‘from Africa’.¹ This ought not to be conceived of crudely. Swedenborg does not say that all Africans are alike interior and good, but only that ‘the best’ of the world’s heathen are to be found in parts of inner Africa. The ‘best’ Africans lead the ‘heathen’ nations in living ‘in conformity with their religion’.

Some Africans are not of this quality, however. As an early nineteenth-century New Church periodical states,

Africans are found of all complexions, from the jet black, to the perfectly white, [and] their moral character appears to possess a similar range from the most virtuous, to the most vicious. The Ashantees probably form one extremity, while those who are described by the Baron [Swedenborg] as forming the centre of the New Church in this world will make the other.²

Swedenborg makes it clear that some Africans are distinctly less than ‘best’: ‘The people are not good beside the Mediterranean, nor near Egypt, nor at the Cape of Good Hope. The mountains where the good live extend from Ethiopia towards the middle.’³

In Swedenborg’s *Diarium*—not published in his lifetime, and possibly not intended for publication—he describes how he ‘was led on by the Lord through changes of state for about half-an-hour or more, towards the south [of the spiritual Africa], all the way to the wiser Africans, and it was given [him] to talk with them on various subjects’. From his ‘discourse’ with these ‘wiser Africans’, he discovers that ‘they know the truths of the Church in themselves’ and that ‘there is now revelation there’. Swedenborg is further ‘led down in the spirit to others in Africa; the tract is known to

¹ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 514.

² Anon., ‘Of the Character of the Mandingoes’, 259.

³ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 88.

Europeans, and is called Ethiopia on the Maps: the people dwell in tents, a good race'.¹

In a roughly-drafted 'outline' of the spiritual Africa by which Swedenborg commits his vision to paper, he marks various regions with letters of the alphabet. A reproduction of this sketch-map is the only illustration in Wilkinson's *The African and the True Christian Religion*, and Grendon is certain to have studied it closely.² The outlines of spiritual Africa bear only passing resemblance to those of natural Africa—but, to be fair to Swedenborg, he claimed to be a revelator, not a draughtsman. The east is at the head of the sketch, because of its correspondence. Swedenborg explains that 'in the spiritual world the east is where the Lord appears as a sun, and from that the other quarters are determined'.³ This map finds that

the best [Africans] are in the whole tract DE; but the worser sort are towards the Mediterranean H; also at the Cape of Good Hope F. Thus the kingdoms of the best are DE. But those who are in the direction of DB, which is towards Asia, are not wise, and are infested by those who come from thence [Asia], because the latter speak things which they [the natives] do not perceive. Almost the same is the case at C; and those who are worse still are towards A, where Egypt lies. They said that in the great tract DE they all worship the Lord, and that they are instructed by many who communicate with the angels of heaven; that the communication is not through speech with the angels, but by interior perception,—that these are their instructors, whom they rightly discern from others. They also said that people from Europe are not admitted to them, and if they come thither, and are not willing to obey, they are sent off on the road to B, and are sold to the natives there. And in this way they [the people of DE] are safe from infestations.⁴

What principally distinguishes the 'best' Africans of 'DE' appears to be the conformity of their conception of God with that propounded by Swedenborg. These 'believe that God is absolutely a man'.⁵ We also learn that Providence provides a shield or screen by which the nascent zone of New Jerusalem's revelation is preserved from European contamination—'infestations'.

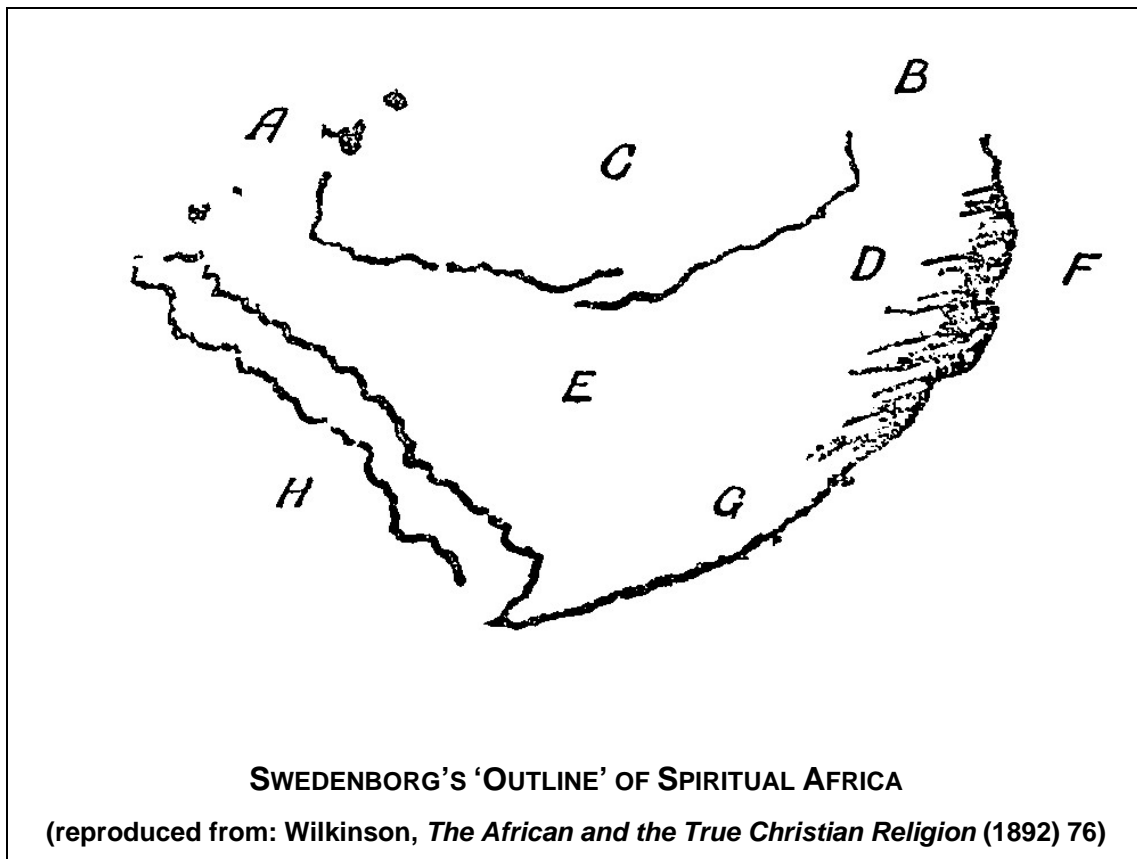
¹ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 75–77.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 76.

³ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 119.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 76.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 87.



Knowledge of Swedenborg's 'best Africans' enables us to make sense of some of Grendon's more arcane utterances. He states, as already quoted, that while many of both the independent African clergy and the laity are Christians only 'by profession, and not repentance'—*i.e.* they have not undergone full Swedenborgian 'regeneration' by bringing the 'will' into harmony with truths in the 'understanding'—the situation will right itself over time, because the 'best Africans' have yet to be located in the 'centre of Africa'.¹ This 'centre of Africa' is none other than Swedenborg's region marked 'D' to 'E' on his map of spiritual Africa.

The existence in the African interior of 'better' Africans than the 'worsers sort' at the Cape of Good Hope—if we are permitted to infer that the spiritual Africa conforms in its principal particulars to natural Africa—also helps to explain Grendon's appeal to 'you, abantu, dwellers in the inland regions' to adopt the Swedenborgian message proclaimed by Durbanite, Harold Attersoll.²

¹ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

² 'The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

The existence of a more spiritually-internal African in the hinterland may also account for Attersoll's letter to the editor of *Koranta ea Becoana* (1904), in which he declares that 'the interests of the African People are very dear to me, and will be so not only through this life, but into the next, in which I trust I shall be able to be of far more use than here'.¹ *Koranta*, a Tswana-English bilingual published at Mafeking, was edited by Sol Plaatje at this time. Mafeking is marginally nearer Swedenborg's zone 'DE' than is Durban.

Attersoll's letter is one of introduction. He hopes that the editor 'will allow [him] to offer a few suggestions sometimes'. He also assures him that 'the African People have to rise, the economical needs of the world require that it be so: and the Divine Providence is acting decidedly for that purpose'.² The idea that 'Providence' has designated a place for Africa in the 'world economy' is a persistent one. Fifteen years after Attersoll's *Koranta* letter, a regular correspondent to *Ilanga*—also Swedenborgian—refers to the 'meaning [of the African people] or what they stand for in the world economy'.³ 'Economy' here has little to do with mercantile exchange: the Swedenborgians appear to have the word's origins in view. The Greek which it transliterates means 'house management', and the theological meaning is 'the divine government of the world' (*Shorter OED*). In this sense, the figure can easily transmute into Swedenborg's *Maximus Homo*—'heaven's realization as a whole of the image and likeness of God'⁴ of which every individual, and every society in 'good' and 'truth' forms a necessary part.

Swedenborg's writings accord a spiritually-privileged position to the 'best Africans' of the interior Africa. He acknowledges that they have an accurate conception of the Divine Man and that they are in touch with their celestial heavens. In view of this, it is little wonder that Grendon, who accepts the seer's credentials, should also look for—and from time to time discover—celestial impulses in these internal Africans.

He praises Livingstone's 'faithful attendants Susi, and Chuma [who] cut out and buried [their deceased master's heart] at Ilala, unconsciously claiming it as Africa's

¹ Attersoll to the editor, *Koranta ea Becoana*, 2:108 (21 Dec. 1904) 5.

² Attersoll to the editor, *Koranta ea Becoana*, 2:108 (21 Dec. 1904) 5.

³ 'Quiz', 'Mr Nesser's Views', *Ilanga* 17:4 (24 Jan. 1919) 5.

⁴ Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg's Religious Thought*, 33.

inalienable heritage'.¹ This is a wholly appropriate act for 'internal' Africans to perform—acting intuitively upon interior divine infusions. As Wilkinson states, Livingstone's 'heart was so gracious that it could not have throbbed more lovingly for that continent for which he lived and died if he had been already above it among the immortals'.² Susi and Chuma intuit from inner light—or, 'unconsciously', as Grendon takes care to qualify their act—that Livingstone's heart belongs to Africa. They must surely rank amongst Swedenborg's 'best' Africans.

Having buried Livingstone's heart at Ilala, these celestial Africans performed a herculean act of self-sacrifice when they bore his body overland to the East Coast opposite Zanzibar. Blyden, whose own indebtedness to Swedenborg needs to be more thoroughly probed, refers to this poignant act when he asks: 'In all history, where is there anything more touching than that ever memorable conveyance, by "faithful hands", of the remains of the missionary traveller [Livingstone] from the land of strangers over thousands of miles, to the country of the deceased, to be deposited with deserved honour in the "Great Temple of Silence" [Westminster Abbey]?'³

In Swaziland, Grendon locates yet another of Swedenborg's celestial Africans. He does not give her personal name, but identifies her as 'one of the wives of the royal-blooded Chief Ngenemane'—a son of King Mswati I (died 1865). Around the start of 1913, this woman converted to Christianity, to which faith she 'steadfastly adhered'. Then she contracted tuberculosis. When death was imminent at the close of the year, her husband—a heathen—arranged secretly for a friendly white neighbour to construct her coffin, desiring 'to make her obsequies as consistent as possible with Christian custom'. He did not tell her that he had taken this step, and yet 'the mists of death seem to have revealed to his wife what he had done', because from her deathbed she inquired of those attending upon her if her coffin had arrived.

Nobody knew for certain. Consequently one of the women was sent to ascertain the truth. Learning that the coffin had come, and was deposited in one of the outside huts, she returned to assure the sick woman of its advent. This information was received by the outgoing party with

¹ 'The Late Sir H. M. Stanley', *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 151.

³ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 115.

the uttermost resign. ‘Dress me in raiment clean, then cover me with something white’, she said, ‘for I am ready to depart’. The end was instant.¹

Grendon discerns a rare profundity in the dying woman’s request: it is as though she opens a window to the state of her soul. He reflects that ‘to thoughtful minds this dying woman’s words—“clean” and “white” are indicative of much. The rest we leave in the hands of her unerring Judge.’²

Since he does not follow this up with an explanation, we have to guess at his meaning. Perhaps he has in mind that ‘great multitude’ of John’s Revelation who have ‘washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb’.³ More likely, he has in mind Swedenborg’s description of the celestial Africans: ‘They detest the blackness of the body, for they know that their souls are shining white, while their bodies which they abominate are black.’⁴ Grendon’s meaning is akin to Blake’s ‘The Little Black Boy’, which Grendon will have encountered in Wilkinson’s book, if nowhere else:

My mother bore me in the Southern wild,
And I am black, but O my soul is white.
White as an angel is the English child,
But I am black, as if bereaved of light.⁵

Concerning this poem, which he quotes in full, Wilkinson writes that ‘whenever the Poets are inspired from above, there is an internal sense present. It may be only for a few lines, but it is there. The spiritual world takes every opportunity to effect such influx into the natural world.’⁶ Grendon appears to feel that ‘the spiritual world’ has spoken through ‘the mists of death’ to Chief Ngengamane’s Christian wife. Her last words appear to identify her as an African of the celestial order, but lest we presume to pass final judgement upon her, ‘we leave [that function] in the hands of her unerring Judge’.

¹ ‘News from Swaziland’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6.

² ‘News from Swaziland’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6.

³ Rev. 7:9–14.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 213.

⁵ Quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 218–19.

⁶ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 219.

Heinrich Vedder, historian of South-West Africa, tells us that ‘great weight and effect are attached to the words of a dying man’ in Herero culture.¹ As a Herero, Grendon appears to live up to that ethnic trait.²

Swedenborg has discovered that the ‘best Africans’ are in touch with their celestial heavens, and communicate without speech—through their internals—with angels. On this account, Grendon feels justified in taking seriously the clairvoyant utterances of Africans. He recognizes that the Zulu-language poet and columnist, ‘Isangoma’ (Diviner), has access to a mystic hotline, when he writes, ‘Thou, *Isangoma*, knowest hidden things’. He goes on to petition ‘Isangoma’ to ‘Consult thine oracle! Declare by thy responses how we may inspire these people of the “Heavens” [*i.e.*, the Zulu] to higher things!’³

Grendon also recognizes the capacity of *izangoma* or shamans to diagnose and heal obscure ailments of which white medical practitioners are completely ignorant, the cures not being in their *materia medica*:

There are human diseases which no European doctors can diagnose. These diseases are legion. They exist in every community. And of all Europeans in South Africa the Boers alone recognize their existence, and have been convinced by many proofs that ‘dirty niggers’ can cure them, where European physicians holding the highest qualifications would confess their inability to even guess the cause and nature of the diseases. It is not always the white brain-box that contains wisdom.⁴

When the youthful Swazi prince Sobhuza is about to ‘proceed to Lovedale [in order to] prosecute his studies’ early in 1916, Grendon remarks—entirely without negative comment—that a ‘Council meeting of Chiefs is being summoned for the purpose of ... invoking the blessing and the protection of the Ancestral Spirits (emadhlozi) on behalf of the lad during his sojourn in a strange land’.⁵ Belief that the ancestors live and take an active interest in the welfare of their kin still in the flesh is altogether in keeping with Swedenborg who, according to Wilkinson, personally

¹ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 506.

² Cf. Shaka’s dying prophecies in *Tshaka’s Death* (1901), and in ‘Umdlwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4. Cf. Grendon’s indirect reference to Bishop Latimer’s last words prior to martyrdom, in ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4. Cf. Zenzema’s prophecy of doom at the time of his assassination (‘PAD’, Pt 11, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4). Cf. Malunge’s dying ‘admonition’ to his brother Lomvazi (‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5).

³ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4.

⁵ ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

‘kindl[ed the hearts of spiritual Africans] to the Africa left behind in the natural world’.¹

Wilkinson also cites Swedenborg as identifying the ‘worst magicians’ as coming from Africa.² At first glance, this appears to contradict the seer’s statements about the ‘good’ Africans. However, Wilkinson is able to reconcile the two classes by showing that the Africans’ heightened capacity to receive angelic influxes—and hence the New Jerusalem—is the same state of receptivity that permits them to receive hellish influxes. Another Swedenborgian explains that ‘since the Africans can rise higher than most people, it is inevitable that they should also be able to sink lower. There are diabolical forces at work in Africa, as elsewhere; and people of a sensitive nature can tap the powers of hell for their own evil ends. The worst magicians of all, says Swedenborg, are from Africa, without any limitation of matter, time and space.’³

Grendon is a firm believer in the evil power of witchcraft: ‘The average white man refuses to believe in magic or witchcraft’, he tells us, ‘yet a century ago his ancestors firmly believed in such practices.’⁴ Europe was once rife with devilish arts, and of the ancient Scandinavians, he remarks—with truth—that ‘atrocities, and witchcraft found a high place in their literature’.⁵ In ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, he expresses anxiety for the safety of the adolescent Prince Sobhuza, who is the late Malunge’s nephew. Grendon appears to fear that the powers of Hell are ranged against Sobhuza—willing his extinction before he can attain his majority and assume the paramountcy of Swaziland. The same evil powers sent Malunge to the shades. The poem includes a direct address to Sobhuza:

Protection such as white men give
 Insur’d Malunge not from harm!
 And Sorcery, which they deny
 Will smite thee too with unseen arm!⁶

But it is not just Swazi and other black malefactors who employ dark powers: ‘The Boers, despite their religious piety, have often inclined towards the abominations of

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 18.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 54, 60.

³ Brian Kingslake, quoted in: Evans, *History of the New Church in Southern Africa*, 29.

⁴ ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁵ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

divination, and sorcery.’¹ In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, the shades of those Voortrekker families massacred by Dingane’s *izimpi* accuse their kinsfolk still in the flesh of having ‘sought | Communion with the Prince of Hell’.²

Prophecy is not the exclusive preserve of Europeans like Swedenborg. Belief in the celestial African may explain the extraordinary Swedenborgian significance that Grendon assigns to a prophecy which King Shaka kaSenzangakona is alleged to have made in 1828 at the time of his assassination at the hands of his half-brothers. (We have already noted Grendon’s interest in the utterances of a dying woman.) Shaka’s last moments quickly became the stuff of oral embroidery, as Dan Wylie has recently demonstrated so admirably.³ Whether or not the king actually prophesied that following his death ‘the sky [would] be white with stars’, we will never know. Variants of his putative dying prophecy abound. As Wylie remarks, ‘Shaka’s prophetic last words we can safely consign to the realm of encrusted legend. However, they are “correct” in terms of any reading of the terrible aftermath’.⁴

This is also the view of ‘Steph. N. N. Gumede’, a Zulu student at Wilberforce University in the United States, who wrote to *Ilanga’s* editor in 1904: ‘At Ulundi, the prophecy of the “Black Napoleon” Tshaka was fulfilled, and at that memorable battlefield liberty took its flight’.⁵ Grendon similarly sees the cosmic implications of Ulundi, at which ‘the last traces of the black man’s material power’ were ‘effaced for ever from the face of this earth’.⁶

He returns more than once to the Shakan prophecy, which, like Gumede and others of his contemporaries, he takes to mean that Shaka’s erstwhile realm would be overrun and dominated by whites. In *Tshaka’s Death* (1901), the dying Zulu king gasps:

Ye think that ye this land will rule
 When I am dead and gone! Ye lie!
 Ye’ll bow before the white man’s stool,
 And him ye’ll rev’rence by and bye!

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 79n.

² *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 79.

³ Wylie, *Myth of Iron*, 502–04.

⁴ Wylie, *Myth of Iron*, 504.

⁵ ‘Good Work’, *Ilanga* 2: 56 (6 May 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘Native Abominations’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4.

As I to you am yielding now
 In shameful, shameful—death laid low,
 So ye unto the sword must bow
 And to destruction *all* must go!¹

This is all conventional enough, but a few years later, Grendon gives a Swedenborgian reading to Shaka’s prophecy concerning the coming of numerous white men like a sky ‘white with stars’. He writes that while Africans cherish ‘visions of some happier day’, they must yet ‘sojourn amidst “Stars” of whom the greatest of our kings [Shaka] foretold’. These ‘twinkling Stars, true Britons are’, he reveals in a verse fragment.² With dependable qualities like natural stars, ‘true’ Britons—more than white men of any other nation—act for the guidance and upliftment of Africans. In ‘The True European’, he describes Attersoll as a ‘solitary “Star of Hope, and Instruction”’ whose role as spiritual guide may be discerned by those who employ ‘the spiritual eye’.³ Elsewhere, he describes ‘Mr Barnett late Superintendent of Education in Natal’ as ‘the “star of our hopes”’.⁴

In the Swedenborgian schema, stars have their particular correspondence. Just as natural ‘stars, although they give little light, by their apparent fixity of position relative to each other, serve to guide the mariner or wayfarer’, so too humans ‘have guiding stars to direct [them on their] heavenward road’.⁵ Swedenborg declares that stars ‘signify things good and true’, but ‘when the stars appear wandering, it is instantly known that they signify things evil and false’.⁶ In ‘Melia and Pietro’ (1897), Melia prays: ‘Oh, LOWLINESS, throughout this life | Be thou my guiding star!’⁷ In *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (1902), the Boers’ ‘guiding star is Tyranny’.⁸ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’ (1904) affirms that a ‘guiding star | Directs this mortal to the Life Divine’.⁹

¹ *Ipepa* 3:431 (24 May 1901) 4. Also published separately as an 8-page pamphlet (Pietermaritzburg: Munro Bros, printers, 1901).

² ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ ‘The True European’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 3.

⁴ ‘Mr Barnett’s Lecture’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3.

⁵ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 142.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 1808.

⁷ ‘M&P’, Pt VIII, *Citizen* 2:44 (27 April 1898) 3.

⁸ *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 56.

⁹ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

Grendon conflates the mystic expressions of Swedenborg and Shaka. Shaka's 'stars' acquire Swedenborg's correspondence. In his death throes, Shaka displays the native prescience germane to one of Swedenborg's spiritually-internal Africans. Even before his death, a sprinkling of Britons had made their way to his Dukuza kraal. But they are only harbingers. 'By and bye'—as *Tshaka's Death* indicates—Shaka's own assassins will be compelled to render obeisance to the White Man, when he plants his 'stool' in Zululand. Then, so numerous will be these stars that the sky will be white with them. Some of these stars—not all—will be fixed, 'true' Britons, able and willing to guide the African at this time of spiritual regeneration that Swedenborg announces. Shaka 'knew' all of this in 1828.



While it is not the purpose of this thesis to draw a sustained parallel between Grendon and Blyden, it is important to be aware that parallels exist in their thinking, and that Wilkinson—whose book Grendon read and quoted—puts a Swedenborgian construction on Blyden's published statements concerning African personality, African Christianity, and African civilization.

Grendon lists Blyden's amongst those 'black men's names' to be found in 'the catalogue of the world's worthies'.¹ Wilkinson describes him as 'an eminent Representative of [his] Race'—one who 'in the near future will in all likelihood be instrumental in guiding and shaping its fortunes'.² For Wilkinson, Blyden's stature lies chiefly in the striking manner in which his most arresting ideas accord with those of Swedenborg.³

It is evident that Grendon looks upon Blyden as likeminded—almost as a fellow believer when it comes to the question of self-determination for African Christians.⁴ Coincidentally, what Hollis R. Lynch says of Blyden's character, might with equal aptness be said of Grendon: 'He saw himself as a race champion and prophet with a

¹ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, v.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 126, 129.

⁴ Of course, as a man proud of his own mixed-race heritage, Grendon could not share Blyden's aversion to 'mulattos'.

divine mission, and this resulted in his being tactless and impatient of other viewpoints.’¹

Regardless of how sound his ideas on Race may appear today, Blyden’s eminence as a shaper of opinion is indisputable. He was ‘easily the most learned and articulate champion of Africa and the Negro race in his own time’,² ‘by far the most arresting figure’ amongst those West Africans ‘who wrestled during the nineteenth century with the problem of the identity of the African’.³ Because his lifespan coincided with the Abolition of Slavery in the United States, with black disenfranchisement and other ‘Jim Crow’ legislation introduced in the last decades of the nineteenth century, as well as with an unprecedented surge of European imperialism in Africa, he had much to engage his fertile mind.

He was born in St Thomas, Virgin Islands, of free parents.⁴ He lived there and in Venezuela before travelling as a youth to the United States in order to train for the ministry. In the States, he was denied enrolment at a theological college on account of his race. Sponsored by the New York Colonization Society, he sailed to Liberia in 1850 in order to complete his education there.⁵ In Liberia, he became a Presbyterian missionary and an agent of the American Colonization Society—an organization whose goal was to ‘repatriate’ free blacks to Africa.⁶

Despite his obvious influence upon Africanist debate in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, comparatively little appears to be known about how Blyden arrived at his highly idealized views on African destiny and African ‘personality’. We would like to see, for example, some attempt to reconstruct and reread his personal library—the texts that he read, and more importantly, those that he reread. Scholars who have reviewed Blyden’s contribution to pan-African nationalist thought seem to take for granted that his extraordinary views were largely of his own creation. What appear to be clues to intensive ideological borrowing are either passed over altogether, or treated as side-issues.

¹ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, vii–viii.

² Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, vii.

³ July, *Origins of Modern African Thought*, 208.

⁴ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, xiii.

⁵ July, *Origins of Modern African Thought*, 211; Dibb, ‘A Love Affair with Africa’.

⁶ Campbell, *Songs of Zion*, 75.

One aspect of Blyden's ideological indebtedness that requires further exploration is what he undoubtedly owes to the Swedenborgian, Alexander Kinmont. Mention has already been made of Grendon's quotation from Kinmont's lectures, which came to him via Blyden and Wilkinson. The broader passage from the Cincinnati lectures of 1837–38, reads:

Philosophers have found a constitutional adaptation in this case to the climate and local circumstances of [the Africans'] native and allotted home, and there can be no question that there is, and that when the epoch of their *civilization* arrives, in the lapse of ages, they will display in their native land some very peculiar and interesting traits of character, of which we, a distinct branch of the human family, can at present form no conception. It will be—indeed it must be—a civilization of a peculiar stamp; perhaps we might venture to conjecture, not so much distinguished by art as a certain beautiful nature, not so marked or adorned by science as exalted and refined by a certain new and lovely theology,—a reflection of the light of heaven more perfect and endearing than that which the intellects of the Caucasian race have ever yet exhibited.¹

This is Kinmont speaking, but it could equally be Blyden, at almost any stage of his mature career. He appears to revisit this passage from Kinmont over a period of several years. As early as 1862, he predicts in language strikingly like Kinmont's, that 'Africa will furnish a development of civilization which the world has never yet witnessed. Its great peculiarity will be its moral element.'² In 1876, he quotes directly from the above-quoted passage concerning the coming 'civilization of the Negro family', marked by a 'certain beautiful nature' and a 'new and lovely theology' superior to that which the 'Caucasian race [has] ever exhibited'.³ Again, in 1878, he predicts that 'there will be an exhibition of virtues not dreamt of in the Caucasian world, a sudden development of energies latent for ages'.⁴ In view of this long-standing appeal to Kinmont, we need to consider the possibility that he is, in some important way, Blyden's ideological predecessor.

Kinmont sees the 'Negro' as 'extremely provincial, and confined from natural inclination to one quarter of the globe, the peninsula of Africa', whereas the 'Caucasian' is 'more migratory in its habits':

¹ Kinmont, *Natural History of Man*, 185.

² Blyden, *Black Spokesman*, 32.

³ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 66–67.

⁴ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 282.

Not one African ever crossed the wide waters with his own consent; and with unalloyed satisfaction and delight would he have been contented to have basked, unmolested and undisturbed, on his own sunny plains, until the genius of native civilization, appearing on the banks of the Niger or the Congo, had roused him from his stupor, and, infusing new sentiments and ideas into his mind, opened to him a career of improvement congenial with his nature, and adapted to his character.¹

Could this perhaps be the origin of Blyden's dogged insistence that the African genius could only flower in its native Africa? Already in 1862, he proclaimed: 'Africa is the appropriate home of the black man, and he cannot rise above her. Water cannot rise above its level; no more can the Negro above his natural home. ... The work is to be done in Africa.'²

Knowingly or unknowingly, Blyden was exposed to Swedenborg via the Kinmont lectures on the 'Natural History of Man'.³ Lynch remarks upon the fact that Wilkinson dedicated his apologia for an African New Jerusalem to Blyden, and that 'Blyden himself was keenly interested in the views of Swedenborg who had conceived of Africans as the people potentially most capable of religious perfection'.⁴ Oddly, however, Lynch displays little curiosity regarding the extent to which Blyden's 'keen interest' in Swedenborg may actually have *moulded* his well-advertised personal views on African racial destiny. Was Blyden a closet Swedenborgian? This issue is important, because much of the ongoing debate on an African 'renaissance' has its roots embedded in Blyden. Is it possible that those roots penetrate even deeper—to Swedenborg?

It may be helpful to compare the gist of Blyden's thought, as epitomized by Lynch, with Swedenborg's pronouncements on Africa and Africans:

[Blyden's] major themes were: that the Negro race did have past achievements of which it could be proud; that it had special inherent attributes which it should strive to project in a distinctive 'African Personality'; that African culture—its customs and institutions—were basically wholesome and should be preserved; and finally, that Christianity had a retarding influence

¹ Kinmont, *Natural History of Man*, 190–91.

² Blyden, *Black Spokesman*, 18.

³ It is possible that Blyden was acquainted with only those passages from Kinmont's lectures that William Ellery Channing quotes (see below). However, in view of persistent verbal echoes of Kinmont to be found in Blyden's writings, I am inclined to think that he was acquainted with the lectures' ideological basis. Swedenborgian ideas of African personality and an incoming African spiritual civilization were widely circulated in American abolitionist circles during the early nineteenth century.

⁴ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 82.

upon the Negro, while that of Islam had been salutary—his most controversial theme, and one on which he wrote at length.¹

Strikingly, all of these ‘major themes’ find antecedents in the Writings of Swedenborg. Wilkinson states that ‘the African represents the last remains of the Most Ancient or Celestial Church’²—a Church the members of which communed through their innermosts with angels. Swedenborg reveals that ‘in some region of Africa from ancient time there is a Book which they hold for sacred, written by correspondences in like manner as the Word with us’, and that in ‘Abyssinian Africa they have some psalms written in a style similar to our Word, and they sing these in their temples, and spirits feel a communication therefrom’.³ This Golden Age of African spirituality might well be considered one of the ‘past achievements of which [the Negro Race] could be proud’.

Blyden posits a uniquely ‘African Personality’, which concept may derive from Swedenborg’s ‘good’ Africans, who are ‘of celestial *indoles* or disposition’ because ‘the last people of the most ancient Church’.⁴ This aboriginal ‘African seed and genius’ survives exclusively amongst the good Africans.⁵ It is more interiorly open than any other racial ‘genius’ to celestial influxes; it is instinctively communal and non-materialistic.

Blyden’s conviction that ‘African culture [is] basically wholesome and should be preserved’ also finds a parallel in Swedenborg, who dignifies the Africans with a superior conception of God than that held by contemporary Europeans of the Old Church. Even their most offensive usages are merely debased vestiges of what once enjoyed divine sanction. For one thing, Swedenborg’s ‘good’ Africans have a conception of true ‘conjugal love’—Swedenborg’s *amor conjugiali*—far superior to that of all the greybeards of Europe.⁶

That ‘Christianity had a retarding influence’ on Africa may also be construed as echoing Swedenborg, who tells his readers concerning the interior Africans who receive the angelic ‘revelation’, that they ‘reject with contempt those strangers from

¹ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 54–55.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 52.

³ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 88.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 160.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 152.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 113–n. 114.

Europe who believe that a man is saved by faith alone, and thus by mere thought and speech independently of will and action'.¹ Besides the false doctrine of the saving power of 'faith alone', the Old Church also fails to teach the true identity of the Lord. Swedenborg tells us that 'Christians come [to the African coastlands] who suggest scandals (*insinuant*), and who hold a human and not a Divine idea concerning the Lord'.² The internal Africans intuitively reject Old Church sophistry, because of their celestial '*indoles*'—'personality' is the nearest translation in Blyden's writing—and because of the angelic communion which they have latterly begun to enjoy with the descending New Jerusalem. Through angelic influxes, these spiritual Africans are 'admonished not to receive any doctrine from Christian emissaries; to hear what they say, but not to believe them.'³ Blyden advises Africans similarly.

Blyden's last 'major theme', in Lynch's epitome, is that Islam has a 'salutary' effect on the lives of Africans—as well as a record of achievement which Christianity cannot match. Believing that this confirms Swedenborg, Wilkinson 'counsel[s] Blyden, his] dear Doctor, to peruse diligently the extensive records which Swedenborg has left for judging of Mahometans and Mahometanism'.⁴ Swedenborg himself writes that 'the Mahometan religion was raised up by the Lord's divine providence to destroy the idolatries of several nations'.⁵ With this view, Blyden's published statements are in perfect accord.

As stated, the relationship between Swedenborg and Blyden needs investigation, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Let it suffice to say here that two possibilities will present themselves to the researcher. The first is that Blyden found in Swedenborg or in his explicator, Kinmont, nothing more than corroboration for views that he—Blyden—had *already* formulated. The second is more far-reaching: that Blyden's reading of Swedenborg—or his indirect exposure to Swedenborg via Kinmont—actually served to *shape* his views on a uniquely African 'personality' and the course that 'civilization' should, and ultimately would, take in Africa. Unfortunately, as in the case of Robert Grendon, Blyden's 'voluminous personal

¹ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 840.

² Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 86.

³ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 38.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, viii.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 342.

papers’ are not available to scholars, and are perhaps lost forever.¹ We are obliged to turn to published material in an attempt to reconstruct the origins of his thought.

In a letter to Wilkinson, whom he knew to be a disciple of Swedenborg, Blyden expresses his hope that ‘the labours of such men as [Wilkinson will] do more than anything else, or quite as much as any other agency, to lead the “good Christians of the Old Church to become good Christians of the New Church”’.² He ‘earnestly pray[s] as [Wilkinson does] that the good Christians of the Old Church may become good Christians of the New Church, call that New Church by whatever name you please’. Furthermore, he believes ‘Jesus Christ ... to be what the Apostle described Him—“the fullness of the Godhead bodily”’, although he does ‘not think that Europe has as yet fully grasped that most fruitful of all conceptions’.³

These extraordinary confessions require analysis. Swedenborg claimed that chapters 21 and 22 of Revelation ‘foretold ... that at the end of the former church a New Church would be established, in which this should be the primary doctrine: That God is One, both in person and in essence, and that the Lord is that God. This Church is what is there meant by the New Jerusalem; into which no one can enter but who acknowledge the Lord alone as God of heaven and earth.’⁴ In his letter to Wilkinson, Blyden signals unambiguously his concurrence both with Swedenborg’s prophecy concerning the two Christian ‘Churches’ and with the foremost doctrine of the New Church—the absolute supremacy of Jesus Christ.

He acknowledges Swedenborg’s concept of an ‘Old Church’ replaced by a ‘New Church’, although his conditional clause indicates that the precise identity of that New Church may be open to interpretation. Wilkinson would have apprehended his meaning without difficulty because, despite a lifetime of promoting Swedenborg’s teachings, he remained in the Anglican fold.⁵ Wilkinson did not construe Swedenborg’s ‘New Church’ in narrow denominational terms, and had likely made this clear in whatever correspondence between him and Blyden preceded the

¹ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 79.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 244: Blyden to Wilkinson, Monrovia, 17 Nov. 1891.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 245: Blyden to Wilkinson, Monrovia, 17 Nov. 1891.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, n. 263.

⁵ Dibb, ‘A Love Affair with Africa’.

publication of *The African and the True Christian Religion*. In September 1886—by which time his *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race* was possibly already in the press—Blyden had resigned from the Presbyterian Church in order to become an itinerant ‘minister of truth’.¹ He may even have linked his own independent missionary activities with the rise of Swedenborg’s New Church in Africa—‘call that New Church by whatever name you please’.

Grendon, who exercised full confidence in the incoming New Church—New Jerusalem—would have said ‘Amen’ to Blyden’s prayer that ‘the good Christians of the Old Church may become good Christians of the New Church’. In 1904, he slams the highhanded methods of South Africa’s white missionaries of the Old Church, who endeavour in concert to thwart the healthy initiatives of newly-established Ethiopian churches, as well as the South African outreach of the American-based African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church.² In later life, Grendon identified closely with the AME Church and taught at an AME school outside Bremersdorp (Manzini), Swaziland during the 1920s.³ His sympathy with the denomination’s programme in Africa is already evident by the start of the twentieth century.⁴

In defending the African independent church movement, he quotes ‘Dr Blyden a pure-blooded African’ as saying that the agents of Christian conversion in Africa must be ethnic Africans, and that ‘the method is the simple holding up of Jesus Christ’, while ‘the instrument is the African himself’.⁵ In support of black American involvement in South Africa, he again cites Blyden who insists that ‘the problem of introducing Christianity into Africa without the aid of independent colonies of negroes from the Western Hemisphere with the experience of the house of bondage is impossible of solution’.⁶

Independent religious movements appear to have arisen almost simultaneously in West and South Africa. In 1891, Blyden reported that West Africans were

¹ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, xiii, 166.

² ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4. The AME Church is a denomination founded by blacks in Philadelphia in 1816. It began mission work in West Africa at an early date, and in South Africa after 1896.

³ Interview: Aurora Malumisa (Grendon’s daughter), Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008; Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 86; Lowe, ‘Tragedy of Malunge’, 77.

⁴ ‘Black Supremacy’, *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6.

⁵ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4. Grendon lifts this quotation from where it appears in Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 126.

‘establish[ing] a Church of their own, so as to be able to deal with their own problems, with which strangers cannot safely or profitably intermeddle’.¹ In 1896, the Ethiopian Church, established four years earlier near Pretoria by Mangena Mokone, became affiliated with the AME Church. Bishop Turner of the AME, who had already made three visits to West Africa, visited South Africa in 1898 and officially recognized the ordinations of several ministers of the Ethiopian Church, enabling them to serve within the AME. It is possible that some AME agents in South Africa may have brought with them elements of Swedenborg’s thought. James Campbell, who has written at length on the history of the church in the USA and South Africa, hints at the possibility of a Swedenborgian dimension to its missionary thrust into Africa in the late 1890s:

Throughout the nineteenth century American disciples of Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg had looked to Africa for the rise of a new, spiritually purified Christianity to supplant the exhausted and materialistic Christianity of the West. Swedenborg’s ideas were picked up by several African American churchmen, including Theophilus G. Steward and AME Zion bishop James Theodore Holly, both of whom linked the prophecy to African Americans’ outreach to Africa. Steward and Holly were both friends of Turner’s.²

Interestingly, Blyden and Turner were mutual admirers and both were uncompromising advocates of American Negro emigration to Africa—a circumstance that adds some weight to the hypothesis that there is an element of pan-Swedenborgianism at the heart of pan-Africanism.

In his letter to Wilkinson quoted above, Blyden also expresses the view that European Christians have ‘not yet fully grasped’ that Christ is ‘the fullness of the Godhead bodily’, by which formulation he quotes ‘the apostle’, Paul.³ By calling into question the correctness of a Christology belonging to ‘Europe’, Blyden makes an undisguised reference to the ‘primary doctrine’ of Swedenborg’s New Church: that the Christ is no less than the single Person of God Almighty, but as he manifests

¹ Blyden, ‘The Native Church’ (1891), in: Bown, *Two Centuries of African English*, 50.

² Campbell, *Songs of Zion*, 81.

It is evident that Jermain Wesley Loguen (c.1813–72), escaped slave, local manager at Syracuse, N.Y., of the Underground Railroad, and a bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, was heavily influenced by Swedenborg’s teachings. (Jermain Wesley Loguen, *The Rev. J. W. Loguen, as a Slave and as a Freeman: a Narrative of Real Life*. Syracuse, N.Y.: J. G. K. Truair & Co., printers, 1859, *passim*; American Council of Learned Societies, *Concise Dictionary of American Biography*, 664.)

³ Col. 2:9.

Himself to humans in a form comprehensible to their finite minds. It is this that Blyden describes as ‘that most fruitful of all conceptions’.

One of the most controversial aspects of Blyden’s career from the 1880s was the generosity with which he treated Islam and its adherents in West Africa. This was widely reported upon in the South African vernacular press. *South African Spectator*, edited and published in Cape Town by Francis Zaccheus Peregrino—himself a West African—reports upon the activities in Sierra Leone of ‘Dr Blyden a Director-General of Islamic Education’.¹ In the Eastern Cape Colony, John Tengo Jabavu’s paper, *Imvo Zabantsundu* remarked in 1896 that the British administration in Nigeria had secured the services of the ‘distinguished African scholar, Dr E. W. Blyden’, whose task it would be to bring the Muslim population into the protectorate’s educational system. It is further reported in *Imvo* that ‘Dr Blyden had been influenced by certain [unspecified] motives in fixing his remuneration’ at an insignificant £100 per annum. The British Governor had upped the sum to £150, and there were ‘circumstances in connexion with the matter which it was undesirable he should mention’.²

Blyden’s ‘motives’ likely included his earnest desire to sidestep the pitfall of material greed, which he—like Robert Grendon—viewed as an alien introduction from Europe. A ‘minister of truth’ could not also be a minister to Mammon. Blyden considered the world to be ‘immersed in materialism’.³ He saw in the ‘wonderful material development’ of ‘the civilized nations’ the seeds of their spiritual downfall. In time, ‘their spiritual preceptions [would become] darkened and their spiritual susceptibilities blunted through the agency of a captivating and absorbing materialism’. Then, Europe’s only sweet well of spirituality would be found in Africa, and Europeans would be obliged to turn to that Continent in order to slake their spiritual thirst.⁴

In his letter to Wilkinson, Blyden expresses himself as ‘anxious to see [his correspondent’s] translation of what Swedenborg said about Mohammedanism’, knowing ‘that so important a religious system could not have escaped the earnest

¹ ‘Islamism on the West Coast of Africa’, *South African Spectator* 1:29 (7 Dec. 1901) 5.

² ‘Dr E. W. Blyden’, *Imvo* 12:596 (26 March 1896) 3.

³ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 64.

⁴ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 124.

attention and study of such a seer as he was'.¹ Here it would seem that Blyden looks to Swedenborg to corroborate what he himself advances in his *magnum opus*: that Islam is better tailored to the special needs of the 'Negro' than is present-day Christianity.

This is not to say that Blyden views Islam as ultimately superior to Christianity, but it is a stepping stone to Christianity. He may not have known Swedenborg's view of Islam at the time that he wrote to Wilkinson, but Wilkinson has offered to point out several passages that privilege 'Mohammedans'. According to Swedenborg, the monotheism of Islam counts greatly in its favour.² He writes that in the 'third state of man after death, which is a state of instruction for those who enter heaven', the good Muslims 'withdraw from Mohammed, because he can give them no help, they approach the Lord and worship Him and acknowledge His Divinity, and they are then instructed in the Christian religion'.³ In this world of spirits, the 'Mohammedans are instructed by angels who had been in the world in the same religion, and had been converted to Christianity'.⁴ They 'are instructed by means of doctrines adapted to their apprehension, which differ only in this, that spiritual life is taught by moral life, in agreement with the good tenets of the religion from which they have derived their life in the world'.⁵

In complete accord with Swedenborg, Kinmont states that 'there is no necessity for supposing Mahomet to have been a bad man, or even a designing man'. We may 'rationally conclude that certain very uncommon and mysterious influences must be exerted on those singular minds which, at different periods of the world's history, have originated *new systems* of religion and new modes of worship'. 'It is absurd, then ... to think that new religions are allowed to be engendered, and to be spread among mankind, without a certain special exercise of the Providence of God.' It is safe to 'suppose that the Mahometan religion, which embodies the cardinal truth of

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 244: Blyden to Wilkinson, Monrovia, 17 Nov. 1891.

² Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 9, n. 183.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 514.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 515.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 516.

the unity of God, and inculcates the laws of moral charity, may have been in a certain sense *permitted* by God'.¹

In like vein, Blyden 'believe[s] that Islam has done for vast tribes of Africa what Christianity in the hands of Europeans has not yet done'. He cannot 'believe that a system which has done such things can be outside of God's beneficent plans for the evolution of humanity'.² While he considered 'Christianity to be the ultimate and final religion of humanity',³ he 'still insisted that Islam in West Africa was "preliminary and preparatory" to Christianity'.⁴ He was prepared to accept what Wilson Jeremiah Moses calls 'an Islamic detour' leading 'indigenous peoples ... to Christianity'.⁵

Following publication of his most famous book, it 'was widely but wrongly reported in the American press that Blyden had become a Muslim'.⁶ This erroneous view persists in some quarters to the present. Louis R. Harlan, for one, states that 'deeming Christianity a white man's religion, Blyden was converted to Islam. In other ways he anticipated the Black Muslims of a later era.'⁷

This construction is, simply, wrong. To Wilkinson, Blyden expresses his chagrin at the 'rumours of [his] having embraced Mohammedanism, based chiefly upon [his] book, and [his] travels and labours among that people'. These persist although they 'have been over and over again contradicted in English and American newspapers'.⁸ He hopes that Wilkinson's book will 'give the *coup de grace* to reports which have no foundation but in the prejudices of those who have not fully understood Christ or the true purport of Christianity'.⁹

Grendon shares the views of Swedenborg, Kinmont, and Blyden respecting Islam. Despite his own Christian belief, he believes that a place exists for Muslims within

¹ Kinmont, *Natural History of Man*, 218–19.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 244: Blyden to Wilkinson, Monrovia, 17 Nov. 1891.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 243: Blyden to Wilkinson, Monrovia, 17 Nov. 1891.

⁴ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 71.

⁵ Moses, *Creative Conflict in African American Thought*, 95.

⁶ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 124.

⁷ Harlan, 'Booker T. Washington', 461.

⁸ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 243: Blyden to Wilkinson, Monrovia, 17 Nov. 1891.

⁹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 244: Blyden to Wilkinson, Monrovia, 17 Nov. 1891.

the many mansions of Providence. In the dedication to *Paul Kruger's Dream*, the 'Moslem', together with 'Christian, ... Jew, and Pagan' finds 'blessing' in the 'precepts' of Britannia.¹ In sentiment, this agrees with Blake's 'The Divine Image'—republished in Wilkinson's book²—in which Blake calls on 'all' to 'love the human form, | In heathen, Turk, or Jew: | Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell, | There God is dwelling too.'

Grendon believes that 'many Christian teachers have blundered in needlessly meddling with the Faith of Islam, *whose degree or plane of love* is neither on a level, nor identical, with that of the True Christian Religion'³—*i.e.*, the religion of the New Jerusalem. He observes how the 'spread of Islamism ... is becoming a "peril" in the eyes of Europeans, who are one by one rising to denounce, and bar, if possible, the progress of the Prophet's Faith'.⁴ Such Christian zealots are misguided—not recognizing that Islam is pre-eminently suited to the special genius of many Africans:

The success (of the Moslem religion) ... is by no means due to 'lack of thorough organisation on the part of the various Christian movements'. ... There is at the root of this matter a deeper and subtler cause, which has entirely escaped the notice of those who ventilate their views at random, when they refer to the growth of Islam as 'insidious'—whether in this Union or in other parts of the African Continent.⁵

Grendon believes that Islam serves a purpose, in that it is the religious system best suited to the receptive capacity of many Africans—the one catering best of all to their '*degree or plane of love*'. Swedenborg states that 'there are in man three degrees of love and wisdom'.⁶ The 'degree' of the Muslim and the 'degree' of the man of the 'True Christian Religion'—the New Church—are not the same, Grendon concludes. But, as is to be expected, men of the Old Church cannot grasp this fact and so have 'blundered' and 'meddl[ed] with the Faith of Islam'.



Blyden, like Grendon, had a model for Race that was both organic and theological. Robert W. July states that 'Blyden saw world civilization as the image of divine

¹ *PKD*, dedication, p. vii.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 219–20.

³ 'Spread of Mohammedanism', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:70 (21 Jan. 1914) 5.

⁴ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁵ 'Spread of Mohammedanism', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:70 (21 Jan. 1914) 5.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 239.

perfection to which each race contributed an essential segment'.¹ Races ought not to conceive of themselves as existing in competition, but rather as collaborative in mirroring aspects of the Image of God.² The *raison d'être* of each several race is to employ its special gifts to make up the World's collective pool of talent and spiritual state. Each race is under moral obligation to perform some special service for the collective functioning of the combined Human Race.

We find this concept in Grendon's hortatory poem, 'To You Abantu', where he puts his auditors on notice that 'The world demands from you | Of work a due proportionate share'. 'The world from out your ranks | A Shakespeare, Milton, Edison, | Expects'. "'Awake—no longer lag!—arise!"—| Thus all creation with you pleads'.³ It is also evident in Grendon's journalism (1904), where he describes the frustration of 'the black man' who is 'denied an opportunity of exhibiting his worth, and adding his quota to the needs of the world'.⁴ We also find corroboration in Seme's oration: 'Justly the world now demands' to witness present-day tokens of Africans' 'great and original genius'.⁵

What black intellectuals of Blyden's and Grendon's generations are saying is that their race, like every other, has a prescribed function to perform, and that the World at large lodges a legitimate claim upon Africans to render now their dues. Africa is on the rise: when she reaches the zenith of her rise, the World will behold for the first time her place of special glory within the grand scheme of things.

Grendon's appeal to 'Abantu' to add their 'quota to the needs of the world' should be read against the backdrop of Swedenborg's doctrine of 'use', which he accepts. Swedenborg states that the 'Lord's kingdom is a kingdom of ends, which are uses; or what is the same thing, a kingdom of uses which are ends'.⁶ No individual, no race, exists in functional isolation, and people are fulfilled only when they know their function and discharge it, because 'to promote use is the delight of the life of all; and hence it is evident that the kingdom of the Lord is a kingdom of uses'.⁷ Attersoll,

¹ July, *African Voice*, 209.

² July, *History of the African People*, 298.

³ 'To You Abantu: What Man's Accomplish'd Ye Can Do', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

⁴ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.

⁵ Seme, 'The Regeneration of Africa', 69–70.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 112.

⁷ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 219.

Grendon's white colleague, repeats in *Ilanga* that 'God's Kingdom is a Kingdom of uses'.¹

In one of innumerable wakeful visions, Swedenborg overheard 'eight wise ones' explain that

no one is wise for himself alone, or lives for himself, but for others at the same time: this is the origin of society, which otherwise could not exist. To live for others is to perform uses. Uses are the bonds of society, which are as many in number as there are good uses; and the number of uses is infinite. There are spiritual uses, such as regard love to God and love towards our neighbour; there are moral and civil uses, such as regard the love of the society and state to which a man belongs, and of his fellow-citizens among whom he lives; there are natural uses, which regard the love of the world and its necessities; and there are corporeal uses, such as regard the love of self-preservation with a view to superior uses. All these uses are inscribed on man.²

Grendon associates the concept of Race with that of 'use'. Other Swedenborgians—like Kinmont—had made this Race-use connection before him. For Grendon, every race has its 'status in the kingdom of Uses'. Each is 'a unit in the Body of Man Universal'. Quoting Swedenborg, he reminds a white polemical adversary that the 'Universe is a kingdom of uses, and that every single thing or creature in that kingdom is created for use. From every man therefore—be he black, white, yellow or red—use is required.'³

He continues by paraphrasing Swedenborg's 'eight wise ones': 'Uses are the bonds of society; and these bonds or uses are infinite in number. There is also necessity for the communication and intercommunication of uses; and these communicate and intercommunicate from primes to ultimates. What is use but the love of neighbour; and what holds the Universe together but this love?'⁴ Whether or not Blyden shares Grendon's Swedenborgianism, he also 'insist[s] that racial achievement must be measured ultimately by its contribution to the sum total of human accomplishment'.⁵

¹ 'H. A.', 'New Light Rays', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugial Love*, n. 18.

³ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

⁴ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

⁵ July, *A History of the African People*, 299.

In another polemic (1918), Grendon cautions a white man to

Cease from alienating yourself from yonder ‘nigger’. This is not the only age. The next may perhaps find you or your posterity, in adverse circumstances, wherein that ‘nigger’ may peradventure render you inestimable aid Tenfold wise is he, who out of various elements is able to erect—for the Kingdom of Use—a structure harmonious from base to apex.¹

‘This is not the only age’ is a truism that Grendon first expresses fourteen years earlier. In ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, he hints at the African’s vast potential—his true-though-dormant genius—which Europe with its natural gaze has failed to discern on account of having been blinded by externalism.

What the black man really is at his best no one thus far has cared to know. What lies under the blackness of his skin, has never been discovered. ... So far [the black race’s] progress has been but slow, but a change is obvious; a stir is manifest; and an attempt is being made to rise to a higher, and better condition. This attempt is scorned [by whites], but that is naught. A start has been made. The present is not the only age: the end is distant yet.²

In this passage, Grendon paraphrases Wilkinson, who declares that Swedenborg has discovered ‘in the spiritual world ... what the veiled African really is in his best estate, and *what the cloud of his blackness covers*; what his inward sense is. ... Whatever may be said and thought of it now, it will have effects. *The present is one age only. The end is not yet*’.³ Wilkinson also explains that the African’s ‘now completed blackness is the preparation in the hands of the Potter for Uses which the white man cannot render’.⁴

Grendon has prophecies of both the Word and the Writings to back up his assertion that in a coming age the true worth underlying the African’s skin will be ‘discovered’. In a subsequent instalment of ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, he assures his readers that ‘the opposite of Ethiopia’s gloomy experience must next be realised. She stretches forth her hands unto God, and looks forward in bitter anxiety for her reward in return for her service to the world—a service which runs through ancient and modern history.’⁵ He is of course invoking Psalm 68:31, but here it is overlaid

¹ ‘Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side’, *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5.

² ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 7–8. Emphasis added to indicate Grendon’s borrowing.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 212.

⁵ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

with Swedenborg: the Africans who supplicate God with palms outstretched are those who more than all others of Earth's peoples 'wish especially to be called obedient',¹ who 'at [their] best' are 'under the blackness of [their] skin' of a 'celestial disposition',² 'the last descendents' of the 'celestial heavens'.³

How appropriate it is that Grendon should find himself amongst *amaZulu*—the 'Race of the Heav'ns';⁴ 'this so-called "celestial nation"'.⁵ They are 'so-called' because they so often belie their name. Their gaze is fixed downwards and outwards, rather than where it ought to be—upward and inward—into their internal heaven. Grendon finds it necessary to cast about for ways in which to 'inspire these people of the "Heavens"'⁶ to redirect their gaze, and to rediscover their 'celestial' origin.

It is clear that in Grendon's view, Race and 'use' are mutually-implicated. In 1916, he addressed an audience of white International Socialists and black intellectuals in the New Trades Hall, Johannesburg.⁷ According to the *Star's* reporter, Grendon expressed the hope that the black African would one day 'rise to a higher plane, to play a higher and nobler part within the realm of uses'.⁸ The lecturer's Swedenborgian Swedenborgian basis for the 'realm of uses' appears to have been lost on both the newspaperman and on Johannesburg's white proto-communists.

To return to Grendon's 1918 polemic: although he does not say as much, the 'inestimable aid' which the white man's 'posterity' may stand in need of during some coming 'age' is spiritual replenishment. When in his crazed pursuit of materialism or externals, the European altogether exhausts what little stock of spirituality he currently retains, he will have to draw upon the spiritual well of inner Africa—the locus of the New Jerusalem.

'We have seen that Africa has thus far been destined to render service to the rest of the world', Grendon writes in 1904.⁹ This service, or use, is not ended. His thought is

¹ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 326.

² Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 42.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 75.

⁴ 'Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5.

⁵ 'The Late Chief Usibepu', *Ilanga* 2:74 (9 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁶ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁷ 'Loyal Natives Surprised: War-on-Warites and Kitchener', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916) 1st ed., 4.

⁸ 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed.,

6.

⁹ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.

altogether in harmony with Blyden, whom Wilkinson quotes as confirming Swedenborg:

Africa may yet prove to be the spiritual conservatory of the world. Just as, in past times, Egypt proved the stronghold of Christianity after Jerusalem fell, and just as the noblest and greatest of the Fathers of the Christian Church came out of Egypt, so it may be, when the civilized nations, in consequence of their wonderful material development, shall have had their spiritual perceptions darkened and their spiritual susceptibilities blunted through the agency of a captivating and absorbing materialism,—it may be that they may have to resort to Africa to recover some of the simple elements of faith.¹

Before Blyden, Kinmont similarly extols the African people's 'willingness to serve, the most beautiful trait of humanity, which we [of European extraction], from our own innate love of dominion, and in defiance of the Christian religion, brand with the name of *servility*, and abuse not less to our own dishonour than their injury'.² As though taking his cue from Kinmont, Blyden in 1894 states that

the spirit of service in the black man is born of his spiritual genius. It is his essential characteristic; and to show you that I connect no servile or unworthy idea with this remark, I hasten to add that I believe that that spirit must lead in civilization before it can become distinctively Christian—the supple, yielding, conciliatory, obedient, gentle, patient, musical spirit that is not full of offensive resistance—how sadly the white man needs it!³

If the 'spirit of service ... must lead in civilization', and the African alone has this spirit as the germ of his being, the obvious conclusion is that Africans will be at the forefront of the future civilization. But African dominion will not be oppressive of other races—it will 'render ... inestimable aid' to the needy European, as Grendon predicts.

Blyden chronicles some of the signal services which 'Africa' has rendered to the World:

When the Saviour of mankind, born in lowly circumstances, was the persecuted babe of Bethlehem, Africa furnished the refuge for his threatened and helpless infancy. ... When Asia, in the person of the Jew, clamoured for His blood, and Europe, in the Roman soldier, was dragging Him to execution, and afterwards nailed those sinless hands to the cross, and pierced that sacred side—what was the part that Africa took then? She furnished the man to share the

¹ Blyden quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 130.

² Kinmont, *Natural History of Man*, 186–87.

³ Blyden, *Black Spokesman*, 207.

burden of the cross with the suffering Redeemer. Simon, the Cyrenian, bore the cross after Jesus.¹

Grendon appears to rework Blyden:

We—Africa—have for ages been, and still are, and probably will ever be the toilers of the world; we—Africa—fed the starving sons of Jacob during their sojourn in the land of Egypt; we—Africa—sheltered the fugitive infant Saviour from the murderous hand of Herod; we—Africa—in the person of black Simon of Cyrene, (when all others stood aloof) assisted the fainting, and fatigued Redeemer to bear His Cross in order to accomplish the redemption of mankind by death upon the Hill of Skulls; we—Africa—when knowledge and religion were well-nigh obliterated, kept open the door, from whence their rays flashed forth upon Europe, and the world; we—Africa supplied the muscle in all the great undertakings of the world; we—Africa—the last of the continents are supporting the surplus population of all the rest. So much have we done for the world.²

Grendon's ideas of racial 'service' or 'use' are clearly Swedenborgian in origin. The question for some future researcher is: 'Does Blyden's conception of what he describes as "Africa's Service to the World" merely *parallel* Swedenborg's doctrine of Use, or—as seems more likely—does it actually *derive from* that doctrine?'³

For Blyden, 'the whole of mankind is a vast representation of the Deity'. What Africans do by proper instinct is the 'representation of some phase of the Infinite being'.⁴ In 1895, Blyden appealed to a Freetown audience to cherish their uniquely African 'personality', warning: 'If you surrender your personality, you have nothing left to give the world.' To disown this defining, internal African-ness would be 'to give up the divine idea—to give up God—to sacrifice the divine individuality'.⁵

At bottom, then, Blyden's theory of race is founded upon his theology. Racial categories are spiritualized. All races of Man are equally worthy, because 'in each separate race, something of the absolute is incarnated'.⁶ July remarks that 'from this basic premise, Blyden was able to draw a whole series of important corollaries. If the races were equal and complementary, it followed that each had its own culture to

¹ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 155.

² 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

³ Blyden delivered a discourse before the American Colonization Society in May 1880, entitled 'Ethiopia stretching out her hands unto God; or, Africa's Service to the World'. The passage which Wilkinson quotes may be read in: Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 124.

⁴ Quoted in: July, *Origins of Modern African Thought*, 214.

⁵ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 61.

⁶ Quoted in: July, *Origins of Modern African Thought*, 214.

contribute to the totality of human civilization.’¹ In another work, July observes that ‘from his basic proposition describing the races as equivalent facets of a unitary godhead, each with its original and necessary contribution toward humanity, Blyden had secured African self-esteem in the face of Europe’.² These observations are true as far as they go, but they do not account for the ‘basic premise’ or ‘basic proposition’. We need to establish the origins of Blyden’s theology if we are to arrive at the origin of his concept of Race.

Pristine African society, as Blyden projects it, is spiritual to the core:

Unlike Europe, African society made little distinction between the temporal and spiritual worlds; all existence was a continuum comprising the ancestors, the living, and the yet unborn. Religious thought and practice was no sabbath ritual but the essence of everyday life, reflecting a religious sense among the African people of highest refinement.³

In an address delivered at Monrovia in 1881, he assures his audience: ‘There is inspiration for us also. We must study our brethren in the interior, who know better than we do the laws of growth for the race. We see among them the rudiments of that which, with fair play and opportunity, will develop into important and effective agencies for our work.’⁴

Here, Blyden locates the ‘inspiration for us also’ with ‘our brethren in the interior’. Is this because they are the primary recipients of that ‘inspiration’? Is it possible that Blyden on the Liberian coast, like Grendon on the ‘Natalian sea-board’,⁵ looks to the deep African interior for the locale of Swedenborg’s good Africans and ‘revelation ... made among them at the present time’?⁶ If so, this would seem to cast a wholly new construction on a passage such as the following:

And this is why we want the [Liberia] College away from the seaboard—with its constant intercourse with foreign manners and low foreign ideas—that we may have free and uninterrupted intercourse with the intelligent among the tribes of the interior; that the students, even from the books to which they will be allowed access, may conveniently flee to the forests

¹ July, *Origins of Modern African Thought*, 214.

² July, *History of the African People*, 299.

³ July, *History of the African People*, 298–99.

⁴ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro*, 77–78.

⁵ ‘The True European’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

⁶ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 840.

and fields of Manding and the Niger, and mingle with our brethren and gather fresh inspiration and fresh and living ideas.¹

Like Grendon and the eighteenth-century Swedenborgian Utopian colonists, Blyden was fascinated by the project of establishing spiritual contact with the African interior. Blyden wanted his College to teach Arabic and African languages so that Africans of the coast could have ‘intelligent intercourse with the millions accessible to us in the interior’.² He laboured to bring Liberia into ‘regular intercourse with the Muslim states of the interior with the aim eventually of incorporating them into the Negro Republic’.³ He wanted to establish contact between the British Colony of Sierra Leone and its hinterland, and to this end personally led an expedition into the interior.⁴

Lynch finds ‘Blyden’s “natural African man” [to be] strikingly similar to Rousseau’s “noble savage”’, but he seems not to consider that this idealized gentleman finds an even closer match in the pages of Swedenborg.⁵ Perhaps Wilkinson, after all, is nearer the mark. He feels that Blyden, ‘looking ahead to the Second Africa’, has correctly identified the way forward for African civilization. He applauds ‘the wisdom of Dr Blyden’s injunction that the New African should sup with the Ancient African in the Krooman, not knowing what ancestral company he may meet there’.⁶ Lynch finds Blyden’s ideological ancestor in Rousseau; Wilkinson finds him in Swedenborg. Hopefully, future research will reveal which comes closest to the truth.

Kinmont had predicted that the new African civilization would be ‘not so marked or adorned by science as exalted and refined by a new and lovely theology’. Here ‘science’ must be understood broadly to mean the sum of knowledge arrived at by external or natural means. Blyden concurs in this diminution of science’s value and relevance to the coming order. He wrote in 1898 that ‘Science for all the really higher purposes of humanity is a dead organism of latent forces unless it is taken up by the moral nature, unless it is animated by earnest purpose and inspired by a great spiritual

¹ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 92.

² Quoted in: Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 152.

³ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 47.

⁴ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 89–90.

⁵ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 62.

⁶ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 128.

idea'.¹ In 1907, while the European Powers were engaged in a frenzied arms race, Blyden wrote:

Science is not the last word for humanity. It cannot be. It is continually threatening the existence of the mighty offspring to which it gives birth. It keeps itself armed to the teeth against its neighbour. Its most popular and lucrative inventions are machinery for the destruction of life. It multiplies its armies and increases its navies; and men wonder when all this would end and where it will lead.²

Wilkinson had earlier drawn heavily upon Blyden; here Blyden appears to recycle Wilkinson, who writes in 1892: 'As [European] nations, our peace means sleeping in iron coats, waistcoats, and trousers, in iron shoes and stockings—and the iron thicker year by year. Europe is the jungle of five great wild beasts of war, and of many lesser ones: lions, tigers, leopards—dragons all.'³ This is the sorry pass to which materialism and 'science' have led those white races whose civilization is of an external order. But such externalism shall not be allowed to rule Africa.

Grendon agrees completely that the pursuit of external knowledges is fruitless in resolving the central questions relating to human nature. He reminds a polemical rival that 'mere external-rational mathematical axioms which however excellent or true on their own level, carry no weight at all in discussions relating to the soul'.⁴ It is 'the religious faculty undoubtedly [that] is the moving and central power of Man. Religion as we understand it, is the central science round which all other branches of knowledge and all the purest influences group; towards which they tend; and from which they receive their "light", their "heat" and their "highest value"'.⁵

Within Swedenborg's system of correspondences, the spiritual Sun's heat is the Divine Love, and his light the Divine Wisdom or Truth:

It is from this correspondence that in the Word the Lord is called not only a 'sun' but also 'fire' and 'light'. And by the 'sun' is meant Himself as to Divine Love and Divine Wisdom together;

¹ Quoted in: Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 63.

² Quoted in: Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 63.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 162.

⁴ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

⁵ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

by ‘fire’ Himself in respect to Divine Love, and by ‘light’ Himself in respect to Divine Wisdom.¹

In *An Essay on Colonization* (1794–95), Swedenborgian Wadström writes of Africans that ‘some of them appear to consider the sun as the emblem of God, for they turn their faces towards it when praying’.² Blake’s ‘Little Black Boy’ learns at his mother’s knee to identify God with the sun. She instructs him to ‘Look on the rising sun: there God does live, | And gives His light, and gives His heat away’.³ Interestingly, Blake and Wadström were almost certainly acquainted: they both attended the inaugural General Conference of the New Jerusalem Church in 1789.⁴

Grendon writes in this same tradition. All ‘branches of knowledge’ must look to the rising sun, he says. They must subserve the chief science, religion. Any subsidiary science is deficient that is not imbued with divine ‘light’ and ‘heat’. In his poem entitled ‘Ilanga’ (Sun), which was ‘specially composed for the first issue’ of John Dube’s newspaper, *Ilanga* (April 1903), Grendon calls forth the Sun as Divine Truth to shine upon Ohlange—where the paper is published—and, more generally, upon ‘our race’:

Arise, and shine upon our race,
Since thou’rt interpreted—‘THE SUN’;—
And with Light’s flood from us efface
The blacken’d course which Night hath run.⁵

On a superficial level, this is an appeal to the newspaper to ‘enlighten’ those that read it. But, on a deeper level, it is a prayer to the Divine Truth to manifest itself at Ohlange—and through Ohlange. It is not science of a natural, external order that will rouse the race to consciousness of its deep-rooted though latent celestial greatness. It is the spiritual Sun ‘whose gilt arrows pierce | The mists that dim fair Embo’s sky’, that ‘Advance tho’ fiery, yet not fierce’. Religious Truth is the source of the ‘light’ and ‘heat’ by which all lesser sciences gain relevance, and by which Africans must make their advance.

¹ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 98.

² Quoted in: Paley, ‘A New Heaven Is Begun’, 85.

³ Blake, ‘The Little Black Boy’, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 218.

⁴ Paley, ‘A New Heaven Is Begun’, 64–65.

⁵ ‘Ilanga’, *Ilanga* 1:6 (15 May 1903) 3.



From his references to Wilkinson's text, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, it is clear that Grendon studied it minutely. He will therefore have read closely the contents of chapter 21, entitled 'African Colonization Proposed, 1787'.¹ In it, Wilkinson looks back to the dawn of the New Church movement in late eighteenth-century England. He does so by providing extracts from the *New Jerusalem Magazine* (1790), in which 'Africa was prominently mentioned in connexion with a plan for a free community upon the coast under the protection of Great Britain'.²

'When Swedenborg made his declarations about the Africans', Wilkinson begins, 'the seed fell upon a rich surface of enthusiasm such as accompanies the earliest stage of a new religion.'³ Just seven years after the seer's death in 1772, the first stirrings of an antislavery impulse in Europe began, not in England, but amongst a group of Swedenborg's disciples in Sweden. This is clear from a letter to the editor of the *New Jerusalem Magazine*, in which the Swede, Carl Berns Wadström 'states that in 1779 a society of admirers of the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg assembled at Norrköping in Sweden, to consider the favourable account given by Swedenborg of the African nations. One aim was to form a settlement among these nations.'⁴

Out of this meeting there grew a resolve to work for the abolition of slavery. Wilkinson abstracts the following from Wadström's recollection of the historic Norrköping initiative, of which he and his fellow Swedenborgian, Augustus Nordenskjöld, were the leading projectors:

'Before this memorable meeting' was dissolved, everyone present agreed to exert himself, with all his ability, 'to concert and carry out a plan, not only for the abolition of the slave trade, but for the general civilization, founded on true Christian principles, of those uncultivated and highly abused nations'. 'To the result of these deliberations', says Wadström, 'I may justly ascribe the resolution of exploring the coasts of Africa.'⁵

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 173–78.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 173.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 173.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 173. See also: Paley, 'A New Heaven Is Begun', 84.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 174.

Article 15 of the Norrköping resolution of 1779 reads as follows:

It is our design that our free community shall be erected in Africa among the Negro nations, not for any purpose of usurping dominion over them, disturbing their peace, enslaving their persons, or debauching their manners; but for the purpose of civilizing them, and gradually incorporating them into our community, by every gentle means, as by regular marriages, education of children, etc. Therefore, instead of slavery, a gentle servitude is to be instantly adopted, and every native redeemed from slavery shall be free after a service or apprenticeship of a few years.¹

Another letter published in the *New Jerusalem Magazine* of 1790 advocates the repatriation to Africa of black men whose ancestors had been sold into slavery beyond that Continent's shores:

I would recommend the procuring of a great number of black men. There are, I conceive, now in this country [England] hundreds, and many of them not only persons of respectable character but possessed of a little property, who under the sanction of a respectable company of QUAKERS, and the prospect of obtaining an independent settlement, would gladly embrace the opportunity of going to Africa. And if it once takes place, there are vast numbers of people of colour in the West Indies who, though FREE, as we are pleased to term it, in those Islands, labour under such oppression and insults that they would almost to a man unite themselves to such a community. Even those of America would not be backward to establish themselves in a country where colour would be no reproach, and where they would have a land they might call their own, and enjoy those privileges which are never allowed them in governments where the white people have had the power of legislation.²

As Wilkinson states earlier in his book, it was Swedenborg's visionary pronouncements that 'led many energetic men, Wadström, Nordenskjöld, and other Swedes, and many Englishmen, to determine to colonize Africa, and to fraternize with the infant New Jerusalem there'.³ Their 'free community' in Africa would upend all the conventions of imperialism. Even the missionary exercise was inverted, since it was anticipated that spiritual enlightenment would flow 'from "interior" Africans to settler whites'.⁴

¹ *New Jerusalem Magazine* (1790), quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 174.

² Henry Smeathman, letter published in the *New Jerusalem Magazine* (1790), quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 176.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 149.

⁴ Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 67.

Swedenborg himself had not directed his energies toward bringing about an end to the institution of slavery. However, his disciples could—and did—infer from the Writings that the African slave trade had to be abolished before Europe could hope to tap into the African New Jerusalem. Their consciences were touched by Swedenborg’s glowing portrayal of the celestial Africans inhabiting their Continent’s deep interior. It was morally outrageous to them that divine excellence should be clapped in irons. New Churchmen also took note of Swedenborg’s stance *vis-à-vis* the evils of coercion and selfish dominion. The seer told them that not even God compels his creatures to bow to his will. Every human is entitled to complete freedom from duress, because this is an absolute precondition for his or her regeneration.¹ Hellish and heavenly influences upon a human have to be in equilibrium, in order for free will to become operative. External influences can tip the scales in such a way that the will is no longer free. Slavery is just such an unwarranted influence. Conversely, every human is a ‘slave’ to hellish influences until his regeneration is complete:

When man has been regenerated, he then for the first time comes into a state of freedom, having before been in a state of slavery. It is slavery when cupidities and falsities rule, and freedom when the affections of good and truth do so. How this is, no man ever perceives so long as he is in a state of slavery, but only when he comes into a state of freedom.²

The Norrköping delegates perceived the incongruity of pursuing the emancipation of the soul or ‘real man’, while the external man—his outward correspondence—answered not to his own will but to that of the slave-driver. They petitioned King Gustavus III (1746–92) to be allowed to establish a model colony on the West African coast, where they could launch their revolutionary experiment in theocratic government. Slavery would be disallowed within their territory, and the community’s affairs would be conducted along enlightened New Church lines.

A decade after Norrköping, Wadström and Nordenskjöld, in their prospectus entitled *Plan for a Free Community upon the Coast of Africa under the Protection of Great Britain* (1789), ask the question: ‘To what purpose is Spiritual Liberty without Civil Liberty?’³ In *Observations on the Slave Trade*, published in the same year, Wadström gives an unmistakably Swedenborgian reading of slavery: ‘This detestable

¹ Andrew Dibb makes a similar point in ‘A Love Affair with Africa’.

² Swedenborg, *Arcana Cælestia*, n. 892.

³ Quoted in: Rix, ‘William Blake and the Radical Swedenborgians’ (online).

abuse may be considered as proceeding from a degenerate love of *dominion*, and of possessing the property of others; which, instead of diffusing the genial influence of benevolence and liberty, produces, in their state of inversion, all the horrors of tyranny and slavery'.¹

Wilkinson, writing a century later, confirms Wadström's account of slavery's roots in the selfish *proprium* when he states that 'slavery of some kind was older than profane history. ... It is so ingrained in the nature of man, in his self-love which crowns itself in the love of dominion over his fellows and possession of them, that to forbid it root and branch was impossible even to a Gordon with whom love to God and love to man were a passion.'² Grendon in turn picks up from Wilkinson: 'The heart of man is centred in the love of self, and the crown it covets, and strives after, is the possession of, and the dominion over its kind. Slavery as constituting this possession, and domination, existed from the very earliest times.'³

In 1787, the Swedish King authorized the emigration of forty families, and partly funded the expedition. He sent Wadström, in company with the naturalists, Dr Anders Sparrman and C. A. Arrhenius, to identify a suitable location for the colony near the Senegal River. While the King hoped for some financial return from his speculation, Wadström had loftier ambitions.⁴ Nordenskjöld, who did not accompany the expedition, wrote urging his colleague to waste no time but to strike inland, evidently with a view to locating the celestial Africans.

The party hoped to traverse the Continent from west to east—motivated, it would seem, by a desire to penetrate the zone of New Jerusalem's revelation. In the event, Wadström got no further than Senegal. This reconnaissance expedition of 1787 proved a failure, and its members returned to Europe. In England, public opinion was beginning to swing against slavery, and there was also talk of repatriating England's black indigents to a 'Province of Freedom' to be set up on the African west coast. Wadström and Sparrman, who happened to be in London, fresh from West Africa, were called upon to give expert eye-witness evidence on the slave trade before the

¹ Quoted in: Paley, 'A New Heaven Is Begun', 85.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 1–2.

³ 'Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4.

⁴ Dibb, 'A Love Affair with Africa'; Paley, 'A New Heaven Is Begun', 84.

British Parliament.¹ Wadström hoped that English sympathisers with abolitionism would furnish financial and logistical backing for his socio-theocratic experiments. He could no longer anticipate backing from home, because he had fallen out with some of his Swedish coreligionists, and because Sweden had embarked upon a war with Russia.²

Leading British abolitionist, Thomas Clarkson (1760–1846), in his history of the English anti-slavery movement (1808), describes the fortuitous arrival in London of the two Swedes from Africa: ‘I fell in unexpectedly with these gentlemen. I had not long been with them before I perceived the great treasure I had found.’³ From them, Clarkson ‘obtained a more accurate and satisfactory knowledge of the manners and customs of the Africans ... than from all the persons put together whom [he] had yet seen’:

I was anxious, therefore, to take them before the committee of council, to which they were pleased to consent; and as Dr Spa[r]rman was to leave London in a few days, I procured him an introduction first. His evidence went to show, that the natives of Africa lived in a fruitful and luxuriant country, which supplied all their wants, and that they would be a happy people if it were not for the existence of the Slave-trade.⁴

The evidence the men gave ‘made a proper impression upon the lords of the council’. They were especially impressed with the disinterested evidence given by Dr Sparrman, ‘a man of high character [who] possessed the confidence of his sovereign’. Clarkson states that as a result of this testimony, the ‘tide’ which had hitherto ‘run so strongly against’ the abolitionists, ‘began now to turn a little in [their] favour’.⁵

Wadström made several attempts to return to Africa, but was unsuccessful. Wartime conditions in Europe played havoc with shipping, and he had to content himself with staying in Europe and campaigning vigorously on behalf of his

¹ Paley, ‘A New Heaven Is Begun’, 85.

² Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 69; Winquist, *Scandinavians and South Africa*, 5; Curtin, *Image of Africa*, 103; Paley, ‘A New Heaven Is Begun’, 85; Sparrman, *Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope*, i:14.

³ Clarkson, *History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade*, i:489.

⁴ Clarkson, *History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade*, i:489–90.

⁵ Clarkson, *History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade*, i:491.

abolitionist and colonial projects. Both he and Sparrman published popular books that exposed the horrors of slavery.

The New Church community lacked the critical mass to launch a successful colony upon their own resources, so their colonial projectors latched their scheme onto that of the ‘Province of Freedom’—later to become the colony of Sierra Leone—where Wadström and eleven other Swedenborgians obtained freehold lots.¹ The first shipload of 411 emigrants arrived in the Province of Freedom in May 1787.² In May 1788, Granville Sharp, a prominent English abolitionist, described the intending Swedenborgian emigrants as ‘12 Swedish gentlemen of rank, great learning, and abilities, several of them members of universities, and philosophers, who propose to embark in two or three months time’. It was their intention to establish ‘an extensive communication with the internal parts of Africa, which they (with the most benevolent intention towards the natives) mean to explore’.³

Wadström’s great two-volume work, published in 1794–95, in which he outlines his project, was entitled *An Essay on Colonization, Particularly Applied to the Western Coast of Africa, With Some Free Thoughts on Cultivation and Commerce; also Brief Descriptions of the Colonies Already Formed, or Attempted, in Africa, Including Those of Sierra Leona and Bulama*. In order to forestall charges of ‘enthusiasm’, and to ensure wide interest in his scheme, the author avoids coming out strongly with Swedenborg’s ideas—in fact, the seer is not named—but the Utopian colony Wadström envisages is manifestly Swedenborgian in motivation. Coleridge made use of the work when preparing an anti-slavery lecture for delivery at Bristol.⁴

Wadström was, ‘together with John Fothergill and Granville Sharp, ... one of the Romantic period’s leading colonial projectors and historians of African colonization’.⁵ His role as the initiator of the West African colonies for freed slaves is acknowledged in the near-contemporary press. *Edinburgh Magazine* states that ‘the opinions [Wadström] delivered concerning the abolition of the slave-trade, and the establishment of philanthropic colonies, gave rise to the settlements of Sierra Leone

¹ Curtin, *Image of Africa*, 103.

² Curtin, *Image of Africa*, 99.

³ Quoted in: Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 78.

⁴ Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 64.

⁵ Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 64.

and Boulama, which may be considered as monuments erected to humanity, by the friends of mankind'.¹ Another early source (1808) states that 'from [the Swedenborgians] originated the proposition for abolishing the Slave Trade; and the richest among them have zealously collected immense sums to found the colony of Sierra Leone, on the west coast of Africa'.² *Encyclopaedia Americana* (1832) states that 'for [Sierra Leone] and other African colonies, and for the abolition of the slave-trade, the Swedenborgians have done much. In the African Society at London, their influence is very great.'³

In 1791, Englishman John Clarkson—brother to the more famous Thomas—sailed to Canada, in order to interest free 'loyalist' blacks living there in emigrating to Sierra Leone. While in Halifax, 'he was greeted by several Swedenborgians who, like those of their persuasion whom he knew in Britain, were keenly interested in African exploration'.⁴ On both sides of the Atlantic, the first generation of New Churchmen watched with baited breath to see how the repatriation scheme would mature, and in what ways African exploration would confirm the existence of the celestial African.

Wadström died in France in 1799. Helen Maria Williams (1762–1827), a writer by profession who lived principally in France after 1788 and had known Wadström, wrote an obituary that appeared in the *Annual Register*. It is a tender and sensitive portrayal of a man who was evidently well-intentioned, even if somewhat credulous and prone to 'enthusiasm'. Williams ascribes the 'foundation of Sierra Leone' to the opinions on slavery and colonization that Wadström gave in the House of Commons,⁵ Commons,⁵ and defends him against charges of religious eccentricity:

Wadström's view in his expedition to Africa has been represented not to have been the emancipation of the slaves, but the discovery of the New Jerusalem, which it seems, in illuminated charts of Swedenborg, lies somewhere concealed, amidst those hitherto unexplored regions. But it is certain that Wadström, though perhaps courteous to some errors of that travelled apostle, never carried his complaisance so far as to undertake a voyage to Africa in his

¹ Anon., 'Account of the Swedish Design of an Agricultural Colony in Africa', 23.

² Wilson, *History and Antiquities*, ii:170.

³ 'Swedenborg', 83.

⁴ Wilson, *John Clarkson and the African Adventure*, 61.

⁵ Williams, 'Memoirs of the Life of Charles Berns Wadstrom', 325.

service. That voyage was a crusade of humanity; the liberty of the Africans was the favourite project of Wadström's mind.¹

It seems that Williams was not fully acquainted with the facts. Wadström was a thoroughgoing Swedenborgian, and his anti-slavery labours were inextricably bound up with his religious conviction. As Robert Rix notes: 'It warrants attention that Wadström and Nordenskjöld's philanthropic programme was more than just abolitionism with Swedenborgianism embellishment. In fact, the anti-slavery programme was predicated on central tenets in Swedenborg's theology.'²

In 1788, Wadström received a New Church baptism together with Peter Panah, son of an African 'king', who had been redeemed from slavery and whom the Swede had brought to England. In a joint portrait of the two men, painted by Carl Frederick Breda, they appear before a palm tree, intent in the study of Swedenborg's *Divine Providence*.³ Not quite twenty years after his death, a New Church periodical adverted to Wadström's failed colonial scheme:

Some of our older friends of the New Church may recollect the favourite opinion of a departed enthusiastic friend, from Sweden, who entertained the notion that the New Church would never flourish to any extent, until a communication was opened between the Church in Africa and that in Europe, which event, in his ardent contemplation of correspondencies, he compared to the union of the will and the understanding.⁴

Evidently, not all New Churchmen read Swedenborg to mean that the New Jerusalem necessitated European-African coupling in the African interior.

As heterodox as their ideas may have been, it cannot be denied that this radical Swedenborgian group with origins in the Norrköping meeting, played an important role in the abolition of slavery. Deidre Coleman remarks upon the fact that 'despite the prominence of the London Swedenborgians [including Wadström] in the anti-slavery and colonization movements, their writings have been omitted from recent collections of key documents concerning slavery, abolition and emancipation in the Romantic period'.⁵ This historical forgetfulness is difficult to account for: the

¹ Williams, 'Memoirs of the Life of Charles Berns Wadstrom', 324.

² Rix, 'William Blake and the Radical Swedenborgians' (online).

³ Paley, 'A New Heaven Is Begun', 85.

⁴ Anon., 'Prospect of the Discovery of the New Church in Africa', 533.

⁵ Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 65.

prominent part played by the Society of Friends (Quakers) in lobbying for slavery's abolition is well-known.¹ Unlike the Swedenborgians, Quakers had no body of doctrine specifically pertaining to Africa.

According to Wilkinson, Wadström regarded the Norrköping meeting as providing 'the first incentive to the regular exploration of Africa'. The projectors of the West African colony had it as their aim 'to find, and establish a communication with, the good Africans who were receiving the internal revelations from the heavens'.² From Swedenborg they had learnt that the revelation to the celestial Africans of the interior would ripple outward, but that it was 'not extending to the coasts'. Swedenborg explained that 'celestial doctrine is not divulged to those who are near the coasts' because 'the Christians come there, and bring in scandals; and are in fact in the forefront of those who believe nothing, and who lead impious lives'.³ Wadström and his circle hoped that by establishing a base on the coast and then striking out into the interior, they might eventually come in contact with the zone of celestial revelation.

Of the fervour that seized Wadström and other European New Churchmen in the decade following the Norrköping meeting, Wilkinson states: 'It was a Shekinah, a peculiar African Pentecost, a coming of Wise Men from the East to the Doctrine of the Lord; a coming of a multitude of the heavenly host to the perceptive genius of the good and mild African.'⁴

He goes on to make the claim that 'the gradual emancipation proposal [was] first suggested by New Churchmen' long before its adoption 'by England fifty years later'.⁵ Realizing that the slave trade stood in the way of attempts to establish contact with the nub of the New Jerusalem was 'perhaps the origin in England and Scandinavia of the movement which gained the legal prohibition of the slave-trade. Whatever part Swedenborg's utterances, backed by his geographical jottings, had in

¹ Geiss (*Pan-African Movement*), for instance, makes repeated reference to Quakers, but omits all mention of New Churchmen.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 177.

³ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 38.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 177.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 177.

this great achievement, it certainly was considerable.’¹ In other words—directly or indirectly—former African slaves had Swedenborg to thank for their emancipation.

Despite indomitable optimism in the face of obstacles that would have cowed lesser men, the Swedenborgian colonists did not achieve their goals. Their experiments in Africa were all stillborn. Some members of their expeditions perished. Their looked-for ‘interior utopia [was] forever just out of reach, usually over the next hill or across the next river, in some even more distant interior’.² In 1800, the *Edinburgh Magazine* reported somewhat wistfully on this failure:

That the Swedish design of agricultural colonization proved abortive, must be regretted by every person of humanity; for, though it originated in ideas of extravagant philanthropy, depended for its support upon persons of opposite views, and could never have realized the sanguine expectations of the founders; yet, when we consider the rude simplicity of the Africans, the romantic nature of the plan was perhaps the very circumstance which would have ensured its success.³

Although the Swedenborgian adventurers failed to locate the mystic centre of the continent, one of them, Adam Afzelius, learnt enough to corroborate Swedenborg’s visionary discoveries. A contemporary of Afzelius reports that he

met with three persons who came from a much more interior part of that continent, and from the conversation he had with them by means of an interpreter, he found the assertions of Swedenborg confirmed. Mr A. assured me that the countenances of these men were beautiful and comely (very different from the negroes on the coast), their voices were sweet and sonorous, their gestures and manners mild and engaging, and that they had frequent and open communication with the spiritual world and its inhabitants; even at the time Mr A. was with them they declared they saw angelic spirits, which it seems was no uncommon case with these men.⁴



Prior to accompanying Wadström to West Africa, Sparrman had earlier made two visits of scientific exploration to the Cape of Good Hope. Sandwiched in between these visits, he accompanied Capt. James Cook on his second voyage of discovery. The Swedish edition of Sparrman’s *Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope* was published

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 149–50.

² Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 64.

³ Anon., ‘Account of the Swedish Design of an Agricultural Colony in Africa’, 22.

⁴ Quoted in: Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 79.

in 1783, and translations soon appeared in several European cities. The first English edition came out in 1785. Being the first account by a traveller in the Cape hinterland aimed at a mass readership, the work enjoyed great popularity.

While at the Cape, Sparrman had witnessed the horrors of slavery, and some of his descriptions must have scandalized European readers. He included these in his account so as ‘to create all that abhorrence for the slave trade, which so unnatural a species of commerce deserves’.¹ One passage is of particular interest to us because it becomes evident that Grendon borrows from it:

I have known some [Cape Dutch] colonists, not only in the heat of their passion, but even deliberately and in cool blood, undertake themselves the low office (fit only for the executioner) of not only flaying, for a trifling neglect, both the backs and limbs of their slaves by a peculiar slow lingering method, but likewise, exceeding the very tigers in point of cruelty, throw pepper and salt over the wounds.²

Although Grendon does not credit this passage, it provides the material and the lexis for a visceral description in his poem, ‘An African’s Vision’, of which we possess only a seventeen-line fragment. This fragment first appears in a lengthy footnote to *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (1902); and then reappears in *Ilanga* (1904). In it, the speaker, an autochthonous African, addresses the shade of Jan van Riebeeck, founder of the Cape settlement. Van Riebeeck’s ‘race’, the Cape Dutch

Have flay’d alive without compassion both the frames
And limbs of those weak slaves; and then—alas—
Surpassing tigers in their cruelty
With pepper and with salt their wounds inflamed.
For what? For petty and for trifling wrongs!³

It is possible that Grendon obtained this material directly from Sparrman’s *Voyage*, but it is equally possible that he read the passage elsewhere. Thomas Pringle, for one, quoted it in 1827.⁴

No evidence has emerged to indicate that Sparrman identified himself as Swedenborgian, but his close association with Wadström may have led some to draw

¹ Sparrman, *Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope*, ii:260.

² Sparrman, *Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope*, ii:256.

³ Published as a footnote in *PKD* (Pt XVIII, p. 51n.); also in *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

⁴ Pringle, ‘Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope’, 107.

that conclusion. We do not know if Grendon knew of Sparrman's connection with Wadström and the West African colony, but in view of his wide reading, it is possible that he did.

We should bear in mind that Grendon read Wilkinson's claim that Europe's abolitionist movement had its origin in the Norrköping meeting, when we consider his several comments on the emancipation of the slaves—first in the British colonies, and subsequently in North America. Grendon accepts others of Wilkinson's conclusions: there is reason to suspect that he accepts this one also. The historical involvement of New Churchmen in the Abolition movement cannot have been far from his thoughts. In his masterly essay, 'The Black Man and His Period of Training'—wherein he quotes Wilkinson—he describes how the mood in Europe swung away from slavery and towards repatriating the former slaves to Africa. 'Some white races have come to understand as though by inspiration', he writes, that they ought now to

look upon [the African] as a charge, to be moulded, and trained for the station that he is destined ultimately to fill ...; for having enslaved the black man, they owned that such superiority however much to be desired, was brutal, and depraved. And having seen the heinousness of their sin, they proved their moral superiority in atoning that sin by wholly emancipating him. Liberia, and Sierra Leone, on the west coast of Africa, colonies founded by America, and Britain, for the repatriation of emancipated slaves, remain to this day the living monuments of British, and American philanthropy. Redeemed from bondage, the black man under the guidance, and assistance of his erstwhile task masters, exhibited in these twin states as also in America, intellectual, and moral qualities whereof he need not be ashamed. ... What happened in America, and in the two West African states referred to, must some day take place amongst our own people in these parts.¹

As Grendon states, the movement for Abolition took place 'as though by inspiration'. He doesn't state the source of that inspiration, but it can only have been the New Jerusalem. We have already seen that he accepts Swedenborg's report of the 'revelation ... at the present time' to the celestial Africans, when he recalls the 'flood of oratorical light' that comforted the 'Ethiopian' in the 1770s with the assurance of an imminent 'mighty transformation'.² It seems reasonable to assume that that 'mighty transformation' occurring some decades later was similarly 'inspired' by

¹ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

² 'Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.

revelation—another glorious first-fruit of the ‘holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven’.

The apotheosis of material greed, Grendon maintains, is slavery—the crass commodification of human lives and labour. His abhorrence of slavery and of any form of servitude resembling it emerges in several of his poems and prose articles. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, lady ‘Truth’ calls upon the Transvaal Boers to

Search Hist’ry’s page a thousand fold,
 And prove if any can,
 That GOD ordain’d, that man might hold
 Full property in man!
 A *sin* it is ’gainst His decree!—
 A *crime* ’gainst Nature’s law!—
 A *stain* on Christianity!—
 A *stain!*—*a curse!*—*and more!*—

Grendon has made a careful study of the history of slavery and of its abolition. His editorials mention such champions of the slave’s cause as Lord Brougham, Clarkson, Curran, Fox, and Wilberforce.¹ In the verses above, he paraphrases Henry, Baron Brougham (1778–1868), British Lord Chancellor of the Exchequer and staunch abolitionist, who condemned ‘the wild and guilty phantasy that men can hold property in man’.²

Grendon’s epic represents the Boers as having trekked into the hinterland because they could not reconcile themselves to the discontinuance of slavery. Generations after the Act of Abolition (1834), they have yet to repent of their role in slavery’s maintenance. Truth continues her reproaches, by contrasting Boer tyranny with British magnanimity:

Six decades full have wing’d their flight,
 Since upright Britons mov’d
 To pity at the bondsman’s plight,
 Harsh cruelty reprov’d.
 Their words of thund’ring truth prevail’d;

¹ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3; ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

² Grendon quotes this speech of Brougham’s at some length in: ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

The serf by gold redeem'd,
 The dawn of days serener hail'd,
 Whereof he'd *never* dream'd.¹

The African had '*never* dream'd' that the yoke upon his shoulders would be lifted, that the shackles upon his wrists and ankles would be unlocked. When every outward indication pointed to the indefinite continuance of slavery and 'whilst the Ethiopian patiently endured his dire misfortunes', he was suddenly infused with 'a flood of oratorical light', comforting him with the assurance of 'some mighty transformation that was soon to come'.² It was indeed 'as though by inspiration'.

Upon divine authority, Swedenborg tells his 'receivers' that the Lord performed the Last Judgement in 1757. Thereafter, the New Jerusalem began its 'descent'. Emancipation, when it came, was a surprise because its origins lay, not in the material world, but in powerful occult workings of New Jerusalem. In Grendon's mind, the abolition and suppression of African slavery in the decades following Swedenborg's discoveries provided ocular confirmation of New Jerusalem's invisible advent.



Despite the apparent failure of Swedenborg's earliest disciples to establish contact with the African remnant of the Most Ancient Church, the New Church community internationally did not lose its belief in a revelation to inner Africa. In the course of their evolving discourse through the nineteenth century, New Churchmen's 'idea of Africa did not change, but ripened and matured. The early enthusiasm of the Swedish idealists who formed their colony on the West Coast grew into the appreciation of African potential.'³

Even if they no longer sought to tap into the African New Jerusalem by spearheading further colonies, generations of New Church people continued to con the works of African explorers and missionaries for passages that would seem to confirm Swedenborg's discoveries. And so, for instance, in 1818, the *New Jerusalem Church Repository* reports that the Marquis D'Etourville has discovered 'a province situated to the south of the western Mountains of the Moon, near which is the empire

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 74.

² 'Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.

³ Dibb, 'A Love Affair with Africa'.

of Droglodo, a region hitherto unknown, but by far more civilized than all the neighbouring countries, with which they have no communication whatever'.¹ This would seem to confirm Swedenborg's discovery that Providence has cordoned off the zone of revelation 'from infestations'.

In an article published in 1849 in the *African Repository*—organ of the American Colonization Society, whose chief purpose was to repatriate freed blacks to Liberia—the erudite author finds evidence that 'tallies remarkably well with Swedenborg' in M. Donville's account of his travels on the Congo.² And in 1859, N. F. Cabell writes:

While we speak, a Livingstone has astonished the world by declaring,—what wakes no surprise in us,—that, in benighted Africa, all is not dark. Her borders are still enveloped in gloom; but, emerging from this into a wide region of twilight, he saw much that gave promise of purer rays, proceeding, it may be, from an ever-burning lamp in her mysterious centre. The day, we think, cannot be very distant, when the interdict shall be removed from this tabooed recess; and when the sources of the Nile and the shores of the Niger shall be accessible as those of the Tigris or Euphrates, of Ganges or of Indus.³

George Fredrickson's researches have discovered that

during the nineteenth century, British and American Swedenborgians were influential in promulgating a millenarian view of African destiny. In fact they made a creative synthesis of Christian eschatology with an emerging ethnology based on the belief in permanent differences in temperament and capacity among human races, a doctrine that in other hands would justify white superiority and dominance over blacks. According to some Swedenborgians, blacks were the race that God and nature had endowed with the greatest aptitude for Christianity. Whites were naturally too cerebral, self-seeking, and aggressive to meet the standards of the Sermon on the Mount; only Africans had the believing, affectionate, and altruistic temperament that was the right soil for the full flowering of Christian faith and virtue. Hence the prophecy of Ethiopia stretching forth her hands unto God meant that the redemption of Africa would realize the Kingdom of God on earth.⁴

It is always difficult to gauge the extent to which ideas enter the popular imagination and prompt individuals and societies to action. Nevertheless, Fredrickson is sufficiently assured to state that the Swedenborgian views on Race 'had

¹ Anon., 'Prospect of the Discovery of the New Church in Africa', 534.

² 'A. W.', 'Ethiopia', 180.

³ Cabell, 'The Influence of the New Jerusalem on Literature', 317.

⁴ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 62.

considerable impact on white American abolitionists, colonizationists, and advocates of missions to Africa'.¹

Mention has already been made of Grendon's quotation from the Scottish New Churchman, Alexander Kinmont, who in a lecture on the 'Origin and Perpetuation of Natural Races of Mankind', delivered in Cincinnati in the 1830s, led his audience to anticipate an African 'civilization of a peculiar stamp', which would be 'exalted and refined by a certain new and lovely theology'.² By two independent channels that Swedenborgians would probably consider 'providential', Kinmont's views on African personality and civilization entered the mainstream of American abolitionist thought. One of these is the novelist, Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–96); the other is the Unitarian clergyman, William Ellery Channing (1780–1842).

Grendon names Stowe with Garrison and Lincoln as the 'champions of freedom on the other side of the Atlantic'.³ Fredrickson remarks that

the image of the Negro as natural Christian received its fullest treatment and most influential expression in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. ... But there is a strong possibility that she was drawn initially to the romantic-religious concept of racial differences by the lectures of Alexander Kinmont. She was living in Cincinnati at the time Kinmont was lecturing; If she failed to hear Kinmont, she almost certainly read him in the beautifully bound memorial edition which was a major publishing event in Cincinnati in 1839. Whatever the circumstances of her first encounter with Kinmont's ideas and whatever influence they may have had at the time, their presence in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* seems indisputable.⁴

Joan D. Hedrick, in her biography of Stowe, concurs with Fredrickson, stating that it 'is highly likely that Harriet Beecher Stowe, living in Cincinnati at the time Kinmont delivered his lectures, was exposed to his ideas'.⁵ In a private letter, Stowe remarks upon Kinmont's death in 1838—a fact that lends support to Fredrickson's hypothesis.⁶ Towards the end of her phenomenally successful thesis novel, Stowe has George Harris declare: 'I think that the African race has peculiarities, yet to be unfolded in the light of civilization and Christianity, which, if not the same with those

¹ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 62.

² Kinmont, *Natural History of Man*, 185.

³ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3.

⁴ Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind*, 110.

⁵ Hedrick, *Harriet Beecher Stowe*, 210.

⁶ Hedrick, *Harriet Beecher Stowe*, 437.

of the Anglo-Saxon, may prove to be, morally, of even a higher type.’¹ Harris—had he not been fictional—might himself have attended Kinmont’s lectures.

Swedenborg states that as a vestige of the Most Ancient Church, the good African is pre-eminently receptive of the New Jerusalem. Kinmont reworks that idea within the framework of wider contemporary discourse on race and slavery. If the ‘Caucasian’ and the African are compared, he maintains, there can be no doubt that the latter is the better Christian. Loosely speaking, Stowe follows Kinmont, and her novel seems to embody the idea that the suffering Negro is a natural Christian. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* first appeared in book form in 1852; it sold more than 300,000 copies in the first year.² In this indirect, filtered, and fictionalized form, Swedenborg’s ideas on the ‘best’ Africans were given wider currency than even the most sanguine New Churchman could have anticipated. As Fredrickson remarks, ‘this religious version of “romantic racialism” propounded by Kinmont “found its most eloquent statement and largest audience in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s epoch-making antislavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*’.³

The second channel by which Kinmont’s Swedenborg-inspired ethnology found its way into the wider world was Channing. A friend introduced Channing to Kinmont’s lectures shortly after their publication in 1839. He was deeply moved by the clarity and visionary beauty of Kinmont’s description of African spiritual aptitude and of the future African ‘civilization of a peculiar stamp’. He felt impelled to append four quotes from Kinmont to his own sermon on the evils of slavery (1840) which was published in his collected *Works* around the time of his death two years later.⁴ Channing was widely read, and by 1849 his *Works* was in its ninth edition. Through it, Kinmont’s predictions for an African civilization gained a vast readership on both sides of the Atlantic. Although the passages Channing selects fill just one page, they are well-chosen and accurately project the thrust of Kinmont’s lecture.

Fredrickson finds no evidence that Swedenborgian ideas made significant inroads into black American thought before white abolitionists made them common currency

¹ Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 437.

² Hart, *Oxford Companion to American Literature*, 781.

³ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 62.

⁴ Channing, ‘Emancipation’, 89.

in the 1840s.¹ As shown above, from the 1860s, Blyden was paraphrasing Kinmont on platforms in the USA and Liberia. Since Blyden also quotes Channing, he may have discovered Kinmont via Channing's quotations. Subsequent developments indicate that he was aware—at least at a later time—of Kinmont's Swedenborgian background.

Blyden's collected essays, under the title of *Christianity, Islam and the Negro*, were published in London in 1887. The volume was heralded as a *tour de force* of scholarship. Some sceptics were reluctant to accept that it was the work of a 'pure-blooded' African. It sent a frisson through the bosom of Cape Colonial parliamentarian, John X. Merriman, who diarized that 'if one thought that the cultivated writer represented any aspirations or ideas of a considerable section of black people, it would give one an uncomfortable feeling'. Merriman reassured himself in the belief that Blyden was 'as much a *rara avis* in his way as Toussaint L'Ouverture was in his'.² Perversely, Blyden's advocacy of social separation of the races—compatible with Kinmont's own doctrine—supplied fuel to white legislators at the Cape who, like their constituents, felt threatened by the integrationist ambitions of the Colony's black petite bourgeoisie. White newspaper editors made much of Blyden's view 'that the Black "races" should work out their own future'.³ Merriman argued that social *and political* separation was in the best interests of both black and white in the country.⁴

In 1891, three or four years after Blyden's book appeared, a second edition of Kinmont's *Natural History of Man* appeared in Philadelphia. After a lapse of more than half a century since its first publication, it is difficult to account for the resurgence of interest in the work that would prompt Lippincott—a leading publishing house—to reissue it, unless it was that the prominence Blyden assigns to Kinmont's lectures had revived interest in them, particularly within New Church and black American intellectual circles.

Besides Blyden, other black intellectuals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who quote Kinmont on the excelling spiritual proclivity of the 'Ethiopian',

¹ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 62.

² Merriman's diary entry for 5 Feb. 1891, quoted in: Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 77.

³ Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, 124–25.

⁴ Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, 138.

are Blyden's former colleague at Liberia College, Alexander Crummell, in 1895, and Rev. S. Kerr in 1902.¹ And then, as already noted, there is Robert Grendon in 1904.

Pixley kaIsaka Seme, a younger 'cousin' of Grendon's employer, John L. Dube, was attending Columbia University in the States when in 1906 his now-famous oration, entitled 'The Regeneration of Africa', won him that University's George William Curtis gold medal. Over half a century later, Kwame Nkrumah quoted Seme's oration in its entirety at the first International Congress of Africanists, 'and was obviously still moved by it'.² Chris Dunton describes it as 'an important contribution to discourse on the notion of an African Renaissance, the history of which extends from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day'.³ But while Dunton identifies the West African Blyden and the South African Seme as amongst those who share in this longstanding discourse, he fails to discern the common Kinmontian parentage of their shared faith in a uniquely spiritual civilization which Africans are destined to contribute to the World.

Seme's exposure to Kinmont's ideas may have been through a copy of Grendon's *Ilanga* article that found its way to him,⁴ or it may have come through some source in the States. He predicts that 'the regeneration of Africa means that a new and unique civilization is soon to be added to the world. ... The most essential departure of this new civilization is that it shall be thoroughly spiritual and humanistic—indeed a regeneration moral and eternal!'⁵

Dunton 'examines the disjunction that appears, throughout the text [of 'The Regeneration of Africa'], between, on the one hand, Seme's argument that each race enjoys its own specific and incomparable characteristics and, on the other, his unitary, universalist definition of societal growth and human development'.⁶ The same apparent 'disjunction' may be traced in Blyden, or even in Kinmont. It is essentially Swedenborgian, and finds its origin in the *Maximus Homo*, whose vital organs correspond in their distinct but mutually-dependent 'uses' to the distinct races of man,

¹ Crummell, *Incidents of Hope for the Negro Race in America*, 10; S. Kerr, 'The Negro as a Christian', in Culp, *Twentieth Century Negro Literature* (online).

² Bown, *Two Centuries of African English*, 9.

³ Dunton, 'Pixley kaIsaka Seme and the African Renaissance Debate', 555.

⁴ Seme speaks of 'the letters that come to us from Zululand' (Rive and Couzens, *Seme*, 79).

⁵ Seme, 'The Regeneration of Africa', 71.

⁶ Dunton, 'Pixley kaIsaka Seme and the African Renaissance Debate', 557.

each with its characteristic ‘genius’. The inconsistency that Dunton detects disappears when one grasps the organic model.

When Nnamdi Azikiwe—Nigeria’s pioneer nationalist and first president—writes in 1937 that he can ‘see’ the ‘Renascent African’ who ‘is spiritually balanced’,¹ he says neither more nor less than Kinmont said in his lectures in Cincinnati almost exactly a century earlier. When Azikiwe writes that the ‘Renascent Africa takes the Old Africa into confidence and seeks for its advice’,² he repeats Blyden who, in an address delivered at Monrovia in 1881, stated, ‘We must study our brethren in the interior, who know better than we do the laws of growth for the race’.³ When he predicts that ‘*Social Regeneration* must be experienced in African society’,⁴ he repeats Grendon who in 1905 confidently anticipated ‘the time for their [*i.e.* Africans] social regeneration’.⁵ And when he describes Africa’s ‘sons and daughters whose hearts burn with the celestial fire’,⁶ does he perhaps unknowingly become a lineal descendent of Swedenborg, who teaches that the ‘good’ Africans are the remnant of the ‘celestial’ or Most Ancient Church?

Strong ideologies are tenacious of life. They transfer and transmute, but they seldom die. Kinmont made a Swedish mystic’s message palatable to an American audience. Channing broadcast Kinmont; Stowe cast his ideas in fiction. Blyden returned more than once to Kinmont in order to gain his bearings. W. E. B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey both drew upon Blyden to inspire generations of blacks of African descent, wherever they found themselves in the world.⁷ Like Blyden—like Kinmont before him, and Swedenborg before that—Du Bois ‘proclaim[ed] that each race was the manifestation of a spiritual ideal, a sacred mystery that existed in the mind of God. Every race was striving, “each in its own way, to develop for civilization its particular message, its particular ideal”’.⁸ The lineage is convoluted, but there can be little doubt that the New Jerusalem is an ideological ancestor to the New Africa.

¹ Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, 312.

² Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, 37.

³ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro*, 77–78.

⁴ Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, 8.

⁵ ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3.

⁶ Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, 155.

⁷ Moses, *Creative Conflict in African American Thought*, 132, 237.

⁸ Moses, *Creative Conflict in African American Thought*, 132.



‘A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country’, and while the Swedish baron did recruit for the New Jerusalem in his native Sweden, his followers faced restrictions in that Lutheran land, where they were ‘obliged to keep their opinions private’.¹ By contrast, his revelations met with greatest tolerance and acceptance amongst the English, for whom religious non-conformity was part of the landscape by the closing decades of the eighteenth century.²

Swedenborg appears to have viewed England as his second home. As a young man, he had spent almost two years in London and Oxford.³ In total, he spent five or six years in England, and it was in London that he died.⁴ Due to England’s comparative press freedom, several of his books were published there, whereas religious proscriptions sometimes ruled out publication in his own country.

Swedenborg recognized and appreciated the Englishman’s jealousy for freedom of expression. In his spiritual travels, he discovered the varying fortunes of Englishmen who had passed into the spiritual world. One of the cities he was permitted to explore was divided into quarters in which distinct sub-categories of Englishmen resided—each quarter evincing distinguishing attributes. In the ‘northern quarter’ of the city, Swedenborg relates, ‘those dwell who more than others have loved freedom of speech and the press’, or, ‘those who have been particularly delighted with the liberty of speaking and writing’.⁵

England produced the largest early societies of those who ‘received’ New Church teaching. The principal early centres of British Swedenborgianism were Lancashire and London.⁶ After the seer’s death, the greater number of New Church societies were formed in England, the British colonies, and North America. Swedenborg’s teaching arrived in America in 1785, and the first New Church organization was inaugurated there in 1792. Its following was ‘strongest in Boston, Philadelphia, and

¹ Anon., ‘Swedenborg’, 83.

² Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 217.

³ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 21.

⁴ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 252.

⁵ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 809. These are variant translations from Swedenborg’s Latin.

⁶ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 223; Davies, *Unorthodox London*, 95.

Baltimore'.¹ Swedenborg's writings are also reputed to have been 'carried on the flagship of the fleet sent to the penal colony in Australia in 1788'.² By about 1870, it was reported that there were 'about one hundred congregations in Great Britain, and a much larger number in the United States'.³

The first New Churchman to reach South Africa appears to have been a British Settler of 1820.⁴ Thereafter a trickle of his coreligionists followed, their numbers augmented occasionally by local conversions. It appears that for generations no concerted attempt was made by this little fellowship to introduce Swedenborg to his 'good' Africans. On the other hand, there must have been an attempt at proselytizing the colonists, because the Anglican Archdeacon of Grahamstown complains in 1849 of 'the pernicious heresies spread by the Swedenborgian tracts which are so industriously circulated throughout the [Cape] Colony, and which have already perverted many and unsettled still more'.⁵

The first Swedenborgians to emigrate to Natal are thought to have been James Ridgway and his family, who hailed from Liverpool. They arrived at Port Natal in July 1850, at the crest of the first wave of organized British settlement to that colony. After a few months spent in a tent, they set up home in a rustic dwelling near the Umgeni River:

In this isolated house, which had only mud floors and was finished principally with home-made bush-wood furniture, may be said to have started the first New Church Society in South Africa; for it was here that Mr Ridgway gathered together his children and instructed them, and developed in them a love for the Heavenly Doctrine.⁶

While the Ridgways occupied their temporary accommodation, their library was kept sealed in the boxes in which it had been shipped from England. When the time came for these to be unpacked, the family discovered to its dismay that termites had consumed most of the books. How great their joy, however, when upon closer inspection, they discovered that 'not one of the Writings [*i.e.*, Swedenborg's works]

¹ Hart, *Oxford Companion to American Literature*, 739.

² Williams-Hogan, 'Field Notes: The Swedenborgian Church in South Africa', 92.

³ Davies, *Unorthodox London*, 93.

⁴ Communicated by Andrew Dibb. Millard ('The New Jerusalem That Was Not Zion', 228) gives the date as 1838, but Dibb's research supersedes hers.

⁵ Merriman, *Cape Journals*, 73.

⁶ 'F. E. G.', 'Beginning of the New Church in Durban', 241.

had been destroyed. The bindings, indeed, of some of the Writings had been nibbled, but not a letter of the print had been touched. The family was very much impressed by this evidence of the special providence of the Lord, and regarded it as nothing short of a miracle.’¹

Amongst those who attended New Church cottage services, was a Mr A. S. Cockerell, who in time married Ridgway’s daughter. In 1872, the couple set up home on the Berea, Durban.² From about 1880, New Church people worshipped at this house, but as time passed, ‘their number had increased to such an extent that it was found necessary to build a more commodious place for worship’. On 1 May 1892, the ‘First African New Church, Durban, Natal, formally opened their new temple’, a specially-built ‘brick building, cemented without’—on a site adjacent to the Cockerell home.³

On the whole, Swedenborgians tended to look upon Britain as the primary secular instrument wielded by Providence. Although the principal Swedenborgian colonists who attached themselves to the West African Province of Freedom in the late 1780s were Swedes, they were ‘intensely anglophilic, pinning their millenarian hopes for Africa on the British people’.⁴ This is evident in the title of Wadström and Nordenskjöld’s prospectus: *Plan for a Free Community upon the Coast of Africa under the Protection of Great Britain*. The *Plan*, which publicizes their Utopian project, claims that Britons are ‘the freest, the most illuminated, consequently the grandest, the most noble people in Europe’. It also advances the view that Providence had singled out Britain to conduct ‘a rational, mild, and perfect Colonization’ in Africa.⁵

These views are echoed in Grendon’s *Ilanga* journalism a century later: ‘Providence has most wisely ordained by entrusting the major portion of the dark races of this globe to the kindly protection of the British Nation. ... Reflect you Bantus, on your happy fortune, and be thankful in that Providence entrusted you to the protection, and the care of them, whose freedom you enjoy and in whose justice you

¹ ‘F. E. G.’, ‘Beginning of the New Church in Durban’, 241–42.

² ‘F. E. G.’, ‘Beginning of the New Church in Durban’, 242.

³ Anon., ‘News Gleanings’, *New Church Life* 12:6 (July 1892) 112.

⁴ Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 67.

⁵ *Plan for a Free Community upon the Coast of Africa* (1789), 44, quoted in: Coleman, *Romantic Colonization*, 67.

partake.’¹ Attersoll, Grendon’s white Swedenborgian associate in Durban, was likewise a staunch advocate of the British Empire.²

In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Grendon portrays the majestic Empress Britannia in ‘her car by lordly lions drawn | The ocean-surf along’.³ In the dedicatory verses ‘To Britannia’ that preface the epic, he sings her praises who, in the true spirit of universal justice, guarantees personal freedom to every subject, regardless of race:

In thy vast, and mighty Empire
Breathes there *one*, who is a slave?
Thousands in yon kingdoms round thee,
Groaning deeply, vainly crave

That they may obtain deliv’rance
From the weight of Thraldom’s chains;
Vainly crave to be admitted
To the realms, where Freedom reigns.⁴

It is obtuse to brand such lines as jingoistic Anglomania. Grendon’s confidence in Britain’s universal libertarian role is an outgrowth of his religious sensibility. To deny Britain her elevated role in world affairs is to deny the hand of Providence.

There was a time, Grendon writes in his journalism, when ‘Britain shone as the first star in slavedom’s firmament’. This was when she ‘enter[ed] into a compact with the Spaniards to supply them annually’ with a fixed quota of African slaves.⁵ Then the the voice of conscience boomed, and true Britons paid heed:

Recalling the long dead past, we find Britain—to undo her sin, and the evil she imposed upon herself by that shameful Assiento, whereby she pledged herself to supply for thirty years 4800 slaves to the King of Spain, for service in his American domain—yielding to the fierce denouncings and pleadings of certain of her upright and true-hearted sons; and offering a heavy ransom (£20,000,000) for the emancipation of the slaves in her dominions.⁶

¹ ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

² Communicated: Andrew Dibb.

³ *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 53.

⁴ *PKD*, Dedication, pp. v–vi.

⁵ ‘Slavery of Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

The *asiento* or ‘agreement’ of 1713 was a provision of the Peace of Utrecht, whereby Spain granted Britain’s South Sea Company the exclusive right to supply 4,800 slaves per annum to her American colonies. Britain’s culpability in this commerce in human cargoes ran deep. Blyden notes that ‘even England, under a contract with Spain, enjoyed the monopoly of the traffic in slaves for thirty years’.¹

But from a position of profound complicity in the slave trade, Britons redeemed themselves by renouncing the nefarious traffic, and swearing to end it wherever they found it still practised. In an address ‘To Britannia’, Grendon describes the miraculous change:

When the world in human traffic
 Triumph’d, bart’ring gold for man,
 Thou, by compact with the Spaniard
 Stoodest foremost in the van.

But some upright sons’ denouncings
 Wrought in thee a sense of shame;
 And a mighty compensation
 Cleans’d thee, and thy blood-soil’d name.

Purified thus from pollution,
 Thou didst purge thy vast domain;
 ’Mid the wrath of rival nations
 Thou effaced’st Serfdom’s stain.

Then the hosts, which groan’d in bondage,
 Rais’d their songs of praise to thee;
 Bless’d the death of Mancipation,
 Hailing Freedom joyously.

Since thy strong arm is uplifted
 To uphold a purer law,
 Which forbids man to be purchas’d,
 Slavedom’s fallen to rise no more.²

¹ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 27.

² *PKD*, Dedication, p. vi.

Britain's righteousness is so manifest that at the close of *Paul Kruger's Dream*, even the aged, exiled President is compelled to acknowledge it. After describing an epiphany that dispels the delusion under which he laboured throughout his career, he is obliged to acknowledge that his war with Britain was unjustified:

The veil, which darkly hid thro' life from view
The uprightness of Britain's soul, is rent;
And I behold—not by the aid of dreams
Obscure, but by the brilliant light of *Truth*—
In all its dread enormity expos'd
The lie, which hurl'd me into misery.¹

'The lie' is that 'Which slander'd, and defam'd Britannia's name; | And rous'd the world the Briton to condemn'.²

While Grendon continues to believe in Britain's moral superiority into the second decade of the twentieth century, he becomes increasingly disenchanted with the way in which the gains wrought by 'British' principles in late colonial times have been rolled back by South Africa's Union Government. In 1916, he told a Johannesburg audience that 'the link between the white and the black which had steadily been in progress of forging up to the time when Queen Victoria passed from hence had since vanished'.³



It is not easy to assess the extent to which Grendon's Swedenborgian views enjoyed currency amongst black Africans in late colonial Natal or beyond its borders. However, there are some statements extant that ring tantalizingly like Grendon's *Ilanga* editorials of 1904 and 1905.

In November 1904, while Grendon had charge of the English columns of *Ilanga*, he republished from *Naledi*, a Basutoland newspaper, a letter written by Rev. Edward T. Mpela, of 'Zion' African Methodist Episcopal Church, in Bloemfontein. In it, Mpela makes remarks that closely resemble both Grendon and Swedenborg. The

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 131.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 131.

³ 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916) 2nd edn, 6.

letter's republication, with the briefest of introductions by Grendon, indicates his approval of its content.

Mpela launches an attack on Rev. F. B. Bridgman of the American Board Zulu Mission on account of statements derogatory of Ethiopianism made by him at the First General Missionary Conference, held at Johannesburg in July 1904. Grendon had earlier published his own exposé of the same conference—an exposé that is steeped in Swedenborg.¹ There are suggestions that Mpela takes his cue from Grendon's article. He berates Bridgman for 'combining the things of God with the things of the world-power', just as Grendon decries the 'compact [...] between the World Power and the White Priesthood'.² A similar charge was made in the 1890s by Bishop Turner of the A.M.E. against 'the treachery of our [South African missionary] brothers in white, who pretend to be very holy till they get to be government agents'.³

'Protestantism has waxed cold, is getting corrupted, and wearing out, like an old garment', Mpela goes on; the white-led 'South African missionary dragon' schemes to thwart the spiritual awakening that is happening amongst black Africans, and is 'attempt[ing] to drag humanity into the mire'.⁴

Mpela's blanket condemnation of 'Protestantism' smacks of Swedenborg. According to the seer, 'dragons' correspond to 'falsities and depraved inclinations to the things which relate to worship'.⁵ As one standard text on Swedenborg states, 'Protestant heresies are ... condemned in the Book of the Revelation. The great red dragon stands for the immoral doctrine of salvation by faith alone, which, as destructive of all spiritual enlightenment, is represented by the monster drawing down the stars with his tail.'⁶ According to Swedenborg, Africans in heaven prize obedience far ahead of faith.⁷ This is because obedience wells up internally into the Will; whereas faith enters externally through the Understanding. When Africans were told that Christians 'believe that men are saved through faith in doctrine and not through

¹ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

² 'Native Priesthood', *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4. Grendon also condemns this compact with the 'World Power' in 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3; in 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 3; and 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

³ Quoted in: Chirenje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa*, 54.

⁴ 'Reply to Rev. Bridgman', *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3–4. *Ilanga* reproduces Mpela's article from *Naledi*, a newspaper published in Mafeteng, Basutoland.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 79.

⁶ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 149.

⁷ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 2604.

life, and they have in fact no doctrinals of life', they 'wondered vastly at this, and did not like to believe it; for their belief is that there is no man who does not live according to his religion'.¹ The doctrine of salvation by faith, as propagated by the 'South African missionary dragon', is alien to the African, who believes in a religion that is lived out from internal promptings.

Mpela's reference to 'an old garment' obviously alludes to the words of Jesus² concerning which Swedenborg writes that 'the Lord used this similitude to describe the truth of the new church and the truth of the old church, for the "garment" denotes truth'. The Old Church, being in 'exterior truth', is worn away and cannot be repaired with the fabric of the New Church, which is 'in the internal truths'. The worn-out Old Church cannot be mended with patches from the New, because of this substantive difference.³

Mpela, who came from Basutoland, was a close associate of Rev. Benjamin Kumalo, also of the A.M.E. The two men played key roles in the A.M.E. in the Orange River Colony, and also took a shared interest in politics. Together they founded the Orange River Native Vigilance Association. Kumalo was brother to Solomon Kumalo, pioneering newspaper editor in Natal and well-known to Grendon. John Dube mentions Grendon, Solomon Kumalo, and Simon Nkosi as though they are associates,⁴ and Grendon himself expresses his regard for Solomon.⁵

James Campbell describes Benjamin Kumalo as 'an administration nemesis, the archetypal Ethiopian agitator'.⁶ According to Natal's Under-Secretary for Native Affairs, he 'had no little share in the movement which resulted in Bishop [C. S.] Smith of Capetown, who is the recognised head of the [African] Methodist Episcopal Church, being disowned in the O.R.C.'⁷ Smith, a Canadian-born black who had been sent to oversee A.M.E. operations in South Africa, was angered by Kumalo's role in his being repudiated in the Orange River Colony. Kumalo's doctrine, he said, was 'dangerous in its trend and expression'. In particular, he took issue with Kumalo's

¹ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 66–67.

² Luke 5:36.

³ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 9212.

⁴ 'Uku Hambela Kwami e Driefontein (Emhlwanini)', *Ilanga* 1:3 (24 April 1903) 1.

⁵ 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

⁶ Campbell, *Songs of Zion*, 174.

⁷ NAB, SNA I/1/329, ref. 1905/2948: S. O. Samuelson U.S.N.A. to Minister for Native Affairs, 11 Nov. 1905.

elevating ‘the ancient civilization’ of the Zulu ‘tribe’ over that of the British.¹ It is just possible that both Kumalo and Mpela had imbibed elements of Swedenborg’s teaching and were propagating it from the A.M.E. pulpit.



In December 1909, David William Mooki, a Tswana-speaking resident of the ‘Old Location’, Krugersdorp discovered a second-hand copy of Swedenborg’s *True Christian Religion* (1771) offered for sale.² Mooki was an ordained minister of the African Catholic Church—a recently-constituted African independent church run on Anglican lines. The book aroused his interest and he bought it.

With the diligence and thoroughness that are characteristic of the man, he read this formidable volume of 816 pages through in a very short time, and to such purpose that, when he reached the end, he found himself so powerfully convinced that the Lord Jesus Christ had made His Second Advent in the manner there explained, that he felt equally sure that the ‘New Church’, of which the book also told him, must be in existence somewhere in the world. He was also profoundly impressed by what he read in the ‘Supplement’ of the book, about the Africans in the Spiritual World and the peculiar genius by which they are distinguished from all other races even on earth. From this he drew the conclusion that the ‘New Church’ type of Christianity was pre-eminently the one for the African people. Thenceforth it became the object of his life to make the Second Advent of the Lord, and the ‘New Church’, known to his fellow-natives.³

Mooki’s reading persuaded him of the correctness of Swedenborg’s theology—in particular, ‘that the One God of heaven and earth was the Lord Jesus Christ and that He had made his Second Advent’.⁴ As Joan Millard states, ‘the New Church appeared to have the answer to many of the things that independent church leaders were looking for[:] acceptance of the contribution of Africans, a new church for a new situation, teaching that included visions and the spiritual world and even a type of ubuntu’.⁵

Mooki ‘gathered about him a little band of believers’, and at a conference held on 25 January 1911, they decided to found ‘The New Church of Africa’.⁶ He is described

¹ Smith, *Blue Book*, 26.

² Millard, ‘The New Jerusalem That Was Not Zion’, 226.

³ Buss, *Romantic Story of the South African Mission*, 11–12.

⁴ Williams-Hogan, ‘Field Notes: The Swedenborgian Church in South Africa’, 93.

⁵ Millard, ‘The New Jerusalem That Was Not Zion’, 230–31.

⁶ Buss, *Romantic Story of the South African Mission*, 12–13.

described as having been ‘a charismatic leader’; many were drawn to his New Church, believing it to be truly independent of white control.¹ When, therefore, Mooki sought and achieved affiliation with the British Conference—a New Church body—some of his converts became disenchanted and fell away.² In 1917, the Foreign and Colonial Missions Committee of the British Conference assumed the supervision of Mooki’s church,³ and the name was changed to the ‘New Church Native Mission in South Africa’.⁴

Mooki is generally regarded as ‘the first black South African to find the New Church’,⁵ and his ‘organization [as] the first genuinely African New Church established. It was not an off-shoot of any Western New Church organization, but was the fruit of an African response to the teaching of Emanuel Swedenborg.’⁶ As this thesis shows, Robert Grendon—who would certainly have regarded himself an ‘African’—had encountered the Writings of the Second Advent some years prior to Mooki and was propagating New Church ideas at the start of the twentieth century.

Unlike Mooki, there is no suggestion that Grendon ever sought membership of—or affiliation with—any existing denominational New Church. He saw the work of Providence working mysteriously through a multitude of independent religious groups. The Writings provide some basis for such a position. As John Howard Spalding reminds readers, “‘the Church”, in Swedenborg’s usage of the term, does not mean primarily an ecclesiastical institution’, but is rather ‘the relation in which any age, nation, or individual stands to divine truth, and thus to the Lord’.⁷

Although no evidence has emerged to indicate that Grendon and Mooki were acquainted, it seems almost certain that Grendon at least knew of the New Church of Africa. Reference is made in the weekly newspaper *Izwe la Kiti* to a meeting of

¹ Millard, ‘The New Jerusalem That Was Not Zion’, 227.

² Millard, ‘The New Jerusalem That Was Not Zion’, 231.

³ Williams-Hogan, ‘Field Notes: The Swedenborgian Church in South Africa’, 93.

⁴ Buss, *Romantic Story of the South African Mission*, 13.

⁵ Communicated: Andrew Dibb.

⁶ Williams-Hogan, ‘Field Notes: The Swedenborgian Church in South Africa’, 93.

⁷ Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg’s Religious Thought*, 194.

Mooki's church at Germiston Location in October 1913.¹ This is just months before articles written by Grendon appear in the same paper.²

In 1921, Mooki donated his cherished copy of *True Christian Religion* to the British Conference, 'for preservation among its archives, as a visible token and evidence of the origin of this wonderful movement'. A special display case was commissioned to accommodate it, and it was given a place of signal honour at the headquarters of the Swedenborg Society in London, where it was placed 'on Swedenborg's writing table'. J. F. Buss, the Conference's first representative to establish direct contact with Mooki's movement, reflects that it is 'interesting to think that, in all probability, part, at any rate, of the first draft of the work may have been written on this very table, nearly 169 years previously'.³

Mooki died in 1927, but the church continued to grow.⁴ By 1930, membership had risen to around 4,000, and Mooki's group had more 'societies' (congregations) than had the English New Church. The Mooki Memorial College was established in Orlando, Soweto, in 1933. David's son, Obed S. D. Mooki (1919–90) trained here for the New Church ministry and later became a dynamic leader of the movement, seeing it through its period of greatest growth. In 1961, the Ethiopian Catholic Church in Zion merged with Mooki's New Church, and membership swelled from around 8,000 to 25,000. Obed Mooki became first President of the Church when it achieved independence from the overseas mission body in 1969–70.⁵ The religious body that his father spearheaded in 1911 is now known as the New Church in Southern Africa.⁶ This wholly-autonomous denomination is today 'by far the largest New-Church organization in the world'.⁷

Obed Mooki is described by one who knew him as 'a most accomplished man, and one of the most delightful people I ever met'.⁸ As a young man, he was very active in ANC politics. When the ANC Youth League was established in 1944, he joined it.

¹ 'Ezetyalike Germiston', *Izwe la Kiti* 2:58 (29 Oct. 1913) 2.

² For example: 'News from Swaziland', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6.

³ Buss, *Romantic Story of the South African Mission*, 14.

⁴ Buss, *Romantic Story of the South African Mission*, 14.

⁵ Williams-Hogan, 'Field Notes: The Swedenborgian Church in South Africa', 94; Evans, *History of the New Church in Southern Africa*, 126.

⁶ Communicated: Andrew Dibb.

⁷ Brian Kingslake, quoted in: Millard, 'The New Jerusalem That Was Not Zion', 228.

⁸ Communicated: Andrew Dibb.

His associates included Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, and Walter Sisulu. Some of the earliest meetings of the Youth League were held at the Mooki Memorial School—named in honour of Obed’s father.¹ Obed rose to become Assistant Chaplain to the ANC, but as the Communist Party grew in influence with the ANC leadership, the office of chaplain was discontinued.²

Besides being Swedenborgian, Obed Mooki shared other things in common with Grendon. Both men were poets and journalists. Henry W. Nxumalo remembered Mooki working for the *Bantu World* newspaper in the 1930s, along with other ‘versatile guys’ whom he enumerates: Jameson G. Coka, Guybon Sinxo, H. I. E. Dhlomo, P. D. Segale, Mweliso Skota, and Peter Abrahams.³ Obed wrote numerous praise poems in English ‘to prominent people, dead or alive’.⁴ Two of his poems, ‘Mother Maxeke, BSc’ and ‘The African National Congress’, appear in company with a selection from Grendon’s verse in an anthology of ‘Black South African Poetry’ published in 1982.⁵ It is unlikely that many readers of that collection are aware of the Swedenborgian worldview of at least two of the poets it represents.



During the years 1918–20, *Ilanga* published a spate of Swedenborg-inspired material, in the form of short pseudonymous ‘letters’ written in English. We gain insight into Grendon’s ideological milieu when we juxtapose these letters with his corpus, as well as with other expositions of Swedenborg’s system.

In all this *Ilanga* material, the revelator is nowhere named. This omission can only have been intended as a safeguard against inevitable misrepresentation by detractors who might employ his name as a derogatory label for the Heavenly Doctrine. Davies discovered in the 1870s that London’s New Churchmen ‘eschew[ed ...] the name Swedenborgian as savouring of the idea that their principles are founded on the assertions of Swedenborg; whereas they insist that he was but the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ to reveal afresh old truths which had been perverted by human traditions,

¹ Evans, *History of the New Church in Southern Africa*, 68.

² Evans, *History of the New Church in Southern Africa*, 71, 73.

³ Sgt Henry W. Nxumalo, in: *Bantu World*, 4 March 1944, quoted in: Couzens, ‘The Social Ethos of Black Writing in South Africa’, 76.

⁴ Couzens, ‘The Black Press and Black Literature in South Africa’, 97.

⁵ Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 107, 141–42.

and new truths which should complete the glorious edifice of Christ's Church'.¹ Similar thinking likely prompted *Ilanga's* Swedenborgians to withhold Swedenborg's name.

In order to propagate a complex system, which flies in the face of prevailing thought and conventional logic, the *Ilanga* Swedenborgians attempt to release its components in brief, measured doses. This approach is not entirely successful, since complex and challenging material usually profits from more extended treatment.

Letters from 'Quiz' are the first to appear; he is subsequently joined by 'Tasisela' and 'Hygienist'. Together, their letters run concurrently for some months. In all, there are at least 150 letters from Quiz alone. Sometimes they appear one to an issue; sometimes two. Tasisela is the most overtly Swedenborgian. Quiz is likewise unambiguously Swedenborgian, but he has also a socialist message to impart. He is outspoken on political issues, declaring that 'the despicability of South Africa results more from the ingress of European banditti than from the natural sons and daughters of the land'.² He recognizes 'the great economic value' that lies in the relationship between 'the British Empire' and the 'Ethiopian people'; by contrast, he disapproves of Africans 'fooling around with South African Nationalists and polished Banditti of various sorts'—which intermingling can only harm Imperial interests.³

While Quiz's English seems to falter ever so slightly on occasion,⁴ Tasisela's control of the language is above reproach, and his style bears considerable resemblance to that of Swedenborgian Harold Attersoll.⁵ The Zulu word, 'tasisela'

¹ Davies, *Unorthodox London*, 93.

² 'Letters by Quiz No. 125', *Ilanga* 18:37 (10 Sept. 1920) 5.

³ 'We don't want Burlesque: Letters by Quiz No. 128', *Ilanga* 18:41 (8 Oct. 1920) 7.

⁴ On occasion, it is difficult to determine whether slips are those of the letter-writer or of a sloppy typesetter.

⁵ 'Tasisela' employs a distinctive didactic device employed also in *A Little More of Truth*, a pamphlet known to be authored by Attersoll. To illustrate: Tasisela prefaces his letter headed 'The Bantu and Religion' (*Ilanga* 18:13 (26 March 1920) 5) by stating: 'I have been questioned by some of our people as to what I referred [to] when I spoke of people not dying'. He then tells his readers what he has already told an inquirer, also reporting the inquirer's response. Finally, having delivered his Swedenborgian message, he reports: 'My friend saw the point and thanked me.'

In *A Little More of Truth*, which was written 'as a paper to promote discussion among the members of the Durban Ethical Society', Attersoll states: 'The origin of my venture was the many questions asked of me by my friends'. Because he 'could not attempt to write all their questions and [his] answers thereto', he 'adopted the plan of posing one intelligent questioner, who would just suffice to bring the matter forward so as to give others a desire to enquire into this most important matter' (p. 1). This is precisely the method used by Tasisela throughout his *Ilanga* letters. After making an important point, Attersoll's fictive voice in *A Little More of Truth*, recalls: 'My friend freely admitted this' (p. 6).

means to ‘give further, in addition, as snuff, information, &c.’,¹ to ‘add further or again on to, into, etc.’.² Since it is claimed that Swedenborg’s ‘new’ teachings augment, without invalidating, the ordinary sense of the biblical ‘Word’, ‘Tasisela’ is a fitting pen-name for one who disseminates them. Furthermore, it is possible that ‘Tasisela’ approximates the way in which a Zulu-speaker might mouth ‘Attersoll’.

It is also possible—but by no means proven—that Grendon is author of some of the other pseudonymous serial letters. Even if he is not, he almost certainly read them. On 15 November 1918, an *Ilanga* editorial praises Grendon by name for services he has rendered ‘the Bantu’.³ Two weeks later the paper publishes the final instalment of Grendon’s polemic in defence of African socialism.⁴ And two weeks after that, the first of the Quiz letters appears.⁵

The tone of these letters is on the whole sanguine, for the simple reason that a bright future lies before the African people. ‘Quiz’ speaks for all enlightened Africans when he says that ‘we Bantu abokwazi prepare for the better times’.⁶ By ‘abokwazi’, he means the African intelligentsia, or alternatively, those acquainted with the Heavenly Doctrine transmitted through Swedenborg. Such optimism might be expected of one who watches keenly for indications of the New Jerusalem’s descent.

A prominent feature of the message conveyed by *Ilanga*’s Swedenborgians is that Christianity is not represented solely in its European strain. There is a manifestation of Christianity that is distinctly African, and an African Church that is about to make its debut appearance on the world stage. It may seem that this miraculous development has been slow in coming, but Africans will be amply compensated for their prolonged wait: Africa has ‘been so long in the dark’. It is ‘like some precious flower taking a longer while to bloom but when it does, repays for the waiting’.⁷ The latter simile resembles one that Seme uses. Immediately after prophesying an African

The fact that both Attersoll and Tasisela appear to have Durban links, are Swedenborgian, and use a fictionalized conversation to expound their religious beliefs, each reporting regularly on what ‘My friend’ replies in response, seems strong circumstantial evidence that ‘Tasisela’ is Attersoll’s pen name. Attersoll died in 1922, shortly after the Tasisela letters cease.

¹ Colenso, *Zulu-English Dictionary*.

² Bryant, *Zulu-English Dictionary*.

³ ‘Critical Examination’, *Ilanga* 16:46 (15 Nov. 1918) 3.

⁴ ‘Native Unrest’, *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918).

⁵ ‘Christmas 1918’, *Ilanga* 16:50 (13 Dec. 1918) 6.

⁶ ‘Quiz’, ‘Not Concerned’, *Ilanga* 17:1 (3 Jan. 1919) 5.

⁷ ‘Tasisela’, ‘The Tasisela Letter’, *Ilanga* 18:17 (23 April 1920) 5.

‘moral’ civilization *a la* Kinmont, he concludes his oration on the ‘Regeneration of Africa’ with a verse fragment—not of his own composition—in which Africa is likened to ‘some great century plant that shall bloom | In ages hence’.¹

Swedenborg’s projections for the regeneration of Africa are seen to confirm the prophecy at Psalm 68:31—the signature text of the ‘Ethiopian’ church movement: Ethiopia will stretch out her hands to God. Quiz predicts that ‘all that muddled theology must be put aside, and a clean faith with a noble basis be adopted for the glorious future of Africa. Truly “Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.”’² On another occasion, he cites the text again as proof ‘that God is with us’.³ Tasisela is also confident that ‘Ethiopia will soon hold forth her hands to the Lord God Messiah!’—an interesting construction which synthesizes Ethiopianism with Swedenborgian Christology.⁴

It is significant that Wilkinson, as early as 1892, sees an African New Church stretching out its hands in South Africa. It is ‘solidly reported’, he avers, that in various lands—he cites Zululand as an example—‘natives’ are ‘accept[ing] the Christianity of the Gospel’ while ‘reject[ing] the dogmas’ of ‘tripersonality, atonement, sleep in the grave, and such like’. This in itself is evidence that ‘a purified Church is arising in heathen lands’⁵—that New Jerusalem goes about her business in Africa.

To what African initiative in ‘Zululand’ Wilkinson refers is unclear. He cannot be referring to Mangena Mokone’s ‘Ethiopian Church’ launched in Pretoria’s Marabastad location some months after Wilkinson’s book was published. Mangena’s initiative is conventionally regarded as the start of the African independent church movement in South Africa. Perhaps Wilkinson has in mind the activities of *Unzondelelo*—the ‘Native Home Missionary Society’—formed in the mid-1870s by evangelically-minded Africans associated with the Methodist mission at Edendale outside Pietermaritzburg.⁶ Agents of this body had stumped heathen Zululand and

¹ Seme, ‘The Regeneration of Africa’, 71. Seme adapts the sonnet, ‘Africa’, by Lloyd Mifflin (1846–1921).

² ‘Quiz’, ‘Are We Misled?’ *Ilanga* 16:51 (20 Dec. 1918).

³ ‘Quiz’, ‘Not Concerned’, *Ilanga* 17:1 (3 Jan. 1919) 5.

⁴ ‘Tasisela’, Tasisela Letter’, *Ilanga* 18:19 (7 May 1920) 5.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 224, 226.

⁶ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 210.

Swaziland well before Wilkinson's book was written. Whatever his meaning, he may have derived his information from members of Durban's small but active New Church society.

It is small wonder that Africa has this thrilling spiritual prospect before her. Everything is prefigured in the glory of her earliest spiritual past. The 'best' Africans are remnants of the Most Ancient Church—spoken of allegorically in Genesis under the name of 'Adam'. Tasisela reveals that it was Africans who brought 'to the world the first Religious Association as a means of enabling God's angelic servants to proceed with the betterment of mankind (the making of the Church Adam)'.¹ This being the case, no one need express surprise that Africans are pre-eminently receptive of the 'goods' and even the complex 'truths' of the New Jerusalem.

In order not to hinder New Jerusalem from achieving her purpose in Africa, Africans need 'to obtain an ethical code from among [them]selves and not be mere copyists of what has been brought over the sea'.² It is true that Europeans would like to claim a monopoly on religious truth, but it cannot be said that 'any special sort of men [has] got all the truth to the exclusion of any other sort of men'. This is because the 'creator of mind'—whether that mind be European or African—'has made it able to recognise the Holy Truth'.³ In order to procure a 'correct theology for [their] wellbeing', 'the Bantu' must therefore consult 'their own mental store-houses', where they will discover 'enough to qualify them in getting a clear and clean religious system'.⁴ Because revelation is internal, communicated largely through influxes, Africans need only consult this inner well of truth. If they do so, they will instantly and intuitively distinguish truth from falsehood.

While shunning outworn and exotic creeds, the coming Church must be guided by the 'Golden Rule' of love, but 'not as misapplied by the Abelungu' (whites). This Golden Rule, expressed in Christ's Sermon on the Mount, represents 'a clear and reliable doctrine that can be practised without fear by the people of Africa'.⁵ Tasisela's exhortation is in harmony with Blyden who counsels: 'Instruct them by the

¹ 'Tasisela', 'The Tasisela Letter', *Ilanga* 18:17 (23 April 1920) 5.

² 'Tasisela', 'Beware of Hypocrisy', *Ilanga* 18:53 (31 Dec. 1920) 7.

³ 'Quiz', 'Christmas 1918', *Ilanga* 16:50 (13 Dec. 1918) 6.

⁴ 'Tasisela Letters', *Ilanga* 18:26 (25 June 1920) 5.

⁵ 'Tasisela', 'Beware of Hypocrisy', *Ilanga* 18:53 (31 Dec. 1920) 7.

simple teachings of Christ—the Sermon on the Mount, and the Lord’s Prayer. Instruct them by the simple method of Christ.’¹

The ‘African mind’ rejects the European superstructure built upon Christ’s simple gospel. Quiz states: ‘Whatever the theology may be that we shall adopt in the future, it will have to bear the test of exact logic, or otherwise it will not suit the African mind. Consequently we shall do well to go at once on to the road that we mean to travel by. The confusion of thought which Missionaries have brought cannot appeal to the clear-minded and patriotic Africans.’²

This reference to a theology ‘suit[ed to] the African mind’, together with the rejection of the ‘confusion of thought’ introduced by missionaries, seems to reflect Blyden who in 1872 slammed ‘the harshness of conflicting sects, which have had their origin abroad and must necessarily exist in the African mind only as a *fungi*’.³ Blyden was ‘one of the strongest critics of European missionary practice in Africa’.⁴ ‘From about 1860 he began to criticize the operations of missionary work in Africa on the grounds that its sectarianism, and, at times, fierce competitiveness, its disrespect of Africans and disregard for their customs and institutions, had produced deleterious results.’⁵ *Ilanga*’s Swedenborgians are scarcely less condemnatory of the same phenomena.

Swedenborg states that ‘at the present day the heathen come into heaven with less difficulty than Christians’.⁶ The individual African must therefore reject the Old Church as a spent force, of no value to Africa. This is a precondition for his receipt of the New Church, where alone exists ‘True Christianity’. Tasisela goes so far as to persuade ‘Makosi’—his fictive interlocutor and disciple—that ‘there are no Christian Nations’, and that ‘a sprinkling of pious persons [do not] make a Christian nation’.⁷ The Old Church is not to be trusted, because it is a weapon in the hands of those in power: ‘The minds of the underlings, the rich hold, must be kept in a state of

¹ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 172.

² ‘Quiz’, ‘Are We Misled?’ *Ilanga* 16:51 (20 Dec. 1918).

³ Blyden, *Black Spokesman*, 227: Blyden to Governor Hennessy, Freetown, 6 Dec. 1872.

⁴ July, *History of the African People*, 299–300.

⁵ Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 73.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 324.

⁷ ‘Tasisela’, ‘Tasisela Letters’, *Ilanga* 18:25 (18 June 1920) 5.

subserviency, and popular religions are made to be tools to serve the acquirement of riches by the privileged few.’¹

This is not to say that the European has no ‘End’ to accomplish within the ‘Kingdom of Uses’. It is the duty of every human—and of every race—to perform ‘Use’. Quiz acknowledges ‘the use of the European ... to be of evident service, whereas the disappearance of them would be in some ways calamity to the native tribes’. However, such ‘utility of the Colonial does not include those of them who are pronounced enemies to the native people’.² Those whites who selfishly endeavour to bend blacks to their own will, perversely decline to render fit service.

In one of his letters, Tasisela reports that he and Makosi have knelt down to pray that ‘the people of Ethiopia will soon have their eyes open to the sacred truth and become a people of the Lord’.³ While it is true that this ‘sacred truth’ represents a return to the simplicity of the Gospel, this does not mean that Africans should not become acquainted with the celestial *arcana* in all their fullness. This ‘coming African Church’ will be acquainted with the allegorical meaning of the ‘first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis’⁴ as revealed by Swedenborg. They must learn for instance, that Adam is not to be understood as an historical figure, but ‘probably stood for millions of men and women’.⁵ In Africa is to be found the remnant of the Adamic Church. Preparatory to the full onset of the New Church, it is important that some Africans become ‘repositories of such knowledge for the Afro people’s service’.⁶

What chiefly sets the African Christian apart from the European is his conception of God. In the course of his peregrinations in the spiritual world, Swedenborg discovered that the Africans had ‘an idea of a Divine Human’ so apt ‘as to exceed belief’.⁷ This declaration would have found favour with many African Christians who who chanced to hear it. Wadström, in *An Essay on Colonization* (1794–95), states that Africans ‘believe simply that there exists one God, the Creator and Preserver of all

¹ ‘Tasisela’, ‘Tasisela Letters’, *Ilanga* 18:24 (11 June 1920) 5.

² ‘Quiz’, ‘Letters by Quiz No. 121’, *Ilanga* 18:27 (2 July 1920) 5.

³ ‘Tasisela’, ‘Tasisela Letter’, *Ilanga* 18:19 (7 May 1920) 5.

⁴ ‘Tasisela’, ‘The Tasisela Letter’, *Ilanga* 18:14 (2 April 1920) 5.

⁵ ‘Tasisela’, ‘The Tasisela Letters’, *Ilanga* 18:15 (9 April 1920) 5.

⁶ ‘Tasisela’, ‘The Tasisela Letter’, *Ilanga* 18:14 (2 April 1920) 5.

⁷ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, n. 5809–n. 5811, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 69.

things; and, in order to fix their ideas, they think on God, in some form or other; for, to believe in any thing without form, they seem to think, is to believe in nothing'.¹

Wilkinson makes the point that 'Dr Blyden holds that *Africa in all its tribes is close to the recognition of an Almighty personal agent*' and that 'the work needful is, to declare to them that Being whom, perhaps even through idols and fetishes, they ignorantly worship'.² In 1900, John Kumalo, a prominent Natal Anglican and father to Grendon's colleague Solomon Kumalo as well as to Benjamin Kumalo, the 'Ethiopian' preacher, expressed the view—his and a friend's—that no 'nation ... rises nearer to the idea of God than the Zulus'.³

Swedenborg rejects the 'tripersonal faith' of the Old Church, which 'for centuries past, since the COUNCIL OF NICE [the Nicene Council], has acknowledged no other faith'.⁴ Wilkinson claims that Africans instinctively reject the 'mistake' of 'tripersonality'.⁵ Quiz holds that the age-old African concept of God is truer than that put out by missionaries of the Old Church: 'The old Bantu doctrine was expressed in the term of Nkulunkulu which signifies the Unity of God. But in contrast to that stands the missionary teaching of tripersonatism, which does not agree with the doctrine of the Unity of God.' Any African theology must 'suit the African mind'—and in this respect alone, 'tripersonatism' fails.⁶

The 'Son' is an aspect—not a 'Person'—of the Almighty Divine Man. He is 'God manifest',⁷ 'God manifest to the finite mind'.⁸ As early as 1905—while Grendon was English sub-editor of *Ilanga*—Attersoll makes this same point in a two-part article that reduces Swedenborg's teaching to thirty-one articles of faith. He writes that 'the Divine Humanity produces an Emanation of Itself, which is not separated or discredited [sic], as the derived Humans are. This Emanation is the Messiah, who is ever one with God, and is God, even Jesus, the Christ.' 'The Messiah is therefore that of the Infinite God, which comes within the apprehension of the finite Humans, and is

¹ Quoted in: Paley, 'A New Heaven is Begun', 85.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 129.

³ Webb and Wright, *James Stuart Archive*, i:261.

⁴ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 338.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 223–24.

⁶ 'Quiz', 'Are We Misled?' *Ilanga* 16:51 (20 Dec. 1918).

⁷ 'Quiz', 'Are We Misled?' *Ilanga* 16:51 (20 Dec. 1918).

⁸ 'Quiz', 'Letters by Quiz No. 126', *Ilanga* 18:39 (24 Sept. 1920) 5.

therefore adorable to them.’¹ This is a belief tailored to the mind of man—and particularly, to the ‘African mind’. By fortitude in the face of adversity, Africans qualify to ‘worship the Divine Man’²—the God of their fathers, God in one Person. This is precisely the doctrine that Grendon expounds in ‘God With Us’.³

Swedenborg states that ‘because God is a Man, the whole angelic heaven in the aggregate resembles a single man, and is divided into regions and provinces according to the members, viscera, and organs of man’.⁴ This is the ‘Grand Man’ or ‘Greatest Man’—which translates Swedenborg’s Latin original, *Maximus Homo*.⁵ If this concept has its origin in St Paul’s organic representation of the Church,⁶ it is vastly elaborated upon by Swedenborg. Wilkinson explains: ‘We inhabit a human form the greatest image and likeness of our individual form; and are in the heart of it, or in the head of it, or in some other part, with divinely-organic variety. Were this known to information, we should expect to find, and to wait upon, differences in our brethren.’⁷ brethren.’⁷ Trobridge cautions us however not to imagine this Grand Man in natural terms, by which the concept has been absurdly parodied. If this ‘doctrine of the Maximus Homo, or “Grand Man”’ is to be understood, we must ‘remove from our minds all ideas of space and time’ and limit our thought to variations of state. *Maximus Homo* represents ‘in its totality the perfection of human qualities’.⁸

Maximus Homo has from the beginning been conceived in racial terms by many New Churchmen. As already pointed out, Wadström, the eighteenth-century Swedenborgian who projected a model community in Africa steered along New-Jerusalem lines, makes reference to the divergent but mutually interdependent genii of the European and the African. Kinmont and Wilkinson see the viscera and other organs of the Grand Man in terms of distinct, interdependent racial units.

So do *Ilanga*’s Swedenborgians. According to Quiz, ‘people are bound by the law of existence to be communal, and the more we struggle against that the more we

¹ H. A., ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

² ‘Quiz’, ‘Letters by Quiz No. 110’, *Ilanga* 18:12 (19 March 1920) 5.

³ ‘God With Us’, *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 3–4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 288.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Earths in the Universe*, n. 9.

⁶ 1 Cor. ch. 12.

⁷ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 140.

⁸ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 171.

struggle for our discomfort and ruin'.¹ If Europeans represent the intellectual genus, Tasisela identifies the 'African people' as the warm 'emotive genus of mankind'.² Hygienist commends his readers to consult what 'St Paul states in his famous Epistles' about the *Maximus Homo*: 'No part of the body works well independently of the other parts.' This basic fact is useful for 'social constructive purposes'.³

Because the racial constituents of South Africa fail to perceive each other's place in the *Maximus Homo*, 'the Union is a mass of clashing elements'.⁴ The 'anti-Bantu do not know either Africa or the Africans, their meaning or what they stand for in the world economy'.⁵ Quiz shares Grendon's perspective. Having quoted St Paul, Grendon in 1915 reminds General Smuts that black Africans 'constitute a member of the Body Politic of this Union'.⁶ In his impassioned appeal 'To the Whites and Blacks Blacks of South Africa', written in the period of reconstruction after the South African War (1899–1902), Grendon warns his countrymen

That sickly limbs contaminate
The trunk whereof they form a part;
And polluted is that State
Where class views class with jealous heart.

'Mongst you, who dwell in this fair land
Let all contamination cease!
Let your body politic command
That purity which bringeth peace!

Black muscle with white intellect
Combine to reconstruct the frame
By cank'rous discord well nigh wreck'd,
Lest threat'ning ills clothe it with shame.⁷

This is more than a trite call for 'unity in diversity'. It is not based upon the serendipitous discovery of an appropriate metaphor, but rather upon what Swedenborg calls 'correspondence'. From God's standpoint, his Church does not

¹ 'Quiz', 'Letters by Quiz No. 114', *Ilanga* 18:19 (7 May 1920) 5.

² 'Tasisela', 'Tasisela Letters', *Ilanga* 18:21 (21 May 1920) 5.

³ 'Hygienist', 'The Circulatory System', *Ilanga* 17:15 (11 April 1919) 5.

⁴ 'Quiz', 'What Shall Be the Future of South Africa?' *Ilanga* 17:3 (17 Jan. 1919) 5.

⁵ 'Quiz', 'Mr Nesser's Views', *Ilanga* 17:4 (24 Jan. 1919) 5.

⁶ 'Gen. Smuts Answered', *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5.

⁷ 'To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

merely resemble a Grand Man—it *is* a Grand Man, because so conceived. The resemblance between the functioning of an individual human body and that of the Church is more than coincidental: it is what God has built into the fabric of his Creation.

South Africans, white and black, are blind to the fact that each race has its distinct, divinely-derived ‘genius’. Quiz says that

one of the faults of the Colonials is that of supposing that the African genius is the same as that of the Europeans. Ethnology does not support such suppositions, and it is the failing to duly observe such facts of existence that leads to so many mistakes being made, not only on the part of the European but also on the part of the African, and much of the historic troubles that have arisen, were the outcome of not understanding each other’s genius.¹

Quiz might be paraphrasing Kinmont, who remarks upon ‘how different and distinct is the genius that distinguishes each settled people’,² or Blyden who refers to ‘the genius of the [Negro] race’ in contradistinction to ‘West Aryan genius’.³ Equally, he might be paraphrasing Wilkinson who detects in ‘the negroid remainder’ of the ‘Adamic or celestial man’ the ‘existence ... of a different genius and genus of man’.⁴

When a clear conception of the nature of the Divine Man is obtained, the African must also obtain clarity as to his own nature. The ‘real’ man is the inner soul, the divine centre of each man and woman. This is of God’s creation. Everything else is secondary or tertiary to this divine centre, and is created by man, in the exercise of his free will. In 1905, Attersoll writes in *Ilanga* that ‘God operates directly into the centre of the Inner Soul, and it is by virtue of the Deific Power that the Inner Soul lives and acts’.⁵ For this reason, continued life is entirely dependent upon the infusion by God of goods and truths into this inner soul. To quote Attersoll once more, ‘all finite Humans as to their essence are Emanations of God, [and so] do not exist of themselves, but are receptive of Life’.⁶ Fifteen years later, Tasisela confirms that the deathless inner man is of God’s creation and is perfect, since ‘God never creates that which in itself is errant’. This ‘Spiritual or primal man is always orderly and therefore

¹ ‘Quiz’, ‘Letter by Quiz No. 118’, *Ilanga* 18:24 (11 June 1920) 5.

² Kinmont, *Natural History of Man*, 166.

³ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 71, 242.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 205.

⁵ H. A., ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

⁶ H. A., ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

is ever in heaven. The heavenly man has full free choice, but does not sin.’¹ Sin’s origin is within the external personality of man’s creation—the *proprium*.

Ilanga’s Swedenborgians also expound Swedenborg’s teaching on the soul-body relationship. Swedenborg speaks of the manifold ‘secret operations of the soul in the body’ by which the soul performs a mysterious and unobserved ministry in shaping and sustaining the natural body in all its parts. He states that ‘nothing can take place in the body except from the mind, for man’s mind is his spirit, and his spirit is equally man’.² In a sense, the mind accretes a body to itself. Tasisela explains that ‘the soul is the man and that the physical body is only the soul’s agent formed by the soul from physical alimentation. As the earthly agent of the soul it has personality only because of the soul controlling it, and in no other way.’³ Hygienist builds upon this when he states that ‘if the soul is vicious, the body will be inclined to viciousness. The body is the result of the soul and must therefore be urged by whatever the soul desires.’⁴ As a result of this soul-body relationship, the ‘laws of health require us to be very sane, i.e. so that the sanity of the soul can enter freely into the elaborate domain of the body’.⁵

Death—conceived as the cessation of existence for the inner man or woman—is an illusion. Rather, Death implies no change, because, as Quiz writes, ‘dying is merely passing from one state of life to another’.⁶ He confirms Attersoll, who writes that ‘the essence or inmost of the derived Humans, being of God, is non-contaminable and cannot suffer violence’.⁷

No particle of our ancestors’ divinely-derived essence is either lost or deranged through the death of the body. When this is known, it follows that they live fully intact in the spiritual world—which fact Africans have known throughout precolonial times. And so, the New Jerusalem simply confirms a cardinal belief of traditional African religion.

In 1920, D. F. Nelson wrote to *Ilanga*, denying Tasisela’s belief in inherent immortality, and putting forward his own belief that ‘there is no consciousness after

¹ ‘Tasisela’, Tasisela Letter’, *Ilanga* 18:19 (7 May 1920) 5.

² Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, n. 296.

³ ‘Tasisela’, ‘The Bantu and Religion’, *Ilanga* 18:13 (26 March 1920) 5.

⁴ ‘Hygienist’, ‘Health the Basis of Happiness’, *Ilanga* 17:11 (14 March 1919) 5.

⁵ ‘Hygienist’, ‘Bodily Health a Sequence’, *Ilanga* 17:11 (14 March 1919) 5.

⁶ ‘Quiz’, ‘Not Concerned’, *Ilanga* 17:1 (3 Jan. 1919) 5.

⁷ H. A., ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

death'.¹ Tasisela is quick to defend his Swedenborgianism: 'The Bantu knowledge of Butonga [*i.e.*, the ancestral spirits] and much else that appertains to the immortal side of human beings as they know it forbids acceptance of crafty teaching that is in league with those [such as Nelson] who are opposed to the Divine Messiah. His word was that "all live unto God". Many of us Zulu people know that the departed are alive.'² Tasisela appears to invoke Swedenborg, who reveals that 'this [revelatory] doctrine does not reach to the Africans dwelling at the coasts, inasmuch as Christians come there who suggest scandals'.³ Nelson appears to be 'in league with' such meddlers.

Like Robert Grendon, Quiz points out several times that South Africa's socio-political problems exist primarily upon a spiritual plane. This is because those in whom power is vested are besotted with the seductions of externalism—materialism in the broadest sense. It is this 'dominant externalism' which prevents South Africa's lawgivers from discerning 'where the right line of action lies'.⁴ What is racism, after all, if not rank externalism?

If spiritual prosperity is to be assured, then the 'murky and fictitious notions of make-believe science or religion' must be cast aside that 'lead people further into the entanglement of mere sense'. Natural sense stimuli must not be allowed to becloud 'our recognitions of God's creation—Humanity'. But, 'will the Colonials with their Parliament do this? Will the Bantu also do this? Peace and comfort for all can only be had in this way.'⁵ Here Quiz repeats an accusation Grendon makes a few years earlier: earlier: his white adversary then was guilty of 'rank materialism and externalism coupled with prejudice' because of his scathing characterization of people of mixed-race origin.⁶

Those who elevate sense above spirit are inherently selfish, and selfishness is the root cause of all woe. Evil arises where men selfishly refrain from performing 'use' and endeavour instead to bend others to their own will. Self-love is a sin of the first

¹ 'Tasisela' refers to a 'lengthy article' from Nelson that appeared on 16 Jan. 1920. Another of Nelson's contributions was published again, on 30 April ('Mr D. F. Nelson Replies', *Ilanga* 18:18 (30 April 1920) 5). Nelson is likely Adventist, Christadelphian, or a Bible Student. All these groups had representation in Durban in 1920.

² 'Tasisela', 'Spiritualism', *Ilanga* 18:9 (27 Feb. 1920) 5.

³ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 86.

⁴ 'Quiz', 'An Appeal to Parliament', *Ilanga* 17:11 (14 March 1919) 5.

⁵ 'Quiz', 'An Appeal to Parliament', *Ilanga* 17:11 (14 March 1919) 5.

⁶ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

order for the Swedenborgian. It becomes all-consuming in those who will not render service to God and the commonweal. Swedenborg states that fallen man ‘is born into love of self and the world, and as these loves do not have any love of God and the neighbour in them except for the sake of self, he is also born into evils of every kind’.¹

As a Swedenborgian, Grendon opines that ‘selfishness is one of the worst qualities that can possibly possess a human being, and one which enters into the composition of nearly every human soul’.² Quiz concurs: ‘Self-seeking in all its variety is hellish, acting contrary to Divine admonition. And all that seek the good of the neighbour act consistently with God’s wishes.’³

The concept of the two loves—that of *Use* opposed to that of *Self*—informs Blake’s poetry, as for instance in ‘The Human Abstract’ and ‘The Clod & the Pebble’. In the latter poem, a ‘pebble of the brook’ gives its definition of love: ‘Love seeketh only Self to please, | To bind another to its delight, | Joys in another’s loss of ease, | and builds a Hell is Heaven’s despite.’ Morton Paley identifies Blake’s pebble with Swedenborg’s ‘*proprium*’—a term which an early English New Churchman defines as Man’s ‘own Propriety, or all that he is of himself, when separated from Divine Influence’.⁴ Attersoll defines it as Man’s ‘ownhood’.⁵ The *proprium* is the source of all selfishness—all evil. ‘A society based on [the pebble’s view of love], according to Swedenborg, can maintain only a spurious order masking its own essential destructiveness.’⁶

The *proprium* is the outer soul, which is not uniformly pernicious in all cases, but carries in it the potential for error, particularly when it wilfully seals itself off from the inner soul, the reservoir of inflowing divinity. Attersoll explains that when the *proprium*—which he also calls ‘the external spiritual selfhood’ is largely ‘shut off

¹ Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, n. 259.

² ‘Selfishness’, *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 3.

³ ‘Quiz’, ‘Christmas 1918’, *Ilanga* 16:50 (13 Dec. 1918) 6.

⁴ Paley, ‘A New Heaven Is Begun’, 68.

⁵ ‘H. A.’, ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁶ Paley, ‘A New Heaven Is Begun’, 68.

from the influence of its internal selfhood, [it becomes] subject to all kinds of follies, which gradually arise in itself'.¹

He explains that while 'the Essential Human ... is perfect in itself, [it] builds up from its own personal consciousness a second self, which is external to its Essential, and derives its life therefrom'. Herein lies 'the possibility of its errancy [sic]'.² Just 'as there is willingness on the part of the Inner Soul to receive of God ..., so there must be willingness on the part of the Outer Soul to receive of the Inner Soul; if the free responsiveness increases it qualifies its consciousness'.³

Without actually naming it, Tasisela gives a description of the *proprium*. The internal Man is 'godly in all finite perfection', but some humans 'enter into extended conditions that were not strictly heavenly, and so little by little build up as it were a secondary personality'.⁴ One may wonder if this 'secondary personality' or *proprium* is what Blyden in 1893 describes as 'fictitious personality': 'It is not out of genuine personality that vanity or self conceit comes, but out of imitation—out of fictitious personality, out of compromise which nature abhors.'⁵

In a learned footnote to his poem, 'Pro Aliis Damnati', Grendon describes the *proprium* as the locus of error:

The soul referred to in this and other similar passages is the Proprium, or External Spiritual Self, which is peculiarly Man's and not God's creation. This External Spiritual Ownhood is the plane wherein error, and folly arise. These evils find no inception in the Physical Body of Man for this has no conscience; neither are they begotten in the Inner or True Soul, for that is God's creation.⁶

Ilanga's Swedenborgians also condemn the reflexive love that arises in the *proprium*. 'Where', asks Quiz, 'is the honour in pampering oneself as compared with the manly affection of desiring to help one's people?' Refusal to perform use is self-defeating, he warns:

¹ 'H. A.', 'New Light Rays', *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

² 'H. A.', 'New Light Rays', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

³ 'H. A.', 'New Light Rays', *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

⁴ 'Tasisela', 'Tasisela Letter', *Ilanga* 18:20 (14 May 1920) 5.

⁵ Blyden, *Black Spokesman*, 202.

⁶ 'PAD', Pt 19, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.

If a man will not help his people, he becomes selfish, and that narrows the channels of his life's forces, bring[s] the illness that he himself has made and which he has to bear, depriving his friends and neighbours of the good service that he might have done. To desire the national good of one's people is the high-road to comfort and satisfaction.¹

Some races of mankind are more prone to selfishness than others. The 'Republican Boers' are notorious for their selfishness: 'From what appears per the effusions of the Republican Boers the Bantu are not recognised as anything of political importance. Those gems of honesty if ruling the land would give no vantage to any but themselves.'² 'Now the presumed interests of the Republican Boers are of the nature of an exaggerated private interest, that is to say, no desire for anyone's interest but their own.'³ Quiz's view accords with Grendon's, expressed in 1904, to the effect that so-called 'Boer "humanity"'—which has 'subjected certain of the aborigines of this subcontinent to the most brutal atrocities'—is 'no receptacle of the Divine, but the pleasurehouse of Hell'.⁴

Africans however must shun such selfishness and externalism. Hygienist warns his African readers against emulating the examples of Self-driven whites: 'Our people the Bantu can only reach the heights of excellence by being the repositories of that which is good, i.e. non-selfish, which means that we must be agreeable to the Lord God Messiah Jesus Christ.'⁵

In order to be regenerated, all selfish loves must be discarded—a painful, prolonged process—and the chief object of Man's probationary sojourn on this natural earth. In regeneration, the man or woman recreates his or her 'delight' to conform to the indwelling Divine. Where once the object of delight may have been external and sensual, now it is a few grades more internal and spiritual. The gaze must be focused inward upon the divine centre, as Attersoll makes clear:

If by suasion the attention of the outer soul can be directed towards the Inner Soul, so as to become conscious of some of the Inner Soul's excellencies, and it (the Outer Soul) becomes willing to adopt the heat, light and power that flow from the Inner Soul; then love, truth and

¹ 'Quiz', 'The National Conscience', *Ilanga* 17:13 (28 March 1919) 5.

² 'Quiz', 'Are We an Imperial Factor?' *Ilanga* 17:6 (7 Feb. 1919) 5.

³ 'Quiz', 'Parliamentary Encouragement', *Ilanga* 17:11 (14 March 1919) 5.

⁴ 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3. In part, Grendon quotes Swedenborg (*Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 242), who states that the role of Man is to 'be a receptacle of the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom'.

⁵ 'Hygienist', 'Health Notes by Hygienist No. 56', *Ilanga* 18:17 (23 April 1920) 5.

operation in such manner will be received [so] that appropriation, to some extent, takes place; and the Outer Soul is thereby renewed according to the orderly mode that is proper to the Inner Soul.¹

The unregenerate man cannot be entirely sane, because as Attersoll states, ‘full saneness and capacity for enjoyment requires that a Human Being’s whole self (both Inner and Outer) shall be in accord; and responsive to the creative force that constantly proceeds from Deity’. It is ‘in that responsive state [that] the mind is conscious of love to God, and love to the Neighbour; *i.e.* the soul enjoys the order and sympathies of the Heavenly State’.²

Africa’s regeneration will take place psychologically (within individual minds) and sociologically (within societies). Perfect volitional freedom must obtain if regeneration is to be carried forward. Swedenborg’s formulation applies, that ‘no one is reformed in states of no liberty or rationality’.³ As the Swedenborgian Trobridge states, ‘hope of reward or fear of punishment, though they may set the thoughts towards higher things, can produce no real spiritual change’.⁴

Hygienist observes that inflowing ‘Deity is necessarily the source of health; but there is one great factor in the case and that is the ability of the receiver to receive. Good is not thrust upon anyone, but must be received according to the mental freedom of one who is to receive the benefit.’⁵ These concerns are shared by Grendon Grendon in 1904, who quotes directly from Swedenborg’s *Divine Providence* to the effect that ‘the external man must be reformed by means of the internal, and not the reverse’. He appends his own gloss on Swedenborg: ‘There must be influx of the spiritual into the natural, and not the reverse. The internal man must first be purified before the external.’⁶

Grendon also upbraids the white instigators behind Durban’s Native Reform Association for working according to the false premise that the ‘purification of the black man’ may be achieved by imposing their will externally upon his. The ‘project

¹ ‘H. A.’, ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

² ‘H. A.’, ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, n. 138.

⁴ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 115.

⁵ ‘Hygienist’, ‘Bodily Health a Sequence’, *Ilanga* 17:11 (14 March 1919) 5.

⁶ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3. Grendon quotes Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, n. 129.

of the Reform League is doomed to failure, for no reform can be effected by either fear or dread, since these faculties do not constitute a part of the internal man'—or, the 'volitional centre', as Quiz describes it.¹

Volitional freedom is a recurring motif in the Swedenborg-inspired material appearing in *Ilanga*. The point is made repeatedly that coercion and oppression merely impede genuine reform, and are evil in themselves: 'Humanity may not be treated as chattels. You may morally issue a pass for things, but not for any one of the human centres. The volitional centres (each human being) are Sacred beings—sons or daughters of God.'² Each 'volitional centre' is a divinely-sustained internal man. In order for divine influxes to regenerate or reform, Will and Understanding must be brought into full accord. This is an intensely private process, in which the individual subject must *will*, or desire, the change. No third party may intervene.

The selfish, unregenerate man is perceived by correspondence in heaven as stooped over, with gaze riveted to the ground, or as standing upon his hands. His spiritual opposite is one who follows the stars of heaven. Swedenborg was told in the spiritual world that the self-obsessed person, 'when viewed from heaven, appears like a man that is hunch-backed, walking with his head inclined and looking on the ground, and who, if he lifts his head towards heaven, does it by a violent retorsion of the muscles, and presently after relapses into his former inclined attitude'.³ 'When the love of self constitutes the head, he is like a man standing not on his feet, but on the palms of his hands with his head downwards and his haunches upwards. ... The supreme principles in a man are turned upwards to God, the middle outwards to the world, and the lowest downwards to self'.⁴ Wilkinson summarizes by saying that 'the higher knowledges, the guides and stars of life ... are visible in plain heavens, but not to the downward gaze enamoured of the ground only'.⁵

Grendon displays an ongoing interest in this upward-outward-downward correspondence. In 'Melia and Pietro' (1897), Melia prays for 'the heart that will not

¹ 'Native Reform', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4. R. C. A. Samuelson—a white colonial well-disposed toward African aspirations—shares Grendon's views on the impropriety of the Durban Native Reform Association (*Long, Long Ago*, 208).

² 'Quiz', 'Letters by Quiz No. 103', *Ilanga* 18:5 (30 Jan. 1920) 5.

³ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 404.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 269.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 233.

bend, | Nor bow to Satan's nod; | Nor heedless stoop to gain his end | Against the will of God'.¹ The 'heart that will not ... stoop' is one that fixes its gaze heavenward. The speaker in 'A Dream' (1897–98) is beckoned by 'a star | That shone afar'.² Having experienced a religious epiphany, he recalls: 'T'wards Heav'n I gazed | In reverential mood'.³

In *Paul Kruger's Dream* (1902), the President's gaze is fixed upon the gold reef that has transformed his Republic overnight from pastoral poverty to unimagined riches. Enthralled, he declares: 'At Mammon's nod our land with wealth o'erflows! | Where'er I tread, the earth doth yield me gold!'⁴ The virgin spiritual visitant, Fortuna upbraids Kruger for his haughtiness and for his oppression of the Uitlanders in his realm. With 'stern reproachings' she rehearses the fate of tyrants of biblical record, amongst them 'a Persian king', Nebuchadnezzar, who stooped low to the ground, becoming beastlike in the process: 'Amongst the beasts—himself a beast—he roam'd; | And like them stoop'd on grass, and herbs to feed'.⁵

In the editorial, 'Copy the Greek' (1904), Grendon perceives that 'Man's life is divided into three stages':

- (1). The natural wherein he stands as partner with the brute creation [downward gaze in Swedenborg].
 - (2). The national [sic] or natural spiritual wherein he stands out as a link between the animal and the spirit [outward gaze in Swedenborg].
 - (3). The celestial wherein he partakes of the nature of the divine [upward gaze in Swedenborg].
- His life [in the first stage] is mainly taken up and spent for the natural with his body stooping like the brute towards the earth for the enjoyment of earthly things. Scarcely does he cast his head upwards to the broad heaven above him, for this was the purpose for which he was created, to look above to things beyond the natural and the material, which at best are transitory. Scarcely does he look forward to spiritual and celestial things which are eternal.⁶

He concludes by urging his readers to 'look forward—strive always to rise from the natural. Elevate your thoughts above the place of self.'⁷

¹ 'M&P' Pt XIX, *Citizen* 2:72 (22 Oct. 1898) 3.

² 'A Dream', Pt I, *Citizen* 21 (29 Dec. 1897) 2.

³ 'A Dream', Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 33.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XIII, pp. 39–40.

⁶ 'Copy the Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

⁷ 'Copy the Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

This imagery reappears as late as 1916 in ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, in which Grendon sees with his spiritual eyes that the death of the Swazi prince is not a tragedy ultimately, although it may seem so to those whose vision is purely natural: ‘To such as stoop to feed,— | Like beasts—on grass, Malunge’s life | A failure seems. To such as read | Him with their vision heav’nward set, | Appeareth no obscurity!— | His failure view’d from higher planes, | Suggesteth naught but victory!’¹



One may readily conceive the suggestive allure of Swedenborg’s discoveries concerning the celestial Africans, and how consoling they might have been to Africans. So long maligned, oppressed, and brutalized, some Africans rallied to the New Jerusalem that Swedenborg describes as brooding lovingly over them. Wadström and other Europeans in the late eighteenth century saw New Jerusalem as occurring in the conjugal/conjugal embrace of Africa and Europe: the marriage of Will and Understanding. A century later, Wilkinson and then Grendon saw it in the coming together of the Old and the New Africa. Instead of looking out to Europe for inspiration, Africans now had powerful reasons to peer into the interior of their Continent—into the interior of their souls.

A few Africans, it would seem, were able to disengage and appropriate Swedenborg’s teaching on Africans, without taking a position on other New Church beliefs. Likely, very many Africans embraced such notions as a New Africa and a distinct African personality without the least inkling that they might have roots in the visions of a Scandinavian baron.

On the other hand, men like Grendon, ‘Quiz’, and the Mookis, embraced Swedenborg in his entirety, or very nearly so. Even Blyden appears to have gone beyond the celestial-African doctrine as filtered through Kinmont. When Monomotapa and Prester John were centuries buried, a favoured few still knew that Africa held a mystic centre.

¹ ‘Tragedy of Malunge’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

CHAPTER 2

BEYOND THE PALE:

DAMARALAND & OVAMBOLAND

I make bold to state that out of a given number of white bachelors, who have been transported from their own country and transplanted in a black man's land, nine-tenths of them in less than five years will take to, and practise miscegenation with black women.¹



Robert Grendon's declamation may seem passé today, but when first read by race-obsessed South Africans in 1914, it touched a raw nerve. The editor of the mission-owned newspaper ought to have anticipated a howl of protest from readers. It came.

Grendon's ideological adversary was Lewis Eccles Hertslet—a young white churchman and vociferous segregationist. His book, *The Native Problem: Some of Its Points and Phases*—self-published from his rural home in northern Natal—had recently emerged.² Hertslet deplored his opponent's 'specious arguments' and 'the low moral standard of his doctrines'.³

Others scrambled to the fray. 'Student' considered Grendon's letters of 'doubtful taste', while 'Lover of Decency' protested that he had not meant his subscription to cover 'such very unedifying effusions'.⁴ The editorial response was predictable, overdue, and conveyed in a single line:

This correspondence is now closed.⁵

But Grendon, the advocate of 'honourable and upright miscegenation',⁶ had had his say. He might be gagged through the exercise of an editor's prerogative, but he

¹ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

² The date of publication, although not shown, must have been c.1912, since the Native Industrial Exhibition, 1911, is mentioned in the text as having taken place (29), and the newspaper, *Izwe la Kiti*, published in Dundee from 1912–14, is described as about to be launched (45).

³ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:89 (3 June 1914) 5.

⁴ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:90 (10 June 1914) 6; 3:86 (13 May 1914) 6.

⁵ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:89 (3 June 1914) 5.

⁶ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

Plate 2a: Maharero (seated left);
Amadamap (Riarua) (seated right);
one of Maharero's sons (standing).
Photograph circa 1876



could not be cowed. He stood unassailable on the high ground, because he spoke from personal knowledge, which no barrage of prudery or moral outrage could gainsay.



In this polemic which raged from February to June 1914, Grendon makes the claim that most bachelors—white or black—repudiate fastidious pretensions to racial ‘purity’ when the special exigencies of time and space conduce to their forming mixed-race sexual unions. He also pours scorn upon Hertslet’s contention that ‘miscegenation’ is anathema throughout Africa. On the contrary, it has been ‘the policy of nearly every Bantu Chief’ to seal alliances with white interlopers by marrying to them females from within their own extended households.

He proceeds to marshal historical precedents in support of this assertion: the *manikongo* of Kongo kingdom in the earliest period of Portuguese intrusion into west central Africa (late 15th–early 16th century); King Mbandzeni of the Swazi (c.1857–89); King Cetshwayo of the Zulu (c.1826–84). These African potentates, he maintains, sanctioned or actively encouraged marriage alliances with white intruders. He reiterates the quintessential case of John Dunn, polygamous ‘white chief’ of Zululand.¹

But there is another example of equivalent weight that he seems studiously to avoid: it is Herero chieftain Maharero (c.1820–90; plate 2a), near whose Okahandja *werft* in southwest Africa, Robert Grendon passed much of his childhood in the 1870s. Even as an adult, Grendon’s mind cannot have failed to gravitate to his early impressions of ‘Damaraland’—the name by which Hereroland was commonly called in the nineteenth century. Robert knew that in taking to wife Maria—a Herero woman—his Irish father was in no way exceptional among the traders, hunters, and missionaries of that region, or indeed of any part of Africa beyond the ambit of colonial strictures. Robert’s failure to cite Maharero’s case as empirical evidence is rendered poignant by a family tradition that identifies Maharero as none other than Robert’s own grandfather.²

¹ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

² J. Hoskins notebook 1.

Joseph William Grendon (1834–1926) is a prime example of the nine-tenths of ‘white bachelors’ who—according to his son—choose to cohabit with African women when left to follow their instincts in ‘a black man’s land’. Maharero in turn is one of those traditional African leaders who for reasons of policy countenance, or actively encourage, the practice of ‘miscegenation’ within their domain. Diplomatic alliance through marriage was Maharero’s favoured strategy for extending and consolidating his influence.¹ In all, he personally took more than sixty wives, and by this means, ‘any chiefs who had been outside the circle [of his influence] were drawn into it’.² When white swashbucklers muscled into Damaraland, he may well have attempted to neutralize any potential threat they posed through similar marriages.

Wolfram Hartmann has made a study of the sexual encounter between white males and black females in precolonial and colonial Namibia, and finds ‘a close connection between friendship, diplomatic and economic ties and the offering of women by indigenous men of authority to white men’.³ He foregrounds the agency of indigenous leaders in actively drawing white traders and hunters into the traditional *oupanga* institution—a covenant of friendship between males, often sealed when one party furnished the other with females for sexual purposes. This was part of a wider programme of alliance and reciprocal hospitality that ‘seems to have been a part of the social fabric’ in precolonial times.⁴

Hartmann is backed up by documentary evidence. The traveller Francis Galton, for instance, complains that ‘it is really a great drawback to African explorings that a traveller cannot become friendly with a chief without being requested and teased to receive a spare wife or a daughter in marriage, and umbrage taken if he does not consent’. Galton finds the Herero ‘very hospitable in this way’.⁵

Any children conceived as the result of an *oupanga* relationship would be regarded ‘as legitimate offspring by the acknowledged husbands, the social fathers’, although on occasion the biological father might request and receive legal paternity of his child

¹ Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 28.

² Vedder, *South West Africa*, 325–26.

³ Hartmann, ‘Sexual Encounters’, 152.

⁴ Hartmann, ‘Sexual Encounters’, 140.

⁵ Galton, quoted in Hartmann, ‘Sexual Encounters’, 141–42.

with a gift of cattle to his friend.¹ Maharero evidently looked upon the offspring of an *oupanga* partner—such as Joseph Grendon appears to have been—as belonging properly to him. In 1876, he complained to a visiting diplomat from the Cape Colony, that ‘whites come into the country, as they represent, by consent of British Government, “marry” Damara [or, properly, Herero] women, have children, and then leave them, taking away the children, and paying the mother something by way of compensation’.² It is noteworthy that the chief voices no objection to white males begetting progeny by African women: rather it is their abandonment of these women and the unlawful removal of their children that he finds objectionable.

Prior to Germany’s imperial land-grab of southwest Africa in the 1880s, perhaps the majority of white males there cohabited with Khoi, Oorlams, Baster, Herero, or Ovambo wives. Mixed-race unions drew little adverse criticism—except from those missionaries who considered them immoral. Besides Kongo kingdom, Swaziland, and Zululand, Robert Grendon might have cited the apposite case of his childhood home, Damaraland, in rebuttal of Hertslet’s unsubstantiated claim that ‘the great bulk of the natives dislike, and are opposed to miscegenation’.³ Perhaps he avoids doing so for fear that a lapse into autobiography would result, which might mar the air of objective detachment his polemic needs if it is to accomplish its aim.

Throughout his life, in Damaraland and elsewhere, Robert Grendon’s observations on the interplay of sexuality, race, and politics were firsthand and penetrating. He could with justice avow: ‘I know and *I have seen* more on that score than Dr Hertslet professes to define or reveal’.⁴ Personal observation, together with his study of precolonial African history, persuaded him that, ‘with few exceptions the history of Bantudom ... has been one steady course of miscegenation’.⁵



¹ Hartmann, ‘Sexual Encounters’, 145.

² Palgrave, *Commissions*, 12.

³ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

⁴ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:81 (8 April 1914) 6. Emphasis in original.

⁵ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

Joseph Grendon was born in Dublin in 1834.¹ He grew up a native of St Thomas Parish in Dublin County.² His surname—originally ‘de Grendon’—points suggestively to the Anglo-Norman conquest of Ireland, and so, like his son Robert, Joseph may have had to deal with a culturally- and politically-ambivalent identity. He appears to have been Anglican rather than Catholic.³ There is also no reason to believe that he flaunted ‘the green’; yet he could not conceal his Irish origin, and it was observed by others. The Swede, Capt. T. G. Een, who met Grendon in Ovamboland in 1866, notes that he was Irish as does the missionary, Carl Hugo Hahn.⁴ Hahn’s wife, Emma (1814–80), who fostered Grendon’s children from 1870 to 1872, refers to his ‘Irish enthusiasm’.⁵ On the other hand, Grendon’s occasional employer, C. J. Andersson, who makes several references to him in his diaries, passes over his Irishness, while he describes another Irish employee as a ‘highly imaginative native of the Emerald Isle’.⁶

According to Julinda Hoskins (1917–2005), her great-grandfather Joseph Grendon left Ireland when he was ‘only eighteen years of age’—*i.e.*, *circa* 1852 or 1853, or a few years after the Potato Famine (1845–47).⁷ This detail dovetails nicely with British Army records, which indicate that he enlisted at Liverpool on 18 October 1853.⁸ In the nineteenth century, burgeoning Liverpool was the first port of call for many emigrant Irish. The same document describes Joseph’s occupation as that of ‘labourer’—which fact, along with his junior rank, would seem to debunk the oral

¹ Joseph Grendon’s death notice gives his age as ‘92 years 6 months’ at the time of his death on 9 Sept. 1926. He was therefore born around March 1834 (KAB, MOOC 6/9/3022 ref. 12486). This document is slightly at odds with Grendon’s discharge papers from the British Army in India, where his age in late 1859 is shown as twenty-four. If the latter document is followed, his year of birth is 1835. I have followed the death notice in the Cape Town Archives, because of its greater precision.

² Grendon, Joseph. Military discharge papers, 1859–60. (British Library: India Office Records IOR/L/MIL/11/281/674).

³ Wolfram Hartmann (‘Sexual Encounters’, 157) believes Grendon to have been Catholic, but he presents no evidence to this effect. Grendon’s sons are entered as adherents of the ‘English Church’ in the Zonnebloem College admission register (Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2). His daughter, Mary Ann, was ‘very Church of England’, according to her grandniece, Lena Maryann Dunnett (Interview, 9 Nov. 2005). In view of the role played in Irish history by William of Orange, it seems unlikely that an Irish Catholic would have named one of his sons William, as Grendon did.

⁴ Een, *Memories*, 68 (The editors of the English translation point out that through the mistaken typesetting of a single character in the original Swedish edition, Grendon’s nationality is given as Icelandic, but the author clearly means Irish); ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 358: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 348: Emma to her sister Matilda, Okahandja, 23 Sept. 1872.

⁶ Andersson, *Notes of Travel*, 95.

⁷ J. Hoskins notebook 2. Apparently ignorant of the years that he spent in India, Mrs Hoskins is mistaken in thinking that Joseph Grendon went directly to Damaraland.

⁸ Grendon, Joseph. Military discharge papers, 1859–60 (British Library: India Office Records IOR/L/MIL/11/281/674).

tradition that he hailed from a ‘Grendon Hall’ or ‘Grendon Castle’ in Ireland.¹ By the same token, he is unlikely to have been a remittance man, as suggested by one of his descendents.²

Grendon served six years in ‘Her Majesty’s Indian Army’, and so was stationed in India during the Indian (Sepoy) Mutiny of 1857–58. That campaign over, he claimed his discharge in 1859, ‘being unwilling to serve in H. M.’s Indian Forces’. The last date on his discharge is 26 January 1860. He had served in the 3rd Madras European Regiment (also known as the 3rd Madras Fusiliers), and his discharge was signed at Fort St George, Madras. His ‘general conduct as a Soldier’ is described as having been ‘Good’, and his physical appearance is reduced to four elements: height (5 feet $5\frac{5}{8}$ inches), hair complexion (light brown), visage (fresh), and eyes (grey). He was still a private (No. 478 of his Regiment), when along with more than 50,000 others, he received the Indian Mutiny medal. The Prince of Wales remarked upon this medal when he spotted Grendon wearing it—presumably at a parade of military veterans—during a Royal Visit to Cape Town in the 1920s.³

The white and coloured branches of the Grendon family both remember that their ancestor was a soldier before settling in Damaraland. Cape Town’s Grendons remember their ancestor’s involvement in the Indian Mutiny, but Julinda Hoskins of Pietermaritzburg, although she states that ‘when he left the army, he went to Damaraland’, confuses the British Army with the German, no doubt assuming that since Damaraland subsequently fell under the German Imperial yoke, the Army to which her great-aunt Mary Ann Grendon used to refer when recalling the family’s history must have been German.⁴

Prior to the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869, shipping between Britain and her eastern possessions rounded Africa at the Cape of Good Hope. It is quite possible

¹ The fact that this legend survives quite independently among descendents of both Joseph Grendon’s white and his coloured families—who lost contact with each other three or four generations ago—suggests that it originated in Joseph Grendon himself. To be fair to Joseph, the possibility should be recognized that he did not mean to associate himself personally with the eponymous ‘Hall’ or ‘Castle’. He may merely have intended to indicate that his family were a sept of an ancient family that once lived there. There is a Grendon Hall in Northamptonshire; I have not been able to trace one in Ireland.

² Interview: John Grendon, 4 Oct. 2006; interview: Jane Mackenzie, 27 May 2006.

³ Grendon, Joseph. Military discharge papers, 1859–60 (British Library: India Office Records IOR/L/MIL/11/281/674); Day, ‘Indian Mutiny Medal Roll’ (online); interview: John Grendon, 4 Oct. 2006.

⁴ J. Hoskins notebook 1.

that Grendon went ashore at Cape Town on his ‘homeward’ journey from India. Perhaps it was here where he learned that gainful employment might be had in ‘Damaraland’, then still ‘a black man’s land’—to use his son Robert’s expression—in southwest Africa (present-day Namibia).

Several Cape Town merchants built their business empires by outfitting hunting and trading expeditions to regions beyond the Colony’s borders. Snug behind respectable façades, they accrued and dispensed the venture capital necessary to launch these costly undertakings. They supplied the ‘kafir truck’ (trade goods), the Cape brandy, the guns, and the ammunition. They also doubled as wholesale purchasers of ivory, hides, feathers, guano, and copper, etc. At a later period, Joseph Grendon describes these Cape entrepreneurs as ‘hav[ing] made their fortunes’ by running ‘brandy and other intoxicating liquors from the Cape for trading purposes with the natives, chiefly Hottentots and Bastards’, of southwest Africa. While these men luxuriated within Table Mountain’s reassuring shadow, ‘the poor trader’ in the remote interior ‘went to the wall’,¹ although it was he who had borne the burden and the heat of the long day.

A motley assortment of white newcomers turned up in southwest Africa in the mid-nineteenth century. Some came to win souls for Christ; others to strip the region of its marketable natural products—pre-eminently ivory, but also guano, cattle, hides, ostrich feathers, and copper.² Some made fortunes—and lost them with equal facility. Many married—or merely cohabited with—local black women. The adventurers, who treated the centrally-located Otjimbingwe mission station as their base, ranged as far afield as southern Angola, the Okavango delta, the Zambezi River, and Lake Ngami. In general, they were a rough, hard-living, heavy-drinking, larger-than-life lot, who dramatically increased the potential for violence in southwest Africa through their wholesale importation of guns, ammunition, and intoxicants. Emma Hahn refers to them as ‘a certain class of white men [whose] loss will rather be a blessing than otherwise to baptised and heathen’.³

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40.

² Diamonds were discovered at a later period.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 349: Emma to her sister Matilda, Okahandja, 23 Sept. 1872.

Joseph Grendon was about twenty-five when he arrived in Damaraland in 1860.¹ His first employer on record was the big-game hunter Smuts, a Cape colonial.² From February to April 1861, Smuts was at Otjimbingwe, at which time Grendon was likely in his employ. In July, the explorer-artist, Thomas Baines complains that Smuts and Cator have allowed an Oorlams chief to bully them into paying ‘for liberty to pass through’ his territory. They have been ‘coerced’ despite their earlier bravado about never succumbing to extortion. Because of their ‘unmanly submission’, they have ‘establish[ed] a precedent which the Hottentots will not be slow to understand and make use of’.³ Later in the year, Smuts and his partner Cator hunted in the interior. Grendon may have accompanied them on that occasion; alternatively Smuts may have detailed him to look after his interests at or near Otjimbingwe.⁴

In evidence given before a Cape Colonial commission of enquiry into the ‘Affairs of Damaraland’ in 1881, Grendon narrated an incident that occurred shortly after his arrival in Damaraland—most probably in 1861.⁵ The narrative is framed, in that Grendon repeats how he recounted it in about 1869 to ‘Amadamap’—the Nama name for Riarua (c.1825–99; plates 2a, 2b), Maharero’s half-brother, one of his chief councillors, and the captain of his troops.⁶ (The missionary Viehe calls him Maharero’s ‘Bismarck’.⁷) Grendon reminded Amadamap of the occasion of his first visit to Okahandja, then dominated by the Afrikaner Oorlams—partly-Westernized Khoi immigrants from the Cape Colony who treated some of the Herero tribes as vassals:

I was a servant to a white man. In the evening my master desired me to make coffee, put stools, &c., for the Hottentot [*i.e.*, Khoi] Chief and people when they came down to visit him. You, Maharero, and your brothers came down also, but did not come near the wagon, fearing the

¹ Since he left Damaraland for good in January 1878, and claimed to have been ‘seventeen or eighteen years in the country’, his arrival in Damaraland cannot postdate 1860 (Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40, 42). Since he was discharged from the British Army in India early in 1860, his arrival in Damaraland cannot predate that year.

² Andersson records that Grendon was in Smuts’s service in 1861 (Andersson Papers: Diary, 26 Dec. 1861).

³ Baines, *Explorations*, 49–50, 72–73.

⁴ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 99.

⁵ Since Maharero abandoned Okahandja in 1863, the incident cannot postdate that year. Grendon’s employer seems to have been Smuts, whose employ he left late in 1861 (Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 43; Andersson Papers: Diary, 26 Dec. 1861).

⁶ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 438, 506.

⁷ Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 31.



Plate 2b: Amadamap (Riarua),
with whom Joseph Grendon
formed a friendly relationship.

Photograph, circa 1876.

Hottentots, your masters; but when they left you came to the wagon and begged tobacco, &c., of the white man, even from me you begged.¹

The old *kaptein* (chief) of the Afrikaner tribe,² Jonker Afrikaner, died on 18 August 1861, and the ‘Hottentot Chief’ to whom Grendon refers may have been his son, Christian Afrikaner. Grendon’s employer—probably Smuts—was at Okahandja in order to trade with the Afrikaner ‘Hottentots’.

Maharero, then a relatively minor Herero chief, had reason for ‘fearing the Hottentots’. The traveller James Chapman states that the Afrikaner Oorlams ‘often butcher whole villages of these wretched [Herero] people, who are scarcely ever known to resist’.³ In the massacre of Okahandja (1850), perpetrated by Jonker and his men, only the village of Tjamuaha—Maharero’s father, who died in 1861—was spared, on account of a pact he had made with the Afrikaners.⁴ Emma Hahn was present in the country when ‘no less than 31 villages of Ovaherero’ were annihilated by the Afrikaners.⁵ The carnage was terrible. While alive, Herero women had their hands and feet hacked off so that the Oorlams and their allies might more easily remove their copper bangles.⁶ By allying themselves with the enemy, Tjamuaha’s people purchased a reprieve, but a very insecure one.

Maharero deemed the begging of tobacco in no wise demeaning of his chiefly status. The missionary Brincker remembered that Maharero frequently entreated him to supply it.⁷ In his conversation with Amadamap, Grendon makes the point that even though he was himself no more than a personal servant at the time of his first visit to Okahandja, Maharero and his principal men had thought nothing of harassing him for tobacco. Their act seems to him to betoken the debased condition of Maharero’s people under Oorlams suzerainty. Such was their abject state when he arrived in Damaraland.

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 43.

² I am aware that Brigitte Lau (‘Emergence of Kommando Politics in Namaland’, 23, 26, 30, 37, *etc.*) takes issue with the use of ‘tribe’ to describe restructured social groupings of nineteenth-century Namibia. She does not, however, offer any viable alternative.

³ Chapman, *Travels* i:330.

⁴ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 218–19.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 117: Emma to her sister Rose, New Barmen, 6 Dec. 1850. Some revisionist historiographers dispute the objectivity of primary texts from this period.

⁶ C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:945: 25 Dec. 1856; Chapman, *Travels*, i:334.

⁷ Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 28.



While in Smuts's service, or very shortly after leaving it, Joseph Grendon met Maria, a Herero woman. Julinda Hoskins describes her great-grandmother as 'Maria Maharero who was the daughter of the Emperor of Damaraland'. Grendon had been in Damaraland 'but a short while when he met—and was invited to dine with' Maharero, 'then Emperor of Damaraland. That was when he met and fell in love with [Maharero's] daughter Maria.' Maria was a 'dark beauty'; Grendon 'asked for her hand in marriage, which was given him'. Maharero grew 'to like and trust young Grendon'. 'The old man ... invited him to stay at his court.' Accepting the invitation, Grendon 'stayed on for many years, helping, advising, and also teaching many'.¹

Unknowingly, Mrs Hoskins—who never visited Namibia—describes in some detail an *oupanga* relationship between Maharero and her Irish ancestor. An 'Emperor', his 'court', an invitation to 'dine'—these are, of course, fanciful embellishments. If there was an 'Emperor' in southwest Africa in 1860–61, it would have been the aging Jonker Afrikaner. As concerns the invitation to 'dine', Maharero was notorious amongst the whites for his complete disregard for table manners and his 'quite ravenous appetite'.² Grendon may have accepted an invitation to share a meal with Maharero, and on that occasion he may have become enamoured of one of Maharero's daughters, but we may dismiss any mental images of napkins and cutlery. And while Mrs Hoskins's account assigns to Grendon the initiative in asking for Maria's 'hand in marriage', it is altogether possible that Maharero himself may have been the first to suggest the relationship. This would be in keeping with what Robert Grendon describes as the 'policy of nearly every Bantu Chief especially when there is something to "hook"'.³ Robert Grendon takes a less roseate view of such relationships than does his grandniece, Julinda Hoskins. As he sees things,

any chief if offered more than the ordinary number of cattle as the price of 'lobola' will gladly and instantly part with his daughter. How much more so when the stranger is in love with such a daughter? Bull's flesh is the price of woman amongst the primitive abantu.—The father will

¹ J. Hoskins notebooks 1 and 2. Mrs Hoskins recalls what her great-aunt, Mary Ann Grendon used to tell her, but having no personal experience of Namibia, she introduces some anachronisms into her story. For instance, she wrongly assumes the identity of 'Maharero' (c.1820–90) and his son, 'Samuel Maharero', born c.1854–56 (Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 3). This is a mistake that Mary Ann herself would not have made, but it can be forgiven in her grand-niece.

² Een, *Memories*, 43.

³ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

resign his daughter into the hands of the biggest black blackguard if the requisite number of cattle is forthcoming. How much more so to a white man in whom there is no guile? Should the man subsequently desert, the father of the girl does not howl over the matter, but simply thrusts her (*‘hloma’*) upon another man, from whom he demands a like or less amount of cattle, as the case may be.¹

Robert Grendon acknowledges that a guileless white ‘stranger’ might feel genuine love for the proffered ‘daughter’ of a black chief, and that he might in good faith enter into a conjugal union with her.

This is not to disparage Mrs Hoskins’s narrative, which is in some important respects corroborated by Joseph Grendon’s own recorded testimony before the 1881 commission of inquiry. Both she and her great-grandfather refer to Maharero as ‘the old man’.² Mrs Hoskins states that Maharero ‘invited [Grendon] to stay at his court’; Grendon testifies that Maharero ‘had invited me there’, and again that he ‘was on [Maharero’s] place by his invitation’.³ Mrs Hoskins states that Grendon played an advisory role; while Grendon claims: ‘I knew the people [at Okahandja] thoroughly and could advise them.’⁴

No independent corroboration has emerged of the Natal Grendons’ firm belief that they are descended from Maharero. On the other hand, no persuasive evidence has been presented to discredit the family tradition in this regard.⁵ By the end of 1863, Maharero had already taken his ninth wife, and he may have had numerous daughters.⁶ Whether one of these was named Maria is unknown. He did have a niece named Maria, the daughter of his brother Tjomorutara alias Nainguava.⁷ Maria Grendon therefore remains poised at the limen of utter obscurity. Her Herero name is unknown. ‘Maria’ is the name that survives in the record-book of Zonnebloem College, Cape Town, where her sons were enrolled in November 1877; it also survives independently in the jottings of her great-granddaughter, Julinda Hoskins.⁸

¹ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 45.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39.

⁴ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 41.

⁵ It should however be noted that Dag Henrichsen, who has made a close study of precolonial Namibia, considers it highly improbable that Maria was Maharero’s biological daughter (email, 8 April 2008).

⁶ Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 28.

⁷ Heywood, *Warriors*, 60: ‘The Maharero Family; Narrated by A. Kaputu, Windhoek, March 1985’.

⁸ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.1: Ms record book: 3 Nov. 1877.

Whether by Christian or traditional African rites, or by a combination of both, Joseph and Maria married. If Joseph paid bride-price to Maria's kinsfolk, he will not have been the first European in Africa to do so, as Robert Grendon makes clear in his 'Miscegenation' polemic of 1914.¹ Perhaps Robert's father, Joseph Grendon, paid the 'requisite number of cattle' to Maria's father—the means by which marriage was ratified in Herero society.² Whether or not Joseph was innocent of 'guile', he appears to have behaved more honourably toward his Herero family than did the majority of southwest Africa's white immigrants who cohabited with indigenous women.³

In his will of 1882, Grendon refers to Englishwoman Sarah Jane Spedding as his 'wife by second marriage'. If this expression is taken at face value, his union with Maria may likewise have been one of marriage according to Christian rites.⁴ In a long letter to his wife, Hugo Hahn—who seldom passed over opportunities to castigate cases of sin—makes several, mostly favourable, references to Joseph Grendon.⁵ Although Hahn finds Grendon entangled in a 'wild marriage' (*wilde ehe*) such as he deplures, he specifically acquits the Irishman of dishonourable conduct towards his mixed-race children.⁶

As an adult, Robert Grendon repeatedly asserts that properly-contracted marriages between whites and blacks are 'honourable and upright'.⁷ Sin enters in only where sexual relationships are exploitative, one-sided, and governed by lust. He reprehends the hypocrisy of a legal system that permits white men to vent their lust upon black women, while it proscribes unions between white women and black men:

It is a crime for black men to cohabit with white women, but no ill for white men to cohabit with black women whom they invariably meet in secret. These unfortunate victims to lust are in the end cast out and rejected by them who have dishonoured them, and they are often dismissed

¹ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6. In Robert Grendon's estimation, to declare a man free from 'guile' is high praise. The expression 'in whom there is no guile' is borrowed from Jesus' description of Nathanael (John 1:47). The expression 'no guile' appears also in Grendon's article, 'A Worthy Philanthropist' (*Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 3).

² Viehe, 'Some Customs', 47–48.

³ Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 301; E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 409.

⁴ KAB, MOOC 6/9/3022 ref. 12486.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 301–08: Emma to her children, Otjimbingwe, 4 Sept. 1866. This contains a transcription of Hugo Hahn's letter.

⁶ 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 388–89: 'Reise nach Ovamboland im Jahre 1866, von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn. Fortsetzung.'

⁷ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6. He also claims, correctly or not, that under Natal law, 'where a valid marriage between a white man and black woman has been contracted the offspring of such marriage hold the status of European' ('Degrading Marriage', *Ilanga* 2:71 (19 Aug. 1904) 4).

with the burden of an illegitimate child who is viewed with contempt and scorn by many with whom he associates.¹

Grendon clearly does not have his own parents in mind when he describes such exploitative cohabitations. His father Joseph did not ‘meet in secret’ with Maria; she was neither ‘rejected’ nor ‘dishonoured’ by him; and Robert does not consider himself to be ‘an illegitimate child’.

South African performance poet Phillippa Yaa de Villiers was inspired to write a poem, ‘For Robert Grendon’, after reading an article on him by Tim Couzens.² In it, she sees Robert’s parents Joseph and Maria as ‘two lovers’ who

questioned the semantics of their
relative races but debated,
under the covers, other
interpretations of
‘all mankind are brothers’.³

‘Under the covers’—calico or *kaross*—may connote clandestinity, which in the arsenal of Robert Grendon’s polemical adversary, L. E. Hertslet, becomes a charge of illicit secrecy—of guilty aberrance. Third amongst Hertslet’s twelve objections to mixed-race sexual unions, is his assertion that ‘such mixture is usually secret and illicit and seldom permanent’.⁴ To this, Grendon replies:

O how prejudice defiles certain white men’s hearts! Lastly on this head—if in this sub-continent such mixture between black and white be usually secret, illicit, and seldom permanent, tell me in the name of truth whereabouts on this planet, social mixture between white and white is absolutely open—non-illicit—permanent.⁵

Grendon shows that Hertslet’s argument is intellectually dishonest and easily overturned. He seeks to vindicate ‘honourable and upright miscegenation’ in the face of Hertslet’s damaging misrepresentation of it.⁶ So doing, he exonerates his parents

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

² Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’.

³ ‘For Robert Grendon’, in: de Villiers, *Taller than Buildings*, 18. Reproduced here with the poet’s permission.

⁴ ‘Miscegenation: L. E. H.’s Reply’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:74 (18 Feb. 1914) 5.

⁵ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

⁶ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

Joseph and Maria of all wrongdoing in having brought him and his siblings into the world.

Because Robert Grendon is the product of a mixed-race marriage, the nature of marital love in an interracial context is one of abiding interest to him. As shown elsewhere in this thesis, his adult Swedenborgianism—with its doctrines of ‘conjugal love’ (*amore conjugiali*), the internal Man, and the *Maximus Homo*—led him to believe that wholesome romantic attraction is no respecter of somatic externals, and that the offspring of mixed-race unions are ‘a unit in the Body of Man Universal’ with a ‘mission to fulfil’ and a ‘status in the kingdom of Uses’.¹ Robert believes that ‘love cannot and will not be frustrated in its desire or determination to conjoin with the object of its quest’.² Racial purists may pontificate from a platform of misguided virtue, but ‘miscegenation’ will continue, because while ‘the tongue declares one thing, love and nature assert another’.³

The example of his own father likely confirmed this principle in Robert’s mind. He takes strong exception when Hertslet asserts that whites are ‘bound to oppose miscegenation as being harmful to both races’.⁴ No ‘harm’ has accrued to Robert as a result of his parents’ marriage. He knows that his own intellect and capacity for virtue are quite the match of Hertslet’s. He need play second fiddle to no man, white or black.

He further dismisses Hertslet’s objection that it is unnatural for ‘civilized’ and ‘uncivilized’ to couple. Hertslet’s distinction is contrived, and bears no relevance in the theatre of love. He defies ‘Dr Hertslet to draw the line of exact demarcation between the “civilized and the uncivilized”’. In so far as the spirit is concerned, [Grendon knows] of no such dividing line.’⁵ Around 1923, Robert married the Swazi woman, Gwilikili (Victoria) Dlamini.⁶ In so doing, he acted out his personal conviction that no racial hurdle should stand between ‘love’ and ‘the object of its quest’.

¹ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

² ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:81 (8 April 1914) 6.

³ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

⁴ ‘A Question for L. E. H.’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:73 (11 Feb. 1914) 6.

⁵ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:81 (8 April 1914) 6.

⁶ Interview: Aurora Malumisa (Robert Grendon’s daughter), Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 86.

Mary Ann Grendon, born in 1861 or 1862, was Joseph and Maria's first child.¹ In later life, she remembered her father Joseph with fondness, and took pride in both her Irish and her Herero ancestry. She frequently used to remind younger generations of the Grendon family that they came of 'royal' Herero stock. Until her death in Pietermaritzburg in 1944, Mary Ann's table talk was replete with references to Maharero and 'Damaraland'. 'I'm a princess in my own birthright', was her frequent saying.²



On 26 December 1861, Charles John Andersson (1827–67) arrived back in Walvis Bay after a business trip to the Cape. In his diary he expresses disappointment at discovering that 'Smuts has got no elephants', and records in the same entry that Joseph Grendon has left Smuts's service and is 'anxious to be re-engaged'. Grendon had already accumulated unspecified trade items, which Andersson purchased from him for the not-inconsiderable sum of £53.4.1. Andersson is considering engaging Grendon to accompany him on 'the Cape trip'—an overland cattle drive that he has in prospect.³

Few figures stand out more conspicuously in Namibian history than Andersson, who was a leading trader there from the mid-1850s to the mid-1860s. Born in Sweden, he took his mother's name, his father being a Welshman, Llewellyn Lloyd. In 1850, Andersson came to southwest Africa as an assistant to the scientist-explorer Francis Galton (1822–1911), who was a cousin to Charles Darwin.⁴ The two men travelled extensively, becoming in 1851 the first Europeans on record to visit Ondonga (modern Ondangwa) in southern Ovamboland.⁵ When Galton sailed home early in 1852, Andersson opted to stay behind in order to explore little-known tracts around Lake Ngami. His travel books, such as *Lake Ngami* (1856) and *The Okavango River* (1861) introduced southwest Africa to the popular imagination of the English-speaking peoples.

¹ She died 23 April 1944, aged eighty-two. NAB, Pietermaritzburg Death Register 23/03/1944–17/07/1944, entry 649 (24 April 1944).

² J. Hoskins notebook 1; interviews: Lena Dunnett, 9 Nov. 2005; Valerie Grantham, 9 Nov. 2005, 16 Nov. 2005, 15 Dec. 2005, 28 Aug. 2006; Cyril Hoskins, 12 Nov. 2005; Ellen Lundall, 2 Dec. 2005; Emily de Lang, 26 Jan. 2007.

³ Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 35: 26 Dec. 1861; Andersson Papers: Diary, 26 Dec. 1861.

⁴ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 42.

⁵ Stals, 'Aanraking', 233, 250.

In a supreme act of self-promotion, Andersson also contrived to have himself appointed supreme ruler of the various Herero tribes, whom he and Hugo Hahn sought to weld into a single nation.¹ In 1863, Maharero and other leading Herero approved one of the most extraordinary contractual documents in the history of European meddling in southern Africa:

Notice is hereby given that we, the undersigned, chiefs and councillors of Hereroland, have appointed, of our own free will and accord, Charles John Andersson as regent and military commander for the period of his natural life, or for as long as he desires to hold office. We promise to be faithful to him, and to obey him unconditionally in all matters concerning his control over the internal and external circumstances of the country. Charles John Andersson is to be responsible only to God and his own conscience.²

It is more than coincidental that Andersson was both chief supplier to the Herero arsenal and chief ‘military commander’ of the Herero ‘nation’. Conrad may not have had him in mind as the archetype of his nebulously evil character Kurtz, but in his ruthless ‘methods’, Andersson bears striking resemblance to that demigod. Like Kurtz, Andersson ‘grubb[ed] for ivory in the wretched bush’; like Kurtz, he ‘recite[d] poetry’; and like Kurtz, he ‘got the tribe to follow him’.³ Andersson also died like Kurtz, a fever-racked cripple, in a remote part of Africa.

It appears that Andersson did engage Grendon. On 31 December, five days after sailing into Walvis Bay, Andersson had embarked his ivory for shipment to the Cape. The same day, he sent Grendon off in company with John Rolfe—another of his servants—possibly with instructions to transport some of Andersson’s recently-arrived trade goods into the interior.⁴

In April 1862, Andersson drove four thousand head of livestock—cattle and possibly also sheep—to the Cape. He was escorted part-way by some volunteers from Otjimbingwe, who were to ensure his safe conduct through hostile Oorlams territory.⁵ This seems to be the ‘Cape trip’ for which Andersson earlier considered contracting Grendon to accompany him. On 30 April, in the vicinity of Rehoboth, Grendon ‘killed

¹ Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 117. Hahn and Andersson subsequently fell out.

² Quoted in: Vedder, *South West Africa*, 340.

³ Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, 61, 91, 80.

⁴ Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 36: 31 Dec. 1861, 1 Jan. 1862.

⁵ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 47; Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 52: 18 Feb. 1862.

a couple of springboks' for the pot.¹ At Rehoboth, Andersson's armed escort turned back for Otjimbingwe. Whether Grendon returned with the Otjimbingwe Volunteers or accompanied the drive all the way to the Cape, Andersson's diary does not say.



Around the start of 1863, Maharero and his council resolved to evacuate Okahandja and settle at Otjimbingwe. This move appears to have been strategically motivated: it was likely hoped that proximity to—and alliance with—the white traders would aid Maharero's people in their bid to shake off Oorlams hegemony.² Otjimbingwe soon became the rallying-place for the scattered Herero tribes, who purchased arms and ammunition there from the traders, especially from Andersson. From this time onward, Maharero's repute as a leader began to increase among the Herero tribes.³

Maharero's flight from Okahandja sparked a lengthy period (1863–70) of sporadic clashes between the Oorlams and Herero—a period labelled the 'Herero War of Independence' by an earlier generation of historians. In less than five years, the Oorlams staged no fewer than three separate attacks on Otjimbingwe—attacks that the Herero did not fail to avenge. Since it lay on Damaraland's frontier with Namaland, it bore the brunt of Khoi (Oorlam and Nama) aggression.

The warring peoples were both pastoralists. In an arid country such as Namibia, competition over access to herds and grazing land could easily escalate into armed conflict. As Joseph Grendon later observes, the dispute between Herero and Nama 'was chiefly the boundary line'. In all their transactions with one another, neither side acted in good faith. 'To do justice to both sides', Grendon remarks, 'the Hottentots are very bad, and so are the Damaras; but I live with the Damaras, and naturally I speak for them.'⁴ It is of interest that although he had settled in Cape Town about three years before making this declaration, Grendon still speaks as though he lives amongst the Herero and feels duty-bound to represent their case to the Cape Government.

The first assault on the mission settlement occurred on 15 June 1863. The fighting was fierce, and even the mission buildings did not go unscathed. Ultimately, the

¹ Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 70: 30 April 1862.

² Vedder, *South West Africa*, 331–32.

³ Irle, *Die Herero*, 178.

⁴ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44–45.

attackers were routed with considerable loss of life.¹ Tensions ran high at Otjimbingwe and throughout Damaraland after the Oorlams attack. Andersson reports that ‘scarcely a day now passed without rumours that a *kommando* of Hottentots was *en route* to attack Otjimbingue; and it was no longer doubted, or denied, that they intended to involve [him] in the general destruction contemplated’.²

We do not know how Joseph Grendon figures in this armed struggle between Oorlams and Herero. Given his experience in the British Army and his gunrunning in southwest Africa, he would seem not to have been squeamish about taking up arms. His little household included his Herero wife and their baby daughter. Marriage to Maria might quite naturally have led him to make common cause with the Herero people. His association both with Maharero—his personal ally in an *oupanga* relationship?—and with Andersson may have prompted him to lend active support to the Herero cause. Grendon can scarcely have escaped some level of involvement. For safety sake, he would have had either to remove his family from the conflict zone or to ensure that they all remained within Otjimbingwe’s defences in times of heightened peril. According to Brigitte Lau, Grendon returned from the hunting fields with 2600 pounds of ivory in June 1864,³ so perhaps he was absent from the conflict at least part of the time.

Early in March 1864, Andersson’s friend and lieutenant, Frederick Green, at the head of 1,400 Herero, sallied out of Otjimbingwe, determined on carrying the war to the Oorlam gates. Whether or not Joseph Grendon was amongst Green’s Otjimbingwe ‘volunteers’ is not known. Emma Hahn reports that ‘several whites’ formed part of the army.⁴ Also in 1864, Andersson and Green together with Maharero staged yet another attack on the Oorlams. Three thousand Herero warriors were supported by a ragtag assemblage including ‘some vagrants and Basters’ as well as a few whites. The Haybittles, Newton, and Birmingham are mentioned by name, whereas Grendon is

¹ Vedder, ‘Herero’, 159; E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 253: Emma to her sister Rose, Gütersloh, 25 Sept. 1863; Vedder, *South West Africa*, 336; Andersson, *Notes of Travel*, 77.

² Andersson, *Notes of Travel*, 80.

³ Lau, ‘Emergence of Kommando Politics’, 256 footnote.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 273: Emma to her mother, Sarah Hone, Otjimbingwe, 13 April 1864.

not.¹ Andersson fully expected that together they would ‘beat the Hottentots into fits’.²

On 22 June, battle was joined at Gam-Gam. Although the Herero won the day and stolen cattle were retrieved, the outcome was far from favourable for Andersson, and the Oorlams were not dealt the crushing blow he had meant to deliver. He was severely wounded when a bullet struck his right leg below the knee.³ The shot crippled him, and he was in constant discomfort until his death—a consequence of fever—three years later.⁴

By late August, Andersson’s condition had stabilized so that he could be brought back to Otjimbingwe from the subsidiary mission station where he had been tended after receiving his battle wound. On Saturday, 29 October, he records in his diary: ‘Grendon came to visit me. Has moved up to his place, his corn being nearly ripe for the sickle. He looks very well.’⁵

Earlier that year, upon their arrival in Otjimbingwe after an extended furlough and fund-raising visit to Europe, Hugo and Emma Hahn discovered Joseph Grendon ‘living near Otjimbingwe’.⁶ Besides farming, he was likely also trading with Maharero’s people. What Andersson describes as Grendon’s ‘corn’ was likely wheat, which was grown at various points in the bed of the Swakop River at this time.⁷ In 1865, the ‘whole bed of the river [at Otjimbingwe was] one corn field’.⁸ In referring to Grendon’s moving ‘up to his place’, Andersson employs the word ‘place’ in the South African vernacular sense, to mean ‘farm’.⁹ It is also possible that Grendon kept an outlying ‘cattle post’ like other whites, and the Herero before them.

Even now, Andersson was periodically laid up with agonizing pains in his bullet-shattered leg. Grendon’s visit may have been prompted by courtesy, but equally it

¹ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 344.

² Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 123: 2 June 1864.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 278: Emma to her mother, Otjimbingwe, 24 July 1864.

⁴ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 6–7.

⁵ Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 165: 29 Oct. 1864.

⁶ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 306: Emma to her children, Otjimbingwe, 4 Sept. 1866. The Hahn had arrived in Otjimbingwe on 12 March 1864.

⁷ De Vylder, *Journal*, 83: 2 July 1873; Vedder, *South West Africa*, 357. Emma Hahn uses the word ‘corn’ to mean wheat; other grains she refers to as ‘Indian corn’ (maize), and ‘Caffer corn’ (sorghum) (*Letters*, 66: Emma to her mother, Windhoek, 8 Feb. 1844).

⁸ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 284: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 25 Sept. 1865.

⁹ This vernacular sense transliterates the Dutch *plaats* (*plaas* in Afrikaans) See *DSAE*.

may have involved small business, because two weeks after the first visit, on 14 November 1864, Andersson records that ‘Joe Grendon called to pay his little account’.¹

On 22 December, he writes: ‘Poor Joe! The Damaras have stolen two oxen from him, and now he is at his wit’s end. It seems nearly certain that he succeeded in tracing them to a certain Damara “werft”.’² By this time, Grendon had discovered that cattle-raiding was as much a part of Herero culture as it was of the ancient Celtic. If, as seems probable, he kept oxen for draught purposes, the loss of a pair may have meant that the remaining span was inadequate to draw his wagon on trading trips. Andersson’s remark that Grendon is ‘at his wit’s end’ suggests that this loss is just the culmination of a series of setbacks that he has recently suffered.



Because of political instability in Damara- and Namaland, Andersson considered it expedient to redirect his trading and hunting operations to Ovamboland. He determined to establish a permanent trading post at Ondonga, and to throw all his resources into making it profitable.³ As the crow flies, Ondonga lay more than three hundred miles to the north of Otjimbingwe. Since heavy wagons had to skirt east or west of Etosha Pan, the travelled distance was considerably longer.⁴ Ondonga village was where King Shikongo shaKalulu (c.1814–74), held court. A powerful ruler, he ordered the execution of anyone whom he judged to be a political threat. He was however friendly towards white traders like Andersson, because he wanted access to their weapons and other trade goods.⁵

On 20 February 1865, Andersson notes that he has ‘made J. Grendon an offer to go to the Ovampo Country for me to trade’. The journal entry is illegible in parts, but it seems that the terms of the proposed contract were a retainer of £3.10.0 per month, for a stipulated (illegible) number of months as well as commission of ‘5% on everything he purchases’. Andersson would also ‘allow [Grendon] one half of all Ivory obtained

¹ Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 173: 14 Nov. 1864.

² Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 184–85: 22 Dec. 1864.

³ Stals, ‘Aanraking’, 243.

⁴ Peltola, *Nakambale*, 47.

⁵ Namuhuja, *Ondonga Royal Kings*, 19–24.

from such work as repairing Guns, &c.’¹ It seems that Grendon would draw his pay off an account that Andersson kept in Cape Town.²

If Grendon accepted the offer, Andersson would have his ‘buck-waggon &c., &c.’ fetched up from Walvis Bay. In local idiom, the ‘buckwagon’ (Afrikaans: *bokwa*) was ‘a large transport wagon with a strong frame and rails, used for transporting heavy loads’.³ Evidently, the offer seemed good to Grendon, because the next day (21 February) Andersson records: ‘Joe, as I anticipated, has accepted my offer to trade for me in Ovampo-land. His term of service not to exceed 1½ year from the time of starting.’⁴ Grendon was probably relieved to escape the cattle thefts and other harassment that Andersson hints at in his diary two months earlier.

On 3 March, Andersson engaged ‘Spinnakop’ (*spinnekop*: Dutch, for ‘spider’) to ‘accompany Joe to Ondonga’.⁵ Spinnakop’s intended role is not stated here, but it later emerges that he was to serve Grendon as an interpreter.⁶ On the 6th, ‘Grendon signed his agreement’.⁷ On the 9th, he came to Andersson at Otjimbingwe and took delivery of his trade goods. Andersson notes that ‘Joe’ seemed ‘much delighted with his contemplated trip’.⁸ On the 13th, Andersson ‘had the cattle up for inspection. After giving off those destined for Grendon’s trip, Todd & Co.—Green &c. there only remained about 140 head—70 of which were oxen.’⁹

James R. Todd, to whom Andersson refers, had a Herero wife like Grendon. Andersson had outfitted Todd and Lewis in mid-1863 to hunt elephant in Ovamboland. Attacked in mid-1864 by a robber band led by Oorlams brigand Samuel, their goods and most of their oxen were plundered.¹⁰ After delivering a small load of ivory and feathers to Otjimbingwe in about January 1865, Todd and Lewis returned to the hunting fields of Ovamboland. The oxen to which Andersson refers in

¹ Andersson Papers: Diary, 20 Feb. 1865.

² Andersson Papers: Diary, 3 Dec. 1866.

³ *DSAE*.

⁴ Andersson Papers: Diary, 21 Feb. 1865.

⁵ Andersson Papers: Diary, 3 March 1865.

⁶ Andersson Papers: Green to Andersson, Ondonga, 7 Dec. 1865.

⁷ Andersson Papers: Diary, 6 March 1865.

⁸ Andersson Papers: Diary, 9 March 1865.

⁹ Andersson Papers: Diary, 13 March 1865.

¹⁰ De Vylder, *Journal*, 88n.

connection with Grendon's Ovambo trip may have been intended to replenish the stock that the partners had lost to Samuel's raid.¹

On 15 March 1865, Andersson writes: 'Grendon is come & gone. Poor fellow he is very unfit for managing Damaras. Had some trouble in getting him off. Thinks he is too heavily laden.'² In what respect Andersson considered Grendon 'unfit for managing Damaras' he does not state, but fourteen months later, he speculates that 'probably [Grendon's] cursed temper makes him unfit to deal with the chief [Shikongo] & the [Ovambo] people'.³

Grendon's indenture was to expire in mid-September 1866. Having seen him off to Ondonga, Andersson proceeded to Walvis Bay, where he set sail for Cape Town. Besides consulting surgeons about his leg and raising fresh capital for his Ovambo venture, he met a young Swedish master mariner, Capt. Thure Johan Gustaf Een, whom he took on as an employee, with a view to his eventually succeeding Grendon at the Ondonga base.⁴

Frederick Green made Ondonga his hunting base at the same time that Grendon settled there. Together, they have the distinction of being the first whites to trek to Ovamboland with the intention of establishing a permanent base there. Others were not far behind, however. By 1866, another Irishman, John Cain, had built a hut for himself and his Herero wife at the principal settlement of another Ovambo tribe.⁵

Joseph Grendon was accompanied to Ondonga by Maria and their daughter Mary Ann—then just two or three years of age.⁶ Maria gave birth to a second child, William, on 18 October 1865.⁷ Conceived in Damaraland, he was probably born in Ovamboland. Catherine Green, Frederick's seventeen-year-old white wife, who had

¹ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 111.

² Andersson Papers: Diary, 15 March 1865.

³ Andersson Papers: Diary, 11 May 1866.

⁴ Een, *Memories*, 5; 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 326: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn.

⁵ 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 379: 'Reise nach Ovamboland im Jahre 1866, von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn. Fortsetzung'; Stals, 'Aanraking', 243, 246.

⁶ Hugo Hahn implies this ('Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 389: 'Reise nach Ovamboland im Jahre 1866, von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn. Fortsetzung'). See also: Hartmann, 'Sexual Encounters', 157.

⁷ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

supplanted the Herero girl Betsey¹ in his bed, was also expecting a child. Just a fortnight after William Grendon's birth, while Green was away hunting, Catherine gave birth to their daughter Mary. In old age, as Mrs Mary Stroud, she told her tale:

By the time my father returned [from a hunting excursion] I had been born, with Chief Chikongo's wives in attendance. The chief was so delighted at the birth of the first white baby in his country that he sent my mother a good cow in milk and asked that the child should be named after him. In my early life I was generally called Chikongo.²

One of the first projects that Grendon undertook upon reaching Ondonga, his designated base, was to erect a European-style house—the first such in Ovamboland. This is 'still remembered [in Ovambo oral tradition] as the time when Europeans started building square houses instead of the local round edifices'.³ The house was sited a short ride from Shikongo's *werft*. According to Hahn who visited the dwelling the following year, it was located 'beneath a mighty Ozongongo tree and [had] a truly pleasant [*recht nett*] appearance. It [had] three rooms, and a veranda round about'.⁴ This little dwelling became the lively centre of social life for Ovamboland's hunter-trader community. Een describes the camaraderie that existed in and around this little house, and states that 'all the hunters were always welcome, whether invited or not'.⁵ When the first Finnish missionaries arrived at Ondonga in July 1870, Grendon's house became their first home in Ovamboland.⁶ By this time it was in a state of disrepair and the missionaries called it 'Grendon's ramshackle old house'.⁷

It appears that Joseph Grendon had been given instructions not to supply ammunition to any of the hunters other than those who were contractually obligated to Andersson. On 12 October, Frederick Green, then in Ondonga, addresses a complaint to Andersson:

I am given to understand that it is by your orders that Grendon is not allowed to assist any of the Hunters so of course we cannot attach any blame to him, but I may as well remark that in case

¹ Betsey cannot have been more than a child at the time. According to one online source (Hayes, 'Frederick Thomas Green') she was born about 1855. For mention of Betsey, see also: Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 301; E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 409.

² Quoted in: Green, *Lords of the Last Frontier*, 21.

³ Hartmann, 'Sexual Encounters', 157.

⁴ 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 351: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn; Couzens, 'New African', 179.

⁵ Een, *Memories*, 74.

⁶ Stals, 'Aanraking', 248, 254–55.

⁷ Peltola, *Nakambale*, 48, 53.

of any of us running short of ammunition is it not more to your interest we should receive a further supply to enable our hunting for Ivory which is intended for yourself than be compelled from want of those means to give up hunting altogether[?]¹

In another of Green's letters to Andersson, dated 1 December, he reveals that Grendon's ivory-collecting has thus far proved successful, but that Grendon's fiery temperament is in danger of alienating Shikongo, whose goodwill is crucial to the new trading venture:

Grendon has done better with regard to collecting Ivory here than I expected and if he can only manage to keep on good terms with Chikongo he may still do better but unfortunately he cannot manage to restrain his temper the consequence of which is that some serious quarrels have ensued between them. Within a very short time and during my absence some misunderstanding arose between them and Chikongo was so incensed that he determined upon ordering Grendon to leave. As I was afraid that Chikongo would carry this resolution into effect I made a point of paying him a visit in company with Smuts to endeavour to reconcile them once more, very well knowing if Grendon was compelled to leave this [place] it would seriously [a]ffect your interest and I can assure you I had the greatest difficulty to persuade him [to] relinquish his resolution and then only by promising that Grendon should apologise and promise to be more careful in his behaviour towards the Chief for the future. Grendon again seems positive that the misunderstanding arose from a misinterpretation on the part of his interpreter done so intentionally and for this reason as well as some former disagreements with Spinnakop he has decided upon discharging him and sending him out by me. I only trust for your sake as well as his own Grendon will endeavour to be more reasonable with Chikongo as should a similar quarrel ensue as the last when we are all absent I fear the result. It is in fact more on your account that Chikongo has forgiven him and from the plain manner in which the Chief spoke to myself & Smuts I am fearful of the consequences to Grendon should he again fail to curb his temper.²

As Green had indicated to Andersson, the fruits of Grendon's ivory trading had exceeded expectations. Grendon estimated that with the help of others, he would be successful in obtaining between ten and twelve thousand pounds of ivory during the 1866 hunting season.³ In exchange for a small canon, Shikongo gave him three hundred pounds of ivory. This canon was set up in a commanding position at the entrance to the chief's *werft*, where, according to Hahn, it gave him a decided

¹ Andersson Papers: Green to Andersson, Ondonga, 12 Oct. 1865.

² Andersson Papers: Green to Andersson, Ondonga, 7 Dec. 1865.

³ 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 371: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn; Stals, 'Aanraking', 248.

strategic advantage over neighbouring peoples.¹ For an ordinary English rifle, Grendon asked forty pounds of ivory.² Hahn considered Grendon's goods to be very expensive, and was of the opinion that he would do much more business if he did not demand 'such enormous prices' (*solche enormen Preise*).³ Yet, while Andersson's business in Nama- and Damaraland incurred a loss, his hunting and trading operation based at Ondonga yielded tolerably good results.

It is possible that Grendon made more for himself at Ondonga out of the earnings from his gun-repairs than out of the retainer and 5% commission that Andersson allowed him. Apparently Shikongo valued a gun-repairer almost as much as a gun merchant, because a few years after Grendon's leaving, he asked a white visitor if he knew how to repair faulty firearms.⁴

On 28 April 1866, a travelling party of William Coates Palgrave (1833–97) was ambushed by brigands at a spring close to Etosha Pan. Three Herero and a white were wounded. The robbers were driven off, and Palgrave's party managed to limp into Ondonga in May, where the white man was nursed in Grendon's house, until he died from complications of his wound.⁵ The robber band struck again on 27 May 1866, when the hunters Todd, Lewis, and Kruger (a Griqua) lost three wagons, five horses, all their cattle, and a thousand pounds of ivory. Lewis had to walk to Ondonga in order to obtain relief.⁶ On occasions such as these, Grendon appears to have played his part well as a considerate host.

Towards the end of May, Andersson arrived back in southwest Africa from the Cape, with his new employees, Eriksson and Een. It seems that he had just read some of his accumulated Ovamboland mail when he penned the following:

J. Grendon seems also to be going very well, but I cannot well make out whether the produce he has obtained has been bartered for his own goods or merely deposited by the hunters? It would

¹ Stals, 'Aanraking', 251, 255; 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 369: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn.

² Stals, 'Aanraking', 248.

³ 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 371: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn.

⁴ De Vylder, *Journal*, 125: 5 Oct. 1873.

⁵ Andersson, *Notes of Travel*, 152; Couzens, 'New African', 180.

⁶ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 112.

appear he is anxious to get away—probably his cursed temper makes him unfit to deal with the chief & the people. I hope he will stay till I can get there.¹

Shortly after this, Hugo Hahn travelled to Ondonga in order to investigate the prospects of extending mission work to Ovamboland.² Shikongo had communicated to him his desire for a resident missionary. Hahn considered it highly fortunate for the establishment of a mission at Ondonga that Grendon had built a house there and was conducting trade on behalf of Andersson. He was also pleased to know that the ‘English’ ivory hunters were frequenting the place in greater numbers now—a phenomenon that implied greater security for any missionaries who might settle there.³

After a journey that lasted just short of six weeks, he reached Grendon’s house on 4 July 1866, where he ‘had a most hearty reception from Mrs Green, Palgrave, Todd, Joe Grendon, and a crowd of Herero’.⁴ Hahn conducted the Sunday service in Dutch and in otjiHerero, at Grendon’s house on 8 July. On the same day, presents for Palgrave and Grendon arrived at Ondonga from King Mweshipandeka of the Kwanyama Ovambo. Mweshipandeka desired their attendance at his *werft*. Since Palgrave was on the point of leaving on an elephant hunt, Grendon took Hahn as his travelling companion instead.⁵ On the way, they drank beer with Shikongo, who furnished a guide for their onward journey.

Mweshipandeka had a reputation for ruthless aggression, and his was the only Ovambo tribe that had not yet been visited by the white traders from the south.⁶ Despite his reputation, Grendon and Hahn encountered unmingled hospitality when they reached the first of the Kwanyama settlements a few days after setting out from Ondonga. Hahn was much taken with ‘this green forestland’, so ‘very different’ from

¹ Andersson Papers: Diary, 11 May 1866.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 301–02: Hugo to his wife Emma Hahn, 10 July, Ondonga, transcribed in: Emma to her children, Otjimbingwe, 4 Sept. 1866.

³ ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 326: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn.

⁴ ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 351–52: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn; Couzens, ‘New African’, 179 (gives the German original).

⁵ ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 357: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn; Stals, ‘Aanraking’, 245–46.

⁶ Stals, ‘Aanraking’, 244.

arid Damaraland.¹ Hahn wrote in his travel journal that ‘Grendon, who was long in India, gave the assurance that cotton would thrive excellently here; likewise also rice in many places.’² This would seem to indicate that Grendon was mindful of the country’s prospects for future ‘development’ and possibly also for its extensive settlement by Europeans.

Hahn was also impressed with Grendon’s generosity and his readiness to be of service in this remote locality: ‘Grendon is of great assistance to me, having lent me fresh oxen so that ours can rest all the while, and he will assist us also as far as the Otjihakondoa omutua, which is the worst part of the road.’³ ‘It is a great kindness of Mr Grendon’s, for which I am most grateful to him.’⁴

In due course, the travellers were told that they were very close to Mweshipandeka’s *werft*. They outspanned. The area was heavily wooded, and they were in some doubt as to whether they had in fact arrived at their destination. Without awaiting the formality of an invitation from the chief, Grendon took it upon himself to approach nearer on foot in order to investigate. As Hahn told his wife in a letter:

Grendon, without my knowledge, followed some time after to convince himself whether the chief’s eumbo was there or not, which being very much against the native rules of decorum made me feel very uneasy. After some time he returned and told me his adventures. He went up, came near to the werft, and then climbed a tree to convince himself whether it was the right one. While up there, he accosted a Kwanyama who was passing and was startled at seeing Joe perched up there. Then came Onpindi and Ikukumu, who were much concerned at Joe’s misdemeanour and brought him back. I also did not like it and feared it might cause some unpleasantness.⁵

Here Hahn reveals something of Grendon’s impetuosity—a quality that his son Robert was to inherit. In seeking out the chief’s inner domestic sanctum,

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 309: Hugo to his wife Emma Hahn, 19 July; transcribed in: Emma to her children, Otjimbingwe, 4 Sept. 1866.

² ‘Grendon, der lange in Indien gewesen ist, versicherte, dass Baumwolle hier ausgezeichnet gedeihen würde, ebenso auch Reis an vielen Stellen.’ (‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 375: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn.)

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 306: Hugo to his wife Emma Hahn, 16 July; transcribed in: Emma to her children, Otjimbingwe, 4 Sept. 1866.

⁴ ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 358: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 306–08: Hugo to his wife Emma Hahn, 17 July 1866; transcribed in: Emma to her children, Otjimbingwe, 4 Sept. 1866; ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 365–66: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn.

unaccompanied and without official invitation, he was—as Hahn intimates—violating a rule of protocol that was a universal ‘given’ throughout African traditional societies. The harem, for one thing, had to be kept screened off from the prurient gaze of strangers. An African chief’s authority might be disparaged by Europeans, but in many cases, as here, it was sovereign. At the very least, Grendon’s action jeopardized the success of Hahn’s visitation. And if he hoped to open up trade with Kwanyama, he would need to act with greater circumspection.

Grendon’s misdemeanour was reported to Mweshipandeka. Fortunately, when he arrived in state—a ‘very fine young man richly dressed in native fashion’—he had already decided to make light of the visitor’s indiscretion:

He soon accosted and particularly began to joke with Grendon: ‘Well, Kadejou, I wonder you did not fall down from your tree today, having climbed it with your shoes on.’ A roar of laughter from His Majesty’s courtiers of course followed this remark, and I was really pleased that he turned this act which, in fact, in their opinion and according to their customs was a very culpable one, into a joke. After some time, he observed: ‘Kadejou, one can see that you have been long in Ndonga, your clothes and waggon have become quite old.’ Grendon had a pair of patched trousers and his waggon was without a tent.¹

Hahn and Grendon believed themselves to be the first whites that the Kwanyama king had ever seen. Following their meeting, Mweshipandeka sent Hahn the gift of a large ivory tusk, and offered Grendon a smaller one in exchange for guns, which he was known to trade at Ondonga. Hahn’s remarks make it clear that trading conditions in Ovamboland—within range of Portuguese settlements to the north—were very different from those in Damaraland, where the English-speaking traders had more or less monopolized trade:

They have a very great notion of the value of a tusk here, as they actually get two of the miserable Portuguese guns which in Europe do not cost more than 5/- or 6/-, for a middle-sized tusk, and thus expect to barter in the same manner for superior and valuable English guns which cost several Pounds each. Of course Joe could not accept the smaller tusk, but mine was carried

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 307–08: Hugo to his wife Emma Hahn, 17 July; transcribed in: Emma to her children, Otjimbingwe, 4 Sept. 1866; ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 368: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn. Emma Hahn transcribes Grendon’s Ovambo name as ‘Kadyve’; in Hugo Hahn’s diary, it is given as ‘Kadejou’—derived, according to Hahn, from Grendon’s English nickname, Joe.

to the waggon, where we found that it weighed 73 lb, a far more valuable present than I had made him.¹

To memorialize their visit, Hahn and Grendon incised their initials and the date, 1866, around a representation of the Cross, in the bark of a large tree. Hahn drew this inscription to the notice of one of Mweshipandeka's friends. To his wife he wrote that he would 'not be surprised if, in time, that tree becomes an object of veneration. To others it will prove that the missionary has been the first in this country.'² He overlooked the fact that Grendon—representative of 'the trader'—stood beside him at this first meeting with Mweshipandeka, and that he therefore shared with 'the missionary' the distinction of being 'first in this country'. If this were drawn to Hahn's notice, perhaps he would reply in words like his wife's: 'God in His great mercy makes the efforts of explorers and commercial men subservient to the spread of His Kingdom among the nations'.³

No doubt acquainted with Grendon's skill as a gunsmith, Mweshipandeka ordered about twenty muskets to be brought to him for inspection. The majority were found to be out of order. Of these, Grendon took and repaired a few. Hahn reflected that a gunsmith would do well for himself in those parts.⁴

Hahn wanted to visit other Ovambo tribes, so the two men parted company, and Grendon returned to Ondonga.⁵ Having concluded his circuit tour, Hahn returned to Ondonga on 12 August. On the 19th, the day before he began the return leg of his journey to Otjimbingwe, Grendon and Iversen assisted him to identify a suitable site for the mission station he proposed founding at Ondonga. Shikongo ceded occupancy of the spot to Hahn and whomever he should designate. He also entrusted two of his sons to Hahn's tutelage at Otjimbingwe.⁶

In early September, only days before Grendon's agreed term of indenture was due to expire, and having received a letter from him, Andersson—then in Damaraland—

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 308: Hugo to his wife Emma Hahn, 19 July; transcribed in: Emma to her children, Otjimbingwe, 4 Sept. 1866.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 309: Hugo to his wife Emma Hahn, 19 July; transcribed in: Emma to her children, Otjimbingwe, 4 Sept. 1866.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 248–49: Emma to her mother, Sarah Hone, Gütersloh, 24 July 1863.

⁴ 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 372: Tagebuch über die Reise zu den Ovambo im Jahre 1866 von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn.

⁵ Stals, 'Aanraking', 246.

⁶ Stals, 'Aanraking', 247.

recorded that Grendon had visited Mweshipandeka, and that he anticipated the prospect of conducting trade with Kwanyama:

Joe will again visit him & expects to do some business. It seems he [*i.e.*, Mweshipandeka] had at one time kept a good deal of ivory for him having received a message from Grendon that he would visit him but finding he did not keep his word he sent the produce to the Portuguese. Joe has acquainted him with my presence & has promised that I will visit him.¹

On 22 September 1866, Andersson despatched Eriksson, Een, and other servants, together with his wagons, to relieve Grendon at Ondonga. Two days later, according to his diary, he suffered a temporary lapse of confidence in Grendon's probity, in consequence of Hahn's tattling about the Irishman:

Had a letter from Grendon containing little or no news. Since he last wrote he has only bought one hundred pounds wt. of ivory! Why that does not even pay expenses! Mr Hahn says Grendon had a couple of pounds wt. of feathers (very fine) which he offered for sale. If I remember our agreement he was not to trade for himself. The feathers he got for my agents Mr Hahn says [are] rubbish.²

A little short of Ondonga, Een and party found themselves desperately short of water, so they outspanned the draught oxen and sent them forward with all possible speed to Ondonga where they could be watered. Grendon promptly sent out two teams of 'fresh draught-oxen to Omatinja for [Een's] journey further'.³ The party arrived at Ondonga toward the end of October.

Andersson decided to visit Ondonga in person.⁴ Late in December 1866, he left Otjimbingwe on his last, fatal, journey to the far north. His damaged limb precluded conveyance in a jolting wagon, and he was obliged to ride horseback the entire distance. A few days after setting out, he anticipates in his diary that he 'ought to have both a garden & corn land ready [at Otjimbingwe] ere many months are past', and that 'very likely J. Grendon may be induced to take charge of the farm'.⁵ Probably, he intended to broach this subject with Grendon when they met.

¹ Andersson Papers: Diary, 2 Sept. 1866.

² Andersson Papers: Diary, 24 Sept. 1866.

³ Een, *Memories*, 68.

⁴ Stals, 'Aanraking', 248.

⁵ Andersson Papers: Diary: 1 Jan. 1867.

Around the start of February 1867, he reached Ondonga, where he found Green, Een, Eriksson, and Grendon, as well as other hunter-traders. Most of the white men were suffering from fever.¹ A few days later, despite illness, Green and others—Grendon possibly included—started out from Ondonga on the ‘homeward’ trek to Otjimbingwe. They were to escort Andersson’s ivory load, and to engage in a little hunting *en route*.

If Joseph Grendon accepted Andersson’s offer of employment as farm manager at Otjimbingwe, we may suppose that he set to work at once. Mary Ann and William—Joseph and Maria’s elder children—were by now five and two years old respectively. If the youngest, Robert—or ‘Robert Charles’, according to Julinda Hoskins—was still unborn, Maria’s pregnancy with him was certainly well-advanced by mid-1867.² The siblings’ first language was otjiHerero, their mother’s tongue. According to Emma Hahn, they spoke English very imperfectly and with great reluctance.³

Weakened by repeated bouts of malarial fever, Andersson died on 9 or 10 July 1867, somewhere between Kwanyama and Ukambi territory.⁴ What action Grendon took when news of Andersson’s death reached Otjimbingwe in October, we do not know. Perhaps he continued to farm on the alluvial flats beside the Swakop; perhaps he combined farming with his trading activities. A visitor to Otjimbingwe remarked in 1873 that Andersson’s ‘land with the garden that he made here is now owned by a German farmer who makes much money out of it’, so it would appear that the farm did not pass into Grendon’s hands.⁵

With Andersson dead, Hahn assumed responsibility for Otjimbingwe’s defence against an anticipated onslaught by the Oorlams. Trenches were dug and ramparts raised.⁶ Just before dawn on 14 December 1867, an Oorlams army under the joint command of Jan Jonker Afrikaner and Jacobus Booï, staged yet another desperate

¹ Stals, ‘Aanraking’, 249.

² J. Hoskins notebook 1. 1867 is the most likely date for Robert Grendon’s birth. Two lines of evidence point to it: (1) Emma Hahn states that the boy was three years old when his father entrusted him to her care (which event almost certainly took place in 1870), and (2) Robert’s age was ten when he was admitted to Zonnebloem College in November 1877 (E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 337: Emma to her sisters Matilda and Rose, Otjimbingwe, 4 March 1872; Zonnebloem Papers, D1.1: Ms record book).

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 343: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 23 June 1872.

⁴ Stals, ‘Aanraking’, 249.

⁵ De Vylder, *Journal*, 90.

⁶ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 356.

attack on Otjimbingwe.¹ Again, no documentary evidence has been found to confirm Grendon's personal involvement in Otjimbingwe's defence. He can hardly have remained passive during a total assault that threatened to destroy the entire settlement, Herero and whites alike. Een, who happened to be there at the time, describes the position vividly:

In the evening before the battle we were informed that the entire strength of the Hottentots consisted of about 1000 or at most 1200 men, of which 60 or 70 men were on horseback. At a council of war at which we white men were present, Mr Green, who had taken part in and held a command in the Damara's war of liberation against the Hottentots, recommended that the Damara should occupy the riverbank as well as the rocks scattered about on the Otjimbingwe plain, and from which the mission station could be controlled completely.²

It seems almost certain that, unless he was away on a trading or hunting trip, Grendon was present at the council of war presided over by Green—likely with assistance from Hahn. None of the whites bore arms during the battle of December 1867. Now that Andersson, the pretentious engineer of Herero 'national' unity, had passed from the scene, they decided that a semblance of neutrality would better serve their long-term interests. Even so, neutrality did not prevent their casting about 14,000 lead bullets on the day of the battle. In this way they were able to support Otjimbingwe's Herero defenders without conspicuous involvement on the front lines. The missionaries supplied the lead.³ Frederick Green's family, whose dwelling was some distance from the station, sought refuge within the mission complex.⁴ Joseph Grendon together with Maria, Mary Ann, William, and the newborn Robert may have done likewise.

The fighting was fierce and many Herero defenders fell. When the Khoi attackers directed their bullets at the mission itself, measures had to be taken to protect the women and children:

The bullets fell so thickly on the mission station that it was deemed best to move all the women and children to the church, which was built of bricks and had thick walls; but as soon as the Hottentots noticed this move, they directed an infernal firing at the doors, windows, and roof of the church, so that the women and children had to be hastily returned to the buildings of the

¹ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 51; Vedder, *South West Africa*, 356.

² Een, *Memories*, 137.

³ Een, *Memories*, 139.

⁴ Een, *Memories*, 137.

mission station, which were situated at a further distance and would provide better protection because of their various and irregular situations.¹

With nightfall, the shooting stopped, and the Oorlams attackers moved off down the Swakop. On the morrow, the pock-marks of more than three hundred bullets were found on mission buildings alone.



The Afrikaner Oorlams had been much weakened by their all-out effort to bring their former vassals to heel. Aware of this, the Herero grew in self-assurance. Joseph Grendon believed that he was witnessing a change in their demeanour. No longer did they defer to missionaries and traders. Early in his experience of southwest Africa, missionaries exerted significant influence, doing ‘much for the natives in educating and civilizing them and preventing much bloodshed amongst them’. But now, it seemed, their authority had waned. Grendon claimed that the Herero had become ‘proud and overbearing through the increase of their cattle and sheep and the great facility of supplying themselves with guns and ammunition and with luxuries’.² His assessment seems not altogether without foundation in the light of the grandiose title which Maharero is purported to have bestowed upon himself at this time: ‘Maharero the Great, the Rich, and All-Powerful.’³

In January 1868, having avenged the latest Oorlams attack, Maharero and the majority of his people abandoned Otjimbingwe, believing it safe to return to Okahandja, their former home and the site of Tjamuaha’s grave.⁴ Okahandja lay a few days upstream from Otjimbingwe on the Swakop at its confluence with a tributary.

According to Grendon, he spent a total of twelve years with ‘Maharero’s people’ at Okahandja, including six years during which he lived there permanently from 1872 to January 1878. Since he distinguishes the latter stay as a ‘permanent’ one—during which time he built himself a house—it is likely that the aggregate of six earlier years

¹ Een, *Memories*, 139.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 47.

³ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 386.

⁴ Viehe, ‘Some Customs’, 54–55; Vedder, *South West Africa*, 361.

spent at Okahandja encompasses several trading visits to that place, during which time Grendon lived out of his wagon.¹

Prior to his European trip (1870–72), Grendon imported his stock-in-trade—guns, principally—through the Cape Town firm of ‘Mr Van der Byl’, with whom Andersson had also had extensive dealings.² Trade with the Herero was no cinch: as customers, they often drove a hard bargain. So it was that a trade dispute arose at Okahandja between Grendon and the Herero councillor, Amadamap. This took place shortly after the Herero returned to Okahandja in 1868, but ‘before the peace of [23 September] 1870 was concluded’.³

Grendon had come to ‘Okahandja with [his] wagon and [trade-]goods’, but the Herero were ‘insisting on getting [his] things for less than [he] could sell them for’.⁴ He therefore cautioned Amadamap not to act arrogantly just because Herero independence now seemed secure. Rather, Amadamap should persuade the people not to browbeat Grendon into parting with his goods at prices below their market value. ‘You seem to forget old times when you were slaves under the Hottentots, as you and your people were when first I came here on this place’, Grendon reminded him. He then recounted the tale, already mentioned, in which he had been at Okahandja in the service of another white man, about eight years earlier. Now, both Grendon and the Herero were free agents, answerable to no-one:

To-day I am here, and so are you and your people. I am master of my wagon and things therein, and you and your people are masters of the country. The cattle, &c., on the hills all belong to you and your people; but the former masters, the Hottentots, are gone; I see them not. The same just God who put the Hottentots down and you up, He is still above you, and can put you down again. Be advised by me, and act justly by every one.⁵

In the years that intervened between Grendon’s two visits to Okahandja—c.1861 and c.1869—the Herero had won their independence from the Afrikaner Oorlams, and Maharero had enhanced his status amongst the Herero tribes, largely with the aid of white traders. Grendon points out that both his and their circumstances have dramatically improved. He is now a trader in his own right, no longer required to

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39, 41, 42.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44; Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 45: 27 Jan. 1862, and *passim*.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 43.

⁴ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 43.

⁵ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 43.

perform menial chores for an employer. He has property that is incontestably his own: his wagon, his goods. They, on the other hand, have won their freedom from Oorlams domination; the cattle they now mind are their own, not those belonging to another race. Grendon does not covet their cattle: neither should they extort his property. They should transact business as equals. If they choose to exchange their property for his, it should be according to free-and-fair, market-related principles. Evidently, Grendon's impassioned and eloquent rhetoric achieved the desired effect, because 'at the end [he] had justice done to [him] by this man Amadamap'.¹ It would seem that Robert Grendon inherited at least part of his talent as a rhetorician from his father Joseph.

Joseph Grendon held Amadamap (see plate 2b) in high regard, and enjoyed his friendship after this incident:

There was a very fine man [at Okahandja], Amadamap, who often said to me that he wished some [white] gentleman could be sent down to live amongst them and teach them what to do. He was a man who understood what justice was, but he was overruled by the greater number of his people. If he proposed to give justice to a white man at the expense of one of themselves his people would say, 'Why give the white man justice and punish our people? Are they not our blood?'²

In later life, Amadamap appears to have embraced Christianity. Despite having been Maharero's military general, he was of a pacific disposition. According to Heinrich Vedder—whose scholarly stature, admittedly, has suffered of late, thanks to the assiduity of revisionists—Maharero's dying words in 1890 were addressed to Riarua (Amadamap):

You have become a Christian and you will find your grave in the Christian churchyard. I have remained a heathen, and so I must be buried in the heathen manner. It is right that things should be done in this way. All your life you have been like a dove and all my life I have been like a snake, and a dove and a snake ought not to be gathered together in the same place.³

A splendid photographic portrait of Amadamap—Grendon's 'very fine man'—taken *circa* 1876, is preserved in the National Library, Cape Town.⁴ It shows the man, head-and-shoulders in three-quarter view. He wears an intense expression—likely his

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 43–44.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 41.

³ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 506.

⁴ Palgrave Collection, photographs.

perennial mien. His brow is furrowed and his cheeks are sunken. His high rank is evident from his western attire: jacket and shirt, with a scarf draped loosely over his neck.



In May 1868, while conducting ivory to the coast for shipment to the Colony, Palgrave, Green, and Lewis were set upon by an Oorlams band led by Jacobus Booï. An Englishman was killed and the robbers made off with six wagon-loads of ivory.¹ Chagrined by ongoing tensions in central southwest Africa, Damaraland's whites met on the 29th to sign an open letter to the Cape Government, expressing outrage at Booï's attack. It was intended that Palgrave—then about to sail for the Cape—should use the letter to enlist sympathy for the traders' plight, in the hope that the Colony would make a show of force in southwest Africa so as to put an end to Oorlams mischief. Joseph Grendon is a signatory to this document.²

About this time, the Herero petitioned the Cape Government to send a representative who would arbitrate in their disputes with the white traders. Grendon claimed that the Herero 'talked of and prayed for' 'a gentleman [who] would be sent down by the [Cape] Government', and

who would be placed at Okahandja or one of those places, so as to give justice between the coloured and the white men. They were always looking out for this; for a gentleman to live amongst them and teach them to do what was right, and to give justice between them; even sending a letter to the Governor, praying that a gentleman might be sent to them.³

Grendon may be referring to a petition of 7 June 1868 endorsed at Otjimbingwe by thirty-one missionaries and traders, as well as by twenty-five prominent Herero, including Maharero. It seems probable that Grendon was one of the signatories, since they were 'much the same people' who had signed the letter of 29 May.⁴

The petition also pleads in behalf of the eighty-seven family members of the white traders—wives and children—whose lives were threatened by the political instability of the country. Grendon's Maria, Mary Ann, William, and Robert will have made up

¹ Tabler, 'Life of Green', 41.

² Palgrave, *Commissions*, xv.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 41.

⁴ Palgrave, *Commissions*, xv.

four of this number. The petition calls upon Sir Philip Wodehouse, Governor of the Cape Colony, to intervene in the region's affairs and to negotiate an end to the outrages.¹

The Oorlams-Herero conflict had acquired the character of a war of attrition. Neither side could afford its continuance. In July 1869, Jan Afrikaner, the Oorlams *kaptein*, war-weary and perhaps fearful of the Cape Colony's intermeddling, began suing for peace. He appealed to Hugo Hahn to mediate between the antagonists. Emma Hahn wrote at the start of November that 'decided tokens of peace have during the last few weeks caused us to breathe again'.² Preliminary negotiations broke down. Then a peace conference was held at Okahandja in September 1870, which was attended by prominent Herero and Oorlams leaders, together with thirteen Rhenish and Finnish missionaries, and a representative of the trading community. Hugo Hahn was the principal mediator, and a peace treaty was concluded on the 23rd which ushered in almost a decade of tenuous peace in the region.³



Until the mid-twentieth century, the portrait of a bearded gentleman of distinguished aspect—likely in clerical vestments as he was wont to pose for the camera—hung in the dining room of a residence on the corner of Berg and Leathern Streets, Pietermaritzburg.⁴ The significance of this portrait was not lost upon the children who grew up in and around that home, because the aging Mary Ann Grendon (c. 1862–1944) was always on hand to place it in context. Toward the end of her life, 'Auntie Mary' remained the Pietermaritzburg family's only living link with its Damaraland origins.

The bearded gentleman was the Baltic German, Carl Hugo Hahn (1818–95), co-founder in 1844 of the Rhenish Missionary Society's Damaraland mission and its guiding spirit until his departure from southwest Africa in 1873. Although he was known as 'Mr Hahn' while in Damaraland, and his honorary doctorate for philological labours was first conferred by the University of Leipzig in 1874, Mary

¹ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 379; Palgrave, *Commissions*, xv.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 322: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 1 Nov. 1869.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 323n.; Mossolow, *Windhoek*, 61.

⁴ Interviews: Lena Maryann Dunnett, 10 Oct. 2005, 9 Nov. 2005; Valerie Grantham, 9 Nov. 2005.

Ann Grendon seems to have referred to him in later years as ‘doctor’.¹ For two years in her childhood—1870 to 1872—while her father returned to Europe, she and her brothers, William and Robert, had been fostered by Hugo Hahn and his English wife Emma, at their mission home, Otjimbingwe.

In old age, Mary Ann’s grandniece Julinda Hoskins jotted down in two notebooks what she could remember of the family history. According to Mrs Hoskins, her great-grandfather Joseph Grendon had intended that his children accompany him to England. ‘Because of the trouble in the land at that time’, Julinda writes, ‘it was decided that the children ... be taken by their father to England to be educated’.² The ‘trouble in the land at that time’ can only refer to the bloody territorial rivalry between Oorlams and Herero. It seems only natural that a dutiful father such as Grendon was should want to remove his children from a dangerous war zone.

Mrs Hoskins sheds important light on the motivation underlying Joseph’s decision to provide for his children’s education. In one place, she writes that ‘as the children grew it was decided that if they were to help their country at all, they would need much more education’.³ Elsewhere, she states that ‘it was decided ... that these children be given the best education so as to prepare them to be better suited for the role they would later have to fill in life’.⁴ She also links the need for educating the children to the fact that their putative grandfather, Maharero, ‘the old man, was getting on in years and not so well’.⁵ By this it would appear that Joseph wanted to groom his children to assume some kind of leadership role in Damaraland after Maharero’s demise.

Mrs Hoskins makes it clear that the children were to be educated, not at the Cape, but in England: ‘England was decided on. Grendon their father would take them there and see that they had the necessary education, and then return with them home to Damaraland.’⁶ However, Maria was not able to accompany the family to England. Two reasons for this are advanced, neither of which is altogether plausible. The first is that Maria ‘had been found to be pregnant with a fourth child [and] was advised not to

¹ *DSAB*, i:341–43.

² J. Hoskins notebook 1.

³ J. Hoskins notebook 1.

⁴ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

⁵ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

⁶ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

make the long trip overseas'.¹ There is no reason to doubt Maria's pregnancy, but there seems little reason why Joseph could not have awaited the birth of his fourth child before making his departure.

The second reason advanced for Maria's inability to accompany her family is that she was unable to leave her doting father: 'Her father had not been too well for months now and it would be unwise to leave the old man alone for long.'² If Maharero was indeed Maria's father—as Mrs Hoskins believed—he was to live another twenty years, and it is unlikely that he would have needed his daughter at his side to nurse him. Furthermore, Maria's maternal obligations would surely weigh more heavily upon her than those she felt towards an aging father, who in any case had many wives and attendants to care for him. More likely explanations are that Joseph chose to leave without Maria, or that he was forbidden to remove her from her ancestral homeland. As Hartmann remarks, a trader such as Grendon 'would have rarely been allowed to take a chief's subject', even if she were his longstanding sexual partner, 'without any agreement with the [chief]'.³ Perhaps Maharero withheld permission for Maria's emigration.

According to Mrs Hoskins, Maria was however permitted to accompany her family as far as Walvis Bay, where she could 'see them off'.⁴ The 'travelling [presumably from Otjimbingwe or Okahandja] was very slow and dangerous and it was a long way to where they would get a ship to take them'. 'A number of carriers and runners would go with, as they would have to protect the company and see Maria safely back home, when Grendon's boat had left.'⁵

En route to the coast, Maria contracted malaria, 'and being with child got very ill'. 'Doctor Hahn ... did what he could for Maria, but things did not look good.' Maria 'had to be carried home to the people. Unfortunately, she died before reaching home.' 'Grendon and the children had to go on to catch their boat!'⁶

¹ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

² J. Hoskins notebook 2.

³ Hartmann, 'Sexual Encounters', 158–59.

⁴ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

⁵ J. Hoskins notebook 1.

⁶ J. Hoskins notebook 1.

At the coast, ‘Grendon waited anxiously for news of his wife, and just before the boat or steamer was about to leave, a runner came with the news that ... Maria had died just before she reached home’.¹ ‘This [was] cause for great concern, as to the effect it would have on the aging Emperor.’² ‘The shock [at learning of Maria’s death] also killed her aging father, as she was an only child.’³ This double tragedy—losing wife and father-in-law—left Grendon ‘devastated’. Though grief-stricken,⁴ Joseph could not now turn back. The die was cast: his ship was set to sail and he was obliged to leave by it.⁵

Mrs Hoskins’s history appears to conflate two departures from southwest Africa: that of 1870, when Joseph went to Europe, leaving the children in the care of the Hahns at Otjimbingwe, and that of 1877–78, when Joseph and his family left permanently to settle at the Cape. Our task is to distinguish plausible from improbable.

Interestingly, early in 1871, not long after Grendon sailed for Europe, Frederick Green—whom Grendon describes as ‘a friend of mine’⁶—sailed for Cape Town,⁷ taking with him his six-year-old daughter Ada, whom he had sired by the Herero girl Betsey. Ada was to receive her schooling at the Cape. The parallel between Grendon’s and Green’s cases is striking. According to available evidence, each one fathered offspring by high-born or well-connected Herero women. Around 1870 or early 1871, both men left Damaraland. In each case, the education of minor children seems to have been part of their motivation for planning to leave. And in each case, the mothers of the children were prevented from sailing with their children, the reason in each case having to do with the will of Maharero or of ‘the Hereros’.⁸ When Maharero complained in 1876 that whites who left Damaraland abandoned their Herero wives, but took with them their Herero children, it is possible that he had men such as Green and Grendon in mind.⁹

¹ J. Hoskins notebook 1.

² J. Hoskins notebook 2.

³ J. Hoskins notebook 1. Mrs Hoskins is mistaken in believing that Maharero had only one child.

⁴ Interview: Cyril Hoskins, 12 Nov. 2005.

⁵ J. Hoskins notebook 1.

⁶ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 341: Joseph Grendon to ‘My dear Madam’, Cape Town, 10 May 1872.

⁷ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 48.

⁸ Dierks, ‘Frederick Thomas Green’ (online); Dierks, ‘Ada Maria Kaera Getzen-Leinhos’ (online).

⁹ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 12.

Malaria—Julinda’s explanation for Maria’s death—could easily have claimed the life of a pregnant woman, especially if illness and pregnancy coincided with the prospect of enforced separation from her children, as well as with a rough overland journey in a springless wagon, ostensibly to see her family off at the Bay. The Damaraland missionary Irle recalls that he and his family suffered with malaria for two and a half months in 1874, and that the disease laid low many Herero at the same time.¹



In the event, Joseph left Africa unaccompanied by his children. He was gone from them for two years. While in England, he met by appointment with several relatives of Emma Hahn, including her sister Matilda. Years earlier, when a young American who assisted the Hahns at their Damaraland station returned home via England, Emma had given him a letter of introduction to her mother, Sarah Hone, asking that she ‘shew him kindness while he sojourns in London for a time, where he wishes to see the chief places of resort’. In exchange for this kindly service, her mother might ‘hear from the lips of an eyewitness somewhat of [the Hahns’] life in the wilderness’.² Likely, when Grendon travelled to England in 1870, he bore a similar introduction from Emma. Her correspondence with family members indicates that he met several of them.

It was likely in 1871 that he and Sarah Jane Spedding married in Southampton, just across the Solent from her Isle of Wight home.³ Little is known about Sarah Jane, except that she appears to have worked as a ‘tailor’ when she settled in Cape Town.⁴ Mrs Jane Mackenzie of Cape Town, who is descended from this second marriage, recounts an oral tradition that Joseph, with ‘a suitcase full of money’, went to the Isle of Wight, where he found his bride, then a ‘young girl’.⁵

¹ Irle, *Herero*, 126.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 121: Emma to her mother, Sarah Hone, New Barmen, 2 March 1851.

³ KAB, MOOC 6/9/3022 ref. 12486. Jane Mackenzie (interview: 27 May 2006) and John Grendon (interview: 4 October 2006) confirm Sarah Jane Spedding’s Isle of Wight origins.

⁴ When William and Robert Grendon were registered at Zonnebloem College in 1877, the ‘Occupation of the Parents’ was given as ‘tailor’. There is no indication that Joseph ever pursued this trade; in any case he was likely wrapping up his affairs in Damaraland, so the occupation appears to be that of Sarah Jane Grendon, the boys’ stepmother (Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2: Admission Register: 1876–1900).

⁵ Interviews: Jane Mackenzie, 27 May 2006, 26 July 2006.

After their marriage, the couple honeymooned in Europe, touring Germany, Switzerland, and possibly also France.¹ They called at the ‘Mission House’, headquarters of the Rhenish Mission Society at Barmen, on the Wupper River, a tributary of the Rhine. This institution directed the Herero mission, and so Grendon’s visit was likely at the instance of Hugo Hahn. From here, Joseph wrote the Hahns, sending love to his children. Thereafter, a ‘post tour’—possibly an early form of conducted package tour—took the newlyweds to Switzerland.²

While in England, Grendon purchased a quantity of superior British-manufactured guns which he intended to offload on the Herero market.³ On 29 December 1871, less than two weeks before embarking for Africa, Grendon contracted a will in London—an act suggesting prudence. If the contents of a subsequent will completed in Cape Town are anything to go by, then Maria’s children were well provided for in the London will.⁴ After ‘a very fine passage of 26 days’, the couple reached Cape Town on 6 February 1872. Grendon had hoped not to be delayed in the Colony more than five or six weeks, but on 10 May, he was still at the Cape, and expecting to leave for Walvis Bay in about ten days’ time.⁵



For some two years, Otjimbingwe—and in particular, its mission house—was to be the home of Mary Ann, William, and Robert Grendon. The house—likely the most comfortable and well-appointed in all Damaraland—was among the extensive Otjimbingwe property of Charles Andersson that Hugo Hahn purchased on behalf of the Rhenish Missionary Society in 1864. Emma describes ‘a good roomy dwelling house with eight rooms besides the kitchen, outhouses, three cottages of two rooms each, smith’s shop, carpenter’s shop, waggon-house, large store and various other conveniences’.⁶ Special features of the mission dwelling, betokening hospitality and

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 334: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 19 Jan. 1872.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 334: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 19 Jan. 1872.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44.

⁴ A subsequent will, formalized in Cape Town in February 1882, bequeaths £100 each to Mary Ann, William, and Robert, to be paid to them upon their coming of age (KAB, MOOC 6/9/3022, ref. 12486). The Cape Town will cancels that concluded in London.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 341: Joseph Grendon to ‘Dear Madam’, Cape Town, 10 May 1872.

⁶ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 275: Emma to her mother, Otjimbingwe, 13 April 1864.

leisure, were its 'sitting-room and verandah'.¹ Een describes the missionary Hahn and his mission home in the late 1860s:

The head or bishop of the Rhenish Mission named Hahn resides at Otjimbingwe; he had been a Russian fortifications officer who, having been born in some part of the German Baltic provinces, considers himself as belonging to 'das grosse Vaterland', without which he would certainly not have been allowed to work within the 'German' mission. Mr Hahn, as he was always addressed, lives in a beautiful, spacious house with all modern conveniences; it contains five wall-papered rooms, and has a rather beautiful veranda with a view towards the river.²

This witness, who is ill-disposed towards Hahn, nonetheless paints a picture of the ideal African mission home: an oasis of comfort and calm in the heart of the wilderness. At that time, there were probably fewer than two hundred whites in the entire territory currently embraced by Namibia. Most of these whites lived in rough shanties or in their wagons, so that the Otjimbingwe missionary home seemed the paragon of civilized taste.

In this home the Grendon children will have encountered many of the furnishings of European culture. There were pictures, including a portrait of the revered German Kaiser,³ which Hahn likely hung against one of the papered walls mentioned above. There was the harmonium that he had nursed even during travels by ox-wagon in trackless Ovamboland; and then there were the ubiquitous books, frequently called into requisition by the scholarly missionary. When the Hahns left Damaraland permanently in 1873, they were preceded by eight chests of books that missionary friends volunteered to convey to Walvis Bay for them.⁴

More than any of the other trappings of Western civilization—more than guns, wagons, and textiles, for instance—books appear to have been held in high regard by the Herero. According to Hugo Hahn, in 1857, most Herero were of the opinion that whites could discover everything from books.⁵ He saw great value in his African

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 284: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 25 Sept. 1865.

² Een, *Memories*, 43–44.

³ C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:909: 12 May 1856.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 350: Emma to her sisters Matilda and Rose, Otjimbingwe, 14 Jan. 1873.

⁵ C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:1036: 20 July 1857: 'Die meisten Ovaherero wännen noch bis auf den heutigen Tag, dass wir aus den Büchern alles wissen und erfahren können'.

converts learning European languages: ‘How many good books are then accessible to them—above all others, good translations of the Bible.’¹

One of his and Emma’s first tasks was to impart basic literacy skills to Herero children. This was complicated in the early years of the Herero mission by the fact that no pre-existing printed literature existed in otjiHerero. The missionaries had to generate texts for didactic purposes. Hugo considered it ‘an inexpressible effort and test of patience, to teach a Herero child to read. For every child brought to reading, the teacher deserves a gold medal for patience and endurance.’² A comparison between Hugo’s diaries and Emma’s letters makes it clear which spouse had the greater store of ‘patience and endurance’.

For young Robert, who was a voracious and wide-ranging reader in later life, the books he encountered in the Hahn home will have opened up an entire world of possibility to him. Emma describes Hugo’s encyclopaedia as ‘a most useful companion in the wilderness’.³ Amongst the many books that found their way into the Hahn household, were those sent by Emma’s English family, and their circle of evangelical well-wishers. There was an illustrated souvenir of the Great Exhibition of 1851, as well as titles intended for juvenile consumption, including: *Dukes of Normandy*; *What is an Egg Worth*; *Alda, or the British Captive*; *The Basket of Flowers*; *Modern Speaker*; Dr Fletcher’s *Scripture History*; *The Fireside*; *The Tongue of Time*; *The Winds and the Waves*; and Bunyan’s Christian classic, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.⁴

The missionaries Brincker and Hahn prepared an otjiHerero translation of Bunyan’s classic allegory, and it was almost ready for the press by mid-1872.⁵ It is also possible that the Grendon children may have encountered *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852)—either in the original, or through Emma’s narration. The Hahns gave a copy of Stowe’s novel as a gift to their own children—then scholars in Europe—in 1856.⁶

¹ C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:954: 6 Feb. 1857.

² C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:950: 5 Jan. 1857.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 132: Emma to her mother, Stellenbosch, 21 Jan. 1853.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 123: Sarah Hone to her daughter, Emma, 19 Cumming St, Pentonville, 5 June 1851.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 343–44: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 23 June 1872.

⁶ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 177: Traugott Hahn to his grandmother, Bielefeld, 8 May 1856.

If Emma did introduce the Grendon children to the novel, this may have sparked Robert's adult preoccupation with slavery and emancipation.

In the Hahn home, the boy Robert encountered much to stimulate his native talents. The years 1870 to 1872, during which Emma nurtured his incipient intellectualism and acute moral sensibility, must have been critical to his spiritual growth. Her natural flair as a teacher and spiritual guide—which she had begun to cultivate as a governess in England during the 1830s—found in Robert a challenging yet rewarding project.

Circumstance had brought the boy into contact with two extraordinary individuals, each with a keen interest in world affairs. Hugo's and Emma's worldviews did not always coincide, but in his exposure to their different approaches to Christianity, childrearing, and other issues, Robert likely discovered much raw material from which he might later fashion his own views on human relations, and on the relationship between God and Man.

Emma Sarah Hahn (1814–80) was the daughter of William and Sarah Hone. She has been described as 'a typical product of the Victorian era'.¹ The Hones were a family of Victorian proportions: Emma had eight brothers and sisters.² Surviving correspondence reveals theirs to have been a close-knit family with a keen collective interest in the triumph of justice and goodness.

In his heyday, William Hone (1780–1842) was a household word throughout Britain. He was well-known within the republic of letters, and counted William Hazlitt and Charles Lamb among his personal friends. Scott and Southey both praised his *Every-Day Book* (1825–27)—a miscellany of cultural-historical snippets. Born at Bath, he became a clerk in Gray's Inn before abandoning law to establish himself as a bookseller in Lambeth Walk in 1800. From 1817, he began publishing a spate of political satires on the Royal Family and the Government (plates 2c, 2d). These earned him notoriety in court and parliamentary circles, but they also made him immensely popular with the public at large. When Hone was prosecuted for his *Political Litany* (1817), he conducted his own brilliant defence, and his acquittal was heralded as a signal victory for press freedom and a blow for authoritarianism. This

¹ D. Guedes in: E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, i.

² D. Guedes in: E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, i.

trial and two others in which he was also vindicated ‘made legal history’, and were a great embarrassment to the Government. Other titles by Hone—some of which were printed by tens of thousands—include: *The Political House that Jack Built* (1819), *The Man in the Moon* (1820), *The Political Showman* (1821), and *The Apocryphal New Testament*. Cruikshank’s rollicking illustrations added immensely to their popularity. *The Political House that Jack Built* did much to consolidate national outrage at the ruthless repression by Government of the legitimate aspirations of ordinary Britons.¹

Until some point in the 1830s, Hone had held the reputation of being a ‘free-thinker’, but he experienced a religious conversion when—together with several members of his family, including his daughter Emma—he fell under the influence of Thomas Binney (1798–1874), a popular nonconformist divine who ministered at the Weigh-House Chapel, London. The two men became close friends.²

William’s grandchildren in Africa will have been very familiar with his illustrious career. In June 1851, his widow sent six copies of his portrait to Emma, intending that one copy should be ‘for each of the dear children’.³ Since Hugo and Emma had just four children of their own, Sarah evidently meant the gift to go also to the adopted Khoi youths, Daniel and Johannes. She wanted all her grandchildren—biological and adopted—to grow up knowing and esteeming the reputation of their grandfather.

Emma never forgot her father’s example as a tenacious defender of the underdog. Just two years before her own death, she reminds her sister Matilda in England of how their ‘dear father ... when he took up a case [always] carried it through thick and thin till the victory was achieved’.⁴ If Emma had been granted her wish to adopt Robert Grendon as her own child,⁵ then the boy would also have become the grandson, by adoption, of a leading light in the struggle for civil liberties in Britain. It is tempting to postulate that Robert inherited a part of his social conscience from William Hone, via Emma. Both men were warrior idealists; they share several traits and achievements.

¹ Grayling, *The Quarrel of the Age*, 244–48; Chandler, *England in 1819*, 17, 83, 277; *DNB*, xxvii:243. Browning, *Everyman’s Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 333; D. Guedes in: E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, i.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 399.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 122: Sarah Hone to her daughter, Emma, 19 Cumming St, Pentonville, 5 June 1851.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 379: Emma to her sister Matilda, Cape Town, 26 Aug. 1878.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 334: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 19 Jan. 1872.



Sponsored by the ‘Eastern Females Education Society’—a sorority of mission-minded do-gooders—Emma sailed for the Cape in January 1843. Believing that God had in mind a specific purpose in placing her on earth, and nurturing a burning desire to serve Him and to alleviate human suffering, she had vowed to devote her labours to serving ‘the heathen’ in Africa.¹

Emma’s domestic responsibilities on the mission stations where she served were far more numerous and diversified than those of the average Victorian housewife. She became ‘from sheer necessity [her] own baker, soap-boiler, candle-maker, dairy woman, needle-woman, nurse, cook, etc., etc., etc.’² These many things, which do ‘not come within the range of an English housewife’s duties’ were all part of her ‘week’s work. And this [was] not in a temperate clime, but in a weary land.’³ In addition to shouldering the weighty responsibilities of a missionary, Emma assisted her husband in raising their three sons and a daughter. In 1855, the Hahns suffered a heart-rending separation from their children when they were compelled to leave them in Europe so that they might complete their education.⁴

In order to raise additional funds for their sons’ university education, the Hahns sent chests of specimens illustrative of Damaraland’s natural history to Professor Peters, director of a zoological collection in Berlin.⁵ For this purpose, Emma and the children on the mission station would collect seeds, shells, insects, and reptiles. Emma remarks in 1857 that the ‘schoolchildren are diligently bringing specimens of insects, reptiles, etc., which we preserve in spirit to send to Germany’.⁶ It seems altogether possible that Robert Grendon—who in 1898 was preparing for publication a work entitled *The Illustrated Genera of South African Plants*⁷—first acquired his interest in botany from Emma.

¹ C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, ii:556; E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 23: Emma to her parents, Spratton, 23 Feb. 1842; 15: Emma to her mother, Spratton, 25 Oct. 1839; 20: Emma to her mother, Spratton, 18 Nov. 1840; 56: Emma to her mother, Komaggas Missionary Station, 20 Oct. 1843.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 119: Emma to her sister Rose, New Barmen, 6 Dec. 1850.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 98: Emma to her mother, New Barmen, 5 April 1848.

⁴ C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:928.

⁵ C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:1110. E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 291, 297.

⁶ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 192: Emma to her sister Matilda, New Barmen, 1 Feb. 1857.

⁷ ‘On the Wing’, *Citizen* 2:42 (16 April 1898) 6.

The Oorlams-Herero conflict produced a crop of orphans needing adoption. After Philippus—whom Emma describes as ‘the chief man of our Herero’—was killed in the Oorlam attack on Otjimbingwe in 1863, the Hahns took two of his children, aged four and six, into their household. They contemplated adopting a third, aged two. One of Hugo’s first actions was to have the children baptized—he evidently believing that salvation was conditional upon the performance of this rite.¹ On 29 May 1871, presumably with their absent father’s consent, he baptized William and Robert Grendon at Otjimbingwe.² If Mary Ann was not already baptized, it is likely that her baptism occurred at the same time.

Emma’s letters reveal a growing attachment to the land of her adoption and to the people she had chosen to serve. She speaks fondly of ‘our poor Herero’ and Damaraland becomes ‘home’.³ By 1850, she is able to avow that Africa is ‘daily dearer’ to her heart, and that she ‘hope[s] it may be the will of God’ that she might live out her days ‘among its sable children’.⁴ When retirement from the Herero mission nears, she laments having to tear herself away from ‘dear old Otjimbingwe and the dear ones there’.⁵

Life in Damaraland was harrowing for the Englishwoman. After Jonker Afrikaner’s massacres in 1850, Emma confided to a sister in England that she was emotionally exhausted: ‘Jonker’s last act has so shaken my nerves that I start almost at my own shadow, and when a gun is fired in the place, were it not for shame before others, I should throw myself flat on the ground to avoid the ball which I fancy will puncture the frail walls of our house.’⁶

Fifteen years later, when Otjimbingwe was attacked by Oorlams cavalry and foot soldiers in 1865, Emma found her home actually under fire. While the battle raged outside, she harboured many station-dwellers within the mission home. She had to keep her composure, ‘being continually among the poor women, etc., etc., to comfort

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 277: Emma to her mother, Otjimbingwe, 24 July 1864. C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:970: 19 April 1857: ‘Sie könne nicht anders, als um die heilige Taufe aufs neue bitten und habe keinen anderen Grund dazu, als ihre Seele zu retten, die sonst verloren ginge.’

² Zonnebloem Papers, D1.1: Ms record book.

³ D. Guedes in: E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, iv. *Op. cit.*, 246: Emma to her sister Rose, Gütersloh, 18 Jan. 1863.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 118: Emma to her sister Rose, New Barmen, 6 Dec. 1850.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 329: Emma to her sisters Matilda and Rose, Walfish Bay, 15 April 1871.

⁶ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 118: Emma to her sister Rose, New Barmen, 6 Dec. 1850.

and reassure them'.¹ She well knew that 'should the Namaquas break through and reach the house ... all the poor women and children who had assembled in [their] kitchen and forecourt would be shot down before [their] eyes without mercy'.² The mission home came under fire from the Afrikaner Oorlams one last time in December 1867.³ These desperate battles were still fresh in Emma's mind when the Grendon children came to stay, a couple of years later.



Otjimbingwe was a remote spot hundreds of miles beyond colonial borders (plates 2e–2g). The climate was hot and dry and the Swakop, on whose banks the station lay, flowed only occasionally. Emma Hahn describes the setting: 'From the ridges on the south and east side of the place at an hour's distance, one gets a fine view of the extensive and undulating plain, sloping down to the river, on which Otjimbingwe lies as a little dot on a sheet of paper.'⁴

A visual record of the settlement was made *circa* 1876 by the official photographer attached to the Cape Colony's Commission despatched to Nama- and Damaraland. These evocative photographs are today preserved in an atlas-folio volume in the National Library, Cape Town.⁵ This is Otjimbingwe as the Grendon children would have known it. The photographs reveal a scraggly, heterogeneous settlement set upon a stony plain. A line of hills shimmers in the distance. The camera's lens seems to capture the leaden sky and the stifling aridity of the place. It appears nearly deserted: the few figures in evidence hug the shade of the mission's outbuildings. Here and there on the plain a solitary tree defies extinction by the elements. Such lesser vegetation as exists is sparse and scrubby. A few trees and bushes seem to survive better in partial shade along the riverbed, between the deeply-rutted banks of the Swakop. These are the *ana* trees—an acacia species—that provide wayfarers with shade, and animals with edible pods.⁶

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 285: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 25 Sept. 1865.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 285: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 25 Sept. 1865.

³ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 48.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 294: Emma to her son Hugo, Otjimbingwe, 1 June 1866.

⁵ Palgrave Collection, photographs.

⁶ De Vylder, *Journal*, 89.

Plate 2e: Otjimbingwe, circa 1876

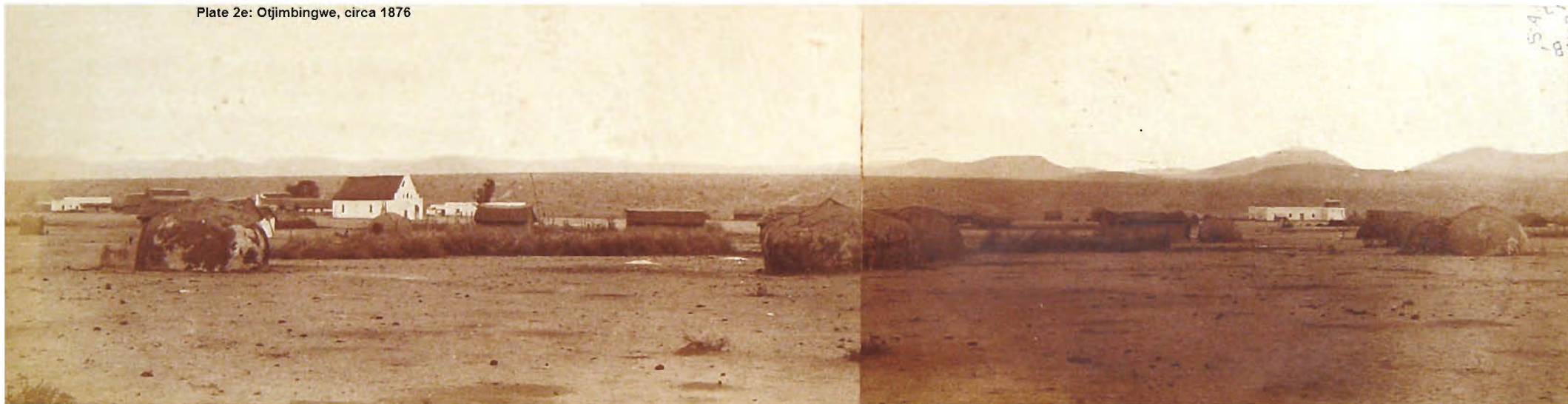
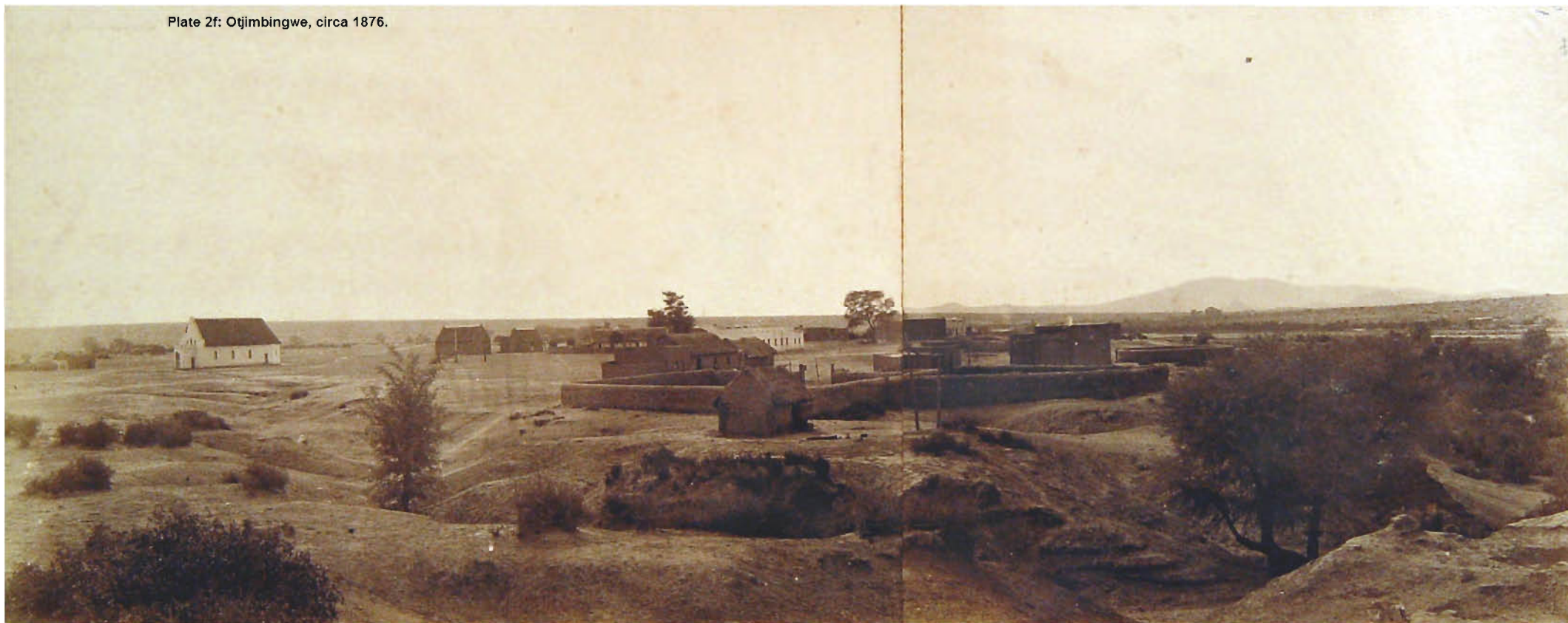


Plate 2f: Otjimbingwe, circa 1876.



A scattering of rudimentary, European-styled buildings—some flat-roofed, some whitewashed—constitutes the mission’s minuscule colony of German artisans, the dwellings of independent traders, and the homes of a few acculturating Africans. Scattered about, more or less at random, are a few ‘*pontoks*’. These are the somewhat amorphous—but approximately dome-shaped—shelters of the Herero. More permanent structures would be inconsistent with their semi-nomadic lifestyle. Also to be seen are cattle-kraals—one apparently constructed from closely entangled thorn-bushes, others of compacted earth or sun-baked bricks.

A whitewashed church—the embodiment of architectural simplicity—stands aloof from other buildings. It is described by a visitor in 1873 as ‘small but rather pleasant and ... completely European in style’.¹ The photographs show it as gabled, with a steep-pitched roof, but lacking a tower. Its windows are few and narrow—suggesting a relatively cool, dark interior. A somewhat more substantial building than all the others is situated at too great a distance from the camera lens to determine detail: it resembles a fort, and appears to incorporate a watchtower. This may be the onetime warehouse of the Walvisch Bay Mining Company.

The mission house itself looks as though it has seen better days (plate 2g). The Hahns have been gone for three or four years. It supports a hipped roof of dishevelled thatch beneath a chimney stack. A fair-sized verandah looks south across the Swakop and into Namaland. A rough paling girds the front of the home, screening it off partially from the mission *werft*, which is a stony, grassless expanse where four wagons stand parked, three with their tents raised, suggesting occupancy, and another with its tent-frame exposed. A few outbuildings stand in close proximity to the missionary home—workshops perhaps, or storerooms. One has the apex of its roof severely bowed. A few detached wagon-wheels rest against one of the buildings—perhaps awaiting attention by the colony’s wheelwright. In the foreground, a gully or wagon track slopes down to the river: this may be the ‘nice road’ up and down which the mission home’s water-barrel was rolled.²



¹ De Vylder, *Journal*, 89.

² Palgrave Collection, photographs. E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 294: E. S. Hahn to her son Hugo, Otjimbingwe, 1 June 1866.

Plate 2g: Otjimbingwe mission home, circa 1876

A.S.
B



In a letter dated 19 January 1872, Emma Hahn announces that Joseph Grendon returns shortly to Damaraland, in company with his new wife. He looks forward to reuniting with his children.¹ Emma has mixed emotions about relinquishing them:

Although I, who have the most to do with them, shall be sorry to part with them, still it is necessary that we part with them, for our house is too full and they take up much time which could be spent more directly for our mission work. The youngest boy, Robert, I should like to keep to adopt him as our own, but only on condition that we leave the country and can take him with us.²

Hartmann remarks upon this passage that Emma's expression of tenderness toward Robert reveals 'the closeness and intimacy that was possible between individuals of different backgrounds on the mission stations'.³ 'Possible' indeed—but rare, nonetheless.

Emma continues her letter with a piece of contemporary 'wisdom': she and her husband 'have often remarked ... that the characters of the offspring of whites and blacks partake most of the bad qualities of both parties (except where by early care and education they are led aright), while the good qualities usually fall into the background'.⁴ She probably has in mind her own experience in rearing such children when she excludes from her generalization those exposed to proper 'early care and education'. Her adoptive son Daniel, for instance, handsomely rewarded her attention when he grew up to make a valuable contribution to the Rhenish Mission.⁵ Thomas Baines, who met Daniel at Barmen mission in 1861, describes him as 'a very respectable half-caste man'.⁶

Since Emma took personal responsibility for the Grendon children during their father's absence, it follows that her diligent 'early care and education' placed them in the exceptional category too. However, throughout his adult life, Grendon would have to endure aspersions repeatedly cast upon the moral worth of 'half-castes'. For instance, his polemical opponent, Hertslet, charges that 'the average half-caste seems

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 333–34: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 19 Jan. 1872.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 334: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 19 Jan. 1872.

³ Hartmann, 'Sexual Encounters', 158.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 334–36: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 19 Jan. 1872.

⁵ D. Guedes in: E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, ii.

⁶ Baines, *Explorations*, 49.

to have inherited most of the vices and few of the virtues of his mixed parentage'.¹ Although Hertslet is clearly prejudiced, it would require rare spiritual and intellectual resources on Robert's part to combat such a persistent slur.

We glean some idea of the 'early care and education' Emma bestowed upon the Grendon children when we consider how she raised her own. In her early Damaraland letters, she expresses deep anxiety over her children's moral education, since they are 'unavoidably so exposed to the evil example of the heathen children'.² The 'children of the natives are not fit companions for them' and 'actually do teach [the eldest] evil things'.³ And yet, it is not feasible to seal off the mission household from external influence. Of her little daughter Gita, she writes: 'We cannot, be as careful as we will, she having no companion, keep her entirely free from the influence of the heathen children.'⁴

Great ingenuity was needed in order to divert the little Hahns' attention from their 'heathen' playmates, and initially the parents tried to confine their children's amusements to those of an indoor variety. Emma asks her sister Matilda in England to send 'a dissected map or box of natural history dissected, etc.' By means such as these, it is their 'aim as much as possible to keep [their] beloved ones from the contamination of the heathen children who constantly beset [their] doors.... Children are children and seek the society of such.'⁵ Since Emma implies that she has laboured to ensure that the Grendon children are 'led aright',⁶ we may suppose that she employs similar strategies, devices, and 'useful articles for [their] amusement'.⁷

Another of Emma's letters home, written in March 1872, again expresses her ambivalent emotions about parting with the Grendon children:

We are very thankful that he [*i.e.*, Joseph Grendon] returns with a wife, for, although I am not at all weary of the children for I am now, although in a small degree, beginning to reap the fruits of my instructions, which I exclusively have carried on with them[, y]et I fear that during the winter months when my health is usually so poor, I should not be that to them which I wish to

¹ 'Miscegenation: L. E. H.'s Reply', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:74 (18 Feb. 1914) 5.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 119: Emma to her sister Rose, New Barmen, 6 Dec. 1850.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 97–98: Emma to her mother, Sarah Hone, New Barmen, 5 April 1848.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 186: Emma to her sister Matilda, New Barmen, 1 Feb. 1857.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 114: Emma to her sister Matilda, New Barmen, 10 March 1850.

⁶ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 336: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 19 Jan. 1872.

⁷ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 114: Emma to her sister Matilda, New Barmen, 10 March 1850.

be. Otherwise I should have liked to keep them, particularly the younger, another year. Robert was a mere baby when he came to us (three years), and feeling for the poor little orphan boy, I took him under my wing and he has become much attached to me, and no-one is able to manage him in his obstinate fits as I, by firmness and decision without absolute severity, am able to do.¹

Emma had never enjoyed robust health, and in her letters home she confesses that, although only in her mid-fifties, she has aged prematurely. The arduous life of a missionary hundreds of miles beyond the colonial frontier, and particularly the grievous physical and emotional privations suffered during the early years, had taken their toll. She would live just eight more years.

After arriving in Cape Town in 1872, Joseph Grendon received a letter from Frederick Green, who told him that Emma's health was somewhat precarious, and that her daughter Gita—who returned from Europe in 1869—had given up teaching school at Otjimbingwe, so as to take over household duties that had become 'too much' for her mother.² With Gita to oversee the housekeeping, Emma was able to focus on her 'instructions' to the Grendon children. She remarks that she 'exclusively' has undertaken their training during the period of their father's absence. By this, she implies that neither her husband nor her daughter has shared the role with her.

It is Robert in particular that she singles out for mention—not naming his siblings in her surviving letters. All three were orphaned by their mother's death, yet she writes fondly of the 'poor little orphan boy'. Of course, being youngest, he may have been the most vulnerable and most needful of her love. However, the chief reason for their special bond appears to have been his responsiveness: as she writes, 'he has become much attached to me'.

'Obstinacy'—which she imputes to him—is not a personality trait that she treats lightly. Elsewhere in one of her letters, she refers to the 'worst and most incorrigible' of the Oorlams 'who have long withstood the Word of God most obstinately'.³ 'Obstinacy', as she employs it, seems then to connote a perverse wilfulness, which must be exorcised with 'firmness and decision', rather than indulged.

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 337: Emma to her sisters Matilda and Rose, Otjimbingwe, 4 March 1872.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 341: Joseph Grendon to 'Dear Madam', Cape Town, 10 May 1872.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 275: Emma to her mother Sarah Hone, Otjimbingwe, 13 April 1864.

And yet, Robert is not completely intractable. Emma claims that she alone is able to ‘manage’ his ‘obstinate fits’. Subliminally, perhaps she alludes to her husband’s inability to work creatively with the boy’s energies. The Hahns had very different approaches to childrearing. He was a severe and impatient disciplinarian, thoroughly persuaded that children—Herero children, in particular—had unimaginably vicious proclivities. ‘It is scarcely credible, however true’, he confides to his diary, ‘that from the fourth and fifth years, [Herero children] already practise carnal sin of the grossest kind’.¹ His method of dealing with impurity and delinquency was as uncompromising as it was unimaginative. He did not hesitate to inflict corporal punishment, not only on children but even on adult miscreants when he believed that circumstances warranted it. A delinquent child was soundly thrashed, because evil tendencies ‘amongst the youngsters must be *crushed*’—his own words.² But Emma had sole charge of Robert, and likely kept him out of her husband’s way as much as possible. She appears to believe that her own private formula—‘firmness and decision without absolute severity’—has been vindicated in his case.



One of Emma’s letters provides a glimpse into the daily round while the Grendon children were with her. After Emma ‘had been at needlework nearly all the day’, she went at twilight to sit for a few minutes with her friend Mrs Marie Baumann, a woman of part-Khoi extraction. While she was at Mrs Baumann’s, Emma’s daughter Gita joined them, and they were ‘just enjoying [them]selves with her and her two dear little children’ and ‘our three’—the Grendons—when Katherine, the Hahns’ kitchen maid, ‘popped her head in’ to report that the much-awaited mail had arrived in Otjimbingwe.

The announcement ‘worked like an electric shock’, and Emma and her daughter Gita scurried home, where they found Hugo ‘busily unpacking a very large packet of newspapers, pamphlets, letters, etc., etc.’ Because the Hahn home was the ‘General Post Office for Hereroland and Ovamboland’, Gita and her father set to work at once, sorting the mails. Having sent out the mails destined for residents at Otjimbingwe,

¹ ‘Es ist kaum glaublich, aber wahr, dass sie von ihrem vierten und fünften Jahre an schon Fleischessünden, und gröbster Art, treiben’ (C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:953: 25 Jan. 1857).

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 369: Hugo Hahn to his wife Emma, Cape Town, 30 Oct. 1877. Emphasis in original.

they could settle down to reading their own precious news.¹ Robert and his siblings will no doubt have hoped for letters from their father in Europe.

During the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71, when the Grendon children were living with the Hahns, the balance of power in Europe underwent major reconstruction. French hegemony suffered ignominious defeat, as Napoleon III was captured after Sedan (1 September 1870), and the modern unified state of Germany saw its genesis. According to Een, ‘when the victories of the German forces became known, the Germans [of Damaraland], in their usual manner of course, started bragging and blustering and behaving arrogantly’. Hahn, ‘the High Priest of the missionaries’, lowered the mission flag and hoisted instead that of the North German Federation. But,

that was not enough. The black Christian brethren must not be left ignorant of and unstirred by the victories of the Germans. Mr Hahn, who had been a Russian officer as I mentioned previously, gathered together a number of negro boys whom he had perform a kind of sham fight with much shooting and in which a detachment of ‘Frenchmen’ were naturally thoroughly beaten.²

William and Robert Grendon may well have been amongst the ‘negro boys’ who took part in this absurd charade, but more likely they were too young to participate, and were spectators instead. As an adult, Robert remarks upon the age-old enmity between the Germans and the French, in a way that allows us to imagine that he had a faint memory of the German victory celebrations that took place at Otjimbingwe probably early in 1871: ‘The same spirit [of envy] broke out against France under the first Napoleon, and though it partially satisfied its revenge on the fall of the third Napoleon, it has not died out in the breast of the Germans with reference to the French, who have been their deadliest foes since the days of Charlemagne.’³



In March 1872, Emma wrote that she expected the Grendons back from Europe, via Cape Town, by the next vessel to call at Walvis Bay. Then they would have to allow a further fortnight’s overland journey for the couple to reach Otjimbingwe. She

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 342: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 23 June 1872.

² Een, *Memories*, 186.

³ ‘Snakes in the Grass’, *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 4.

anticipated—perhaps wishfully—that for a time she would be called upon to keep the children until their parents had had opportunity to establish themselves:

As Grendon has no house and was not certain where he should live on his return, the children will of course not yet be able to return to him, at least not until he has a pontok ready to go into. A pontok is a hut built of poles and reeds and plastered with clay—it can be large or small, have one, two or even three rooms, be round or square. When built high it is a good shelter from sun and rain until one has a more substantial dwelling, and far preferable to a tent.¹

In late April 1872, Emma describes the hive of activity that the Otjimbingwe mission house had lately been. It had been the Hahns' turn to host the annual conference of southwest Africa's Rhenish missionaries:

On the 22nd the conference commenced, and I can assure you that, although we had previously in some measure prepared for it, we have our day's work each successive day that returns, for we are not only our own cooks but bakers, confectioners, etc., etc., for although our young people learn and are of great assistance to us, their overliveliness and excessively loquacious propensities cause us often much trouble and vexation. We sit down daily fifteen to table, after us come seven, and then our seven seminary youths and three domestics all must be cared for.²

Amongst the conference delegates, Emma enumerates 'our adopted son Daniel Cloete' who 'with wife and five children [were accommodated] in the large school room'. The two eldest Cloete daughters, who were then preparing for their confirmation, shared the Hahns' 'second spare room' together with the three young Grendons.

Although Joseph and Sarah Jane Grendon arrived at Cape Town on 6 February, they had experienced some unanticipated delays in readying themselves for the final leg of their journey—to Damaraland. Upon arrival at the Cape, Joseph had intended placing an order for the manufacture of some wagons, but the discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West meant that all the wainwrights were fully employed in filling orders from throngs of incoming fortune-seekers, and Grendon could find no-one to meet his order immediately.³ He also had some surplus cash that he hoped to place

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 337–38: Emma to her sisters, Matilda and Rose, Otjimbingwe, 4 March 1872.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 339: Emma to her sister, Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 2 April 1872.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 341: Joseph Grendon to 'Dear Madam', Cape Town, 10 May 1872.

with one of Cape Town's merchant firms, but because of the boom economy, he could only manage to obtain two percent interest on it.¹

By about mid-June 1872—presumably with their new wagons—the Grendons arrived in Walvis Bay. They reached the Hahns' mission home at Otjimbingwe on the 29th.² Julinda Hoskins describes her great-grandfather's return from Europe: 'It is not known how long he was away for, but when he returned, he brought with him a new wife and mother—an Englishwoman—for his children. They settled in the Cape.'³ It is true that they ultimately settled at the Cape, but that was a few years later. From Mrs Hoskins's notes, it is clear that Joseph intended that his new wife should be a mother to his children by Maria.

Emma's impressions of Sarah Jane, the new Mrs Grendon, are somewhat equivocal:

As far as we can judge, we hope Mrs Grendon will be a suitable wife for him and mother for her children. She has already quite gained their confidence. We have given them a room in our house, or rather adjoining it, for her circumstances are such that she cannot ride further just yet. They intend, if permitted by the chief, to settle on or near our old station, New Barmen, and there establish a trading establishment, at first on a small scale, increasing if he succeeds. He has had 'his eyes about him' in England, and it is a great pleasure to me to get a hearty *satisfying* chat with him about dear old England, which, although greatly changed in many respects, still retains her peculiarities among the nations—I should like to have a chat with you about these things. The children are still with us and are quite happy—their father finds them much improved also in English, which I feared would not be the case, for I have had much trouble to get them to speak any other than the Herero language.⁴

Emma's letter reminds us that Damaraland is yet what Robert Grendon in his 'Miscegenation' polemic describes as 'a black man's land'.⁵ Chief Maharero's permission must be sought and obtained before a white trader—even one long resident in the region—can set up shop in any given locality. In the event, Joseph Grendon would set up his new business, not at New Barmen, but beside the chief's

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 343: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 23 June 1872.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 343: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 23 June 1872.

³ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 343: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 23 June 1872 (continued 2 July 1872).

⁵ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

own *werft* at Okahandja, and he makes clear in 1881 that Maharero ‘invited [him] there’ and, again, that he ‘was on his place by [the chief’s] invitation’.¹

Emma states that Joseph found his children ‘much improved also in English’. She could readily identify with his desire that his children learn English. Proficiency in the English language was very important to her. Although Hugo was German-speaking, he spoke English with Emma—at least in the early years of their marriage.² When it became apparent to Emma in letters from her children in Europe that they were ‘forgetting the language in which they had received their first instructions and conversed both with Father and Mother’, the discovery ‘was almost too difficult [for her] to bear’.³ She must therefore have shared Joseph Grendon’s pleasure at his children’s marked improvement in English.

In September 1872, after Hugo and Emma Hahn decided to retire from the Herero mission, Emma, in company with Gita, went on a farewell circuit of ‘some of the different stations for the double purpose of taking leave of old and new friends and of recruiting [their] health a little before going over Walwich Bay to the Cape in one of the little trading vessels’. They reached Okahandja on the evening of the 20th, where they hoped to stay for ten days until the 30th.⁴ On the 22nd, Emma saw Joseph Grendon, who had ‘settled here and desire[d] his best compliments’ to be conveyed to Emma’s family who had shown him hospitality in England.⁵ At this time, Okahandja may have had fewer than a dozen white residents—missionaries and traders. Although her letters are silent on this score, Emma’s motive in visiting Okahandja was likely a desire to see the Grendon children one last time.

In May, while still in Cape Town, Joseph Grendon had claimed that Hugo Hahn’s departure would spell disaster for Damaraland:

There is much talk of war again between the Damaras and Hottentots. I do think, should Mr Hahn leave the country for good, the people will not remain quiet very long, owing to the great quantity of cattle and sheep which the Damaras possess, which makes them (their cattle and sheep) a great eye-sore to the Hottentots and other tribes. I am very sorry to hear this [talk of the

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 83: Emma to her sister Rose, New Barmen, 1 Jan. 1846.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 196: Emma to her sister Rose, New Barmen, 30 May 1857.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 348: Emma to her sister Matilda, Okahandja, 23 Sept. 1872.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 349: Emma to her sister Matilda, Okahandja, 23 Sept. 1872.

Hahns leaving], as it will put the country again in a state of disorder unfit for any white man to live there, and all the good that Mr Hahn and others have been doing will be lost. But we will trust in God, and hope for the best.¹

Emma however sees fit to refute Joseph's bleak prognosis for the future of Damaraland:

Hugo will be greatly missed in the country and the mission, but so as Grendon in his Irish enthusiasm means, not—there is now a band of young, faithful men in the work and we hope that in a month or two their number will be augmented by two more arrivals, and there is also a band of men among the baptised natives who with God's help will stand by their missionaries in hours of need. If through Hugo's leaving the country is made uncomfortable to a certain class of white men, their loss will rather be a blessing than otherwise to baptised and heathen.²

Precisely whom Emma means to bracket in her descriptor, 'a certain class of white man', is unclear, but one supposes that she excludes Grendon. All the same, his fraternizing with men of this class may have called into question his own character. She may mean those traders who import large quantities of Cape brandy and other stimulants, from the trade in which Grendon appears to distance himself in his evidence before the 1881 'Damaraland Affairs' commission.³ Perhaps she also had in mind the reckless gunrunning that was a mainstay of trade in the region, but since the Rhenish Missionary Society itself had reputedly introduced 'a great number of guns for hunting, the most important article of exchange in trade with the natives',⁴ Emma could scarcely criticize the non-missionary traders for doing the same.



During the latter part of 1872, the Grendon family made its home at Okahandja.⁵ The place was growing in importance as Maharero's residence and as a centre of the Herero ancestor and cattle cult. Besides his chiefly office, Maharero was guardian of the sacred fire—a priestly function that precluded his personal conversion to Christianity.⁶ His capital rapidly surpassed Otjimbingwe in importance, and by 1878,

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 341: Joseph Grendon to 'Dear Madam', Cape Town, 10 May 1872.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 348: Emma to her sister Matilda, Okahandja, 23 Sept. 1872.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40, 44, 46, 48.

⁴ Een, *Memories*, 44.

⁵ Joseph Grendon's memory concerning dates is somewhat faulty. He later told a Cape Government Commission that he has resided in Okahandja from the end of 1871. As the letters of Emma Hahn make clear, he was in England and Europe throughout 1871.

⁶ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 326.

Emma Hahn—now retired to Cape Town—could describe it as ‘the chief mission station in the country’.¹

In 1872, the year in which the Grendons settled at Okahandja, missionary Diehl performed his first baptisms. The Okahandja congregation now stood at sixty baptized. Amongst its members were Wilhelm Maharero and some other sons of headmen.² Wilhelm was chief Maharero’s eldest son and the heir apparent to the Okahandja chieftaincy. He and his wife were considered model Christians,³ and presented ‘a shining example of what a Christian marriage ought to be’.⁴ Palgrave describes Wilhelm as ‘intelligent’, ‘a prominent member of the Church, and fully under its influence’.⁵ In keeping with his mission-based education, Wilhelm even kept a harmonium and a small library in his brick-built house—which, according to Diehl, was in 1873 the most substantial dwelling after the mission house itself.⁶

Okahandja in the 1870s showed many signs of industry and material progress. In its wagon sheds stood a number of new wagons. The inhabitants laid out many vegetable gardens, and both Christians and heathen sowed wheat. According to missionary Irle, the settlement resembled ‘an oasis in the desert’ with its many maize and pumpkin gardens. Everything thrived, and the Christians even ventured to plant grapevines and potatoes. ‘The people’s industriousness was astonishing.’ Maharero forbade the felling of trees or bushes, and the flats acquired once again the attractive wooded appearance they had had before being stripped bare during the joint Oorlam-Herero occupation.⁷

Okahandja also boasted two trading stores, whose proprietors were strictly forbidden to offer brandy for sale. Grendon is unlikely to have violated this prohibition, since he professed himself opposed to the indiscriminate trade in ‘brandy and other intoxicating liquors from the Cape’.⁸ It is likely that he either owned or had shares in one of these stores. Okahandja’s white traders included the elderly

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 376: Emma to her sister Matilda, Cape Town, 9 April 1878.

² Irle, *Herero*, 261–62.

³ Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 43.

⁴ Quoted in: Irle, *Herero*, 262.

⁵ Quoted in: Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 38.

⁶ Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 42–43.

⁷ Irle, *Herero*, 262.

⁸ Irle, *Herero*, 262; Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40, 44, 46, 48.

Englishman, Irons,¹ William Clay,² and Grendon's fellow Irishman, John Cain, who lived with his Herero wife and their several children.³ From their Okahandja base, these traders would send out their wagons on far-flung trading expeditions.⁴

Grendon seems to have been the most prominent of the white residents. Diehl names him first when referring to them,⁵ and in February 1873, when Hahn visited Okahandja, he discovered that Grendon was in the process of 'building himself a pretty house ... in a shady, snug little spot'. He remarks that this trader had 'achieved prosperity in just a few years'.⁶ Grendon states that he erected this house at 'great expense'⁷—likely in consideration of his English bride who, unlike him, was not inured to living under harsh or primitive conditions. Interestingly, this is the second occasion when Hahn comments favourably on the charming appearance and setting of a house built by Grendon: he wrote similarly of the Ondonga house in 1866.



Joseph Grendon recalled that when he first arrived in Damaraland, guns were luxury items that only wealthy Herero could afford: 'Formerly a poor man never used to offer to buy a gun; he used sometimes to offer to work for one. The guns only came within the reach of the rich man.'⁸ Trade in guns and ammunition was potentially lucrative. According to Grendon, a single-barrelled gun that fetched about £10 or £12 in Cape Town might change hands in Damaraland for as much as ten or twelve oxen, or the equivalent of £20 to £24.⁹

In the 1870s, however, trading conditions began to deteriorate. Guns and ammunition began to flood into Damaraland and Namaland in quantities sufficient to

¹ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 59.

² Tabler, *Pioneers*, 25.

³ Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, 297; Tabler, *Pioneers*, 18.

⁴ McKiernan, *Narrative*, 120.

⁵ 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest-Afrika', vol. xxvii, 18: Okahandja 1873–1890.–Otjikango (Barmen) 1880–1888: 'Auszug aus einem Brief von Missionar Ph. Diehl sen., Okahandja, 29.5.1876.'

⁶ 'Abends machte ich auch einen Besuch bei dem Engländer Grendon, einem Händler, der sich ein hübsches Haus ganz in der Nähe, an einem schattigen, lauschigen Plätzchen baut. Dieser Mann ist in nur wenigen Jahren zum Wohlstand gekommen.' ('Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest-Afrika', vol. xxviii: 'Meine Heimreise. Von C. Hugo Hahn (1873). (Auszug)'); Lau, 'Emergence of Kommando Politics', 350.

⁷ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39.

⁸ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44.

⁹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 48.

‘arm all the Malays in Cape Town’¹—as Grendon dramatizes the situation. He also reveals that a large proportion of arms and ammunition from Europe no longer passed through Cape Town, but was being imported directly into the territory. As a result, the ‘country was overstocked’ with guns.²

Guns and ammunition represented Grendon’s chief merchandise. In the more settled regions of the Cape Colony, he might have been branded a ‘gunrunner’—but he would have rejected that label. When one of the Cape commissioners inquired if he did not consider his line of work ‘an illicit trade’, he replied, curtly: ‘Certainly not.’³ He believed that to supply guns to African hunters was legitimate commerce. All the same, he opposed the ‘indiscriminate trade in guns’. Such trade ought to be restricted; on the other hand, there should be a ‘free trade by all means in things that will help to civilize’ the ‘natives’.⁴

Despite his protestation to the contrary, Grendon’s role as a gun merchant does not bear close moral scrutiny. His supply of guns and ammunition—albeit to hunters—can only have heightened existing tensions in a land where intercommunal violence had become endemic by the late precolonial period.⁵ It is reasonable to assume that at least some of the guns and part of the powder and ammunition used in warfare had been supplied by Grendon—although he may not have been a major culprit. Palgrave observed in 1876 that

all the men, and even boys of twelve, carried guns and these mainly good rifles. The only flint guns I saw had been relegated by the original owners to the youngest of their sons able to carry them, and I may record here ... that everywhere through the country the same sight is met with; so overstocked is the gun market that at the time of which I write there were 6,000 in the country waiting sale; and not less, probably much more, than 20 tons of gunpowder and a proportionate weight of lead.⁶

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 43.

⁴ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 48.

⁵ This cycle of violence was due, in large measure, to the rapid northward expansion of the Cape colonial frontier. White graziers placed tremendous pressure upon the indigenes—who included several largely-aculturated Khoi groups (*Oorlams*). The brutal *kommando* military system operative at the Cape made outlaws of entire communities. Some of these *Oorlams* groups began crossing into Namaland at the start of the nineteenth century, bringing with them their horses, wagons, and guns—as well as the *kommando* system that they had adopted in order to survive in the rough colonial borderlands south of the Orange (Gariep) River.

⁶ Quoted in: Marks and Atmore, ‘Firearms’, 521.

Grendon confirms this picture, testifying that the Herero ‘threw away the old’ guns, and now ‘everyone’ went ‘about with a breech-loading gun in his hand’.¹ The evil arose when those Herero who did ‘no hunting at all’ acquired guns simply ‘for the name of the thing’.² By the time he left Okahandja in January 1878, muzzleloaders had become worthless, and only breechloaders still had any sort of market.³

Montague L. Bensusan, a leading Cape Town merchant, gave evidence in 1882 before a Cape Colonial ‘Select Committee on Gunpowder Trade’ to southwest Africa. He stated that one Damaraland trader whom he supplied on a regular basis, sent him during the years 1878–80 ‘about £20,000 sterling value of produce of his hunting, consisting of feathers, ivory, &c.’ This man kept between three and four hundred men employed.⁴

The man to whom Bensusan refers is almost certainly Axel Wilhelm Eriksson (1846–1901) who had come to southwest Africa in 1866 to serve out a three-year apprenticeship to Andersson. In 1871, he established a business partnership with Anders Ohlsson, a Cape Town brewer and businessman who, like Eriksson, was a Swede. Eriksson’s base was at Omaruru, where his business flourished. ‘In 1876 he had about twenty whites in his service; in 1878 about forty; his firm was said to have employed about £200,000 in capital in the 1870s.’⁵

In order to compete with the Swedes, the Germans also stepped up their import of guns and ammunition. Joseph Grendon had ‘no hesitation in saying that the import of guns and ammunition by the German colonists, and, secondly, by the German Trading Company, was due to the great importation of guns by the Swedish Company. They did it, one might say, in self-defence, not to lose the trade.’⁶ As a consequence of this indiscriminate introduction of firearms, Grendon’s own business began to suffer, and he was unable to find buyers for the superior British-made guns that he had imported in 1872. They ‘lay in [his] place six years’—he being unwilling to cut his losses and

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 48.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44.

⁴ Cape, *Gunpowder Trade*, 13.

⁵ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 37.

⁶ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40.

sell them ‘at the Damara price’.¹ He complained that the ‘poor trader went to the wall’ after this mass importation of guns.²

Dag Henrichsen, an authority on precolonial Namibia, explains the plight of small, independent trading and hunting outfits from the 1870s. The majority were obliged to purchase their stock-in-trade at inflated prices from one or two local wholesalers. Since they might also have to sell the produce of their trading and hunting to the same firms, they were unable to realise what they might have done, had they been in a position to sell on colonial or European markets. In the ‘hierarchy of the trade chain’, they operated with the least potential for profit.³

The situation for many small traders was exacerbated in 1874 when the Cape authorities imposed tolls on the most important trade goods entering Damaraland—namely guns and ammunition. This placed large firms such as Eriksson & Co. at a considerable advantage, since they continued to land their wares directly from Europe—not passing them through any British-controlled port. In turn, those small traders whom they supplied could significantly undercut others who looked to the Cape Town wholesalers for their supply.⁴ The trader Ludwig Conradt explained in 1888 that the majority of the small-time traders were so deeply in debt to Cape Town firms that they could no longer obtain trade goods on credit.⁵ It is little wonder then that Grendon exhibited some bitterness when interviewed by the Damaraland Affairs commission.

At any rate, southwest Africa was oversupplied with firearms. Grendon discerned that, because of their proliferation, the country was ‘smouldering’ by 1875.⁶ On one occasion, a Herero man had the audacity to bring his gun right into Grendon’s house at Okahandja. Although Grendon ‘spoke to the Chief [likely Maharero] about it’, he ‘got no justice’.⁷ He had ‘no hesitation’ in claiming that ‘the great importation of guns and ammunition direct from Europe destroyed the country’.⁸ If traders continued, without governmental hindrance, to import guns and ammunition through Walvis

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40.

³ Henrichsen, ‘Herrschaft und Identifikation’, 249.

⁴ Henrichsen, ‘Herrschaft und Identifikation’, 249.

⁵ Quoted in Henrichsen, ‘Herrschaft und Identifikation’, 250.

⁶ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 47.

⁷ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 44.

⁸ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40.

Bay, it ‘would completely ruin the country’.¹ His recommendation was that in future only ‘a certain amount of guns and gunpowder’ be allowed to pass through Walvis Bay.²



During the early 1870s, the political climate in Damaraland was further complicated by rumours that Boers from the Transvaal and elsewhere were planning to invade. Even before 1870, the Transvaal Boer, Hendrik Matthys van Zyl (1828–80), had crossed the Kalahari Desert, established himself at Ghanzi, and paid a visit to Maharero.³ He was ‘one of the largest and richest big game hunters in Southern Africa’ and a ‘one-time member of the Transvaal Volksraad’.⁴ The missionary Irle probably exaggerates, but he likely gives an accurate account of prevailing rumours when he writes that about five hundred Boer families, under van Zyl’s leadership, sought to establish themselves in eastern Damaraland in 1874.⁵

Alarmed by the prospect of a Boer invasion, Maharero and other Herero chiefs met together on 21 June 1874 to petition the Cape Government to extend protection to Damaraland. Their document was drawn up by Frederick Green and S. A. Mumford.⁶ Some of Damaraland’s whites were also apprehensive about the prospect of the Boer advance. War, if it came, might ruin their trade. In December, forty white traders signed a similar petition.⁷

The Cape Government did not relish the idea of a ‘second Transvaal’ on her back doorstep. Besides anything else, this was calculated to impede the Colony’s own trade with southwest Africa, and it would give the Boers of the interior direct access to a seaport. In response to the Herero petition, the Cape Colony in 1875 decided to send a diplomat to the various indigenous peoples of central southwest Africa. The purpose of this commission was to protect the interests of the white traders and to nurture a

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 47.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 48.

³ McKiernan, *Narrative*, 129n.

⁴ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 155n.

⁵ Irle, *Herero*, 200–01.

⁶ Tabler, *Pioneers*, 48.

⁷ Palgrave, *Commissions*, xiii; Irle, *Herero*, 200–01.

political climate conducive to annexation—in the event of such a step being decided upon.¹

A German trader in southwest Africa, Dr Johannes Theophilus Hahn (1842–1905)² created a furore in 1875 when a secret letter from him to van Zyl was intercepted by Maharero, who became outraged when its contents were revealed to him.³ Hahn was encouraging the Boers to establish between fifty and one hundred families east of Rehoboth, in an area where Oorlams and Herero spheres of influence overlapped. Initially, the local people might be persuaded to accept an annual rental for use of their pasturage, he suggested, but he added cynically that in a few years time, van Zyl and his people would ‘easily ... be able to rule the country’. His letter should be kept secret, ‘because the Missionaries will do every thing to keep the farmers out of the country’.⁴ Hahn also tried to persuade Boers in the Cape Colony to invade this same area.⁵ His was a Machiavellian scheme to establish an independent Boer republic upon the violent seizure of land from the indigenous peoples.

Theophilus Hahn was born on his father’s mission station in Namaqualand, Cape Colony, and spent his early childhood there and in Namaland, southwest Africa.⁶ He attended school and university in Germany, and obtained his doctorate in philology with a thesis on the Nama language.⁷ Returning to southwest Africa in 1871, he endeavoured to set up as a trader while conducting a scientific survey that would culminate in the publication of the first reliable map of the region in 1879. His cultural arrogance and ferocious temper counted against him however, and before long he had alienated almost everyone.⁸ The missionary Hugo Hahn describes him as ‘a man without God and without shame’.⁹ The Oorlams chief, Jan Jonker Afrikaner complained that Hahn abused his subjects, the ‘Berg Damaras’, by ‘punishing them too severely and flogging them for the most trivial offences’. When he wrote to complain about this to a trader at Rehoboth, ‘Dr Hahn abused [him] and wanted to

¹ Irle, *Herero*, 200–01; Palgrave, *Commissions*, xvi.

² No relation of Carl Hugo Hahn.

³ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 12–14.

⁴ ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xv: ‘75 Dokumente aus dem Nachlass von Maharero’, No. 11: Theophilus Hahn to van Zyl, Otjikango, 17 Sept. 1875.

⁵ *DSAB*, i:345.

⁶ *DSAB*, i:344.

⁷ *DSAB*, i:344.

⁸ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 14n.

⁹ ‘Ein Mann ohne Gott und ohne Scham’ (‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxx, 77: ‘Aus “Meine Heimreise” (1873).’)

know what business [he] had to write letters to a white man'. Furthermore, 'Hahn threatened ... that he and Eriksson would get some armed Damaras to punish' Jan Jonker. Afrikaner wanted Hahn banished.¹

Hahn's relationship with the Herero was no better. Maharero's first contact with him related to some horses that the trader wanted to sell. The Herero considered his price too high, and the transaction was not concluded. Maharero's Mbanderu interpreter told him that in Hahn's rage at the deal not coming off, he 'had said [that] if he had had poison with him, he would have put some into some beef, and poisoned the lot of [them]'.²

When Hahn's letter to van Zyl was read and translated to him, Maharero ordered its writer to appear at Okahandja and account for his action. Hahn refused to obey the summons. As Joseph Grendon later recalled the incident, Hahn 'happened to get into the bad books of Maharero and his people, and was invited and sent for to come to Okahandja to clear himself, but did not think it safe to do so'.³ Hahn made himself still more odious by writing to Maharero in a tone of contempt.⁴

In an atmosphere of escalating fear, rumours were rife. Scapegoats were sought. Joseph Grendon was accused of 'carrying letters to the Boers'.⁵ As it happened, by early 1876, Grendon's own belligerence and insubordination had brought relations between him and Maharero to low ebb. In about March or April, Maharero issued orders that Grendon's wagon and goods should be confiscated. Grendon was absent on a trading trip when the order was executed.⁶ He attributed Maharero's order to his personal refusal 'to pay black mail, as other traders did then'. He had considered himself exempt from such exaction, because Maharero had invited him to settle at Okahandja.⁷ Evidently Grendon was presuming upon a special intimacy with Maharero which, if it had ever really existed, had now worn perilously thin.

¹ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 63.

² Palgrave, *Commissions*, 16.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 45.

⁴ 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xv: '75 Dokumente aus dem Nachlass von Maharero', No. 12: 'Brief von Theophilus Hahn vom 9. Januar 1876 aus Rehoboth an den Häuptling Maharero in Okahandja.'

⁵ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 45.

⁶ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39.

⁷ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39.

The so-called ‘black mail’ to which Grendon refers was a form of tribute universally ‘imposed upon the traders in the country unless they made a present willingly’.¹ The payer acknowledged the supremacy of the chief through whose territory he purposed conducting his goods, or amongst whose people he proposed bartering those goods. It might be argued that what Grendon calls ‘black mail’ took the place in Damaraland that import tariffs and trading licences occupy in so-called ‘civilized’ lands. When it was later put to Grendon that ‘the native chief [had] as much right to charge for a licence for trading as the Cape Government had’, he replied by insisting that ‘it was never understood’ like that in Damaraland.²

He maintained that he would have had no objection to taking out a statutory trading license, if Damaraland were brought under Colonial administration—provided he were afforded commensurate protection from Herero harassment. His objection was not to legitimate taxation, but to the terrorism and arbitrariness with which the ‘black mail’ was imposed. The better-heeled trader ‘had a chance of getting over the younger trader, because he gave these presents for the sake of passing his wagons and people through, and he paid the black mail without any hesitation; but the poor man could not, and he came to grief, and [this situation] more or less cause[d] ill-feeling amongst the traders themselves’.³

Similarly, justice of ‘a sort’ could only be obtained by paying some bribe. Grendon complains that ‘if a white man greased the hand of a chief with a gun or something of that kind he got a sort of justice’.⁴ He claims that he never consented to pay for the ‘justice’ he considered his due. He also acknowledged no obligation to pay for the privilege of unmolested passage from one part of the country to another.⁵ In consequence of Grendon’s ‘trying to stand out against’ what he perceived to be a corrupt practice, he found himself ‘always more or less in hot water’.⁶

Upon his return to Okahandja from his trading trip, he had to pass Maharero’s *werft* in order to reach his own house. To his intense annoyance, he was apprehended and detained by Maharero’s constables, who told him that he was their prisoner, and

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 42.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 42.

⁴ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 42.

⁵ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 42.

⁶ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 42.

who denied him leave to return to his house. His wagon was confiscated and ‘pushed in behind Maharero’s house’. In the evening, he was permitted to return home, but his wagon and goods remained forfeit.¹ The wagon remained at Maharero’s house for six weeks. He considered himself to be under house-arrest, ‘watched by [Maharero’s] people, to prevent [his] moving away to trade, and [Maharero’s] people were prevented from trading with [him].’ The only way out of his predicament would have been to pay the ‘black mail’.²

As both Grendon and Theophilus Hahn were traders, and both had Maharero and his tribespeople as customers, it is possible that they were in some kind of partnership, or perhaps that they were merely on friendly terms. Subsequent events suggest a relationship of sorts. In his evidence before the ‘Damaraland Affairs’ commission, Grendon describes an unspecified ‘misunderstanding with [Maharero’s] people’ in which the chief ‘ordered [him] away [from Okahandja], though he had invited [Grendon] there, and [Grendon] had been at great expense in building a house, &c., and had nothing but one wagon and span to remove [his] property with’.³ It is unclear when this ‘misunderstanding’ took place—it may have been during the early months of 1876—but it appears to relate to ‘some foolish report circulated of [his] carrying letters to the Boers’. It is possible that Grendon was charged with having acted as postman for Hahn. Regardless of whether or not there was any foundation to the report, it does suggest that at least one of Grendon’s trading expeditions ranged as far east as the Boers’ temporary encampments on the western fringe of the Kalahari—some weeks’ journey from Okahandja.⁴

To clear his name, Grendon had audience with Maharero and assured him that ‘it was all false’. The ‘old man’ appeared to believe his protestations of innocence, ‘but was overruled by some of his people’.⁵ It appears that the eviction order would have held, but for the timely arrival of W. C. Palgrave, the Cape Colony’s Special

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 45.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39.

⁴ Some Damaraland traders may have viewed the Trekboers as potential customers. In December 1876, it was reported that about one thousand cattle were being driven from Damaraland for sale to the trekkers who had lost many of their cattle to starvation and thirst in the desert (McKiernan, *Narrative*, 150). If Grendon was involved in such an undertaking, it might account for the allegations that he was acting as a go-between for Hahn and the Boers.

⁵ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 45.

Commissioner to southwest Africa.¹ Palgrave arrived at Walvis Bay on 25 April 1876.² When news of his arrival reached Okahandja, probably early in May, Maharero 'at once sent a message to [Grendon] that [he] could come and take [his] wagon from his house'.³ Furthermore, according to Grendon, whereas the Herero at Okahandja had been 'getting ready for war', 'things seemed to quiet down' with Palgrave's visit.⁴

On 29 May 1876, Palgrave's wagons arrived at Okahandja, where they were greeted with a salvo of guns and canon, fired by the 'European residents' and by the Herero.⁵ Vedder also records that 'the traders Grendon, Cain, and Irons had decorated the town with flags' in honour of Palgrave's arrival.⁶

On 29 July, Grendon was present at a meeting in Okahandja between Palgrave, Maharero, various chiefs and prominent Herero, and some white traders.⁷ At this meeting, the 'Commissioner at some length explained the Governor's message, and the advantages and benefits the Damaras would derive from submitting to Colonial rule'. He also 'represented the nature and extent of the obligations that would devolve upon them in the event of their coming under Colonial rule'.⁸

Palgrave was also able to arbitrate between Maharero and Theophilus Hahn, who was induced to come to Okahandja to justify his action in respect of the Boers. As Grendon points out, 'after the arrival of the Commissioner at Okahandja, he tried and succeeded to smooth down things a little, so that Dr Hahn could come down to Okahandja. Through Mr Palgrave's influence things were so far arranged that Maharero and Dr Hahn parted good friends.'⁹

The rapprochement was of short duration, however, because Hahn's beastly temper soon gained the better of him. While still at Okahandja, he assaulted a Herero servant,

¹ *DSAB*, i:344–45.

² Vedder, *South West Africa*, 427.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39.

⁴ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 45.

⁵ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 11.

⁶ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 428; 'Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest-Afrika', vol. xxvii, 18: Okahandja 1873–1890.–Otjikango (Barmen) 1880–1888: 'Auszug aus einem Brief von Missionar Ph. Diehl sen., Okahandja, 29.5.1876.'

⁷ Palgrave, *Report*, 28.

⁸ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 35.

⁹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39–40.

dealing him a violent blow on the nose with a *jukskei* (wooden yoke pin). On learning of the assault, Maharero became incensed, and Palgrave could barely restrain him from wreaking vengeance on the impetuous Hahn.¹ Grendon recalled that ‘the man ran bleeding to Maharero. It is easy to see what an effect this occurrence had on the Damaras. I am quite confident if it had not been for Mr Palgrave he (Dr Hahn) would have lost his life.’²

Palgrave was hard put to prevent a summary execution. He condemned Hahn’s violent conduct, but recommended that an enquiry be held, to be directed jointly by Amadamap and Mr Christie—a member of the Cape Commission.³ The deliberations that followed lasted all that day, and continued into the next. Hahn appears to have been absent throughout the proceedings—possibly to ensure his safety. When judgement was given, he was represented by Joseph Grendon, who ‘expressed his satisfaction and guaranteed payment of the fine’, which was equivalent to the value of ‘a large slaughter ox’.⁴ In view of the fact that his own tenure at Okahandja was insecure at this time, and that Hahn’s life appeared to hang in the balance, Grendon’s action in representing him was—if nothing else—at least courageous.



If Joseph Grendon hoped that a British Resident stationed at Okahandja would secure his own presence there, he was disappointed. The Herero accused the Commissioner of favouring the Oorlams, and the Cape protectorate collapsed almost as soon as it began.⁵ The seeds of controversy were bedded in the Peace of Okahandja (1870), which had failed to delineate territorial boundaries or to stipulate other important details of the Herero-Oorlam accord.⁶ The potential for war was as great as ever.

According to Grendon, the war that broke out in 1880 between the Khoi and the Herero had ‘been brewing for years’.⁷ He had been expecting a fresh outbreak as early as 1872—just two years after the Peace of Okahandja.⁸ Even before it became known

¹ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 37–40.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 45.

³ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 38–39.

⁴ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 40.

⁵ Irle, *Herero*, 264.

⁶ Mossolow, *Windhoek damals*, 61.

⁷ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 41.

⁸ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 341: Joseph Grendon to ‘Dear Madam’, Cape Town, 10 May 1872.

that the Cape Government was sending its Commissioner, which it did early in 1876, ‘all those things that were in dispute between the Damaras, the Hottentots, and the white people existed, and ... there would have been war in any case: it could not have been prevented’.¹ In the end, Grendon judged that the time was ripe to leave. He scooped up his winnings and made plans for a staged withdrawal. By November 1877, his family was in Cape Town, and he joined them shortly thereafter. In January 1878, he left Okahandja for good.²



When Robert Grendon referred in 1914 to the inevitability of miscegenation within ‘a black man’s land’,³ the Scramble for Africa had all but put an end to African political independence. Liberia and Ethiopia were perhaps the only African countries that still retained their independence. Forty years earlier, however, when Robert was a boy, the majority of Africa’s land surface still remained under the control of traditional rulers. He spent his early childhood at the very heart of a precolonial society—in ‘a black man’s land’. Maharero’s authority was absolute—subject of course to the concurrence of his councillors. White men like Robert’s father were uninvited interlopers, and were suffered to remain only so long as they were considered useful and did not significantly undermine chiefly authority.

By the time of Robert’s birth, white missionaries and traders had been active in Damaraland for a quarter of a century. The acculturated, Dutch-speaking Oorlams *kommando* groups, originally from the Cape Colony, had been there even longer. Signs of Western influence were evident on every side. Whether or not he recognised the fact while still a boy, Robert was observing a traditional society beginning to adopt and adapt the spiritual and material culture of Europe. He was eye-witness to an irrevocable transformation of crucial significance.

Joseph Grendon was no ordinary European settler in Africa. He was representative of a small class of intrepid pioneers and frontiersmen who were prepared to venture far into the uncharted wilderness. According to his own declaration, he had been in remote parts of southwest Africa for ‘many years and there was not a white man for

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 41.

² Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2: Admission Register: 1876–1900; Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40.

³ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

hundreds of miles'.¹ His and Hahn's historic encounter with Kwanyama king Mweshipandeka was in several respects paradigmatic of all initial encounters between Europe's agents and African autochthons. That meeting seems iconic, in that it represents the dichotomy of Europe's historical interest in Africa: spiritual in the missionary; material in the trader.

On balance, southwest Africa's newest arrivals, the whites, did nothing to relieve existing interethnic tensions. A visitor in the 1870s records that 'murder and the spilling of blood' were 'the order of the day', and lays the blame 'mainly with the whites as most of them are not the kind of men that the Negroes respect—neither their persons, deeds, nor words'.² Joseph Grendon's children were born into this fractured society. It cannot have failed to leave some impression upon them.

Robert Grendon's southwest African childhood sounds the keynote for his entire life. Already at a tender age, he was initiated into the notion of Race, and more particularly into the dual potentiality for interracial conflict or cooperation. Conflict and cooperation are motifs that inform the greater part of his poetry and polemical prose. In Damaraland, white traders had collaborated with the Herero in their struggle with the Oorlams. On the other hand, Robert cannot have failed to observe that many white treated his mother's race with uttermost contempt. In verse, he asserts:

The law of justice in all climes,
Where mingle black men with the white,
Both long, and closely I've survey'd.³

Few 'climes' could be more diverse than luxuriant Natal—where these lines are composed—and the arid, unyielding Damaraland of his boyhood recollection. The speaker makes a bold claim: he has travelled widely in 'all' regions where whites and blacks interact; in each of these he has conducted a 'survey'—'long' and 'close'—of how justice is applied to race relations. Damaraland, as the initial chapter to this survey, will have furnished Grendon ample material for reflection.

Minuscule though the white population of southwest Africa was in late precolonial times, it was deeply divided on national-ethnic lines. Generally speaking, there was

¹ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 46.

² De Vylder, *Journal*, 160–61: 17 Dec. 1873.

³ 'A Plea for Justice', *Ilanga* 1:24 (18 Sept. 1903) 4.

little love lost between the German missionaries and the non-German traders. Een, a Swede, claims that the Germans were ‘generally little liked by all the other white men in the country, if not hated, and there was seldom any social contact between them’.¹

Europe’s frenzied late nineteenth-century carve-up of Africa had not quite begun, but already the political preconditions for it were taking shape. Major political events in distant Europe cast a heavy shadow even in this remote and independent African territory. Bismarck’s German Empire was in genesis, and already the Prussians had adopted the vainglorious militaristic policy that precipitated the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71. Most of the Rhenish missionaries of Damaraland—Hahn chief among them—mirrored the escalating nationalism of their countrymen back in Europe.

As a child in Damaraland, Robert Grendon had ample opportunity to witness at first hand—in microcosm—the power politics of imperialism. He could also formulate his personal views on the relative merits and demerits of British and German rule. There seems little reason to doubt the justice of his father Joseph’s charge that the Germans in southwest Africa—missionaries, artisans, traders—‘wanted to get the first place’ in the country, and that ‘they quietly put up the Damaras and Hottentots against’ the British.²

Hugo Hahn was an intransigent Anglophobe,³ who urged the Herero not to accept any kind of British or Cape Colonial hegemony over their country.⁴ Een goes so far as to guess at Hahn’s ‘hidden ultimate intention to annex the entire country as a transatlantic colony of “das grosse Vaterland”’.⁵ The Rhenish missionaries petitioned Otto von Bismarck, Chancellor of the North German Confederation, to guarantee their safety in Damaraland, or, failing that, to pressure the British Foreign Office into extending a similar guarantee.⁶

As an adult, Grendon believed that British Imperial rule was far superior to that of Germany. He counsels his African readers to consider ‘which is the better, and the

¹ Een, *Memories*, 167.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 46.

³ See for instance: C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, iv:1115–16.

⁴ Palgrave, *Commissions*, 24.

⁵ Een, *Memories*, 186.

⁶ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 380–81.

happier lot—to swear allegiance to the British Lion, which means freedom to a vast extent, or bow in homage to the Slavic or Germanic Eagle, which means virtually both physical, and civil bondage'.¹ The descriptive term, 'Slavic or Germanic Eagle' seems puzzling, especially since, unlike Britain and Germany, the 'Slavic' peoples established no empire in Africa. Elsewhere Grendon equates 'Slavs' with Russians,² and Russian authority seems to be synonymous with oppression in his writings.³ In context, the only explanation that suggests itself is that he unconsciously fuses German and 'Slavic' (Russian) people, because for him these ethnic identities merge in the figure of Hugo Hahn. Hahn was an ethnic German, but a Russian national, having been born in Livonia.

As an adult, Robert Grendon makes several remarks disparaging of German influence and authority. He is outraged when letters published in the *Natal Mercury* that 'have emanated from European (German and Russian) sources' on the African Continent, are allowed to pass without censure, although their authors are 'defiant and insulting to the British race'. In Europe, he says, 'a triple alliance (France, Germany, and Russia) yearns for the downfall of the Island Power', but even here in British South Africa some Germans and Russians belittle British prestige with impunity.⁴

This insupportable truculence is observable not just in Natal but also in Damaraland at the outbreak of the so-called 'Herero Rebellion' (1904). Grendon writes: 'On the other side of this sub-continent—we refer to Damaraland—a similar attitude has been adopted by the Germans against the British and they have gone so far as to arrest certain British subjects on the pretext that they were inciting the natives of those regions to rebellion against German rule.'⁵

Grendon's disapproval of Germany as a Colonial Power appears to solidify during the 'Herero Rebellion' (1904–07) when his kinsfolk, the Herero, were brought within a hair's breadth of total annihilation. 'The trouble arose out of ill-treatment of the

¹ 'Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

² 'From Patriotism to Sedition', *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4.

³ 'Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:55 (29 April 1904) 4; 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4; 'Notes and Comments' *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4; 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4; 'Three Notable Speeches', *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

⁴ 'Snakes in the Grass', *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 4.

⁵ 'Snakes in the Grass', *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 4.

natives at the hands of the Germans', Grendon declares.¹ In Damaraland, he observes that the Germans are imbued with 'envy' and a 'spirit of Anglophobism' which 'will continue so long as Britain remains the foremost Power of the world'.² From these expressions, it seems evident that Grendon still draws upon a childhood memory of the ethnic arrogance and nationalist vaunting of Hugo Hahn, of Dr Theophilus Hahn, and of other Damaraland Germans.



There is much about Robert Grendon's life and thought that is exceptional. Inevitably, anyone who makes a study of his literary output will seek to discover what influences may have shaped such striking otherness.

Not to be overlooked is the formative influence of his father—himself an exception among southern Africa's white frontiersmen. All available evidence leads to the conclusion that Joseph Grendon treated his Herero family honourably and with true affection. This is more than can be said of the majority of white males who cohabited with indigenous women. Missionary Hahn describes the shabby way in which most whites dealt with their sexual partners and mixed-race children. At the same time, he exculpates the Irish traders Joseph Grendon and John Cain of such conduct. In the journal he kept of his Ovamboland tour, Hahn writes:

Cain lives, like almost all Europeans here and in Hereroland, in a wild marriage with a young Herero girl. For the most part, these Europeans treat these poor persons as their wives only in one respect ['nach einer Seite hin als ihre Frauen'; *i.e.*, with an interest in sexual intercourse only]; otherwise [they treat them] hardly better than slave-girls, rather like in the case of the celebrated slave states of North America. When the whites afterwards leave the land, they may perhaps compensate the woman with a few cows and let them go. These abandoned women usually marry some Herero man shortly afterwards, and usually have no love for the children that have been rejected by their white fathers. They neglect them and regard these pitiable creatures as outcasts. Just one of the reputable Englishmen had enough conscience that he, when he cancelled such a relationship, acknowledged his child by the wild marriage and took it in.

¹ 'The Herero Rebellion', *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4. See also: 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

² 'Snakes in the Grass', *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 4.

Some of the lowlier whites also conduct themselves honourably toward their children—Grendon and Cain belong amongst these. Usually they are given these people by the chiefs.¹

Hartmann is correct in his surmise

that Grendon's companion [Maria] was in this relationship with the express sanction of one of the Otjimbingue chiefs and on the lines of an *oupanga* arrangement. The permission to take his Ovaherero wife away from Hereroland and to Ovamboland points to this, as he would have rarely been allowed to take a chief's subject without any agreement with the latter. This agreement would have been based on certain expectations and perceptions of reciprocal relationship formation and conduct, from which both sides would have profited. Grendon's visibly demonstrated paternal responsibility was not only emotionally grounded. I would argue that it was also an expression that he understood and honoured *oupanga's* reciproc[ative] obligations.²

Maria bore Joseph three children, and died while pregnant with a fourth. They were long-term partners and it was only death that severed their relationship. When their son Robert 'heartily advocates' mixed-race marriages that are 'honourable and upright', he must surely be thinking of his own parents.³

Although Joseph was not entirely innocent of the acrimony and strife that dogged nineteenth-century southwest Africa, he seems on the whole to have enjoyed a good working relationship with the indigenous people. His 'cursed temper' is referred to in more than one place, and his bitter rows with Ovambo Chief Shikongo, 'misunderstandings' with Spinnakop, with Maharero, and with Amadamap, have already been mentioned. For all this, no record has come to light of his ever having assaulted anyone—which is more than can be said of Andersson, Dr Theophilus Hahn, and even the missionary, Hugo Hahn. Despite his volatility, his impetuosity,

¹ 'Cain lebt wie fast alle Europäer hier und im Hereroland in wilder Ehe mit einem jungen Hereromädchen. Meistens behandeln diese Europäer diese armen Personen nur nach einer Seite hin als ihre Frauen, sonst kaum besser als Sklavinnen, etwa so wie es in den gepriesenen Sklavenstaaten Nordamerikas der Fall ist. Wenn später die Weissen das Land verlassen, finden sie die Frau vielleicht mit einigen Kühen ab und lassen sie laufen. Diese Verlassenen heiraten gewöhnlich bald danach irgendeinen Herero und haben durchgehends zu den Kindern, die von ihren weissen Vätern verstossen sind, keine Liebe. Sie vernachlässigen sie, und man sieht diese bedauernswerten Geschöpfe als Auswürflinge an. Nur ein angesehenener Engländer hatte soviel Gewissen, dass er, als er ein solches Verhältnis löste und eine Engländerin heiratete, sein Kind aus wilder Ehe anerkannte und zu sich nahm. Einige der geringeren Weissen nehmen sich auch ihrer Kinder redlich an, zu ihnen gehören Grendon und Cain. Gewöhnlich lassen sie sich diese Personen von den Häuptlingen geben.' ('Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika', vol. xxvi, 388–89: Reise nach Ovamboland im Jahre 1866, von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn. Fortsetzung.)

² Hartmann, 'Sexual Encounters', 158–59.

³ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

and his lack of refinement, surviving records suggest that there was something charming about Joseph. He was generous and brave, and from the way in which he laboured and saved his earnings, there appears to have been nothing improvident or dissolute about his way of life. Several people seem to have liked him: amongst the blacks, Amadamap and, for a time, Maharero; amongst the whites, Andersson, Green, Palgrave, and both Hugo and Emma Hahn.

Despite his quarrels with the Herero, he seems sincerely to have bonded with them—although they may have found him a little condescending. He also believed that fairness was what Africans most appreciated in their dealings with Europeans. It is instructive to contrast Andersson's with Joseph Grendon's guidelines for survival in a 'black man's land'. Andersson's views may be taken as fairly typical of southwest Africa's hunter-trader-explorer class:

In a country utterly devoid of all laws, the only chance of safety to the poor [white] traveller lies in his own power of defence, and in the fear with which he is able to inspire his foes. When a savage semi-civilized man ceases to fear, he becomes overbearing and insolent, from which it is but one step to personal violence, and probably ultimate destruction.¹

Joseph Grendon's standpoint is radically at odds with Andersson's: 'I always tried to do what was right by these people, and I expected them to do the same with me, and they in many cases have done so. If traders in general would act in a more just spirit towards them they would be respected.'² While Andersson desires to be feared, Grendon looks for respect emerging out of a trader's consistent application of just principles.

Joseph's assumption that his long residence at Okahandja and his 'thorough' acquaintance with the Herero qualified him to be their adviser³ was clearly not shared by everyone in Maharero's circle. Being an alien white, he was a man of indeterminable ancestry and rank. If he contemplated manoeuvring himself into the position of adviser to Maharero, it was a dangerous game. To assume such a role meant encroaching upon the jealous prerogative of ordained councillors. His son Robert would later adopt a similar position as adviser to black African communities, such as Natal's *kholwa* community, and the people of Swaziland. He frequently

¹ Andersson, *Notes of Travel*, 23.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 42–43.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 41.

offered unsolicited advice to ‘Abantu’, *en bloc*.¹ Like his father, he would have to learn that such a role attracts few friends but many rivals.

As an adult, Robert Grendon exhibited an intense spirituality that continues to live through his poetry and prose. It is likely that he acquired at least part of his faith in the workings of Providence from his father, who was evidently devout after his own fashion. In August 1866, Hahn takes particular note of the fact that Joseph Grendon missed none of the religious services he conducted while visiting Ondonga. Grendon and Iversen assisted the missionary to locate a suitable site for the proposed mission station there.² For Grendon and Cain’s kindness in lending him trek-oxen for the first leg of his return journey to Damaraland, Hahn prays that God will repay them ‘on that day when no cup of cold water will remain unrewarded’.³ And, in 1873, he recalls Grendon’s favourable disposition towards the missionaries.⁴

Joseph could remind the Herero that the ‘same just God who put the Hottentots down’ while elevating the Herero, was ‘still above’, and could as easily abase the Herero as uplift them, if they acted arrogantly or unjustly.⁵ Decades later, Robert uses rhetoric strikingly similar to his father’s when he points out that the destinies of the world’s peoples are mutable. ‘Everything in this world seems to have its opposite’, he writes. For instance, ‘there is *freedom*, and there is *servitude*. Through each of these coupled phases, nations, and individuals must pass some time or other in their existence on this globe.’ There is One who appoints the vicissitudes of humankind. That One is always at hand to turn the tables on an oppressor.⁶

From this it emerges that the Grendons—father and son—preached in unison that God is no respecter of race: where one people arrogantly subjugates another, it is only a matter of time before He brings about a reversal of fortunes. Be the oppressor

¹ For editorial appeals to the group conscience of ‘Abantu’, see: ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4; ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3; ‘Storm and Calm’, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4; ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4; ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4; ‘The True European’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4; ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4.

² ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 406–07: Reise nach Ovamboland im Jahre 1866, von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn. Fortsetzung.

³ ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest Afrika’, vol. xxvi, 408–09: Reise nach Ovamboland im Jahre 1866, von Missionar C. Hugo Hahn. Fortsetzung.

⁴ ‘Quellen zur Geschichte von Südwest-Afrika’, vol. xxviii: ‘Meine Heimreise. Von C. Hugo Hahn (1873). (Auszug).’

⁵ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 43.

⁶ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

Oorlams, Herero, or European, he should take cognizance of this sobering fact. If Joseph told a Herero councillor that Providence directs the affairs of nations, it is likely that he taught his son Robert the same lesson.

Besides learning from his father, Robert likely learnt many lessons—positive and negative—from the missionary couple, Hugo and Emma Hahn. Despite marriage to an ethnic German who made no apparent attempt to conceal his Anglophobia, Emma never lost sight of her English identity, and she felt deep affection for Victoria (‘our beloved Queen’) and England (‘our dear old country’).¹ She would not have concealed these patriotic sentiments from the Grendon children. For Robert, Britain’s Queen has iconic status. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (1902), she is the ‘belovèd Mother-Queen—| Victoria—purest ’mongst her sceptred kind, | And greatest ’mongst all earthly potentates, | In present, and in bygone time’.² She is ‘Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen VICTORIA the Good’,³ “‘Good’ by the unanimous consent of her people’.⁴

Emma’s Christianity ran deep and had a strong eschatological dimension. The European Revolutions of 1848 reminded her that she was living in ‘portentous times, times such as have never yet been since the world began, times which appear fully to agree with Scripture as the “latter times”’.⁵ In the Crimean War, which began in 1853, 1853, she again saw ‘striking signs of the times’. She anticipated the ‘personal reign of Christ on the earth during the Millennium’ and took a keen interest in the Revelation of St John,⁶ as did Robert Grendon in adulthood.⁷ Grendon’s intense spirituality and his interest in prophecy were likely cultivated during the two years that Emma had charge of his education.

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 241: Emma to her sister Rose, Mission House, Barmen [Prussia], Dec. 1861; *op. cit.*, 336–37: Emma to her sisters Matilda and Rose, Otjimbingwe, 4 March 1872.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXV, pp. 113–14.

³ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁴ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:87 (20 May 1914) 6.

⁵ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 111: Emma to her mother, Sarah Hone, New Barmen, 25 Nov. 1849. Emma appears to reference Matt. 24:21.

⁶ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 112: Emma to her mother, Sarah Hone, New Barmen, 25 Nov. 1849. *Op cit.*, 147: 147: Emma to her mother, Sarah Hone, Barmen, Prussia, 29 March 1854.

⁷ Grendon refers to Rev. 6:5–8 in: ‘South Africa’s Future’, *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4; ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’ (*Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3) is ‘suggested by a sermon preached’ on Rev. 2:5; the three ‘Woes’ of Rev. 9:12; 11:14 are alluded to in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ (‘PAD’, Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4; ‘PAD’, Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4; ‘PAD’, Pt 14, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4).

The Child is father of the Man. Emma reveals facets of Robert's personality that were to stay with him throughout his adult life: his strong will; his capacity for close personal attachment. Firmness of purpose—sometimes indistinguishable from 'obstinacy'—became a trait that would characterize his mature career. When he was in his late thirties, it was said that he found it impossible to 'agree with other people'.¹ Simply put, he was a radical idealist who was frequently disillusioned because so few of his contemporaries measured up to his ideals.

At times, the determination that Emma witnessed as 'obstinacy' translated into healthy resolution and close adherence to moral principle. On other occasions, it rendered Grendon so inflexible that it alienated him from those who had it in their power to offer him moral or material support. To those who shared his principles, he was loyal. To those who opposed what he stood for, he could be a formidable enemy. When he believed his cause to be just, his will was indomitable, as adversaries invariably discovered.

Fortunately, Grendon was not ignorant of his tendency to be self-willed, and he strove to accommodate his will to higher objectives. In one of his poems, he recognizes that 'No mortal liveth to himself'.² Much of his adult creativity emerged out of the tension between his *will* and his perception of the *commonweal*.

¹ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437 Police, Inanda, to Magistrate, Verulam, 21 Oct. 1906. Said of Grendon.

² 'To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

CHAPTER 3

AFRICAN ENGLISHMAN

ZONNEBLOEM COLLEGE, CAPE TOWN

Education is the training of the person in mind and body, or in the more accurate division of our being, body and soul and spirit. It is the making the most of him. Its aim is not to turn out blacksmiths or tailors or lawyers..., but men—men able to think and to employ their varied faculties to the glory of God—the good of mankind and their own comfort and reward.¹



The Grendon family's move to Cape Town appears to have occurred in stages. It is possible that Sarah Jane was in the Colony by late 1876 because, according to the military record of her son Joseph William junior, he was born in Cape Town on 4 December 1876.² If this record may be taken at face value, Sarah likely took the youngest children with her to Cape Town: possibly she took all of them. William and Robert Grendon were enregistered at Zonnebloem College (plates 3a–3c) on 3 November 1877, at which time, according to the school's admission register, their parents occupied 'no fixed address'.³ Finally, Joseph left Okahandja in January 1878.⁴

Joseph may have been in Damaraland in early November 1877 when his eldest sons were enrolled at Zonnebloem, because the column headed 'Occupation of the Parents' has 'tailor' against each of their names. Joseph was consecutively a labourer, a soldier, and a trader. There is no evidence that he was also a tailor. It therefore seems likely that it was Sarah Jane, the boys' step-mother, who, in the absence of their father, oversaw their enrolment. This is puzzling, however, because Joseph's signature does appear in the Zonnebloem register. The signature is undated and may have been written in early 1878, when Joseph personally brought up the rear of the exodus from Damaraland.

¹ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 5.

² TAB, SAC 87, ref. B2775: Record of Conduct and Service of South African Constabulary, Joseph William Grendon.

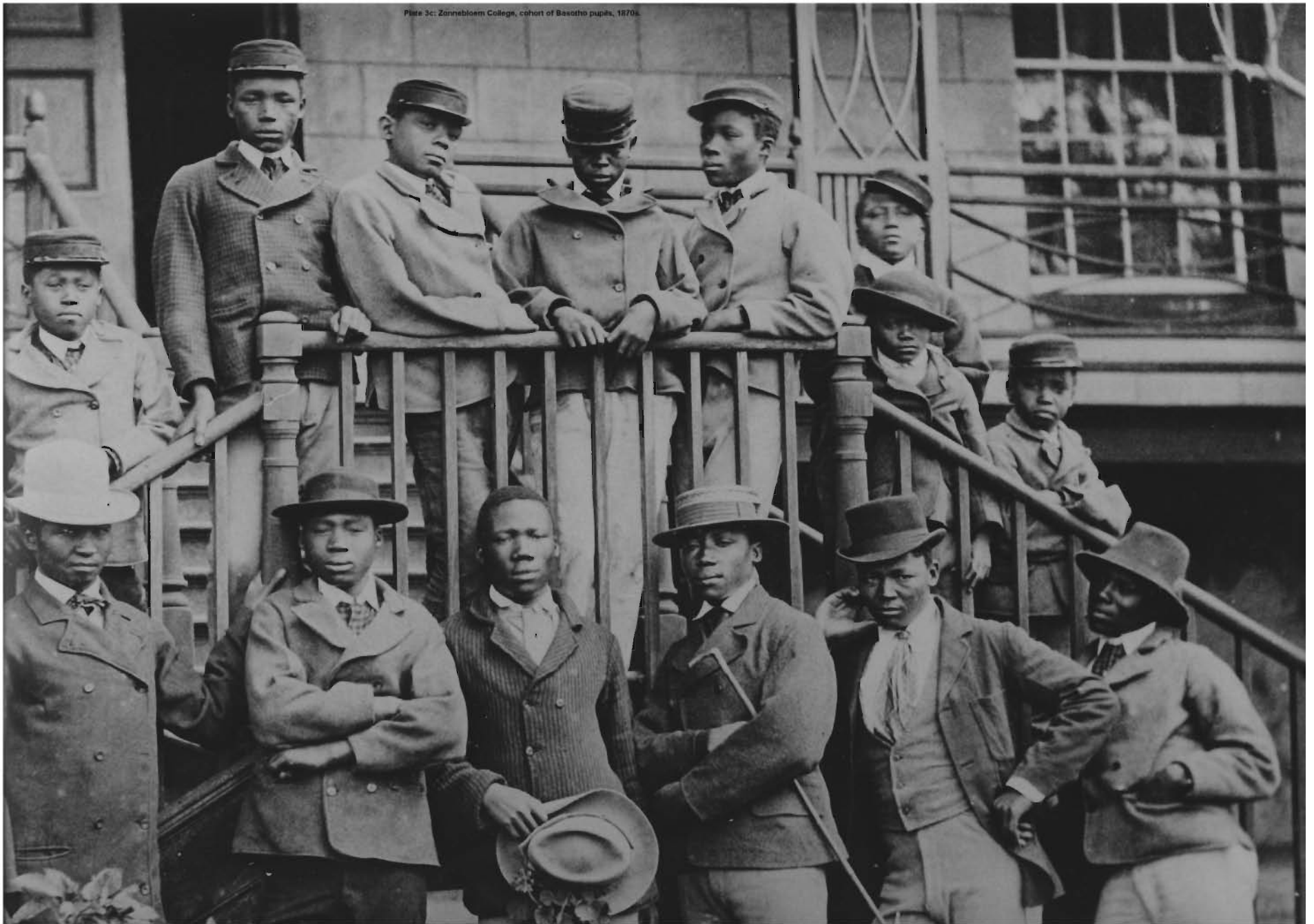
³ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2 and D1.1.

⁴ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 40.

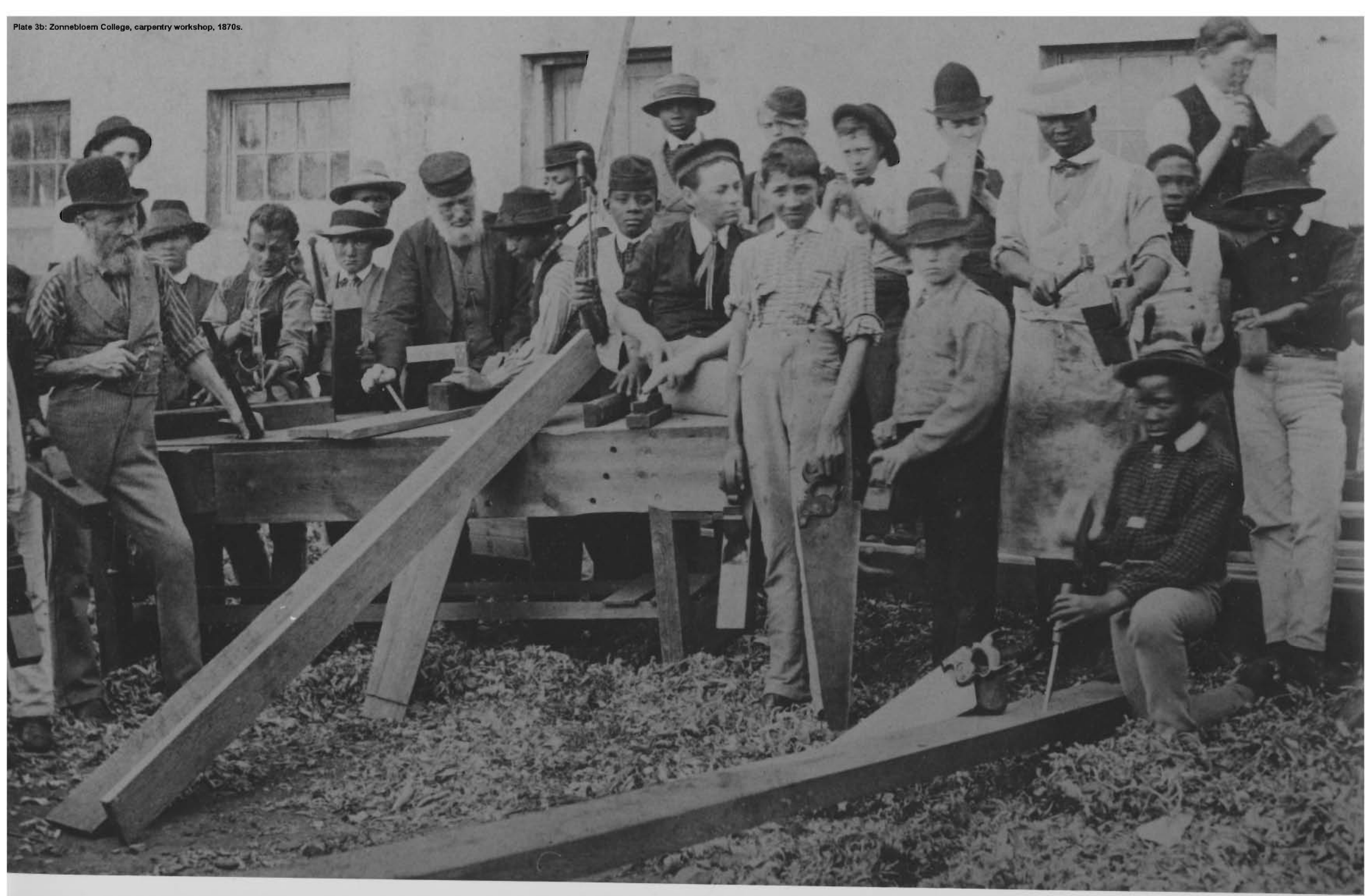
Plate 3a: Zonnebloem College, as Grendon will have known it in the 1870s



Zonnebloem College, Cape Town, as Grendon would have known it



Basotho scholars, Zonnebloem College (1870's)



Carpentry workshop, Zonnebloem College (1870's)

It is not clear if Maharero actually enforced the expulsion order that he had served upon Joseph Grendon in early 1876.¹ Grendon's confession has already been noted that he was 'always more or less in hot water' at Okahandja. At any rate, if the order stood after the arrival of the Cape Commissioner, it was evidently not of such a threatening nature as to preclude Joseph's salvaging some of his possessions. He complains afterward that when the order was served he 'had nothing but one wagon and span to remove [his] property with'.² The wagon journey between Okahandja and Walvis Bay would have taken him two or three weeks, and if his furniture and stock-in-trade could not be transported in a single load, he may have had to make two or more return trips.

The decision to relocate to Cape Town may be attributed to a combination of 'push' and 'pull' factors. The prospect of a comfortably secure domestic life at Okahandja had proved chimerical. There was talk of war. Guns were ubiquitous, and Grendon even apprehended a man who had the temerity to bring a gun into his house—the house he had built 'at great expense' for his English wife.³ If Joseph was concerned over his family's safety, he had good reason to be. He may even have begun to plan a discreet withdrawal to the Cape before Maharero's expulsion order came.

Maharero's order is mentioned in evidence Joseph Grendon gave before the 'Damaraland Affairs' commission of 1881. Knowledge of it does not appear to have come down in the oral traditions of either his coloured or his white descendants. According to family memory, Sarah Jane could not accommodate herself to the lonely life of southwest Africa. This is easy to credit. A young native of the Isle of Wight would have found little solace and little that was familiar to her at Okahandja. It appears that Joseph undertook prolonged trading excursions to places at considerable distance from Okahandja. On such occasions, his wife must have felt her isolation acutely. Although there were missionaries and one or two other traders at Okahandja, Sarah Jane may have yearned for companionship with women who both spoke her language and understood her cultural background. In Damaraland, she gave birth to children without the reassuring presence of a (white) midwife. According to one of

¹ Joseph Grendon testified that Maharero 'ordered me away' from Okahandja (Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39). See chapter 2.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39.

³ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 39, 44.

her great-granddaughters, a Herero chief may have assisted at the delivery of at least one of Sarah's children.¹

Joseph—now about forty-three—appears to have made sufficient money to live comfortably without holding down arduous employment. Remembered by one of his descendants as mildly eccentric,² he passed the remainder of his long life in Cape Town as a gentleman. He appears to have become a moneylender, charging interest at six percent on his loans.³ When Cecil John Rhodes pioneered the fruit farming industry around Franschhoek and Stellenbosch towards the end of the nineteenth century, Joseph had money to invest in the venture. He and his family never lacked for funds.⁴

An education for his children was an important priority for Joseph. According to Julinda Hoskins, her great-grandfather wanted his children to receive 'much more education' so that they might be in a position to 'help their country'.⁵ The superior education that he envisaged was quite unobtainable in Damaraland, so William and Robert went to Zonnebloem College,⁶ and Mary Ann 'was sent [to] and educated at a school for young ladies'.⁷

Although Mrs Hoskins seems to confuse some details of Joseph's trip to Europe in the early 1870s with the move to Cape Town in 1877–78, Joseph's motivation was

¹ Interviews: Jane Mackenzie, by telephone, 27 May and 26 July 2006, at Constantia, 4 Oct. 2006. Mrs Mackenzie (née Grendon) is a great-granddaughter of Sarah Jane Grendon.

² Mrs Jane Mackenzie (interview, Constantia, 4 Oct. 2006) says that in old age, Joseph (her great-grandfather) was a real 'character', well-known around Cape Town. When he needed to cross a busy street, he would simply step off the pavement, brandishing his walking stick aloft imperiously. All traffic—trams included—would then grind to a halt. Mrs Mackenzie also remembers it being told that once when one of his granddaughters was invited to a children's party, he conducted both her and her brother along. When the hostess opened to them, he presented her with an ultimatum: she could entertain *both* his grandchildren, but he would not have his grandson left out.

³ This is only known because interest on a sum of £650 that Joseph Grendon loaned in 1909 was not paid by the due date, and the matter ended up in the law-courts (Cape, Supreme Court, '*Cape Times Law Reports*', 531–32). Earlier, in 1899, he lent Robert £100 (see chapter 4). In both recorded cases, the interest charged was 6%.

As early as 1872, Emma Hahn records that Grendon attempted to 'place' some surplus cash with a Cape Town merchant before he returned to Damaraland, but he was disappointed when the highest rate of interest he could obtain for it was 2%—money being in great supply following the discovery of diamonds (E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 343: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 23 June 1872).

⁴ Interview: John Grendon and Jane Mackenzie, Constantia, 4 Oct. 2006. When Joseph Grendon died (9 Sept. 1926), his estate was worth £1603 (KAB, MOOC, Vol. 13/1/5843, ref. 405).

⁵ J. Hoskins notebooks 1 & 2.

⁶ Interview: Cyril Hoskins, Pietermaritzburg, 12 Nov. 2005. Mr Hoskins learnt much of his family's history from his mother Julinda and from other family members of his mother's generation.

⁷ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

likely as she describes it. By placing his sons as boarders at a prestigious grammar school where their combined fees for the first year amounted to £45, he indicated how seriously he took their education. This is further confirmed by the fact that both boys were permitted to pass through all five standards of the Zonnebloem system—many scholars dropped out long before that—and then to stay on at the College, where Robert qualified as a teacher and matriculated, and William completed a carpentry apprenticeship. Robert remained at Zonnebloem for a total of twelve years, receiving an educative advantage bestowed upon few colonial youths, whatever their race. It is probable that Joseph funded all of this education.

Joseph's initial intention appears to have been that his children would return to Damaraland on completion of their studies. This plan was abandoned when fears arose that some relative—possibly an uncle—who had unexpectedly gained in influence or power, might harm the children, were they to return.¹ In 1880, after a decade of tenuous peace, violence erupted once again with the massacre of some Oorlams living in and around Okahandja. As in the period 1863–69, the country was thrown once again into a state of near anarchy—a condition that Germany was soon to use as its ruse for imposing a 'protectorate' over the region. Commenting on this time of trouble, Hugo Hahn writes that the Rhenish 'mission has been a very heavy loser. Besides that several stations have been abandoned with great loss of property, many valuable lives of our very best baptised men have been sacrificed.'² It is against this historical backdrop the Grendons' decision not to return to Damaraland may be understood.

Wilhelm, who had been designated his father Maharero's successor, was by all accounts an exemplary Christian, and the missionaries pinned great hopes on the Christianizing influence he would exert over his people. Although he deplored his father's action in precipitating war with the Oorlams, he felt duty-bound to defend his people. The missionaries suffered a severe blow to their expectations when he perished in battle in late 1880.

¹ Interview: Cyril Hoskins, Pietermaritzburg, 12 Nov. 2005.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 388: Carl Hugo Hahn to his sister-in-law, Matilda, Cape Town, 23 May 1881.

Maharero had not wanted a younger son, Samuel, to succeed him, because of his alcohol dependence and his reputation for erratic behaviour.¹ Unlike Wilhelm, Samuel had a troubled relationship with the Rhenish Mission, which had once imposed sanctions upon him for conduct unbecoming a Christian.² In 1884, Samuel was censured by the Resident at Walvis Bay for planning to invade that British enclave so as to attack the Nama living there.³ In the event, with the passing of Wilhelm, in whose shadow he had long lived,⁴ Samuel assumed greater responsibility, and the Germans later confirmed him in the position of ‘paramount’, as successor to his father. Marrying family lore with published Namibian history, we may speculate that the Grendon siblings cancelled their repatriation plans on account of the Herero-Khoi war, and because of their disquiet over the disposition of Samuel.⁵ By the time Robert matriculated in 1889, Germany’s colonial regime had become a fixture, and the precolonial conditions that traders such as Joseph Grendon had found attractive were fast disappearing.



By 1881, Joseph and Sarah Jane Grendon were living at Upper Harrington Street, Cape Town.⁶ In 1882, their address is shown as ‘Derry-terrace, Upper Harrington-street’.⁷ In 1885, it appears as ‘21, Upper Buitenkant-street’—but this may not indicate a change of address, because Harrington and Buitenkant Streets ran parallel to each other and Derry Terrace appears to have linked them. It is not clear if the ‘Johan Grendon’, a labourer living at 115 Caledon Street, was also a relative.⁸ In 1892, Joseph is shown as resident at ‘26, Derry-terr, Buitenkant-st’,⁹ and he was still

¹ Vedder, *South West Africa*, 505. Since writing this paragraph, I have discovered the great extent to which Namibian history is debated by specialist scholars. Vedder, in particular, has been largely discredited by revisionist historians. For this reason, my hypotheses regarding Joseph Grendon’s decision not to return his children to Damaraland should be treated with caution.

² Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 38.

³ Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 58.

⁴ Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 29.

⁵ In her notes, Julinda Hoskins mentions Samuel by name—although, having no firsthand knowledge of southwest Africa, she appears to confuse him with his father. Robert Grendon quotes Samuel in ‘The Herero Rebellion’, *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4.

⁶ *General Directory and Guide-Book to the Cape of Good Hope ... 1881*, alphabetical directory, xiv.

⁷ *General Directory and Guide-Book to the Cape of Good Hope ... 1882*, alphabetical Directory, xciv.

⁸ *General Directory and Guide-Book to the Cape of Good Hope ... 1885*, alphabetical Directory, xxxv.

⁹ *Argus Annual and South African Directory 1892*, 1018.

living as a widower at 26 Derry Terrace in his late eighties on 19 February 1923—the date of his last will and testament.¹

‘Upper’ Harrington and ‘Upper’ Buitenkant indicate proximity to Table Mountain—they run quite steeply up the incline beneath its towering escarpment. This is the same ‘fruitful slope’ that enraptured Dutch mariners of the mid-seventeenth century apostrophize in the first part of Robert Grendon’s epic, *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (1902):

O foam-fring’d coast! O fruitful slope,
 Where we have reap’d and sown!
 O azure peaks! O skies serene!
 O silent crystal streams!
 O pleasant woods for ever green,
 Wherethro’ the sun’s bright beams
 Do never pierce, adieu—adieu!—²

All who have grown up ‘beneath old Table Mountain’s wind-fann’d brow’³—as Grendon’s epic describes the hoary massif beneath its ‘tablecloth’—need no convincing of its capacity to enchant. We may imagine the youthful Robert Grendon hiking in the kloofs of Table Mountain. His botanical interest, likely active even in childhood, would have been quickened on such occasions. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Kruger’s ‘dejected, luckless comrades’ extol their lost

fair garden of the Cape—
 Thou paradise of flow’rs!
 Thy landscapes beauty e’er will drape
 With grace, that stamps the pow’rs
 Of man to very nothingness.⁴

As already suggested, it is possible that Robert’s interest in plants was first awakened by Emma Hahn. In a letter to her sister Matilda, written in 1877, she describes the botanical richness of the Cape Peninsula, remarking that a botanizing relative in England never saw ‘such ferns as are here to be met with, along the valleys

¹ KAB, MOOC 6/9/3022 ref. 12486.

² *PKD*, Pt I, p. 1. These lines were reprinted in *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 4:16 (Easter 1906) 20. The poetic vocative ‘O’ appears in the original as ‘Oh’, but is corrected in the *College Magazine*, which I have followed here.

³ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 1.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt V, pp. 16–17.

of the Table Mountain and in the ravines, besides the multitudes of bulbs from the largest to the smallest. The bouquets of wild flowers are splendid in the extreme in the months of September and October, and so exceedingly variegated.’¹

Derry Terrace was situated within easy walking distance of Zonnebloem College. Since the school began accepting day scholars from 1873,² a question arises as to why Joseph chose to board his sons at Zonnebloem rather than accommodate them beneath his own roof. The decision may have represented the best available compromise between his love for, and sense of duty toward, Maria’s children, and his need to accommodate the susceptibilities of his second wife. Sarah Jane had her own biological children to rear, and may have feared that they might be socially disadvantaged by the conspicuous presence at their Derry Terrace home of three half-siblings of unmistakable ‘mixed-racial’ origin.

Although there was no legal prohibition upon miscegenation at the Cape, such unions were quite incompatible with pretensions to middle-class respectability in an urban colonial setting like that of Cape Town. Men and women who married across the colour line were not uncommon, but they needed to deport themselves with considerable circumspection and to forgo all expectation of social climbing. If, for argument’s sake, ‘a wealthy but ignorant trader of humble birth, who endeavoured to get into “society”’—such as Robert Grendon describes ‘Tyranto’ in his poem, ‘Melia and Pietro’³—were discovered to have begotten black children at some stage in his early career, this would very likely have put paid to all such ambition.

Robert Grendon’s assertion has already been noted that ‘in a black man’s land’, the vast majority of ‘white bachelors’ will cohabit with black women.⁴ By the 1870s, however, Cape Town was the staid and respectable capital of a British colony, where the mores differed greatly from those obtaining in Damaraland. Cape Town was steeped in racism.⁵ Despite a much-vaunted ‘liberal’ tradition, ‘Victorian Cape Town,

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 363: Emma to her sister Matilda, Cape Town, 9 June 1877.

² Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii:616.

³ ‘M&P’, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

⁴ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

⁵ Hendricks, ‘“Ominous” Liaisons’, 29, 30, 42. Hendricks makes the point that—contrary to conventional historiography—racism did not originate on the frontier and work its way back to the Peninsula. Rather, frontier racism was the elaboration of ‘much earlier social thought, policies, and customs prevalent at the Cape’.

and the Cape Colony in general, were hardly paragons of non-racist, non-sexist democracy'.¹

In the mid-1870s, fully a quarter of Cape Town's total population of 45,000 was described racially as 'mixed and other'.² 'Other' might have included such 'pure' groups as 'Mozbickers'—ex-slaves from the East Coast who had been liberated by the British. Coloureds were undeniably second-class citizens. Their very existence was often tied up with 'sexualised shame'.³ Although Joseph Grendon may have maintained consistently that his first marriage to Maria had been altogether honourable, it is unlikely that many white Capetonians would have seen it as such.

Joseph may have been acquainted with the experience of Rev. Harry Grey (born 1812) who cohabited with Martha Solomons, a coloured woman by whom he fathered three children. The first of these was born out of wedlock in 1877. In his 'Miscegenation' polemic of 1914, Robert Grendon relates the case of this 'Englishman of high descent' who dwelt in 'one of the suburbs of Cape Town' (Wynberg) towards the end of the nineteenth century. In consequence of Grey's alcoholism and general dissipation, his white peers had ostracized him. For solace, according to Robert Grendon, he 'sought alliance with a coloured girl who looked after him with constant fidelity, and many a night led him home from the gutter'. When he was elevated to the peerage in 1883—becoming Earl of Stamford—the white citizenry of Cape Town all of a sudden began to take a solicitous interest in him. They 'pleaded with him to cast off the coloured girl, who had thus far lived with him as a concubine'. But, 'in the spirit of true manhood' he 'married that black girl'.⁴

Grey's case illustrates the social pressure that could be brought to bear upon a white man who cohabited with a black woman. Although Cape Town's white racial purists would have found Grendon's marriage to Sarah Jane unexceptionable, three dark-complexioned youngsters in his household would undoubtedly have set their tongues wagging. By placing William and Robert at Zonnebloem, and Mary Ann at 'a

¹ Bickford-Smith, 'Black Ethnicities', 444.

² Bickford-Smith, 'Black Ethnicities', 443. This figure of 11,300 does not include 7,500 who are described as 'Malays'.

³ Erasmus, *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place*, 14.

⁴ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

school for young ladies', Joseph could gain access to them as and when he chose. Zonnebloem was close enough—but not too close.

According to Julinda Hoskins, William and Robert's elder sister Mary Ann grew up to be a 'very well educated and well-read' woman.¹ She 'never ever married as her Father did not approve of her choice of a younger man!'² While this conjures up the image of Joseph as a stern and authoritarian patriarch, it also suggests that he took a sustained interest in his children's welfare and future prospects—which is more than can be said of perhaps the majority of South Africa's white progenitors of coloured offspring.

Julinda Hoskins also records that 'Mary Ann was to stay with Dr Hahn and his family on a little farm in the —— district' (ellipsis in the original).³ While lodging with them, she attended a 'school for young ladies'. According to Mrs Hoskins, Mrs Hahn was expecting her first baby at about this time.⁴ She is confused about details, and it seems likely that it was the trader and Nama philologist Dr Johannes Theophilus Hahn, rather than the missionary and Herero philologist, Dr Carl Hugo Hahn on whose 'little farm' Mary Ann Grendon lodged. Theophilus Hahn, whose political intriguing, and whose contemptuous abuse of Herero, Baster, and Khoi had made him *persona non grata* in southwest Africa and necessitated his evacuation to the Cape at about the same time as Joseph Grendon, had taken up residence initially at Stellenbosch, where his brother was principal of the Rhenish mission school.⁵

Early in 1881, Theophilus Hahn became Cape 'government philologist', and librarian in charge of the Grey Collection in the South African Public Library, Cape Town. His major anthropological work, *Tsuni-//Goam: the Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi*, appeared in London during the same year.⁶ Also in that year, Joseph Grendon refers to him as 'a gentleman now here in Cape Town'⁷—which suggests that the two men may have kept up contact at the Cape.

¹ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

² J. Hoskins notebook 2.

³ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

⁴ J. Hoskins notebooks 1 and 2.

⁵ *DSAB*, i:345.

⁶ *DSAB*, i:345.

⁷ Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 45.

In 1875, Theophilus Hahn had married Marianne Ester de Roche Smuts (1847–1895), the daughter of a medical doctor from the Cape.¹ Marianne Hahn may have been the woman to whom Mrs Hoskins refers. Emma Hahn was well beyond childbearing age. The Rhenish school at Stellenbosch may also have been the ‘school for young ladies’ that Mary Ann attended. From as early as the 1850s, other Herero girls had been sent south to this school to obtain an education and to train as teachers.²

That Joseph Grendon did not sidestep his duty toward his ‘coloured’ children is further confirmed by the new will he concluded in Cape Town on 25 February 1882. In it, he cancelled an earlier will made in London in 1871—the provisions of which are not known. In the 1882 document, he bequeathed to Mary Ann, William, and Robert Grendon—his children by his marriage to Maria—‘the sum of one hundred pounds (£100) to be paid to each of them free of succession Duty on their severally becoming of ages’. He also names his second wife Sarah Jane Grendon ‘in the first instance as Guardian’ of these three minor children, in the event of his untimely demise.³

Even in the bustle of Cape Town, the family would have had many reminders of its links with Damaraland. In addition to the presence of large mercantile firms equipping transfrontier hunters and traders, there were some residents with personal experience of life in southwest Africa. Sarah Andersson, widow of Joseph Grendon’s former employer C. J. Andersson, kept ‘a small haberdashery shop’ in the Buitenkant, which brought her into close proximity with the Grendon family home. In 1879 she petitioned the Cape Government to recognize the validity of land grants Maharero had made to her late husband.⁴

Hugo and Emma Hahn, who had acted as foster parents to the Grendon children in 1870–72, also lived in Cape Town, where Hugo had oversight of a Lutheran congregation. In view of Emma’s attachment to the Grendon children and to Robert in particular, it seems possible that there was some ongoing contact between them in Cape Town, although no evidence for this has been located in Emma’s published

¹ De Vylder, *Journal*, 251; *DSAB*, i:344–45.

² E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 419; Mossolow, *Otjikango*, 40; Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 38; Vedder, *South West Africa*, 441.

³ KAB, MOOC 6/9/3022 ref. 12486.

⁴ Andersson, *Trade and Politics*, vii.

correspondence. When W. C. Palgrave returned to Cape Town in January 1879 after discharging his second commission to South-West Africa, he was accompanied by Maharero's sons, Wilhelm and Samuel. They lived with their old instructor Hugo Hahn for at least part of their Cape stay, which lasted approximately four months.¹ Emma was however in poor health, and died of a heart ailment in June 1880.² In 1877, W. C. Palgrave had placed a Herero orphan at Zonnebloem College,³ and personally contributed funds towards his education. It is therefore quite possible that he may have visited Zonnebloem in early 1879, and perhaps even have been accompanied by Maharero's sons.



When William and Robert Grendon arrived at Zonnebloem, it had existed for just short of two decades. Originally known as the 'Kafir College', it came into existence in 1858 as the joint initiative of Colonial Governor, Sir George Grey (1812–98) and the Bishop of Cape Town, Robert Gray (1809–72). Although these men concurred as to the utility of the new school, their objectives were not identical. In fact, their divergent approaches to education epitomize the material-spiritual dichotomy that dogged a rapidly evolving South Africa. While the Governor placed emphasis on material evolution as the way forward to a more united, more pacific country, the Bishop not unnaturally saw the realization of the same goals as contingent upon spiritual or intellectual transformation.

Sir George had strong faith in the civilizing influence of 'industrial education', and made the 'civilization' of aboriginal peoples a high priority wherever he served the Imperial cause. In his view, Cape Town, 'by its population and advanced civilization, by its being the seat of Government, by its shipping and commerce, and all its social surroundings, [was] undoubtedly the place for impressing native character'⁴—the right place for the proposed College. The Bishop's agenda included extending

¹ Pool, *Samuel Maharero*, 48.

² D. Guedes in: E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, iv.

³ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.1: Ms record book.

⁴ Zonnebloem Papers, C5.42: clipping headed 'Zonnebloem', from *Argus* 15 May 1877.

Anglican influence in frontier and transfrontier regions, where Wesleyans, Presbyterians, and others had already spearheaded mission work.¹

After a brief interim existence at Bishop's Court (Bishop Gray's estate), the College was relocated in 1860 to Zonnebloem (Dutch: 'sunflower'), an old Cape Dutch farm on the outskirts of old Cape Town. Zonnebloem was purchased with funds donated by

the Governor, the late Duchess of Northumberland, and the Baroness Coutts, and was conveyed to the Bishop, in trust, for the education of the sons of African chiefs, and also of Europeans, in indigent circumstances, and of sons of schoolmasters and others engaged in the mission work. The paramount objects were to be religious education, industrial training, and instruction in the English language, and in January, 1860, the Native College of Zonnebloem was opened, with some fifty native boarders, including seven Basutos.²

As may be appreciated, altruism was not all that enthused Zonnebloem's backers. The rationale behind its establishment was basically political. By mid-century, it had become apparent that colonial firepower would not break the cycle of costly wars with tribes on the eastern frontier.³ A more clandestine approach had therefore to be contemplated. It was proposed to isolate the sons of chiefly families from traditional influences, 'in order to educate them as a black upper-class elite, attached to Western Christian norms'.⁴ The school's projectors envisaged that by instilling strong 'British' values into highborn black youths, they would be transmogrified into the African equivalent of English gentlemen.⁵ Essentially, this was to be a form of ideological disarmament.

The 'most promising lads' would be 'sent to complete their education at St Augustine's seminary, Canterbury'.⁶ For this reason, their preliminary education at Zonnebloem would need to be of a standard equivalent to that of an English grammar school.⁷ When they returned to their native territories after some years in Cape Town, and perhaps also in England, it was hoped that Zonnebloem's products would inject

¹ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 64.

² Zonnebloem Papers, C5.42: clipping headed 'Zonnebloem', from *Argus* 15 May 1877.

³ Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:359.

⁴ Goedhals, 'The Journal of Peter Masiza', 106.

⁵ Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:620.

⁶ Zonnebloem Papers, C5.42: clipping headed 'Zonnebloem', from *Argus* 15 May 1877.

⁷ Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:362; Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records of the Church of the Province of South Africa*, 104.

into their traditionalist compatriots their own newly-acquired Christian values, together with admiration for Western Civilization. In theory, the process would hamstring militant tribal reactionaries, and in this way the volatile frontier would be pacified.¹

It was a bold gamble, and the long-term consequences were in many cases quite unlooked-for. Zonnebloem became a meeting and melding place for numerous South African cultures and ethnicities. Converging from localities across the region, members of both the African aristocracy and the new class of ‘progressive’, mission-affiliated, petit-bourgeois property-holders were thrown into intimate association. Under no other circumstance would they have had occasion to mingle in this fashion. While white policy-makers were beginning to speculate about the feasibility of a pan-South African political identity linked to the ‘federation’ or ‘confederation’ of the region’s various white-dominated territories, black youths at Zonnebloem were *actually discovering* a common identity in their dormitories and on their playing fields.

It is probably accurate to state that the majority of Zonnebloem’s scholars went out into the world with an appreciation for their shared identity as African subjects of the Imperial throne. Robert Grendon himself expresses this identity when he states that ‘we [blacks] are not British in blood though British subjects loyal to the core; and anything insulting to British honour must of necessity touch us as well, and cause us uneasiness’.² The colonial administration can scarcely have carped at the expression of such ‘loyal’ sentiments, but what the school’s projectors did not reckon upon was the extent to which some old boys—Grendon foremost among them—would utilize knowledge and skills acquired at the College to interrogate, and even to subvert, the colonial order.

Sir George was recalled in 1859. He governed New Zealand for several years from 1861, and so his involvement with the College came to an end. Bishop Gray remained Zonnebloem’s stalwart champion until his death in 1872. By dint of untiring moral and political suasion, he succeeded in keeping the ship afloat, despite persistent pecuniary difficulties and the hostility of colonists and their parliamentary

¹ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 64.

² ‘Snakes in the Grass’, *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 3.

representatives who believed that nothing good could possibly come from exposing African youths to a syllabus indistinguishable from that offered at schools catering to middle-class white pupils. He stuck resolutely to his belief that Cape Town was ‘the fittest place’ for such an institution, and that the College was ‘essential to the success of our missionaries in all parts of Africa, along both our East and West Coast’.¹

During the late 1860s, Anglican missionaries first mooted the idea of Zonnebloem’s expansion to incorporate a university for black students from all parts of Africa. Henceforth, all who came to the College should have had at least some prior education, and only those (male) scholars who showed the greatest academic promise at their respective mission stations should be enrolled at Zonnebloem.² No longer was membership of a chiefly household the major benchmark of eligibility. Commoners who were judged morally and intellectually exceptional began to be accepted with greater frequency than before. This is not to say that illiterate sons of the more influential chiefs would be excluded in future, but that from this time on, highborn and lowborn Africans would rub shoulders to a greater extent.³ The first students chosen purely on academic merit arrived in March 1868. They were three boys from the Anglican Mission in Zululand.⁴

Bishop Gray aimed to deemphasize industrial training and to boost academic teaching. He faced a dilemma, however, because in order to benefit from vital financial subsidization from the Colonial Government, Zonnebloem had at least to give the appearance of being an industrial training institution rather than an elite academy.⁵ Gray had to persuade successive Governors that Zonnebloem’s strategic function warranted special treatment—exemption from the stipulation that industrial skills should constitute a major component of the instruction offered.⁶

Zonnebloem’s patrons were disappointed in their sanguine expectation that it would ultimately spawn a pan-African university. Nevertheless, a select group of exceptionally talented students whose parents or other sponsors could raise the requisite fees were able to stay on at the College and prepare for the matriculation

¹ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii: 326.

² Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii: 491.

³ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii: 492, 503.

⁴ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii: 495.

⁵ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii: 492.

⁶ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii: 610.

examination of the University of the Cape of Good Hope, after that institution was established in 1873.¹



In April 1874, the Rev. Canon Thomas Henry Peters took charge of Zonnebloem. A widower, he lived with his two unmarried daughters in the warden's lodge on College grounds.² His 'twenty-six years of devoted wardenship'³ that ended in 1900 did much to augment the prestige that had already accrued to the institution. While obligated by the College's brief to continue its industrial training component, his focus was on providing a liberal academic education that would equip men of all races to realize their full potential and become useful, sensitive members of society.

When Peters died in 1914, one of his old pupils, Aaron E. Nazo—by now a highly-regarded minister at Cofimvaba in the Transkei—wrote an encomiastic obituary that was published in *Tsala ea Batho*—a vernacular newspaper established by Sol T. Plaatje.⁴ Nazo—like Robert Grendon—was one of the just sixteen Zonnebloem scholars who matriculated in the last quarter-century of the nineteenth century. Since Nazo matriculated in 1892, three years after Grendon, they were almost certainly acquainted with each other at Zonnebloem.⁵ In 1904, Nazo had written to the editor of the College magazine, pointing out that Grendon's was one of two names 'conspicuous by their absence' from a recently-published list of Zonnebloem matriculants.⁶ The omission was made good when a revised list of Zonnebloem's matriculants was published in 1907.

As an epigraph to his obituary, Nazo quotes Mark Antony's praise of Caesar: 'His life was gentle, and the elements | So mixed in him that Nature might stand up, | And say to all the world—This was a Man'.⁷ He eulogizes Peters as 'one of the last of God's good Englishmen in this part of the world', and as a 'life-long champion of Native Higher Education'. With Peters at its helm, Zonnebloem 'stood for liberal

¹ Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii: 601.

² Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*, xviii.

³ Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records of the Church of the Province of South Africa*, 104.

⁴ Aaron E. Nazo, 'The Late Rev. Canon Peters', *Tsala ea Batho* 4:188 (19 Sept. 1914) 4.

⁵ 'A List of Zonnebloem Matriculants', *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 5:21 (Trinity 1907) 28.

⁶ 'To the Editor', *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 2:10 (Michaelmas 1904) 19–20.

⁷ *Julius Caesar*, V.v.73–75.

education for Africans’—*i.e.*, in contradistinction to the sop of third-rate industrial training doled out at institutions of lesser note.

The Canon’s personal attributes are sung eloquently:

A devout and devoted priest, a spiritual force in a world dark with sin, and a leading educationalist of his day, he heroically espoused the cause of Native Higher Education in health and sickness, through good report and evil report, and with that bull-dog tenacity of purpose which never failed to command the admiration of our people all over the sub-continent, and it is as Warden and Teacher of Zonnebloem College who taught by example as well as by precept that he will be remembered and his name held in veneration by the sons of the soil with whom it has ever been a household word.¹

One thing that Nazo—and Grendon—learnt at Zonnebloem was now to craft a neoclassical sentence!

Peters’s overriding objective was to equip youths thoroughly for their launch onto life’s ocean. ‘He taught Classics, Mathematics, Philosophy, Chemistry, etc.’, Nazo relates, ‘as a means of equipping his pupils for grappling with the serious problems of life after leaving school’. This assessment is confirmed by the College’s 1884 *Report*, which identifies the object of a Zonnebloem education as ‘not to turn out blacksmiths or tailors or lawyers ... but *men*—men able to think and to employ their varied faculties to the glory of God—the good of mankind and their own comfort and reward’.²

The *Report*—almost certainly authored by Peters as warden and head teacher—sees a liberal education not as an end in itself, but as the optimum instrument for the production of ‘men’:

We use [classical languages] simply as instruments; we know of no better way of making a boy think—of making him able to understand the thoughts of others and to express his own—than by making him translate from one language to another, and for this purpose no languages are so well adapted as those of Greece and Rome.³

In his single-minded determination to dispense a grammar-school education to every pupil, Peters was at once liberal and reactionary. He was liberal in that he

¹ Nazo, ‘The Late Rev. Canon Peters’, *Tsala ea Batho* 4:188 (19 Sept. 1914) 4.

² Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 5.

³ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 5.

dissented from the prevailing opinion of the colonial establishment that education for blacks should equip them for nothing more than what was presumed to be their immutable, lowly station in life. Peters's detractors would object that since there could never be social equality between black and white, to instill classical knowledge and classical tastes in African pupils was a bizarre species of cruelty—creating an appetite that could never be adequately satisfied through social intercourse with whites who had enjoyed a comparable education.

Peters did not subscribe to the Colony's racially-differentiated educational policy. His approach to the education of 'a native or any other boy' was just the same:

We apply to him whatever means of mental training are within our power, without reference to what the boy's future life is likely to be. There is, to my mind, no reason why the man occupied in the lower employments (as they are called) of life should not solace his leisure and carry on his mental cultivation by the study of the works of the great thinkers of antiquity.¹

Zonnebloem's Warden was also reactionary, in that he upheld the value of the Classics at a time when their ultimate value was being undermined by new disciplines and a powerful utilitarian paradigm. The old chestnut of Ancients-versus-Moderns, or of Classics-versus-Sciences, emerged even in the colonial periodical press, as evidenced by an article published in the *Natal Magazine* of 1880. It commented upon an earlier article appearing in a Cape periodical:

For a long time past there has been raging in the educational world a conflict between the supporters of classical education on the one hand, and the advocates of an education in the exact sciences on the other; between the Conservatives and Liberals of educational life; and the struggle shows small sign of abatement as yet.²

Peters was not swayed by the 'Liberals of educational life', but held fast to 'the time-honoured theory that Classics and Mathematics are the best known instruments of training the mind in right habits of thought and in power of expression'.³ Furthermore, so long as matriculation remained conditional upon acquaintance with the languages and literatures of ancient Greece and Rome, it was pointless to argue that any ambitious scholar could afford to be without such knowledge.

¹ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 5.

² E. J. Taylor, 'On Getting to Parnassus', *Natal Magazine* 5:23 (May 1880) 193.

³ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 4.

Peters's approach to education was vindicated in the careers of such men as Aaron Nazo and Robert Grendon. At Zonnebloem, Grendon acquired familiarity with the Judeo-Christian scriptures, with the English literary canon, with Latin and Greek classics, with philosophy, with Euclid, with botany, the art of printing, singing, the organ, and likely also a host of other arts and sciences. In 1904, after fifteen years as a teacher, Grendon expressed his own view on the utility of a full and well-rounded education:

Let no man be deceived by the lying whispers of those who affirm that education is of no utility to a native. We need all we can get for we know our needs better than those who pretend to know them. Let those who are parents offer every facility to their children to seize whatever they can lay their hands upon whether mental or manual education. ... He who has a knowledge of different subjects and arts is better than he who boasts of only one.¹

According to Nazo, Peters was a severe critic of generally-accepted pedagogical practices, who 'did not care "tuppence" (as he would say) for public examinations which, he feared, were often mischievous in their results'. The College's 1884 *Report* acknowledges that in that year only one boy had passed the Elementary Teachers' Examination. With apparent distaste, it goes on to forecast that in future the staff will be compelled to 'give more attention to answering questions on paper'.² Scepticism concerning written examinations is shared by Peters's pupil Robert Grendon, who in 1905 writes that

the present state of native education [in Natal] is faulty. We notice many candidates crammed for the Natal Native Teachers Examinations, and who on passing these, are drafted as teachers into schools where in many instances they find themselves unable to carry out the duties required of them. We know of several teachers who on finding themselves handicapped, resigned their posts and went back to school to qualify for the post they had quitted through the weakness of their education.³

Nazo's obituary describes Peters as devout, unostentatious, and self-effacing—'great in his gentleness and gentle in his greatness, and justly idolised by all those who had the good fortune to come under the spell of his unique influence'. This tribute bears out a report in the College magazine at the time of Peters's retirement,

¹ 'Educate Your Children!' *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4.

² Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 6.

³ 'Mr Barnett's Lecture', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3.

which refers fondly to his constant ‘gentle kindly presence’.¹ According to Nazo, Peters’s heedlessness of Race paid substantial dividends:

He believed and practised the wholesome doctrine of Human Brotherhood—a necessary corollary of the Fatherhood of God—as witness White, Black and Coloured students at Zonnebloem sitting at the same desks, doing the same lesson, sharing the same meals in one common hall, participating in the same games, and worshipping the Great Unseen side by side in the same chapel—never with any untoward results. I cannot think of a single case at Zonnebloem where ‘familiarity bred contempt’; but on the contrary, I can testify to warm friendship and mutual respect growing between the members of the different races. We were quite a happy family, brothers in heart and hand, all looking up to our venerable Warden as our common father ever beaming with fatherly love towards us without distinction of race, colour or creed.²

The idyll of interracial harmony that Nazo sketches, reiterates the *College’s Report*, which denies ‘that any [white] boy could say that he had received any injury to his moral or spiritual being from having been associated with Natives in this place’.³

Throughout his life, Robert Grendon opposed education that was based upon racially-differentiated curricula. No doubt, this was the legacy of Zonnebloem’s salutary indifference to Race. He takes issue, for instance, with an article in the *Interpreter* of 3 February 1916, which faults the Cape Education Department for not having ‘devised a scheme of native education calculated to develop the native according to his own nature’. The *Interpreter* would be hard pressed—Grendon responds—if called upon to define its own phrase, ‘Native’s own nature’. He perceives that white selfishness informs the schemes afoot to offer blacks a different—inferior—schooling: ‘Hitherto the native has been educated on the lines intended for the whites [as at Zonnebloem]; and here he has *succeeded rather than failed*. Hence the clamour for the abomination, that there should be one system of education for the white, and another for the black.’⁴



¹ ‘Editorial’, *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 1:1 (1 June 1901) 1.

² Nazo, ‘The Late Rev. Canon Peters’, *Tsala ea Batho* 4:188 (19 Sept. 1914) 4.

³ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 4.

⁴ ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

A major challenge confronted Canon Peters in his first year as Warden. On Sunday 6 December 1874, while everyone was attending evening service at St Mary's in nearby Papendorp, fire swept through the Zonnebloem complex, destroying chapel, schoolroom, library, and carpentry workshop. In the months following this dire setback, Peters proved his mettle. He was 'a man of great resource as well as a very holy man of prayer, and by September, 1876, the chapel was reopened'.¹ The logistical difficulties brought on by the fire were compounded by the simultaneous arrival of twenty or more new scholars from Basutoland, but 'by a judicious use of the accommodation left by the fire, the Warden ... was enabled to find room for the new arrivals'.²

Funds were urgently required to make good the damage. Appeals for donations went out, partly in the Colony, but more especially 'in the Mother Country': metropolitan philanthropists had a reputation for digging deeper into their pockets. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge supplied a grant of £750, and the Cape Government offered £1,000 as a loan, 'in consideration of the importance of the work done by the College'.³ But there was still a shortfall of more than £1,000, and so fundraising continued.⁴ The boys themselves supplied some of the labour, producing the flooring, ceiling, and chapel fittings.⁵

Early in the 1870s, the Cape Colony annexed Basutoland. Throughout much of that decade, Zonnebloem was 'recognized specially as a training institute for Basuto lads', on account of the cohort of Basotho youths sent there at the time. They included close relatives of King Mshweshwe (c. 1786–1870). Simultaneously, the College continued to fill its brief as an institution for the 'teaching and training [of] Diocesan schoolmasters and catechists'. Some were white, although the student body's racial composition was always in a state of flux.⁶

The months immediately leading up to the arrival of the Grendon brothers were eventful for the College. In February 1877, one of the masters, Shepherd, was

¹ Zonnebloem Papers, C5.42: clipping headed 'Zonnebloem', from *Argus* 15 May 1877; Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records of the Church of the Province of South Africa*, 104.

² Zonnebloem Papers, F.4.1.1: clipping from unidentified newspaper, dated 15 May 1877.

³ Zonnebloem Papers, F.4.1.1: clipping from unidentified newspaper, dated 15 May 1877.

⁴ Zonnebloem Papers, C5.40: printed appeal for funds, headed 'Native College, Zonnebloem'.

⁵ Zonnebloem Papers, F.4.1.1: clipping from unidentified newspaper, dated 15 May 1877.

⁶ Zonnebloem Papers, C5.42: clipping headed 'Zonnebloem', from *Argus* 15 May 1877; Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:505, 612.

dismissed ‘for most disgraceful conduct’, and a retired schoolmaster from St Bartholomew’s, Grahamstown, was asked to step temporarily into the breach.¹ Then, one Saturday early in May, the new chapel, dormitories, and schoolrooms were formally opened with a large reception held on the campus and attended by several dignitaries, including the Colonial Governor, Sir Bartle Frere, the Metropolitan, Members of Parliament, and ‘a fashionable gathering of ladies’.² At a ‘sumptuous luncheon’ served in the schoolroom, the Governor addressed the assembled guests. He expressed ‘his entire sympathy’ with what Zonnebloem was doing, but there was still

a great task before them of perfecting and consolidating the cause of civilization and enlightenment in this land, and he was sure that no means would be found more effective than was furnished by such institutions as this, where instruction in the truths of the Gospel—the only real bond of union—and in the arts of civilization, went hand in hand.³

In both the Governor’s speech and that of Dr Langham Dale, the Colony’s Superintendent-General of Education, the watchword was ‘industrial training’. They shared the view of most colonists that an African was better served when a saw or a plane, rather than a pen or a volume of poetry, was placed in his grasp. Frere extolled ‘the dignity of labour’—a concept that always seemed *apropos* of ‘native education’, but seldom came to the fore when the topic under discussion was education for the sons and daughters of colonists. In a retrospective look at Zonnebloem, Dale shook his head at ‘English notions of training natives’ which he considered woefully ‘sentimental’. In the early days, ‘natives’ had been mollycoddled and given grand notions that unfitted them for their station. Now sanity had at least begun to prevail, as witnessed by the presence of ‘saw, plane, hammer, and spade’.⁴

In Dale’s view, African intellectual capacity was as yet ‘dormant’. It was misguided to offer African students education of a highly cerebral character. To the extent that they were able to master such a curriculum, it would drive a wedge between them and their illiterate kindred. On the other hand, an advanced education offered them little prospect of ‘higher social intercourse’—presumably that with whites. Otherwise put, a black scholar steeped in liberal humanism, the Classics, etc.,

¹ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.1.

² Zonnebloem Papers, C5.42: clipping headed ‘Zonnebloem’, from *Argus* 15 May 1877.

³ Zonnebloem Papers, C5.42: clipping headed ‘Zonnebloem’, from *Argus* 15 May 1877.

⁴ Zonnebloem Papers, C5.42: clipping headed ‘Zonnebloem’, from *Argus* 15 May 1877.

became a misfit both in traditional and in colonial society—he was neither fish nor fowl. Dale took care to couch his reservations in pragmatic language, but his basic premise was transparent: intellectually, Europeans are better endowed than Africans.¹

He adverted to the herculean task ahead of ‘Christianiz[ing] and civiliz[ing] the thousands of children of Aboriginal races, whether Kafirs, Fingoes, Tembus, or Basutos, who are within and about the colonial border’. Besides the enormity of this task, the more philanthropically-minded whites had also to contend with the prevailing ‘prejudice against the school-Kafir’, in the face of which prejudice even ‘the most ardent philanthropist’ might quail, did he not hold fast his conviction that Christianity was ‘the only basis of true civilization’ and that the desired results would ultimately be realized.

By way of encouragement, Dale assured his audience that he could, if called upon, enumerate dozens of schools on the border, in the Transkei, and in Basutoland, that were staffed exclusively by black teachers, many of whom had been taught at Zonnebloem. They, in turn, were training still other Africans as elementary teachers, ‘and so the ever-growing wave of civilization [was] rolling on from [Zonnebloem] to the border, and from the border through Fingoland and on to the confines of Natal’.²

From the *Argus* account of the banquet, it appears that Canon Peters had little to say on this festive occasion. This was probably just as well, since his maverick insistence on racially-undifferentiated syllabus would not have gone down well with Frere, Dale, or many others of the guests. It is a measure of his calibre as an educator and a human being that Peters was able quietly and consistently to pursue his objective in the teeth of prevailing colonial prejudice.

A little over a month after the new buildings were officially opened, school broke up ‘a few days earlier than was intended in consequence of Lawson taken ill with scarlet fever’.³

On 3 November, William and Robert Grendon, were enrolled. They were aged twelve and ten respectively, according to the admission register.¹ Coming direct from

¹ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii:623.

² Zonnebloem Papers, C5.42: clipping headed ‘Zonnebloem’, from *Argus* 15 May 1877.

³ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.1.

remote Damaraland, where a mission station seemed like a metropolis, the boys were likely overawed by the College's imposing buildings, some in neoclassical style (plate 3a). In his last years, Bishop Gray had wanted to extend the College's catchment area to include children of southwest African chiefs—Namaqua, Herero, and Ovambo.² Now it would seem that his wish was beginning to be fulfilled. The school's record book shows their parents as 'Joseph Grendon & Maria a Damara woman', and that the father had made over the 'first year's payment' of £45 to cover 'all expenses connected with them'. Their arrival at Zonnebloem is also recorded in the Colony's published annual report on education for the year ended June 1878. They are both named and identified simply as 'Damara'.³

As boarders, the Grendon boys will soon have made the acquaintance of Jacob, the Herero boy of 'eight or ten years' who had been brought to the College in January of the same year, by W. C. Palgrave, when he returned from his first commission tour to southwest Africa. According to the record book, Jacob was an orphan, 'his parents both' having been 'shot by a white man to get possession of their goats'. Palgrave personally undertook to pay £8 per annum toward the boy's upkeep and tuition.⁴ In early 1878, the Grendon brothers and Jacob are described as being 'too young for trade teaching', and were required to do 'school-work only'.⁵

Several mission schools forbade their scholars to communicate in a language other than English, except on Sundays when they could speak their home languages with impunity.⁶ Whether or not William, Robert, and Jacob were permitted by school regulations to converse in otjiHerero is unknown: part of Zonnebloem's original function was to promote the spread of English as the *lingua franca* of southern Africa. It is of course a truism that from time immemorial boys have discovered ways of circumventing prohibitions.

By the time the Grendon brothers came to Zonnebloem, its multiracial character was well-established. White pupils had been introduced partly in a bid to raise the

¹ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2, and D1.1.

² Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:612.

³ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 30th June, 1878*, 217. The brothers' names are shown as William and Robert 'Erenden'—clearly a typesetting error.

⁴ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.1.

⁵ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 30th June, 1878*, 217.

⁶ Msimang Papers: PC 14/1/2/2, p. 15: Msimang gives Kilnerton, Edendale, and Healdtown as examples.

standard of English spoken by African pupils.¹ In the early years of the Grendons' stay at the school, its scholars were drawn from Cape Town itself, and from other parts of the Western Cape, the Eastern Province, Griqualand West, Ciskei, Transkeian Territories, Basutoland, Natal, and Transvaal. One or two came from even further afield—Saint Helena Island, and London, England, are mentioned in the admission register.² The occupations of the boys' parents included those of blacksmith, chief, clergyman, clerk, cook, engineer, farmer, overseer, railway foreman, steward, street-keeper, and tailor.³ As regards religious persuasion, adherents of the 'English Church' constituted the largest group, but there were also several Wesleyans, and one or two members of the 'Dutch Church'.⁴ Amongst the 'white' scholars, the majority are shown as 'English' (as opposed to Dutch). The ethnicity of the African (or non-'white') scholars included 'Basuto', 'Coloured', 'Fingo', 'St Helena', and 'Tembu'.⁵ Almost all the boys had undergone some prior education. Three years is about the average, but it varies from one year to—in a single case—eleven years.⁶

In the first half of 1877, Zonnebloem had 103 boys on its roll. The teachers were the Rev. T. H. Peters, B.A. (Warden), assisted by Henry A. Paine and Matthew Kempton.⁷ African languages and African history did not feature on the curriculum. All pupils were taught English, geography, and music. The vast majority studied history, English grammar and composition, and drawing. Eighty-one studied arithmetic on higher rules, 21 studied geometry and algebra, and 37 learnt Latin.⁸ Greek was taught to the select few who aspired to the matriculation exemption.⁹

The English novelist Anthony Trollope visited South Africa in 1877. He was 'taken by the Bishop of Capetown to the Church of England Kafir school at Zonnebloem, and had there been satisfied of the great capability which the young Kafir has for learning his lessons. [Trollope] had been assured that up to a certain

¹ Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:450.

² Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2.

³ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2.

⁴ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2.

⁵ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2.

⁶ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2.

⁷ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 30th June, 1877*, 198. The same staff are shown in the next annual report (Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 30th June, 1878*, 243).

⁸ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 30th June, 1877*, 132.

⁹ Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*, 55.

point and a certain age the Kafir quite holds his own with the European.’¹ He is not quite prepared to acknowledge intellectual parity between white and black students: instead, by implication, he rehashes the received opinion that at some advanced point in their education, the progress of black students is arrested, while whites sail ahead in respect of book-learning. Several of Zonnebloem’s scholars—men like Robert Grendon and Aaron Nazo—would give the lie to this misconception. It is a pity that Trollope seems oblivious to the existence of such cases.

Like so many self-appointed contemporary ‘authorities’ on education for African students, Trollope considers industrial training better fitted to their needs and their mature potential:

At Zonnebloem a master carpenter was one of the instructors of the place, and, as I thought, by no means the least useful. The Kafir lad may perhaps forget the names of the ‘five great English poets with their dates and kings’, by recapitulating which he has gained a prize at Lovedale,—or may be unable some years after he had left the school to give an ‘Outline of Thomson’s Seasons’, but when he has once learned how to make a table stand upon four legs he has gained a power of helping his brother Kafirs which will never altogether desert him.²

It is doubtful whether Robert Grendon ever forgot the ‘five great English poets with their dates and kings’. His memory for historical detail was excellent, and his extant writings show a varying degree of familiarity with many of the poetic ‘greats’, including Shakespeare, Milton, Burns, Cowper, Coleridge, Campbell, Longfellow, Tennyson, and Kipling. If Trollope had read Grendon’s poem, ‘A Glimpse of Umkomaas’,³ he would have had to concede the possibility that at least one ‘Kafir lad’ may not have entirely forgotten Thomson’s *Seasons*.

Trollope mentions Zonnebloem’s famed carpentry shop (plate 3b). Carpentry was the principal trade taught at Zonnebloem.⁴ The department produced high-quality fittings for local houses and for such institutions as St George’s Orphanage, but its chief metier was the construction of ecclesiastical furnishings: pews, altars, screens, pulpits, and lecterns.⁵ The master carpenter to whom Trollope refers is Mr Faulkner. Evidently, he was a skilled teacher as well as a skilled craftsman. It was he who

¹ Trollope, *South Africa*, 168. Also quoted in: Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 63–64.

² Trollope, *South Africa*, 168.

³ *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.

⁴ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii:456.

⁵ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii:456–57.

fashioned the altar and the credence table in the College chapel. Zonnebloem's carpentry exhibition at the Paris Exhibition of 1878 won a diploma of merit.¹ In 1881, the Cape Government was subsidizing the trade teacher's salary to the tune of £120 per annum—£20 more than it contributed towards the Warden's salary.² This fact alone indicates where Government's priorities lay.

In 1878, there were nineteen boarders, of whom twelve were 'Basuto' (plate 3c). The Basotho were all 'employed in general school-work and in carpentry'. The other seven boarders included a 'Gaika' (Ngqika), a 'Fingo', two 'Colonials' (an indeterminate racial category), and three 'Damara' (Herero). The last bracket included the Grendon boys and Jacob.³

The roll had diminished radically by 1879: there were now just 46 boys in total. The teaching staff was down to two. There were however eight pupil-teachers, and others were in training.⁴ Geography, history, English, music, and drawing were being taught to almost all the boys, and 22 were learning Latin.⁵ By early 1879, it appears that William Grendon was old enough to undergo two hours of instruction per day in the carpenter's shop, but Robert—now approaching twelve—was still 'too young'.⁶

Whereas Robert's greatest aptitude was for academic work, carpentry was his elder brother's occupation throughout his life. When his five years of schoolwork were over, William began his apprenticeship. In 1884, he is listed as one of four 'apprentices to Carpenter's Shop'.⁷ When he left Zonnebloem is not clear, but he was married by 1892,⁸ and had moved to Natal no later than 1895.⁹ Postal directories from 1897 to 1913 show him as a 'carpenter' at 301 Greyling Street, Pietermaritzburg.¹⁰ A Pietermaritzburg Congregational Church was once graced with a pulpit that is

¹ 'Z. C. D. S.', *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 1:5 (Oct. 1902) 6.

² Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended June 30, 1881*, 10.

³ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 30th June, 1878*, 217.

⁴ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year Ended 30th June, 1879*, 152, 160.

⁵ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year Ended 30th June, 1879*, 164.

⁶ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year Ended 30th June, 1879*, 256.

⁷ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 13.

⁸ He had a son born in May 1892 (J. Hoskins notebook 2).

⁹ *Natal Almanac ... 1895*, directory section, 103.

¹⁰ *Natal Almanac ... 1897*, directory section, 104; *Natal Directory ... 1913*, directory section, 198.

understood to have been constructed by him.¹ When William died in penury in 1921, he ‘had no assets beyond his [carpentry] tools’.²

In 1881, the number of Zonnebloem’s boarders had risen to fifty-nine, whose ‘industrial training’ the Government was subsidizing at the rate of £12 per head per annum.³ During the financial year 1883–84, the Government paid the considerable sum of £942 10s towards the running costs of the College. As this amounts to approximately 40% of the College’s total expenditure for the year, it can be appreciated that Peters needed to stay on the right side of the Government’s ‘industrial training’ policy. In this year, there were 91 boys on the roll.⁴

In 1886, in addition to the College Warden, there were two assistant masters, as well as a teacher of carpentry, and another of printing. Instruction in shoemaking had been discontinued.⁵ On the occasion of the inspection by the Superintendent-General of Education, there were 46 boys on the roll. Of these, 22 were boarders, of whom just six were ‘of Native descent’, the rest being ‘European and Colonial born’. He found the dormitories to be ‘spacious and airy’.⁶ The two schoolrooms were likewise ‘large, well lighted, ventilated, and furnished; [having] boarded floors’. In 1889, the roll had climbed again, and stood at 100 boys. Greek was being taught to a few.⁷



William and Robert’s arrival at Zonnebloem coincided with the Ninth Cape Frontier War—the ‘War of Ngqayecibi’ (1877–78). *Casus belli* was an attempt on the part of the Gcaleka Xhosa to recover lands they had earlier lost when the Cape Government awarded them to the Mfengu. The Mfengu, of all frontier tribes, were most amenable to Western Civilization, and had in the past rendered valuable military services to the Colony. The Cape therefore rallied to the defence of an old ally by invading Gcalekaland and defeating the Gcaleka at the end of September 1877.⁸

¹ Interview: Cyril Hoskins, Pietermaritzburg, 12 Nov. 2005.

² NAB, MSCE 6609/1921.

³ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended June 30, 1881*, 10.

⁴ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for 1884*, 112.

⁵ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for 1886*, appendix, 5.

⁶ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for 1886*, appendix, 5–6.

⁷ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for 1889*, 64–65.

⁸ Goedhals, ‘The Journal of Peter Masiza’, 108.

The war was not over, however, because in December the Ngqika, together with some of the Thembu, took sides with the Gcaleka. Sandile, the Ngqika chief, was killed in May 1878.¹ His heir, Edmund Sandile (or Gonya), had entered the 'Kafir College' at its inception in 1858 and had left in 1868. Sir George Grey had even granted him a farm while he was a scholar at Zonnebloem. When his father made common cause with the Gcaleka, Edmund's loyalties became strongly conflicted. Despite his exposure to Zonnebloem's 'civilizing' influence, he joined the Ngqika forces, and played his part in active fighting. Captured at the end of June 1878, he was convicted of rebellion, and imprisoned on Robben Island, within sight of Zonnebloem where he had obtained his schooling. He was released in 1888, the year before Robert matriculated.² For the greater period of Robert's schooling, he must have known that an old boy of his College was a political prisoner on the island that could be seen in Table Bay.

Edmund Sandile was just one of many old scholars of Zonnebloem who were resident in or near the war-zone at the outbreak of war. They found themselves in an invidious position: should they side with the Colonial-Mfengu alliance, or take up arms against them? Finding themselves on the horns of a dilemma, they suffered acute anguish.³

Peter Masiza who obtained part of his schooling at Zonnebloem became the first black Anglican priest in South Africa.⁴ In his journal of 1878, he expresses regret that some of his fellow old boys have shown so little gratitude for what their *alma mater* offered them: 'What great privilege had Sir George Grey made for them that a good number of young men were sent to Zonnebloem, with several chiefs' sons amongst them, to have a free education, and some had the privilege were sent to England, thinking they will return to be an example to their own people.'⁵ Masiza grieves that Edmund Sandile, with whom he 'had spen[t] many happy days' at Zonnebloem, should now 'take his gun and ammunition to turn out and to fight so to speak against

¹ Goedhals, 'The Journal of Peter Masiza', 109.

² Goedhals, 'The Journal of Peter Masiza', 110; Goedhals, 'Ungumpriste: A Study of the Life of Peter Masiza', 20.

³ Saunders, 'Through an African's Eyes: the Diary of Nathaniel Umhala', 24.

⁴ Goedhals, 'The Journal of Peter Masiza', 107.

⁵ Goedhals, 'The Journal of Peter Masiza', 117: 2 July 1878.

his Father the Government who gave him all these things'.¹ Of course, ethnic loyalties also differentiated them: Sandile was Ngqika; Masiza was probably Mfengu.

It is not clear if Alexander Masiza, who was a boarder at Zonnebloem when Robert arrived, was related to Peter Masiza.² Peter cannot have been Alexander's father, because according to Mandy Goedhals, Peter was a widower, and had only one child who lodged at to St George's Orphanage in Cape Town, where it died in 1883.³ However, the 1884 *Report* does describe Alexander as 'the orphan son of a Native Clergyman'.⁴ Goedhals states that Peter had a brother Paul Masiza, who was 'the first black Anglican deacon'. Paul died in 1871, and his orphaned daughter was educated in Cape Town.⁵ In view of the fact that Peter had a Zonnebloem education, and that both Peter and Paul Masiza were involved in the service of the Anglican Church, and that both had children who lived—and received their education in—Cape Town, it seems altogether possible that Robert Grendon's classmate Alexander Masiza may have been their relative. He was an Mfengu, and of approximately the same age as Robert, because together they are described in 1879 as being 'too young for trade teaching'.⁶ He was in Robert's class in 1884, and performed academically somewhat better than him.⁷ Both Robert and Alexander were appointed pupil-teachers in 1885.⁸

While Edmund Sandile took up arms against the Colony, and Peter Masiza adopted a decidedly 'loyal' stance, other former Zonnebloem scholars tried to maintain neutrality. Nathaniel Mhala (born c.1843) was working as court interpreter at King William's Town when war broke out. Although he did not actively side with the Gcaleka-Ngqika-Thembu alliance, his sympathies were very clearly divided.⁹ He did not join the 'rebels', but neither would he condemn their stand.¹⁰ Charged with high treason at the conclusion of the war because of his alleged support for the rebel cause, he was exonerated in court.¹¹

¹ Goedhals, 'The Journal of Peter Masiza', 118.

² Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 30th June, 1877*, 238.

³ Goedhals, 'The Journal of Peter Masiza', 111.

⁴ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 7, 9.

⁵ Goedhals, 'The Journal of Peter Masiza', 111.

⁶ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year Ended 30th June, 1879*, 256.

⁷ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 9.

⁸ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for 1885*, 137.

⁹ Goedhals, 'The Journal of Peter Masiza', 110.

¹⁰ Saunders, 'Through an African's Eyes: the Diary of Nathaniel Umhala', 25.

¹¹ Saunders, 'Through an African's Eyes: the Diary of Nathaniel Umhala', 24.

Mhala was described as having ‘considerable intellectual ability’ by no lesser figure than the British High Commissioner himself. His father was leader of the Ndlambe Ngqika Xhosa. Like Edmund Sandile and Peter Masiza, he was one of the first cohort of scholars taken from the eastern frontier to study at the ‘Kafir College’. After a time at Zonnebloem, he went on to St Augustine’s in Canterbury to complete his training for the ministry.¹ In the decades after the war, he continued to hold responsible positions, as a catechist, a law-agent, and for a brief period from late 1897, he became the first editor of the East London Xhosa-English newspaper, *Izwi Labantu*,² which, according to one of Robert Grendon’s *Ilanga* editorials, could ‘be safely termed “*Malleus Kaffrariensis*”, the “Native Hammer”’.³



In 1884, Robert had reached Class I at the College—*i.e.*, the highest of five standards. The few youths who stayed on after this, did so as trainee teachers, as apprentices to the carpenter’s shop, or so as to prepare themselves for the matriculation examination of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. There were fifteen scholars in Class I in 1884. Robert came fourth in Religious Knowledge, seventh in Literature, and second in Mathematics. He also won a prize for mathematics. William Grendon had already passed through the academic system, and was now concentrating on his trade apprenticeship.⁴

Zonnebloem had become an important teacher-training facility during the 1860s. Pupil-teachers were given a small stipend, enabling them to gain some first-hand pedagogical experience while still at the College.⁵ In 1885, Robert—then seventeen or eighteen years old—became a pupil teacher at Zonnebloem.⁶ In 1886, he was awarded the Third Class Certificate—presumably the Colony’s elementary teaching qualification.⁷ Despite the diversity of activities in which he engaged throughout his adult life, teaching remained his economic mainstay. His last teaching post was at a

¹ Saunders, ‘Through an African’s Eyes: the Diary of Nathaniel Umhala’, 24.

² Saunders, ‘Through an African’s Eyes: the Diary of Nathaniel Umhala’, 28.

³ ‘The Native Press’, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.

⁴ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 9, 13.

⁵ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii:462.

⁶ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for 1885*, 137.

⁷ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for 1886*, 20.

school run under the auspices of the African Methodist Episcopal Church outside Bremersdorp (Manzini), Swaziland, during the 1920s.¹

In 1889, he matriculated. Of the 198 candidates examined by the University of the Cape of Good Hope in that year, only 109 passed. They came chiefly from the Cape Colony, but there was a fair representation from Natal, and a sprinkling from the South African republics. Robert took 64th place, and missed honours by just a few positions. It was a good year for Zonnebloem, because C. Mpaki, another of its scholars, also matriculated, coming 82nd. The results were published on 29 July 1889.² Zonnebloem honoured the memory of its few matriculants. A manuscript note amongst the Zonnebloem Papers, now lodged with the University of Cape Town, lists Robert Grendon with about a dozen other matriculants,³ and lists of matriculants were published in the College magazine.⁴



If Grendon left any private papers, they have disappeared. Throughout his journalistic corpus, he gives autobiography a wide berth, in consequence of which direct personal references to his youth in Cape Town are nonexistent. There are however some oblique references that are worth noting. At the end of 1904, for instance, Grendon records the passing of Thomas Fothergill Lightfoot (1831–1904), Archdeacon of the Cape, and Vicar-General of the Diocese of Cape Town. He trained at St Augustine's College, Canterbury, to which several of Zonnebloem's earliest scholars had been sent to complete their training for the ministry. Grendon writes: 'To the native races of South Africa the loss of the Ven. Archdeacon Lightfoot of Capetown will prove irreparable, for they have lost in him a friend, counsellor and labourer in the cause of their advancement whose memory cannot but live imperishably in the hearts of them who are endowed with gratitude.'⁵

Lightfoot had arrived in Cape Town in 1858, the year of Zonnebloem's establishment. It was Bishop Gray, one of the College's co-founders, who inspired him to take up mission work at the Cape. He laboured among Cape Town's urban

¹ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 54, 86.

² MacAlister (online).

³ Zonnebloem Papers, D2.28.

⁴ *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 5:21 (Trinity 1907) 28.

⁵ 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

poor from this time on, becoming ‘the first of a long local line of reforming Anglican clergy’.¹ Amongst his earliest congregants were freed slaves of East African origin—so-called ‘Mozbiekers’—who still spoke their own language.²

A member of Cape Town’s large Mozbieker community who afterward achieved distinction was Bernard Mizeki, who was born near Inhambane around 1860. At the age of about sixteen, he ‘came to Cape Town, via Lourenço Marques, ... under the [Cape] Government labour importation scheme’.³ After attending a night school run by the Anglican Cowley Fathers—an order with close ties to Zonnebloem—Bernard was enrolled by them as a day scholar at Zonnebloem, where he spent five years, ‘excell[ing] in religious studies and show[ing] an aptitude for arithmetic’.⁴ In 1891, he joined Bishop Knight-Bruce’s pioneering party to Mashonaland.

An able missionary, he established and ran a station of his own in central Mashonaland, and even married the granddaughter of a local chief. In 1896, when the Mashona Rebellion against the rule of the British South Africa Company broke out, Bernard was killed. His body has never been located. He was subsequently declared a martyr by the Church. Robert Grendon undoubtedly knew Mizeki who was six or seven years his senior. In the Zonnebloem College archive are some manuscript notes for a Jubilee commemorative souvenir, which date from around 1907–08. Grendon’s surname appears on the same sheet of paper with ‘Bernard the Martyr, Cowley Evangelist, obit. 1896’.⁵



The Emancipation of the Slaves was promulgated in 1834, and took effect in 1838. When Grendon was a boy, many Capetonians of Malay and mixed-racial origin were still alive who had personally suffered enslavement in their youth. Zonnebloem’s situation on the edge of District Six would have brought its pupils into almost daily contact with some of these ex-slaves. Situated behind Zonnebloem was ‘Lydia’s Cottage’, a single-roomed dwelling occupied by a former slave, Lydia, whose back

¹ Worden, *Cape Town: the Making of a City*, 180.

² Worden, *Cape Town: the Making of a City*, 178.

³ Harries, ‘Culture and Classification of the Mozbieker Community at the Cape’, 41.

⁴ Harries, ‘Culture and Classification of the Mozbieker Community at the Cape’, 42; Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*.

⁵ Zonnebloem Papers, D2.27.14.

still bore the stripes inflicted by some cruel master. Starting late in 1884, a cottage-school and religious services for the poor began to be held at Lydia's Cottage. Canon Peters's two daughters taught about forty children there on Sundays.¹

Each year Cape Town's ex-slave population celebrated the Act of Emancipation on the first day of December. For the benefit of black readers in Natal—a Colony that had never known institutionalized slavery—Grendon writes on 2 December 1904:

Yesterday Dec. 1. is a red-letter day in all British possessions where slaves existed, for it was on this day that the slaves gained their freedom six and sixty years ago. To perpetuate the memory of slave emancipation, it has been the custom for the descendants of the slaves to celebrate the day above referred to in rejoicing, and in some instances by thankfulness, and prayer. In the Cape Colony the practice is still carried on but we fear that it is gradually dying out with the younger generation that seeks to obliterate the thought that their ancestors were slaves.²

Slavery and emancipation are recurrent motifs in Grendon's poetry and prose. In *Paul Kruger's Dream*, personified 'Truth' reminds Boer commandos assembled at Paardekraal just prior to the outbreak of the South African War: 'Six decades full have wing'd their flight, | Since upright Britons mov'd | To pity at the bondsman's plight, | Harsh cruelty reprov'd.'³ But, in contrast with 'the custom for the descendants of the slaves to celebrate the day ... in rejoicing', South Africa's Boer population still rankles decades later over the statutory Abolition of Slavery. Kruger speaks for his countrymen when he vows: 'With deepest curses annually | We'll hail Emancipation Day.'⁴

As Vivian Bickford-Smith explains, the anniversary of Emancipation Day marked the start of a 'festival period' for Cape Town's freed-slave population during Victorian times. This period embraced the '*bid dae*' (prayer days) 'of Christmas and New Year, the traditional slave holidays'. Troupes of street minstrels in fancy costume were much in evidence.⁵ Grendon acknowledges that members of the 'ex-slave' community celebrated their emancipation in a variety of ways. There was universal rejoicing, but only 'in some instances' did the celebrants show 'thankfulness' or resort to prayer. This may reflect the fact that as early as 1862, the

¹ Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*, 24.

² 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 74.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XII, p. 37.

⁵ Bickford-Smith, 'Black Ethnicities', 446.

Cape Press was complaining that Emancipation Day festivities had ‘degenerated into a Bacchanalian orgy of the emancipated’.¹

It is evident that Cape Town’s ex-slave population left a deep impression upon Grendon. In prefatory verses to *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, he joins with all emancipated peoples in extolling ‘Britannia’. He also dedicates his epic to her for granting him his liberty:

I—with them due praises render,
I—who am from fierce wrath free;
And by virtue of my freedom,
Dedicate this song to thee.²



As noted earlier, a contingent of sixteen Basuto boys arrived at Zonnebloem in 1875. Among them was Mojela Moshesh (modern orthography: Mshweshwe). His brother, the paramount chief of Basutoland, Alexander Letsie Moshesh, had earlier spent five years at the College. During the 1870s, the majority of the black African students at the College were Basuto. It was reported in the Colonial press in 1877 that

this institution is educating nearly 100 lads, of whom fifty to sixty are boarders; among the twenty-five native boarders we note several grandsons of the late Chief Moshesh [c.1786–1870], as well as sons of the Chiefs Molappo, Mapeshuane, Sofonia, and Maqua. Three are on the point of returning to Basutoland—Rafa, who has recently passed the Government examination as an elementary teacher; Majela, son of the Chief Letsie, and Enoch, son of Maphiki, Molappo’s councillor. It is gratifying to us to join in congratulations offered to Mr and Mrs Peters on the success of their labours.³

Basutoland had become a British Protectorate in 1868, and was summarily annexed to the Cape Colony in 1871. In 1884, after the Basuto ‘Gun War’, when the Colony relinquished Basutoland, it became one of the High Commission Territories of southern Africa.

Since they were also boarders, William and Robert Grendon would have had ample opportunity to become acquainted with the royal-blooded and chiefly Basuto

¹ *Cape Argus*, 2 Dec. 1862, quoted in: Worden, *Cape Town: the Making of a City*, 195.

² *PKD*, Dedication, p. vii.

³ Zonnebloem Papers, F.4.1.1: clipping from unidentified newspaper, dated 15 May 1877.

scholars.¹ From them, the inquisitive Robert may have gleaned the history and political affairs of the mountain kingdom. In 1916, he refers to the ‘tangles ... that beset Basuto Life and History’, and describes Basutoland as ‘prolific with internal discord—and famous for inward complicated intrigue’.²

A smaller grouping of Zonnebloem scholars came from Edendale, a progressive Wesleyan mission settlement a few miles outside Pietermaritzburg, capital of Natal Colony. Edendale’s Christian inhabitants held title to their lands, enjoyed relative prosperity, and had established extensive cultural and trade links within Natal, as well as with Swaziland, Transvaal, Orange Free State, and Basutoland. Several members of this pro-British community volunteered to serve on the Imperial side in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879. They formed the Edendale Horse Regiment.³

Several gifted and ambitious men came out of Edendale and its offshoot settlements. As an adult, Robert Grendon would have much to do with them—both during his Natal sojourn, 1900–05, and later in Swaziland, with which country the Edendale community maintained strong historical links. ‘S. Mini’, who is listed as a boarder at Zonnebloem in early 1879,⁴ was probably Stephen Mini, whose father Stephanus was Edendale’s third headman, a prominent elder, and a substantial landholder at Edendale and other places. Stephen succeeded his father as *kholwa* (Zulu: ‘believer’) chief of Edendale in the 1890s.⁵ In July 1882, Stephen’s brother, Simon Mini, then at Edendale, was called upon to proceed to Cape Town, in order to take up the ‘situation of English-speaking Zulu Interpreter for women and other Zulus left at [Cetshwayo’s] location’.⁶ The deposed Zulu King, who had been captured by the British in August 1879 and imprisoned in Cape Town, had recently had his petition granted for an audience with Victoria. Prior to Simon Mini’s call to his ‘location’, he had sailed for England, leaving the majority of his retinue behind him.

In the early 1880s, there was a small but important Natalian presence at Zonnebloem. This was likely due to the fact that Natal Colony was without an

¹ Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii:505.

² ‘Farewell Msindazwe!’ *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

³ Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, 112c.

⁴ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year Ended 30th June, 1879*, 256.

⁵ It is also possible, though less likely, that ‘S. Mini’ may have been Stephen’s brother Simon, who in 1875 was already a schoolteacher at Edendale (Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 202).

⁶ NAB, SNA I/1/54, ref. 1882/279.

institution offering a comparably advanced curriculum, and able to prepare blacks for matriculation or for clerical and civil service careers. In February 1881, five Natalians arrived at the College. Four came from Edendale; the fifth was a Presbyterian from Umvoti County. The Edendaleans included twenty-year-old William George Mini (another of Stephanus Mini's sons), Peter Msomi, Albert Molife, and Benjamin Dlamini.¹ Two other Edendale pupils, Samuel Xaba and Orpen Molife, were enrolled in 1883. Both belonged to families of Basuto origin.²

Benjamin Dlamini and Samuel Xaba had fathers who were Wesleyans and farmers at Edendale. Samuel Xaba's father, Solomon, was one of those who served the Queen in the Edendale Horse Regiment in 1879.³ He had received exemption from the operation of Natal Colony's Native Law Code in 1877. William George Mini was twenty years old when he entered Zonnebloem.⁴ In addition to his schooling in Cape Town, he spent about seven months in England. In June 1883, he was back in Natal, where he applied for a post in Government Service.⁵ Peter Samuel Msomi, son of Samuel and Sarah Msomi, was born c.1861. He studied in Cape Town for two or three years, and was back in Natal by June 1883. In 1887, when his application to be exempted from the operation of Natal's 'Native Law' was granted, he was teaching at a rural school, and recognized Stephanus Mini as his chief.⁶

Albert Molife was the elder son of Jabez Molife. Orpen Molife may have been a younger son. The College admission register identifies Orpen's father as a chief, but does not show his residence. In 1884, Albert was one standard behind Robert Grendon. So were W. and J. Mzamo, and S. Xaba, all of whom subsequently fetched up in Natal.⁷ By late 1889, Albert had spent 'five years at College in Cape Town and two years at Heald Town Institution'.⁸ His father Jabez appears to have been son-in-law to Stephanus Mini, which would make William Mini and Albert Molife cousins.⁹ In August 1873, Jabez had accompanied Theophilus Shepstone to the 'coronation' of

¹ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2.

² Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2.

³ Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, 112c.

⁴ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2.

⁵ NAB, SNA I/1/62 ref. 1883/314.

⁶ NAB, SNA I/1/62 ref. 1883/316; NAB, SNA I/1/99 ref. 1887/445.

⁷ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 10–11.

⁸ NAB, SNA I/1/121 ref. 1889/1320.

⁹ NAB, RSC 1/5/364 ref. 115/1926.

Cetshwayo.¹ Later in the same year he was also called upon to raise a military force to suppress the ‘rebellion’ of the Hlubi under chief Langalibalele. As a member of the Edendale Horse Regiment, he was present at the battle of Isandhlwana in January 1879, when the British suffered a devastating defeat, and he assisted Simeon Kambule when he heroically saved the life of a Natal Carbineer. He was also the ‘faithful Native servant’ who retrieved the remains of Colonel Durnford from the battlefield for proper burial in Pietermaritzburg.²

Jabez became an active member of Funamalungelo—a political pressure group formed by black Natalians in 1887. He was one of very few blacks who succeeded in becoming voters in Natal, despite the enormous odds stacked against them by Natal’s legislators.³ During Stephanus Mini’s frequent absences from Edendale, Jabez Molife would sometimes act as chief in his stead,⁴ and when a permanent replacement was being considered for chief of Edendale, his was one of the names put forward.⁵ He had farms at Edendale and at Driefontein, a large and flourishing offshoot of the Edendale community, situated north of Ladysmith. In the 1880s, he served the interests of British concessionaires in Swaziland. Unlike others of the Edendale community in Swaziland—Stephen Mini included⁶—Molife did not obtain a Swaziland concession for himself.⁷ He and Stephen Mini led a group of black scouts who gathered intelligence for the British during the South African War.⁸

As an adult, Grendon would have much to do with these Zonnebloem old boys, and with members of their families, when he became head teacher of Edendale Native Training Institution in 1900, and when as a journalist for *Ilanga lase Natal*, from 1903–05, he took an interest in the deliberations of Funamalungelo—which still existed, although subsumed by the Natal Native Congress. The Funamalungelo men were an elite group of black Natalians, many of whom had been exempted from the operation of ‘Native Law’. In reporting upon the organization’s meetings in early 1905, Grendon mentions by name ‘Stephen Mini’, ‘W. Mini’, ‘Jabez Molife’,

¹ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 369–70.

² Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 426.

³ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 278.

⁴ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 298.

⁵ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 307.

⁶ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 420.

⁷ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 426.

⁸ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 380a.

‘Mzamo (jun)’, ‘Rev. Mzamo’, and ‘Sol. Xaba’.¹ These men all either attended Zonnebloem or had a family member who had.

Robert Grendon and Albert Molife were boarders together at Zonnebloem for some years. It seems inconceivable that Grendon never heard Albert speak of his father’s heroism at Isandhlwana, or of his earlier services to the colonial militia of Natal. With the example of men like Jabez Molife in mind, Grendon asks rhetorically: ‘Who ... were they who laid down their lives for Queen and Country, and violated the sacred law of kinship by fighting against their own blood throughout the Zulu Campaign?’ He also refers to the monument erected at Edendale ‘to the memory of those who fell during the Zulu War in defence of British honour’.² Although Robert Grendon and the Molifes came from opposite ends of the subcontinent, they shared a strong sense of loyalty to the Imperial cause.



Black South Africans knew that it was only at institutions in the Cape—the ‘Old Colony’—that their sons and daughters could get more than a basic education. The Tswana-English paper, *Koranta ea Becoana* summed up the situation in 1903:

As our Native readers are aware, never did a black inhabitant of the Cape Colony send his child to any of the neighbouring British possessions for education, while black children (whose parents pay taxes direct to Downing Street), have come from Transvaal, the [Orange River Colony], Basutoland and the [Bechuanaland] Protectorate to be educated at Lovedale, Heald Town, Zonnebloem and other colonial educational institutions, at the expense of the Cape Treasury.³

The article remarks that even Natal—a British Colony—sent her advanced black scholars to the Cape.

By the close of the nineteenth century, there were few corners of southern Africa where Zonnebloem’s reputation for academic excellence had not penetrated. Some ambitious youths were prepared to make great sacrifices in order to partake of the superior education it was reputed to offer. *South African Spectator* reported in 1901

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4; ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

³ *Koranta ea Becoana* 28 (28 Feb. 1903) 5.

that ‘a youth recently walked two hundred miles to become a student of the Native College at Zonnebloem’, and it regarded this feat as ‘a healthy sign of the Native African’s love of learning and a strong argument in favour of the appreciation by the Native of the benefits derived from that institution’.¹

A Sesotho-language article published in *Ilanga* in November 1903, just weeks after Grendon’s arrival at Ohlange, where the paper was published, recounts an anecdote about a colonist who encountered an African reading the *Natal Mercury*. He asked the reader if he understood English. When the black man replied affirmatively, he asked him to define the word, ‘Ethiopian’, which appeared in the phrase, ‘Ethiopian Movement’, printed in that issue of the paper. When the black man answered that it was a church, the white man ridiculed him, saying that he had better go back to school and learn Latin and Greek, because he would learn the correct meaning of the word there. The article continues by reporting that the black man had now resolved to enter Zonnebloem College, so that he might learn Greek and Latin. Whites habitually say that those languages are of no value to blacks, but they persist in teaching them to their own children. All the ‘high terms’ in English originate in those languages, and if a person is unacquainted with them, he does not really know English. Blacks should attend the same schools as whites, and obtain degrees—‘B.A., B.D., M.A., D.D.’—just like them.² In view of Grendon’s position on *Ilanga*’s editorial staff,³ it seems quite possible that the Sesotho journalist was prompted by him to write this article.



Zonnebloem’s academic curriculum was divided into three broad categories: ‘Religious Knowledge’, ‘Literature’, and ‘Mathematics’. In 1884, when Robert was in the most senior class, religious knowledge meant the study of one book from the Old Testament (2 Samuel), and one from the New (Acts of the Apostles). Also considered were the Church Catechism and the Prayer Book. As respects religious knowledge, Robert took fourth place in a class of fifteen.⁴

¹ ‘Walked 200 Miles to Zonnebloem’, *South African Spectator* 1:22 (7 Sept. 1901) 5.

² ‘Tsa Thuto’, *Ilanga* 1:34 (27 Nov. 1903) 3.

³ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, to Under Secretary for Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, 16 Oct. 1906.

⁴ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 9.

His early religious training appears to have touched him deeply. The epic *Paul Kruger's Dream* abounds with scriptural allusions, as do many others of Grendon's poems and journalistic pieces. In the *Dream*, for instance, 'Fortuna' appears to a proud, self-reliant Kruger, reminding him of how the Almighty once shattered the pride of Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Herod.¹ New-found wealth has emboldened the Transvaal President to tread justice underfoot, but Providence will deal him a blow like unto the punishments meted out to those ungodly potentates mentioned in the sacred canon.

Grendon so internalized scriptural precedents and object lessons that they became thoroughly integrated into his rhetoric and poetry. In 1916, a reporter for Johannesburg's *Star* considered that Grendon misjudged his communist audience when he delivered a lecture—'full of rich and highly-coloured metaphor, much of it religiously inspired'.² His religious references provoked demonstrations of scorn from some whites in attendance.

In 1884, Robert came seventh in class for 'Literature', which embraced several subjects: Latin, English Grammar and Analysis, English History, Geography, and Greek Grammar. English history covered the period from the Conquest (1066) to the end of the fourteenth century (Richard II's reign). The texts were 'Curtis's Outlines' and 'Smith's Primary History'. Latin texts that year were Smith's Latin Grammar, the fifth book of Caesar's *De Bello Gallico* ('On the Gallic War'), the third book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Henry's First Latin Book. Latin instruction was very much a fixture at the College: in 1882, a thirty-six page pamphlet entitled *A Short Latin Accidence for Beginners* (plate 3d) had been pulled from Zonnebloem's own press.

Material such as this might seem hopelessly irrelevant to boys from a rural African background. Nonetheless, skilful Imperialist propagandists discovered a formidable ideological arsenal in the Classics, English literature, and European history. By means of them, students could be overawed with a sense of the majesty and seeming permanence of Western Civilization, together with a fatalistic acceptance of the

¹ *PKD*, Pt XIII. pp. 39–40.

² 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790, 2nd ed. (9 June 1916), 6.

British Empire's inexorable subsumption or supplanting of putatively inferior cultures. What, after all, could Africa offer to rival Homer or even Milton?

But knowledge of the classical Mediterranean world and of later Western European history could also have untoward consequences for the educator. In later life, the astute and politically-aware African student could—and frequently did—employ such knowledge to interrogate or to subvert the colonial system.

Zonnebloem's 1884 *Report* claims 'that whether or not a boy after leaving school ever looks into a Greek or Latin book again, these languages have answered, as far as we have been able to make them, the purposes for which they were employed. They have been the instruments of education, and at whatever stage the boy leaves off, so far his mental training has been carried on on sound principles.'¹ In Robert Grendon's case, some educators with hindsight might have countered that this classical and historical knowledge 'answered' rather too well. A teacher throughout most of his adult life, Robert *did* in fact 'look into a Greek or Latin book' on many occasions subsequent to leaving school.

All history and literature to which Robert was exposed—whether it was biblical, Classical, European, or African—became grist to his polemical mill. Tim Couzens discerns in such poems as *Tshaka's Death* (1901) and *Paul Kruger's Dream* (1902) Grendon's 'strong interest in history (no doubt acquired at Zonnebloem). Their epical qualities indicate a nationalistic trend in his historical thinking'. But, 'whereas he may have learned English history at Zonnebloem, his drift is towards *local* history'.² It is true that African or colonial history did not feature in the curriculum of Zonnebloem College. As Janet Hodgson points out, a course in Colonial history 'would hardly have been considered a suitable subject for the [black] pupils' at Zonnebloem.³ However, it was an easy and a natural step for Grendon, whose taste and aptitude for history had been quickened and educated at the College, to apply to African history the sensibility he acquired at Zonnebloem. In this way—by connecting African history with World history—he was able to ensure the relevance of his own historical study.

¹ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 5.

² Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 75.

³ Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:361.

Replete with instructive historical precedents, Grendon was enabled to do three things:

- (1) He could remind Europeans that their own ancestors were once barbarians, before they were ‘conquered’ by classical civilization. From this historical fact, he could infer that Africans have every prospect of one day achieving a level of civilization equivalent—or even superior—to that of modern Europe.
- (2) He could cite historical examples to support his argument that latter-day colonists and colonial administrators betrayed the illustrious traditions of which they claimed to be inheritors.
- (3) He could hold up historical examples of moral, intellectual, aesthetic, and spiritual excellence for emulation by Africans.

Grendon did all three. In an *Ilanga* editorial of 1904, he urges Zulu readers to copy the ancient Greeks, who ‘contributed to the world the richest literature through the medium of the most perfect of human tongues!’ He calls upon ‘you Zulu lads’ to ‘copy in self-denial the Greek youth who to obtain an education deems it no disgrace and no shame to engage in any work even the lowest and the most mean’.¹ Later, he refers to Mankulumana, the faithful friend and councillor to Zulu king Dinizulu, as ‘that primitive Ndwandwe orator, whom Demosthenes, the prince of Greek orators would have applauded, had he been privileged to hear him speak’.²

Caesar’s *Gallic War*, Grendon’s school text in 1884, served him well in later life. In answer to white critics who harped upon the vileness of African polygamy, he states ‘emphatically’ in 1904 ‘that it is ... more honourable than that which the primitive Britons practised; which was the very reverse of that now existing in Africa, and infinitely more detestable and degrading’. He quotes the testimonial evidence of ‘the Roman conqueror Caesar in his “De Bello Gallico” who observes that ‘ten or a dozen’ woad-besmeared Kentish savages would have one woman in common. The conclusion he draws is difficult to refute:

The primitive people of Britain were in their habits on a par with, if not lower than, the inhabitants of this continent. By the influence of Christianity, and civilisation, the descendants

¹ ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

² Grendon, ‘A Question for L. E. H.’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:73 (11 Feb. 1914) 6.

of those primitive Britons to-day stand at the very roof of the world's progress. May not the natives of Africa under similar conditions emerge from their primitive customs and take a higher position in the scale of life? There is nothing impossible in the theory, and the results are within the range of probability.¹

He pursues the same line of argument in April of the same year. Having reminded his reader that 'Modern Europe can trace her descent to Rome', he goes on to quote a 'recent writer' who describes the roots of European civilization as 'incessant strife, and corruption, decline and fall, for a thousand years'. Rome's 'emperors did what they liked, and vice was imperial'. The 'recent writer' is the prominent English Swedenborgian, James John Garth Wilkinson. Grendon quotes *The African and the True Christian Religion: His Magna Charta. A Study in the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg* (1892):

Great Caesar, Divus Julius, made slaves of his Gallic captives, and had contractors on the spot, after his sieges to buy them—often the nobles of their country, and transport them to Italy. The conquered chiefs, and kings were led in triumph through the Roman streets, and often butchered on the way. So much for the meanness of Empire, and the dirty hands of glory. Successful men, at last money grubbers, had proconsulates given them to plunder subject nations. The people were educated in the sight of the gladiatorial arena, and the death of valiant men was their pastime. ... These and other things which cannot be named, were in the very organization, and frame of Imperial Rome, and ever various anarchic despotism held the unshapely mass of nationalities together. Yet modern Europe has been brought out of it, and has lost many of the grossnesses of the old state, and with every decade is purged of more.²

From Wilkinson's damning indictment of Imperial Rome, Grendon draws powerful lessons:

Here we again notice that the white people in their past history have been stained with guilt to a degree greater than the black. We notice also that from the rottenness and corruption of her early career, the Continent on the other side of the Mediterranean became a flourishing centre of civilization in all its branches, and the home of what we venture to call 'stable order', though it maintains it at the point of the sword. We note further that the several nations referred to above have risen from savagery to their present sublime position. Is it not possible that Africa will in

¹ 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

² 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4. Grendon quotes verbatim from Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 164–65.

time likewise emerge from her savage state? Is it not possible that the black man is capable of attaining to a level higher than he at present occupies?¹

De Bello Gallico comes once again into requisition when Grendon slams the folly of greedy capitalists who exacerbate South Africa's existing social problems by importing mine-workers from distant China. 'Somewhere' in that text, Grendon recalls, 'Caesar states "*that imported cattle are useless*".' Grendon is 'curious to see and know whether this condemnation of the illustrious Roman conqueror will also cover the Celestial during his stay on this sub-continent'.²

The history of England serves Grendon in precisely the same way. The period treated in his 1884 class—1066 to 1399—furnishes two cautionary examples for modern colonial legislators. They are Magna Charta and Wat Tyler's Rebellion. Every English schoolboy—but not every African schoolboy—knew that in 1215, under threat of open rebellion from his barons, King John was compelled at Runnymede to issue the Great Charter that subsequently became the constitutional foundation of all English liberties—or so the school textbooks described it. In dedicatory verses to his epic, *Paul Kruger's Dream*, Grendon praises 'Great Britannia':

Thou, who flinched'st not from grasping
Arms against harsh tyranny,
Didst from JOHN wrest Magna Charta—
Keystone of thy liberty.³

And yet, Grendon finds that blacks living in Natal do not enjoy the basic liberties that the barons extracted from John. In that colony, most Africans are denied access to the ordinary courts, but must content themselves with the White Man's garbled rendition of their 'Native Law'. This inequity flies in the face of a clause of Magna Charta: 'The "*King's Court shall be stationery and open to all*". Can it be said to be adhered to in Natal? Instead, we find the very opposite—two Superior Courts, the Supreme, and the Native High—the one often deciding in conflict with the other.'⁴

¹ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.

² 'The Labour Problem', *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4.

³ *PKD*, Dedication, p. v.

⁴ 'Natives and Law', *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 3.

Elsewhere, Grendon parallels Magna Charta with the proclamation issued in Cape Town in 1843 whereby ‘Natal and her inhabitants became practically part and parcel of British territory’.¹ This latter-day charter provided that ‘there shall not in the eye of the law be any distinction of persons, or disqualification founded on mere colour, origin, language or creed; but that the protection of the law, in letter, and in substance shall be extended impartially to all alike’.² Natal’s history subsequent to British annexation, makes a mockery of both charters—those of 1215 and 1843: ‘Magna Charta, ex parte, and the Proclamation dated May 12, 1843 so far as we in Natal are concerned are dreams.’³ Grendon finds the situation in the Cape Colony somewhat more consistent with ‘British justice’, because at least there the ‘Ordinance 50’ of 1828—the so-called “Magna Charta” of the Hottentots’—is still upheld, whereby all ‘Hottentots and free persons of colour are entitled to every privilege to which any other British subjects are entitled’.⁴

In 1906, Natal introduced a universal male poll-tax that provoked many Africans to armed rebellion. When the Colony’s powerful, all-white Agricultural Union mooted the new tax the previous year, Grendon sounded an alarm. Marshalling precedents from English history, he showed how a capitation often led to widespread disaffection and public disorder. The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381—about which Grendon would have learnt in his 1884 history class—is one of his examples. Led by Wat (Walter) Tyler, it was the first massed popular rising of English history. Grendon warns: ‘The history of England furnishes sad instances where the poll-tax has proved obnoxious to the heart of the people. Wat Tyler’s Rebellion was caused by an obnoxious poll-tax.’⁵ This was a lesson that white Natalians might have learnt from their own history books.

Grendon goes on to observe that ‘it was a question of taxation that caused Charles St[u]art to lose his head’.⁶ In 1884, the Stuart Period of English history was studied in the class immediately behind Grendon’s.⁷ As indicated by his polemical gloss on the Regicide, the Stuarts might also furnish instructive lessons for colonial legislators. In Grendon’s dedication to *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, it is not Parliament that passed

¹ Freedom is Love!’ *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

² ‘Natives and Law’, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4.

³ ‘A Worthy Philanthropist’, *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4.

⁵ ‘Native Taxation’, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 3.

⁶ ‘Native Taxation’, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 3.

⁷ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 10.

sentence of death upon its King, but ‘Great Britannia’ herself, who had become outraged by Charles’s autocratic rule:

Thou, who didst adjudge CHARLES STUART
 Traitor—to thy freedom dead—
 Faithful to the call of duty,
 Shrankest not to cleave his head.¹

Although Grendon’s writings all reveal his keen historical sense, these dedicatory verses are not the outpourings of an antiquarian. They make a vital point: the same Britannia who lopped the head from off the shoulders of a tyrant king, still survives as a potent angel of retribution. She stands poised to humble Kruger and other Boer tyrants. The poetic speaker—whom we might equate with Grendon in view of the sentiments expressed—further extols Britannia:

Thou, who strovest for thy freedom,
 Despotism to restrain,
 Raisest now thy hand, and purgest
 This polluted Boer domain.²

Grendon sees history as cyclical and comprehensible: if historical circumstances are replicated in a new setting, they can be trusted to produce a similar outcome. In June 1916, he addressed a Johannesburg audience on the topic, ‘Links between Black and White’.³ During the question-and-answer session that followed, someone in the audience stated that ‘by united effort ... the native could get what he wanted’. Grendon replied ‘that the native did not have the political power necessary to effect any purpose. They could not do, as whites had been known to do—cut off the head of a king who did not please them’. Here a white woman—a modern-day Madame Defarge—chimed in with ‘You can’.⁴

Like Grendon, J. Tengo Jabavu, the leading Mfengu politician and newspaperman, found occasion to score an ideological point out of England’s Regicide. He did so in evidence given before the South African Native Affairs Commission in 1903. When one of the Commissioners caricatured ‘the Chief amongst independent tribes [as]

¹ *PKD*, Dedication, p. v.

² *PKD*, Dedication, p. vi.

³ ‘A Unique Event’, *International* 37 (2 June 1916) 3.

⁴ ‘Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives’, *Star* 6790, 2nd ed. (9 June 1916) 6.

despotic’, and suggested that there existed no ‘restraint ... on the will of a man like Tshaka or Lobengula’ in traditional African politics, Jabavu argued that such cases were exceptional rather than the norm in African history. England herself furnished examples of tyrant kings: ‘We could have a despotic Chief just as you have had in English history. You have had your Charles and your James, and knew how to deal with them; the same with the Natives.’¹ In the view of men like Grendon and Jabavu, history’s lessons have universal application. Weaponry works both ways: whites may choose to characterize all African chiefly authority by singling out conspicuous tyrants as typical; but blacks can as easily point to case-studies of European tyranny.

In 1884, during which Grendon was in Zonnebloem’s senior class, he came second in Mathematics—which included arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. The First Book of Euclid was one of the prescribed works.² He retained his aptitude for mathematics after leaving school. In 1905, he found himself teaching geometry to the Swazi princes, Malunge and Lomvazi. In place of a blackboard, he used a hearth. Presumably, the spent coals served him as chalk.³ In 1918, he was still in Euclidean harness when he slew a polemical opponent whose ‘reasoning similar to that of Euclid I. 18; or the “Proof by Exhaustion”’ led him to ‘condemn [him]self out of [his] own mouth’.⁴ However, in Grendon’s view, ‘mere external-rational mathematical axioms’ have their limitations, and he cautions another polemical adversary not to employ them in ‘discussions relating to the soul, in so far as its will ... is concerned’. Such axioms ‘carry no weight at all’ in matters pertaining to the free operation of the human will.⁵

The extramural life of Zonnebloem College appears to have been full and varied. Debating was an important part of the extra-curricular activity of the College. In the early twentieth century, such propositions as the following were debated: ‘That it is a mistake to give European names to Native children’; ‘That Printing is preferable to Carpentry’;⁶ that ‘Riches in money is preferable to riches in cattle’; ‘the relative merits of Native and European doctors’; and ‘whether agriculture or mining will be

¹ SANAC, ii:745.

² Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 9.

³ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 43.

⁴ ‘Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side’, *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5.

⁵ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

⁶ ‘Z. C. D. S.’, *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 1:5 (Oct. 1902) 6.

most conducive to the future prosperity of South Africa'.¹ Participation in such debates would have honed Grendon's skill at argumentation.

Sport also formed an important part of the extracurricular life at the College. André Odendaal observes that by introducing African scholars to 'modern sports at mission schools such as Lovedale, Healdtown and Zonnebloem', educators helped to 'foster ... the assimilationist ideal'.² An African lad who could wield the willow as well as recite Milton may have believed that he was well on his way to finding a respectable niche in colonial society. It seemed reasonable to predict that when once blacks excelled in those endeavours that Britons prized most highly, they would no longer be excluded as socially inferior to whites. What such a presupposition failed to take into account, of course, was that colonial prejudices were *not* reasonable.

Cricket was introduced at Zonnebloem in 1861, and soon became almost an obsession with the boys.³ In 1910, Cape Town's mayor recalled a time when Zonnebloem 'had the best cricket team in the whole Peninsula'.⁴ Robert must have taken his game seriously, because in the 1890s, he is described in newspaper reports as 'the Kimberley crack',⁵ 'the crack Kimberley Malay batsman',⁶ and 'that good all-around cricketer'.⁷ Perhaps his academic performance in 1884 might have been somewhat better had it not been for participation in sport and other extra-curricular activities.



Close on twelve years spent at Zonnebloem College could not fail to leave an indelible impression upon Robert. Throughout his own teaching career, he endeavoured to reproduce the academic excellence to which he had grown accustomed in Cape Town. Canon Peters's belief in producing *men* rather than 'blacksmiths or tailors or lawyers' paid off in Robert's case. The College bestowed upon him the skills he needed to wage effective ideological warfare. It levelled the

¹ 'Z. C. D. R. S.', *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 2:10 (Michaelmas 1904) 18.

² Odendaal, 'South Africa's Black Victorians', 196.

³ Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:453.

⁴ Quoted in: Gemmell, *Politics of South African Cricket*, 79.

⁵ 'Sport and Pastime: Cricket: Malay Tournament', *DFA* 14:3275 (3 April 1891) 3.

⁶ 'Sport and Pastime: Cricket: Malays vs. Europeans', *DFA Weekly Mail Summary* 5:203 (11 April 1891) 8.

⁷ 'The Owl', 'On the Wing', *Citizen* 2:42 (16 April 1898) 6(?).

playing fields for black and white, providing the frame of reference and the rhetorical strategies that would enable him, a black man, to combat the inequities and iniquities of the colonial order, in terms that white colonists themselves employed and understood. What he wrote to a white polemical adversary in 1918 encapsulates the use to which he put his Zonnebloem training. According to Grendon, ‘sword’ and ‘quill’, as ‘weapons’, ‘differ from each other only in degree as to their work, which they perform.’¹

Zonnebloem’s old boys had good reason never to discard the old school tie. They acquired prestige from having attended this widely-famed institution. In after years, their education would serve them well—opening doors to areas of employment for which very few black South Africans had been trained.² In 1898, the Xhosa-English *Imvo Zabantsundu*, described ‘Mr Grendon [as] a coloured man who has received a good education at Zonnebloem College and has deported himself in a manner of which he may be proud’.³ Three decades after Grendon’s death, one of the few things that an aging T. D. Mveli Skota could tell Tim Couzens about Grendon was that he was a ‘coloured’ man who had been educated at Zonnebloem.⁴

By the start of the twentieth century, the list of Zonnebloem’s alumni read like a directory of African celebrities. The son of Ngqika chief Sandile, and the grandsons of Basotho King Mshweshwe have already been mentioned. Sons of King Lewanika (c.1842–1916) of Barotseland and of Khama III (c.1837–1923) of Bechuanaland also enjoyed a Zonnebloem schooling.⁵ Three sons of Matabele King Lobengula ‘were sent to Zonnebloem and did well’.⁶ Names such as Moshesh and Lobengula appear as office-bearers of the College debating society as late as 1904—indicating that the blue-blooded element was still present at Zonnebloem in the first decade of the twentieth century.⁷ From Natal, the sons of Chief Mnini of the Thuli people, whose tribal lands were just south of Durban, were amongst the earliest representatives from

¹ ‘Native Unrest’, *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918).

² Hodgson, ‘History of Zonnebloem College’, ii:620.

³ *Imvo Zabantsundu* 14:704 (20 April 1898) 3.

⁴ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 54.

⁵ Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*, 54.

⁶ Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records of the Church of the Province of South Africa*, 104.

⁷ ‘Z. C. D. R. S.’, *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 2:10 (Michaelmas 1904) 18.

the Garden Colony to be educated at Zonnebloem. They returned to Natal in the 1870s.¹

Johannesburg-based advocate Montsioa studied at Zonnebloem before passing on to London.² Other Zonns included C. N. Falati (born 1867), who taught at Edendale's Native Training Institution after Grendon's dismissal in 1903. Falati went on to become Chairman of the African Teachers' Association of East Griqualand.³ Then there was politician and journalist, Thomas Levi Mvabaza, who, together with Grendon's colleague, Saul Msane, established *Umlomo wa Bantu*, a Xhosa-English newspaper, in 1910–11.⁴ Grendon would meet up with him again in Johannesburg, because Mvabaza had a long association with the national paper, *Abantu-Batho*, which Grendon would edit in 1915–16. James Tantsi, who was in a lower standard at Zonnebloem than Robert in 1884,⁵ and later moved on to Wilberforce College in the United States in 1896, was the eldest son of Rev. J. Z. Tantsi, an early leader of the Ethiopian Church.⁶

William and Robert Grendon maintained ties with Zonnebloem in later life. In December 1903, the *Zonnebloem College Magazine* recorded receipt of 'a copy of "Paul Kruger's Dream", a long poem by Mr Robert Grendon—an old Zonnebloem Student'. It was an 'excellent poem', a 'work of some magnitude'.⁷ The *College Magazine* published an extract from the poem in 1906.⁸ Grendon's poetic achievement with *Paul Kruger's Dream* grew in legend at Zonnebloem. Jean Farrant, writing in 1966, exemplifies the erudition of Zonnebloem scholars by reference to 'an epic in Greek on Paul Kruger' written by 'one of the Native students'.⁹ The poem was, of course, written in English, but Grendon almost certainly learnt a little Greek at Zonnebloem.¹⁰

William still retained membership of the Association of St John the Baptist—a religious affiliation with Zonnebloem links—in mid-1908, when his greetings were

¹ Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants and Politics in Southeast Africa*, 68.

² Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 64.

³ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 152.

⁴ *New DSAB*, i:193.

⁵ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 12.

⁶ Campbell, *Songs of Zion*, 254; *SANAC*, iv:957–58.

⁷ *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 1:7 (Dec. 1903) 4.

⁸ *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 4:16 (Easter 1906) 20.

⁹ Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*, 55.

¹⁰ 'Copy the Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

read at its annual gathering.¹ When the College's Jubilee was being planned for 1907–08, both Grendons featured in the preparations. William wrote to the Editor of the *College Magazine*, proposing that at the upcoming Jubilee Celebration, there should be a cricket match between past and present pupils,² and 'An Old Boy' put forward Robert's name to represent all former Zonnebloem scholars living in Natal and Zululand on a 'corresponding committee' that would make recommendations for the upcoming celebrations.³ The surname 'Grendon' is one of just six jotted down under the heading, 'Suggested Articles: Zonnebloem as I knew it', in manuscript notes for the projected Zonnebloem Jubilee souvenir.⁴ Unfortunately, that souvenir appears never to have been published.



Robert probably sat his matriculation examination in mid-1889: the results were published at the end of July.⁵ By the start of September, he found himself at St Alban's College in Pietermaritzburg, Natal.

St Alban's Native Training College and Industrial School had opened its doors in February 1881. Like Zonnebloem, it was an Anglican institution, and like Zonnebloem, its *raison d'être* was to train Christian teachers, but it was also found expedient to include an 'Industrial School for Native Boys', because it was 'well known that where the majority of the colonists of Natal do not approve of teaching the Natives to read and to write only, they all approve of teaching them to work'.⁶ The 1893 directory of the Church of the Province of South Africa describes it as a 'college for training Natives for the Ministry, and as Catechists and Teachers, together with an Industrial School'.⁷

By laying the focus on industrial training, it was hoped to attract financial support from within the Colony, but in the event, colonial support was negligible, and the great bulk of the funding came from well-wishers in England, and in particular from

¹ 'The Association of St John Baptist', *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 6:24 (Trinity 1910) 20.

² William Grendon, 'To the Editor', *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 5:22 (Michaelmas 1907) 67.

³ 'An Old Boy', letter to the editor, *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 4:18 (Michaelmas 1906) 68.

⁴ Zonnebloem Papers, D2.27.14. In the same general grouping of notes relating to the Jubilee souvenir is another (D2.27.10) with the name of 'W. Grendon, Maritzburg', so it may have been William's reminiscences, rather than Robert's, that the editor intended soliciting.

⁵ MacAlister, Heather (online).

⁶ *Vineyard* (15 May 1883) 3.

⁷ Quoted in: Rossouw, *South African Printers and Publishers, 1795-1925*, 135.

such religious bodies as the SPG and the SPCK.¹ In 1885, St Alban's boasted a carpenter's shop, and shortly thereafter, training in printing was also offered. The 'Course of Instruction' in 1889 when Grendon arrived included 'The Christian Faith and Life, English Grammar and Analysis, Geography, Arithmetic, Science, Physical Geography, English History, Singing (Tonic Sol-Fa) etc.' Industrial training embraced 'Carpentry, Printing, Gardening, [and] House Work'.² By 1890, the institution—located in lower Longmarket Street—'boarded and educated' some thirty male students.³

It is possible that Grendon came to St Alban's as a teacher by arrangement with the administration of Zonnebloem College. By the late 1880s, Zonnebloem's reputation for excellence was well-established throughout South African mission circles. It was twenty-five years since the first Natalians entered Zonnebloem in 1864.⁴ A full Zonnebloem education capped with a Cape matriculation—such as Grendon had achieved—was virtually an open sesame to any teaching post available to black or coloured applicants.

The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge supplied St Alban's with a printing press.⁵ Students were taught printing on this press, which also earned the College much-needed income through job-printing. *Inkanyiso* ('Enlightener')—an isiZulu-English newspaper founded in 1889—as well as the diocesan magazine, came off the St Alban's College press. While Grendon was at Zonnebloem, it had begun to offer printing as part of its 'industrial' programme; in time the college 'became famous'⁶ for this department, which was kept busy turning out College forms and publications, while jobbing a little on the side.⁷ Couzens speculates—quite reasonably—that Robert Grendon may have received instruction in printing.⁸ It seems possible that Grendon was seconded from Zonnebloem to the sister college in Natal, in order to operate the new press, as well as to teach printing and possibly other

¹ *Vineyard* 7:72 (April 1887) 42.

² *Inkanyiso* 1:2? (7 May 1889) 1.

³ Sister Margaret, 'Visit to Maritzburg', *Church News from Natal* 42 (May 1890) 9.

⁴ Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:380.

⁵ Natal Diocesan Archives, ms. note in a file headed 'St Alban's College near Estcourt'; *Vineyard* (Nov. 1881) 84; Rossouw, *South African Printers and Publishers, 1795-1925*, 135.

⁶ Hodgson, 'History of Zonnebloem College', ii:456.

⁷ The College's press turned out a Latin primer in 1882, as well as the *Report and Class Lists for 1884*. As respects job printing, an example is a small poetry collection by Amos Bailey—*Annie's Album, and Other Verses*—printed at Zonnebloem in 1887.

⁸ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 69–70.

subjects also. He was attached to the printing department at St Alban's by September 1889.¹

St Alban's printing department was soon paying its own way with 'profitable commercial orders' and the popular weekly newspaper.² Larger printing orders were coming in by 1892 when the department was reported to be 'a source of profit to the funds'.³ Regarding the printing and bookbinding department, where seven boys were employed in 1892, it was reported that 'the boys, being kept steadily and regularly employed, have every opportunity of forming industrious habits. This work has greatly improved and strengthened the character of the boys engaged in it.'⁴

Inkanyiso began publication in about April 1889. It was billed—erroneously, as it happens—as 'the first native journal in Natal'.⁵ It started as a monthly, soon becoming fortnightly, then weekly in 1891. By September 1891 it boasted 2,500 subscribers. From 1891 until its demise in 1896, the masthead read *Inkanyiso yase Natal*.

The majority of the columns were in isiZulu, but there was also a small English content. The paper tended to carry rather more social and political comment than did other mission-run newspapers. An early statement of purpose declared that 'although it is published chiefly for the benefit of the Natives, yet, by having a column or two in English, we wish to give publicity to our thoughts, in the hope that, as our English friends become more acquainted with "Native opinion", a better understanding between us may be created'.⁶

If Robert Grendon wrote anything for *Inkanyiso* in 1889 or afterward, it has yet to be discovered. Each of the numbers came with its own pithy saying. Grendon would have endorsed that of the seventh number (September 1889): 'A reading people will soon become a thinking people, and a thinking people will soon become a great

¹ *Inkanyiso* 1:8 (1 Oct. 1889) 1.

² *Church News from Natal* 46 (May 1891) 20.

³ *Church News from Natal* 52 (Nov. 1892) 55.

⁴ *Church News from Natal* 52 (Nov. 1892) 56.

⁵ *Inkanyiso* 3:48 (12 March 1891) 3. The mistake was corrected in 3:51 (9 April 1891) supplement, 6, where it was acknowledged that 'American Missionaries on the coast' had issued a 'Native paper' as early as 1861.

⁶ *Inkanyiso* 3:48 (12 March 1891) 3.

people.’¹ The supply of journalistic copy was largely the responsibility of the staff and students themselves—their efforts being overseen by the editor, Rev. Francis James Green, son of James Green, the well-known Dean of Maritzburg. The Dean had opposed Bishop Colenso more than a quarter-century earlier when Bishop Gray of Cape Town—one of Zonnebloem’s founders—deposed and excommunicated him on alleged grounds of heresy. F. J. Green was ‘supervisor of Anglican church work among the Africans of Pietermaritzburg. With the assistance of African clergy and catechists, he developed a number of outstations in the district.’²

In two early issues of the paper—1 October and 1 November 1889—Grendon is named along with Sikweleti Nyongwana as overseeing the printing department.³ His involvement cannot have lasted much longer than a couple of months, however. Prior to his arrival, Nyongwana is shown as manning this department on his own,⁴ and after Grendon’s departure, Nyongwana continued to hold charge of the department. By 15 November, Nyongwana is again solely responsible for the printing department, and it seems likely that Grendon had left the College by this time.⁵

Whether by default or by design, *Inkanyiso* became a mouthpiece for ‘Funamalungelo’—the ‘first European-style African political organization in Natal’, founded in 1887.⁶ It sought to bring together for socio-political purposes the few hundred mission-educated blacks who had successfully petitioned the Government to acknowledge their acculturated—‘civilized’—status by releasing them from the operation of ‘Native law’. Funamalungelo was also a mutual improvement society, and a forum for articulating grievances and ‘progressive’ aspirations—for the realization of ‘the highest state of civilisation’.⁷ It was an important precursor to later political bodies, such as the Natal Native Congress (c.1900–01), and the South African Natives National Congress (1912), and was one of very few instruments enabling the mission-educated *kholwa* elite to forge and to consolidate its group identity.

¹ *Inkanyiso* 1:7 (14 Sept. 1889) 3.

² Webb and Wright, *James Stuart Archive*, i:229n.

³ *Inkanyiso* 1:8 (1 Oct. 1889) 1; 1:10 (1 Nov. 1889) 1.

⁴ *Inkanyiso* 1:2? (7 May 1889) 1.

⁵ *Inkanyiso* 1:11 (15 Nov. 1889) 1.

⁶ Meintjes, ‘Early African Press in Natal’, 6.

⁷ *Inkanyiso* (1 June 1894).

In the final analysis, Funamalungelo lacked leverage with the colonial authorities who were becoming increasingly intolerant of Africans adopting Western manners and mores, owning freehold property, or competing with whites in farming, trade, and industry. Deprived of political leverage, meetings of the association were often little more than occasions for the exhibition of oratorical virtuosity. In the early twentieth century, Grendon, who evidently attended some Funamalungelo meetings, reports that ‘at times several members wandered from the point in their desire to excel each other by exercising themselves in lengthy and polished language’.¹

Through *Inkanyiso*’s columns, Funamalungelo publicized the assimilationist ambitions of Natal’s incipient black petite bourgeoisie. Lacking political clout, it resorted to moral pressure upon the Colonial Government to extend, rather than curtail, Africans’ rights.² Amongst other objectives, these *kholwa* wanted legal equality with whites, the franchise on equal terms with whites, access to high-quality education, full freedom to own and to trade in property, and freedom to move about within the Colony and across its borders without racially-discriminative pass laws. As Sheila Meintjes remarks, the ‘existence of a black-run newspaper augured a new era in the assertiveness of Africans seeking full incorporation within civil society’.³

Brief though Grendon’s involvement with St Alban’s and *Inkanyiso* appears to have been, it nonetheless provided him with valuable early exposure to the politics and journalism of resistance, and set the keynote for his bold assertion of the rights of Africans. It represents a significant starting point to a lengthy adult career as a polemical letter-writer and an occasional editor of vernacular newspapers. By 1892, he was writing to editors of such papers as the *Argus* and the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*. In the late 1890s, his contributions would appear in such Kimberley papers as the *Comet* and the *South African Citizen*. In Uitenhage, he would act first as local agent for *South African Citizen*, and then become editor himself of the short-lived *Coloured South African*, in 1899. In 1904–05, he edited the English columns of John L. Dube’s paper, *Ilanga lase Natal*, and in 1915–16, he reached the zenith of his career as a newspaperman when for a few months he edited *Abantu-Batho*, the Johannesburg-based national paper with close ties to the South African Native

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

² Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 69; Meintjes, ‘The Early African Press in Natal’, 6.

³ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 267.

National Congress (renamed African National Congress in 1923). From the early 1890s until at least 1918, Grendon perpetually wooed and cajoled editors, or took advantage of his own editorial privileges when he had them, in order to put his poetry and polemics into print.

Inkanyiso reports that Grendon was present at an interracial ‘tea meeting’ in Pietermaritzburg on 4 September 1889, likely held under the auspices of St Alban’s College, or of its local benefactors and well-wishers. By the 1860s, tea meetings—an established Methodist tradition in England—had become valued social occasions for Edendale’s black Christians. These gatherings—structured yet informal—presented an opportunity to display one’s ‘respectability’ and material status, and were regarded as a useful antidote to profitless social gadding.¹

Taylor was master of ceremonies. When the venue was filled to capacity, Mr Taylor, the master of ceremonies, called for a song. After that, tea and raisin-bread were served. Mr Bale arrived after tea to deliver a brief speech, evidently exhorting the guests to adhere to their Temperance pledges. This would appear be Henry Bale—later knighted—who was born in Pietermaritzburg and educated at the Maritzburg High School and in England. He became an Attorney of the Supreme Court of Natal in 1875, and an Advocate in 1878.² After his hortatory address, two ladies sang a duet, which one of them accompanied on the piano. When they had done, Robert Grendon sang a solo, accompanying himself on the organ. *Inkanyiso* reports that everyone was positively thrilled by his performance. Next, a Mr Bennett, and then a Mrs Horne, sang solos. Finally, a piece was played on the violin.³

This is the earliest record of Grendon’s musical prowess. Grendon’s granddaughter remembers her mother telling her that he was ‘very musical’ and had a ‘melodious voice’. He was forever whistling.⁴ In 1896, he would be a tenor in Kimberley’s Colonial Concert Company, of which the impresario was Will P. Thompson, a black American, formerly associated with Orpheus McAdoo’s internationally-renowned

¹ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 202, 220; Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1851–1930’, 68; Hughes, ‘Doubly Elite’, 448.

² *Natal Who’s Who* (1906), 19.

³ *Inkanyiso* 1:7 (14 Sept. 1889) 2.

⁴ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

Jubilee Singers.¹ At the Edendale Native Training Institution, Grendon presided ‘very ably ... at the organ’ in 1903,² and at the Zulu Christian Industrial School, Ohlange, in 1904–05, he gave instruction in organ-playing.³



At St Alban’s, Grendon will have come in contact with several members of Natal’s black proto-nationalist intelligentsia. Although his stay was brief, the contacts he formed here appear to have stood him in good stead in later years—when he returned to Natal in 1900, and still later in Swaziland and on the Witwatersrand, in both of which places mission-educated men from the Natal midlands played influential roles.

Grendon’s colleague in the printing department was Sikweleti Nyongwana, a trained schoolteacher who went on to play a prominent part in black politics and journalism. He was an early office-bearer of the Natal Native Congress, founded during the South African War with the aim of broadening Funamalungelo’s support-base. In 1907, Nyongwana opposed on racial grounds the involvement of his white employer—advocate and parliamentarian Ralph Tatham—in the activities of the NNC. Tatham’s brother, Frederick Spence Tatham, whom Grendon describes as a ‘fame-aspiring politician’, who ‘was never friendly in the least to the advancement of the [black] race’,⁴ strongly opposed ‘the youths of St Alban’s’ when *Inkanyiso* protested the erosion of the status of ‘exempted’ blacks under Natal’s new Responsible Government (1893).⁵ In 1911, Nyongwana presided over John Dube’s faction of the NNC. He was also an early editor, before 1915, of *Ilanga*.⁶

Another of the men closely associated with St Alban’s when Grendon knew it was Solomon Kumalo. His father, John Kumalo, a ‘respected Catechist at Estcourt’, was Funamalungelo’s founder. Solomon was amongst the first students to study at St Alban’s College.⁷ He had begun contributing material to *Inkanyiso* by the time

¹ *DFA* (7 July 1896) 6.

² *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

³ *Ilanga* 3:93 (20 Jan. 1905) 1.

⁴ ‘Poor Personality’, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 3.

⁵ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 273–74.

⁶ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 69; Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu*, 280; Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, 359–60; *Natal Who’s Who* (1906), 195; Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 388–89; Switzer and Switzer, *Black Press*, 38–39.

⁷ Webb and Wright, *James Stuart Archive*, ii:256; Lazarus Xaba, interviewed 30 Dec. 1900.

Grendon arrived.¹ A few years later, his brother, Benjamin Kumalo, was to become a controversial bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Orange Free State. In 1890, Solomon was St Albans's 'senior native teacher'.² Although Anglican, his family appear to have had close ties with the Edendale Wesleyans.³ He was evidently a bright student, and is described in 1890 as having 'obtained the only first-class certificate awarded at the Government Examination [that year] to native teachers'.⁴

In 1892, Kumalo was one of a troupe of 'Natal Native Singers' that toured England.⁵ In January 1895, when *Inkanyiso* was bought out by a black syndicate and became Natal's first entirely black-run paper, it was published and edited by Kumalo, though presumably still printed on the College press. For the final one-and-a-half years of its existence until the Government forced its closure in 1896 by withdrawing the subsidy to St Alban's, it became a 'relatively vociferous protest newspaper'.⁶

In view of Grendon's and Kumalo's shared interest in the 'Native Press', and the fact that Grendon was editing a paper of his own by 1899, it is possible that they maintained contact during the decade of the 1890s. In 1903, John L. Dube links Grendon's name with those of Solomon Kumalo and Simon Nkosi in a context that suggests that they were close associates.⁷ In 1904, Kumalo was Assistant Compound Manager—apparently under Saul Msane—on a Witwatersrand gold mine.⁸ In September of that year, Grendon names Kumalo and Msane among the 'more enlightened of the Zulu race'.⁹ Just three months later, however, Grendon has to report the death of

Mr Solomon Kumalo (Moyeni), who passed away at Johannesburg. He was in former days senior assistant teacher under the wardenship of the Rev. Frank Green, at St Alban's College, P. M. Burg. Subsequently he became joint-editor with Mr S. Nyongwana, of the now defunct

¹ See for example: *Inkanyiso* 1:4 (6 July 1889) 4.

² *Church News from Natal* 43 (Aug. 1890) 3.

³ Meintjes, 'The Early African Press in Natal', 6; Meintjes, 'Edendale 1850–1906', 266.

⁴ *Church News from Natal* 43 (Aug. 1890) 3.

⁵ Meintjes, 'Edendale 1850–1906', 328–29.

⁶ Switzer and Switzer, *Black Press*, 249.

⁷ 'Uku Hambela e Driefontein (Emhlanini)', *Ilanga* 1:3 (24? April 1903) 1.

⁸ SANAC, iv:853: evidence of Solomon Kumalo, 17 Oct. 1904.

⁹ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4.

native paper 'Inkanyiso'. Since the discontinuation of that paper, he passed an uneventful life until his death, the news of which strikes us with intense surprise mingled with profound regret.¹

In mid-1894, Walter Fraser Mzamo, 'late student of the Zonnebloem College, Cape Town', was assistant master at St Alban's.² It is not clear if he was already at St Alban's in 1889, when Grendon knew the place. The three brothers, Joseph Mzamo (born c.1863), Walter Mzamo (born c.1867), and William Mzamo (born c.1870) were admitted to Zonnebloem College in August 1883.³ They appear to have performed well academically, particularly in their 'religious knowledge'.⁴ Their father, Rev. Daniel Mzamo, an Mfengu clergyman of Port Elizabeth, was born at Grahamstown, c.1842. He attended a Wesleyan school there, before entering Lovedale College from 1859 to 1862. In 1870, he was ordained by the Church of England Mission, and received his first appointment to the Port Elizabeth 'Native Congregation'. In 1875, a little book entitled, *The Angel's Message*, which he translated into isiXhosa, was published at Lovedale. In 1883, he was posted to Springvale, Natal, where he took charge of a black congregation.⁵ Joseph Mzamo entered Lovedale in 1879, later moving on to Zonnebloem. In 1885, he assisted at a small night-school for 'pure-blooded Natives from Kaffraria, Zululand, and other parts of the country' run by the Cowley Fathers in Cape Town.⁶ The following year, he had a teaching post 'near Maritzburg'.⁷ It is quite possible that Grendon renewed his acquaintance with the Mzamo brothers—wherever in Natal they were posted—in 1889.



Grendon's first stay in Natal did not last long. Perhaps he felt stifled by the Colony's increasingly pathological socio-political climate. Perhaps he was lured to Kimberley by the prospect of a higher income. *Inkanyiso* last mentions him at St Alban's College at the start of November 1889.⁸ His sporting achievements in Kimberley are reported in *Diamond Fields Advertiser* as early as October 1890,⁹ so his move to Griqualand West must have occurred between these dates. His position in the printing department

¹ 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

² *Inkanyiso* 4:214 (29 June 1894) 3.

³ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2.

⁴ Zonnebloem, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 10, 12.

⁵ Lovedale Missionary Institution. *Lovedale Past and Present*, 249–50.

⁶ Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*, 25.

⁷ Lovedale Missionary Institution. *Lovedale Past and Present*, 250.

⁸ *Inkanyiso* 1:10 (1 Nov. 1889) 1.

⁹ 'Sport and Pastime', *DFA* 13:3139 (10 Oct. 1890) 3.

at St Alban's appears to have been taken over by Magama Fuze, who was hired as a compositor and to teach printing in 1890.¹

St Alban's College ceased to exist as a 'Native Training Institution' after 1896. Its demise was due to pressure from a reactionary Government intolerant of even moderate opposition to its 'native' policies.² The College itself, described as 'a great centre of industrial work' ceased to offer printing—or any other mechanical training—after Natal's Responsible Government gave way to pressure from white artisans who resented competition from skilled blacks. The end came when Government withheld its subsidy for industrial training.³ As Grendon aptly observes, 'Responsible Government as manifested in Natal is one-sided and only suits the caprice of the white population'.⁴

¹ Fuze, *Black People and Whence They Came*, 132. Fuze had been educated at Bishop Colenso's Ekukhanyeni mission in the late 1850s. For a period in the 1890s, he served on St Helena Island as secretary to the exiled Dinizulu and as tutor to the royal princes. His *Abantu Abamnyama Lapa Bavela Ngakona* ('The Black People and Whence They Came'), published in 1922, is one of the earliest full-length books written in Zulu by a black African (Nyembezi, *A Review of Zulu Literature*, 6).

² Switzer and Switzer, *Black Press*, 249.

³ *Natal Diocesan Magazine* 4:1 (Jan. 1899) 2; 4:2 (Feb. 1899) 56; Webb and Wright, *James Stuart Archive*, ii:256; Lazarus Xaba, interviewed 30 Dec. 1900.

⁴ 'Poor Personality', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 3.

CHAPTER 4

PROGRESSIVE OF PROGRESSIVES

KIMBERLEY & UITENHAGE

Mr Grendon was certainly a progressive of progressives, and he will be much missed in enlightened circles on the Diamond Fields.¹



Within the culture of ideas in which Grendon moved and had his being during the 1890s, the words ‘progress’ and ‘progressive’ bore connotations that have since slipped from view. ‘The Owl’—a columnist in Kimberley’s ‘coloured’ *Citizen* newspaper—dubs him a ‘progressive of progressives’. A brief look at contemporary ideas of ‘progress’ within Kimberley’s black petit bourgeois society will provide some idea of what that laudatory epithet might have conveyed to the *Citizen*’s readers.

Brian Willan has provided a vibrant pen-picture of the rich cultural and political incubator that was *fin-de-siècle* Kimberley to a class of acculturated Africans—the Kimberley known intimately to Sol T. Plaatje and to Grendon.² He describes some ‘elements of [this] ideological milieu’: a ‘firm belief in the legitimacy of the imperial order, a Victorian work ethic, a confidence in the possibility, indeed the obligation, of individual advancement through the medium of education, and a sense of optimism about “progress” and “improvement” generally’.³ ‘Possibility’, ‘progress’, and ‘improvement’ were as much part of Grendon’s life in Kimberley as they were part of Plaatje’s.

To scan the columns of the ephemeral *Citizen* is to discover that ‘progress’ was the foremost watchword of mission-educated, propertied, enfranchised blacks—the ‘enlightened circles’ of Griqualand West, as ‘The Owl’ distinguishes them. An enterprising and prosperous farmer of Uitenhage is described as ‘a coloured

¹ ‘The Owl’, ‘On the Wing’, *Citizen* 2:42 (16 April 1898) 6.

² Willan, *Sol Plaatje*; Willan, ‘An African in Kimberley’.

³ Willan, ‘An African in Kimberley’, 243.

progressive friend and pattern for us all'.¹ One of Griqualand West's coloured rugby clubs is named 'Progress'.² South Africa's gold reserves are crucial to the country's future because 'progress is the order of the day and without the wherewithal [*i.e.*, gold] nothing can be done in the way of enterprise'.³

But 'progress' encounters opposition in the lethargic, reactionary 'Boer' mentality that has so long dominated South Africa. The Transvaal's white 'Uitlanders com[e] from different parts of the enlightened world with progressive ideas foremost in their minds'. When they attempt to implement those 'progressive ideas' in South Africa, they 'upset the conservative equanimity of the Boer imagination'.⁴ After the Jameson Raid debacle, when for the first time Cecil John Rhodes found it expedient to actively canvass the coloured vote, he stated that the pro-Imperialist South African League 'had not been formed on a racial basis but on the basis of progressive ideas'.⁵ The League had been formed to advance the same 'progressive'—here, read 'expansionist'—goals in Africa that he had long espoused. Many 'enlightened' coloureds, Grendon included, were members of its racially-segregated 'B'-branches.

From the above exercise it emerges that 'progress' was linked to British innovation, and implied a refreshing antidote to the 'Boer' mindset or 'imagination'. This is confirmed by George Fredrickson, who observes that most Africans who styled themselves 'progressive', 'viewed the Queen, the British empire, and the English-speaking liberal politicians of the Cape as their defenders against the unvarnished racism of the Afrikaners'.⁶ The general trend of progress, it seemed to them, was away from racism and towards a more inclusive, organic society in which exploitative race-relationships were eschewed and everyone shared in the ever-growing prosperity.

Progress also required that the country's mineral wealth be tapped—not as an end in itself, but in order to finance and promote the 'opening up' of Africa. In *Paul Kruger's Dream*, Grendon waxes lyrical concerning Rhodes's vision of a Cape-to-Cairo overland transport link, as well as the intercontinental telegraph connection that

¹ 'Port Elizabeth Notes', *Citizen* 2:28 (16 Feb. 1898) supplement, 1.

² 'Kimberley Notes', *Citizen* 4 (25 Aug. 1897) 4.

³ 'The South African Republic', *Citizen* 2:29 (23 Feb. 1898) 2.

⁴ 'The South African Republic', *Citizen* 2:29 (23 Feb. 1898) 2.

⁵ 'League Delegates at Groot[e] Schuur', *Citizen* 2:28 (16 Feb. 1898) supplement, 1.

⁶ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 42.

he fostered.¹ By these material means, the Dark Continent is floodlit with knowledge and value systems to which Grendon elsewhere refers allusively as ‘the Light’.²

For Kimberley’s blacks, ‘progress’ meant industry and personal application. It bracketed the collective aspirations of a community on the move—comprising people who strove after personal and communal betterment, all endeavouring to enrich their lives through education, meaningful and fairly-remunerated employment, and a calendar crammed with cultural, sporting, and religious projects. Whereas ‘civilized’ implied a fixed state and a destination, ‘progressive’ meant an inclination, a process, a journey. And in Griqualand West, birthplace of southern Africa’s industrial revolution, where blacks prized ‘progress’ so highly, ‘The Owl’ represents Grendon as a ‘progressive of progressives’. He was the embodiment of an ideal.



Grendon himself has much to say about progress as he conceives it. While he urges progress and advancement upon his pupils and readers, he rejects materialist models of that progress, and retains instead a spiritualized, teleological conception of all human processes. He believes in the spiritual essence of all causation: his spiritual world pervades the quotidian, influencing Earth’s inhabitants for good and for ill. In the final analysis, history is projected and steered by Providence. He refers to the workings of ‘Destiny’ in a sense that is sometimes difficult to distinguish from predestination. Spiritual progress and its concomitant, material progress are a response to the ‘Voice of Destiny’.³

Grendon links progress with ‘civilization’, but dismisses prevailing definitions of the latter word as inadequate because they dwell on externals—on phenomena—and fail to reckon on the real substance of the human ‘soul’. He tells us that there is no ‘line of exact demarcation between the “civilized and the uncivilized”’. In so far as the spirit is concerned, [Grendon] know[s] of no such dividing line’. ‘The world’s standard ... of drawing the line between savage, barbarian, and civilized, rests upon the knowledge of writing &c. This is inadequate, for it fails to measure the state or

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 125.

² ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5; ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

³ Grendon uses this phrase in: ‘The True European’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

progress of the soul.¹ So, progress is spiritual at core. Material advances are merely an adjunct to the ‘progress of the soul’. They derive from spiritual progress and they facilitate it, but it is folly to confuse external, material effects with internal, spiritual causes.

According to her own schedule, Progress visits all societies, each in its turn. Currently, ‘the black man finds himself’ in a lowly position similar to that in which ‘all European nations in the course of their history found themselves’.² The ‘descendants of ... primitive Britons to-day stand at the very roof of the world’s progress’,³ but, having ‘reached the summit of the ladder of culture’, Europeans become forgetful of the spiritually-ajunct plane whence they themselves have risen, and so hold in contempt the ‘black race, which through centuries of adverse circumstances has striven, and still is striving to reach the self-same goal. So far its progress has been but slow, but a change is obvious; a stir is manifest; and an attempt is being made to rise to a higher, and better condition.’⁴ In Griqualand West, that ‘stir’ was mighty in the 1890s.

Grendon saw the country’s advancement as contingent upon non-racialism and the unimpeded progress of Africans. In his view, unless white colonists were ‘moulded by the spirit of justice, equity, and love’, and allowed their black neighbours to elevate themselves, they would ‘hurl the country into terror, and set back its progress for many a year to come—if not for all time’.⁵ They would ‘trample progress in the dust’.⁶



Grendon’s life in Griqualand West was characterized by almost frenetic activity. In addition to teaching school, the days were a ceaseless whirl of cricket tournaments, rugby engagements, athletics meetings, sports administration, musical recitals, botanizing, forays into literature, freelance newspaper work, and—always—politics.⁷

¹ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:81 (8 April 1914) 6. Emphasis added.

² ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.

³ ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘The Native Question’, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3.

⁶ ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

⁷ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 70.

He had concluded his formal schooling and stepped into the world of adult cares at an inauspicious juncture in the Cape Colony's legislative history. Whites were becoming increasingly reluctant to share prosperity and political power with blacks, and an institutionalized racism was becoming evident in new laws designed to thwart the very progress for which Grendon and other black citizens of Kimberley stood. The buoyant tide of liberal and humanitarian sentiment that had marked the earlier part of the nineteenth century was ebbing fast.

Grendon was a political creature by nature, and quite equal to the unique challenge of the hour. His temperament thrived on adversity, and he possessed the pluck, the stamina, and the spiritual vision to defy anything that offended his acute innate sense of justice. His entire upbringing had led up to this day. Joseph Grendon had linked his children's education with leadership roles he contemplated their assuming as adults in Damaraland.¹ German takeover of that country necessitated that his son Robert divert his political energies toward British South Africa. This he did.

Zonnebloem had prepared him vocationally as a schoolteacher. It is likely as a schoolteacher that he came to Pietermaritzburg in 1889, and it is probable that he travelled to Griqualand West in the summer of 1889–90 to take up a better-paying teaching post there. By 1897, he was teaching at the Public School, Beaconsfield, a town close to Kimberley.² Until retirement in Swaziland, teaching would continue to supply the greater part of his livelihood.

Records show that by 1897 he was a registered elector resident in Selby Street, situated on the edge of Kimberley's Malay Camp.³ This suburb was located near the centre of the town, on rising ground affording wide-ranging views of distant hills.⁴ It traced its origin to Kimberley's inception in the early 1870s, when Malay transport contractors from the Western Cape established their Diamond Fields base.⁵

The streets of the suburb were poorly maintained, and Selby Street in particular appears to have been in a shocking state of disrepair. Despite carrying heavy traffic and being the principal thoroughfare leading from Kimberley to Alexanderfontein, it

¹ J. Hoskins notebook 1.

² Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 251n. Willan does not cite his source.

³ Cape, *List of Persons residing in the Electoral Division of Kimberley*, 58.

⁴ Africa, 'Die Maleierskamp van Kimberley', 46.

⁵ Africa, 'Die Maleierskamp van Kimberley', 44.

is described in the 1880s as ‘merely a cart track’, and ‘in a deplorable condition’. Its immediate environs were not picturesque: several mine dumps lay along its route.¹ This industrial landscape may well have inspired some lines in the poem, ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’. Of the ‘whiteman’, Amagunyana declares: ‘The very mountains he hath bored and crushed | And made havoc of’.²

Collectively, Grendon’s Selby Street neighbours constituted a representative cross-section of Kimberley’s ‘progressive’ petite bourgeoisie. The voters’ roll of 1897 enables us to form an idea of their diversity, industry, and respectability. From the roll’s description of occupations, several Selby Street residents appear to have been self-employed. Artisans, mechanics, and craftsmen are well-represented. There were: a blacksmith, five carpenters, an engine driver, a fireman, a labourer, two masons, a painter, a saddler, a shoemaker, four tailors, and two wagon-makers. Other occupations included: an agent and a ‘general agent’, a bookkeeper, a cab-owner, three clerks and one articulated clerk, a collector, a draper, a guard, a hairdresser, a merchant, a sergeant, a shopkeeper, a speculator, a storekeeper, two storemen, a teacher (Grendon), and a wine storekeeper. To judge by surnames, the majority of the street’s residents were likely ‘coloured’. Only one conspicuously African surname is noted in the roll.³

In a country where residential segregation was usually taken for granted even when not actually on the statute books, the Malay Camp was one of very few racially-mixed urban areas where black residents held title to their land. Significantly, Grendon was personally acquainted with several of these exceptional communities: District Six in Cape Town, Edendale outside Pietermaritzburg, the Malay Camp, and—later—Sophiatown, a few miles west of central Johannesburg.⁴ Decades later, suburbs such as these where races and ethnic groups lived cheek-by-jowl in tolerable harmony, became an acute embarrassment to an Apartheid Government, and some of them became the target of forcible evictions and demolition.

¹ Africa, ‘Die Maleierskamp van Kimberley’, 39.

² ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’, *Ilanga* 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4. See Appendix 3 for Grendon’s authorship of this anonymous poem.

³ I am grateful to Shirley James of the Africana Library, Kimberley, for extracting this information.

⁴ Zonnebloem lay on the outskirts of District Six; Grendon taught at Edendale, 1900–03; he refers to ‘the various Sophiatown sections of the Bantu Race’ in ‘Notes and Comments’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

By Grendon's time, 'Malay Camp' had become something of a misnomer, since many residents were not Malay.¹ The place was densely populated by black Africans, Asians, coloureds, and even whites.² A report of 1901 notes the presence of Cape Coloureds, Malays, Chinese, Japanese, Indians, 'and representatives from nearly all the yellow-skinned people from all parts of the world'.³ It is described in 1888 as the 'Alsatia of Kimberley'⁴—presumably because it was a region of ethnic twilight with a reputation for harbouring vagrants and outlaws.

The Malay Camp was home to several illustrious figures in the 'progressive' black community. Grendon will have known most of them at least by name. One of these was Horatio Isaiah Budlwana Mbelle (1870–1947), known to his peers as Bud-M'belle. For a time, he shared his accommodation with Sol T. Plaatje, who was soon to marry Bud-M'belle's sister.⁵ Plaatje worked as a 'letter carrier' for the Kimberley Post Office from 1894 and 1898.⁶ He achieved literary and political celebrity in the years after both he and Grendon left Kimberley.

Bud-M'belle's monthly salary of £25 as Interpreter in Native Languages to the Northern Circuit of the Supreme Court was likely the highest paid to any African in Cape Government service.⁷ Universally recognized as a gifted linguist, his *Kafir Scholar's Companion* would be published by Lovedale Mission Press in 1903. For mission-educated blacks, he epitomized what might be achieved when a man of ability and flair knew how to play the colonial system astutely. In 1893, he became the first African to pass the Colony's civil service examination. He was a leading member of the South Africans' Improvement Society, established by Kimberley blacks in mid-1895, in order to 'cultivate the use of the English language'.⁸ A trained teacher, he played a role 'in the establishment of schools for Africans in Griqualand West'.⁹

¹ Africa, 'Die Maleierskamp van Kimberley', 45.

² Africa, 'Die Maleierskamp van Kimberley', 67.

³ Quoted in: Africa, 'Die Maleierskamp van Kimberley', 68.

⁴ Quoted in: Africa, 'Die Maleierskamp van Kimberley', 46.

⁵ Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 244.

⁶ Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 238.

⁷ Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 244.

⁸ Allen, 'The Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', 162.

⁹ *New DSAB* i:171.

Grendon became familiar with Bud-M'belle through their shared political and sporting activities. In 1897, both men figured prominently in the launch of the South African Coloured Rugby Football Board (SACRFB), the aim of which was to 'organize all those rugby players excluded from the whites-only SARFB'.¹ Bud-M'belle was successful in persuading Cecil John Rhodes to donate a trophy—the Rhodes Cup—for South African-wide rugby tournaments.² He became the Board's first Secretary, and Grendon its first President.

In view of Grendon's collaboration with Bud-M'belle, it seems inconceivable that he did not also know Plaatje. If ever Grendon and Plaatje found occasion to converse, it would not have taken them long to discover common ground. They had both received at least part of their education on mission stations run by Germans. African history was of absorbing interest to both of them, and both were to have some experience in journalism and political campaigning. Grendon's literary impulse found its chief outlet through poetry. As far as literature is concerned, Plaatje is best remembered popularly for his 'epic' novel, *Mhudi*. Grendon's epic poem, *Paul Kruger's Dream* (1902) is a work of equal stature, but whereas *Mhudi* has been treated at considerable length by literary critics and historians, Grendon's great gift to posterity has hitherto suffered shabby neglect.

Grendon and Plaatje were two of the most gifted black South African writers of the late colonial era, and it would be gratifying to be able to show clear evidence that they knew each other in the Malay Camp. No such evidence has yet emerged. A brief, solitary reference to Plaatje from Grendon's pen is published in *Abantu-Batho* in 1915, at which time Grendon was editor of that paper.³

In *Mhudi*, Matabele warrior-king Mzilikazi expresses contempt for the 'gnome offspring' of 'miscegenation' between Boers and Tswana—'a race of half man and half goblin'.⁴ There is reason to suspect that many of Plaatje's contemporaries—and even the novelist himself—shared such prejudice against 'miscegenation'.⁵ This may account for the fact that two highly talented writers, Grendon and Plaatje, although

¹ Odendaal, 'The Thing That is Not Round', 42.

² Odendaal, 'South Africa's Black Victorians', 207.

³ 'Reply to Mr. Plaatje', *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5. Reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*—likely the issue of 9 Dec. 1915.

⁴ Plaatje, *Mhudi*, 188.

⁵ A. E. Voss, in: Plaatje, *Mhudi*, 18; Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 378.

close contemporaries and living in near proximity for at least three years of their early adult lives, have little or nothing to say about each other's achievements.



One of Grendon's great pleasures during the Kimberley period was the botanical research in which he engaged. His interest in plants was probably acquired at a tender age. Emma Hahn, his foster mother in the years 1870–72, took an amateur interest in botany, and possibly communicated this to Robert and his siblings. Tim Couzens speculates, quite plausibly, that Grendon 'picked up this botanical interest at Zonnebloem for we know that some of the boys there became "avid collectors" of botanical and zoological specimens. But the interest might go all the way back to his Otjimbingwe days.'¹

There are several botanical references in Grendon's poems, and in two of them—'Melia and Pietro' and 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas'—there appear what can only be described as botanical catalogues. In 'Pro Aliis Damnati', Grendon the botanist emerges in the waving 'heads | Of tall Andropogon, whose reed-like culms | Do tremble with a rustling noise'.² In *Paul Kruger's Dream*, the environs of Cecil Rhodes's tomb in the Matopos are described with botanical appreciation: 'Aloe, Thorn, and vast Euphorbia, | And Protea there emit | Their mix'd odours round about thee, | In their seasons wont, and fit.'³

In mid-1897, Grendon wrote a series of brief articles on 'The Medicinal Plants of Griqualand West' for publication in *The Comet and Local Advertiser*—one of Kimberley's many ephemeral newspapers.⁴ His scientific descriptions follow the standard botanical texts closely, but there are several interpolations of his own—indicated with his initials, 'R. G.'—in which he describes the medical uses of plants or where they might be encountered in Griqualand West.

Under the subheading, 'Habitat', he informs readers that *Nasturtium Officinale* is 'common in the water-furrow, &c., at Alexanderfontein', whither it has 'probably

¹ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 70.

² 'PAD', Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 127.

⁴ Numbers III to VI of the series have been traced. The date of the first appears to be 29 May 1897, but the microfilm print-outs with which I have been supplied are indistinct, and the dates of subsequent numbers are unknown.

[been] introduced'. *Mesembryanthemum edule* may be discovered 'on the embankments of the Kimberley Reservoir and Kenilworth Dam'. *Datura Stramonium* is 'common everywhere in Griqualand West in waste garden ground, on dirt heaps and elsewhere'. *Nicotiana glauca* is 'common on debris heaps in Boshof road, Beaconsfield, Kimberley and elsewhere in Griqualand West'.

If we allow our imaginations some rein, we may observe Grendon, the ardent young botanizer, rambling—and, conceivably, also cycling¹—around Kimberley, Beaconsfield, and elsewhere in Griqualand West. In his satchel he carries his chalks or watercolours, also his notebooks. Botanizing is a pursuit that encourages solitude and reflection. For Grendon, it supplied a legitimate reason to grub on vacant suburban stands, to trespass upon farmland, and to betake himself on occasion to the wilderness. His botanical interest allows us occasionally into the private side to his personality. There seems for instance to be an autobiographical basis to these lines in 'Melia and Pietro':

I've wander'd ev'rywhere this day,
By mountain, stream, and vale;
I've trodden ev'ry path and way,
Where flow'rs sweet scent exhale.²

It would not be glib to say that Grendon's botanizing excursions drew him closer to his God. This is evident in 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas', where he describes how on the road to Bulwer, he 'paus'd enrapt to gaze | Upon the vegetation that entwin'd | The forest trees from root to topmost sprays', and was so moved that he bowed 'In wonder at the Arch-Creator's skill'.³

One of the botanical references that Grendon cites, quotes, and adapts, is the multi-volume *Flora Capensis* of Harvey and Sonder—a work of unprepossessing external

¹ Bicycling was a popular recreation amongst Griqualand West's coloured petite bourgeoisie during the late 1890s. 'Mr R. Grendon' was Assistant-Secretary at a Saturday athletics tournament, in the programme of which 'bicycle handicaps' featured prominently ('Sport and Pastime: Athletics: Colonial Athletic Club: Saturday's Sports', *Citizen* 19 (15 Dec. 1897) 2). That he may himself have been a cyclist is suggested by the intensity of his outrage at a 'species of municipal tyranny' introduced by Johannesburg's Town Council, requiring 'all native cyclists "to wear a badge" on their left arms when riding in the streets'. This measure serves no other purpose than 'to humiliate and degrade the blacks' ('Bow Down You Dogs!' *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4).

² 'M&P', Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3.

³ 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas', *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.

appearance, and lacking illustrations.¹ It was the standard text on Cape botany during the second half of the nineteenth century, and on his teacher's salary, he might have afforded to purchase a set of his own. He also cites Carl Peter Thunberg's eighteenth-century *Flora Capensis*, and Carl Linnaeus's *Species Plantarum*, although it is unclear whether he handled these antiquarian texts in the original, or merely transcribed his references to them from later botanical works.

In addition to the Latin taxonomy, Grendon supplies colonial—Cape Dutch and English—plant-names. He follows Harvey and Sonder in giving the local names for *Mesembryanthemum edule*² as 'Zuure, or Paarde, or Hottentot's Vijgen, or Vijgerank' in Dutch, and 'Sour or Hottentot's Figs' in English, but in identifying *Nasturtium Officinale* as 'Water slaai', or 'Bromkos',³ he goes beyond Harvey and Sonder, who do not supply a Dutch name.

Grendon is a folklorist in his use of common—colonial—plant-names, and his reference to *boererate*, or local home remedies.⁴ The medicinal uses of these plants are most varied. 'Under the name of cress[, *Nasturtium Officinale*] is well-known at the table, and in culinary matters'. Its 'pungent properties ... are most effective in curing diseases of the lung. In the latter case either the juice is extracted and drunk pure, or the leaves are boiled and the juice then drunk, or the leaves and the tender parts are eaten raw.' 'The fruit [of the *Hottentot's Vijgen* or 'Hottentot fig'] is edible, and purgative when water is taken'. Its 'leaves are used as a curative in cases of sore throat and like complaints'. *Datura Stramonium*, otherwise known as 'Stink blaar' or 'Thorn-apple', is a 'good remedy for nervous and other disorders'; its 'leaves are used for headache and sores', and when 'smoked in a pipe, are effective in cases of asthma'—a medicinal property confirmed by other sources.⁵ The leaves of *Nicotiana glauca*—'Tabak-blaar' or 'Wild Tobacco'—when 'laid on the head, remedy headache', and when 'steeped in castor or other oil, are used for sore eyes'.

¹ William H. Harvey, and Otto Wilhelm Sonder, *Flora Capensis. Being a Systematic Description of the Plants of the Cape Colony, Caffraria, & Port Natal*. Vols 1–3 were published 1859–65; they were followed by vol. 6 (1896–97) and 7 (1897–1900).

² *Carpobrotus edulis*, according to *DSAE*.

³ The *Tweetalige Woordeboek* of Bosman, Van der Merwe, and Hiemstra, gives the Afrikaans for 'cress' as *brankors* or *waterkers*.

⁴ In 'Melia and Pietro', he cites the peculiar nomenclature of 'rustics' ('M&P', Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3). He also displays a knowledge of—and interest in—folk superstition in a learned footnote to 'Pro Aliis Damnati' ('PAD', Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4).

⁵ *DSAE*, at 'stinkblaar', has two examples relating to the treatment of asthma.

By 1898, Grendon was conducting research for a major botanical monograph. The *Citizen* reported on 16 April that Grendon had ‘left Kimberley for the Eastern Province, whither he ha[d] gone to complete a botanical work, entitled “The Illustrated Genera of South African Plants”’.¹ *Imvo Zabantsundu* gave a similar report on the 20th, referring to Grendon as ‘the well-known cricketer’.²

An illustrated work requires an illustrator, and since it is improbable that Grendon was in a position to remunerate a professional artist, it is likely that he undertook the botanical drawings himself. Art lessons appear always to have been available to Zonnebloem scholars—if not on-campus, then at least off.³ In 1877, when the Grendon brothers arrived, ninety out of a total of 103 boys at Zonnebloem were taking drawing lessons.⁴

Grendon’s poem, ‘A Glimpse of Umkomaas’ (1903)⁵ leaves its reader with the distinct impression that the poet is a watercolorist whose chromatic descriptors derive from his palette. His landscape is ‘deck[ed] with tints exceeding fair’. Other colour properties in this poem include ‘cobalt haze’, ‘glaz’d’, ‘hazel-wash’d’, ‘purple’, ‘reddish-yellow’, ‘russet brown’, ‘scarlet ... bright’, ‘silv’ry’, and ‘slaty’. Grendon certainly had an artist’s eye, and there were few challenges at which he balked: the drawings for the *Illustrated Genera* are likely to have been his own.

If anything survives of Grendon’s *Illustrated Genera*, it has yet to be located by scholars. Whether or not Grendon completed the work is unknown, but regardless, his having attempted a project of such magnitude speaks eloquently for his ambition and confidence in his personal ability. The Cape Colony with its rich floral diversity produced many competent botanists, some of them on the Government payroll. If Grendon hoped to earn his reputation through botanical labours, he was pitting himself against the likes of the chemist Rudolf Marloth (1855–1931). Being white, such men had access to specialist libraries, herbaria, and elaborate scientific equipment, including cameras and darkrooms. Above all, they stood a chance of obtaining sponsorship which Grendon as a coloured man could discount. It is more

¹ ‘The Owl’, ‘On the Wing’, *Citizen* 2:42 (16 April 1898) 6.

² *Imvo* 14:704 (20 April 1898) 3.

³ Saunders, ‘Through an African’s Eyes’, 24.

⁴ Cape of Good Hope, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 30th June, 1877*, 132.

⁵ *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.

than likely that when Grendon discovered the odds he was up against, and realized that he might never shine amongst botanists, he focused his energies upon other areas where he could with greater confidence expect to leave his mark.



Kimberley's close proximity to the Boer republics and her remoteness from coastal towns seems to have fostered a siege mentality years before the Boers laid literal siege to the town from 4 November 1899 to mid-February 1900. Having republican neighbours who resented British inroads into the African interior reinforced Kimberley's psychological need to keep the flag flying high. Her geographical situation accounts for her residents being constantly alive to political developments within the Boer republics, and viewing with concern—if not actual alarm—any increase of political tension across the frontiers. The Siege of Kimberley—'six-score and sixteen days' in duration, according to *Paul Kruger's Dream*,¹ served only to confirm how vulnerable the town was to attack.

A visitor to Kimberley in 1896 described it as the 'most English—that is, British town in the Cape Colony'.² As Willan points out, 'Kimberley was, after all, the base of the greatest imperialist of them all, Cecil Rhodes. More than anybody else, he personified and expounded [the] imperial mission.'³ Rhodes, the Colony's Premier from 1890, was Kimberley's pre-eminent son, and many of the town's black citizens, Grendon included, revered him. Rhodes's obsession with British supremacy over Africa imprinted itself upon Kimberley's communal consciousness.

When Grendon first encountered it, Kimberley had the most sophisticated and heterogeneous black community in all southern Africa. Willan describes

an African pet[ite] bourgeoisie: a growing and increasingly coherent class of educated Africans who had been drawn to Kimberley because of the opportunities that it provided for employment and for the utilisation of the skills associated with the literacy they possessed. Kimberley became, in fact, a focal point for the ambitions of hundreds of Africans from different parts of

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 69.

² Allen, 'Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', vii.

³ Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 239.

the Cape and beyond ... who shared common ideas, values and experiences as a result of education at the hands of Christian missionaries.¹

These blacks were 'sustained' by a 'vision of a common, non-racial society in which merit and hard work, and not race, would determine their position within it'.² Subsequent events would prove that 'vision' to be chimerical, but blacks had no way of foreseeing that in the 1890s.

Kimberley was also home to a sizeable 'coloured' or mixed-race community, most of whose members entertained pronounced pro-British sentiments. During the South African War, many of Griqualand West's coloureds volunteered to serve the British Army in non-combatant capacities—notably as transport riders. Social intermingling between black and coloured Africans did occur in Kimberley, but was exceptional rather than general. Grendon seems to have worked more assiduously than most of his peers to promote dialogue and cooperation between blacks and coloureds.



In 1890, a troupe of black American Jubilee Singers under the baton of Orpheus Myron McAdoo—'a classmate of Booker T. Washington'³—arrived in South Africa. Their show was a runaway hit in most parts of the country, but they received their finest reception in Kimberley. The black community was entranced by its encounter with the musical Americans. On the last day of their stay in Kimberley, in August, the Jubilee Singers performed exclusively for 'Natives and Coloured People'.⁴ They introduced black Kimberley to the distinctive musical traditions of black America. The troupe awakened keen 'interest in Negro spirituals and Afro-American folk music'.⁵

American Negroes were powerful role models of poise and ambition for Kimberley's petite bourgeoisie. Even in the racially-charged social climate of South Africa, they sometimes managed to hold the uneasy status of 'honorary' whites, by virtue of their American citizenship. In April 1891, 'An American Subject' wrote to the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, complaining that he had been refused service at Mr

¹ Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 241.

² Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 34.

³ Erlmann, 'A Feeling of Prejudice', 340.

⁴ Quoted in: Erlmann, 'A Feeling of Prejudice', 343–44.

⁵ Erlmann, 'A Feeling of Prejudice', 332.

Glover's bar on account of his race. 'Although being coloured', he wrote indignantly, 'I do not wish for a moment that I should be classified with an African native.'¹

After completing a lengthy Australian tour, McAdoo's troupe returned to South Africa in mid-1895. On this occasion, the impresario fell out with some members of his company, in particular Will P. Thompson, who took up permanent abode in Kimberley. A talented entertainer, Thompson became manager of the Colonial Concert Company, which presented benefit concerts at the Perseverance School. He also founded a Philharmonic Society, and directed the Diamond Minstrels.²

Well known as a 'first-rate pianist', Thompson's 'invaluable services' were constantly in demand, and he was invariably associated with the variety of musical enterprises that catered to the interests of [Kimberley's] African society. Sol Plaatje, too, was frequently involved, most notably in the Philharmonic Society, whose debut took place—under Will P. Thompson's management—in the Woodley Street Hall on 19 March 1897.³

One of the Colonial Concert Company's benefit concerts, in aid of the Perseverance School, was held at the Town Hall, in July 1897. Grendon performed as a tenor on that occasion.⁴ Grendon also had dealings with Thompson through their shared involvement in sports administration.⁵ If Grendon and Plaatje were not introduced by their mutual associate, Isaiah Bud-M'belle, then perhaps they were introduced by Thompson, who also knew and worked with both of them.

Members of the Jubilee Singers have been credited with the founding of Kimberley's *Citizen*, which enjoyed a brief existence in 1897–98. This may account for the fact that the paper made the claim in December 1897 that 'Mr McAdoo's Minstrels [exemplify] the superiority of the American coloured people over the South African'.⁶ The paper has been described as the 'earliest known independent Coloured newspaper' in South Africa.⁷

¹ 'A Complaint re the Gardens', *DFA* 14:3303 (6 May 1891) 3.

² Erlmann, 'A Feeling of Prejudice', 338.

³ Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 250.

⁴ 'Concert this Evening', *DFA* (7 July 1896) 6.

⁵ 'Sporting News', *Citizen* 8 (22 Sept. 1897) 2.

⁶ *Citizen* (1 Dec. 1897), quoted in: Erlmann, 'A Feeling of Prejudice', 345.

⁷ Switzer and Switzer, *The Black Press*, 101. The paper had a couple of name changes, and at least one change in ownership during its brief existence.

Robert Grendon appears to have enjoyed a close connection with this pioneering newspaper, and he may have supplied some of its anonymous copy. There are several references in it to his sporting and political activities. The *Citizen* also published three of his poems.¹ One of these—the epic-length ‘Melia and Pietro’—is serialized from the issue of 12 March 1898 to that of 24 December 1898, at which point the paper appears to have become defunct. Grendon is also almost certainly the ‘R. G.’ who organized and adjudicated a ‘Prize Competition’ for the ‘Three Best Essays’ by boys or girls.² After his move to Uitenhage, his name is advertised as the paper’s ‘authorized agent’ in that town.³

It appears that the *Citizen* aimed at a wider readership and news coverage than just the Cape Colony. In January 1898, for instance, it reported on a cricket match played in Pietermaritzburg, in which William Grendon—Robert’s brother—took part.⁴ In February of the same year, mention is also made of the *Citizen*’s ‘Pietermaritzburg correspondent’.⁵



Grendon was playing cricket—and excelling at the game—within months of having settled in Griqualand West. An internet website describes him as ‘the finest bat that Black cricket would see in the 1880s and 1890s in South Africa[. H]e would be a revelation. A superb fielder at point he should have made any [South African] side of the period.’⁶ It is not the purpose of this thesis to trace his sporting career in great detail; yet it is important to note that for several years, sport seems to have overshadowed all his other activities. In fact, whereas descendants of his brother William know of Robert’s cricketing and rugby-playing achievements, there is no surviving memory in the same family line of his literary achievements.⁷

¹ For coverage of these poems, please see the next chapter.

² ‘Prize Competition’, *Citizen* 21 (29 Dec. 1897) supplement, 2; ‘Result of Prize Competition’, *Citizen* 2:25 (26 Jan. 1898) 3. The first part of Grendon’s poem, ‘A Dream’, which was published over the initials ‘R. I. G.’, also appears in *Citizen* 21.

³ ‘Agents for the Citizen’, *Citizen* 2:71 (15 Oct. 1898) 2.

⁴ ‘Our Sporting Column: Cricket: Wanderers vs. Comet C. C.’, *Citizen* 2:24 (19 Jan. 1898) supplement, 2.

⁵ ‘Sayings and Doings’, *Citizen* 2:26 (2 Feb. 1898) supplement, 1.

⁶ ‘Great Pioneering Cricketers of Kimberley’ (online).

⁷ Interviews: Valerie Grantham, 16 Nov. 2005, 1 April 2007.

Sport assumed a degree of importance for Griqualand West's black ethnic communities that is difficult to appreciate today. André Odendaal sketches the function served by sport within the colonial milieu at large:

Sport, particularly cricket, served an explicitly political function for the black élite. They were intent on using it as an instrument of 'improvement' and assimilation. By enthusiastically playing the most gentlemanly and Victorian of games, they intended to demonstrate their ability to adopt and assimilate European culture and behave like gentlemen—and by extension to show their fitness to be accepted as full citizens in Cape society. Through sport they could pay homage to the ideas of 'civilization', 'progress', 'Christianity', and 'Empire' that were so precious to the Victorians, and call for imperial concepts of 'fair play' to be respected; through sport they could assert their own self-conscious class position.¹

Whereas Odendaal refers to conditions throughout the Cape Colony, Brian Willan sketches the picture for Kimberley in particular. Cricket

was the game that Kimberley's African pet[ite] bourgeoisie really made its own. That this should have been the case is perhaps not at all surprising. Cricket, after all, was not just a game. Rather, it was a uniquely British institution that embodied so many of the values and ideals which, individually and collectively, they aspired to. Cricket provided for them an opportunity to assimilate those values and ideals, and to demonstrate that they were capable and worthy of doing so. Cricket was a social training ground: the analogy between cricket and life generally was widely accepted, its value in character development unquestioned.²

Grendon's sporting colleagues were in several instances also his colleagues in political and community affairs. Almost everyone with political aspirations played cricket or rugby, or served as an office-bearer for some sporting body.³ Organized sport represented an ideal opportunity for collective activity in a setting that was least likely to arouse the suspicions of the colonial authorities. Black and coloured Africans learnt to organize sporting fraternities before applying the same skills to political collaboration and to 'agitation' against legislative measures deemed prejudicial to their group interests.⁴

Competition sport served the additional function of facilitating social interaction between black Africans, coloureds, Malays, and Indians from widely-separated

¹ Odendaal, 'South Africa's Black Victorians', 199–200.

² Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 251. Similar thoughts are expressed by Gemmell, in *Politics of South African Cricket*, 80.

³ Odendaal, 'South Africa's Black Victorians', 199.

⁴ Odendaal, 'South Africa's Black Victorians', 201.

geographical regions. Odendaal observes that by 1890 Kimberley's black cricketers were 'starting to reach out across regional boundaries'.¹ In the process, they discovered a Colony-wide community of interest. It would not be far-fetched to suggest that the potentialities of interethnic political combination first suggested themselves on sports fields, or at the receptions and entertainments that usually went along with tournaments. But, whereas black sportsmen not infrequently played against others of a different race or ethnic background,² it was less common for two or more ethnic groupings to be represented in a single team. Kimberley's sportsmen tended to practise integration to a greater extent than was common in other Colonial towns, but even here deep-rooted prejudices sometimes spoil the interethnic harmony.

On 6 October 1890, Grendon played for Progress Cricket Club in a victorious match against the Wanderers. The *Diamond Fields Advertiser* recorded that 'special praise is due to R. Grendon, who batted capitably throughout both innings, and scored no less than 43 out of 52 in the first innings, and 51 out of 92 in the second innings; his hitting was simply astonishing'.³ Around Christmastide, he played for a Kimberley side in Port Elizabeth. Indicative of the interracial character of Kimberley sport, that tournament team, according to a contemporary source, included 'five coloured Christians, one Kafir and five Malays'.⁴

In January 1891, Grendon played for the Malay Tournament XI against the all-white Eclectic Cricket Club. The *Daily Independent* reporter wrote that 'the fielding of the Malay team was excellent, Grendon at point being very smart. Ahmat at the wicket was surprisingly good while Grendon's bowling was as good as any I have seen.'⁵ The *Diamond Fields Advertiser* reported that

the contest was full of interest all the way along. The very fine bowling and fielding of the Malays almost made up for their comparative weakness in batting, and on each occasion they succeeded in getting rid of their formidable opponents for a very small score.... Grendon and Marjiet started the second venture of the Malays, and Grendon provoked applause by cutting

¹ Odendaal, *Story of an African Game*, 76.

² Odendaal, 'South Africa's Black Victorians', 207.

³ 'Sport and Pastime', *DFA* 13:3139 (10 Oct. 1890) 3.

⁴ 'The Malay Cricket Tournament', *DFA* 14:3283 (13 April 1891) 3.

⁵ *Daily Independent* (26 Jan. 1891). Quoted in: Kimberley Africana Library, 'McAnda's Sport' (awaiting publication), 57.

Glover's first ball finely to the bath fence.... The Eclectic won the best and most interesting match seen in Kimberley this season by the narrow majority of 31 runs.¹

In February, Grendon played for the Universal Cricket Club against Mr Powell's XI—another local all-white team—at the Kimberley Club Ground. Universals lost and Grendon 'appeared to be out of form', although in their second innings, he and Vogt gave 'the field every chance of exercising their muscles and wind'.²

In March and April 1891, an inter-district 'Malay Tournament' was played at Kimberley. The participating teams were Port Elizabeth, Kimberley, and Cape Town. Despite the name, several of the players—Grendon included—were not 'Malay'. Early in March, Abdol Burns (c.1838–98), President of that City's Union Cricket Club and one of the most colourful members of Cape Town's 'Malay elite',³ announced in the papers that, along with the cricketers he intended bringing to Kimberley, he had also secured a sideshow:

He intends to bring to Kimberley, along with the team, a 'menagerie', consisting of an Arab lion, Arab monkeys, a Turkish camel of Assyrian type, lately the property of Abdulla H[u]ssain, and wild cats; and other wild animals never before seen in Kimberley. The whole menagerie will be exhibited on the Eclectic Cricket Grounds during the tournament, and he hopes the Kimberley public will give his show a hearty welcome. ... Mr Burns will also be accompanied to Kimberley by a genuine Soudanie, one of Osman Digna's followers.⁴

Clearly, Burns had a keen sense of the exotic spectacular. Osman Digna (1836–1926), a follower of the Mahdi, defeated Baker Pasha near Suakim in 1884. 'His ability contributed largely to the capture of Khartoum and [the] death of General Gordon.'⁵ The proud exhibition in Kimberley of a warrior who could conceivably have been present at—and complicit in—the slaying of Gordon, one of the Empire's most iconic heroes, cannot have been calculated to endear Burns and other organizers of the tournament to jingoist white colonials. Both the 'menagerie' and the introduction of a 'genuine Soudanie' were part of a conscious campaign on the part of Burns—and likely also of other notable Cape Muslims—to represent the Islamic

¹ *DFA* (2 Feb. 1891). Quoted in: Kimberley Africana Library, 'McAnda's Sport', 57.

² 'Sport and Pastime: Cricket: Universal C.C. vs Mr. Powell's XI', *DFA* 3246 (26 Feb. 1891) 3.

³ Bickford-Smith, 'Black Ethnicities', 454.

⁴ 'The Malay Cricket Tournament', *DFA* 3258 (12 March 1891) 4.

⁵ *Webster's Biographical Dictionary*.

heartland to descendants of the Cape's Malay slaves who, for generations, had been almost entirely cut off from contact with such lands.

It was probably not coincidental that the Malay cricket tournament coincided with the fiftieth birthday of the Sultan of Turkey, which Griqualand West's Muslims celebrated 'with all their wonted enthusiasm', according to the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*. The paper noted 'the deep interest which they unceasingly display in everything pertaining to the Ottoman Empire'.¹ It is likely that Muslim members of the visiting teams, including Abdol Burns, were amongst the celebrants. Friendly contact was maintained between Cape Muslims and the Sultanate of Turkey throughout the Victorian period. The Sultan had on several occasions extended financial aid to the Cape Malay community, for the promotion of Islamic education.²

The first match of the tournament began on Monday 30 March. It was between the Eastern Province (Port Elizabeth) team and Kimberley, and at day's close the Kimberley Captain decided to close the innings. A headline in the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* reported 'FINE PERFORMANCES BY GRENDON AND HENDRICKS':

Both the Kimberley bowlers, Grendon and Hendricks, were unplayable, assisted by the sticky condition of the ground, Grendon taking four wickets for 19, and Hendricks six for 9. Grendon's analysis would read even better if the several chances that were missed off his bowling had been accepted and he frequently beat the batsmen with balls that barely shaved past the wicket. When Kimberley went in Grendon and Dick soon polished off the score standing against them. ... Grendon's innings was a very fine display of sound defence and powerful hitting, his cutting being especially clean and hard, and was only marred by a chance to third man.³

'Krom' Hendricks, the coloured cricketer whose name is here linked with that of Grendon, played in a Malay XI against a visiting English test side in 1891–92. He was 'described by English Test players George Rowe and Bonnor Middleton as one of the fastest bowlers they had witnessed'. Initially, he was 'included in the 1894 South African team to tour England. However, he was later omitted, a result of "the greatest

¹ 'Sultan of Turkey's Birthday Celebration by Kimberley Mahomedans', *DFA* 14:3272 (31 March 1891) 5.

² Mahida, 'History of Muslims in South Africa' (online).

³ 'Sport and Pastime: Cricket: the Malay Tournament: Kimberley vs. Port Elizabeth', *DFA* 14:3272 (31 March 1891) 5.

pressure by those in high authority in the Cape Colony”.¹ A similar story is told of Robert Grendon by descendants of his brother William.²

On the morning of the next day, the Eastern Province team entered on its second innings. ‘Grendon and Hendricks, the two crack trundlers of the Kimberley eleven, again opened the attack, and from the outset met with signal success. Five wickets fell with the total only 15, Hendricks accounting for four of them, Grendon taking the fifth.’³ Kimberley won a single-innings victory.

On the second and third days of the tournament, the Port Elizabeth side faced the Capetonians, and met again with defeat.⁴ The final match—Cape Town versus Kimberley—occupied the balance of the third day as well as the fourth. Grendon played up to his usual standard, and his performance had more than a little to do with Kimberley’s winning the tournament:

Grendon and Sheldon started the batting [on the third day], while Ariefdien and Abrams took up the bowling. Grendon scored fast from the first, but his first three partners were speedily bowled by the demon Ariefdien, the score reading 29 at the fall of the third wicket. Then Salie joined Grendon, and a long partnership followed, and although several bowling changes were tried, none took effect, until the century had been successfully passed, when Salie was caught for a creditably compiled score. Hendricks assisted Grendon to make 47 runs for the fifth wicket, and during his stay Grendon completed his century, loud applause greeting the coveted three figures. Grendon did not long survive after his captain’s departure, a fine catch at square leg closing his superb innings. Except for a chance at third man after he had made 80 his innings was without mistake, and his all-round hitting, especially his cutting, was a treat to witness.⁵

Kimberley became the first winners of the ‘splendid fifty-guinea cup presented by Mr J. K. Glover’. Grendon won the prize bat for the best batting average.⁶ In a pseudonymous letter to the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, a Muslim correspondent claimed that Kimberley would still have won the Cup even if the team had been

¹ Gemmell, *The Politics of South African Cricket*, 85; Odendaal, ‘South Africa’s Black Victorians’, 203–04.

² Julinda Hoskins, Robert’s grand-niece, learnt from Mary Ann Grendon, Robert’s sister, that he used to play rugby and cricket, but because of his colour was not permitted to play in white teams (Interview: Valerie Grantham, 16 Nov. 2005).

³ ‘Sport and Pastime: Cricket: Malay Tournament: Second Day—Tuesday, March 31’, *DFA* 14:3275 (3 April 1891) 3.

⁴ ‘Second Day—Cape Town vs. Port Elizabeth’, and ‘Third Day—Wednesday (April 1st): Port Elizabeth Again Meet With Defeat’, *DFA* 14:3275 (3 April 1891) 3.

⁵ ‘Capetown vs. Kimberley—Final Match: Kimberley Wins the Cup’, *DFA* 14:3275 (3 April 1891) 3.

⁶ ‘Capetown vs. Kimberley—Final Match: Kimberley Wins the Cup’, *DFA* 14:3275 (3 April 1891) 3.

‘composed of Moslems only’. All the same—and rather inconsistently—he had to ‘acknowledge that Grendon saved the Cup from going to Cape Town’.¹

After the conclusion of the ‘first cricket tournament ever engaged in by the Malay cricketers of South Africa’, a celebratory dinner and entertainment was laid on for the visiting teams by Kimberley’s Muslim merchants, several of whom had performed the *hajj*. A ‘sumptuous repast’ was enjoyed at the home of Hajji Ebreim Omar Hussein. After Hajji Ojer Ally addressed the visiting teams, the ‘company then settled down to music and conversation’.²

Ally, a Mauritian-born businessman, had come to the Cape Colony in 1884. In Cape Town, he headed up a soda-water firm and quickly assumed a leadership role in Muslim politics. He was resident in Kimberley by the early 1890s.³ He and Grendon would shortly become closely associated in the ‘Agitation’ against the Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892, and as office-bearers of the Coloured People’s Association.

Immediately after the Malay Tournament, Kimberley’s white cricketers opted to face a combined ‘Malay team consist[ing] of five Kimberley men, three Cape Town, and two Port Elizabeth’. Kimberley’s leading white cricketers were away in Johannesburg competing for the Currie Cup. Even so, the white cricketers won. The *Diamond Fields Advertiser* states that

the principal feature in the day’s cricket was the batting of Grendon, the crack Kimberley Malay batsman, who headed the scores of his side in each innings. In the first innings he batted without fault until caught in the long field, and although in the second innings he was favoured with some let-offs, his innings—only eight short of the century—was a brilliant exposition of well-timed hitting, his cutting being particularly clean and hard. Grendon’s display dwarfed that of his comrades.⁴

In February 1892, Grendon played for the Malay Tournament XI against the (white) Kimberley Cricket Club at the Kimberley Ground. He ‘played nicely when the visitors batted’, although he was not the highest scorer.⁵ Five years later, when aged thirty, he was still playing inter-district cricket. In late December 1897, he was part of

¹ ‘Fair Play’, ‘The Malay Cricket Tournament’, *DFA* 14:3283 (13 April 1891) 3

² ‘Malay Cricket Tournament: Banquet to the Visiting Teams’, *DFA* 14:3276 (4 April 1891) 3.

³ Hunt, *Gandhi in London*, 51.

⁴ ‘Sport and Pastime: Cricket: Malays vs. Europeans: All Day Cricket Match’, *DFA Weekly Mail Summary* 5:203 (11 April 1891) 8.

⁵ ‘Kimberley C.C. vs. the Malay Tournament XI’, *DFA* 15:3535 (8 Feb. 1892) 3.

a coloured Kimberley team that entrained for Cape Town in order to compete for the Glover Cup in a tournament starting on 3 January.¹ On that Monday, at Newlands cricket ground, close to one thousand spectators gathered to watch Kimberley and Cape Town compete ‘for the trophy which Cape Town wrested from Kimberley some six years ago, and which has been retained there ever since’.² Grendon produced the highest score—64 out of a total of 182 runs. On Tuesday, 4 January, the Kimberley side faced a combined team of Cape Town and Claremont players, and ‘Grendon fell leg before to Gertze, after having completed a brilliant innings of 28 runs’.³ On 10 January, the Kimberley team met Claremont, again at Newlands. Grendon was run out for 70—the highest individual score of the game on either side.⁴



Besides being a cricketer, Grendon was active also in rugby—not merely as a player for the Excelsior Club,⁵ but also as an organizer of the sport. As shown below, available records suggest that he viewed black interethnic rugby as a wholesome stimulus to the formation of a more ethnically-inclusive communal spirit. Whereas black cricketers showed comparatively little resistance to playing against persons of a different ethnic and cultural background, rugby—being a contact sport—seems to have offended the scruples of not a few.

Excelsior was one of four foundation clubs in the Griqualand West Colonial Rugby Football Union (GWCRFU) when it was constituted in 1894.⁶ Other clubs joined later. This union is described by Odendaal as ‘one of the very first sports organizations in South Africa which was specifically non-racial’⁷—by which he means that all players who were not white were free to join member clubs, irrespective of their ethnic background.

In 1897, Bud-M’belle, captain of the Native Rovers Rugby Football Club, another of the teams comprising the GWCRFU, approached Cecil John Rhodes with a request

¹ ‘Glover Cup Tournament’, *Citizen* 21 (29 Dec. 1897) supplement, 2.

² ‘Sport: Cricket: Glover Cup Competition: Cape Town vs. Kimberley’, *Citizen* 2:23 (12 Jan. 1898) supplement, 1.

³ ‘Kimberley vs. Capetown and Claremont Combined’, *Citizen* 2:23 (12 Jan. 1898) supplement, 1

⁴ ‘Cricket: Kimberley vs. Claremont’, *Citizen* 2:26 (2 Feb. 1898) supplement, 1.

⁵ ‘Kimberley Notes’, *Citizen* 4 (25 Aug. 1897) 4.

⁶ Odendaal, ‘The Thing That is Not Round’, 37; ‘Sporting News: G. W. C. R. F. U.’, *Citizen* 8 (22 Sept. 1897) 2.

⁷ Odendaal, ‘The Thing That is Not Round’, 37.

that he donate a rugby trophy for teams of all races excluded from the white union. No doubt with an eye to capturing the black vote, Rhodes 'was pleased to present the various sporting coloured peoples of South Africa with a valuable Trophy in the form of a handsome Silver Cup' worth fifty guineas. The South African Coloured Rugby Football Board (SACRFB) was established 'in consequence of this generous gift'.¹

On 19 August 1897, the inaugural meeting of the SACRFB took place at the Savona Cafe in Kimberley. The GWCRFU had circularized black clubs across the country, inviting them to send delegates to this meeting.² Griqualand West was well-represented, but Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth were represented by proxies only, and Cape Town was entirely absent, although a hope was expressed that 'clubs and unions will have joined by next meeting'. It was proposed that a 'South African Coloured Football Board' be formed, and the motion was carried. Next, Bud-M'belle proposed, and Grendon seconded,

that this Board formally express the gratitude and appreciation of the coloured inhabitants of South Africa to the Right Hon. C. J. Rhodes for the Fifty Guinea Cup which he so generously presented to them, and also thank Mr W Pickering for the assistance he personally rendered in procuring the cup, &c, to the members of the G.W.C.F. Union of Kimberley.³

The meeting elected Grendon as President of the Board, and Isaiah Bud-M'belle as its Secretary. Daniel Lenders and Ed Heneke were elected auditors. All four of these office-bearers were also active in their communities' political and social affairs, 'respected figures within the emerging black educated and political elite'.⁴ Grendon addressed the audience, reporting that 'owing to a little difference in Capetown and Port Elizabeth amongst the players', these centres had not been properly represented at this important first meeting. However, he 'hoped that time [would] vanish all differences from amongst all our sportsmen'.⁵ He did not spell out the nature of the 'little difference', but in the context of later remarks, it was evidently race-related.

One Wednesday night in September 1897, a 'crowded house assembled', under the auspices of the GWCRFU, to welcome back the rugby 'tournament team of

¹ 'S. A. Coloured Rugby Football: Meeting of the Board', *Imvo* 14:709 (25 May 1898) 3; Odendaal, *The Story of an African Game*, 78.

² Odendaal, 'The Thing That is Not Round', 38.

³ 'Kimberley Notes', *Citizen* 4 (25 Aug. 1897) 4.

⁴ Odendaal, *Story of an African Game*, 78.

⁵ 'Kimberley Notes', *Citizen* 4 (25 Aug. 1897) 4.

Kimberley'. Lenders was the team's manager, and Will P. Thompson, the American Negro, its Secretary. According to the *Citizen*,

Mr Robert Grendon, President of the S. A. Coloured Board, said that up to now the only centres that had applied for affiliation to the Board were Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Johannesburg, and Griqualand West. He trusted that other centres would apply for the necessary affiliation before May. Mr Rhodes had given the Cup to the coloured Rugby football players of South Africa, and he hoped there would be uniformity of opinion on the matter. He knew there would be some difficulties in some parts as some coloured clubs had refused to meet others of the coloured races. But he was sure time would vanish all these difficulties.¹

From Grendon's remarks, it becomes apparent that racial prejudice impinged upon harmonious sporting relations, just as it did upon all other aspects of cultural interaction in South Africa. On the one hand, talented black players like Grendon and Hendricks were denied opportunity to compete at the highest level because of the prejudices of white players and organizers. But even within their own ranks, players 'of colour' did not always relish playing with—or even against—others of differing ethnic background.

What the basis was of Grendon's sanguine expectation that 'time would vanish all these difficulties', *Citizen* does not report. Perhaps it was little more than wishful thinking, but it seems likely that Grendon believed that as players encountered one another with increasing frequency on the sports fields, the old prejudices would break down. The fact that he was able to assist in the formation of a Western Province Coloured Rugby Football Union, over the New Year period, 1897–98, may have given him hope that the unity he envisaged was attainable.²

In January 1898, 'A Cricketer', writing to the editor of the *Citizen*, criticized black Western Province cricketers for their ethnic exclusivity, which prevented them from bringing together the best players for inter-regional competitions:

It is a recognized fact that had the selection of the Cape men been more general and their team more representative than that opposed to the Kimberley men, matters would probably have resulted otherwise and I fear that Kimberley should perhaps have had to return home cupless. I

¹ 'Sporting News: G. W. C. R. F. U.', *Citizen* 8 (22 Sept. 1897) 2.

² 'S. A. Coloured Rugby Football: Meeting of the Board', *Imvo* 14:709 (25 May 1898) 3.

am aware of the existing party jealousies which mar the good feeling which at this time is so urgently needed.¹

Grendon's remarks at the September 1897 meeting of the GWCRFU amount to an appeal to black South African sportsmen not to allow ethnic or racial prejudice to drive a wedge between them. This is an early expression of the same plea for greater interethnic and interracial union and cooperation that Grendon repeatedly raised in his poetry and prose. Some years later, he called upon his black readers to stand together and give the lie to the 'remarkable expression ever on the lips of many who scorn the idea that the natives can ever stand united on any matter that claims their attention. It is often openly asserted that the natives are seriously afflicted with the defect that they are unable to co-operate.'² It seems that in the 1890s, Grendon saw interethnic cooperation in sports associations as laying the groundwork for cooperation in more important areas of life. Griqualand West, having perhaps the most racially-inclusive of the country's sporting communities, could afford to upbraid other centres where ethnic snobbery still prevented black sportsmen from playing alongside each other.

Following upon Grendon's speech at the GWCRFU meeting, Bud-M'belle repeated the call for 'greater unity amongst coloured sportsmen in this country':

He briefly referred to sport in Europe where no distinctions are made as to race, complexion and creed, instancing Prince [Ranjitsinhji] and others. In Cape Town, the native coloured man and the aboriginal native do not want to play with the Malay. In Port Elizabeth the native coloured man and the Malay do not want to play with the aboriginal native. In the border towns the aboriginal native and the Malay do not want to play with the native coloured man. But he was glad to say that Kimberley would have none of these absurd classifications. Kimberley has proved that by the representative team which they were welcoming that night and also the composition of the platform. Thus in the game of unity in sport Kimberley has already scored a 'try', and he trusted that before the next century dawned upon them that try would be converted into a goal of unity in sport throughout South Africa.³

The 'composition of the platform' included Bud-M'belle himself, who was an 'aboriginal native', and Grendon, who was a 'native coloured man'. If Kimberley could get such harmonious collaboration to work, so could other towns.

¹ 'The Glover Cup', *Citizen* 2:23 (12 Jan. 1898) supplement, 1.

² 'Move Ye On!' *Ilanga* 3:94 (3 Feb. 1905) 4.

³ 'Sporting News: G. W. C. R. F. U.', *Citizen* 8 (22 Sept. 1897) 2.

What emerges from Grendon's and Bud-M'belle's speeches is the fact that, although black African and coloured players were often the victims of racial prejudice, they were also sometimes party to it. This was not Bud-M'belle's first call for impartiality amongst black sportsmen. In Kimberley itself, two black African cricket clubs competed with several other Indian, Malay, and Coloured teams.¹ But when a black African man, J. S. Moss, was elected as Vice-President of the Union in November 1895, three coloured clubs withdrew, apparently out of protest.² Bud-M'belle wrote the editor of the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, claiming that these three coloured clubs disliked any official position in their league being filled by 'a native gentleman'. 'I could understand', he protested, 'if the objection of the three clubs was based on the fact that a barbarous native, a street Malay, nay, even a stupid Cape coloured man had been elected to such a post. As far as ability, education, and all other things—except an almost white(?) colour—are concerned, Mr Moss is far superior to any of the men composing the three clubs.'³

After Grendon and Bud-M'belle had addressed the September 1897 GWCRFU gathering, Ed Heneke took the floor and repeated the earlier speakers' appeal. He 'urged the coloured sporting peoples to join hand in hand and hoped that 1898 would see them more combined. Unless they [were to] have social gatherings oftener, unity amongst them [would] never take place.' The meeting concluded with some impromptu entertainments. There was a 'humorous recitation', followed by songs, which Will P. Thompson and F. Myburgh accompanied 'in their usual masterly style'.⁴ Sport, social gatherings, music, and vigorous political debate ran seamlessly into and out of each other in this vibrant, forward-looking community of communities.

In May 1898, the 'Annual General Meeting of the South African Coloured Rugby Football Board was held in the Savona Cafe, George Street.... Mr Dan Lenders in the absence of the President Mr Robt Grendon, was voted to the chair.'⁵ Grendon had recently left Griqualand West for the Eastern Province. At this meeting, there were representatives from the black rugby unions of Western Province, Eastern Province,

¹ Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 251.

² Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 252.

³ Letter to the Editor, *DFA* (14 Nov. 1895), quoted in: Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 252.

⁴ 'Sporting News: G. W. C. R. F. U.', *Citizen* 8 (22 Sept. 1897) 2.

⁵ 'S. A. Coloured Rugby Football: Meeting of the Board', *Imvo* 14:709 (25 May 1898) 3.

and Transvaal, as well as the host GWCRFU. All the regional unions ‘had paid their registration fees’.¹ It appeared that Grendon’s prediction that ‘time would vanish all these difficulties’ was coming to pass.



Grendon’s involvement in sports went beyond cricket and rugby. In September 1892, he played as a three-quarter back for the Universal Club in an association football match against the Red Crescent Football Club.² In 1897 he was variously ‘Assistant-Secretary’ and ‘Honorary Secretary’ of the Colonial Athletic Club—a body of which Daniel Lenders was President.³ The Club met for competition on the Queen’s birthday, 24 May, and the prize-giving was held in the Perseverance Schoolroom on a Friday evening shortly afterwards. Kimberley’s mayor presented the prizes. As seems to have been the pattern with all social occasions linked to sporting events, there were several speeches—Grendon gave one—and the company was also regaled with a musical programme. Finally, prior to dispersing, all sang the National Anthem.⁴

Daniel John Lenders (1865–1912), who served with Grendon on the governing bodies of the SACRFB and the Colonial Athletic Club, was born in Cape Town. A character sketch in the *South African Spectator* (1901) gives the impression of a pious, self-made man:

Evincing early the trait for industry and perseverance, which developed with the growing years, the boy was engaged for some time in the honourable occupation of selling newspapers. Later on he became junior clerk to his uncle at the Alfred Docks, and while at this occupation, ever alert and resourceful, he mastered the intricacies of the donkey engine. A little later on, now in the prime of early manhood, he was apprenticed to the saddlery trade. After six years service he became an expert journeyman. About this time the young man began to take a serious view of life, and to use his own words, it dawned upon him that this world is but a transitory stage, and but a prelude to a more perfect and a permanent existence for which we must prepare. He joined the Church, and was instrumental by precept and example in leading others to choose the better part. In 1885 he determined to visit Port Elizabeth, where for a long time he laboured in his chosen field, preaching the Gospel of Christ, visiting many parts of the Eastern and Western

¹ Odendaal, ‘The Thing That is Not Round’, 39.

² ‘Universals vs. Red Crescent Football Club’, *DFA* 3718 (21 Sept. 1892) 3.

³ ‘Sport and Pastime: Athletics: Colonial Athletic Club’, *Citizen* 19 (15 Dec. 1897) 2.

⁴ ‘Athletics: Colonial Athletic Club: Presentation of Prizes’, *DFA* (31 May 1897) 7.

Province, and being of magnetic presence, winning ways, and highly popular, the result of his ministrations would never be known to man.¹

He arrived in Kimberley in 1889, shortly before Grendon himself. Employed by J. Samuelson, a saddler-cum-harness-maker, he rose in the firm, until he became manager of one of its stores. Ultimately, he acquired the entire business. In an obituary, *A.P.O.* stated that he had taken ‘an active part in every movement to uplift the Coloured people’.² At Kimberley, he was ‘ever found at the forefront of all movements designed to benefit his people, socially and politically’, and, by the turn of the century had come to be ‘regarded as the natural leader of the coloured people there’.³ He held office in the African Political Organization—a coloured pressure group founded in 1902—and ‘was one of the three Coloured delegates who went over to England [in 1910] to protest against the “Colour Clause” in the Act of Union’. He continued as President of the South African Coloured Rugby Football Board until his death.⁴

It is instructive to compare the divergent career paths followed by Lenders and Grendon. Both men spent their formative youthful years in Cape Town. Both appear to have undergone profound religious experiences in youth or early manhood, and intense spirituality seems to have remained transcendent throughout their adult lives. Both had active social consciences. At Kimberley, they were to collaborate repeatedly in their community’s social, political, and sporting affairs. And yet, despite these common elements in their respective biographies, their career paths diverged. As the *Spectator* remarks, Lenders found his niche representing the interests of ‘his people’—*i.e.*, those of mixed-race heritage. Grendon, by contrast, associated and identified increasingly with black Africans—with ‘*abantu*’—although he never forgot his mixed-race parentage.⁵

¹ ‘Mr Daniel John Lenders’, *South African Spectator* 1:29 (29 Dec. 1901) 7.

² ‘Death of D. J. Lenders, Vice-President, A. P. O.’, *A. P. O.* 3:68 (13 Jan. 1912) 3.

³ ‘Mr Daniel John Lenders’, *South African Spectator* 1:29 (29 Dec. 1901) 7.

⁴ ‘Death of D. J. Lenders, Vice-President, A. P. O.’, *A. P. O.* 3:68 (13 Jan. 1912) 3.

⁵ By 1905, Grendon could write: ‘Now we know for a fact that if judged on their merits the native would in many cases outclass the coloured man of the Western Province, but honours go by favour in this world and so the coloured man gains access to the parliamentary register more through his complexion than through real merit’ (‘The Native Vote’, *Ilanga* 3:95 (10 Feb. 1905) 4). For Grendon’s defence of his mixed-racial identity, see the ‘Miscegenation’ polemic in *Izwe la Kiti* 3:73 (11 Feb. 1914)–3:87 (20 May 1914).

Just as Plaatje identified himself politically with black Africans, largely to the exclusion of coloureds, Lenders identified very largely with the cause of the Cape's mixed-race community to the exclusion of black Africans. Grendon, on the other hand, occupies an interstitial, cross-over position, which provides an important clue to our understanding of the reason for his disappearance from the history books. In later years, he might tutor Swazi princes and edit *Abantu-Batho*—mouthpiece of the South African Native National Congress. But, unlike Lenders or Plaatje, his political goals meant that he was never altogether an insider to the collective life of any one of South Africa's black communities.



When the Grendon family arrived at the Cape in 1877–78, the Colony had by far the most enlightened race policy of any white-dominated South African territory. Robert Grendon saw the Cape Colony's politically 'liberal' tradition as the natural outgrowth of 'British' principles entrenched for centuries in the constitution of the Home Country.

Just prior to his move to Kimberley, a reactionary Cape Parliament began to place legislative curbs upon the equality which blacks in the Colony had come to value so highly. The late nineteenth century witnessed three shameful pieces of legislation (1887, 1892, and 1894), prompted by the short-sighted fears of white legislators, and designed to prevent colonists from being 'utterly swamped' by blacks at the polls.¹ As a young man, Grendon emerged as a vigorous defender of the Cape's non-discriminative tradition. His defence in 1892 of black access to the franchise serves, as it were, as a prologue to at least a quarter-century of campaigning for political equality.

The greatest challenge to black voting rights appeared to be the rise of the Afrikaner Bond, 'first real political party to emerge in South Africa',² formed by the cleric, S. J. du Toit in June 1879, and associated principally with the name of its leader, J. H. Hofmeyr ('Onze Jan', 1845–1909) from 1883.³ It was intended to

¹ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 15; Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall*, 9; Philips and Evans, 'South Africa: Saving the White Voters', 164.

² Davenport, *Afrikaner Bond*, ix.

³ Edgecombe, 'The non-racial franchise', 21.

preserve and extend the interests of the white Dutch-speaking community. After the elections of 1884, 'it tended to control at least 40 per cent of the seats in the House of Assembly'.¹

The ascendancy of Afrikaner nationalism posed a grave threat to the survival of the Colony's liberal tradition.² One of the Bond's earliest and most determined campaigns was aimed at curtailing the relatively easy access to the franchise enjoyed by blacks.³ It succeeded in getting the Parliamentary Registration Bill enacted in 1887—thereby culling from the roll thousands of black voters in the eastern districts. But Bondsmen were not satisfied with their initial success. In 1891 Hofmeyr again raised the issue of the franchise in the Cape Parliament. The law enacted in 1887 had not done enough to curb the threat facing white voters, he said.⁴ A new bill was therefore steamrolled through Parliament, and the resultant Franchise and Ballot Act was promulgated on 16 August 1892.

Three of the Act's provisions were especially detrimental to the voting rights of black Africans and coloureds. The minimum property requirement was upped by 200% from £25 to £75; remuneration in the way of board and lodging would no longer be considered in the reckoning, and for the first time a literacy test was to be imposed.⁵ The effect in the Western Cape was devastating. In Cape Town alone, the number of black voters on the roll was halved overnight.⁶

In 1892, a racially-heterogeneous group of blacks in Kimberley, led largely by Muslims, but also including Christians, organized a Colony-wide petition in a manner prefiguring organized mass action of the twentieth century. Having lost confidence in the goodwill and integrity of Cape parliamentarians, the decision had been taken to petition the Crown. In this 'Agitation' against the Franchise and Ballot Act, the merchant, Hajji Ojer Ally, as chairman of the Coloured Agitation Committee, played

¹ Edgecombe, 'The non-racial franchise', 22.

² Edgecombe, 'The non-racial franchise', 21.

³ Philips and Evans, 'South Africa: Saving the White Voters', 162.

⁴ Edgecombe, 'The non-racial franchise', 34.

⁵ Eybers, *Select Constitutional Documents*, 73–74.

⁶ Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, 145.

the leading role. A petition was sent to Queen Victoria, asking that she withhold her royal assent from the Franchise and Ballot Act.¹

Grendon played a supportive role under Ally's oversight. As already noted, they had likely met through mutual involvement with the 'Malay' cricketers of Griqualand West. In the 1892 political campaign, Grendon is described variously as 'Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Coloured People's Association' and as 'Secretary of the Griqualand West Agitation'.

Ultimately, despite the best efforts of Ally, Grendon, and others, the Agitation failed. The man they blamed most of all for its failure was newspaper editor and politician, John Tengo Jabavu (1859–1921). During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Jabavu, an Mfengu, was the most prominent mission-educated black man in the Colony.² He had matriculated in 1883, becoming only the second black South African to do so.³ This was just six years before Grendon himself matriculated.

In view of Jabavu's strenuous opposition to the Parliamentary Registration Bill in 1887, Kimberley's Muslims and coloureds felt they could rely on him to lend his weight to their campaign to have the 1892 legislation reversed. Jabavu's alliance with white parliamentarians appears to have clouded his judgement, however. He was in an invidious position, in that the white 'liberals' to whom he was beholden for financial and other support, were becoming increasingly illiberal, and had persuaded him to acquiesce in the Franchise and Ballot Act. They argued that the Act represented a major compromise and that the alternative—draconian measures that had been contemplated—would have been far worse.

In the columns of his newspaper, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, Jabavu salved readers' sense of injury by pointing out that the Act had not been framed in explicitly racial terms. The 'coloured man [had not] been singled out from the rest of the community for special unjust legislation'. Unlike the legislation of 1887, 'on the present occasion there ha[d] been no differential treatment'.⁴ This was little more than self-deception,

¹ Hunt, *Gandhi in London*, 51.

² Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 42.

³ Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa*, 49.

⁴ *Imvo Zabantsundu* (1 Sept. 1892), enclosed in: Coloured People's Association Papers, ref. CO 19241.

since the intention of the Bill had been unambiguously racist. Jabavu remained intransigent in his opposition to Ally's campaign. And so, when the Kimberley pressure group tried to fill their Colony-wide petition, they found their efforts frustrated in the eastern districts by Jabavu's obstructionism. Almost to a man, his supporters refused to sign.

Beyond the necessity of Jabavu's not alienating his white parliamentary allies, the fact was that the initiative to 'agitate' against the 1892 Act came from Muslims, who had hitherto had little in common with Jabavu's support base. There was no tradition of political combination between Eastern Province blacks and Western Province Muslims and coloureds. Jabavu may have felt disinclined to play 'second fiddle' to one of an alien race, who had little political bargaining power of his own. In his editorials, he places emphasis upon the racial otherness of the Kimberley protestors.

Jabavu was to be a fly in the ointment on future occasions. As Fredrickson, remarks, he 'continued to follow a zigzag course in deference to his white political allies', and by the mid-1890s, some black intellectuals had begun to lose patience with 'his less-than-consistent advocacy of African rights'.¹ Grendon comments in 1905 upon the role that Jabavu and *Imvo* had hitherto played in black politics:

Twenty years ago there existed in South Africa only one mouth-piece by which the natives expressed and conveyed their political opinions. That mouthpiece was the 'Imvo' conducted by that father of South African native journalists, Mr J. Tengo-Jabavu. This organ, which has had a chequered career through good and evil report still stands in the front rank of native newspapers.²

The 'chequered career through good and evil report' must take in, on the one hand, Jabavu's rejection of the Parliamentary Registration Act (1887) and the Glen Grey Act (1894), but on the other hand, it must also embrace, in Grendon's view, Jabavu's reprehensible opposition to the protest against the Franchise and Ballot Act (1892), his alliance with the Afrikaner Bond, and his antiwar stance during the South African War (1899–1902), on account of which *Imvo* was shut down by the Cape military censors. In the months leading up to the outbreak of war, Grendon and Jabavu found themselves editors of separate newspapers, representing 'coloured' and black African

¹ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 43.

² 'The Native Press', *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.

interests respectively, propagating widely-divergent political messages, and each disparaging the other's political alliance with white politicians.¹



On 16 August 1892, the Franchise and Ballot Act was promulgated. Four days later, on the 20th, Ally, as Chairman of the group known variously as the 'Coloured Agitation Committee', the 'Coloured People's Association', or the 'Coloured Political Association', telegraphed British Prime Minister Gladstone, informing him that a petition was in the course of being signed 'by thousand queens loyal coloured subjects' (sic) and entreating him to 'advise Queen graciously withhold Royal Assent to Cape Franchise bill' until the petition reached the Colonial Office.²

On 22 August, Robert Grendon, as Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Coloured People's Association, wrote Gladstone, enclosing a copy of Ally's telegram sent two days earlier (plates 4a–4c):

Kimberley
Aug. 22. 1892.

To the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.
Prime Minister.
Downing Street.
London.
England.

Sir:—

I have the honour to enclose herewith, copy of the telegram which the Coloured people of Kimberley, British subjects and registered voters, sent to you on Saturday, with reference to the Franchise and Ballot Act, passed this session by the Parliament of the Cape Colony.

I am instructed to advise you that already a large number of signatures has been secured to the Memorial. Accompanying this, I beg to forward you copy of to-day's 'D.

¹ *Imvo* 15:754 (3 May 1899) 3. See chapter 5.

² Coloured People's Association Papers, ref. CO 17241.

Kimberley
Aug. 22. 1892.

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To the Right. Hon.
W. E. Gladstone.
Prime Minister.
Downing Street.
London.
England.

C. O.
18235
REC.
REG. 14 SEP 92

Sir :-

I have the honour to enclose herewith, copy of the telegram which the Coloured people of Kimberley, British subjects and registered voters, sent to you on Saturday, with reference to the Franchise and Ballot Act, passed this session by the Parliament of the Cape Colony.

I am instructed to advise you that already a large number of signatures has been secured to the Memorial. Accompanying this, I beg to forward you copy of to-day's "D.F. Advertiser," in which is published a letter signed by H. O. Alby, fully explaining the position of the Coloured

enclosed with this
from this day

inhabitants and the political hardship they
are bound to endure, should Her Majesty's
final ratification be given to the Act

I have the honour to be
Your obedient Servant:

573

Robert Grendon
Sec: Executive Committee
Coloured People's Association.

Cablegram:

574

From
Ally
Chairman
Kimberley

To
Prime Minister
London
England.

18235
REC:
REG 14 SEP 92

Respectfully pray you will advise
Queen graciously withhold royal assent
to Cape Franchise Bill until memorial
by thousands Queens Loyal Coloured
subjects reaches you.

F. Advertiser', in which is published a letter signed by H. O. Ally, fully explaining the position of the Coloured inhabitants and the political hardship they are bound to endure, should Her Majesty's final ratification be given to the Act.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant:

Robert Grendon

Sec: Executive Committee

Coloured People's Association.¹

On 25 August, an editorial in *Imvo* expressed disappointment at the unseemly haste with which a bill 'fundamentally affecting the Constitution' should have been rushed through Parliament, and that instead of referring such a weighty measure to the Colonial Office for 'Her Majesty's pleasure', the Governor as her representative had summarily signified the royal assent. Having expressed displeasure at Parliament's unilateral tampering with the Constitution, the article takes an abrupt *volte-face*, insisting: 'we have not the slightest desire to assist in any way the audible murmurs about a belated appeal raised by some Natives in Kimberley'. The legislation was a *fait accompli*, as far as Jabavu was concerned, and the Kimberley campaigners should accept it as that.²

A large protest meeting was convened in Cape Town in August, to muster support for the petition. The Press reported this agitation as being 'essentially Moslem'. Even so, at least one Christian, James Curry, addressed the audience. He reminded those assembled that 'we Coloured people have never rebelled', and he indicated that this Act might be just a first step on road back to slavery. Their record of loyalty to the Crown was very much the petitioners' plea. Whereas some frontier tribes had rebelled as recently as fifteen years earlier, 'Coloured people' had not, and they felt aggrieved that they were being made victims of this punitive Act.³ When H. O. Ally took the rostrum, he informed his predominantly Muslim audience of what they were up against. Even the reputedly 'liberal' white parliamentarian, John X. Merriman had

¹ Coloured People's Association Papers, ref. 18235.

² *Imvo Zabantsundu* (25 Aug. 1892), enclosed in Coloured People's Association Papers, ref. CO 18559.

³ Bickford-Smith, 'Black Ethnicities', 456.

cast ‘Abdol’—his pejorative for Muslim voters collectively—as Cape Town’s main bugbear.¹

In its number of 1 September 1892, Jabavu’s paper launched an assault against the Kimberley agitators:

There can be but one feeling—that of pity—in the breast of every lover of the country at the movement of some of the coloured people to appeal to the Imperial Government on the subject of the Franchise and Ballot Act. Having at heart the interests of our Native people we regret it. ... [A]s those long devoted to the best interests of our people, through good and evil report, we must raise our voice against our being made ridiculous by misguided action. It is a fortunate thing the movement is promoted by an irresponsible minority, and is deplored by moderate Natives who have hitherto taken a part in public affairs; and it is to be hoped it may be looked upon by our friends in the Government and in Parliament as such.²

The writer—likely Jabavu—draws a clear racial distinction between ‘some of the coloured people’ and ‘our Native people’—thus perhaps hinting at his real objection to the Agitation—that it was ‘coloured’, rather than ‘native’. Characterizing the Coloured Agitation Committee as ‘an irresponsible minority’ amounted to unwarranted character assassination. Even if Ally’s group stood little prospect of success, there is nothing to suggest that it was irresponsible. Jabavu appears more concerned to ingratiate himself to his ‘friends in the Government’ than to give serious consideration to the issues at stake.

On 5 September, Ally wrote to the British Colonial Secretary, informing him that thus far, four thousand signatures had been appended to the petition, but that many more were still anticipated and that the organizers’ intention was to make this petition fully representative as possible:

Notwithstanding the enormous number of signatures already obtained in the Western Province, extending right away from Kimberley to Cape Town, the promoters of this movement are desirous of securing as extensive a representation of coloured opinion on the subject as could be secured, and they have despatched delegates to the Eastern portions of the Colony, so that the signatories will include not alone Moslems, and Indians or Cape Coloured men, but thousands

¹ Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, 196.

² *Imvo Zabantsundu* (1 Sept. 1892), enclosed in: Coloured People’s Association Papers, ref. CO 19241.

of Aborigines of pure birth, dwelling in peace and contentment, with the justice of her Majesty's reign, but who are fretting at this restrictive Franchise measure.¹

On 23 September, the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* published a letter from Grendon, in which he highlights the multiracial, multi-ethnic range of the protest movement, and rebukes Jabavu's failure to come on board:

SIR,—With reference to the Franchise agitation, which is causing so much excitement, kindly allow me to correct an error, which is spreading about, that the movement is confined to the Moslem community, as the Capetown journals state. From the very commencement all people of colour were included, nor was the agitation confined to one district, but to the whole Colony; and from Capetown right away to Matatiele, near Natal, the alteration in the Franchise has caused unabated dissatisfaction. The natives are beginning to see the mischief that will be caused by the alteration, for had the editor of *Imvo* done his duty as a man; had he looked at the matter in its proper light; had he interpreted the natives' opinion in its true form, instead of beating about the bush to secure the favour of both parties concerned in this question; had he considered his position as one in whom the voice of a people was centred; there would to-day have been no alteration in the Franchise.

I am, &c,

ROBERT GRENDON, SEC. GRIQUALAND WEST AGITATION.

Kimberley, Sept 22nd, 1892.

P.S.—This letter having been refused publicity in the *Cape Times*, I would ask you kindly to insert it in your valuable paper.²

Couzens remarks concerning this letter that 'Grendon's early identification with "the natives" is as interesting as the uncompromising and outspoken stance he takes. These are the two most characteristic traits of his later life.'³ It is true that Grendon chose to identify with 'the natives' throughout much of his life, but he does so here in no exclusive sense. In his official capacity as Secretary of the Griqualand West Agitation, he aims to advertise the fact that the obnoxious legislation will harm the existing rights of black Africans just as it will those of Muslims and Christian coloureds. The letter 'identifies' with 'the natives' no more than Ally's does with the 'Aborigines of pure birth', whose support for the petition he anticipates obtaining. At

¹ Coloured People's Association Papers, ref. CO 19001.

² 'The Franchise Act', *DFA* 15:3720 (23 Sept. 1892) 2. This letter is republished in Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 71.

³ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 71.

this stage of his career, Grendon appears to take his cues from the coloured-Muslim sector more than from any other.

It is easy to understand Grendon's annoyance at the apparent timidity of the 'editor of *Imvo*': he had failed to do 'his duty as a man'. Elsewhere, Grendon accuses an ideological adversary of 'betray[ing] a sorry lack of manhood'.¹ 'Manhood' for Grendon seems to connote moral courage—the insight to recognize evil, and the readiness to war with it. Jabavu had failed to live up to his manly role as leader of his people, by paying court to white racists and by denying that aggrieved Africans the right to petition their Queen when they are denied justice by the Colonial Government.

Grendon seeks to correct the widely-circulated 'error' that the Agitation 'is confined to the Moslem community, as the Capetown journals state'. Cape Town's press had indeed given out the view that Ally's support base in Cape Town was 'essentially Moslem'.² The inference was that the petition was somehow invalidated by the fact that the petitioners were not 'aboriginals'. That Ally was Mauritian-born may not have helped his cause. Furthermore, the Cape Malays' parading of their cultural alterity and their ties with the wider Muslim world, led some white colonists to suspect their 'loyalty' to Empire.

There was a measure of truth in the media's characterization of the protest movement, since it had arisen in Kimberley's Muslim community, and it did not receive widespread support from black African voters, particularly in the eastern districts. The Muslim leaders must have been well aware of the deep-seated antipathy felt toward them by Cape parliamentarians, and they likely felt a need to wear a multicultural appearance, as far as possible. Grendon's appointment as Secretary to the Agitation may have held an element of window dressing.

On 23 September, Sir Henry Loch, Governor of the Cape and British High Commissioner, telegraphed the Colonial Secretary, citing *Imvo* as evidence in support of his contention that the Agitation represented no more than a sectional group and

¹ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

² Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, 196.

was therefore of little consequence. Loch counselled the Colonial Office against interfering with the measure.¹

When the petition bore 10,341 signatures one month later, it was considered time to send it to Britain. Grendon, then in Kimberley, was deputed to convey it to Cape Town and to present it personally to Lt.-Gen. W. G. Cameron, Acting Governor of the Colony and High Commissioner in the absence of Loch. Cameron would be asked to transmit the petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Grendon must have been an exceptional young man to have been singled out for this high honour. Apart from embodying the ‘progressive’ Christian image that the petitioners sought, he also cut a fine figure. He possessed poise and was probably well-spoken like his sister Mary Ann. According to his daughter, he was a meticulous dresser.² Five years later, his community would call upon him again to read an address from the ‘coloured inhabitants’ of Griqualand West to a newly-appointed Governor and High Commissioner.³

Grendon entrained for Cape Town about 24 October.⁴ Cameron despatched the petition by the outgoing English mail on the 26th, and his covering note specifically refers to ‘a petition bearing 10,341 signatures which I have received from Kimberley by the hand of Mr Grendon, the Secretary of a Coloured Agitation Committee, praying that Her Majesty may be pleased to exercise her power of disallowance in respect to the “Franchise and Ballot Act No. 9 of 1892” of the Cape Parliament’.⁵

In his letter accompanying the petition, Ally alleges that the Cape Government had acted illegally in ‘omitt[ing] to publish the Bill as required by the Constitution of the Colony for a period of three months in the *Government Gazette* before the introduction of the said Bill into Parliament’. The coloured community considered this to be a ‘very high-handed act of the Government, ... done on purpose to force this measure through the Legislature’.⁶

¹ Coloured People’s Association Papers, ref. CO 18871.

² Interview: Isabel Tshabalala (Grendon’s granddaughter), Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

³ ‘The Governor’s Arrival and Reception on the Diamond Fields’, *Citizen* 13 (27 Oct. 1897) 3.

⁴ Coloured People’s Association Papers, ref. CO 22151.

⁵ Coloured People’s Association Papers, ref. CO 22151.

⁶ Coloured People’s Association Papers, ref. CO 22166.

While it was true that Race was not mentioned in the proposed legislation, the racism of its backers was blatantly obvious in some statements made by prominent parliamentarians, to which Ally drew the attention of the Colonial Secretary. The Prime Minister Cecil John Rhodes, for instance, in moving the second reading of the Bill, had said that ‘extreme caution must be used in granting the Franchise to coloured people’. In response to the ‘suggestion that the Bill had been promoted by the Bond party, in order to deprive the sons of his own mother country [*i.e.*, Britain] of their proportion of political power, Mr Rhodes protested that “even” if that were to be the effect of the measure, he would advocate it nevertheless’. Sir James Sivewright, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, stated that ‘he regarded the Yellowman as a very great danger’ and the Treasurer-General, John X. Merriman remarked ‘that it was the Cape Town Coolie, the Abdol who was undesirable in any election’.¹

While acknowledging that ‘the Act make[s] no difference in colour’, Ally submitted that ‘the above expressions prove clearly the aims in view by the promoters, and how it will eventually affect the Coloured People’. On this account, he and his fellow petitioners ‘implore[d] the protection of Her Majesty’s Government against this law which would deprive [them] of [their] just rights, freedom, and political privileges’.²

On 8 November, James Rose-Innes, on behalf of the parliamentary ministers reported to Cameron that the ‘agitation of the persons styling themselves the humble and loyal subjects of Her Majesty residing in the Colony has been largely fomented by Asiatics residing at Kimberley’ and that by contrast ‘the large masses of aboriginal natives on the frontier’ together with ‘the more educated among them who act as their leaders’ have ‘behaved throughout with great moderation, recognising that the Act complained of in the petition has been based upon a compromise’.³ Why any sector of the electorate should ‘compromise’ in the abridgement of its rights is not specified.

In January 1893, the Colonial Secretary (the liberal, George Frederick Samuel Robinson, 1827–1909, 1st Marquis of Ripon) wrote to the Cape Governor, that despite the fact that he could not ‘conceal from [him]self that such legislation [was] contrary

¹ Coloured People’s Association Papers, ref. CO 22166.

² Coloured People’s Association Papers, ref. CO 22166.

³ Coloured People’s Association Papers, ref. CO 22721.

to the spirit and tendency of public opinion in the present day', he had 'come to the conclusion that [it would] not be [his] duty to advise the Queen to interfere with the operation of the Act, to which [Governor Loch had] already assented in Her Majesty's name'.¹ Despite his qualms, he declined to act upon the petition.²

Grendon no doubt gained self-confidence and valuable political experience during the 1890s from his involvement in the Agitation, as well as from his association with his educated and politically astute Muslim colleagues. In later years, he seems to have displayed consistent sympathy with the aspirations and political projects of South African Muslims.³ During this time, he learnt that when the populace organizes politically, it can exert substantial pressure upon its rulers. He also learnt that the failure of a single influential leader to support a remonstrance would be exploited by the colonial press and by colonial parliamentarians. He learnt to distrust the goodwill of a 'responsible' government, and he also learnt that, on occasion, it became necessary to circumvent institutionalized prejudice by making a direct appeal to the Imperial Government. This lesson he took to Natal, where he later counselled blacks to lodge an appeal with the Privy Council if they failed to obtain justice before the Colony's Supreme Court.⁴



Grendon continued to cherish the Cape's non-racial franchise and its constitutional guarantee of legal equality to all citizens, irrespective of their race. But from the 1890s, he came to realize that racial equality was coming under increasing threat, and that the rights of blacks across the South African territories were being flouted by white legislators. When the *Bloemfontein Post* proposed in 1904 to 'depriv[e] the natives, and coloured people of the Cape Colony of their votes', thereby curtailing 'rights and privileges unmolestedly enjoyed so long', Grendon showed that the provisions of Magna Charta and of the Colony's celebrated 'Ordinance 50' stood in jeopardy:

¹ Coloured People's Association Papers, ref. CO 031-032.

² Coloured People's Association Papers, ref. CO 22721.

³ For instance, Grendon's reports sympathetically on the political aspirations of Cape Muslims, in 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 4. See also chapter 1 for more on Grendon's stance in respect of *Islam*.

⁴ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

Both the Great Charter and Ordinance No. 50 of 1828, otherwise known as the Magna Charta of the natives, would become a farce, and the chiefest provision of the latter, which runs thus—‘Hottentots, and free persons of colour are entitled to every privilege to which any other British subjects are entitled’—would stink in their nostrils, did the ‘Bloemfontein Post’ succeed in persuading South Africa to follow in her footsteps, and carry out her harsh and tyrannous dictates.¹

A non-racial franchise was ever the great sticking point for white South Africans, as Grendon points out in an *Ilanga* editorial on the ‘Native Vote’:

The most formidable question which the whites will hardly ever concede to the natives is the Franchise. Over and over again have we been treated to vapourings from various sources protesting in no uncertain language against passing, or ever discussing any such measure. These protests are inspired by none other than mere dread of the so-called ‘Black Peril’, and a harsh intent to withhold from the natives, who are qualified, that which is their due.²

In the same leader, Grendon recognizes that suggestions to separate voting districts and voter’s rolls according to the race of electors, ‘betray ... a spirit of cowardice which the natives very easily see through and laugh to scorn’.³ In another editorial, he likewise identifies white fears—‘mere dread of the so-called “Black Peril”’—as the reason why the franchise is withheld from blacks:

To our mind this withholding of the suffrage is but a species of political cowardice on the part of the ruling caste. We are dispossessed and deprived of a voice in the affairs of the country. We at present are content with our hard lot, but this we believe, and this we fearlessly assert, that at no distant day that privilege will come despite all the opposition, and prejudice which at present prevail.⁴

In these two editorials as elsewhere,⁵ Grendon identifies the root cause of the colonists’ refusal to grant blacks the suffrage. It is ‘mere dread’; ‘a species of political cowardice’; willingness to renounce lofty principles in a mean attempt to further their myopic self-interest. Cowardice is a charge he repeatedly levels at white legislators who deprive blacks of a say in the running of their own land.⁶

¹ ‘A Worthy Philanthropist’, *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 3–4.

² ‘The Native Vote’, *Ilanga* 3:95 (10 Feb. 1905) 3–4.

³ ‘The Native Vote’, *Ilanga* 3:95 (10 Feb. 1905) 3–4.

⁴ ‘Poor Personality’, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁵ ‘The Native Question’, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4.

⁶ He discerns ‘indications of fear and dread of the native vote’ in proposals made by SANAC (‘The Native Franchise’, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 3).



While it is true that the Coloured People's Association failed in its immediate objective, something was nonetheless gained by its mass action. The multi-ethnic 'Agitation' had served to weld a community of interest between the descendants of both Christian and Muslim slaves and other black minority groups. While 'Malay' identity was not obliterated in this process, from this time forward, it was gradually 'subsumed within a broader Coloured ethnicity'.¹ The Association was 'the first attempt at a national Coloured organisation', and prefigured to some extent the African Political Organization (APO) founded in Cape Town a decade later.² But whereas the Kimberley pressure group had aimed at racial and ethnic inclusivity, the founders of the APO were more modest in their aspirations. They were largely motivated by a desire 'to distinguish themselves from "Natives", people like the Mfengus, Gaikas and Gcalekas'.³ The parting of the ways appears to have come after Jabavu and his 'aboriginal native' support base snubbed the invitation to combine with the Kimberley pressure group.

In early 1893, it was reported that the Coloured People's Association in Kimberley had 450 active members drawn from Muslim, black African ('Native'), Indian, and coloured ('Cape Men') sectors of the community. Its stated objective was to make black voters more politically-aware, to campaign for political equality, to secure a higher standard of education for historically-disadvantaged groups, and to provide for 'better representation of coloured people on the jury lists'.⁴ Grendon will have known that trial by jury was one of the landmark provisions of Magna Charta, which he extols in *Paul Kruger's Dream*.⁵ His view on the right of blacks to sit on juries is expressed in 1905:

We fear that the registration of native jurors will never become an accomplished fact in this country. This being the case are we to be forever befooled by that meaningless and foolish theory that a man is tried by his peers. In theory the black man is the white man's equal before the law. In practice this is strenuously opposed and denied. No such equality exists. Caste spirit

¹ Bickford-Smith, 'Black Ethnicities', 456.

² Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall*, 11.

³ Bickford-Smith, 'Black Ethnicities', 445.

⁴ Allen, 'Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', 162.

⁵ *PKD*, Dedication, p. v.

rules it out of court. And as long as this spirit reigns the black criminal can never be said to be tried by his peers who actually and practically do not exist.¹

Since white colonists are fixated on segregation in almost every area of society, why can they not follow their own ‘logic’ through to its conclusion and concede that there should be ‘white juries for white criminals, and black juries for black criminals’?²

The Coloured People’s Association survived for a time after the crisis surrounding the Franchise and Ballot Act, and it is reasonable to assume that Grendon continued to play a role in its activities. It appears to have become moribund by the second half of the 1890s.³ Many of its members may have been absorbed by the coloured B-branches of the South African League, when they began to be formed in 1897.

What was perhaps the last concerted action of the Coloured People’s Association occurred in 1893, when Achmat Attoulah Effendi, a member of Kimberley’s Malay community, announced that he would stand as a candidate for one of Cape Town’s parliamentary wards in the upcoming elections to be held the following year. The *Cape Argus* construed this audacious initiative as an outgrowth of the Franchise and Ballot Act agitation.⁴ Gavin Lewis ascribes Effendi’s decision to stand for office to a ‘new mood of black political assertiveness’—the ‘new political self-confidence amongst some blacks in the Cape’.⁵

Effendi’s father, Abubakr Effendi (c.1835–80), was a highly-educated *imam*, born into an aristocratic family in Kurdistan. Following representations from Cape Muslims sent via the Turkish ambassador in London, the Turkish Government sponsored Effendi senior to settle at the Cape as a spiritual leader. In 1884, his elder son Achmat founded the Ottoman School for Religious Studies in Kimberley, where he had settled.⁶ Because of his close sporting and political ties with Kimberley’s Muslim community, Grendon would almost certainly have known Achmat Effendi.

At the time, the voting system in Cape Town represented an anomaly in the Colony, in that each voter had four votes, one for each of the city’s parliamentary

¹ Natives and Law’, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 3–4.

² ‘Natives and Law’, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 3–4.

³ Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, 198.

⁴ *Cape Argus*, 18 Jan. 1893, cited in: Bickford-Smith, ‘Black Ethnicities’, 456.

⁵ Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall*, 11.

⁶ Mahida, ‘History of Muslims in South Africa’ (online).

seats. The voter could cast these votes howsoever he chose—either spreading them over four candidates, or settling all four votes on a single candidate. It was predicted that if all Cape Town’s Muslim voters ‘plumped’ their votes for Effendi, he was likely to gain a seat. White parliamentarians and the white press took fright at the prospect of a Muslim sitting in the House. It was pointed out that he was receiving funding from Kimberley, where the Coloured People’s Association had recently come into existence.¹

The Afrikaner Bond in particular pressed for the immediate abolition of Cape Town’s cumulative vote system which allowed for plumping. They were backed by the Prime Minister, Rhodes. The intention of the new Bill was openly acknowledged as being to keep “the Effendi” out of the House’.² Henceforth, Cape Town’s electors would be permitted to give one vote only to each of four candidates.³ Undaunted, Effendi did stand for Parliament as he had indicated he would. He gained approximately 700 votes, doing best in Districts Two and Six, but since very few white electors would cast their votes for him, he was defeated at the poll.⁴

In September 1904, Effendi’s brother-in-law, Dr Abdullah Abdurahman, made South African history, when he ‘became the first black man to win election to the Cape Town City Council, as the representative of District Six’—a position he was to hold—with one brief interruption—until 1940.⁵ In reporting this landmark event, Grendon harks back to the ‘Effendi incident’:

At the recent elections of the Capetown Town Council one of the successful candidates was Dr Abdurahman, a Moslem doctor who graduated first on the list in his day at Glasgow. This is the first instance in which a coloured man has gained admission into the ranks of the ‘Urbani Patres’. No doubt race feeling will be intensified by the event, but any way the Malays of Cape Town are not dead to their interests. Some time ago Ahmet Effendi, the uncle [sic] of this well-known coloured doctor, stood as a candidate for the House of Assembly. His ambition was a little too premature, for he gave his opponents an opportunity of cutting down the plump vote which at that time was in vogue, and he fell out in the race. Unsuccessful though he was, he

¹ Bickford-Smith, ‘Black Ethnicities’, 456.

² Edgecombe, ‘The Non-Racial Franchise’, 36.

³ Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, 145; Davenport, *Afrikaner Bond*, 148; Edgecombe, ‘The Non-Racial Franchise’, 35.

⁴ Bickford-Smith, ‘Black Ethnicities’, 456–57; Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, 145, 197–98.

⁵ Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall*, 27; Bickford-Smith, ‘Black Ethnicities’, 461.

transmitted his desire to his nephew who to-day is the person to whom the Capetown Malays look for the furtherance of their urban interests.¹

Having close acquaintance with the political climate at the Cape, and having been personally involved in black activism there, Grendon was well-placed to cite the Cape Malays as an object lesson to their Natalian contemporaries—the disenfranchised *kholwa* class. These too should not be ‘dead to their interests’. Although Grendon does not articulate this inference, it may readily be drawn by his readers.



The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 brought massive foreign investment to the Transvaal, but it also put in place the political conditions that led thirteen years later to war between Britain and the Republic. ‘Crowds of aliens flocked into the country in quest of fortunes’, as Grendon records in the prose argument to *Paul Kruger’s Dream*.² In a footnote to the *Dream*, he describes the *Uitlander* Crisis, during which British nationals living in the gold-producing areas

vainly petitioned the Volksraad to redress their grievances. They next formed an association—the Reform Association—for the purpose of agitating for their rights by constitutional means. When these failed, they armed 4,000 men in case of disturbance, and they appealed for aid to Dr Jameson, ex-Administrator of Matabeleland, who with 500 men crossed the Transvaal border and marched as far as Krugersdorp, where he, and his force were defeated, and compelled to surrender.³

On 30 December 1895, Kimberley’s citizens learnt the news that Dr Jameson at the head of ‘a contingent of Chartered Company’s police had invaded the Transvaal’. Lady Sarah Wilson, who happened to be in the town, remarked that ‘no upheaval of Nature could have created greater excitement ... than this sensational news’.⁴ A few days later, Jameson’s surrender and arrest ‘caused considerable anxiety amongst the Kimberley people’.⁵ They knew that if the incident escalated into full-scale war, they would be uncomfortably close to the front line. Grendon, who was resident in Kimberley at the time, may have begun to conceive his epic poem at about this time.

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 4.

² *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 32, prose argument.

³ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 40n.

⁴ Quoted in: Allen, ‘Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley’, 22.

⁵ Allen, ‘Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley’, 22.

The Jameson Raid transformed the political landscape of South Africa—in particular, that of the Cape Colony. Rhodes's complicity in the Raid became known, leading to an immediate fall-out with his Afrikaner Bond partners who naturally took the part of their aggrieved kinsfolk in the Transvaal. He resigned as Cape Premier.

The Raid also injected fresh vitality into black politics in the Colony. It 'set up delicate political balances at the Cape, in which Anglo-Dutch rivalry was a key element'.¹ Efforts to curb the black franchise had preoccupied politicians prior to the Raid. Now fears that whites were about to be 'swamped' at the polls were superseded by what Grendon in the subtitle to *Paul Kruger's Dream* describes as the 'Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa between Boer and Briton'. On the face of things, the Raid resuscitated the Cape's 'liberal' tradition, and a premium began to be placed on the black vote by white politicians on both sides of the Anglo-Boer divide.² Ever a political weathercock so long as imperial interests were served, Rhodes began to broker alliances with the black electorate in an effort to regain power. So it was, paradoxically, that whereas the Raid greatly exacerbated already-strained relations between Boers and Britons in South Africa, for the time being at least it brought about closer working relationships between blacks and colonials.

Ruth Edgecombe describes the side-effects of the Jameson Raid for the Cape Colony's black electorate:

After the Jameson Raid in 1896, a distinct two-party system emerged at the Cape. Liberals such as Rose-Innes, Merriman and Sauer allied themselves with the Bond and took with them the support of Jabavu and the Mfengu. The Xhosa and Thembu tended to support the English-speaking Progressive Party and in 1898, A. K. Soga's Xhosa/English newspaper, *Izwi Labantu*, was launched in opposition to *Imvo*. With both having Black and Coloured support it was in the interest of neither party to make further inroads on the colour-blind franchise.³

What Edgecombe omits from her succinct description of political conditions in the Cape during the years immediately prior to the South African War, is a third newspaper, *Coloured South African*, which Grendon edited from Uitenhage in 1899.

¹ Edgecombe, 'The Non-Racial Franchise in Cape Politics', 22.

² Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, 145; Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall*, 11.

³ Edgecombe, 'The Non-Racial Franchise in Cape Politics', 37.

Like *Izwi*, it aligned itself with Rhodes's Progressive Party.¹ *Izwi*'s identification with Rhodes's new political rhetoric accounts for the fact that Grendon, in an editorial on 'The Native Press', privileges it above Jabavu's *Imvo*, when he states that *Izwi* 'can be safely termed "*Malleus Kaffrariensis*" the "Native Hammer"'.² *Izwi* took the line that 'only the triumph of British democratic ideals would ensure lasting progress, prosperity and peace for South Africa'.³ In the estimate of many blacks, Rhodes became the foremost white exponent of these values.

In 1896, the South African League, a pro-imperial political association, was founded. Its aim was to realize objectives that Jameson's Raid and the planned *Uitlander* uprising might have brought about had they succeeded in their aim. The League had roots in the National Union, which had spawned Johannesburg's 'Reform Committee' prior to the Raid. Its rallying cry was that of 'British Supremacy' across South Africa.⁴ The republican, F. W. Reitz was probably not far off the mark when he described the South African League as 'a political organisation which sprang up out of, and owed its origin to, the race hatred which the Jameson Raid had called into being [*i.e.*, that between British and Boers], and at the head of which Mr Rhodes himself stands'.⁵

The League's principal aims were to keep South Africa—with its wealth—in British hands, and to act as a counterweight to the Afrikaner Bond.⁶ It encouraged electors to vote for men who espoused its imperialist and expansionist agenda. It also broadcast the alleged abuses of Kruger's administration and the plight of disfranchised Britons and coloured peoples in the Republic.

The League decided to recruit members amongst the coloured electorate. But instead of providing for complete racial integration, it formed separate 'A'- and 'B'-sections, to accommodate whites and coloureds respectively. Initially, the B-sections would be under white superintendence.⁷ T. R. H. Davenport criticizes this grudging compromise with the 'progressive' principle of racial equality. He speculates that 'the

¹ *Imvo* 15:754 (3 May 1899) 3.

² 'The Native Press', *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.

³ Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu*, 31.

⁴ *SESA* 11: 43–44.

⁵ Reitz, *Century of Wrong*, 66.

⁶ Allen, 'Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', 159–60.

⁷ Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, 146.

Cape liberal tradition could only have acquired substantial content', if the League had 'risen to the occasion in 1896 and created, out of a multiracial electorate, a multi-racial political party, instead of contenting itself with ill grace with a poorly developed system of non-white branches'.¹

Somewhere near the start of June 1897, the Kimberley branch of the League established its B-section—possibly the first in the Colony. A meeting was convened at the Perseverance School Room—a regular venue for the coloured community. The Press reported 'a large attendance of coloured citizens'. Grendon was there. Ed Heneke, in introducing J. Pooley, Chairman of Kimberley's white branch,

spoke of the desirability of a coloured branch of the League being formed, and said that Her Majesty possessed no more loyal subjects than the coloured community, who, even at the present moment, were ready, if called upon, to fight on behalf of the land of their birth, and he was of opinion that as the Government was willing to accept their services in time of need, they should be trained to bear arms whilst there was peace. (Applause.) ... Mr Pooley then carefully explained the primary principles of the League, after which he said the first thing he wished to do was to disabuse their minds that the League was antagonistic to the Dutch people. The League was anti-Bond, but that did not mean anti-Dutch. He was pleased if he could be of service to the coloured community, and when asked by them to assist in forming an Africander [*i.e.*, coloured] section of the Kimberley branch, he did so most readily. Mr Pooley then explained to the meeting how the proposed section would be worked, and stated that for the time being the Chairman of 'A' [white] section would also be the Chairman of 'B', or the coloured section.²

A coloured B-section of the League, consisting of sixty members, was formed at that first meeting. Grendon elected to its Executive Committee. 'An enthusiastic, interesting, and orderly meeting was brought to a close by the singing of "God Save the Queen"'.³

So it was that Griqualand West's politically-minded coloured community pioneered coloured membership of the South African League. It seems likely that Grendon was just one of several League members who had earlier belonged to the Coloured People's Association. It was reported in August 1897 that 'Port Elizabeth coloured people were about to start a Branch on lines similar to those adopted by their

¹ Davenport, *Afrikaner Bond*, 330.

² 'South African League: A Coloured Branch Formed: Enthusiastic Meeting', *DFA* (12 June 1897) 9.

³ 'South African League: A Coloured Branch Formed: Enthusiastic Meeting', *DFA* (12 June 1897) 9.

Kimberley friends', and that a prominent member of Kimberley's B-Section had left for Cape Town with the commission to broach the subject of starting a coloured branch there.¹

During the course of Rhodes's political campaigning in 1897, the newspapers reported that he had been promising 'equal rights for all White men south of the Zambesi'.² Not unnaturally, some of the League's coloured members wanted to know where they fitted in. In September, Kimberley's *Citizen* reported upon a recent general meeting of the coloured section of the League, held once again in the Perseverance School Room:

Mr La Vita said he noticed that Mr Rhodes has on several occasions made the same remarks with regard to equal rights to every white man south of the Zambesi, and he should like to know the opinion of the League on that subject. ... Mr R Grendon thought it foolish to meddle with that question. Mr Rhodes was addressing white people, and he promised equal rights to white people. Mr Rhodes did not state that the coloured man should have no rights. We were going beyond our boundary by tackling Mr Rhodes for a statement which he did not make. When he (the speaker) would say to another man, 'I will give you the same right in a certain capacity as myself', it has nothing to do with others, and it would be ridiculous if any other person should ask him 'What about me?'

Mr C. La Vita asked Mr Grendon whether any distinction was made between white and white, and if there was any necessity for Mr Rhodes to make such a statement because in his opinion every white man has equal rights.

Mr Grendon was a little puzzled, but very soon had his recollections together, and stated that in the Transvaal every white man has not equal rights[. T]here [are] the Uitlanders, and Mr Rhodes' aim was to have those Uitlander grievances removed. Mr Rhodes was doubtless referring to the state of things there, and we should wait to hear Mr Rhodes's opinion about the coloured people, before we should say anything further in connection with that matter.³

After Grendon had taken Rhodes's part, 'Mr J. H. Bowers spoke in the same strain', saying that 'he firmly believed that Mr Rhodes is a friend of the coloured people'. La Vita was apparently not appeased by Grendon's apologia for Rhodes, because a 'somewhat fiery discussion took place on the subject'.⁴

¹ 'S. A. League, Section B', *Citizen* 3 (18 Aug. 1897) 3.

² Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, 146.

³ 'South African League: Section B, Kimberley Branch', *Citizen* 8 (22 Sept. 1897) 3.

⁴ 'South African League: Section B, Kimberley Branch', *Citizen* 8 (22 Sept. 1897) 3.

The thrust of Grendon's argument is that La Vita has chosen to take Rhodes's words out of context. Rhodes refers to the *Uitlander* Crisis in the Transvaal—an issue that exists exclusively between white men who do not currently enjoy equal rights. Rights for blacks and coloureds have no bearing in this context. Rhodes did not say—and may not have meant—that civilized men other than whites were not entitled to equal rights, and if the meeting went along with La Vita's inference, they would be 'going beyond [their] boundary by tackling Mr Rhodes for a statement which he did not make'. The rugby analogy reveals the extent to which Kimberley's coloured community drew the metaphors of life from sporting contests.¹

Rhodes's motto of 'equal rights for all white men' was not laid to rest by Kimberley's B-section of the South African League. If Rhodes wanted their votes, he would need to alter his tune. In response to objections from coloured electors, Rhodes had the good sense to alter his rallying cry to 'equal rights for all civilised men'.² F. W. Reitz, onetime President of the Orange Free State and Kruger's State Secretary in the period leading up to the South African War, was one of the most articulate advocates of the republican cause, and thus one of Rhodes's principal adversaries. After the failure of the Jameson Raid, Reitz states, Rhodes was obliged to embark upon 'a new programme for the "progressive policy" of South Africa, and [accordingly] made use of the formula "Equal rights for all white people south of the Zambesi"'. Mr Rhodes altered this cry afterwards, with an eye to the coloured vote in the Cape Colony, to "Equal rights for all civilised persons south of the Zambesi".³

In an atmosphere of heightened political tension following the Raid, Kimberley's B-Section lobbied for the right to be trained and equipped militarily. At a Congress of the League, Lenders proposed that '(1) A corps of volunteers, composed of a limited number of Coloured men should be established in all the towns throughout the Colony; [that] (2) they should be commanded by European officers and enjoy the same privileges as the other volunteers; [and that] (3) it be urged upon Parliament to give the matter its serious consideration at the earliest possible opportunity'. Mr

¹ Grendon uses a similar sporting metaphor to describe 'an Englishman of high descent' who was 'declared "off-side"' by his 'own class of people' ('Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6).

² Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, 146; Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall*, 11.

³ Reitz, *Century of Wrong*, 83; Fredrickson (*Black Liberation*, 43) confirms this.

Pooley, the white leader of the Kimberley A-branch, seconded Lenders's proposal, and after small amendment, it 'was carried unanimously'.¹ In view of Grendon's personal involvement in the South African War,² it seems likely that he was at the forefront of this lobby-group.



For Kimberley's blacks who held the 'vision of a common, non-racial society', it was focused in 'the image of the great white queen', Victoria, who stood for 'justice, progress, and opportunities for education and advancement'.³ The Queen's birthday was always a red-letter day on Kimberley's calendar. 'All business was suspended for the day and the public usually turned out in very large numbers to witness the various public events of the day or to pass the hours in picnicking.'⁴

But, 'not one of these birthday celebrations ... surpassed the festivities during the Great Jubilee of the Queen' in 1897.⁵ For the Diamond Jubilee of the monarch's reign, it seemed appropriate that the diamond capital of the Empire should celebrate the event in proper style. Throughout the town, 'pillars, posts, shop- and house-fronts were all magnificently decorated, and Queen Victoria's portraits were prominently displayed'.⁶ Griqualand West's coloured community commissioned an illuminated congratulatory address to Victoria (plate 4d), which read, in part:

To her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland; Defender of the Faith;
Empress of India.

May it please your Majesty:

We, Colonial coloured residents of the province of Griqualand West in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, do humbly beg to offer to Your Majesty by means of these presents our sincerest wishes and congratulations, on the completion of the sixtieth year of Your Majesty's glorious and beneficent reign.

¹ 'Coloured Volunteers', *Citizen* 2:28 (16 Feb. 1898) supplement, 1.

² See chapter 6.

³ Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 34.

⁴ Allen, 'Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', 89.

⁵ Allen, 'Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', 89.

⁶ Allen, 'Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', 90.

Plate 44: Illuminated address congratulating Queen Victoria on the Diamond Jubilee of her reign, 1897. (See Grendon's signature.)



Illuminated address: Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (1897)

And we venture to express the hope that Your Majesty may long be spared in health and strength to rule over the British Empire, which during the last 60 years of Your Majesty's reign has been the mainstay of the preservation of peace in the affairs of the earth.¹

Grendon was one of the six signatories to this beautiful address, which is today preserved in the British National Archives²—an eloquent memorial to those black South Africans who acknowledged Victoria as their Sovereign, and who ascribed the 'preservation of peace' to the quality of her reign.



On 23 October 1897, Sir Alfred Milner, the new Cape Governor and British High Commissioner to South Africa, was given a warm reception when he paid his first official visit to Griqualand West. Kimberley's townsfolk festooned their buildings, while the town council erected a welcome arch and a decorated reception platform.³ The black communities in particular saw the occasion as an opportunity to express their loyalty and their good wishes for Milner's term of office. The new Governor, after all, was not a locally-elected member of the Cape Government, but an appointee of the Imperial Government—a deputy for the Queen herself.

Shortly before the visit, the *Citizen* reported upon a 'very well attended meeting' of coloured burgesses held 'in the Mechanic's Hall for the purpose of considering what steps should be taken by our people here to welcome His Excellency the Governor on his visit to Kimberley'. It was decided to commission an illuminated address, and a committee was appointed—of which Grendon was a member—'to see to the drafting of the Address'.⁴ A local calligrapher lettered and decorated the address, which prayed that 'success [might] crown [His] Excellency's efforts in every undertaking to maintain peace, and to further the prospects of this land'. Grendon was one of the signatories.⁵ He was also part of the delegation of 'Cape coloured residents of

¹ 'Coloured Citizens' Address', *DFA* (29 May 1897) 5.

² Colonial Coloured Residents of Griqualand West, illuminated congratulatory address to Queen Victoria (BA, PP 1/647).

³ Allen, 'Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', 86.

⁴ 'The Governor's Visit', *Citizen* 12 (20 Oct. 1897) 2; Allen, 'Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', 86.

⁵ 'The Governor's Arrival and Reception on the Diamond Fields', *Citizen* 13 (27 Oct. 1897) 3; 'Coloured Citizens' Address', *DFA* (29 May 1897) 5.

Kimberley, Beaconsfield, Klipdam, and Barkly West' introduced to Milner by Kimberley's mayor. Grendon was deputed to read and present the address.¹



In November 1897, Grendon was one of the dignitaries specifically named in *Imvo* as present at the opening ceremony of the Jubilee Commemoration Hall in the Malay Camp:

As advertised, a large and gay company of Natives and coloured people assembled at the Malay Camp, Kimberley, on Tuesday evening, to celebrate the opening of the Queen's Jubilee Commemoration Hall for this class. The building is large and has a good situation, having been used as a store, and is being fitted for a Native Hall, with attached compartments. Mr J. Tengo-Jabavu, on his way from Bulawayo, had consented to open the building.²

Other prominent members of the black petite bourgeoisie were also present. There was the Rev. Jonathan Jabavu, a Wesleyan minister who was 'invariably asked to become president, chairman or honorary member of the many societies and clubs which flourished in the life of this community'.³ Jonas Msikanya was 'educated at Lovedale', and had worked as an 'interpreter and office messenger at the Beaconsfield magistrate's court since 1879'.⁴ 'Mr Skota' may possibly have been Boyce Skota, president of the Eccentrics Cricket Club, whose son T. D. Mveli Skota would compile the *African Yearly Register*—a black biographical dictionary—in 1931.⁵ S. Mankazana was 'a respectable member of the community' and chairman of the Eccentrics Cricket Club.⁶ The prosperous and multi-talented Isaiah Bud-M'belle has already been referred to. 'Mr Binase' may possibly have been Theo. Binase, a postman, cricketer, and vocalist.⁷ Mr Mokuena may possibly have been Simon Mokuena, secretary of the South Africans Improvement Society, and 'interpreter in the Beaconsfield magistrate's court, whom Plaatje remembered as "perhaps the greatest linguist and orator I ever knew"'.⁸ Mr 'Lemkoni' may possibly be Patrick ('Pat') Lenkoane, a well-known humorist, who had once served Cecil John Rhodes as

¹ 'The Governor's Arrival and Reception on the Diamond Fields', *Citizen* 13 (27 Oct. 1897) 3.

² 'Jubilee Commemoration Hall: Opening Ceremony', *Imvo* 13:682 (18 Nov. 1897) 3.

³ Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 33. He was John Tengo Jabavu's brother.

⁴ Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 33.

⁵ Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 252.

⁶ Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 48.

⁷ Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 32, 45.

⁸ Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 36.

a gardener.¹ The identities of other worthies listed in the *Imvo* report have not been traced.

Grendon and Crutse are the only surnames of European origin. Notable by their absence are such names as Lenders, Heneke, Bowers, and La Vita. This would seem to indicate that Grendon felt more at home at ‘Native’ events than did many other prominent coloureds. It is noteworthy that whereas *Imvo* states that the new facility is intended as a ‘Native Hall’, the guests include ‘Natives and coloured people’—indicating that the two communities were not altogether integrated, even in Kimberley.

In opening the new facility, John Tengo Jabavu ‘read a long congratulatory telegram from his beloved brother and partner, Mr John Knox Bokwe’,² who was a Presbyterian minister and the author of *The Native Land Question* (1894). Bokwe (1855–1922) is best remembered as a musical composer. His first collection of hymns and songs came off the Lovedale Mission press in 1885. In 1897, he became a partner with Jabavu in *Imvo*. The fact that he was a trained telegraph operator may account for the ‘long congratulatory telegram’.³

After narrating the racist mistreatment he had recently suffered while passing through Boer territories on his rail journey from Matabeleland, Jabavu emphasized that ‘it was not so under their beloved Sovereign, and it was meet that they should thus tangibly demonstrate some gratitude and indebtedness to the British Queen and her people. He trusted that in this Commemoration Hall they would do all to realise, in their lives and actions, the virtues of the Union Jack overhanging him.’ At the conclusion of his speech, the audience ‘rose and gave three cheers for Her Majesty’.

An ‘excellent spread’ was next enjoyed, after which Bud-M’belle proposed ‘The progress of the Natives’—a toast that confirms the impression that the Jubilee Hall was intended principally for black African rather than for coloured use. He compared their present condition to what prevailed at the time of the accession of the Queen, and pointed out that though then scarcely a Native could write his name and there

¹ Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 38.

² ‘Jubilee Commemoration Hall: Opening Ceremony’, *Imvo* 13:682 (18 Nov. 1897) 3.

³ *DSAB*, i:88–89.

were no Native ministers, now thousands could write, and there were about five hundred Native ministers'.¹

Imvo's report places Grendon at the very heart of Kimberley's vibrant multi-ethnic society of mission-educated blacks—talented, 'progressive', and 'respectable', dedicated to what they perceived as 'British' values, and expressing devotion to an aging white Queen enthroned on an island six thousand miles distant. Significantly, the report finds Grendon in the company of some the foremost members of the Cape Colony's black intelligentsia.

The Queen's Jubilee celebrations suggest some fluidity in Grendon's personal sense of racial affiliation. On one hand, he could serve on the committee of the group of 'Colonial coloured residents' who sent their congratulations to Victoria on her achieving a sixty-year-long reign. On the other, he could be one of a 'company of Natives and coloured people'—but preponderantly the former—who gathered together to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee by inaugurating a hall for 'Natives' in her honour.



Early in December, Grendon attended a meeting of the B-Section of the South African League, held once again at the Perseverance School. An important point of discussion was 'the Langberg indenturing scheme'.² This issue arose in the aftermath to the Bechuanaland Campaign of 1897—also known as the Langberg or Langeberg Campaign—in which the last resistance of the southern Tswana tribes was quashed by the Cape Government. As a punitive measure, much reserve land—which the Tswana had lately been assured would never be alienated—was confiscated and given over to the use of white farmers. Kevin Shillington describes the Cape Colony's handling of the aftermath of the Campaign:

The end of the Langeberg campaign signalled the end of the last remnants of Southern Tswana autonomy. Between 1,200 and 1,500 were officially estimated to have died or been killed during the campaign, while nearly 3,800 men, women and children were taken prisoner to Kuruman. There the old and infirm were 'let off by being contracted to local farmers' while the remainder,

¹ 'Jubilee Commemoration Hall: Opening Ceremony', *Imvo* 13:682 (18 Nov. 1897) 3; Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 243.

² 'S. A. League.—B. Section', *Citizen* 19 (15 Dec. 1897) 3.

a little over two thousand, were given the choice of accepting indentured employment among the western Cape farmers or standing trial for treason. All 'chose' the former alternative, although J. S. Moffat took two to stand trial as a test case which was dismissed for lack of evidence. Altogether, 1,896 were indentured to western Cape farmers for five years at 10 shillings a month for men and 7 shillings and 6 pence a month for women. One hundred and thirty-four had died in custody between Kuruman and Cape Town.¹

At the League meeting of December 1897, where 'the Langberg indenturing scheme' was 'briefly referred to' by the Chairman,

Mr Grendon then proposed and Mr C. La Vita seconded, that this section adopt the original motion as proposed by Mr Stratten at the meeting held by Branch A:—

That this meeting of the League disapproves of the action of the Government in indenturing the Bechuanas who surrendered themselves, together with their wives and children, without first having submitted them to trial before a competent Court.²

Although Grendon proposed this motion, he appears to have taken his cue from a motion already put forward at a meeting of the white section of the League. It appears that Stratten's motion—and Grendon's, which duplicates it—accuses Government of acting outside of the Law by indenturing the Tswana who have willingly surrendered. A 'competent Court'—rather than a drumhead military one—would be likely to exonerate many of these people on charges of 'disloyalty' or 'rebellion'. To indenture the innocent was contrary to 'British' principles.

Grendon was implacably opposed to *corvée*, or forced labour, which sometimes masqueraded as 'indenture' within white-dominated South African territories, where it was an institution. Under the Shepstonian system of 'Native Administration' in Natal, it was termed *isibalo*, a word which described 'the power of the [white] Supreme Chief to call upon Africans to labour on public works in the Colony'.³ Grendon objects to all such 'forced labour which in its very essence is slavery'.⁴ In the article, 'Slavery or Not?' he states that 'forced labour is one of those plagues wherewith Natal is cursed'.⁵ He also warns that if the 'Bangwaketse'—a Tswana tribe

¹ Shillington, *Colonisation of the Southern Tswana*, 240.

² 'S. A. League—B. Section', *Citizen* 19 (15 Dec. 1897) 3.

³ Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, 122.

⁴ 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 3.

⁵ 'Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4.

under Chief Bathoen¹—fail to raise enough money to pay the hut tax, the unsympathetic white Government will ‘call [them] out to work in their share upon public roads, &c.’, for the privilege of ‘living on Government land’.² The Langeberg ‘indenturing scheme’ against which Grendon protested was an example of the whitewashed ‘slavery’ he detested.



In March 1898, a *Citizen* columnist reported: ‘I learn that that good sportsman, Mr Robert Grendon, will shortly leave Kimberley to take charge of a school in Uitenhage. “Bob” will be greatly missed on the cricket field, and his departure from our midst will be hailed with general regret.’³ The same writer—quoted in the epigraph to this chapter—reported in April that ‘that good all-round cricketer, Mr Robert Grendon, has left Kimberley for the Eastern Province, whither he has gone to complete a botanical work, entitled “The Illustrated Genera of South African Plants”. Mr Grendon was certainly a progressive of progressives, and he will be much missed in enlightened circles on the Diamond Fields.’⁴

Comparatively little is known about Grendon’s brief residence in Uitenhage. In a footnote to *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, he contrasts the backwardness of Uitenhage—one of his models of a ‘Boer’ town and a ‘monument’ to ‘Sleep, and Sloth’—with the growth and progressiveness of its neighbour, Port Elizabeth, one of the South African towns that ‘found their origin in British hands’.⁵ In another footnote to the *Dream*, he ascribes his couplet,

AS YE ARE NOW, SUCH ONCE WERE WE,
WHAT WE ARE NOW, YE SOON MUST BE!

to ‘a defaced epitaph [he had] discovered in the Church of England Cemetery, Uitenhage, some years ago’.⁶ (In the tradition of the Romantic poets, Grendon sought inspiration in graveyards!¹)

¹ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 5.

² ‘Bathoen’s Protest’, *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.

³ ‘The Owl’, ‘On the Wing’, *Citizen* 2:36 (26 March 1898) 3.

⁴ ‘The Owl’, ‘On the Wing’, *Citizen* 2:42 (16 April 1898) 6.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 55 and p. 55n.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XXXV, p. 114n.

His poem, 'Melia and Pietro' may have been composed, at least in part, at Uitenhage.² Towards the end of 1898, he was an 'authorized Agent' for the *Citizen* at Uitenhage,³ and in 1899, he was editing the *Coloured South African*, also at Uitenhage.⁴ His poetry and journalism from this period are treated in the next chapter.

In June 1899, while living at Uitenhage, Grendon obtained a loan of £100 from his father, Joseph Grendon. The supporting documentation is preserved in the Cape Town repository of the South African National Archives:

Notarial Bond

Know all men whom it may concern that on this the 7th day of July in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety Nine before me, Arthur George Syfret, of Cape Town, Notary Public, duly sworn and admitted and in the presence of the subscribed witnesses personally came and appeared Clarence de Jager also of Cape Town, he being duly authorised thereto by a Power of Attorney dated the 29th day of June 1899, drawn up at Uitenhage and granted him by Robert Grendon.

And the Appearer declared to acknowledge his Principal to be justly and truly indebted to and on behalf of Joseph Grendon in the sum of one hundred pounds sterling being the amount of an existing debt, renouncing therefore all benefit from the legal exception 'Non causa debiti'. Which aforesaid sum of one hundred pounds the said Robert Grendon undertakes to pay unto the said Joseph Grendon his Order heirs Administrators or Assigns in Monthly instalments of five pounds each payable on the first day of every quarter together with the Interest thereon at the rate of Six per cent per annum from the 30th day of June 1899, provided however that in case the Appearer's Principal shall make default in his punctual payment of Interest or instalments as aforesaid as they fall due then and in that case the capital or balance thereof shall immediately become due and recoverable without notice with all Interest due thereon.

And as security for the payment of the capital sum, and any costs (not to exceed the sum of £50) which may be incurred in giving notice or in proceedings for recovery of any sums due in respect of this Bond the Appearer binds his Principal's person and all his property both such as he is already or may in future become possessed of moveable and immoveable without an exception submitting them all and the choice thereof to constraint and execution as the law directs.⁵

¹ Grendon quotes from Thomas Gray's 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard' in 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

² See for instance: Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

³ 'Agents for the Citizen', *Citizen* 2:71 (15 Oct. 1898) 2.

⁴ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

⁵ KAB, DOC 4/1/666, ref. 3367.

One hundred pounds was a not-inconsiderable sum in 1899, and Joseph's willingness to lend it to his younger son by Maria is perhaps an acknowledgement that Robert still held some sort of familial claim upon him. The loan agreement also reveals that contact between the white and the coloured Grendons was maintained at least until the end of the nineteenth century. What is not known, however, is whether or not the sum of £100 that—according to the terms of Joseph's 1882 will—was to become payable to Robert in the event of his father's death and upon his achieving his majority,¹ bears any relationship to this particular £100.

Likely Robert approached his father for a loan because he did not reckon highly his chances of obtaining one from a bank. Even so, the repayment terms, and provisions in the event of default, offer little suggestion of paternal indulgence. Perhaps this was not the first 'loan' that Robert had obtained from his father. It also seems that Joseph may have become a professional moneylender by this time.²

Clarence de Jager has not been positively identified, although he was obviously someone whom Grendon trusted and who was prepared to act in his behalf in Cape Town. He may have been J. C. de Jager—a well-known butcher of District Six, and 'the first Coloured person to stand for the town council'.³

It is unclear why Grendon required this loan. It may have been intended to cover a pre-existing debt, or to finance an upcoming project. Although the *Citizen* states that he was moving to Uitenhage to 'take charge of a school', no evidence has emerged that he actually did so. The botanical work seems to have been an impractical self-indulgence: it is highly unlikely to have made its author any money. It may even have involved Grendon in considerable debt, as his involvement in the short-lived *Coloured South African* may also have done.

¹ KAB, MOOC 6/9/3022 ref. 12486.

² See chapter 3, p. 197.

³ Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, 200; Bickford-Smith, 'Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political Expression in Late Victorian Cape Town', 458; Worden, *et al*, *Cape Town: the Making of a City*, 221.

CHAPTER 5

EARLIEST POETRY & JOURNALISM

You contend for the truth as you behold it; so do I as far as I discern it. Both of us are fighting for a virgin; and it remains to be seen on which of us she will bestow the tiara.¹



Newspapers were Grendon's gallery, soapbox, pulpit, and playground. He once boasted of being 'permitted to monopolise a paper for twelve ... weeks'.² In a colonial setting, newspapers were overwhelmingly the foremost print medium. Except for those occasions when Grendon occupied an editor's chair himself, he had the task of persuading other men to print his contributions. If one paper declined to publish what he had written, he would submit it to another.³ To realise his calling, he needed access to print.

With few exceptions, his published prose and verse are to be found nowhere outside of newspapers. His earliest writings thus far discovered date from the period of his residence in Kimberley and Uitenhage—the decade of the 1890s. Broadly speaking, they fall into three genres—poetry, prose journalism, and botanical description. The poetry and journalism are treated in this chapter.

Most of these early pieces were located during the course of research for this thesis. It should be borne in mind however that they represent a small fraction of what Grendon probably wrote during his years at the Cape. While some of this material is no doubt irretrievably lost, much else may yet await discovery in late-colonial newspapers.

¹ Grendon to Anthony Webb, editor of *Lake Chrissie Chronicle*, published in: 'Native Unrest', *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918).

² 'Native Unrest', *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918).

³ When Grendon's letter on the 'Franchise agitation' was refused publication in the *Cape Times*, he re-submitted it to the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* (15:3720 (23 Sept. 1892) 2). After the *Lake Chrissie Chronicle* turned down his polemic on black socialism, he arranged for its publication in *Ilanga* ('Native Unrest', *Ilanga* 16:41 (11 Oct. 1918) 5).

‘MELIA AND PIETRO’

A substantial fragment survives of ‘Melia and Pietro’—which appears to be Grendon’s earliest major poem. It was completed in late 1897, or in 1898. The sheer scale of this dramatic poem testifies to the self-assured ambition of the poet. He is a young man intent on making his mark. Already, he has done this in spectacular style at the cricket pitch and in the sectional politics of Griqualand West’s coloured population. But these achievements can never fully satisfy him. Literature is the pre-eminent theatre for the exhibition of his greatest talent. Sporting achievements are by nature transitory and localized, but ‘in eternal lines’ he can confidently expect a wider and a lasting reputation.

Despite obvious flaws and imperfect survival, ‘Melia and Pietro’ deserves our appreciative attention. Through it we trace the genesis of Grendon’s verse-craft and of his world view. The poem contains snatches of artistic inspiration that anticipate his mature stature as a more poised and self-critical poet.



Although published pseudonymously, Grendon’s authorship is above question. His *nom de plume* is ‘Vespertilio’ (Latin: ‘bat’) which he will later use for three of his Natal poems, all published in 1903: ‘Ilanga’, ‘Adieu to the Rev. W. Cliff and Family’, and ‘A Warning’. The pseudonym may conceivably be a tongue-in-cheek nickname given him by his cricketing associates—at Zonnebloem or afterwards—in recognition of his legendary ‘batting’. On the other hand, it seems also to embody Grendon’s identity as a creature of the twilight—between races, between cultures.

Besides the pseudonym, the poem’s lexis, style, and treatment bear unmistakable resemblance to others of Grendon’s poems. For instance, in Part VII, Pietro describes the season of the year: ‘Tis April; and the smoke of Earth | Doth heav’nward straight ascend’.¹ In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Kruger describes the Cape when the first Dutch settlers arrived in 1652: ‘Twas April, when the smoke | Of fires upright ascends into

¹ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3.

the sky’.¹ The poem’s complementary relationship to Grendon’s ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ (1904–05) is shown below.

With few exceptions, after each instalment of the poem, the date line appears: ‘Uitenhage, Dec. 17, 1897’. This presents us with a problem, in that Grendon dates his elegy for the Palm Brothers, ‘Kimberley, Dec. 16, 1897’,² and the first part of ‘A Dream’, he dates ‘Kimberley, Dec. 18, 1897’.³ It is inconceivable that he was in Kimberley on the 16th, in Uitenhage on the 17th, and then back in Kimberley on the 18th. What is more, however briskly Grendon composed, ‘Melia and Pietro’ cannot be the work of a single day. One possible explanation is that he began the poem in Kimberley on 17 December 1897, and completed it in Uitenhage at some undisclosed date.

The poem is published in ‘parts’ from 12 March to 24 December 1898, in Kimberley’s *Citizen*—the same paper that published the two shorter poems considered in this chapter. The *Citizen* is described by a contemporary as ‘wholly in English, and [apparently] intended for the coloured population of the West and Midland districts of the Colony’.⁴ It is reputed to have been launched by ‘a member of a troupe of American Jubilee singers’—possibly by Will P. Thompson, or by the great world-ranging impresario, Orpheus McAdoo himself.⁵ Politics and sport held first place in the paper’s columns, but there was also a fair proportion of cultural and literary material. During 1898, for instance, the paper published several poems by the jingoist Natalian, ‘Lynn Lyster’ (Thomas Leander Millar), whom it described as ‘a very fair imitator of Rudyard Kipling’.⁶ Grendon’s verse has therefore to share column space with other talents, but nothing literary in the paper enjoys anything approaching the editorial indulgence accorded Grendon’s prodigious ‘Melia and Pietro’.

What has come down to us of ‘Melia and Pietro’ is a large fragment—perhaps the bulk—of the finished poem. Because it is incomplete, it is not possible to pass final

¹ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 2.

² ‘In Memoriam’, *Citizen* 20 (22 Dec. 1897) 2.

³ ‘A Dream’, Pt I, *Citizen* 21 (29 Dec. 1897) 2.

⁴ ‘Another Welcome’, *Citizen* 3 (18 Aug. 1897) 3. *Citizen* quotes *Cape Mercury*’s comment on its first number.

⁵ ‘Gemel’ (George Manuel), ‘Coloured Newspapers That I Have Come Across’, *Cape Standard* 2:99 (29 March 1938) 10; Erlmann, ‘A Feeling of Prejudice’, 345.

⁶ ‘The Owl’, ‘On the Wing’, *Citizen* 2:36 (26 March 1898) 3.

critical judgement upon this poem as an artistic entity. The poem is truncated after Part 24, at which point the *Citizen*—which had a few name-changes during its brief existence—ceased publication. Available microfilm copy of the paper ends at the close of 1898. Although Grendon does not advertise how many parts the complete poem comprises in total, it would take several additional parts to bring the plot to denouement.

Other difficulties confront the scholar. Slovenly typesetting in some numbers occasionally obscures the poet's meaning. Grendon's residence in Uitenhage when the later instalments were published deprived him of an opportunity to correct proofs. The effect of poor typesetting is exacerbated by partial illegibility that results from physical damage—tears and creases, chiefly—sustained by the paper prior to its capture on microfilm. Finally, two entire parts—XV and XVII—appear to be missing altogether.

Each part comprises several 'cantos'. Together with three 'choruses', it is possible that Grendon may have had a musical accompaniment in mind, although there is no mention of any score. The composition chiefly comprises ballad stanzas rhymed abab. Inevitably, the aural effect in a poem of such length is rather tedious. At no stage in his career is Grendon particularly adventurous in metrical experimentation, but by the time he began work on *Paul Kruger's Dream* in 1900—three years after 'Melia and Pietro'—he had discovered the flexibility and grandeur of blank verse. In that vehicle, more than in any rhymed form, his talent would soar. None of Grendon's earliest three poems employs it, however, and 'Melia and Pietro' would certainly profit from sections of blank verse interspersed amongst a variety of rhymed fixed forms, as we encounter in *Paul Kruger's Dream*.



As in *Paul Kruger's Dream*, Grendon equips 'Melia and Pietro' with an incremental prose argument preliminary to each section. The argument to the first part supplies the setting:

MELIA—a lovely brunette of nineteen, was the favourite daughter of a wealthy but ignorant trader of humble birth, who endeavoured to get into 'society' but failed through rough manners and lack of learning. He provides a liberal education for his daughter, pushes her amongst those

who rejected his company; and even nominates from that coveted society, lovers for his daughter. But Melia, with dignity rejects them all. Meanwhile there appears upon the scene, from a far and distant land a youthful stranger—Pietro—whose history for the present is enshrouded in mystery. He at first sight falls in love with Melia, who returns it. One day in a shady spot near a gentle stream within the LOVERS' WALK, Pietro recounts to Melia how Fortune has mated them; predicts coming trials that will separate them; and determines—should this happen—never again to set his heart on womankind. Melia, ignorant of the future, reproaches Pietro for his blindness and encourages him to steadfastness.¹

Melia's name hints at a racial dimension to this verse-drama. Grendon appears to have in mind the Greek word for 'black' (*melas*).² This supposition is strengthened by Melia's reference to 'our race' in Part X.³

Tyranto is Melia's father. He is an ambitious parvenu, and in keeping with his name, he is a flat character, who out-herods Herod. When 'idle whisperers' poison him against Pietro, he flies into a rage and resolves to 'slay' his daughter. His rage abates marginally when he witnesses Melia's 'steadfastness ... to encounter death for Pietro's sake'. Nonetheless, he 'lashes her most brutally' with his horse's reins. Melia retires to her room, 'in agony and pain', where she petitions Heaven to 'direct and strengthen' the love that she and Pietro share.⁴

Tyranto, 'heated with wine, proceeds in a raging storm' to Pietro's home. The two men quarrel. Pietro tells him to return when he is sober, and counsels him to 'judge men by their hearts and actions', rather than by their outward appearance. Tyranto declares that he would sooner see Melia a harlot than consent to her marrying Pietro. Pietro's anger is kindled and he ejects Tyranto from his home. Outside, he forewarns Tyranto that 'his wish' to see his daughter a harlot 'might one day become a reality, and might also include the downfall and destruction of his five younger daughters'.⁵

The two lovers have a secret tryst, when Melia 'shows Pietro the stripes and wounds inflicted upon her arms' and he 'endeavours to comfort' her. Melia next 'questions EARTH (this world of beings) whether it is a fault or a crime to love. EARTH replies that the working within her heart is but the touch of that ALMIGHTY HAND that

¹ 'M&P', Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

² I am grateful to Dr C. A. Woeber for drawing this to my attention.

³ Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt II, *Citizen* 2:33 (16 March 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt III, *Citizen* 2:34 (19 March 1898) 3.

runs throughout the Universe, and concludes with the soothing assurance that it is no sin—no fault—no crime—to love.’¹

Tyranto is now temporarily ‘smitten by regret’ at his conduct toward the lovers. He sends a younger daughter to summon Pietro to his shop for a *tête-à-tête*. When Pietro complies, Tyranto ‘in a despairing strain requests him to break his love for Melia’. Pietro refuses; Tyranto’s ‘regret’ evaporates, and he ‘draws a pistol to shoot the stranger’. But Tyranto is unnerved by Pietro’s composure and his assurance ‘that though his natural body be destroyed his love for Melia could never be shaken’. Instead of firing a shot, he ‘forbids Pietro from entering his house’. Pietro ‘affirms that though forbidden access to Tyranto’s house, he [will] meet Melia elsewhere’.²

Tyranto and his wife Syrena, together with two of their daughters, Katrina and Rynette, are next discovered in their drawing room. The overwrought Tyranto tells his wife of ‘his determination to do away with himself’. Impatiently, she ‘twits him’, and ‘advocates the part of Melia and Pietro’. An argument ensues, in which Tyranto asserts that his paternal authority is sovereign and must be obeyed unquestioningly. He commands Katrina and Rynette to trail their elder sister, and to report to him if ever she makes contact with Pietro.³

In the next part, Pietro is seen alone, strolling Lover’s Walk, where he has a rendezvous with Melia. ‘He bursts into a strain of adoration at beholding the splendours of NATURE around him, especially Cockscomb Mountain, towering above the neighbouring hills.’ Seating himself upon an olive stump, he awaits Melia, who presently appears, ‘joyful, and free from care’, and takes ‘her seat at Pietro’s feet’. Pietro acquaints Melia with a vision that he has had, by which he has learnt that she will grow ‘faint-hearted’ and that as a result they will separate.⁴

‘Whisperers’ are again busy. They inform Tyranto of Melia’s secret tryst with Pietro in Lover’s Walk. ‘In a fit of anger he again lashes his child—well-nigh to death. His servants Hannah, and Byrza and Sarah, (man and wife), intervene’ in defence of Melia, but after ordering them off, Tyranto ‘again seizes the horse’s reins,

¹ Pt IV, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3.

² Pt V, *Citizen* 2:36 (26 March 1898) 3.

³ Pt VI, *Citizen* 2:37 (30 March 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3, and 2:39 (6 April 1898) 3.

lashes, and tramples upon his child who [is] now prostrated unconscious upon the floor'. In response to Melia's anguished cries, neighbours crowd around the shop door, where they 'witness the awful scene'. In the 'first chorus of spectators', they reproach Tyranto and threaten him with violence if he does not 'cease his brutal actions towards his child'. Tyranto 'escapes from his shop', but heads for Pietro's 'with the intention of whipping him also'. As on the earlier occasion, he is ignominiously ejected, and 'departs in shame amid the taunts and hootings of another crowd of spectators', which constitute the 'second chorus of spectators'.¹

Tyranto attempts a fresh tack by enlisting the aid of Judge Gracie, 'the officer of the law in the place'. The Judge instructs Pietro to appear before him and 'give an account of himself'. Pietro recognizes that the Judge is 'playing the "game of bluff" upon him', and refuses to obey his restraining order. If Melia 'were under age, he would wait till she became of age and then take her'. The Judge concedes the legitimacy of this, and Pietro—again revealing his prophetic insight—foretells that 'should that day ever dawn', Gracie 'would be called upon to perform the marriage ceremony'.²

Returning home, Syrena interrogates Tyranto about the outcome of his latest ploy. Tyranto 'sullenly' admits failure: 'In sense the lad is deep and wise, | His words so full of pow'r.' Judge Gracie has been unable to persuade Pietro to renounce his love for Melia. Chicanery has failed, and Tyranto is obliged to fall back upon the oldest last resort in World Literature—the powers of darkness. He despatches Syrena to 'an aged witch' with a request that she conjure Melia's love into hatred, and replace it with love for a suitor favoured by Tyranto.³

Katrina reproaches her sister Melia for pursuing a courtship with Pietro—an 'ill-bred fellow', 'So poor in pocket'. Marriage to Pietro will bring 'disgrace' upon their family. Melia, in reply, warns Katrina that 'wealth and ease' have beclouded the family's judgement. 'The mansion in which they were living was not yet paid for, and ... next year it would pass out of their hands.' They would then 'fall into poverty and

¹ Pt VIII, *Citizen* 2:44 (27 April 1898) 3, and 2:46 (4 May 1898) 3.

² Pt IX, *Citizen* 2:48 (14 May 1898) 3.

³ Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

shame', while Pietro, 'whom they now belittled and reviled, would one day rise to wealth, and fame'.¹

Syrena is found under cover of night in the witch's den, where, having proffered a 'bag of gold', she persuades the witch to do Tyranto's bidding. Opening the 'Book of Fate', the witch warns Syrena against attempting to 'check the course of Destiny, as it [will] end in sorrow to herself and family'. Seduced by the gold, however, she 'undertakes to carry out Syrena's request' and invokes 'The Pow'rs of boundless Hell' in her behalf. Syrena is despatched homewards with a potion and a charm.²

Melia and Pietro meet in a 'waste garden' belonging to the servant Hannah, located 'just below Tyranto's shop'. Tearfully, Melia tells Pietro of her parents' plot to employ sorcery to wreck their romance. After consoling Melia, 'Pietro bursts out in violent language—cursing those who had brought about such a state of things, and promis[ing] to endure for her sake all danger and hardships'.³

Tyranto and Syrena resort to subterfuge to persuade Melia to imbibe the potion, but she refuses. Thereupon, Tyranto 'seizes her and having prostrated her upon the floor of their drawing room, stretches out her hands, thus rendering her helpless. He then forces open her mouth whilst her mother pours the potion down her throat'. Learning what has occurred, the neighbours 'violently reproach Tyranto and his wife' for having resorted to 'devilish practices in order to deprive their favourite child of her own free love'.⁴

Melia now visits her 'intimate friend, Nellie' whose home is 'below Tyranto's shop'. She tells Nellie of the 'recent drugging episode', which has thus far failed to alienate her love for Pietro, although she fears that her parents will again consult the witch. Nellie comforts Melia, and 'advises her to be steadfast in her love if she felt it was true love'. She also 'condemns the actions of [Melia's] parents as unnatural—against humanity and heaven'. Melia returns home with augmented resolve 'to carry out her love, despite all opposition on the part of her parents'.⁵

¹ Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

² Pt XI, *Citizen* 2:50 (21 May 1898) 3.

³ Pt XII, *Citizen* 2:54 (18 June 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt XIII, *Citizen* 2:56 (2 July 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt XIV, *Citizen* 2:64 (27 Aug. 1898) 3.

Pietro's rival suitor Urino—an 'evil fop', as he is later described¹—is introduced in Part XV, which unfortunately appears not to have survived. In Part XVI, he confides to Melia's parents that he has had a disturbing dream in which he gained a 'glimpse of future time'. Melia's 'graceful figure' appeared bent over him, and a voice was heard to say: '*This maiden shalt thou wed.*' But their union will be sterile, because, as Urino complains, 'within her heart | There is for me no place!' Tyranto urges him to persevere with Melia, and Syrena entrusts him with the witch's 'spell' which he is to wear on his person. The couple then 'completely resign their daughter into Urino's power'. He 'gladly accepts the witch's charm and sets about his task of entrapping Melia'.²

Part XVII is also missing from the *Citizen* files on microfilm. In Part XVIII, Melia and Pietro again succeed in meeting secretly. Once more, Pietro contends that Melia's love is insubstantial and will not withstand the tests brought to bear upon it. Melia begs him 'to dispel such a thought' and cites her record of fidelity as evidence of the quality of her love. She also tells Pietro that her parents have selected Urino to supplant Pietro in her affections, but she vehemently insists 'that the choice of a lover [lies] with her and not with her parents'. Pietro continues to doubt her future loyalty.³

The next scene finds Melia on the 'balcony of her father's shop', where she 'gaz[es] enviously on the things of Earth and Heaven, which to her seem ... full of gladness', while she alone suffers 'woes'. Beweeping Pietro's 'coldness towards her', she petitions Heaven to preserve her from Urino's wiles—from '*this viper's fangs*'—and declares a 'fervent wish to be mated to one actuated not by devilish practices and hellish arts, but by manly, upright, God-given principles and intentions'.⁴

Having been 'baffled' by Melia until now, Urino confronts her in her father's mansion. She utterly rejects his advances and 'orders him to quit the place'. Her display awakens his anger, and he 'openly asserts that he [will] humble her' and drive Pietro from her heart. At this point, the witch's charm begins taking effect, because,

¹ Pt XXII, *Citizen* 2:78 (3 Dec. 1898) 3.

² Pt XVI, *Citizen* 2:66 (10 Sept. 1898) 3.

³ Pt XVIII, *Citizen* 2:70 (8 Oct. 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt XIX, *Citizen* 2:72 (22 Oct. 1898) 3.

‘towards the close of the scene (which marks the beginning of Pietro’s downfall), Melia becomes dumb, confused and stupefied by the charms of the wily Urino’.¹

After this fateful encounter with Urino, Melia meets with Pietro in Hannah’s garden. Pietro is on the point of leaving on a ‘pleasure tour’. Melia begs him to postpone his departure, but he is adamant that he must go. He also ‘foretells that during his absence Melia’s love [will] become cold, and that the heart that now love[s] him, [will] love him no longer’. Melia once again ‘vehemently denies’ this, and ‘vows to be true to the end’. But Pietro leaves, confident of his prescient powers, and ‘having again given vent to his feelings’.²

As he predicts, a ‘marked change’ comes upon Melia during his absence. To her servants, Byrza, Sarah, and Hannah, she reveals ‘her determination to forsake Pietro for the sake of Urino’. They try to dissuade her, ‘but she remains firm and determines to please her parents by giving herself up to Urino’.³

In the next scene, we are introduced for the first time to a family servant, the ‘aged Brower’, who lies upon his deathbed, nursed by Melia. With a ‘tender eye’, Brower has watched the girl mature to the brink of womanhood. She ‘bursts into tears as the hand of Death lays hold of the aged sire’. Brower ‘tells her not to weep since he [is] passing to brighter worlds’. He ‘recalls the purity, innocence and calmness of her past life, foretells coming sorrows, and ere he passes away offers up a prayer wherein he invokes a blessing on her behalf’.⁴

Returning from his ‘holiday tour’, Pietro is informed by Hannah that Melia has bowed to parental pressure, and now indulges Urino’s suit. Although Byrza and Sarah confirm Hannah’s report, Pietro is reluctant to believe ‘until he sees for himself’, and so he ‘determines to watch Melia closely before severing his connections with her’.⁵

This is the twenty-fourth part of ‘Melia and Pietro’, published on 24 December 1898. To judge from microfilmed files of the *Citizen*, the paper ceased publication immediately after this. As a result, at least for the present, the remainder of the poem

¹ Pt XX, *Citizen* 2:74 (29 Oct. 1898) 3.

² Pt XXI, *Citizen* 2:77 (26 Nov. 1898) 3.

³ Pt XXII, *Citizen* 2:78 (3 Dec. 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt XXIII, *Citizen* 2:80 (17 Dec. 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt XXIV, *Citizen* 2:81 (24 Dec. 1898) 4.

is lost to posterity. All we have to go on are a few prescient hints in what survives of the poem, that its denouement would be a happy one. Pietro anticipates such an outcome:

Ah!—then will dawn that glorious morn,
When doubts have flown away;
When thou wilt say that we were born
To hail LOVE’S greatest day.¹



The poem’s setting is indeterminate, or rather, ambiguous. Reference to ‘Cockscomb Mountain’ in Part VII points to the Eastern Province. Cockscomb is in the Great Winterhoek Mountains, on the edge of the Uitenhage district. With a height of 1759 metres, it is the tallest peak in the Cape’s ‘coastal ranges east of the Kouga Mountains’.² A few isolated South Africanisms strengthen the impression of a colonial setting. One example is Melia’s reference to her father’s ‘cruel strop’.³ The Cape Dutch *strop*, cognate with the English ‘strap’, was an animal’s halter, which in the Colony often doubled as an instrument for inflicting corporal punishment.⁴ Here, Tyranto uses his strop to flog Melia. Other South Africanisms include the references to indigenous plants in Part VII, one of which ‘the rustics call | “Bosch-Barroe”’⁵—a word combining the Dutch *bosch* (bush) with the Khoikhoi *baroe* or *barroe*. It describes a plant ‘with an edible tuberous rootstock’.⁶

On the other hand, the Colonial atmosphere is upset by mention of ‘Jesuits’ in Part V,⁷ and by some personal names. As in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ (1904–05), the setting is an apparently haphazard amalgam of colonial and Classical. In the stock characters and the theme of star-crossed lovers, Grendon also seems to have Renaissance drama within his frame of reference. Likely, while still at Zonnebloem, he gained familiarity with several of Shakespeare’s lovelorn creations. Like Shakespeare, he does not

¹ Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

² *SESA*.

³ Pt XII, *Citizen* 2:54 (18 June 1898) 3.

⁴ *DSAE*. The *strop* might also be used for sharpening razors.

⁵ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3.

⁶ *DSAE*.

⁷ Pt V, *Citizen* 2:36 (26 March 1898) 3.

trouble himself overmuch with verisimilitude, but focuses instead on his theme, his plot, and the poetry of his lines.



Some key aspects of plot and characterization parallel real-life circumstances within Grendon's domestic circle. It seems possible that he modelled the character of Melia, at least in part, upon his sister Mary Ann (plate 5). Their grandniece Julinda Hoskins recalls that 'Mary was sent and educated at a school for young ladies'. She was 'very well educated and well-read'. 'She never ever married as her Father did not approve of her choice of a younger man!'¹ Joseph Grendon then closely resembles Tyranto in at least four important respects. Each man is 'a wealthy ... trader of humble birth', who 'provides a liberal education for his daughter'.² Each is possessed of a volatile temper,³ and each disallows his daughter's marriage to the man of her choice.

There can be little doubt that, on some level, the poet identifies with his male protagonist. He certainly injects something of himself into Pietro's character. That mysterious 'youthful stranger' hails, tautologically, from 'a far and distant land'.⁴ Grendon arrived in Uitenhage from Kimberley at about the time that instalments of his poem began to be published. Does Kimberley, or Cape Town, or even Damaraland, correspond to the 'far and distant land'?

Like Pietro, Grendon places great store by his personal powers of prediction. Pietro 'predicts coming trials that will separate' Melia from him;⁵ he 'predicts by a vision her faint-heartedness'.⁶ To the end, he 'clings to an unshaken belief in his predictions'.⁷ Grendon likewise makes frequent predictions, and gives numerous sober warnings to individuals and communities.⁸

¹ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

² 'M&P', Pt I, prose argument, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

³ Andersson Papers: Diary, 11 May 1866; Andersson Papers: Green to Andersson, Ondonga, 7 Dec. 1865.

⁴ Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

⁵ Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

⁶ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3.

⁷ Pt XXI, *Citizen* 2:77 (26 Nov. 1898) 3.

⁸ See for instance: 'A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3; 'Two Warnings', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4, and 1:37 (18 Dec. 1903) 4; 'A Second Warning to Edendale', *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3; 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

Plate 5: Mary Ann Grendon (c.1862 to 1944) as a child. Grendon may have modelled his protagonist, Melia on the character of his sister.



Like Pietro, Grendon probably believed himself to be well-born. Pietro boasts ‘proud ancestral line’,¹ ‘high ancestral line’.² Grendon’s sister identified herself as ‘a princess in [her] own birthright’,³ and Robert almost certainly shared her pride in the family relationship to Maharero, ‘paramount chief’ of Damaraland. He may also have accepted his Irish father’s account of illustrious ancestors and an eponymous ‘Grendon Hall’. If so, he too boasts ‘proud ancestral line’. Perhaps, like Pietro, he fell in love ‘at first sight’ with a real-life Melia, about the time of his move to Uitenhage.

In Part VII, Pietro emerges as an admirer of Nature: ‘He bursts into a strain of adoration at beholding the splendours of NATURE around him, especially Cockscomb Mountain, towering above the neighbouring hills’:⁴

Oh COCKSCOMB, far—but yet so near!
 Whose brow cool breezes lave;
 Whose splendours now more bright appear
 On rock, ravine, and cave,

 My spirit wings its rapid flight
 To thee—thou snow-clad throne—
 Thou wondrous structure, vast and bright,
 To worship there alone.⁵

Like Pietro, Grendon is himself an admirer of Nature. In the topographical poem, ‘A Glimpse of Umkomaas’ (1903), he describes his impressions of a scenic tour through Natal’s mountainous southwest.⁶ As Pietro extols the majesty of Cockscomb, ‘Whose brow cool breezes lave’, Grendon is entranced by a mountain that looms over little Bulwer village—‘Mahwaqa with his twice-cleft purple brow’ that ‘Doth heav’nwards tower silent and alone’. Pietro observes how Cockscomb’s ‘splendours now more bright appear | On rock, ravine, and cave’. Grendon observes ‘Proud shaggy Nomandafu’s splendours’ and reads the geological record in ‘cleft—crevice—crag—and cliff’. To Pietro, Cockscomb is a ‘snow-clad throne’; to Grendon, ‘Kwahlamba’ (Drakensberg) is a ‘snow-clad range’. For both Pietro and Grendon, the

¹ Pt IX, *Citizen* 2:48 (14 May 1898) 3.

² Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

³ J. Hoskins notebook 1.

⁴ Pt VII, prose argument, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3.

⁶ ‘A Glimpse of Umkomaas’, *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.

experience of mountain scenery is a religious one. Pietro feels drawn to Cockscomb Mountain in order 'To worship there alone'; riding through the rugged topography surrounding the upper Umkomaas River, Grendon finds himself 'In wonder at the Arch-Creator's skill'.

In Part VII of 'Melia and Pietro', the hero 'pluck[s] sweet flow'rs at ev'ry turn'. Here Grendon the botanist emerges in the catalogue of flowers that Pietro gathers: aloe, *Cissus*, *Clematis*, *Crassula*, *Cyphia*, fern, *Haemanthus*, *Loranthus*, *Nymphaca*, *Oxalis*, *Richardia*, *Royena*, and *Stapelia*. In addition, he 'wander[s] in *Euphorbia* glades', eats '*Carissa* fruits', rests 'in *Acacia* shades, | Where green *Dipcadi* shoots', and climbs 'yon thickly thorn-clad hill, | Where *Schotia* doth abound'.¹ A similar botanical inventory occurs in 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas'.² These common elements invite a guarded autobiographical reading of Grendon's male protagonist.



Some of the language and imagery of 'Melia and Pietro' is loosely reminiscent of the Song of Solomon, and we are reminded that Mary Ann Grendon used to apply to herself the Shulamite maiden's words: 'Look not upon me, because I am black'.³ If, as earlier suggested, Grendon had in mind a dark pigmentation in naming his female protagonist 'Melia', he may also have had in mind his sister's frequent repetition of the Shulamite maiden's appeal.

The Shulamite maiden is described as 'the lily among thorns'.⁴ Grendon's lovers pass through 'thorny brakes where lilies sweet | Emit their fragrance free'. Addressing 'Earth', Melia asks how Love can be a crime when Earth's 'waters cannot quench' Love's 'thirst', and Earth's 'floods can never drench' love's 'flame'.⁵ This seems to resonate with the Song of Solomon, where Love's coals 'are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.'⁶

¹ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3.

² *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.

³ Ca 1:6; Interview, Cyril Hoskins, Pietermaritzburg, 12 Nov. 2005.

⁴ Ca 2:2.

⁵ Pt IV, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3.

⁶ Ca 8:6–7.

The plotline of ‘Melia and Pietro’—to the extent that we know it—could easily have been lifted from the Renaissance stage. Tyranto’s resort to Judge Gracie in Part IX¹ may owe its origin to the appeal Egeus makes to Theseus in the opening scene of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.² Both Tyranto and Egeus induce the magisterial authority to pressure their daughters’ lovers into calling off their courtship. But, while Egeus accuses his daughter’s lover, Lysander, of having ‘bewitch’d the bosom of [his] child’,³ in ‘Melia and Pietro’ it is the father who bewitches his daughter in his desperation to shake off her choice of suitor. Interestingly, Hermia addresses Duke Theseus as ‘your Grace’⁴—conceivably supplying the germ of Judge Gracie’s name.

There is a brief intertextual echo of Thomas Gray’s ‘Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard’ in the line, ‘*Stapelia*, that unseen did blush’.⁵ Grendon recalls the line, ‘Full many a flower is born to blush unseen’. That this is so is evident from the fact that he twice quotes these ‘telling words of Thomas Gray’ in his *Ilanga* journalism of 1904.⁶



Of particular interest to this study is the manner in which ‘Melia and Pietro’ consistently portrays sexual attraction in Swedenborgian terms. Grendon’s lovers enjoy love of an exalted, celestial order. By contrast, the love that Tyranto seeks to foist upon his daughter is destructive, and alienated from a divine source. Urino, who is Tyranto’s candidate for his daughter’s hand in marriage, is ‘actuated’ by ‘devilish practices and hellish arts’; Pietro is actuated ‘by manly, upright, God-given principles and intentions’.⁷

Sexual attraction, sexual relations, and marriage loom large in Swedenborg’s philosophy. There is nothing prudish about him, and he examines sex—like everything else—head on. This may be the reason why ‘John Wesley, who met and initially admired Swedenborg, would later call him [rather uncharitably] that “filthy

¹ Pt IX, *Citizen* 2:48 (14 May 1898) 3.

² I.i.22, *et seq.*

³ I.i.27.

⁴ I.i.58,62.

⁵ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3.

⁶ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4; ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁷ Pt XIX, *Citizen* 2:72 (22 Oct. 1898) 3, prose argument.

dreamer”¹. Swedenborg spiritualizes the sex-drive in an elaborate and compelling way, identifying what he terms the ‘*conjugal*’ principle as pervasive throughout the Universe, not merely in the mutual attraction that godly men and women experience on Earth. Conjugal love originates in God Himself who desires union with his Creation. The truly conjugal union of man and woman on earth ‘corresponds to the celestial, spiritual, and holy marriage of the Lord and the church’.² New Jerusalem’s descent is perceived as a marriage between the things of the heavens with those of the earth.

Throughout God’s universal creation, the ‘goods’ of Love and the ‘truths’ of Wisdom yearn for conjunction. ‘In every thing in the universe good is conjoined with truth, and truth with good’³—this is the absolute origin of conjugal love on earth. As the Swedenborgian, Alan Grange states, ‘the principle of conjunction runs through the universe’.⁴ And Swedenborg assures us that it is even ‘with the angels of heaven’.⁵

Conjugal love, then, is the marriage of love and wisdom, or of ‘goods’ and ‘truths’, both of which have their origin in God. Since the impulse for good and truth to conjoin is integral to God’s Creation, it may be said that conjugal love exists wherever in the Universe these principles conjoin.⁶ Every angel of heaven and every godly human of earth is imbued by God with the inclination to conjoin with Him, with the Universal ‘Church’, and—on the lowest level—with a single other human of the opposite sex.⁷ Even on the level of the individual human subject, there is need of conjunction between truths in the understanding and goods in the will. This is the essence of spiritual regeneration.

The vast majority of today’s marriages may be ‘conjugal’ in the conventional sense, but they are *not conjugal*, in the Swedenborgian sense. True conjugal partners are very literally created for each other; their reciprocal love is divinely-derived and not of their own originality; and such conjugal unions survive the death of the body.

¹ Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried*, 149.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 62.

³ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 60.

⁴ Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 78.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 64.

⁶ Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 75.

⁷ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 64.

All of these Swedenborgian tenets appear to inform ‘Melia and Pietro’, as shown below.

Swedenborg’s *De Amor Conjugiali*—in which he expounds upon ‘true’ conjugal relations, as well as upon fornication, and the ‘insanity’ of adulterous love—was published in Amsterdam in 1768. English translators have transliterated his Latin qualifier as ‘conjugal’, rather than as ‘conjugal’ love. Their object has been to distinguish it as referencing a unique, religious concept. Swedenborg had two Latin adjectives at his disposal: *conjugalis* and *conjugialis*. The latter, ‘found in Ovid, was chosen probably because the contents are startlingly different from popular notions of conjugal life’.¹ ‘Conjugal’ has an entry in *OED*, where its Swedenborgian specificity is noted.

Key aspects of Swedenborg’s conjugal doctrine are summarized in note 57 of *De Amor Conjugiali*:

I. There exists a love truly conjugal, which at this day is so rare that it is not known what is its quality, and scarcely that it exists. II. This love originates in the marriage of good and truth. III. There is a correspondence of this love with the marriage of the Lord and the church. IV. This love from its origin and correspondence, is celestial, spiritual, holy, pure, and clean, above every other love imparted by the Lord to the angels of heaven and the men of the church. V. It is also the foundation love of all celestial and spiritual loves, and thence of all natural loves. VI. Into this love are collected all joys and delights from first to last.²

Grendon was familiar with *De Amor Conjugiali* in its English translation—*The Delights of Wisdom Pertaining to Conjugal Love, to which is Added the Pleasures of Insanity Pertaining to Scortatory Love*. In a leader article in *Ilanga* (1905), he states that the ‘purest’ love

is what is termed conjugal love. This love can exist in only one man and one wife. From this it is manifest that where conjugal love is accompanied by love other than conjugal [as in polygamous relationships] there is a struggle which virtually constitutes the obstacle to the advance of the Christian faith, for conjugal love is the ‘jewel of human life’, and bliss, and the ‘repository of the Christian religion’.³

¹ Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 71.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 57.

³ ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3.

Here he quotes *Conjugal Love*, without referencing his source. In it, Swedenborg writes that the ‘conjugal [union] of one man with one wife is the jewel of human life, and the repository of the Christian religion’.¹ Some years later in Swaziland, Grendon quotes again from this text in his ‘Miscegenation’ polemic (1914).² These facts suggest that he held a copy of the book in his personal library.

In ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ (1904–05)³ there are five direct references to conjugal love, although Grendon employs the conventional spelling, ‘conjugal’, in that poem. In it, we encounter such quintessentially Swedenborgian phrases as ‘joys of true conjug[i]al love’,⁴ ‘true conjug[i]al sympathy’,⁵ and ‘true conjug[i]al fire’.⁶ Against the foil of conjugal ideality, we witness—and are invited to judge—the adulterous protagonist Helen, who is actuated by ‘lusts, | And cravings summon’d by scortatory love’.⁷ ‘Scortatory love’ is the polar opposite of ‘true’ conjugal love within Swedenborg’s religio-philosophical system. It is adulterous love, and as such is the arch-enemy of the conjugal principle, since it breaks up the ‘marriage’ of womanly ‘goods’ with manly ‘truths’.

Since Man (Swedenborg’s ‘*homo*’, rather than his ‘*vir*’) is made in the image of the Divine Mind, the operation of the conjugal principle in the lives of men and women on Earth is absolutely necessary for healthy mental states. By contrast, adulterous love, which tends to disturb the conjugal principle—or the marriage of the Will with the Understanding—leads to states of insanity.

All humans are endowed with ‘the love of the sex’, but this is not conjugal love, which is ‘the love of one of the sex’. The raw ‘love of the sex’ must be rejected in order for the conjugal love principle to gain a foothold.⁸ The reining in of animal lust does not imply any lessening of sexual enjoyment, because the ‘delights’ of the truly conjugal embrace exceed in magnitude and quality those of all inferior and aberrant loves.

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 531. See also n. 457.

² ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6. Grendon quotes *Conjugal Love*, n. 18.

³ “‘Pro Aliis Damnati’”: For others doomed’ is published in serial form in *Ilanga*. Pt 1 appears in 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4, and Pt 20—the last published—in 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁴ ‘PAD’, Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘PAD’, Pt 11, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘PAD’, Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

⁷ ‘PAD’, Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁸ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 58.

Swedenborg states that ‘none can be principled in love truly conjugal but those who receive it from the Lord, that is, who come directly to him, and by derivation from him live the life of the church’.¹ Grendon acknowledges the religious basis of the conjugal relation. In an editorial on ‘Polygamy’ (1905), he explains that conjugal phenomena are observable both in microcosm and in macrocosm. On earth, the individual Christian man cherishes the conjugal principle, and so regards polygamy as ‘an abomination’ because it flies in the face of the true conjugal principle. But, he remarks that ‘conjugal love is the consort of religion at every step; and this religion is the conjunction, or marriage of the Lord with the Church in a universal sense; in a less universal sense religion is the conjunction of Heaven with that man, in whom it (religion) exists’.² To conjoin with Heaven, one must shun all selfish loves, so leaving space just for conjugal love and all its virtuous derivative loves. Polygamous love is an ‘alienation from the path of true religion; thus from the worship of the Lord, who is the centre of man’s existence, and the only object of man’s adoration’.³

Swedenborg rules against polygamy because ‘celestial blessednesses, spiritual satisfactions, and natural delights, which from the beginning were provided for those who are in love truly conjugal, can only exist with one wife’. Furthermore, ‘love truly conjugal, with its felicities, can only exist with those who are of the Christian church’. ‘Polygamists, so long as they remain such, cannot become spiritual.’⁴

On the other hand, God in his mercy makes allowances for the frailties of Man, and this brings us to the doctrine of ‘permissions’. God ‘permits’ certain objectionable usages, in consideration of the current spiritual receptivity of individuals and communities. For this reason,

POLYGAMY IS NOT SIN WITH THOSE WHO LIVE IN IT FROM A RELIGIOUS NOTION. All that which is contrary to religion is believed to be sin, because it is contrary to God; and on the other hand, all that which agrees with religion, is believed not to be sin, because it agrees with God; and as polygamy existed with the sons of Israel from a principle of religion, and exists at this day with the Mahometans, it could not, and cannot, be imputed to them as sin.⁵

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 71.

² ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

³ ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 332.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 348.

Nor is polygamy sinful in states of ‘ignorance respecting the Lord’.¹ An example of one of God’s merciful ‘permissions’ relates to ‘the Israelitish nation’, of which the males were ‘permitted to marry several wives’. This indulgence was on account of the fact that ‘they had not the Christian church, and consequently love truly conjugal could not exist with them’.²

Because polygamy is so deeply entrenched in African culture, Grendon considers Swedenborg’s doctrine on conjugal love to have special relevance to the spiritual regeneration of the Continent. At the same time, he applies the Swedenborgian ‘permission’—or ‘allowance’—to a local context:

So far as the inclinations of the external man are concerned, polygamy as an institution finds an honourable place amongst the heathen natives. So far as the internal man is concerned the custom is an abomination that demands a clean sweep. We are here concerned with the internal aspect of the case. Love in its purest state cannot be divided excepted by itself in as true a manner as the number one is divisible by no other than by itself to retain equality with its divisor. Internal or spiritual or celestial love seeks always to be near, and in the object of its affection; to impart and give as much of itself to that which it loves. These are some of the chief points by which that love can be thoroughly tested and proved. Now in the case of polygamy the heart of man is divided among several women, which really is impossible. That man’s love is truly confined to one woman, whilst to the others it is mere sham, existing only for the furtherance of his licentious appetites. Very probably the African inherits polygamy from the Hebrews, for the hardness of whose hearts the system was allowed. (Matt. xix. 8). This system moreover was permitted for the sake of the external in the Jews who are known to have been an idolatrous race. The very fact of its survival in the African can be accounted for in no manner other than that it remains for the sake of the external in this race also. Among the Jews of the present time polygamy is a thing practically unknown. If such a change in the course of a few thousand years has taken place, among the seed of Jacob, what can hinder the same law from repeating itself among the Africans when the time for their social regeneration has arrived.³

In the above-quoted passage, Grendon begins by making the point that, at least for the time being, polygamy holds no moral or religious stigma in the context of traditional African society. For the present, African society *is* external, and so an external practice such as polygamy is tolerable.

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 349.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 332.

³ ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3.

This outlook seems to coincide with that of Swedenborgian Harold Attersoll, whose views Grendon publishes in the columns of *Ilanga*: ‘I am aware that a polygamist cannot be entirely a Christian, but what sane man expects anyone to leap from A to Z in moral conditions? ... The friendly polygamist can live by the church, and if he sees that its style of life is better than his, he will at least not object to his children being brought up in it.’¹

On the other hand, as Grendon implies, the practice of polygamy will need to be discontinued before the regeneration of the internal man can commence. This is because polygamy destroys the true conjugal principle, rendering sexuality ‘external’, based in carnal appetites, and negating everything religious. He identifies the hallmark of a truly conjugal relationship: it exists where one male and one female desire everlastingly to conjoin exclusively with each other, and to impart goods and truths one to the other. Love deficient in this quality is not conjugal, and has therefore fallen from the ideal love as practised in the primeval Adamic or Celestial Church.

He goes on to point out that since God ‘allowed’ *Hebrew* polygamy, there is every reason to believe that He similarly makes allowance for *African* polygamy, because He is aware that the race is yet external, and has still to cultivate its internal through individual and collective regeneration. Since Jews have very largely taken up monogamy in recent centuries, it is safe to predict that Africans will do the same when their society becomes regenerated through exposure to the ‘True Christian Religion’.

In his essay, ‘A Voice from the Sea’, Grendon expresses the same sanguine expectation that ‘as to polygamy, that will right itself as soon as the people grasp the “True Christianity”’—that is, the New Jerusalem, or New Church, as heralded by Swedenborg. The prevailing strain of Christianity as ‘presented to [the] daily view’ of Africans is a ‘phantom’. As such, it is powerless to work any ‘transformation amongst those for whom a change is desired’. Polygamy will die a death, not because of the dire strictures of the Old Church or the draconian laws of civil authority, but because

¹ H. Attersoll to the Editor, *Ilanga* 2:55 (29 April 1904) 4.

of providential destiny: 'Polygamy we contend, will die out of itself, and at its own appointed time, but not at the imperious dictates of man.'¹

Although Grendon does not use Swedenborg's qualifiers, 'conjugal' and 'scortatory' in 'Melia and Pietro' as he does in the later 'Pro Aliis Damnati', it appears that he is nonetheless already familiar with the concepts they express. The language in which Melia 'questions' 'Mother Earth' in Part IV suggests that she has imbibed the Swedenborgian concept of 'conjugal love':

When other Powers—not *our own*,
 Do show'r on *all*—not *me alone*
 LOVE'S darts to captivate our hearts;
 When hearts thus pierc'd by heav'nly darts,
 Do bow before the THRONE above,
 Is it—I pray—a crime to love?

If LOVE, whose pow'r EARTH cannot quell,
 And mortal men cannot repel;
 Whose thirst THY waters cannot quench,
 Whose flame THY floods can never drench;
 If LOVE descendeth from above
 Is it—I pray—a crime to love?

If from CREATION'S distant day
 This pow'r has held his mighty sway,
 And mated man, and beast, and bird;
 If all CREATION heed his word,
 And love descendeth from above,
 Why should I fear, because I love?

If NATURE'S voice is also GOD'S
 Then I shall listen when SHE nods;
 This inward working is HER choice,
 And I must needs obey HER voice;
 If NATURE'S voice is GOD'S above,
 Then do I sin, because I love?²

In response, Earth reassures her that

¹ 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

² Pt IV, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3.

If in thy heart the shaft of LOVE
 Which pierceth mortals from above
 Be fix'd, and hold its mighty sway;
 'Tis but the touch—and who'll gainsay?—
 Of GOD HIMSELF, who moves in thee
 In me,—in ALL—continually.

If LOVE reside within thy frame
 And is an all essential flame;
 A flame that burns not of thy will—
 A flame that mortals cannot kill—
 A flame that cometh from above—
 'Tis then, my child,—no crime—to love.¹

Melia sings of a 'pow'r [that] has held his mighty sway, | And mated man, and beast, and bird' 'from Creation's distant day'. This is the universal conjugal love that Melia discerns throughout Nature, and concerning which one Swedenborgian apologist writes: 'Indeed nature is so permeated with something resembling sexual union as to suggest that the sex relation springs from and represents something that exists in the eternal source of all being.'² Swedenborg himself states that the conjugal principle 'pervades the universe ... from angels even to worms'.³

Earth assures Melia that 'GOD HIMSELF' 'moves in' all living things 'continually'—that is, God enlivens and operates in his creatures by influx. The prose argument to this part states that 'Earth replies that the working within [Melia's] heart is but the touch of that Almighty Hand that runs throughout the Universe'.⁴ Melia should heed the impulse she feels implanted within herself.

Embodied in Earth's licence is a cardinal concept elaborated in Swedenborg's writings. No creature has life in himself or herself: it is eternally derived from God who alone 'lives' in the full, self-sustaining sense. Without God's continuous 'influxes' into the inner man or inner woman, death would immediately ensue. Even the 'shaft of LOVE'—*i.e.*, love truly conjugal—emanates 'from above', by direct influx from its divine source. Earth's reference to conjugal love as 'flame that cometh

¹ Pt IV, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3.

² Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg's Religious Thought*, 35.

³ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 92.

⁴ Pt IV, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3.

from above’ resonates with *Conjugal Love*, where ‘flame’ stands frequently for the epitome of conjugal enjoyment, and it is ‘as flame’ that ‘celestial love appears with the angels of heaven’.¹

Swedenborg teaches that truly conjugal relationships are inspired by God, and that He Himself earmarks the partners to an everlasting conjugal marriage. He endorses the old adage that ‘marriages are made in heaven’:

All marriages of love truly conjugal are provided by the Lord. ... [I]t is provided that conjugal pairs be born; and that they be continually educated to their several marriages under the Lord’s auspices, neither the boy nor the girl knowing anything of the matter; and after a stated time, when they both become marriageable, they meet in some place as by chance, and see each other, and in this case they instantly know, as by a kind of instinct, that they are a pair, and by a kind of inward dictate think within themselves, the youth, that she is mine, and the maiden, that he is mine; and when this thought has existed some time in the mind of each, they accost each other from a deliberate purpose, and betroth themselves. It is said, as by chance, by instinct, and by dictate; and the meaning is, by divine providence; since, while the divine providence is unknown, it has such an appearance; for the Lord opens internal similitudes, so that they may see themselves.²

In the case of Melia and Pietro, the meeting ‘in some place as by chance’ aptly describes their first encounter in Church one ‘Sabbath day’. Pietro recalls this miraculous conjugal encounter, when instantly, ‘amid a throng | Of friends’ he recognized his ‘heart’s true love’. If he is wrong in this, he calls upon ‘High Heav’n’ to ‘reveal [its] law’.³ He has seen many young beauties, but of all these, Melia was the only one destined for him:

There pass’d before my watchful face
Fair maidens in their glee;
But none—yea none—could take the place
Assigned by Heav’n to thee.⁴

As Swedenborg expresses it, ‘the Lord open[ed] internal similitudes’ in Pietro and Melia’, so that they [might] see themselves’ as conjugal partners.

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 359.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 229.

³ Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

⁴ Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

Repeatedly, throughout the poem, the lovers, their sympathizers, and even their enemies acknowledge that the match has been made in heaven. Melia concurs with Pietro:

'Tis from above this love was sent,
I verily believe;
'Tis Heav'n's most mighty Hand hath bent
Our hearts love to receive.¹

Love therefore does not originate in the lovers' hearts, but in God Himself. They are recipients by influx of heavenly conjugal love. Recognizing the source of her love to be divine, Melia prays:

Ye Heav'nly Pow'rs that in us work
Things wonderful to say;
O feed those living sparks that lurk
Within our moulded clay!²

When her parents endeavour by foul means to thwart her love for Pietro, she tells him that 'The Will of GOD HIMSELF they'll dare | To change undauntedly'.³ The match between her and Pietro is 'The Will of GOD HIMSELF'.

Melia's friend and confidante, Nellie 'condemns the actions of [Melia's] parents as unnatural—against humanity and heaven',⁴ and urges Melia to 'feed ... that spark—| Best gift from Heav'n above'.⁵

Feed thou that flame—no earthly lot,
If Heaven gave it thee;
It waneth not—it dieth not,
Down-trampled tho' it be.⁶

Tyranto's male servant, Byrza, likewise believes in the divine origin of conjugal love. Courageously, he stands up to his master, telling him that 'if MELIA were destined to become PIETRO's wife, no power could check her':¹

¹ Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

² Pt II, *Citizen* 2:33 (16 March 1898) 3.

³ Pt XII, *Citizen* 2:54 (18 June 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt XIV, prose argument, *Citizen* 2:64 (27 Aug. 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt XIV, *Citizen* 2:64 (27 Aug. 1898) 3.

⁶ Pt XIV, *Citizen* 2:64 (27 Aug. 1898) 3.

Oh, master,—fool—dost thou not know
 True love is unrestrain'd,
 And ne'er removed;—when it doth flow
 From Heav'n, is ne'er disdain'd?²

The witch, to whom Tyranto and Syrena apply for aid in undoing Melia's love, recognizes that Pietro and Melia crave true conjugal union. She petitions the '*Pow'rs of Hell*' to grant her the power to break the love '*Of two who yearn one flesh to be*'.³

At the outset—before yielding to pressure from Tyranto—Syrena opposes his attempts to prevent Melia and Pietro's courtship. She recognizes that the love the young couple have for each other is 'God's work'. Her husband is wrong in attempting to unite Melia to hypocritical suitors:

Away—with wealthiness and ease
 Conjoin'd to feignèd love;
 These only for a moment please;
 Let love be from above.

Direct and guide the secret love
 That MELIA's heart doth fill;
 Undo not, thou, GOD's work above,
 Ignore not, thou, HIS will.⁴

The arch-villain, Tyranto bitterly opposes his daughter's match because, in his view, Pietro lacks wealth and breeding. Yet, remarkably, even he recognizes that his daughter's match is made in Heaven. In vowing that the 'marriage ne'er will be', he also boasts that the 'will of GOD HIMSELF I'll dare | To change—*I will not fear*'.⁵ So enlarged is Tyranto's *proprium* that he is prepared to defy the will of God. To quote Swedenborg, his self-love, because unchecked, 'rushes on until at length it desires to rule not only over the whole earth, but over the whole heaven, too, and over the Divine Himself'.⁶

¹ Pt VIII, prose argument, *Citizen*, 2:44 (27 April 1898) 3.

² Pt VIII, *Citizen* 2:44 (27 April 1898) 3.

³ Pt XI, *Citizen* 2:50 (21 May 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt VI, *Citizen* 2:37 (30 March 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 559.

In this Tyranto resembles Kruger in *Paul Kruger's Dream*, who 'strove to check' 'The Will | Of GOD Supreme'.¹ He also resembles the adulterous Memnon of 'Pro Aliis Damnati', who 'would in his blindness, and his pride | Unto a contest God Himself invite | To test His pow'r, believing that perchance | He might victorious from the field emerge, | And force all Heaven to obey his will'.² Although the sins of Tyranto and Memnon differ in quality, they have a common origin in the *proprium*, or—as Grendon defines it—the 'External Spiritual Self, which is peculiarly Man's and not God's creation', and which is 'the plane wherein error, and folly arise'.³ Swedenborg finds 'three universals of hell', which are 'the love of dominion grounded in self-love, the love of possessing the goods of others grounded in the love of the world, and adulterous love'.⁴ The first two originate in Tyranto's *proprium*; the third in Memnon's.

Because conjugal love is rooted within the internal man or woman, external coercion cannot uproot it. Melia insists that, though her father should attempt with corporal punishment to impose his will upon hers, his blows cannot penetrate to her heart, where her love for Pietro dwells:

This outward flesh thou can'st affect
With chastisement most dire;
This heart with rods thou'lt ne'er subject
Throughout thy life, dread sire.⁵

When Tyranto threatens Pietro with violence, he responds by assuring Tyranto 'that though his natural body be destroyed, his love for MELIA could never be shaken'.⁶ This can only mean that Pietro's love will survive the death of his body, and that Melia and he will be conjugally united as spirits or angels, in realms beyond the reach of Tyranto's rage. In his *Ilanga* journalism, Grendon also refers to the 'natural body' in contradistinction to 'spirits' covering'.⁷ Even if Tyranto should chastise or slay the lovers' 'natural' bodies, he is powerless to prevent their spiritual bodies from conjoining, for Pietro assures him:

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 109.

² 'PAD', Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

³ 'PAD', Pt 19, Grendon's explanatory footnote, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 261.

⁵ Pt II, *Citizen* 2:33 (16 March 1898) 3.

⁶ Pt V, prose argument, *Citizen* 2:36 (26 March 1898) 3.

⁷ 'Native Abominations', *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4.

Thou can’st smite down this outward clay,
 And trample it to dust;
 The soul within—that lives always,
 Thou fool!—can’st never rust.¹

Conjugal love cannot be extinguished because it is at the volitional centre of man, which is ‘celestial’, and which cannot be coerced. Swedenborgian Wilkinson states that ‘there is no compulsion in Divine things’,² and Grendon agrees: ‘Religion is a thing which will bear no compulsion.’³ Since conjugal love is defined by Swedenborg as the ‘repository of the Christian religion’, it also cannot be compelled, except by the individual will in which it operates. Grendon consistently opposes the intervention of external coercive measures into what are essentially affairs of the soul, or the ‘real man’.⁴



As already indicated, two of the ‘three universals of hell’—sins of the *proprium*—isolated by Swedenborg find their embodiment in Tyranto. These are ‘the love of dominion’ and ‘the love of possessing the goods of others’.⁵ Man’s love of dominion is one of the great errors of his fallen nature, and is closely allied to the love of self.⁶ Grendon identifies ‘Selfishness [as] one of the worst qualities that can possibly possess a human being’.⁷ It is diametrically opposed to the love of ‘use’, and is evident where one person strives inordinately to bend others into conformity with his or her will. Tyranto’s outrageous lust for unqualified power over his daughter originates in his selfish *proprium*. He insists that his personal will is paramount, and that ‘The child must bend before the tread | Of her commanding sire!’⁸ When Syrena counsels him that ‘To force [his] child’s own will is bad’, Tyranto replies, ‘But I am father!—master!—all!—| And I shall force her will!’ Later, he again insists: ‘I’m father!—master!—I am all!—| My word she must obey!’⁹ Tyranto selfishly seeks out

¹ Pt V, *Citizen* 2:36 (26 March 1898) 3.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 91.

³ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

⁴ See, for instance: ‘Native Reform’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4; ‘The Mission Native’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 261.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 261.

⁷ ‘Selfishness’, *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 3.

⁸ Pt III, *Citizen* 2:34 (19 March 1898) 3.

⁹ Pt VI, *Citizen* 2:37 (30 March 1898) 3.

suitors for his daughter who are wealthy or whose superior rank or breeding will enhance his own repute and self-regard. His wife sees through his motive: ‘To further thine own selfish aims, | Ten lovers thou did’st fish; | Thou dost ignore the maiden’s claims; | Thou tramplest down her wish.’¹

Tyranto also indulges ‘the love of possessing the goods of others’, and plans to enrich himself through a loveless arranged marriage between Melia and a wealthy but unworthy man of his own choosing. He is angered that she repeatedly rejects the suits of ten handsome and wealthy men, and he bemoans the fact that ‘A life of happiness and ease | She forfeits—to be poor’.² When Syrena bows to her husband’s will and carries out his fell imperatives, Melia reveals that her parents’ fault is essentially that of selfishness. In their selfish *propria* they have elevated the acquisition of wealth above human values—even above family ties—by insisting that their daughter marry into wealth. Out of the depths of her despondency, Melia cries:

Away with parents such as these!
Who lead their lives for self;
And sell *their blood* to be at ease,
For Earth’s unstable pelf.³

Melia also charges her supercilious younger sister Katrina with having been spoiled by luxury and ease:

A golden calf ye now have met,
Who dwell within this place;
That calf hath made you to forget
The poor ones of our race.⁴

But ‘That golden calf will melt one day’: the ease and comfort upon which Katrina has grown selfishly dependent will vanish ere long, when the family is turned out of its mansion.⁵

In Swedenborg’s exegesis of the ‘internal’ meaning of the Word, ‘a golden calf in the spiritual sense signifies carnal pleasures’¹—pleasures to which Katrina has

¹ Pt VI, *Citizen* 2:37 (30 March 1898) 3.

² Pt VI, *Citizen* 2:37 (30 March 1898) 3.

³ Pt XIX, *Citizen* 2:72 (22 Oct. 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

become habituated. The calf *topos* occurs also in *Paul Kruger's Dream*, where Kruger confesses, 'I've trampled down | The right! I've made obeisance to the calf'.² In that epic, 'Mammon'—the god of wealth—corresponds to the calf-idol. The President allows his head to be turned by the discovery of gold in his realm.

Repeatedly, as in the above-cited instances, Grendon points out the subversive allure of gold. In 'Melia and Pietro', the witch is the tool villain who, in exchange for a bag of gold, is prepared to undo the work of Heaven. She promises: 'My very soul I'll sell for gold, | Come howsoe'er it may.' Although she cautions Syrena against severing a true conjugal tie, she consents to employ her hellish art to that selfsame end, when she considers the gold offered her:

But gold—the rootstock of all sin
Will gain thee thy desire;
That love *I'll* wreck, the maid *I'll* win,
Against them *I'll* conspire.³

In 'Pro Aliis Damnati', the tool villains are the slaves Damon and Cleon, who agree to assassinate their master's enemy, Zenzema, in exchange for the gold their master offers them. 'On their visage this response is stamp'd':

The price of our reward is glitt'ring gold;
And to secure such tempting prize, we'll scorn
The admonitions—pleadings—and the pray'rs
Of such as strive our project to frustrate!⁴

Like Katrina and the witch in 'Melia and Pietro', like Kruger in the *Dream*, the hired assassins Damon and Cleon are 'Abandon'd to the worship of a Calf'.⁵



Throughout Grendon's verse, he expounds the view that Heaven and Hell are not merely future states, but are present even now in the world—in varying proportions in every man and woman. This is in keeping with Swedenborg, who learns of an angel

¹ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 849. The gist of this is repeated in n. 535.

² *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 38.

³ Pt XI, *Citizen* 2:50 (21 May 1898) 3.

⁴ 'PAD', Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁵ 'PAD', Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

that ‘so far as man does good and believes truth as if from himself, he is an angel of heaven; while so far as he does evil and therefrom believes falsity, which he also does as if from himself, he is a spirit of hell’.¹

Urino—Tyranto’s choice of suitor for his daughter—is in league with devils, and readily employs sorcery to win Melia’s hand in marriage. But he is also guileful, and so entreats Melia: ‘Oh do not think!—*thou hast not seen* | That I’m by devils sway’d.’² In Part IV, Pietro states: ‘Curs’d be the heart | That playeth the part | Of a devil with angel wings!’³ The motif of devils masquerading as angels, or of a seeming angel transforming himself into a devil, may be found in others of Grendon’s poems. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Britannia reprimands the ‘Vile traitor’, President Steyn of the Orange Free State: ‘Whilst thou dost feign an angel’s face | Thou play’st a devil’s part!’⁴ And in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, Memnon, ‘who heretofore an angel seem’d | Thro’ Beauty’s charms a devil soon becomes’.⁵

Swedenborg denies the existence of a fiery hell into which God pitches the wicked. Hell and Heaven are conditions constituted by Man himself and are ever active through the material world. It is true that there is a present and a future state of torment for the wicked which is described as ‘Hell’, but that torment is entirely self-induced and is never inflicted by God. If a man’s ‘ruling love’ has been hellish during a life spent on earth, then after the death of the body, he gravitates inevitably towards his own peculiar hell. The tortures of Hell are the negation of the goods and truths of Heaven.

Following Swedenborg, Grendon asserts that ‘No Hell with finite and material flame | Shall burn the soul of man for evermore!’⁶ However, ‘By his own sin pronounces Man | His own damnation. Thus he feeds | Within himself a hell.’⁷ The expression, ‘Hell-pervaded world’ appears in two of Grendon’s poems;⁸ in such a

¹ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 621.

² Pt XX, *Citizen* 2:74 (29 Oct. 1898) 3.

³ Pt IV, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXII, p. 63.

⁵ ‘PAD’, Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁷ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁸ ‘PAD’, Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4; ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

world, ‘justice’ and ‘truth’ are wanting.¹ When Melia’s parents conspire to bewitch her with a magic draught, she declares her resolve: ‘Henceforth, I will not drink nor eat | Within this hell-plagued place!’²



Another apparent trace of Swedenborg to be found in ‘Melia and Pietro’ is the categorical denial of the reality of death—a denial we encounter from time to time in Grendon’s later verse. Swedenborg states that ‘man does not die; he is merely separated from the bodily part that was of use to him in the world, while the man himself continues to live. ... [T]he death of man is merely his passing from one world into another. And this is why in the Word in its internal sense “death” signifies resurrection and continuation of life.’³

The dying servant Brower ‘tells [Melia] not to weep since he [is] passing to brighter worlds’:⁴ ‘*My flesh must turn to clay!* | Oh, blind he, this change who dreads! | *My soul will ne’er decay!*’⁵ He goes on:

THERE IS NO DEATH! A child can scan
Where passing spirits go;
The Grave is not the End of Man!
They dream who tell us so!⁶

Superficially, there may appear little that is heterodox in Brower’s personal creed. However, his contention is that the ‘Man’ does not cease to exist when his clay is committed to the grave. As Swedenborg asserts, it is ‘Man’ who ‘passes’ into other ‘worlds’.



Numerous references to destiny are found throughout Grendon’s prose, as well as in such poems as *Paul Kruger’s Dream* and ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’. He also employs a synonym, ‘fortune’—occasionally with initial capital—in such poems as ‘Melia and

¹ ‘PAD’, Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4.

² Pt XIII, *Citizen* 2:56 (2 July 1898) 3.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 445.

⁴ Pt XXIII, prose argument, *Citizen* 2:80 (17 Dec. 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt XXIII, *Citizen* 2:80 (17 Dec. 1898) 3.

⁶ Pt XXIII, *Citizen* 2:80 (17 Dec. 1898) 3.

Pietro', 'A Dream', *Paul Kruger's Dream*, 'Pro Aliis Damnati', and 'A Warning'. In *Paul Kruger's Dream*, destiny is reified as the stern female visitant, 'Fortuna'.

In various places throughout Grendon's corpus, the attentive reader may struggle to reconcile this insistence upon destiny and mystic foreknowledge with the notion of individual volitional freedom. 'Melia and Pietro', being one of Grendon's earliest surviving poems, introduces us to this philosophical problem. Here, an awkward tension exists between Pietro's gloomy fatalism and Melia's volitional autonomy. The poem makes reference to the 'will of HEAV'N',¹ 'the will of God',² and the 'Will of GOD HIMSELF'.³ But what—we may fairly ask—of poor, devoted Melia's personal will? With black magic, destiny, and ruthless parents arrayed against her, just how much choice does she actually possess? What evidence, internal to the poem, can be adduced to demonstrate that she is in fact a free moral agent?

Free Will and immutable destiny may be reconciled in Grendon's mind, but he fails to resolve the enigma for his reader. On the one hand, we are presented with Melia's exercise of volitional freedom in 'choosing' the mate that Providence has marked out for her. She also stalwartly rejects ten hypocritical suitors whom her father appoints. How are we to reconcile this apparent self-determining capacity with overmastering 'Destiny' and black magic?

Pietro insists that Melia will prove unfaithful to him—it is an outcome she cannot avoid:

Thou can'st not see what I can see
 Upon TIME's distant face;
 From DESTINY thou can'st not flee,
 However fleet thy race.⁴

This sounds very like predestination. Since 'Melia becomes dumb, confused and stupefied by the charms of the wily Urino',⁵ it appears that her personal volition avails naught. How then can her estrangement from Pietro reflect upon her fidelity—as though it were a matter of choice?

¹ Pt VIII, *Citizen* 2:44 (27 April 1898) 3.

² Pt XIX, *Citizen* 2:72 (22 Oct. 1898) 3.

³ Pt XII, *Citizen* 2:54 (18 June 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:39 (6 April 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt XX, *Citizen* 2:74 (29 Oct. 1898) 3.

Our difficulty is compounded by the knowledge that Grendon was not predestinarian—at least, not in any ordinary sense. He advocates Free Will in his *Ilanga* prose, when he writes that ‘the evil which a man commits, is his, and his alone. No man can be held responsible for the voluntary deeds of another.’¹ His Swedenborgian associate, Attersoll, also writing in *Ilanga*, formularizes that ‘because God is voluntary, therefore man is voluntary’, and adds that ‘the voluntary principle includes the power of rational discernment and the decision of choice for the satisfaction of desire’.² By qualifying ‘deeds’ as ‘voluntary’, Grendon allows that some deeds are not, and in this qualification, we may perhaps trace the glimmer of an answer to Melia’s predicament. Perhaps her inability to exercise her free will because of overwhelming adversity is the very point that Grendon seeks to make. And perhaps the closing parts of the poem—if ever they are found—will show us that Melia must await life after the body’s death before she begin to enjoy the unimpeded exercise of moral choice.

The issue of destiny set against individual free will appears central to ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, the Latin title of which Grendon translates as ‘For others doomed’. Unfortunately, like ‘Melia and Pietro’, ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ survives only as a large fragment, and so definitive critical judgements must be reserved. However, it appears that the title has reference to the slaves Damon and Cleon, who are induced by their master Memnon to commit murder. They are ‘doomed’ in that they will have to face the full wrath of temporal law, but because of their vastly unequal relationship with their master, they cannot act out of perfect volitional freedom, and may therefore be exculpated of the crime, which originates in the minds of the adulterous lovers, Helen and Memnon. The ‘others’ for whom Damon and Cleon are ‘doomed’, then, appear to be their master and his mistress. The ‘voluntary deeds’—to quote Grendon’s editorial once again—are Helen’s and Memnon’s; those of the slaves are largely involuntary. This at least appears to be the import of the title that Grendon gives his poem.

Even though the poet may not be predestinarian or fatalist, at least some of his characters are. Contemplating the gravity of the wicked deed he purposes, Memnon shrugs: ‘How can I now retrace my wanton steps? | I’m doom’d, FOR MURD’ROUS DEEDS I DESTIN’D AM!’ He next proceeds with choice sophism worthy of Dr Faustus:

¹ ‘A Strange Question’, *Ilanga* 2:61 (10 June 1904) 4.

² Harold Attersoll, ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

Could Christ have ever scal'd the Cross of Shame,
 Had he by Judas never been betray'd?—
 Could I to bloodiest horrors ever stoop,
 Were I by Fate precipitated not
 Thereto?¹

The implication of this is that the traitor, Judas was foreordained to betray his Lord, in order that Christ might discharge his perfect ministry. By the same token, Memnon considers himself propelled by 'Fate'. In effect, the end justifies the means. The desired end is Helen's hand in marriage; the means is the destruction of her tyrannical husband, Zenzema.

Mammon—god of pelf—uses a similar specious syllogism in *Paul Kruger's Dream* to argue that his existence has been vital to Man's Salvation. Of Christ, he says: 'For when incarnate He became | To save Mankind from Sin, | I purchas'd Him—and who'll disclaim?— | I purchas'd Him with tin!'² Mammon claims in effect that his role in Christ's betrayal was necessary, and hence predetermined. Mammon is referred to also in 'Pro Aliis Damnati', where he is described as the one 'who directs the destinies | Of mortal man on this material orb;—| Who purchas'd Heav'n's Eternal King with tin, | And nail'd Him to the Tree of bitt'rest Shame'.³ It makes little sense to argue from the above that Grendon himself denies the reality of free choice. The irony implicit in these passages is palpable.

Swedenborg strongly opposes predestination, at least in the Calvinist sense. In *True Christian Religion*, for instance, he asks: 'But what more pernicious doctrine could have been devised, or what more cruel notion in regard to God could have been conceived, than that any of the human race are damned by a positive pre-determined decree?'⁴ This is one aspect of his teaching that Blake—an unqualified believer in free will—initially appreciated.⁵ But, in a *volte-face*, Blake subsequently accuses Swedenborg of predestinarianism.⁶ As Northrop Frye points out, it seems a little perverse on Blake's part that he chose to attack the doctrine of predestination in Swedenborg, who denies it, rather than in Augustine or Calvin, with whom it is most

¹ 'PAD', Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

² *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 34.

³ 'PAD', Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 486.

⁵ Paley, 'A New Heaven Is Begun', 65.

⁶ Paley, 'A New Heaven Is Begun', 69.

commonly associated.¹ Morton Paley offers a possible explanation. He suggests that ‘for Blake the essential problem in Swedenborg’s view is the failure to reconcile man’s free will and God’s foreknowledge’ and that Swedenborg simply fails to go far enough in his rejection of predestination.²

Certainly, Blake misrepresents Swedenborg in branding him a predestinarian. And yet, he may have a point, in that the baron does not supply a full answer to the question of how God could foreknow what moral choices men and women yet unborn would one day make, in the exercise of their volitional freedom. An analogous problem exists in Grendon’s poetry, in that it likewise fails ‘to reconcile man’s free will and God’s foreknowledge’. Grendon appears to have had a less complicated relationship with Swedenborg’s teaching than Blake had, and it is just possible that he does not even register any philosophical difficulty. But it is there for his readers.

The apparent philosophical impasse in Grendon’s poetry and prose may arise from the striking alterity of Swedenborg’s doctrine on human volition. He denies that the will to do good arises in the individual human breast. Humans do not possess love or wisdom ‘in themselves’, any more than they possess life in themselves. These attributes are derived from God. While the religious act ‘as if’ from themselves, it is the divine good and truth that are actually at work in them. Their own ‘will’ extends no further than their capacity to choose heavenly influences above hellish ones.³ In the final analysis, all moral action is portrayed by Swedenborg as a *response* to some spiritual influence.

‘Man’s free will is from this’, states Swedenborg, ‘that he feels life in himself as his, and God leaves him so to feel, that reciprocal conjunction may take place between Him and man’.⁴ While Swedenborg acknowledges Free Will, the concept is circumscribed by his denial that the will to act virtuously is truly man’s own. Man is permitted to believe that his will to do good is his own, but for a fact, it is not. It is necessary to maintain the illusion that goods in Man’s Will and truths in his Understanding are his own, in order that ‘reciprocal conjunction’ between him and God may take place. As Trobridge puts it, Man ‘is held in equilibrium between forces

¹ Frye, *Fearful Symmetry*, 188.

² Paley, ‘A New Heaven Is Begun’, 70.

³ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 48.

⁴ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 504.

of good and of evil, and must make his choice between them. At the same time the ability and will to do good are from the Lord alone, though it is given to man to feel that they are from himself. All he can do, however, is to dispose his mind and heart to receive the Divine influences.’¹ If this is really ‘all he can do’, some might be inclined to argue that it isn’t very much. Swedenborg’s concept of volition is the freedom to ‘yield’ to influences, rather than the freedom to act of oneself. It does seem that ‘all [Melia] can do’ is yield to ‘influences’, but in her case, it is difficult to concede that she is held in ‘equilibrium between forces of good and of evil’.



Gifted as Pietro is with second sight, he observes ‘on TIME’s far-distant face | Such vision bright and clear, | As often happens in Life’s race | And troubles us with fear’.² The vision takes the form of a simple allegory, which Pietro will later decode for Melia’s benefit. Pietro recounts his ‘vision bright and clear’ as follows:

*Two lovers on Life’s path do pace,
Thick clouds on them alight;
Their front present[s] an angry face,
Behind,—a glorious sight.*

The maiden hesitates—she cries—
She turneth back her face—
She dreads the storm and homeward flies—
The swain doth onward pace.

He struggles hard through rain and hail
That well-nigh do him stun;
And safely passes to a vale
Where shines perpetual sun.

The storm has ceas’d: ’tis overpast
The face of heaven clear;
Those lovers *parted*, stood at last,
Between—one boundless mere.³

¹ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 134.

² Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:39 (6 April 1898) 3.

³ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:39 (6 April 1898) 3.

Having narrated his ‘vision’ for Melia’s edification, Pietro sets about deciphering it. The ‘storm’ of parental persecution is intense and daunting. Fearing her father’s brutal displeasure, Melia’s courage flags, and she runs for figurative shelter. By contrast, ‘the swain’—Pietro—shows dauntless courage and persists until the storm has abated and the sky is radiant. His courage has brought him to the ‘vale’ of ‘perpetual sun’.

In the poem, ‘Storm and Calm’ (1904), which Grendon dedicates ‘To you, Abantu, weary, and forlorn with trials, and vicissitudes of present life’, he uses similar imagery to indicate that trials are temporary and must be courageously endured. In this later poem, he describes how ‘Dense storm-charg’d furious nimbus-clouds | On fleeting whirlwinds borne’ compel ‘mortals in despair | To utter frantic pray’r’. Their dread is Melia’s. Yet this storm likewise passes; the sun shines brightly in a clear sky;

And loudly do they now declare
 That Courage dreads not Harm;
 That steadfast Hope dispels Despair,
 And Storm declines to Calm;
 That Darkness blended is with Light,
 And Sorrow link’d to Bliss;
 That Wrong is sister unto Right,
 Tho’ rear’d for deeds remiss.¹

The storm–calm imagery of both ‘Melia and Pietro’ and ‘Storm and Calm’ seems to argue not merely that adversity is transient, but that it is endowed with positive utility. When borne with fortitude, or resisted out of regard for principle, ‘Wrong’ is indeed ‘sister unto Right’, or—as the dying servant Brower assures Melia her own trials will eventually reveal to her—‘ILL begetteth GOOD’. In ‘Storm and Calm’, Grendon calls upon ‘frail, and vain, and sinful man’ to recognize ‘That Ill sometimes brings Good; | That often thro’ this cheque’d life | When the flesh lies smitten down, | O’ercome by violent, heated strife, | Despair holds out a crown.’² This seems to express Grendon’s own outlook *vis-à-vis* the manifold trials of life.

Both poems use storm-cloud imagery to embody the moral that evil endured produces good. But, whereas ‘Abantu’ through courage may yet emerge triumphant

¹ ‘Storm and Calm’, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

² ‘Storm and Calm’, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

through the storm of ‘trials, and vicissitudes’, and Pietro achieves his ‘vale | Where shines perpetual sun’, it seems that Melia is singled out for a less happy lot. She must muster courage, even while Pietro insists that it will desert her.

Pietro glosses his blissful vale as follows:

*That vale, where shines perpetual sun,
Is that BRIGHT—GLORIOUS SHORE
Where Human Life doth peaceful run—
Where love-trials pain no more.*¹

As a place or state where night and darkness are forever banished, Pietro’s vale resembles Swedenborg’s Heaven. In one of his ‘Memorable Relations’, the seer records how he is informed by two marriage partners in Heaven: ‘With us in heaven there is perpetual light, and on no occasion do the shades of evening prevail, still less is there darkness; because our sun does not set and rise like yours, but remains constantly in a middle altitude between the zenith and the horizon, which, as you express it, is at an elevation of 45 degrees.’² Swedenborg teaches that ‘The Sun of heaven is the Lord’,³ who shines unremittingly. Heaven seems therefore the likeliest signification of Pietro’s ‘vale | Where shines perpetual sun’. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, the aging exile, Kruger likewise looks forward, after death, to ‘Eternal Day’.⁴

By identifying his vale with that ‘BRIGHT—GLORIOUS SHORE | Where Human Life doth peaceful run’, Pietro appears to strengthen our hypothesis. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Kruger apostrophizes the lately-deceased General Joubert, assuring him that ‘We’ll meet on yonder shore, | Whereunto thou thy flight hast sped’.⁵ Here by ‘shore’, Kruger clearly means life after the body’s decay.

It is unclear how far the reader may trust the internal consistency of ‘Melia and Pietro’, but assuming that Pietro holds to his promise to ‘repair’ to ‘deserts’ and to

¹ Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:39 (6 April 1898) 3.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 137.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 117.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133. Kruger’s view of the afterlife is not however entirely compatible with Swedenborgianism. The same stanza predicts ‘realms—where Silence reigns | Uncheck’d’ prior to the dawn of ‘Eternal Day’. Silent is one thing Swedenborg’s heavens are not. Grendon does not pretend that Kruger embraced Swedenborg.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXX, p. 99.

remain a ‘bachelor all [his] life’ if ever Melia should deceive him,¹ then the vale of ‘perpetual sun’ cannot imply a life of ease in some bosom other than Melia’s. Melia remains his conjugal partner, and it seems hard to conceive ‘perpetual sun’ without her.

It is a great pity that we do not possess the conclusion to this poem, because it is altogether possible that the final scenes are played out in Heaven. It is not clear how far Grendon had mastered Swedenborg’s intricacies by 1897, but since he knew something of conjugal love, he likely also knew that conjugal partners invariably locate each other in Heaven. In such case, he would have held the hope that, even if the odds were stacked impossibly against his fictive lovers on earth, when they achieved their final state, beyond the ‘rain and hail’ of adversity, they would conjoin everlastingly. It is quite possible that Melia will make it across the ‘boundless mere’ that Pietro sees in vision, but whether the ‘perpetual sun’ will cause it to evaporate, or some barque will conduct her across its expanse, remains—for us—unresolved.

This may explain why Pietro presses on with his courtship when he already knows that Melia will succumb to her father’s pressure. Perhaps he persists because his unerring prescience sees them ultimately united in the celestial heavens. The poem predicts that he will rise in fortune, but that Tyranto’s household—including Melia—is destined for an imminent and calamitous fall. Perhaps the fire of adversity must further purify Melia, and it is necessary that she pass through the gutter, or even the ‘harlot’s den’, before she may fitly unite with her ‘true’ conjugal partner.



‘Melia and Pietro’ (1897) and ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ (1904–05) are two epic-length poems that stand in a complex relationship to each other. As already indicated, the earlier poem highlights Swedenborg’s concept of ‘conjugal’ love—the everlasting, God-sent mutual attraction between one man and one woman made for each other. By contrast, in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’—a more carefully conceived and crafted poem with a finer surface quality—the poet seems concerned to explore ‘scortatory’ (adulterous) love—the principle in direct opposition to ‘conjugal’ love.

¹ Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

Melia and Helen are the female protagonists of these two poems. Grendon settles the question of their physical appearance early on: Melia is ‘a lovely brunette of nineteen’.¹ Helen, the female protagonist of ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, is ‘a handsome dame’² with ‘flowing auburn hair’.³ The reader must therefore be content with assurances of great beauty and descriptions of hair colour. Each woman is potentially an object of desire.

Tyranto in ‘Melia and Pietro’, and Zenzema in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ are both Blue Beard-like figures—domestic tyrants and little else. Visceral descriptions of brutal male-on-female domestic violence are common to the poems. Grendon provides graphic descriptions of females wounded and blood-besmeared. In both poems, the language used to describe the wounds inflicted is strikingly similar: Melia lies ‘prostrate’ ‘In a pool of gore’⁴; Helen ‘welter[s] in a pool of gore’.⁵ Melia describes ‘These stripes, these wounds o’ercharg’d with blood’ inflicted by her abusive father,⁶ Helen describes ‘These purple stripes—and yonder clotted gore’, caused by her abusive husband.⁷ In both poems, ‘horse’s reins’⁸ or ‘riding-whip’⁹ are the preferred instruments of torture.

Several of the male characters are violent—and this trait is not limited to the principal villains. Tyranto’s name bespeaks his cruel, authoritarian nature. Urino, Melia’s false suitor, threatens her with violence: ‘I’ll humble thee with pride o’er grown, | And thrust thee in the dust!’¹⁰ Byrza, Tyranto’s servant, threatens to ‘prostrate’ his master if he does not desist from persecuting Melia.¹¹ Even Pietro, the moral hero of the poem, is anything but mild. He readily resorts to abusive and provocative language in response to Tyranto’s threats and violence.

In ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, the same phenomenon is observed. Helen’s cuckolded husband, Zenzema, has almost no redeeming feature to his thoroughly obnoxious,

¹ ‘M&P’, Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

² ‘PAD’, Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ ‘PAD’, Pt 6, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘M&P’, Pt VIII, *Citizen* 2:46 (4 May 1898) 3.

⁵ ‘PAD’, Pt 7, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘M&P’, Pt IV, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3.

⁷ ‘PAD’, Pt 6, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁸ ‘M&P’, Pt VIII, *Citizen* 2:46 (4 May 1898) 3.

⁹ ‘PAD’, Pt 5, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov 1904) 4.

¹⁰ ‘M&P’, Pt XX, *Citizen* 2:74 (29 Oct. 1898) 3.

¹¹ ‘M&P’, Pt VIII, *Citizen* 2:44 (27 April 1898) 3.

thoroughly brutal personality. The adulterous Memnon plots Zenzema's violent death, and his slaves, Damon and Cleon, perform the bloody deed.

It so happens, therefore, that the only two extended depictions of home life in Grendon's surviving poetic corpus have in common male brutality and grossly unequal relations between the sexes. It seems inescapable that we address the question of whether or not Grendon's own upbringing led him to such a jaundiced view of sexual and domestic politics.

Extracting autobiographical clues from a poet's output is by its nature a highly speculative project. However, what facts we know of the Grendon family prompt an attempt to correlate life with art. Given contemporary reports of Joseph Grendon's dangerously volatile temper,¹ and his own confession that he 'was always more or less in hot water' while in Damaraland,² it seems likely that Robert Grendon and his siblings were exposed to some of his outbursts.

It also seems possible that machismo was a family trait amongst the Grendon men of Robert's generation. Joseph William Grendon junior, our poet's white half-brother, who served during the South African War, as well as in Rhodesia before that, was 'dismissed as unsuitable' from the South African Constabulary in 1904. His character is described in official records as 'bad', and in May of that year he was fined £5 for 'overstaying his pass, creating a disturbance in a public place, drunkenness, [and] breaking arrest while prisoner in camp'. In July, he pleaded guilty to having struck a superior officer, although he denied a charge of drunkenness.³

Although he portrays the domestic tyranny of Tyrano and Zenzema in a negative light, Robert Grendon himself seems concerned with visible displays of manhood, and he has no patience with sexual ambiguity. He admires the Swazi Prince Malunge as 'that superlative specimen and model of Bantu manhood'.⁴ By contrast, on at least two occasions, he accuses polemical adversaries of lacking 'manhood'.⁵

¹ Andersson Papers: Diary, 11 May 1866; Green to Andersson, Ondonga, 7 Dec. 1865.

² Cape, *Damaraland Affairs*, 42.

³ TAB SAC 87, ref. B2775: Record of Conduct and Service of South African Constabulary, Joseph William Grendon.

⁴ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁵ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6; 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

In verse, he also deplores the degradation of manhood. In ‘Melia and Pietro’, Urino is an ‘evil fop’ and ‘*no man*’.¹ In ‘Defence of Tommy’, Grendon attacks those ‘Bombastic dastards vain, who shrank | From arms, and from a rustic foe’ during the late South African War. Having failed to take up arms against Britannia’s enemies, they have the audacity to ‘revile | With lips that are effeminate | The common soldier’.² The luxurious European lifestyle is likewise portrayed as unmanly by the speaker in ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’, who ‘scorn[s the white man’s] Most effeminate ways’.³

For Grendon, the roles of women and men are complementary and mutually-exclusive. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Kruger hears ‘a Voice’ that condemns those ‘Seditious women sway’d by vain desires’ who ‘loathe their natural state, and do against | Their better halves conspire’. The Voice reminds these wayward women that ‘’Tis *yours* to bow | And to obey; but *man’s* to rule, command | And to defend! So long as Earth revolves, | Frail creatures, ye man’s helpmates must remain! | Your portion this,—no more by God decreed!’ Women delude themselves who think that they can invest themselves with ‘manhood’ by means of ‘stealth’.⁴

An editorial intrusion in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ derides the folly of men who confide secrets to fickle womankind: ‘Accursed fool, oh man, art thou, | Who dost the fortress of thy manhood yield | To woman—howsoever true she be! | The first temptation shakes, and overcomes | Her, and she falls a victim to her tongue.’⁵ This general slur on the character of the female sex is particularized in Pietro’s prediction that Melia ‘turneth back her face’ at sight of the storm she ‘dreads’.

There is something a little distasteful about the sexual politics implicit in ‘Melia and Pietro’ and ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’. The poet’s own sexual chauvinism appears implicit, for instance, in the fantasy that Melia’s sisters—and perhaps she herself—will descend into harlotry when the time for their father, Tyranto’s humbling arrives.

¹ Pt XXII, *Citizen* 2:78 (3 Dec. 1898) 3.

² ‘Defence of Tommy’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

³ ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’, *Ilanga* 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 100. Grendon appears to work from St Paul, who writes of ‘silly women ... led away with divers lusts’ (2 Tim. 3:6); and of ‘women [who] did change the natural use into that which is against nature’ (Rom. 1:26).

⁵ ‘PAD’, Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 4.

Grendon's views on the differential functions of the sexes are likely coloured by his Swedenborgianism. Swedenborg draws a clear line of demarcation between the roles of husband and wife. These roles arise out of their spiritually disparate constitutions:

The wife cannot enter into the proper duties of the man; nor the man, on the other hand, into the proper duties of the wife.... In the proper duties of men the understanding, thought, and wisdom act the chief part; but in the proper duties of wives the will, affection, and love act the chief part. And from these the wife performs her duties, and from those the man performs his. Their duties are therefore in their nature different,—but yet conjunctive, in a successive series. ... By some it is also imagined that women are equally capable of elevating the sight of their understanding, into the sphere of light in which men may be, and of viewing things in the same [intellectual] altitude; an opinion to which they have been led by the writings of certain learned authoresses. But these being examined in their presence in the spiritual world were found to be products not of judgement and wisdom.¹

In assigning to men and women distinct but complementary functions, Swedenborg does no more than many religious writers. What sets his philosophy apart however is that he sees sexual difference in terms of the marriage of Wisdom and Love. While all humans have both wisdom and love infused into them, women are especially endowed with love, and men have superior wisdom.

Men are created forms of wisdom, for 'the truth of good, or truth grounded in good, is in the male' and 'is the very essential male (or masculine) principle'. Women are created forms of love, for 'the good of truth, or good grounded in truth, is in the female' and 'is the very essential female (or feminine) principle'.² Or, as Harold Attersoll, Grendon's co-believer in the New Jerusalem, states, women's 'affectional nature [is] outside (their rational faculty is inward, just the reverse of that of the male)'.³ Conjugal marriage occurs when the male's truth of good unites with the female's good of truth. In the light of this clear-cut spiritual division, we may read Tyranto's reluctant confession regarding his daughter, Melia's conjugal partner: 'In sense the lad is deep and wise.'⁴ The tenderness of Melia's love, on the other hand, is amply pictured in her nursing of the dying Brower.

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 175

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 61.

³ H. Attersoll to the Editor, *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4.

⁴ Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

It need not be assumed that Swedenborgianism in some way implies the dysfunctional sexual or parent-child relationships observed in Grendon's two domestic verse-dramas. On the contrary, Attersoll ascribes 'the false position in which we are and in which the people of this Earth have been for many centuries' chiefly to

the indisposition of the males generally to care for the female side of humanity with a full feeling of equity and loving kindness. Why, even now, in the much vaunted twentieth century, most of us males, in our own hearts treat the female as a toy, or something to be preyed upon. This is barbarism, whether in Europe, Asia, America, or Africa! ...

In all our nuptial regulations they [*i.e.*, women] should have equal power with man, for it is by the equation of the forces of the dual Mind—the male and the female—[that conditions will be set to rights].¹



Pedigree, rank, and station constitute a connecting *topos* that interlaces Grendon's poetry and prose. 'Amagunyana', the eponymous speaker of Grendon's poem, or poem-fragment, 'Amagunyana's Soliloquy', boasts that in his 'swarthy veins doth course the blood | Of ancient kings from Sheba until now'.² In the 'Miscegenation' polemic, Grendon narrates the true account of the Earl of Stamford, 'an Englishman of high descent', who fell into drink and vice at the Cape, and while in that state was nursed 'with constant fidelity' by a 'coloured girl' who became first his mistress, and afterwards his wife.³ He also tells of 'the marriage [in England] of an Indian aristocrat to the daughter of an English nobleman'.⁴ In 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland' (1915), he warns that 'the ruling caste in Swaziland' will need to rely upon something other than royal lineage if they hope 'to meet the stern demands of the times'. Many Swazi aristocrats wallow in 'indolence, apathy, and sloth', while 'commoners are faring better. They, at any rate, are striving to keep abreast with the times.' Being 'born in the purple' is all very well, but it needs to be augmented by new skills and faculties tailored to the unique and daunting challenges of a rapidly changing South Africa.⁵

Although no direct evidence exists, it is quite likely that Grendon's reputed family association with the ruling chiefly house of Damaraland counted in his favour when

¹ H. Attersoll to the Editor, *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4.

² 'Amagunyana's Soliloquy', *Ilanga* 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4. See Appendix 3.

³ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6.

⁴ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:87 (20 May 1914) 6.

⁵ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

he was introduced to the Swazi royals, particularly to Queen-Regent Labotsibeni and to her son, Prince-Regent Malunge waMbandzeni. Grendon's marriage to Gwilikile (Victoria) Dlamini¹ may or may not have been 'conjugal', but it was politically astute: the Dlamini are the dominant Swazi clan, and the royal family are Dlamini.

Grendon may also have made some capital out of his real or imaginary European ancestry. In the 'Miscegenation' polemic, he displays more than a passing knowledge of European royal genealogy. For instance, he identifies 'Rollo the Norse viking' as the ancestor of Queen Victoria, and hence also of her grandson, the 'present Emperor of Germany'.² The Scandinavian chieftain, Rollo or Hrolf (c.860–c.932) was the first duke of Normandy and founder of the Norman dynasty. If Grendon believed, like his siblings, that his Irish ancestors were once genteel and landed proprietors, and if he knew also that he had an illustrious thirteenth-century name-sake, the Anglo-Norman Sir Robert de Grendon, Knight, of Grendon and Shenston, Sheriff of Staffordshire and Salop, he might by a flight of fancy have 'discovered' some ancestral consanguinity with Rollo.

The theme of personal worth in relation to breeding is central in 'Melia and Pietro'. Tyranto's chief objection to Pietro is that he is 'low of birth':

That maiden's heart I wish to knit
To men of higher breed—
More known—more comely—and more fit
Than thou who art in need.³

By way of a retort, Pietro reminds Tyranto: 'Thou knowest little of my breed | And of my fitness less.'⁴ It is noteworthy that although Pietro seeks to divorce his 'breed' from his 'fitness', on another occasion he glories in his 'proud ancestral line'.⁵ Melia confirms Pietro's lofty lineage when she tells proud Katrina

Know this—that we were lowly born—
Not rear'd on couches fine;

¹ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 86.

² 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:87 (20 May 1914) 6.

³ Pt III, *Citizen* 2:34 (19 March 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt III, *Citizen* 2:34 (19 March 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt IX, *Citizen* 2:48 (14 May 1898) 3.

But PIETRO so reviled and torn
Boast[s] high ancestral line.¹



Sexual attraction seems to Grendon to be especially susceptible to enchantment. In Part XI, Tyranto and Syrena resort to witchcraft in an attempt to redirect their daughter's affections.² Rather than causing their wicked plot against their daughter to be foiled, the poet allows the witch's charm to take effect. It alienates Melia's love from Pietro, and fixes it on Urino.

As pointed out in chapter one, Grendon believed implicitly in the power of witchcraft, which he abhorred. Swedenborg and his disciples have never wavered in their conviction that hordes of evil spirits exist and wield pernicious influence over men and women on earth. The spirit world—including angels and devils—is viewed as not *in* the material world of Time-Space, but contiguous with it. Evil spirits pose real danger to men and women on earth, because these likewise inhabit the spirit world, as respects their interiors. Wilkinson writes: 'In a word such magi, and in general such as make influx into the principle of Freewill (*voluntario*), are not worthy to live, because they are the destruction of the human race.'³

Wilkinson identifies a particular class of evil spirit that seeks by influx to manipulate the sexuality of men. These are the 'sirens, subtle seducers, who lust to rule over the interiors of men's minds by appropriate arts.... Their fascinations and seductions deprive the mind of its senses, and their potions and spells complete the insanity of the victims.'⁴ Sceptics stand warned:

I have met with those who thought that these sirens were mythological, but on the contrary they are known as common characters in the spiritual world; and the fables of mythology are the shadows of their bad reality. Swedenborg treats of them, and of their male counterparts, *genii*, extensively in his works, and especially in his *Diary*. 'The multitude of Sirens', he says, 'is so great that it is scarcely credible; most of them come from the Church (*plerique ex Ecclesia*).

¹ Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

² Pt XI, *Citizen* 2:50 (21 May 1898) 3.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 56.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 59.

They are destruction; very bane of the human race. They beset man's interiors, and breathe in whatever things are foul and atrocious.¹

In 'Pro Aliis Damnati', Grendon depicts a siren's power: 'The devil Memnon, to secure a wife, | Had yielded to the siren Helen's charms | And sold his soul to ev'ry wickedness.'² In 'Melia and Pietro', Syrena's name may have been suggested by such a being, although Grendon does not develop that aspect of her nature. In his elegy for Michal Nkosi, he alludes to the male counterpart of the siren—a sex-crazed satyr. Now that Michal has entered the spirit world, he assures her: 'No Devil—partly Man, and partly goat—| As thou didst in Umcwaba's house behold—| On bat wings balanced, o'er thy path shall float, | To fashion thee in his satyric mould!'³ Michal was a spinster.⁴ In some unspecified way, it appears that a satyric devil had sought to deflower her 'in Umcwaba's house'.

It seems likely that, to Grendon's mind, the application of 'potions' and 'philtres' has real potency to allure or to repel a sexual partner. In 'A Second Warning to Edendale' (1904), the speaker accuses the mission community at Edendale of having become 'intoxicated' 'well-nigh | To death' by 'Love philtres sparkling'.⁵ Whether he there means literal or figurative love charms, the message is the same: 'love' can be enchanted. (It may be taken for granted that *conjured* love cannot be *conjugal*.) In 'Melia and Pietro', a witch's potion and magic spell deflect an innocent girl from her divinely-appointed conjugal partner.⁶



There are several stock characters in 'Melia and Pietro': the implacable, tyrannical father (Tyranto), the rich and unscrupulous fop (Urino), the mysterious youthful stranger (Pietro), and the evil tool (the witch). Because the poem tends towards allegory, its flat characterization may not be altogether out of place.

What is less easy to excuse—and can only be regarded as a flaw—is the psychologically inconsistent conduct of some leading characters. Syrena's

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 59n.

² 'PAD', Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

³ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

⁵ 'A Second Warning to Edendale', *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

⁶ Pt XI, *Citizen* 2:50 (21 May 1898) 3.

unaccountable *volte-face* is a prime example. Early on, she takes Melia's part and courageously withstands Tyranto, but later, without rhyme or reason, she meekly acquiesces: 'Thy will be done, TYRANTO, then, | This instant I'll depart; | I'll hasten to the witch's den | And satisfy thy heart.'¹

Pietro's characterization also appears flawed. The reader cannot help but reprehend his decision to undertake a solitary 'pleasure tour' at precisely the moment that his beloved Melia undergoes her direst test. Even though she pleads with him to put it off, he 'remains firm to his purpose'. He 'foretells that during his absence Melia's love [will] become cold, and that the heart that now love[s] him, [will] love him no longer'.² Although Grendon may not intend it so, this is impossible to look upon as anything other than self-fulfilling prophecy: Pietro himself alienates Melia's love.

He claims: 'I *must* depart; I may not stay; | 'Tis Fate that driveth me.' But surely Grendon could have found some more substantial pretext for the operation of 'Fate' than a 'pleasure trip'? He also says that his absence 'will be the test' of Melia's love for him, but he predicts confidently that 'The love enshrin'd within thy breast | Wilt fade away and die'.³ Any fair-minded reader will ask what further 'test' the maiden deserves to endure. Twice, her father's savage assaults have brought her to within an inch of her life. She has been the target of sorcery and chicanery. Has she not undergone a sufficiently arduous test of her love for Pietro? By heaping upon her a further 'test', Pietro calls into question *not her* love, but his own.

Perhaps this critical judgement of Grendon's artistic control is unduly harsh. Melia does say of Pietro that 'His blindness tears [her] heart apart, | And kills Love's ev'ry spark!'⁴ Perhaps this is a sub-theme that Grendon means to develop in those parts of the poem that are lost to us. Still the question remains: why a 'pleasure tour'? And why, after having confidently predicted that Melia will desert him, does he accuse the servant-girl Hannah of lying when she tells him that his own prediction has come true?⁵

¹ Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

² Pt XXI, prose argument, *Citizen* 2:77 (26 Nov. 1898) 3.

³ Pt XXI, *Citizen* 2:77 (26 Nov. 1898) 3.

⁴ Pt XIX, *Citizen* 2:72 (22 Oct. 1898) 3.

⁵ Pt XXIV, *Citizen* 2:81 (24 Dec. 1898) 4.

Grendon was thirty years of age when he composed this poem. Perhaps something akin to what has been said of Milton—whom Grendon greatly admired—might with telling accuracy be applied to him: ‘At thirty Milton was perhaps the most accomplished young man in England, so far as music and books could make him; of some other things more important for the conduct of life he was and remained invincibly ignorant.’¹ In public affairs, Grendon stands tall; in terms of fully-rounded humanity, he appears somehow crippled. His two domestic verse-dramas discover this frailty for us.



Everything we know of Grendon leads to the conclusion that he never wrote with the primary objective of taking or giving pleasure. His periodic flourishes of virtuosity and erudition suggest that personal ambition formed part of his artistic impulse, but before all else, he meant to teach. A didactic tone is never wholly missing from any piece of his poetry or prose. When he puts pen to page, he aims to lead—to be in some manner exemplary. What he writes respecting independent black African journalism applies with equal force to his verse:

The Native Press stands to its people as a teacher does to his pupils. There is no equality between the two. How then can a teacher convey his ideas and teachings to his pupils otherwise than by a process which will cause and require in the latter to be always behind the light which they seek to obtain? The teacher then must always be in advance of his pupils. How could he perform his duty otherwise? If he is to lead he must be in advance. If he be in the body of those whom he professes to lead, he is no leader, but a ‘common soldier’. So too in a sense is it with the Native Press. If it seem that much of what it publishes is immaturely advanced we beg to state that in the process of both leading and teaching, an advance on those who are led must always be assumed by those who lead. And if this advance is to be termed ‘immature’ it does not much matter, so long as the leader himself is in sight of his followers, and pointing out the road by which they will be enabled to reach up to him.²

In ‘Melia and Pietro’, Grendon ‘lead[s] and teach[es]’ by example. It is clear that he sets out to perform a *tour de force*—a work that will dazzle his sectional readership and establish his place within his community’s nascent world of letters. Likely he considers exemplary the mere fact that a coloured man can display such erudition and

¹ Grierson and Smith, *Critical History of English Poetry*, 158.

² ‘The Native Press’, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.

turn out a work of such magnitude. That a 'coloured' newspaper is prepared to devote so much column space to original literary material should serve as inducement to other aspiring poets to follow Grendon's lead. With this poem, he positions himself 'in advance of his pupils'. In the poem, 'To You Abantu' (1903), he calls forth an African 'Shakespeare' and an African 'Milton' from the 'ranks' of 'Abantu'.¹ In 'Melia and Pietro', as in others of his poems, he demonstrates how it is done.

Grendon 'teaches' profound lessons in 'Melia and Pietro'. Conjugal love is God-given; being such, no-one should tamper with it. Loveless marriage is not to be entertained. The spiritual world is active within the terrestrial. Pride goeth before destruction. The human will is sacred: no-one's will should domineer anyone else's.

Ambitious in conception, the poem nonetheless suffers from a general slackness, which is probably the result of Grendon's inattention to shaping through successive drafts. Such criticism cannot be levelled at *Paul Kruger's Dream*, completed about four years later—a work with few flaws and a sustained grandeur seldom achieved in 'Melia and Pietro'. In the *Dream*, at least, Grendon had the benefit of peer criticism.² It is striking how quickly he matures from the daring but exploratory poems of 1897–98, to the proficiency of the solidly African *Tshaka's Death* (1901) and *Paul Kruger's Dream* (1902), both published in Pietermaritzburg.

'Melia and Pietro' is essentially a drama in verse. The to-and-fro of dialogue is signalled in the manner of a dramatic script—with each character's name preceding his or her lines. There are no narrative sections, and all the action must be imagined through dialogue and prose argument. This is a restrictive format, and one that Grendon will shortly abandon. In the Pietermaritzburg poems, he finds a narrative structure and a formal diversity, incorporating blank-verse paragraphs, which makes for greater narrative continuity and freer expression than are possible in the interminable ballad stanzas of 'Melia and Pietro'.

Although 'Melia and Pietro' displays several indications of the poet's immaturity, it deserves to be cherished by South Africans for its status as an important precursor

¹ 'To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

² Grendon credits Gunner 'Skin' Cooper', his 'intimate friend', with having always evinced 'a lively interest' in the composition of *Paul Kruger's Dream* (PKD, Pt XXXVI, p. 117n.).

to Grendon's mature poetry, and for such exquisite lines as Pietro's soulful outpouring:

Autumn has come, and soft winds mourn
 The fallen yellow leaf;
 And in their flight the ox-birds scorn
 My dull unceasing grief.¹

The pathos of Pietro's plaint recalls Keats's 'Knight at arms': 'The sedge is withered from the Lake | And no birds sing!'² Troubled love expressed through the pathetic fallacy is common in the English poetic canon, but Grendon's scornful 'ox-birds' are a local touch that seems to affirm the validity of an indigenous poetic idiom.³



'IN MEMORIAM'

'In Memoriam' is published above the poet's own name ('R. Grendon') in the *South African Citizen* of 22 December 1897.⁴ The place and date of composition are given as 'Kimberley, Dec. 16, 1897'—that is to say, just three days after the drowning of the Palm brothers, to whom the poem is an elegy.

William Palm, a coloured 'cab proprietor', had lived at Du Toit's Pan for quarter of a century, when he was bereaved of his sons. On the evening of 13 December 1897, his fifteen-year-old son Andrew took one of his father's horses for its regular swim. According to the report in the next day's *Diamond Fields Advertiser*,

It is surmised that the animal either stumbled, or attempted to lie down. At all events, the little fellow fell into the water. His cries for help were heard by an elder brother, Henry, aged 20 (the house being situate less than 100 yards from the edge of the Pan), and he at once mounted another horse and went to his brother's assistance.

He reached Andrew, but in seizing hold of him was himself compelled to get off the horse into the water. The drowning boy gripped his brother round the neck and before assistance was forthcoming, both were drowned.⁵

¹ Pt II, *Citizen* 2:33 (16 March 1898) 3.

² Keats, 'La Belle Dame sans Merci'.

³ Grendon appears to mean the cattle egret ('tick bird'), or possibly the ox-pecker (*OED*).

⁴ 'In Memoriam', *Citizen* 20 (22 Dec. 1897) 2.

⁵ 'Drowning Fatality', *DFA* (14 Dec. 1897).

Henry Palm was a member of the Wanderers Cricket Club and, as an avid cricketer himself, Grendon would have known him.¹ The brothers' joint funeral was attended by 'a large number of friends and relatives', including 'almost all the members of the Wanderers Cricket Club', Henry's pall-bearers being club-members. Andrew had belonged to the Beaconsfield Football Club, and his pall-bearers were six members of that club.² At the next weekly meeting of the Wanderers—the 'saddest meeting ever held'—'deep regret [was expressed at] the sad and sudden death of their late and loved member, Mr Henry Palm'. Club members resolved to 'wear mourning for a month, as a mark of respect'.³

This is the first of four surviving 'In Memoriam' poems by Grendon. The others are: 'In Memoriam: Mrs Sydney Strong' (1903),⁴ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala' (1904),⁵ and 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi' (1904).⁶ Grendon was familiar with Tennyson's 'In Memoriam A. H. H.', and quotes from its opening stanza in two *Ilanga* articles, published more than a decade apart.⁷ That elegy, like Grendon's, is cast in iambic tetrameter quatrains, and it seems likely that it made a forceful impression upon Grendon. The elegy to the Palm brothers is composed in twenty-two quatrains, rhymed abab.

Occasional verse—which categorizes several of Grendon's poems—always runs the risk of being hastily conceived and inadequately felt. 'In Memoriam' is not 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings'. Neither does it take 'its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity'.⁸ Two healthy, active youths drown, and within three days, Grendon's occasional poem is ready for publication in the next issue of the *Citizen*. Three days between event and poem supply insufficient opportunity for 'that inward eye'⁹ to do its work.

The pattern repeats itself in Natal. Grendon reads something objectionable in the *Natal Mercury* of 25 March 1904. He composes his response in verse on 28 March,

¹ 'Wanderers C. C.', *Citizen* 20 (22 Dec. 1897) 3.

² 'The Late Brothers Palm', *Citizen* 20 (22 Dec. 1897) 3.

³ 'Wanderers C. C.', *Citizen* 20 (22 Dec. 1897) 3.

⁴ *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

⁵ *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4, and 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁶ *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept 1904) 4, and 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁷ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4; 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁸ Wordsworth, preface to *Lyrical Ballads*.

⁹ Wordsworth, 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud'.

and it is published in *Ilanga* on 1 April.¹ Without access to private papers, we have no direct way of knowing how he tackled the business of composition, but the speed with which he sometimes trotted off verse seems to indicate that he did not always concern himself with revising his drafts. It seems more important to him that a poem should appear before the public while the occasion that spawns it still has currency. Usually, he has mastery of this frenetic creative schedule; less often—as in ‘In Memoriam’—he falls short.

The poem itself is—frankly—undistinguished. Grendon appears to lack complete control of his craft, as in the banal digression: ‘In swimming, they who hold no name, | Make easy victims for the wave’. He seems to be striving after an effect, and the strain is conspicuous, as in the contrived classicism of the drowning brothers’ last cries: ‘Farewell! farewell! one last farewell! | We enter Pluto’s gloomy hall!’

Precisely the same classical allusion works well in *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (1902), where ‘a vast, and varied throng of shades’—those massacred by Dingane’s *impi* ‘beside the Bushman’s flood’—address their kinsmen still in the flesh, now assembled at a Paardekraal war council prior to the outbreak of the South African War. Ominously, they warn the ‘living’ that ‘One year from hence ye’ll be with us | In Pluto’s silent, gloomy hall’.² Elevated language such as this seems suited to an epic, where it is sustained. The elegiac tone of ‘In Memoriam’, however, is marred by the unintegrated reference to Pluto’s hall. The impression created is that of an immature poet trying altogether too hard, and in the process inadvertently revealing more about his personal misconceptions than about his subject matter.

Throughout the poem, it is difficult to shake off a disquieting sense of the speaker’s glib detachment from the profound tragedy and untimeliness of this double drowning. By personifying the elements, Du Toit’s Pan becomes more than a lake: it is invested with a malevolent ‘troubl’d mind [that] | Breath[s] vengeance dire to human blood’. Like some Celtic Earth Goddess, ‘ev’ry year’ this insatiable malevolence demands to be placated with ‘a human being | And this year’s gifts were still unpaid’. The triteness of this conceit is ill-timed, and can hardly be expected to

¹ ‘Defence of Tommy’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

² *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 79.

console any mourner. While personifying lake, graveyard, homestead, and Death itself, Grendon depersonalizes the individual lives that have been lost.

The poet appears to mistake his genre. His superscription says it all. These lines, it announces, are ‘*suggested by the sad drowning fatality*’ (my emphasis). But death should not ‘suggest’ elegy: it cannot be merely the point of departure for such a poem. Rather, death—and the crushing vacuum left by the dead—*is* the elegy and should obsess it. True elegy mourns, but Grendon holds something of himself in reserve. He conveys no clearly discernible sense of personal loss.

To a lesser extent, this remains a criticism in respect of the later ‘In Memoriam’ poems, where Grendon takes opportunity to sermonize, and so forgets to mourn. These four poems fail—to a greater or lesser extent—because he sets himself simultaneously two mutually-exclusive objectives. The first is to write elegy; the second is to deny the reality of death, and in effect to minimize tragedy. This tension comes close to being resolved in the elegy for Michal Nkosi, but that is only because in it Grendon allows his personal grief to show.

Another troublesome feature of ‘In Memoriam’ is the awkward lexical borrowing—likely unconscious—from Thomas Campbell’s narrative poem, ‘Lord Ullin’s Daughter’. This once-popular recitation piece describes the drowning in Lochgyle of an eloping couple—Lord Ullin’s daughter and her ‘Highland chief’. They undertake a perilous ferry crossing in the midst of a tempest, so as to escape the girl’s ‘angry father’. Where ‘in the scowl of Heaven each face | Grew dark’ over Lochgyle, in Grendon’s poem, the sky’s ‘face grew dark’ over Du Toit’s Pan. Lord Ullin is ‘sore dismay’d’ when, reaching the shoreline, he watches helplessly as his daughter’s boat is swamped by tempestuous waves. Correspondingly, a woman is ‘sore dismayed’ who witnesses the Palm brothers thrashing wildly in the water. Ullin’s daughter has a ‘lovely hand ... stretch’d for aid’; the Palm brothers have ‘Two arms extended out for aid’. Lochgyle’s ‘waters wild went o’er [Ullin’s] child’; Du Toit’s Pan’s ‘waters wild’ become subdued when once the Palm brothers sink beneath its waves.

In this poem and the one to follow, we observe a novice poet, seated at the feet of canonical masters. Here the literary precedent is Campbell; in ‘A Dream’ as we shall see presently, the model is Coleridge. As already noted, Grendon calls upon ‘Abantu’

to produce their own ‘Shakespeare’ and ‘Milton’.¹ But no real advantage is to be gained when an African poet slavishly follows canonical poets such as Shakespeare, Milton, Coleridge, or Campbell—even patterning his lexis after theirs as Grendon does in his 1897–98 verses.

It is only in the first decade of the twentieth century, when Grendon finds a voice and a native idiom, that his talent is fully realized. Then he discovers that his best poems and prose pieces are those that wage war, and cover the broadest canvas. Domestic tragedy is too mean for a congenital epicist: he needs nothing less than national tragedy to achieve greatness. And since South Africa abounds in national tragedies, his talent will not lack scope.

Some language and imagery of ‘In Memoriam’ is recycled in later poems. The mortal remains of the Palm brothers are laid ‘in yonder acre dry’; Michal Nkosi’s body lies buried ‘Within yon acre by Sundusi Stream’.² When it is snatched away, Andrew’s young life is ‘still wrapp’d in bud’. In his elegy to Elias Tshabalala, one of his pupils at Ohlange, the poet employs similar imagery when he describes the deceased Elias as a ‘fairer flow’r than such as deck | The meadow’.³

‘In Memoriam’ also supplies an indication that Grendon—at least at this point in his career—is not altogether free of racist distinctions. The speaker reproaches the ‘Two swarthy men’ who stood ‘on the bank’, but lacked the manhood to swim to the rescue of the drowning boys: ‘Ye,—cowards,—ye, who saw them sink, | Would! would, that ye had not been there!’ The dastards may have been ‘swarthy’, but why link their cowardice to their colour? Does Grendon mean to imply that their culpable inaction had anything to do with the fact that the drowning boys were not ‘swarthy’ but ‘coloured’?



¹ ‘To You Abantu’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

² ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

‘A DREAM’

This poem was published in two parts. Part I, dated 18 December 1897, appeared in the *Citizen* of 29 December, and Part II on 1 March 1898.¹ The second part is dated either 23 January, or 23 February 1898: through the typesetter’s oversight, the month is omitted. As in ‘Melia and Pietro’ and *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (1902), each part is preceded by a prose argument.

Although the poet signs with just his initials, ‘R. I. G.’,² ‘A Dream’ is unmistakably Grendon’s work. His onymous poem, ‘In Memoriam’ appears in the issue of the *Citizen* immediately preceding the first instalment of ‘A Dream’.³ The lexis and imagery of ‘A Dream’ bear striking resemblance to other poems known to be Grendon’s. We encounter, for instance, some of Grendon’s favoured archaisms and poeticisms: ‘methought’ occurs also in *Paul Kruger’s Dream*;⁴ ‘Of speech bereft’ appears also in ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’ (1904);⁵ ‘scented morn’ reappears as ‘scented morning’ in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’;⁶ and ‘thunder cloud | Like war-horse proud’ becomes ‘thunder-cloud | ... To race like war-horse proud’ in *Paul Kruger’s Dream*.⁷ Spirits clad in ‘white raiment’ or ‘spotless raiment’ put in appearance in both ‘A Dream’ and *Paul Kruger’s Dream*.⁸

‘A Dream’ comprises forty-five sestets, each possessing two dimeter lines, one trimeter, two dimeters, and one trimeter. The measure is iambic, and the rhyme-scheme aabccb. This is an unusual stanzaic form for Grendon, and represents an experiment that he does not appear to take up again. Blake employs dimeters charmingly in poems such as ‘Infant Joy’. In Grendon’s poem, their use seems somehow gratuitous and produces a halting rhythm that does not altogether agree with the sense. By typographical rearrangement, the poem might just as well have appeared in common meter—in which case the first and third lines of each quatrain would be

¹ *Citizen* 21 (29 Dec. 1897) 2; 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

² It is not known what the middle initial stands for. Julinda Hoskins gives her great-uncle’s names as Robert Charles Grendon. If she is correct, the middle initial ‘I’ may be the typesetter’s misreading of ‘C’.

³ ‘In Memoriam’, *Citizen* 20 (22 Dec. 1897) 2.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt IV, p. 12.

⁵ ‘In Memoriam, Elias Tshabalala’, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘PAD’, Pt 5, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt V, p. 17.

⁸ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 7; Pt IV, p. 13.

tetrameter and possess internal rhyme as well as medial caesurae. As it is, Grendon makes extensive use of ballad or common metre throughout his verse, and his departure from it in this poem appears to be an error of aesthetic judgement.

The poem may be synopsised briefly. Walking through woodland by night, the speaker plots his course by a distant star. Next morning, the star is obscured by a thundercloud. When the cloud passes, the star has disappeared and, as a result, the speaker loses his path. At this point, he is accosted by a spectral old man—described most often as an ‘aged sire’, but also as a ‘gray sire’, and a ‘hoary sire’—who cautions him that the course he now follows leads to death. He counsels the speaker to retrace his steps towards the west, until he reaches a fountain, where he must quench his thirst and pass the night. He promises to meet the young man at that spot on the morrow, when he will predict his fortune.

The speaker complies. While asleep, he is favoured with a vision. When he awakes, the visitant returns, prophesies the manner of life the speaker may expect to lead henceforth, and decodes the previous night’s dream-vision. At the young man’s request, he reveals himself as one who ‘dwell[s] in realms above’, where he ‘guard[s] the gate | Where all men wait | Of WISDOM, TRUTH and LOVE’. He utters a prayer of blessing upon the speaker, in particular petitioning ‘Heaven’ to grant the speaker a long life, that he might be equipped to serve some intermediary role between ‘Heaven’ and ‘mortals on this earth’. Having discharged his mission, the visitant is caught up to heaven upon a ‘crimson cloud’, amidst ‘flames of living fire’. Alone once again, the speaker utters a prayer of his own to ‘God above’, the ‘Spring of Love’.

‘A Dream’ could pass muster as an art ballad: its language seems consciously imitative of ‘The Rime of the Ancient Mariner’. The prose argument introduces ‘an aged man, with long grey beard and flaming eyes’—an unambiguous echo of Coleridge’s mariner with ‘long grey beard’ and ‘glittering eye’. The collocation, ‘spring of love’ is common to both poems. Coleridge’s ancient ‘stoppeth’ the ‘wedding guest’; Grendon’s will ‘not let [the speaker] pass’. In each poem, the hoary stranger requires the younger man to perform some unanticipated task. In each poem, the mysterious older figure leaves the scene first, while the younger remains behind, overawed, and more pious than before. Coleridge’s wedding guest

... went, like one that hath been stunn'd
 And is of sense forlorn:
 A sadder and a wiser man
 He rose the morrow morn.

Grendon's first-person narrator describes the effect of his encounter with the aged sire:

Heart-sore—amazed
 T'wards Heav'n I gazed
 In reverential mood;
 Of speech bereft,
 There I was left
 Alone—in that wide wood!

Besides borrowings from Coleridge, 'A Dream' appears to possess at least one brief verbal echo of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. (In Chapter 6, we discover that *Paul Kruger's Dream* contains several such echoes.) In Milton's epic, the Archangel Michael tells Adam:

Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
 To show thee what shall come in future days
 To thee and to thy offspring; good with bad
 Expect to hear.¹

Using the Archangel's initial phrase, Grendon's speaker calls upon his heavenly visitant to pronounce a blessing upon him, 'Ere thou from hence depart'. Grendon's aged sire has already promised—as Michael promises Adam—to reveal the speaker's fortune.

Taken together, these coincidences suggest not that Grendon consciously borrowed from Coleridge or from Milton, but that he was thoroughly acquainted with—and had assimilated—their style, diction, and phrasing. At times, he might unconsciously set down figures and phrases, believing them his own, when in reality they had their origin in the works of earlier poets. Likely, every poet has done this at some time. Lest we be tempted to disparage Grendon merely on account of his subliminal reference to established poetic models or for his frequent archaisms, we might reflect

¹ xi. 356–59.

that Coleridge's pseudo-ballad style drew heavily upon Percy's *Reliques*,¹ and in him critics generally concur that the simulated antiquarian style is a positive virtue. Likewise, Milton's multifarious intertextual allusions are inseparable from his canonical stature. One poet may simulate another's idiom and yet be sincere: there is often no clear line demarcating art and artificiality.

Of Grendon's two dozen surviving poems, the great majority are of a pronounced religious or mystical tendency. The first six, published in whole or in part from 1897–1902, contain at least some supernatural elements, or mystic foreknowledge, or conspicuous reference to afterlife, or an address to or from the dead-but-not-actually-dead. Much of Grendon's verse is also saturated with symbolism. In 'A Dream', we find several of these ingredients. These include the poet's interest in: the supernatural ('aged sire', 'Bright spirits gay'); fortune, destiny, and foreknowledge; varying states of consciousness (wakefulness, sleep, dream, vision); the measured passage of time (night, dawn, day); the symbolism of simple, everyday phenomena (road, stream, fountain, trees, forest clearing, flowers, nectar, bees); the symbolism of atmospheric conditions (storm, cloud, lightning flash); and the symbolism of heavenly bodies (star).

The poem is clearly allegorical, but like Coleridge's 'Rime', it defies exhaustive analysis. The best-known exponent of the English-language allegory involving a metaphorical journey is John Bunyan. In extended allegory, his *Pilgrim's Progress* tells of the religious conversion of the pilgrim, Christian. After the Bible, it is one of the earliest European texts translated into South African Bantu languages. Eighty of the 200 languages into which the book has been translated are African.² Xhosa and Zulu translations appeared as early as 1868.³ It is most likely that Grendon first listened to this Christian classic as a small boy at Otjimbingwe mission, because Hugo Hahn was correcting the manuscript of an otjiHerero translation for the press in the first half of 1872, when the Grendon children were under his roof.⁴

In an evolved form, the voyage of Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner' belongs also to this tradition, in that the mariner's voyage describes a religious process. The

¹ Brett and Jones, in: Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, xx.

² Hofmeyr, *Portable Bunyan*, blurb.

³ Hofmeyr, *Portable Bunyan*, 242.

⁴ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 344: Emma to her sister Matilda, Otjimbingwe, 23 June 1872.

‘supernatural events of [Coleridge’s] poem symbolize the pattern of sin, repentance, grace, and expiation that is part of man’s religious experience’.¹

Grendon’s poem likewise employs the journey motif to describe a profound religious process. A star beckons. The traveller sets his course by it. It vanishes. The traveller loses his bearings and wanders from the way. He becomes disconcerted. Providentially, he falls in with a kindly spiritual mentor. The mentor alerts him to the danger of his present course. He directs him to the proper path, as well as to refreshment and rest. The traveller regains his bearings, takes refreshment and rest. He is assured of future success despite arduous trials. He receives a divine commission. Having been shown the way, it now becomes his own task to show the ‘ways’ of Heaven to others.

Some of the symbols in ‘A Dream’ are obscure in their reference, but we may attempt some tentative unravelling. The first emblem is a twinkling star that ‘beckons’ the speaker away. Grendon’s writings often invest heavenly bodies—sun, moon, and stars—with something approaching the ‘correspondences’ assigned them by Swedenborg. The Swedenborgian believes that humans ‘have guiding stars to direct us on our heavenward road’.²

Guiding stars abound in Grendon’s poetry and prose, as illustrated in chapter one. At times, abstract principles—good or bad—are represented as stars;³ in other cases guiding stars represent humans individually or collectively. According to ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, a ‘guiding star | Directs this mortal to the Life Divine’.⁴ In prose, the picture is much the same. Referring to the deliberations of South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903–05, Grendon states in an *Ilanga* article that ‘if truth, equity and justice be the guiding stars in this important work then the Native Problem will right itself’.⁵

In calling down a blessing upon the traveller, the aged sire prays: ‘O Heaven guide | In this world wide | Thy son in Wisdom’s way.’⁶ It would thus seem that Wisdom is

¹ Brett and Jones, in: Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, xx.

² Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 142.

³ ‘M&P’, Pt VIII; *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 56; ‘PAD’, Pt 12.

⁴ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘S.A.N.A. Commission’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

⁶ Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

to become the young man's guiding star. In the preceding stanza, the aged sire has identified himself as guardian of 'the gate | Where all men wait | of WISDOM, TRUTH and LOVE'. In Swedenborg's system, the 'very essence' of Love and Wisdom exist in, and emanate from, God.¹ What love and wisdom humans 'possess' is derived—infused by God, the Source, into Man. Throughout God's creation, the principles of Love and Wisdom seek ever to marry. Wisdom is essentially the masculine principle in conjugal marriage, and this seems to be why 'Heaven' is called upon to 'guide' the traveller 'in Wisdom's way', rather than in the way of the Divine Love. As already noted, it is also the reason why Pietro is depicted as uncommonly wise, rather than as outstanding in the display of love.

But not all stars are fixed. There are also wandering stars that, according to Swedenborg, 'signify falsities'.² To chart a life-course by such stars is perilous. This appears to be the import of Grendon's allegory, because although its star does not wander, it treacherously disappears after having first beckoned. It might as well be a wandering star—in either case the speaker is misdirected. This beckoning-vanishing star represents some unspecified 'falsity'—some unsound or undependable guiding principle—that has let the speaker-traveller down. Without reference to a fixed point of light, he can no more direct his course. At this point of crisis, he encounters the mysterious figure from 'realms above', who redirects him, and who throws in a blessing for good measure.

A central feature of the poem is the traveller's dream-vision and its subsequent explanation by the aged sire. It is an embedded allegory—a form special to Grendon. (In this particular case, it is allegory embedded within allegory—an intriguing form of frame narrative.) We have already treated Pietro's allegorical 'vision bright and clear', which he sees 'on TIME's far-distant face', and which he decodes for Melia.³ In 'A Dream' we are likewise presented with the allegory, followed shortly after by its succinct decoding. And in Grendon's journalistic piece, 'Umdelwa's Musings' (1904),⁴ he embeds yet another untitled verse-allegory. The eponymous Umdelwa—Grendon's persona for purposes of this article—first relates his 'mysterious utterance', or 'mystic stanza', and then decodes it with a second stanza. In Umdelwa's

¹ Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, n. 29.

² Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 1128.

³ 'M&P', Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:39 (6 April 1898) 3.

⁴ *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

allegorical correspondence, ‘Twinkling Stars’ are ‘true Britons’, ‘Pluvian cars’ (Grendon’s kenning for ‘clouds’) are ‘matchless laws’, ‘Rain-drops’ are ‘Justice’ and ‘Equity’, and ‘Scorching sun-fire’ is ‘Tyranny’.¹

Having dreamt his visionary dream, the traveller in ‘A Dream’ ‘sought to pry | Into mysterious things’. The aged sire untangles the vision in the same manner that Umdelwa does his own ‘mysterious utterance’:

Those blossoms, son,
By bees o’er-run
Are emblems of SUCCESS;
In all thy work
Success will lurk,
And—Heav’n thy life will bless.

This fountain clear
Thou seest here
Man’s HOPES together binds;
This verdant space
A RESTING PLACE
For persecuted minds.

Those busy bees
On yonder trees
Betoken ARDUOUS TOIL;
That nectar sweet
ENJOYMENT’S SEAT,
Which mortals cannot spoil.

Thy wingless flight—
A glorious sight—
Bespeaks A GLORIOUS NAME:
Thou’lt rise in life
From out great strife
Within the House of Fame.

Those heav’nly beings
With snowy wings

¹ Untitled verse, published in: ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

Betoken JOY and MIRTH—
 The topmost seat
 That human feet
 Can ever reach on earth.¹

The aged sire assures the traveller that despite ‘arduous toil’ and ‘strife’, Heaven’s blessing upon him guarantees rest for his ‘persecuted mind’, as well as success, ‘joy and mirth’, and glory. There is little wanting from this scenario, except perhaps a ‘conjugal’ partner. Of course, when all this has been spelt out plainly, the prosaic might question the need for a vision in the first place, since the explanation can be delivered so intelligibly. But, then, this is poetry, whose function is to defamiliarize the everyday.

Beyond his dream explication, the aged sire also assures the young traveller:

A chequer’d life
 Enslaved to strife
 Is granted unto thee;
 Thou’lt wander here,
 And sojourn there
 Hateful to all, save me.²

This amounts to an undertaking on the part of a heavenly visitant to watch over the earthling throughout his terrestrial peregrinations. As in his later poem, ‘Storm and Calm’ (1904), Grendon here rhymes ‘chequer’d life’ with ‘strife’.³ On life’s road, the traveller will experience mixed fortune, but never evade strife. He will be ‘Hateful to all’, with the exception of the aged sire himself—which implies that he will safeguard the traveller. A guardian angel, invisible to the natural eye, the ancient will continue to take a solicitous interest in the activities of the traveller, as he makes Heaven’s ‘ways’ known ‘To mortals on this earth’.⁴

This picture tallies with Swedenborg, according to whom the spirit realm takes an unabated interest—for good and for bad; for truth and for falsehood—in the affairs of those still living on earths. He ‘writes that the spiritual world is all around us in the

¹ Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

² Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

³ ‘Storm and Calm’, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

sense that our thoughts come from it, although we are in freedom. He says that we have guardian angels and can attract infernal spirits towards us if we give ourselves to evil.’¹

While recognizing the hazards of reading the poet’s autobiography into each detail of his poetry, there is too much in ‘A Dream’ that implicates Grendon’s self-perception and sense of personal mission to ignore the real possibility that the traveller is the poet’s allegorical analogue. The poem suggests some manner of spiritual crisis. It points to deep-rooted *Angst*, which is resolved only after a mystic encounter. The speaker is lost; he has ‘Wild thoughts within [his] head’; on losing sight of his guiding star, he becomes ‘forlorn, | Trembling in wild dismay’. The heavenly visitant infuses courage into him, and in the final stanza, the speaker describes the effect of his profound otherworldly encounter:

Heart-sore—amazed
T’wards Heav’n I gazed
In reverential mood;
Of speech bereft,
There I was left
Alone—in that wide wood!

In rich metaphor, the poem describes one who has lost his spiritual bearings, and found them again. Perhaps he has exchanged one set of values for another. Has Grendon himself lost some mentor, or some guiding principle—perhaps some system of belief that has vanished as the ‘twinkling star | ... vanish’d with the cloud’? As conjectured in chapter one, does the speaker’s ‘second birth’² imply Swedenborgian regeneration? And, given the overwhelmingly spiritual content of this allegory, could it describe Grendon’s earliest encounter with Swedenborg? The aged sire’s prayer that ‘Heaven’ grant the youthful traveller long life, that he might ‘show thy ways | To mortals on this earth’,³ can only be read as the divine commissioning of a prophet.

There is good reason to suspect that Grendon believed himself to occupy the role of prophet. In the superscript to the poem, ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’ (1904),⁴

¹ Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 106.

² ‘A Dream’, Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

³ Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

⁴ ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’, *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

he refers back to his ‘first warning uttered April 27. 03’. He refers to ‘A Warning’ (1903),¹ his earlier hortatory poem addressed to Edendale, in which he upbraids the mission folk for physical sloth and spiritual inertia. In the later poem, he accuses the people of Edendale of having shed the ‘blood of prophets ... | When they to thee were sent to warn’. Grendon had earlier been expelled from his position as head-teacher at Edendale’s Native Training Institute. It is difficult to dismiss the impression that he saw himself among those divinely-ordained ‘prophets’ whose ‘warnings’ Edendale had failed to heed, and whose ‘blood’ she had faithlessly spilt. In his ‘Second Warning’, he co-opts the prophetic imagery of John’s Revelation, predicting further spiritual deprivation for Edendale:

Since then their warnings thou’st ignor’d,
 And to thyself hast faithless prov’d,
 The CANDLESTICK, which thou’st abhor’d,
 From out thy midst must be remov’d.²

The spilling of prophets’ blood is of course figurative, and the context indicates that Grendon reckons himself such a prophet—to Edendale’s *kholwa* (believer) community, at the very least.

In a later prose piece, ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’ (1915), he again adverts to prophetic warnings that go unheeded. In this case, the spiritual dullards are the Swazi, who Mafukuzela (John L. Dube) exhorts to avail themselves of every opportunity to improve themselves through education, so that they can ‘compete on better terms with the strangers sojourning within their gates’.³ Grendon remarks that ‘many prophets have advised these people in a strain similar to that of Mafukuzela; but these, alas, were hushed, as voices crying in the wilderness’.⁴ Matthew’s gospel makes application to John the Baptist of the words of the prophet Isaiah: ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’⁵

¹ ‘A Warning’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

² Grendon’s own footnote to this stanza reads as follows: ‘This verse was suggested by a sermon preached at Edendale (1903), by the Rev. W. Cliff, sometime before his departure for England. The text thereof was Rev. ii.5.’

³ By ‘strangers’, Grendon may mean either mission-educated Africans of other ethnic groups who occupy key support roles around the Swazi royal circle and minor positions in the Civil Service, or he may mean the whites who have lately assumed a dominant role in Swaziland.

⁴ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁵ Matt. 3:3–4.

Grendon—sometime tutor to Swazi princes—cannot have excluded himself from the ‘many prophets’ who the Swazi ‘hushed’ and failed to heed.

Grendon’s advertises his projected epic, ‘An African’s Vision’, as ‘an Appeal to the present various races inhabiting [South Africa]’.¹ The hortatory poems, ‘A Plea for Justice’,² ‘Press on Ohlange’,³ ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’,⁴ and ‘To You Abantu’,⁵ all impress the reader with the poet’s strong sense of his personal mission, and of being gifted with insights that set him apart from the common herd. The speaker in ‘A Dream’ is destined hereafter to ‘show [Heaven’s] ways | To mortals on this earth’. This is precisely what Grendon repeatedly seeks to achieve with his verse and prose.

Wilkinson states that ‘wherever the Poets are inspired from above, there is an internal sense present. It may be only for a few lines, but it is there. The spiritual world takes every opportunity to effect such influx into the natural world.’⁶ In like manner, Blake identified ‘the artist’s genius with the Holy Spirit’.⁷ In connection with Blake, Northrop Frye asks rhetorically, ‘if in the Bible poetry, prophecy, and divine inspiration are the same thing, and if in Classical poetry they are almost the same thing, is it not a possible inference that any poetry, even one’s own, may be prophetic and divinely inspired?’⁸ Almost every poem that Grendon wrote is consistent with his thought processes having followed along similar lines. ‘A Dream’ may describe in allegorical code Grendon’s divine commissioning as poet-prophet ‘to the present various races’ of South Africa.

The speaker-traveller appeals to the aged sire not merely to pronounce a blessing upon him, but also to ‘plant’ in him ‘A stout revengeless heart’.⁹ On life’s journey, he will need both blessing and the spirit of forgiveness. The desire for personal revenge is an attribute of fallen human nature. Being such a strong inclination, it must be combated internally. Grendon may have recognized in himself a ‘hellish’ tendency

¹ *PKD*, p. 135.

² *Ilanga* 1:24 (18 Sept. 1903) 4.

³ *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

⁴ *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

⁵ *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

⁶ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 219.

⁷ Frye, *Fearful Symmetry*, 157.

⁸ Frye, *Fearful Symmetry*, 156–57.

⁹ Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

towards vindictiveness. Revenge as a motive features frequently in his verse, where the word ‘revenge’ and its derivatives appear at least thirty-four times.¹ He describes ‘everlasting revenge’ as what ‘the majority’ of Africans serving under Boer and Portuguese ‘task-masters’ feel toward their masters.² By contrast, Grendon eulogizes the late Prince Malunge for having been ‘So void of malice, and revenge!— | So constant in fidelity!’³

Grendon’s self-image seldom coincided with the image that his peers had of him. He comes to us down the years as a lonely, misapprehended figure, ‘wander[ing] here, | And sojourn[ing] there | Hateful to all’—except, perhaps, his inner voices.



EDITOR OF *COLOURED SOUTH AFRICAN*

Grendon’s earliest surviving poetry appears in Kimberley’s *Citizen* newspaper, of which the targeted readership was primarily the Cape’s coloured community.⁴ In view of the amount of column-space accorded ‘Melia and Pietro’, it would appear that he enjoyed a close association with the paper’s editor.

By mid-April 1898, he had left Kimberley for Uitenhage,⁵ and in mid-October 1898, ‘Mr R. Grendon, Uitenhage’ is identified as one of the ‘authorized Agents’ for the paper—at this particular time styled the *Kimberley Citizen*.⁶ The *Citizen* was published up to the end of 1898, but seems not to have survived into 1899. Since there was no other paper then catering to the coloured community, the loss of the *Citizen* must have been felt by its readers as a grievous blow.

At about this time, the *Coloured South African* emerged in Uitenhage, apparently as a successor to the *Citizen*. The paper’s name may have been suggested by analogy with the *Colored American* or the *Colored American Magazine*, the editors of which

¹ In *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (fifteen times); ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ (fourteen times); ‘Tragedy of Malunge’ (three times); ‘Melia and Pietro’ (once); ‘A Dream’ (1897) (once).

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

³ ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁴ Around the start of February 1898, the paper was bought out by a white man. *Imvo* makes a point of the fact that ‘the words, “Cape Coloured Man’s Opinion” [are now] left out’ (‘New Editor, *Imvo* 14:694 (10 Feb. 1898) 3).

⁵ ‘The Owl’, ‘On the Wing’, *Citizen* 2:42 (16 April 1898) 6.

⁶ *Citizen* 2:71 (15 Oct. 1898) 2.

took a periodic interest in South Africa's emerging black literati, and published occasional contributions from the Cape Colony.¹ Almost nothing is known about this short-lived newspaper. It was operative in 1899, and possibly for two or three years after that. No run—nor even an individual number—has been traced in any institutional library. *Coloured South African* is of interest to us, however, because according to his own declaration, Grendon was its editor in 1899.²

The paper's existence is noted in an emigrants' guide to the Cape Colony published in London in 1903. There, *Coloured South African* is identified along with two other 'progressive newspapers' published in Uitenhage, although it is possible that the author's information may be a little out of date, and that the paper may already have ceased publication by 1903.³ 'Progressive' in this context likely means aligned with Rhodes's Progressive Party, and opposed to the principles of the Afrikaner Bond. *A List of South African Newspapers, 1800–1982* (1983) records no more than the bald fact of the paper's one-time existence, and finds no holding library for it.⁴ This seems to be an indication that Grendon's paper was very ephemeral indeed. In an article on the 'Native Press' (1905), he acknowledges—by implication—that not all vernacular papers 'pass beyond the age of infancy'.⁵ Perhaps he thinks of his own experience with the *Citizen* and the *Coloured South African*.

In addition to being editor of *Coloured South African*, Grendon may also have held a financial stake in it. In mid-1899, he obtained a loan of £100 from his father Joseph Grendon of Cape Town.⁶ The purpose of the loan is not recorded, but it may well have had something to do with the launch of the newspaper.

According to two secondary sources, the Uitenhage paper was later incorporated by Francis Zaccheus Santiago Peregrino into his Cape Town-published *South African Spectator*,⁷ although available microfilm copies of the *Spectator* (1901–02) do not show the incorporation at the masthead, or elsewhere. It is however possible that Peregrino may have acquired *Coloured South African*'s mailing list and good will.

¹ Saunders, 'F. Z. S. Peregrino and *The South African Spectator*', 84; Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 50.

² 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

³ Burton, *Cape Colony for the Settler*, 243.

⁴ State Library, *List of South African Newspapers*, 30, #374.

⁵ 'The Native Press', *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.

⁶ KAB, DOC 4/1/666, ref. 3367: Mortgage Bond, Robert Grendon.

⁷ Switzer and Switzer, *Black Press*, 58; State Library, *List of South African Newspapers*, 74.

Peregrino was an erudite and much-travelled West African who settled in Cape Town late in 1900, and began publishing his newspaper almost immediately. No complete run of *South African Spectator* exists, and it is not even known for sure when that paper ceased publication. Secondary sources tentatively suggest 1912 as the date of closure,¹ although in view of Peregrino's precarious financial position, that date may be too late. He was declared insolvent early in 1904,² but the paper may have survived that crisis, because early in 1905, Grendon lists 'the "South African Spectator" at Cape Town' amongst the few 'native newspapers' that 'bid fair to pass beyond the age of infancy'.³ Notably, he does not mention *Coloured South African*, which may be assumed to have died a cot death.

Interestingly, in a polemic on proposed alterations to Zulu orthography, Grendon points to the etymology of Peregrino's surname. He is illustrating how a consonantal shift has occurred from 'r' to 'l', in the case of some foreign words borrowed into English. His English example is 'pilgrim which is *pellegrino* in Italian, *pelerin* in French, *peregrino* in Spanish, and *peregrinus* in Latin'.⁴ Although Grendon's subject matter is linguistics, his unusual case in point suggests that Peregrino—a true pilgrim—is on his mind.

From an article in J. Tengo Jabavu's *Imvo* of 3 May 1899, it is evident that *Coloured South African* stood by Rhodes's Progressive Party, and was opposed to the alliance that so-called 'liberals' John X. Merriman and J. W. Sauer had made with the Afrikaner Bond. Because Jabavu opposed the Progressives and stuck with his longtime white allies, even after they aligned themselves with the Bond,⁵ it was inevitable that *Imvo* and *Coloured South African* should be at loggerheads. *Imvo* writes:

The *Coloured South African* which speaks in the name of the Coloured people is [opposed to⁶] Mr Sauer, Mr Solomon and Mr Merriman, and is all for Sir G. Sprigg, Sir J. Sivewright, Sir Pieter Faure and, if you please, Mr le Roux as its leaders. We look in vain for this 'thusness', and imagine that the 'Sir' sported by the brace of knights may appeal more to the tastes of the

¹ Switzer and Switzer, *Black Press*, 58; State Library, *List of South African Newspapers*, 134.

² NAB, CSO 1759, ref. 3374/1904.

³ 'The Native Press', *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.

⁴ 'Zulu Orthography', *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 3.

⁵ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 43.

⁶ *Imvo* uses the expression 'is dead nuts on' catachrestically. From the context, it is evident that the opposite meaning is intended.

Coloured folks than the proletariat [sic] ‘Mr’ which is the handle to the names of the first set of politicians.¹

The Jameson Raid had brought together some strange political bedfellows. Jabavu, who formerly opposed the Bond, now takes a position against those spreading ‘the anti-Dutch propaganda’. Grendon finds himself in the same camp with Sir John Gordon Sprigg (1830–1913), who had several terms as prime minister, including the period immediately following the Jameson Raid. Concerning Sprigg, *Imvo* is ‘unable to discover one solitary benevolent act’ that he ‘did for the Natives or Coloured people’.

It emerges that *Coloured South African* had taken issue with *Imvo*’s praise for John X. Merriman. *Coloured South African*—likely the editor, Grendon himself—accused Merriman of being no champion of black rights:

If the Molteno-Merriman Ministry was the best and Molteno and Merriman had a common interest at heart, viz.: the rights of Natives, Merriman still lives though Molteno is dead. Would the Natives’ cause be safe in the hands of him who is as changeable as the weather[?] We fear not. Whatever Merriman was when he was associated with Molteno, he is certainly not that now.

Imvo rallies to the defence of Merriman, insisting that he has never changed his position ‘on the Native question’ and that ‘he stood by Mr Saul Solomon in the Seventies, when the writer of the comment was probably still in his pinafores’.²

If ever a run of *Coloured South African* from 1899 is located by scholars, it will yield a wealth of Grendon material. For the present, only one brief editorial article—of which Grendon claims authorship in 1914³—has been traced. According to Grendon, it was reprinted ‘*in extenso*’, in the *Looker-On* of Port Elizabeth. The article objects on moral grounds to the exportation to England of southern African ‘aborigines for exhibition at the South African Show in London’.⁴



¹ *Imvo* 15:754 (3 May 1899) 3.

² *Imvo* 15:754 (3 May 1899) 3.

³ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

⁴ ‘Taking S. A. Natives to England’, *Looker-On* 242 (28 March 1899) 5: reprinted from *Coloured South African* (24 March 1899).

‘TAKING SOUTH AFRICAN NATIVES TO ENGLAND’

Ethnological exhibitions enjoyed a long history in the British capital. Usually they were mounted by astute colonial entrepreneurs keen to tap Metropolitan wealth, and aware that exotic freaks, nymphs, and naked warrior savages could be counted on to draw crowds. From a South African standpoint, the most notorious ‘freak’ sideshow was the prurient display of a Khoi woman, Sarah Bartmann—the so-called ‘Hottentot Venus’—in 1816. Special points for absorbed study were the woman’s steatopygous buttocks and her ‘Hottentot apron’—the ‘excessive elongation of the *labia minora* in Khoikhoi women’.¹ In 1847, a group of South African Bushmen went on exhibition in London,² and in 1853, the Pietermaritzburg merchants, Alphonso Torkington Caldecott, and his son, C. H. Caldecott brought a money-spinning ‘Exhibition of Native Zulu Kafirs’ to St George’s Gallery, Hyde Park Corner.³

Although no evidence has emerged to indicate that Grendon ever visited Europe, he demonstrates a disapproving awareness of the putative English predilection for smut, aberrance, the macabre, and pornography. In his ‘Miscegenation’ polemic (1914), he notes the ‘refined horrors and refined abominations [that] are daily perpetrated [in England] by certain so-called cultured and refined people’:

And there is this to add, that those refined horrors and refined abominations, together with photos of their refined perpetrators are (i) circulated week by week for purposes of gain!—in the pages of various journals and periodicals beyond the sea; (ii) preserved in wax in various ‘Chambers of Horrors’, which as Seminaries of the Devil, silently impart their hellish culture to such unstable, and unwary visitors, as venture within their fascinating halls.⁴

Needless to say, these spectacular ‘abominations’, by pandering to the senses, appeal to the external man, while the internal man remains unopened, undeveloped. Grendon recognizes that lurking behind all such displays are the lascivious sex-interest of spectators and the avarice of showmen. Thus they unite, in a potent cocktail, two of Swedenborg’s ‘three universals of hell’, viz., ‘the love of possessing the goods of others grounded in the love of the world, and adulterous love’.⁵ Truly, they propagate

¹ *DSAE*.

² *SABIB* ii:198.

³ Caldecott, *Descriptive History of the Zulu Kafirs*.

⁴ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 261.

a 'hellish culture'. Grendon acknowledges—and possible even feels—their fascination, but they are nonetheless to be shunned for what they are: 'Seminaries of the Devil'.

As a Swedenborgian, Grendon believes in the existence of a multitude of devils, but not in a single fallen Angel of Light, or arch-Devil. This may be the reason why he assures Michal Nkosi that she will encounter 'No Devil' in her spiritual travels.¹ Swedenborg states that 'there is not one angel in the whole heaven who was created from the beginning, nor any devil in hell who was created an angel of light and was cast down thither; but all, both in heaven and in hell, are from the human race'.² In the Word, Swedenborg maintains, the expressions 'Devil' and 'Satan' refer to the hells.³ After life on this material planet, adulterers are progressively drawn by their own inclination to hells special to their particular strain or grade of adultery—wherefrom they seek to inject their destructive, adulterous yearnings by evil influx into susceptible men and women still in material bodies.

Grendon describes 'Chambers of Horrors' as 'Seminaries of the Devil'. Perhaps this is an echo allusion to Swedenborg's formula, repeated several times in the Writings, that 'marriages are the seminaries of the human race, and thence also the seminaries of the heavenly kingdom',⁴ slightly reworded in the *Arcana Cælestia*, where marriages are 'the seminaries of the human race, and the human race is the seminary of the heavens'.⁵ If marriages are seminaries of heaven, then adulteries—and spectacles that foster them—may be construed as 'Seminaries of the Devil', or of Hell.

The ethnological spectacular to which Grendon righteously objects in 1899, occurred towards the tail end of the tradition of live human exhibits. It was masterminded by Frank Fillis—South Africa's showman extraordinaire, the Cape Colony's very own 'P. T. Barnum'. Born in London in 1857, Fillis's parents were circus equestrians, and his uncle was riding master to the Russian Tsar. As a young man, he joined a circus at the Cape, but with its proprietor's death in 1881, he struck

¹ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 311.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 544.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 481.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cælestia*, n. 9961.

out on his own, still in South Africa. In time, he became very successful, and his name was a household word in the Cape Colony.¹

In February 1898, Kimberley's *Citizen* reported that 'Mr F. Fillis, the popular showman, [was] as usual doing good business', but that the 'amphitheatre [was] too small for the quantity of people patronizing it every evening'.² One year later, Port Elizabeth's *Looker-On* reported that 'Mr Reed's ground, adjoining the Agricultural Show Yard' would be the location of 'the best show that Mr Fillis has yet brought to this country, and when it is considered what have been his previous efforts and successes in that direction, it is undoubtedly saying a good deal'. The company comprised equestrians, a 'celebrated contortionist and gymnast', 'England's cleverest acrobats', 'charming equilibrists', a 'champion jumper', 'marvellous haute ecole artists', a 'celebrated animal trainer', the 'funniest and most versatile of clowns', all 'star artistes in their particular lines', led by the 'most genial of managers' and his 'able lieutenant'.³

Ambitious for an even greater spectacle that would wow British crowds, Fillis hit upon the idea of *Savage South Africa*. He hoped that it would form the centrepiece of the 'Greater Britain' Exhibition that was scheduled to be held at the Earl's Court Arena, London, in 1899.⁴ At least, he always claimed that the idea was his, but in view of the enthusiasm and financial backing it received covertly from Cecil Rhodes's Chartered Company, who wanted to direct the show's focus towards Rhodesia, Fillis's original idea may have been greatly elaborated when Rhodes's agents moved into action. The 'Chartered Company, still recovering from the Jameson Raid and the Matabele and Mashona uprisings, desperate for investment in their new colony, saw a chance to "bring Rhodesia to the active notice of the British public"'.⁵

Fillis recruited exhibits for *Savage South Africa* with advertisements placed in Cape newspapers. 'Wild animals' were in requisition, but so were 'freaks of nature', and 'young Afrikaner girls (good looking and to be slightly coloured)'.⁶ The salacious tone was bound to ruffle prim colonials. From the start, Fillis and his

¹ Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, 20.

² *Citizen* 2:26 (2 Feb. 1898).

³ 'Fillis's Circus', *Looker-On* 231 (20 Jan. 1899) 6.

⁴ Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, 36.

⁵ Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, 39.

⁶ Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, 43.

backers faced opposition. Bearing in mind that the British South Africa Company had lately been fully occupied in putting down a Matabele ‘rebellion’, it is small wonder that British High Commissioner Milner vetoed the passage of fifty Matabele ‘warriors’ to England. Fillis suffered a further setback when Natal’s Responsible Government prevented him from head-hunting for ‘warriors’ in Zululand.¹ In Britain, officials privately deplored ‘these exhibitions of uncivilised natives’, which imparted no accurate information to the British population but had deleterious effects on the African ‘savage’.²

The show had to be scaled down, but it was still mammoth. Fillis

chartered a liner and filled it with two hundred Africans, assorted whites, countless wild animals and a man who claimed to be the son of the Matabele King, Lobengula. Then he brought all these ingredients together at Earl’s Court in London, in a show called *Savage South Africa*, which combined thrilling re-enactments of the Matabele Wars of the 1890s and a ‘Kaffir Kraal’, where the British public could wander among Africans in their natural setting.³

Because Grendon’s article on ‘Taking S. A. Natives to England’ stands alone as the surviving representative of his editorship of *Coloured South African*, it is presented here in its entirety:

The scheme fostered we believe by Mr Fillis, the popular showman, to export from this country to England a number of aborigines for exhibition at the South African Show in London, during next May, is at once wrong in principle, dangerous in its consequences, and destructive from a moral point of view. It is a deliberate step towards drowning those unwary natives in the pleasures and vices of the English race. They for whose benefit and interest the natives are to be transported to foreign shores, will never feel the effects beyond that of a considerable swelling of their pockets. The effects will be mainly apparent and be felt in this country, when the Amazons have returned from their life of pleasure, vice, and ease, on the other side of the Atlantic. They will be welcomed in England to a life, which will scarcely be tolerated in this country. On London’s streets they will be brought into contact with, and be beguiled by ‘strangers beautiful to behold’, whose vices will—as Mr Thompson in his letter to the ‘Cape Times’ truly pointed out—awaken in the native heart an irresistible desire, and an unquenchable thirst, which, on their return to their own country, will break out into action in many objectionable, if not unlawful, ways. We rejoice at the news that the High Commissioner has

¹ Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, 43.

² Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, 73.

³ Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, blurb.

prohibited the exportation of these natives, and we expect that those who have already embarked will be sent back when they reach their journey's end.¹

Here, Grendon emerges as a moral crusader—a role he would play repeatedly in years to come. He is especially concerned that South Africa's dusky 'Amazons' may be led into unaccustomed vices during their English sojourn. Perhaps he has in mind the 'young Afrikander girls (good looking and to be slightly coloured)' for whom Fillis advertised at the Cape. He certainly takes a dim view of the moral climate of England when he writes of 'unwary natives' succumbing to 'the pleasures and vices of the English race'. These 'pleasures and vices' are the 'refined horrors and refined abominations' to which he alludes suggestively fifteen years later.² In late years, much has been made of ways in which European colonizers 'Othered' 'the African'. Here is an intriguing demonstration of the reciprocity of the 'Othering' process. Fillis and his backers set themselves the task of representing '*Savage South Africa*' to England: for the benefit of his African readers, Grendon 'Others' 'the English race' as ridden with vice.

All the excess of Fillis's show, Grendon maintains, is prompted by white material greed: the amoral organizers look only to the 'considerable swelling of their pockets'. They will not have to live with the moral consequences of their ill-considered action. This is the 'Mammon', the 'pelf', the ill-gotten 'lucre' against which Grendon rails time and again in poetry and prose. It is alien to African culture, and is harmful to the long-term interests of individual Africans and of South Africa as a corporate entity.

'Mr Thompson', who Grendon quotes approvingly, is likely the American Negro, Will P. Thompson, formerly of the Jubilee Singers, and subsequently manager of the Colonial Concert Company of Kimberley, in which Grendon performed as a tenor.³ The Pittsburgh-born baritone quickly became the heart and soul of Kimberley's cosmopolitan black cultural life during the late 1890s, taking a leading role in several musical performances.⁴ Because he is well-known, at least by reputation, to the coloured communities of the Cape, Grendon does not need to give his full name. As a

¹ 'Taking S. A. Natives to England', *Looker-On* 242 (28 March 1899) 5. Reprinted from *Coloured South African* (24 March 1899).

² 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

³ *DFA* (7 July 1896) 6.

⁴ Allen, 'Social and Cultural Life of the White Community of Kimberley', 133; Erlmann, 'A Feeling of Prejudice', 338.

widely-travelled public performer, Thompson may have considered himself eminently qualified to predict the likely moral outcome of shipping ‘unwary natives’ to the cesspool of London.

Grendon agrees with Thompson’s view that Fillis’s show is fraught with tremendous sexual peril. In England, the guileless, callow Africans will have instilled into them ‘an irresistible desire, and an unquenchable thirst’ for illicit pleasures, which are bound to translate into unspeakable actions upon their repatriation. Although likely quite sincere in their concern, Grendon and Thompson seem nevertheless to be playing upon white paranoia. They must have known that mass hysteria was apt to erupt at the crossroads of Race and Sex. Occasional phantasmal ‘scares’ over the alleged prevalence of desperate black rapists who preyed on white women were known to provoke vigilantism in late colonial times.¹ In 1904, Grendon himself admits to being ‘startled at the progress of rape and assault committed on white women by natives’.²

Grendon concludes his piece by expressing approbation for Sir Alfred Milner’s having ‘prohibited the exportation of [some of] these natives’. He also hopes that ‘those who have already embarked will be sent back’ when they reach English shores.³ It seemed that the High Commissioner—who doubled as Governor of the Cape Colony—truly had the interests of Africans at heart.

Grendon expresses the confidence that many coloured Colonials placed in Milner’s judgement and administration. Not two years before publishing this editorial, on the occasion of High Commissioner’s official visit to Kimberley, Grendon had been deputed by Griqualand West’s coloured community to read an illuminated address to this representative of the Crown. *Inter alia*, the address prayed that success might attend His Excellency’s ‘efforts in every undertaking to maintain peace, and to further the prospects of this land, wherever and whenever possible, so that [His] Excellency’s

¹ See, for instance: Martens, ‘Settler Homes, Manhood and “Houseboys”: an Analysis of Natal’s Rape Scare of 1886’.

² ‘Keep Your Breeds Pure!’ *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 4.

³ ‘Taking S. A. Natives to England’, *Looker-On* 242 (28 March 1899) 5: reprinted from *Coloured South African* (24 March 1899).

name [might] be transmitted to and cherished by the generations to come, with honour, pleasure, admiration, and respect'.¹

It was not to be. In the build-up to the War, Milner had 'encouraged black hopes and support for the war effort with promises of "equal laws, equal liberty" for all races in South Africa in the event of a British victory'.² In *Paul Kruger's Dream*, Milner is described as a 'shepherd powerful in counsel'.³ With and after the Treaty of Vereeniging, however, he quite forgot his pledge, and went on to entrench much of the racist legislation operative in the Transvaal under Kruger's regime. Blacks and coloureds were still subject to pass laws and numerous other restrictions. In response to such perfidy, Transvaal coloureds established an African Vigilance Association to protest and seek redress.⁴

Grendon's attitude towards Milner hardens in the period of postwar reconstruction. This is partly because of Milner's endorsement of the pass laws,⁵ and partly because of his support for the importation of Chinese labourers to work the Witwatersrand goldmines. In 1904, he likens Milner to presumptuous King Herod, and predicts that despite his current popularity, he will soon have throngs baying for his blood:

The one great figure before the Transvaal public is Viscount Milner. His very presence inspires them with intensest admiration. The words that fall from his unerring lips are straightway heeded, and adored. To them his voice is 'the voice of a god, and not of a man'. To-day, whilst 'fortune smiles', they hail their idol with a deafening '*Hosanna*'. To-morrow, when fortune frowns—as assuredly it must!—their salutation will be changed to a furious '*Crucify!*'⁶

'The voice of a god, and not of a man' was the adulatory cry Herod's audience made, when 'arrayed in royal apparel', he 'sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them'. After the crowd ascribed godship to him, 'immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost'.⁷ Currently, the 'Transvaal public' hold the Viscount in the highest admiration, hanging upon his every word, as though spoken by a god. But, the angel

¹ 'The Governor's Arrival and Reception on the Diamond Fields', *Citizen* 13 (27 Oct. 1897) 3.

² Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall*, 15.

³ *PKD*, Pt XX, p. 59.

⁴ Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall*, 15–16.

⁵ Grendon reports on 'the Coloured People's meeting' held in Johannesburg in March 1905, where the Transvaal pass laws came up for discussion ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4).

⁶ 'The Voice of a God', *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.

⁷ Acts 12:22–23.

of the Lord stands poised to deliver the *coup de grâce*. Presumably, Milner will be spared the worms, but the Transvalers will inevitably turn against him, when his rash schemes—like the importation of Chinese labour—are wrecked. Grendon mixes his biblical precedents somewhat: the cry of ‘Hosanna’ changed to ‘Crucify’ applies of course to the trial of Jesus.

Indicative of the depth of Grendon’s disillusionment with Milner, and with the postwar settlement in general, is the fact that just two years prior to applying the Herod allusion to Milner (the ostensible embodiment of ‘British’ principles in South Africa), Grendon had applied it to Kruger (the ‘Boer’ principle incarnate). In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, ‘Fortuna appears to Paul for the second, and last time’, in 1895,¹ and warns that ‘haughty tyrant’² of the possible outcome of his career of reckless presumption:

Perchance JEHOVAH in his furious ire
May smite thee, and consign thee unto worms,
Like him of yore, who did His pow’r usurp!³



Grendon returns to the aftermath of the Earl’s Court *Savage South Africa* exhibition of 1899 on two occasions in his subsequent journalism. The first is an *Ilanga* editorial (1904); the second is a polemical letter published in *Izwe la Kiti* (1914). In the *Ilanga* editorial, he tells of ‘the escapades of one of our own countrymen—an alleged son of Lobengula—who created such an amount of sensation in England a few years ago; for whom also an English young lady became so infatuated that she would at all costs have the “nigger” for her lawful husband, despite the protests of her parents, and relatives’.⁴

‘Prince Lobengula’, the star attraction of Fillis’s show, had stunned London by marrying Kitty Jewell whom he had earlier met in South Africa. The wedding came

¹ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 38, prose argument.

² *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 39.

³ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 40.

⁴ ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

off in St Matthias's Church, Warwick Road, Earl's Court, London.¹ In response to the news, London's *Evening News* wrote that 'there is something inexpressibly disgusting in the idea of the mating of a white girl and a dusky savage'.² The fact that 'Kitty was beautiful, was a goddess', did not little to appease the critics, either.³ As Grendon recalls in 1904, the wedding had 'created such an amount of sensation in England' when it hit the newsstands. It also gave a new slant to Grendon's prediction that Fillis's scheme would 'awaken in the native heart an irresistible desire, and an unquenchable thirst', but at least in this case, it was sealed in honourable marriage.

'Peter Lobengula' died in a Manchester slum—a poverty-stricken consumptive and father of several 'half-caste' children—on 24 November 1913.⁴ His death was reported in British and colonial papers, and once again there was discussion on the grievous sociological consequences of *Savage South Africa*. At about this time, an article by W. Guthrie Tully appeared in the *Natal Witness*, in which he describes the 'dusky emigrants (call them what you like) from South America, South Africa and elsewhere' who are inundating England, enjoying English hospitality, taking on airs, and showing their 'gratitude' by copulating with English girls:

Black people are made a fuss of by the English people, and they rapidly become spoilt. Familiarity breeds contempt, and when at length the time comes for them to return to their native land, these visitors more than often leave a legacy in the shape of a little half-breed baby as a reminder of their appreciation of the 'glorious hospitality of the English people'. The pity of it is that the people will not be taught that there is such a thing as the colour line and that black and white can never mix. ... Many a South African when in England, has inwardly cursed at seeing a white girl walking arm in arm with a native, whose proper place is in his kraal.⁵

In April 1914, Grendon responds to Tully's lament, and takes the opportunity to indulge in a little *Schadenfreude* and 'told-you-so' at the discomfort of white purists:

The Colony of half-breeds in the White City and Earl's Court, London[, to which Tully alludes], is the direct result of your own doings. Ever thirsting for accursed gold you saw in the black man a fine opportunity of piling your 'shiners'. You took him hence for the purpose of

¹ The story of the love and marriage of 'Peter Lobengula' and Kitty Jewell has been admirably told by Ben Shephard, in *Kitty and the Prince* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2003). See p. 115 for the wedding.

² Quoted in: Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, blurb.

³ Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, 114.

⁴ Shephard, *Kitty and the Prince*, 218.

⁵ Quoted in: 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

exhibiting him in your own land, not in the least expecting that some day he would win and woo white girls, by whom he would beget half-caste yellow children. The sweetness that you enjoyed through the money you piled by reason of exhibiting the nigger, has long worn off. Now the bitterness of regret rises,—alas too late! Fifteen years ago I warned you against the project of transporting black men for exhibition purposes in Europe. My words (when I was editor of the ‘Coloured South African’ (defunct) published at Uitenhage (C.P.) fell upon unheeding ears. ... It is now too late to murmur. The mule is in the midst of London. Make the best use of him and cease to clamour over the blunders—if they be really, such!—of the past.¹

In his 1899 editorial, Grendon accuses Fillis and his ilk of looking only to the anticipated ‘considerable swelling of their pockets’. Here, he accuses them of ‘thirsting for accursed gold’, and of seeing ‘in the black man a fine opportunity of piling [their] “shiners”’. It is brazen material greed that obsesses such men—their ‘thirst for gold’ is a spirit that sours every relation in South Africa. The ‘thirst for gold’ may be an intertextual gesture to Pope’s *Essay on Man*, in which the poet discerns a happier shore for ‘the poor Indian’, where ‘No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold’.²

In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, upon the discovery of the Witwatersrand goldfields, ‘Vast multitudes’ ‘throng’ thither, in order ‘To quench their thirst for gold’.³ The South African War does not purge the land of such scavengers, because when it concludes, ‘the slaves of Lucre sweep | In denser crowds, to quench their thirst for gold’.⁴ In 1904, Grendon describes Transvaal ‘capitalists, whose thirst for gold is unquenchable’,⁵ and in 1905, he notes that ‘in the Transvaal revelations lately made prove that the thirst for gold is paramount to all else’.⁶ By ascribing a ‘thirst for accursed gold’ to the promoters of *Savage South Africa*, Grendon claims spiritual kinship for them with the Randlords: they are all slaves of Mammon, ‘slaves of Lucre’, who care not what the black man suffers, so long as ‘their pockets’ swell, and their ‘shiners’ pile.

‘I warned you against the project of transporting black men for exhibition purposes in Europe’, Grendon chides. The collective ‘you’ embraces Englishmen, or whites in

¹ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

² Grendon employs the phrase, ‘hope springs eternal’, also from *Essay on Man*, signalling his borrowing with quotation marks, in ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 34.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133.

⁵ ‘The Labour Problem’, *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

general. In this sense, his claim is more than a little fanciful. Such ‘warning’ as he gave in 1899 appeared in a periodical with a very limited circulation. Relatively few whites can have read it, even after its republication in the *Looker-On*. The problem was not that Grendon’s warning ‘fell upon unheeding ears’, but that it fell upon very few ears—and probably upon none belonging to anyone who could have made a difference. All the same, he cannot pass up an opportunity to illustrate his prescient powers.

Grendon never opposes, on moral grounds, the ‘open miscegenation through honourable marriage between white and black’.¹ He is unwilling to tut with Tully over the ‘Colony of half-breeds in the White City and Earl’s Court’. So he counsels him—by way of apostrophe, since Tully is unlikely to be reading *Izwe la Kiti*—to ‘make the best use of [the ‘Mule’ in London] and cease to clamour over the blunders—if they be really, such!—of the past’.



Grendon tells *Ilanga*’s readers that Man has ‘physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual faculties’, and that ‘it is contrary to the nature and constitution of Man, and also to the designs of the Creator that any of [these faculties] should remain undeveloped’.² His sporting activities ‘developed’ the physical faculty. Literary pursuits—poetry, journalism, botanical description—gave ample scope for the growth and expression of his other faculties. Transcending and informing all, was his religious sense—his ‘spiritual faculty’. In everything he observed the ‘designs of the Creator’. As evidenced in this chapter, his earliest poetry and prose were inspired by his strong spirituality and his acute moral sensibility.

¹ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6.

² ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

CHAPTER 6

PAUL KRUGER'S DREAM

The Boer is for trampling down; the Briton for raising. The Boer is for murdering and annihilating; the Briton is for saving.¹



Paul Kruger's Dream stands out as the *magnum opus* amongst Grendon's surviving poems (plate 6a). Tim Couzens—who was acquainted with just the first three of its thirty-seven parts—describes it as Grendon's 'most interesting poem of the [Edendale] period'.² For sheer scale, it represents a major achievement. Including the Dedication, but not the headings, prose argument, footnotes, *etc.*, it comprises somewhat over 30,900 words arranged in 4,750 verse-lines. It runs to 133 pages—or 136, when the dedicatory verses are considered. The only other poem of comparable length published in colonial Natal is Charles Barter's *Stray Memories of Natal and Zululand* (1897)—printed, like the *Dream*, by Munro Brothers of Pietermaritzburg. Barter's poem is composed in tediously unvaried iambic tetrameter rhyming couplets, and so lacks the metrical variety of Grendon's *Dream*. Being strongly autobiographical, it also lacks the *Dream's* epic scope and interplay of voices. It is perhaps a token of the arbitrary manner in which literary texts are received and preserved that whereas several literary surveys make mention of *Stray Memories*, none makes even passing reference to the *Dream* in its complete form.³

According to its subtitle, the *Dream* sets out to depict the 'Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa between Boer and Briton'. In this tableau, black Africans are far from invisible, however: they appear at intervals throughout—as loyal British subjects, allies of the Imperial cause, or as oppressed bondsmen of the Boers. The chief antagonists may be 'Boer and Briton', but the ideological theatre implicates black

¹ 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

² Couzens also notes that a fragment from the poem's conclusion appears in *Ilanga* ('Robert Grendon', 72, 74).

³ Barter is the only poet from colonial Natal noted by Beeton (*Pilot Bibliography of South African English Literature*, viii). *Stray Memories* is one of very few Natalian poetry volumes noted by Nathan (*South African Literature*, 180), Gardner ('Natal Literature', 44), and Van Wyk Smith (*Grounds of Contest*, 20).

PAUL KRUGER'S DREAM,

The Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa

between

BOER AND BRITON,

or the overthrow of

“CORRUPTION,” “FALSEHOOD,” “TYRANNY,” “WRONG,”

and the triumph of

“JUSTICE,” “TRUTH,” “LIBERTY,” “RIGHT.”

A POEM,

BY

ROBERT GRENDON.

[ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.]

PIETERMARITZBURG:
MUNRO BROS., PRINTERS, BANK STREET.

1902.

subordinates also, because conflict—as projected in the *Dream*—is over the issue of equitable governance.

According to Grendon's preface, the poem represents 'an endeavour to depict the political ambition of Paul Kruger, President of the late South African Republic, as far as possible from the man's own standpoint'. Accordingly, the poetic speaker—the poem's centre of consciousness—is Paul Kruger himself. By 'dream', Grendon makes clear he means

the 'delusion' under which the man laboured throughout his presidential life. His most cherished hopes, his aspirations; his loftiest aims; his most ardent desires; his strongest determinations, and his most carefully matured designs conceived from the time he ascended the supreme chair of his country up to the moment he shook South African dust from his feet in flight, were one by one doomed to failure, and on this account are summed up both in the title page, and in the last word of the poem in the expression 'dream'.¹

Poet and President have worldviews that stand at poles apart. In his selection of a fallible or unreliable primary poetic speaker, Grendon creates an ironic distance between his own ideological identity—as proclaimed in his dedication, 'To Britannia'—and that of the Transvaal President. Such dramatic irony is difficult to sustain and is not an ordinary ingredient of the epic. There are places in the *Dream* where a degree of authorial 'objectivity'—the impression of which is essential to the genre—can only be sustained through the uneasy interpolation of subsidiary speakers, some of them distinctly antagonistic toward Kruger and his politics, whose speech is nonetheless faithfully reported by him. In order to present a viewpoint conflicting with Kruger's, Grendon causes him on occasion to hear and to repeat words spoken by an unidentified, mystic 'Voice'.

It is conceivable that in his choice of title, Grendon may have been influenced—subliminally or otherwise—by *Kruger's Dream of Empire*, a short British propaganda film (1900) produced by cinema pioneer, Robert W. Paul (1868–1943). Poem and film appear to share some allegorical elements.² If this is the case, it represents one of the earliest instances in South Africa of a crossover between film and text.



¹ *PKD*, Preface, p. iii.

² 'Bioscope Goes to War' (online).

The first three parts of *Paul Kruger's Dream* were published in *Ipepa lo Hlanga* in June and July 1901, shortly before that paper's temporary stoppage in August 1901.¹ *Ipepa* was at that time printed by Munro Brothers of Bank Street, Pietermaritzburg, on behalf of the Zulu Printing & Publishing Syndicate. It was likely shortly after the paper's suspension that Grendon arranged with Munro Brothers for the entire poem to be printed as a separate publication. According to the title-page, it appeared in 1902. Couzens refers to the partial serial publication of the poem in *Ipepa*, but seems unaware of its subsequent publication in full.²

A rare exemplar of the *Dream* survives amongst the Colenso family papers—a special accession in the Pietermaritzburg depot of the South African National Archives.³ The photocopy of another exemplar exists in the National Library, Cape Town Campus.⁴ *South African Bibliography to 1925* (1979), a comprehensive survey of the holdings of the principal South African libraries locates no other copy than that in Pietermaritzburg.⁵

Likely, the surviving original exemplar was acquired by Harriette Colenso—either by purchase, or as a gift—around the time of its publication. It is not inscribed in any way, suggesting that the immediate donor was not Grendon, since contemporary practice was for an author to add a presentation inscription to some preliminary page, and Grendon would not have shirked his responsibility in this regard, had the copy in question passed directly from his hands to hers. Harriette's correspondence is very considerable and not yet fully indexed. Her biographer, Jeff Guy, is unable to state whether or not this correspondence includes letters to or from Grendon.⁶ That Grendon admired Harriette's bold and steadfast championing of various Zulu causes, is evident from his 'Tribute to Miss Harriet [sic] Colenso', published in 1914 and advertised as being a fragment from a longer (projected) work, entitled 'Dinizulu, Ex-King of Zululand'.⁷

¹ It enjoyed a brief resurrection, starting with the issue of 24 April 1903. See chapter 7.

² Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 72–74.

³ NAB, A204, ref. C.1284/9 (located in a box of miscellaneous pamphlets).

⁴ A.1986–842. From the appearance of water-staining in the original from which the Cape Town photocopy was made, it is evident that it is not the Pietermaritzburg copy.

⁵ *SABIB* ii:439.

⁶ Personal communication: Jeff Guy.

⁷ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5.

The surviving copy is a side-stitched octavo booklet. This is to say that the printed signatures are collated as usual, but instead of being saddle-sewn onto tapes—a more labour-intensive and costly method—the text-block has two metal staples driven sidewise through its inner margins, close to the spine.¹ The Colenso copy lacks wrappers, and appears to have been issued thus, since there is no visible trace of wrappers having been removed. This fact, together with the inexpensive binding method, suggests that Grendon may have been governed by strict economy in seeing the *Dream* through the press. In all probability, his prime objective was to witness his labour of many months preserved in print. It is likely that the print-run was severely restricted. No evidence has emerged to show that the book was offered for sale through Pietermaritzburg booksellers.

Kruger died in European exile in 1904, two years after the *Dream*'s publication. In December of that year, Grendon again took up his pen—this time to write the former President's obituary for *Ilanga lase Natal*, of which he was English sub-editor during the foreign absence of proprietor and editor-in-chief, John L. Dube (plate 6b).² His obituary begins with an epigraph lifted from the *Dream*.³ In the epic, this is a quatrain applied by Britannia to her late son, Rhodes; in the obituary, it has reference to Kruger himself:

In thy life how many damned thee,
 Yearn'd, and pray'd to see thee fall,
 In thy death how many gather
 To extol thee?—Well nigh all!

The obituary concludes by quoting the *Dream*'s final twenty-five lines, in which the aging Kruger anticipates his imminent demise, and expresses the hope that 'At God's command supreme', he may shortly begin to enjoy a life 'More real than Earth's dull dream'.



¹ This is also the binding method employed for Barter's *Stray Memories*.

² 'The Late President Kruger', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4. The article includes a wood-engraved portrait of Kruger—a comparatively rare feature in *Ilanga*. Illustrations are chiefly used to embellish advertisements for patent remedies in early numbers of *Ilanga*.

I concur with Couzens ('Robert Grendon', 74) that this anonymous article is Grendon's. See reasons advanced in appendices 1 and 2.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 126.

THE LATE PRESIDENT KRUGER.

"In thy life how many damned thee,
Yearn'd, and pray'd to see thee fall,
In thy death how many gather
To extol thee?—Well nigh all!"

To-day—the most solemn reckoned by Boer hearts as a day of thanksgiving in remembrance of the overthrow of Dingana's power by Andries Pretorius, mightiest of Boer soldiers, six and sixty years ago; to-day Dingana's Day—perhaps the most memorable in all Boer military history—the mortal remains of the late ex-President Kruger of the late South African Republic find their last resting-place among the crumbled ashes of of his fathers, in Pretoria. To-day, the dead remains of that mortal man, who for



twenty years wielded the supreme power in the State beyond the Vaal—who stood out as a champion against what he termed the "new civilisation" of "murderers" and "thieves;"—who in his day of power sought to unite all Southern Africa under the Boer Flag, and from this subcontinent wipe out by one stroke of violence the rule of Britain;—who to save his land and people from being absorbed by aliens, waged a deadly war of three years' duration, in the midst of which he was forced to flee to Europe, and there in exile pass the remainder of his life—receive from friend and foe alike, a recognition that was stabbornly denied the living man; and the funeral orations delivered this day over his dust are characterised by a

Before the death of Cecil John Rhodes (26 March 1902) prompted Grendon to add a thirty-seventh part to his epic, Part XXXVI was likely intended to conclude it.¹ In this penultimate part, reified ‘Truth’ accosts a prostrate Kruger, serving him with an ultimatum. Planting ‘her foot upon [his] breast’, she rests ‘her pond’rous sword upon [his] throat’ and counsels him, since ‘THE END IS NEAR’, to ‘Brood not o’er strife’, but to ‘Be wise, and for thy guilt atone!’ (5 octaves, iambic tetrameter, rhymed ababcdcd). In a footnote, Grendon explains that

the above stanzas are the outcome of a conversation with Gunner Cooper (nicknamed *Skin*) of the 42nd B.R.F.A., to which I was for some time attached as driver of the forge-wagon. This conversation took place on the morning after the Battle of Bergendaal [sic], August 28th, 1900, on the march with General Buller’s columns to Machadodorp in pursuit of Paul Kruger and his band. It will be noticed that this particular section of the work was sketched long before the aged chieftain took flight from South Africa, and long before the sorrows in the land of exile, further above described, overtook him. Gunner Cooper, I may mention was my intimate friend, and always took a lively interest in this work. It is therefore with sincere recognition, and grateful remembrance of his kindness towards me, that I here refer to him.²

Grendon was likely in Uitenhage at the outbreak of the South African War in October 1899. He does not state for how long he was attached to the 42nd Battery Royal Field Artillery, or when he signed up. It is possible that he sailed to Natal shortly after the outbreak of hostilities and enlisted there. The 42nd Battery was active during the earliest battles of the Natal campaign, including Elandslaagte. It became bottled up in Ladysmith when the Boers invested the town, and it sustained heavy

¹ *Zonnebloem College Magazine* (1:7 (Dec. 1903) 4) refers to the *Dream*’s ‘thirty-six songs’; Couzens (‘Robert Grendon’, 72) likewise refers to ‘thirty-six parts’. A round multiple of twelve seems more appropriate than thirty-seven ‘parts’ for an epic (the *Odyssey* comprises twenty-four books; *Paradise Lost* in one of its arrangements has twelve). It is possible therefore that there were two issues of the booklet: the first in thirty-six parts (possibly released in 1901), and a later issue (1902) in which an extra gathering (Pt XXXVII) and new title-page were stitched in with the already printed gatherings.

The *Dream*’s preface is dated 5 May 1901, which would seem to imply that Grendon considered the work completed by that date. The last datable event prior to Pt XXXVII is Victoria’s death (22 Jan. 1901). Pt XXXVII describes two events that postdate the preface: Rhodes’s death and the Thanksgiving Celebrations in Pretoria at the conclusion of the War (both 1902).

Rhodes was in a sense Kruger’s chief antagonist in ‘the Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa between Boer and Briton’ (*vide* the poem’s subtitle). The two are described as ‘*twin statesmen*, who by pathways cross | Sought union of the States South African’ (Pt XXXVII, p. 122). On learning of Rhodes’s death, Grendon may have felt that a *denouement* needed to be added to his epic.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, pp. 118–19n.

losses in the failed attempt to take Nicholson's Nek on 'Mournful Monday', 30 October.¹

Ladysmith was relieved by General Buller and his columns on 28 February 1900. Thereafter—as part of the second phase of the war, in which the Boer invading armies retired from Natal and the Cape—Buller's Natal Field Army advanced on the Transvaal. It incorporated many of the troops who had survived the Siege of Ladysmith, including the 42nd Battery. The column occupied Volksrust, just across the border from Natal, on 12 June. In the Transvaal, Buller's Natal Field Army joined forces with General French's column for a final all-out assault on a Republican stronghold in the eastern Transvaal. From combatant members of the Battery who had experienced the Ladysmith siege, Grendon may have learnt the details that inform 'the song | The British soldiers sang in their distress | Beside Klip River's muddy stream'.² If he signed up just after the War's commencement, it is just possible that he experienced the Siege at first hand.

Grendon's forge wagon—not to be confused with a 'forage wagon'—was a 'travelling forge for service in the field'.³ As a coloured man, he was officially debarred from bearing arms, or at least from actual combatant service. The majority of wagon drivers, *voorlopers*, and other attendants in this campaign were either blacks or coloureds. Seven thousand of such transport auxiliaries took part in French's march on Machadodorp, to which Grendon refers in the footnote to *Paul Kruger's Dream*, quoted above.⁴

Bergendal was a farm situated near the crest of the Transvaal's eastern escarpment, below which lay Machadodorp and the location of Kruger's temporary headquarters during his retreat towards Portuguese East Africa. It was here that the last pitched battle of the South African War was fought. Almost three months earlier, on 5 June 1900, the British had captured Pretoria. On the eve of Pretoria's fall to the British, Kruger, together with his government and army, withdrew eastward along the Delagoa Bay railroad. The British were victorious at Bergendal, and the Transvaal

¹ Doyle, *Great Boer War*, chapters 4–7.

² *PKD*, Pt XXVII, pp. 90–91.

³ *OED*.

⁴ Nasson, *Abraham Esau's War*, 67; Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, 21.

was annexed just days later. At this point, it was generally believed that the War was over. Many black and coloured auxiliaries—Grendon included—were demobilized.

It was natural that on the morning after the Boer defeat at Bergendal, Grendon and his white comrade, Gunner ‘Skin’ Cooper, should reflect upon how the tables had recently turned on the aging Transvaal President. As Grendon’s 1904 obituary for Kruger recalls, in the Transvaal’s War of Independence (1880–81), Kruger had,

in conjunction with Piet Joubert [overthrown] the British authority in the Transvaal. Then he was elected President and held this office until the Republic was annexed to the British Empire by Lord Roberts in 1900. His policy towards the aliens, a policy which hastened, and ended in, his overthrow, and the oppression, which all dark-skinned people in this country endured

were a matter of public record.¹ Kruger had trodden down ‘Truth’; now in a retributive turnabout, she was ‘treading’ upon him.

Grendon draws his reader’s attention to the fact that the verses describing Kruger’s abasement and day of reckoning with Truth were ‘sketched long before the aged chieftain took flight from South Africa’. The implication is that these lines were somehow prescient. Here, as elsewhere, Grendon exhibits his prophetic as well as his aesthetic credentials.

For decades after the South African War, ‘official’ (white) historiography defined that conflict—neatly but inaccurately—as involving Boers and Britons only. History books portrayed black Africans as mere spectators, largely unaffected by the hostilities. Like Sol T. Plaatje’s diary kept during the Siege of Mafeking, however, the discovery of *Paul Kruger’s Dream* ‘explodes the myth, maintained by belligerents, and long perpetuated by both historians and the popular imagination, that [the War] was a white man’s affair’.² Both Plaatje’s diary and Grendon’s epic are responses, not of detached bystanders, nor of hirelings in the employ of an Imperial master, but of ideologically-committed participants in Britain’s general war effort. No longer can the conflict be styled the ‘Anglo-Boer War’, without qualification. As Peter Warwick makes clear, ‘it was very much more than that. In a real sense it was a “South African

¹ ‘The Late President Kruger’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

² John Comaroff, in: Plaatje, *Diary*, 1.

war”, a conflict that directly touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of black people in whose midst the familiar dramas of the war unfolded.’¹

The existence of Plaatje’s diary was first brought to public notice by John Comaroff, who discovered it in the 1960s and arranged for its first publication in 1973. The discovery ushered in a paradigmatic shift in scholarly approaches to the South African War (1899–1902) and gave impetus to an already-existent trend toward more racially-inclusive regional history writing.

Revisionist studies over the past three decades have uncovered a mass of documentary evidence that renders the old orthodoxy untenable. This archival material corroborates the picture that emerges from a reading of Plaatje’s manuscript: that the lives of black Africans were profoundly touched by the War, and that neutrality was neither a viable nor even an attractive option for many of them.² It is now clear that many blacks and coloureds were caught up in the warfare itself, in auxiliary or—in rare cases—combatant roles. Thousands lost their lives as a direct consequence of the War.

Plaatje’s secretarial and linguistic skills were much in demand in Baden-Powell’s Mafeking—both in the Civil Service and by the war correspondents stationed there. Grendon likewise rendered valuable service to the British war effort as a wagon driver. As Bill Nasson points out, ‘British officers looked to the haulage skills and transport facilities of rural African and Coloured communities’ in the Cape Colony.³ Warwick notes that ‘transport-riding with the military was an almost exclusively Coloured and African occupation’.⁴ Grendon’s wartime service should be seen in this context. Enlistment was purely voluntary. That a highly educated man—a teacher and newspaper editor—should choose to accept employment that was comparatively menial, yet fraught with danger, indicates his own ideological commitment to the British cause, and his desire to see the overthrow of independent Boer rule in the republics.⁵

¹ Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, 4.

² Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, xi; Nasson, *Abraham Esau’s War*, i.

³ Nasson, *Abraham Esau’s War*, 65.

⁴ Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, 21.

⁵ Nasson, *Abraham Esau’s War*, 65.

Early in 1904, Grendon recalls that the ‘Imperial Government ... remunerat[ed] honestly the natives who acted as camp-followers during the late war’. This was the case, even though white capitalists appealed to the Government to ‘cut down the wages which were the price put upon black men’s lives’.¹ Grendon appears to imply that he too was well remunerated as a ‘camp-follower’ to the British Army. In view of the fact that he stood in debt to his father to the tune of £100 in mid-1899, it is possible that his income as wagon driver may have come at an opportune time. Having been close to the front lines of actual battle at Bergendal, he would certainly have known how ‘black men’s lives’ could have been endangered by the War.

Our reception of *Paul Kruger’s Dream* should take into account the poet’s consistent personal record of ‘loyalty’ to the Empire. In 1892, he had addressed an appeal to the British Prime Minister. In 1897, he was signatory to an illuminated address congratulating Victoria on the Diamond Jubilee of her reign. In the same year, he also read a welcome address to the High Commissioner, Milner, and defended Cecil Rhodes, the archetypal Imperialist, against a charge of racism. In 1899, he edited a newspaper that had ‘as its leaders’ (Jabavu’s expression²) members of the Cape Colony’s Progressive Party, which meant close alignment with Rhodes and Milner, and with Britain’s case for unsheathing her sword in South Africa. Finally, when the War broke out, Grendon, although not a conscript, and although ineligible on racial grounds from taking up arms, did the ‘patriotic’ or ‘loyal’ thing in volunteering for the only role open to coloured men—that of a non-combatant auxiliary. He did not merely write about the ‘Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa’: he took a full and an active part in that struggle.



Paul Kruger’s Dream describes the origin, rise, and (apparent) demise of a distinct people—the ‘Boers’. At the beginning, Dutch mariners arrive from the outer world to settle at the Cape; at the end, thousands of their descendants—prisoners-of-war and exiles like Kruger himself—are driven back into that outer world. The poem’s argument may therefore be viewed as describing a cyclical movement.

¹ ‘The Labour Problem’, *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4.

² *Imvo* 15:754 (3 May 1899) 3.

Dedication: ‘To Britannia’: These poignant dedicatory verses may be regarded as a self-standing poem, distinct from *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, because in them the speaker is not Kruger, but the poet himself. He addresses himself to Britannia, extolling her superlative ‘enactments’ and the liberty that she grants her subjects. The lineage of that liberty can be traced through such high spots as Magna Charta, the Regicide, the humbling of Napoleon, and the Emancipation of the Slaves. In her latest act to ensure liberty throughout her realm, Britannia now purges ‘This polluted Boer domain’. Grendon identifies himself unequivocally as a black man, ‘whose kinsmen gained redemption | Thro’ [Britannia’s] power, and [her] gold’. It is ‘by virtue of [his] freedom’ that he dedicates ‘this song’ to Britannia.

Part I: Kruger takes up his narrative. He traces the early history of European settlement at the Cape from 1649, when a party of shipwrecked Dutchmen are obliged to winter in Table Bay. They are so enraptured with the charms of the place that on leaving they vow, rather ominously: ‘A shipwreck’d band—| We’ll not return again—| But *conq’rors*—and in thee, fair land, | Shall we for aye remain!’ They express their contempt for the natives, and their utter disbelief that ‘the GOD of Heaven shap’d’ this Cape ‘With such exquisite grace’ that it should ‘ever be the lot | Of such a worthless race!’

‘Four summers laps’d’ before three ships appear in Table Bay—this time to found a permanent settlement. ‘They multiplied, and waxing powerful | Soon crush’d the worthless aborigines, | Whom they enslav’d, or drove from out the land.’ Then came the Britons, who ‘made [the Dutch] bow to the accursèd law, which makes the *black* man equal with the *white*; | And sets the *slave* degraded, and debas’d, | On equal footing with his lord’. Part I ends with the Great Trek, when a ‘mighty rolling Voice’ is heard calling upon the Boers to vacate the Colony: ‘A better land toward the North | Your injur’d race awaits! | Arise—arise—and go ye forth | To found you other States!’

Part II: Kruger gives his personal recollection of tribulations endured by his kinsfolk during their wanderings in the interior. In particular, he refers to Dingane’s treachery, through which the ‘flower’ of Kruger’s ‘race’ was massacred. He admits that he finds it impossible to forgive the treatment meted out to him and to his race by black Africans and by Britons: ‘This deadly rancour from my earliest years | In me

engender'd 'gainst the Africans, | And Britons, will remain within my breast | Fast-rooted, till I close mine eyes in death!' He next calls on the 'First Cause', petitioning Him to forgive 'These blasphemies of [his] distracted soul!' All human sins the 'outgrowth be of that *one sin* 'gainst Thee'. Concerning Man, Kruger questions God: 'Wilt Thou ne'er pardon and restore | Him purified, to yon lost Paradise?'

In 'the Land | Of Dreams', a youthful Kruger 'discern[s] things yet to be'. At Jove's behest, Fortuna, 'A virgin with perpetual youth endow'd', appears to Kruger and unfurls the republican *Vierkleur*—'a costly standard ... wov'n in red, and white, and blue | And green'. Her mission is to notify Kruger that he will 'rise a king | In [his] declining day!' The colours of the *Vierkleur* 'Four battles signify, | Wherein, whilst striving for the right | [Kruger will] force [his] foes to fly'. She enjoins him to eschew Pride and Tyranny, and to pursue Justice and Truth. In particular, he should be on guard against the seductions of Mammon, who will 'shamefully reward' Kruger 'With crown of bitter woe', if ever Kruger elects to serve him. Before taking her leave, Fortuna promises to return 'In five and fifty summers hence', when—she predicts—Kruger shall 'Heav'n disdain'.

Part III: Under the command of Andries Pretorius, the Voortrekkers congregate to avenge themselves on the Zulu. They vow to God that if He should grant them victory, they will memorialize that day annually forevermore, and erect to his honour a 'house of pray'r, and praise'. The Battle of Blood (Ncome) River is vividly described, in which 'the GOD of Heav'n' delivers 'those accursed Canaanites' into Boer hands.

Part IV: Kruger contrasts the improved fortunes of his people at the first 'Dingaan's Day' celebration (16 December 1839) with their desperate plight one year earlier. Falling asleep, he beholds another vision in which a 'multitude of spirits' encourage Pretorius with the assurance that 'Natal lies at [his] feet!' However, the spirits predict Boer defeat at Boomplaats, after which Pretorius, a 'crestfallen hero', will be constrained to flee, 'Beyond the Vaal to roam'. Pretorius's son Marthinus will be proclaimed 'First chieftain of their land', and Pretoria 'Will rise from out the sand' as a 'tribute to his name'. But that Transvaal 'kingdom' will ultimately be absorbed by 'the British Empire vast'.

Part V: Pretorius lays claim to Natal—‘Yon tract, which Dingaan by a faithless scroll | Had ceded unto luckless Piet Retief, | For heritage—to him, and his for aye’. Kruger next ‘bursts into impassionate and violent strains at the recollection of the subsequent annexation of this land to British territory (1843)’, but is compelled to acknowledge the veracity of earlier ‘angelic tidings’ which predicted that Pretorius should again become a wanderer. The Voortrekkers decide once again to trek: ‘To other regions now we pass | Across Quathlamba’s heights; | Beyond the turbid Vaal in mass | We’ll meet, our God-giv’n rights | On dusky foemen to impress. | Our tricks we’ll there renew! | The King of Heav’n our cause will bless, | Tho’ weak we be, and few!’ In leaving, they warn Britain’s ‘red-neck’d thieves’ of their intention to recover Natal on ‘some distant day’.

Part VI: Leaving behind beautiful Natal, the Voortrekkers cast their gaze upon a land ‘Of grace | And beauty, and productiveness how void’. Kruger—still young—pledges to ‘trample down Britannia’s hateful sons, | When they should unto this new land repair’. Having traversed the Drakensberg, the assembly implores God’s blessing, and offers praise to Him. Unable to contain their wrath, however, their ‘pray’rs to vengeance [are] transform’d’ and they pronounce a curse upon ‘ye Britons—most shameless of beings’, ‘whose race is most curs’d, | Most hated, and envied by nations on earth’.

Part VII: ‘The British Lion’ annexes ‘yon tract of land’ between the Orange and Vaal Rivers. The narrative follows the fortunes of Pretorius, who resolves to remove ‘the Lion’s foot’ from lands north of the Orange (Gariiep). Kruger finds the ‘angelic prediction’ of Part IV further fulfilled at the Battle of Boomplaats (1848), where Pretorius is defeated and compelled to team up with Hendrik Potgieter across the Vaal. At the Sand River Convention (1852), Britain recognizes the independence of the Transvaal Boers, and in the following year, both Pretorius and Potgieter die. Marthinus Pretorius is declared the first President of the new Republic (1855)—a further fulfilment of the angelic prediction.

Part VIII: The Transvaal’s fledgling republic is beset with ‘strife, and discord, wranglings, and disputes, | And violence’ from within. There exists also the threat of attack ‘by swarthy foes’—Cetshwayo and Sekukuni. Hopes are pinned on President Thomas Burgers (1872), who proves an ineffectual ruler. Worse yet, the nation turns

apostate: their ‘faith | In God was traml’d under foot. His law | Was reckon’d naught.’ At this juncture (1877), ‘Somtseu’—Theophilus Shepstone—appears ‘To save [the Transvalers] from [them]selves, and from the foes, | Who hover’d round in black array’. He annexes the Transvaal to the Empire. Shortly after this, Kruger begins to rue the ‘rash, and oft-repent’d deed’ whereby the Boers acquiesced in Britain’s annexation of their country.

Part IX: The Transvalers make three unsuccessful attempts to regain their independence by constitutional means. Thwarted on every occasion, they congregate for a council of war (1880). Paardekraal ‘Receiv’d [their] hosts, and echoed for a week | With [their] orations, threats, and pray’rs, and vows’. They resolve ‘to cast off Britain’s yoke’. On the final night of the convocation, ‘Stern Mars’ appears to the throng, ‘With sword unsheath’d’ and with ‘helmet wrought of burnish’d brass’. Mars eggs the *burgers* on to war, promising them ultimate victory in this campaign. However, he also prophesies that the Transvalers will succumb to Mammon’s allure, and to the ‘honey’d lips’ of foreigners. Nineteen years hence, the Boers ‘Must face Earth’s bitt’rest woes’.

Part X: Heeding Mars, the Boers raise three commandos and proclaim the reestablishment of their republic. In a brief campaign (1880–81), they are victorious ‘in every instance’. At O’Neill’s farmhouse, a peace treaty is signed, whereby the Transvalers’ ‘complete Self-Government with reference to their internal affairs’, is guaranteed by Britain. The Boer ‘hosts, like wild doves throng’d around | Majuba’s northern flanks to render thanks, | And worthy praise to Heav’n’s Almighty King’. Confessing their faithlessness and hardheartedness, they vow: ‘But now we’ll adore Thee—and Thee alone!’

Part XI: With the State Treasury exhausted through expenditure on military campaigns against Mapoch, Mampoer, Mankoroane, and Montsioa, the discovery of gold in various places (1884–86) comes as a welcome windfall. Kruger describes how ‘At Mammon’s nod [his] land with wealth o’erflows!’ Thousands of fortune-seekers converge on the Transvaal, and Kruger is ‘by pride | O’ercome’. Mammon appears to him ‘in costliest robes attir’d’, and by means of ‘artful suasion’, induces Kruger to serve him.

Part XII: Newfound wealth and power inflates Kruger's pride. He boasts that he is a 'king', 'inferior not | To German William; nor to Nicholas | Of Russia; nor to Francis of the Huns; | Nor e'en to Britain's world-fam'd Queen'—Victoria. He vows to persecute both blacks and Britons.

Part XIII: In keeping with her promise to return after an interval of fifty-five years, Fortuna reappears to Kruger (1895). She castigates him for having disobeyed the commands she gave him in his youth, and 'cites from history's page instances of the fate of kings, who defied and blasphem'd the Almighty'. She goes on to prophesy that Kruger's oppression of the *Uitlanders* will lead them to rise up in rebellion. Kruger's term of office will last just 'five summers' more. Then 'will Justice overthrow | [his] pow'r'.

Part XIV: Kruger describes the abortive Jameson Raid on the Transvaal (1895–96)—a fulfilment of Fortuna's prophecy. At Doornkop, Dr Jameson and his 'filibusters' 'yield submissively to Cronje's pow'r'.

Part XV: Kruger's 'illustrious watchmen'—possibly the detested republican police—scour Johannesburg, rounding up 'the foremost—wealthiest aliens in the land', for their complicity in the attempted coup. The 'four ringleaders' are condemned to death, but in a theatrical display of magnanimity, Kruger commutes their sentences.

Part XVI: Kruger wavers temporarily in his policy of oppressing 'this alien race'. He is 'almost persuaded to grant them full privileges', but finally yields 'to the popular demand' and resolves that 'From henceforth they must face severest laws. | And at [the Boers'] feet for aye must crouch, and fawn.' To entrench his position politically, he curries favour with European leaders, amasses arms against a possible armed invasion by Britain, and gathers to him 'A crowd of hirelings of divers tongues, | From Europe, and the Western World'.

Part XVII: Kruger urges his 'kinsmen' to prepare for the looming conflict, during which they will 'sweep [the Britons] off like scatter'd, wind-blown chaff, | And launch them in the Indian Ocean's depths'. He also promises that they will regain their 'lost possessions'—Natal and the Cape.

Part XVIII: Kruger reports how ‘The savage brutal spirit of [his] race, | Which dormant lay two centuries, awakes’ to target Britons resident in the Transvaal. These *Uitlanders* (aliens) petition Britannia, their ‘sea-girt Mother, Guard of Right, | Of Justice, and of Truth divine’ to ‘Awake, arise, and overthrow | Oppression’.

Part XIX: Kruger records ‘Britannia’s reply to her distracted sons; and her demands to the Government of the South African Republic’ that it set her ‘children free’ from ‘bondage’.

Part XX: Kruger makes insolent reply to Britannia, refusing to grant *Uitlanders* the rights they claim. The Bloemfontein Conference takes place between Kruger and Lord Milner, but fails to achieve *entente*.

Part XXI: Kruger and Steyn, presidents of the Boer republics, meet. Confident of support from ‘Kinsmen in yon neighb’ring States’—Cape Colony and Natal—they conspire to overthrow ‘British supremacy in South Africa’. Britannia warns Steyn to form no military alliance with the Transvaal. Steyn quails, and promises to remain neutral.

Part XXII: Steyn goes back on his word to Britannia, serving her with an ultimatum to withdraw her armies from the borders of the Orange Free State, or face the prospect of war. Britannia is outraged and promises ‘no rest’ for his ‘dark soul’.

Part XXIII: Kruger attributes Britannia’s current interest in the internal affairs of the Transvaal to greed for the gold discovered there, and claims that she seeks a ruse to reclaim what she relinquished after the War of 1880–81. He urges the *burgers* to muster at Paardekraal, and assures them that ‘God, and Mauser cannot lie’.

Part XXIV: The *burgers* rally to Paardekraal, as they did prior to the previous conflict. They ‘thirst for British blood’, and refuse to heed General Joubert’s caution not to initiate hostilities. Truth makes a powerful appearance and ‘with her presence calm[s] the multitude’. In thirty-eight stanzas, she predicts that, after initial successes, the Boers’ ‘boastful hosts will flee | Before their foemen’s hail’. Their doom is inescapable. If they prolong the conflict, they may expect harsh treatment from the enemy. Truth predicts mass slaughter, Kitchener’s scorched-earth tactics, and foreign exile for thousands of Boer prisoners-of-war. She berates the Boers for failure to heed

the warnings of Mars and of Fortuna, for breaking their covenant with Britain, for succumbing to ‘Mammon’s foul device’, and for dealing ruthlessly with Africans.

Part XXV: Heedless of the ‘admonition from the lips | Of Truth’, the ‘frenzied’ mob at Paardekraal demand ‘naught but blood, and war’. Here follows a macabre pageant, as the ‘gates of Hades burst, and now the shades | Of hero kinsmen, long departed, rise | In stature full, and awful, to forewarn | Their heedless living kinsmen of their doom’. Calm descends, as there appear to the congregation the shades of the ‘illustrious dead | In grim possession’.

Jan van Riebeeck, first commander of the Dutch settlement at the Cape (1652–62), reminds them of that ‘traffic vile—in black men’s souls’ in which they once ‘rejoic’d’. ‘For such, and other past misdeeds’, he warns, ‘The price we soon must pay’. Similarly, Simon van der Stel recalls the past, when they cruelly abused ‘Ham’s seed in ev’ry place’. Because of their treachery, they must ‘Despair, and prepare to die!’ The ‘bleeding shade of Piet Retief’ then warns that for the Boers’ wilful wrongs, ‘These lands must be despoil’d!’ Next appears ‘a vast, and varied throng of shades’—Voortrekkers slain in the 1838 massacres—who bewail the fate that must soon befall their kinsmen assembled here at Paardekraal, ‘hill of gloom’. Similar reproaches and dire warnings come from Boer heroes, Piet Uys, his son Dirk Uys, Hendrik Potgieter, and Andries Pretorius. The shade of President Brand turns his invective on the principle players in the republics’ struggle against Britain: ‘Vile traitors of our race, and land | Are ye—Paul Kruger—Steyn—| And Leyds—and Reitz—and ye who stand | Here, leaders of this train!’

Part XXVI: Despite having witnessed and heard these ghostly visitants, the Boer ‘hosts unmov’d remain’d’. They disperse ‘from Paardekraal, resolv’d | On war’. An ultimatum is served upon Britain (9 October 1899). If she fails to agree to republican demands within forty-eight hours, it will be taken as ‘Averment of dread war’.

Part XXVII: The ultimatum having expired, the Boers invade Natal, occupying its northernmost towns and investing Ladysmith. The exultant Boer fighters boast that nothing will stay their headlong rush to ‘Durban’s land-lock’d bay’. Natal appeals for succour to Britannia, and in Ladysmith, British soldiers find themselves in sore straits ‘Beside Klip River’s muddy stream’. At the Tugela River, ‘The fierce Red Bull with

goring horns’—General Sir Redvers Buller—is three times made to retreat before the Boers’ ‘deadly hail’. Finally, he succeeds in lifting the Siege of Ladysmith and in flushing republicans from Natal.

Part XXVIII: As the tide of war turns against the republics, Kruger reports that the Boers’ ‘cherish’d hopes’ begin to fail. Bloemfontein falls to Roberts, the ‘agèd Lord of Kandahar’. The British relieve both Kimberley and Mafeking. Kruger describes his and Steyn’s plight: ‘From battle-field to battle-field we speed—| Twin potentates of these twin tott’ring States, | Our warriors from despair to rouse. In vain | We strive! They flee confus’d before the rush | Of British steel! Our hopes are crush’d for aye!’ They appeal to Britannia for clemency, and an end to war on terms favourable to themselves, but she scorns their peace overtures.

Part XXIX: Kruger reflects despairingly on how ‘Truth’s stern predictions unto us | Are come to pass in dread realities!’ As he does so, the plaintive voice of ‘that luckless captive’, General Cronje, wafts to him across ocean and land, from St Helena, ‘yonder island-rock implanted firm | In far mid-ocean’s depths’. It is ‘a voice which thrill’d | With bitterness, and grief, and wrath combin’d’.

Part XXX: Kruger reports that General Piet Joubert has been ‘smitten down’ who was ‘The tower of our race’ and ‘Our chiefest Captain’. This part contains Kruger’s funeral oration for Joubert, delivered ‘With tearful eyes, and wounded heart, and tones | Which quiv’ring to [his] jaw-bones clung’. It concludes with his ‘exhortation to the burghers’.

Part XXXI: A mystic ‘Voice’ rebukes those women of the Cape Colony who presume to speak out against Britain’s treatment of the Boers.

Part XXXII: The same Voice ‘Upon Natalia naught but praises show’r’d | For her fidelity, and truthfulness | Towards her Motherland’. It heaps upon the Cape Colony ‘a lasting condemnation ... | For treason, faithlessness, and treachery’.

Part XXXIII: The nostalgic laments of Boer captives transported to St Helena and to Ceylon—‘the fragrant isle of the Singalese’—are heard. There is much pathos in these stanzas.

Part XXXIV: Kruger goes into European exile. He describes his meditations on board the Dutch warship *Gelderland*, as well as those upon his arrival in Europe. As the vessel passes through the Red Sea, he reflects on Pharaoh and his armies who, for pitting themselves against their Creator, were drowned in ‘*this* Crimson Sea’, and he prays to the ‘GOD of Love’ that he might not meet a like fate ‘for past misdeeds’. Arriving in Europe, his cares do not diminish. He feels remorse at having served Mammon, ‘That heedless, lifeless Calf’, and would fain make peace with ‘Heav’n’s Eternal King’, but his ‘unconquerable Pride forbids’. Reviewing his life and unfulfilled ambitions, he concludes that they have all been ‘one mocking dream’.

Part XXXV: Kruger learns the news of Victoria’s death (1901), and describes how ‘All Earth is hush’d—one fifth thereof in tears, | And mourning’.

Part XXXVI: In exile, Kruger mourns the loss of his wife, son, and daughter. As ‘Gross darkness gathers’, ‘Consciousness of guilt | Weighs heavy on [his] wretched soul’. He gains a vision in which Corruption, Falsehood, and Murder dance hand in hand with Mammon, ‘and mock | The gasping form of prostrate, vanquish’d Truth—| Upon whose neck [Kruger’s] foot doth firmly tread!’ This ‘retinue of devils’ adulates him. Next, invisible hands bind him ‘both hand | And foot’, and he is ‘headlong hurl’d to deepest depths | Of gloom!’ He awakes to find vindictive Truth standing over him. The tables have turned, since now it is *she* who has ‘her foot upon [his] breast’, and ‘her pond’rous sword upon [his] throat’. Truth adjures Kruger to spurn these devils. The aged, penitent Boer makes ‘unfeigned confession’, and entreats deliverance of the One whom he ‘So oft blasphem’d—ignor’d—defied’. He forsakes ‘the World and all | Its ways; and Mammon, and his dazzling gifts’.

Part XXXVII: Kruger reflects upon the death of Cecil John Rhodes—‘The *Spoiler* of yon Afric continent’. Whilst Kruger ‘dreamt throughout [his] life to federate | Yon States under a Flag Republican’, Rhodes ‘burn’d with high ambition to unite | The self-same Colonies ’neath Britain’s wing!’ Britannia pronounces an elegy over Rhodes, the ‘Greatest of [her] sons great-hearted’, enumerating his illustrious achievements, and praising his reputed lack of racial prejudice. On hearing ‘this fun’ral song’, Kruger wrestles momentarily with vengeful thoughts towards his erstwhile enemy, but succeeds in quelling them. Reflecting on how his contemporaries have passed away, he prays that he might join them: ‘Oh, kindly Fate,

consign me to my rest, | For I am sick, and weary of this world!' A celestial virgin trumpets the declaration of peace, which the former combatants celebrate. Kruger experiences an epiphany as 'The veil, which darkly hid thro' life from view | The uprightness of Britain's soul, is rent'. He now hears 'Repatriation's song by exiles rais'd', as they 'extol Britannia for [their] timely release'. Having made his peace with God, he directs his 'feeble steps' to 'the realms of Peace'.



As shown hereafter, Milton was perhaps Grendon's foremost aesthetic model. And yet, in its formal heterogeneity, combining blank verse with rhymed fixed forms, the *Dream* bears little resemblance to the uniform iambic pentameter blank verse of *Paradise Lost*. In composition, it is nearer to Milton's *Lycidas*, which 'runs not into stanzas but *laissez* of varied length, variously rhymed, with unrhymed verses and trimeters here and there, plastic to every change in the poet's mood'.¹ Grendon sets off various voices and historic episodes by interspersing blank and fixed verse forms.

With blank verse, Grendon is in his element. Despite conspicuous archaisms, poeticisms, and rhetorical flourishes, his blank verse is fluid and august. Slightly fewer than half of the *Dream*'s verse-lines—2,349 of 4,759—are composed in unrhymed iambic pentameter lines. These are comprised in approximately eighty distinct blocks of varying length. With the exception of two comparatively brief passages in which Fortuna and Britannia speak in blank verse, this form is reserved for Kruger's master narrative.

Kruger's account of his people, their origins, wanderings, and vicissitudes of fortune down to the calamitous conflict of the South African War, is interspersed with a variety of embedded voices. The speeches of sundry divinities, risen heroes, and statesmen—some friendly, some inimical towards Kruger—are filtered through his controlling narrative. For these reported sections, fixed (rhymed) verse-forms are most commonly used. When Kruger himself speaks in rhymed verse, there is invariably a temporal space between his speech and his subsequent reporting of it.

¹ Grierson & Smith, *Critical History of English Poetry*, 162.

The poem's metrical diversity and rich sound patterning obviate the monotony of sustained blank verse. Prosodic and topical variety augment one another, and ensure the reader's or auditor's interest throughout. As observed in the *Zonnebloem College Magazine* in 1903, Grendon's 'metres throughout are very varied, a well chosen method of relieving the monotony, almost necessary in a long Epic Poem'.¹

There is comparatively little stanzaic experimentation in Grendon's verse, and in the fixed-form sections, alternate rhyme (abab) and the iambic measure are overwhelmingly preponderant. The default stanza form is the quatrain, with the ballad stanza of alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter lines much in evidence. Even where longer rhymed stanzas are found, these usually comprise two or three alternate-rhymed quatrains spliced together.

Other forms do occur. These are chiefly permutations of the quatrain, but there are a few sestet sequences, as for instance the *Uitlanders'* appeal to Britannia for succour (iambic tetrameter lines, rhymed ababab),² or Britannia's calling of Kruger to account for his harsh treatment of her 'race' (two trimeters, one tetrameter, repeated, iambic measure, rhymed abcabc),³ or the plaint of the beleaguered British soldiers in Ladysmith, who 'Beside Klip River's muddy stream' 'ventilate' 'Their grief, and pain' (two tetrameters, one trimeter, repeated, iambic measure, rhymed abcabc).⁴ A miraculous 'Voice' speaks in quintains when it commends Natalia for her sons' gallantry, and heaps reproach upon the Cape Colony (lines of 8 syllables each, rhymed aabcc).⁵

Very rarely, Grendon abandons accentual-syllabic verse in favour of accentual verse, in which the number of syllables may vary considerably and unpredictably, but the number of stressed syllables to the line follows a fixed pattern. An example is 'Repatriation's song by exiles rais'd', in which Boer prisoners-of-war 'extol Britannia for [their] timely release' from captivity on 'the fragrant isle of the Singalese', 'Helena's rock', and in the West Indies (octaves, syllable-count fluctuating between

¹ *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 1:7 (Dec. 1903) 4.

² *PKD*, Pt XVIII, pp. 51–52.

³ *PKD*, Pt XIX, pp. 54–56.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXVII, pp. 90–91.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXXII, pp. 102–03.

nine and twelve per line, but an invariable four strong beats to the line, rhymed abcdabcd).¹



Paul Kruger's Dream is a national epic. If we allow Benedict Anderson's thesis that nations are communities 'imagined' into being, then the imagination of the epic poet may be seen as integral to the process whereby nationhood is conceived.² Tim Couzens observes that 'epics tend to be associated with the growth or achievement of a spirit of nationalism'.³ In the build-up to—and during—the English Civil Wars, Milton contemplated writing 'the great poem that was to be his contribution to the national effort'.⁴ There can be little doubt that Robert Grendon—who confessed admiration for Milton—was actuated by similar ambition.

Grendon recognized that epic poetry lies at the heart of national imagination. For him, a nation has not come of age that has yet to produce an epic poet of Milton's stature. In one of his lyric exhortations, Grendon appeals to 'Abantu' to 'Advance!' because the World expects them to produce 'A Shakespeare, Milton, Edison'.⁵ That poem is dated 8 December 1903—more than a year after the publication of *Paul Kruger's Dream*. In the *Dream* we observe Grendon himself donning the mantle of an African Milton. He does not plagiarise Milton, yet his intimate acquaintance with the cadences, tone, and imagery of *Paradise Lost*, emerges at intervals throughout his own epic poem.

When Milton settled down to write his first epic, 'his task was to write a great poem which should be "doctrinal and exemplary for a nation". At first he thought of an Arthuriad; but study convinced him that the Arthurian story was a mass of fables; and a national epic must be true.'⁶ As Guérard states, the 'aim of the epic is to present truth, even though truth be amplified or reconstructed so as to be most effective'.⁷ Like Milton, Grendon is concerned with 'truth', however broadly that concept is defined. A conspicuous attribute of the *Dream* is its solid grounding in standard—

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 132.

² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, *passim*.

³ Couzens, 'Sol T. Plaatje and the First South African Epic', 52.

⁴ Grierson & Smith, *Critical History of English Poetry*, 158.

⁵ 'To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

⁶ Grierson & Smith, *Critical History of English Poetry*, 163.

⁷ Guérard, *Preface to World Literature*, 251.

‘true’—nineteenth-century South African historiography. Included in it are many historic episodes that were widely considered at the time to be of special significance to ‘the struggle for supremacy in South Africa’. Every incident described in the *Dream* has an actual occurrence at its core.

In all art, however, faithful adherence to objective truth does have its limitations. As Guérard points out, the ‘epic is a work of art, and in all art ... there is an element of make-believe’.¹ When Grendon describes Kruger’s ambitions and motivations, he has extensive recourse to speculation. In his prose preface to the *Dream*, Grendon concedes this when he states that the ‘passages where imaginary scenes or sketches occur have been purposely introduced for the sake of colour’.² Interestingly—perhaps under the growing influence of Swedenborgian theology—Grendon in his obituary for Kruger (December 1904) states: ‘Of his inner character we, through want of knowledge, are not permitted to speak’.³ The *Dream* itself, completed approximately two years earlier, appears not to evince any such reluctance, and its preface ‘assume[s] that the reader is acquainted with the aged chieftain’s character’.⁴

One of the most evocative of the historical episodes that the *Dream* treats is Dingane’s endorsement of a ‘faithless scroll’ by which Natal was ‘ceded unto luckless Piet Retief, | For heritage’.⁵ This document was pivotal to the thinking of early generations of South African historians, who tended to reconstruct the past around treaties, concessions, and other documents marked with crosses by illiterate and uncomprehending Africans. It is now recognized as just another of the many dubious deeds of cession that punctuate transactions between autochthons and white adventurers throughout the nineteenth century. After Pretorius and his fighters at Blood (Ncome) River avenge their kinsfolk slaughtered at Dingane’s behest, they retrieve the

leathern pouch, wherein
Was found inviolate, and clean, the scroll,

¹ Guérard, *Preface to World Literature*, 234.

² *PKD*, preface, p. iii.

³ *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4. In *Arcana Coelestia* and other writings, Swedenborg developed a doctrine of an inner and an outer person, which is central to his theological system.

⁴ *PKD*, preface, p. iii.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt V, p. 15.

Which ceded unto him [Retief], and to his seed
Natal, for everlasting heritage.¹

The *Dream* also makes obligatory mention of ‘The Vow’—the sacred *Gelofte*—by which the Voortrekkers contract with God that they will ‘consecrate to [Him *their*] *day of victory!*’ and erect to His ‘great Name ... a house of pray’r, and praise’, on condition that He favour them with victory over the heathen foe.² For generations, such covenants—profane and sacred—legitimated the armed seizure of African lands by whites.

Couzens remarks that the ‘epical qualities’ of *Paul Kruger’s Dream* and of *Tshaka’s Death* are indicative of ‘a nationalistic trend in [Grendon’s] historical thinking’.³ There is an overt moral and political purpose to almost all of Grendon’s poetry. Like Virgil, Milton, and other epic poets, he sees the epic genre as the optimum vehicle for transmission of ethical and political lessons. No aesthete, he means to instruct. In reading the *Dream*, one cannot escape its moral didacticism and the national scale of its projected readership. In consonance with this, his poetic diction and neoclassical syntax—particularly in the case of his blank verse—enact the gravity of his epical matter. Pleasing aural effects are invariably subservient.

One national lesson that Grendon propounds—both in the *Dream* and elsewhere—is that blacks are naturally an integral part of civil society and that to exclude them is to court disaster. They will ‘operate | With mightiness for good or ill’, contingent upon the manner in which they are treated.⁴ If Boer and Briton are the poles of *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, then the black African is central to it.

As a generic descriptor, ‘epic’ has wide application in modern usage, as is borne out by South African examples. Sol Plaatje describes his novel, *Mhudi* (published 1930) as an ‘epic’, and Couzens describes it as Plaatje’s ‘attempt to create in mythical and historical terms the first South African national epic’.⁵ ‘First’ it may now confidently be stated *Mhudi* is not, since the publication of *Paul Kruger’s Dream* precedes *Mhudi*’s writing by almost two decades and its first publication by almost

¹ *PKD*, Pt III, p. 11.

² *PKD*, Pt III, p. 10.

³ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 75.

⁴ ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

⁵ Couzens, ‘Sol T. Plaatje and the First South African Epic’, 53.

three.¹ However, Plaatje's novel is indeed 'epic' in scope—describing momentous events that were constitutive of an historical present.

On the other hand, Plaatje also uses the term 'epic' rather gratuitously when he applies it to his twelve-page pamphlet, *The Mote and the Beam* (1922)—a 'discourse on the hypocrisy of white South African attitudes towards the question of sex across the colour bar'.² Unlike Plaatje, Grendon does not flag any of his literary texts as 'epic'. All the same, it is quite manifest that he too aspires to the magnitude implicit in the term.

At this point, it may be helpful to consider a definition of 'epic' as used in literary discourse. Derived from the Greek for 'word, narrative, song', an epic is in

strict critical usage, a long narrative poem in an elevated style whose protagonist is a heroic or quasi-divine figure on whose actions depend the fate of a tribe, a nation, or the human race. ...

The epic is the most ambitious of poetic types, making tremendous demands on a poet's imagination, craft, and knowledge to sustain the grandeur, scope, and variety of a poem that encompasses the entire world of its day and a large part of its learning. It contains shorter forms within its boundaries; e.g., the panegyric appears in the heroic contests, and the elegy in the death of heroes.³

In respect of several of the above criteria, *Paul Kruger's Dream* qualifies as an epic in a narrow sense. It is a substantial narrative poem; the style is 'elevated'; the chief protagonist (Kruger) has heroic stature, and upon his actions 'depend[s] the fate' of republican Boers, as well as the destiny of South Africa. The poem has the requisite 'scope' and 'variety', and includes panegyric and elegy—examples being Kruger's funeral oration for General Joubert (Part XXX), and Britannia's mourning of her 'great empire-builder', Cecil Rhodes (Part XXXVII). The *Dream's* subtitle indicates that it treats the 'Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa'—and in this respect it embraces several 'heroic' contests between the antagonists. It also displays two hallmarks of the 'true epic': 'awe' and 'deep earnestness'.⁴

¹ It is premature to put forward *Paul Kruger's Dream* as the new contender for 'first South African national epic'. Practical experience teaches that such epithets have often to be revoked.

Compared with *Mhudi*, the *Dream's* restricted circulation meant that it was unable to exert the same level of influence on the popular imagination.

² Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 269.

³ Myers & Wukasch, *Dictionary of Poetic Terms*, 121.

⁴ Guérard, *Preface to World Literature*, 251–52.

The poem abounds in references to conflict and bloodshed, and the word ‘blood’, with its derivatives, occurs sixty-four times in its text. It cannot be coincidental that both nation states and epic poetry so often trace their origins to warfare. Albert Guérard states that ‘of epic deeds, war is the most obvious example; and Voltaire was not wholly wrong when he described the epic as “a narrative in verse of warlike adventures”’.¹ The Trojan Wars provide the circumstances—real or mythic—behind the rise of Classical Greece; they also supplied Homer with the stuff of his *Iliad*. Grendon reveals his own acquaintance with Homer’s epics when he writes in an *Ilanga* editorial of the ‘chivalry’ of ‘fierce Achilles’ and ‘crafty Odysseus’.² We may wish to shelve the annals of armed conflict in South Africa—including several Anglo-Boer wars and numerous campaigns between white insurgents and black autochthons—but it cannot be denied that this conflict was constitutive of the State in which we currently find ourselves. Present-day geopolitical boundaries, population distribution patterns, land-use, and infrastructure all owe at least part of their origin to wars or to the peace terms that concluded bygone hostilities. Analogously, Grendon’s great epic is in essence a literary digest of ideological and military conflict—historical and recent—that constituted the South African new order as he conceived and projected it in the immediate aftermath of a major war (1902).



Grendon’s Kruger is more than just man: he is emblematic of the old—pre-British—order in South African colonial society: conservative, reactionary, stubborn, puritanical, ruthless, and duplicitous. This is an order that is doomed to extinction: it must ultimately make way for a more exalted dispensation.

In his personal character, Kruger may seem an unlikely candidate for epic hero; however, the principles for which he stands—according to the *Dream*—are the very stuff of epic. Guérard explains that ‘no man, purely as an individual, is the proper subject for a true epic. A hero does not tower very high above the average human stature: he becomes “epic” only when he represents something greater than himself—a nation, a race, a faith.’³

¹ Guérard, *Preface to World Literature*, 231.

² ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

³ Guérard, *Preface to World Literature*, 232.

That the *Dream* implicates the fortunes of an entire ‘race’ is spelt out more than once. In Kruger’s youth, ‘a multitude of spirits ... predict[s] not only the fortunes of Pretorius, but also those of his son, and those of his race in general’.¹ The poem describes ‘the final downfall and dispersion of the Boer race’.² As he sails into exile, Kruger ‘recalls | The sad career of [his] ill-fated race’,³ and reflects ruefully that the ‘Dark Continent’ contains ‘No resting-grounds for our doom’d race’.⁴

Kruger stands simultaneously for all three of Guérard’s epical entities: nation, race, and faith. While Grendon sketches him as an individual, with warm attachment to his wife and children,⁵ he also stands synecdochically for all Afrikanerdom. He is both eye-witness to and key player in many major chapters of his nation’s saga. As Grendon records in an obituary for Kruger (1904): ‘At the age of 11 he accompanied his parents northwards in the Great Trek of 1836 and later settled down in the Transvaal, of which in 1862 he was made Commandant General of the Forces.’⁶ In the *Dream*, Kruger recounts his personal experience of the epoch-making Great Trek:

WHILST but a stripling, when those injur’d sires
O’er wilds in divers multitudes were driv’n
By laws obnoxious, and enactments vile,
I follow’d in their train, with heavy heart.⁷

By virtue of his having taken part in his people’s great exodus from the Cape Colony, in their many tribulations, hopes, aspirations, and disappointments, he becomes the epic embodiment of these things.

It might be argued that Milton’s and Grendon’s epics will not bear comparison, since the first is overwhelmingly religious, while the latter is political in character. However, these categories are far from watertight, especially as they pertain to the epic genre of poetry. In describing God’s abasing of Satan and his legions, *Paradise Lost* describes minutely the power politics of heaven. As pointed out by Walter

¹ *PKD*, Pt IV, p. 12, prose argument.

² *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 66, prose argument.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 110.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 111.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXXV, p. 114.

⁶ ‘The Late President Kruger’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 4.

Bagehot (1826–77), in *Paradise Lost*, the Fall originates in ‘a political event’.¹ Grendon’s Kruger perceives the political dimension of Satan’s ouster from heaven. ‘Since GOD Himself ... hesitated not to hurl [the rebel angels] unto blackest gloom’, Kruger resolves that God’s ‘faultless deed will serve [him] for a guide’.² He will deal in like fashion with Britannia’s sons now sojourning in the Transvaal.

Guérard accounts for the propensity of the epic genre to glide easily between natural and supernatural:

A cause ‘greater than any individual man’ easily assumes a superhuman character. Any ideal for which we are willing to fight and die becomes a god.... All nations, as objects of worship, are in truth tribal deities, and the patriotic poem is a religious epic. ... Every collective conflict is in sooth a war of the gods; and all true epics sing heroes who are, not of the flesh, but of the spirit.³

Kruger is ‘of the spirit’ inasmuch as he repeatedly consorts with spirits and represents ‘a cause “greater than any individual man”’. Behind all terrestrial action and reaction in the *Dream* lurks providential ‘Destiny’ on one hand, and the machinations of Mammon and Mars on the other.

Milton composed *Paradise Lost* during the early Restoration years. Having publicly defended the Regicides, any overt political comment from him would have elicited a hostile response from the Stuart court. *Paradise Lost* is thus perforce less conspicuously political than Milton might have desired his great epic to be. Nevertheless, a political subtext can be discerned in it. Conversely, Grendon’s *Dream*, although overwhelmingly political, is nonetheless deeply imbued with his religious thought—and he was an intensely religious man. Chris Lowe observes that ‘everything written by Grendon suggests that he treated matters of spirit with deep seriousness’.⁴ The *Dream* is written with conviction and in a pronounced apocalyptic strain, its language resonant with that of Daniel or St John.

As Guérard points out, in *Paradise Lost*, ‘the stake is nothing less than the eternal fate of the human soul’.⁵ Uncertainty over the ultimate destiny of Kruger’s soul

¹ Walter Bagehot, ‘Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning; or, “Pure, Ornate, and Grotesque Art” in English poetry’, *National Review*, N.S, I (1864), 27–67: quoted in Armstrong, 285.

² *PKD*, Pt XXIII, p. 65.

³ Guérard, *Preface to World Literature*, 234.

⁴ Lowe, ‘Tragedy of Malunge’, 64.

⁵ Guérard, *Preface to World Literature*, 232.

provides much of the narrative tension in the *Dream*. Even Kruger recognizes that ‘the pow’r of glitt’ring gold ... teacheth [man] to damn his precious soul’.¹

Passages where Mammon and the Principles of Good—Fortuna, Truth, Britannia, *etc.*—compete for dominion over Kruger’s soul, have an ancient Christian literary lineage, traceable backwards through the good and evil angels of Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*, through some medieval interludes, to the *Psychomachia* of the Christian poet Prudentius (348–c.410), and even more anciently to Matthew’s Gospel, where in his Sermon on the Mount, Christ declares: ‘No man can serve two masters: ... Ye cannot serve God and mammon.’² The *Dream* affirms that ‘these two Masters cannot dwell | Within the self-same soul’.³ Interestingly, Mammon is a player common to both *Paradise Lost* and to the *Dream*. Milton identifies this god of pelf with Vulcan or Mulciber, the ‘personification of the evils of wealth and miserliness’.⁴



For many generations, along with Shakespeare as poet-dramatist, Milton as epic poet held the status of an English national—next, a British imperial—icon. By the close of the nineteenth century, the works of such canonical authors were being used to exemplify the extraordinary potentialities of the English language and of the English ‘mind’. The historian, Professor J. A. Cramb, claimed that the “‘unseen empire” of the national spirit’ was ‘the empire reared by Shakespeare, Webster, Beaumont, and Milton’ and Sir Charles Lucas in 1915 concurred, stating that the British Empire had its origins in Drayton, Shakespeare, and Milton.⁵

Milton’s rating appears to have been high in the South African colonies. In the Eastern Cape, the settler poet, H. H. Dugmore (1810–97) imitated Milton’s blank verse, but with scant success.⁶ *Paradise Lost* was read at a meeting of a black cultural group in Kimberley during the 1890s.⁷ In Natal, Bishop Colenso found occasion to

¹ *PKD*, Pt XVII, p. 48.

² Matt. 6:24.

³ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 9.

⁴ Brewer, *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*.

⁵ MacDonald, *Language of Empire*, 5, 59.

⁶ Miller & Sergeant, *Critical Survey of South African Poetry in English*, 31.

⁷ The ‘South Africans Improvement Society’, of which Sol. Plaatje was a member (Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 37).

quote Milton in his sermons¹ and along with Shakespeare, Milton was on the curriculum of primary schools in the Colony during the 1880s.²

Both Milton and Grendon lived in times of intense civil strife. Strife—or at least a contest—is the essence of epic poetry. Like England’s wars of the 1640s, the South African War that inspired the *Dream* had characteristics of a civil or ‘national’ conflict: it ranged people of the same social and ethnic groups against each other. It is true that South Africa was not a unitary state in 1899, but neither were the ‘British’ Isles a unitary state in the mid-seventeenth century, although their ‘Civil Wars’ were carried into all regions of the Isles. In both English and South African conflicts, artists found themselves caught up in the war-effort: for them neutrality seemed impossible. In *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649) and other tracts, Milton finds in favour of the Regicides. He has been called their ‘literary champion’.³ Two hundred and fifty years after Milton, Grendon also praises England’s Regicides. In the *Dream*’s dedication, Grendon praises Britannia for having ‘adjudge[d] CHARLES STUART | Traitor—to thy freedom dead’, and for having dutifully ‘cleave[d] his head’. And the poet similarly expresses himself wholly in favour of Britain’s prosecution of her war with the South African republics.

It is unsurprising that Grendon should look to canonical models such as Milton when conceiving his own epic. Great epic poems have repeatedly spawned others. Homer’s epics, for instance, provided much of the impetus for Virgil’s *Aeneid*. The *Aeneid*, in turn, inspired Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, which Blake later used as a springboard for some of his long prophetic works.⁴ In addition to enumerating such literary models for Plaatje’s *Mhudi* as the Bible, Virgil, Bunyan, and Haggard, Couzens suggests that ‘Milton perhaps reinforced the epic language and the image of a paradise lost’.⁵ An example is Plaatje’s description of the Matabele army, whose ‘serried ranks’ brandish ‘innumerable spears’ and ‘myriads of shields waved to and

¹ Colenso, *Sermons*, 18.

² Harley, ‘Emergence of “English” as a School Subject in Natal’, 5.

³ Grierson & Smith, *Critical History of English Poetry*, 159.

⁴ Myers & Wukasz, *Dictionary of Poetic Terms*, 122.

⁵ Couzens, ‘Sol T. Plaatje and the First South African Epic’, 52–53.

fro or vertically up and down'. Plaatje seems to mirror Milton's description of 'A forest huge of spears: and thronging helms | ... and serried shields in thick array'.¹

With Milton, Grendon shares an affinity for iambic pentameter blank verse and for the sonority of elevated diction. He also makes extensive use of enjambment, syntactic inversion, parentheses, and complex sentences replete with multiple clauses and qualifying phrases. Both *Paradise Lost* and the *Dream* are equipped by their respective authors with incremental prose arguments preceding each of the several 'parts' or 'books'. Each poem marries the Judaeo-Christian cosmos with the pantheon of the ancient pagan world.²

In terms of its diction, the *Dream* has much in common with *Paradise Lost*. Pharaoh is 'a Memphian king' in the *Dream*;³ Milton describes the Pharaohs collectively as 'MEMPHIAN Kings'.⁴ In Part I, Kruger describes April at the Cape, when 'Ocean's crest is calm, and smooth as glass; | When Heaven's vault assumes a clearer blue'. Here may be discerned borrowings from Milton's 'glassy sea'⁵ and 'vault of Heaven'.⁶ In Part II of the *Dream*, there is a description of how, at the command of the 'First Cause',

suns,
And moons, and stars innum'erable, flash'd forth
From Darkness and Chaotic Night to grace
And to illuminate Thy firmament;
And living creatures into being danc'd—
And trees, and herbs of every kind—to play
Their sev'ral parts upon the Stage of Life.⁷

Against Grendon's 'stars innum'erable', we have such phrases in *Paradise Lost* as 'innumerable stars',⁸ and 'Innumerable as the Stars at night'.⁹ Against Grendon's 'Darkness and Chaotic Night', we have Milton's phrases: 'the Reign of Chaos and old

¹ Plaatje, *Mhudi*, 155–56; Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 547–48.

² Camoens is another Renaissance epic poet who attempts this syncretic experiment.

³ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 39.

⁴ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 694.

⁵ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, VII. 619.

⁶ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 669.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 5.

⁸ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, III. 565.

⁹ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, V. 745.

Night’;¹ ‘Of Chaos, [and] with him enthroned | Sat sable-vested Night’;² ‘Chaos and Ancient Night’;³ and ‘Chaos and eternal Night’,⁴ *etc.* Against Grendon’s ‘herbs of every kind’, we have Milton’s ‘bare Earth ... | Brought forth ... Herbs of every leaf’.⁵

Also in Part II of the *Dream*, we have this description of Mankind’s Fall:

How soon—alas—how soon his faithlessness
Depriv’d him of the bliss and happiness
Of Eden; clos’d its gates for evermore
’Gainst his re-entrance; and incited Thee
To set a watch of Angels, and a Sword
Of Fire, which all directions turn’d to guard
The Tree of Life, lest tasting of *its* fruit
Man live, e’en as Thou livest—*evermore!*⁶

Here we may trace faint intertextual gesturing towards the opening lines of Milton’s epic, where he invokes his Heavenly Muse to sing

Of Man’s first disobedience and the fruit
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of EDEN.⁷

And in Milton’s Book XI, ‘The Almighty’ calls upon Michael to place ‘on the East side of the Garden’,

Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame
Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the Tree of Life.⁸

As indicated earlier, Mammon, god of pelf, is common to Milton and Grendon. In *Paradise Lost*, he is

¹ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 543.

² Milton, *Paradise Lost*, II. 960–62.

³ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, II. 970.

⁴ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, III. 18.

⁵ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, VII. 314–17.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 6.

⁷ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 1–4.

⁸ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, XI. 119–22.

Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
 From Heaven, for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts
 Were always downward bent, admiring more
 The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold.¹

In the *Dream*, it is at 'Mammon's nod' that Kruger's 'land with wealth o'erflows!'² Mammon is Kruger's 'rock, and strength'.³ Satan is the 'Rebel Sprite | Who headlong hurl'd from Heaven, waves | His banner to o'erthrow the Light | Of Light'.⁴ In *Paradise Lost*, Satan's ejection from Heaven precipitates the action of the epic, and his abased legions are likewise described as waving banners.⁵

The *Dream* occasionally echoes even the imagery of *Paradise Lost*. The following describes the Battle of Blood River:

Corpses stretch'd to rise no more
 Lay thickly strewn, like wither'd leaves, upon
 That river's banks; and on the plain beyond;
 And in the stream, whose waters roll'd with blood.⁶

This seems to mirror—perhaps unconsciously—Milton's description of Satan's vanquished angels:

His legions, Angel forms, who lay entranced
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
 In Vallombrosa.⁷



In compiling his epic, Grendon could delve into the plethora of contemporary publications to which the Uitlander Crisis, the Jameson Raid, and the South African War gave rise. But there were also many oral informants who might have supplied details not obtainable from published texts. Jabez Molife of Driefontein and William Mini of Edendale were amongst the first scouts engaged by the British Intelligence

¹ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 679–82.

² *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 33.

³ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 38.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 118.

⁵ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 545; II. 885.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt III, p. 11.

⁷ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I, 301–03.

Department, some months before the outbreak of war.¹ Their espionage will have taken them into republican-held territory. Mini had been at school with Grendon in Cape Town, as had Molife's son, Albert.

Ipepa lo Hlanga reports in 1903 that 'there would not have been such a loss of men in the battle fought prior to the capture of Bergendal [which battle Grendon witnessed], had information, given by native scouts, been acted on'.² Grendon was particularly close to the Edendale-Driefontein community which supplied many of these scouts. From them, he could easily have gleaned many out-of-the-way details.

Another black scout with close ties to the Driefontein settlement was 'Teise' (Thys?) Ndhlovu. He had been in the Transvaal prior to the War, where he was employed by the Boer General Joubert. According to R. C. A. Samuelson, who had command of the Driefontein scouts, Ndhlovu was 'special groom of General Joubert's horse during the Malaboko [Malaboch] campaign, and used to follow him and hold his horse when he dismounted. He returned to Natal on the 8 October, 1899, and joined [the British] as a scout. He eventually became [Samuelson's] best scout'. He was able to tell the British many of 'the tricks of the Boers when they were out campaigning'.³ Samuelson publishes an anecdote as Ndhlovu narrated it to him. To the best of Samuelson's knowledge, this tale had 'never before ... been recorded' in print:

When trouble between the English and the Dutch had been talked about General Joubert went to see President Kruger at the Residency and I accompanied him. Having arrived there he went on the veranda where Mr Kruger was seated and I overheard this conversation. Kruger urged that they should get everything ready to fight the English, but General Joubert replied that he had better arrange matters peacefully; that he had been in England and knew the power of England. The Boers might succeed for a time but would end in being beaten. There then came on the scene Mrs Kruger, who, it appears, had been listening to the conversation and said, 'Kruger, do you agree that we should not fight the English, you had better put on my clothes, stay at home and do my work, and I will put on your clothes and lead the Burgers to fight against "fordermde [*verdomde*: damned] English"'—this speech altered his mind and he decided to fight.⁴

¹ 'Sidelights on the Late War', *Ipepa* 3:458 (11 Sept. 1903) 3.

² 'Sidelights on the Late War', *Ipepa* 3:458 (11 Sept. 1903) 3.

³ Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, 142.

⁴ Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, 142–43.

Ndhlovu subsequently learnt from ‘some Basutos’ the circumstances of Joubert’s death as a consequence of being struck by a ‘splinter of a Lyddite shell’ outside Ladysmith.¹

Grendon might easily have learnt from Ndhlovu—either directly, or via intermediaries—some of the background to the *Dream*. In it, Joubert warns his countrymen against entering into war with Britain—just as Ndhlovu overheard him doing on the *stoep* of Kruger’s presidency:

Oh countrymen, one moment pause!
Be not precipitate!
Smite first not we—That blow will cause
The downfall of our State!

Desist, I pray, from measuring arms
With such a mighty foe!
Our vict’ries past be only charms,
Which lure us on to woe!²

Joubert also anticipates his own decease:

[W]ounded I must fly
For life t’wards home—to fight no more—
And *there* alone must die!³

Both prophecies come to pass. The Transvalers lose their independence, but not before the *burgers* have performed the obsequies for the fallen General, and ‘their below’d Commander’s dust’ is ‘convey’d’ to ‘its final resting-place | At quiet Rustfontein’,⁴ which Grendon explains in a footnote means ‘*The Fountain of Rest*’ and is ‘Joubert’s farm in the district of Wakkerstroom’⁵—a part of Transvaal abutting on Newcastle district of Natal. This is a farm that Ndhlovu would have known well.

In 1904, Grendon refers in an essay to ‘the horrors of the Malaboch campaign in which the much exalted Boer “humanity” was damned out of its own mouth and

¹ Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, 147–48.

² *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 67.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 67.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXX, p. 97.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXX, p. 97n.

proved no receptacle of the Divine, but the pleasurehouse of Hell'.¹ Since Ndhlovu was present on that campaign, and in close company with General Joubert, he would have been able to expand upon many of those unspeakable 'horrors'.



Grendon's Swedenborgianism is not as conspicuous in *Paul Kruger's Dream* as it is in 'Pro Aliis Damnati'. This is perhaps chiefly because the poetic speaker is Kruger, who, outside of the *Dream*, was a Calvinist *Dopper*, and not easily transmogrified—even with Grendon's poetic wand—into a thoroughgoing New Churchman. Even so, indications of Grendon's Swedenborgian worldview are apparent in the poem.

Part II includes Kruger 55-line prayer to God, the 'First Cause'. He adverts primarily to Man's morally-debased condition since the Fall, as in the following extract:

Man's caprice, avarice, and lust have plung'd
Thee—Earth—into confusion, misery,
And hate, and strife; and sown thee ev'rywhere
With skeletons of thine inhabitants;
And with their blood, and tears have water'd thee!²

It would seem that, besides the ordinary meaning of Kruger's expressions in this passage, some Swedenborgian correspondence may also be referenced. Depending upon context, 'Earth' may correspond to the 'fallen human mind', and 'skeletons' may be 'symbols of the human who has lost life by giving up the Lord's presence in any genuine goodness or truth in life'.³ Grendon appears to assign a correspondential meaning to 'EARTH' in 'Melia and Pietro', where he defines it in the prose argument as 'this world of beings'.⁴

¹ 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

² *PKD*, Pt II, p. 6

³ These correspondences were suggested by Andy Dibb, an authority on Swedenborg's theology.

⁴ 'M&P', Pt IV, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3.

In the same prayer, Kruger inquires of the ‘Eternal God’:

Oh, what *was* Man, ere he ’gainst Thee rebell’d?
A creature spotless, innocent, and pure—
With whom Thou heldest converse face to face!¹

Kruger here alludes to Man’s Rebellion as described in the third chapter of Genesis. The expression, ‘face to face’ first occurs much later in Genesis, in chapter 32. Yet, Kruger believes that before Man’s Fall, he held ‘converse face to face’ with God. Here again, Grendon’s Swedenborgianism offers a clue, because in paragraph 49 of the *Arcana Cælestia*, Swedenborg declares that ‘the Lord conversed face to face’ with members of ‘the Most Ancient [*i.e.*, the Adamic] Church’, and appeared to them then ‘as a Man’.²

Kruger also notes in the same prayer that God created Man ‘Half-human—half-divine’.³ Swedenborg extrapolates a great deal from the Biblical expression, ‘Let us make man in our image’.⁴ It implies that the expressions ‘God’ and ‘Man’ are practically interchangeable. God is a Man—the ‘Divine Man’, as Quiz calls him in *Ilanga*.⁵ Swedenborg also says that ‘life for man is God in him’⁶—presumably because Man derives his life uninterruptedly from God, who infuses it into his inmost. This would seem to account for Man’s ‘half-divine’ nature, as Kruger describes it.⁷

Swedenborg attaches ‘internal’ meanings to ‘voices’ and ‘trumpets’ where these expressions occur in ‘the Word’: ‘Truth Divine itself in heaven is signified by “voices” and “lightnings”, but the celestial or angelic truth adjoined to what is Divine, ... is signified by “the voice of a trumpet”’.⁸ In his correspondential exegesis on Matthew 24:29–31, Swedenborg explains that ‘by angels with a trumpet and a great voice, is signified heaven, whence comes Divine Truth’.⁹ Disembodied heralds are to be found throughout Swedenborg’s Writings. By the same token, the many angels,

¹ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 6.

² Swedenborg, *Arcana Cælestia*, n. 49. I am grateful to Andy Dibb for pointing this out to me.

³ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 6.

⁴ Gen. 1:26. Kruger cites this text in his prayer: ‘COME LET US MAKE IN OUR OWN IMAGE, MAN!’

⁵ ‘Letters by Quiz No. 110’, *Ilanga* 18:12 (19 March 1920) 5.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 135.

⁷ It should be noted however, that Kruger’s ‘Half-human—half-divine’ is not a Swedenborgian formulation. It appears that at this early stage, Grendon’s grasp of Swedenborg’s theology was very imperfect.

⁸ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cælestia*, n. 8815.

⁹ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 1.

trumpets, and mystic, unidentified ‘Voices’ in *Paul Kruger’s Dream* serve to announce weighty truths and prophecies. Overall, a miraculous, nameless ‘Voice’ is mentioned about twenty times in the text, while the word ‘trumpet’ occurs seven times. In a Swedenborg-inspired editorial (1905), Grendon similarly links the mystic ‘Voice of Destiny’ with the sound of a ‘trumpet’.¹

A further indicator of Grendon’s Swedenborgianism in the *Dream* is a reference to the disembodied hosts who await ‘the soul’s final state’.² The phrase is echoed later in Grendon’s elegy for Michal Nkosi, where Michal, who has entered her ‘Second State’—in Swedenborg’s ‘World of Spirits’—joins other ‘spirits who their Final State await’, in Heaven or in Hell.³

Swedenborg states that if one’s ruling love is the love of self, and that love is given free rein, then it ‘rushes on until it finally longs to rule not only over the entire world but also over the entire heaven, and over the Divine Himself, knowing no limit or end. This propensity lurks hidden in everyone who is in love of self.’ Examples of this phenomenon, he reminds his readers, can be observed ‘in potentates and kings who are subject to no ... restraints and bonds, but rush on and subjugate provinces and kingdoms so far as they are successful, and aspire to power and glory without limit’.⁴ Such is ‘the political ambition of Paul Kruger’,⁵ whose great error exists in his pitting his own will against the Will of God. In exile, he confesses:

His sacred dwelling-place, the Heav’n of Heav’ns
I sought to wreck!—And His Eternal Throne
In wilful blindness durst I overthrow,
And into ashes madly strove to grind!—
I fail’d!—’Tis madness unto mortal men
Against the Lord Omnipotent to strive!⁶

¹ Grendon speaks of Attersoll when he counsels readers: ‘See that you lag not, nor, faint whilst the “Voice of Destiny” which though soft, yet through him sounds like the peal of a mighty trumpet: “MOVE YE ABANTU MOVE YE ON!”’ (‘The True European’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4).

² *PKD*, Pt XXX, p. 99.

³ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 559.

⁵ *PKD*, Preface, p. iii.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 108.

Later he adds: ‘The Will | Of GOD Supreme ... I strove to check!’¹ Finally, nearing the end of his First State, a penitent Kruger resigns his will to that of God, and the process of his spiritual regeneration has begun:

I dare not murmur ’gainst Thy faultless Will.
My life—my all—I now to Thee resign.²

Early in the poem, Kruger recognizes Man’s need of spiritual regeneration. In the already-mentioned prayer, he longs for a day when Man is ‘purg’d’ by God ‘From his uncleanliness, iniquity, | And sin’. Then he might ‘stand again before | [God’s] Face in his *lost glory*, and *lost bliss*’.³ His fond hope is shared Memnon in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, who, prior to his seduction and collapse into sin, prays: ‘Oh may the day not distant be | When Man his back shall wholly turn on Sin! | This mighty transformation will blot out | The Tempter’s work.’⁴

Part XXXVI of the *Dream* describes ‘Paul Kruger’s sorrows in the land of exile’, as well as ‘his afflictions, final trial, conversion, unfeigned confession, and acknowledgment of Truth’.⁵ The veil of selfishness has fallen from him, and Kruger is ready to acknowledge now that Providence has been working through the British Empire as her instrument. He knows his death is near, and his prayer—which concludes the poem—is:

When I yon portal shall have pass’d
At GOD’s command supreme,
May I a life enjoy *at last*
More real than EARTH’S DULL DREAM!⁶

For the regenerating Kruger, life on this Earth is therefore a ‘dull dream’, while that to come is ‘more real’. Kruger’s heartfelt wish is in harmony with Swedenborg, who teaches that the natural world comprises phenomena only, whereas the spiritual world is the realm of realities. C. Maurice Davies learnt from London’s Swedenborgians in the 1870s that ‘the spirit-world is but the region of realities, whereof all things here

¹ PKD, Pt XXXIV, p. 109.

² PKD, Pt XXXVI, p. 115.

³ PKD, Pt II, p. 6.

⁴ ‘PAD’, Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ PKD, Pt XXXVI, p. 115, prose argument.

⁶ PKD, Pt XXXVII, p. 133.

are the phenomena'.¹ Trobridge elaborates: 'Living in this phenomenal world we cannot help being misled by outward appearances; it is difficult to believe that the things that we see and handle are less real than those which are unseen, yet we can be brought to a rational conviction of this truth.'² Repeatedly, Man's life on Earth is described as 'changeable' in the *Dream*.³ In his words that conclude the poem, Kruger seems to express a yearning to pass from the phenomenal world into the 'real' world of true substance and true causes.



Grendon's wide and intensive reading leaves its stamp on the *Dream* as it does on much of his poetry and journalism. The *Dream*'s intertextuality is a fascinating area of study. It is likely that in course of time many intertextual references other than those put forward here will be discovered.

A book that Grendon dredged for historical background is the school textbook, *Natal: the Land and its Story*, by Robert Russell. Already in its eighth edition by 1902, the book doubled as a geography and a history of the colony, and Grendon likely used it in teaching his pupils at Edendale. Many of the incidents in the *Dream*, and even some of the phrasing, may be traced back to Russell's *Natal*.⁴

As pointed out, the phrase, 'Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa' appears on the title-page to *Paul Kruger's Dream*. 'The Transvaal Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa' is also the heading of chapter 8 of John Mackenzie's *Austral Africa: Losing It or Ruling It*.⁵ Grendon quotes Mackenzie twice in his *Ilanga* journalism.⁶

In the *Dream*, Lady Truth challenges the Transvaal *burgers* to

Search Hist'ry's page a thousand fold,
And prove if any can,

¹ Davies, *Unorthodox London*, 98.

² Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 124.

³ *PKD*, Dedication, p. v; Pt II, p. 7; Pt XXX, p. 97.

⁴ Robert Russell, *Natal: The Land and Its Story: A Geography and History for the Use of Schools*. 8th ed. Pietermaritzburg: P. Davis and Sons, 1902. For a tabulation of some of Grendon's borrowings from this text, see Appendix 6: 'Grendon's Holinshed?'

⁵ Mackenzie, *Austral Africa*, i:152.

⁶ 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3; 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

That GOD ordain'd, that man might hold
Full property in man!¹

As pointed out in chapter 1, Grendon here paraphrases Lord Brougham (1778–1868), who condemned ‘the wild and guilty phantasy that men can hold property in man’. He quotes Brougham’s famous speech in an *Ilanga* editorial.²

Behind the rapturous praise that Dutch mariners lavish on the fairest Cape—‘Oh Land of Hope—Oh Land of Hope—| Far brighter than our own!’³—appears to be the glimmer of a reference to Andrew Marvell’s ‘Bermudas’, where European seafarers light upon ‘an isle so long unknown, | And yet far kinder than our own’.

In one of his footnotes to the *Dream*, Grendon quotes from *Boer to Boer, and Englishman* by Paul M. Botha.⁴ This is a slim pamphlet, written in Dutch by a former Member of the Orange Free State Volksraad, some months after British annexation, and translated into English by his son. Prior to the War, Botha opposed President Steyn’s policy of forming closer ties with the Transvaal Republic, and favoured the continuance of his country’s tradition of friendly coexistence with its British neighbours. Botha covers some of the ground that Grendon treats in the *Dream*, and loses no love for ‘Marthinus Theunis Steyn and the Kruger gang’.⁵

Of Kruger, he states that ‘he spent millions of the country’s money in pretended benefits—millions which were in reality expended for the purpose of feeding up a crowd of greedy favourites and aasvogels (vultures), men who were necessary to him for the furtherance of his own ends’.⁶ In the *Dream*, ‘Stern Mars’ warns Kruger against such ‘Gold seekers ... and parasites, | Who’ll ruin you at last’.⁷ Grendon’s explanatory note identifies these as ‘Hollanders, Germans, Russians, *etc., etc.*, in whom the Boers subsequently confided. These ambitious, and foreign schemers despoiled them and hurried them on to ruin.’⁸

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 74.

² ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

³ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 1.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 86n.

⁵ Botha, *From Boer to Boer and Englishman*, 14.

⁶ Botha, *From Boer to Boer and Englishman*, 14.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt IX, p. 30.

⁸ *PKD*, Pt IX, p. 30n.

The Afrikaner Bond slogan, ‘Africa for the Afrikanders’, which Botha juxtaposes with ‘Sweep the English into the Sea’,¹ is echoed by Grendon’s Kruger, whose resolve has been to hold ‘AFRICA FOR AFRIKANDERS’.² Kruger later regrets that the republican allies have not ‘swept this mighty land | Right onwards to the ocean’s whiten’d fringe’.³

In the *Dream*’s final part, when Peace is declared, ‘reconcilèd foes unite | To render thanks unto the LORD OF HOSTS’ in Pretoria. Jubilant British soldiers in ‘vast array’ celebrate on ‘yon market court, | Hard by [Kruger’s] long deserted home’.⁴ From distant European exile, Kruger hears but is unmoved by their noisy clamour. He is however touched at hearing the hymn, ‘Nearer my God to Thee’, three verses of which he recites. These moving strains come wafting to him over land and sea. We can well imagine Grendon pounding out this popular hymn—composed by Englishwoman Sarah Flower Adams (1808–48)—on the organ at Edendale Training Institution or at Ohlange. Grendon had done his homework: this hymn *was* actually played at the Pretoria peace celebrations in 1902.⁵



Like the few other ‘New Africans’ who received a mission education towards the close of the colonial period, Grendon’s frame of intertextual reference embraces both Biblical and Classical knowledge. His Zonnebloem grammar school education exposed him both to Anglican-style Christianity and to the lore of the ancient Mediterranean world.

Apart from direct allusions to Classical literature, the *Dream* manifests Grendon’s Classicism in its rhetorical devices, such as *chiasmus* and parallelism. Examples of *chiasmus* include: ‘we praying prais’d, | And praising pray’d’;⁶ and, ‘marching slept; and sleeping march’d’.⁷ Parallelism is found in lines such as: ‘Upon thy sands I *never*

¹ Botha, *From Boer to Boer and Englishman*, 16.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 122.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXVIII, p. 93.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, pp. 130–31.

⁵ *Military Thanksgiving Service*, 3.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt VI, p. 19.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt XIV, p. 42.

*more shall tread! | Thy beauties I shall never more behold!*¹ The same figures of speech are also employed in Grendon's 'Pro Aliis Damnati'.²

With equal assiduity, Grendon mines both Classical lore and the Hebrew Scriptures for conventional signifiers to personify abstracts. 'Greek Penelope' stands for chastity—which, according to Truth, is *not* a universal possession of Boer wives.³ Pharaoh betokens wilful pride—a quality that Fortuna ascribes to the Transvaal President.⁴

The *Dream*'s most common references are biblical. Grendon's grasp of the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures is impressive, and he comes across in this poem—as in his later poetry—as a man with extensive biblical knowledge and strong religious conviction. His poetic diction—particularly in blank verse sections—often recalls the language of the Authorized Version (1611). The *Dream* resounds with Old Testament phraseology, although the biblical allusions are usually so thoroughly integrated into Grendon's own authorial voice, that there is little profit in here citing numerous individual texts to which he may or may not be referring. For instance, Voortrekker leaders Andries Pretorius and Hendrik Potgieter, at death, are 'gather'd to [their] sires'⁵—a distinctly Old Testament phrase.⁶ Fortuna accuses Kruger of being a 'subtle 'subtle chief'⁷—the qualifier 'subtle' being used in the archaic—Authorized Version—sense of 'crafty' or 'deceitful'.⁸ Kruger inquires of God: 'Oh, what *is* Man, since he offended Thee?'⁹ This appears to be an echo of the well-known words of Psalm 8:4: 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him?' As these random examples illustrate, Grendon's text very often has a Biblical 'ring' that cannot easily be cross-referenced.

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 121.

² An example of *chiasmus* is: 'Henceforth for them is doom, and wrath, and tears; | And tears, and wrath, and doom' ('PAD', Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4). An example of parallelism is: 'What then seem'd Love is whitewash'd Hate!—What then | Seem'd Truth, declares itself a horrid Lie!' ('PAD', Pt 14, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4).

³ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 72.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 39.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt VII, p. 23.

⁶ For example, see: 2 Chron. 34:28.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 41.

⁸ For example, see: Gen. 27:35.

⁹ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 6.

Grendon's classical allusions are generally quite straightforward. Most can be easily identified through Brewer's *Phrase and Fable*, and it is possible that Grendon had this or a similar *vade mecum* always to hand. Kruger, for instance, prides himself in his resemblance to the hero of Classical legend, Cincinnatus, who is reputed to have abandoned his plough in order to save Rome from military disaster, sometime in the 5th century B.C.:

LIKE Cincinnatus, who in days of yore
Was summon'd from his field, and plough, to grace
An Emp'ror's throne, in that fair city Rome,
I, Kruger, from amongst my people rose,
And step by step I scal'd the heights of Fame.¹

The analogy may be apt, but it is not original. Philip Pienaar (1902) describes Boer General de Wet as a 'modern Cincinnatus',² and Howard C. Hillegas (1900) pictures the Boer commandos in the same way: 'Like Cincinnatus, the majority of the old Boers went directly from their farms to the battlefields, and they wore the same clothing in the laagers as they used when shearing their sheep or herding their cattle.'³ As already indicated, Grendon also spells out the fact that the Boer commander-in-chief, Joubert, was a farmer.

Throughout the *Dream*, Boer heroes living and dead jostle for audience alongside gods of the Olympian pantheon. Mars and Fortuna make appearances; Phœbus—Apollo as the sun-god—observes 'from his high ethereal car', and Jupiter, or Jove, keeps backstage, making his presence known through his emissaries, Fortuna and Mars. There are also the reified abstracts—Britannia, Mammon, and Truth—who put in appearance and say their lines. In addition, there are the aforementioned unidentified angelic 'Voices', and a 'multitude of spirits'.

It is important not to overlook the political dimension to Grendon's classicism. In an intellectual climate where knowledge of the classical world was ubiquitous amongst the educated classes, a figure such as Cincinnatus had instantly recognizable token value. Classical references also identified the writer's competence, and marked him out as belonging to a community of approved knowledge. The views of any

¹ *PKD*, Pt XII, p. 35.

² Pienaar, *With Steyn and de Wet*, 97.

³ Hillegas, *With the Boer Forces*, 75.

man—black or white—who could discourse on Cincinnatus, for instance, might have been assumed to be at least worthy of fair consideration.

There may be a Swedenborgian quality to Grendon's syncretic blending of pagan myth with the Christian canon. According to Swedenborg, Greek 'fables' are in fact the garbling of divine truths once known by correspondence to all mankind during the 'Most Ancient' epoch:

From these two Words [*i.e.*, the 'Ancient' and the 'Israelitish'] religious systems spread ... from the maritime parts of Asia into Greece, and from Greece into Italy. But as the Word could be written only by representations, which are such things in the world as correspond to and thus signify heavenly things, the religions of these nations were turned into idolatries, and in Greece into fables; and the Divine attributes and properties were turned into as many gods, over whom one was made supreme, whom they called Jove, possibly from Jehovah. It is known that they had a knowledge of Paradise, of the flood, of the sacred fire, and of the four ages, from the first or golden age, to the last or iron age.¹

Swedenborg states that there exists a kernel of primeval truth even in pagan mythology. Surviving myths are a product of the distortion—as light through a lens, prism, or frosted pane—of ancient, divine revelation through the lost science of 'correspondence'. Swedenborg even suggests that Jupiter—or Jove—who presides over the *Dream's* pantheon, is a corrupted memory of Jehovah—the ineffable mode of Swedenborg's aspectual Trinity. Such a schema may account for the apparent facility with which Grendon imports classical deities into what is essentially a biblically-aligned text.

By a similar thought process, Milton accounts for the incorporation of pagan deities into his epic. Of the original names of fallen angels, the 'Heavenly records now' contain 'no memorial', *Paradise Lost* informs; yet in course of time, 'among the sons of Eve', those angels 'Got them new names':²

Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.³



¹ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 275.

² Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 361–65.

³ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 374–75.

In Part I of the *Dream*, Dutch sailors encounter the Khoikhoi inhabitants of the Cape Peninsula, whom they describe as ‘such a worthless race’ of ‘savage men’. These autochthons are likened to the ‘Lotus-eaters [who] grope | In darkness—void of ken’.¹ The original lotus-eaters were encountered by Odysseus in the course of his voyaging, and are described only very briefly in Book IX of the *Odyssey*. Like the fleet homeward-bound for Ithaca, Grendon’s Dutch sailors are intent on reaching Holland—their home country. Just as the Mediterranean mariners meet with stormwinds that drive them onto the coast of an unknown island, inhabited by *lotophagi* (lotus-eaters), the Dutch are ‘shipwreck’d cast’ upon the shores of Table Bay.

Homer’s islanders feed upon the lotus-tree, the fruit of which induces a blissful forgetfulness and an indifference to one’s own hearth and home:

They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feast
The trees around them all their food produce:
Lotus the name: divine, nectareous juice!
(Thence call’d Lo’ophagi); which whose tastes,
Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts,
Nor other home, nor other care intends,
But quits his house, his country, and his friends.²

Should they partake of the lotus, sojourners to this mystic island are in grievous danger of losing all patriotic feeling for their birth-land. Three of Odysseus’s crewmen, having tasted the ‘divine, nectareous juice’, have to be dragged bodily back to the ships. So besotted have they become with the ease and plenty of the island that they have altogether disowned the filial ties that should bind them to Ithaca.

Grendon’s seventeenth-century castaways, compelled to pass some months at the Cape, do so—like the three Ithaca men and the native *lotophagi*—‘In ease—in ease, and plenty, undisturb’d, | Forgetful of their home beyond the sea’. They become so attached to the Cape that when they eventually re-embark for their native shore, they do so with ‘tearful eyes’, vowing to return.

Tennyson, who casts a long shadow over the poetic production of the nineteenth century, may have had a stronger influence on Grendon’s lotus-eating Cape

¹ *PKD*, Pt I, pp. 1–2.

² *Odyssey* (Pope), IX. 104–10.

aboriginals than Homer himself. In one of his finest early poems, ‘The Lotos-Eaters’ (1832; reworked 1842), Tennyson elaborates on this minor episode in Homeric legend. In Tennyson’s poem, ‘The Lotos blooms below the barren peak’. In Grendon’s, the mariners are enchanted by ‘That fruitful valley, and those azure peaks’. Both Tennyson and Grendon make the artistic decision to put song in the mouths of the travel-weary mariners themselves, who have tasted of the (literal or figurative) lotus. Tennyson’s poem concludes with their appeal to their fellow sailors:

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

Isobel Armstrong describes how as ‘modern myth [Tennyson’s ‘The Lotos-Eaters’] carries along its waves of sound the great literary testimonies against sloth’.¹ Given Grendon’s ongoing critique of sloth and apathy toward the dictates of ‘progress’, one may wonder if the Dutch mariners’ assessment of the Khoikhoi as a ‘worthless race’ might be shared—at least in part—by the poet himself.

Significantly, in two editorial essays, Grendon cites this same Homeric legend. In one, he warns black Africans that the ‘time of Lotus-Eaters, and Lotus-Eating has ceased’.² In another, ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’ (1904), he quotes extensively from Tennyson’s ‘The Lotos-Eaters’, to sketch prevailing conditions in Natal when it was yet ‘a black Arcadia’:

A century ago our fathers lived in peace. Their petty quarrels ended with the setting of the sun. They knew not what it was to violate the eighth and tenth commandments of the Decalogue. No foreign foes broke in upon their peace. They lived in ease and plenty, and their daily chanting scorned the following verses of the bard of Somersby:—

Why are we weigh’d upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown;

¹ Armstrong, *Victorian Poetry*, 87.

² ‘Two Warnings’, *Ilanga* 1:37 (18 Dec. 1903) 4.

Nor ever fold our wings,
 And cease from wanderings,
 Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
 Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings,
 'There is no joy but calm!'
 Why should we only toil, the roof, and crown of things?¹

Grendon first describes the presumed idyllic quality of life in precolonial 'Natal'. Before the advent of whites, no-one thieved, and no-one coveted—offences against the 'eighth and tenth commandments of the Decalogue'. There were no 'foreign foes' to disrupt the peace; all disputes were resolved by sunset, in line with the scriptural injunction: 'let not the sun go down upon your wrath'.² Compliance with the divine will was instinctive.

Grendon goes on to quote, from Tennyson, the plaint of the Ithaca men, for whom life has become all thankless toil at the oars and sails, and who would fain have rest like the carefree *Lotophagi*. A plaint like *that* was never heard in precolonial Natal, for the reason that its inhabitants *had* freedom from care, like the *Lotophagi*. In the *Dream*, the Dutch mariners are likened implicitly to Odysseus's crewmen and the Cape's aboriginals to the indolent *Lotophagi*; in 'Umdelwa's Musings', the early inhabitants of south-eastern Africa are *contrasted* with the careworn men of Ithaca-bound fleet. Those self-governing Africans were not 'weigh'd upon with heaviness'; they uttered no 'perpetual moan'.

By 1904, however, the idyll is ended. Grendon ('Umdelwa') complains: 'No longer is Natal a black Arcadia. We are steadily and surely losing our inheritance, and the last vestiges of heaven-bequeathed possessions will ere long be wrested from our grasp. Our substance is being consumed before our very eyes.' Grendon next launches out 'in the following choric song'—another quotation from 'The Lotos-Eaters'—with which present-day black Africans 'oftentimes burst out':

Hateful is the dark blue sky,
 Vaulted o'er the dark blue sea.
 Death is the end of life; ah why
 Should life all labour be?

¹ 'Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

² Eph. 4:26.

Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
 And in a little while our lips are dumb,
 Let us alone. What is it that will last?
 All things are taken from us, and become
 Portions, and parcels of the dreadful Past.
 Let us alone. What pleasures can we have
 To war with evil?¹

‘All things are taken from’ black Africans: taken by stealth, subterfuge, and chicanery, or they are simply seized. As Grendon complains, ‘we are steadily and surely losing our inheritance’. They tire of constant strife, having to slave in order to retain the vestiges of their early paradise.



The guiding hand of Providence is ever-present in *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, manoeuvring nations and individuals according to a benign though inscrutable purpose. The Voortrekkers recognize this influence in their prayer to ‘Jehovah, Most High’, the ‘Lord God of Hosts’:

Thou lookest upon the condition of men,
 Thou guardest the weak from the wiles of the strong;
 And by movements mysterious to mortal ken,
 Thou preservest Right from the power of Wrong!²

Providence does however employ human agencies to accomplish its purpose. Grendon believes that ‘Providence has most wisely ordained by entrusting the major portion of the dark races of this globe to the kindly protection of the British Nation’.³ During the Great War, he maintains that ‘Providence has raised up [Germany] as a troubler, teacher and corrector of the World’.⁴ He also states in an *Ilanga* essay that ‘everything in this world seems to have its opposite’, and ‘nations, and individuals must pass some time or other in their existence on this globe’ through ‘each of these coupled phases’.⁵

¹ ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

² *PKD*, Pt VI, p. 20.

³ ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Gen. Smuts Answered’, *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5. Grendon makes an earlier reference to the saving ‘providence of God’ in ‘God With Us’ (*Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 3).

⁵ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

Currently, the principal agency employed by Providence—in Grendon’s view—is Britain:

GREAT BRITANNIA—thou—that givest
Equity to ev’ry man,
Thy enactments are the purest,
Since this changeful world began.¹

In old age and ignominious exile, Kruger comes belatedly to recognize that Providence has been backing Britannia. Then the ‘veil, which darkly hid thro’ life from view | The uprightness of Britain’s soul, is rent’, and he discerns the cosmic implications of his lifelong struggle.² But until he experiences that epiphany, he repeatedly expresses loathing for Britannia and her sons.

General Cronje, a prisoner-of-war on St Helena, pronounces a curse upon Britain, which is later taken up by other Boer prisoners-of-war:

Like Athens, Babylon, and Rome,
Go Britain to decay!
Like Spain, and our ancestral home
Decline thou too some day!³

Cronje’s curse agrees with Grendon’s editorial essay, in recognizing that ‘nations, and individuals must pass some time or other in their existence on this globe’ through ‘coupled phases’—being sometimes in prominence; at other times in obscurity. While Britain discharges her providential role, she must inevitably attract the jealousy of rival nations. In another editorial essay, Grendon predicts that this ‘spirit of Anglophobism’

will continue so long as Britain remains the foremost Power of the world. This envy shown by nation against nation, pursued Imperial Rome until she perished in the flames, and all her wealth, her grandeur, and renown became transformed to dust. ... It is alive whether open or secret at the present time, whilst a triple alliance (France, Germany, and Russia) yearns for the downfall of the Island Power, in order that they may partake of the spoil resulting from such ruin. Fortunate for us [Africans] their yearnings are afar.⁴

¹ *PKD*, Dedication, p. v.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 131.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXIX, p. 97; repeated in Pt XXXIII, p. 106.

⁴ ‘Snakes in the Grass’, *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 4.

Both in the poem and in the editorial, the downfall of Imperial Rome is taken as prefiguring that of Imperial Britain. Grendon recognizes that Britain must ultimately decline, but while she holds prominence, Africans may bask in the sunshine of her enlightened reign.



From its inception, the British Empire could be conceived either materially or ideologically, but seldom in both modes simultaneously. Every literate person could read that Empire was about cotton, sugar, opium, and (before 1834) slaves. But was it anything loftier than a vast trading venture? Many who trusted in the rightness of Empire were concerned that it should not be confused with a species of institutionalized piracy. In 1870, John Ruskin delivered an inaugural lecture at Oxford, which Rhodes once claimed had ‘made a forceful entry into [his] mind’. In this lecture, Ruskin asked the ‘youths of England’ to determine whoever was to be ‘king’ of the world empire that science and commerce had made possible. Was this empire to be kingless, or was it to have ‘only kings of terror, and the obscene empires of Mammon and Belial?’¹

The concern that Britain’s spirit was in danger of being seduced by mere pelf was also felt in the colonies. According to a poem published in *Natal: the Land and its Story*—a school textbook that Grendon evidently used:²

Now ’tis sordid self, not Empire;
Mammon would enthral us all,
Make us hirelings, snap the heart-strings
That once thrilled at Duty’s call.³

The poet here contradistinguishes ‘self’ or ‘Mammon’ on the one hand, and ‘Empire’ or ‘Duty’ on the other. These become mutually-exclusive terms.

Some observers viewed the discovery of gold deposits in the South African interior as a mixed blessing. While it meant increased prosperity for some, it was also feared as spelling the erosion of spiritual values. In a footnote to the *Dream*, Grendon quotes

¹ Boehmer, *Empire Writing*, 16–18.

² See Appendix 6.

³ ‘The Men of Forty-Two’, published in: Russell, *Natal: the Land and its Story* (1894), 280.

President Kruger at the opening of the Transvaal Gold Fields, where he is supposed to have said: ‘We have fought the Kafirs, and won; we have fought the English, and won; but this gold is our most dangerous enemy.’¹ Johannesburg is described as ‘Chrysopolis’—‘City of Gold’—four times in Grendon’s epic,² and Mammon is mentioned by name twenty-one times. Runaway materialism is repeatedly shown to have an ideological dimension—to be bondage to ‘Mammon’. Gold is depicted as a principal cause of strife, leading Boer and Briton to cross-accuse each another of rank greed.

In linking ‘Chrysopolis’ with the realm of Mammon, Grendon does not write alone. The Scottish-born Natalian, R. D. Clark, in one of his witty adaptations of Horace (1904), notes that ‘In Mammon’s honour many will discourse | Of Free State horses and the Golden Rand’.³ And in ‘Lines written during a Stay in Johannesburg, September, 1892’, an anonymous Natalian poet delivers a breathless exposé of the six-year-old city’s spiritual bankruptcy:

Unfriendly fate has cast my lot within
 A city built for business, and its din
 Is torturing to my spirit, which would droop
 Until I was most wretched, or should stoop
 To be the thing that others are and join
 In the mad race for glittering worthless coin;
 Forgetful of the nobler life that frees
 The thoughtful mind to better impulses,
 Which, when no sordid things partake its care,
 Spring up within it, and will often bear
 A rich ripe fruit, whose fresh and juicy sweet
 Will make the pulses of existence beat
 More happily; but here the tender germ
 Of generous impulse cannot live its term
 Of life among these hurried bustling streets
 Where man his fellow as a stranger meets,
 And in whose face there is no interest shown

¹ *PKD*, Pt XVII, p. 48n.

² In an editorial, Grendon calls Johannesburg the ‘Golden city’ (‘Keep Yourselves Clean’, *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4).

³ ‘To the Hon. G. M. Sutton, M.L.C., Premier of Natal’, in: Clark, *Adaptations of Horace*, 11.

For any other welfare than his own.¹

In the *Dream*, Fortuna appears to the youthful Kruger decades before the discovery of gold. She unfurls the *Vierkleur*, which is to be ‘the Ensign of that [future] State’, the Transvaal Republic. At the same time, she instructs him to ‘Let *Justice* ever sway thy heart! | Let *Truth* thy pathway light!’ In particular, he should be on guard, ‘Lest Mammon win [his] heart’.² ‘Stern Mars’ appears at the Boers’ Paardekraal council of war in 1880, and predicts that the ‘frail nation’s heart’ will ‘confide’ in Mammon.³ The Transvaal’s mining revolution brings overnight prosperity to the Republic. ‘At Mammon’s nod [Kruger’s] land with wealth o’erflows’,⁴ but there is attendant spiritual regression: ‘Gold was discovered, and the prosperity of the land revived. Crowds of aliens flocked into the country in quest of fortunes. At the sight of this Kruger becomes haughty; is visited by Mammon, who tempts him to reject the worship of the True God.’⁵

Kruger’s seduction by Mammon is strongly reminiscent of Faustus’s dealings with Mephistopheles in Marlowe’s drama. Mammon appears to Kruger, ‘in costliest robes attir’d’, promising to ‘shower gifts’ on him. He proposes a compact such as the Devil attempted to conclude with Christ in the Judean wilderness: ‘All earthly pow’r will I impart, | If thou wilt worship me’.⁶ Kruger is called upon to choose between God and Mammon. Like Faustus, Kruger is beguiled. He swears obedience to Mammon, ‘Whose artful suasion overcame [his] soul’.⁷

Later, Fortuna roundly condemns Kruger for his devotion to Mammon: ‘Thou subtle chief, thy god is gold!’ On account of this, his ‘doom is seal’d’.⁸ At the end of his career, in European exile, Kruger bemoans his folly in giving obeisance to Mammon. Like Faustus, he is attended upon by triumphant devils, as

Corruption—Falsehood—Murder—hand in hand
With Mammon dance triumphantly, and mock
The gasping form of prostrate, vanquish’d Truth—

¹ Anon., *Legend of Dilsberg Castle*, 65.

² *PKD*, Pt II, pp. 7–8.

³ *PKD*, Pt IX, p. 30.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 33.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 32, prose argument.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 34; cf. Matt. 4:9; Luke 4:7.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 35.

⁸ *PKD*, Pt XIII, pp. 41–42.

Upon whose neck my foot doth firmly tread!
 Yea all this retinue of devils dance
 Around; and with the overtures of Hell
 Do render adulations unto me!¹

Unlike Wittenberg's metaphysician, however, the aging Kruger experiences a Damascus-Road experience. 'Like that great persecutor of the Faith', Saul of Tarsus, he shows genuine contrition, renouncing 'the World and all | Its ways; and Mammon, and his dazzling gifts'.²

Fortuna had forewarned Kruger in his youth that when once he had 'satisfied that lord', Mammon would 'shamefully reward' him 'With crown of bitter woe'.³ It comes to pass as prophesied, when Kruger bewails his career of apostasy:

Oh, where is Mammon unto whom I—*fool!*—
 A fool's obeisance made? In vain—in vain
 That heedless, lifeless Calf unto my aid
 Do I invoke! Oh, how I've been beguil'd!
 Oh, how ensnar'd!—For glitt'ring gold the GOD
 Of gods did I forsake; and now, alas,
 I reap reward for my most grievous sin!
 Too late amends to make!⁴

Kruger's anguish closely resembles that dramatized in the closing scenes of *Doctor Faustus*. The crushing revelation comes to him in exile:

Alas, mine error now I see!
 Alas—'tis all too late!
 Vile Mammon did most artfully
 Allure me to *this* fate!⁵

Whereas Kruger learns his lesson, the world at large does not. At the conclusion of the South African War, Mammon remains victorious,

And southwards to the region of Good Hope
 Like carrion-fowl returning to their prey,

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 117.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, pp. 119–20.

³ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 9.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 107.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 112.

Whence they'd been scar'd, the slaves of Lucre sweep
 In denser crowds, to quench their thirst for gold;
 And render due obeisance at the shrine
 Of Mammon—Prince, and Ruler of this world!¹

In Warwick's words, 'the overriding objective of British reconstruction after the war [was] not the engineering of social changes in the interests of South Africa's black population', but 'a world made safe for the profitable long-term development of gold mining'.² In this new order of things, the interests of big business and of white-dominated administrations became increasingly confused, while disenfranchised ethnic groups found themselves increasingly marginalized. The *Dream's* reference to 'slaves of Lucre' converging on South Africa after the conclusion of Peace, suggests that Grendon already had an inkling in 1902 that the War had changed little for the better.



In the *Dream*, Boers and Britons fail to reach consensus primarily over the status of Africans. Boers are so contemptuous of African lives that 'for pleasure's sake', they 'Do brother mortals scourge and slay; and play | With life as tho' it were a thing of nought'.³

In an editorial essay, Grendon elaborates on such Boer atrocities. He quotes David Livingstone, who wrote of the interior Boers that it was 'difficult for a person in a civilized country to conceive that any body of men possessing the common attributes of humanity ... should proceed to shoot down in cold blood, men and women—of a different colour, it is true, but possessed of domestic feelings and affections equal to their own'. In the same essay, Grendon also quotes the missionary Mackenzie as stating that the Boers 'shot them (the Natives) down like vermin ... They (the Boers) are God's people, and their enemies (the Natives) are His enemies'.⁴

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133.

² Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, 5.

³ *PKD*, Pt XVIII, p. 51.

⁴ 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3. Grendon's quote from Livingstone is taken from *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (1857). Mackenzie (*Ten Years North of the Orange River* (1871), 509) writes: 'But the Dutchmen shot them [blacks] down as vermin'. It is not clear if this is the text from which Grendon quotes.

The *Dream* traces Boer racism back to the foundation of the Dutch settlement. Outrageous cultural arrogance of seventeenth-century Dutch settlers enables them to rationalize their dispossession of African autochthons. Dutch sailors, whose vessel, the *Haarlem*, was wrecked at the Cape of Good Hope in 1649, are so enraptured by the land's pristine beauty that they lay claim to it, even though this means wresting it from its rightful inhabitants. In chorus, they assure the splendid 'Land of Hope'—currently an 'abode of savage men'—that

The GOD of Heaven shap'd thee not
With such exquisite grace,
That thou should'st *ever* be the lot
Of such a worthless race!¹

In the eyes of the European sailors, the Cape's Khoi tribes—'a worthless race'—have no just claim to the earth beneath their feet: their very worthlessness disqualifies them from its tenure. Ominously, the mariners in chorus swear that when they return to the Cape, it will be in order to take full possession of it:

Adieu—adieu! A shipwreck'd band—
We'll not return again—
But *conq'rors*—and in thee, fair land,
Shall we for aye remain!²

This vowed is fulfilled in 1652, when Van Riebeeck's founding party arrives. More than two centuries later, Grendon's Kruger acknowledges that 'we'—Dutch settlers and their Boer descendants—'from its true owners wrench'd this land'.³ This is confirmed by the shade of Jan Van Riebeeck, who damns himself when he confesses: 'These lands we stole!'⁴

Britain's manumission of slaves and extension of legal equality to 'people of colour' are traditionally cited as the chief reasons for the Great Trek,⁵ when Dutch colonists migrated from the Cape Colony in order to escape British rule in the mid- to late-1830s. This is also how the *Dream* accounts for the Trek. In their newly-formed

¹ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 2.

² *PKD*, Pt I, p. 2.

³ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 2.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 77.

⁵ Loubser, *Apartheid Bible*, 14.

inland republics—Boers persist in their maltreatment of autochthons. Grendon's Kruger holds black men in utter contempt:

Long years have ye escap'd our grasp,
 And Britain prais'd with boastful shout;
 Your arms shall we with badges clasp
 Like dogs with chains their necks about.

Where Dutchmen hold a sway supreme
 There gold is might, and might is right.
 How blindly—blindly do ye dream
 Who deem yourselves the peers of white!

Created were ye for a life
 Of beasts; and beasts must ye remain!
 'Gainst us ye cannot kindle strife,
 So long as we your pow'r restrain.

Bow down, ye swarthy things—bow down,
 Whene'er your masters ye shall meet!
 Bow down, ye dogs, when white men frown,
 And crouch submissive at their feet!¹

There are several other references to blacks—and Britons—as 'dogs' in the *Dream*. Grendon titles one of his *Ilanga* editorials, 'Bow Down You Dogs!' and, in an tone of irony, echoes Kruger's haughty imperatives to blacks living in the Transvaal: 'Consider your condition that of dogs, you natives in the Transvaal, and like dogs bow down when white men frown at you'.²



In the *Dream*, Grendon represents the Boers as attributing their abuse of black Africans to an assumed divine right over them and their land. Voortrekkers vow to 'impress' their 'God-giv'n rights | On dusky foemen';³ and Kruger declares: 'These

¹ *PKD*, Pt XII, p. 38.

² 'Bow Down You Dogs!' *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

³ *PKD*, Pt V, p. 17.

primitive inhabitants have we | For ever crush'd. This land for heritage | To us by Heav'n was giv'n.'¹

For Kruger, blacks are the 'swarthy, hateful sons of Ham'. 'Above all mortals [they] are curs'd!'² In a footnote, Grendon explains that the 'Dutch base their assertion that blacks are cursed upon the story connected with Noah's drunkenness', in which Noah pronounced a curse upon his grandson Canaan. The Boers believed this curse to be of everlasting application to all black Africans. Grendon challenges their exegesis:

According to Gen. ix., 20–25, Ham was not cursed, but his youngest son Canaan. As far as history reveals, Canaan was never the progenitor of the African races. He was the ancestor of the people of the land of Canaan (Gen. x., 15–19). It is therefore unwarranted and ridiculous for the Dutch to suppose that the Africans are cursed.³

Contemporary commentators besides Grendon confirm the Boers' theological rationale for mistreating blacks. C. H. Thomas, for instance, writes in 1900 that the 'authority for this [racist] stand is sought from ancient biblical history, where the descendants of Ham appear marked out for servitude'.⁴ And J. A. Loubser has written that the 'spurious interpretation of Gen 9:18–27 that Ham's descendants were cursed to be slaves of Shem and Japheth, was general in the slavery period'. He traces this use of the text back to an early citation 'in 1703 by the church council of Drakenstein', and finds that as late as the first quarter of the twentieth century, the 'idea was as alive as ever'.⁵

Grendon makes a point of showing that it is self-delusion for Boers to lay claim to a favoured standing with God. Truth appears at the second Paardekraal council of war (1899) to disabuse them of their error:

More favour'd in GOD's gracious sight
Than *yonder* British swain,
Or *yonder* swarthy Canaanite,
Who've bow'd with bitter pain
Beneath your yoke, and scourge, ye're not!—

¹ PKD, PT XVII, p. 49.

² PKD, Pt XII, p. 37.

³ PKD, Pt XII, p. 37n.

⁴ Thomas, *Origin of the Anglo-Boer War Revealed*, 166.

⁵ Loubser, *Apartheid Bible*, 7.

*That gospel is a lie,
Which charms you with so fair a lot!
Despair—for ye must die!*¹

In his *Ilanga* polemic, ‘A Voice From the Sea’, Grendon again claims that, while ‘sheltering themselves behind the “Curse of Canaan” (Gen. ix 25, 26)’, the Boers ‘subjected certain of the aborigines of this sub-continent to the most brutal atrocities’.²

According to the received wisdom of Boers—as portrayed in the *Dream*—blacks are subhuman ‘creatures’—not endowed with an immortal soul. ‘Truth’ outlines their erroneous position:

The swarthy aborigines
Ye’ve held in deadly hate,
Subjecting them to cruelties
Most dreadful to relate.
That they be human, ye deny.
‘No soul have they!’—say ye;
‘Like beasts they must live; like beasts they must die;
And with beasts must number’d be!’³

In a footnote to Kruger’s use of the expression, ‘Ethiopia’s swarthy things’, Grendon explains that ‘an Englishman is by Boers termed “*verdomde rooinek*” (‘accursed redneck’) and ‘Natives and persons of colour are addressed as “*zwarte goed*”; “*zwarte schepsels*” (‘black stuff’; ‘black creatures’).⁴ The missionary, Mackenzie, whom Grendon twice quotes in his journalism, confirms that the Boers described the Griqua—a Khoi people—as “*schepsels*” (creatures).⁵ Similarly, in ‘Bow Down Ye Dogs!’ Grendon notes that ‘the Boers looked upon the natives as mere creatures—“*schepsels*”’, and adds that even ‘certain Britishers consider them inferior to dogs’.⁶ In 1916, he again makes reference to the Boers unwillingness to acknowledge the humanity of dark-skinned races:

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 75.

² *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 75.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XII, p. 36n.

⁵ Mackenzie, *Ten Years North of the Orange River*, 65.

⁶ ‘Bow Down Ye Dogs!’ *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

The moment white is brought into contact with people other than white then it will be seen that it resorts to prejudice and bullying. ... In the Boer of South Africa this same quality has worked to such extremes that he has forgotten that the darker creature with whom he comes in daily contact is a human being at all. Hence his speech ‘bewrayeth’ him, for he is wont to call those of his own class and colour ‘*mensch*’ and those Africans not of his class and colour ‘*schepsel*’.¹

Because the Transvaal Boers believe themselves to be racially superior to blacks, they refuse to accord them legal equality. Loubser points out that ‘as early as 1855 the slogan “no equality” was entered into the Transvaal constitution (article 9), with the qualification that it applied both to church and state’.² Grendon draws attention to this legislation in three editorials. In ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, he states: ‘As a general rule the Christianity of Europe admits in theory the equality of man with man, but in practise, alas, this equality is proved glaringly false by enactment such as the following from the Grondwet of the late South African Republic—“THE PEOPLE WILL ADMIT OF NO EQUALITY WITH THE BLACKS IN CHURCH OR STATE.”’³ In ‘Missionary Conference’, he refers to this same Article 9 of the Transvaal *Grondwet* (Constitution), ‘still fresh in our recollection’,⁴ and in ‘A Voice from the Sea’, he cites it yet again, as one of the Boers’ ‘enactments in direct opposition to the Divine’.⁵



An admirable feature of the *Dream* is the thoroughness with which it excavates the ideological underpinnings of conflict in South Africa. As the sub-title of the poem indicates, it treats the ‘Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa between Boer and Briton’. Grendon is at pains to sketch the roots, trunk, and boughs of an ancient, entrenched enmity between Boers and Britons. This enmity began when the Cape was ‘harshly torn’⁶ from the Dutch by the British take-over—first in 1795; then permanently from 1806.

¹ ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

² Loubser, *Apartheid Bible*, 14.

³ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4. In this essay, Grendon embeds a poetic stanza in which the speaker, who is ‘Born black’, complains of being denied ‘equality with white | In Church, and State’.

⁴ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 2.

The *Dream* construes the emigration of Dutch-speaking colonists from the Cape, and their subsequent founding of ‘other states’ in the interior, as the outright rejection of Britain’s suzerainty and of her elevated laws—in particular those pertaining to racial equality. The trekkers migrate *en masse* in response to ‘a Voice | Inviting our embitter’d injur’d race | To regions northwards, where Britannia’s sway | Detested we might scorn—ignore—defy’.¹ It is to ‘set at naught [Britannia’s] laws’ that the Boers subsequently retreat from Natal into the interior.²

Boer resentment is exacerbated when Britain seizes control of Natal in 1842–45. Then, the ‘entire assembly’ of Boers ‘declare their determination to oppress the British in their [*i.e.*, the Boer’s] coming day of power’.³ From the Boer standpoint, ‘Britons’ are the ‘most shameless of beings, | Who traverse the earth in quest of gold, | And deem it naught [their] neighbours’ things | To seize, and such by force to hold!’⁴ Britain’s attempt to foist her will upon the Transvaal Republic is seen by Kruger as yet another manifestation of her piratical propensities, evidenced earlier when she seized the Cape from the Dutch, when she deprived the Dutch colonists of their slaves, and when she laid claim to Natal and the territory between the Orange and the Vaal.

In Kruger’s estimation, the British are actuated by unbridled greed. When the Transvaal Boers discover their gold reserves, the British, ‘a race of thieves’, begin to ‘covet ... their neighbour’s goods’.⁵ He laments that these fortune-seeking *Uitlanders*, ‘murderers, and thieves ... have transform’d | This paradise into a very hell!’⁶ Grendon expands in a footnote:

On his first visit to Johannesburg (1890), Paul Kruger prefaced his speech to the people thus:— ‘*Burghers, Murderers, and Thieves*’. The result was the pulling down of the Transvaal Flag, and a general riot amongst the *Uitlanders*, who were pacified by the intervention of Capt. Von Brandis, Chief Landdrost of Johannesburg.⁷

¹ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 3.

² *PKD*, Pt V, p. 18.

³ *PKD*, Pt V, p. 15, prose argument.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt VI, p. 21.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt V, p. 16.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XVII, p. 48.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt XVII, p. 48n.

In his *Ilanga* obituary for Kruger (1904), Grendon repeats that during the Transvaal President's life, he 'stood out as a champion against what he termed the "new civilisation" of "murderers" and "thieves"'. He strove 'to unite all Southern Africa under the Boer Flag, and from this subcontinent wipe out by one stroke of violence the rule of Britain'.¹ In their war with Britain, the *Dream* portrays the Transvaal republicans as the chief aggressors.



In the *Dream*, Boer race hate focuses upon a perceived alliance between blacks and Britons. Kruger's wrath is directed against these twin foes—'Britannia's cursèd, red-neck'd, dark-soul'd sons, | And Ethiopia's swarthy things'.²

In his novel, *Mhudi* (written c.1919–20), Plaatje illustrates that black-white cooperation is achievable. A Boer-Barolong military alliance overthrows the tyrannical overlordship of Mzilikazi of the Matabele. The novel's chief male protagonist, Ra-Thaga, forms a close friendship with an exceptional 'noble Boer', the youthful Phil-Jay, who—unaccountably—is untainted by his nation's vicious race-hate. Couzens observes that 'while realistic about the very great divisions and the obstacles to the founding of ... a united [South African] nation, [*Mhudi*] nevertheless presents such a vision—a vision of the advantages of an alliance of all the peoples of the country'.³ With the *Dream*, Grendon likewise sets out to demonstrate that black-white cooperation can overturn tyranny. The difference in his writings, however, is that the allies are Africans and Britons, and the tyrant is—with few exceptions—the Boer.



During the South African War, it was still possible to maintain the illusion—as Grendon does in the *Dream* and elsewhere—that an alliance of liberal Britons and educated New Africans would overcome backward, racially-repressive 'Boer' principles and engineer an enlightened, racially-inclusive postwar dispensation. Lady Truth points out that in this conflict, Briton and African, 'Redeemer, and redeem'd

¹ 'The Late President Kruger', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

² *PKD*, Pt XII, p. 36.

³ Couzens, 'Sol T. Plaatje and the First South African Epic', 53.

here stand | 'Gainst [the Boer] to testify!¹ The ideological battle-lines, as Truth sees them, are drawn between republican Boers on one hand, and the combined progeny of emancipators and emancipated on the other. Nothing surpasses a common enemy in bringing together unlikely allies.

Kruger reinforces this Boer-*versus*-black-and-Briton scenario when he gives vent to his 'deadly rancour' 'engender'd 'gainst the Africans, | And Britons'.² Part XII of the *Dream* describes how, during the years 1886–93, Kruger 'vows to trample down all aliens dwelling in his land, especially the Britons, and the dusky Africans'.³ In a similar vein, Grendon's poem 'Defence of Tommy' (1904) lumps together 'yonder twain—vile African, | And [British] soldier lov'd by few'.⁴ The communion of a lowly station and the world's contempt has thrust together the 'loyal' mission-educated black auxiliary and the ordinary Tommy. In the minds of the many black and coloured Africans who—like Grendon—rendered valuable service to Britain during the war, fruitful collaboration between blacks and whites was not merely a wishful hypothesis: it was a proven reality.

A discernable subtext to the *Dream* is the parallel that Grendon draws between the Boers' mistreatment of British citizens resident in the Transvaal and their mistreatment of blacks. Britannia upbraids Kruger for abusing her subjects, and invites him to learn from historical precedents the fate of tyrants:

To any despot State
Go forth, and there discern
How Tyranny inciteth men
To violence and hate;
How kings, who wisdom spurn,
Find their just doom in Murder's den.⁵

But if this principle has application to Kruger's denial of rights to Britons, it must also hold good for his lifelong record of treading the rights of Africans underfoot.

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 75.

² *PKD*, Pt II, p. 5.

³ *PKD*, Pt XII, p. 35, prose argument.

⁴ *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 56.

Blacks held high hopes that the South African War would topple Kruger's 'despot State'. Against a backdrop of widespread and resilient loyalty to British rule, they watched with keen interest as war-clouds began to bank over South Africa in 1899. The prospects for a war between Britain and the republics increased steadily in the months leading up to the Boer invasion of northern Natal in October 1899. On the whole, petit bourgeois blacks were hopeful that Britain would triumph and that when the former republics came under British colonial rule, the rights which blacks had long enjoyed in the Cape Colony would be extended to Natal and to the former Boer republics. No-one could then have anticipated the paradox that, even though Britain would win the War, republican racist policies would prevail throughout the greater part of the twentieth century.¹

At an early meeting of the Natal Native Congress, which was established during the South African War, delegates made a formal expression of their loyalty to Britain, as well as their fond hope

that Her Majesty's Government will in arriving at the settlement of South African affairs safeguard Native races from restrictive legislation in regard to (1) education (2) a certain amount of direct representation in the Legislatures of the different states (3) freedom of trade (4) acquisition of land.²

In Kimberley, blacks and coloureds felt

a fervent loyalty to the British imperial government, to which they looked for protection and assistance in preserving their rights. The very existence of such institutionalized rights encouraged a sense of optimism about the future, and a self-confident enthusiasm for exploring to the full the opportunities which Africans, individually and collectively, saw before themselves.³

Grendon's personal sentiments were very much in keeping with those of the educated black community at large.

In public pronouncements made during the late 1890s, statesmen such as Chamberlain, Milner, and Rhodes had given black South Africans every reason to anticipate an amelioration of their socio-political condition when once the prospective

¹ Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, 111.

² Quoted in: Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, 112.

³ Comaroff in: Plaatje, *Diary*, 7.

war was brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Chamberlain condemned the Transvaal's treatment of its 'natives' as 'disgraceful; ... brutal; [and] unworthy of a civilized Power'. Milner expressed his conviction that 'it was not race or colour, but civilisation which was the test of a man's capacity for political rights'.¹ In the *Dream*, Milner calls upon Kruger to embrace the principle of even-handed justice, to 'let *all men*, as in [Britannia's] land, | On equal footing stand!'² In an editorial written a couple of years after the War, Grendon recalls that 'one potent factor in precipitating the late War between Boer and Briton was the vexed "Native Question"'.³ And in a somewhat later article, he remembers that 'one of the causes of the late Boer War was said to be the oppression of the natives by the Boers'.⁴

In the *Dream's* final part, Britannia sings of Rhodes that he did 'o'erlook *race, creed, and colour*, | Which have render'd rulers blind' and that he 'Taught ... that, by *truth, and labour* | They [*i.e.*, blacks] upon Life's scale might rise'.⁵ We are reminded of the part Grendon played in 1897 in defending Rhodes against the accusation of racism in connection with his promise of 'equal rights to every white man south of the Zambesi'⁶—a slogan he subsequently revised to embrace equality for all 'civilized' men. Referring to Rhodes's reputed advocacy of non-racism, Plaatje's *Native Life in South Africa* makes favourable reference to Rhodes's modified 'formula of "equal rights for all civilized men, irrespective of colour"'.⁷

Public assurances like these stimulated the 'loyalty' of Africans to the Imperial cause, and no doubt contributed to their widespread readiness to enlist as non-combatant auxiliaries. 'Loyalty' did not need to be fabricated: in many cases educated Africans considered themselves *de facto* citizens of a Greater Britain that spanned all oceans and continents, uniting communities formerly unknown to one another. Colonials could be petty and perverse, but the Imperial genius never could be.



¹ Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, 111.

² *PKD*, Pt XX, p. 59.

³ 'A Marvel', *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 125.

⁶ 'South African League: Section B, Kimberley Branch', *Citizen* 8 (22 Sept. 1897) 3. See Chapter 4.

⁷ Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, 162.

Grendon reveals considerable depth of insight into the roots of Afrikaner group identity—perceiving, for instance, that Boer nationhood cannot easily be disengaged from notions of sacrifice and martyrdom. Reflecting on Dingane’s slaughter of unsuspecting Voortrekkers in Natal, Kruger apostrophizes:

Can I forget those scenes of massacre
Which redden’d *you*—Blaauwkrantz, and Bushman streams?
...
Ah, Weenen, of all earthly valleys, thou
To us the dearest, and most sacred art;
For yonder town which suckles on thy breast
Draws nourishment and strength—nay, even life—
From our ill-fated kinsmen’s blood, and tears!¹

Title to Natal was won with blood. Blood sanctifies the land for occupation by kinsfolk of Boer martyrs. F. W. Reitz claims that the Boer Republic of Natal (1838–42) embraced a land ‘purchased with our money and baptized with our blood’.² An unidentified Dutch-language poet (c.1881) writes of the relationship between the supreme sacrifice paid by Natal Voortrekkers, and the hallowed soil upon which their blood was spilt:

Toe onse martelare
Daar sterf op Weenens velde
Die grond die blyf ons heilig
Deur ewig al die jare.³

Historically, there are few toponyms in Afrikaner group memory with more emotive connotations than ‘Weenen’, ‘Bloukrans’, and ‘Boesmansrivier’—to which Grendon’s Kruger refers.

Grendon is also on the mark when he describes the Voortrekkers’ intense spiritual connection with the physical beauty of their adoptive land, Natal. In the *Dream*, Voortrekkers sing in chorus:

¹ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 4.

² Reitz, *Century of Wrong*, chapter 2.

³ Loosely translated: ‘When our martyrs | Died there on Weenen’s fields | The land remains holy to us | Throughout eternity.’ The original manuscript is in private possession (Anon., ‘Ons klim die berge oor ...’ (manuscript)). Written in a hasty hand on two sides of an octavo leaf, it was inserted loose between the leaves of a copy of H. J. Hofstede, *Geschiedenis van den Oranje-Vrijstaat* (1876), purchased in the United Kingdom. The poem carries no title.

Oh land of pride, which never fails,
 And rugged, wooded hills,
 Which frown o'er pleasant, verdant vales,
 Sustaining crystal rills;
 Of all the climes wherethro' we've pass'd,
 Thou—thou—the fairest art,
 Whereon our eyes have e'er been cast,
 And *thou*—hast won our heart!¹

Grendon further extols Natal's scenic beauty in his topographical poem, 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas'.² Natal is portrayed in the *Dream* as a prize of surpassing value. By contrast with this idyll, the land 'Beyond the turbid Vaal' is 'Of grace, | And beauty, and productiveness how void!'³

Netherlands-born trekker Erasmus Smit, in his diary, speaks ecstatically of Natal's superlative richness and loveliness:

The whole land below the Drakensberg is beautiful; but from the Bushman's River and the Mooi River it is very beautiful; and here from the Karkloof it becomes more and more indescribably beautiful. We ... unyoked at the Geelhoutboomenrand in as beautiful an area (of hills and dales with springs and streams and luscious grass) as I have ever in my life seen in Africa. Here the emigrants shot buffalos and pulled out honey, and the women plucked flowers.⁴

In the *Dream*, Natal is to the Voortrekkers a 'belovèd strand!'⁵ The anonymous poem quoted above speaks similarly of Natal's 'beloved shores':

O dierbre Natal strande,
 O liefste aller lande
 Ons kan ja nooit vergete
 Die jare van tevore
 Ons volk is daar gebore⁶

For the Dutch-language poet, Natal is a fondly-recollected but relinquished Arcadia. It is the birthplace of the nation. While Transvaal may be a land of physical domicile,

¹ *PKD*, Pt V, p. 16.

² *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.

³ *PKD*, Pt V, p. 17; Pt VI, p. 18.

⁴ Smit, *Diary*, 165: 24 Jan. 1839.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt V, p. 17.

⁶ Loosely translated: 'O dear shores of Natal | O most beloved of all lands | We can assuredly not forget | The bygone years | Our nation was born there' (Anon., 'Ons klim die berge oor ...' (manuscript)).

Natal is where the heart trends. Grendon's epic recognizes this reality and captures it with great poignancy.

On account of its choiceness, ownership of Natal will forever be contested. As predicted by the Boers flushed out by British takeover, Natal will 'a land | Of battlefields remain'.¹ They vow that they will 'strive Natalia to regain | From [Britain] some distant day'.² When Kruger commits his nation to war, he does so in an attempt to 'regain the lost possessions of his race', including 'Natalia, fair, and fruitful'.³



Despite such perceptivity, Grendon's epic takes a dim view of 'Boerdom'⁴—white Afrikaner rule—and ethnic stereotypes of 'the Boer' abound in it. In the majority of cases, Afrikaners are depicted as ultra-conservative, stubborn, 'slim' (crafty), and hypocritical.

While a boy in Damaraland, Grendon likely encountered the image of the Boer as hostile to autochthons and as stubbornly resistant to progress. Maharero stated in 1876: 'the Boers are our enemies',⁵ and around the time that the Grendons left Damaraland, it was rife with rumours that Transvaal Boers planned to seize the country by force of arms.⁶ Concerning the 'Conservatism of the Boers', the missionary Hahn—who fostered the Grendon children in the early 1870s—writes:

The African farmer is resistant [to progress], and even when he sees that his more enterprising neighbour achieves a much more encouraging result with half the labourers and draught-animals, he doesn't want to imitate this, because after all his great-great-grandfather didn't do it.⁷

In the *Dream*, Britannia takes hidebound Boers to task for obstructing progress:

Behold how sluggish be

¹ *PKD*, Pt V, p. 17.

² *PKD*, Pt V, p. 18.

³ *PKD*, Pt XVII, p. 48, prose argument; Pt XVII, p. 49.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt IX, p. 27, prose argument.

⁵ Cape, *Report of W. Coates Palgrave*, 35; Palgrave, *Commissions*, 45.

⁶ Jordan, 'Journal of the Trek Boers', 169–70.

⁷ 'Aber der afrikanische Bauer ist zäher, und wenn er auch sieht, dass sein mehr unternehmender Nachbar mit der Hälfte der Arbeiter und des Zugviehs zu einem viel ermutigenderen Resultate kommt, so will er's doch nicht nachmachen, denn sein Ur-Urgrossvater hat's ja nicht getan' (C. H. Hahn, *Tagebücher*, 3:627: 8 Nov. 1852).

The workings of your hands!
 How dead unto the voice of Growth!
 Whoe'er hath eyes, can see
 In yonder wrested lands,
 The monuments of Sleep, and Sloth.¹

In a footnote to these lines, Grendon invites his reader to compare 'Dutch' with 'English' South African towns. This exercise, he maintains, will demonstrate that 'the city building of the Boers has been dead to growth'. 'Dutch Capetown' should be compared with 'modern or English Capetown'; Uitenhage with Port Elizabeth; Bloemfontein with Kimberley; Pietermaritzburg with Durban; and Pretoria with Johannesburg. 'It will be noticed that those towns which were built by the Dutch have advanced but very slowly, whilst those that found their origin in British hands have advanced as if by magic.' Grendon fails to take into account that a pastoral economy such as is followed by the Boers has less call for large cities than one in which commerce and manufacture play leading roles.

The *Dream* also depicts Boers as wilful and unyielding. They display 'That stubbornness which loathes to bow'. This is the same '*stubbornness* which drove [their Huguenot] sires | From their belovèd fatherland' in the seventeenth century, when the Edict of Nantes was revoked and they were forced into exile. This same hereditary stubbornness 'did incite [the Voortrekkers] from the Land of Hope to part',² when they refused to accommodate themselves to British rule.

Boers are also portrayed as duplicitous and crafty. Kruger describes his ally, President Steyn, as possessing 'that artfulness | Inherent in our race'.³ Steyn breaks 'faith with Albion';⁴ he is 'double-tongued, and double-fac'd'.⁵ Nor does Kruger escape censure in this regard: he is 'crafty Kruger',⁶ who underhandedly courts favour with the crowned heads of Europe in an attempt to stave off British aggression.⁷ In the *Dream*, Britannia brands Kruger as the 'Profoundest hypocrite'.⁸

¹ *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 55.

² *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 81.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXI, p. 62.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXII, p. 63.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXXII, p. 103.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XXXII, p. 103.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt XVI, p. 47.

⁸ *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 56.

Grendon's characterization coincides with other contemporary literary projections of the 'slim' or crafty Boer. In Buchan's *Prester John* (1910) we read that 'the Dutch about here are a slim lot'; a 'Special Correspondent' for the *Daily News* (1900) speaks about the 'slimness' of 'the wily Boer'; and in 'Reminiscences of 1871', a short story by a Natal author (published 1916, but written several years earlier), 'Boer youths and maidens' make no attempt to conceal their hilarity at an English-speaking Natalian's 'lack of slimness'.¹ Hypocrisy is another charge often levelled against Kruger—and Boers in general—in texts written during the period of the Uitlander Crisis, the Jameson Raid, and the South African War. The Natalian poet, William Henry Walker describes Kruger as 'the most consummate hypocrite the world has ever known'.²



A controlling metaphor running through the *Dream* relates republican Boers to ancient Israelites. In part, the likeness is suggested by a grandiose claim on the part of the Boers themselves. As the shade of Simon van Stel admits: 'We believ'd that we were God's elect, | And we swore we were Israel's race.'³ The *Dream* concedes the parallel, but thoroughly undermines it—showing the grounds for comparison to be not fidelity but the apostasy that Boers supposedly share with the Jews. In an editorial, Grendon states that 'the Jews ... are known to have been an idolatrous race'.⁴ Like 'Israel's race', the Boers apostatized, and incurred God's displeasure.

The Boers might believe themselves 'God's elect', but Grendon repeatedly represents them as religious apostates. In his prose argument to Part XIII, he parenthesizes: 'What else but a career of blasphemy can [Kruger's] term of office as President of the Transvaal Republic be termed?'⁵ Similarly, President Steyn of the Orange Free State is described as an 'Apostate chief'.⁶ His 'apostasy' has a political dimension: it is constituted in his breaking faith with Britannia, but because Britannia is allied with Providence, Steyn's apostasy is also religious.

¹ Buchan, *Prester John*, 43; Hales, *Campaign Pictures*, 143; Woods, *South African Sketches and Stories*, 57.

² Walker, *Devil Amongst the Tombs*, 3.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 77.

⁴ 'Polygamy', *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 38, prose argument.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 85.

There was a time, Kruger relates, when ‘We knew no law—each did what pleasing was | In his own eyes. We knew no lord, no king!’¹ This is a clear reference to Israel under the administration of the Judges, before the establishment of the unitary kingdom under Saul: ‘In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes’.² Following through with this motif, ‘A multitude of spirits’ predict that Marthinus Pretorius will become ‘First chieftain’ of the newfound Transvaal Republic, but they also warn that ‘that kingdom ne’er will last; | For such will folly rend!’³ Similarly, of Saul’s kingdom—the first that Israel had—the prophet Samuel had predicted: ‘But now thy kingdom shall not continue’.⁴

After their victory over the British at Majuba (1881), the Boers confess in prayer to God:

Thy mighty works we long disbeliev’d,
For our hearts like Israel’s were hard as stone;
And long in our blindness Thy Spirit we griev’d,
But now we’ll adore Thee—and Thee alone!⁵

Their resolve is short-lived, however, because Kruger himself later confesses: ‘I’ve made obeisance to the calf | Of glitt’ring gold! ... My rock, and strength is Mammon, who is lord’.⁶ Calf-worship was a persistent source of apostasy in Israelite history.⁷ Kruger’s description of Mammon as his ‘rock’ and ‘strength’ is a perverse intertextual echo of Psalm 18:1–2, where King David calls his ‘Lord’ by these expressions.

The Transvaal plunges into apostasy. ‘When strife, and discord, wranglings, and disputes’ beset the infant Republic under the administration of President Thomas Burgers in the early 1870s, and ‘swarthy foes’ become refractory, the spiritual condition of the *burgers* reaches a correspondingly low ebb:

The nation’s strength was crippl’d, and our faith
In God was tramp’d under foot. His law
Was reckon’d naught; His Word ignor’d—defied;

¹ *PKD*, Pt VII, p. 22.

² Judges 21:25.

³ *PKD*, Pt IV, p. 14.

⁴ 1 Sam. 13:14.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt X, p. 32.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 38.

⁷ Ex. 32:4, 31; 1 Kings 12:28.

His temples, and His altars were defil'd;
His worship was a sham.¹

The apostasy begins in real earnest when vast gold deposits are discovered, first at De Kaap, then on the Witwatersrand, in the mid-1880s. It is 'at the sight of [his land's newfound riches that] Kruger becomes haughty [and] is visited by Mammon, who tempts him to reject the worship of the True God'.²

Homage paid to Mammon is one aspect of Boer paganism; another is sorcery. The shades of Voortrekkers slaughtered by the Zulu *impi* in 1838 accuse their flesh-bound kinsmen of having 'sought | Communion with the Prince of Hell'.³ To this, Grendon appends an explanatory footnote:

The Boers, despite their religious piety, have often inclined towards the abominations of divination, and sorcery. This practice lately called forth the condemnation of the Dutch Reformed Clergy, especially those in the Cape Colony. Chiefest amongst the causes which incited the Boers to proclaim their victories beforehand, were the favourable though delusive responses which they received from those whom they consulted.⁴

It is of interest that Sol Plaatje in his Mafeking siege diary levels a similar charge against the Boers. Of the field cornet, A. Lemmert, Plaatje writes: 'He and his family wear Native charms, as so do many of the Z.A.R. commandants and field-cornets. A Native M.D. once got into trouble with his associates through having taught one of them how to use "dolosse".'⁵

The abuse of foreigners and of the aboriginal peoples living in the Republic is yet another facet of Boer apostasy. The oppressed British *Uitlanders* in the Transvaal appeal to Great Britannia, their 'sea-girt Mother, Guard of Right, | Of Justice, and of Truth divine' to 'Stretch forth [her] rod, which oft hath stay'd | The pride of despots, who despise | God's law, and brother man degrade'.⁶ God opposes the republicans for their ill-treatment of blacks and Britons, but He favours Britons for their even-handed justice. It is also noteworthy that Britannia is 'Guard' of 'Truth divine'. This being the case, political 'apostasy' becomes simultaneously religious apostasy. At this point in

¹ *PKD*, Pt VIII, p. 25.

² *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 32, prose argument.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 79.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 79n.

⁵ Plaatje, *Diary*, 95: 6 Feb. 1900.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XVIII, p. 52.

the *Dream*, Grendon inserts a footnote in which he cites four texts from the Old Testament. These include the injunctions that ‘one law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you’ (Exodus 12:49), and that ‘the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself’ (Leviticus 19:34).¹ In an *Ilanga* article, Grendon again cites three of these same texts as ‘injunctions [that] the Boers defied’.² And in yet another article, he cites the same three texts as those ‘intentionally or unintentionally ignored in present and in bygone days by multitudes of statesmen’.³ Swedenborg refers to all three of these texts in a single context to show that Israelites were obligated not to discriminate against those of other ‘nations who accepted their worship’.⁴ Grendon’s point is that disregard for the rights of the African ‘stranger’ is violation of God’s law—in effect, apostasy.

Interestingly, Grendon is not alone amongst contemporary poets in describing Kruger as a blasphemer and apostate. William Henry Walker, in his burlesque *The Devil Amongst the Tombs* (Pietermaritzburg, 1900) describes Kruger as ‘the enemy of virtue, godliness and liberty and ... the vile tyrant of the Transvaal’. Like Grendon, Walker represents Kruger as a votary of the god of wealth:

I’ve seen him by night, and I’ve watched him by day,
To Mammon and not to his God does he pray;
A hypocrite base, his black heart fill’d with guile,
No mortal since Adam has act’d so vile.⁵

And in the anonymous poem, ‘The Poet’s Dream; or, the President’s Future of the Transvaal’—ostensibly composed by a disaffected Boer P.O.W. on Ceylon—hypocrisy and apostasy are again cited as Kruger’s principal offences:

Oh! Paul thou hypocrite, heathen Paul,
Thy deceitful heart is stained with guilt;
Thou wilt be judged by one and all
For all the blood which thou hast spilt.¹

¹ The other citations are Lev. 24:22 and Num. 15:16.

² ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3. Grendon here quotes in full: Ex. 12:49, Lev. 19:33–35, Num. 15:15–16.

³ ‘The Native Question’, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 4444.

⁵ Walker, *The Devil Amongst the Tombs*, 12.



While it is true that the *Dream* tends to reinforce prevailing ethnic stereotyping of ‘the Boer’, this is mitigated by the recognition Grendon gives to a measure of diversity within Afrikaner ranks. For instance, an earlier President of the Orange Free State, Sir Johannes Hendrik Brand (1823–88), is described in the *Dream* as ‘The illustrious Brand, whose reign in yonder land ... breath’d peace, and love | On all mankind’.² The shade of Brand himself protests: ‘The law of Justice did I bring | To cast our Wrong, and Hate.’³ And in a later footnote, Grendon quotes a one-time Member of the Orange Free State Volksraad as stating that if all will ‘work together, and create a peaceful, united, self-governing South Africa, under the British flag..., we shall still see the words of our beloved old President Brand fulfilled in this unhappy country—“ALLES ZAL RECHT KOMEN”,—“*All will come right*”’.⁴

Plaatje similarly regards Brand’s term of office as exceptional. In *Native Life in South Africa*, this exceptional president is described as ‘the faithful ally of [a Barolong] chieftain’.⁵ And in his Mafeking siege diary, Plaatje compares Kruger unfavourably with Brand: ‘Surely these Transvaal Boers are abominable. I really do not think they are children of the same Dutchland as the inhabitants of the O.F.S. No wonder their president [Brand] was a judge while Oom Paul was a “schaapwachter”—*i.e.*, a shepherd.’⁶ Brand practised law in the Cape Supreme Court before taking office as President. His principal virtue from Britain’s perspective was that he maintained neutrality in her disputes with the Transvaal—particularly during the war of 1880–81.



The *Dream* shows Britannia’s realm to be universal; she is the great arbitratix, the one to avenge all wrongs. In Part XIX, she is pictured riding ‘her car by lordly lions drawn | The ocean-surf along’. Her vestments, arms, and accoutrements bespeak her incontestably high station:

¹ Anon., ‘The Poet’s Dream’ (manuscript).

² *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 84.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 84.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 86n. Grendon quotes: Botha, *From Boer to Boer and Englishman*.

⁵ Plaatje, *Native Life*, 111.

⁶ Plaatje, *Diary*, 125.

A gorgeous purple robe—upon whose front
 Her thrice-cross'd banner, which o'er one-fifth part
 Of this terrestrial body floats, was wov'n—
 Her person did adorn. Upon a shield
 Of oval shape, which stood upon her left,
 The self-same ensign was emboss'd. Within
 Her right hand she a massive trident grasp'd;
 A silver trumpet in her left she held.¹

Later in the *Dream*, Britannia is again witnessed; on this occasion she is seated 'Upon her sea-girt throne | Majestic on the crest of northern waves' with 'a mighty trident in her hand'.²

This imagery accords with stock representations of Britannia as a warrior queen. The 'first known representation of Britannia as a female figure sitting on a globe, leaning with one arm on a shield, and grasping a spear in the other hand, is on a Roman coin of Antoninus Pius, who died 161 A.D.'³ Thomas Campbell (1777–1844) in *Ode to the Germans* describes how 'With Freedom's lion-banner, Britannia rules the waves'. Drawing on suchlike pre-existing imagery, Grendon depicts the British Empire's antiquity, majesty, and unprecedented reach.

Britannia is a 'Pure fount of knowledge, and of light',⁴ the 'Guardian of Truth, | And Justice, and Right'.⁵ But she is more than the fountainhead of civil liberties. She becomes also a stern adversary to any who withstand her fixed resolve. It is not without purpose that her car is drawn by 'lordly lions'. It is 'The Lion's foot' that Pretorius vainly attempts to remove at the Battle of Boomplaats (1848).⁶ When crossed, Britannia is not easily placated. Liberty and enlightenment are her children's birthright. Wherever they find themselves on earth, they feel confident in calling on her in all their distress. British *Uitlanders* in Kruger's Transvaal appeal for relief from the oppression they suffer at the hands of the Boer oligarchy. Britannia promises these her sons that the Republic will be compelled to 'bow to purer laws'. She reassures them: '*In bondage ye were never born! | In such ye shall not share, | Whilst I the*

¹ *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 53.

² *PKD*, Pt XXVIII, p. 94.

³ Brewer, 178.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XVIII, p. 51.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXVIII, p. 94.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt VII, p. 22.

Guard of Justice be!’¹ The coming war is to be fought over the issue of legal equity: her sons must have full political representation in the Transvaal. Natalia similarly appeals to her ‘Sea-girt Mother’ to ‘Shield [her] from [her] threat’ning foes’.² Britannia instantly rallies her armies to the defence of her children in Transvaal and Natal.

In the *Dream*, Britannia is Kruger’s nemesis. Kruger calls upon his auditors to ‘Behold a jealous baffled woman’s ways’.³ Britannia is such a woman. She spurns his and Steyn’s peace overtures when they belatedly discover that the tide of war has turned against them. Yet, when her enemies humble themselves, she can be magnanimous, as is evidenced when she repatriates Boer prisoners-of-war from their places of internment on Ceylon, St Helena, and Bermuda. In song, these returnees ‘extol Britannia for *this* timely release’.⁴ Ultimately, despite himself, even the recalcitrant Kruger must confess that he has misjudged Britain’s designs in South Africa. At the close of the epic, his eyes open to the ‘uprightness of Britain’s soul’.⁵

The republics do not stand alone in their opposition to Britannia. Even the Cape Colony comes in for censure on account of its perceived disloyalty to the Imperial cause. In Part XXXII, a miraculous Voice bestows praise upon Natalia, for ‘her fidelity, and truthfulness’ toward her Britannic Mother, but roundly condemns her ‘trait’rous sister—“Cape of Hope” who, ‘Enamour’d deeply, did elope | With crafty Kruger, and with Steyn’.⁶ For her loyalty, Natalia shall ‘rank a jewel of renown | ’Mongst those that deck Britannia’s Crown!’⁷

Grendon’s dedicatory verses make clear that, over the centuries, Britons have built a reputation as aggressive champions of liberty. In his dedicatory verses, Grendon presents Magna Charta, the Regicide of Charles I, the Napoleonic Wars, and the Emancipation of the Slaves, as outstanding episodes in this tradition.⁸ In reverent strains, he ascribes to Britannia his own liberty and that of men of all lands and creeds:

¹ *PKD*, Pt XIX, pp. 53, 54.

² *PKD*, Pt XXVII, p. 89.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXIII, p. 64.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 132.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 131.

⁶ It is possible that Grendon is adapting the imagery of Ezekiel 23.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt XXXII, p. 103.

⁸ *Dedication*, pp. 5–6.

I—extol thee, Great Deliverer,
 Fountain-head of Liberty—
 To the sore-oppress'd a refuge,
 Hiding-place, and Sanctuary.

'Tree of Life', and 'Tree of Knowledge',
 To all races of mankind,
 Christian, Moslem, Jew, and Pagan
 In thy precepts blessings find.¹

In these adoring dedicatory stanzas 'To Britannia', Grendon praises her for granting 'Equity to ev'ry man'. Because of Britannia's renown as the Guardian of Right, 'Thousands in yon kingdoms round' about her 'Vainly crave to be admitted | To the realms, where Freedom reigns'.² Grendon's 'Moslem, Jew, and Pagan' expresses a sentiment not unlike Blake's 'heathen, Turk, or Jew', in 'The Divine Image', which Grendon may by this stage have read in Wilkinson's *The African and the True Christian Religion*.³

Grendon pronounces Britannia's 'enactments [to be] the purest | Since this changeful world began'. Even the 'Ancient Grecian—Roman—Jewish' law codes 'Fade away compar'd with' the British.⁴ In an essay entitled 'Umdelwa's Musings', he repeats this praise for Britannia, and urges Africans to make full use of opportunities afforded them in the immediate postwar period:

The British law surpasses any that has hitherto occupied the attention of man from Adam downwards to the present day. That law is by itself not to be hastily condemned. If it err, the fault lies not in itself but in him who dispenses the same.

Be thankful that your lot is what it is, and strive to make the most and best of your condition in this school of veritable experience. Emerge from out the slough of despond; shoot Time as she passes; quicken your energies; aim at perfection in the least of things, so that when the greatest claim your attention, you shall know how to meet them; be not impatient of advancement; patiently abide your season of reward.⁵

¹ Dedication, p. vii.

² PKD, Dedication, p. v.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 220.

⁴ Dedication, p. v.

⁵ 'Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

Grendon appropriates John Bunyan ('the slough of despond') before moving on through the *carpe diem* theme ('shoot Time as she passes'), to conclude by quoting the popular, didactic poem, 'A Psalm of Life' by 'the bard of Maine' (Longfellow):

Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.

The gist of 'Umdelwa's Musings' is that although the postwar dispensation might not realize the most sanguine of black aspirations, all should nonetheless rejoice in the overwhelming benevolence of their Britannic Mother. Give her time: ultimately, she will redress all injustices. Meanwhile, the challenge facing 'you Bantus' is to not lose heart, to be prompt and diligent in utilizing every opportunity that British rule makes possible, 'and to wait' for better times.



In contrast with the Boers, the *Dream* characterizes the British as enterprising and resourceful. Rhodes—that pre-eminent son of Britannia—is a model in this regard. His Cape-to-Cairo rail and road link, and his telegraph system are objects of national pride for all Britons. Britannia applauds the salutary consequences of these technological advances wrought by Rhodes:

Language flash'd from the Cape to Egypt,
Thence to Europe and the world—
Roadways carv'd thro' trackless regions
Old beliefs *to death* have hurl'd.
...
These twin labours, most illustrious,
Do exalt thee in men's sight!
These twin marvellous conceptions
Link Earth's *darkness* to Earth's *light!*¹

Sol Plaatje, in his Mafeking siege diary expresses similar wonderment at the ingenuity and pluck of 'the English'. In Mafeking, he witnesses 'soldiers representing the wisdom of their nation in a most demonstrative manner. They not only invent

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 125.

miracles but know how to utilize them at random, under thunder and lightning, through all circumstances.’¹

Grendon’s has high regard for Britain’s political and military heroes. In the *Dream*, Milner is a ‘shepherd powerful in counsel’;² Rhodes the ‘great empire-builder’;³ and Baden-Powell a ‘gallant leader with a band | Of comrades few, and brave’.⁴ Buller is the ‘fierce Red Bull’;⁵ Kitchener a ‘sterner lord’;⁶ and General White the ‘Lion of Ladysmith’.⁷ Even the passage of years did not dampen Grendon’s admiration for larger-than-life agents of Empire. At an interracial meeting of the International Socialist League held in Johannesburg in 1916, he ‘proposed a motion of condolence at the death of Kitchener’, recently lost at sea when the cruiser *Hampshire* was sunk.⁸



In Part XXXI, Kruger observes how Cape women combine in protest against ‘the hard fate of [their] imprison’d folk’. A mystic ‘Voice’ accuses these women of abandoning their God-ordained feminine estate, and brazenly presuming to question the justice that Britannia metes out to her vanquished foes. These ‘Fair school maids, innocent, and free | From guile’ are evidently incapable of independent thought and action, since they are coached in their reckless rebellion by ‘evil priestesses’. Collectively, this Cape sorority—leaders and led—‘would adjudicate upon this strife, | Dictating what these [Boer] rebels’ fate shall be’.⁹ The ‘Voice’ expresses outrage:

The times are chang’d! The customs of this world
Like tatter’d garments upon dung-hills flung
To rot, are cast aside! *The times are chang’d!*
Seditious women sway’d by vain desires
Do loathe their natural state, and do against
Their better halves conspire! Ah, fickle beings,
Who boast but part of man, in vain ye strive
Your consorts to usurp! ’Tis *yours* to bow

¹ Plaatje, *Diary*, 61.

² *PKD* Pt XX, p. 59.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 123.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 69.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 90.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, 70.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 90.

⁸ Hirson & Williams, *Delegate for Africa*, 153–54. See Chapter 11.

⁹ *PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 100.

And to obey; but *man's* to rule, command
 And to defend! So long as Earth revolves,
 Frail creatures, ye man's helpmates must remain!
 Your portion this,—no more by God decreed!
 This—this was His intent, when He design'd,
 And fashion'd fickle Eve from Adam's bone.¹

The 'Voice' singles out for especial censure the unwarranted reproaches heaped upon Britannia by one unnamed but particularly thankless daughter who, according to the prose argument to Part XXXI, 'rose to fame under the protection of Britain's wing'. This is an obvious reference to novelist Olive Schreiner, whose 'fame' in Britain exceeded that of any other contemporary South African woman. The 'Voice' entreats Britannia to expunge the slur cast upon her reputation by this woman:

Wilt thou thy most illustrious name permit
 To be defam'd, and in the dust be soil'd
 By accusations of yon pois'nous dame,
 Whilst all the earth beholds, and stands amaz'd?
 Wilt thou approve, when she reviles thee thus?²

The 'Voice' goes on to quote the charges and dire warnings of this 'evil priestess'—this 'pois'nous dame'.³ With consummate effrontery, she counsels her Britannic Mother:

Tho' at thy feet now helpless, bleeding lies
 This devastated land,
 Some day will tardy Justice suddenly arise
 To smite with heavy hand!⁴

Since Grendon has Schreiner in his sights, we cannot dismiss the possibility of some professional jealousy on his part. Schreiner's meteoric rise to international literary prominence after the publication of *The Story of an African Farm* (1883) was without precedent in South African history. Grendon—conscious of his own talent—may have desired for himself some of the recognition conferred upon her.

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 100.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 101.

³ Incidentally, these stanzas furnish an excellent example of the *Dream's* layered narrative structure. Kruger reports the 'Voice', which in turn reports the expressions of the aberrant dame.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 101.

Swedenborg notes that some of his eighteenth-century contemporaries had mistakenly ‘imagined that women are equally capable of elevating the sight of their understanding, into the sphere of light in which men may be, ... an opinion to which they have been led by the writings of certain learned authoresses’. However, when they come into the spiritual world, it is revealed to them that what appeared ‘wisdom’ to them in the natural world, was merely ‘cleverness’. In this same paragraph of the *Conjugial Love*, Swedenborg states that the ‘wife cannot enter into the proper duties of the man; nor the man ... into the proper duties of the wife’.¹ It is not clear which ‘learned authoresses’ Swedenborg has in mind; Grendon’s mystic ‘Voice’ can only be referring to Schreiner who, as a woman, ought to play a supportive role to her ‘better half’, her ‘consort’, rather than intrude herself into politics and warfare—the proper theatre for masculine action, in Grendon’s view.

Schreiner was no stranger to controversy. In *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland* (1897), she turns allegory to good effect against the monstrous conduct of Rhodes’s imperial bully boys north of the Limpopo. Her eponymous protagonist meets up with a stranger on the veld, to whom he confides that Rhodes is ‘death on niggers’.² The trooper has yet to discover that his mysterious visitor is the materialized Christ. In Grendon’s *Dream*, Rhodes is the heroic Englishman who despite enormous personal danger, brokered peace with belligerent tribal leaders at a great *Indaba* in the Matopo Hills. In *Trooper Peter Halket*, on the other hand, he is the unseen guiding, invisible presence behind the British South Africa Company’s oppression of black Africans within its newly appropriated territories.

Publishing this damning exposé of Rhodes’ policies was an act of singular courage on Schreiner’s part. She knew full well that she might face libel action for doing so. Furthermore, her mother, her brother W. P. Schreiner—shortly to become Prime Minister of the Cape Colony—and others of her family, were vehement supporters of Rhodes, and felt that Olive’s anti-Rhodes stance was by definition also an anti-British one.³ Olive’s conscientious opposition to Rhodes alienated not merely strangers, but to some extent even those dearest to her. It seems a pity that a man of Grendon’s

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugial Love*, n. 175.

² Quoted in: First & Scott, *Olive Schreiner*, 228.

³ First & Scott, *Olive Schreiner*, 222–24.

moral courage could not have recognized the same quality in another artist who happened not to share his uncompromising support for the Imperial project.

For her critique of Britain's 'forward' policy in southern Africa, and her vociferous defence of Afrikaner interests during the South African War, Schreiner occupies an ideological position remote from Grendon's own. As a pamphleteer, speech-maker, and letter-writer, she was a prominent leader of the women's anti-war protest movement both before and during the War. Without naming Schreiner, the *Dream* sheds scorn on her, and lavishes praise on Rhodes. Given Rhodes's bad faith and abominable misconduct in Matabeleland from the time of the Rudd Concession in 1889, it seems difficult with hindsight to account for the high esteem in which he was held by mission-educated black South Africans such as Plaatje and Grendon.

Just as Grendon in the *Dream* seems oblivious to the brigandage of Rhodes and the BSA Company, he seems blind to the reprehensible conduct of British Army officials, particularly during the guerrilla phase of the South African War. For instance, he records—but in no way rebukes—the scorched-earth policy of Kitchener (1850–1916). Horatio Herbert Kitchener 'of Khartoum' was a hero at age thirty-eight when he re-won the Sudan for Britain. He was Chief of Staff to Earl Roberts during the first phase of the South African War, and took over supreme command of the British forces from his superior in 1900. Thereafter, he orchestrated British military operations during the protracted guerrilla phase of the War (1900–02). Under directions from Kitchener, British armies routinely destroyed Boer crops and farmsteads, herding Boer civilians, including women and children, into ill-prepared concentration camps, where thousands perished as a consequence of inadequate feeding and unsanitary, overcrowded conditions. Besides being 'stern', as the *Dream* describes him, Kitchener could also be brutal. Schreiner campaigned chiefly against annexation of the republics, farm burnings, and concentration camps.

In the *Dream*, the lady Truth foretells that Boer 'stubbornness will agitate | This youthful chieftain's [Kitchener's] breast',¹ and that Boer 'treachery t'ward generous foes' will rebound on them when he wreaks British vengeance:

¹ PKD, Pt XXIV, p. 70.

[T]errible will be your woes
 When *they* indulge in spoil!
 They'll hurl your dwellings to the ground;
 Your fields they'll devastate;
 Your orchards long with fruitage crown'd
 Will long be desolate.¹

All this vandalism is presented as an inescapable consequence of Britain's prosecution of her just war. Since they are unwilling to acknowledge defeat, Boer commandos and their families must necessarily discover that even their 'generous foe', Britannia, has limits to her patience.

Whereas 'Seditious women sway'd by vain desires'—women such as Olive Schreiner, Emily Hobhouse, and Marie Koopmans de Wet—occupied every available platform to rail against the inhumanity of the British concentration camps, Grendon's *Dream* pictures the camps as yet another evidence of Britannia's munificence. Truth prophesies the large-scale evacuation of Boer civilians from the Transvaal to places of succour in Natal and the Cape:

From hence will your distracted folk
 Be southward safely led
 To climes serener, where the stroke
 Of dearth, and famine dread
 No more will threaten. Foemen's food,
 And their protection kind
 Will save that helpless multitude
 From fell Destruction's wind.²

In June 1899, some months before the outbreak of war, Schreiner had again laid her reputation on the line by publishing in the periodical press a potent anti-war essay entitled 'An English South African's View of the Situation: Words in Season'. A run of 3000 copies sold out in five days after it appeared as a booklet in London.³ In order to forestall accusations of disloyalty, Schreiner begins by identifying the South African community of which she is a member: 'We are South Africans, but we are not

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 72.

² *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 72.

³ First & Scott, *Olive Schreiner*, 235–36.

South Africans only—we are Englishmen also.’¹ Like Grendon in his dedication ‘To Britannia’, she begins by declaring her allegiance to Britain—‘English’ and ‘British’ being roughly synonymous in contemporary usage.

She provides an insightful description of the process of white creolization—giving evidence of a nuanced perception rather lacking in Grendon’s *Dream*:

Shading away from us by imperceptible degrees, stand on one side of us those English South Africans who, racially English, yet know nothing or little personally of her [*i.e.*, England]; the grandparents, and not the parents of such men, have left England; they are proud of being Englishmen, proud of England’s great record and great names, as a man is proud of his grandmother’s family; but they are before all things essentially South African. They desire to see England increase and progress, and to remain in harmony and union with her while she does not interfere with internal affairs of South Africa, but they do not and cannot feel to her as those of us do whose love is personal and whose intellectual sympathies centre largely in England.²

For Schreiner, the issues confronting South Africa cannot be reduced—as in the subtitle of Grendon’s *Dream*—to oppositional pairings such as ‘corruption’ versus ‘justice’, ‘falsehood’ versus ‘truth’, ‘tyranny’ versus ‘liberty’, and ‘wrong’ versus ‘right’. Grendon means these four polar pairings to contradistinguish Boer and British modes of ruling Africa and Africans. Schreiner, however, sees a finely graded continuum of allegiance and identity that is forever susceptible to evolution and subversion. It is in Britain’s interests to deal circumspectly with South Africa. Loyalty is after all not fixed, but subject to flux.

Grendon tended to view all human processes as conflict between true and false principles in polar opposition. This way of seeing does not encourage nuanced insightfulness. In an editorial, he paraphrases Swedenborg by aphorizing that ‘everything in this world seems to have its opposite’.³ Swedenborg teaches that ‘every thing in the universe has its opposite’⁴ and that ‘all truth appears from relation to its opposites’.⁵ It is precisely in this manner that Grendon discerns the ‘truth’ of the South African War. Truth may well emerge in silhouette when foregrounded against falsity, but ‘everything in this world’ has also its *degrees, shades, and variations*.

¹ Schreiner, *An English South African’s View of the Situation*, 11.

² Schreiner, *An English South African’s View of the Situation*, 12.

³ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 425.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Earths in our Solar System*, n. 35.

Cognition that disregards these is surely flawed. In pursuing his preoccupation with opposites, Grendon often appears insensitive to tints and shades in the good–evil and truth–falsehood continua. In his near-fixation with contrariety, he resembles Blake who, in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, writes ‘Without Contraries is no progression’. Although Blake probably means much more than Grendon would have allowed, both men seem to have believed in the inevitability of conflict between opposing principles. To Grendon, it seemed that the South African War—an armed confrontation between incompatible ‘Boer’ and ‘British’ principles would bring about the real spiritual, moral, and social ‘progress’ that his country so desperately needed.

Similarities do exist between the *Dream* and *An English South African’s View of the Situation*. In the *Dream*, ‘a Voice’ observes that the Boers and Britons are ‘twin offshoots of the self-same stock’.¹ Schreiner’s tract also recognizes the ancestral links connecting Englishman and Boer. The Boers are scions of the Dutch—a people ‘in language, form, and feature resembling [the English], and in a certain dogged persistence, and an inalienable, indestructible air of personal freedom’.² Schreiner’s emphasis on such cognation invests the looming war between Afrikaners and Britons with a fratricidal quality.

In the *Dream*, Kruger claims that the Cape was ‘from our bosoms ... harshly torn | By them—the Britons—who in blood and tongue | With us are cognate’.³ Schreiner likewise observes that ‘England obtained the Cape as the result of European complications, and the South African people, without request or desire on their part, were given over to England’.⁴ Gladstone’s act in 1881 of restoring to the Transvaal the independence it had enjoyed before 1877 is described by Schreiner in *An English South African’s View of the Situation* as a ‘Most Heroic Moral Action’,⁵ and by Britannia in the *Dream* as ‘The noblest of my deeds’.⁶ Both texts treat ‘the terrible story of [the Voortrekkers’] struggles, the death of Piet Retief and his brave followers,

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 101.

² Schreiner, *An English South African’s View of the Situation*, 13.

³ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 2.

⁴ Schreiner, *An English South African’s View of the Situation*, 14.

⁵ Schreiner, *An English South African’s View of the Situation*, 16.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 56.

killed by treachery by the Zulu Chief, Dingaan, [and] the victory of the survivors over him, which is still commemorated by their children as Dingaan's Day'.¹

Despite these elements of correspondence, the anti-war tract and the pro-war epic diverge markedly as respects political stance. Schreiner demonstrates little sympathy for the *Uitlander* class—those foreign fortune-seekers who 'have no interest in [South Africa's] remote future, and only a commercial interest in its present';² the magnates and speculators who worm their way into political inner circles. She maintains that a British birthright does not entitle them to swamp the Transvaal *Volksraad* with their own men, as they would do if they were enfranchised. Grendon has little sympathy for the super-wealthy Randlords—'carrion-fowl', 'slaves of Lucre'³—and yet he appears to be more accommodative of the ordinary *Uitlanders* who, 'although they contributed vast sums of money to the State Treasury, ... were not allowed any share in the Government' of the Transvaal.⁴

Schreiner's character-typing of 'our Dutch fellow-South Africans' is more modulated and sympathetic than anything Grendon produces in his poetry or prose. It would surprise us, for instance, if Grendon were to write, as Schreiner does, that the Boers are 'at once the gentlest and the most determined of peoples', or that they display 'a large and generous response to affection and sympathy'.⁵

For Schreiner, the Boers occupy 'a country which by the might of their own right hand they ... won from savages and wild beasts'. This 'great northern land', their 'gallant little Republic ... is theirs, the best land on earth to them'.⁶ According to this schema, the interior was 'won' by whites—not 'stolen', as van Riebeeck makes plain in the *Dream*.⁷ The fact that the land's former proprietors were 'savages' would also seem to justify the territorial conquest. Coming from widely disparate cultural backgrounds, Grendon and Schreiner cannot be expected to read South Africa's past according to the same script. Each has a particular blind spot.

¹ Schreiner, *An English South African's View of the Situation*, 24.

² Schreiner, *An English South African's View of the Situation*, 66.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133.

⁴ 'Poor Personality', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁵ Schreiner, *An English South African's View of the Situation*, 19.

⁶ Schreiner, *An English South African's View of the Situation*, 19, 25.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 77.

Schreiner concedes that ‘the Dutch South African [has not] always dealt gently and generously with the native folks with whom he came into contact’, but she quickly adds the rider that ‘neither has any other white race of whom we have record in history’.¹ In the light of ‘terrible events of the last five years in South Africa’—the armed seizure of land both north and south of the Limpopo—Britons can no longer command the moral high ground when it comes to ‘Native’ policies in southern Africa. In fifty or one hundred years, Schreiner predicts, ‘our sons’ will have to render account for injustices against blacks performed by ‘Dutchmen and Englishmen together’.²

Schreiner sees it as disingenuous for Britons to cite Boer maltreatment of Africans as a *casus belli*—as Grendon effectively does in the *Dream*. In concluding her tract, however, she does commend to the notice of Transvalers the text at Leviticus 19:34, where they will learn that ‘the stranger that dwellest with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself’.³ As already noted, Grendon cites the same text, both in the *Dream* and in his *Ilanga* journalism.



Africans’ confidence that ‘British’ values would ultimately prevail came under increasing strain in the years immediately following the War. For Natal’s pro-Imperial *kholwa* class, in whose company Grendon found himself, as well as for blacks in the other South African territories, it became ever harder to ‘hold the faith’. The Treaty of Vereeniging (31 May 1902), which concluded the War and laid the groundwork for postwar reconstruction, included the highly contentious ‘Clause 8’ that put off any possibility of full citizenship rights for blacks in the former republics until those states were once more self-governing. In effect this meant that the decision to extend voting rights to blacks in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies would rest entirely with the already-enfranchised whites, most of whom were overtly racist. In effect, there would be no extension of civil and political rights to blacks in the former republics. Clause 8 represented major acquiescence on the part of British peace negotiators to the prejudices of former republicans. When once the War was over, few English-speaking colonials came out strongly in favour of complete legal and political equality

¹ Schreiner, *An English South African’s View of the Situation*, 26.

² Schreiner, *An English South African’s View of the Situation*, 27.

³ Schreiner, *An English South African’s View of the Situation*, 96.

for all races in South Africa, and few British statesmen were prepared to express themselves courageously and unambiguously on the subject.

The Peace of Vereeniging dealt an immense blow to black political aspirations.¹ It seemed that Britain had perfidiously reneged on her pre-war assurances. It all smacked of rank ingratitude, in the light of an untarnished record of loyalty to the Imperial masters. It was difficult for the black elite not to conclude that it had been left in the lurch by its British ‘protectors’. Nasson describes the ‘mounting disillusion of [the Cape’s] African and Coloured elites with a postwar outcome which saw the specific regional configurations of the Cape merging inexorably into the overarching political culture of a repressive racial state’.² And Comaroff contrasts the ‘sense of optimism so strongly evident’ in Plaatje’s Mafeking siege diary with the ‘grim pessimism about the future’ evident in his later writings.³

It is clear from his postwar poetry and journalism that Grendon’s pro-British optimism also sustained a battering. According to his dedicatory preface to the *Dream*, Britannia waged war with the Transvaal in order to ‘purge’ ‘This polluted Boer domain’.⁴ Less than three years after the War, Grendon expresses disappointment that the new Transvaal Colony has yet to be ‘purged of Boer prejudice and hate towards the natives’.⁵ The War had not achieved its objective.

¹ Warwick, *Black People and the South African War*, 164, 175.

² Nasson, *Abraham Esau’s War*, 189.

³ Plaatje, *Diary*, 11–12.

⁴ Dedication, p. vi.

⁵ ‘Bow Down You Dogs!’ *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

CHAPTER 7

WRESTLING ‘NATALIA’S MAMBA’

EDENDALE & OHLANGE

There be few like her, that have splinter’d the fangs
Of Natalia’s mamba, and its venom excis’d...¹



Grendon was present at the Battle of Bergendal in late August 1900,² and must have been discharged shortly thereafter. On 6 October, ‘Buller’s column, which had returned to Lydenburg on the 2nd, was broken up, as there seemed no further reason to retain the Natal Army as a separate command’.³ The protracted guerrilla phase of the South African War had not yet set in, and it was widely believed that the War was all but over. Around October, Grendon arrived at Edendale to take up the post of headmaster at the Native Training Institution (plate 7a).⁴ He would remain at Edendale for a little under three years.

The Edendale Institution was ‘beautifully situated upon the banks of the Umsunduze’, a few miles west of Pietermaritzburg. It enjoyed ‘the advantages of healthy surroundings’ combined with ‘those of easy accessibility’ to the colonial capital.⁵ The main building was double-storeyed. Its lower storey comprised three classrooms, staffroom, refectory, and kitchen; upstairs were three large dormitories with quarters for about sixty boys. The missionary’s residence stood apart.⁶

The school was known more formally as the ‘Nuttall Training Institution’ after its founder and first Governor, Wesleyan missionary, Ezra Nuttall, who was appointed

¹ ‘A Tribute to Miss Harriet Colenso: The staunchest friend of the Zulu Race’, part of Grendon’s epic, ‘Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand’ (*Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5).

² *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 117n.

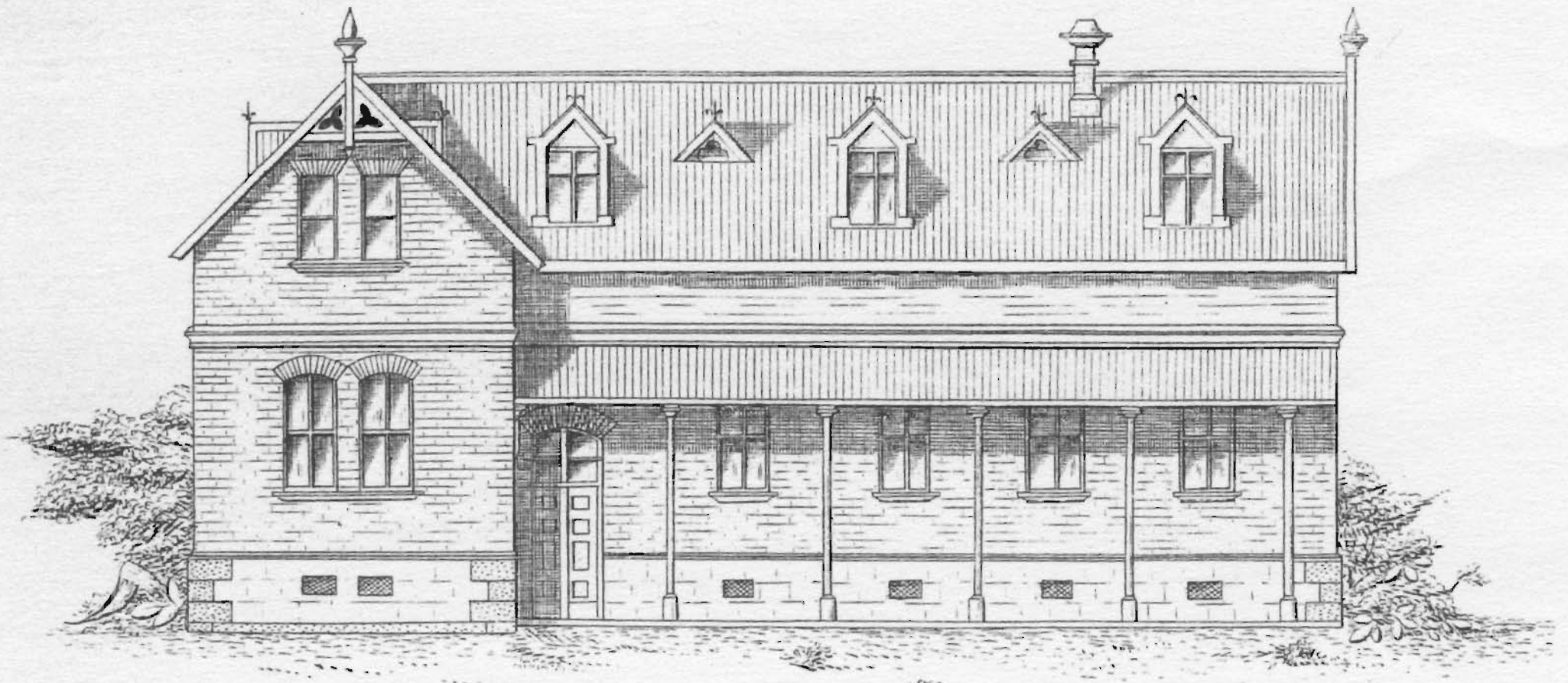
³ Amery, *Times History of the War in South Africa*, iv: 484.

⁴ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 75.

⁵ L. H. S. Wilkinson, ‘Nuttall Training Institution, Edendale’, *Native Teachers’ Journal* 3:1 (Oct. 1921)

⁶

⁶ *ibid.*; Msimang Papers: PC 14/1/2/2, p. 23.



Wesleyan Native Training Institution.

EDENDALE, NATAL.

Plate 7a: Front elevation of the Native Training Institution, at which Grendon was head-teacher (1900 to 1903).

Resident Missionary at Edendale in 1882. Building work commenced in 1883, and the first students were in harness by August of the following year.¹

Initially, the school was intended to train black youths as preachers, pastors, and primary-school teachers. By Grendon's time, its chief function was to prepare scholars to sit the 'native teachers' examination'. Students at Edendale were required to teach in mission schools for a minimum period of three years following graduation.² In 1900, there were forty-one pupils enrolled, including nineteen trainee teachers. None was under the age of twelve.³ In 1902, there were forty-eight pupils, including four under age twelve.⁴

Edendale was one of very few places in Natal—all of them mission-affiliated—where blacks might obtain a secondary education. It never achieved the status of Cape mission schools such as Lovedale, Healdtown, and Zonnebloem, but within Natal, it came to stand for the material advantages that modernity could bestow. The Institution turned out a small annual crop of teachers, clergymen, artisans, and clerks, who found employment throughout Natal and beyond its borders. Several influential players in the history of Swaziland's modernization—starting in the late nineteenth century—were Edendale men.⁵

Grendon's teaching must have been effective, because in examinations held at the end of 1902, three of his students received Class I certificates, while several others received Class II and III certificates.⁶ In December 1903, *Ilanga* published a Sesotho-language article on Natal's high schools for Africans, of which there were four for boys. The most outstanding of these, in terms of pass-rate, was Edendale's Native Training Institute, while it was still headed by 'Mr R. Grendon'. Since he left the school, the article continued, the standard of education had gone down.⁷



¹ Wilkinson, *op. cit.*, 5–6; NAB, SNA I/1/71, ref. 1883/722.

² Natal, *Native Affairs Commission, 1906–7*, 915.

³ Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1900*, G38–G39, G44.

⁴ Natal, *Report of the Superintendent of Education ... 1902*, 52.

⁵ SANAC iii: 234, 246; University of Natal, *Experiment at Edendale*, 6; Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 4.

⁶ Natal, *Report of the Superintendent of Education ... 1902*, 68.

⁷ 'Likolo tsa Natal', *Ilanga* 1:35 (4 Dec. 1903) 3–4.

Edendale had been a thriving industrial mission settlement even before the high school was established. In late 1859–early 1860, Hugo Hahn visited Natal to study some of its missions. According to surviving correspondence, he intended to visit the missionary James Allison and the Edendale mission station, and it is quite possible that he did so.¹ This is significant, because after a visit to Europe during which he promoted the idea of an industrial mission for Damaraland, he returned there in 1864 and established one at Otjimbingwe.² It is possible therefore that the idea of the Rhenish artisan colony at Otjimbingwe was conceived after Hahn visited Edendale. If this is the case, Grendon, who spent at least two years as a small boy at Otjimbingwe, may have found Edendale’s layout and ethos familiar in some respects.

Grendon’s first contact with members of the Edendale community was at Zonnebloem College, Cape Town. There was an ‘S. Mini’ from Edendale at the College in 1879. This is likely to have been the later headman—or ‘chief’—of the Edendale settlement, Stephen Mini. The Minis were an influential family in Natal’s *kholwa* politics; they were also substantial landholders in several places, including Polela (Bulwer) district of Natal, and more-distant Swaziland. Stephen was active in early Natal Native Congress (NNC) politics, and later in the early SANNC, even being nominated as a possible successor to its first President, John L. Dube. His brother, William Mini, together with Peter Msomi, Albert Molife, and Benjamin Dlamini—all of Edendale—arrived at Zonnebloem in February 1881, and Samuel Xaba arrived in April 1883. Albert Molife’s father was Jabez Molife, one of very few black Natalians to achieve the vote. During his brief stay at St Alban’s College, Pietermaritzburg, in 1889, Grendon will again have had contact with several Edendale *kholwa*.



It may have been while he was headmaster at Edendale that Grendon’s students first assigned him an isiZulu nickname, ‘Nongamu’—later rendered ‘Longamu’ in siSwati. According to one who knew him, the name was a tribute to his ‘rather short and clear

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 229: Hugo Hahn to his wife Emma, Port Natal [Durban], 1 Dec. 1859.

² Peltola, *Nakambale*, 41.

and precise' teaching style.¹ The sobriquet presumably derives from the verb-stem, *nonga*: to 'do finely; make nice or nicely'.² The name was apt. In one of his editorials, Grendon urges Africans to 'aim at perfection in the least of things',³ and his granddaughter, Isabel Tshabalala, remembers her mother telling her that Grendon used to say: 'Everything you do, do it right, do it perfectly.' Do it 'perfectly ... with concentration'.⁴

Grendon's time at Edendale was happy and productive. In verse, he speaks of 'beauteous Edendale',⁵ of a 'Fair hamlet', and a 'black man's paradise'.⁶ In fact, so lovely is Edendale and its setting, that 'all Natal boasts not a spot | To match this hamlet 'mongst the hills'.⁷ Grendon's Edendale years were characterized by feverish creative activity. His considerable literary output during this period suggests that he was propelled by enormous energy. This was the period during which he completed *Paul Kruger's Dream*, *Tshaka's Death*, and other poems.

At Edendale, Grendon's literary genius found both the impulse and the opportunity for expression. His distinctive approach to teaching was unhampered by his superior. He had colleagues whom he admired and in whose company he thrived. In October 1904—by which time he had taken up a new post as headmaster of John Dube's Ohlange College—he could look back with nostalgia to the Edendale interlude:

Two summers, marr'd by but one brief dark cloud,
Themselves have stamp'd upon my memory—
Two summers!—into whose brief span did crowd
A host of joys that still do live in me—
Two summers!—on whose endless flight entranced
I gaze, as they recede in distance pale—
Two summers!—which continually enhanced
The unsurpassèd loveliness of Edendale.⁸

¹ H. Selby Msimang quoted in: Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 75. Grendon was using 'Nongamu' as a pen-name just prior to his arrival at Ohlange in late 1903 ('A Plea for Justice', *Ilanga* 1:24 (18 Sept. 1903) 4).

² Bryant, *Zulu-English Dictionary*, 440.

³ 'Umdlwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

⁵ 'Adieu to the Rev. W. Cliff and Family', *Ipepa* 3:446 (22 May 1903) 3.

⁶ 'A Second Warning to Edendale', *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

⁷ 'A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁸ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

It appears that he was earning well, too, and this may have enabled him to fund the printing of both *Paul Kruger's Dream* and *Tshaka's Death* as separate publications. In 1902, official records state that there were two 'European' teachers at the Institution, earning £300 per annum—presumably £150 each. There was also one 'Native' teacher, earning £82 per annum.¹ If this is correct, then Grendon as head teacher was drawing a salary according to the scale for 'Europeans'. This could only have been possible with the resident missionary's connivance. Records from the 1890s show that white mission school teachers on average tended to earn between £150–£200, while blacks earned in the region of £60–£70 per annum.²

In 1904, the Colony's Education Department published the directive that, in respect of 'Training Schools for Teachers', no grants in aid would be made, 'unless the principal teacher is a European'.³ Grendon was not a 'European', and yet the Institution *did* receive a grant from the Government. Perhaps this irregularity had something to do with his dismissal after the arrival of a new missionary in 1903. Since Edendale was one of very few 'Training Schools for Teachers' in Natal—they could be numbered on the fingers of one hand—it is hard to stifle a suspicion that the 1904 directive came in response to the circumstances behind Grendon losing his position as 'principal teacher'.



It is not clear where Grendon lived during this period. He speaks of 'my room' in a poem dated April 1903.⁴ This may have been at the Institution, but it is equally possible that he stayed at the home of his brother William (plate 7b), 301 Greyling Street, Pietermaritzburg. William's name first appears at this address in the *Natal Almanac* of 1895—information for which would have been gathered the previous year.⁵

William married Lena Maria Barry (born 28 May 1865; plate 7d), who, according to her granddaughter, Julinda Hoskins, came from King William's Town and was the

¹ Natal, *Report of the Superintendent of Education ... 1902*, 52.

² Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1893–94*, G22; Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1897*, G38; Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1898*, G50; Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1899*, G38–G39; Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1900*, G38–G39.

³ Natal, *Education Department Directory... 1904*, 38.

⁴ 'A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁵ *Natal Almanac 1895*, directory section, 103.

Plate 7b: William Grendon (1865 to 1921), elder brother to Robert.



natural daughter of an unknown black woman and a white dignitary, ‘Judge Barry’. When and where William and Lena’s marriage took place is unknown, but their son William Joseph was born on 6 May 1892,¹ so they were probably married prior to their move to Natal. Lena was accompanied to Natal by an older woman named Julinda van Breda, whom family members have speculated may actually have been her mother.²

William, a carpenter, enjoyed the franchise, although coloured.³ He lived not many doors from number 323—the offices of *Ipepa lo Hlanga*, which published several of Robert’s poems. On 17 April 1901, Robert gives his brother’s Greyling Street address as his own, in a letter to the *Natal Witness*.⁴ This may have been no more than prudence on his part, however, since the subject of his letter was politically sensitive, and an Edendale address would have prejudiced some readers against him.

Mary Ann Grendon (plate 7c) also lived with her brother William and sister-in-law Lena, to whom she was deeply attached.⁵ Although dark-complexioned, Mary Ann spoke with the cultured voice of a white society lady. Younger generations of her family recall her as ‘staunch, upright’, ‘very English’, ‘very Church of England’, and the real ‘matriarch’ in the Grendon family.⁶ Because of her superior education and her intimate familiarity with Victorian parlour manners, Mary Ann’s services as a domestic helper and housekeeper were in constant requisition. At various times she worked for some of Maritzburg’s leading burgesses.⁷ ‘Judge Hathorn’ as Julinda

¹ J. Hoskins notebook 2; interviews: Valerie Grantham, 16 Nov., 15 Dec. 2005.

The only ‘Judge Barry’ that research has identified is Jacob Dirk Barry (1832–1905). He was the sixth child of Joseph Barry, the prosperous founder of the firm of Barry and Nephews, which flourished in the southern Cape during the mid-nineteenth century. Jacob Dirk Barry was educated at Swellendam, and at Cheltenham College, England, thereafter going up to Trinity College, Cambridge. He graduated with distinction in 1854, and was called to the Bar four years later.

In December 1859, he became an advocate of the Supreme Court, Cape Town. He practised there until 1865, when he transferred to Grahamstown and began to serve the Eastern Districts Court. If he is identical with the ‘Judge Barry’ of Grendon family memory, then his departure from Cape Town coincided more-or-less with his daughter Lena’s birth.

In 1867, he married Charlotte Merriman of Grahamstown, whose brother John X. Merriman would later become Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. Barry himself was knighted in 1878 for services rendered to the Crown while in Griqualand West. He became Judge President of the Eastern Cape Division in 1880 (*SESA*, ii:186; *DSAB*, iv:19).

² Interview: Valerie Grantham, 15 Dec. 2005.

³ *Natal Government Gazette* 53:3189 (23 July 1901) 1072.

⁴ ‘Black Supremacy’, *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6.

⁵ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

⁶ Interviews: Emily de Lang, 26 Jan. 2007; Lena Maryann Dunnett, 9 Nov. 2005; Cyril Hoskins, 12 Nov. 2005.

⁷ J. Hoskins notebook 2.

**Plate 7c: Miss Mary Ann
Grendon (c.1862 to 1944), elder
sister to Robert.**



Plate 7d: Lena Grendon (born 1865), wife to William Grendon



Hoskins describes him, was likely Kenneth Howard Hathorn, K.C. (born 1849), President of the Natal Law Society, M.L.A. for Maritzburg City from 1901 to 1906, and a puisne judge.¹ ‘O’Brien’ was probably William John O’Brien, O.B.E., M.P., J.P., an Irish-born accountant and conveyancer, who was twice Mayor of Pietermaritzburg (1903–04, and 1904–05).² Mary later worked as a housekeeper for ‘the Walters’—likely Harold Ernest Walter (born 1866), who came to Natal in 1901, as aide-de-camp to the Colonial Governor (1901–04).³ One wonders what Mary Ann overheard in these households, and how much of it she may have shared with her brother, Robert. In her mature years, and prior to her retirement, Mary worked at St Cross Anglican convent and orphanage in Longmarket Street.⁴

A red-letter day during Grendon’s stay in Pietermaritzburg-Edendale was the official visit on 14 August 1901 of the Duke of Cornwall and York—who was later crowned King George V. The Duke officially opened Maritzburg’s newly-completed Town Hall on that day. According to Grendon, he also received a ‘deputation consisting of the Chiefs and Representatives of the Zulu People’. In 1904, Grendon recalls the royal visit, and quotes with much appreciation the Duke’s speech to the Zulu delegation, which he contrasts with the notoriously racist address of a colonial magistrate, John W. Cross, to Africans in his division (Greytown). Grendon publishes the two speeches side-by-side, and calls upon readers ‘to note the haughty, harsh and threatening spirit that runs through the speech of the Magistrate, and the manly, sympathetic, and encouraging feeling that pervades the address of the Prince. The former is characterized by a leonine ferocity; the latter by a princely, and majestic tenderness.’⁵ The stark contrast affords Grendon an opportunity to reinforce the putative superiority of the imperial or metropolitan over the colonial mode of treating subject peoples.



¹ *Natal Who’s Who* (1906), 87. *Who’s Who in Natal* (1933), 118.

² *Natal Who’s Who* (1906), 150; *Who’s Who in Natal* (1933), 185.

³ *Natal Who’s Who* (1906), 209.

⁴ Interviews: Lena Maryann Dunnett, 9 Nov. 2005; Valerie Grantham, 16 Nov. 2005; Natal Diocesan Archives: Sisters of Saint John the Divine, manuscript diary, 23 and 25 April 1944 (the last source records Mary Ann Grendon’s death and funeral).

⁵ ‘The Tiger and the Lion’, *Ilanga* 2:45 (19 Feb. 1904) 4.

When Grendon arrived at Edendale in late 1900, the incumbent Wesleyan missionary and Governor of the ‘Boys’ Training Institution’ was William Cliff (1847–1922),¹ who appears to have taken up his post in 1899.² Born in Cheshire, he was a Wesleyan missionary in the Transkei just prior to his first marriage, which took place in Pietermaritzburg in 1883.³ Both before and after his spell at Edendale, he conducted mission work at Ladysmith⁴ and Newcastle in northern Natal, where he had overall spiritual oversight of such Edendale-spawned communities as Driefontein, Kleinfontein, and Watersmeet.⁵ His name appears in the files of the Native Affairs Department during the 1890s, in support of petitions by individual *kholwa* men for exemption from the Colony’s Code of Native Law.⁶

During the four years he served at Edendale, Cliff was recognized as ‘an earnest preacher’ who loved his congregation. He was valued for his ‘lucid, effective, and most homely exposition of God’s Word’.⁷ It is also evident that he and Grendon enjoyed the best of relationships because, in verse written in 1904, Grendon describes him as the ‘angel-hearted Cliff’ and ‘our respected pilot’.⁸

Grendon’s colleagues at the Edendale Institution were the teacher Simon Nkosi and his spinster sister, Michal Nkosi, ‘who for many years filled the position of matron’.⁹ ‘To angel-hearted Cliff subordinate, | Our duties we discharged harmoniously’, Grendon sings in elegy to Michal.¹⁰ Under Cliff’s Governorship, Grendon thrived. Cliff allowed the headmaster much latitude in respect of his

¹ NAB, MSCE, ref. 7430/1922.

² *Natal Almanac 1901*, 519; *Natal Almanac 1903*, 1st pagination, 264, and 2nd pagination, 15; Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1899*, G38–G39. Cliff is mentioned, along with Stephen and William G. Mini, in connection with a synod meeting at Ndaleni, in early 1899 (‘Impawana’, *Imvo* 14:741 (23 Jan. 1899) 2).

³ NAB, MSCE, ref. 7430/1922; *Natal Witness* (17 Feb. 1883).

⁴ *Who’s Who in Natal* (1933), 53.

⁵ Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1894–95*, G30; Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1896*, G32; Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1897*, G38; Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1898*, G52; *Natal Almanac 1909*, 709.

⁶ NAB SNA 1891/260; SNA 1891/557; SNA 688/1896; SNA 680/1897; SNA 2246/1897.

⁷ ‘Notes from Edendale’ *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁸ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁹ Simon is described as the elder son (‘*indodana enkulu*’) of Mr Benjamin Nkosi or Edendale in: ‘Ezase Jozi’, *Ilanga* 14:665 (3 March 1916) 2. Michal is described as the ‘eldest daughter of Mr Benjamin Nkosi of Edendale’ in: ‘The Old Year and the New’, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3. Grendon refers to ‘Simon, thou, and I’ in an elegiac address to Michal (‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4).

¹⁰ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4; ‘The Old Year and the New’, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

pedagogical practices and the syllabus he chose to follow.¹ There is also reason to suppose that Grendon may have shared Swedenborgian ideas with the Nkosi siblings. ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’ refers to ‘The Truths concerning Heav’n and Hell’ which Michal was ‘anxious to discern’ when she and Grendon last met.²

In addition to teaching, Simon Nkosi was also steward of the Methodist society at Edendale.³ *Ipepa* reported in April 1903 on wonderful progress taking place at the Institution under the instruction of Grendon and Nkosi. More boys had enrolled than during the previous year; they were enthusiastic and intently focused on their studies. It is reported that Nkosi had passed a high-level examination under the Cape Education Department—becoming the first from a Natal school to do so.⁴ In late July 1903, he attended a meeting of the Natal Native Teachers Association, held at Ohlange.⁵

Cliff’s benign administration came to an end when he and his family left in May 1903. On the evening of the 6th, the Edendale community staged a farewell gathering, at which laudatory addresses were read and gifts presented. ‘The proceedings were charmed by the rendering of a few musical pieces by the girls of the Primary School and a few of the boys of the Institution—Mr Robt. Grendon the headmaster very ably presiding at the organ.’⁶ The head-boy also read a poem in Cliff’s honour that had been composed by Grendon.



Edendale’s history represents something of an anomaly in Natal. It was founded as a mission station, independent of all missionary bodies, by James Allison, in 1851. Allison had worked under the Wesleyan Missionary Society from the early 1830s—amongst the Tlokwa, the Griqua, and the Rolong, at remote stations far north of the Orange River, in what later became the Orange Free State. His keen interest in the material as well as spiritual advancement of his converts and the many others who adhered to his mission community, led a large number to trail him—first when he

¹ ‘Notes from Edendale’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

² ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ipepa* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ ‘Notes from Edendale’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁴ ‘Izikolo’, *Ipepa* 3:442 (24 April 1903) 2.

⁵ ‘Umhlangano wa oTisha: Natal Native Teachers Association’, *Ilanga* 1:18 (1 Aug. 1903) 2.

⁶ ‘Notes from Edendale’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

established a mission station at Mahamba on the Zulu-Swazi frontier in the mid-1840s, and then to Natal in 1846–47, when civil war in Swaziland rendered mission work there perilous.

Initially, Allison established a Wesleyan mission station at Indaleni near the site of what was shortly to become the village of Richmond. A breach with the parent body of his mission in London prompted him to strike out on his own, and he and his mission community purchased a 6,123-acre farm, 'Wilverdient', just west of the Pietermaritzburg townlands. Late in 1851, Allison and 450 loyal adherents of his mission, settled at the new spot, in a lovely valley they renamed 'Edendale'. Allison's station quickly became a model missionary village, and was greatly admired by visitors. The village itself was named Georgetown, in honour of Sir George Grey, Governor of the Cape and one of Edendale's benefactors.¹ Grendon was well-acquainted with the history of this unique, multiethnic community, and he refers to Allison's pioneering missionary activities in Swaziland in a 1916 *Abantu-Batho* article.²

An eye-witness describes Edendale as it appeared *circa* 1860:

These people have their substantial stone dwellings, and well ploughed fields, with the power of buying or selling at pleasure. They have also erected a church, school-house, and watermill. Every day witnesses the arrival of waggon loads of Edendale produce at the Maritzburg market. It is quite a sight to see the waggons returning, on a summer's evening, packed with the wives and families of these Edendale Caffres; all clad in British manufactured goods, and carrying on their countenances an unmistakeable air of contentment and joyous prosperity.³

Besides the production of maize and vegetables for sale, Edendale accommodated numerous artisans—brick-makers, carpenters, masons, thatchers, hedgers, *etc.*—all of whose skills were in requisition in and around Pietermaritzburg. In the early years, before colonial officials spun a legislative web to paralyze economic competition from Africans, Edendale's black settler population profited from proximity to Pietermaritzburg markets, where surplus produce could be sold, and consumer items purchased. With their earnings, the inhabitants of Edendale acquired the trappings of Western-style modernity: education for themselves and their children, more freehold

¹ University of Natal, *Experiment at Edendale*, 1.

² 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

³ Mason, *Zululand*, 32.

land, substantial square-built dwellings, livestock, ploughs, wagons, Western furnishings, dress, and food items. Several of the valley's residents maintained trade, cultural, and familial links with distant regions, from the Transvaal and Swaziland in the north to Pondoland and East Griqualand in the south.

From the start, 'Edendale was never a tribal community'.¹ It comprised Swazi, Hlubi, Sotho, Zulu, part-Khoi, and other ethnic groupings. Together, they built a reputation for industry, temperance, and progressive ambition. The community's cohesiveness was predicated upon a strong Christian ethic, the charismatic personality of the first resident missionary, and a determination to achieve prosperity and elevated status within the new colonial order.

Acculturated and propertied Edendale *kholwa* (Christian 'believers') were at the forefront of a pressure-group in the mid-1860s that claimed—and obtained—the right to petition for exemption from Natal's Code of Native Law. This occurred with the passing of Act No. 11 of 1865, which extended qualified 'civil rights and legal equality with Europeans' to a select minority of educated and 'respectable' blacks.² The authorities bestowed 'exemption' grudgingly and on the basis of individual petition only. The names of the few successful applicants were published from time to time in the *Government Gazette*. In 1904, Grendon could write that,

out of a total population of 460,000 in Natal, the list of exempted natives contains only 498 names of fathers, whose exemption covers also that of their wives and those children who entered exemption with their parents. ... [S]carcely half a thousand out of the 460,000 souls is no ornament to the colony which boasts itself, to be one of the brightest jewels in the British Crown.³

In the first decades of its existence, the Edendale community was able to accumulate wealth and property.⁴ From the 1860s, Edendale's *kholwa* began to found daughter communities in other parts of Natal. These second-generation settlements operated more-or-less along the communal lines of Edendale itself. Sheila Meintjes describes this process as the Edendale 'diaspora'.⁵

¹ University of Natal, *Experiment at Edendale*, 5–6.

² University of Natal, *Experiment at Edendale*, 6.

³ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:95 (10 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁴ University of Natal, *Experiment at Edendale*, 7.

⁵ Meintjes, 'Edendale 1850–1906', 200, 211, 240.

In the 1870s, the wider Edendale community was seized with evangelical fervour, and formed *Unzondelelo*—the ‘Natives’ Home Missionary Society’. Although the movement fell under white supervision, it was a purely African initiative aimed at bringing the Gospel to the heathen in places as remote as Zululand and Swaziland. Daniel Msimang, the grandfather of the later political activists, Richard W. and H. Selby Msimang, was a prime mover behind *Unzondelelo*’s establishment, and in the early 1880s he personally re-established a Methodist mission at Mahamba.¹

The earliest and most successful of the Edendale offshoots was the farm Driefontein, north of Ladysmith in the Klip River Division. Driefontein’s inhabitants were widely acknowledged as ‘respectable’ and ‘progressive’. It was purchased in 1867 by a black syndicate from Edendale, and then subdivided into village and agricultural plots. The *induna* was Johannes Hlabati Kumalo, who had served Shaka’s regiments as an attendant in his youth.² In time, the name ‘Driefontein’ came to include a complex of six adjacent farms, or a total of 38,000 acres which the community held in freehold. ‘Fully one-third of the total acreage’ was ‘under cultivation’, and the valuation of the property—not including structures and other improvements—was in the region of £47,000 to £50,000 in 1903.³

Grendon clearly took an active interest in this remarkably prosperous and ‘progressive’ community: he mentions it on several occasions in his *Ilanga* journalism.⁴ Twice he refers to an exchange that occurred between the Colonial Governor, ‘Sir Henry McCallum and Chief Johannes Kumalo, of Driefontein, sometime in 1901’, in which Kumalo expressed the desire of many Christianized blacks that the Colony’s dual legal system—Roman-Dutch Law for whites, and ‘Native’ Law for all but a few blacks—be abolished, and that there be only one law for all. As Grendon reports the exchange, it went like this:

¹ Woollam, ‘Coming of Age’, 32–33.

² Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 69.

³ ‘The Governor at Driefontein’, *Ipepa* 3:455 (21 Aug. 1903) 3. In 1900, Ezra Msimang gave the size of the property as 36,000 acres (Webb and Wright, *James Stuart Archive*, iv: 47).

⁴ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 3; ‘The Native Question’, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3; ‘Native Abominations’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4; ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:95 (10 Feb. 1905) 4.

SCENE:—THE COURTYARD, LADYSMITH.

Chief Kumalo: ‘There is one stumbling-block placed in our way by the Government. Whenever there is occasion for us natives to go to the front, we go together with white men; we fight side by side with them. On our return we find that there are two different sets of laws. One for the whites, and another for the blacks.’

Sir Henry McCallum: ‘It is right that conquered nations should be governed by laws which suit them.’

Chief Kumalo: ‘No, Sir, it cannot be so. We are ruled by one King, and governed by one Governor. How then are there two systems of laws? We fled from Zululand, and its native laws, and sought the Queen’s protection, wherein we found comfort and rest; through which circumstance we require native laws no longer. And lastly, as we are subject to one King, we are desirous that we should be governed by the one law of that King.’¹

Grendon himself repeatedly slams Natal’s racially-differentiated legal system. There can be no ‘harmony’ while ‘one section of the community [is] governed by one set of laws, [and] the other section is ruled by another code’.² Blacks, he says, will ‘continue to raise [their] voice until this abomination is abolished’.³



From the 1840s until his resignation as ‘Secretary for Native Affairs’ (SNA) three decades later, policies affecting Natal’s African inhabitants were shaped very largely by one man—Theophilus Shepstone (1817–93). So much was this the case, that Natal’s colonial race policy has come to be described as ‘Shepstonian’. Shepstone had extensive dealings with several members of the Edendale community, and employed some of them as messengers to outlying chiefdoms, and as ambassadors to independent rulers residing still further afield.

His dealing with the autochthonous people of Natal bears closer affinity to late-nineteenth-century *Realpolitik* than to the earlier humanitarianism that inspired the Cape Colony’s liberal tradition. Shepstone dealt with contingencies as they arose—often doing what was expedient rather than following any overarching, high moral

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 3. This dialogue is quoted again in: ‘The Native Question’, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3. Cf. also: ‘One Law for All’, *Ipepa* 3:438 (12 July 1901) 4—an anonymous article conceivably authored by Grendon.

² ‘The Native Question’, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3. See also: ‘Natives and Law’, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 3.

³ ‘Natives and Crime’, *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.

principle. He used existing tribal structures and manufactured new ones to keep Africans from forming cohesive opposition to white minority rule. He had a genius for obfuscation and for manipulating the fears of blacks and of white colonists; when he felt that occasion warranted doing so, he acted ruthlessly to restore the balance of fear.

While some of his faithful black retainers reportedly held Shepstone in high regard,¹ others recognized his divide-and-rule stratagems for what they were. John Kumalo, father to Grendon's associate Solomon Kumalo, said of Shepstone in 1900 that 'he was inimical to the highest interests of the native race. He advocated a separation between Europeans and natives instead of promoting unity.'²

In *Paul Kruger's Dream*, Shepstone is called by his Nguni sobriquet, 'Somtseu'. In a footnote, the poet expands upon this name: 'Somtseu—"Nimrod or mighty hunter", is the name of Sir Theophilus Shepstone acquired whilst he was diplomatic agent at Fort Peddie. By such he was known to the natives of South Africa.'³ Somtseu does *not* mean 'Nimrod or mighty hunter'—of which fact Grendon is well aware—but he is making a far-reaching critical comment about Shepstone's administration, by likening him to the founder of ancient Babylon—'Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord'.⁴ In *Paradise Lost*, Milton describes Nimrod as a cruel, murderous tyrant—a man

Of proud, ambitious heart, who, not content
With fair equality, fraternal state,
Will arrogate dominion undeserved
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of Nature from the Earth—
Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game)
With war and hostile snare such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled
Before the Lord.⁵

¹ 'Obituary: Late Mr John Gama', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

² Webb and Wright, *James Stuart Archive*, i:216.

³ *PKD*, Pt VIII, p. 25n. Grendon derives this explanation of 'Somtseu' from Russell, *Natal: the Land and Its Story* (1902), 161.

⁴; Gen. 10:9.

⁵ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, XII. 24–34.

That Grendon had all these Miltonic associations in mind in linking the name of Shepstone to that of Nimrod, is evident from one of his editorials, in which he warns against warmongers—‘people whose desire is to see war, in order that they may reap pecuniary advantages thereby. Such characters fill the pages of history from the days of Nimrod to this present day.’¹ Grendon considers Shepstone to have been a warmonger. This view was shared by some of his contemporaries. Selby Msimang, whom Grendon knew, was told by his father—also an Edendale man—that ‘the Zulu War was provoked by’ Shepstone.²



In April 1903, John L. Dube—writing in the third number of his new paper, *Ilanga lase Natal*—records his impressions of a recent visit to Driefontein.³ There he met—apparently by appointment—with Grendon, Simon Nkosi, and Solomon Kumalo (died 1904), the pioneer editor of the defunct *Inkanyiso yase Natal*, who by this time was an assistant compound manager on a Witwatersrand gold-mine.⁴

Dube, who had never before visited Driefontein, was thrilled at everything he witnessed there. He detrained at the Besters Station and walked what must have been a considerable distance to the Driefontein farm complex. Once there, he called at the home of Simeon (or ‘Simon’) Kambule, who, although a Driefontein resident, was also one of Edendale’s largest absentee land-owners.⁵ Having established himself at Kambule’s house, he sent for ‘Messrs. Sol. Kumalo, Robert Grendon and Simon Nkosi’ to join him. ‘One who knows these [three men] understands that I did not feel lonely’, he writes in Zulu. ‘Mr Kambule lives in a beautiful house which is like a white man’s house, even a better one.’ Dube notes that Esther Kambule, Simeon’s helpmate, was a particularly competent housewife. She must also have been a plucky woman, because during the recently-concluded War, she had supplied George Xaba and Qhoto Kubheka with the wherewithal to sabotage the railway line between the Besters and Brakvaal Stations—which by then were in Boer hands.⁶ At that time,

¹ ‘Freedom is Love!’ *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

² Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 168.

³ ‘Uku Hambela Kwami e Driefontein (Emhlanini)’, *Ilanga* 1:3 (24? April 1903) 1.

⁴ SANAC, iv: 853; ‘The Old Year and the New’, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

⁵ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 354.

⁶ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 381–82.

Simeon, who oversaw a party of scouts gathering intelligence for the British Army, was holed up in besieged Ladysmith.¹

Simeon's father, Elijah Kambule, was a military hero who perished during a skirmish in the Bushman's River Pass during the Langalibalele Campaign of 1873. He had endangered his own life while making a futile attempt to save the injured Colonel Durnford. His name is inscribed on a monument in central Pietermaritzburg.² Grendon refers to Elijah's heroism, when asks rhetorically of a polemical adversary who has impugned the 'loyalty' of Christianized Africans:

Who, and what were they who died for the British name at Bushman River Pass? Who, and what were they who laid down their lives for Queen and Country, and violated the sacred law of kinship by fighting against their own blood throughout the Zulu Campaign? Who, and what were they, who during the late Boer War laid down their lives, as twice recorded hitherto? Against their own blood they willingly took up arms in order to prove their loyalty to the British. Against the Boers how violent was their feeling?

Was that not proof enough to T. B. [Grendon's adversary] of the native's attachment to his British employer? If T. B. has eyes let him prove their power of vision by finding out the monument erected opposite the Town Hall P. M. Burg to the memory of heroes who fell at Bushman River's Pass. One amongst the marble figures on that monument is a veritable nigger.³

It is not clear what brought Grendon, Dube, and the others to Driefontein. Dube seems to offer a clue when he states that he 'with the other buyers, arrived at the same time to inspect the matters of the land'. It seems possible then that there was to be a land auction, and that this had drawn together men from as far afield as Johannesburg (Solomon Kumalo) and Ohlange near the coast (Dube).

In August 1903, the Colonial Governor, Sir H. McCallum, paid an official visit to Driefontein to show appreciation for the part that black scouts from that settlement had played in the South African War.⁴ In answering an address from the community, McCallum stated that it 'was the habit with most people to only speak of loyalty. This cannot be said of the people of Driefontein. They had shown theirs in deeds.' Before

¹ Meintjes, 'Edendale 1850–1906', 380a, 381.

² Meintjes, 'Edendale 1850–1906', 369.

³ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4. Grendon appears to conflate two monuments—one to the fallen in the 1873 campaign and the other to the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879.

⁴ 'The Governor at Driefontein', *Ipepa* 3:455 (21 Aug. 1903) 3; 'Notes on the Governor's Visit to Driefontein', *Ipepa* 3:456 (28 Aug. 1903) 3; 'The Governor at Driefontein (continued)', *Ipepa* 3:457 (4 Sept. 1903) 3.

leaving, he reassured the scouts that the medals they had been promised would be forthcoming.¹ R. C. A. Samuelson, who led the scouts prior to and during the War, later wrote with deep regret of the unfulfilled promises made by the Government at this time:

Sir H. McC[a]llum promised that the Government would build a large school at Driefontein, to show how the loyalty and progress of the people was appreciated. That promise was not carried out on the ground that only one man, Robert Mtembu, answered the call to serve against Bambata in 1906. But it was the fault of the Government that this loyal tribe did not go against Bambata, for the Government had refused to grant the Boer War Medal to these Scouts, who had, in consequence, lost faith in the Government—and no wonder.²

As Samuelson remarks, Natal's Government had proposed establishing an Industrial School at Driefontein in 1903. The sum of £1,500 that it intended investing in the project was not 'over generous' and, in the event, 'the scheme fell through—as did an attempt to revive the plan ten years later'.³ Early in 1905, Grendon refers to the Government's unfulfilled promise of a 'large school' to be built at Driefontein in recognition of the military service rendered by the men of the community:

We heard whisperings of great projects that were to be commenced at Watersmeet [one of the Driefontein farms], where a site had been selected for the purpose of building a Government School for the benefit of the natives. ... But so far they have been mocked and only the bare site at Watersmeet exists to satisfy the expectations of those who bequeathed the ground whereon the proposed school was to be built. We cannot say for we do not know how far the matter has advanced, but we should not be surprised to learn that the project has been shelved.⁴

In Samuelson's and in Grendon's remarks, we find a possible clue to Grendon's presence at Driefontein in 1903, together with at least two other leading black educators—Nkosi and Dube. The land which Dube implies was to be sold may relate in some way to the 'proposed school', and the visit may have been for the purpose of selecting a suitable site for it.

During his Natal years, 1900–05, Grendon took an active interest in the lives and changing fortunes of mission-dwellers, such as those at Edendale and Driefontein. He was acutely aware, for instance, of the mounting ill will of white colonists toward

¹ 'The Governor at Driefontein (continued)', *Ipepa* 3:457 (4 Sept. 1903) 3.

² Samuelson, *Long, Long Ago*, 148–49.

³ Dodd, *Native Vocational Training*, 64.

⁴ 'Mr Barnett's Lecture', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3.

educated Africans with assimilationist aspirations. The ‘progressive’ African found himself in an invidious position, as Grendon points out: ‘The Mission Station native is verily a most unfortunate creature. When he seeks to follow, and walk in, the path of truth he is scorned by both the un-Christian white, and the heathen of his own race. If he does the opposite he is likewise reviled.’¹

Many whites were also deeply resentful of the comparative material prosperity and independence of Christianized Africans. The *kholwa* resisted attempts to force them into the labour market, the terms of which they knew to be dictated by white employers. Edendale has been described as ‘the earliest experiment in black freehold land tenure in Natal’,² and the wider Edendale community was at the forefront of the drive for black land-ownership.³ By 1907, 1,548 African landowners were registered in the Colony, and 191,466 freehold acres were in their hands. Of this total, nearly half was in the Klip River County, where the Driefontein complex was located.⁴

At Edendale and Driefontein, Grendon witnessed firsthand what could be made of an agricultural-industrial settlement, when the inhabitants owned freehold title to their lands. As Sikweleti Nyongwana—whom Grendon had known at St Alban’s College—stated before the Natal Native Affairs Commission of 1906–07, many Africans were ‘desirous of purchasing land in freehold, and ... no obstacle should be placed in the way of their doing so’. Where people had full title to their land, it ‘was very well managed indeed, and the ownership generally had done the people good’.⁵

Although there was no legislative prohibition on the sale of Crown Lands to Africans, ‘many colonists pressed for one’.⁶ Theophilus Shepstone had opposed the freehold purchase of land by blacks, because he believed that this would assure them ‘a measure of independence which he considered to be undesirable’.⁷ A later Secretary for Native Affairs, the farmer F. R. Moor, opposed freehold for blacks, because in his opinion, ‘any condition of land tenure that would give the Native an

¹ ‘The Mission Native’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

² Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 23.

³ Lambert, ‘African Reasons for Purchasing Land in Natal’, 34; Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants and Politics in Southeast Africa*, 142; University of Natal, *Experiment at Edendale*, 3; Maylam, *History of the African People of South Africa*, 87; Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 23, 37.

⁴ Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, 199–200.

⁵ Natal, *Native Affairs Commission, 1906–7*, 915.

⁶ Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, 198.

⁷ Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, 185.

idea that he is in any way equal to the white man, either socially or politically, [would] breed profound mischief if ever attempted in South Africa'.¹

When the Government began to exercise greater central control upon the mission reserves, Grendon predicted that 'the struggle for existence [would] become more acute' for 'natives, who live[d] on the Mission Reserves'.² 'The Mission Reserves Act' (No. 49, 1903) in particular caused consternation amongst the *kholwa* class. Concerning it, Grendon wrote:

To you, natives, who live on the Mission Reserves, the struggle for existence will become more acute. Things are no longer what they have been. The year 1856 [when Britain gave Natal Colony its Charter] is not 1904. Colonial law is not English law. What the latter granted you the former can take away whenever it pleases. What Crown Authorities bequeathed to you, Responsible Government can annul. The original trusteeship of your Reserves has by legislative Act nine years ago been transferred to the Natal Board of Native Trust. An assurance (1903) was given you that the Reserves would be forever solely kept for your occupation. But since one Government can repeal the enactments of its predecessor, you cannot sit too securely on the fence, and think that all is well with you. Some day may bring about a change which you did not expect.

You were opposed, bitterly opposed to the Act passed last year, because it did not contain the word 'sale'[,] ... Government opposed the sale of the lands. From that day until the day of judgement you are doomed to disappointment in securing freehold.

Leasehold remains to soothe your disappointment—leasehold *ad infinitum*—to be sure; leasehold which demands £3. 14. 0 per hut per annum from each of you.³



Following the demise through Government interference of *Inkanyiso yase Natal* in June 1896, Natal's African elite found itself without an independent vernacular newspaper. The loss appears to have been sorely felt. In June 1898, Isaac Mkize, Bryant Cele, and Walter Fraser Mzamo, styling themselves the 'Zulu Publishing Syndicate, Limited',⁴ duly notified the colonial authorities of their intention to launch

¹ Moor's evidence before SANAC, quoted in: Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, 199.

² 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ The publisher appears as 'Zulu Printing and Publishing Company'—abbreviated as 'Z.P.P.'—in the *Ipepa*. See, for instance, *Ipepa* 3:431 (24 May 1901) 4; 3:448 (5 June 1903) 3.

Ipepa lo Hlanga ('Newspaper of the Nation').¹ Switzer and Switzer describe *Ipepa* as 'the earliest known African-owned newspaper' in Natal²—although, for the last year and a half of *Inkanyiso*'s existence, it too had been black-owned. Shula Marks describes *Ipepa* as 'the first non-missionary paper in Natal', and draws attention to the fact that its promoters were in most cases founder members of the Natal Native Congress (NNC), established during the South African War.³ The Syndicate 'was run by Natives with the exceptional case of one European who afterwards proved detrimental to the Syndicate, hence his expulsion'.⁴

Because of his interest in politics and newspaper work, Grendon was drawn into association with the circle of intellectuals involved in *Ipepa*'s publication. By 1901—when Grendon's poetry began to appear in the paper—it had 550 subscribers, and fifty copies were distributed free.⁵ Mzamo (born c.1867), who was an Mfengu man, was well-known to Grendon. He had entered Zonnebloem College along with two brothers in August 1883.⁶ By 1893, he was an assistant Master at St Alban's College,⁷ where *Inkanyiso* was edited and published. This fact alone may have led the Government to suspect that *Ipepa* was no more than a resuscitated *Inkanyiso*. In 1905, Grendon reports upon a general meeting of Funamalungelo—an elite *kholwa* political group—where delegates included 'Mzamo (jun.)' and 'Rev. Mzamo'.⁸ In 1912, Walter Mzamo became rector at Springvale, Natal—his father's old parish.⁹

The printer-publisher and first editor of *Ipepa* was Mark Samuel Radebe (1869–1924).¹⁰ Born in Pietermaritzburg, he had been educated at Lovedale Institution in the Cape Colony, before returning to his home-town and eventually opening his own business as an outfitter-draper,¹¹ 'the first attempt of its kind by a Native' in Natal. In

¹ No copies of the earliest issues of *Ipepa* can be traced, but its launch occurred in 1898 or 1899 (NAB, CSO 1597, ref. 1898/4500; NAB, CSO 1759, ref. 1904/3519). The Switzers (*Black Press*, 5, 44–45) are mistaken in suggesting 1894 as *Ipepa*'s starting date.

² Switzer and Switzer, *Black Press in South Africa and Lesotho*, 45.

³ Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, 73. Switzer and Switzer also note the relationship between *Ipepa* and the NNC (*Black Press*, 45).

⁴ M. S. R. [*i.e.*, possibly Mark S. Radebe, junior], 'Obituary: the Late Mr. Mark S. Radebe', *Ilanga* 22:30 (25 July 1924) 7.

⁵ Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, 73.

⁶ Zonnebloem Papers D1.2: Zonnebloem College Admission Register: 1876–1900.

⁷ Natal, *Departmental Reports, 1893–94*, G20; *Inkanyiso* 4:214 (29 June 1894) 3.

⁸ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁹ Denis, 'The Making of an Indigenous Clergy in Southern Africa' (online).

¹⁰ NAB, CSO 1597, ref. 1898/4500; Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, 73.

¹¹ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 84.

order to ‘extend the good works in English literature he made translations into Zulu’ of Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* and Andrew Murray’s *Steps to Christ*, as well as other books.¹ Both Radebe and Mzamo were members of Funamalungelo,² the first black pressure group founded in Natal, and subsequently incorporated into the NNC.

Radebe was succeeded as editor by Cleopas Kunene, whom Grendon describes in 1905 as ‘editor of the late “Ipepa lo Hlanga”’, and as ‘our old friend’.³ By 1915, Kunene and Grendon had become fierce enemies and rivals—both for the editorship of *Abantu-Batho* newspaper and for access to the Swazi royal circle.⁴ When Kunene went to Swaziland on a secret political mission to Queen-Regent Labotsibeni in March–May 1904, Radebe again acted as editor for a brief period, although *Ipepa*’s days were numbered.⁵

The following poems by Grendon have been traced in extant copies of *Ipepa*: *Tshaka’s Death*,⁶ the first three parts of *Paul Kruger’s Dream*,⁷ ‘A Warning’,⁸ ‘Adieu to the Rev. W. Cliff and Family’,⁹ ‘A Glimpse of Umkomaas’,¹⁰ and ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’.¹¹ On the strength of lexical evidence, it is also possible that the editorial, ‘A Need of Leaders’ was authored by Grendon. It is published during Kunene’s absence in Swaziland, and appears immediately before Grendon’s poem, ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’, in *Ipepa* of 22 April 1904—apparently the last number published before the paper’s final closure.¹²

In 1901, a combination of wartime hysteria and martial law led to *Ipepa*’s stoppage. As André Odendaal points out in *Vukani Bantu*,

Ipepa met with white hostility from the start. It was regarded generally as a seditious propaganda organ for the Ethiopian movement, an ominous and vague appellation under which all African political aspirations were subsumed. The newspaper followed a bold policy critical

¹ M. S. R. [*i.e.*, possibly Mark S. Radebe, junior], ‘Obituary: the Late Mr Mark S. Radebe’, *Ilanga* 22:30 (25 July 1924) 7.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

³ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁴ See Chapter 11 for Grendon, Kunene, and *Abantu-Batho*.

⁵ SANAC iii:544.

⁶ *Ipepa* 3:430 (17 May 1901) 3; 3:431 (24 May 1901) 4.

⁷ *Ipepa* 3:435 (21 June 1901); 3:436 (28 June 1901); 3:439 (19 July 1901).

⁸ *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁹ *Ipepa* 3:446 (22 May 1903) 3.

¹⁰ *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.

¹¹ *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

¹² *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

of white attitudes, which soon led to its suppression by the Natal government. After several articles seemingly seditious to whites, including one entitled '*Vukani Bantu!*' (i.e. 'Rise up you people!'), had appeared in the *Ipepa*'s columns, the directors were summoned before the Under-Secretary for Native Affairs at the end of 1901. Chiefs Mkize and Majozi were given a 'friendly warning' whereupon they 'voluntarily' decided not to take out a licence for publication the following year.¹

In 1904, Grendon recalls

the stir caused in Maritzburg during April month a couple of years ago when the 'Witness' clamoured for the suppression of our contemporary 'Ipepa lo Hlanga'—a native organ—and demanded the arrest of its Editor—accursed malefactor in its sight. This senior journal of Natal [i.e., the *Natal Witness*, established 1846] clamoured, and demanded action against the Natives because from its dreams it woke one day to find that amongst them there was a stir that was deemed, and declared political sin.²

The trouble began in April 1901 with a series of letters and editorials in the *Natal Witness*. Its editor resented the fact that whereas he had been gagged under stringent military censorship, a contemptible 'native' sheet was permitted to carry on publishing 'sedition' with impunity. On 9 April, the *Witness* gave exposure to a letter from a conspiracy theorist who styled himself 'Uitlander'. He called upon the Secretary for Native Affairs to initiate an urgent inquiry into the Ethiopian movement, in order to 'find out the responsible leaders'. Their teaching 'is pernicious and harmful in the extreme', and they believe according to their garbled Scriptural exegesis 'that the time for being any longer under the sway of the white man is ended'. 'Uitlander' concludes by emphasizing: 'It is time that the evil was dealt with and stamped out.'³

Two days later, a *Witness* editorial takes up the story, cautioning its readers regarding the dangers of 'the visionary fanatic, who will create a holy war'. Such a man 'thinks the story of the Israelites is that of his race'. There is also a reference to the religiously-inspired 'Jehads of the Mussulman', and the broad hint that a parallel phenomenon is possible in Natal.⁴

¹ Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu*, 61. See also: Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, 73.

² 'Snakes in the Grass', *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 4.

³ 'Uitlander', 'A Serpent Among the Natives: A Hint to the S.N.A.', *Natal Witness* 57:9055 (9 April 1901) 5.

⁴ 'Inter Alia: Native Unrest', *Natal Witness* 57: 9057 (11 April 1901) 5.

Again, two days later, the *Witness* scrapes *Ipepa* into the controversy, claiming that the Ethiopian

propaganda includes a native newspaper, the title of which translated is ‘The Paper of the Race’. The articles therein are of the most seditious character, and if published in any other paper would probably put the editor and proprietor in gaol at short notice. They all tend in the one direction—that the white man is a usurper, that the kafir is the proper owner of the land, and that he should claim his rights. The articles invariably end with the sentence: ‘The time has arrived for the native to rise and claim his rights.’¹

‘A few months before the Indian Mutiny’—*Witness* soberly warns—the idea of any such uprising was pooh-poohed by ‘a leading British General’. May such reckless disdain never recur in Natal! *Witness* represents *Ipepa* as ‘week after week preach[ing] sedition and treason, the extermination of the white man and the supremacy of the black, in terms which would bring the editor and publisher of a respectable European journal to the dock and probably the gaol’. These ‘sedition-mongers’ who repeatedly conclude articles with the sentence, ‘Now is the time for the native to rise and proclaim his rights’, should be silenced forthwith.²

On 16 April, W. A. Goodwin of St Alban’s College—which had been revived purely as a religious seminary—wrote in defence of *Ipepa* and its editor. The ‘attack’ on the paper, he states, ‘is unjustifiable. ... Mark Radebe is an absolute loyalist. He has a shop and a good trade, and is not such a fool as to endanger his position for sentiment. He is not a native “Bywoner”: he has something to lose; he is interested in the peace and progress of the community.’ Goodwin goes on to state that the Zulu imperative, ‘*vuka* equals bestir themselves’, and does not mean an uprising in the sense that *Witness* chooses to translate it.³

Grendon had personal reason for anger at the clamour for *Ipepa*’s closure. Besides the fact that the charges against it were patently unfounded, and apparently malicious, it had also provided a rare medium for the publication of his verse. On 20 April, his letter of protest was published in the *Witness*:

Sir,—In your issue of the 13th inst., you made, under the above heading [‘Black Supremacy’], certain revelations, which you maintained were ‘pro bono publico’. You attacked, and

¹ ‘Black Supremacy’, *Natal Witness* 57:9059 (13 April 1901) 5.

² ‘The Snake in the Grass’, *Natal Witness* 57: 9059 (13 April 1901) 4.

³ ‘The Snake in the Grass’, *Natal Witness* 57:9061 (16 April 1901) 6.

condemned, with no little bitterness the religious movement at present amongst the natives. You proceeded to enumerate the various leading characters connected with that movement from its beginning up to the present time. You concluded with the following, which I presume is your rendering of some passage or passages taken from the native paper you so violently handled: 'The time has arrived for the native to claim his rights.' In your leaderette (of the same date and issue) entitled 'The Snake in the Grass', you varied the above quotation into: 'Now is the time for the native to rise and proclaim his rights'. Amongst the various headings to your article as above quoted were 'Arming the natives', and 'Seditious Articles'. Having carefully compared the two translations I find that your fears were aroused by the word 'claim' in the first rendering, or by the expressions 'rise' and 'proclaim' in the second. Now, sir, I challenge you to squeeze sedition out of any of those words selected from your translations.

(1) 'Claim.' Your translation does not throw any light as to the precise meaning of this word. The meaning of 'claim' in your mind is associated with violence, as one of your headings bears out. But you must remember that a claim is not an action of force or violence. To 'claim' or 'demand' is not a crime, but a legitimate act, inasmuch as it has reference to something due to the claimant. Thus in this word, sedition is impossible for the natives feel that their rights are curtailed.

(2) 'Rise.' If this be a correct rendering of the Zulu; then it is capable of various meanings. In this instance it seems to refer to a man advancing from a lower to a higher level of thought—from apathy or indifference to a consciousness of his rights. This is more likely the meaning of your translation, than a rising to arms, or rebellion, which you seem to favour. Thus, of all the meanings assigned in English to the word 'rise', you chose the worst whereby to convey the meaning of the Zulu expression. From its connection with 'proclaim', it clearly implies a legitimate action.

(3) 'Proclaim.' There is nothing criminal in this word, since any man is free to announce, or make known what he is entitled to. When the Reform Association in Johannesburg 'announced', 'proclaimed', or 'made known' that they were deprived of their rights by the Boer Government, no one, as far as I am aware, condemned them as sedition-mongers. Their action was reckoned a legitimate one prior to the miserable circumstances which led to the Jameson Raid, and the arrest of the Reform Committee. If, then, it was reckoned no crime—no sedition—for white men to proclaim their rights, I fail to see how your reason came to make you insinuate that black men are sedition-mongers for preparing to do the same.

With reference to your headings, the first one quoted reveals the 'arming of the natives', yet it fails to point out the arms amongst them. The second condemns the native paper for publishing 'seditious articles', yet it fails to prove the sedition. This world, sir, is guided by reason, and not by the clamourings of alarmists and fanatics. I make bold to assert that the natives are not such fools as you make them out. They will not 'rise' in the sense you mean. The language from which you venture to translate is a subtle one, and it must not be thought that any random English words can exactly render what is expressed in Zulu. You have given the

renderings of the same passage in two different ways, and there you have failed as a translator. The two renderings are wide of each other. In justice to the paper attacked, kindly quote the passage (in Zulu) from which you obtained such ingenious renderings; and when you have done so, I shall have something more to say.—Yours, etc.,

R. GRENDON.

301, Greyling Street, Maritzburg.

April 17th, 1901.¹

In his later *Ilanga* editorials, Grendon makes similar points. He insists, for instance, that in the African context, “unrest” ... does not necessarily imply a desire to resort to arms. “Unrest” as experienced in Europe is not the exact equivalent of the present restless attitude of the natives, under British rule in Southern Africa. *There* “unrest” would imply a conflict backed by the use of arms; *here* it means bombastic vapouring, and nothing more.² Grendon also repeats his assertion that Zulu is a ‘subtle’ language, not to be tampered with by obtuse colonials. He repulses whites who promote themselves as experts on the Zulu language, with his directive: ‘Hands off our language, you Abelungu, We can manage it ourselves.’³

Finally, he again draws a parallel between the predicament of black Natalians and the Transvaal’s British *Uitlanders* prior to the South African War:

We are taxed without being in the least represented. Let our white neighbours undergo the same hardships and not one day would pass without seeing a protest lodged setting forth their grievances. Was this not proved in the Transvaal before the late Boer War started? Was taxation without representation not the immediate cause of all the recent bloodshed in this country?⁴

Interestingly, he mentions the disfranchisement of British *Uitlanders* in a footnote to *Paul Kruger’s Dream*: ‘Although they contributed vast sums of money to the State Treasury, they were not allowed any share in the Government. Groaning under excessive taxation; and unjust, corrupt, and rotten administration, they vainly petitioned the Volksraad to redress their grievances.’⁵

¹ ‘Black Supremacy’, *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6.

² ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 3.

³ ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4.

⁴ ‘Poor Personality’, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 40n.

In the end, the white alarmists had their way: *Ipepa* was discontinued with issue 441 (23 August 1901). It re-emerged about twenty months later with issue 442 (24 April 1903),¹ but its resurrection was short-lived, because it coincided with the debut of John Dube's *Ilanga lase Natal*, a vibrant new weekly. *Ipepa*'s final issue appears to have come off the press on 22 April 1904.² On 27 May, a Zulu leader article in *Ilanga* laments the death of *Ipepa*.³



William Cliff left Edendale in May 1903, and in the same month, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference appointed J. S. Morris as his successor to the superintendence of the Edendale Circuit. Morris gave his first sermon in the mission chapel in July. It was in isiXhosa: Morris did not speak isiZulu. *Ipepa* reported him to be 'a first-class Xosa Kafir linguist'. He was 'tall and sinewy', and the older congregants remarked that he was as tall as 'Mneli'—James Allison, missionary founder of Edendale.⁴

Morris's arrival cast a cat among the pigeons. He promptly withdrew what freedom Cliff had allowed Grendon, and announced his intention to overhaul the Training Institution, by replacing the existing staff. In his elegy for Michal Nkosi, Grendon alludes to the upheaval precipitated by the advent of Morris. Until then, all had been a perfect idyll:

Ah, little knew we then what shadows dark
Upon our track would soon be gathering,
Or what detestable, terrestrial shark
Would on our liberty be trespassing;
And scarcely reckon'd we that one by one
For other fields this paradise we'd quit,

¹ *Ipepa* 3:441 (23 Aug. 1901); 3:442 (24 April 1903). See also: NAB, CSO 1759, ref. 3519/1904. *Koranta ea Becoana* reports upon the postwar revival of *Ipepa*: 'The Zulus of Natal have a further reason for being grateful for the return of halcyon times and the release of their paper. We have before us a copy of the "Ipepa lo Hlanga", the organ of the Zulu nation, published at the capital of the Garden Colony (Pietermaritzburg). This paper became a victim to the peremptory command of the military press gag, the editor being ordered to put up the shutters owing to his religious views, during the reign of the sword. ... In the interim a plant was installed and the paper takes up the cudgels, on behalf of the Native from where it left off, but under its own roof, with its own type' ('Native Newspaper', *Koranta ea Becoana* 38 (9 May 1903) 5).

² *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904).

³ 'Ilanga lase Natal', *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 2.

⁴ *Ipepa* 3:452 (17 July 1903) 3.

When our respected pilot's race was run,
That we our powers elsewhere might transmit.¹

Grendon's and Michal's 'respected pilot' was Cliff; his 'race was run' when he and his wife left for England in May 1903.² There is every reason then to suppose that the 'detestable, terrestrial shark' is Cliff's replacement, Morris, who was in residence by mid-July.³ Grendon's reference to Morris 'trespassing' on 'our liberty' is an allusion to St Paul's complaint concerning 'false brethren' who 'came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage'.⁴ Morris is therefore a 'false' brother.

This was almost certainly not the first encounter between Grendon and Morris. Both men had worked in Beaconsfield outside Kimberley during the 1890s—Grendon as teacher at the Public School;⁵ Morris as missionary to migrant labourers in the mine compounds.⁶ Each man was conspicuous in his own particular sphere. They cannot have failed to notice each other. The missionary probably knew of Grendon's political activism and heterodox theology.

Morris was active in religious and social activities in Griqualand West. In 1891, for instance, he oversaw a 'Grand Magic Lantern Exhibition' on 'the Zulu War, Central Africa, &c., &c.', in aid of the Wesleyan Band of Hope. The venue was the Undenominational Schoolroom, Beaconsfield.⁷ And in 1892, he delivered a lecture in Kimberley on 'The Life and Customs of the Native Races of South Africa', which included limelight illustrations and a musical accompaniment provided by a 'Native Choir'.⁸

Prior to his Edendale posting, he boasted 'fifteen years experience' of the 'compound system of Kimberley', where he had conducted his missionary labours, and although it had 'been condemned by some as a great evil', he considered it 'a decided boon', because within the tight security of the compounds, Africans were

¹ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

² 'Notes from Edendale', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3. Cliff subsequently returned to Natal.

³ *Ipepa* 3:452 (17 July 1903) 3.

⁴ Gal. 2:4.

⁵ Willan, 'An African in Kimberley', 251.

⁶ Missionary Conference, *Report of the Proceedings*, 34.

⁷ *DFA* 3215 (21 Jan. 1891) 3.

⁸ 'The Native Races of South Africa', *DFA* (11 Nov. 1892) 3.

‘under proper control, drink [was] kept from them, their sick [were] attended to, and altogether they enjoy[ed] far greater advantages than they did while outside’. He viewed the discovery of diamonds and gold ‘as part of the Divine scheme for the civilizing and Christianizing of this great continent’.¹

On 11 September 1903, Morris advertised in *Ipepa* for an assistant teacher at the Native Training Institution, and a head teacher at the primary school.² The first post was that which Simon Nkosi had formerly occupied. On 30 October—in what can only have been intended as a jibe against the joint administration of Cliff and Grendon—it was reported that

the Edendale Training Institution, whose discipline on the boys has been extraordinarily lax for some time past, has lately experienced a change under the management of the new Governor, the Rev. J. S. Morris, and his new staff of teachers. The new authorities will stand no nonsense from the boys, and last week a general rebellion took place at the Institution, on the question of hours for manual work, which was promptly and effectively dealt with. The boys have now settled down to work and are quite amenable to the rules of the establishment. A few delinquents, after showing obstinacy against obeying them, were expelled, and this act had a salutary effect.³

What the above implies is that, under Grendon’s headmastership—with Cliff as Principal—little manual work was performed by the boys, and that discipline was not enforced. Morris on arrival had put the house in order.

Grendon’s Swedenborgianism seems to have impacted profoundly upon his pedagogical practices. He saw no value in a teacher attempting to impose his will upon a pupil, because Swedenborg teaches that compulsion has no lasting effect upon the inner man and that the ‘external man must be reformed by means of the internal, and not the reverse’.⁴ Grendon quotes this very prescription verbatim in an editorial.⁵ Wilkinson similarly states that ‘there is no compulsion in Divine things’,⁶ and Grendon would rank education amongst those things ‘Divine’. He would likely agree with Attersoll, whose letter he published in *Ilanga* on 29 April 1904:

¹ Missionary Conference, *Report of the Proceedings*, 34.

² *Ipepa* 3:458 (11 Sept. 1903) 3.

³ *Ipepa* 3:465 (30 Oct. 1903) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, n. 129.

⁵ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

⁶ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 91.

There is no such thing as ‘compelled morality’. We may teach, persuade, and convince as to a desired condition of mind, so that the pupil may of his or her own accord accept, and enact the new conditions, but you cannot force them. We may get a semblance of those desired conditions by compulsion, but we are better without such empty appearances.¹

Throughout Grendon’s writings, he rules out the use of force to correct, train, or restrain the inner man. Frequently, he expresses this general idea axiomatically. ‘Religion is a thing which will bear no compulsion.’² Reformers are ‘doomed to failure’ who resort to ‘force, and compulsion’, because ‘laws, and enactments ... only affect the external man’.³ The ‘human internal cannot be compelled by external force. It must act from its own freedom according to its own reason and not in any other manner.’⁴ Love ‘is insinuated in freedom and cannot and will not be compelled’.⁵ ‘No reform can be effected by either fear or dread, since these faculties do not constitute a part of the internal man’.⁶ ‘The external can compel the external *only*; as to the internal it has absolutely no control.’⁷

A teacher therefore instructs by consent of his pupils, and in no other way. This would seem to rule out physical threats, sanctions, or corporal punishment. It might also explain why Morris considered that the ‘discipline on the boys ha[d] been extraordinarily lax’ under Grendon’s headmastership. It may also partially account for Grendon’s replacement as teacher at the Zombodze school for Swazi royals in late 1906. According to one source, he had had some ‘difficulty [in] enforcing discipline’.⁸

In October 1903, *Ilanga* reported that Grendon had left the Edendale Native Training Institution, where he had ‘so creditably filled’ the post of headmaster ‘for three years’.⁹ On 6 November, it was reported in *Ipepa*’s Zulu columns that ‘Mr Falati who matriculated like Mr Grendon’ was coming to the Institution.¹⁰ C. N. Falati (born 1867), was educated at Blythswood, St John’s, and Lovedale, before enrolling at

¹ H. Attersoll to the Editor, *Ilanga* 2:55 (29 April 1904) 4.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

³ ‘Native Reform’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 3.

⁴ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

⁵ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:81 (8 April 1914) 6.

⁶ ‘Native Reform’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁷ ‘The Old Year and the New’, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁸ Zombodze, ‘Early History of Zombode School’.

⁹ *Ilanga* (2 and 16 Oct. 1903), cited in: Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 75.

¹⁰ *Ipepa* 3:466 (6 Nov. 1903) 2.

Zonnebloem, where he matriculated in 1898, becoming with Grendon one of the handful of Zonnebloem scholars to do so.¹

Morris was having things his way because, in early December, it was stated that ‘things are shaping themselves again at the Edendale Training Institution. The firm hand, with which the new Governor manipulated, the reins² of authority was more responsible for bringing about the present smooth working of the establishment. It remains now with the teachers—who should prove an efficient staff—to demonstrate to the world what good instructors can do.’³

On 11 December 1903—by which time Grendon was established at Ohlange—*Ipepa* carried a Zulu-language article addressed chiefly to parents of pupils at the Edendale Institution. The previous month, it remarked, the College had suffered the terrible loss of its head teacher (Grendon) who had gone elsewhere to continue his good work. The article’s writer is happy to be able to report that after a painful struggle at the Institution, the school had recovered, and this was due to the late headmaster’s ‘manhood’ and the fact that he was supported by other men at Edendale. Nothing untoward had occurred at the school, and it had not shut down. At the time of writing, it appeared to be back to normal again.⁴

An open letter from Morris appeared in the same issue of *Ipepa*. He remarks that although Edendale’s Institution has been in existence for twenty years, it has failed to make satisfactory progress. His objective will be to bring it up to parity with the leading colleges in the Cape Colony. After much effort, he has engaged well-qualified teachers. The new headmaster is C. H. Johnson, a Wesleyan preacher and graduate of Dublin University. There are also Mr Falati, a matriculant, and Mr Makhobotloane, who was educated by the Wesleyans at Clarkebury. With these competent—and likely more compliant—teachers under his direction, Morris felt confident that Edendale could begin to earn a reputation like that of the Cape schools.⁵

¹ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 152; *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 2:10 (Michaelmas 1904) 20; 5:21 (Trinity 1907) 28.

² Possibly a misprint for ‘reins’; alternatively, a South Africanism for ‘thongs’ (from Cape Dutch, *riem*).

³ *Ipepa* 3:470 (4 Dec. 1903) 4.

⁴ ‘Ikoliji lase Edendale’, *Ipepa* 3:471 (11 Dec. 1903) 2.

⁵ ‘Incwadi yo Mfundisi Morris’, *Ipepa* 3:471 (11 Dec. 1903) 3. See also: *Ipepa* 4:484 (11 March 1904) 2.

On 18 December, *Ipepa* comments upon the ‘circular to the Native people in which [Morris] sets forth the course of action he proposes to take in connection with the remodelling of the Institution’. The writer seems to have some reservations about Grendon’s replacement—the Irishman, Johnson. It ‘is a mistake to treat a class of Native youths in the same way as one would treat a class of white boys’. There is a ‘danger of English masters not understanding the true nature of the native and certain qualities peculiar to himself’. If success is to be achieved, it is advisable ‘that native teachers be consulted’, because they ‘can give white masters points as to how instruction should be successfully given to a native youth’.¹

H. Selby Msimang, who arrived at Edendale from Swaziland late in 1904, gives an indication of the school’s ethos under Morris’s government. As at similar institutions within his experience, boys were forbidden to speak their native languages, except on Sundays. (Grendon is unlikely to have enforced this stipulation.) Msimang recalls that his own incipient political views led him to have ‘serious clashes with the Principal’, Morris, in 1905. On one occasion, Johnson, the Irish headmaster, was teaching South African history, and the role played by Sir Theophilus Shepstone came under discussion. Msimang piped up that Shepstone was ‘a traitor to the Zulus’. Johnson evidently reported this remark to Morris, who summoned the pupil to his study, where he was ‘strongly reprimanded’, and told that he ‘should be very careful and not to speak against the Government officials in that way’.²

Morris’s Draconian ‘firm hand’ may have been counter-productive. His sanguine vision of a college to rival the Cape schools and to draw students from Natal, Orange River Colony, Transvaal, Swaziland, and Basutoland,³ was never realized. The Institution actually closed its doors sometime in 1905, and did not reopen until 1907.⁴



There are several issues upon which Grendon and Morris are likely to have clashed. The first relates to a point already made: that Grendon, although coloured, appears to

¹ *Ipepa* 3:472 (18 Dec. 1903) 4.

² Msimang Papers: PC 14/1/2/2, pp. 15, 19, 22–23, 168.

³ ‘Ikoliji lase Edendale’, *Ipepa* 3:471 (11 Dec. 1903) 2.

⁴ L. H. S. Wilkinson, ‘Nuttall Training Institution, Edendale’, *Native Teachers’ Journal* 3:1 (Oct. 1921) 7.

have been drawing a white teacher's salary. This may explain why Morris made sure that Grendon's successor was a white headmaster.

Morris and Grendon also held mutually-antagonistic views on the subject of religious independence for Africans. Grendon on several occasions made a public defence of 'the religious movement at present amongst the natives',¹ 'what is known as the Ethiopian Church',² or 'the Ethiopian Movement'.³ Morris, by contrast, was intransigently opposed to the movement, and believed that white missionaries 'should not offer any sympathy to' it. He had discovered in the Kimberley compounds that the religious independents 'infused a spirit of distrust and disloyalty towards [him] as a European missionary'. He also claimed that 'wherever [he had] seen these men working the same spirit' of distrust for white missionaries had 'followed them'. He, for one, was determined that he should 'oppose them to the last'.⁴

When it came to education, Grendon did not share Morris's view that black pupils should be offered a syllabus differing from that offered to whites.⁵ He entertained grave reservations respecting the paltry education dispensed to Africans in Natal's mission schools. In 1893, the Inspector of Native Education had reported concerning the Edendale Institution that it was 'far and away the best school of an advanced character for boys that we have, too far advanced perhaps, Latin and algebra having been added to the subjects taught'. On the positive side, 'carpentry, printing, and gardening [were] taught regularly'.⁶ In order to qualify for a Government subsidy, Edendale's Institution was required from the very beginning to offer compulsory 'industrial training' in addition to academic subjects.⁷ The view of whites was that blacks had to be trained to occupy a subordinate station within—or more usually, *outside*—colonial society. This was the attitude that Grendon had to deal with after Morris's arrival.

¹ 'Black Supremacy', *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6.

² 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 3.

³ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

⁴ Missionary Conference, *Report of the Proceedings*, 179.

⁵ Morris expresses such a view in: Missionary Conference, *Report of the Proceedings*, 35.

⁶ Natal, *Report of the Inspector of Native Education ... 1893*, 27.

⁷ L. H. S. Wilkinson, 'Nuttall Training Institution, Edendale', *Native Teachers' Journal* 3:1 (Oct. 1921) 7.

In particular, he doubted the efficacy of ‘industrial training’ in assuring the real advancement of Africans.¹ Such views would almost certainly have brought him into conflict with Morris, for whom industrial training was the chief plank of ‘native’ education. In a paper that he delivered before the First General Missionary Conference held at Johannesburg in July 1904, Morris spelt out his views on the necessity of teaching blacks to work:

The industrial work is also very important. In many of the institutions there is an industrial department where trades are taught, but even when this department does not exist, we should in all the institutions insist upon a certain amount of manual labour. This is a kind of training which our native youths sadly need. Those who are acquainted with the natives know how adverse they are as a rule to manual work. Booker Washington tells us that he found the same thing in America. ... In this country we find amongst the natives the same aversion to native labour, and as missionaries it is our duty to oppose it and to endeavour to teach the youths who are brought under our care the ‘dignity of labour’.²

It was Morris’s own ‘insist[ence] upon a certain amount of manual labour’ that had sparked the ‘general rebellion ... on the question of hours for manual work’ at the Edendale Institution in October of the previous year.³ Appeal to the authority of Booker T. Washington (1856–1915)—leading black exponent of ‘industrial education’—is typical of white South African educators of this period. It is an ideological stratagem that Grendon would encounter again while headmaster of the Zulu Christian Industrial School at Ohlange.⁴ Washington’s name was often bandied about in support of the assertion that blacks needed nothing so much as to learn the value of work.⁵

Grendon held an opposing view. ‘Let the nigger work is the daily cry of many Europeans’, he writes in 1905. He goes on to quote Sir Godfrey Lagden, a member of the South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC, 1903–05), who states that

¹ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3–4; ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4; ‘Native Education’, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

² J. S. Morris, ‘Evangelistic Work in Large Towns, and Mission Work Generally’, in: Missionary Conference, *Report of the Proceedings*, 37.

³ *Ipepa* 3:465 (30 Oct. 1903) 4.

⁴ Missionary, W. C. Wilcox, cites Washington for a similar purpose in a letter to *Ilanga* (3:111 (2 June 1905) 4).

⁵ James Stewart, Scottish Free Church missionary and superintendent of Lovedale College in the Cape Colony, visited Washington’s Tuskegee Institute in the 1890s, ‘and came away singing Washington’s praises’ (Campbell, *Songs of Zion*, 301).

‘the best education for the native is work’.¹ As far as Grendon is concerned, it is preposterous to suggest that blacks have any special need to learn the value of work from missionaries, because the ‘gospel of work does not emanate from Christianity.... Work was preached long before the dawn of Christianity, and it is just as much the gospel of heathendom, as of any other belief under the sun.’² It is small wonder that when the General Missionary Conference resolved that industrial training is the foremost means of developing ‘native’ character, Grendon describes this as ‘one of the most senseless [resolutions] adopted by a body of divines since the Day of Pentecost’.³ The fact that Morris—the ‘detestable, terrestrial shark’, with whom he had so recently had a confrontation—delivered a paper at the Conference, can only have added ardour to Grendon’s denunciation.

Grendon saw through the hypocrisy of whites who protested that blacks were indolent or feckless. What whites really wanted was not that the African should work for himself, but that he should be provided with elementary skills to make him a productive, acquiescent labourer or agent for the white ruling class. This would seem to be why Grendon’s poetic speaker, ‘Amagunyana’ declares his detestation for the white man’s ‘eternal work’ and his ‘fretful time-card’.⁴

But there is another—perhaps more relevant—aspect of Grendon’s pedagogical approach over which he and Morris may have clashed. This is Grendon’s unorthodox religious teaching, which by this stage was almost certainly seasoned with Swedenborg. Within the staid confines of a Methodist establishment like Edendale’s Training Institution, Swedenborg’s doctrines—especially those pertaining to ‘celestial’ Africans—would not have been favourably received.

Grendon believed that nothing was good enough for his students if it fell short of the best he could offer. After all, he was educating *spirits*—infinite in potential. He writes in this regard: ‘We further contend that as man is a spiritual being, and in this nature pertaining to the infinite, his education should be in accordance with his

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4.

² ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

³ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

⁴ ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’, *Ilanga* 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4. See appendix 3 for textual evidence that Grendon is author of this anonymous poem.

nature.’¹ Instead, he finds that all the knowledge African students ‘receive in their schools in this country is of the niggard sort which only tends to “puff” them “up”’.²

This is not the only place where he adapts St Paul’s axiom that ‘knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth’.³ In another editorial, he quotes both Paul and Alexander Pope—juxtaposing sacred and profane wisdom in order to bolster his argument. He writes: ‘the little knowledge imparted to our people tends only to “puff them up”, and cause them to be disliked by those [with] whom they happen to come in contact. Let them drink deep of the Pierian Spring or let them not taste its waters at all.’⁴

From these expressions, it appears that Grendon’s Swedenborgianism was something that he could not conscientiously divorce from his pedagogical practices. If, as seems highly probable, he had introduced elements of Swedenborgian heterodoxy into the syllabus at Edendale, this can hardly have won the confidence of an unimaginative Wesleyan like Morris. The Swedenborgian element of Grendon’s teaching may in fact account for the ‘higher grade of knowledge’ offered at Edendale during his tenure there, for which the community thanked missionary Cliff on his departure. This ‘higher grade of knowledge’ could only be imparted because Cliff had ‘giv[en] a free hand to [his] helpers’.⁵ It was because Cliff had countenanced—or turned a blind eye to—Grendon’s teaching methods and syllabus, that Grendon was able to put his theories into practice. The latitude that Cliff granted Grendon had ‘given such vigour and tone to the schoolwork, that it eclipse[d] anything that ha[d] been done’ previously at Edendale.⁶

The ‘higher grade of knowledge’ referred to in the tribute to Cliff was apt to raise eyebrows in a colony where many officials believed in an intellectual ceiling above which no African could or should rise. Sooner or later, the generosity with which Grendon propagated his encyclopaedic knowledge was going to bring him into conflict with the education authorities. He arrived at Edendale with ambitious objectives. It seems he would have liked to establish academic standards similar to

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 3.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

³ 1 Cor. 8:1.

⁴ ‘Mr Barnett’s Lecture’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3. Grendon quotes: Pope, *Essay on Criticism*, II, 215–16.

⁵ ‘Notes from Edendale’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁶ ‘Notes from Edendale’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

those he encountered at Zonnebloem—where Classics, advanced mathematics, and philosophy were all available to scholars.

In a poem, Grendon attempts to coax out from the ‘ranks’ of ‘Abantu’, a ‘Shakespeare, Milton, Edison’.¹ If by his own distinctive teaching methods he hoped to do the same at Edendale, he would not have enjoyed much moral support from the education authority. In 1904, Robert Plant, Natal’s Inspector of Native Education, testified before SANAC that there were in the Colony only three schools—Edendale being one—where a black scholar could, if he so chose, ‘pursue his studies beyond standard 6’. Even these institutions did ‘not attempt to go beyond standard 7 really’. Whereas some Natal scholars had gone abroad to further their education, in his opinion, they were prompted by nothing more noble than ‘a love of novelty, of something that they think they can get there that they cannot get here’. Whereas ‘in other places they teach Algebra and Latin’, in Natal, Plant and his colleagues ‘distinctly refused to do it’.²

As Grendon reminisces in his elegy for Michal Nkosi, he, she, and her brother Simon flourished at the Institution during two balmy ‘summers’. They ‘scarcely reckon’d’ that they would have to forsake that ‘paradise’, and direct their ‘powers’ to ‘other fields’.³ Grendon does not state to what ‘other fields’ Michal ‘transmitted’ her ‘powers’ after leaving the Institution. She died on 6 September 1904⁴—no more than a year after Morris cleansed the Augean stables.

In the same month, Simon Nkosi—the ‘late Edendale College Teacher’—conducted a choir from Vryheid.⁵ In 1905, he was resident in the Newcastle district⁶ where syndicates of the Edendale *kholwa* had purchased Crown Lands and established communal farms.⁷ In 1904, William Cliff was back in South Africa and overseeing Methodist mission work in the Newcastle district,⁸ so it is possible that he and Nkosi maintained ties. In after years, Nkosi remained active as a teacher and activist.⁹ In

¹ ‘To You Abantu’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

² SANAC iii:246.

³ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁵ *Ilanga* 2:74 (9 Sept. 1904) 2.

⁶ NAB, PVS 47, ref. 369/1905.

⁷ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 347, 352, 364.

⁸ Natal, *Education Department Directory*, 7.

⁹ Cleopas Kunene to the editor (Zulu-language), *Izwe la Kiti* 3:96 (22 July 1914) 2.

1916, he was teaching Standards V and VI at Gardensville.¹ 1920 found him in Salisbury, Rhodesia, when he wrote for *Ilanga* in a tone that Grendon would have approved, even though his control of English is slightly imperfect.² In 1924, he was in Durban.³



Grendon did not have to wait long before another teaching post came his way. It is just possible that Dube's offer of the headmastership at Ohlange was made while Grendon was still employed at Edendale.

John Langalibalele Dube (1871–1946; plate 7e) was in his day 'the leading spokesman ... of Natal's African Christian elite',⁴ 'the most prominent black educator in South Africa'.⁵ His achievement is multifaceted and of crucial importance to South African history—although no full-length biography of the man has yet been published.⁶ As educator, he founded the celebrated Zulu Christian Industrial School (Ohlange College). As newspaperman, he was the earliest proprietor and editor of *Ilanga lase Natal*, published at Ohlange.⁷ As a politician, he was a founder member of the Natal Native Congress, established during the South African War,⁸ and in 1912, he became the first President of the South African Native National Congress—later renamed African National Congress.⁹ His literary output included editorials in English and isiZulu, several pamphlets, and *uJeje, Insila kaTshaka* (1933), set during Shaka's reign, and described as the 'first Zulu novel'.¹⁰

When Grendon and Dube first met is not known, but Grendon's headmastership of Edendale's Native Training Institution—one of the Colony's very few secondary schools for black pupils—would naturally have established a community of interest between them.

¹ 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:665 (3 March 1916) 2.

² 'Slavery', *Ilanga* 18:22 (28 May 1920) 5; 'Ezase Rhodesia', *Ilanga* 18:28 (9 July 1920) 2.

³ 'Gamma Sigma Club, in Old Court House, Durban', *Ilanga* 22:10 (7 March 1924) 7.

⁴ Hughes, 'Doubly Elite', 445.

⁵ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 119.

⁶ Both Davis ('John L. Dube', 510) and Hughes ('Doubly Elite', 445) remark upon the fact that the definitive Dube biography has yet to appear.

⁷ Davis, 'John L. Dube', 509.

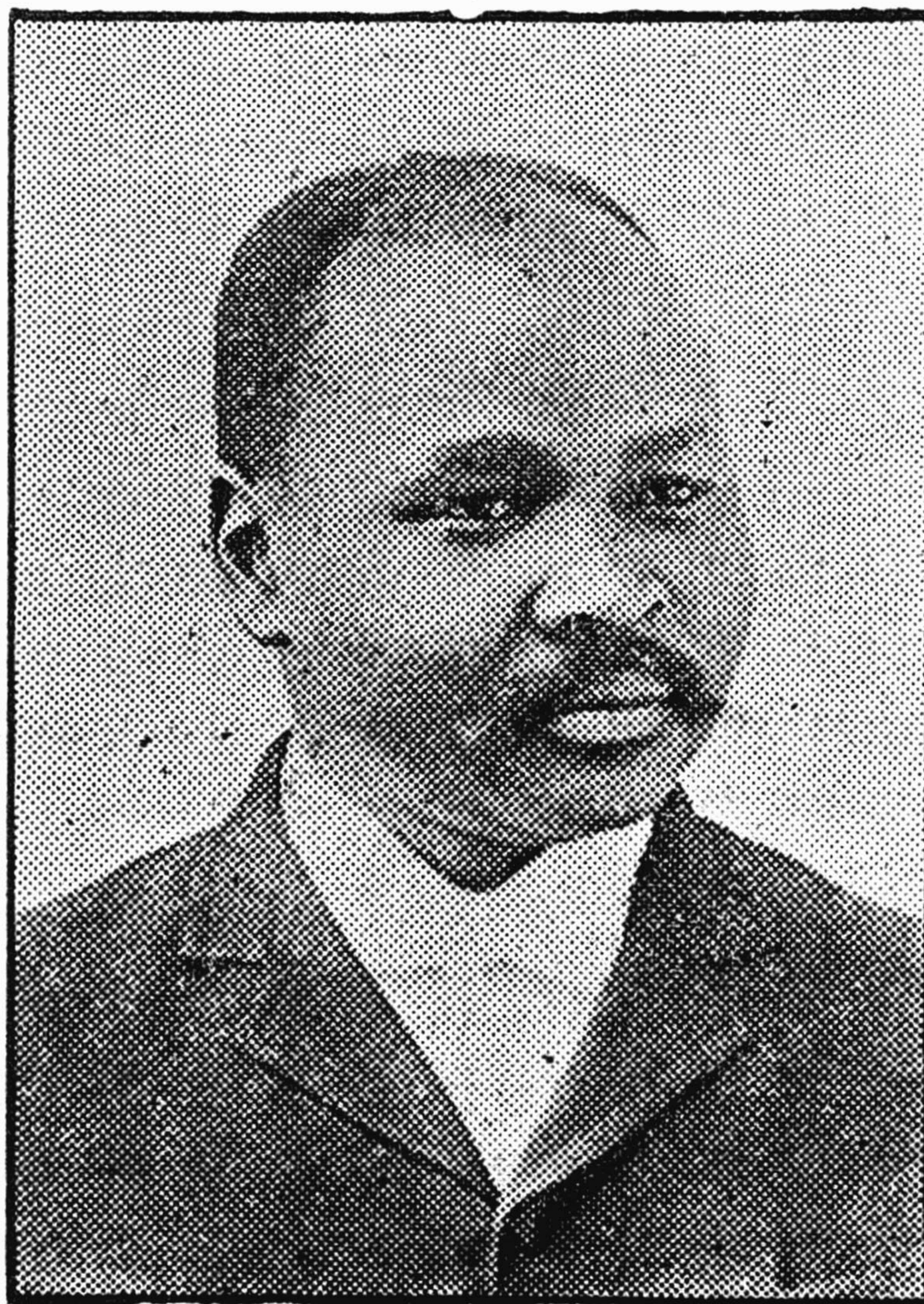
⁸ Marks, *Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa*, 44.

⁹ Davis, 'John L. Dube', 509.

¹⁰ Davis, 'John L. Dube', 509; Nyembezi, *Review of Zulu Literature*, 6–7; Malcolm, *Outline of Zulu Literature*, 49. Malcolm is quoted above.

Rev. John L. Dube.

Umpati wesikole sas' Ohlange, nomnikazi we Langa, emva kokuba ekade enyamalele lapa kiti benenkosikazi yake, ubuyile. Kuyasitokozisa ukubonisa abafundi be Langa umfanekiso wake. Sibonga iNkosi ete yangcina kuzo zonke izingozi zendhlela abe eyihambile waze wabuye wabuya waba nati



U Mafukuzela.

Reference has already been made to the Driefontein meeting between Dube and Grendon that probably took place in early April 1903. They appear to have met by appointment rather than by accident. It is possible that Dube was already sizing Grendon up as a potential staff-member of his school, or that he had him in mind for editorial work on *Ilanga*. The composition of Grendon's dedicatory poem, 'Ilanga', is dated 9 April—*i.e.*, the day *before* the paper was launched. It was 'specially composed for the first issue', although it was only published in the sixth, on 15 May.¹ Thus Grendon was personally involved with the newspaper from its inception.

The coincidence of circumstances invites a little speculation. Within a matter of days—or weeks at most—Dube and Grendon meet, Dube launches his newspaper, and Grendon's dedicatory poem, which bears the same title as the paper, is composed. As shown in Chapter 8, Grendon's poem builds on the Swedenborgian correspondence for 'sun' (*ilanga*). Was the Driefontein meeting intended in part to discuss plans for the paper? And, in view of the correspondential significance that Grendon attaches to the name, 'Ilanga', did he perhaps suggest it? The Driefontein meeting brought together three pioneering black newspaper editors: Solomon Kumalo had edited *Inkanyiso yase Natal* in the mid-1890s; Grendon had edited *Coloured South African* in 1899; and Dube was about to begin editing *Ilanga lase Natal*.



Grendon arrived at Ohlange to take up his new post, likely toward the end of October 1903.² On 6 November, *Ilanga* reports his arrival, and that he has begun at once with great fervour, urging the boys to press for progress. His pupils found their first day's lessons so exhausting that when they were dismissed, they were almost dumb.³

For about eighteen months, from November 1903 to May 1905, Grendon was headmaster of the Zulu Christian Industrial School. For fifteen of those months, his principal, Dube was absent abroad, and so once again, as at Edendale during Cliff's superintendence, Grendon had almost full discretionary power to prosecute his personal educational policy and to express his views through *Ilanga*—views that ultimately brought him into direct conflict with Dube. In several *Ilanga*

¹ *Ilanga* 1:6 (15 May 1903) 3.

² Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 75.

³ *Ilanga* 1:31 (6 Nov. 1903) 2 (isiZulu original).

advertisements, Grendon's name appears as headmaster of Ohlange's 'School Department'—*i.e.*, not of the industrial department. He is also identified as an instructor on the organ. Dube's brother-in-law, John S. Mdimba, is shown as acting principal in the same advertisements.¹

The campus was situated on elevated ground three miles from the Phoenix railway station, about fourteen miles from Durban on the North Coast line. It enjoyed a commanding view of lovely undulating country and of the Indian Ocean, ten miles away. The first building was of modest wattle-and-daub construction.² More imposing edifices were erected afterwards, and particularly after Dube's fund-raising trip to the States in 1904–05.

In many ways, Grendon was able to identify with Ohlange, its *raison d'être*, and its ethos. Although a 'lone, despised spot' from the standpoint of white colonials, it remained "'muntu's truest friend'.³ He must have admired Ohlange's students for the privations they were prepared to endure in order to procure the education they so keenly desired.⁴ They had had to overcome what Grendon describes as 'serious drawbacks to the acquisition of that learning, such as poverty, and meagre resources, together with a denial in many instances, on the part of the ruling caste'.⁵ Through *Ilanga's* columns, he urges all black parents to 'copy the poverty-stricken [ancient] Greek parent who with small resources flinches not to sacrifice all other interests in order that he might educate a daughter or a son'. And he counsels black youths to 'copy in self-denial the Greek youth who to obtain an education deems it no disgrace and no shame to engage in any work even the lowest and the most mean'.⁶ As far as this exhortation goes, he and Dube would have found themselves on common ground.



¹ See, for instance: *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 4; 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4; 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 1. This fact alone contradicts the statement by Kuper (*Sobhuza II*, 43) that Grendon began teaching in Swaziland in 1904. Couzens ('Robert Grendon', 77) is misled by Kuper when he suggests that it is 'highly likely that Grendon went to Swaziland at the very end of 1904'. As shown below, Grendon cannot have begun teaching in Swaziland before mid-1905.

² Sol T. Plaatje, 'S. A. Native National Congress', *Tsala ea Batho* 4:159 (28 Feb. 1914) 4; R. T. Bokwe, 'Ohlange', *Native Teachers' Journal* 4:4 (Jan. 1925) 201.

³ 'Press on Ohlange', *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

⁴ Marable ('African Nationalist', 125) describes some of these privations.

⁵ 'Copy the Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

⁶ 'Copy the Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

Dube was a charismatic figure—a man of considerable dynamism and determination. While he was in residence, there was no question as to who held the reins of Ohlange and *Ilanga*. His supporters gave him the praise-name, ‘Mafukuzela’, which according to one source means ‘the one who struggles against obstacles’.¹ Recognizing the key role that Dube’s personality played in focusing the aspirations of ‘progressive’ blacks in Natal, Grendon urges ‘those who revolve around Dube as the centre to be steadfast in their work, and let their watchword be—“Press on!”’²

Dube was born in the Inanda district north of Durban, the eldest son of Rev. James Dube. The family belonged to the chiefly house of the Qadi, a fact of which he was proud. His grandfather, Qadi chief, Dabeka kaDube, is reputed to have perished in a campaign against Dingane in the 1830s. As a boy, Dabeka’s son James fled with his widowed mother to the safety of the American missionaries at Inanda, not far from the site of John Dube’s future school. In the early 1860s, James assumed responsibility for a mission school, and in the 1870s, he became an ordained pastor of the American Board Zulu Mission—a Congregationalist body. He also accumulated some wealth through transport riding. His son John’s adult stature derived not merely from his personal talents, but also from his close relationship to the Qadi traditional leadership, his upbringing at the heart of Natal’s coastal *kholwa* elite, and his advanced Western education.³

John received his elementary education at Inanda mission, before passing on to the Amanzimtoti Institute—later named Adams College—where the American Board catered to its most advanced students.⁴ In 1887, he sailed for the United States in company with his American mentor, Rev. W. C. Wilcox, who had been one of his teachers at Amanzimtoti. At Oberlin College in Ohio, he trained as a teacher, later accompanying Wilcox on a lecture circuit in the States, during which they preached self-help and industrial training for Africans. Having obtained a teaching

¹ Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu*, 62.

² ‘Rev. and Mrs Dube’, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

³ Davis, ‘John L. Dube’, 527; Dhlomo, ‘John Langalibalele Dube’s Position in South African Literature’, 77; Hughes, ‘Doubly Elite’, 447, 449–50, 453, 458; Marks, *Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa*, 45, 47; Rycroft, in: Dube and Dube, *Zulu Song Book*, viii.

⁴ Davis, ‘John L. Dube’, 504; Marks, *Ambiguities of Dependence*, 43; Rycroft, in: Dube and Dube, *Zulu Song Book*, viii.

qualification, Dube returned to Natal in 1892.¹ He took up a teaching post at Amanzimtoti, and married Nokutela Mdimba, also a teacher, in 1894. Together with his wife and her brother John Mdimba, he spearheaded an independent industrial mission at Incwadi, on the south bank of the Umkomaas River, west of Pietermaritzburg.²

Intent on ordination for the Congregationalist ministry as well as on obtaining American funding to realise his dream—an industrial college in Natal—Dube sailed again for the States in 1896, this time in company with Nokutela. He trained at Union Missionary Seminary in Brooklyn, New York, was ordained, and succeeded in obtaining initial funding to launch the proposed college. During this visit, he was profoundly impressed by the social gospel preached by the Negro educationist, Booker T. Washington of the legendary Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. Dube proposed to model his African college after Tuskegee.³

The Dubes returned to Natal in April 1899.⁴ John's uncle, the Qadi chief Mqawe, although not a Christian convert, generously funded the purchase of land for his nephew's industrial college.⁵ The entire community collaborated to get the project off the ground. Dube's neighbours volunteered to cut poles for construction work, stone was hewn on the property, and with it Dube's West Indian assistant, Reynolds Scott, built a house 'consisting of three good-sized rooms, storeroom, and kitchen'.⁶

Dube's white missionary mentor, Wilcox was bowled over by the zeal and dedication with which Dube and his co-workers applied themselves to the construction of the campus buildings. He testified that he 'had never before witnessed in [Dube] such evidence of humility. His Builder testified that Mr Dube had wheeled

¹ Davis, 'John L. Dube', 504–05; Duminy, 'Towards Union, 1900–10', 404–05; Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 119; Hughes, 'Doubly Elite', 456; Marks, *Ambiguities of Dependence*, 43; Rive and Couzens, *Seme: the Founder of the ANC*, 11; Rycroft, in: Dube and Dube, *Zulu Song Book*, viii.

² Davis, 'John L. Dube', 505–06; Hughes, 'Doubly Elite', 452, 456; Rycroft, in: Dube and Dube, *Zulu Song Book*, viii.

³ Davis, 'John L. Dube', 506–07; Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 119; Hughes, 'Doubly Elite', 457; Marks, *Ambiguities of Dependence*, 43–44; Rycroft, in: Dube and Dube, *Zulu Song Book*, viii.

⁴ Duminy, 'Towards Union, 1900–10', 405; Marable, 'African Nationalist', 125.

⁵ Marable, 'African Nationalist', 122.

⁶ Marable, 'African Nationalist', 122.

stone and mixed up mortar with his own hands for the work on the building.’¹ This was the sort of conduct of which the great Washington would have been proud.

The school was up and running on 20 August 1901.² Applications for enrolment streamed in from far and near. Several had to be turned down because of inadequate accommodation. By the close of 1902, Ohlange had close on 230 students, slightly more than half of whom boarded on campus. One keen student is reputed to have walked seven hundred miles in order to attend Ohlange.³



In the States, Dube had seen how the Negro colleges were supported and promoted by their own in-house serial publications, such as the *Southern Letter*, the *Tuskegee Student*, and the *Southern Workman*.⁴ Ohlange needed such a mouthpiece. But this need could easily be combined with the wider need within Natal for an independent black newspaper. In the way that *Inkanyiso*'s stoppage in 1896 appears to have made *Ipepa* necessary, so the passing of *Ipepa* in 1901 seems to have created the vacuum that Dube sought to fill by producing a paper of his own. *Ilanga* appeared for the first time in April 1903. As it happened, almost simultaneously, *Ipepa* was relaunched, and so for a period of several months until *Ipepa* finally shut down for good in April 1904, Natal had the luxury of two independent black newspapers.⁵

Ilanga began life as a four-page weekly. Its first page was given over to advertisements, which sometimes appeared also on other pages. Most of the copy was in isiZulu, but there were always a few columns in English, usually on page four. Occasionally, a brief article appeared in Sesotho by the sub-editor for that language, Josiel A. Molise.⁶ Dube may have envisaged being editor-in-chief of the paper, with an English, a Sesotho, and possibly even an isiZulu sub-editor answerable to him.

¹ Wilcox quoted in: Chirenje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa*, 141.

² Chirenje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa*, 142.

³ Marable, 'African Nationalist', 127.

⁴ Davis, 'John L. Dube', 509.

⁵ *Ipepa lo Hlanga* discontinued after 3:441 (23 Aug. 1901), and recommenced with 3:442 (24 April 1903).

⁶ *Ilanga* 1:38 (25 Dec. 1903) 4.

As C. L. S. Nyembezi recognizes, *Ilanga* ‘played an important part in the development of Zulu literature by providing useful training ground for Zulu writers’.¹ But it is equally true that the paper provided a valuable forum for the development of English-language literary talent, as is evident from Grendon’s poems and editorials published in it. After 1934, English was dropped from the paper, and it became exclusively an isiZulu vehicle.²



Documentary evidence exists that Grendon did not merely teach at Ohlange, but was also ‘on Ilanga staff’.³ In answer to a police inquiry in 1906, Dube stated that Grendon ‘did at one time write articles in the “Ilanga” which were objectionable to the Government’.⁴ Persuasive intertextual evidence can be used to show that Grendon began to write for *Ilanga* from the moment he arrived at Ohlange.

On 13 November, for instance, there appears in *Ilanga* a piece headed, ‘**In Memoriam: the Late Sir John Robinson**’. This is an unsigned obituary for the man who had served Natal as its first Prime Minister after Responsible Government was obtained in 1893. Robinson had died just eight days earlier.⁵ The first two clauses of the opening sentence read: ‘Yet another of Natalia’s pillars by the hand of destiny is smitten down to crumble into dust; yet another silver trumpet-voice is hushed to be heard in sound debate in Senate hall no more.’ In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Kruger laments the death of his Commander-in-Chief:

The tower of our race is smitten down,
And wreck’d! Our chiefest Captain, Piet Joubert
Alas, is dead! His trumpet voice we’ll hear no more
In sound debate within yon Senate-Hall!⁶

Common to both passages are the collocations, ‘smitten down’, ‘trumpet-voice’, ‘sound debate’, and ‘Senate hall’. In addition, the expression ‘crumble into dust’

¹ Nyembezi, *Review of Zulu Literature*, 6.

² Switzer and Switzer, *Black Press*, 38–39.

³ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, to Under Secretary for Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, 16 Oct. 1906.

⁴ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Police, Inanda, to Magistrate, Verulam, 21 Oct. 1906.

⁵ ‘In Memoriam: the Late Sir John Robinson’, *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XXX, p. 97.

appears twice in *Paul Kruger's Dream*,¹ as does 'silver trumpet'.² The pen that wrote the poem *has* to be identical with that which wrote the obituary.

As an epigraph to his obituary, Grendon employs six lines from Tennyson's 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington'. He evidently had high regard for the poetic stature of the former poet laureate.³ Two further blocks from this poem—five and twenty lines respectively—are embedded in the prose article. Grendon transcribes the passages faithfully, taking only one small liberty with its closing lines. Where Tennyson has, 'And in the vast cathedral leave him', the colonial context demands Grendon's modest adaptation, 'And in (yon lonely churchyard) leave him'.⁴

Grendon mourns the passing of 'so eminent a statesman' and 'so distinguished a journalist'—Robinson had edited the *Natal Mercury* for many years. He 'and his life-long friend and colleague the late Right Hon. Harry Escombe ... were the founders, and the builders of Natal of to-day'. There is much encomium, and in particular, Robinson's moral character is praised. He 'always acted true to his political principles and convictions—true to his country—true to his race—and true to his King', and he displayed 'an utter abhorrence of all that was mean, and low'. Grendon's expressions are undoubtedly sincere: Robinson was widely recognized as a man of high principles.⁵



Grendon's two-part article, entitled '**Two Warnings**' appeared in consecutive issues of *Ilanga* in December 1903.⁶ It is a rallying cry to the 'native' people of South

¹ *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 32, and Pt XXXV, p. 114.

² *PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 53, and Pt XXXVII, p. 129.

³ Tennyson's 'In Memoriam A. H. H.' was a possible influence upon his own 'In Memoriam' poems. In the prose article, 'Native Education' (*Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4), Grendon refers to that 'long-looked-for event to which the black "creation moves"'—a small intertextual borrowing from the conclusion of 'In Memoriam'. In 'Notes and Comments' (*Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4), the embedded quotation, 'That men may rise on stepping stones | Of their dead selves to higher things', is likewise drawn from Tennyson's 'In Memoriam', Pt 1, stanza 1. As pointed out in chapter 6, Grendon draws on Homeric myth, via Tennyson's 'The Lotos-Eaters', in *Paul Kruger's Dream* (Pt I, p. 2), in 'Umdelwa's Musings' (*Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4), and again in his prose-article, 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland' (*Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5). An epigraph to Grendon's prose article, 'Justice Only!' (*Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 3) is taken from Tennyson's Sir Galahad, in *Idylls of the King* and includes the lines, 'My strength is as the strength of ten, | Because my heart is pure'.

⁴ Brackets in original.

⁵ Guest, 'Towards Responsible Government', 235.

⁶ 'The Indian Invasion', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4, and 'The Chinese Plague', *Ilanga* 1:37 (18 Dec. 1903) 4. Attribution of this article to Grendon is based upon circumstantial and intertextual evidence.

Africa. Not only do they have to compete economically with their white overlords, but they have also to pit their wits and energies against the foreign labourers that successive white governments have brought as indentured workers to South Africa—first Indians, and now the Chinese.

The first part of ‘Two Warnings’ is ‘The Indian Invasion’,¹ which reminds *Ilanga*’s readers that the first Indians were brought to Natal in 1860 to work the sugar plantations. Since then, they have flourished as a people. Largely as a consequence of their admirable industry, thrift, and business acumen, they have ‘succeeded in becoming owners of considerable property in many parts of Natal’; their market gardens are ‘veritable Elysiums’; indeed, the ‘fruit markets of the Colony are practically ruled by Indians’, and they ‘hold no small share in the store trade’. Grendon is willing to give credit where credit is due: ‘The success of the Indians has gained for them that respect which is due to all who succeed.’

Grendon had already begun to produce editorial copy for *Ilanga* (*vide* reference to ‘In Memoriam: the Late Sir John Robinson’, above). The first part of ‘Two Warnings’ is followed immediately by Grendon’s poem, ‘To You Abantu’, with which the prose article has points in common.

Intertextual evidence: *Cf.* ‘Yet again are we constrained’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘yet once again am I constrain’d’ (‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4); ‘I am again constrained’ (‘Thou Art the Man!’ *Ilanga* 13:650 (19 Nov. 1915) 5). *Cf.* ‘many opportunities that lie bestrewn upon their path neglected’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘all your opportunities | Ye, Zulus, wantonly neglect!’ (‘A Warning’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3). *Cf.* ‘Two warnings have been sounded in their very ears. The first has been unheeded’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘My words ... fell upon unheeding ears’ (‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6). *Cf.* ‘it remains to be seen’ (‘Two Warnings’) with the same expression in: ‘Degrading Marriage’, *Ilanga* 2:71 (19 Aug. 1904) 4; ‘The Late Chief Usibepu’, *Ilanga* 2:74 (9 Sept. 1904) 4; ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4; 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4; 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4; ‘Native Unrest’, *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918). *Cf.* ‘strangers who sojourn within our gates’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘this alien race, | Which sojourns in our gates’ (*PKD*, Pt XVI, p. 46); ‘strangers sojourning within their gates’ (‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5). *Cf.* ‘swell the purses’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘a considerable swelling of their pockets’ (‘Taking S. A. Natives to England’, *Looker-On* 242 (28 March 1899) 5). *Cf.* ‘the survival of the fittest’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘those who’re fittest must survive’ (‘To You Abantu’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4); ‘the “fittest must survive”’ (‘Selfishness’, *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4); ‘the fittest must survive’ (‘A Warning’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3). *Cf.* ‘THAT YOU MUST GO TO THE WALL!’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘he ... must ... assuredly go to the wall’ (‘Educate Your Children’, *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4); ‘must “go to the wall!”’ (‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5). *Cf.* ‘driven between two fires’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘Sitting between two fires’ (‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:86 (13 May 1914) 6). *Cf.* ‘natives should bestir themselves’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘unless they bestir themselves’ (‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5). *Cf.* ‘The time of Lotus-Eaters, and Lotus-Eating has ceased’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘like the Lotos-Eaters they were loth to rise’ (‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5); also with references to Tennyson’s ‘Lotos Eaters’ in ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4, and in *PKD*, Pt I, p. 2. *Cf.* ‘repeating the blunders of the past’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘repeating blunders’ (‘Farewell Msindazwe!’ *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916)); ‘correcting the blunders of the past’ (‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 3). *Cf.* ‘WHAT MAN HAS DONE MAN CAN DO’ (‘Two Warnings’) with ‘What Man’s Accomplish’d Ye Can Do’ (‘To You Abantu’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4).

¹ ‘Two Warnings: I. The Indian Invasion’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

In the face of such worthy competitors, the ‘indolence’ of Africans is ‘totally inexcusable’. There is no suggestion here that Africans and Indians should make common cause—they are, essentially, economic competitors. It is imperative that Africans ‘seiz[e] the many opportunities that lie bestrewn upon their path neglected and ignored’. Their predicament is dire: ‘We know also by sad experience how beneath our very eyes our children’s bread is taken by these Asiatics; how whatever little earnings we derive from Europeans, go to swell the purses of these strangers, with whom we seem obliged to trade.’ Africans must ‘renounce *once, and for ever*, [their] old-time customs, [their] sluggish attitude towards progress’.

Grendon counsels readers to take stock of their inherent talents. For one thing, ‘God has endowed [them] with physical constitutions unequalled the world over’. In colonial times, expressions of admiration for the Zulu physique were commonplace. Hugo Hahn, on the occasion of his visit to Port Natal in late 1859, was struck by ‘the athletic figures of the Zulu’, which were ‘in perfect, more than beast-like nudity’.¹ Grendon accepts the robust anatomy of the Zulu as ‘given’. It is amongst their foremost God-given assets, and ought not to be squandered.

He goes on to present a modified Social Darwinist basis for his argument that Africans must rise to the challenge presented by the racial newcomers: ‘From a practical point of view the survival of the fittest includes not always those who are physically strong, and capable of enduring toil, and hardship, but those who exercise diligence, perseverance, productive ability, and similar qualities.’²

‘Survival of the fittest’ is the idea of Englishman Herbert Spencer—a Lamarckian evolutionist—who taught that biological progress is the outcome of fierce competition. The ‘fittest’ survive and thrive, while the weak—in muscle or in mind—are either driven to extinction, or are made to serve the biologically or socially dominant. Saul Dubow has made a provisional attempt to trace the ‘seepage of Social Darwinist ideas into South Africa’. He finds that ‘the vocabulary was already present in embryonic form during the 1870s, though it seems likely that it only became widespread in the following two decades as the doctrine of social imperialism came to be forcefully articulated. Indicative of this process were the increasingly insistent

¹ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 225: Hugo Hahn to Emma.

² ‘Two Warnings: I. The Indian Invasion’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

assertions of national or racial superiority as well as accounts of social development, based on the notion of survival of the fittest.’¹

Grendon’s poem, ‘To You Abantu’ was written at about the same time as ‘Two Warnings’, and shares a page with its first part. Like the article, the poem reminds readers that ‘those who’re fittest must survive’.² Similarly, in Grendon’s poem, ‘A Warning’, he writes: ‘Of them, who for dominion strive | In things pertaining to the mind | And hand, the fittest must survive.’³

But a materialist explanation for human progress is far from Grendon’s thoughts. He knows that individual capacity to survive and thrive is not biologically predetermined. The ‘real man’ is the inner man—the spiritual and celestial man. And so he makes it clear that success does not depend upon physical prowess, but upon such ‘internal’ qualities as ‘diligence, perseverance, [and] productive ability’.

Grendon’s Swedenborgian model of human society—the organic and highly spiritualized *Maximus Homo*—is diametrically opposed to the materialism of Social Darwinists and eugenicists. This is why he rejects the crassly materialist models of white supremacists, and prefers the collaborative or cooperative models favoured by Swedenborg and socialism. He is so assured of his position that he dismantles Huxley’s system of race categorization, showing how it ‘falls to the ground when tested’, and drawing the conclusion that even ‘wise men err sometimes grievously’.⁴ Similarly, Blyden eschews the rank materialism of Social Darwinists. ‘There will never be of the original races any “survival of the fittest”’, he confidently predicts. ‘All are fit, for the work they will have to do, and all will continue.’⁵

In his 1918 polemic on socialist-inspired unrest amongst African labourers, Grendon identifies ‘Dishonesty and Colour Prejudice’ as ‘relatives to the law of the Brute Creation, viz: “eat or be eaten!”’ These false principles ‘are the guiding-stars of your present-day competitive system’—Capitalism, of which the ‘slogan’ is ‘cheat or be cheated!’ Superior to economic competition—Grendon maintains—is ‘the

¹ Dubow, *Scientific Racism*, 128–29.

² ‘To You Abantu’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

³ ‘A Warning’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁴ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ Blyden, *Black Spokesman*, 203.

collective, or cooperative' system.¹ This socialist model is harmonious with Swedenborg, who teaches that Man is only fulfilled when he 'performs uses' for the betterment of Society.

Grendon is not the only black South African intellectual to engage with contemporary quasi-scientific discourse on competition between the Races of Mankind. Dube did so too. William Manning Marable makes the point that 'from the techniques of modern western agriculture to the strict use of the English language in instruction, Dube's entire programme [at Ohlange] taught Kholwa children and young adults the meaning of competition and a stern belief in the Social Darwinist concept of "survival of the fittest".'² Dube saw the forward march of 'Civilization' in terms of 'fitness' and competition. In evidence delivered before the Natal's Native Affairs Commission, on 5 April 1907, he makes the point that 'those who did not keep pace with civilisation dropped out and died, as, for instance, the natives of Tasmania and Australia and the Red Indians of America'.³ And in *Ilanga*, in January of the same year—by which time Grendon had been gone from Ohlange for over a year—an editorial asks: 'Where is the Native Race of Tasmania? Where are the Maoris of New Zealand? Where are the black men of Australia? ... the Red Indians of North America?'⁴ The inference is that these people are not 'fit' enough to encounter modernity, and have therefore either become extinct, or are on the way out.

In the second part of 'Two Warnings', Grendon turns his attention to the 'Chinese Plague'.⁵ 'The first warning is sounded and past', he tells his readers in an apocalyptic flourish.⁶ As early as January 1898, the South African League, of which Grendon was a staunch member, 'decided to urge upon Government the necessity of prohibiting immigration [of Asiatics]—especially of Chinamen'.⁷ It was felt that South Africa's racial problems were sufficiently convoluted not to further complicate them. Yet, Lord Milner's postwar reconstruction administration was intent on indenturing Chinese labourers for the goldmines, and as 'Two Warnings' states, 'the importation

¹ 'Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side', *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5.

² Marable, 'African Nationalist', 127–28.

³ Natal, *Native Affairs Commission, 1906–7*, 961.

⁴ *Ilanga* (18 Jan. 1907).

⁵ 'Two Warnings: II—The Chinese Plague', *Ilanga* 1:37 (18 Dec. 1903) 4.

⁶ Cf. Rev. 9:12. Cf. also: 'THE FIRST WOE SOUNDS—AND SOON MUST COME TO PASS!' ('PAD', Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4).

⁷ 'The League Congress', *Citizen* 2:28 (16 Feb. 1898) supplement, 1.

of the Celestials is being pushed on with promptitude and zeal, despite the protests of them who are averse to the presence of the “Yellow Danger”.

Grendon accepts it as an accomplished fact that legions of Chinese workers will soon land in South Africa. This being the case, Africans must not miss the point of the earlier ‘warning’ regarding Indian immigrants. In ‘times past the natives seem to have reclined at ease on the bosom of the Indian’. There is now even greater danger of their ‘yield[ing] to the Chinaman’s frowns, and smiles, when they come to the point of contact’. What Grendon means by the African ‘reclining’ upon an Indian ‘bosom’ is not entirely clear. However, in his poem, ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’, he conjures up a similar image of unwholesome African-Indian bosom-intimacy, when he counsels Edendale’s mission folk to expel their valley’s Indian newcomers:

Would’st thou a black man’s paradise
 Remain? Then vomit out yon pest
 Emitting fragrant Orient spice,
 And rear THINE offspring on thy breast.¹

There is nothing to be gained from downplaying the xenophobic quality of these expressions. To be fair to Grendon, however, they should be read in historical context. Heather Hughes has remarked the ‘pronounced anti-Indianism’ of Grendon’s employer, Dube.² The thrust of ‘Two Warnings’, however, is that the arrival of ‘Oriental’ races poses great challenges for Africans—challenges of which they are little aware, and which they are ill-prepared to meet. At no time does Grendon argue in favour of inherent and immutable inferiority of the Indian or Chinese. To the contrary, he argues that all ‘nations, and individuals must pass some time or other’ through vastly changing fortunes ‘in their existence on this globe’.³ Grendon’s objection to existing economic competition from Indians and anticipated competition from incoming Chinese is alloyed with praise for their cultural virtues, which he sees as industry, thrift, and perseverance. But Grendon is partisan, and makes clear that he stands for the interests of his ‘*abantu*’.

It is also possible that in his guardedness towards Indian and Chinese immigrants, Grendon is partially influenced by his reading of Swedenborg or of the compendium

¹ ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’, *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

² Hughes, ‘Doubly Elite’, 446n, 447.

³ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

that Wilkinson makes of Swedenborg's pronouncements relating to Africa and Africans. The people of Asia, in respect of their influence in Africa, receive a measure of notoriety in Swedenborg's Writings. The Seer says of the spiritual Africans that those who inhabit the regions 'towards Asia, are not wise, and are infested by those who come from thence [Asia], because the latter speak things which they [the natives] do not perceive'.¹ Whatever the 'plane' of these Asian intruders may be—it is *not* 'celestial'. In his anti-Indian expressions, both in 'Two Warnings', and in the poem, 'A Second Warning to Edendale',² Grendon may have in mind some spiritual taint that Africans run the risk of acquiring from the 'infestation' of Asians in their midst.

Grendon's principal purpose with 'Two Warnings' is to bestir readers into taking lessons from the exemplary application of the immigrants, and to inject their own inherent ability into the struggle for spiritual, social, and economic survival. In 1918, he identifies 'the Moral victory of the Indian Passive Resistance Movement' as one of the 'important lessons' that the 'Native' has learnt in recent years.³ He concludes 'Two Warnings' by counselling readers 'not to continually cry against some who succeed, or to condemn others because they subsist on two-pence a day, but to practise economy in every way; and to recognize this almighty and eternal principle that in all ages, and in all climes—"WHAT MAN HAS DONE MAN CAN DO".' Grendon counsels against defeatism: Africans must not be overawed by whites, Indians, or Chinese. They too can achieve great things.



In '**The Labour Problem**' (22 January 1904),⁴ Grendon attacks the Randlords for pressuring the Government of the Transvaal Colony into sanctioning the immigration of thousands of Chinese indentured mineworkers. In this article, we catch an early

¹ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 76.

² *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

³ 'Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side', *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5.

⁴ *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4. My attribution of this prose piece to Grendon is again based upon intertextual evidence, viewed in the light of the fact—already demonstrated—that Grendon began to supply editorial copy for *Ilanga* from the moment he arrived at Ohlange in November. Examples: *Cf.* 'assumed another aspect' ('The Labour Problem') with 'assume another aspect' ('Mr. Barnett's Lecture', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3). *Cf.* 'faithless and perverse generation of capitalists' ('The Labour Problem') with: 'foolish, and perverse reason of a foolish and perverse generation' ('The Mission Native', *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4). *Cf.* 'thirst for gold is unquenchable' ('The Labour Problem') with: 'To quench their thirst for gold' (*PKD*, Pt XI, p. 34); and 'quench their thirst for gold' (*PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133). *Cf.* quote from Caesar's *Gallic War* ('The Labour Problem') with another quote from the same text in 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

glimpse of Grendon the socialist. ‘The voice of the plebs’, he says, ‘is raised in indignant protest at the action of the capitalist’. The ‘schemes’ of South Africa’s white magnates ‘are always directed against giving labour its due reward!’

Grendon dismisses as disingenuous the capitalist’s claim that southern Africa cannot furnish an adequate supply of labourers to work the goldmines. The real ‘motive at the bottom of the whole trouble is not so much the laziness and unwillingness of the natives to work, but rather the determination on the part of the capitalists to refuse to remunerate the natives for their labour’. If mine-owners will ‘deal fairly and squarely’ with African labour, then it ‘will be forthcoming in abundance’.

During the late South African War, Grendon writes, capitalists, out of naked self-interest, took ‘the Imperial Government’ to task ‘for remunerating honestly the natives who acted as camp-followers’ to the Army. Africans risked their lives at the front lines, and yet capitalists ‘plotted ... to cut down those wages which were the price put upon black men’s lives’. These same ‘mining magnates’ are behind the current move to import Chinese labourers, whom they will pay a pittance.

Grendon concludes this article with the appeal: ‘Let those fortunate ones on whom Mammon smiles make another effort to secure native labour on this continent; let them admit that the fault lies with themselves; let them deal fairly and squarely with the Natives—then labour will be forthcoming in abundance; and lastly let them constantly set before them this naked truth—“*That the workman is worthy of his hire.*”’¹



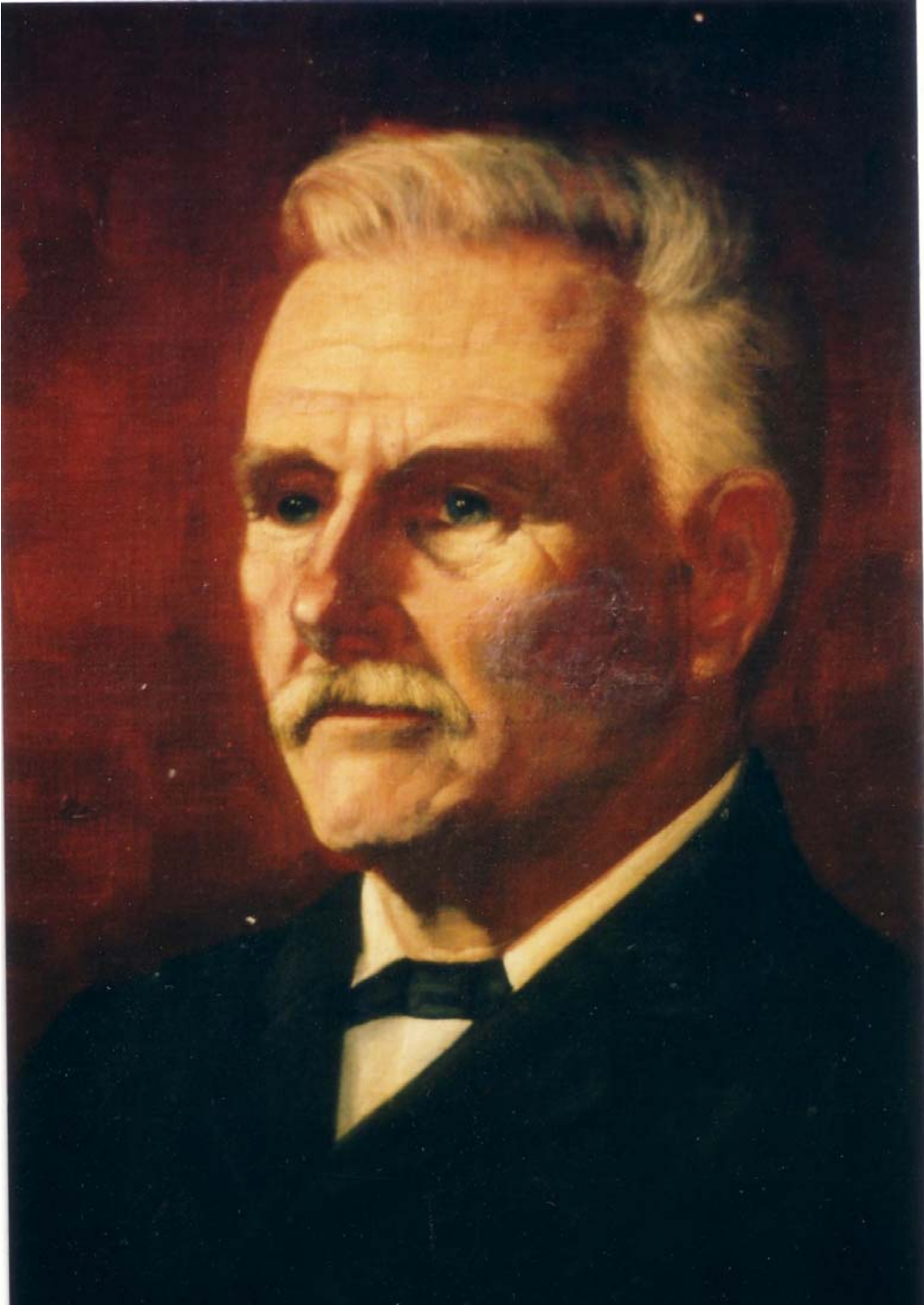
It is likely that Grendon’s most significant contact while at Ohlange was with London-born Harold Thomas Attersoll (1849–1922; plate 7f),² who arrived in Durban as a youth in the early 1860s.³ As a young man, Attersoll became interested in Swedenborg, and began associating with the Durban Society of the New Church. His baptism took place in 1879. Thereafter, for two decades, he played a leading role in

¹ Grendon quotes Jesus (Luke 10:7).

² NAB, MSCE, ref. 7568/1922.

³ *Who’s Who in Natal* (1933) 17 (biographical sketch of Attersoll’s son).

Plate 7f: Harold Attersoll, Durban Swedenborgian



the affairs of the Durban Society, taking an active part in the construction of the first New Church building on the Berea Road in the early 'nineties.¹ When Grendon knew him, he was a storekeeper and lived in Musgrave Road.²

During the 1890s, the worldwide New Church community was racked by theological discord, arising out of disagreement over the authority of Swedenborg's writings. The most contentious text was *Conjugial Love*,³ which seemed to allow for fornication and the keeping of a mistress in exceptional cases. Victorian middle-class mores being what they were, some receivers of New Church doctrine found difficulty in accepting this work as fully inspired of God.

The two principal New Church bodies at the time were the General Conference of the New Church, based in England, and the General Convention of the New Jerusalem, in the United States. Both were rent asunder, and out of their wreckage a third organization emerged. This was the General Church of the New Jerusalem, with headquarters in the United States. It took the view that all Swedenborg's theological writings are fully inspired and therefore infallible. *Conjugial Love* was no exception.

During the late 1890s, Attersoll became embroiled in an acrimonious debate as to whether the Durban Society should look, as before, to the British-based organization, or rather to the newly-formed General Church. He objected in no uncertain terms when a majority of the Durban Society voted in favour of asking the new body to supply a minister. He appears to have been motivated by a distaste for ecclesiasticism, and an inability to accept the totality of Swedenborg's writings as fully inspired and infallible. He and his close circle—a minority within a minority—continued to look to the General Conference for guidance. Although he retained membership of the Durban Society, he became the object of some ill will.⁴ He did not however abandon his personal faith, and remained a zealous proselytiser for Swedenborg, especially among the mission-educated African community.

¹ Personal communication: Andrew Dibb, 30 Jan. 2006. Dr Dibb is Attersoll's great-grandson, and on the teaching staff of Bryn Athyn, a Swedenborgian liberal arts college in Pennsylvania. Durban's original New Church building still stands, and is owned by the Salvation Army.

² *Natal Government Gazette* 53:3190 (27 July 1901) 1153.

³ The full title in English is *The Delights of Wisdom Pertaining to Conjugial Love; to Which is Added the Pleasures of Insanity Pertaining to Scortatory Love*. This work was first published in Latin as *Delitiæ Sapientiæ de Amore Conjugiali; post quas sequuntur Voluptates Insaniæ de Amore Scortatorio* (Amsterdam, 1768).

⁴ Evans, *History of the New Church in Southern Africa*, 23; personal communication: Andrew Dibb.

Like Grendon, Attersoll appears to have been somewhat disputatious. In a self-published pamphlet entitled *A Little More of Truth* (c.1905), he implies that the Rev. James Frederick Buss, pastor to the Durban Society, has not dealt adequately with the subject of biblical higher criticism in a lecture delivered in Durban's Town Hall.¹ Buss was a prolific writer on subjects Swedenborgian, as borne out by the catalogue of the British Library.² He came to South Africa in 1903 to recoup his health, and served the Durban Society for four years until the theological dispute within his congregation reached such a pitch that he was compelled to return to England.³

Attersoll's nonconformity in the debate over the proper allegiance of the Durban Society alienated him from former friends. Furthermore, his active spiritualism would not have endeared him to the majority of New Church people, who viewed séances with deep suspicion.⁴ In 1920, a Swedenborgian regular correspondent to *Ilanga*—likely Attersoll himself—defends spiritualism by appealing to its parallel in the 'Bantu knowledge of Butonga and much else that appertains to the immortal side of human beings'.⁵

While Swedenborg himself spoke with spirits, he cautions his readers against the perils inherent in attempting the same themselves:

At the present day to talk with spirits is rarely granted because it is dangerous; for then the spirits know, what otherwise they do not know, that they are with man; and evil spirits are such that they hold man in deadly hatred, and desire nothing so much as to destroy him both soul and body[. . . M]ost spirits are not aware that there is any other world than that in which they live, and therefore are unaware that there are men anywhere else; and this is why man is not permitted to speak with them in return. If he did they would know.⁶

Swedenborg stops short of pronouncing an outright prohibition, leaving an interpretive loophole for disciples like Attersoll who feel impelled to make contact with the Other Side. By practising spiritualism, Attersoll was nonetheless venturing into a dangerous twilight periphery of mainstream Swedenborgianism.

¹ Attersoll, *A Little More of Truth*, 3.

² Perhaps his earliest work is: *The Two Christianities: Old and New*. London: James Speirs, 1890.

³ Buss, *Romantic Story of the South African Mission*, 17; Evans, *History of the New Church in Southern Africa*, 23–24.

⁴ Personal communication: Andy Dibb.

⁵ 'Spiritualism', *Ilanga* 18:9 (27 Feb. 1920) 5.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 249.

In the 1870s, C. Maurice Davies—a non-Swedenborgian student of comparative religion—discovered that while all New Church people in London ‘quite conceded the reality of the [spiritualist] phenomena’, most viewed spiritualism as off-limits to them, ‘because Swedenborg’s revelation was final’. One of Davies’s informants went so far as to confess that ‘this matter ha[d] well nigh caused a schism in [their] body, some members claiming the right of judging for themselves as to whether they shall communicate or not’.¹ He concludes that the ‘Spiritualists, then, are in the position of a kind of Swedenborgian Nonconformists’.² Attersoll seems to have fallen into this ‘Nonconformist’ camp.

On these grounds, he was considered a loose cannon, and some members of the Durban Society opposed him vehemently.³ He employed a variety of means to extend his influence and to proselytize for the African New Jerusalem. Together with other Durban New Churchmen—George Russell, F. A. Hammond, and George Pay—he formed what he called a ‘Brotherhood’—the purpose of which was to reinforce ties with the British body. Florence Warland, a member of the Durban Society and one of Attersoll’s adversaries, wrote to a New Church magazine, protesting his initiative, and implying that it was an attempt to wrest control of the Society.⁴ Attersoll also infiltrated the Durban Ethical Society, becoming its Secretary.⁵ One wonders if anyone discerned the irony in an avowedly agnostic—or at least freethinking—body having a Swedenborgian and spiritualist as one of its office-bearers.

Attersoll’s Swedenborgianism-*cum*-spiritualism may account for a tendentious letter of his, published in *Koranta ea Becoana* in December 1904. In it, he wrote: ‘The interests of the African People are very dear to me, and will be so not only through this life, but into the next, in which I trust I shall be able to be of far more use than here.’⁶ From Swedenborg, Attersoll knew that ‘Africans are more receptive of celestial doctrine than any others on this planet’, and that ‘now angels from the Lord speak with them, and instruct them concerning the Lord, with the promise that they

¹ Davies, *Unorthodox London*, 94–95.

² Davies, *Unorthodox London*, 99.

³ Personal communication: Andrew Dibb. Grendon confirms this when he describes Attersoll as ‘a hateful and detested figure amongst the ranks of his own kinsmen’ (see below).

⁴ Personal communication: Andrew Dibb, 1 Feb. 2006.

⁵ Attersoll, *A Little More of Truth*, 1.

⁶ ‘As Others See Us’, *Koranta ea Becoana* 2:108 (21 Dec. 1904) 5.

shall accept celestial doctrine'.¹ As an angel 'from the Lord', Attersoll expected in due course to be empowered to instruct countless Africans in 'celestial doctrine'.

Like any good Swedenborgian, Attersoll desires to render 'use' and 'far more' of it. He is limited in the services he may offer here and now, but from the Spiritual or Celestial Heaven, there is no telling how much good he may be able to perform for Africa and Africans. For if Africans on this material planet hold converse with the living 'dead'—'the ancestors'—then surely the benignly-disposed 'dead' may reciprocally render loving 'use' to terrestrial Africans. The Swedenborgian Wilkinson implies as much when he writes of David Livingstone's 'heart' that it 'was so gracious that it could not have throbbed more lovingly for [the African] continent ... if he had been already above it among the immortals'.² When once Attersoll is released from his flesh, and thus unimpeded by the constraints of finite space and time, he is confident that his labours in behalf of Africa will be 'far more' effectual than any he has been favoured to perform 'through this life'.

Attersoll's vocal defence of Africans, although largely inspired by his acceptance of Swedenborg's African doctrine, may have caused his coreligionists in Durban some embarrassment. The image of a 'celestial' African remnant in the bosom of Africa could not be expunged from the Writings, but it did not sit comfortably with colonial stereotypes of 'the African'. A book promoting Swedenborg's teaching was put out in Durban in 1925;³ yet curiously, although published in Africa, it makes no reference whatsoever to Swedenborg's special African doctrine. One has to wonder if this was an element of their belief that South African New Churchmen preferred to sweep under the carpet, or at least not to spring upon the uninitiated.

It seems to follow that, in view of the manner in which Swedenborg extols celestial Africans, white South African New Church people would—one and all—endeavour to establish friendly contact with that favoured though elusive remnant. But this does not appear to have been the case, and Attersoll was a rare exception in actively bringing Swedenborg's revelations to his black neighbours. Very possibly, strained

¹ Swedenborg, *Diarium Majus*, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 85, 86.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 151.

³ Theodore Pitcairn, *The Book Sealed With Seven Seals: an Invitation to the New Church*. Durban: s.n., 1925.

relations with the white Durban Society afforded him greater freedom to explore possibilities of creating a new fellowship of black Swedenborgians amongst a group of people who already had a tradition of belief in living ancestors.

Attersoll's view was that 'human life is best when it joys or suffers with its fellows'¹—a view, incidentally, also espoused by William Blake, in 'The Clod and the Pebble'. To Attersoll, Africans *were* his 'fellows'. In July 1903, he wins high praise and benedictions in *Ilanga* for his charitable deeds in respect of various African causes. He had made donations to the Inanda Seminary for Girls, to a new African Congregational Church, to the Zulu Christian Church, to Dube's Zulu Christian Industrial School, and to other such institutions. Attersoll is cited as living proof that not all whites are inimical toward blacks.²

It is not clear how Grendon and Attersoll met, but undoubtedly their shared interest in Swedenborg must have kept them together. In January 1905, Grendon writes with considerable appreciation of Attersoll's spiritual labours in behalf of Africans:

Though amongst the ruling caste thousands upon thousands are actuated by dark principles, corrupted by the thought of earthly honour and gain, spurred to deeds that are dishonourable in the eyes of righteous men, we have at least one true and honest friend, who stands out a hateful and detested figure amongst the ranks of his own kinsmen, to fearlessly champion both by lip and pen, in public and in private, the much despised black man's cause. To many of our readers this solitary 'Star of Hope, and Instruction' is well known, and where the spiritual eye both sees and recognises him, it were useless to bring him before the natural view. To you Abantu—dwellers along the Natalian sea-board—this angel is well known. His shadow is constantly about your path; and his exertions are constantly directed in your behalf. See then that you profit by his labours to uplift you, and to lead you on the 'Path of Truth'. ... And you, abantu, dwellers in the inland regions, take up the message though as yet the messenger be to you unseen.³

Attersoll, as a 'solitary "Star of Hope, and Instruction" is well known' to those dwelling on the 'Natalian sea-board', on account of his deeds of mercy in that region,

¹ Attersoll, *A Little More of Truth*, 8.

² 'Isihlobo sabantu', *Ilanga* 1:16 (24 July 1903) 2.

³ 'The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4. Grendon chooses not to identify this local 'Star of Hope, and Instruction' by name, but from the context he is clearly referring to Attersoll.

and because his many expositions of Swedenborg have appeared in *Ilanga* right from its second issue.¹ The ‘Natalian sea-board’ describes *Ilanga*’s principal reach.

Grendon’s appeal to African ‘dwellers in the inland regions’ to ‘take up the message’ implies that both he and Attersoll are intent on giving the doctrines of the New Jerusalem the widest possible coverage. This ambitious project accounts for Attersoll’s letter to the editor of *Koranta ea Becoana* in December 1904—just weeks before Grendon’s own appeal to the ‘inland regions’. *Koranta* is published in Mafeking, which is significantly ‘inland’ from the ‘Natalian sea-board’. In his letter, Attersoll makes known that ‘the Divine Providence’ has foreordained that the ‘African People have to rise’, and ‘the many factors like [*Koranta* and its staff] must work steadily without fear’ towards that goal.² It is not coincidence that Attersoll speaks of the need for the ‘African People’ to ‘rise’, while Grendon urges Africans to ‘profit’ from Attersoll’s ‘labours to uplift’ them.

Grendon and Attersoll evidently both viewed the black-controlled newspaper press as the chief instrument for broadcasting the Heavenly Doctrine. Grendon states that Africans ‘look forward to the restoration of the True Christian Religion’.³ He also states that they ‘look forward to the time when these [vernacular] papers will unite in disseminating the same seeds of civilisation and religion, which are the only factors which go to make up the true advancement of any race’.⁴ The ‘True Christian Religion’ is Swedenborg’s own phrase for the beliefs and practices of the New Church—the Church of the New Jerusalem.⁵ Ultimately, it will be by embracing this New Church that the ‘African People’ will ‘rise’, as Attersoll predicts. Grendon links the ‘restoration of the True Christian Religion’ with the work of newspapermen. Already *Ilanga* is ‘disseminating’ these ‘seeds’, but the time may well come when other papers, such as *Koranta*, edited by Sol Plaatje, will be doing the same.



¹ Early examples include: ‘Education of Body and Mind’, *Ilanga* 1:2 (17? April 1903) 3; untitled letter, *Ilanga* 2:55 (29 April 1904) 4; untitled letter, *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4; untitled letter, *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4; ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4; ‘Jehovah Christ’ (poem), *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 4.

² ‘As Others See Us’, *Koranta ea Becoana* 2:108 (21 Dec. 1904) 5.

³ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘The Native Press’, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.

⁵ *True Christian Religion* (1771) is also the title of Swedenborg’s most comprehensive, single-volume account of his religious system.

Desperately in need of cash to advance his projects, Dube was probably planning a fund-raising trip to the United States for some months prior to February 1904, when he and his wife sailed from Durban. He was away from Ohlange for fifteen months, about twelve of which were spent on American soil, where he ‘concentrated on the Northeast and the Midwest’. His brother Charles and sister-in-law Adelaide Dube had concluded their studies at Wilberforce University. John teamed up with them, and it is possible that they may have returned to South Africa at the same time.¹

In taking the decision to go abroad, Dube was likely torn between two imperatives: on the one hand the financial need of the college was most pressing; on the other, both Ohlange and *Ilanga* were in their infancy and Dube as their spiritual parent must have been loath to entrust their care to others. Grendon’s arrival three months prior to Dube’s departure may have provided the window of opportunity that Dube urgently required. Those three months may have been probationary, during which Dube coached and watched his new employee.

On 12 February 1904, *Ilanga* announced the departure from Natal of ‘Rev. John L. Dube, Editor of this paper and Principal of the Industrial School’. He had left the previous day ‘by the mail steamer with his wife to visit England and America’. He returned early in May 1905,² at which time, he is described as *Ilanga*’s ‘editor-in-chief’, who had left behind ‘stewards’ to edit the paper during his absence.³

Ignorance of Dube’s absence from South Africa has led more than one scholar into mistakenly attributing to him editorial material written during this period. On 26 February 1904—by which time Dube had spent more than a fortnight at sea—a leader article appeared in *Ilanga* entitled ‘South Africa’s Future’, which debunks Rudyard Kipling’s roseate vision of postwar South Africa.⁴ David Attwell claims that this article was ‘authored no doubt by the newspaper’s founding editor, John Langalibalele Dube’, and goes on to hypothesize that ‘Dube, the Congregationalist (and Calvinist), was also offended by what he saw as Kipling’s sheer hubris: the

¹ Davis, ‘John L. Dube’, 508.

² ‘Visits England’, *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4; ‘Rev. and Mrs Dube’, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4. Among legal deposit exemplars of *Ilanga* sent to the Colonial Government, and currently preserved in the Bessie Head Library, number 2:43 (5 Feb. 1904) is the last that Dube personally hand-signs. J. S. Mdimba—Dube’s brother-in-law—hand-signs 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) to 3:107 (5 May 1905) ‘for J. L. Dube’. Number 3:108 (12 May 1905) is again signed by Dube.

³ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁴ ‘South Africa’s Future’, *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4.

apparent miracle of a crop of millionaires reaped for every poor man placed on the land was a “moral impossibility”.¹

Here, Attwell inadvertently commits an error that his essay seeks to expose—the historiographical approach that ‘elide[s] many of the aesthetic, historical, and political complexities’ of South African literature.² The leader is Grendon’s, not Dube’s, and ‘moral impossibility’ is Grendon’s phrase.³ Grendon most certainly was *not* Calvinist, nor does ‘South Africa’s Future’ beg a Calvinist reading as Attwell appears to imply.

By the same token, Paul la Hausse, through unwarranted assumptions and failure to read *Ilanga* editorials in context, ascribes a significant polemic to John Dube, which was in fact written by Grendon.⁴ This polemic, which is ostensibly on ‘Zulu Orthography’, is in reality on the right of Africans to lay claim to their own linguistic and literary heritage, without interference by white grammarians, orthographers, philologists, and oral historians. It appears just prior to Dube’s return to Africa, and again could not possibly have been written by him. La Hausse’s error might be excusable were it not for the fact that he treats *Zulu* ethnic identity, and, whereas Dube is a Zulu, Grendon is not—not even by adoption.

As it currently exists, the editorial history of *Ilanga* and others of South Africa’s earliest independent vernacular-language newspapers is woefully incomplete. According to bibliographers L. E. and D. Switzer, the ‘earliest known’ editors of *Ilanga*, other than Dube himself, are Sikweleti Nyongwana (before 1915), and Ngazana Luthuli (from 1915 to 1943).⁵ Another source states that ‘due to pressure of work, Dr Dube was forced to relinquish his editorship in favour of Mr S. Nyongwan[a], who was succeeded by Mr N. Luthuli’.⁶ My research reveals that as an English-language sub-editor, Grendon was earlier than either of these. He shared editorial responsibilities likely with an isiZulu and—occasionally—with a Sesotho editor. Nyongwana was not editor as early as 1904–05. In the latter year, he was still

¹ Attwell, ‘Reprisals of Modernity’, 267–68.

² Attwell, ‘Reprisals of Modernity’, 267.

³ See, for example: ‘moral impossibility’ (‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4), and ‘morally impossible’ (‘Native Abominations’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4).

⁴ La Hausse, *Restless Identities*, 12. La Hausse comes in at the tail-end of a polemic that has been going on for five issues of *Ilanga* (‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 3; 3:104 (14 April 1905) 3–4; 3:105 (21 April 1905) 3–4; 3:106 (28 April 1905) 3–4; 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4).

⁵ Switzer and Switzer, *Black Press*, 38–39. This is confirmed in: Couzens, ‘Black Press and Black Literature in South Africa’, 93.

⁶ State Library, *South African Newspapers Available on Microfilm*, 35.

teaching at Impolweni—a Scottish Free Church mission station between Albert Falls and New Hanover.¹ In 1904, *Ilanga*'s English-language editor—Grendon, as I argue here—refers to him in the third person.²

The question before us then is: 'Since Dube cannot have authored *Ilanga*'s English-language articles during his foreign absence, who did?' Much of the English-language material published in *Ilanga* during Dube's absence is of extraordinary value, from aesthetic, ideological, and historical points of view. Since these editorial articles are anonymous, the identity of their author may be contested. Through a combination of strong circumstantial and textual evidence, I have been able to demonstrate conclusively that Grendon was author of *Ilanga*'s English-language editorials during this period. Couzens makes a similar—though more modest and more generalized—claim when he states that 'in the 1901–1904 period there are a few waspish letters and articles by Grendon',³ and that the author of an obituary for Paul Kruger⁴ 'was clearly Grendon'.⁵ Had Couzens chosen to follow up this line of inquiry, he would likely have arrived at the same conclusion that I do here.

In Dube's Zulu-language article, 'Salani Kahle'⁶ (*i.e.* 'Farewell'), of 12 February 1904, he notifies *Ilanga*'s readers that by the time they read these lines, he and his wife will be *en route* to England. He assures them that nothing will change during his absence. His brother-in-law, Mr John Mdimba will take charge of the school and of *Ilanga*. Mdimba is a man who has proven his worth. He obtained his education at Lovedale, thereafter teaching at Amanzimtoti. He even assumed the run of the Ncwadi mission, when Dube undertook his previous visit to the States. All monies intended for *Ilanga* and for the Zulu Christian Industrial School should be directed to Mdimba during Dube's absence.

However, Mr Mdimba will not have to labour alone, Dube continues, because he has the assistance of Mr Grendon, the head teacher. *Ilanga*'s readers should not

¹ 'Isaziso: Umhlangano Wabamnyama Wokusebenza', *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

² 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

³ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 81. Couzens does not cite examples of these 'waspish letters and articles' published between 1901 and 1904—unless Grendon's obituary for Kruger be considered 'waspish'. Since *Ilanga* was established in 1903, Couzens's period, 1901–04, must presumably take in the earlier *Ipepa lo Hlanga*.

⁴ 'The Late President Kruger', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁵ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 74.

⁶ 'Salani Kahle', *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 2.

repine, believing that ‘progress’ will grind to a halt because Dube is away. In the same vein, another brief isiZulu note appearing on the same page states that Dube travels with a clean heart, because he leaves behind Mr Robert Grendon, a man of great knowledge.¹

It becomes apparent that while the trusted Mdimba assumed supreme command of college and newspaper, Grendon took charge of the academic teaching. The task was no doubt onerous, because, as Grendon himself states, the Institution ‘in point of numbers [was] the largest boarding School for Native boys in Natal’.²

Mdimba may well have edited the Zulu columns, and from what follows, it becomes evident that Grendon was responsible for the English copy. During this period, the paper’s English component swelled to fill, usually, the entire back page. Sometimes, it intruded backwards into page three.

Grendon is a much likelier candidate than Mdimba for the position of English sub-editor of *Ilanga*. Several statements made in the English columns during Dube’s absence run counter to everything for which Dube and his college professedly stood. Industrial training, for instance, is judged to be significantly flawed, and some of Dube’s white allies are roundly condemned.³ It is unthinkable that Dube’s brother-in-law would have originated articles that were so glaringly antithetical to Dube’s much-publicized views.

Every available clue points to Grendon as author of this controversial material. For a start, we have conclusive archival evidence that he was ‘on *Ilanga* staff’ at an early point in its existence.⁴ He was on the spot, and Dube clearly had faith in his academic credentials. He had already had an association in various capacities with at least four independent black newspapers: *Inkanyiso yase Natal*, *South African Citizen*, *Coloured*

¹ *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 2.

² ‘Visits England’, *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4.

³ In ‘Missionary Conference’ (*Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3–4), the First General Missionary Conference comes in for a pounding, and two prominent members of the American Board Zulu Mission who attended it—F. B. Bridgman and W. C. Wilcox—are mentioned by name. One of Dube’s most valuable white allies, W. C. Wilcox, is made to look ridiculous in ‘Zulu Orthography’ (*Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 3; 3:104 (14 April 1905) 3; 3:105 (21 April 1905) 3; 3:106 (28 April 1905) 3), and F. B. Bridgman is grilled in ‘Reply to Rev. Bridgman’ (*Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3), which although written by A.M.E. Churchman, E. T. Mpela, is nonetheless introduced into *Ilanga* to support the earlier attack on the Missionary Conference.

⁴ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437.

South African (as editor), and *Ipepa lo Hlanga*. And, as already shown, he had begun to furnish English-language material in prose and verse for publication in *Ilanga* even prior to Dube's departure in February 1904.

In the early years of *Ilanga's* existence, it and Ohlange were inseparable. One of Dube's main objectives with *Ilanga* was that it should advertise the work of his college. Grendon's poem, 'Ilanga' closely identifies the Institution with the paper.¹ *Ilanga's* editorial voice—both before and during Dube's absence—is that of the Institution's teaching staff.² The author of 'Notes and Comments', adopts the corporate persona, 'We, Ohlange'—the very phrase Grendon uses in his elegy for Elias Tshabalala.³ Since the Institution had printing plant by 1904, it is most likely that actual printing of *Ilanga*—and not merely the editorial department—was located here.⁴

Ilanga of 12 May 1905 welcomes back 'our chief and his consort' from a fifteen-month visit to America, and prays that they 'may long be spared to continue the work for which they have given their lives in order to raise their race to higher things'.⁵ The 'rise' to 'higher things' is pure Grendon. We encounter the phrase both in poetry of this period and in his later (Swaziland) prose.⁶ The message of welcome to Dube also exhorts Dube's circle to 'let their watchword be—"Press on!"'⁷ 'Press on!' is likewise Grendon's watchword: it appears several times in his poems, 'Press on Ohlange' and 'To You Abantu'.⁸

Appendix 1 to this thesis sets out in tabular form a comparison between texts of which Grendon is the known author, and anonymous editorial material published in *Ilanga* from late 1903 to May 1905, but particularly during Dube's absence from February 1904. In this table, I identify some of the many unusual collocations which

¹ 'Ilanga', *Ilanga* 1:6 (15 May 1903) 3.

² See, for instance: 'Closing Day', *Ilanga* 2:61 (10 June 1904) 4; 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3; 'Rev. and Mrs. Dube', *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4; Marable, 'African Nationalist', 127; Davis, 'John L. Dube', 509.

³ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 3; 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁵ 'Rev. and Mrs Dube', *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁶ 'To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4; 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁷ 'Rev. and Mrs Dube', *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁸ 'Press on Ohlange', *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4; 'To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

are common to Grendon's onymous, pseudonymous, and anonymous texts. The cumulative weight of this evidence is compelling. I also show where Grendon embeds fragments of his own poetry in the anonymous editorials, and where he follows an argument or creates a visual image very like another occurring in work of which he is the known author.

In establishing the authorship of these early *Ilanga* articles written during Dube's foreign absence, the discovery of a surviving copy of Grendon's epic, *Paul Kruger's Dream*, has been a boon. Close intertextual comparison between that text and the *Ilanga* articles reveals striking parallels, and in some cases unmistakable evidences of a common authorial identity. Unusual words and collocations favoured by Grendon in the *Dream* as in the rest of his known poetic corpus crop up repeatedly in prose articles of the period February 1904 to May 1905.

Another persuasive line of evidence is the Swedenborgianism that permeates many of the anonymous editorials as it does Grendon's known poetry and prose.¹ One has either to postulate the presence of *two* black Swedenborgians active at Ohlange, or to accept that all this material—onymous and anonymous—is the product of a single pen, Grendon's. Additionally, while the writer of this not-inconsiderable material identifies himself occasionally as black, he never once claims to be Zulu. This is entirely consistent Grendon's own ethnic identity.

The issue of *Ilanga* that marks the return of Dube also represents the last in which Grendon has a voice. It includes the last published instalment of Grendon's epic-length 'Pro Aliis Damnati', as well as the last appearance of the regular feature, 'Notes and Comments'—an innovation that arose during Dube's absence.² 'Pro-Aliis Damnati' is cut short before its *denouement*—a fate Grendon would not willingly have permitted his creation to suffer.

Within a week or so of Dube's return to Africa, Grendon drops altogether from *Ilanga* and from Ohlange. There are no further advertisements showing him as headmaster of the Zulu Christian Industrial School, and his poems do not appear—at

¹ Examples are not cited here, for the reason that they abound throughout this thesis.

² 'Notes and Comments' ran from *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) to 3:108 (12 May 1905). Interestingly, a regular column, also entitled 'Notes and Comments', appears in *Abantu-Batho*, during Grendon's brief editorship of that paper, from late 1915. See: *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

least not under his name or his usual pen names. He just vanishes—drops from view—and turns up next in Swaziland. There is no send-off—none of the usual encomia.

There is however a tantalizing though cryptic reference to Grendon in an isiZulu poem, ‘Ukuhlangana kungamandhla’ (‘Unity is strength’), by ‘Sangoma’, published on 26 May 1905. The first three lines of its penultimate stanza read:

Akuzanywe isu laba se ‘London’,
Ngitsho kuwe masal’ eskundhleni M’Dima.
Gweba ngazo zombili mfana ka Grendon.¹

A loose English translation is:

Let’s try the plan of the ‘Londoners’ [*i.e.*, the English],
I’m telling you Mdimas since you have kept your position.
Judge with both hands, Grendon [*i.e.* judge/weigh fairly].

Zulu periodical poetry tends to be arcane, allusive, and situation-specific. This poem represents a call upon Africans to take a leaf from the book of the British—more correctly, people of ‘London’, to rhyme rather dubiously with ‘Grendon’. According to one of the stanzas, these English are exemplary collaborators. In the stanza quoted above, Sangoma addresses an exhortation to John Mdimas, who has retained his position. At the same time, Grendon is instructed to judge even-handedly—which seems to imply that his earlier judgements have fallen short of impartiality.

Sangoma’s precise meaning is lost, but in stating that Mdimas has retained *his* post or position, he seems to imply that Grendon has lost his. According to evidence gathered by a police officer in 1906, Grendon was ‘dismissed from the Phoenix Industrial school for private reasons’ evidently relating to a major personality disorder. He is described as ‘a very dissatisfied man’ that ‘cannot agree with other people’.² It appears that Grendon’s inability to get along with his peers arose from his penchant for passing adverse judgement upon them.

¹ ‘Isangoma’, ‘Ukuhlangana kungamandhla’, *Ilanga* 3:110 (26 May 1905) 2.

² NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437, Police, Inanda, to Magistrate, Verulam, 21 Oct. 1906.

One of Sangoma's stanzas is in English:

Teacher's meeting how far have you gone?
 Any further from where you started:
 Hark! listen, the clock strikes one
 Oh! its too late, you have not departed.

Could this perhaps describe a conclave of Ohlange's teachers assembled shortly after Dube's return—a meeting that went overtime and at which the decision was taken to dismiss Grendon?

Viewed as a whole, the poem is an appeal for greater political unity within, and between, Funamalungelo and the Natal Native Congress. Blacks of all ethnic groups in Natal—'Msutu, Mswazi, Mnguni, Mtonga'—should recognize a common identity. Whatever Sangoma means to say, his poem positions Grendon as central to the debate about political unity amongst black Natalians.



Shortly after Dube's return, he published a letter in *Ilanga* from W. C. Wilcox—the American Board missionary who had accompanied him to the States on the occasion of his first visit there in 1887. Wilcox expresses relief that Dube has returned to Ohlange, and that he 'still hold[s] that grand leader of [his] race in America as [his] model, Booker Washington'. But Wilcox has a complaint to make, because 'from time to time in [Dube's] absence there have been editorials in [his] paper which seemed to be deliberately designed to turn [his] best friends against [him]'. Wilcox is vexed at having been 'severely criticized' in *Ilanga* over his proposals concerning a revised Zulu orthography.¹

Likely in direct response to Wilcox's complaint, Dube published an editorial in the next week's number (9 June), repudiating much of what had been published by the English sub-editor of *Ilanga* while Dube as editor-in-chief was abroad:

During our absence there have appeared in the English columns of the *Ilanga* Editorials which were entirely against the spirit and policy of the *Ilanga*. I recall that during my stay abroad I wrote something for the *Ilanga*, and it appeared in due course, but the week following an article in the same paper was printed which was contrary to what I had said. It has pained me on many

¹ W. C. Wilcox to the editor, 25 May 1905, *Ilanga* 3:111 (2 June 1905) 4.

occasions to see during my absence deviation from the well known policy of our paper. Of course those who had charge of the paper during my absence had a right to express their opinions, and I was not here to refuse their publication. Our friends will take this as sufficient explanation.

We have had many letters from Natives and Europeans complaining of giving English altogether too much space in a Zulu paper. We quite agree with some of their arguments. Our English readers take it especially because it is a Zulu paper, and they want all the Zulu they can get in it. But while we do not intend to discontinue English entirely still, it will not be as much as it has been during the past year and a half.¹

It is notable that Dube singles out the ‘English columns’ for special reference. Apparently, whichever ‘steward’ was responsible for isiZulu copy did not offend as the English-language editor had done. A ‘year and a half’ traced back from May 1905, brings us to the closing months of 1903—that is to say, about the time of Grendon’s arrival at Ohlange, and two or three months before Dube left for his foreign fund-raising trip. This is consistent with Grendon’s having been accorded limited subeditorial responsibilities at the same time he began teaching at Ohlange.

Dube also complains that there has been too much English material published during his absence. It is beyond dispute that—from a purely editorial point of view—an excessive quantity of Grendon’s verse was published in *Ilanga* while Dube was away. Who but the poet himself would have taken the editorial decision to publish 2,742 verse-lines of ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ in a four-page isiZulu-English weekly? While from a literary point of view, we may applaud the decision, no-one could have interpreted it as Dube’s wish that such an intrusion be made into his columns. Grendon—as poet and as subeditor—must have known that he was overstepping the mark. We can understand—and even sympathize with—Dube’s chagrin.

During Dube’s absence, the offending subeditor had given out that the Trappist missionary A. T. Bryant’s Zulu-English dictionary was ‘not reckoned authoritative as far as educated natives are concerned, though Mr Wilcox, and those of his origin think so’.² Now that Dube was back in the editorial chair, he had opportunity to set the record straight. An editorial of 19 May 1905 congratulates A. T. Bryant on the recent publication of his *Zulu-English Dictionary*, and gushes that ‘men like him although of

¹ ‘Ilanga’, *Ilanga* 3:112 (9 June 1905) 4.

² ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 3.

European birth can be regarded as authorities on the Zulu language’—a flat contradiction of what Grendon had published a little more than one month earlier.¹

Ilanga was a four-page weekly. Dube’s policy was that Zulu-language material should preponderate. A single, reasonably competent man could easily have turned out all the English-language editorial material. Grendon would certainly have had no difficulty in coping with this workload, and the signs are that he guarded his editorial privileges jealously. Appendix 2 to this thesis sets out intra-textual evidence that a single editorial voice commands the English-language material in *Ilanga* during Dube’s absence from February 1904 to May 1905. More examples could be adduced: it is hoped that the combined weight of those which are presented will be taken as conclusive. One really needs to work with the texts themselves over an extended period to become impressed by their homogeneity—in terms of idiosyncratic world-view, lexis, phrasing, etc. Frequently, too, during the fifteen months in question, the editor makes reference to what he has written in earlier issues of the paper. My conclusion is that *all unsigned English prose material* in *Ilanga* during Dube’s absence is Grendon’s, unless it is identified as having been clipped from another paper. Letters from readers and other contributions are invariably signed with their author’s name or pseudonym.

Ilanga during the period 1903–05 provides a rich store of Grendon-authored material, consisting in mutually-explicative prose and verse.² Grendon brings his unique perspective to bear upon every issue touching the wellbeing of the people with whom he chooses to identify. His *Ilanga* journalism also encompasses astute observations on Natal’s simmering racial tension that would shortly achieve meltdown in the catastrophic rebellion of 1906.

This thesis concentrates on Grendon’s poetic output. His prose writing is treated to the extent that it elucidates his spiritual and aesthetic vision, or illustrates important stages in his career. Space constraints forbid an in-depth examination of Grendon’s *Ilanga* journalism, which would furnish sufficient material for another full-length work. Suffice it here to say that this journalistic corpus promises to command the

¹ ‘The Zulu Language’, *Ilanga* 3:109 (19 May 1905) 4.

² Horst Zander (*Fact–Fiction–‘Faction’*, 120–21) notes the richness and diversity of *Ilanga* during this period. He refers to Grendon’s poems published in *Ilanga* at this time, and also cites several editorials that, unbeknown to Zander, were also authored by Grendon.

abiding interest of future researchers, because it casts striking sidelights on what has become an all-too familiar stage, and it reveals motivations and spiritual causes of societal phenomena in ways that few of Grendon's contemporaries were equipped to emulate.



Some of this prose material is profoundly Swedenborgian. In the English leader article, '**God With Us**' (23 December 1904), which is Grendon's Christmas message to *Ilanga*'s readers, he corrects orthodox Christology, and presents Swedenborg's Trinity—not of Persons, but of divine modes or aspects:

Yet once more are we privileged to hail this season of the year, wherein Jehovah, 'Heav'n's Eternal King' descended from above, and took upon Himself the form of Man to save Mankind, and condescended while being the Lord of lords, and King of kings, yea Very God of Very God, to be conceived, and born of mortal woman, in a lowly manger in an ill-constructed cattle-shed adjoining a humble inn in an insignificant village—Bethlehem of the Jews.¹

It should be noted that Grendon marks off 'Heav'n's Eternal King'² with quotation marks, signalling intertextual borrowing, and the elided second 'e' in 'Heav'n's' suggests that he quotes verse. We have already seen in Chapter 6 how Grendon interacts creatively with Milton's *Paradise Lost*. In the poem 'To You Abantu', he calls out of the 'ranks' of Africans another 'Milton'.³ In the opening lines to the editorial, 'God With Us', Grendon seems to allude to the opening lines of Milton's poem, 'On the Morning of Christ's Nativity':

This is the Month, and this the happy morn
Wherin the Son of Heav'ns eternal King,
Of wedded Maid, and Virgin Mother born
Our great redemption from above did bring.

The intertextual borrowing is appropriate since both Milton's poem and Grendon's editorial treat the Nativity. There is however a subversive quality to Grendon's borrowing. He knowingly 'corrects' Milton's Christology to make it conform to the

¹ 'God With Us', *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 3.

² Precisely the same collocation, 'Heav'n's Eternal King', occurs twice in Grendon's own poetry (*PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 107; 'PAD', Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4).

³ 'To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

Swedenborgian conception of ‘the Divine Man’ and the ‘Incarnation’.¹ Within New Church theology, God exists in one Person: ‘the Father is ... the exhaustless, ineffable Love of God; the Son is ... the Divine Wisdom...; the Holy Spirit is the effluent energy of Divinity.’² According to Grendon, in keeping with Swedenborg, it is not ‘the Son of Heav’n’s Eternal King’ who comes to earth—as Milton has it—but ‘Heav’n’s Eternal King’ Himself.

The rest of this leader article turns out to be an unabashed Swedenborgian sermon, discoursing on Swedenborg’s five consecutive ecclesiastical epochs that culminate in ‘the Fifth, or Second Christian Church, which is the New Church, or the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven (Rev. xxi.)’, and explaining the Incarnation:

In the Word the Lord is called Jehovah as to Divine Good. This Divine Good is the Very Divine; and the Lord is called the Son of God as to Divine Truth, for Divine Truth proceeds from, or is begotten from Divine Good, as a son proceeds from, or is begotten from his father. Thus it can be understood as to what is meant by saying the Son of God was born. The Christianity of the present day believes that God begat a Son from eternity, and that this Son descended and assumed the Human to redeem and save Man. But this is proved utterly false when it is said that ‘God is One’.³



As already noted, slavery, or forced labour, is a recurrent subject for treatment by Grendon’s pen. The four-part article, ‘**Slavery or Not?**’⁴ examines *isibalo*—the isiZulu word for forced labour, or *corvée*—‘one of those plagues wherewith Natal is cursed’. It aims at a definition of slavery by examining the practice under three headings—Ancient, Medieval, and Modern—and concludes with a tabular comparison showing that the condition of blacks living under the operation of Natal’s Code of Native Law has more in common with slavery than with anything else, for ‘the essence of slavery is seen in the wholesale robbery of labour’.⁵

¹ This is not to imply that Milton’s Christology was orthodox.

² Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 112–13. Swedenborg dismisses the idea of three divine ‘Persons’ (*True Christian Religion*, n. 389).

³ ‘God With Us’, *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Slavery or Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4; 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4; 2:55 (29 April 1904) 4; 2:58 (20 May 1904) 3–4.

⁵ ‘Slavery or Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:58 (20 May 1904) 3–4.

In this essay, Grendon also makes the quintessentially Swedenborgian statement that the ‘heart of man is centred in the love of self, and the crown it covets, and strives after, is the possession of, and the dominion over its kind’.¹ Thus, he locates the origins of slavery, and of its near-relative, Natal’s *isibalo* system, in the selfish *proprium* of fallen Man. It was precisely this ‘usurping Dominion’ that late-eighteenth-century Swedenborgian projectors of a model colony on the West African coast renounced in their prospectus.²

Deirdre Coleman states that according to ‘the apocalyptic and alchemical terminology favoured by radical Swedenborgians [of the late eighteenth century], the abolition of slavery was to form a key part of their project for the regeneration and purification of mankind’.³ In ‘Slavery or Not?’, Grendon similarly links the regeneration of Africa with the end of slavery. He writes that, from the time when the ‘first shipment of Negro slaves to the New World took place under Portuguese hands in the year 1503’, the ‘Negro stood rooted in bondage’ for ‘three anxious weary centuries’. Then, miraculously, at about the turn of the nineteenth century, ‘a flood of oratorical light with all its penetrating, and convincing power flashed upon, within, and around him’, and he had witness borne to him that his material and spiritual liberation was imminent.⁴ This ‘flood’ was none other than the ‘revelation ... at the present time’ which Swedenborg reveals to be in progress within the heart of Africa.⁵ It is the prelude to Africa’s full regeneration.

Grendon concludes ‘Slavery or Not?’ powerfully with an appeal to two momentous statements of human rights. From the American Declaration of Independence, he extracts the ‘self-evident’ truth that ‘all men are created equal’, and therefore possess ‘inalienable rights’, including ‘*life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness*’. From the ‘Grand Declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens, issued by the National Assembly of France in 1789’, he quotes the following:

I. Men are born, and always continue free and equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinction, therefore, can only be founded on public utility.

¹ ‘Slavery or Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4.

² Coleman, *Romantic Colonization and British Anti-Slavery*, 67.

³ Coleman, *Romantic Colonization and British Anti-Slavery*, 66–67.

⁴ ‘Slavery or Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.

⁵ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 840.

II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural, and imprescriptible rights of Man, and these rights are LIBERTY, PROPERTY, SECURITY, and RESISTANCE of OPPRESSION.¹

Natal's racially-differentiated legal system flies in the face of these widely-acknowledged rights of Man, and as Grendon would later say, the Black Man's grievances are 'manufactured in the place where the laws [are] made'.²



'**The Black Man and His Period of Training**' is a 4,750-word essay published in five parts, from 4 March to 13 May 1904.³ It is a masterly application to South African conditions of Wilkinson's Swedenborgian text, *The African and the True Christian Religion* (1892), of which Grendon has obviously made a careful study. Because Wilkinson works largely with what Edward Wilmot Blyden has written, Grendon's article is informed both by Swedenborgianism and by Blyden's ontological concept of Race and teleological approach to World History.

Grendon gives voice to the ground swell of disquiet amongst black intellectuals when he notices the increasingly retrogressive trend of legislation and the seeming return to a modified form of slavery. He observes that both in South Africa and in the United States, 'whatever vestiges of rights remain to the black man, are gradually being curtailed, so that in time not far distant we may expect even these dim shadows of Liberty to be wrested from his bosom, and the wretch himself [to] be thrust ... into a disguised servitude'. Service or 'servitude' has been the *leitmotif* of African history:

We—Africa—have for ages been, and still are, and probably will ever be the toilers of the world; we—Africa—fed the starving sons of Jacob during their sojourn in the land of Egypt; we—Africa—sheltered the fugitive infant Saviour from the murderous hand of Herod; we—Africa—in the person of black Simon of Cyrene, (when all others stood aloof) assisted the fainting, and fatigued Redeemer to bear His Cross in order to accomplish the redemption of mankind by death upon the Hill of Skulls; we—Africa—when knowledge and religion were well-nigh obliterated, kept open the door, from whence their rays flashed forth upon Europe, and the world; we—Africa supplied the muscle in all the great undertakings of the world; we—Africa—the last of the continents are supporting the surplus population of all the rest. So much

¹ 'Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:58 (20 May 1904) 3–4.

² 'Blacks and Whites', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916) 2nd ed., 6.

³ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3–4; 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4; 2:51 (1 April 1904) 3–4; 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4; 2:57 (13 May 1904) 3–4.

have we done for the world. What have we gained in return? Abuse, and hate, and trappings under foot we have not earned, and such we merit not. All we pray for, in return for services rendered cheerfully, and humbly and obediently is the recompense, and the reward which unto us is now ages upon ages due.¹

In this passage, Grendon draws heavily upon Wilkinson, who in turn seeks to harmonize Swedenborg with Blyden. The parallels these men draw between Africa's past and present service to the World at large are part of an idiom that was current throughout African intellectual circles in the late nineteenth century.²

The Black Man's 'period of training' has not been in vain. It has already borne fruit amongst a class of freed blacks in America and in the West African territories, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Further undreamt-of advancement is yet in store for Africa, and black South Africans will be rewarded for their patient endurance of oppression. Every race passes through periods of elevation and abasement, as Grendon affirms elsewhere:

Each [nation] has its own appointed time to ripen and flourish, and command the respect of others. Each had its own appointed time to fade, and fall, and die. The black man's turn has passed long, long ago. Perhaps some day his turn may come again. If he is to rise again to his pristine glory be sure it will not be by mere hopings and prayers. Those hopes and prayers must be accompanied by genuine endeavours which must be proved by actual deeds and nothing else.³

Grendon roots the rise and fall of racial or national groupings in Swedenborg's ground principle that 'everything in this world seems to have its opposite'.⁴ This being the case, the 'opposite of Ethiopia's gloomy experience must next be realised'. 'Ethiopia' 'anticipates a life of *light*, and *joy*, and *sweetness*; and she yearns for that *rise*—that *up*,—which is the enjoyment of *freedom*, long withheld and wilfully, and cruelly denied'.⁵

To those who like to harp upon African atrocities, Grendon points to the history of England, and—quoting directly from Wilkinson—points out that it is nothing less

¹ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 129, 188; Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 117, 155; Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden*, 57, 65; Campbell, *Songs of Zion*, 119.

³ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

⁴ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4. As Swedenborg phrases it, 'Every thing in the universe has its opposite' (Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 425).

⁵ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

than a ‘record of atrocities, massacres, effacements of industries, destruction of towns, villages and dwellings; of the abolition of decent civilization from one end of the land to the other. Nothing in African history surpasses it in ruthlessness.’¹ This is proof conclusive that ‘the white people in their past history have been stained with guilt to a degree greater than the black’. And yet, from such ‘rottenness and corruption’, Europe ‘became a flourishing centre of civilization in all its branches, and the home of what we venture to call “*stable order*”, though it maintains it at the point of the sword’. Why should not Africans similarly rise above degradation and brutality, if *their* hour has come? Grendon has full faith that Africa will be ‘regenerated’²—this is the inviolable decree of Providence, the accomplishment of which not even the might of Europe can thwart.



Grendon may well have known that his tenure at Ohlange was insecure. It had already been predicted that at least two of Dube’s close associates—both of whom were studying abroad—might take up teaching at the Zulu Christian Industrial School upon their return to Africa. In March 1903, *Koranta ea Becoana* reported that when once Pixley Seme’s studies were concluded, ‘all being well, he will go back to Africa, and teach in the Zulu Industrial Institute’.³ After Grendon’s departure for Swaziland in 1905, Dube’s brother Charles, recently returned from Wilberforce College, an A.M.E.-Church institution in the States, took up the headmastership of Ohlange.⁴ Perhaps Grendon knew from the outset that his post was secure only until Charles Dube’s return.



Despite John Dube’s position in the history of Africans’ quest for independence and self-determination, his place in South African historiography is not uncontroversial. His emulation of Booker T. Washington’s policy of placating whites, while in some

¹ Grendon quotes: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 163.

² ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3; ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5. Grendon also quotes the eighteenth-century British jurist Curran who states that black slaves are ‘regenerated ... by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation’ (‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3).

³ *Koranta ea Becoana* 29 (7 March 1903) 5.

⁴ Chirenje, *Ethiopianism and Afro-Americans in Southern Africa*, 142; Marable, ‘African Nationalist’, 106; Davis, ‘John L. Dube’, 507. Chirenje appears to be mistaken in giving the start-date of Charles Dube’s term at Ohlange as 1904. It is more likely to have been 1905.

measure a necessary expedient given the racially-hostile climate of late-colonial Natal, was, in the view of at least one scholar, taken too far.¹ Like Washington, Dube believed that his people's future lay in education and wealth accumulation, rather than in aggressive political campaigning for full incorporation into colonial society.

Dube made his first contact with Washington in March 1897. In 1912, he declared that 'that great and edifying man, Booker Washington' was his 'patron saint' and his 'guiding star'.² J. Hunt Davis believes that Washington's spell 'is fundamental to a full understanding of John L. Dube'.³ Dube came to be known as 'the Booker T. Washington of South Africa' and his college at Ohlange was a studied imitation of Washington's Normal and Industrial Institute for blacks at Tuskegee, Alabama. It gained the reputation of being a 'Tuskegee in Africa'.⁴

Dube and Washington both had to deal with the problem of elevating the status of their fellow blacks in white-dominated societies—the American South, and Natal, both notoriously racist and segregationist. Like Washington, Dube did not press for the social integration of blacks. Both men believed that white prejudices might profitably be soothed and accommodated with assurances of the modesty of black aspirations. In 1897, Dube told an audience at Hampton College in the States that his people's 'greatest need' was 'industrial education'; without it, they would 'sink into the vices of civilization instead of profiting by its virtues'. And adopting the language of white missionaries, he told a white Natalian audience that his aim was to teach his fellow Africans 'the nobility of work, be it brain or hand'.⁵ He liked to give colonials 'the impression that he was training a docile work force, when in reality he was educating much more broadly than this concept suggested'.⁶ Predictably, Dube's American backers and fundraisers also laid emphasis upon the industrial component of Ohlange's programme, and downplayed the liberal arts courses.⁷

¹ Hughes, 'Doubly Elite', 446.

² Davis, 'John L. Dube', 497–98.

³ Davis, 'John L. Dube', 513.

⁴ Marable, 'African Nationalist', 127.

⁵ Davis, 'John L. Dube', 514–15.

⁶ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 120.

⁷ Davis, 'John L. Dube', 497–98, 501–02, 506, 513, 514–15; Duminy, 'Towards Union, 1900–10', 405; Erlmann, *African Stars*, 61; Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 119; Harlan, 'Booker T. Washington', 459; Marable, 'African Nationalist', 106, 126, 127; Maylam, *History of the African People of South Africa*, 153; Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu*, 62.

Grendon undoubtedly had some respect for Washington's stature and accomplishments. He lists the American amongst the 'black men's names' that have found their way into 'the catalogue of the world's worthies'.¹ In his hortatory poem, 'To You Abantu', Grendon endorses Dube's Washingtonian emphases on race-pride and on self-help, and even makes token reference to the importance of training 'the hand' as well as the brain.²

Grendon may even have been prepared to accept a moderate degree of racial segregation such as Washington advocated, because he writes in 1904:

The natives as we have always asserted do not care one iota for social equality. All they desire is consideration from those under whom they stand. Freedom is the one thing for which they yearn—FREEDOM in so far as it is their heritage by natural right, and by law; FREEDOM which to the heart and life of man, be he black, white, yellow, or red, is none other than LOVE.³

Grendon did not categorically reject any of the ideals for which Washington and Dube stood, but he did balk at the disproportionate emphasis they placed upon industrial training, and the unfounded assumption that it could somehow 'improve' a man. With industrial education in mind, he accuses 'the majority of the population of Natal' of being in favour of 'training of the outward, and not the inner man'.⁴ Taken together, his Swedenborgianism and his liberal education at Zonnebloem persuaded him that it takes something other than lessons in crop rotation or dressmaking to elevate individuals or an entire race to what he calls 'higher planes'.⁵

In time, Dube and Grendon may have discovered that their different pedagogical strategies were irreconcilable. As Michael Chapman remarks, Ohlange 'became a symbol of black identity and utilitarianism'.⁶ But utilitarianism would never do for Grendon, who for twelve fruitful years had been exposed to the educational theories and practices of Canon Peters at Zonnebloem College. Peters staunchly defended his policy of imparting the best liberal education to blacks and whites alike:

¹ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

² 'To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

³ 'Freedom is Love!' *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 3.

⁴ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁵ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5; 'Tragedy of Malunge', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁶ Chapman, *Paperbook of South African English Poetry*, 300.

The objection which is often felt and expressed to persons who are to occupy the lower positions of life engaging in these studies, which are commonly looked upon as the heritage of the wealthier classes, seems to be founded upon a wrong conception of the nature of education and of the duty of the educator.

Education is the training of the person in mind and body, or in the more accurate division of our being, body and soul and spirit. It is the making the most of him.¹

When Grendon considered his students, he saw not potential husbandmen or even preachers, teachers, and clerks, but the African equivalents of Shakespeare, Milton, and Edison,² of Aristophanes, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Euripides, Isocrates, Plato, Socrates, and Sophocles.³ Shortly after Dube sailed for England and the United States in February 1904, Grendon noted that ‘he ha[d] emphasized industrial training of Natives as the solution of the many difficulties connected with the Native Problem’,⁴ but, pointedly, he withholds his own endorsement of Dube’s emphasis. The truth was that Grendon’s personal integrity was compromised by his working within an institution that laid such emphasis on what he stigmatizes as ‘the *external*, or *industrial training*[, which] is unable to produce *internal character*’.⁵

Grendon may be forgiven if he had difficulty in stomaching Dube’s exaggerated deference to whites, and particularly towards white authority. At times, Dube seemed even to cringe before his adversaries—a fact remarked upon by his contemporaries. *Izwi Labantu*, for instance, writes of him: ‘We have our opinion of Mr Dube, and his attitude strengthens our belief that a man without any principles worth defending or the moral courage to speak the truth so that all men could understand is a public danger.’⁶ *Izwi* made this statement after Dube allowed himself to be cowed by the Colonial Governor into making an abject apology for statements published in *Ilanga* during the 1906 rebellion.

To be fair to Dube, however, one has to read his seeming servility in the context of the times. The success of his projects was crucially dependent upon maintaining the favour—or at least not incurring the displeasure—of whites. The Natal Government had already demonstrated how effectively it could silence the black press, in the case

¹ Zonnebloem Native College, *Report and Class Lists for 1884*, 4–5.

² ‘To You Abantu’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

³ ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Visits England’, *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

⁶ ‘The Ilanga lase Natal’, *Izwi Labantu* 42:58 [sic] (5 June 1906) 2.

of *Inkanyiso* and *Ipepa*; and it had also managed to shut down St Alban's College by withholding its subsidy. Dube knew well on which side his bread was buttered. He knew that he could expect no assistance from the authorities—but he also knew that if he was not seen by the Government to be towing the line, his school and his paper would be in immediate jeopardy.¹

Whereas black schools run by approved missionary societies benefited from Government subsidies, Dube as an independent could discount financial assistance from any official quarter. In 1895, Natal's Superintendent of Education declared that black schools did not receive a Government grant 'if the products of the industrial work done in that school are allowed to be sold or disposed of in such a manner as to compete with general trade, or if the school be in any way responsible for or associated with the printing and publishing of any Native newspaper'.² While this measure was aimed at St Alban's College, it applied equally to Ohlange when Dube founded it a few years later.

Grendon recognizes the invidious position of black craftsmen who try to make an independent living in a racist society: "*Come and learn from us*" urge the teacher, and the trade-instructor, but, "*do not dare to compete or work side by side with us*" exclaim the business man, and artisan.³ Ohlange was training independent craftsmen, and it published a 'Native newspaper'. These facts on their own disqualified it from receiving Government aid. Plaatje wrote in 1914 that the 'total value of [Ohlange's] school buildings is now about £17,000, of which the Natal Government gave not a penny'.⁴

Besides Ohlange's great emphasis on turning out artisans, there are other grounds on which the working relationship between Dube and Grendon may have been doomed from the start. One of these is Grendon's mixed-racial identity. While at Ohlange, he wrote that the 'offspring of black and white ... is in most instances

¹ Odendaal (*Vukani Bantu*, 62) points out that *Ilanga* was under close observation by Natal's Native Affairs Department.

² Quoted in: Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, 270.

³ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.

⁴ Sol T. Plaatje, 'S. A. Native National Congress: Special Conference in Kimberley', *Tsala ea Batho* 4:159 (28 Feb. 1914) 4.

detested and shunned by either those of his mother's, or by those of his father's race'.¹ In his experience, prejudice against people of mixed race was not limited to whites.

On 8 December 1905—six months after Grendon's departure from the School—*Ilanga* carried a leader article, in which it was stated that 'social equality' between whites and blacks 'would not be a good thing for either race', because it 'would form another race which would be despised by both'. The editor avowed: 'I am as jealous of the purity of the black race as the Anglo-Saxon is of his.' In view of this editorial declaration, one has to wonder if Grendon, although headmaster of Dube's school, was nonetheless 'despised' by his employer because he lacked the much-vaunted racial 'purity'.²

Izwi Labantu—a paper closely associated with Alan Kirkland Soga, son of an Mfengu minister and a Scottish woman—takes violent issue with *Ilanga* over this leader, and its 'inexcusable reflection on the coloured or brown race'. It denies that there exists any 'pure race in God's creation', and severely censures *Ilanga's* editor—possibly John Dube at this stage:

It is that traitorous and treacherous spirit so common in the black man and which has probably been the ruling cause of his enslavement by other races which we desire to exorcise if possible from our contemporary and other black men—the slave mind—which is always ready to round on its own in order to win the cheap applause of other races.³

Dube's and Grendon's personalities diverged widely. This presented a further area for possible conflict. Dube was more a politician and pragmatist; Grendon lived and thought very much within the realm of ideality. Whereas circumstances had taught Dube the value of tact and equivocation, Grendon seldom minced words in condemning evils as he identified them. Grendon, after all, had little to lose in the material way, whereas Dube stood to lose all he had built up, if he fell foul of the Government, or if his foreign backers were poisoned against him. He had to sail his barque through treacherous, uncharted waters—a barque that Grendon, despite his observable talents, threatened to scuttle with his reckless outspokenness.

¹ 'Keep Your Breeds Pure!' *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 4.

² At a later period, Grendon believes that Dube takes a more enlightened view of coloureds ('Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:85 (6 May 1914) 6; 3:87 (20 May 1914) 6).

³ 'Inexcusable Race Reflections', *Izwi Labantu* 42:43 [sic] (6 Feb. 1906) 2.

CHAPTER 8

SHINE UPON OUR RACE

SHORTER POEMS & FRAGMENTS IN CONTEXT, 1901–04

Language is only music in monotone.¹



TSHAKA'S DEATH (1901)²

In 1904, Grendon made an appeal ‘to the more enlightened of the Zulu race to commit their knowledge [of Zulu history] to writing and so save the “deeds illustrious” of their race from passing to forgottenness’. They should ‘exert [them]selves’ so that ‘posterity [... might] bless [their] memory, and look back upon [them] with feelings of gratitude’.³

The ‘deeds illustrious’ include those of the precolonial past—the ‘mighty deeds | Whereof the Bantu minstrel sings, | Of Jobe’s son; of Nandi’s seed’.⁴ (Jobe was father to Dingiswayo, king of the Mthethwa, and mentor to the youthful Shaka; Nandi was mother to the ‘illustrious’ Shaka himself.) In his appeal for Zulu writers to knuckle down to the task of salvaging their history, Grendon tries to entice them with the assurance that posthumous celebrity is still attainable even under the colonial order: the ‘more enlightened’ latter-day Zulu can also make a celebrated name for himself as a chronicler or an epic poet. Like the heroic subjects whom he extols in verse or in prose, the would-be poet or historian may count on being favourably remembered by ‘posterity’.

Grendon was not one to advise a course of action that he was not himself inclined to follow. His own labours in the field of Zulu history include the poems, *Tshaka's Death* (1901), and ‘Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand’ (1914). In the former, he imitates the ‘Bantu minstrel’ in ‘singing’ of ‘Nandi’s seed’. It was published over two

¹ ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

² See: Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 19–26.

³ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘To You Abantu’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

consecutive issues of *Ipepa lo Hlanga* in May 1901¹ and issued as an eight-page pamphlet during the same year (plate 8).²

For historical source material, Grendon could interview Zulu-speaking patriarchs, who prided themselves in being both repositories of oral lore and accomplished raconteurs. During his period at Edendale, several Christian elders of the settlement and of its splinter communities were still alive who recalled the precolonial era, and who would have been in a position to acquaint him with oral traditions not accessible through published sources.

An example is Chief Johannes Kumalo of Driefontein, to whom Grendon several times refers in his prose³ and whose thriving agricultural settlement he visited in April 1903.⁴ Born *circa* 1814, Kumalo had been a ‘mat-bearer’ to the Zulu army at the time of Shaka’s assassination in 1828.⁵ Another possible informant closer at hand was Matthew Msane of Edendale (*c.*1816–1904). This ardent Christian proselytiser was the father of Saul Msane, Grendon’s colleague on the staff of *Abantu-Batho* in 1916. Matthew must have been well-known to Grendon when he was headmaster of the Edendale Training Institution, 1900–03. On the old man’s death, Grendon published his obituary in *Ilanga*. In it, Matthew Msane’s father is stated to have been ‘killed during one of the civil wars[—]probably that against the famous Dingiswayo, or the cruel, and blood-thirsty Tshaka; whilst his mother and sisters were taken captives by the victorious party after the black Napoleon’s ascendancy to the Zulu throne’.⁶ There were many other seniors to whom Grendon may have been introduced during his Edendale and Ohlange years, and to whom he could have applied for the materials to work into *Tshaka’s Death* and other writing projects that he may have taken in hand.⁷

Grendon also had access to published histories, which he might mine for historical material. For instance, he appears to have read H. Rider Haggard’s *Cetywayo and his*

¹ ‘Tshaka’s Death’, Pt I, *Ipepa* 3:340 (17 May 1901) 3; Pt II, *Ipepa* 3:431 (24 May 1901) 4. The part-division does not exist in the pamphlet.

² Robert Grendon, *Tshaka’s Death: a Poem*. Pietermaritzburg: Munro Bros, printers, 1901.

³ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 3; ‘The Native Question’, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3; ‘Native Abominations’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4; ‘Natives and Law’, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 3.

⁴ ‘Uku Hambela Kwami e Driefontein (Emhlanini)’, *Ilanga* 1:3 (24? April 1903) 1.

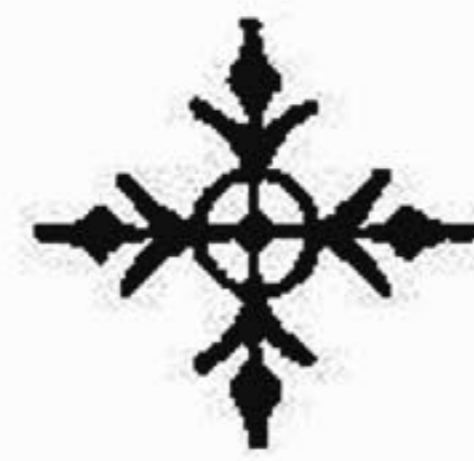
⁵ Webb and Wright, *James Stuart Archive*, i:213.

⁶ Solomon Xaba, ‘The Late Matthew Msane’, *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4.

⁷ Interestingly, John Dube (*Jeqe the Bodyservant of King Tshaka*, 30) covers much the same historical ground as Grendon’s poem.

Tshaka's

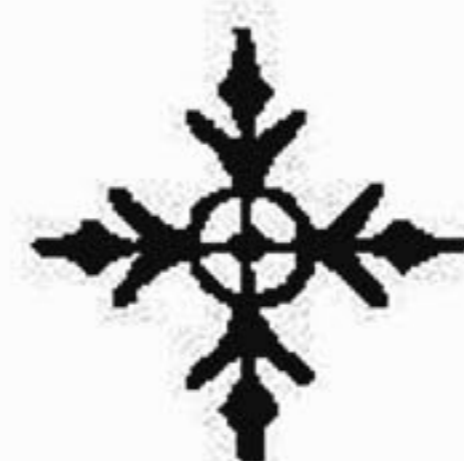
== Death.



A P O E M

BY

ROBERT GRENDON.



White Neighbours.¹ He was also aware of the labours of oral-historian James Stuart, whom he describes as having ‘spent much time in rescuing from oblivion the fascinating portions of the history relating to the natives’. Grendon expresses himself as keenly awaiting ‘the day when the results of [Stuart’s] labours in this little known department of the world’s history are committed to print’.²

Correspondingly, Stuart must have been aware of Grendon’s literary work and of his interest in Zulu history. In his personal library, he had a copy of Grendon’s pamphlet, *Tshaka’s Death: a Poem*. After Stuart’s death in 1942, this copy was acquired at auction by the Gubbins Library of the University of Witwatersrand.³ It is inscribed ‘J. Stuart | 18.11.01’. This is the only copy of the pamphlet recorded in *South African Bibliography to 1925*.⁴

The action of *Tshaka’s Death* all takes place in September 1828. The poem begins by describing the return to Shaka’s kwaDukuza kraal of the soldiers sent out on the *Ihambo* campaign to the south of the Mzimkhulu River, and the almost immediate despatch of *Bhalule* expedition to the north-east.⁵ The king is enraged that his *impi* has not returned victorious from remote Pondoland, and that it bring no spoils. The exhausted warriors are offered no respite, but are ordered off to engage in combat with other equally-remote and ‘contumacious vassals’ of Shaka. As soon as his soldiers have left on this fresh campaign, Shaka cold-bloodedly gives orders that their women are to be summarily executed:

Again! Awake—Dukuza—wake—awake!
 Prepare, with me, on human blood to feast!
 Lead out the women of the vanquish’d band!
 Before my presence let them be array’d!
 Advance, ye executioners, and slay
 Yon wretches, lest in time to come they bear
 A race of children—dastards like their sires!

¹ In ‘A Voice from the Sea’ (*Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3), Grendon quotes the missionary Ludorf on Boer barbarities. Precisely the same passage appears in Haggard, *Cetywayo and his White Neighbours*, 124. In ‘Notes and Comments’ (*Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4), Grendon appears to paraphrase page 132 of the same text.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4.

³ Shelf number: X Pam PR 6013.

⁴ *SABIB* ii:438.

⁵ Wylie, *Myth of Iron*, 483, map.

This episode complete, the curtain lifts on Shaka's assassination by a triumvirate of his half-brothers, Mahlangana and Dingana, and his servant Umbopu, which occurs just after he has been presented with a tribute of crane feathers.¹ He is stabbed in the back by Mahlangana, but before he expires, he directs his assassins to 'take heed | I pray the things which I shall now divine'. He proceeds to predict the violent deaths of the three assassins.

And with this, the poem abruptly ends—cut off before even the mighty 'Napoleon'² of Africa has opportunity to gasp his last. This fact leads us to suspect that *Tshaka's Death* is no more than a fragment from a full-scale epic on Shaka's life that Grendon may have had in his sights. The life, exploits, and assassination of Shaka would certainly have furnished material for a great epic. The pamphlet, *Tshaka's Death*, and the poem's publication in *Ipepa* may have been intended to gauge the likely reader reception of such a work.

To an ear attuned to nineteenth-century representations of Shaka, there is something conventional about Grendon's poem. Shaka is the same arbitrary potentate, the same ruthless slayer of innocents that we encounter in several historical accounts. In the throes of death, Shaka confesses the enormities of which he has been guilty:

Alas for me,
Whose caprice hurl'd to gloom the shades of men
And women, and of babes innumerable.

One of the earliest white hunter-traders in Natal claimed in 1828 that when Shaka despatched the *Bhalule* expedition, he 'fancied he could with impunity go to greater lengths in acts of cruelty than he had ever yet ventured upon and ordered 2,000 females to be destroyed at the rate of about 300 p[e]r diem'.³ Grendon's characterization of Shaka rests upon records contemporary with Shaka's assassination.

¹ Several accounts concur about the tribute of crane feathers preceding the assassination (Wylie, *Myth of Iron*, 453, 501–02).

² Various authors, including Grendon, refer to Shaka as an African 'Napoleon'. Grendon does so in: 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4. Other writers who do the same: Solomon Xaba, 'The Late Matthew Msane', *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4; Steph N. N. Gumede, 'Good Work!' *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 4; R. V. Selope Thema, "'The Voice of the Races of South Africa" vs. the Bantu People of South Africa', *Ilanga* 14:673 (28 April 1916) 5.

³ Quoted in: Wylie, *Myth of Iron*, 499–500.

We have come to associate the imagery of Shaka as a forerunner of Joseph Stalin or Pol Pot with Haggard's *Nada the Lily*—the picture of a man who 'in his march to power ... slaughtered more than a million human beings', a 'colossal genius and most evil man,—a Napoleon and a Tiberius in one'.¹ Daniel Wylie has called into question this commonplace projection of Shaka as a wholesale butcher. Shaka 'may have exhibited occasional cruelty', he allows, 'but he was far from genocidal'.² This quibble seems not to touch the *quality* of the man, but to call into question the numeric *scale* of his brutality. It allows that Shaka may have killed wantonly on occasions, but denies 'the women, and ... babes innumerable' of Grendon's poem, or Haggard's 'million human beings'. The 'truth'—if it is important now—may never be known.

What is important to realise is that, regardless of the accuracy of the prevailing view of Shaka as 'genocidal', few if any black intellectuals at the turn of the twentieth century saw fit to challenge it. We have yet to discover an early attempt to rehabilitate Shaka's reputation. One and all, they acknowledged the scale and the savagery of his killings, and in various ways sought to salvage what they could that was positive about the Shakan legacy.

In the poem, Grendon accepts the image of Shaka that appears in the standard histories of his day. In his essay-writing, he appears to have identified a need to reconcile the surfeit of brutality with which Africans such as Shaka have been credited, with Swedenborg's projection of 'celestial' remnants extant in Africa. He writes: 'For our own part we frankly admit all that has been imputed as vile against the black man. We admit all his atrocities, his cannibalism, and his wilful disrespect for the sanctity of human life.'³ In this passage, he responds to his reading of Wilkinson's work, *The African and the True Christian Religion* (1892). There, Wilkinson comments upon the concerns of an unnamed Swedenborgian friend, who writes:

I have read of so much brutality and objectless cruelty among the African tribes, and see that all further explorations into the interior only reveal a similar state of savagery, that I am inclined to think that Swedenborg must have been alluding to Africans in the spiritual world, and not to any

¹ Haggard, *Nada the Lily*, preface.

² Wylie, *Myth of Iron*, 482.

³ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.

racess on this earth. Certainly there appears to be no African race yet discovered that answers his description, and the continent has now been pretty well explored. They may have interior spiritual qualities superior to ours, but they do not seem to show through the natural degree in which they are enveloped. A thirst for blood, and an utter disregard of the sanctity of human life, seem to be innate in the African savage, often combined with cannibalism.¹

Wilkinson acknowledges: ‘Yes, probably, we must grant all the atrocities’ (compare Grendon’s willingness to ‘admit all his atrocities’). Both Wilkinson and Grendon dispose of the objection that blacks are ‘natural’ and not ‘celestial’, by pointing the finger at Europeans. Wilkinson writes:

And now look at us. Are we Lambs? We are at peace just now, dealing with criminality actual, and respectably legal, living in Church and State under established rules. Yet, as nations, our peace means sleeping in iron coats, waistcoats, and trousers, in iron shoes and stockings—and the iron thicker year by year. Europe is the jungle of five great wild beasts of war, and of many lesser ones: lions, tigers, leopards—dragons all.²

Grendon paraphrases Wilkinson, and quotes him directly:

What about the Europeans? Are they in a position to declare themselves lambs? Are they free from condemnation? They, just now, are at peace with one another, dealing with actual crime under the cloak of legal respectability, and living in Church and State under established laws; but ‘as nations their peace means sleeping in iron coats, waistcoats, and trousers; in iron shoes and stockings—the iron growing thicker year by year. Europe’ at this present time ‘is the jungle of five great wild beasts of war, and of many lesser ones—lions, tigers, leopards all’.³

Brutality is a product of Man’s Fall from the celestial state of *immediate* communion with God—of his gradual abasement to the ‘natural plane’, where carnal passions, like those of beasts, may rule unchecked. On such a plane of existence, it is inevitable that greatness will be measured in purely ‘natural’ terms, and influence will work externally, by brute force of the strong over the weak. Shaka was a great man indeed, but his greatness was that of a natural man—ruling over natural men and women.

But, as Grendon later reveals, ‘Providence Almighty’ has decreed ‘That darkness unto Light should yield’.⁴ This spells Africa’s ‘regeneration’, when natural men will

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 161–62.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 162.

³ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

attain to higher planes—spiritual and celestial. Then, as Grendon predicts in the poem, ‘To You Abantu’, will arise ‘Some *bloodless* Tshaka’, whose ‘*bloodless* methods’ will cause his people to ‘thrive’ in the world community of races.¹



‘AN AFRICAN’S VISION’ (c.1902)

If *Tshaka’s Death* deals with black atrocities, then what little has survived of ‘An African’s Vision’ speaks of white brutality—notably that of the ‘Boers’. In 1902, Grendon bills the poem, then ‘IN PREPARATION’, as ‘A review of events which have agitated South Africa, from a Native’s standpoint’, and as ‘An Appeal to the present various races inhabiting the same’.² A seventeen-line excerpt from this poem, dealing with the Boers’ notorious exterminatory war upon the Bushmen (San) as well as their ill-treatment of slaves is published as a footnote to *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, and subsequently in one of Grendon’s *Ilanga* editorials.³

Like *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, ‘An African’s Vision’ was probably conceived as an epic. While Kruger is the speaker in the *Dream*, it is the voice of ‘an African’ that we hear in the ‘Vision’. Probably, these poems were intended to counterbalance each other—to present the same scenario from diametrically-opposed viewpoints. This would explain why Grendon describes the *Dream* as written ‘as far as possible from [Kruger’s] own standpoint’,⁴ while he describes the ‘Vision’ as being written ‘from a Native’s standpoint’.⁵

In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, the shade of Jan van Riebeeck, founder of the Dutch settlement at the Cape in the mid-seventeenth century, addresses the ‘entire congregation assembled at Paardekraal’ in the Transvaal Republic, prior to the outbreak of the South African War, in 1899. ‘These lands we stole!’ van Riebeeck cries. ‘In traffic vile—in black men’s souls—| Rejoic’d we in our day.’ For these and like ‘misdeeds’, his people will soon be called to account.⁶

¹ ‘To You Abantu’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

² *PKD*, p. 135.

³ *PKD*, Pt XVIII, p. 51n, and ‘A Voice From the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

⁴ *PKD*, Preface, p. iii.

⁵ *PKD*, p. 135.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XXV, pp. 76–77.

Whereas the shade of van Riebeeck speaks in the *Dream*, in the ‘Vision’, van Riebeeck is addressed, this time presumably by ‘An African’ of the poem’s title:

Thy race, great pioneer has hunted men—
The Bushmen small—with horses and with dogs;
Destroy’d the bonds of love ’twixt man and wife;
And those ’twixt parents and their little ones;

Mention has already been made in chapter one of the creative use to which Grendon puts Sparrman’s eighteenth-century *Voyage* in his visceral description of Boer savagery towards their slaves. Thomas Pringle makes use of just the same material in an essay on slavery at the Cape.¹ The opening lines of ‘An African’s Vision’, quoted above, suggest that Grendon may also have been partly inspired by Pringle’s sonnet, ‘The Bushman’, which depicts the unprovoked ambush by ‘Christian-men’ upon a Bushman ‘lair’, and the cold-blooded murder of its inhabitants. Pringle’s sonnet begins by sketching the scene:

The Bushman sleeps within his black-browed den,
In the lone wilderness. Around him lie
His wife and little ones unfearely—
For they are far away from ‘Christian-men’.²

Is it just coincidence that both Pringle and Grendon both refer to ‘little ones’ and to the violent rupture of domestic ties within the Bushman family unit, as a result of murder performed by Boers? In a footnote to what Kruger in the *Dream* describes as ‘The savage brutal spirit of my race’, Grendon refers to ‘the time when the early Dutch settlers (mounted on their horses and accompanied by dogs) indulged in hunting Bushmen. The wretches who were captured, were often subjected to a process of torture the most brutal and cruel.’³

‘An African’ continues his address to van Riebeeck:

’Gainst thy posterity the blood of slaves
Cried. On you Heav’n’s vengeance was invok’d,
And God gave ear unto their mournful cry.
The Dutch slave-driver’s whip hath ceas’d to lash;

¹ Pringle, ‘Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope’, in: Prince, *History of Mary Prince*, 107.

² Pringle, ‘The Bushman’, in: *African Poems of Thomas Pringle*, 69.

³ *PKD*, Pt XVIII, p. 51.

His foot hath ceas'd to kick. Behold the change!
 Another race more upright, now holds sway,
 Beneath whose laws impartial, and more just,
 The black man lives secure from his dread foe.

The 'race more upright' than the 'Boer' is the British, as Grendon states in 'A Voice from the Sea': 'There is no comparison between the methods of the Boer and the Briton regarding their treatment of the native. Comparison can only come in with like things. Love and hatred; murder and saving are not likes; and therefore cannot be compared. The Boer is for murdering and annihilating; the Briton is for saving.'¹



'A WARNING' (1903)

In this poem (12 quatrains, iambic tetrameter, rhymed abab),² dated 27 April 1903, Grendon ('Vespertilio') harangues the inhabitants of Edendale for their strife, improvidence, and sloth. Edendale has great potential, 'For all Natal boasts not a spot | To match this hamlet 'mongst the hills'. The valley abounds 'in stone | And finest building sand', and in 'clay for moulding bricks'. Where once 'rich crops' were grown, the ground now lies uncultivated, and the Msundusi River 'In laundry work demands a share'. Yet, despite such obvious openings for gainful employment, he scolds: 'all your opportunities | Ye, Zulus, wantonly neglect!'³

In the first decades of the Edendale settlement, from the early 1850s, the community was close-knit, progressive, and productive. There was almost complete employment for able-bodied adult *kholwa* men and women, and the villagers included 'thatchers, masons, hedgers, carpenters, brick-makers, and blacksmiths', while fresh produce was also grown for sale on the Pietermaritzburg market.⁴ Early visitors describe a fertile, prosperous valley, an orderly village dominated by its chapel, and happy, well-regulated, and self-respecting inhabitants.

¹ 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

² *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

³ Such a sweeping ethnic generalization is not unique in Grendon's verse. In 'The Tragedy of Malunge' (c.1915), of which only fragments survive, he keenly anticipates 'The day in which the Swazi sheds | His wilfully lethargic ways'.

⁴ Meintjes, 'Edendale 1850–1906', 124.

As the century wore on, however, things began to change. Relations with white missionary-mentors turned sour with increasing frequency; major economic recessions threatened the independent survival of several Edendale men; and—most significantly—a whole raft of discriminatory legislation was conjured up at the instance of envious white farmers, artisans, and traders, who resented the stiff competition that mission-educated Africans gave them. Profitable long-distance trading and transport-riding was hampered by legislation designed to impose tighter control on the movement of Africans. African traders found that they could no longer travel without first obtaining a pass—which, in any case, was not readily granted. It became increasingly difficult for Edendale to sell its produce in Pietermaritzburg, and a particular blow was felt when Africans were forbidden to sell at the capital’s market-place. In any case, there was new competition from Indian smallholders and vegetable vendors. The rewards of modernity began to seem so slight, so grudgingly and so arbitrarily bestowed. It was natural that, after being repeatedly thwarted in their honest attempts to earn a decent living and to improve their lot, some Edendale people lost heart and gave up the struggle.

Grendon had likely made the acquaintance of the Edendale Christians during his first Natal stay in 1889. Fourteen years later—as revealed in ‘A Warning’—he believes that he is witness to a profound change. He flies ‘in thought back to the past’. His ‘tear-drops gather fast’ as he reflects on Edendale’s dereliction during the intervening years. For some inhabitants of Edendale, ‘life is “tywala” [‘native beer’]—maize—and meat, | And idle squatting on the sand’.

In view of Edendale’s changed fortunes, it was possible to think of the valley community in terms of an idyll, lost through folly and error—a vanished Arcadia or Eden. Interviewing descendents of the *oNonhlevu*—Edendale’s earliest converts—in the 1980s, Sheila Meintjes discovered an oral tradition that begins with ‘a romanticised idyllic life “in milk”, which glosses over early struggles, and which blames subsequent adversity on the “stupidity” of individuals rather than the circumstances in which they found themselves’.¹ As a poet, Grendon seems to be writing within the same tradition. In ‘A Warning’, he maintains that every resource surrounds ‘umuntu’—the Edendale man—demanding ‘development’. It is

¹ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 42.

‘wanton[ness]’, or stupid neglect, that denies the Edendale folk the glorious future that could be theirs.

Grendon’s reference to ‘tywala’ (*utshwala*)¹ reflects a subject of ongoing concern for the Edendale *kholwa*. All intoxicants had been banned by the missionaries, and the majority of the Christians were avowed teetotalers. However, as the nineteenth century wore on, Edendale became home to many new settlers who did not consider themselves in any way bound by the mission regime:

The new population was not in the least committed to the principles upon which the Edendale settlement had originally been established. Prescriptions against drinking, for instance, found little support from a population accustomed to brewing its own nutritious sorghum beer, *utshwala*, or ‘kaffir’ beer as it was more commonly known. Demand for *utshwala* in the village even prompted an old resident, the official marriage witness Samuel ‘Mpofo’ Hlatywako, to apply for a license under Law 18 of 1888, to sell ‘kaffir beer’ in the village. News of his application reached the ears of the village elders and the missionary, William Baker, and led to a great furore which rent asunder the surface unity of the village.²

Another concern of the speaker is that he sees his ‘kinsmen one by one | To foreigners their land resign’. Here the poem touches on the barbed blessing of unqualified freehold tenure, which permitted the mission occupant to dispose of his property whenever, and to whomever, he chose.³ By 1907, some four hundred of Edendale’s acres had been sold to outsiders—including Indians and whites. Insufficient manure and faulty farming practices further impoverished the descendants of the original settlers.⁴ As strangers moved in, and as older residents relocated to thriving ‘daughter’ settlements such as Driefontein, the original Edendale ethos began to dissolve. ‘A Warning’ reflects this development, revealing that, whereas formerly, men ‘dwelt in peace’, now ‘dire ills increase’.



¹ The so-called ‘Kaffir beer’—a beverage home-brewed from malted grain.

² Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 299.

³ University of Natal, *Experiment at Edendale*, 8.

⁴ Natal, *Native Affairs Commission, 1906–7*, 910, 916.

‘A SECOND WARNING TO EDENDALE’ (1904)

In this poem (14 iambic tetrameter quatrains, rhymed abab),¹ dated 14 April 1904, Grendon (writing as ‘Nongamu’)² picks up on his earlier warning, now almost one year old. By this time, he was teaching at the Zulu Christian Industrial School, at Ohlange, having been dismissed from the Edendale Native Training Institution. In a footnote, he explains that his poem takes as its departure point ‘a sermon preached at Edendale (1903), by the Rev. W. Cliff, sometime before his departure for England. The text thereof was Rev. ii. 5.’

The text in question is addressed to the church in Ephesus, and reads: ‘Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent’. William Cliff’s sermon apparently cautioned his congregation of the danger of losing its ‘candlestick’, just as Hugo Hahn once told Namaqua congregants that God had ‘removed His candlestick from among them and placed it among the very people they despise’—the Herero.³ Swedenborg says of this verse that ‘the church is here called a “lampstand” [or, ‘candlestick’] from the Divine truth which is there from the Lord’.⁴ Grendon seems to be troubled that Edendale’s Christians are in dread danger of forfeiting what little remains of their spiritual illumination, because they have severed themselves from ‘Divine Truth’.

This ‘Second Warning’ is written in much the same vein as the first. Its purpose is to ‘rouse’ Edendale from her ‘wanton sleep’. The speaker accuses this ‘fair hamlet’ of ‘wanton suicide’—of pursuing a death-wish through sloth, lack of initiative, neglect of traditional spiritual virtues, and by succumbing to the wiles of exploitative outsiders. In what seems a xenophobic strain, the Edendale community is warned to have no truck with the Indians who are establishing themselves in the valley:

¹ *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

² In 1977, Couzens learnt from H. Selby Msimang that ‘Nongamu’ is a name by which Grendon was known to his students (Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 75). This is confirmed by independent evidence. That ‘Nongamu’ and ‘Vespertilio’ (already shown to be Grendon) are pen-names for one poet is evident from a comparison of ‘A Warning’ (*Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3) with ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’ (*Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3). In the first the poet identifies himself as ‘Vespertilio’; in the second as ‘Nongamu’. In a superscription to ‘A Second Warning’, the poet also claims authorship of the earlier poem.

³ E. S. Hahn, *Letters*, 189: Emma to her sister Matilda, New Barmen, 1 Feb. 1857.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 9548.

Would'st thou a black man's paradise
 Remain? Then vomit out yon pest
 Emitting fragrant Orient spice,
 And rear THINE offspring on thy breast.

There is no mistaking the identity of 'yon pest | Emitting fragrant Orient spice'. In 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', Grendon refers to 'The fragrant spicy East',¹ and in *Paul Kruger's Dream*, Ceylon is 'yon spicy Orient isle'.² Grendon means Natal's Indian population. Indian market-gardeners and shopkeepers first began to purchase land at Edendale during the 1890s. They 'pos[ed] serious competition ... to the struggling producers at Edendale'.³

This is not the only place where Grendon refers to Edendale as a 'paradise'.⁴ If the valley and its inhabitants desire to remain 'a black man's paradise', two actions are required: the Indian 'pest' must be 'vomit[ed] out'; and Edendale must henceforth suckle her own 'offspring on [her] breast'. Grendon creates a startling effect by juxtaposing the violence of retching with the gentleness of giving suck.

The reference to 'vomit' is a biblical allusion. At Leviticus 18:25, God says: 'And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.'⁵ Concerning this passage, Wilkinson says that 'this vomiting out meant death for the offenders [in old Canaan], and banishment for the polluted race'.⁶ The paradisaic Edendale has been 'defiled' by an alien 'pest'. An emetic must be administered; the offending 'pest' must be disgorged before communal health can be restored.

Edendale suckling her 'offspring' is reminiscent of Roy Campbell's well-known poem, 'The Zulu Girl', in which a young Zulu mother suckles her boy-child, while 'Her body looms above him like a hill | Within whose shade a village lies at rest'. Grendon may have witnessed Indian infants with African wet-nurses—in which case his injunction to 'rear THINE offspring on thy breast' might be taken literally. But a

¹ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 4.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXIII, p. 106.

³ Meintjes, 'Edendale 1850–1906', 363, see also: 298–99.

⁴ See also: 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ See also: Lev. 18:28; 20:22.

⁶ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 184–85n. See also: *op. cit.*, 134.

figurative reading seems more appropriate: Edendale as a community should nurse its own rising generation—not harbouring foreigners at the expense of indigenes.

Grendon's poem reflects the fears and prejudices of many black Africans towards economic competition from Natal's Indian immigrants.¹ Dube told the Natal Native Affairs Commission (1906–07) that 'Natal, to-day, was full of Indians who had usurped the positions which ought to be filled by the natives', and that 'if the policy of the Government was continued, by which they introduced Indians in large numbers year by year, it was evident the aboriginal natives of Natal would go to the wall'.²

Sandwiched chronologically between his two poetic 'warnings' to Edendale, is Grendon's leader article in *Ilanga* warning of the 'Indian Invasion', which has been dealt with in the chapter 7. In the first of the poems, Grendon accuses 'Zulus' of 'wantonly neglect[ing]' 'all [their] opportunities'.³ In the prose article, he again refers to these 'many opportunities' that need to be taken up before they are missed altogether.⁴ In the poems and in the article, he dangles the threat of Indian competition like the sword of Damocles over Natal's *kholwa* class.⁵

The caveats in 'A Second Warning' respecting cunning strangers do not extend to those who come from foreign parts to partake of the superior secondary education known to be offered at Edendale's Training Institution. The speaker urges Edendale: 'To all who thirst, and seek thy Well | Of Knowledge ... freely give'. The image of learning as water to be imbibed occurs also in Grendon's prose article, 'Mr Barnett's Lecture', in which, paraphrasing Alexander Pope, he counsels that Africans should 'drink deep of the Pierian Spring or ... not taste its waters at all'.⁶

The poem animadverts on the use of 'Love philtres sparkling' that 'have well-nigh | To death intoxicated' Edendale. Under the Natal Code of Native Law (1891), one of

¹ Hughes, 'Doubly Elite', 446n.

² Natal, *Native Affairs Commission, 1906–7*, 960, 961. Like Dube, Grendon repeatedly warns Africans that they will 'go to the wall'—he uses that expression—unless they 'fall into line with the onward march of civilisation; unless [they] adopt its methods' ('Two Warnings' *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4); unless they acquire many 'trades or professions' ('Educate Your Children!' *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4); and unless they 'rise to meet the stern demands of the times' ('Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5).

³ 'A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁴ 'Two Warnings: I. The Indian Invasion', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

⁵ 'A Warning' speaks of 'foreigners' to whom Edendale's African proprietors 'resign' their land. 'A Second Warning' is more explicit about their racial identity.

⁶ 'Mr Barnett's Lecture', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3.

the responsibilities of chiefs was to prevent ‘the sale of poisons and love philtres’.¹ Whether the poet refers exclusively to literal love potions² is not clear because he goes on to urge the people of Edendale to be ‘cautious’ of those ‘murderers’ ‘who seek to charm thine eye’.³ Perhaps he intends an analogy between artificially-induced, counterfeit sexual love, and the attempts of guileful outsiders to insinuate themselves into the confidence of the community.

In Stanza 8, Edendale is accused of having shed the ‘blood of prophets ... | When they to thee were sent to warn’. This same charge is levelled more than once at various parties in the scriptures.⁴ As argued in chapter 5, Grendon appears to be making a cryptic reference to a prophetic role that he conceives himself as having. He had already ‘warned’ Edendale a year earlier, shortly before the departure of the well-disposed William Cliff and the arrival of the hostile missionary who would dismiss Grendon, along with the rest of the teaching staff. Did Grendon’s dismissal so cut him that it could be equated metaphorically with the shedding of a prophet’s blood? A prophetic—almost apocalyptic—note is sounded many times in Grendon’s verse and prose, and it is hard to escape the conclusion that his self-image extended well beyond that of a poet. Like Milton and Blake, he seems to have considered poetic ‘inspiration’ as being more than merely figurative.

The poet now turns his attention to Edendale’s two major establishments: ‘YON PALACE, wherein WISDOM reign’d’ (*i.e.*, the Training Institution), and ‘Yon FANE, wherein thou’rt wont to pray’ (*i.e.*, the Methodist chapel). He predicts that the first will become dedicated to Bacchus. (Perhaps the Irishman Johnson—Grendon’s replacement as headmaster of ‘Yon PALACE’—was suspected of being a devotee of Bacchus.) ‘Yon FANE’ will be forsaken by God, and taken up by Mammon, who gets many a dishonourable mention in Grendon’s writings.⁵ Grendon is troubled that Edendale is becoming spiritually bankrupt. In a prose article, he decries ‘the “gross materialism” which stifles religious feeling in other walks of life’ and which is now

¹ Quoted in: Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 283–84.

² In ‘Melia and Pietro’ (1897), Tyranto administers a love potion to his daughter, Melia.

³ In *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (Pt XXXII, p. 103), Grendon describes figurative lovers. The Cape Colony, ‘Enamour’d deeply, did elope’ with the presidents of the two Boer republics.

⁴ See for example: Matt. 23:30; Luke 11:50; Rev. 16:6; 18:24.

⁵ There are twenty-one references to Mammon in *Paul Kruger’s Dream*; he is also mentioned in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’. Prose articles that refer to him, include: ‘The Labour Problem’, *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4; ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4; ‘The Mission Native’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4; ‘The Old Year and the New’, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

‘entering, and corrupting the Priesthood’ of ‘the whole range of the Church wherein the black man forms a part’.¹ He also finds that ‘many of the Africans become Christians by profession, and not repentance’.²

‘A Second Warning to Edendale’ concludes by predicting that Edendale’s

Illustrious suns, and stars, and moons,
Which now thy firmament adorn,
Ere long will darken, when buffoons
O’er their calamity will mourn;

And awful voices, and deep thunderings
With cries of desp’rate men will blend
And dire terrestrial quiverings
Thine inmost depths will pierce, and rend.

These words are intended to resonate with Christ’s prophecy at Matthew 24:29: ‘But immediately after the *affliction* of those days, the *sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light*: and the *stars, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken*.’³ Swedenborg opens his *Heaven and Hell* with an explanation of this text:

the ‘sun’ there that is to be darkened signifies the Lord in respect to love; the ‘moon’ the Lord in respect to faith; ‘stars’ knowledges of good and truth, or of love and faith ...

All this makes clear that these words of the Lord mean that at the end of the church, when there is no longer any love, and consequently no faith, the Lord will open the internal meaning of the Word and reveal *arcana* of heaven.⁴

Grendon is deeply conscious of the waning of love and faith under the sway of the spiritually spent Old Church. In an *Ilanga* leader article, he considers that many of South Africa’s missionaries have ‘lost their first love’.⁵ Here he quotes Revelation 2:4—the verse immediately prior to that which inspired Cliff’s sermon, and Grendon’s ‘Second Warning’. And in another leader, he says that the Old Church, or ‘First Christian Church has declined, or is in the last stage of its decline’, which ‘is

¹ ‘The Native Priesthood’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

² ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

³ The italics here are as they appear in Grendon’s quotation of this passage, cited below. Similar prophetic language appears at: Joel 2:31; Mark 13:24; Acts 2:20; Rev. 6:12.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 1.

⁵ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

seen from the fact that there is no faith' in it.¹ Grendon's Swedenborgian reading of Christ's prophecy concerning the extinguishing of heavenly luminaries implies a dropping off in the love and faith in the Edendale community. In an editorial, Grendon decodes the prophetic passage at Matthew 24:29 as follows:

But '*immediately ... the sun*' etc.; this signifies the state of the Church as to truth of *faith*; *affliction* signifies desolation of truth throughout the Word;—that is when *faith* is lost, *charity* no longer exists. By '*the sun shall be darkened etc.*' is meant *love* to the Lord, which is the *sun*, and *charity* toward the neighbour which is the *moon*; to be darkened means that the sun and the moon or love and charity would fail. By '*the stars—shall fall &c*' is meant that knowledge of good and truth shall be lost. By '*the powers of the heavens &c*' is meant that the foundations of the Church will be moved and shaken when both *truth* and *charity* are lost.²

The 'dire terrestrial quiverings' in 'A Second Warning' also have a Swedenborgian-biblical basis because, as the Seer states, 'the "earthquake" (of Revelation 16:1) means the overturning of the church, which is done by falsities and falsifications of truth, and this is signified also by:—The great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world (Matt. 24:21)'.³ And Wilkinson glosses this by explaining that there occur in modern times 'spiritual earthquakes overthrowing rocky institutes of opinion'.⁴

Wilkinson states that the 'key to begin to open an understanding of the [current] age is the communicated fact that the first Christian Church has come to its end; that there is in it "no faith because there is no charity"; and that its judgement took place in the spiritual world in 1757',⁵ where it was witnessed by Swedenborg. This is also a 'key' to understanding Grendon's 'Second Warning'. We might go so far as to suggest that it is an important 'key' to understanding Grendon.

In general terms, 'A Second Warning' is an indictment of the First Christian Church, which is devoid of faith and charity. More specifically, it indicts the Edendale's Christian community, which has shed the 'blood of prophets ... sent to warn' it. Indirectly, it also points an accusatory finger at Grendon's spiritual antagonist, Morris, Edendale's present incumbent, who is a prime representative of

¹ 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

² 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 179.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 6.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 115.

the moribund Old Church, and who has failed to arrest the process of spiritual deterioration within his flock.



‘ILANGA’ (1903)¹

‘Ilanga’ (Zulu: sun) appeared in the sixth issue of *Ilanga*, on 15 May 1903.² The composition is dated 9 April, and was ‘specially composed for the first issue’ of the paper, although for some unstated reason it missed the publication deadline, or was otherwise overlooked when the first number went to press. From this fact, it is evident that Grendon was privy to *Ilanga*’s launch, and had sufficient rapport with its editor to be confident that these dedicatory verses would be accepted for publication by him. Grendon’s involvement with the paper—albeit small at the start—seems emblematic of attempts on the part of Natal’s black intellectuals such as Dube to broaden the range of their influence and in particular to foster working ties between the coastal *kholwa*—who were products of the American mission—and the Wesleyans of the interior districts, who looked largely to Edendale as their point of origin.

For ‘Ilanga’ (four iambic tetrameter quatrains, rhymed abab), Grendon uses his pen-name, ‘Vespertilio’ as he did with ‘Melia and Pietro’ in 1898. In it, he first apostrophizes the Sun as Divine Truth,³ and then addresses Ohlange—the site of Dube’s school, from which *Ilanga* would be published.

Swedenborg states that God’s ‘Divine love [appears in the heavens] as a sun, glowing and resplendent like the sun of the world’. From this sun two life-giving principles issue forth: the ‘heat is Divine good’ and the ‘light is Divine truth’. By light from this Spiritual Sun, one’s understanding is able to see ‘truths, and it is from that heat that the will is sensible of goods’.⁴ All this depends however upon one’s state of receptivity—how responsive one is to these influxes. Swedenborg’s ‘Sun’ correspondence is perhaps his most central, and recurs throughout the Writings.

¹ See: Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 26.

² ‘Ilanga’, *Ilanga* 1:6 (15 May 1903) 3.

³ Couzens (‘Robert Grendon’, 75) treats this poem as embodying one of Grendon’s ‘favoured puns’. In view the Swedenborgian weighting that Grendon elsewhere gives to the sun, a key Swedenborgian ‘correspondence’, and not merely a ‘pun’, is here intended.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Spiritual Life and the Word of God*, Part 4, Section 2.

Besides Grendon, at least one other writer seems to allude to the correspondence of ‘sun’—*ilanga*. N. M. Lutuli makes the point that, just as the sun warms the soil, enabling vegetation to grow, and thereby giving life to humans and to animals, so the newly-launched newspaper, *Ilanga lase Natal*, will satisfy all its readers’ requirements.¹

The first stanza entreats the correspondential Sun of Divine Truth to shine benevolently upon ‘Embo’—the Lyonesse of prehistoric southeast Africa:

Thou splendour, whose gilt arrows pierce
 The mists that dim fair Embo’s sky,
 Advance tho’ fiery, yet not fierce—
 Upon the vault of time to fly!

This appeal to the Sun to shed its light recalls the prayer of the aged Brower in behalf of Melia: ‘Holy Spirit, oh descend! | Lighten this maiden’s way! | Let the brightness of thy light | Ever around her play!’²

The poet sees fit to qualify the manner in which *ilanga* dispels the misty shroud hanging over Emboland. Although ‘fiery’, it should not shine ‘fiercely’. That correspondential sunshine may be fierce is evident from an untitled stanza embedded in Grendon’s prose article, ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, in which he describes ‘Tyranny’ by way of correspondence, as ‘Scorching sun-fire’.³ There exists a basis for this in Swedenborg. The Seer explains that just as ‘the light from the same sun produces in one subject beautiful and pleasing colours, in another unbeautiful and disagreeable colours’, so too ‘when the light of heaven flows into the truths of good it imparts intelligence and wisdom; but when it flows into the falsities of evil it is turned into insanities and phantasies of various kinds. Thus in every instance the result is in accordance with reception.’⁴ How the folk of Embo—and of Ohlange, in particular—receive the correspondential Sunlight of Truth, will determine its quality. May it reveal ‘beautiful and pleasing colours’ in them.

¹ M. N. Luthuli, ‘Kumhleli wePepa lo Hlanga’, *Ipepa* (7 Aug. 1903).

² ‘M&P’, Pt XXIII, *Citizen* 2:80 (17 Dec. 1898) 3.

³ ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 569

In the second stanza, there is a call upon the correspondential *ilanga* to shine generally upon ‘our race’. This it may do through the pages of the *Ilanga* newspaper, which will find its way into households far and wide:

Arise, and shine upon our race,
 Since thou’rt interpreted—‘THE SUN’;—
 And with Light’s flood from us efface
 The blacken’d course which Night hath run.

In a moment of despondency more than a year later, Grendon concedes that the Sun shines in vain for people in general: ‘Truly does “Ilanga” shine upon a “world” revolving for sportive and marital [sic] things; for empty merriment delighting only the external man! Verily the internal starves!’¹ In this article, ‘Ilanga’ is enclosed in quotation marks because Grendon means to reference the newspaper as well as the correspondential sun. It is not immediately clear why it is necessary to mark ‘world’ similarly. Perhaps it is because he has in mind a Swedenborg-style correspondence similar to that which we encounter in ‘Melia and Pietro’, where a personified ‘EARTH’ is clarified as ‘this world of beings’.² In Swedenborg’s correspondential hermeneutics, the ‘Earth’ of Genesis 1:1 is ‘the external man before regeneration’.³ Grendon may mean ‘World’ to reference unregenerate Man in his article.

The foregoing is not intended to assert that *Ilanga*’s—the newspaper’s—naming was necessarily inspired by Swedenborg’s ‘Sun’ correspondence, although that is a possibility which cannot be ignored.⁴ To pick on heavenly and other luminaries as names for Zulu newspapers may have seemed a natural choice to Dube. The American Board Zulu Mission published *Ikwezi* (‘Morning Star’) as early as 1861, and *Ubaqa* (‘Taper’) from 1877.⁵ *Inkanyiso*, published by Anglicans in Pietermaritzburg from 1889, also describes a source of light. Coming after these, *Ilanga*’s title seems rather obvious. However, we can say with confidence that in the poem ‘Ilanga’ at least, Grendon superimposes his Swedenborgian cosmos upon an

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4. ‘Marital’ may be a misprint of ‘material’. Alternatively, ‘marital’ may be meant as it appears, and Grendon may have in mind Matt. 24:38.

² ‘M&P’, Pt IV, prose argument, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3.

³ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 16.

⁴ It may be significant that the white Swedenborgian, Harold Attersoll, was being published in *Ilanga* from its second issue. See: H. A., ‘Education of Body and Mind’, *Ilanga* 1:2 (17? April 1903) 3. Could Attersoll perhaps have suggested the name?

⁵ *Inkanyiso* 3:51 (9 April 1891) supplement, 6.

existing frame of metaphorical reference. As already shown, Grendon applies Swedenborg's correspondential values to 'suns, and stars, and moons', both in 'A Second Warning to Edendale', and in an editorial written a few months after.¹

Having addressed the Sun, the speaker now calls upon Ohlange, 'whence this ring | Of brightness hath aris'n this day'. The sun shines not merely *on* Ohlange, but *in* Ohlange, and *through* Ohlange. Ohlange should ever 'obey' 'the truth'; and be 'foe' to 'Falsehood'. Here Grendon comes nearest to making an explicit Swedenborgian ligature of Sun-Truth. He refers to spiritual warfare, and war must be waged resolutely upon wrong ideology—Swedenborg's 'insanities and phantasies of various kinds'. When this is done, then 'from out the fray', the Sun will 'emerge ... triumphantly'.



'ADIEU TO THE REV. W. CLIFF AND FAMILY' (1903)

This occasional poem (six iambic sestet, each comprising two tetrameter lines and one trimeter, repeated, rhymed aabccb) is dated 5 May 1903, and appeared in *Ipepa* on the 22nd, above Grendon's pen-name, 'Vespertilio'.² It is written as an expression of appreciation from 'the boys of Edendale Institution' to William Cliff, Edendale's outgoing missionary and principal of the Training Institution. The Cliffs were about to sail for England. At a formal farewell arranged for Rev. and Mrs Cliff on the evening of 6 May, the poem was 'recited by George Mapanzela, senior student'.³ Mapanzela must have been one of Grendon's prize pupils: in the 'Teachers and students' examination for teachers' certificates, held in November and December, 1902', he achieved the First Class Teaching Certificate.⁴

The poem is tinged a little with sentimentalism, and is spoilt with rather too many commonplaces. Nevertheless, the regard in which Grendon held the Rev. William Cliff is evidently sincere, as revealed in the second stanza:

¹ 'A Second Warning to Edendale', *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3; 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

² *Ipepa* 3:446 (22 May 1903) 3.

³ 'Notes from Edendale', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁴ Natal, *Report of the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1902*, 68.

Beloved sire, thy labours here—
 Devoid of prejudice, and fear
 Have now approach'd their end!
 Pass hence!—Thou meritest thy rest
 With the land thou lovest best—
 Thou—shepherd—guide—and friend!

In Grendon's elegy for Michal Nkosi, the missionary is remembered as 'angel-hearted Cliff'.¹ The poet favours Cliff with a high compliment in declaring him to be 'Devoid of prejudice, and fear'. Fearlessness is particularly required of anyone who would adhere to liberal principles amongst hosts of others who, according to Grendon, 'have gone mad and are blinded by prejudice'.² Grendon lavishes similar praise upon the courageous and unprejudiced Swedenborgian, Attersoll, a 'true and honest friend, who stands out a hateful and detested figure amongst the ranks of his own [white] kinsmen, to *fearlessly* champion both by lip and pen, in public and in private, the much despised black man's cause'.³ Attersoll, in turn, counsels 'the African People' to 'work steadily without fear' in order to take their proper place in the world community of races.⁴ Grendon similarly exhorts Ohlange Institute: 'Fear not! Press on, and in thy heart be strong!'⁵



'A GLIMPSE OF UMKOMAAS' (1903)⁶

Within Grendon's surviving corpus, 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas' (thirteen iambic pentameter octaves, rhymed ababcdcd) is perhaps the most anomalous poem.⁷ It is his only topographical poem, and one of the least didactic. Couzens and Patel describe this as 'an unselfconscious nature poem which assumes that the land, the scenery is for all to enjoy'.⁸

¹ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

² 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

³ 'The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4. Emphasis added.

⁴ 'As Others See Us: Harold Attersoll[I]', *Koranta ea Becoana* 2:108 (21 Dec. 1904) 5.

⁵ 'Press on Ohlange', *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

⁶ See: Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 27–30.

⁷ *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3. The composition is dated 'Bulwer, June 30, 1903'.

⁸ Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 4.

It records a mid-winter trip on horseback that Grendon made to Bulwer, a village nestled beneath the Mahwaqa mountain—a spur of Natal’s southern Drakensberg. Evidence internal to the poem suggests that this may have been in part a botanizing, geologizing expedition, although wintertime is perhaps not the ideal time for such an excursion. Perhaps Grendon was still gathering material for the *Illustrated Genera of South African Plants*.

The road from Pietermaritzburg to Bulwer passes through Edendale. This route is described in an early railway and post-cart guide to the Colony (1895) as especially scenic. The ‘district of Polela is considered one of the very finest stock-rearing areas in the Colony’ and ‘the scenery in many places rivals that of the Highlands of Scotland. The great mountain slopes vary in tint from delicate green, through all the shades of grey and brown, to neutral and blue.’¹

Kholwa settlement in the Polela district was a result of the Edendale diaspora of the 1870s–90s, during which evangelically-minded Christians both outgrew their valley and sought to bring the Gospel to their heathen neighbours.² Stephen Mini, *kholwa* ‘chief’ of Edendale from 1893, held the farm ‘Eden’, renamed ‘KwaTunzi’, in the Polela district.³ Two Zonnebloem old boys—Peter Msomi and William George Mini (Stephen’s brother)—farmed close to the upper Mkomazi and Polela Rivers towards the end of the nineteenth century.⁴ It is possible that Grendon’s visit may have included visits to their homes.

Pausing beneath a ‘shady bow’r’, Grendon makes

Surveys minute of landscapes, that would rank
Amongst the loveliest in this rugged land;
And on the hills, which like sentries did round me tow’r,
And hold o’er all below supreme command,
I traced the violence of dead volcanic pow’r.

Lo, there above—cleft—crevice—crag—and cliff
Their origin and history explain!

¹ Ingram, *Colony of Natal*, 205.

² Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 240, 286–287, 298, 352, 354, 364.

³ Meintjes, ‘Edendale 1850–1906’, 298, 352.

⁴ NAB, SNA I/1/99, ref. 1887/445; NAB, RSC 1/5/364, ref. 115/1926.

His eyes are those of artist and scientist merged into one, and he reads into landforms their geomorphologic past. A similar observation is made in *Paul Kruger's Dream*, where Grendon describes the setting of Cecil Rhodes's tomb in the Matopo hills, surrounded by 'Rocks—raised by some hand Titanic—| Which forgotten wonders prove'.¹ All that he observes on the road to Bulwer—majestic and minute—fills Grendon with admiration for the 'Arch-Creator's skill'.



'A PLEA FOR JUSTICE' (1903)

Grendon had not yet come to Ohlange when he composed 'A Plea for Justice' on 31 August 1903. It appeared in *Ilanga* on 18 September, above the pen-name 'Nongamu'.² The poem comprises three sestets of iambic tetrameter lines, rhymed abcabc. It is Grendon's response to an incident that occurred when Native High Court judge, John C. C. Chadwick, in sentencing a white man for 'attempted gaol-breaking', declared 'that it was against his wish to administer flogging to a white man'. Grendon surmises—quite justifiably—that 'had prisoner been black he certainly would not have escaped the scourge. This is the only inference one can come to.'

Throughout his wanderings, the speaker has 'closely ... survey'd' the operation of 'The law of justice in all climes, | Where mingle black men with the white'. He has discovered how often 'wanton prejudice' leads to stiffer penalties being applied to black miscreants than to whites who perform the selfsame misdeeds:

Th' offences of the sons of Ham,
More heinous ten-fold do appear
Than like misdeeds of Japheth's seed,
And worse—Man's law would harshlier damn
The dusky culprit.

Grendon points out a real problem facing Christianized Africans in the Colony. Because of overwhelming white prejudice against them, they were expected by colonists to be moral giants. And yet those colonists did not apply the same stringent standard to Christians of their own race. Meintjes states that by the 1870s, Natal's

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 127.

² 'A Plea for Justice', *Ilanga* 1:24 (18 Sept. 1903) 4.

mission-dwellers ‘needed to be more pious than their colonial brethren, more responsible and more respectable than either collaborating chiefdoms or the majority of white settlers’.¹ And Grendon makes a similar point when he states that ‘nothing short of “*intellectual and spiritual superiority*” on the black man’s part will ever make the white man respect him’.²

In ‘A Plea for Justice’, Grendon states that the faults of blacks ‘More heinous ten-fold do appear’ than those of whites. Writing in prose, he makes the same point, and in much the same language: The ‘evil deed of a black man is in the eye of this world reckoned tenfold more heinous than a similar one committed by a white man’.³ And again: ‘The evil which a black man commits is tenfold more heinous than like misdeeds committed by white men.’⁴

Grendon often describes the white and black races by referring to their biblical progenitors: Japheth and Ham, sons of Noah. In prose, for instance, he observes the hypocrisy of the ‘milk-white spotless race—Japhetidae—[who] are quick to behold the mote in the eyes of the swarthy, vice-polluted Cushites, but consider not the beam that is in their own.’⁵ Cush, a son of Ham, is presumed the ancestor of all black Africans.

Grendon is a severe critic of the white man’s penal system. In ‘Native Reform’, he shows the folly of those who think that the Colony’s gaols will remedy crime: ‘You pretend to correct the blackguardly, thievish, and murderous native, by casting him into prison, which in reality is the school-house of greater evils, and from which he emerges a devil ten-fold more evil—ten-fold more vicious—ten-fold more daring—ten-fold less correctable.’⁶ In the poem, the black man’s crimes are made to appear ‘ten-fold’ more ‘heinous’ than equivalent acts by whites. In the editorial, prison renders the malefactor ‘ten-fold more evil, ... vicious, ... daring, ... [and ten-fold] less correctable’. Grendon concludes this poem with an appeal for the application of colour-blind justice, because, ‘If men commit the self-same sin, | Their chastisement should be at par!’

¹ Meintjes, ‘Edendale’, 245.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

³ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘Native Reform’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘Native Reform’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.



‘TO THE WHITES AND BLACKS OF SOUTH AFRICA’ (1903)

Grendon’s poem, ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, was composed on 7 October 1903, and published in *Ilanga* on 16 October, under the pen-name, ‘Nongamu’.¹ It comprises eighteen iambic tetrameter quatrains, rhymed abab. It is possible that the poem forms part of Grendon’s projected *An African’s Vision*—probably cast as an epic—which he advertises as forthcoming, at the end of *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (1902). Like ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, that envisaged poem constitutes ‘An Appeal to the present various races inhabiting’ South Africa.²

In the first two stanzas, the speaker appears to adapt to the South African situation, Kipling’s lines, ‘East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet’.³ He begins by acknowledging that ‘black can ne’er be white, nor white | Be black’. All do well to ‘Respect’ such ‘Relations thus defin’d, and fixed’. He is even prepared to discourage miscegenation: ‘Let blood be one, and pure—not mix’d—| The white with white, the black with black!’

Not to be overlooked is the poignancy of this exhortation, coming as it does from the child of a racially-mixed union. But it should not be taken to mean that Grendon wishes to outlaw sex relations between white and black. In his prose article, ‘Keep Your Breeds Pure!’ (1904),⁴ he picks up on his advice in this poem that ‘blood’ be kept ‘pure’, but makes it clear that he is not propounding an inviolable decree. What he offers is merely kindly, pragmatic advice, in the face of present-day realities that put great cultural strain upon mixed-race unions and unfairly disadvantage the children that result from them. He does not wish to dictate to others in the matter of their sexual preference. If it crosses the colour-line, far be it from him to intrude upon the volitional freedom of his brother man in this most intimate and sacred of matters.

¹ ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

² *PKD*, p. 135.

³ Kipling, *The Ballad of East and West*. Grendon describes Kipling as a ‘bard’ gone ‘crazy’, in ‘South Africa’s Future’, *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Keep Your Breeds Pure!’ *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 4.

He speaks from personal experience when he states that the ‘offspring of black and white’ is ‘in most instances detested and shunned by either those of his mother’s, or by those of his father’s race’. He has ‘always favoured the doctrine that there should be no mixture of unlike bloods, but doctrine has no weight and therefore is powerless, when natural inclinations burst the barrier which man would seek to set against them’. He shrinks from condemning what ‘nature’ dictates. ‘Nature never would obey’ such prohibitions. The imperative, ‘Keep your breeds pure!’ must therefore be understood as ‘merely admonition, and entreaty, in so far as [Grendon is] concerned’.¹

In 1914, Grendon quotes an *Ilanga* editorial, which finds that ‘graciousness has often been noticed’ in people of mixed race, even though they have been cruelly dealt with by an ‘abusive society’. Despite such evident ‘graciousness’, ‘half-breeds’ are ‘sneered down from their babyhood’. In language that seems to prefigure South Africa’s current Bill of Rights, which binds the State to deal equitably with all, regardless of such factors as religion and sexual orientation, the *Ilanga* writer states that he does ‘not ask any person to forego the freedom of his or her preference—be it in matters of religion, medicine or sexual liking’.² In ‘Keep Your Breeds Pure!’ Grendon had earlier made the same point: each human is entitled to his or her own ‘sexual liking’. Heterosexual ‘liking’ is of course implicit in this context, but interracial ‘liking’ is frankly countenanced.

The allowance Grendon makes for miscegenation in some of his prose writing does not negate the force of his opening lines in ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’. Racial ‘breeds’ do well to keep each other, genetically, at arm’s length. But, being racially—and sexually—separate is no licence for ‘breathing wrath’, one race against the other. These ‘long disputations hoarse’ must now be ‘stayed’.

The third stanza is an appeal for unity in diversity, because ‘Unity | Alone will cause this *land* to thrive!’ Here, Grendon repeats the appeal of the Swedenborgian, Wilkinson, who urges his reader to ‘remember again that the two races, in their

¹ ‘Keep Your Breeds Pure!’ *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 4.

² ‘Miscegenation, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:85 (6 May 1914) 6. The leader article to which Grendon refers is in *Ilanga* (8 Nov. 1912). Grendon identifies its author as Dube, in ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:87 (20 May 1914) 6. Interestingly, a few years earlier, Dube came in for criticism on account of his prejudiced aversion to miscegenation (‘Inexcusable Race Reflections’, *Izwi Labantu* 42:43 [sic] (6 Feb. 1906) 2). Perhaps he had had opportunity to reorganize his ideas in the interim.

respective heavens, and therefore on earth, are indispensable to each other as the earth to the air and to the ether, and *vice versa*'.¹

Stanza four interrogates all South Africans, pointing out a perverse inconsistency that must have struck many blacks in the aftermath of the South African War (1899–1902):

If in late gloomy times of strife
 White men with black together fought,
 Declare how in your peaceful life
 Of union twixt you there is nought!

Grendon had himself served as a transport auxiliary, working alongside white combatants during the South African War. During this time he formed at least one close and rewarding friendship with a white soldier—'Gunner Cooper (nicknamed *Skin*)', his 'intimate friend' who 'always took a lively interest' in Grendon's literary work, and whose 'kindness towards' Grendon, was remembered with gratitude.² By the same token, many of Grendon's black Natalian associates had served the British Army as scouts, spies, drivers, *voorlopers*, and general assistants. If in 'gloomy times of strife' the races could sink their differences and become, so to speak, comrades-in-arms,³ why could not the same spirit of cooperation carry forward into the period of postwar reconstruction?

Stanzas five and six introduce the 'undisputed natural law', that Man's corporate existence is no less organic than his individual biological existence. South Africans must recognize that just as 'sickly limbs contaminate | The trunk whereof they form a part', so too 'polluted is that State | Where class views class with jealous heart'. Grendon makes a similar point in an editorial entitled 'Selfishness', in which he observes in Natal the 'cancer of selfishness and [racial] envy ... in all its nakedness'. Whereas in his poem, Grendon finds 'class view[ing] class with jealous heart', in this prose article, he 'clearly detect[s] one class viewing another with jealousy'. What 'Europeans' fail to acknowledge is that their own true 'prosperity' is contingent upon that of Africans. 'Prosperity as Europeans admit it is prosperity only when it happens

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 167.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 117n.

³ Officially, blacks were not permitted to play a combatant role.

to benefit Europeans.’ But the ‘understanding revolts’ against ‘this sort of logic’, for ‘if one member of the body suffers, all the other members suffer with it’.¹

Here Grendon quotes St Paul to the Corinthians: ‘And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.’² But he has also imbibed Swedenborg, and read Wilkinson, who declares that

the world is one assembly, and all its members are bound justly to associate with each other. Here comes another confirmation of the [Swedenborgian] Doctrine of the Divine Man, that we are all members one of another. We inhabit a human form the greatest image and likeness of our individual form; and are in the heart of it, or in the head of it, or in some other part, with divinely-organic variety. Were this known to information, we should expect to find, and to wait upon, differences in our brethren,—differences to which white and black are insignificant: differences which we shall have to recognize when we die; and perhaps also before then, as revealed knowledge, and its preliminary sensibility, increases.³

This is Swedenborg’s *Maximus Homo*, or ‘Grand Man’—one of his central doctrines, which ‘has been ridiculed by some, because it has not been understood’, as Trobridge remarks. *Maximus Homo* must not be regarded ‘as an immense shape, into whose bodily form are packed away myriads of other human beings; but as representing in its totality the perfection of human qualities’.⁴ This is the concept that Grendon has in mind. Wilkinson appeals to his reader to try to conceive the human race in Swedenborgian terms:

Reader, if you be a reverent ethnologist, try to comprehend the division of the race into celestial, spiritual, and natural, as the great heavens and earths of humanity. You will then see how one plane of its order rests upon another; and how all, in Divine appositeness of differences of gifts, functions, and uses, are one Greatest Man whose communicated life is from the Lord, Who again is the sole and essential Man.⁵

If a healthy human body is a healthy society in microcosm, then a cancerous or otherwise diseased body stands for a disordered society. In stanza seven, the speaker calls for ‘all contamination [to] cease’, and in stanza eight, he describes ‘the frame’ of South African society as being ‘By cank’rous discord well nigh wreck’d’. By ‘frame’,

¹ ‘Selfishness’, *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4.

² 1 Cor. 12:26.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 140.

⁴ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 171.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 168.

Grendon means ‘trunk’ or ‘torso’.¹ The vital organs of this South African Grand Man, are almost ruined by cancerous ‘discord’. Society is diseased as when the organs of an individual body begin to devour, or war against, one another.

South Africans must let their ‘body politic command | That purity which bringeth peace!’ In an *Abantu-Batho* editorial (1915), reprinted in *Ilanga*, Grendon again quotes St Paul’s words, ‘If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it’, as he did in his 1904 editorial on ‘Selfishness’.² General Smuts, by snubbing patriotic Africans who express eagerness to take up arms on behalf of the Empire during the Great War, ignores the fact that black South Africans ‘constitute a member of the Body Politic of this Union’.³

South Africa’s frame has been ‘By cank’rous discord well nigh wreck’d’. This ‘discord’ could refer equally to long-standing strife between blacks and whites, or to the recent fratricidal South African War. In Grendon’s mind, these conflicts are mutually entangled. Both have sapped the strength and compromised the bodily integrity of South African society. Some suffer: all suffer.

The way forward is clear: ‘Black muscle with white intellect’ must be ‘Combine[d] to reconstruct the frame’. Using the word, ‘Church’, in the peculiarly Swedenborgian sense of a religio-societal epoch or dispensation, Wilkinson states that a

Church wants many genera, species, and individuals. The function of no one of these supersedes or hinders, but completes and helps, that of the others. For the Lord’s Church in heaven and on earth is a complete detailed human form with all its organs, members, and contents: with all its lives, loves, wisdoms, intelligences, sciences, senses, natures, and industries. No one of these can be absent, but each must be represented.⁴

This is Grendon’s point. He accords to the white man the superior intellect; but the black man also plays a vital role. It may seem lowly in the eyes of arrogant whites, but it is nonetheless indispensable. This is not to say that ‘genius’, in the confining sense of intellectual excellence, is restricted to whites. Each race has a God-given

¹ In ‘An African’s Vision’, Grendon speaks of ‘the frames | And limbs’ of ‘weak slaves’ who were flayed by cruel slave-masters (*Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3).

² ‘Gen. Smuts Answered’, *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5 (reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*); ‘Selfishness’, *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4.

³ ‘Gen. Smuts Answered’, *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 52.

‘genius’ native to itself. South Africans should nurture, and not suppress, such genius. Blacks should be encouraged in their ambition to elevate themselves spiritually. Stanza nine reads:

True genius seek not to despise
Nor crush the root from which it springs,
Encourage all who strive to rise
From brutalism to higher things.

‘True genius’ is a plant that ‘springs’ from a buried rootstock. The impulse lies dormant even when present displays of that genius are lacking. At the predetermined growth season, the ‘root’ sends out shoots. Whites in particular ought not to condemn the very natural outgrowth of this rootstock, and they ought not to ‘crush’ it at very source.

Genius ‘springs’ upward; it ‘strive[s] to rise’. As Grendon elsewhere writes, ‘the black man is planning in every possible spiritual manner to thwart his fairer brother’s endeavour to keep him down’.¹ Amongst South African blacks, Grendon witnesses the same spirit that once permeated ancient Greek culture: the insatiable thirst for higher learning. It is ‘the spirit which seeks to ... strive after that which is above and beyond the material’. This “quicken[ing] spirit” is clearly visible’ among blacks, in ‘the general movement for education’. But, as the poem indicates, many whites ‘despise’ the upward thrust of such ‘True genius’. They subject it to scorn, seek to curtail it, even to legislate against it. There is a strenuous contest between those who would rise, and those who, having risen, seek to perpetuate their educational advantage by denying others an opportunity to emulate them:

Though amongst us there is a desire for learning yet there are serious drawbacks to the acquisition of that learning, such as poverty, and meagre resources, together with a denial in many instances, on the part of the ruling caste. But all these drawbacks are nothing if there be the determination to press towards the mark and the end in view.²

South Africans should ‘Encourage all who strive to rise | From brutalism to higher things’.³ In this spiritually-progressive project of upliftment, John Dube, principal of the Zulu Christian Industrial School, and editor-in-chief of *Ilanga* newspaper,

¹ ‘Native Abominations’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4.

² ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

³ ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

evidently plays a key role, for Grendon describes ‘Rev. & Mrs Dube’ as having ‘given their lives in order to raise their race to higher things’.¹

Stanza ten calls upon South Africans to spread the word that individual humans have no existence separate from Society:

This mighty truth perpetuate
That in the conflict wild for self—
Renown, and things, which elevate,
No mortal liveth to himself.

Grendon’s view is that of Swedenborg, who states that ‘no one is wise for himself alone, or lives for himself, but for others at the same time: this is the origin of society, which otherwise could not exist. To live for others is to perform uses. Uses are the bonds of society, which are as many in number as there are good uses; and the number of uses is infinite.’² Swedenborg’s doctrine of ‘use’ makes clear that the *raison d’être* of each human being is the unique function that he or she performs with respect to Society and God. There is no place for the ‘idle rich’ within this schema. Every human must ‘perform use’: this is the ‘mighty truth’ that Grendon would have South Africans ‘perpetuate’. In opposition to the love of use is the love of self. Swedenborg states that ‘the life of self is life from man’s *proprium*’ and therefore evil. ‘Love of self and love of the world rule in the hells and also constitute them’, whereas ‘Love to the Lord and love toward the neighbour rule in the heavens and also constitute them’.³

The black West African intellectual, Edward Wilmot Blyden, whom Grendon professes to admire, states the same principle:

The gifts of God are not ours to do as we please with. If we prevent their application or diffusion for the good of others, or for the benefit of our country, He will remove us from them or them from us. We may have our plans for ourselves—for our individual gratification, but God has *His* plans, which are for the country, for the race, for humanity; and His plans will be carried out. The agents for carrying them out are on every hand, in the air, in the water, in the

¹ ‘Rev. and Mrs Dube’, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 18.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 559.

fire. In the operation of the laws of Providence, ‘The individual dwindles, while the race is more and more’.¹

Stanza eleven states that the ‘white estate deemed more sublime | Its subject often much denies’. Yet, for all that, ‘each in its appointed time, | And place, the other’s needs supplies’. Black and white are interdependent: they should acknowledge this reality.

The speaker identifies himself as a black man in stanzas twelve and thirteen:

In all the burdens of the State
 We blacks our portion must fulfil;
 And mark ye well—we’ll operate
 With mightiness for good or ill.

For good we’ll strive most cheerfully
 The while ye prove that ye are just;
 Prove treach’rous; play your tyranny—
 We’ll trample progress in the dust.

In these stanzas the address ceases to be that of an objective but concerned onlooker, spoken ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, but becomes that of a black South African admonishing his white countrymen. ‘With mightiness for good or ill’, blacks are bound to make their mark. They can serve the interests of the State—well, and ‘most cheerfully’—provided whites ‘are just’. Whenever whites ‘play [their] tyranny’, however, progress—both material and spiritual—is stunted. The tone slides from admonitory, to cautionary, to almost threatening in stanza fourteen:

Stagnation shall we constitute
 With all the force of niggerdom;
 And to the State we’ll contribute
 A load tenfold more burdensome.

In the final three stanzas (16–18), the speaker reverts to addressing all South Africans, calling upon them to ‘Blot out all prejudice, and hate’, ‘all wranglings, and disputes, | Which centuries twixt you their sway | Uncheck’d have held’; to ‘*Blot out* for ever from your land | *These devils*, which do men incite | Brute passions to betray;

¹ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 218.

and stand | For love—united black with white!’ This plea is as cogent and as valid today as it was a century ago.

Grendon’s reference to ‘devils’ is not poetical or figurative. He means quite literally what his poem states: there are ‘devils’—formerly evil humans in the flesh—who ‘incite’ terrestrials to display ‘Brute passions’. According to Swedenborg, whether they be true or false, good or bad, Man’s thoughts come from the spiritual world.¹ ‘Every man in respect to his spirit, even while he is living in the body, is in some society with spirits, although he does not know it; if a good man he is by means of spirits in some angelic society; if an evil man in some infernal society; and after death he comes into that same society.’² Just as racial amity and trust have their origin in heavenly influxes, so race hate and mistrust have theirs in the nether regions.

The poem rounds off with the impassioned appeal:

And oh for GOD ALMIGHTY’s sake
 May ye be drench’d with purer leav’n;
 Thereby will ye be cleans’d to make
 OF HELL-PERVADED EARTH A HEAV’N.

The guilty Memnon in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ questions rhetorically: ‘In this Hell-pervaded world | What is justice?—What is truth?—| Sin and sin together hurl’d | Constitute the love of Man!’³ Earlier in that poem, while the possibility yet remains of his resisting Helen’s wiles, he expresses the hope that ‘the day [might] not distant be | When Man his back shall wholly turn on Sin! | This mighty transformation will blot out | The Tempter’s work. Then Hell will be a Heav’n’.⁴

According to Swedenborgian definition, all sin is selfishness and arises in Man’s secondary self, his *proprium*. But this ‘Hell-Pervaded Earth’ may become ‘a Heav’n’, if Man will renounce selfishness-sin. The ‘purer leav’n’ with which South Africans need to be ‘drench’d’ would seem to equate to the ‘purer Love’ that Grendon advocates in an essay: ‘Cultivate a purer Love than that which governs the daily life of most men on this earth, then before your sight will glitter riches grander far than

¹ Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 106.

² Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 438.

³ ‘PAD’, Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4.

⁴ ‘PAD’, Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

those material mocking gifts of earth; riches grander and eternal, which the moth cannot corrupt and which the robber cannot steal.’¹

Wilkinson sees the occult percolation of Swedenborg’s doctrines through Society as a salutary ‘leavening’.² Grendon’s ‘purer leav’n’ is the love of ‘use’—‘purer’ because it transcends the squalid love of self. In Blake’s poem, ‘The Clod and the Pebble’, the yielding clod defines this love of use, and its effect: ‘Love seeketh not itself to please, | Nor for itself hath any care; | But for another gives its ease | And builds a heaven in hell’s despair.’



‘IN MEMORIAM: MRS SYDNEY STRONG’ (1903)

Grendon had not been at Ohlange more than a few days when his elegy, ‘In Memoriam: Mrs Sydney Strong’, was published in *Ilanga* of 13 November 1903.³ It comprises fourteen iambic pentameter quatrains, rhymed aabb. The date of composition is given as two days earlier—the 11th. A few lines—likely Dube’s—attribute the poem to Grendon:

The sad news of the death of Mrs Sydney Strong, who came to this country with her husband as Deputation of the American Board [of Missions to South and East Africa] reached us through a brief message to Rev. F. B. Bridgman. All our people who saw her and loved her will be very sorry. Mr Robert Grendon, head-teacher in the Industrial School, has expressed our feeling in the foregoing poem.

Mrs Strong had died aboard her homeward-bound ship somewhere on the Mediterranean. It is altogether possible that the poet never met her, and that the poem was commissioned by Dube. This may explain why the tone is formalistic and the language stilted, as in such mawkish lines as, ‘yon Great impurpled Sea—| Hath snatch’d a life of boundless charity’. The dead woman’s loss is simply not felt by the poet. The poem seeks to console the bereaved husband, urging him to ‘Gaze upward thou on Hope, and be thou STRONG!’ Since his surname is Strong, he can hardly be anything else. Grendon also repeats the refrain that runs through all his elegies: ‘There

¹ ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4. Grendon paraphrases Matt 6:21.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 116, 226.

³ ‘In Memoriam: Mrs Sydney Strong’, *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

is no death! What seemeth so to us | Is but the gate to Life more glorious.’ But if there is no death, then mourning and the elegiac strain seem gratuitous. The poem smacks of hackwork.



‘PRESS ON OHLANGE’ (1903)

Grendon’s hortatory poem, ‘Press on Ohlange’, likewise appears in *Ilanga* on 13 November 1903.¹ Its composition is dated 6 November, and it is composed in three iambic pentameter octaves, rhymed aabbccdd.

Grendon repeats the call to ‘Press on’ from time to time in his poetry and prose. In ‘To You Abantu’, published one month after ‘Press on Ohlange’, he encourages ‘*abantu*’ several times to ‘Press on!’ or ‘Press onwards!’² Upon Dube’s return from his fifteen-month trip to Europe and North America, Grendon ‘encourage[s] those who revolve around Dube as the centre to be steadfast in their work, and let their watchword be—“Press on!”’³ Fully a decade later, he calls upon Dube to persist in his good work: ‘Press on, Mafukuzela! Courage!—Courage!’⁴

‘Press on Ohlange’ provides encouragement to ‘Ohlange’—by which Grendon presumably means Dube’s educational complex as well as the *Ilanga* newspaper—to persevere, and to lead the ‘rude inhabitants of this fair land’ by example. Ohlange is urged to ‘Uplift thy race from out the sand | Wherein they’re deeply sunk!’ and to ‘impart’ to individuals of the race ‘Ungrudgingly, and with sincere a heart | The talents, and the gifts by Heav’n on thee | Bestow’d; and fare thou thenceforth prosperously!’ This appeal is very like that which Grendon makes to Edendale’s Native Training Institute, in ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’. If Edendale desires ‘fame perpetual’, she must ‘freely give’ ‘To all who thirst, and seek [her] Well | Of Knowledge’.⁵

¹ ‘Press on Ohlange’, *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

² ‘To You Abantu’, *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

³ ‘Rev. and Mrs Dube’, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁴ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁵ ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’, *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

The second stanza recognizes that Ohlange is encircled by enemies who would like nothing better than to see it come to naught. Ohlange must therefore hold resolutely to the cause of uplifting the Black Man, and not be deceived by false friends:

Press on, Ohlange—lone, despised spot!
 Keep courage alway—hesitate thou not,
 For such as have malignant 'tward thee turn'd
 And for thy downfall and destruction yearn'd
 Ere long will see the folly of their deed,
 When thou shalt blossom and put forth thy seed.
 Ere long they'll stretch forth friendly hands to greet
 Thee, but beware of treachery, and deceit!

The poem does not identify Ohlange's enemies, but they can only be those white colonists who like to hold forth about Africans being unable to take the initiative in anything relating to their own upliftment. Such critics will be obliged to witness their folly, because Ohlange will 'blossom and put forth seed' when her graduates disperse to relay her teaching to far-distant places. When that time comes, outright hostility and ridicule will be replaced with different but equally dangerous challenges for the infant college: white 'treachery, and deceit'. The same warning is given to Edendale: 'Be cautious! Shun the false embrace, | And scorn thou the dissembled smile | Of such as gaze upon thy face—| Tho' fair without, within they're vile.'¹

The final stanza assures Ohlange of success in her great mission, because she is directed by Divine Providence: 'If the call | To aid thy race proceed from the Most High, | No mortal pow'r thy progress shall defy.'



'TO YOU ABANTU: WHAT MAN'S ACCOMPLISH'D YE CAN DO' (1903)²

This poem is dated 8 December 1903, and was published above the poet's name, 'Robert Grendon', just three days later—suggesting that Grendon had written it for the next issue of *Ilanga*.³ It comprises seven iambic tetrameter stanzas, six of which are of seventeen lines each. Stanza 3 is an anomaly, having twenty-one lines. The six

¹ 'A Second Warning to Edendale', *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

² See: Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 30–34.

³ 'To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

seventeen-line stanzas are rhymed ababcdcdefgfhjj. The last four lines of each stanza constitute the refrain:

There's nothing in this world that's new,
Tho' knowledge often hides from view;
When courage actuateth you,
What man's accomplish'd ye can do.

The last line is varied slightly in stanzas 3, 5, 6, and 7, where it reads: 'What man's accomplish'd ye shall do.'

Couzens and Patel describe 'To You Abantu' as 'an exhortation to work, a eulogy to the dignity of labour and self-help'.¹ It is these things to the extent that it embodies the first principles upon which Ohlange operated. It is a marshalling cry—to greater energy, to greater courage, and to greater racial ambition. But it is more.

When first published, Grendon's poem was very topical. One charge against Africans was that they had not *earned* the respect of Europeans. They were not entitled to respect because they had made no original discoveries and had produced no original artwork of sufficient quality to persuade Europeans that African culture held equal merit with their own. The oral historian and civil servant, James Stuart, in 1900 told John Kumalo—a highly-esteemed black Anglican catechist—that one reason why there existed such an 'immense gulf between Europeans and the natives, especially the more enlightened', was 'that the Zulus or natives of South Africa have never done anything. Other nations of the world, Indians and Chinese, for instance, had produced evidences of originality, but the Zulus, for instance, can show nothing.'²

Abantu 'can do' and 'shall do' whatever men of other races have 'accomplish'd'. Grendon seems anxious to counter a morbid death-wish he discerns amongst black Africans. They have allowed themselves to be browbeaten into believing in their innate incapacity to rise above their abject lot as a dispossessed, disenfranchised underclass. Grendon's poem says in effect that there *is* a way out for blacks. It means sweat, indifference to opposition, and the discovery within themselves of their own enormous racial potential, locked up in their racial genius.

¹ Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 4.

² Webb and Wright, *James Stuart Archive*, i:240.

As the refrain stresses, no endeavour is off-limits to blacks; no goal is beyond attainment. Grendon makes the same point in an *Ilanga* article, fifteen months later: ‘We hold that the native can choose whatever profession he desires provided that he has the brain and the money to secure it.’¹ Grendon’s proviso means that, racially at least, a black person is in no way incapacitated. The talents and financial resources of individuals within the race will of course vary greatly, and on account of such factors not all may aspire to becoming professionals, but no-one should ever let Race hold him or her² back from aiming to achieve full potential.

This is an impassioned call upon ‘*abantu*’ to muster all their natural talents and abilities to meet the special contingencies of the new order into which they have been suddenly thrust. Black Africans must consciously reject ignorance. They must ‘awake’ to the crisis of modernity—‘arise’ to the occasion. They must toil at whatever projects—material, intellectual, or spiritual—hold promise of upliftment. They must have a heart for all the adversity and disappointment they will encounter.

The opening stanza—not including the refrain—reads:

Put forth—*Abantu*—all the pow’rs
 Wherewith by Nature ye’re endow’d.
 The ignorance that round you tow’rs,
 Encircling you in its black shroud,
 Dispel! There is no time for sleep,
 Or conversations that are vain—
 No time to squat about, and weep
 O’er privileges, and disdain
 Facilities within your grasp.
 Awake!—This age demands not cries
 ’Gainst wrong, but veritable deeds.
 ‘Awake—no longer lag!—arise!’—
 Thus all creation with you pleads.

So far, the message of this poem is not obscure, and it has been sounded before. It is a call to Africans to ‘awake!’, ‘arise!’—it is regenerating Africa’s *reveille*. It is the English version of the Zulu call, ‘*Vukani abantu*’, pronounced in *Ipepa*’s columns

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

² Grendon did not subscribe to the view that education was ‘wasted’ on girls. He believed that black parents should send ‘their sons and daughters’ to school so that they might ‘obtain the education that is necessary for the struggle of life’ (‘Educate Your Children!’ *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4).

during the South African War, which caused white colonial hackles to stand on end. As pointed out in Chapter 7, this very call precipitated the forced closure of *Ipepa* by the administration, which was then operating under military law.

André Odendaal gives some historical context to this cry:

The phrase ‘Vukani Bantu!’, meaning ‘Rise up you people!’ in Zulu or Xhosa, was used by members of the early educated African class in Natal in efforts to galvanise the people into becoming politically aware and active. Regarded by the Natal government as a dangerous and seditious invitation to rebellion, the term came to assume an emotive connotation. Its use contributed ... to the government-instigated closure of ... *Ipepa lo Hlanga*, and ... later the government threatened to ban its successor, the *Ilanga lase Natal*, for the same reason. The *Ilanga* again made the ‘Vukani Bantu!’ call at the time of the protests against the draft South Africa Act in 1909.¹

Wartime conditions coincided with the rapid advance of the ecclesiastical independence movement amongst southern African blacks. In Natal particularly, where the tiny white population had a reputation for jumpiness and seasonal ‘native scares’, the galling spectacle of ‘natives’ wearing dog-collars—believed by whites to mask insurrectionism—was just too much, coming as it did on top of war with Boer republicans. With a characteristic lack of subtlety and sympathy for Africans’ efforts to acculturate or assert their worth, white Natalians tended to lump all such attempts under the same header—‘Ethiopianism’.

As noted in our last chapter, Grendon courageously took the part of *Ipepa* and the dreaded ‘Ethiopian’ movement, in 1901. He attacked the *Natal Witness* for placing the very worst possible construction upon *Ipepa*’s ‘Vukani abantu!’ cry. In particular, Grendon objected to the haphazard way in which the *Ipepa*’s isiZulu copy was translated into English by the *Witness*. They had chosen to translate *vukani* as ‘rise’. ‘If this be a correct rendering of the Zulu’, Grendon ‘challenge[d the *Witness*’s editor] to squeeze sedition out of’ it.² Nevertheless, *Ipepa* sealed up its press, and created the media vacuum that would prompt Dube to start up his *Ilanga* in April 1903.

‘To You Abantu’ can only be read within this historical context. It is in part a call upon the black man to ‘advanc[e] from a lower to a higher level of thought—from

¹ Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu*, ix.

² ‘Black Supremacy’, *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6.

apathy or indifference to a consciousness of his rights', as Grendon interprets the *Vukani abantu* appeal.¹ It is an appeal to the African to peer into his inner self—into the 'real man', the divine centre—to discover the potential with which 'Nature' has 'endow'd' him.

Outside 'To You Abantu', the direct address to 'you Abantu' occurs at least six times in Grendon's poetry and prose;² to 'you Bantu', at least four times;³ and to 'ye Abantu', once.⁴ We also encounter 'the Bantu Race',⁵ 'the Bantu races',⁶ 'Bantu tribes',⁷ 'South Bantu tribes',⁸ and 'Bantudom'.⁹ The vocative, 'you Abantu' is what might be expected from one who positions himself as spokesman to and for black Africans, and who believes unreservedly that he has invaluable moral, spiritual, and political advice that will serve the best interests of all *abantu*. Grendon's is the voice of a prophet—of one who speaks with absolute confidence in his own authority.

'The Bantu Race' acknowledges a commonality of racial identity between all black Africans and tends to obscure difference; while 'the Bantu races' acknowledges the heterogeneous character of the peoples described. 'Bantudom' is an interesting neologism, evidently intended to have somewhat vague reference, but incorporating notions of integral identity and autonomy from white political control. 'Bantu tribes' seems to connote precolonial structural organization and perhaps some primitivism; while 'South Bantu tribes' recognizes that there are cognate ethnic groupings to the north, perhaps even in the Great Lakes region, and West Africa.

It would be very interesting to know whether Grendon locates his own ancestors amongst the 'South Bantu tribes'. Bearing in mind his wide-ranging interest in

¹ 'Black Supremacy', *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6.

² 'Copy The Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4; 'Storm and Calm', *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4; 'The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4 (twice); 'Poor Personality', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 3; 'Zulu Orthography', *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4.

³ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3; 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4; 'Umdlwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4; 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

⁵ 'The Tragedy of Malunge' in 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5. The collocation appears twice in 'Notes and Comments', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁶ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁷ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5; 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁸ 'Farewell Msindazwe!' *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

⁹ 'Miscegenation' *Izwe la Kiti* 3:82 (15 April 1914) 6; 'Swaziland and the S. A. Union', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

African history, he almost certainly knew that the Herero in Damaraland were relatively recent immigrants from some remote locality far to the north. At any rate, in addressing ‘*Abantu*’, Grendon speaks as a representative of that broad category.

The stem, *-ntu* or *-tho*, signifies ‘person’ in many African languages. In Zulu, the singular is expressed as *umuntu*¹ and the plural (‘people’) as *abantu*. White nineteenth-century comparative philologists and ethnographers found ‘*bantu*’ a useful label to reference a concept largely of their own making. As ‘*bantu*’ was naturalized into English, it came first to reference the largest family of languages in Africa, and then a sweeping racial categorization—not unlike the crude appellation, ‘Oriental’ to reference any people from Arabs to Chinese.² ‘*Bantu*’ became a concept rooted in geography (sub-Saharan Africa), and racialism (‘*Bantu*’ was other than ‘Caucasian’; other than ‘Arab’; even other than ‘Hottentot’ and Bushman). Having found an underlying commonality for people of widely disparate material and spiritual cultures, as well as a blanket expression to reference it, whites were better equipped to stereotype their construction.

Mission-educated blacks had reasons of their own for adopting the expression, ‘*Abantu*’ as a pan-ethnic concept. Their rights were progressively denuded by Boers and British colonists. As white intrusion upon ancestral lands became all but complete, and Africans were increasingly denied access to natural resources, interethnic solidarity, which transcended precolonial tribal categories, became critically important. As hundreds of tribal units—Hlubi, Barolong, Thembu, etc.—little effectual resistance could be offered, but as ‘*abantu*’, they stood more of a chance.

In Natal during the era of Theophilus Shepstone, the ‘native’ policy—if it was coherent enough to be described as a ‘policy’—was rooted in the divide-and-rule principle. The need for a united front to oppose or circumvent retrogressive racist legislation was recognized before the end of the nineteenth century, and a descriptor like ‘*abantu*’ being readily to hand, it was adapted to the purposes of the politically-

¹ Grendon employs the singular—‘*umuntu*’ and ‘*muntu*’—in ‘A Warning’, *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3, and in ‘Press on Ohlange’, *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

² Edward W. Said, in his seminal *Orientalism* (1978), thoroughly explored the ‘occidental’ construction of the ‘Orient’.

minded mission-educated. Likely, few black intellectuals at the turn of the twentieth century used it so much as Grendon.

Grendon's poem urges *abantu* to 'Dispel' 'The ignorance that round you tow'rs, | Encircling you in its black shroud'. This is because 'There is no time for sleep'. He employs a figure that enjoyed wide currency amongst literate blacks during late colonial times. Pixley Seme pictures 'Africa' as a recumbent giant that has lain inert for centuries. But now 'the giant is awakening!'¹ He concludes his 1906 oration with a passage of anonymous verse, in which Africa's 'doors [are] unlocked, where knowledge in her tomb | Hath lain innumerable years in gloom'.² For such men as Grendon and Seme, civilization is not European in an exclusive sense. It is a vital germ that, touching down in any fertile place, takes root and flourishes.

'To You Abantu' finds the modern era 'No time to squat about'. In 'A Warning', composed earlier in the same year, Grendon accuses Edendale's mission community of 'idle squatting'.³ Interestingly, Sol T. Plaatje in 1900 contrasts a young woman's 'squatting' with useful activities in which she might rather be engaged, such as 'cooking and doing such household practice as will fit her for greater cares in future'.⁴ As Grendon employs 'squat', it describes culpable inertia and foolish disregard for the inexorable tide of modernity.

Abantu should not 'disdain | Facilities within [their] grasp'. In 'A Warning', Grendon chides Edendale for failure to utilize readily-available arable land, building stone and sand, clay for brick-making, and a river where the laundry industry might be tried.⁵ Exasperated, he gasps: 'Ah—all your opportunities | Ye, Zulus, wantonly neglect! | How can ye hope to live in ease | If Fortune's gifts ye thus neglect?' The requisite 'facilities' are within *Abantu*'s 'grasp'; the 'opportunities' lie on every side, yet 'Ye, Zulus' and 'you Abantu' 'wantonly neglect' them.

The opening stanza of 'To You Abantu', declares that 'This age demands ... veritable deeds' of black Africans. With variations, this is a motif that runs through the poem. We read such phrases as: 'all creation with you pleads'; 'The world

¹ Seme, 'The Regeneration of Africa', 70.

² Seme, 'The Regeneration of Africa', 71. Compare Seme's 'gloom' with Grendon's 'black shroud'.

³ 'A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁴ Plaatje, *Mafeking Diary*, 126.

⁵ 'A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

demands from you'; 'The world from out your ranks | ... Expects'. The image this conjures up is of ethnic Africans stationed upon a universal stage, while every other continent and race looks on expectantly, even clamouring for visible tokens of Africa's having paid her dues to World Civilization. In prose, Grendon refers to 'the black man' as desiring 'an opportunity of exhibiting his worth, and adding his quota to the needs of the world'.¹

The idea that each race must play its part, or subscribe its 'quota', if it is to capture the respect of an exacting world audience, occurs in Blyden's writing as early as 1862, when he expresses the desire to 'create an African power which would command the respect of the world'.² Having presented evidences of Africa's past glory, Pixley Seme follows up by stating that 'justly the world now demands' to see positive proofs that this ancient glory survives in present-day African society.³

'[A]ll creation ... pleads' with *Abantu* to 'no longer lag'. What Grendon means by 'lag' is clarified in his article 'Two Warnings', published on the selfsame *Ilanga* page as 'To You Abantu'. In the article, he warns black Africans that they run the risk of 'becom[ing] laggards in the race':

Unless you fall into line with the onward march of civilisation; unless you adopt its methods, in playing your part in life; unless you act faithfully up to the standards required in these enlightened days, you will become laggards in the race, and the bitter consequence of your own negligence, and folly will be this—'THAT YOU MUST GO TO THE WALL!'⁴

The first line of the refrain to each of the stanzas, reads: 'There's nothing in this world that's new'. This appears to be a biblical reference to the oft-quoted 'there is no new thing under the sun'.⁵ Given that Grendon's poem is written for publication in *Ilanga* ('Sun'), the intertextual reference, if intended, is especially apt. The refrain also appears to gainsay the well-known saying of Pliny: *Ex Africa semper aliquid novi* ('There is always something new from Africa').

¹ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.

² 'The Call of Providence to the Descendants of Africa in America' (1862), in: Blyden, *Black Spokesman*, 28.

³ Seme, 'The Regeneration of Africa', 70.

⁴ 'Two Warnings. I. The Indian Invasion', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

⁵ Eccl. 1:9

The second stanza counsels *Abantu* ‘this doctrine [to] learn—| That those who’re fittest must survive’. As pointed out in chapter 7, survival of the ‘fittest’ is a subject of Grendon’s contemporaneous prose piece, ‘Two Warnings’. For Grendon, fitness is not so much inborn as the product of conscious self-moulding. It is less a matter of *being* than of *becoming*. *Abantu* must ‘go sweat, and toil, | By training hand, and heart, and mind’. In the struggle for advancement, no labour should be considered demeaning. Blacks must apply themselves to ‘cultivation of the soil, | And whatsoever task ye find’. This will render them ‘fit’ for ‘survival’. Stanza 3 elaborates:

Arise! Go forth and take your place
 ’Mongst them who daily toil, and spin!
 Go forth, and strive in Labour’s race,
 And deem not *Work* disgrace or sin!
Work is your heritage, your right,
 Your ladder to success, and fame,
 Your sword and breastplate in the fight
 ’Gainst serfdom, penury, and shame,
 And all that tends to tread you down.
 Arise! Go forth, and toil by brain,
 Or manual pow’r! In all ye take
 In hand strive ever to maintain
 Therein a cheerful love, and make
 No plaint when thorns beset your way.
 If your intent be firm, succeed
 Ye must, and great will be the day
 When what ye’ve sown puts forth its seed.

It is ‘in Labour’s race’ that *Abantu* must ‘Go forth, and strive’. In this race, they dare not ‘lag’. In this stanza, Grendon piles up metaphors to illustrate the value of ‘Labour’ or ‘Work’. There is the athletic contest (‘Labour’s race’); the reward (‘your heritage, your right’); the means by which *Abantu* may elevate themselves (‘Your ladder to success, and fame’); and weaponry in armed combat (‘Your sword and breastplate’).

Abantu should utter ‘No plaint when thorns beset [their] way’. ‘Thorns’ appear to have a correspondential value here. Swedenborg finds in Hell, ‘brambles, nettles,

thorns, and thistles, and some poisonous plants'.¹ In an editorial, Grendon reproaches those religionists who are 'stifled in their spiritual development and growth by "thistles" and by "thorns"'.² In another, he acknowledges that the white man 'has done his part in clearing the thorns from the black man's path', but that the 'rest of the work must be done by the black man himself'.³ 'To You Abantu' cautions the African to work in such a way as not to be snagged or lacerated by the spiritual 'thorns' of Hell.

In contrast with spiritual 'thorns' is useful vegetation, and Grendon's poem assures readers that 'great will be the day | When what ye've sown puts forth its seed'. Seme also sees civilization as propagating or seeding itself: 'Civilization resembles an organic being in its development—it is born, it perishes, and it can propagate itself. More particularly, it resembles a plant, it takes root in the teeming earth, and when the seeds fall in other soils new varieties sprout up.'⁴

Swedenborg says of the correspondence of seeds: 'The rational of man is like a garden and floretum, and as land newly ploughed; the memory is the ground, truths known and cognitions are seeds, the light and heat of heaven cause them to spring forth; without these there is no germination.'⁵

Seed symbolism—or is it Swedenborgian correspondence?—abounds in Grendon's poetry and prose. The 'aged sire' in 'A Dream' advises the poetic speaker to 'sow [his] seed | In this the prime of life'.⁶ The witch in 'Melia and Pietro' warns tells Syrena, 'Thou sowest Sorrow's seed'.⁷ The late Mrs Sydney Strong is 'one, who Gospel seeds hath sown'.⁸ In time, Ohlange will 'blossom and put forth [her] seed'.⁹ In 'Pro Aliis Damnati', Memnon's 'vain vows' 'carry in themselves the seeds of woe'.¹⁰ Grendon 'look[s] forward to the time when [the 'Native Press'] will unite in disseminating the same seeds of civilisation and religion, which are the only factors

¹ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 78.

² 'The Mission Native', *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

³ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

⁴ Seme, 'The Regeneration of Africa', 71.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 464.

⁶ 'A Dream', Pt II, *Citizen* 2:30 (1 March 1898) supplement, 2.

⁷ 'M&P', Pt XI, *Citizen* 2:50 (21 May 1898) 3.

⁸ 'In Memoriam: Mrs Sydney Strong', *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

⁹ 'Press on Ohlange', *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

¹⁰ 'PAD', Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

which go to make up the true advancement of any race'.¹ But black Africans, he cautions,

must also do away with that foolish and fatal notion that a man can plant seed to-day, and eat the fruit thereof to-morrow. The seed[s] they sow require time to germinate and pass through the various stages of their existence. The fruit expected, do not suddenly ripen at the bidding of the husbandman, but come to perfection in their own appointed season. So also is it with the affairs of nations. Each has its own appointed time to ripen and flourish, and command the respect of others.²

Stanza 4 reminds *Abantu* that 'The world demands from you | Of work a due proportionate share, | Be it accomplish'd by the mind, | Or by the hand'. This harmonizes with Swedenborg's doctrine of 'use'. He tells us that 'to perform use is the delight of everyone's life. This shows that the Lord's kingdom is a kingdom of uses.'³ Grendon recognizes 'that the Universe is a kingdom of uses, and that every single thing or creature in that kingdom is created for use. From every man therefore—be he black, white, yellow, or red—use is required. Uses are the bonds of society; and these bonds or uses are infinite in number.'⁴ Viewed organically, 'The world demands' of all its constituent members a 'proportionate share' of work—*i.e.*, each constituent race and each individual 'is created for use', and of each 'use is required'. At present, it is unknown to the World what shape Africa's contribution to the Kingdom of Use will take, but Grendon knows that 'The brilliant deeds | Of swarthy men must also find—| Tho' often damned—the way that leads | To *Honour*, and *Acknowledgment*'.

The poem continues by encouraging *abantu* to 'Strive ever *up*—forget the *down*; | And then at length ye'll rise to fame, | Where Hate on you no more shall frown'. There is a touching naiveté in the logical process by which the poet assumes that racial prejudice will evaporate when once *abantu* have 'rise[n] to fame'. And yet, this was an assumption made by many mission-educated Africans. Dube, following Booker T. Washington, believed that whites would eventually be compelled to acknowledge the worthiness of blacks when they were presented with incontestable

¹ 'The Native Press', *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.

² 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 219.

⁴ 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

evidences of ability and respectability. What such thought failed to take into account was the irrationality of racist assumptions.

Abantu should ‘Strive ever *up*—forget[ting] the *down*’. Repeated throughout his poetry and prose, Grendon urges readers to lift their gaze heavenwards, to fix it on the stars, and not on the earth. They should ‘look upwards on hope’.¹ Employing a decidedly Swedenborgian idiom, and having described the three phases of Man’s existence as delineated by Swedenborg, he urges the reader not to stoop ‘like the brute towards the earth for the enjoyment of earthly things’, but to ‘cast his head upwards to the broad heaven above him, for this was the purpose for which he was created, to look above to things beyond the natural and the material, which at best are transitory’. Each man and woman must ‘strive always to rise from the natural’, to ‘elevate [their] thoughts above the place of self’.² This is Swedenborg’s urgent appeal to unregenerate Man in general, and Grendon applies it to *abantu* in particular, who have special need of regeneration in view of ‘The blacken’d course which Night hath run’³ in Africa prior to New Jerusalem’s progressive advent.

Stanza 5 contains an arcane passage that is illuminated only by reference to Swedenborg. Grendon writes:

Press on! *No man is truly man,*
 Except his soul give full consent
 To *all* that constitutes his plan;
 Nor will he ever know content.

Grendon implies that some ‘men’ are less than men. According to Swedenborg, ‘man has two faculties distinct from each other, namely, the will and the understanding, and [... these] two faculties constitute one mind, in order that man may be truly man’.⁴ Unless the Will (or ‘soul’ in Grendon’s poem) is in harmony with (or, ‘gives full consent | To’) truth in the understanding, man is less than man. John Howard Spalding explains:

Man, therefore, is man because he is capable of being motivated by unselfish love and guided by wisdom to a life of practical usefulness. In other words, he is man because he is capable of

¹ ‘The Old Year and the New’, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

² ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

³ ‘Ilanga’, *Ilanga* 1:6 (15 May 1903) 3.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 9050.

becoming love, wisdom, and use. For these qualities do not exist as abstractions, but as concrete realities—as substances and forms of the mind. In the degree that these qualities are developed in him and are consistently embodied in his life, he becomes truly man. In other words, man is man in the degree that he loves unselfishly, knows how to express this love in truly beneficent action, and lives accordingly.¹

‘To You Abantu’ now casts a retrospective look over the pages of history to locate positive role models for *abantu* to follow. The poem’s addressees are urged: ‘The footprints of all great men trace, | And strive to tread as they have trod.’ Stanza five looks at white examples; stanza six at black ones. *Abantu* are put on notice that ‘The world from out your ranks | A Shakespeare, Milton, Edison, | Expects’. (It is revealing to note that of the three examples cited, the first two are poets.) In an editorial (1904), Grendon urges the Zulu people, especially the youth, to ‘Copy the Greek’:

Copy that race in oratory and you too shall bequeath to the world such stars illustrious in their firmament as Demosthenes or Isocrates. Copy that race in music and you too shall boast of such as Euripides, Aristophanes, and Sophocles. Copy that race in philosophy and you too shall generate an Aristotle, a Plato and a Socrates. In chivalry you too can boast of a fierce Achilles or a crafty Odysseus, but the day for chivalry for you as well as for Greece is past and dead.²

Grendon lines up historical figures with mythological ones. It may be significant that African youths are cautioned not to emulate the mythological examples. Possibly this is because the glory days of valiant hand-to-hand combat with foes—real or chimerical—have been superseded by an era of sophisticated, long-range weaponry. It would be suicidal in the colonial context to attempt a re-enactment of the martial feats of great epical heroes such as Achilles or Odysseus.

Other blacks—contemporaries of Grendon—thought along similar lines to those of Grendon when he summons an African ‘Shakespeare’ and ‘Milton’ from *abantu*’s ‘ranks’. The American Negro, J. Q. Johnson, at one time President of Allen University, Columbia, S. C., wrote (1902):

It would be extravagant to set up any claims of greatness in behalf of Negro writers. The Negro has yet his contribution to make to the literature of mankind. We fully believe that he has a message to deliver. The making of a writer is a matter of centuries. England was a long time

¹ Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg’s Religious Thought*, 76.

² ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

producing a Shakespeare or a Milton, Italy a Dante, Russia a Tolstoi, France a Hugo or a Dumas, Germany a Goethe and a Schiller.¹

Like Grendon and Johnson, Blyden in West Africa recognizes that ‘some of the greatest works of human genius’ were composed by such men as ‘Shakespeare and Milton’.² But Blyden is perhaps a little more guarded in his appreciation of the English literary canon, feeling that Africans

surely cannot indulge, with the same feelings of exultation that the Englishman or American experiences, in the proud boast that—

We speak the language Shakespeare spoke,
The faith and morals hold which Milton held;

for that ‘language’, in some of its finest utterances, patronises and apologises for us, and that ‘faith’ has been hitherto powerless to save us from proscription and insult.³

It is highly improbable that Blyden would ever have urged his people to become Shakespeares, Miltons, or Edisons, as Grendon does. Both Blyden and Grendon believe in the importance of employing a local idiom, but Blyden is professedly less inclined to follow European models:

It is the complaint of the intelligent Negro in America that the white people pay no attention to his suggestions or his writings; but this is only because he has nothing new to say—nothing that they have not said before him, and that they cannot say better than he can. Let us depend upon it, that the emotions and thoughts which are natural to us command the curiosity and respect of others far more than the showy display of any mere acquisitions which we have derived from them, and which they know depend more upon our memory than upon any real capacity. What we must follow is all that concerns our individual growth. Let us do our own work and we shall be strong and worthy of respect; try to do the work of others, and we shall be weak and contemptible. There is magnetism in original action, in self-trust, which others cannot resist.⁴

Blyden’s appeal for African originality may be lofty in sentiment, but it is almost impracticable. Throughout history, cultures have modelled themselves on others—contemporary with or earlier than their own. In the glory days of the British Empire, English pedagogues tried to coax authors of classical stature out of the English youth. The author of a reader for English youths, published in 1897, stated that England’s

¹ J. Q. Johnson, ‘The Negro as a Writer’, in Culp, *Twentieth Century Negro Literature* (online).

² Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 82.

³ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 83.

⁴ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 92.

great epic still awaited the advent of an English Homer or Virgil.¹ If Grendon's exhorting *abantu* to imitate English literary models is to be disparaged as Africa 'aping' Europe, it seems only fair to ask how we should designate an Englishman's appeal to his countrymen to imitate the literary models of classical Greece.

Blyden however sees a danger inherent in the fact that 'nearly all the books [Africans] read, the very instruments of their culture, have been such as to force them from the groove which is natural to them'. Africans

read and study the books of foreigners, and form their idea of everything that man may do, or ought to do, according to the standard held up in those teachings. Hence, without the physical or mental aptitude for the enterprises which they are taught to admire and revere, they attempt to copy and imitate them, and share the fate of all copyists and imitators.²

What Blyden describes as 'everything that man may do, or ought to do' seems to correspond in sense with the refrain and title to Grendon's poem—*i.e.*, 'What Man's Accomplish'd Ye Can Do'. Grendon is of course not trying to derail *abantu* from the 'groove which is natural to them', and it would be absurd to portray him as suggesting that Africans *replicate* the achievements of Europeans. What he calls for are fresh achievements that are of *equal merit* with—though qualitatively different from—those of Shakespeare, Milton, and Edison.

Like Blyden, Grendon recognizes that Africans are better led by African examples. Similarly, in 1901, the *South African Spectator*, edited in Cape Town by F. Z. S. Peregrino, a Ghanaian, recounts 'some of the grand and noble achievements of the race in times past', at the same time that he tells readers of 'what [their] race is doing, in America, on the Gold Coasts, everywhere'.³ In stanzas 6 and 7, which conclude 'To You Abantu', Grendon points to African examples of greatness. He also demonstrates his expansive knowledge of southern African history. If greatness has already been achieved by the Black Man, Grendon maintains, it can be achieved once more. All that needs to be done is for the inherent racial genius to be channelled in new directions. The latent ability to perform deeds of greatness is still present in the race. If talents are applied to pacific ends, rather than to warfare, then *abantu* may accomplish anything they resolve to perform:

¹ MacDonald, *Language of Empire*, 28.

² Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 75–76.

³ Quoted in: Lewis, *Between the Wire and the Wall*, 17.

Press on! Your race has rear'd great sons,
 Who've thrill'd the human firmament
 In days gone by. Let him who runs
 Recite achievements violent,
 That stain'd the tracks of Bantu kings;
 Let him recall some mighty deeds
 Whereof the Bantu minstrel sings,
 Of Jobe's son; of Nandi's seed;
 Dingana, and the '*Vale of Tears*';
 Cetywayo, and 'Sandhlwana's Tomb;
 Moshesh, and Cathcart of Crimea;
 'Zilikazi's son, and Wilson's doom;
 And so your drooping spirits cheer.

'Jobe's son' is Dingiswayo, Shaka's mentor. Nandi is the mother of Shaka; her 'seed' is thus the great Shaka himself. Dingana (Dingane) is Shaka's half-brother and assassin, who ruled in his place. The 'Vale of Tears' is Weenen, the spot in Natal where Dingane's *impi* massacred immigrant Voortrekker families in 1838, and of which Grendon writes in *Paul Kruger's Dream*.¹ Cetywayo (Cetshwayo) succeeded his father Mpande to the kingship of Zululand, Mpande being yet another half-brother of Shaka. 'Sandhlwana's Tomb' refers to the total defeat of the British army at Isandhlwana (January 1879). Sir George Cathcart (1794–1854) was military Commander-in-Chief in South Africa from 1852–54, and died at Inkermann in the Crimean War. He warred with tribes on the Eastern Cape frontier, as well as upon the Basuto—Moshesh being Basuto king. 'Zilikazi's son' is Lobengula, Matabele king upon whom Cecil Rhodes and his Chartered Company waged war in the 1890s. Alan Wilson led the famous Shangani Patrol, which was wiped out by Matabele warriors.

All these deeds of military genius and valour—the poem suggests—should 'drooping spirits cheer'. Admittedly, they are deeds of 'chivalry' for which Grendon asserts 'the day' is 'past and dead'. Grendon acknowledges that 'since the awful day of [the Battle of] Ulundi, the last traces of the black man's material power, were effaced for ever from the face of this earth. The strife from that day onwards to this has been a spiritual one, and will continue such from this point onwards.'² He does

¹ 'Weenen—"Vale of Tears, | *And wailing, and of bitter grief*" | Which crown'd thy foemen's spears!' (*PKD*, Pt IV, p. 13).

² 'Native Abominations', *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4.

not therefore envisage a return to natural greatness in displays of ‘the black man’s material power’, but to future displays of spiritual-*cum*-intellectual power that will astonish the watching World.

Stanza six speaks of ‘mighty deeds | Whereof the Bantu minstrel sings’. By ‘minstrel’, Grendon evidently means the *imbongi* or traditional praise-singer. Anyone that has heard the *imbongi* perform his art may wonder if ‘minstrel’ is the best English word to describe him. At any rate, in a 1905 polemic, Grendon reminds readers that ‘it must be remembered also that the [Zulu] language possesses no native printed literature worth mentioning. The bulk of its literature consists of unwritten songs that have been preserved in the memories of bards or minstrels, and handed down from generation to generation.’¹ Again in 1916, he describes Swaziland’s praise-singers as ‘minstrels’.²

By adverting to the ‘Bantu minstrel’ in ‘To You Abantu’, Grendon touches upon one of his persistent concerns. It is what he elsewhere describes as ‘the scantiness of written Zulu history’.³ He is troubled by the thought that African history and literature—because orally transmitted—are in danger of being neglected or even forgotten. In his editorial capacity, he responds in 1905 to a letter from N. M. Lutuli: ‘That we are indebted to foreigners for the dawning of Zulu literature is a dream invented by yourself. Please recognise that long before the Europeans ever thought of the Zulu nation, Zulu literature existed not in printed books, but in the brain and mind of Zulu poets and orators &c. who transmitted it from generation to generation.’⁴

The ‘mighty deeds’ of ‘To You Abantu’, recounted by *izimbongi*, should not be perpetually entrusted to fickle memory, but should be set down in writing. In a 1904 editorial, he applauds the labours of the oral historian, James Stuart, in making a record of Zulu traditions:

An interesting lecture on the life and reign of Tshaka the Napoleon of Southern Africa, was delivered last week by Mr J. Stuart the worthy A.R.M. of Durban. This gentleman it will be noticed is one of the few authorities on the history of the Zulu race. He has spent much time in rescuing from oblivion the fascinating portions of the history relating to the natives. As stated

¹ ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 3.

² ‘Farewell Msindazwe!’ *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

³ ‘The Late Chief Usibepu’, *Ilanga* 2:74 (9 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁴ Editorial note, *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4.

heretofore scarcely any accurate written Zulu history exists. Mr Stuart's researches therefore supply a long felt want, and we shall hail the day when the results of his labours in this little known department of the world's history are committed to print. Here we seize our opportunity of appealing to the more enlightened of the Zulu race to commit their knowledge to writing and so save the 'deeds illustrious' of their race from passing to forgottenness. Exert yourselves you—Messrs. Kunene, Radebe, Msane, Sol. Kumalo, J. T. Gumede, and all the host of you whose names at present slip the memory.¹

It is noteworthy that immediately after commending Stuart's efforts, Grendon moves swiftly on to urging black men to record their own history. It is as though he feels that the honour of preserving the Zulu past should go to Zulus, and not be palmed off onto a white man. Interestingly, in the next week's number of *Ilanga*, Grendon again makes mention of Stuart, this time calling into question the evenhandedness of one of the R.M.'s judicial decisions, and seeming to imply that Stuart is racially biased.²

The five men whom Grendon singles out by name are all early black intellectuals, newspapermen, or politicians: Cleopas Kunene (died 1917), Mark Radebe (1869–1924), Saul Msane (died 1919), Solomon Kumalo (died 1904), and Josiah Tshangana Gumede (1867–1947). Interestingly, Stuart shares Grendon's confidence in the intellectual ability of some of these men. In one of his notebooks, he singles out Kunene, Radebe, and John Kumalo (Solomon's father), together with a few others, as possessed of 'able and comprehensive native mind[s]' and being the 'keenest philosopher[s] on the native question'.³

By calling upon 'him who runs' the metaphorical race to 'recall some mighty deeds | Whereof the Bantu minstrel sings', Grendon knowingly or unknowingly repeats the advice of Blyden to Liberians in 1881:

Now, if we are to make an independent nation—a strong nation—we must listen to the songs of our unsophisticated brethren as they sing of their history, as they tell of their traditions, of the wonderful and mysterious events of their tribal or national life, of the achievements of what we call their superstitions; we must lend a ready ear to the ditties of the Kroomen who pull our boats, of the Pessah and Golah men, who till our farms; we must read the compositions, rude as we may think them, of the Mandingoes and the Veys. We shall in this way get back the strength of the race, like

¹ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4.

² 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 4.

³ *James Stuart Archives*, i:265.

the giant of the ancients, who always gained strength, for his conflict with Hercules, whenever he touched his Mother Earth.¹

Wilkinson, who quotes most of the above passage in *The African and the True Christian Religion*, adds his Swedenborgian gloss: ‘This is sound advice; for the tradition of the forefathers coming from ancient Churches has Divine truth easily instructed and read into it, and it also repels abstract and alien dogmas with a rustical home-power.’² It is possible that Grendon had read Wilkinson by this stage, in which case, he may have had Blyden’s eloquent plea in mind when he penned ‘To You Abantu’.

It behoves the black runner in the race of progress to ‘Recite achievements violent, | That stain’d the tracks of Bantu kings’. Their ‘recital’ means to recount or to enumerate those ‘achievements’, but the connotation of oral repetition for the purpose of entrenching these historic events in individual and collective memory is likely also intended. Grendon does not mean the textual transmission of African history to supplant oral transmission, but merely to supplement it.

The final stanza anticipates the future advent of ‘Some *bloodless* Tshaka [who] will arise | To vanquish *ignorance*, and strive | By *bloodless* methods to devise | A plan whereby ye too shall thrive’. Here the import of the penultimate stanza becomes clear. The poem is not calling for the modern-day re-enactment of ‘achievements violent’; it merely expects that the strategic genius exemplified in Shaka should be applied to the discovery of a solution for modern times. This reference to a Shaka *redivivus* agrees in substance and tone with ‘The Spirit Song of Mehlokazulu’ (1906),³ where that fallen warrior-leader and his ‘impi of spirits’ call upon Shaka to ‘enrol’ them, so that they might ‘march’ alongside him.⁴

The Nigerian, Nnamdi Azikiwe might have taken his cue from Grendon’s poem, ‘To You Abantu’, when he wrote in 1937:

Take heart, Renascent African, the best is yet to be. If man could exercise his brains to invent a flying apparatus, thou too, could! ... Amidst the vicissitudes of life, the African seems to be

¹ Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, 91.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 127.

³ *Ilanga* 3:166 (29 June 1906) 4.

⁴ ‘The Spirit Song of Mehlokazulu’, *Ilanga* 3:166 (29 June 1906) 4. See appendix 4.

impressed by the inventions and discoveries of others. He seems cowed and he believes that others have a superior genius. ...

Come now, Renascent African, believe in yourself. Believe that you have the talent, but it is latent. Believe, and it shall be done unto you.

Africa has produced geniuses in the past. Africa is producing geniuses to-day. And Africa can and will produce geniuses to-morrow.¹



‘A FAITHFUL AMAZON’ (1904)

The two poems, ‘A Faithful Amazon’ and ‘Defence of Tommy’ are published one month apart.² Each is an appeal to whites to renounce their prejudice, to recognize their indebtedness to blacks, and to witness the nobility of representative members of the race they contemn.

‘A Faithful Amazon’ is published above Grendon’s praise-name, ‘Nongamu’. It is an occasional poem, based upon the courageous act of a black nanny in saving the life of a white infant from certain drowning. As such, it bears passing resemblance to the Afrikaans poem, ‘Amakeia’, by A. G. Visser (1878–1929), which also describes the fidelity of a black nurse towards her little white charge. In each poem, the child has already been orphaned before the narrative begins.

Grendon’s poem is dated 22 February 1904, and was published in *Ilanga* on 4 March.³ It comprises seven iambic tetrameter stanzas, six of which have twelve lines each, rhymed ababcdcdefef. Stanza six is an anomaly in that it has sixteen lines, representing an additional quatrain.

One Sunday afternoon in January 1904, a freak cloudburst occurred over Bloemfontein. A devastating flash-flood ensued, causing the Bloemspruit to overflow its banks. Early reports stated that between twenty and thirty persons had drowned, and that 176 houses and shops had been destroyed. Three hotels—the Royal, Central,

¹ Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa*, 156, 157.

² ‘A Faithful Amazon’, *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 4; ‘Defence of Tommy’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

³ ‘A Faithful Amazon’, *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 4.

and Union—were swept away by the torrent. It is not clear if one of these is the ‘hostel’ of Grendon’s poem.¹

The speaker addresses all whites

who vilify, and scorn
 Heroic deeds of swarthy men—
 All ye, with prejudice o’erborne,
 And dwarf’d in vision and in ken—
 All ye, who blindly oft declare
 That Cushites be your foes
 Invet’rate.

Many whites within Grendon’s experience are overladen (‘o’erborne’) with prejudice against blacks. Their unrelenting enmity blinds them to acts of valour performed by ‘swarthy men’. They are ‘dwarf’d in vision and in ken’—a construction that appears tautologous, but may be intended to indicate that prejudiced whites are stunted both in terms of their capacity to *see* virtue in blacks, and in what they *already know* about them. He may also have in mind the uniquely Swedenborgian distinction between ordinary knowledge (*scientia*) and the interior or real knowledge (*cognitio*).²

In the above-quoted passage, the penultimate line is brachycatalectic. This truncation foregrounds the line and seems to reinforce the obstinacy of prejudiced whites in their opinion of ‘Cushites’. In a prose article, Grendon uses similar biblical vocabulary to describe the implacable hostility of whites towards blacks: ‘The milk-white spotless race—Japhetidae—are quick to behold the mote in the eyes of the swarthy, vice-polluted Cushites, but consider not the beam that is in their own.’³

Having identified his intended audience, the speaker now issues the imperative: ‘stay your venom, spare | Your hate’. Whites should turn their ‘gaze’ towards the disaster that recently befell Bloemfontein. When they have done this, they should ‘Then t’ward the black man kindlier grow’. Having sketched the chaos of the Bloemfontein flood, the poem now focuses upon the plight of the ‘Faithful Amazon’:

¹ ‘Bloemfontein’ (online); ‘News of the week ending January 23, 1904’ (online).

² Warren, *Compendium*, 285n.

³ ‘Native Reform’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

On yonder hostel's balcony,
 A while by yon wild storm assail'd
 A swarthy nurse-maid patiently
 Her doom beheld, whilst others wail'd.
 Within her arms a tender child,
 Whose fev'rish brow the sweat of Death
 A month had moisten'd, faintly smil'd,
 Whilst gasping in its pain for breath.
 The parents, say oh where are they?
 Can they not this their suckling save?
 Be silent! They have fallen prey
 To yon swift tawny ruthless wave.

Grendon's poem appeals to one of the lowest common denominators of our shared humanity: maternal feeling. Swedenborg states that 'infants are sometimes loved by their nurses more than by their mothers. It follows ... that that love is from no other source than the conjugal love implanted in every woman.'¹ And Wilkinson states that 'already the Africans do work for the world, in motherhood, wifhood, and fatherhood,—in daily labour'.²

As the hostelry collapses under the force of the flood, someone on higher ground casts a rope to the woman. In one hand,

The maid the cable grasps; the child
 Within the other; then with pure
 Devotion braves the tempest wild.

She bears the child to safety. The final stanza drives home the moral, addressing first all whites and in the final quatrain, singling out the white infant for special admonition:

All ye who boast complexion fair
 Pray render praise where it is due!
 Be gracious to that black maid—there!—
 Who saved the life of one of you.
 Let sneers upon her not be hurl'd!—
 Fling open wide the Gate of Fame,

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 393.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 188.

And 'mongst the heroes of the world
 Emblazon ye in gold her name!
 And *thou, fair child*, when consciousness
 Possess thee, be respectful to thy nurse—
 Black saviour thine. Her deed confess,
 And breathe thou ne'er on her a curse!



'DEFENCE OF TOMMY' (1904)

For 'Defence of Tommy'¹ (six iambic tetrameter octaves, rhymed ababcdcd), Grendon adopts the pseudonym, 'Mirator Militum'.² The composition is dated 28 March 1904, and is written in response to something that Grendon has read in the *Natal Mercury* of the 25th. *Koranta ea Becoana* of Mafeking, republished Grendon's poem on 4 May, and appended an endorsement of the sentiments it expresses: 'To this we add a hearty AMEN; and we wish that our people were to make a note of the [preceding] very sound advice which is given to them free of charge.'³ As Sol Plaatje was editor of *Koranta* at this time,⁴ it is possible that this note is his.

Under the subheading, 'Condemnation of Tommy', Grendon quotes the relevant passage from the *Mercury*. Referring to the recently concluded South African War, it reads: 'The natives who came in touch with the open-hearted Tommy Atkins found that there were some white men willing to step across the gulf which before had seemed fixed between the inheritors of the white skin and of the coloured. It is not uncommon to hear Colonists say ruefully that the kafir has been "spoilt" by the war, &c.'

¹ *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

² Couzens ('Robert Grendon', 89) believes that it is 'highly likely' that Grendon authored this poem. Intertextual comparison with Grendon's known verse and prose allows us to state with confidence that 'Defence of Tommy' is his work. The collocation, 'kindle strife' occurs also in *PKD*, Pt XII, p. 38. The collocation, 'Cease ye to clamour' in 'Defence of Tommy' finds a parallel in: 'cease to clamour' ('Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6); 'cease all clamourings' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4); and 'Nay summon up your pluck, you clamorous Britishers, and cease your worn-out cry!' ('A Worn-Out Cry', *Ilanga* 2:74 (9 Sept. 1904) 4). The Shakespearean allusion in 'by "one touch of Nature" White, and Black were rendered "kin"' in the prose superscription to 'Defence of Tommy' corresponds to "'touch of Nature", which makes the whole world kin' in 'Hooray!', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916). Grendon's ironic use of 'nigger' has numerous parallels in his prose and verse.

³ 'Soldiers and Natives', *Koranta ea Becoana* 2:81 (4 May 1904) 3.

⁴ Willan, *Sol Plaatje*, 104, *et seq.*

The average British soldier sent out from ‘Home’ was not imbued with the same prejudices as many longtime colonials. In many cases, ‘Tommy’ treated the blacks he encountered with a greater measure of respect than colonists were accustomed to displaying. Now that the war was concluded, and foreign combatants had left South Africa, they had left behind a legacy that threatened the established colonial order, in which whites liked to preserve the pretence that they were the ‘master race’. Blacks had been ‘spoilt’ by kindness. Now they would expect the same treatment from all whites, who were by no means prepared to extend it to them.

In his poem, Grendon makes a ‘reply to all them, who, when the late Boer War broke out, fled from the scene of strife, and sought refuge with women, and at a distance ventilated cowardly opinions concerning the conduct of Tommy Atkins towards the natives whom “loyalty” and a “common cause” had made his camp-followers, when by “one touch of Nature” White, and Black were rendered “kin”’. Grendon’s vehemence cannot be divorced from the fact that as a wagon-driver during the War, he too was a ‘camp-follower’ to Tommy Atkins, who, in the person of his ‘intimate friend’, Gunner Cooper of the 42nd Battery R.F.A., showed him constant courtesy, unmindful of his dark skin.¹

In his superscription to the poem, Grendon appropriates the words of Ulysses, in Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*: ‘One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.’² Desperate wartime contingencies caused whites to make common cause with blacks. In the face of a common enemy, they discovered a previously unacknowledged ‘kinship’. As the sixth stanza points out, ‘perils render mortals kin’. Grendon again quotes these words of Ulysses in an *Abantu-Batho* editorial relating to black involvement in the Great War.³

As in ‘A Faithful Amazon’, the first stanza of ‘Defence of Tommy’ begins by identifying the speaker’s targeted audience:

Bombastic dastards vain, who shrank
From arms, and from a rustic foe,
And of the cup of Rancour drank,
Till Envy did your sense o’erthrow,

¹ PKD, Pt XXXVI, p. 117n.

² Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, III. iii. 175–76.

³ ‘Hooray!’ *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

Durst ye condemn—dare ye revile
 With lips that are effeminate
 The common soldier, for the while
 He chose a nigger for his mate?

With such invective, Grendon cannot hope to win over the intransigent racist. But that is not his purpose. His rhetoric masks an appeal to the vacillating moderate—the man who might be touched by his appeal—not the rancorous, envious ‘dastard’, whom no argument will sway.

These ‘Bombastic dastards’ have the effrontery to censure the British soldier because ‘He chose a nigger for his mate’. Yet, they who thus carp were the first to flee the theatre of war. They lacked the manhood—the ‘British’ pluck—to face out a ‘rustic foe’, the inland Boer (‘farmer’). In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Grendon remarks upon the rustic character of the republicans. Andries Pretorius led a ‘rustic band’ at Port Natal against the British occupational force in 1842.¹ Kruger, like ‘Cincinnatus ... in days of yore | Was summon’d from his field, and plough’ to take charge of the affairs of state.² Qualifying the ‘foe’ as ‘rustic’ in ‘Defence of Tommy’ serves to diminish the military threat he poses. Even so, these postwar prattlers are so cowardly that they balked at exchanging fire with farmers.

In his prose superscription to the poem, Grendon refers to those cowards who ‘fled from the scene of strife, and sought refuge with women’. In his view, this is a gross inversion of natural order. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, a heavenly ‘Voice’ addresses presumptuous women—‘fickle beings’—reminding them that it is the role of men ‘to rule, command | And to defend’.³ But, instead of defending women, Grendon’s addressees have overturned the sexual roles, and seek personal protection ‘with women’. Having thus shrunk from danger, even their ‘lips’ are ‘effeminate’. They disqualify themselves from all debate upon the social consequences of the War, since they themselves took no active part in it.

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 83.

² *PKD*, Pt XII, p. 35.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 100.

Throughout his journalism, Grendon makes repeated use of the pejorative ‘nigger’ for ironic effect.¹ This is part of a technique bordering on free indirect speech, in which Grendon affects the language of the racist in order to parody it. Grendon is very concerned to present points of view—even those diametrically opposite to his own. His most sustained example of this is in *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, where Kruger soliloquizes at length, expressing sentiments quite incompatible with Grendon’s own.

The structural parallel between ‘A Faithful Amazon’ and ‘Defence of Tommy’ is quite close. The speaker in ‘A Faithful Amazon’, after identifying the fictive audience, issues the command, ‘stay your venom, spare | Your hate’. Having invoked his audience in ‘Defence of Tommy’, the speaker issues a similar command in the second stanza: ‘Be silent, ye, whose viprous tongues | Have sought to kindle strife, and hate | Twixt black and white!’

The references to ‘venom’ and to ‘viprous tongues’ require elucidation. Snakes, serpents, and vipers coil and hiss their way through Grendon’s writings. This is scarcely surprising since he wages relentless spiritual warfare, in which a variety of snakes and dragons must be trodden underfoot. Melia prays to be saved ‘from *this* viper’s [Urino’s] fangs’.² Towards the end of his apostate life, Kruger finds himself cast headlong into a living hell, wherein ‘a thousand angry voices hiss’d; | And as their pois’nous snake-like hissing ceas’d, | They breath’d on [him] their hate’.³ Zenzema orders his wife Helen to ‘set a latchet to [her] viprous lips’.⁴ An ideological adversary makes a ‘viprous statement’.⁵ A ‘deadly viper ... fastened its fangs in British flesh’.⁶ Warmongers are ‘vipers’.⁷ Foreign nationals who undermine the dignity of the British Empire are ‘alien serpents [who] lie snug within Natalia’s bosom’.⁸ Harriette Colenso ‘splinter’d the fangs | Of Natalia’s mamba, and its venom

¹ A few examples include: ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3; ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4; 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4; 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4; ‘Befooled!’ *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4; ‘Mr. Barnett’s Lecture’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3; ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:83 (22 April 1914) 6; ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916); ‘Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side’, *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5.

² ‘M&P’, Pt XIX, *Citizen* 2:72 (22 Oct. 1898) 3.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 117.

⁴ ‘PAD’, Pt 5, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁶ ‘A Worthy Philanthropist’, *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 3.

⁷ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 131.

⁸ ‘Snakes in the Grass’, *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 4.

excis'd'.¹ The arguments of a polemical adversary are 'serpents of prejudice, fit only to be trampled and crushed under my heel'.²

In the last of these cited references, Grendon alludes to the first prophecy of scripture (Gen. 3:15) in which God addresses the serpent in Eden: 'And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' Swedenborg, in his exegesis of this text, writes: 'By the "serpent" is here meant all evil in general, and specifically the love of self...[;] by the "head of the serpent", the dominion of evil in general, and specifically that of the love of self; by to "trample upon", depression'.³ The serpent's poison is hatred.⁴

Grendon's reptiles—together with their hissing and their venom—appear to have the correspondential value identified by Swedenborg. He finds racial prejudice and hatred to be rooted in the profoundest of evils: 'the love of self'. In combating such self-love in its protean manifestations, Grendon 'tramples upon' or 'depresses' 'numerous [reptilian] genera and still more numerous species'.⁵ When he orders racially-prejudiced whites to 'stay your venom' or to silence their 'viprous tongues', he also has Swedenborg's correspondence in mind: whites should suppress their own hatred, which springs from the love of self.

Stanza two ends with the counsel that the fictive audience 'confess | By whom from ruin ye've been spar'd!' Whites who reproach Tommy Atkins for hobnobbing with the 'nigger' do well to reflect how these two, shoulder-to-shoulder, stayed the insurgent Boer commandos in Natal and elsewhere, thus sparing 'from ruin' the very whites who deplore their fraternizing. Grendon makes a similar point in an article, where he asks rhetorically: 'Who, and what were they, who during the late Boer War laid down their lives...? Against their own blood they willingly took up arms in order to prove their loyalty to the British.'⁶ Colonial blacks have demonstrated their loyalty in a time of military crisis. They have merited recognition and a helping hand from whites—not contempt.

¹ 'Dinizulu, Ex-King of Zululand', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5.

² 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:81 (8 April 1914) 6.

³ Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 250.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 251.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 251.

⁶ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

These self-same white colonists stood aloof from Tommy when he arrived on their shores intent on defending British honour and British lives. Their selfish obsession with caste excluded not only those with darker skins, but also the lowly British soldier. What right have they therefore to reproach Tommy?

Since to grasp their hand
In friendship ye in haughtiness declin'd,
What else could Tommy Atkins do,
But for his friend the black man find,
Whose finer feelings shameth you[?]

Instead of charging their British-born 'kinsmen ... with sin', colonists might learn an invaluable lesson from 'Tommy' and his 'nigger' friend:

From *yonder twain*—vile African,
And soldier lov'd by few—
This lesson learn, and thro' Life's span
'TREAT YE A MAN AS HE TREATS YOU.'



'BORN BLACK...' (1904)

This untitled twelve-line stanza, embedded in a prose article by Grendon,¹ may conceivably be a fragment from his 'lost' epic, 'An African's Vision'. With considerable depth of emotion, Grendon outlines the spiritual causes underlying the religious independence movement amongst black Christians:

Born black, equality with white
In Church, and State am I denied,
And render'd hateful in the sight
Of them, who ever would divide
My God from me. But I shall strive
By aid of my dim, flick'ring light
To strike a path whence to derive
The wisdom to lead life aright.
E'en tho' my sorrows prove acute—
E'en tho' I needs must pause, and plod—

¹ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4.

E'en tho' I'm reckoned but a brute—
At length I'll learn to know my God!

Grendon's authorship of these anonymous lines is little short of certain. Besides the fact that they are contained within an editorial that can be shown to have been written by him (see Appendices 1 and 2), they also include unmistakable echoes of phrases and ideas that are encountered in Grendon's known poetry and prose.¹

Prior to inserting these lines of verse, Grendon has been discussing the 'religious side of the black man's training'. He remarks that even 'in church matters', blacks are witness to 'the existence of what is called "*caste spirit*",—"*race prejudice*",—"*class antagonism*",—"*social hatred*". Whites are not even willing to share the communion bread and wine with blacks, for fear that they may contract some dread disease or—worse yet—turn black themselves! 'This malignant spirit' on the part of white Christians 'has been a potent factor in summoning into existence what is known as the Ethiopian Church'. Black Christians, ostracized and degraded by white congregants and clergy, have been induced 'to establish their own Churches outside European control; to receive the Gospel at the hands of men of their own blood; and to worship God in "unmixed assemblies" where the curse of caste would cease to live'. For this reason, it can be truly said that the 'corner stone' of the Ethiopian Church was laid '*by the whites themselves*'. Who can fairly blame the Black Man 'when he stands out to work his own salvation', and when, 'amid the taunts, and sneers of his detractors', he gives utterance to the lines quoted above?²

The speaker 'Born black' starts with the plaint that he is denied 'equality with white | In Church, and State'. This is an echo allusion to 'the Grondwet of the late South African Republic', that 'THE PEOPLE WILL ADMIT OF NO EQUALITY WITH THE BLACKS IN CHURCH OR STATE', to which piece of discriminatory legislation Grendon refers on at least three separate occasions.³ Having been repeatedly snubbed and

¹ Compare 'hateful in the sight' with 'hateful was in sight' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 74). Compare 'dim, flick'ring light' with: 'flick'ring Camp-light pale' ('A Warning', 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3); 'flick'ring candlelight' ('PAD', Pt 5, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4); and 'dimly-twinkling star-like light' ('In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4). Compare 'lead life aright' with 'walk aright' (*PKD*, Pt II, p. 8, and *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 121) and 'walks aright' ('In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4). Compare 'E'en tho' I needs must pause, and plod' with 'E'en tho' ye're forced to plod' ('To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4).

² 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 3–4.

³ 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4; 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4; 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904). Saul Msane also

segregated in ecclesiastical affairs, many blacks—Grendon maintains—have come to believe that ‘there are two Gods, one for the whites—a White God; and another for the blacks—a Black God’.¹ The poetic speaker believes that despite manmade hurdles confronting him, ‘At length I’ll learn to know *my* God!’² This is a statement of intent very like Amagunyana’s in ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’,³ to the effect that if it can be proved that the God of the whites is greater than his own *Nkulunkulu*, ‘Then will I do Him homage and serve Him, | And in the manner He had fashioned me, | But not in theirs’.⁴ ‘Amagunyana’ and the speaker ‘Born black’ both acknowledge a need to worship a Supreme Being in a way that accords with their own racial makeup or genius.

Grendon’s speaker is resolved to ‘strive | By aid of [his] dim, flick’ring light | To strike a path whence to derive | The wisdom to lead life aright’. This is the ‘inner light’—the faint vestiges of the ancient Celestial or Adamic Man, with whom God communed by *immediate* influx into his innermost and uncreated soul.⁵ Wilkinson speculates that New Jerusalem’s work will begin in ‘prepared humble and simple Africans, leading blameless lives up to the inner light’. Such Africans will ‘waken to a new day; and to good tidings of great joy pealing from tribe to tribe, from patriarchate to patriarchate’. New Jerusalem has already performed the groundwork over the century and a half since it began to descend over Africa. It has begun to unlock and harness for good the largely-dormant celestial disposition of good Africans. All that is now required is for ‘native African New Churchmen’—men like Grendon—who ‘will be the carriers of its edifying Word and celestial doctrine’.⁶ From a passage such as this it becomes possible to see how readily some Swedenborgians might ascribe ‘Ethiopianism’ to the operation of the New Jerusalem. Under the kindly occult influence of New Jerusalem, the speaker ‘Born Black’ need only consult his own internal ‘dim, flick’ring light’ to access the divine ‘wisdom to lead life aright’.

makes reference to ‘the Grondwet (fundamental law) of the South African Republic that the people will suffer no equality of whites and blacks either in State or Church’ (‘Saul Msane and the S.A.N.N. Congress: an Essay’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

¹ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4.

² Emphasis added.

³ See: chapter 10 and appendix 3.

⁴ ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’, *Ilanga* 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4.

⁵ In ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, Memnon apostrophizes ‘Ye flick’ring sparks of Heav’nly Light, | That still do lurk within my heart’ (‘PAD’, Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4).

⁶ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 151.

‘E’en tho’ I needs must pause, and plod’, the speaker insists, ‘At length I’ll learn to know my God!’ In his editorial assault upon the General Missionary Conference held in Johannesburg in 1904, largely to discuss the inroads made by the African independent church movement into the traditional preserves of established missions, Grendon states that the ‘sons of Ham are striving, despite their crude and imperfect methods, towards [religious] union’.¹ Whites have had centuries to perfect their ecclesiastical and missiological practices. Blacks by contrast may appear ‘crude and imperfect’ in their ‘methods’—or, as the poetic speaker ‘Born black’ puts it, they may ‘pause, and plod’. Grendon is even prepared to concede ‘that some of the worst specimens of the Ethiopian Priesthood are now in prominence, and that many of the Africans become Christians by profession, and not repentance’.² His candour mirrors that of Blyden, who acknowledges:

I have not the slightest doubt that, in forming an independent Church, there will be at first much that is unsatisfactory. We shall probably be misgoverned; the work will be at times neglected; our finances will be mismanaged. Some who watch on the walls may go to sleep when the hour demands unsleeping vigilance; but here again we should be learning by experience. We might be often hampered by the thought of the clumsy and blundering figure we present to the world.³

All the same, the die is cast, for Providence directs African affairs as it does all others. Grendon predicts that, in the fullness of time, when the Ethiopian ‘movement penetrates from the circumference to the centre of Africa’, it will meet up with ‘the best Africans’ and in the marriage that will then occur, ‘the Ethiopian Church will rise to a higher and purer religious plane, with a high mission before her’; the ‘True Christian Religion’ will be established, not in Europe, but in Africa herself.⁴ Then, ‘at length’, will Grendon’s poetic speaker be able to exclaim: ‘I know my God!’



¹ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

² ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

³ Blyden, ‘The Native Church’, quoted in Bown, *Two Centuries of African English*, 50–51.

⁴ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

‘IN MEMORIAM: ELIAS TSHABALALA’ & ‘IN MEMORIAM: MICHAL NKOSI’
(1904): TWO SWEDENBORGIAN ELEGIAC SERMONS IN VERSE

Grendon published two elegies in 1904 that may be treated together, because they closely resemble each other in intention and in treatment. Elias Tshabalala was approximately thirty years old when he died on 18 May 1904. ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’ (28 iambic tetrameter octaves, rhymed ababcdcd) is dated 17 August, and appeared in two consecutive issues of *Ilanga* in late August–early September.¹ Michal Nkosi, thirty-nine years of age, died on 6 September. ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’ (23 iambic pentameter octaves, rhymed ababcdcd)² carries the following day’s date, and was published in two consecutive issues of *Ilanga* in late September–early October.³ Grendon attaches his proper name to both poems.

In a year-end *Ilanga* editorial, Grendon notes the deaths of Elias and Michal in an obituary paragraph: ‘Amongst our own ranks we have to record with regret the death of Mr Elias Tshabalala, one of the most promising of our students here at Ohlange; ... and in [the] village of Edendale, of Miss Michal Nkosi, (eldest daughter of Mr Benjamin Nkosi of Edendale), who for many years filled the position of matron in the Edendale Institution.’⁴ The deceased were therefore both associated with educational institutions of which Grendon was headmaster—Michal as a fellow staff-member at Edendale, and Elias as a student at Ohlange.

During Dube’s foreign absence in early 1904, ‘Some pestilential blast releas’d | For deadly purposes, swept down | Upon Ohlange’⁵ and ended the mortal existence of at least one of its students—Elias Tshabalala. He appears to have left a widow, because an *Ilanga* advertisement for ‘Dr Williams’s Pink Pills’ publishes the endorsement of ‘Mrs Elias Tshabalala’.⁶

Michal’s death was also the result of ‘disease’.⁷ Grendon appears to have felt real personal attachment to her. He expresses his keen loss in the lines: ‘A friend in

¹ *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4; 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

² These are numbered I–XIII, and XV–XXIV. No Stanza XIV appears.

³ *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4; and 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘The Old Year and the New’, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3.

⁵ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, stanza V, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁶ *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 3.

⁷ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, stanza XIX, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

prosp'rous seasons, and adverse, | This day takes final earthly leave of me.'¹ Addressing Michal's father, Grendon describes her as 'Thy first-begotten, father, and the crown, | And pillar of thy household'.² Her mother must also have survived her, because Grendon addresses both parents: 'Be comforted, ye twain, who gave her birth, | And rear'd her thence to ripen'd maidenhood!'³ Simon Nkosi, Grendon's fellow teacher at Edendale, who is mentioned by first name in the poem, was Michal's brother.⁴ The 'Umcwaba', in whose house Michal once witnessed a bat-winged satyr,⁵ was probably John Mgcwaba, a Wesleyan Methodist 'Native Minister' at Edendale, and a member of the Committee of Management for the Edendale Institution in 1902.⁶



Grendon refers to his 'elegiac strains',⁷ and elegy is clearly the genre in which he means to compose these poems. The opening stanza to Michal's elegy allows the auditor to anticipate a lament. Grendon promises to 'Give voice to agony, whereto [he is] chain'd', and to do so 'in shrill falt'ring tones'.⁸ However, he has a double agenda, his principal object being to sermonize, rather than to grieve, or to extol the qualities of the departed. The life and achievements of the deceased receive scant attention, because the poet's principal concern is to offer assurances that the dead live on perfectly entire and unchanged in the spiritual world, and that death claims only the natural body. Somewhat brash sermonizing and the denial of death do not sit comfortably within the parameters of elegy. This has already been noted in the case of Grendon's elegy for the Palm brothers (1897) and that for Mrs Sydney Strong (1903).

One of the Swedish baron's most radical departures from the major creeds of Christendom is his insistence that the body is no integral part of the 'real' man or woman. The real Man is *only* spiritual and, in mysterious ways, this Man-Spirit accretes to itself a correspondential body visible to natural sight. As pointed out in the first chapter, the Swedenborgian 'Tasisela' states that 'the soul is the man and that the

¹ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza II, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

² 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XI, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

³ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza IX, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁴ Benjamin Nkosi of Edendale is described as father to both Michal and Simon (*Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4; *Ilanga* 14:665 (3 March 1916) 2). He also had a son, Solomon Nkosi (SwNA, J 129/06: Edgar Mini to J. M. Parsonson, Mdimba Store, Bremersdorp, 16 June 1906).

⁵ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XXIII, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁶ Wesleyan Methodist Church, *Minutes of the Twentieth Annual Conference*, 30, 66.

⁷ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza V, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁸ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza I, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

physical body is only the soul's agent formed by the soul from physical alimentation. As the earthly agent of the soul it has personality only because of the soul controlling it, and in no other way.¹ Grendon observes that Elias's 'frame | Death-stricken, which the hideous worm | Ere long for heritage will claim, | Is fashion'd from the Spirit's form'.²

Swedenborg's schema requires a new vocabulary—or at least, new relationships between words and their referents. According to New Church understanding, it is technically incorrect to say that Man *becomes* a spirit at death. 'Man' is spirit always, and death does not alter that fact. At death, he 'merely loses the consciousness of the material world in which he has lived, and passes into a consciousness of the spiritual world in which he had also lived, though unconsciously'.³ Grendon tells Michal that her 'first estate—when soul and flesh unite—| Is past'.⁴

Death deprives a human of absolutely nothing except this external material shell whose only function is to serve Man during his earthly sojourn. To emphasize that the body is to be cast off as an appendage that has lost its usefulness, Grendon uses a variety of symbols to describe it. It is 'the casement of the bud | Of what Man must hereafter be';⁵ 'A shatter'd shell, destin'd, and born | To deck the Kingdom of Decay';⁶ a 'crumbling tent of clay';⁷ and merely 'crumbling clay'.⁸ At the conclusion of his First State, the Man is 'drawn from his material frame' so that 'He wakes within the Spirit World | A Man—a Spirit—still the same!'⁹

But while the 'frame' is 'Death-stricken', the real man lives on, for 'Man as Spirit cannot die!'¹⁰ Repeatedly, Grendon spells out that Elias and Michal are in no way dead: 'THERE IS NO DEATH!—Man lives for aye!'¹¹ The expression, 'There is no

¹ 'Tasisela', 'The Bantu and Religion', *Ilanga* 18:13 (26 March 1920) 5.

² 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza X, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

³ Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg's Religious Thought*, 25.

⁴ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XIX, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XII, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁶ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza VII, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁷ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XX, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁸ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza VIII, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁹ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XVI, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

¹⁰ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza VIII, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

¹¹ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza VIII, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

occurs six times in four of Grendon's poems.¹ In the elegy for Elias, Grendon writes that 'Man is Man from Spirit, not | From crumbling, dead, material clay'.² He makes the same claim in 'The Tragedy of Malunge': 'The Spirit is the quick'ning pow'r,—| And this can never—never die!'³ In the elegy for Elias, he exhorts the bereaved: 'Weep not! Elias is not dead!'⁴ Again, in 'The Tragedy', he writes, 'Malunge therefore, is not dead!'⁵ In his prose obituary for Kruger, Grendon reports that the ex-President has 'passed from out this natural life', and is 'as it were, reckoned dead for ever'.⁶ This is the reckoning of others—not Grendon's.

Similar assurances appear in the elegy for Michal:

An active, moving, disembodied soul
 Thou art, with all thy powers still complete!
 Thus free from clay, thou'rt still thyself—the whole
 And only Michal—for unseen worlds meet.⁷

And also:

Live on! In yonder World whereto thou'st sped.
 There is no death!—no rest! no sleep! no dream!—
 There live! but not beneath yon clay-heaps dead
 Within yon acre by 'Sundusi Stream.⁸

Grendon follows Swedenborg, who states that although humans are said to 'die',

yet the man does not die, but is only separated from the corporeal part which was of use to him in the world; for the man himself lives. It is said that the man himself lives, because a man is not man by virtue of the body, but by virtue of the spirit; for it is the spirit in man which thinks, and thought together with affection makes the man. From this it is plain that when a man dies he only passes from one world into the other.⁹

¹ 'M&P', Pt XXIII, *Citizen* 2:80 (17 Dec. 1898) 3; 'In Memoriam: Mrs Sydney Strong', *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4 (twice); 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', *Ilanga* 2: 72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4 (twice); 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

² 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza X, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

³ 'Tragedy of Malunge', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁴ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza VII, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁵ 'Tragedy of Malunge', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁶ 'The Late President Kruger', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁷ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XIX, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁸ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XXIV, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁹ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 445.

And Wilkinson states succinctly: ‘Death changes no man: he is most exactly the same man, person, identity, character, in the life after death as before.’¹ He retains all his ‘powers still complete’, as Grendon tells Michal.

To illustrate the concept of deathlessness through change of state, Swedenborg cites an example from the insect world:

Any one may confirm himself in favour of the Divine from things visible in nature, when he sees larvae, from the delight of some impulse, desiring and longing to change their terrestrial state to a certain likeness of the heavenly state, and for this purpose creeping into corners, and putting themselves as it were into a womb in order to be born again, and there becoming chrysalises, aurelias, caterpillars, nymphs, and at length butterflies; and having undergone this metamorphosis, and each after its kind been decked with beautiful wings, they ascend into the air as into their heaven, and there disport themselves joyfully, form marriage unions, lay eggs, and provide for themselves a posterity, nourished meanwhile with pleasant and sweet food from flowers. Who that confirms himself in favour of the Divine from the visible things in nature can help seeing a kind of image of man’s earthly state in these as larvae, and in them as butterflies an image of the heavenly state?²

Using Swedenborg’s imagery, Grendon challenges those ‘Who claim to know the Mystery | Of Life’: ‘Teach us the lily is the bud—| The chrysalis the butterfly—| Teach us that Man is only mud—| Then all Creation is a lie!’³

Swedenborg asserts that not only do humans retain their personalities, their gender, and their senses—touch, smell, sight, *etc.*—but these latter are refined and clarified, as it were, so that sensation becomes infinitely more acute than it was in the material world.⁴ It is likely for this reason that Grendon makes several references to spiritual vision and to spiritual smell. John Wesley was scandalized by Swedenborg’s Heaven, which seemed to him degraded into a sensual paradise. He censured his contemporary for having turned ‘the Bible into “the Christian Koran”, which “exceeds even the Mahometan”’.⁵

Because he believes that ‘death’ is a process so widely misunderstood, Grendon finds it necessary to append a learned note to ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, in order to qualify

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 162.

² Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 354.

³ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, stanzas XI, XIII, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁴ Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg’s Religious Thought*, 25.

⁵ Quoted in: Schuchard, *Why Mrs Blake Cried*, 149.

his poetic reference to it: ‘As the soul of Man lives on after death, and acts, feels, and moves even as before, the word [“dead”, as used] in the above line is applied to those, who have passed out of this material world. I use the word for want of a better.’¹ Similarly, in the elegy for Elias, he states of the Man that ‘Materially he dies’.²



Swedenborg’s doctrines on the nature of reality, on life and the afterlife diverge markedly from the major Christian creeds. To begin with, all men and women pass through three conditions: a first or probationary state; an intermediate spiritual state of judgement; and a final or everlasting state where ultimate destiny is achieved. Man’s First State is that in which Grendon grew to know his friends Elias Tshabalala and Michal Nkosi. As he tells the departed Michal, this was her ‘first estate—when soul and flesh unite’.³ Man’s sojourn on this material Earth is a period of probation that ends with the natural body’s decease, and Man’s eternal destiny is contingent upon how he—or she—fares while on Earth.

At what is commonly conceived of as ‘death’, the soul or ‘real Man’ is shorn from the natural world, but cannot accurately be said to ‘enter’ the spiritual world, because Man has been ‘there’ all along, albeit that humans on Earth are for the most part unconscious of the ubiquity of spirit men and women—good and bad—in the quotidian. Man on Earth holds dual citizenship, inhabiting the natural and spiritual worlds simultaneously.

The natural world is very limiting because, as Swedenborg reveals, ‘there are two properties ... which cause all things of it to be finite; one is space, and the other time’.⁴ On the other hand, ‘there are no times and spaces in the other life, but instead of these, states’.⁵ The natural is the finite, transient, phenomenal world—the world of effects. As Swedenborgian Trobridge states: ‘Living in this phenomenal world we cannot help being misled by outward appearances; it is difficult to believe that the

¹ ‘PAD’, Pt 8, footnote, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

² ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, stanza VI, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

³ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, stanza XIX, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 27.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 3857.

things that we see and handle are less real than those which are unseen, yet we can be brought to a rational conviction of this truth.’¹

In contrast with the natural world, the spiritual world is infinite—it consists only in ‘state’ and in the infinite varieties and changes thereof. While the natural world is no more than a phenomenal one, the spiritual world comprises real substance and ultimate causes. It knows neither time nor space as they exist in the natural world—although spirit men and women do *perceive* changes in state as variations in time and space, according to ‘correspondences’ that are fixed within the fabric of Creation.² In ‘dying’, Man is freed from the natural world, with its delusional, finite distractions. He discovers himself in a spiritual world of pure states, which in fact he unknowingly occupied all the while he lived on Earth. He leaves behind those things that Trobridge identifies as ‘less real than those which are unseen’—the condition that Grendon’s Kruger describes as ‘Earth’s Dull Dream’.³ Now he sees, hears, feels, smells, tastes, with superb clarity, because the dulling effects of natural existence no longer obtain.

The concept of natural and spiritual worlds—the latter ‘present’ within the former—bears passing resemblance to the idea of ‘parallel universes’. And Grendon accepts this far-reaching aspect of Swedenborgian teaching. In 1918, when a newspaper editor informs Grendon that he will need to foot the bill for typesetting if he desires his lengthy contributions to appear in print, Grendon replies, half in jest: ‘I am not one of those who would sacrifice “state” to “space”. If spirit be debarred because of insufficiency of material space, from expressing its opinion, then it were better to hold my peace, or seek expression elsewhere.’⁴ He means his statement to be decoded on two levels. If the editor can offer insufficient free ‘space’—column-inches—for Grendon’s contributions, then Grendon will exercise his volitional freedom by placing them with a paper that *can* offer sufficient space. On a metaphysical level, Grendon means that he will not consent to the constraints of time-space in the natural world curtailing the free expression of the infinite world of ‘state’ and spirit. He opposes the expressions ‘state’ and ‘space’, and associates ‘spirit’ and ‘state’ in a way that is recognizably Swedenborgian.

¹ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 124.

² Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 29.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133.

⁴ ‘Native Unrest’, *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918).

This background knowledge helps in our understanding of Grendon's elegy for Michal Nkosi. He expresses a wish to be present at the graveside in Edendale, beside 'Sundusi stream', when the earthly shell of his dear friend is committed to the earth. Then he might apply 'One gentle touch to [her] decaying brow'.¹ But, regrettably, this cannot be; for while Michal now dwells in the realms of unrestricted State, Grendon is yet bound by the finite law of the material universe: 'Circumstance restrains | Me. Space, and Time forbid.'² He is at Ohlange; the funeral takes place at Edendale. Were Grendon, like Michal, freed from Space-Time, there would be no hindrance to their coming together, because they are—and would continue to be—similar in state.

This subject is broached again later in the poem. On the occasion that Grendon and Michal last met in the flesh, he recalls, she was anxious to learn from him 'The Truths concerning Heav'n and Hell'. Now, these very 'Truths' 'lie unfolded' before Michal. Grendon would dearly value it if she were to 'Convey' her 'new impressions' to him. But even this wish cannot be realized, because Grendon is still inextricably bound up with Space-Time. Michal might *endeavour* to communicate all 'Truths concerning Heav'n and Hell' to him,

But oh, I'd hear not, neither would I see,
Because betwixt us lies material space.³

By this, he does not mean that they are separated by material distance, but that very Space as a phenomenon constitutes a gulf between them. He is still shackled to 'material space'; Michal has been released from it.



Man's earthly sojourn is fleeting, and all phenomena in the First State are transitory, as Grendon reiterates in various places. In an essay, he writes that the 'natural and the material ... at best are transitory'.⁴ Addressing Kruger, Fortuna exclaims: 'How

¹ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XIII, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

² 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XIII, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

³ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XXI, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'Copy the Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4. Cf. also: 'transitory cheer' ('Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5).

changeable is Man's life on Earth!'¹ Kruger himself exclaims: 'Oh how uncertain is the life of man! | How changeable, and how brief!'²

In the elegy for Elias, Grendon likens this mortal phase of human existence to 'Yon flow'r o'er which the sunbeams play', and which is quite unconscious of 'What change o'er it a day may bring'.³ The metaphor is an old one, and Grendon probably lifts it from the Bible where it occurs more than once. We read for instance that 'the glory of man [is] as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.'⁴ Elias is such a 'flower of grass', as Grendon elaborates: 'A fairer flow'r than such as deck | The meadow, we, Ohlange, rear'd.'⁵ The natural sun rises and sets on our material existence, even as it does upon the 'flower of grass'. But in the future state, Man experiences 'Eternal Day',⁶ 'everlasting Day',⁷ 'where shines perpetual sun'.⁸ Rather than to be feared, 'death' should be viewed as a release, in which

We rise
Beyond Earth's transitory things
To realms unpierced by mortal eyes—
Beyond material travailings.⁹

Concerning the First State, Grendon writes in the opening lines the elegy for Elias: 'Oh how uncertain is the life | Which mortals cherish here below...[!]',¹⁰ There is a faint reproach implicit in these lines. In 'cherishing' their lives 'here below', 'mortals' are unmindful of the fact that the *real* life—the life 'More real than EARTH'S DULL DREAM'¹¹—begins only after the death of the body. But Grendon excludes Elias from this generalization, because his dying words reveal that he, at least, had set his gaze towards Eternity:

¹ *PKD*, Pt II, p. 7.

² *PKD*, Pt XXX, p. 97. See also: 'this changeable world' (*PKD*, Dedication, p. v).

³ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza I, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁴ 1 Pet. 1:24. Cf. Ps. 103:15–16.

⁵ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza II, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133.

⁷ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XV, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁸ 'M&P', Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3.

⁹ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza III, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

¹⁰ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza I, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

¹¹ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133.

'I'M STRONG!—AND CLEAR I SEE MY WAY!'—

Such were the parting words he said.¹

Yet, even though mortal existence is glutted with woe and 'travailings', it serves a crucial purpose, in providing men and women opportunity to become regenerate, and to fit themselves for eternal life in Heaven. Those who are fully regenerated while on Earth 'are immediately taken up into heaven', Swedenborg declares.² Such ones are exceptional, however. The majority need to pass through a transitional 'World of Spirits', in which they are prepared for their ultimate destiny, in Heaven or in Hell.

Grendon fully endorses Swedenborg in rejecting the doctrine of Salvation by Faith. It is properly-motivated deeds of virtue performed during their First State that bring men and women closer to Heaven:

Each righteous deed accomplish'd lifts
Man nearer t'ward his Perfect State
Bestrewn with True Love's choicest gifts.³

Although fallen, Man is not left in the lurch by God, because 'in our sojourn here', He always furnishes some 'guiding star' that 'Directs this mortal to the Life Divine'.⁴ God infuses his Love into Man's Will and his Truth into Man's Understanding. Grendon alludes to these 'twin' influxes when he asks rhetorically:

How can
The Soul that neither loves, nor heeds
Infinite Love, and Wisdom, gain
What these twin pilots would on him
Bestow?⁵

The 'crux and centre of the process' of regeneration is 'temptation combat'—another cardinal concept of Swedenborgianism.⁶ Swedenborg states that 'evils and falsities are broken up and dispersed' by means of 'combats of temptations'. To this salutary end, 'they who are being regenerated are let into combats'.⁷ The struggle is

¹ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza VII, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 491.

³ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XXVIII, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza III, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁵ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XXIII, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁶ Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 42.

⁷ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 1692.

arduous and painful, leading Grendon to exclaim: 'how hopeless seems the strife | 'Gainst Sin, which [mortals] must undergo!'¹ This 'strife' only '*seems*' 'hopeless': in reality, it is of immeasurable value to the regenerating man or woman. Humans therefore 'must undergo' such combats: they are part of a recreative process that cannot be circumvented. Temptation combat is in fact a major motif running through such poems as *Paul Kruger's Dream* and 'Pro Aliis Damnati'. In the latter poem, Memnon acknowledges that the 'struggle against sin' is the one constant of life in the flesh.² In the *Dream*, Kruger engages in temptation combat, and for the greater part of his earthly career, fares very badly.

Through temptation combat, Man on Earth progressively exchanges hellish loves for heavenly ones. How he shapes up in combat with temptations, will determine the character of his 'ruling love'. Swedenborg's doctrine of a 'reigning love' or 'delight' existent in—and defining—each human is one that Grendon acknowledges, and which informs his poetry and journalism.³

As Spalding states, 'in [the] inner sphere of mind everyone comes to have a predominating love either for God and goodness from him, or for self. This Predominating love results from the choice he makes day by day between good and evil, truth and falsity, as they present themselves to him in his experience. ... That which [Man] supremely desires and strives for, Swedenborg calls one's "ruling love".'⁴ Swedenborg actually states that 'man is such as his reigning love is'.⁵ This is because the quality and object of his ruling love is the quintessence of his personality. Heaven and Hell comprise controlling and subsidiary loves, which combine to establish the spiritual substance and form of the spiritual world of State:

The whole heaven is divided into societies according to all the differences of loves; in like manner hell, and in like manner the world of spirits. But heaven is divided into societies according to the differences of heavenly loves; hell into societies according to the differences of

¹ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza I, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

² 'PAD', Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ He refers to 'the white man's reigning love', which is to exercise material and spiritual dominion over the black man ('The Native Priesthood', *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4). Polygamy is a 'delight' 'to the external or worldly man' ('Polygamy', *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4). Zenzema's 'life's delight' is to tyrannize his wife Helen ('PAD', Pt 5, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4). Damon and Cleon's assassination of Zenzema is a deed that 'delight, and lustful love demand' ('PAD', Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4).

⁴ Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg's Religious Thought*, 28.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 369.

infernal loves; and the world of spirits, according to the differences of loves both heavenly and infernal. There are two loves which are the heads of all the rest, that is, to which all other loves are referable; the love which is the head of all heavenly loves, or to which they all relate, is love to the Lord; and the love which is the head of all infernal loves, or to which they all relate, is the love of rule springing from the love of self. These two loves are diametrically opposed to each other.¹

Whatever the fundamental character of his or her overarching love, it becomes integral to a human, and is carried forward into the spiritual world, determining Man's final state—whether turned towards God, or away from Him.² Grendon's elegy for Elias bears this out:

If hate
Of righteous living were the throne
Whereto Man bow'd, and homage paid
Whilst yet incarnate, evil will
In Spiritland his Soul pervade,
And he'll accomplish evil still.³

Swedenborg's 'World of Spirits' is the 'Intermediate State' that intervenes between the heavens and the hells. It is a halfway house—or a series of staging posts—for the majority of disembodied men and women *en route* to their Final State. In the Intermediate State, Man's true character is clarified in all its splendour or hideousness, as the case might be. Hypocrisy and feigned goodness—so prevalent during the First State—become untenable, since Spirits-Men can no longer hide behind the façade of materiality. The ruling love of each man and woman becomes evident.⁴ Grendon describes the Intermediate State:

Man here his judgment undergoes,
And his true character betrays;
Here good t'ward evil men prove foes,
By seeking each their chosen ways.
The good with good associate
By virtue of their purity;

¹ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 141.

² Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 185.

³ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XX, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁴ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 168.

The wicked with the wicked mate
Thro' deeds committed sinfully.¹

Swedenborg denies a 'General Resurrection' at some future 'Last Judgement', when the material bodies of the dead are reconstituted and reunited with the spirits that once occupied them. Rather, because life on this terrestrial globe is probationary, judgement occurs on an individual basis to each person promptly upon his or her death. Swedenborg

conversed with some a few days after their decease.... And some believed that they should first rise again at the time of the last judgement, when the world would perish; and that they should then rise with the body, which though fallen into dust would then be collected together; and thus that they were to rise again with flesh and bone. ... But they have been instructed that the last judgement of every one is when he dies.²

Grendon likewise emphatically rejects the Last Judgement and the General Resurrection. In his elegy for Elias, he acknowledges that to their cast-off bodies 'Say some with certain hope, and trust | That parted spirits will return, | Therein to make abode anew. | But ah, how fatal 'tis to learn | A doctrine so unsound—untrue!'³ 'Man's Resurrection is [no more than] the flight | Of Spirit from its clay domain!'⁴ Grendon therefore counsels theologians: 'Nay, teach us not that at the end | Of this material world the clay | Shall rise, and with the Spirit blend, | To give account at Judgment Day!'⁵ In his elegy for Michal, Grendon again denies the General Resurrection: 'There is no resurrection from the dead | In ages still unknown, as they avow | Who on the Truth a lurid lustre shed. | By thee is such accomplish'd even now!'⁶

Grendon also takes advantage of the opportunity to slam the Old Church, the Christians of which are 'disciplin'd from youth', by their spiritual mentors 'To yield unto an old, and strange belief, | Which construes error into Gospel Truth'.⁷ A Hell of 'material fire' is a doctrine that 'divers crafty priests invent | The fickle to insnare'.⁸

¹ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XXI, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 4527.

³ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza IX, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XI, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁵ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XII, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁶ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XX, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁷ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanzas II–III, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁸ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XXVI, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

In view of such erroneous teaching, Grendon counsels: ‘Nay teach a doctrine purer, ye—| Who claim to know the Mystery | Of Life!’¹

Swedenborg teaches that at the death of the material body, the man or woman passes into ‘an intermediate state where souls are prepared for their final abodes’.² This is not equivalent to purgatory, since probation is quite ended with the close of mortal existence, and there is no ‘second chance’ at salvation in the spirit realm:

In order therefore that he may be a subject either of heaven or hell, he is first after death brought into the world of spirits; and there a conjunction of good and truth is effected in those who are to be elevated into heaven; and a conjunction of evil and falsity in those who are to be cast into hell. For it is not permitted any one, in heaven or in hell, to have a divided mind, that is, to understand one thing and will another; but what he wills he must also understand, and what he understands he must also will. In heaven therefore, he who wills good must understand truth; and in hell he who wills evil must understand falsity. For this reason with the good falsities are removed in the world of spirits, and truths suitable and conformable to their good are given; and with the evil truths are there removed and falses are given suitable and conformable to their evil.³

Grendon describes Swedenborg’s ‘World of Spirits’⁴ as the ‘Intermediate State’ in the elegy for Elias, and as the ‘Second State’ in that for Michal. ‘In this—the Intermediate State—| The Soul of Man lives on alone, | With senses all complete.’⁵ Michal has ‘enter’d like a babe [her] Second State’. Grendon exhorts her to ‘Move therefore, act, and feel with yon array | Of spirits who their Final State await!’⁶

The Intermediate State occurs to Man’s senses very like the world he left behind. It is so similar that some men and women suppose themselves to be still in that world:

The first state of man after death is similar to his state in the world, because then in like manner he is in externals. ... Hence it is that he then knows no otherwise than that he is still in the world, unless he adverts to the things he meets with, and to what was said to him by angels

¹ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, stanza XI, *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

² Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 168.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 425.

⁴ The ‘World of Spirits’ is not to be confused with the ‘spiritual world’—the latter being an expression that embraces the ‘world of spirits’, as well as the heavens and hells.

⁵ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, stanza XX, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, stanza XX, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

when he was raised up, that he is now a spirit. Thus one life is continued into the other, and death is only the transit.¹

Grendon works this into his elegy for Elias:

Unconscious of the state he now
 Assumes, unconscious of his change,
 Unconscious as to when, and how
 He pass'd to realms beyond the range
 Of mortal eyes, he wakes to find
 Him launch'd on a serener shore,
 Where with vast legions of his kind
 He moves, acts, feels, e'en as before.²

According to Swedenborg, 'there are places of instruction [in the World of Spirits] for those Gentiles who have led a good life in the world in conformity with their religion'. Of these 'Gentiles', he tells us, 'the best ... are from Africa'.³ Because 'the Africans are the most beloved of all the Gentiles' in Heaven, 'they receive the goodness and truth of heaven more easily than others'.⁴

Wilkinson pictures the process by which good Africans in the World of Spirits are educated for Heavenly life: 'Any man with ordinary perception can know that the best Negroes are simple, humble, affectionate creatures.... As soon as these best people die, angelic spirits are with them at once, and lead them upwards to the Lord's New Heavens. It is simply then a matter of reception in soil prepared by a good life led in the world.'⁵

This is why Grendon urges Michal, now in the angelic schools of the Intermediate State: 'Learn thou unto perfection, learn, and learn!'⁶ And it is why we read in the elegy for Elias:

Thus all the countless myriads born,
 Of ev'ry nature—ev'ry age,
 Will into various groups be drawn,

¹ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 493.

² 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XVII, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 514.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 2604.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 151.

⁶ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XXI, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

To learn of Teachers here more sage
Than men, who on this Earth behold
As thro' a glass but dimly, things
Supernal.¹

Children who die prematurely are consigned to the care of the best angelic teachers. According to Swedenborg, 'all children who die, whether baptized or unbaptized, whether Christian or Gentile, are given immediately into the care of the wisest angels and are trained and educated to become angels likewise'.² Concerning heathen infants that die, Grendon says in an article: 'Whatever may be said in despair about their future state they too in the world beyond are cared for.'³

While Hell is very much a part of the Swedenborgian schema, it is far removed from the Dantean Hell of subterranean infernos. Grendon likewise denies that Hell consists in literal fires. In the elegy for Elias, he writes: 'Material fire—this we maintain—| Doth not the Spirit here torment, | For such produces finite pain'.⁴ And in that for Michal: 'No Hell with finite and material flame | Shall burn the soul of man for evermore! | No infinite, immortal Spirit's frame | Can lastingly be damned by finite law!'⁵

Another of Swedenborg's distinctive teachings is that God casts no-one into hell. Rather, those creatures that, by wrong choices, form within themselves a hellish disposition, gravitate irresistibly hell-wards through the exercise of their own free will. As Grendon states, 'Man's Hell or Heav'n himself he makes, | Whene'er he sins or walks aright'.⁶ 'By his own sin pronounces Man | His own damnation. Thus he feeds | Within himself a hell.'⁷

All would be welcome to enter heaven, if they chose it of their own volition, but the wicked would suffer exquisite pain if compelled to share the company of angels. Swedenborg uses an illustration that Grendon works into his elegy for Elias: 'In a

¹ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XIX, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4. The expression, 'thro' a glass but dimly', is an allusion to 1 Cor. 13:12.

² Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 162.

³ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁴ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XXVI, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁵ 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', stanza XXIII, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4. Compare also: 'tortures, which the soul of Man afflict | In Hell's infernal, and infinite Fire!' ('PAD', Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4).

⁶ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XXVIII, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁷ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', stanza XXIII, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

word, if those that have lived wickedly come into heaven they gasp for breath and writhe about, like fishes out of water in the air, or like animals in ether in an air-pump when the air has been exhausted. From this it can be seen that heaven is not outside of a man, but within him.’¹ Working with this passage, Grendon asks rhetorically:

Did wicked Souls with good unite,
 And access thus to Heaven gain,
 Whilst each to each are opposite
 Could they endure the awful pain?
 Can fish upon the dry land live?—
 Within the wat’ry deep can Man?
 If the verdict here be negative,
 Then Hell in Heaven never can!²

According to Swedenborg, Hell is the tormented internal state of the wicked, not a chamber of horrors that a malicious God delights to reserve for them. During the Intermediate State, men and women begin to gravitate inexorably towards the particular spiritual society—heavenly or hellish—which most closely corresponds to their spiritual state during their mortal existence. Ultimately, ‘the evil spirit of his own accord casts himself into the hell where they are who are like him’.³ Grendon describes the sorting process by restating Swedenborg’s principle that likes attract, whereas opposites repel. In his elegy for Elias, he explains that ‘the unlikes unlikes shun’.⁴ By this process, those who are heaven internally, enter external heavens; while those who are hells internally of their own accord enter external hells.

All of this serves to clear God of any imputation of vindictiveness. Swedenborg states that the very Goodness of God precludes any possibility that He might ‘damn anyone, curse anyone, send anyone to hell, predestine any soul to eternal death, avenge wrongs, be angry, or punish. He cannot even turn Himself away from man,

¹ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 54.

² ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, stanza XXIV, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 510.

⁴ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, stanza XXII, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4. Compare: ‘These are things that in all eternity can never be associated, since they are unlikes, and there is no comparison to be made with unlikes, but with things of the same nature, quality, and name’ (‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4). Compare also: ‘Good can simultaneously | Not Evil be; for these are opposites, | Which, when they meet, must cause a deadly strife, | Whence one or other must at length prevail’ (‘PAD’, Pt 19, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4).

nor look upon him with a stern countenance. These and like things are contrary to His essence; and what is contrary to His essence is contrary to His very Self.’¹

Trobridge states that ‘there is nothing vindictive in Divine punishment; indeed, ... there is no such thing, really, as *Divine* punishment; it only appears to be Divine, and the appearance is due to the evil setting themselves against the true order of their life’.² Grendon agrees. There exists in Heaven

No furious fickle Father, destitute
Of love, and changing with decay and age!
No Judge implacable, and resolute,
And awful in severity, and rage!³

And again:

Infinite Love pronounces not
Man’s judgment. Justice fain would draw
Him to herself, but Sin’s dark blot
Cannot dispute her faultless law.⁴



The foregoing consideration of Grendon’s elegies for Elias Tshabalala and Michal Nkosi covers relatively esoteric doctrinal territory. I have resisted an inclination to sidestep this material, because I believe that it well illustrates the extent of Grendon’s Swedenborgian underpinnings, and because I hope that it will serve to persuade future Grendon scholars that no exegesis of his poetry and prose-writing may be considered complete, or even correct, that fails to take this complex theological and philosophical system into the reckoning.

These two elegies also prompt questions concerning Grendon’s teaching practices at Edendale, at Ohlange, and afterwards in Swaziland. If he was able to turn the deaths of an Ohlange pupil and an Edendale staff member into occasions for thoroughgoing Swedenborgian sermons, what did he teach his pupils at those institutions?

¹ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 56.

² Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 169.

³ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, stanza XXII, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, stanza XXII, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

CHAPTER 9

PRO ALIIS DAMNATI

lusts, | And cravings summon'd by scortatory love¹



Like ‘Melia and Pietro’ (1897–98), to which it bears distinct resemblance in its dramatic treatment of sexual love and domestic politics, “‘Pro Aliis Damnati’: For Others Doomed’ (1904–05) is incomplete. Only the first twenty parts were published. They appeared in *Ilanga lase Natal* from 14 October 1904 to 12 May 1905.² A few were spread over two issues, and Part 18 alone, which runs to 362 verse-lines, appears in three consecutive instalments.³ In all, we have 2,742 lines—making this the longest of Grendon’s surviving poems or poem fragments after *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, which runs to 4,750 lines.

The poem has a metrical variety similar to that which Grendon employed with notable success a couple of years earlier in *Paul Kruger’s Dream*. In the *Dream*, Grendon intended Kruger’s narrative voice to be inherently unreliable, necessitating that he counterbalance it, and objectify the whole, with the introduction of an incremental prose argument. The absence of similar structural irony in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ allows the poet to forgo the prose argument and to represent the issues treated with greater directness. As in the *Dream*, the speaker’s voice appears in blank verse (unrhymed iambic pentameter). Subsidiary voices of individual characters are in most cases cast in varieties of the alternate-rhymed quatrain.

Technically, ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ represents a marked advance on ‘Melia and Pietro’, and exhibits a level of control seldom surpassed even in Grendon’s later poems. The unidentified, omniscient speaker or narrator shares the poet’s Swedenborgian cosmos, and may be taken to represent Grendon’s worldview. The central consciousness of this master speaker binds the plot, extrapolates general truths from their specific manifestation in the narrative, and calls upon the reader/auditor to

¹ ‘PAD’, Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

² *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904)–3:108 (12 May 1905).

³ *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 4; 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4; 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

anticipate future events that must in the course of Destiny follow from the immoral choices made by the protagonists.

We have Dube's foreign absence to thank for the publication of what survives of 'Pro Aliis Damnati'. Had Dube been at *Ilanga*'s helm, this masterpiece would almost certainly not have seen the light of day. From a purely editorial viewpoint, Grendon's decision to publish this mammoth and in many respects arcane work of art in a four-page Zulu-English weekly, was unconscionable self-indulgence. On Dube's return to *Ilanga*'s editorial chair, publication of the poem terminated abruptly without a word of explanation, although Dube does express regret that during his absence, the paper has 'giv[en] English altogether too much space'.¹ Since the column-inches allowed 'Pro Aliis Damnati' represent a sizeable proportion of that 'too much space', it is impossible to escape the conclusion that Dube felt that the poem's publication in his paper was inappropriate, and an improper exercise on Grendon's part of editorial privileges that had been delegated to him.

The work was probably complete before Grendon committed its first instalment to the press. As pointed out, what has survived is no more than a substantial fragment. Even so, it is sufficient to impress us with the grandeur of the poet's imagination, the depth and scope of his spiritual vision, and his consummate mastery—by this stage—of English blank verse.

Couzens describes 'Pro Aliis Damnati' as 'a very long Greek-type love epic',² and it is true that it evinces several hallmarks of the epic. Memnon's character is essentially that of an epic hero. He has great stature—witness his 'mansion-hall' and his 'trusty slaves'—and he also has a fatal personality flaw of epic proportions, which is destined to become his tragic undoing. The cosmic ramifications of decisions taken by the protagonists Helen and Memnon are several times spelt out: this is clearly nothing less than a battle between the forces of light and of darkness. By piling error upon error, Helen and Memnon line themselves up for everlasting damnation. Their sins thrust them instantly into Hell—a hell of excruciating conscience—the inevitable consequence of their having steered their course according to false principles.

¹ 'Ilanga', *Ilanga* 3:112 (9 June 1905) 4.

² Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 76.

‘Greek-type’ the poem may or may not be. It is true that elements of Greek tragedy are discernible and that Grendon chooses Greek names for four of the characters and for Dikidion¹—the judicial centre of his imagined realm. Helen confesses that she has ‘violated love | Avow’d at Hymen’s holy shrine’²—Hymen, or Hymenaeus, being the Greek god of marriage. From his prose writing, it is also evident that Grendon held Greek language and literature in high esteem, offering his readers in one editorial the following advice: ‘Copy the Greek is our advice to you *abantu*. Copy that race which has contributed to the world the richest literature through the medium of the most perfect of human tongues!’³

But it would be a mistake to suppose that Grendon follows a single literary model, and that that model is Greek. There are, for instance, several elements of Renaissance drama here, as we encountered in ‘Melia and Pietro’. A crucial feature of the poem that has hitherto eluded scholarship is the fact that the poem is saturated with Swedenborgian philosophy, particularly that appertaining to the polar opposites of sexual attraction—conjugal and scortatory love. Helen is actuated by ‘lusts, | And cravings summon’d by scortatory love’⁴—the adulterous love that is a hell in itself. It is inherently insane and violates that most sacred of institutions—the true conjugal union. Concerning conjugal marriage, Grendon himself affirms—quoting Swedenborg—that it is the ‘jewel of human life’ and the ‘repository of the Christian religion’. Wherever ‘conjugal love is accompanied by love other than conjugal there is a struggle which virtually constitutes the obstacle to the advance of the Christian faith’, Grendon tells readers in an editorial.⁵ ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ makes a similar statement more expansively, by means of a grand verse drama.

It was this poem that first alerted me to the poet’s acquaintance with Swedenborg’s system of thought. At that time, I had no knowledge of Swedenborgianism, and identified it—as many English-speaking people do—with William Blake. Blake was alternately a disciple of and an apostate from Swedenborg. Grendon’s relationship

¹ Derived from a Greek stem, signifying ‘justice’.

² ‘PAD’, Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

³ ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘PAD’, Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁵ ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3. Grendon quotes Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 457, n. 531.

with respect to Swedenborg's teaching, it emerges, was probably much less complex than Blake's.

In particular, my attention was captured by two of Grendon's erudite explanatory footnotes. In the first, which appears in Part 8, Grendon finds it necessary to define the word 'dead'. He seems almost to apologize for the word, and implies that the English lexis contains none more suitable. In reality, he asserts, there is no such condition as 'death' as popularly conceived, because, 'as the soul of Man lives on after death, and acts, feels, and moves even as before, the word in the above line is applied to those, who have passed out of this material world'. Grendon employs the word 'dead' 'for want of a better.'¹

At first glance, this appears no more than a quibble, but closer scrutiny reveals otherwise. Grendon's statement goes beyond an orthodox reaffirmation of a widely-held belief in the immortality of the soul. He claims that the soul experiences no change whatever, but is 'even as before' it 'passed out of this material world'. Even its feelings remain intact. In time, I came to identify Grendon's personal creed, expressed in this footnote, with Swedenborg's claim that 'when a man dies, he does not die, but only lays aside the body which served him for use in the world'² and that 'in the Word in its internal sense "death" signifies resurrection and continuation of life'.³

In Part 19, there appears another footnote, which—when I read it—seemed to reference a definition of Man that was strikingly at odds with any other I had already encountered. Here Grendon employs the word, '*proprium*', which I discovered was in common usage in publications of the Swedenborgian New Church:⁴

The soul referred to in this and other similar passages is the Proprium, or External Spiritual Self, which is peculiarly Man's and not God's creation. This External Spiritual Ownhood is the plane wherein error, and folly arise. These evils find no inception in the Physical Body of Man for this has no conscience; neither are they begotten in the Inner or True Soul, for that is God's creation.⁵

¹ 'PAD', Pt 8, footnote, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 6008.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 445.

⁴ An internet search-engine confirmed this.

⁵ 'PAD', Pt 19 footnote, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.

At once, I realized that I had here to deal with a highly-developed theological paradigm, the identity of which puzzled me. It seemed improbable that it was a theology ‘home-grown’ by Grendon himself. I therefore set myself the task of fixing the appropriate label to this system of belief, because I felt intuitively that it would provide a vital ‘key’ to Grendon’s obvious alterity, and make possible a fuller and richer reading of his poetic corpus. In the event, I was rewarded not only with a more informed understanding of Grendon’s known texts, but also by the discovery that he was author of other Swedenborg-inspired poetry and prose journalism.

Grendon endeavours to achieve a great deal with the last-quoted footnote. In just sixty-eight words, he defines Man and solves the ‘Problem of Evil’. His model is a layered one—which I have attempted to represent diagrammatically, below. Rather than the conventional Christian distinction between ‘body’ and ‘soul’, Grendon posits a body and two souls—inner and outer. God’s perfect, incorruptible creation is the ‘inner or true soul’; Man however has created an identity of his own, external to this ‘true soul’, or ‘real man’. Here arise the enormous sins and follies that Grendon represents in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ as he does in other poems, such as ‘Melia and Pietro’ and *Paul Kruger’s Dream*. The speaker in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ tells us that it is

The Soul, and not the Body that must face
The judgement and the pain of punishment.
All Sin in the internal man resides,
And thro’ the external manifests itself.¹

This ‘internal man’ is the *proprium*—not sinful of itself, but containing the potential for sin, which works its way out through acts of the physical body.

Swedenborg’s account of the historical rise of the *proprium* with its capacity for sin replaces orthodox concepts of ‘The Fall’ in mainstream churches. Adam’s sin is taken to be allegorical. His pristine condition depicts the happy primordial state of the earliest Race of Man that enjoyed unmediated communion with God through direct influxes into their divine inner souls. The *proprium* did not intrude itself at this stage, and awareness of good was apprehended instinctively in a manner that is so entirely lost to most of Mankind today that few even recognize that ‘goods’ and ‘truths’ *can* be received in this way.

¹ Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4.

‘Physical Body’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘has no conscience’ • is therefore not the ‘plane’ where ‘evils’ arise
‘Proprium’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is the ‘External Spiritual Self’ • ‘is peculiarly Man’s ... creation’ • is not God’s creation • ‘is the plane wherein error, and folly arise’
‘Inner or True Soul’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘is God’s Creation’ • is therefore not the ‘plane’ where ‘evils’ arise.

Grendon’s account of Man and of the Origin of Evil.

In this schematic representation of Man, based upon Grendon’s footnote to Part 19 of ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, both the body and the ‘true soul’ are absolved of error, and it is fastened upon the ‘proprium’.

The Fall—*a la* Swedenborg—occurred over an extended period, as Man withdrew progressively from direct communion with God, and formed, as it were, a partial cyst around the ‘true soul’, into which God perpetually infuses His ‘goods’ and ‘truths’—thereby sustaining life. In time, God was obliged to adopt new means of communicating with Man. In each epoch of history, the method God used was commensurate with Man’s receptive capacity at that time.

Man has always a measure of access to this life-giving well—he would die had he not—but in proportion as his self-made proprium looks to the flesh (carnal desire), the exterior world (material riches), and to the self (self-promotion; dominion over others), to that extent Man is unable to draw those goods and truths into his Will. The quality of each man and woman is defined by his or her individual capacity to integrate truths in the Understanding with goods in the Will—Will and Understanding being the essential dichotomy of Mind, or Man. Of great significance to African Swedenborgians is the Seer’s assurance that somewhere in the heart of Africa there exists a remnant of the ‘celestial’ Man—those who still retain the capacity to

commune directly with God through angels. It is largely for this reason that the English Swedenborgian Wilkinson warns that Europeans ‘must be careful not to graft [their] European ideas upon’ Africa,¹ and that Grendon has ‘always held the opinion that Europe’s religion cannot be grafted on African stock’.² Grendon knows that that ‘stock’ harbours the precious residue of Celestial or Adamic Man.

Shortly before Grendon’s footnote on the *proprium* appeared in *Ilanga*, a two-part article by the white Swedenborgian, Harold Attersoll was published. Entitled ‘New Light Rays’,³ it presents in point form leading tenets of the New Church appertaining to the nature of—and relationship between—God and Man. It also considers the principle of Free Will, explains the existence of Evil, and shows how it may be overcome.

Attersoll’s model conforms to that which Grendon presents in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ and elsewhere. Humans are ‘Emanations of God’, and ‘do not exist of themselves, but are receptive of Life’ from Him. What Grendon describes as ‘the Inner or True Soul’, Attersoll calls ‘the essence or inmost of the derived Humans’. He also confirms Grendon by stating that this ‘Essential Human’ is ‘non-contaminable and cannot suffer violence’—*i.e.*, can neither sin nor die. However, ‘from its own personal consciousness’, it does construct ‘a second self, which is external to its Essential, and derives its life therefrom’. This, Attersoll and Grendon call ‘man’s *proprium*, or ownhood’.⁴ Attersoll defines Evil as ‘the negation of goodness by continued mal-choosing’. Such ‘mal-choosing’ occurs only in the *proprium*—‘the plane of mental errancy’.⁵

Over time, the errant *proprium* seals itself off progressively from access to its own inner well of divine influx. ‘As errancy increases in the *proprium*’, Attersoll goes on, ‘so it shuts itself off from the efflux of its internal spiritual Being wherein the efflux of the Divine is received’. The *proprium* ‘also accepts follies proffered by souls in similar conditions to itself’.⁶

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 165.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4.

³ *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4; 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

⁴ H. A., ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁵ H. A., ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

⁶ H. A., ‘New Light Rays’, *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

This ideological background is vital to an understanding of ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, which emerges as an impassioned exposition on the origin of Sin, and its progress in individual human subjects. In his delineation of Memnon’s character, Grendon treats with considerable acuity Man’s wrestling with Sin, and the powerful grip it has on him. Memnon’s wrestling is with a Will that is technically ‘free’, but which he cannot bring over to the side of moral rectitude, because of overwhelming craving to pursue a selfish end. By a process of ‘continued mal-choosing’—to use Attersoll’s expression—Memnon negates his inherent goodness and shuts himself ‘off from the efflux of [his] internal spiritual Being wherein the efflux of the Divine is received’. His *proprium* ‘also accepts follies proffered by souls in similar conditions to itself’—by the temptress Helen, as well as by the myriad devils invisible to natural eyes. In Hell, Memnon is to fall in with such ‘souls | With like affections’ to his own.¹

Sin and evil have no independent existence according to Swedenborg. Every sin is such because it is a violation or travesty of some virtue—some ‘truth’ and some ‘good’ in combination. To repeat Attersoll, Evil is ‘the negation of goodness’. Adultery is very evil for no other reason than that conjugal love is very good and its ‘use’ is unmatched—populating Heaven. Swedenborg makes this point in *Heaven and Hell*: ‘That [adulteries] are heinous [might be known] from the fact that marriages are the seminaries of the human race, and thus also the seminaries of the heavenly kingdom; consequently they must on no account be violated, but must be esteemed holy.’²



The argument of ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ may be abstracted as follows:

Part 1: The married couple, Zenzema and Helen, are introduced in their ‘lonely farmhouse built of iron’. Their dysfunctional relationship is described and accounted for. Zenzema is violently abusive, and Helen is inclined toward infidelity. It is forecast that her ravishing beauty will be her undoing, and that it will also bring death

¹ Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 385.

to her husband, calamity to her ‘paramour’, Memnon, and to those who are to play ‘a bloody part’ on behalf of the lovers.¹

Part 2: The first nocturnal tryst between Helen and Memnon is described. This is also Memnon’s ‘first temptation’. Helen confesses to him her hatred for Zenzema. While ‘lock’d in Helen’s arms’, Memnon muses on the power of temptation and the capacity of the free-willed subject to overcome it. Recoiling at the realization of the gravity of his error, he extricates himself from Helen’s grasp, cautioning her to ‘Respect [her] marriage vows’, and warning her of the grievous consequences of adhering to her adulterous purpose.²

Part 3: The next morning, Helen sweeps away the physical evidence of the previous night’s illicit meeting. She soliloquizes her determination ‘Fair Memnon’s heart to win’, although she is fully conscious that to do so involves her in sin. Finally, she ‘supplicates’ the ‘Pow’rs of Hell’ to render ‘assistance’ in ridding her of her ‘hateful husband’.³

Part 4: Helen’s ‘pray’r on evil wings is borne | Unto the “Throne of Ill”’. Next occurs the lovers’ second nocturnal tryst. Helen steals away to Memnon’s mansion-hall, where she joins a throng of visitors enjoying a musical entertainment. She remains behind when they disperse, after which she and Memnon steal off into the night. The vacillating Memnon faces his second temptation, and yields to Helen’s irresistible beauty and to her will. The encounter also spells the departure of ‘all | The uprightness of Memnon’s soul’. The couple halt ‘Beside the rill hard by fair Helen’s home’, where Helen importunes Memnon to make love to her.

‘Again the sorely tempted Memnon breaks | Away from Helen’s treacherous embrace’, but his resistance is flagging. Helen draws a ‘sheathless dagger’ from ‘her bosom’ and with it threatens to ‘transform’ Memnon to her ‘will’. Thoroughly overcome, Memnon bids her stay her ‘mad disease’. He gives her licence to ‘Possess [his] soul, and damn, and blast | It with eternal sin’. ‘They now embrace, sweet kisses

¹ *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

² *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

to exchange, | And mad affection to confirm and seal.’ Helen concludes by exhorting Memnon to take courage so that he might ‘play [his] part’ in her scheme.¹

Part 5: Returning home, Helen encounters ‘her fuming lord’, Zenzema, who threatens to deal violently with her on the morrow. The next morning, he fulfils this promise when, ‘Sore tempted to the utmost pitch | Of anger’, he interrogates her about her absence the previous night. She replies insolently, and Zenzema, with mounting rage, orders her to ‘set a latchet to [her] viprous lips’. She fails to comply, however, and continues ‘With her perverse oration’. ‘[L]osing self-control, with one swift bound’, Zenzema seizes his riding whip and begins flogging her. Not cowed by this thrashing, she calls him to witness that her heart has become ‘dead’ to him, and that she will henceforth consider herself at liberty to seek solace with ‘Some fair stranger’. At this, ‘Zenzema with one swift blow | His spouse incorrigible—false—prostrates’. But, yet again she defies him, and ‘her unconquer’d soul cries out’ for ‘revenge’. She concludes with the chilling threat: ‘Surely as my heart doth beat, | Thou shalt fall DEAD—at my feet!’²

Part 6: Zenzema takes his leave, and for a while Helen lies sprawled upon the floor, ‘In blood still weltering; and struggling ’gainst | Excruciating pain’. Finally, ‘writhing in intensest agony’, she musters energy to rise. Having done so, she soliloquizes about her murderous intentions towards her husband. ‘All mortals have their day of vengeful pow’r, | When they do tyrannize, and persecute | Their weaker kind.’ Zenzema has enjoyed his turn: now it is hers. When he is done to death, ‘In his behalf | Shall no man intervene’.

Having washed her wounds and prettied herself, Helen goes in search of her lover. In her absence, Zenzema returns ‘To find his faithless treach’rous consort gone’. In soliloquy, he recognizes that his violence has served only to arouse in her ‘a deadlier hate’. He realizes that she means to do him grievous harm, and resolves to await his ‘doom awake’.³

Part 7: This is the third nocturnal tryst. Helen makes her way through the shadows to Memnon’s home, where, standing upon a balcony, she ‘softly raps the window-

¹ *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4, 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

² *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4.

³ *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4.

pane'. Memnon awakes, and she beckons him to follow her. 'Fair Memnon all unconscious of her schemes, | From innocence is to damnation lur'd.' At the 'wattle gate', the couple embrace, and Helen asks him to accompany her to 'yonder stream'.

Once there, they embrace again. Helen breaks into 'sobs, and tears', and invites Memnon to 'feel these swollen stripes' inflicted by Zenzema. She emphasizes that it has been for Memnon that she has 'endur'd brutality'. What will Memnon do, 'The cruel dog to recompense'? Memnon is 'overcome | By Helen's treachery, and feigned tears'. Enraged at Zenzema, he vows to carry out Helen's bidding, recognizing that in so promising, he alienates himself from all virtue—as he apostrophizes: 'Uprightness,—thou matchless crown—| Henceforth I must lay thee down!'

Helen urges him to 'Swear now in sight of Heav'n above;—| Before the living, and the dead' that he will 'cleave [her] husband's head'. Memnon undertakes to murder Zenzema. This crime will be performed 'at supper any time', and in order 'to escape the deadly dart', Helen should from her 'vile consort sit apart'. Memnon's words 'strike in vain the walls | Of Heav'n; to be from thence repell'd; to fall | In their descent upon the floor of Hell, | And find 'mid devil shouts a welcome there'. Helen has an illusory vision of a blissful future spent 'With Memnon hand in hand', and vows fidelity to him.¹

Part 8: The lovers go their several ways home, 'Memnon with a most determin'd soul | Possess'd by devil multitudes'. Sleep eludes him. Fired by his lust for Helen, and by outrage at Zenzema's brutality toward her, he 'paces to and fro,—| In musings vile,—upon the parlour floor'. He seeks to frame some 'hellish scheme' to 'encompass Zenzema, and hurl | Him to the World of Shadows', so that he 'May lead away fair Helen for [his] bride'.

Though fully conscious that 'Time still remains' to 'turn aside' from his 'iniquitous intent', he finds himself powerless to do so, because 'frenzied love forbids' his taking remedial action. He is engaged in an internal battle of Faustian magnitude, as 'Twin powers—"God", and "Devil"'—lay claim to him. But his 'soul is resolute and firm' and 'knows | No sorrow!—no repentance!'²

¹ *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

² *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

Part 9: When the new day dawns, the ‘sky by scaly clouds is deck’d’—an omen portending Zenzema’s death. Memnon resolves that the murder must not be performed by him. Accordingly, he summons his ‘trusty bondsmen’, and from their number selects Damon and Cleon, who are beguiled by their master’s ‘artful words’ and promise of a reward in gold. They promise to obey their master and on no account to implicate him should they be apprehended for their crime. The ‘voice | Of final admonition’ warns them that they are lining themselves up for ‘Hell’s infernal, and infinite Fire’.¹

Part 10: The ‘bell tolls forth the hour of noon repast’ and Memnon’s slaves gather to ‘quell voracious appetites’. They note the ‘absence of their guards’, Damon and Cleon, and soon the rumour is being circulated that ‘This day with grievous ill is fraught,—| For some must in a snare be caught’. Although they overhear this rumour, ‘Memnon, and his trusty bondsmen’ are not deterred from their evil purpose. ‘All Hell’s profoundest depths with joy are thrill’d’, and ‘Iniquity in sight of God prevails’.

‘Gross darkness’ falls, and the ‘bondsmen twain from out their hiding-place | Step forth’. They entreat their master to be true to his pledge, and to award the blood money to their relatives in the event that they are ‘thwarted’. Memnon reassures them that he will not fail to reward them for the part they are about to play. He entrusts to them ‘yon pistol—weapon true, | And yon deadly balls of lead’, and urges them to banish ‘All faint-heartedness’. The two ‘now crush | The final flick’ring sparks of right and truth’ within themselves, and ‘All hope of turning from their evil course | Is lost’.²

Part 11: In their ‘homestead lone upon | The hill’, a lamp burns in the ‘supper-hall’. Zenzema and Helen sit ‘each from each apart’. Zenzema shuns ‘both meat and drink’: his ‘soul | As tho’ preconscious of some awful fate, | E’en unto death with agony is bow’d’. Damon and Cleon steal ‘Across the farmyard silent and unseen’, locating a ‘window at the rear | Of Zenzema’. Even as Zenzema ‘meditates upon his fate’ | The pistol roars in Damon’s hand’, and ‘The ball | Within the helpless victim’s skull is lodged’. He ‘falls | Full length outstretch’d, and mute at Helen’s feet’. Wholly

¹ *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

² *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4.

lacking in ‘true conjugal sympathy’, ‘Like as a queen in majesty entron’d, | Her master’s corse she unaffectedly | Surveys’. She exults that she is now at liberty ‘to yield | To Memnon’s loving, soft embrace’, and that ‘Henceforth will be conceived, and born | To [her] a race for which [she] long[s]’. Though her dying husband ‘sues for aid ’gainst murderers unseen’, she ‘derides, and mocks him’. With ‘his last breath’, he prophesies ‘torture’ and ‘doom’ both for her and for her ‘chosen mate’, and predicts also that Death will claim ‘each babe that fills [her] womb’.¹

Part 12: Feigning ‘outward signs of wild despair’ and ‘dread’, Helen flees ‘t’ward Memnon’s distant home, | Her pretext being to seek assistance there’. Once at the mansion-hall, she raises the alarm. The ‘massive doors | Fly open, [and] face to face the lovers stand. | Each other shamelessly embracing, they | Of love dishonourable take their fill’. Now that ‘Wedlock’s chains’ are ‘Sunder’d’, Helen entreats Memnon to ‘Guide—protect—and cherish’ her.²

Part 13: ‘To the music of some devil’s lyre attun’d’, Memnon plights his troth in song to Helen. ‘The First Woe Sounds’, when ‘the voice of Conscience’ upbraids the ‘soul of terror-stricken Helen’, and then of Memnon, who even now ‘scheme[s] with a vile intent | How [he might] responsibilities evade’. Conscience promises that it will ‘haunt, and judge, and grieve, and torture’ the murderous and adulterous pair forevermore, even though ‘in the world’s esteem [they] be held | Respectable’.

Memnon starts out to escort Helen back to her home when they encounter Damon and Cleon returning ‘from their murd’rous task’. The two claim their reward, because their ‘guilty conscience urges flight | Ere dawn’ ascends. ‘The Second Woe Is Trumpeted’, as Conscience begins to assail these tool villains. In the presence of the wife of the man they have just assassinated, ‘all the horrors of their guilt now rise’, and ‘Conscience holds | Them firmly to the spot’. Treacherously, Memnon ‘hesitates | To compensate’ the hired killers. Instead, he ‘plans how he himself may free | From the entangling net which he himself | Had wov’n’. And so he attempts to pacify his slaves with ‘pledges garnish’d o’er with lying words’, promising to bestow their reward on the morrow. With ‘tortur’d soul’, he ‘Escorts his lady Helen to her home’.³

¹ *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

² *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

³ *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4, 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

Part 14: It is still the night of Zenzema's assassination. Memnon escorts Helen home. 'Out upon the dusty road | They speed as tho' some danger they discern'd.' Suddenly, 'The Third Woe Sounds', when 'At yonder parting of the ways midway | To Helen's home' they are confronted with the 'shade of Zenzema—| His countenance with fury all aflame'. He chastises first Memnon, and then Helen. He warns Memnon that 'woe on woe' will pursue him, and that he will ultimately 'meet | A doom, in horror far exceeding' Zenzema's. To Helen, he acknowledges that their married 'life has been | A glaring sham', and that what they at first took to be 'Love is whitewash'd Hate'.¹

Part 15: The guilty couple 'reach the homestead' and enter, where they find themselves in the 'presence of the mangled corpse'. The disembodied Zenzema reappears and accosts them: 'Touch not yon ruin'd temple prostrate laid | By your desires, entreaties, and commands!' he orders. Instead, they should 'only gaze thereon', and thereby 'Discern [their] coming judgment'. 'True penitence is now impossible', he tells them. Henceforth, 'From hell to hell ye'll wander hand in hand | In quest of vain relief; and mock'd, and hiss'd | By damned associates in those gloomy pits | Ye'll woo damnation everlastingly!' At Zenzema's command, they 'quit | The homestead, [and] pass out into blackest night'. It is past midnight, and the shade of Zenzema, 'to evade material light, | Now speedily approaching, disappears'.²

Part 16: 'Report throughout the land is spread | Concerning Zenzema's untimely fate.' Memnon and Helen are anxious to shift suspicion from themselves, and so 'Against the serfs determine to conspire'. Memnon reassures Helen that Damon and Cleon, being slaves, 'dare not lay | Accusation 'gainst their lord'. His and Helen's 'station clears the way | To confirm [their] innocence'. Since they are together deep in guilt, they may as well proceed in the same vein: 'Devil thou—and devil I—| Hand in hand let us advance.'

Damon and Cleon, 'overpower'd by their guilt', are anxious to escape from the vicinity of their crime, and so they approach Memnon again with the request that he pay them the 'due reward'. The 'faithless Memnon now incensed becomes', and 'stoops | To cowardice, in trampling down the weak'. He 'turns accuser of his trusty

¹ *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4.

² *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 4.

slaves', refuses to honour his promise, and dismisses them from his presence. Deeply chagrined, 'They strive to flee; | But guilt forbidding, chains them where they stand'.¹

Part 17: The narrator indulges in a lengthy moralistic digression. 'Crime committed in the dark, | Mysteriously proclaims itself upon | The housetops.' Sin arises in the Soul, not the Body, and it is therefore 'the Soul, and not | The Body that must render the account | Of Sin'. With the 'law of Man things are revers'd', because in the case of human justice, it is the 'Body—not the Soul—| That suffers'.

Damon and Cleon are overcome with 'cowardice, and dread', and 'resolve by flight to quit the scene'. Simultaneously, 'Adown the dusty road t'ward Memnon's home | Three forms as 'twere of armed men approach, | On fleet steeds mounted'. These are the 'crime-detectors'. While they interview Memnon, the assassins 'in despair | Betake themselves to vain—deceiving flight'.²

Part 18: Within 'Memnon's grand abode', the 'crafty crime-detectors feign | As to their mission', claiming that they are searching for cattle that have strayed. Both Memnon and Helen are stricken with 'Confusion, and a damning conscience', and a 'silence most profound' ensues. The crime-detectors make reference to 'yon road-side cottage lone'—the home of Zenzema and Helen—which they have just passed. No one answered their knock, they observe, 'But a dread tranquility' hung about the place. It seemed to them that 'Death therethro' ha[d] pass'd', and that the 'solitary place | O'er some lost possessor dreams'.

This is too much for Helen, who swoons, immediately arousing the 'suspicion, and astonishment' of the crime detectors. When she regains her senses, she makes 'confession strange—| Incriminating'. She identifies herself as Zenzema's wife, 'Widow'd by atrocity'. At hearing her partial confession, the 'crime-detectors cast aside | The mask' that they have been wearing, and reveal that they are in pursuit of the villains who murdered Zenzema. It appears to them that beneath Helen's 'swooning, and her tears | Some treach'ry hidden lies'.

Reclining upon a couch, Helen again makes confession. She acknowledges that her 'inmost spirit is at last | In all its hideousness unmask'd'; that she is a 'faithless

¹ *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4.

² *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4; 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

consort', and has 'violat[ed] sacred laws, | And vows conjugal'. She herself 'wickedly the plot conceiv'd' by which Zenzema's 'earthly span' was 'shorten'd'. Since she has made full confession, 'Her pet [Memnon] is impotent to make defence | In her behalf'.

The crime-detectors offer her indemnity from prosecution if she will provide the 'names of such as were employ'd | The bloody crime to perpetrate'. 'Again the fickle Helen swoons' and then makes her 'third confession', in which she disowns any claim to their pity, since she has 'violated laws | Most sacred'. Recklessly, she also incriminates Memnon, before identifying the assassins, who by now have a six-hour lead on their pursuers. Hearing this, the crime-detectors 'straightway mounted their impatient steeds, | And westward steer'd their course o'er hill and dale' in 'swift pursuit' of Damon and Cleon.¹

Part 19: Memnon 'rebukes' Helen 'For her unwariness, and fickle tongue, | Whose revelations grievous must ere long | Entangle, and incriminate both him, | And her'. Even though they have had no material part in Zenzema's assassination, and thus are able to avoid 'the dungeon', they through Helen's 'confession are outcast, | And sore debas'd'. Memnon expresses regret at having 'vow'd | Fidelity' to Helen, 'frail dame'.

But Helen's ire is also raised, and she has the 'final word'. She reminds Memnon that it was 'with full consent' that he conspired with her against Zenzema. Since Zenzema's shade has already predicted their 'downfall', why does Memnon object to her having made confession? The 'torturings' of Conscience that she endures are 'fearful', she tells him. 'Thus in | Confession' she obtains 'brief comfort from the sin | Which haunts and grieves [her] more and more'. She offers some specious justification for her action, and affirms that 'naught on earth shall mar, or blast' their marital happiness. They might yet be able to 'appease | The Judge unerring' with 'A sigh—a pray'r—unto the Throne | Of Love directed'. The narrator condemns 'this blind woman's doctrine vile—perverse—| Destructive—and most wicked'.²

Part 20: The crime-detectors eventually catch up with their quarry, who, 'faint and worn thro' want | Of food' have 'linger'd in the rugged glens, | Whereto they'd taken flight'. They 'captives manacled' are 'led forth | Unto the "House of Shame"' in

¹ *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 4; 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4; 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

² *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.

Dikidion, while their captors treat them abusively. ‘Multitudes | Of people throng
Dikidion’s guarded streets, | All curious to behold the luckless serfs’. The prisoners
narrowly escape mobbing, and are incarcerated in the ‘dungeon’.

After three days, Memnon and Helen appear before the ‘State tribunal’ as
witnesses against Damon and Cleon. Dikidion’s citizens throng the ‘Judgement Hall’,
the majority baying for the blood of the two slaves. Helen is dressed in ‘heavy
mourning weeds’, and ‘on solemn oath’ both Memnon and she ‘Declare the
bondsmen guilty of the crime | Of murd’ring the ill-fated Zenzema’. Memnon’s
‘crafty testimony on the judge, | And on the peers, and on the multitude | Assembled
in the Judgement Hall, prevails’. The citizenry clamours loudly for the death-sentence
to be passed.¹

This is the last part to be published in *Ilanga*, but the poem is far from complete.
Part 20 finds the assassins arraigned before the Dikidion judge, but no sentence is
passed upon them. A full treatment of the slaves’ fate would bring the poem to a neat
conclusion, since the title purports to cover a narrative in which the innocent are
‘doomed’ or ‘damned’ in place of the guilty. We would also expect to witness at least
some fulfilment of Zenzema’s prophecy that ‘Thro’ torture’ Helen is to meet her
‘doom, | Together with [her] chosen mate’, and that Death will ‘ruthlessly annihilate’
‘each babe that fills [her] womb’.² This is likewise true of Zenzema’s prophecy that
Memnon will ‘meet | A doom, in horror far exceeding’ that which Memnon has
inflicted upon him, and that Zenzema will ‘unceasingly torment, and hound’
Memnon, wheresoever he attempts to flee.³



As with ‘Melia and Pietro’, the backdrop to ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ is an intriguing
amalgam of Classical and colonial. The opening lines trace the geographical setting.
Although non-specific, it is almost recognizable as one of the remoter western parts of
Natal in the foothills of the Drakensberg:

Within a grove of wattles, and of pines
Upon the crest of yon hay-scented hill,

¹ *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

² Pt 11, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 14, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4.

Far, far remov'd from noise of busy towns,
 A lonely farmhouse built of iron stands.
 This homestead over which the mountains frown,
 The purity of upland air enjoys.¹

Grendon visited the rugged country around Bulwer, in Natal, in mid-1903.² In 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas', which came out of that visit and is Grendon's only extant topographical poem, the speaker rises, 'the splendours of Natalia's west | To view'. His upland route takes him 'Past scatter'd farms 'mid wattle groves' (*cf.* 'groves of wattles', above), and 'Proud shaggy Nomandafu's splendours frown' (*cf.* 'mountains frown', above) over the surrounding terrain. 'Kwahlamba'—*i.e.* the Drakensberg range—'blows kisses to the air' (*cf.* 'purity of upland air', above). It seems altogether possible that Grendon modelled his setting, in part, on his experience of this region.

A vaguely Natalian setting is further suggested by the fact that after assassinating Zenzema, Cleon and Damon take flight 'Toward the west',³ and that it is 'westward'⁴ that the crime detectors 'steer'd their course o'er hill and dale' in 'swift pursuit of the twin murderers'. Westward flight would be the obvious course for fugitives from justice in Natal. In colonial times the lands lying beneath the Drakensberg were amongst the last to be settled by colonists. The rugged, sparsely-occupied terrain made this an admirable place to conceal oneself, and the Basuto highlands in the far west might become the ultimate resort for desperate law-breakers.⁵

The 'lonely farmhouse built of iron' could conceivably be one of the prefabricated wood-framed, corrugated-iron-clad, kit-built dwellings manufactured by firms such as E. V. Marsh and Company of Pietermaritzburg, and erected by settlers all over the Subcontinent during the late colonial era, and certainly much in use in south-western Natal. Such structures were often meant to be temporary, until some more substantial edifice could be constructed from local materials. By the close of the nineteenth

¹ Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

² 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas', *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.

³ Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

⁴ Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

⁵ McKenzie, *Pioneers of Underberg*, 3. In terms of Swedenborgian correspondence, flight towards the west might signify a movement towards evil and away from God, who dwells in the correspondential east (Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 476).

century, a ‘grove of wattles’—fast-growing trees introduced from Australia in the 1860s—could often be seen shading an isolated colonial farmhouse.¹

Grendon often wrote in code. Dikidion—the urban seat of justice to which the slaves Damon and Cleon are hauled in order to stand trial—could conceivably be a Classical type of Pietermaritzburg, capital of the Colony of Natal, seat of its Responsible Government, and the location of its Native High Court.



Grendon depicts Helen as a *femme fatale*. Much of the evil wrought in this dramatic poem finds its origin in her—and in her self-loving *proprium*. From the start, her fixed resolve is to act upon her will, and to impose it upon Memnon. She never wavers from her ruinous intent, nor does she appear to suffer either anguish at the gravity of the sins she contemplates, or remorse when once they have been performed. She is a flat—albeit well-delineated—character, inasmuch as she stands throughout for adulterous lust and the aberrant Will. Furthermore, she undergoes little or no psychological transformation throughout what survives of the poem.

Grendon favours Classical names in this poem. Perhaps in naming his female protagonist ‘Helen’, he has in mind the ancient ‘type of female beauty’²—the beautiful daughter of Zeus whose abduction precipitated the Trojan War. This surmise seems altogether likely, since in *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Grendon cites ‘Greek Penelope’ as the paragon of wifely virtue.³

Zenzema is Helen’s tyrannical husband. Like Tyranto in ‘Melia and Pietro’, he rules his household with an iron rod. The etymology of his name is obscure, but appears to have isiZulu roots. We are told that ‘Zenzema’ is a byname that he acquires on account of a dominant characteristic: ‘The lord ’mongst neighbours rude around | Whom he tormented when they pass’d his way, | The nickname Zenzema had rightly earn’d. | Moreover he was somewhat craz’d in brain.’⁴ ‘Zenze’ in isiZulu means ‘flea’.⁵ Zenzema does resemble a hopping, biting flea that plagues everyone

¹ Guest, ‘The new economy’, 319.

² Brewer, *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 72.

⁴ Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ Colenso, *Zulu-English Dictionary*, 700; Bryant, *Zulu-English Dictionary*, 725.

indiscriminately. Since the name is ‘rightly earn’d’, and relates to the ‘torment’ Zenzema meted out to his neighbours, this Zulu origin would seem quite apt. If the name does have an isiZulu root, it is the only one that is not of Classical origin.

In Greek mythology, Memnon is an Ethiopian or Oriental prince. Grendon must have been aware of this, and so the relationship between Helen and Memnon becomes doubly-transgressive—contravening not merely the ‘Marriage Law’,¹ but also colonial society’s unofficial ban on mixed-race sexual unions. The Swedenborgian Wilkinson quotes Homer who describes the Ethiopians as ‘blameless’.² In ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, Grendon describes how the initial ‘uprightness of Memnon’s soul’ is corrupted by Helen’s wiles.³

Grendon’s choice of names for the guilty lovers invites speculation that his poem is to be read on two levels, one of which is a grand allegory. According to such a reading, Memnon may stand for the ‘innocence’ of precolonial Africa, seduced by the wiles and importunities of Europe, embodied in Helen. Notably, of the two protagonists, Memnon lives in greater wealth and splendour. Helen, by insinuating herself into his affection, may stand for Europe’s ‘rape’ of the African Continent and her despoliation of the putative precolonial idyll that Grendon portrays in at least one essay.⁴ Wilkinson draws such a parallel, by likening unequal familial relationships with those between unregenerate races:

In intercourse, too, the male mind dominates rather than marries the female mind. ... [T]he want of appreciation of woman as an integral soul by man, and of man by woman,—and of childhood by adult fathers and mothers, and by adults generally,—is common enough to furnish an illustration of the way in which races incommunicable save by a regeneration of the affections treat each other, when they are brought into close relations.⁵

In a footnote to Part 5, Grendon ascribes the inspiration for one of his couplets to his reading of the Roman biographer, Cornelius Nepos’s *On the Great Generals of Foreign Nations* (1st century B.C.).⁶ Since Grendon appears to have been reading this text at about the time that he composed ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, he may well have lifted

¹ Pt 7, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 185.

³ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁴ Cf. ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 141.

⁶ Pt 5, footnote, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4.

the names of Cleon and Damon—Memnon’s slaves—more-or-less at random from this work. In *Nepos*, Cleon is a rhetorician of Halicarnassus in Caria (vi.3.5) and Damon is an Athenian musician (xv.2.1). Alternatively, Damon’s naming may have been suggested by the Syracusan Damon, who offered to face execution instead of a condemned friend. Such an origin would coincide with the poem’s title—‘For Others Doomed’.



As pointed out in Chapter One, by 1904—when ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ began to be serialized in *Ilanga*—Grendon was well-acquainted with Wilkinson’s *The African and the True Christian Religion* (1892). In it is quoted one of Swedenborg’s ‘Memorable Relation[s] in which the African genius is exhibited in contrast with the European’.¹ This ‘Memorable Relation’ concerns an occasion in spiritual Europe when Swedenborg observed a high-level philosophical contest on the true nature of ‘Conjugal Love’.

In vision, he witnesses four divinely-directed despatch riders sent out to summon all the wise men of Europe to a convocation whose object is to ‘solve the secret “Of the Origin of Conjugal Love, and of its Virtue or Potency”’.² A precious diadem will be awarded to whichever national team answers truly. In response, the wisest spiritual Spaniards, Frenchmen, Italians, Germans, Dutchmen, English, Swedes, Danes, and Poles assemble in conference.³

The delegates deliberate in separate conclaves for three hours before submitting their answers in writing. Each of these is read in turn. All the contestants tender answers that are off the mark. Some see conjugal love as a time-honoured tradition that arose in Mankind’s Golden Age; others see it as a necessary bridle for promiscuity; others as the purification of lust when it becomes focussed in a single object of desire; others see it as a sub-paragraph of the Social Contract; others as a

¹ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 22, *et seq.*

² Quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 22.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 23.

means to ensure the proper education of children and the laws of inheritance. One team even confesses inability to fix on the true origin of conjugal love.¹

At this point, Swedenborg's narrative takes a Cinderella twist, as 'certain strangers from Africa', hitherto unobserved by the contestants, now invoke these 'natives of Europe: "Permit one of us also to proffer an opinion concerning the origin of conjugal love, and concerning its virtue or potency"'.² Permission granted, one of these celestial Africans declares:

You Christians deduce the origin of conjugal love from the love itself, but we Africans deduce it from the God of heaven and earth. Is not conjugal love chaste, pure, and holy? Are not the angels of heaven in it? Is not the human race universal, and therefore the universal angelic heaven the seed of that love? Can any such supereminent thing exist from any other source than from very God, the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe? You Christians deduce conjugal virtue or potency from various causes, rational and natural; but we Africans deduce it from the state of the conjunction of man with the God of the universe. This state we call the state of religion, but you call it the state of the Church. When love is from this source, and as such stable and perpetual, it cannot do otherwise than work its own virtue, which is like it; so also stable and perpetual. Truly conjugal love is not known excepting to those few who are near to God.³

At this, a miraculous Voice intones, 'The diadem must be for the African' (plate 9).⁴ Africa scoops the trophy, because the Africans—more 'internal' than Europe's wisest—apprehend the true origin and character of the conjugal principle.

So in the heavens, from the lips of an African, Swedenborg obtains direct testimonial evidence for his doctrine of conjugal love. From this testimony, several things become clear. Love 'truly conjugal' does not originate in Man but emanates from God Himself, and exists in proportion as a man and a woman are in 'conjunction' with 'the God of the universe'. Those out of harmony with Him cannot enjoy conjugal unions. The Africans also recognize that all angels are imbued with the same conjugal love, and that the entire 'angelic heaven' is populated with the offspring of conjugal unions on Earth. Ironically, while Christians have no comprehension of some of these essential facts, non-Christian Africans are right on

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 103–n. 112.

² Quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 31.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 31–32.

⁴ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 32. Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 114. Some translators render Swedenborg's Latin as 'turban', 'mitre', or 'crown'.

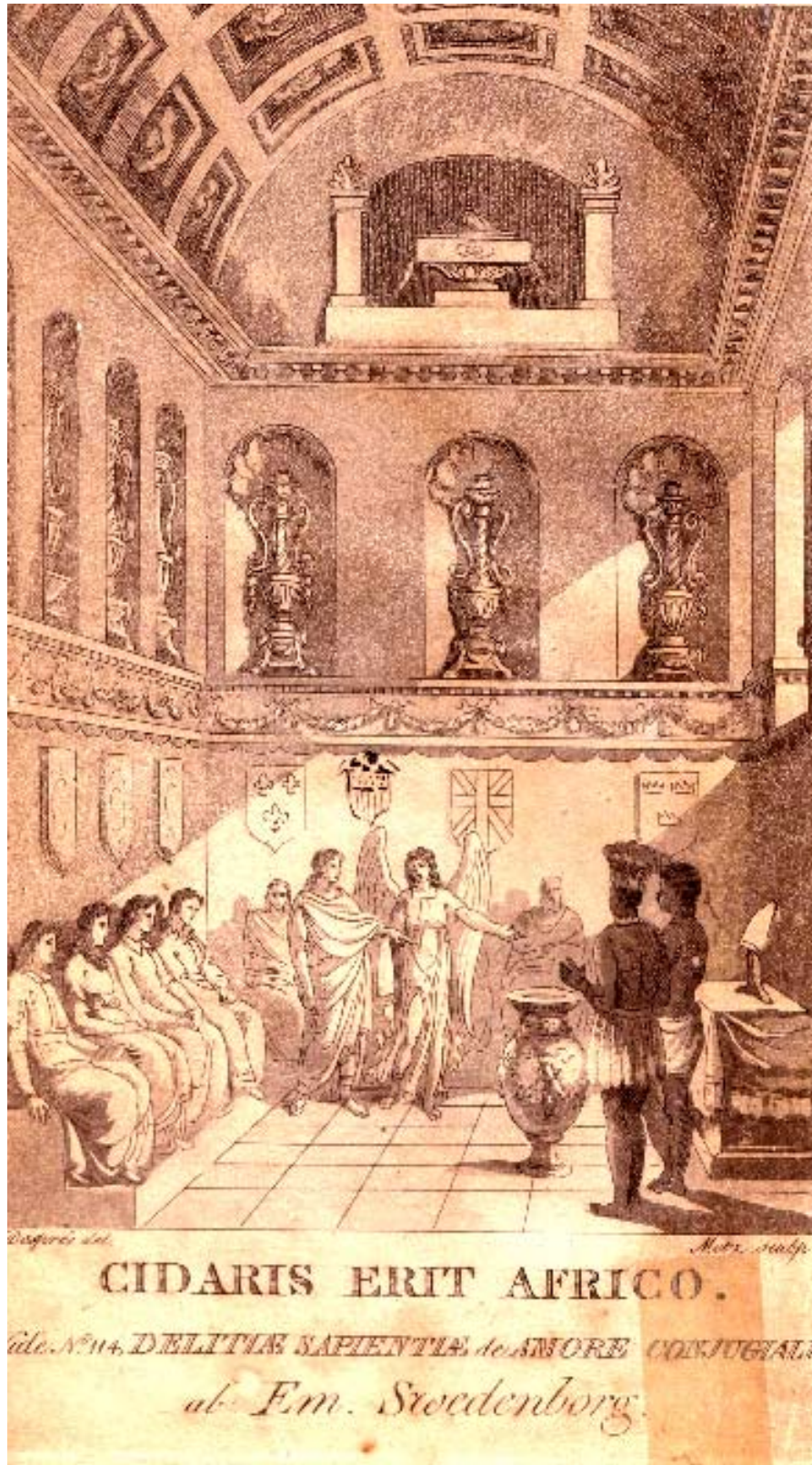


Plate 9

'The diadem must be for the African': Eighteenth-century engraving, illustrating the contest in which Europe's sages fail to define the conjugal principle, but African 'strangers' succeed in doing so.

the mark with their answer, which receives the seal of divine approbation when the diadem is awarded to them.



This narrative occurs in Swedenborg's *Delitiae Sapientiae de Amore Conjugialis* (1768)—a book that caused upheaval in the worldwide New Church community from the 1890s, when some members insisted it be expunged from the inspired canon on account of the perceived immorality of some passages. Its status is still contested.¹ Grendon would have been well familiar with the above passage in English translation, either in the original, or in Wilkinson's text, which quotes it *in extenso*.² In both 'Melia and Pietro' (1897–98) and 'Pro Aliis Damnati' (1904–05), Grendon the African—like the celestial Africans of Swedenborg's vision—presents an African's view of 'the origin of conjugal love'.

The superlative love is the love conjugal—'*amor conjugialis*'. Its 'origin', Swedenborg tells us, is the 'marriage union of good and truth'.³ Such love is perfectly complementary, perfectly balanced. Conjugal partners cannot dominate one over the other: instead they nurture and protect each other, and become increasingly 'one flesh'. 'Pro Aliis Damnati' describes how such love may actuate a woman:

How vast—how infinite is woman's love!—
How steadfast and how true, when it is fed
By like affection in her chosen mate!
She succours her companion 'gainst all foes
And cleaving to his side endures all woes,
And all calamities e'en unto death!⁴

In this passage are two phrases of crucial importance to the definition of conjugal love: 'like affection' and 'chosen mate'. The woman's steadfast, succouring love must necessarily be matched by 'like affection' in her husband. He must also be a 'chosen mate'—a mate of choice. The choice is not her own, nor is it his. Rather, it is the

¹ The paragraphs in Swedenborg's *Conjugal Love* that relate to the Africans' true definition of conjugal love are 113–14. See Chapter 7 for the late-nineteenth-century rift in the New Church community.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 103–n. 114, quoted in: Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 22–32.

³ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 60.

⁴ Pt 6, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4.

prerogative of Heaven. Such is the origin of conjugal love. God weds his Divine Good in a particular woman to his Divine Truth in a particular man. Grendon describes this ‘internal or spiritual or celestial love’ as that which ‘seeks always to be near, and in the object of its affection; to impart and give as much of itself to that which it loves’. This ‘purest’ of loves, he tells *Ilanga*’s readers, ‘is what is termed conjugal love’.¹

In an ideal world, all marriages would be ‘true’ conjugal unions. But Grendon finds this to be a ‘world of carnal affections’², a world in which ‘the *carnal spirit*’³ prevails. In such a world, most marriages fall far short of the ideal. Because they are of human rather than of divine origin, such matches do not endure in Heaven. From the start, both Helen and her husband Zenzema lack true conjugal attachment. Hardened by his abuse, she feels no sympathy for him even when he lies at her feet in his death throes:

Like as a queen in majesty enthron’d,
Her master’s corse she unaffectedly
Surveys. Of true conjugal sympathy
Devoid, and therefore render’d destitute
Of love, upon her throne she sits unmov’d—
Unmov’d externally, yet in her soul
For very joy she leaps.⁴

In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Grendon depicts a similarly disordered marital relationship, in which Kruger’s son suffers ‘the torments, and the tricks, | And wiles of woman destitute of love’.⁵

Helen is described as being ‘destitute | Of love’, *because* she is ‘Of true conjugal sympathy | Devoid’. If a match is not made in Heaven—and hence is not conjugal—its partners cannot complement each other spiritually, and their match cannot last. Swedenborg states that when married partners ‘come into their internal state’ in the World of Spirits, their ‘inclination manifests itself; and if it be in mutual agreement and sympathy, they continue to live together a conjugal life; but if it be in

¹ ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3.

² ‘Justice Only!’ *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 3.

³ ‘The Native Priesthood’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

⁴ Pt 11, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 116.

disagreement and antipathy, their marriage is dissolved'.¹ He further states that 'what is of a similar nature or concordant causes conjunction and presence, and what is of a dissimilar nature and discordant causes disjunction and absence'.² Zenzema and Helen are antipathetic souls on account of internal dissimilarities. Their match is flawed because not founded on the conjugal principle. Helen lacks love for Zenzema because at an even deeper level she lacks 'true conjugal sympathy' as it is described in 'Pro Aliis Damnati', or 'mutual agreement and sympathy', as it is described in Swedenborg.

The polar opposite of conjugal love is adulterous love—or 'scortatory' love, as rendered by the early English translators of Swedenborg's Latin. Grendon's speaker apostrophizes scortatory love: 'Unrighteous, and forbidden love, what lusts | Dost thou within the breast of Man inspire?'³ Scortatory attraction is destructive of the conjugal principle, and the two cannot coexist. Whereas 'Melia and Pietro' seems to represent a conjugal relationship, the attraction between Helen and her Memnon is unequivocally scortatory. Helen, 'thro' lusts, | And cravings summon'd by scortatory love' 'link[s] her faithless self' to Memnon.⁴

Her adulterous embrace is likened to 'some serpent's coil'.⁵ For this image, Grendon draws upon a Swedenborgian correspondence. It has already been shown in Chapter 8 that in general terms, serpents correspond to evil. In 'Pro Aliis Damnati', Memnon finds himself up against the serpent of evil lust. As the Swedenborgian Trobridge states, the 'serpent is a type of ... lust,—of the lower, sensual nature that delights to grovel on the earth'.⁶ In vision, Swedenborg witnessed a cavern filled with harlots and rampant satyrs, whilst 'upon the ground round about the cavern lay a great serpent in spiral foldings, breathing poison into the cavern'. This serpent, Swedenborg explains, is a 'correspondence' of the 'lasciviousnesses' of the cavern's occupants.⁷

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 47.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 171.

³ Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4. It is significant that the poetic speaker represents scortatory love as 'inspiring' 'lusts' in the 'breast of Man'. This is because—according to Swedenborg—all thoughts are *suggested* by influx into Man. Volition is limited to Man's choice between good and evil influxes.

⁴ Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁵ Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁶ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 144.

⁷ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 521.

Another Swedenborgian correspondence is the noisome odour of adultery. Several references are made to the ‘hay-scented’ hill on which Helen’s and Zenzema’s rustic home is situated. After a lewd assignation with Memnon however,

Yon lonely home exhales the putrid scent
Of woman’s treachery. Its windows warp’d,
And doors flung open wide now freely drink
The breath of scented hay.¹

Although none of the lovers’ secret trysts takes place in ‘Yon lonely home’; it nonetheless ‘exhales the putrid scent’ of Helen’s ‘treachery’. Swedenborg learnt from angels that ‘every filthy principle of hell is from adulterers, and it stinks in heaven like putrid mire of the streets’.² In Grendon’s poem, adultery imparts a ‘putrid scent’ to a ‘hay-scented’ locale.

‘Scortation’ is repellent to those who have tasted the pleasures of the true conjugal embrace. But Helen has had no such personal knowledge: her nature is that of an adulteress. All the same, Memnon is not absolved of blame. He would not succumb to her wiles were he and she not of the same fallen spiritual makeup. This is confirmed by Grendon’s anonymous speaker, as he generalizes about the archetypal adulteress:

Her artful words
As gall are bitter; and her very smile
Becomes a horror in the sight of men
Who’ve tasted joys of true conjugal love.
Her mien, and movements nimble fascinate
But them who to herself in soul are kin.
Her touch contaminates with cankerous
Destruction, and her treacherous embrace,
In some commands obedience to her will.³

From the outset, Helen is an incorrigible adulteress. Weak-willed Memnon is egged on to adultery by her. Nonetheless, both ‘in soul are kin’. For this reason, Memnon finds her charms irresistible and does not summarily reject her immoral advances.

¹ Pt 3, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 500.

³ Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

Swedenborg repeatedly makes the point that spiritual opposites repel, while likes attract. Helen and Memnon come together because their sinful *propria* are alike.

The guilty lovers conduct a series of moonlit trysts, both *alfresco* and at Memnon's mansion-hall. Grendon's unblinking depiction of lust and adultery can only have been considered distasteful to the Victorian morality of some of Ohlange's white missionary friends. At times, his descriptions seem almost voyeuristic, a quality which—strange to say—they share with a few passages in Swedenborg's writings. More than once the poetic speaker invites his auditor to allow the gaze to penetrate some murky bower where Helen and Memnon drink their fill of adulterous love:

In yonder nook beneath a spreading pine,
Where hideous darkness densest sits, two forms—
A woman, and a man are faintly seen.
'Tis Helen, and the youthful Memnon lock'd
Within each other's arms. Oh lustful scene!
...
Be still, oh darkness! Hide me, thou, from view,
That I may watch these traitors to the end!
See, how forbidden kisses they exchange.¹

The speaker describes how a 'twinkling star o'erhead, with silv'ry rays | Pierced thro' that pine-tree bow'r, where they were hid, | Surveying all their naked wickedness'.² On a later occasion, we are invited to 'Behold' how the predatory Helen closes on her 'victim', and then to 'See' how 'the twain ... now embrace, sweet kisses to exchange, | And mad affection to confirm and seal'.³ And still later, having engineered Zenzema's assassination, the lovers stand at the 'massive doors' of Memnon's 'mansion-hall', 'shamelessly embracing', while 'they | Of love dishonourable take their fill'.⁴ In passages such as the above we discern Grendon's unflinching determination to represent 'scortatory' love in all its grossness, excess, and sensuality.



¹ Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

² Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁴ Pt 12, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

In *Conjugal Love*, Swedenborg finds several causes of marital breakdown that are ‘just causes’ of separation, divorce, and concubinage.¹ Helen identifies three of them:

Women, when they once grow cold
 To their husbands never hold;
 And when Want arrests their sight,
 Then Love flaps her wings for flight.

Women, who with mad men mate,
 Soon reject their love for hate;
 They, whom husbands faithful deem,
 Oft with scoundrels plot, and scheme.

Women childless by their lords
 Often sever wedlock’s chords;
 Often bring forth bastard seed—
 Proof to damn their secret deed.²

In these three stanzas, she cites in turn three causes of marital breakdown: sexual frigidity, insanity of one partner, and barrenness.

Swedenborg states that when a wife discovers frigidity in her husband, it

communicate[s] its cold, first to the interiors of the mind, afterwards to the breast, and thence to the ultimates of love which are appropriated to generation; and these being affected with cold, conjugal love would be banished to such a degree, that there would not remain any hope of friendship, of confidence, of the blessedness of dwelling together, and thence of the happiness of life; when nevertheless wives are continually feeding on this hope.³

A prominent cause of ‘cold’ is ‘a striving for pre-eminence between married partners’.⁴ This is a pronounced characteristic of Helen and Zenzema’s relationship, and Helen’s coldness toward Zenzema arises in part from his insistence upon husbandly ‘pre-eminence’.

Insanity is another of the barriers to conjugal love noted by Helen. She warns Zenzema that wives ‘who with mad men mate, | Soon reject their love for hate’.

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 234, *et seq.*, n. 470, *et seq.*

² Pt 5, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 167

⁴ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 234.

Zenzema himself is ‘somewhat craz’d in brain’¹—‘crazed unto the core’, to quote Helen.² Swedenborg states that ‘a wicked person internally is insane’,³ and Zenzema’s insanity and wickedness do seem to be interconnected. Conjugal love is the union of two minds to form a single Mind—Will and Understanding, female and male. Zenzema’s insanity precludes such union. Swedenborg finds among the ‘just causes of separation from the bed and the house’ such ‘vitiating states of mind’ as ‘madness, frenzy, furious wildness, actual foolishness and idiocy’, *etc.*⁴

Barrenness is the third of Helen’s Swedenborgian grounds for marital separation. Besides being void of ‘true conjugal sympathy’, Zenzema and Helen’s marriage of ten years has failed to produce a child. Because conjugal marriages are ‘the seminaries of the heavenly kingdom’,⁵ barrenness becomes a major obstacle to the operation of the conjugal principle. The hope of conception ‘nourishes and strengthens ... conjugal love’,⁶ and yet Zenzema and Helen are ‘with progeny | Not bless’d’.⁷ The speaker instructs us in the (supposed) general principle that

A wife who is with progeny unblest’d,
Toward her lord a mask’d soul oft assumes;
And she doth ever with some rascal plot,
To satisfy the worm within her heart.⁸

This couple’s love is at no stage conjugal, and their childlessness serves only to underline the fact. Helen cries:

I loathe my husband, and my lord;
His loveless law I’ve long defied,
For children—woman-life’s reward—
Thus far are unto me denied.⁹

Swedenborg teaches that an infant’s soul derives from its father.¹ Perhaps this is why the blame for Helen’s barrenness is laid upon Zenzema. By engineering her

¹ Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

² Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 48.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 470.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 481.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 254.

⁷ Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁸ Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁹ Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

husband's death, and then by marrying Memnon, she hopes that her womb will finally be fruitful. When the murder is performed, and with the hope that Memnon will father her children, she exults:

Henceforth, all barrenness,—begone!
 Henceforth raise I Thanksgiving's Song!
 Henceforth will be conceived, and born
 To me a race for which I long!²

But Heaven is not populated by means of adulteries, and her optimism is unfounded. Zenzema, prematurely shorn of his body, predicts that 'each babe that fills [Helen's] womb' will not survive.³

Coldness, insanity, and inability to beget children—these then are Helen's three objections to marriage with Zenzema. They happen also to be amongst Swedenborg's list of the causes of 'legitimate separation'. They are of course no ground for adultery or murder, and neither Swedenborg nor Grendon represents them as such.



Within the Swedenborgian schema,

the essence and origin of true marriage is the union of love and wisdom, and from this union all created things exist and are sustained. With mankind these elements are unequally distributed, love being predominant in the woman, and wisdom in the man, and it requires that the sexes should be united in order to achieve the full development of human possibilities. Human marriage is thus the union of love and wisdom in a finite degree.⁴

Of course, the 'marriage' of love and wisdom must also be actualized within each individual human subject—this is the essence of 'regeneration'. Swedenborg finds this lesson taught allegorically in the narrative of Adam and Eve, who 'are not to be regarded as two individuals', but 'are representatives of the race, or of human nature in the abstract, Adam standing for its intellectual, and Eve for its emotional, side'.

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 206, n. 238.

² Pt 11, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 11, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁴ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 186.

This explains why ‘the woman was first tempted, and through her the man: it is desire that leads a man astray and warps the judgment to its wishes’.¹

Swedenborg identifies the Will primarily with the female, and Helen’s sin is a consequence of that female Will gone awry. It is epic in its consequences because, like Eve’s, it sours the lives and prospects of others who become implicated in it. Her ‘great beauty’

was destin’d to become ere long
The cause of death unto her lord; and grief,
And woe, and bitter anguish to herself,
And to her paramour; and unto them
Who play’d a bloody part on their behalf
Damnation coupled with a death of shame.²

This concept is at the core of ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’. Helen is singularly *wilful*: at all times, her aim is to bend her lover into conformity to her will. Memnon is more cautious, more intellectual, and his initial scruples—ultimately overridden by his lustful love—anticipate the fearful consequences of compliance with Helen’s entreaties. Grendon’s protagonists—male and female—conform closely to Swedenborg’s model of the complementary character of the sexes:

For the man is born to be intellectual, thus to think from the understanding, and the woman is born to be voluntary, and thus to think from the will; and this is evident from the inclination or connate disposition of each, as also from their form. ... [T]ruth and faith are of the understanding, and good and love are of the will.³

In a balanced conjugal union, female Will and male Understanding are knitted together harmoniously. But where a woman’s will overrides a man’s understanding, as Helen’s does, the relationship is unbalanced, and cannot survive. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, we are invited to

¹ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 144–45.

² Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 368?

BEHOLD a jealous baffled woman's ways,
 Who strives what destiny forbids to gain.
 How awful, treach'rous, wilful she becomes!¹

In 'Pro Aliis Damnati', a similar generalization appears where we are informed that 'woman strong in will brooks no defeat'.² 'Oh what can check a woman's firm intent?' inquires the speaker rhetorically, when Helen's 'courage, and her strength of will are rous'd'³ by Zenzema's brutality and by her lust for Memnon.

Grendon's poetic lovers experience a lopsided union. She employs deceit and her external beauty to win his obedience. Essentially, Memnon becomes Helen's dupe:

This youthful swain did she with honey'd words
 At length beguile, and his unspotted soul
 Did she pollute, that at her haughty nod
 He'd rise, and for her sake accomplish ill.⁴

She muses that her 'embrace and kisses sweet | Will mould [Memnon to her] will'.⁵ When these appear to fail, she draws a 'bright dagger' which she threatens to use on her lover. This weapon, she tells Memnon, 'Will transform thee to my will'.⁶ Memnon recognizes that he has fallen foul of an unequal relationship and relinquished his manhood:

Ye pow'rs of Hell, oh testify
 To this dark scene of ill;
 And witness that henceforth am I
 A slave to woman's will!⁷



Swedenborg does not rest with a simple condemnation of adultery. Instead, he takes pains to grade or classify various species of the genus, finding 'four degrees of adulteries, according to which they have their predications, their charges of blame, and after death their imputations'. Of these, the least offensive are 'adulteries of

¹ *PKD*, Pt XXIII, p. 64.

² Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 7, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁴ Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ Pt 3, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁶ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁷ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

ignorance’, while the most heinous ‘are adulteries of the will, which are committed by those who make them lawful and pleasing, and who do not think them of importance enough, to consult the understanding respecting them’.¹

Helen’s and Memnon’s adultery is aggravated by their knowing complicity with Hell. When Helen supplicates the ‘Pow’rs of Hell’ to ‘sanction, and precipitate | [Her] hateful husband’s end’,² her ‘pray’r on evil wings is borne | Unto the “Throne of Ill”’. Because of her pride, she will never be able to retract that ‘murderous invocation’.³ Her adulterous love is certainly of Swedenborg’s fourth degree—an adultery ‘of the Will’. Her corrupted will is thoroughly implicated in it.

Memnon’s adultery is also that of an aberrant will. With stunning brazenness, he swears to Helen:

Love—I dreaded heretofore
To offend the Marriage Law;
But the same I’ll violate,
Notwithstanding direst fate!

He next bids adieu to ‘Uprightness’:

Uprightness,—thou matchless crown—
Henceforth I must lay thee down!
Beauty doth my soul incite
To destroy thee now outright!⁴

Fully conscious of the gravity of his evil resolve, Memnon launches himself into the hells reserved for adulterers and murderers. The words of his evil vow

wing their rapid flight
Like shooting stars, to strike in vain the walls
Of Heav’n; to be from thence repell’d; to fall
In their descent upon the floor of Hell.
And find ’mid devil shouts a welcome there.
All Heav’n looks down in pity on the scene;

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 478.

² Pt 3, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁴ Pt 7, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

All Hell's apostate devil-hosts rejoice
 In this their conquest of twin human souls.¹

While Heaven pities, Hell rejoices. This picture is not figurative: it is quite literal. Grendon sees error-prone humans on earth poised between the influences of Heaven and Hell. In the case of Memnon and Helen, Hell scores a victory over Heaven when they sell themselves to Evil. This is a conquest for Hell.



A balanced appraisal of Grendon's writing cannot ignore traces of misogyny. These are not confined to a single poem. In 'Pro Aliis Damnati', we read that 'A faithless woman's conscience knows no fear',² and the rhetorical question is asked: 'What secret can in woman's breast lie hid, | And not some day be nakedly reveal'd?'³ It seems that in Grendon's estimate, women have little control over their tongues. The omniscient poetic speaker enumerates historical precedents to support this imputation:

The Mother of Mankind by serpent charms
 O'erpower'd, parting with the Key of Bliss
 In Eden, paved the way for Adam's fall.
 Her frailty by transmission tainteth all
 Her daughters in a high or low degree.
 Delilah, the Philistine traitress wrought,—
 By violating trust in her repos'd—
 The downfall of her most illustrious lord,
 Manoah's luckless, giant-mighty son.
 Accursed fool, imperil not thyself
 By stooping to the error that constrain'd
 The Roman Cato to repent that he
 To woman e'er a secret did confide;
 And strive the great Napoleon Bonaparte
 To imitate, who never deign'd to trust
 His secrets to his consort Josephine!⁴

During one of their secret trysts, the lovers are able to meet because Zenzema is 'absent from his home, as is his wont'.¹ *Paul Kruger's Dream* similarly implies that in

¹ Pt 7, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Pt 5, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 4.

⁴ Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 4.

the absence of their husbands, women incline towards infidelity. By separating husbands and wives, the South African War conduces to adultery:

The love 'twixt husbands, and their wives
This horrid war will blight;
 Amongst you many stand, whose lives
 Now prosperous, and bright,
 Must darken. Women soon prove blind,
 When husbands absent be;
 Few—few as true, and firm—we find—
 As Greek Penelope.²

Helen is no Penelope. Her great beauty is her tragic undoing. In the life hereafter—according to Swedenborg—outward beauty becomes an unfailing indicator, by way of ‘correspondence’, of Man’s angelic character. Then, the evil appear hideous, and the good beautiful. In our deceptive natural world, however, we live with the unsettling reality that external loveliness may mask a devil. When the fleshly mask is put aside in death, semblances can no longer be maintained. Swedenborg states that

after death it frequently happens that deformed women become beauties, and beautiful women become deformities. ... [A] woman before marriage is desirous to be beautiful for the men, but after marriage, if she be chaste, for one man only, and not for the men. ... [I]f a woman after marriage is desirous to appear beautiful in like manner as before marriage, she loves the men, and not a man: because a woman loving herself from her beauty is continually desirous that her beauty should be sipped; and as this no longer appears to her husband, ... she is desirous that it may be sipped by the men to whom it appears. It is evident that such a one has a love of the sex, and not a love of one of the sex.³

This describes Helen’s self-love. She is ‘desirous to appear beautiful in like manner as before marriage’. At the poem’s outset, we are informed that ‘The lady, Helen, was a handsome dame. | To her, great beauty was a constant snare; | And to some neigh’ring swain temptation sore.’⁴ Memnon, in turn, becomes

¹ ‘PAD’, Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

² *PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 72.

³ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 330.

⁴ Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

a slave
 To Beauty—so profane—so vain—so vile—
 So faithless—so inconstant—so perverse—
 Yet so entrancing,—so superlative.¹



All told, there are thirty occurrences in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ of the words, ‘hell’, and ‘hellish’. Swedenborg formularizes that ‘the love of adultery is from hell and returns to hell, and the love of marriage is from heaven and returns to heaven’.² He finds Heaven and Hell to be, not merely future states, but also present internal conditions in every man and woman. When the body dies and a seal is placed upon probation, each Man gravitates towards the heavenly or hellish spirit community that most closely resembles his or her internal heaven or hell. For this reason, Grendon several times refers to humans as ‘devils’ or ‘angels’. Their hellish or heavenly internal states are indicators of what they must enjoy or suffer hereafter.

In Swedenborg’s writings, ‘Heaven’ and ‘Hell’ are terms to describe the disembodied denizens of that world of ‘state’ beyond—yet contiguous with—the realms of material time-space. It is in those spiritual regions that ultimate causes arise. Every event in our material world is phenomenal—the response to some heavenly or hellish cause. On earth, Man has dual citizenship—he ‘inhabits’ the realms of infinite world of state, and the finite world of space and time. While Helen and Memnon dwell in material time-space, they simultaneously occupy hell or heaven in no less ‘real’ a sense.

Grendon acknowledges the existence of an internal ‘hell’. Helen wails that ‘human language cannot paint | The seething hell that [she] contain[s]’.³ While he heeds the voice of conscience, Memnon appeals to her: ‘E’en tho thou dost a hell contain, | Respect thy marriage vows!’⁴ When Helen prepares to seduce Memnon, ‘All Hell doth ... her soul invade’.⁵ Even while in the flesh, she suffers exquisite pain as a

¹ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 478.

³ Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

direct consequence of her evil. Breaking down before the ‘crime-detectors’, she confesses,

I’m filthy beyond cleansing—lost
 Beyond redemption. Captive bound
 By vile, and shameless love, I’m toss’d,
 And hurl’d to Torture’s depths profound.¹

The tool villains, Damon and Cleon, incarcerated for the murder of Zenzema, similarly suffer ‘the torturings of hell | Within themselves’.²

Grendon finds the fallen world hellish, yet he yearns for its transformation into a heaven. In this poem, Memnon muses:

Oh may the day not distant be
 When Man his back shall wholly turn on Sin!
 This mighty transformation will blot out
 The Tempter’s work. Then Hell will be a Heav’n.³

The idea that Heaven and Hell inhere in the natural world occurs also in Grendon’s poem, ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, where he makes the earnest plea to South Africans:

And oh for GOD ALMIGHTY’S sake
 May ye be drench’d with purer leav’n;
 Thereby will ye be cleans’d to make |
 OF HELL-PERVADED EARTH A HEAV’N⁴

When Hell ‘pervades’ individual men and women, it likewise permeates what Grendon variously describes as ‘the Body Politic’⁵ and ‘the Body of Man Universal’⁶—the *Maximus Homo* of Swedenborg—of which individual men and women are constituent parts.

¹ Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.

² Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

³ Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

⁵ ‘Gen. Smuts Answered’, *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5. Republished from *Abantu-Batho*.

⁶ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

Although Swedenborg's Hell is self-inflicted, and God casts no-one into it, this in no way diminishes its horrors. It is excruciating and eternal. 'Conscience' warns Damon and Cleon that the murder they contemplate leads inevitably to Hell:

Go EXECUTE THE DEED; which freedom both
Of choice, delight, and lustful love demand;
But know that ye by falsities are spur'd,
And lur'd to torments that ye know not of;
GO EXECUTE THE DEED, and unto Hell
Direct your course! There shall ye meet with souls
With like affections, who at first will seem
Your friends, but in the end will prove to you
Malignant foes, subjecting you to dread,
Eternal, and excruciating pain;
GO EXECUTE THE DEED!—and pave your way
For tortures, which the soul of Man afflict
In Hell's infernal, and infinite Fire!¹

Here, we encounter several features of Swedenborg's theological system. 'Freedom of choice' is the only freedom that humans have. Alternative courses are continually laid before them, and they must make their choice. All human volition begins and ends in such choices. Helen, Memnon, Damon, and Cleon all have to make moral choices, and all choose badly. All steer a course toward Hell; all are inundated with devils.

Conscience speaks also of 'delight', which in Swedenborg's writings is the central desire that occupies and defines each soul—residing in its deep recesses. On Earth, humans have the capacity to conceal this 'delight' from others—even from themselves—but it becomes manifest in the hereafter. Helen's and Memnon's delight is adulterous union; Damon's and Cleon's is the proffered reward of gold.

Conscience further warns the slaves that in the Hereafter they will meet in Hell 'with souls | With like affections'. This is pure Swedenborg. He teaches that each separate hell is a spiritual society made up of those cast together by the coincidence of their wicked loves. Adulterers of the different degrees will be drawn to the society of those who share their particular, agonizing strain of lust. By an inevitable process,

¹ Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

individuals containing internal hells gravitate towards these societal hells. They find no solace in these evil societies, because every man and woman is enemy to every other, and the fires of evil and of impossible lust are never extinguished within them. The enmity they encounter in the hells serves only to accentuate their anguish and pain. Conscience prophesies for Damon and Cleon that in their particular hells, they will encounter others of like mind,

who at first will seem
Your friends, but in the end will prove to you
Malignant foes, subjecting you to dread,
Eternal, and excruciating pain.¹

The disembodied Zenzema warns the adulterers that they will pass disconsolate through Swedenborg's multiple hells,² tortured by their 'damned associates':

Yea ye have pledged your souls unto a love,
That leads to sorrows fierce, and infinite,
And tortures fearful and invincible.
From hell to hell ye'll wander hand in hand
In quest of vain relief; and mock'd, and hiss'd
By damned associates in those gloomy pits
Ye'll woo damnation everlastingly!³

As Zenzema's prophetic words make clear, the torturous consequences of evil-doing are inherent and inevitable. God has neither need nor inclination to actively punish the wicked. Each sin is inextricably bound up with its own 'punishment'. The quality of 'love' to which Helen and Memnon have 'pledged [their] souls' 'leads' inexorably to tortures—self-imposed alienation from the Light of Heaven. Zenzema's prediction that the adulterers will continue to 'wander hand in hand' 'From hell to hell' embodies Swedenborg's teaching that 'the mutual and reciprocal love of the sex remains with men (*homines*) after death'.⁴

Conscience predicts for wilful evildoers, Damon and Cleon, 'Hell's infernal, and infinite Fire'. This is not the conventional subterranean Inferno of Dante. In his elegy

¹ Pt 11, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Paley ('A New Heaven Is Begun', 79) remarks that Blake's 'plurality of hells' derives from Swedenborg. The same is true of Grendon.

³ Pt 15, *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 37.

for Michal Nkosi, Grendon denies the existence of a ‘Hell with finite and material flame’. This is because ‘No infinite, immortal Spirit’s frame | Can lastingly be damned by finite law’¹—and material fire cannot inflict harm upon spirit which is infinite. He rejects the materiality but not the sufferings of Hell. In his elegy for Elias Tshabalala, he makes the identical point: ‘Material fire—this we maintain— | Doth not the Spirit here torment, | For such produces finite pain’.²

The torment of violated Conscience constitutes ‘hellfire’ in ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’. Having yielded to a course of wickedness, Damon and Cleon find that they cannot escape the agonizing consequences of their wrongdoing by fleeing the physical scene of their crime. Conscience burns as hell within them:

From Conscience, and from Self ye’re never free;
And these twin judges are a million-fold
More fearful than the sternest earthly judge;
And torture born of them is awful more
Than all the torments of the guillotine.
The Body’s chastisement is swift, and brief,
But that which doth the Soul of Man afflict
In this, and in the world to come, is slow,
And spans the past, the present, and the time
To come.³

Swedenborg’s doctrine of Hell—adopted by Grendon—serves to absolve God of charges of cruelty and vengefulness in meting out torment to malefactors. It does nothing however to diminish the horrors of Hell.

If earthlings contain ‘heavens’ or ‘hells’ within, they are classified respectively as ‘angels’ or ‘devils’. Swedenborg reports an angel’s declaration that ‘so far as man does good and believes truth as if from himself, he is an angel of heaven; while so far as he does evil and therefrom believes falsity, which he also does as if from himself, he is a spirit of hell’.⁴ Furthermore, ‘every man in respect to his spirit, even while he is living in the body, is in some society with spirits, although he does not know it; if a

¹ ‘In Memoriam, Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

² ‘In Memoriam, Elias Tshabalala’, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 621.

good man he is by means of spirits in some angelic society; if an evil man in some infernal society; and after death he comes into that same society'.¹

Memnon, 'who heretofore an angel seem'd | Thro' Beauty's charms a devil soon becomes'.² He is 'spurr'd | By devil passions',³ 'Possess'd by devil multitudes';⁴ he is a 'man in devil shape, and devil in | The form of mortal man'.⁵ In the final surviving part of the poem, he is described as 'The devil Memnon' who 'sold his soul to ev'ry wickedness'.⁶ And he is fully conscious of the potent invisible forces that compete for his soul:

Twin powers—'God', and 'Devil', now
Each seeks to win me for himself; but since
By nature I am devil, t'were a task
Not easy of accomplishment to range
Myself upon the side of God.⁷

Having passed the point of no moral return, he urges Helen: 'Devil thou—and devil I—| Hand in hand let us advance'.⁸ After Damon and Cleon undertake the murder of Zenzema, they too become 'devils in the form of men'.⁹

The same Swedenborgian language emerges in others of Grendon's poems. In *Paul Kruger's Dream*, President Steyn 'feign[s] an angel's face', but plays 'a devil's part'.¹⁰ In 'To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', the 'wranglings, and disputes' that have beset race relations for 'centuries' and 'whose bitter fruits | Breathe poison e'en in this our day', are described as '*These devils*, which do men incite | Brute passions to betray'.¹¹



¹ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 438.

² Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 7, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁴ Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁵ Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁶ Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁷ Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁸ Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4.

⁹ Pt 10, *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4.

¹⁰ *PKD*, Pt XXII, p. 63.

¹¹ 'To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ is much more than a treatise on scortatory love—and this fact is evident in the poem’s title. Grendon supplies his own English translation: ‘For Others Doomed’. The ‘Others’ of this title are Helen and Memnon; those ‘doomed’ for them, are Memnon’s slaves Damon and Cleon who, having discharged their master’s commission, are cruelly betrayed by him. By involving the slaves in their own sin, Memnon and Helen ‘hurl’ ‘to destruction such as would, | If left alone, ne’er dream of doing aught | To injure, or ensnare the innocent’.¹ The slaves are hauled before Dikidion’s judge; the lovers escape prosecution.

Grendon has a point to make, and he makes it powerfully. ‘Justice’ is not even-handed in this world. It favours the rich and influential; and comes down heavily on the poor and defenceless. For this reason, ‘tis not easy of accomplishment | For crooked justice great ones to condemn’.² It is a pity that we do not have the poem’s conclusion because although this theme of ‘crooked justice’ is implicit in the poem’s title, it only begins to be developed after Zenzema’s murder takes place.

In much of his poetry and prose, Grendon dwells on the application and misapplication of ‘justice’. In the same issue of *Ilanga* in which Part 7 of ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ appears, he publishes a brief editorial entitled ‘Justice Only!’ In it, he describes the rare magistrate who renders even-handed justice:

He who seeks to be the champion of justice in this world of carnal affections, must forgo the good report and friendship of his fellows. He who strives to the best of his abilities, to purify the atmosphere of life so often soiled by the lusts and evils of self, must be prepared to offer himself as a sacrifice on the altar reared, and dedicated to the god that tramples justice in the mire, amid the adorations of those mortal slaves who swear allegiance to his throne.³

Damon and Cleon suffer the full might of Dikidion’s Law because they

sadly lack

That pow’r—that art,—that lures, and wins the law,
Pollutes,—annihilates the fount of Truth;
And in the dust doth trample Justice down.⁴

¹ Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4.

³ ‘Justice Only!’ *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 3.

⁴ Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

The point that Grendon makes in his prose article is made in blank verse by his poetic speaker. In this world of ‘carnal affections’, obsessed with externalism, Justice miscarries. In ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, he sets out to represent ‘crooked justice’¹—the systemic injustice of the State Dikidion, a name he derives from the Greek for ‘Justice’. The quasi-Classical setting veils thinly Grendon’s indictment of the colonial justice system—particularly that operative in Natal, where, as he frequently observes, justice is not even-handed, and two codes are in force—so-called ‘Native Law’ for the vast majority of blacks, and a version of European Law for whites. Several parallels between the poem and Grendon’s journalism of the same period support the conclusion that ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ is intended to make a political statement about the predicament of blacks living under Natal’s ‘Responsible’ Government.

Memnon reassures Helen that at least in this material world they will escape the consequences of their adultery and murder, because Justice gives no credence to the word of a slave:

Vengeance doth yon serfs pursue,
Sparing her intent on us;
Since the slave’s word ne’er is true,
Justice will our cause befriend.

...

Since they’re slaves, they dare not lay
Accusation ’gainst their lord;
Thus our station clears the way
To confirm our innocence.²

Later, Memnon’s words come back to him, when Helen reminds him that they need not fear, since ‘The bondsman’s word | Cannot o’er ours prevail’.³

In his serialized article, ‘Slavery or Not’, Grendon makes the point that throughout history, slaves have not been permitted to bring court actions against their masters. The ‘negro slave was in status and condition exactly like his ancient ancestors, the Greek and Roman slaves. He was saleable, and punishable at the will of his master. He had no rights—political or otherwise. He could not sue in the courts of law and his

¹ Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4.

² Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4.

³ Pt 19, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.

word was never taken as evidence against a white man.’¹ Of modern-day Russian serfs, Grendon writes: ‘Except only in cases of rebellion or of high treason the accusation of a serf ... against his master is not admitted in courts of law.’² This accurately describes the plight of Damon and Cleon.

In prose, Grendon observes that ‘the evil deed of a black man is in the eye of this world reckoned tenfold more heinous than a similar one committed by a white man’.³ In verse, he says the same: ‘Th’ offences of the sons of Ham, | More heinous ten-fold do appear | Than like misdeeds of Japheth’s seed.’⁴ Damon and Cleon are poetic types of the ‘sons of Ham’. Their ‘misdeed’, grave though it is, was performed at the behest of their master. And yet,

this fickle world
Will damn yon servile creatures, and set free
Yon couple, who incited them by gold
To perpetrate the heinous, bloody deed.⁵

Dikidion’s institutionalized injustice manifests itself in ‘the mighty hall’ of the courthouse, where no-one comes forward to present evidence in defence of the slaves, or in mitigation of sentence. The entire system appears hostile:

And yonder are the peers, on whom it rests
Thro’ evidence to damn them or acquit,
Ah, luckless serfs! No man their cause will plead!⁶

In prose, Grendon denies that a black man is ‘tried by his peers’, since blacks are excluded from serving upon juries:

We fear that the registration of native jurors will never become an accomplished fact in this country. This being the case are we to be forever befooled by that meaningless and foolish theory that a man is tried by his peers. In theory the black man is the white man’s equal before the law. In practice this is strenuously opposed and denied. No such equality exists. Caste spirit

¹ ‘Slavery or Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.

² ‘Slavery or Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:55 (29 April 1904) 4.

³ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘A Plea for Justice’, *Ilanga* 1:24 (18 Sept. 1903) 4.

⁵ Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4.

⁶ Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

rules it out of court. And as long as this spirit reigns the black criminal can never be said to be tried by his peers who actually and practically do not exist.¹

Damon and Cleon are victims of an inherently flawed legal system. They are slaves, whereas the judge and jury are free citizens. The ‘peers’ whose duty is ‘to damn them or acquit’ are not in any true sense *their* peers.



Another of Grendon’s concerns that informs ‘Pro Aliis’ *Damnati*’ is the escalating criminality he observes around him. In an *Ilanga* article, he makes a fervent appeal to fellow blacks to renounce wanton violence, because it serves only to promote fear and the spirit of revenge in whites. This in turn may lead to mob ‘justice’. In particular, he finds fault with Durban’s *amalaita*—described by La Hausse as ‘migrant youth gangs, usually comprising male domestic workers’.² They terrorise Durban’s white burgesses with their nocturnal prowling:

It is madness that impels the ‘leita gangs’ of Durban to masquerade its streets at night with the intention of injuring innocent people; it was madness that incited Makatala to take the life of his master; it is madness that inspires the mob—whether white or black—to violate the law; it will be madness that will call into being in this land the horrors of lynch law. This state of things will surely come if violence and lawlessness on the part of some of our people be not totally repressed.³

As an antidote to such ‘mad’ violence, Grendon offers Education: ‘You, Bantus, seek education. You will never obtain it when and where terror reigns.’⁴ It would seem that where blacks acquire education, the ‘madness’ of violent crime is dissipated. This would appear to explain the ‘untutor’d vapourings’⁵ of Damon and Cleon, who are unconscious of the moral wrong into which they are lured by their master. With chilling bravado, they pronounce their nihilist creed:

WHAT—WHAT TO US, UNTUTOR’D SERFS, IS LIFE?
And what is yonder Future State beyond
The grave? Life here upon this ball call’d Earth
Must be enjoy’d—e’en by the flow of blood;—

¹ ‘Natives and Law’, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4.

² La Hausse, *Restless Identities*, xiv.

³ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁵ Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

What matter, tho' it be the blood of them,
Who're guilty, or of them, who're innocent!¹

Considering Grendon's article about actual conditions in Durban, where violent crime is linked to 'madness' and ignorance, it appears significant that the Damon's and Cleon's moral indifference is twice linked to their being 'untutor'd'—uneducated.

Grendon's warning that the 'horrors of lynch law' might become a familiar feature of Natalian society, as it already is in the Southern United States, must have touched a nerve. Literate South African blacks were aware of 'Jim Crow' legislation and of the mobs of white Southerners who all too often took 'justice' into their own hands and murdered blacks. The *South African Spectator*, for instance, reported 'on the horrors of lynching, one [early issue] listing the names of some 250 blacks lynched in 1897'.²

Like crazed Southerners, the majority of Dikidion's citizens want to take the law into their own hands and execute summary punishment upon the prisoners, Damon and Cleon. As the prisoners are led in fetters to the gaol house, 'The violence of the frenzied mob prevails' and 'Destruction they invoke upon the serfs'.³ At the subsequent trial,

Confusion now ensues, and clamorous threats
Thus thro' the spacious edifice resound:—
'Down—down with yonder dogs! To them extend
No mercy! Down with them! Revenge!—revenge!—
Seize we, and tear them where they stand! The Law
Is tardy—powerless! Let violence
Prevail! Down—down with them!
Revenge!—revenge!'⁴

Grendon here describes precisely the sort of lynch-mob that he warns *Ilanga's* readers will arise unless an instant curb be placed upon the mad gang violence of the *amalaita*. He also vividly describes the mob-mentality of white Natalians, who like their counterparts in the Southern States are disposed to circumvent the due process of law and arrogate to themselves the prerogatives of judge, jury, and hangman.

¹ Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

² *South African Spectator* (23 Feb. 1901), cited in: Saunders, 'F. Z. S. Peregrino and *The South African Spectator*', 85.

³ Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

⁴ Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.



‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ exposes hypocrisy, dissemblance, and double-standards to considerable scrutiny and censure. There are nine occurrences of the words ‘mask’, ‘masked’, and ‘unmasked’, employed figuratively. On various occasions, both Helen and Memnon, to achieve selfish ends, assume a ‘masked soul’.¹ We also learn that one who, according to external appearances, ‘heretofore an angel seem’d’, may subsequently be exposed as a ‘devil’.² Swedenborg explains that ‘in the World’, ‘the spirit of [evil Men] is not open, but is covered over by a mask like that used by actors in theatres’.³

The doctrine of ‘Correspondence’ has a bearing here. Swedenborg takes the human face as a proof in point of this doctrine:

From the human face it can be seen what correspondence is. In a face that has not been taught to dissemble, all the affections of the mind present themselves to view in a natural form, as in their type. This is why the face is called the index of the mind; that is, it is man’s spiritual world presented in his natural world.⁴

The problem with Helen and Memnon is that their faces *have* been ‘taught to dissemble’. Helen’s ‘fair countenance | With smiles alit, strives outwardly to hide | The wild commotion in her throbbing breast’.⁵ Because of this couple’s perversity, the proper ‘correspondence’ between their inner spirits and their natural appearance breaks down. But, in the fullness of time, and by an inviolable law, their true natures will become manifest to external observers, as their outward appearance is made to conform to their evil interiors.

Swedenborg states that this unmasking takes place in the World of Spirits—the transitional state of Man. In ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, it begins sooner. Helen is powerless to stifle her own confession: ‘Mine inmost spirit is at last | In all its hideousness unmask’d’.⁶ The poetic speaker invites us to fix our attention upon Memnon—‘This

¹ Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4; Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 590.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 91.

⁵ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁶ Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 4.

traitor—chip of the Iscariot’, because it will then be observed how ‘all the rottenness of his damn’d soul | Will be unmask’d, and clear to human view!’¹

In a world preoccupied with what Grendon terms ‘materialism and externalism’,² it is inevitable that evilly-disposed humans will dissemble, and that other people will take these masks to be their real selves. ‘Conscience’, for instance, taunts Memnon:

Thro’ judgment wilfully debas’d by man
Shalt thou the penalty of thy dark deed
Escape, and in the world’s esteem be held
Respectable;³

Having committed both adultery and murder, Memnon strives

to defeat the ends
Of Justice, and to prove his innocence,
That he, and his belov’d respectable
In sight of all the prying world might seem.⁴

As Grendon points out, in this fickle world, it is possible to perform the most heinous of felonies, and yet retain the high regard of others.

When once their evil deeds are performed, Helen and Memnon’s most pressing objective is to maintain a semblance of respectability. To this end they are even prepared to sacrifice the slaves, Damon and Cleon. On the day of the trial, they present themselves as witnesses for the prosecution. She—the architect of her husband’s killing—dresses in mourning:

Both Memnon, and his bride-elect attir’d
In heavy mourning weeds, on solemn oath
Declare the bondsmen guilty of the crime
Of murd’ring the ill-fated Zenzema.⁵

Grendon’s Swedenborgianism leads him to mistrust appearances of ‘respectability’. In an editorial, he slates ‘the vice, and roguery of present-day

¹ Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

² ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

³ Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁴ ‘PAD’, Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4.

⁵ Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.

respectability, which corruption you term civilisation'.¹ And he finds polygamous marriage unions, bad though they be, to be 'infinitely better than white-washed, and sham Christian respectability'.² Although he does not spell out his meaning, it would seem from the context that he refers to 'white-washed, and sham' monogamous unions. 'Sham' and 'whitewashed' are precisely the words that Zenzema employs to describe his and Helen's marriage of ten years. Their married 'life has been | A glaring sham', he cries. What 'seem'd Love' at the altar is now proved to be 'whitewash'd Hate'.³



As in the poems 'Melia and Pietro' and *Paul Kruger's Dream*, as well as in much of his prose writing, Grendon finds occasion in 'Pro Aliis Damnati' to rail against Mammon,

who directs the destinies
Of mortal man on this material orb;—
Who purchas'd Heav'n's Eternal King with tin,
And nail'd Him to the Tree of bitt'rest Shame;
And who will work destruction on this earth
By greed accurs'd, deceit, and lust uncheck'd,
Till fickle Man, and glitt'ring gold have ceas'd
To be.⁴

Seduced by the ten talents held out to them by their master, Damon and Cleon become 'Abandon'd to the worship of a Calf'.⁵ In the *Dream*, Mammon is likened to a calf-idol,⁶ and in Swedenborg, a 'golden calf' corresponds to 'the pleasures of the flesh',⁷ which same meaning it carries, along with that of material prosperity, in 'Melia and Pietro'.⁸ In the end, the slaves' hopes of wealth and liberty prove chimerical. The perfidious Memnon withholds the gold he promised, and his tools,

¹ 'Native Reform', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

² 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 14, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4. Interestingly, in *Paul Kruger's Dream*, the aging Kruger, exiled and approaching death, bewails the fact that his 'life throughout was a pretence!—a sham' (*PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 121).

⁴ Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

⁵ Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 38.

⁷ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 849; *Conjugal Love*, n. 535.

⁸ 'M&P', Pt X, *Citizen* 2:49 (18 May 1898) 3.

Damon and Cleon, find themselves ‘Despis’d, rejected, doom’d, and lost in this | Unkindly, lying, lucre-craving World’.¹



‘Pro Aliis Damnati’ presents the same philosophical problem that we first encountered in ‘Melia and Pietro’. It is best expressed in the form of a question: Does Man possess ‘Free Will’, and if he does, what are its limits? On one hand, Memnon muses that even ‘A devil tho’ outcast, and fallen down | Hath also been by Heav’n with pow’r endow’d | To struggle against sin’.² On the other hand, this devil’s ‘pride forbids him to reject his ways, | And turn towards his God’.³ This is the same dilemma faced by Kruger, who describes his internal warring, thus: ‘Most willingly would I atonement make | For my misdeeds t’ward Heav’n’s Eternal King, | But oh, unconquerable Pride forbids.’⁴ Essentially, this is also the problem of Milton’s outcast Satan, whose cardinal error is outrageous pride in self, precluding all prospect of repatriation to Heaven.

Even Memnon has the God-given capacity to ‘struggle against sin’, and yet ‘is powerless to resist’ Helen’s subtle charms.⁵ The inability to ‘resist’ therefore does not reflect negatively upon God’s creative work, but is entirely the fault of Memnon’s disordered *proprium*, or secondary self. He *could* resist *if only* he would choose to do so. However, try as he may, he cannot find it in himself to so choose, because of his infatuation with Helen. As he himself states, ‘Time still remains for me to turn aside | From mine iniquitous intent, and mend | Mine evil ways, but frenzied love forbids’.⁶ This is very like the quandary—moral and theological—faced by Marlowe’s Faustus: that of the ‘Free’ yet unwilling Will. Faustus witnesses Christ’s blood streaming in the firmament, yet is so bound up in his compact with Evil that he cannot procure its saving properties.

What Memnon describes as a ‘struggle against sin’ equates to the Swedenborgian doctrine of ‘temptation-combat’—an essential prerequisite for spiritual regeneration or rebirth. Regeneration cannot occur ‘without temptation-combat, in which a man

¹ Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.

² Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

³ Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 107.

⁵ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁶ Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

struggles to make himself conform to the new as yet unattained goodness defined by truth in his understanding'.¹ Such a man forces 'himself to conform to truth in his understanding, against the affections of his own will. Later, when he begins to find pleasure in living a good life, regeneration has begun. He is being given a new will in place of the old.'²

Memnon has an understanding of what constitutes goodness, but his feeble temptation-combats are quite inadequate to draw this understanding into his will. In short, he cannot muster sufficient resolve to exchange a hellish 'delight' for a heavenly one. Temptation-combat 'is in essence deprivation of delight, which the individual must endure, relying upon the promise of new delight'.³ The 'delight' of which Memnon needs to forcibly deprive himself consists in those 'Pleasures that the soul delight',⁴ 'The ills, wherein Mankind delight'⁵—in particular, the sensual pleasures of Helen's embrace. He will not make this needful choice, and so remains unregenerate and ultimately doomed to Hell. He wages a desultory 'combat' with temptation, but he does not reject evil out of hand, and eventually capitulates, consigning himself to Hell.

Memnon is destined for—but not predestined to—Hell. The various doctrines of Predestination are abhorrant to Grendon, as they were to Blake, and to Swedenborg before him. Swedenborg denies 'the unspeakable doctrine of predestination',⁶ which the faith of the New Church abhors ... as a monster'.⁷ There can therefore be no doubt that Grendon believed in the reality of Free Will. His Durban associate, Harold Attersoll offers the maxim in *Ilanga* that 'because God is voluntary, therefore man is voluntary'; also that 'the voluntary principle includes the power of rational discernment and the decision of choice for the satisfaction of desire'.⁸

In a prose article, Grendon writes that the 'evil which a man commits, is his, and his alone. No man can be held responsible for the voluntary deeds of another.'⁹

¹ Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 26.

² Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 42.

³ Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 35.

⁴ Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

⁵ Pt 19, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.

⁶ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 177.

⁷ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 486.

⁸ 'New Light Rays', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁹ 'A Strange Question', *Ilanga*, 2:61 (10 June 1904) 4.

Although this is not the precise point that he is making, by indicating that a man is accountable for his own ‘voluntary deeds’, this axiomatic statement hints that a man might not be accountable for evil deeds performed under compulsion—*involuntary* misdeeds. In such a case, the crime of the assassins—who are slaves and therefore bound to obey their master for good or ill—seems much less reprehensible than that of Memnon himself, who acts in a state of volitional freedom.



Swedenborgians find fault with the Old Church’s ‘immoral doctrine of salvation by faith alone, which, as destructive of all spiritual enlightenment, is represented [in Revelation] by the monster drawing down the stars with his tail’.¹ They see this doctrine as seeking dangerously to obviate the real need for all men and women to become regenerate through temptation combats while yet upon this Earth. One New Church text reads: ‘Man must use his freedom to compel himself, forming his life to receive good from God. Swedenborg has no use for the psychology of Salvation by Faith Alone as exemplified in the *Westminster Confession*: “Man has lost all ability of will to any spiritual good” (Article IX).’²

Having embroiled herself deeply in wilful sin, Helen asserts spuriously that she may escape the inevitable consequences of her evil by invoking the doctrine of salvation by faith:

A sigh—a pray’r—unto the Throne
Of Love directed will appease
The Judge unerring, who is prone
To utter merciful decrees.³

Helen believes that a prayer of faith will suffice to clear her of the consequences of her wrong choices. She believes that salvation may come to her and Memnon even though they failed to combat temptation resolutely. Grendon’s objective speaker ridicules the implications of her words:

Alas for the Eternal God’s intent
If this blind woman’s doctrine vile—perverse—

¹ Trobridge, *Swedenborg: Life and Teaching*, 149.

² Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 54.

³ Pt 19, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.

Destructive—and most wicked should prevail!
 Alas for God Himself, if faith in Him
 Without a life according to His Word
 Be the condition that the Gate of Heav'n
 To the approach of ev'ry spirit would
 Unbar! Were Helen's vile belief confirm'd,
 Repentance would be then of no avail;
 Mankind would stoop to ev'ry wickedness,
 And their reward would be a crown of Joy
 Hereafter. Thus damnation would be not,
 And Hell which hangs thereon would be a Heav'n.¹

Helen hopes vainly that 'faith in Him' will grant her access to Heaven. Not 'God Himself' can free these sinners from the need to repent and lead 'a life according to His Word'. But it is too late for the lovers to take such a course now. They have crossed their moral Rubicon.

Grendon captures a sense of the agony of temptation combat in a 72-line soliloquy he gives Memnon in Part 8. Memnon is contemplating the murder of Zenzema. He appears to paraphrase the tragic villain Macbeth, who, having launched himself into a course of sin, might as well persist in it, since he cannot now undo the evil he has already done:

I am in blood
 Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
 Returning were as tedious as go o'er.²

Memnon thought pattern is much the same:

I've grieved Heaven by invoking Hell
 To witness what ere long I must commit!
 How can I now retrace my wanton steps?
 I'm doom'd, FOR MURD'ROUS DEEDS I DESTIN'D AM!

He then launches into a piece of specious self-justification worthy of Faustus himself:

Could Christ have ever scal'd the Cross of Shame,
 Had he by Judas never been betray'd?—

¹ Pt 19, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.

² Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, III.iv.136–38.

Could I to bloodiest horrors ever stoop,
 Were I by Fate precipitated not
 Thereto? Like Judas, urg'd by Caiaphas,
 And his assembly of Judaeen priests
 To sell his Lord for gold, am I prevail'd
 Upon by Helen to encompass him—
 My neighbour—who has threaten'd me no wrong—
 No wrong—in either thought, or word, or deed!¹

Memnon's first premise is that Christ 'scal'd the Cross' to save Mankind; his second that Christ would not have 'scal'd the Cross' had Judas not betrayed him. His specious conclusion is that Judas' act of betrayal was ordained, hence unavoidable. Marlowe's Faustus wrests Scripture in much the same way. In a specious syllogism, he makes his first premise the text, 'The reward of sin is death';² and his second premise, 'If we say we have no sin, | We deceive ourselves'.³ From these, he draws the conclusion:

Why then belike we must sin,
 And so consequently die.
 ...
 What doctrine call you this? *Che serà, serà,*
 What will be, shall be?

In *Paul Kruger's Dream*, Mammon beguiles Kruger with a similar gem of speciosity. He argues that he was an indispensable component in the Providential scheme for Man's redemption. Speaking of Christ, Mammon declares:

For when incarnate He became
 To save Mankind from Sin,
 I purchas'd Him—and who'll disclaim?—
 I *purchas'd Him* with tin!⁴

Memnon's excuse for persisting in sin is that he is 'by Fate precipitated'; like Judas he is merely acting out the part foreordained for him. He goes on:

¹ Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Rom. 6:23.

³ 1 John 1:8.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XI, p. 34.

A murderer am I e'en tho' the deed
 Be not committed! I am doom'd, since I
 The law have violated both in thought,
 And word! Twin powers—'God', and 'Devil', now
 Each seeks to win me for himself; but since
 By nature I am devil, t'were a task
 Not easy of accomplishment to range
 Myself upon the side of God. My sins
 O'erwhelm me. How—oh, how can I escape?¹

Memnon recognizes himself as a murderer even though the deed has yet to be performed. He has already 'murdered' Zenzema 'in thought' and in 'word'—giving a solemn pledge to Helen that the murder will be performed. He knows that the act of murder is as good as committed, because sin resides in the *proprium* and not in the natural body, which is merely the agent of the murder. Swedenborg states that one who 'from his hatred burns with revenge, and would therefore commit murder if he were not restrained by civil laws and external bonds, which he fears' is 'continually committing murder', even though not through the body.² 'Since I'm a murderer in thought, and word', Memnon rationalizes, 'Let me a murd'rer be in very deed!'

Swedenborg makes it quite plain that sin in thought is no less grievous than sin in deed, if the only factors preventing the sinner from carrying out his sin are fear of shame, or retribution. So, 'if any one restrains himself from actual adulteries, under the influence of these and like reasons, and yet favors them in his will and understanding, he is still an adulterer'.³ Grendon's speaker concurs:

Who sins in thought doth not escape the law;
 Who sins in thought, and word is damned in deed;
 Who sins in one condemns himself in all,
 And so completes the trinity of crime.
 Such is the judgement of the Law Divine;
 But by the law of Man things are revers'd,
 For then it is the Body—not the Soul—
 That suffers.⁴

¹ Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 531.

³ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 494.

⁴ Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4.

Grendon appends an explanatory footnote to ‘judgement of the Law Divine’:

It is affirmed that he who offends against one commandment offends against all the commandments of the Decalogue. This expression is dark, and does not appear as it sounds. We desire to explain it thus:—He who by purpose, or determination acts contrary to one, acts contrary to all the other commandments, since to act from purpose, or determination is to deny entirely that it is a sin, and if he is told that it is sin, to reject the warning as of no consequence. He then, who denies, and makes a sin a matter of no concern, makes light of everything else that constitutes a sin. The reader is referred to Matt. v. 28; xxiii. 25, 26; and Rom. xiii. 8–10.¹

This footnote is a fairly close paraphrase of Swedenborg’s *Conjugal Love*, which Grendon as usual fails to cite as his source of authority:

It is said in the church that no one can fulfil the law, and the less so, because he that offends against one precept of the decalogue, offends against all: but this form of speaking is not such as it sounds; for it is to be understood thus, that he who, from purpose or confirmation, acts against one precept, acts against the rest; since to act so from purpose or confirmation is to deny that it is a sin; and he who denies that it is a sin, makes nothing of acting against the rest of the precepts.²

Being consumed with adulterous ‘fire’ amounts to being an adulterer; smouldering with murderous hate amounts to being a murderer. The ‘law of Man’ fails to recognize this profound truth, as the speaker makes plain. Men cause ‘the Body—not the Soul’ to ‘suffer’. They give the body stripes; confine it to a material prison; sometimes they destroy it altogether. But as Grendon states in an editorial, ‘human reform must be sought from the internal man, and not from the external’.³

If Helen wages combat with temptation, it is not depicted in the poem, which begins *in medias res*, with Helen already sold to Self. Temptation’s power is therefore to be observed in characters of Memnon, Damon, and Cleon. We watch as together they venture beyond the point of no return, when even ministering angels are powerless to recover them:

And tho’ e’en angels intervene they’ll ne’er
Upon these wanton reprobates prevail;
And being powerless to thwart the ills
About to strike like thunder on the ears

¹ Pt 17, footnote, *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 528.

³ ‘Native Reform’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

Of men, ere long with hearts most sorely griev'd,
 Must be—thro' witnessing the bloody play
 So soon to be enacted—forced to own
 Defeat at the dread Arch-Destroyer's hands.¹

When the hour of reckoning comes to Marlowe's Faustus, he cries in anguish:

Damned art thou, Faustus, damned! Despair and die!
 Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voice
 Says, 'Faustus, come! Thine hour is come.'²

Memnon's lament runs along the same lines when he realizes that he has stepped beyond the point of no return:

In me is evil victorious. Hell
 Hath rooted God from out my soul. I'm damn'd!
 To check my course is now beyond all hope!³

In typical Faustian fashion, Memnon's speech resonates with scriptural borrowings:

I have set
 My heart upon destruction both of soul,
 And body; and I press towards that goal
 Upon a path which loathes a halting twixt
 Opinions twain, and knows no turning back.⁴

The expression, 'destruction both of soul, | And body', derives from Jesus' words: 'And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.'⁵ 'I press towards that goal' appears to be a wicked echo allusion to Paul's words: 'I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'⁶ And the 'halting twixt | Opinions twain' references the rhetorical question addressed by Elijah to idolaters: 'How long halt ye between two opinions?'⁷ Memnon and Faustus quote Holy Writ in the same slick manner.

¹ Pt 10, *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4.

² Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, A-Text, 5.1.

³ Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁴ Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁵ Matt. 10:28.

⁶ Phil. 3:14.

⁷ 1 Kings 18:21.

Memnon next appeals to the heaven within him to abandon him, so that he might perform the heinous crime for which both lust and vengeance call:

Ye flick'ring sparks of Heav'nly Light,
That still do lurk within my heart,
Depart! Abandon me this night,
That I may play my bloody part!¹

There are similar appeals in Renaissance drama, in which the gravity of a villain's contemplated evil is brought home to an audience through a soliloquy in which the character aligns him- or herself squarely with the powers of darkness. Faustus is one example; Lady Macbeth is another, who calls upon attendant spirits to steel her for the evil she has resolved to commit:

Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts! unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top full
Of direst cruelty.²

The 'Heav'nly Light' which Memnon addresses is the Divine Truth that God infuses into human hearts. Swedenborg states that in the Bible 'love is meant by heavenly fire and wisdom by heavenly light'.³ But Memnon is a 'natural man who has become sensual through evils and their falsities [and so] cannot bear a ray of heavenly light'.⁴

¹ Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

² *Macbeth* I.v.40–43.

³ Swedenborg, *Spiritual Life and the Word of God*, Part 4, Section 2.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 254.

CHAPTER 10

A VERY DISSATISFIED MAN

SWAZILAND

He is a very dissatisfied man and cannot agree with other people.¹



While Grendon was editor of *Ilanga*'s English columns (1904–05), the paper gave considerable coverage to the affairs of Swaziland.² In 'Annexation of Swaziland' (September 1904), for instance, he reports 'that Swaziland is shortly to be annexed to the Transvaal'—which by then was a British Colony. In three military campaigns, the Swazi 'proved invaluable allies to the British Nation'; yet, despite their faithful service, they were shabbily treated when Britain abandoned the country to the Transvaal Republic in 1894. She did this despite three separate treaties in which the Swazi 'were guaranteed their independence by the British', and despite 'earnest appeals,—both by petition and deputation' that Britain honour her undertakings to protect Swaziland from Boer aggression (plate 10a).³

For some years following 1894, Swaziland suffered under oppressive Boer rule. Grendon apportions much of the blame to Britain:

Had the British Government upheld the convention which it entered into with the Boers, and honestly clung to those three solemn treaty pledges, which affirmed that 'no inroad on that [Swazi] independence shall be allowed', Swaziland would have been spared the pain of seeing herself preyed upon by those to whom concessions were granted by its king, rendered drunk for this purpose by Boer agents—rendered drunk that he acted in a state of unconsciousness, and without the knowledge of his council or subjects. Had the British Government done its duty,

¹ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437 Police, Inanda, to Magistrate, Verulam, 21 Oct. 1906. Said of Grendon.

² Examples include: 'The Native Question' (10 and 17 March 1905), which quotes at length from the *Times of Swaziland*; 'Notes and Comments' (17 March 1905); and 'Notes and Comments' (24 March 1905). For Zulu-language coverage of Swazi matters, see for instance: 'Ezase Swazini' (29 July 1904).

³ 'Annexation of Swaziland', *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3–4.

Plate 10a: Late nineteenth-century cartoon depicting the 'reward' for Swazi loyalty.



instead of repeating unpardonable blunders a goodly portion of the Swazi people would have escaped the cruelty, the tyranny, and the barbarities of their Boer masters.¹

In this article, Grendon quotes Swazi Prince Longcanga Dlamini,² who led the Swazi delegation to England in 1894. Longcanga said on that occasion: ‘The Boers are old acquaintances of ours. We have known them from childhood. ... We know the Boers, and their government. We do not know what wrong we have done that we should be handed over to such people as the Boers, who are so cruel.’³ Twelve years later, in an *Abantu-Batho* article on Swaziland’s relationship with the Boer-dominated Union of South Africa, Grendon repeats the gist of Longcanga’s statement: ‘The Swazis—as indeed all Bantudom—have “smelt out” the Boers; and having tasted the bitterness of contact with them, they prefer to remain beyond their control.’⁴

In October 1904, just weeks after Grendon’s article appeared, Britain issued its ‘Proclamation No. 3, Swaziland’ (Swaziland Administration Proclamation, 1904), by which Swaziland was effectively subsumed into the Transvaal. The *Ndlovukazi*, Gwamile Mdluli (better remembered as ‘Labotsibeni’, c.1858–1925; plate 10b) was devastated when she learned of it. During the South African War, she had hoped that the British would triumph, and that they would then restore to her and her heirs their sovereignty. She had invited the British to establish Swaziland as a protectorate. Britain chose instead to establish a settler colony, and the precolonial ruling family was stripped of most of its authority. For the next two decades, until her death in 1925, Labotsibeni followed an astute political policy, collaborating as far as possible with the white regime, but taking every opportunity to remind the British of their broken promises.⁵

In December 1904, Labotsibeni met with seventy Swazi chiefs assembled at Zombodze, her royal kraal, to deliberate on the Swaziland Administration Proclamation. Together, they signed a petition to Lord Milner, British High Commissioner to South Africa, in which they protested ‘most strenuously’ against the annexation. The Proclamation would ‘destroy [their] national life and put an end to

¹ ‘Annexation of Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3.

² Grendon gives the name as ‘Nonqanga’; Huw Jones shows it as ‘Longcanga Dlamini’ (Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 111–12).

³ ‘Annexation of Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3–4.

⁴ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁵ Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland*, 185.

Plate 10b: Queen-Regent
Labotsibeni, with her grandson,
Mona (Sobhuza).



[their] separate existence, merging [them] indiscriminately among the scattered tribes of the Transvaal'. The Swazi had 'not merited such treatment' and it would 'bring a stain upon the name of the British Nation so to treat their loyal and faithful Allies'. They called for their 'independence of which [their] Nation [had] hitherto been so justly proud' to be restored to them 'in its fullness'. One of the two witnesses to this petition was Edgar Mini, an Edendale man well-known to Grendon.¹

The Swazi saw annexation as 'a breach of the Conventions relating to Swaziland' and an 'attempt to take away their land'. They resolved to appeal for justice to the King in Council, 'as allies and protected, and not a conquered nation'.² Labotsibeni and her councillors resolved to send a deputation to London, but soon discovered that 'the ports were closed to her'.³ They also decided to send Prince Malunge (c.1881–1915), Labotsibeni's son, to Natal, in order to retain the services of a white solicitor who would represent them before the British-appointed Concession Commission, the purpose of which was to resolve once and for all Swaziland's concessions muddle.⁴

Grendon will have been well-informed on the Swazi protest. He appears to have been in Edendale for a Funamalungelo meeting on 11 January 1905, at which meeting Cleopas Kunene was also present.⁵ Kunene, together with Edgar Mini, were deeply involved in organizing the Swazi protest. From Kunene, Grendon will likely have learnt much about the Swazi reaction to the Swaziland Administration Proclamation. He may have been introduced to Malunge's younger brother, Lomvazi (c.1885–1922), who had enrolled as a scholar at Edendale near the start of the previous year. Lomvazi had been conducted there by Edgar Mini.⁶ If Grendon stayed on in Edendale for a few days, he may even have met Malunge, who arrived there no later than the 15th.

¹ SwNA, J18/1905: extract from *Times of Swaziland* (6 May 1905); SwNA, J18/1905: Petition of Labotsibeni in Council, to Viscount Milner, High Commissioner for South Africa.

² SwNA, J18/1905: 'Swaziland: Strong Native Protest', extract from *Rand Daily Mail* (18 April 1905).

³ SwNA, J18/1905: 'The Passing of a Nation', extract from *Rand Daily Mail* (10 May 1905).

⁴ SwNA, J18/1905: P. C. Dalmahoy (Acting Resident Magistrate), to Honey (Secretary for Swaziland Affairs), Johannesburg, 13 Jan. 1905.

⁵ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4; 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

⁶ Lowe, 'Swaziland's Colonial Politics', 243; Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 111. Lomvazi attended school at Edendale for some months—possibly for a little over one year. Some secondary texts (see for example, Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland*, 72) assume that his elder brother Malunge was also taught at Edendale, but this is not supported by the primary evidence. *Ilanga* (2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 2, isiZulu original) reported that two Swazi princes would be attending the Edendale Institution when classes recommenced the following month and *Ipepa* ('The Swazis and Education',

The fledgling government of British Swaziland, located at Mbabane, a village on the rim of the Highveld, sent word to Natal's Native Affairs Department, asking that a careful watch be kept on Malunge's movements. Whereas Malunge's ostensible purpose in going to Natal was to attend school at Edendale, it was suspected that Labotsibeni 'intended to send him to England secretly'.¹ Natal made arrangements for Malunge's movements to be tracked, so that any attempt he made to embark at Durban could be thwarted.²

This was Malunge's first visit to Natal. He was profoundly impressed by all that he witnessed in the Colony. He travelled from Swaziland to Vryheid, obtained a travel pass, and entrained, in company with a small party of close male relatives. Alighting at Pietermaritzburg, they proceeded immediately to Edendale, where Malunge's brother Lomvazi was still a scholar. Malunge also went on to Durban, and in view of his quest for further education, we may speculate that he visited the famous Ohlange College.³

On 16 January 1905, just five days after the Funamalungelo meeting, Stephen Mini, father to Edgar, presented himself at the Native Affairs Office in Pietermaritzburg to announce the arrival of Malunge and 'eight of his younger brothers', who had 'come to Edendale for the purpose of being educated'. He also added that 'there was a possibility of Malunge himself proceeding to the Cape Colony

4:479 (5 Feb. 1904) 3) duly announced that 'two young Swazi royalties'—'Novanzi' (Lomvazi) and 'Jabhane'—had lately 'arrived at Edendale for the purpose of attending school there'. They were conducted by Edgar Mini. Prince Malunge is not mentioned among the Swazi scholars at Edendale. The article also goes on to report that he was 'proceeding to England shortly to pursue his studies there'. It appears that the nascent British administration in Swaziland communicated to the Natal authorities its concern that the Swazi should not sail to England, for fear they might broadcast their grievances in the Metropolis—in repetition of the 1894 delegation. (NAB, IRD 27, ref. 509/1904: Under Secretary for Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, to Principal Immigration Restriction Officer, Point, Durban, 21 May 1904.)

¹ SwNA, J18/1905: Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, to Governor's Private Secretary, Johannesburg, 13 Jan. 1905; SwNA, J18/1905: Governor of Natal, to High Commissioner, Johannesburg, 27 Jan. 1905.

² SwNA, J18/1905: S. Harrison, Secretary for Native Affairs Department, Pietermaritzburg, to Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, 25 Jan. 1905.

³ 'Isangoma', 'Ezase Swazini', *Ilanga* 2:68 (29 July 1904) 3. The author of this article, who goes by the pseudonym 'Isangoma' (Diviner), was a frequent newspaper correspondent and Zulu-language poet, with close ties to Swaziland and to Natal's *kholwa* community. There is a strong possibility that he was Cleopas Kunene, who at the time was friendly with Grendon. Dyer D. Macebo of Mbabane (letter to the editor, *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 3) refers to Kunene in isiZulu as 'that Sangoma'. Grendon calls Kunene 'our old friend' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4). SwNA, J18/1905: S. Harrison, Secretary for Native Affairs Department, Pietermaritzburg, to Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, 25 Jan. 1905.

or even to England in pursuance of his object'.¹ Mbabane did not however believe that Malunge's purpose in going to Natal was to procure an education. Rather, it was thought that it had 'something to do with the threatened deputation to England'.²

On the 26th, Malunge and two of his 'cousins' applied 'for passes to leave Natal by sea for purpose of proceeding to England to be educated'. It was believed by ministers of the Natal Cabinet that Malunge's object was of a 'political nature'.³ The High Commissioner wrote to the Governor of Natal that 'what these people really intend is political mischief and ... the plea of desire of education is a mere pretext'.⁴ Malunge was told that he should return to Swaziland and apply there for permission to travel to England. He was back in Swaziland by 25 March, but F. Enraght-Moony, Resident Magistrate of Swaziland told his superiors in Johannesburg that he could not endorse Malunge's application to travel abroad, since he was 'convinced his real reasons for wishing to visit England [were] political in connection with the subject of the recent Swazi Petition' against the Swaziland Administration Proclamation.⁵

Though temporarily obstructed in their purpose of sending a deputation to England, Labotsibeni and her council did not give up. In 1907, despite much opposition from Mbabane and from the High Commission, a Swazi delegation headed by Malunge was finally allowed to travel to England.



Grendon was dismissed from Ohlange and *Ilanga* shortly after Dube's return to South Africa in May 1905. From this point until October 1906, there is a hiatus in the archival record of his movements. By the latter date, he had been 'called to Zombodi [Zombodze] as school master by Swazi [queen] regent',⁶ Labotsibeni. However,

¹ SwNA, J18/1905: S. Harrison, Natal Native Affairs Department, Pietermaritzburg, to A. Marwick, Mbabane, 20 Jan. 1905; SwNA, J18/1905: S. Harrison, Secretary for Native Affairs Department, Pietermaritzburg, to Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, 25 Jan. 1905.

² SwNA, J18/1905: P. C. Dalmahoy (Acting Resident Magistrate), Mbabane, to the Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, 18 Jan. 1905.

³ SwNA, J18/1905: Under-Secretary for Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, to Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, 26 Jan. 1905; SwNA, J18/1905: Governor of Natal, to High Commissioner, Johannesburg, 27 Jan. 1905.

⁴ SwNA, J18/1905: High Commissioner to Governor of Natal, 27 Jan. 1905.

⁵ SwNA, J18/1905: F. Enraght-Moony (Resident Magistrate), Mbabane, to Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, 28 March 1905.

⁶ NA, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, to Under Secretary for Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, 16 Oct. 1906

according to an anonymous typescript, Grendon's school for Swazi youths began at Mahamba—a mission station on the Swazi-Transvaal border—before moving to the Zombodze Royal Kraal.¹ Presumably, Grendon came to Mahamba at Labotsibeni's invitation.

It is possible that Grendon moved almost immediately to Mahamba upon leaving Ohlange, and that his outspoken political views and religious heterodoxy contributed to the 'Church row among the Mahamba people', which had begun by early September 1905.² At any rate, with one or two brief absences, he was to spend the remainder of his life—more than half of it—in Swaziland.

It is altogether likely that he acquired much of his knowledge of Swazi history and socio-political conditions through his many contacts within the Edendale community and its diaspora. The Edendale people maintained close ties with Swaziland. Grendon was of course well-known to the Minis—the leading *kholwa* family of Edendale. His association with them stretched back two decades to Zonnebloem, where Stephen Mini appears to have been a fellow boarder with William and Robert Grendon,³ and his brother, William Mini was also enrolled as a scholar in 1881.⁴ The Minis will have known that Grendon was one of very few Zonnebloem scholars to matriculate. His pedagogical talents had also been conspicuous at Edendale, where Stephen was the Christian headman, recognized as such by the Government. The Minis seem therefore to be the most likely means by which the Queen-Regent came to know of Grendon's qualifications. His outspoken advocacy of the Swazi cause in *Ilanga's* columns might also have played a role in Labotsibeni's selection of him to teach the children of royals and leading commoners. And if her sons, Malunge and Lomvazi, met with Grendon at Edendale—as earlier conjectured—then they would have been in position to convey to their mother their personal impressions of the man.

In addition to the Minis, Grendon was well-known to such Edendale people as Cleopas Kunene, the Msimangs, and the family of his friend Simon Nkosi. All of

¹ Anon., 'Early History of Zombode [sic] School', in the possession of Huw Jones, communicated by email, 2 Dec. 2005.

² Swaziland National Archives, J18/1905: Resident Magistrate to Nicholson, 8 Sept. 1905.

³ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 30th June, 1879*, 256: This source shows 'S. Mini' of Edendale together with the Grendon brothers as boarders at Zonnebloem.

⁴ Zonnebloem Papers, D1.2. Relations between the families of Stephen and William Mini appear to have become strained in the early twentieth century (NAB, RSC 1/5/364, ref. 115/1926).

these had strong links with Swaziland.¹ Many Edendale people traced their descent from parents or grandparents who had, along with their missionary James Allison, fled the original Mahamba mission station in southern Swaziland when civil war erupted there in the mid-1840s. The collective influence of Edendale's *amakholwa* upon Swaziland's modernization was profound; some future scholar will find it a fruitful field for research. The Edendale people began to return to Swaziland from the 1870s as advisers to the royals, as interpreters, missionaries, teachers, clerks, and shop assistants, *etc.* In the early twentieth century, this community even produced an lawyer trained in England who would have the Swazi Queen-Regent as one of his clients.²

Christianized Swazi returnees from Edendale kept the Swazi royal circle abreast of affairs in the outside world. The *Ngwenyama*, Mbandzeni Dlamini (c.1857–89) had extensive dealings with such Edendale men as John Gama, Stephen Mini, and Lazarus Xaba. His widow Labotsibeni relied heavily upon the advice, connections, and linguistic and mediatory skills of the Edendale people.³ On the other hand, white colonialists distrusted the Edendale community for the very reasons that Swaziland's traditional rulers valued them. From its inception shortly after the conclusion of the South African War, Swaziland's British administration treated most Africans with Edendale connections as potential firebrands and conduits of dangerous 'Ethiopianism'.⁴

In the late 1880s, Stephen Mini of Edendale had been advisor and secretary to Mbandzeni, who, according to Grendon, was 'rendered drunk' by 'Boer agents', so that he could be cheated into signing away his country's sovereign rights to greedy and underhanded white concessionaires.⁵ Briefly, during the 1890s, Cleopas Kunene

¹ Edgar Mini, son of Edendale's Christian *induna* Stephen Mini, wrote in 1906 of one Solomon Nkosi, the son of Benjamin Nkosi of Edendale, as being present with him in Swaziland. Solomon must therefore have been a brother to Grendon's friends, Michal and Simon Nkosi, whom Grendon refers to in 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi'. (SwNA, J 129/06: Edgar Mini, Mdimba [Mdzimba] Store, to J. M. Parsonson, 16 June 1906.)

² The lawyer, Richard W. Msimang was the grandson of Daniel Msimang—an Edendale pioneer, and pioneer of the restored Mahamba mission in the early 1880s. (SwNA, RCS 333/19: J. J. Xaba to Resident Commissioner, 12 March 1919.)

³ Bonner, *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires*, 63; Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 47; Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland*, 43, 184–85.

⁴ Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland*, 337; SwNA, J211/1903.

⁵ Stephen Mini, as it happened, also used his influence with the king to obtain concessions for himself.

of Edendale had tutored the Swazi princes.¹ Shortly after the South African War (1899–1902), Labotsibeni set up a school at Zombodze for ‘scions of the ruling family’.² Edgar Mini became its first teacher. Although Labotsibeni staunchly resisted conversion to Christianity, she had come to recognize the utility of a Western education—particularly for youths from those families closest to the royal family. She saw literacy as a means by which Swaziland—and the royal Dlamini in particular—might be rescued from the threat of being completely disinherited. Infused with Western learning, she hoped the rising generation of Swazi elite might even discover a key to regaining the land and independence that their parents had lost to white adventurers.

Labotsibeni wanted her school located at her principal settlement, so that Sobhuza might be ‘educated sufficiently under her control to insure that [the ritual] “secrets of rulership” would not be jeopardized’ (plates 10c, 10d).³ In time, she would have to transmit these secrets to him. She was also determined that her school should not be commandeered by white missionaries. This was because she did not want her grandson Sobhuza alienated from his cultural-religious heritage. The British administration yielded reluctantly on this score, but continued to ensure that teachers employed at Zombodze should themselves be ‘reliable’ products of a sound, mission-based education, have an impeccable record of political ‘loyalty’, and eschew all ideas subversive of the colonial order or disparaging of white prestige.⁴

In 1903, F. Enraght-Moony, the principal resident representative of British authority in the territory, reported that Labotsibeni’s school at Zombodze was ‘at present being taught by a son of Stephen Mini, headman of Edendale Station, Natal’. In the next breath, he regretted that it was ‘extremely difficult to obtain any reliable intelligence regarding the doings at Zombodi’.⁵ The implication seems to be that if a complaisant African schoolmaster were installed at Zombodze, he might keep his white principals in Mbabane informed of those obscure ‘doings’.

¹ Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland*, 337.

² SwNA, J211/1903: F. Enraght-Moony (Special Commissioner), Mbabane, to Private Secretary to the Governor, Pretoria, 26 Oct. 1903.

³ Perkins, ‘A History of Christian Missions in Swaziland’, 437.

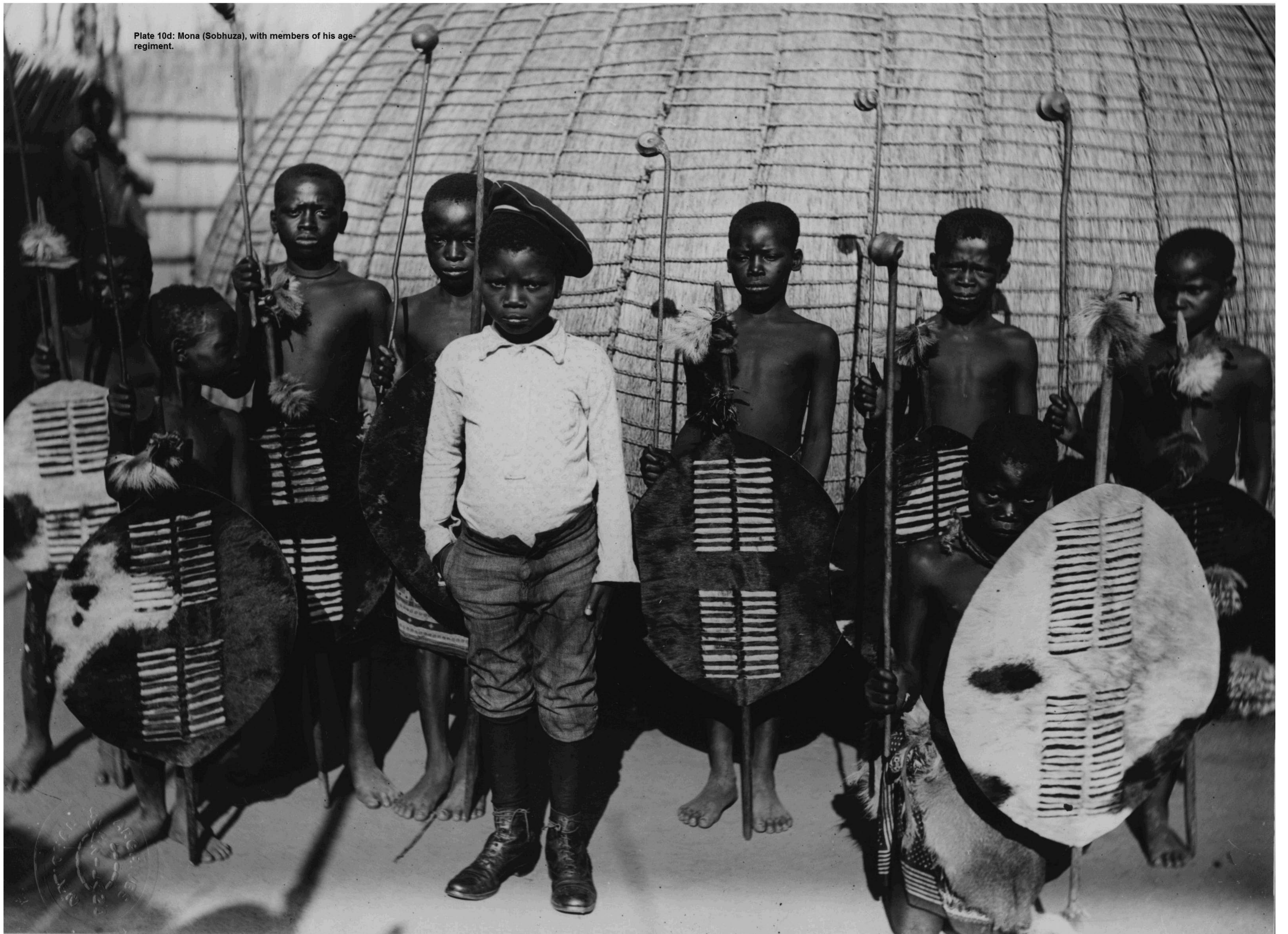
⁴ Lowe, ‘Swaziland’s Colonial Politics’, ch 8; Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 43.

⁵ SwNA, J211/1903: F. Enraght-Moony, Special Commissioner, Mbabane, to Private Secretary to the Governor, Pretoria, 26 Oct. 1903.

Plate 10c: Mona (Sobhuza) as a young scholar, together with his mother, Lomawa. (Notice his mortarboard.)



Plate 10d: Mona (Sobhuza), with members of his age-regiment.



Two years later, Enraght-Moony branded Edendale as an unwholesome influence in Swaziland. When he learnt that Labotsibeni's sons—including her favourite, Malunge—wanted an Edendale education, he endeavoured to dissuade them, suggesting Lovedale College instead. This was because he did 'not think Edendale influence ... good'. He felt that it would 'be well to start a school at Zombodi under a good reliable Native who might be in a position to exercise considerable influence for good down there'.¹ In so saying, he sounded the keynote of what was to remain the persistent mindset of successive administrators toward Western education offered to the Swazi: as far as it was absolutely necessary, it should be entrusted to 'reliable' Africans—essentially tools of the white administration, chosen for their sycophancy and their willingness to spy upon and report the goings-on at Zombodze. Any educator that Mbabane deemed suitable would need to deflect his or her pupils' attention from the injustice of colonial dispossession—and not keep harping on it, as Edgar Mini, Grendon, and their ilk were bound to do.

Mini taught school at Zombodze from the latter part of 1902 until 1906, when he was replaced by Joseph James Xaba—who came from the Cape Colony and whose first language was isiXhosa.² Like his father before him, Edgar was one of the mission-educated black men upon whom Labotsibeni 'relied heavily for advice'.³ In 1905–06, she employed him as a go-between with the Pietermaritzburg-based speculator, J. M. Parsonson, who undertook to champion the Swazi cause in return for a vast financial consideration. The British distrusted Mini and subjected his private correspondence to censorship.⁴ His position at Zombodze eventually became untenable. On the other hand, the Resident Commissioner considered his replacement, the conservative Xaba, to be 'entirely satisfactory' as a teacher.⁵

¹ SwNA, J18/1905: F. Enraght-Moony (Resident Magistrate) to Nicholson, 8 Sept. 1905.

² *Ipepa* 3:465 (30 Oct. 1903) 3. Edgar Mini was also known as Edgar Mzoli. According to an *Ipepa* report early in 1904, he had begun teaching in Swaziland about eighteen months earlier ('The Swazis and Education', *Ipepa* 4:479 (5 Feb. 1904) 3). Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland*, 195.

Several writers conflate the identities of two brothers—Joseph James Xaba and his younger brother, Rev. John James Xaba, who succeeded him at Zombodze. That there were two men named 'J. J. Xaba', see: Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 56 footnote; Great Britain, *Colonial Office List for 1916*, 358; *Colonial Office List for 1922*, 379.

³ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland to 1902*, 402.

⁴ SwNA, J129/1906; Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 44; Lowe, 'Swaziland's Colonial Politics', ch 8.

⁵ Resident Commissioner to Secretary, Native Affairs Department, 25 June 1909, quoted in Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 44.

Mini's link with Grendon may have been the fact that his father and Grendon shared the old school tie—an elite Zonnebloem education. Alternatively, it may have been their mutual friendship with the Nkosi siblings of Edendale. Apparently disillusioned by frequent betrayal in Swaziland, Edgar Mini describes Solomon Nkosi in 1906 as 'the only friend of mine whom I will trust utterly to-day'.¹ Simon Nkosi, Grendon's fellow teacher at Edendale's Native Training Institution, was Solomon's brother, and their sister Michal Nkosi—for whom Grendon wrote an elegy—had been matron there.



Hilda Kuper is mistaken when she states that Labotsibeni brought Grendon to Swaziland in 1904.² As revealed in the previous chapter, Grendon was at Ohlange when John Dube returned from his trip abroad in May 1905. It is however possible that Labotsibeni's first contact with Grendon was in 1904. Grendon may have visited Zombodze briefly during a school vacation, or Labotsibeni may have communicated with him through an intermediary. The earliest date at which Grendon can have settled in Swaziland—at Mahamba, rather than at Zombodze—is June 1905.

Mahamba was the site of the first Christian mission to the Swazi. It was established by converts of the Methodist missionary, Rev. James Allison (1805–75) in 1844. Allison himself arrived the following year. He and a following of several hundred were obliged to flee to Natal in 1846 after civil war broke out within the Dlamini clan.³ They settled first at Indaleni, near what would later become the village of Richmond, and then at Edendale, from 1851.

Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Swazi royals maintained their resistance to missionary activity. Grendon regrets the fact that, despite their early contact with Christian 'Light' through 'Mneli' (Allison's African byname), the Swazi were 'amongst the last' of the South African tribes to actively embrace it.⁴ When he speaks of 'the Light', he means religious as well as secular enlightenment—but principally 'Religion [as] the central science round which all other branches of

¹ SwNA, J129/1906: Edgar Mini, Mdimba Store, Bremersdorp, to J. M. Parsonson, Pietermaritzburg, 16 June 1906 (intercepted letter).

² Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 43.

³ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 11–15.

⁴ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

knowledge and all the purest influences group; towards which they tend; and from which they receive their “light”, their “heat”, and their “highest value”.¹ ‘Light’ is Swedenborg’s correspondence of the Divine Truth; ‘heat’ his correspondence of Divine Love.

In 1882, Rev. Daniel Mavuso Msimang (1831–1903), a prosperous Edendale Christian, took a bold step in re-establishing mission work at Mahamba, on Swaziland’s southern border. He did so without the customary, direct supervision of a white missionary. For a time, he was assisted there by Mangena Mokone, who would go on to achieve fame as founder of the independent Ethiopian Church in Pretoria a decade later.² By 1890, Msimang had established a satellite station at Makhosini, a few miles into Swaziland from Mahamba. He placed Makhosini under the oversight of his son, Rev. Joel Msimang (1854–1935).³

The area around Mahamba and Makhosini became an important centre in the history of African religious separatism. Although Daniel remained within the Methodist fold, he enjoyed greater autonomy than was usual for an African cleric—a fact due in part, no doubt, to Mahamba’s remote location. Around 1904, his son Joel broke away from the Wesleyans and soon thereafter established the Independent Methodist Church in Swaziland, with headquarters at Makhosini.⁴ Joel was father to the lawyer, Richard W. Msimang, and to H. Selby Msimang, an early South African Native National Congress (SANNK) activist.⁵ Grendon had dealings with both Msimang brothers.⁶ He and Selby Msimang did not get along.¹ Richard later married

¹ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3. For the correspondence of the natural sun’s light and heat, cf. Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 464.

² Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 431–32; Millard, ‘Factors Leading to the Formation of the Independent Methodist Church’, 19. Msimang had been in service to Allison when that missionary first arrived at Mahamba in 1845.

³ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland to 1902*, 432.

⁴ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland to 1902*, 434. Balia (‘New Independent Methodist Movements in Southern Africa’, 24) also gives 1904 as the date of the denomination’s founding; Millard (‘Factors Leading to the Formation of the Independent Methodist Church’, 16) gives it as 1906. Selby Msimang gives the name as the ‘Independent Methodist Church of South Africa’ (Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 74).

⁵ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 218.

⁶ Grendon’s acquaintance with the Msimang family likely went back to his Edendale days. In *Ilanga* (1905), he records the death of the Rev. Luke Msimang of Driefontein—Richard and Selby Msimang’s uncle—and expresses the hope that Ernest Msimang, the dead man’s son, will not discontinue his studies, because he, although young, has ‘distinguished himself in the Natal Teachers (Native) Examinations’ (‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 10 Feb. 1905; Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 1).

Grace, daughter of Isaiah Bud-M'belle, with whom Grendon had collaborated in Kimberley.²

Grendon was preceded to Mahamba-Makhosini by two of his Edendale scholars. Titus Maseko was teaching at Makhosini mission by July 1904. Under Grendon's instruction, he received his Class III teaching certificate in examinations held in late 1902.³ At Makhosini, people said of him: 'That little fellow is sharp; he is even good at passing judgement'—a trait that an *Ilanga* correspondent seems to imply Maseko inherited from his former schoolmaster, who was forever passing judgement.⁴ Another of Grendon's ex-pupils, George Mapanzela, taught at Mahamba around the same time.⁵ While under Grendon at Edendale, Mapanzela achieved the Class I teacher's certificate in the examinations held at the end of 1902;⁶ he was 'head boy' when he recited Grendon's poem, 'Adieu to the Rev. W. Cliff and Family' at a farewell for that missionary in May 1903.⁷

Sometime around mid-1905, Grendon would relocate from Ohlange to Mahamba. These facts find Grendon together with two of his recent pupils—and possible disciples?—newly arrived as teachers at the very locus and moment of an African religious breakaway movement that was to become the 'largest Ethiopian-type church in Swaziland'.⁸ Can it be that Grendon's arrival in Swaziland in some way catalyzed Joel Msimang's decision to establish an independent denomination?⁹

¹ Grendon, 'Thou Art the Man!' *Ilanga* 13:648 (5 Nov. 1915) 5; 13:650 (19 Nov. 1915) 5; H. Selby Msimang, 'Mr Msane and Native Congress', *Ilanga* 14:668 (24 March 1916) 5; Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 77.

² Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 136.

³ Natal, *Report of the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1902*, 69.

⁴ 'Ezase Swazini', *Ilanga* 2:68 (29 July 1904) 3: isiZulu original. The writer identifies Maseko as one of Grendon's pupils. Grendon, appears to have had a reputation for passing judgement. Of him, Isangoma writes in verse: '*Gweba ngazo zombili mfana ka Grendon*'—i.e., 'Judge with both your hands', or 'Give even-handed judgement' (Isangoma, 'Ukuhlangana kungamandhla', *Ilanga* 3:110 (26 May 1905) 2).

⁵ White, 'History of Mahamba Methodist Mission School', 6. This source appears to locate Mapanzela at Mahamba when its religious schism occurred.

⁶ Colony of Natal, *Report of the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1902*, 68.

⁷ 'Notes from Edendale', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3; *Ipepa* 3:446 (22 May 1903) 3.

⁸ Millard, 'Factors Leading to the Formation of the Independent Methodist Church', 21.

⁹ A number of reasons have been put forward as to why Joel Msimang established an independent denomination. None relates to any doctrinal disagreement that he might have had with his parent mission. The decision to separate is presented as no more than a personal breach between Msimang and his white superiors. (Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 73; Millard, 'Factors Leading to the Formation of the Independent Methodist Church', 20, 22; Balia, 'New Independent Methodist Movements in Southern Africa', 24) Joan Millard even makes the bold statement that the schism was *not* 'caused by

More than once, Grendon—encouraged by Swedenborg who divines a spiritual awakening in Africa—courageously defended the African independent (‘Ethiopian’) church movement.¹ In 1904, Grendon predicted that ‘the Ethiopian Church will rise to a higher and purer religious plane, with a high mission before her’ and that this would bring about ‘the True Christian Religion’—Swedenborg’s own expression and the title of the last of his books published before his death.² In so saying, Grendon paraphrased J. J. G. Wilkinson, who hypothesizes what will occur ‘if the Negro learns from Swedenborg, through his religious instructors of his own race, that a special new religion awaits him, and that according to his obedience to its commandments he can be a new man *with a high mission before him*’.³ Unquestionably, Grendon was just such a ‘religious instructor’, and he would not have missed an opportunity in Swaziland to tell ‘his own race’ of the ‘special new religion’ that awaited them.

Several of Grendon’s expressions postulate the existence of a peculiarly African strain of Christianity—distinct from the European variety. He expresses sympathy with those Africans who ‘say that there are two Gods, one for the whites—a White God; and another for the blacks—a Black God’.⁴ He has ‘always held the opinion that Europe’s religion cannot be grafted on African stock’, since ‘there is something manifestly faulty about’ the former that must not be allowed to contaminate the latter.⁵

It seems fair therefore to ask if a man with strong convictions such as these, and a proven determination to proclaim them, could have *restrained himself* from efforts to influence Msimang, Maseko, Mapanzela, and others at Mahamba-Makhosini in favour of ‘the True Christian Religion’? Interestingly, Grendon later also quotes with approbation Joel Msimang’s son Richard, who writes in *Abantu-Batho* that “‘from the beginning the Churches did not bring us ... a religion pure and undefiled”, and again

the spirit of Ethiopianism that swept South Africa’. (Millard, ‘Factors Leading to the Formation of the Independent Methodist Church’, 21)

¹ Examples include: letter to the editor, *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6; ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3–4.

² ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

³ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, vi. Emphasis added.

⁴ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4. Grendon makes the same point in ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

⁵ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4.

“the supreme religion of the White race is Hypocrisy and Cant”¹. According to his brother Selby, Richard Msimang ‘drew up the constitution for [their father’s] church and had it registered’. He ‘was very loyal in the cause of the old man’s church’.²



An anonymous typescript on the ‘Early History of Zombode School’, states that

Labotsibeni established schools for the sons and daughters of the royal family and of the principal chiefs. One was established at Mahamba, under a Cape Coloured [sic] teacher named Grendon, a man of considerable ability. The sons were at first taught at Mahamba in Southern Swaziland but later on Grendon and his pupils were moved to Zombodze, the chief kraal.³

It was probably somewhere near the beginning of October 1906 that it was brought to the attention of the Resident Magistrate at Mbabane that Grendon had turned up at Zombodze royal kraal—invited there by Labotsibeni, who desired him to take over her school, Edgar Mini’s services apparently having been terminated. Grendon found teaching conditions very primitive: ‘My schoolroom was a store-hut, my blackboard the hearth. There I taught geometry.’⁴

Amongst Grendon’s first pupils were the princes Lomvazi and Malunge, although it seems that the latter had little exposure to Grendon’s teaching.⁵ Lomvazi was at Edendale’s Native Training Institution early in 1905, but the school was shut down at some point in that year, and only reopened in 1907.⁶ April 1906 found him back at his mother’s Zombodze kraal. The air was thick with rumours of rebellion against colonial rule in neighbouring Zululand, and there was even talk of the Swazi being

¹ ‘A Question for L. E. H.’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:73 (11 Feb. 1914) 6. Grendon quotes an article by R. W. Msimang, published in *Abantu-Batho* (26 Dec. 1913). See the epigraph to ‘Native Papers and Missionaries’, *Tsala ea Batho* 4:162 (21 March 1914) 4, which quotes, and takes issue with, a similar passage from *Abantu-Batho*.

² Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 74.

³ I am grateful to Huw Jones for sharing this information with me. The typescript is undated, but Jones suspects that it was made around the decade of the 1930s.

⁴ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 43.

⁵ Jones (*Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 111) states that Labotsibeni hired Grendon to ‘tutor Lomvazi and others’, while Kuper (*Sobhuza II*, 43) specifies that Grendon’s first pupils were ‘Malunge and Lomvazi’. Rev. John James Xaba refers to Grendon having once held the post of ‘private tutor’ to ‘Chief Lomvazo’, but he does not say the same respecting Lomvazi’s elder brother, Malunge. (SwNA, RCS 333/19: J. J. Xaba, Zombode School, to Resident Commissioner, 12 March 1919)

⁶ L. H. S. Wilkinson, ‘Nuttall Training Institution, Edendale’, *Native Teachers’ Journal* 3:1 (Oct. 1921) 7.

drawn into the conflict. According to the report of a secret agent at Zombodze, Lomvazi and one of his brothers were in discussion one day when

one of them said, 'It is no good us staying here to fight as the Chiefs will not let the people fight.' The other said, 'Well it's no use us going off to School, for, if fighting commences, how will we get back?' One suggested joining Dinizulu; the other said, 'Oh, we'll get back all right.' Both these young men want to go to school.¹

Just how far this source may be trusted is unclear, but it at least indicates that Grendon's royal pupils were eager to acquire an education, and that they did not entirely reject the idea of opposing the colonial order. At some point after leaving Edendale, Lomvazi entered the mission school at Mahamba. This was in 1907, according to Huw Jones.² Grendon's movements for the years 1907 to 1913 are unknown. Since it is known that he taught Lomvazi, but was prevented by the white administration from doing so at the Zombodze National School, he must have done so at some other location—perhaps at Mahamba.

It is also unclear just how much instruction Grendon gave to Lomvazi's nephew, Mona (Sobhuza). Kuper calls Grendon the 'stimulating and controversial teacher of Sobhuza's boyhood', but she is quite unhelpful in supplying details as to when and where Grendon gave the future *Ngwenyama* his lessons.³ Grendon himself refers to Sobhuza's early formal education as having been conducted by Joseph James Xaba at the National School 'built by the Swaziland Administration in 1907 or 1908, for the education of the children of Swazi Royalty'.⁴

Labotsibeni urgently wanted schools and teachers for her people. From 13 to 17 September 1906—about the time of Grendon's arrival at Zombodze—Lord Selborne, the British High Commissioner for South Africa, paid a brief visit to Swaziland. In an interview with him, Labotsibeni stated: 'I am not educated, and we can not go without an adviser'.⁵ Her words illustrate how she often conflated the roles of educator and political adviser; they explain why three African teachers whom Labotsibeni or her

¹ SwNA, J130/1906: report of unnamed secret agent at Zombodze kraal, dated Mbabane, 24 April 1906.

² White, 'History of Mahamba Methodist Mission School', 7; Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 111.

³ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 342.

⁴ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

⁵ Quoted in Gillis, *Kingdom of Swaziland*, 144.

predecessors hired—Kunene, Mini, and Grendon—were all looked to for political advice. Lord Selborne promised Labotsibeni that ‘he would establish a school at Zombodze and find a teacher for Sobhuza and the sons of chiefs’.¹ But Labotsibeni had not waited for the High Commissioner to recruit a teacher: she had already instituted her own search, and it had yielded Grendon.

If white officials were ‘unimpressed by Mzoli’ (Edgar Mini), they were ‘suspicious’ of Grendon.² The Resident Magistrate reported Grendon’s arrival to his superiors in Johannesburg, and on the 16th, the Secretary for Swaziland Affairs in Johannesburg telegraphed the Natal Native Affairs Department in Pietermaritzburg:

Resident Magistrate Swaziland reports that he is informed that a half bred Zulu [sic] named Robert Grandin [sic] sometime teacher in Zulu Industrial College & on Ilanga staff from both of which it is understood he was dismissed because of Anti Government opinions has been called to Zombodi as school master by Swazi regent. Will you kindly inform me whether this man is known to you & what character he bears.³

S. O. Samuelson, Natal’s Under-Secretary for Native Affairs, acknowledged that Grendon was not known to him personally, but an investigation was launched.⁴ The Magistrate of Inanda, in which division Ohlange fell, was asked if he knew anything of Grendon, and he in turn inquired of the police at Verulam.⁵ They duly made their inquiries, and it was discovered that

This man was dismissed from the Phoenix Industrial School for private reasons, not for his anti-Government opinions. He is a very dissatisfied man and cannot agree with other people. John Dube, the head of the Industrial School, informs me that Robert Grandin did at one time write articles in the ‘Ilanga’ which were objectionable to the Government.⁶

¹ ‘His Excellency: Final Indaba’, *Times of Swaziland* 6:17 (22 Sept. 1906) 3; Gillis, *Kingdom of Swaziland*, 144–45.

² Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 44.

³ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, to Under Secretary for Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, 16 Oct. 1906.

⁴ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Under Secretary for Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, to Secretary Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, 16 Oct. 1906.

⁵ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Acting Under Secretary for Native Affairs, to Magistrate, Inanda Division, 18 Oct. 1906; Inanda Magistrate to Inanda Police, 19 Oct. 1906.

⁶ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Inanda Police to Inanda Magistrate, 21 Oct. 1906.

Having obtained this character reference, Samuelson notified the Swaziland administration that he was unable to recommend Grendon as schoolmaster.¹ Even so, for a time, Grendon was employed as a teacher by Labotsibeni—although perhaps not at the National School. In 1919, she told the Resident J.P. of Bremersdorp that she had formerly paid Grendon £10 per month as a teacher.²

Working for the Queen-Regent was not without its challenges, as Mini and Grendon were to find out. In August 1908, the *Times of Swaziland* reported that Mini had brought a claim against the Queen-Regent in the local Court of the Assistant Commissioner. Mini had been retrenched, and he claimed that his former employer still owed him £187 in unpaid salary. The Court decided in his favour.³ That Grendon sometimes lost patience with Labotsibeni's conservatism is suggested in his description of her as being 'so unlike—so utterly unlike' her saintly son, Malunge.⁴

Labotsibeni favoured Grendon. Anthropologist Hilda Kuper says as much in her official biography of her friend, Sobhuza. So does Grendon's daughter, Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa.⁵ There are substantial reasons why the Queen-Regent might have preferred Grendon above the more conventional mission-educated Africans who were often scathing in their denunciation of the heathen, precolonial order of which Labotsibeni seemed the die-hard embodiment. Grendon's Swedenborgianism allowed him to adopt a more accommodative stance toward traditional African beliefs and customs. He could—and likely did—treat these as glimmers of ancient, 'celestial' truths, or as God's temporary 'permissions', intended to meet the particular receptivity of people just starting out on the road to spiritual regeneration.

For instance, he took a more tolerant view of polygamy than did the missionaries and most of their converts. Swedenborg states that 'polygamy is not sin with those who are in ignorance respecting the Lord'.⁶ Grendon points out that although the practice is incompatible with the conjugal principle, and must ultimately pass away,

¹ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Under Secretary for Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, to Secretary, Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, 26 Oct. 1906.

² SwNA, RCS 333/19: S. B. Williams (Resident Justice of the Peace, Bremersdorp) to Resident Commissioner, 8 Sept. 1919.

³ 'Ndhlovukazi and Mfundisi', *Times of Swaziland* 8:10 (1 Aug. 1908) 2.

⁴ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁵ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 55; interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; also S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

⁶ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 349.

it ‘may be tolerated’ in the external man. In time, as Africans rise to a higher spiritual plane, polygamy will pass away of itself.¹ Grendon’s acceptance of Swedenborg was also compatible with belief in the existence of ancestral spirits (*emadhlozi*) present with, and actively interested in, the welfare of their corporeal kinsfolk.² He will not have made a secret of these and similar views. For this reason, Labotsibeni likely believed that he posed less of a threat to the continuity of Swazi ideology and customs than did many other mission-educated blacks.

While engaged in field-work in Swaziland during the 1930s, Kuper interviewed Grendon, who told her about his first meeting with Labotsibeni.³ The Queen-Regent asked him rhetorically: ‘In what does the white man’s power lie?’ Before Grendon could venture a reply, she supplied her own: ‘It lies in money and in books. We too will learn; we too will be rich.’⁴ Money and ‘books’—papers, documents—had deprived the Swazi of their land and their political independence. With money and books they would regain what they had lost.

When he arrived in the country, Grendon joined a very small, elite group of literate black men. He was, in all probability, the first black matriculant to make Swaziland his home. Fynn Frankfort Sepamla, who ‘arrived in Swaziland one blue May winter afternoon in 1908’, recalled forty years later that at that time, he ‘could count the educated Africans throughout Swaziland with [his] fingers. ... Most of these educated Africans were employed as Police Interpreters, Store Salesmen, Book repairers, Ndunas at the Tin Mine Compounds and a few Mission Teachers.’⁵ The Swazi had to do a lot of catching up if they were to harness the ‘power’ that their *Ndlovukati* discerned in ‘books’.

¹ ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3.

² ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916). The Swedenborgian columnist ‘Tasisela’ endorses the ‘Bantu knowledge of Butonga [*i.e.*, the ancestral spirits] and much else that appertains to the immortal side of human beings’, and states that ‘many of us Zulu people know that the departed are alive’ (‘Tasisela’, ‘Spiritualism’, *Ilanga* 18:9 (27 Feb. 1920) 5).

³ Kuper states that all the material for *African Aristocracy*, in which her interview with Grendon is cited, was ‘collected in the thirties’ (Kuper, *African Aristocracy* (1947), vii).

⁴ Kuper, ‘Development of a Primitive Nation’ (1941), 363, repeated in: Kuper, *African Aristocracy* (1947), 31. Kuper repeats this anecdote thirty years later, but with additional material, indicating that she still held the transcript of her 1930s interview with Grendon (Kuper, *Sobhuza II* (1978), 43). Her anthropological papers, including field notebooks, were lodged with the University of California, Los Angeles. A project for future research will be to trace the record of her interview/s with Grendon.

⁵ Fynn Frankfort Sepamla, ‘African Progress in Swaziland 1908–1948’, *Times of Swaziland* 26:38 (18 Aug. 1949) 4.



In 1906, Natal and Zululand became the theatre of rebellion against an increasingly harsh and arbitrary administration. As Chris Lowe points out, ‘to the Swazi royalty, the violence of the British colonial response illustrated that white people’s capacity for savagery was not restricted to Boers, while the fate of Dinuzulu, put on trial for treason because he was neutral rather than actively opposed to the rebels, presented a cautionary tale for African ex-rulers’.¹ Through her African advisors from Natal, Labotsibeni will have kept herself informed of what was taking place south of the border.

In this period of heightened interracial tension, two remarkable poems appeared in *Ilanga*. These are ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’ and ‘The Spirit Song of Mehlokazulu’. They stand out from most English-language original verse in vernacular papers of this period—both in the technical competence they display, and in their uncompromising anti-colonial subtexts. Based on compelling intertextual evidence, we may conclude that Grendon composed both poems.² Overwhelmingly, the bulk of all English-language verse published in *Ilanga* from its inception in April 1903 until May 1905 is Grendon’s, and no other known poet who was published in the early volumes of *Ilanga* produced verse remotely resembling his, or approaching his level of sophistication. Each poem has as its speaker an African traditionalist leader who is strongly opposed to the colonial order. Couzens makes the point that both these poems, viewed in the context of the times ‘are not totally uncommitted. So-called “protest poetry” is therefore not entirely modern.’³

‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’ is a poignant 96-line poem that appeared anonymously in the issue of 18 May 1906.⁴ It has been republished in two anthologies in recent decades: *Return of the Amasi Bird: Black South African Poetry 1891–1981* (1982) and *Paperbook of South African English Poetry* (1993). It is just possible that

¹ Lowe, ‘Swaziland’s Colonial Politics’, 257.

² See Appendices 3 and 4.

³ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 81.

⁴ ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’, *Ilanga* 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4. See: Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 35–38, or Chapman, *Paperbook of South African English Poetry*, 68–70.

The poet’s anonymity is not to be wondered at. His poem deals with material that Natal’s colonial establishment would certainly have viewed as insurrectionary. Just months before the poem’s publication, a new poll-tax had been implemented that provoked Africans to armed rebellion. Martial law had been declared, racial tensions were at fever pitch, and many colonists—particularly those in the inland districts—became hysterical in their resolve to stamp out all resistance to white rule.

it is a fragment from Grendon's lost epic, *An African's Vision*, which is advertised at the end of *Paul Kruger's Dream* (1902) as being then 'in preparation'.¹

Couzens was the first to hypothesize Grendon's authorship of 'Amagunyana's Soliloquy'. His tentative attribution is altogether justified. As he points out, this 'very sharp and moving poem' displays 'marks of [Grendon's] style'.² Cast in confident blank verse (unrhymed iambic pentameter) such as was Grendon's medium of choice, it has a pronounced Grendon-like 'ring' and contains several of his idiosyncrasies. The adoption of a persona, the lexis, the figures—indeed, the general handling—are altogether in conformity with Grendon's known oeuvre. As I demonstrate in Appendix 3, the poem shares a distinctive vocabulary with other poetry and prose known to have been authored by Grendon. Words such as 'goodly', 'behest', 'gore', and 'homage', and the collocations 'human flesh' and 'naught but'—all of which appear in 'Amagunyana's Soliloquy'—may be traced in works known to have been authored by him. In the *Dream*, Grendon uses the word 'hail' in four places to describe flying bullets or shells. A particularly unusual instance of syntactic inversion is repeated elsewhere in Grendon's known writing, as is allusion to the Queen of Sheba legend.

Since we know that it was only in October 1906 that Grendon's arrival at Zombodze was reported to the Mbabane authorities, it is possible that he may have been in Natal in May when this poem was published. Interestingly, an article on 'Industrialism' that appears in a newspaper column immediately adjacent to 'Amagunyana's Soliloquy', is by Harold Attersoll, Grendon's Swedenborgian-socialist associate.³ In it, Attersoll exposes the 'lust of gain [which] is the motive power of the competition method, and the foundation upon which all enmities arise'. 'Amagunyana' shares Attersoll's aversion to industrialism and materialist greed, expressing 'scorn' for the white man's 'fretful time-card' and his 'eternal work'. By this time, runaway industrialization had begun to ruin the rural peasant subsistence culture of most African societies. Large cohorts of rural men and youths had become migrant workers satisfying the labour 'requirements of an industrializing

¹ *PKD*, Pt XVIII, p. 51n; 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

² Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 78. At least three scholars have taken up Couzen's attribution: Chapman, *Paperbook of South African English Poetry*, 300; Haarhoff, *Wild South-West*, 114; Attwell, 'Reprisals of Modernity', 274; Attwell, *Rewriting Modernity*, 58.

³ H. A., 'Industrialism', *Ilanga* 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4.

subcontinent'.¹ They would encounter the industrialist's 'fretful time-card' in the mining compounds of the Witwatersrand.²

'Amagunyana's Soliloquy' has a tripartite sequential structure. In lines 1–53, the king reminisces on the precolonial past and, with reference to anecdotes, shows how 'grand' it was. Lines 54–86 describe black-white contact both as a moment in time and as an ongoing process—the colonial present. Finally, having remonstrated against past horrors and present injustices, Amagunyana peers into the future (lines 87–96).

The poetic speaker is a hereditary ruler, whose monologue begins with the sketch of a precolonial idyll—the world over which he once enjoyed paramountcy. So vast is this realm that his 'Foot [has] never wandered to the limits | Of [his] father's heritage'. He piques himself on being in the ancestral line 'Of ancient kings from Sheba until now'. A 'goodly score | Of lesser kings' still swear fealty to him, and even now, he may reckon on 'A hundred thousand assegais' to muster at his word of command, 'Within a morning's sunrise'.

Then whites came, whose unceremonious advent swept away the idyll:

Then came the Whiteman with
That assegai of his, which hurls so fast
The hurtling iron hail, which will not cease
Nor rest till all is his, till foe there's none.
Before it human flesh however brave must
Melt like early dew.

The poem swivels on that deictic 'Then', which begins a new verse paragraph at line 54.³ 'Then' equates to the moment of colonial penetration: it describes rupture with a known heroic past, and it presages an anxious and unknowable future. Whites arrived, bristling with the 'assegai' that 'hurls so fast | The hurtling iron hail'. The poet employs tragic irony to good effect by planting that periphrasis for 'gun' on Amagunyana's lips. It heightens pathos by revealing the speaker's bewilderment and incomprehension as to the mechanism by which his violent and unprovoked dispossession has been accomplished. 'Flesh' is not punctured or lacerated by this

¹ Laband and Thompson, 'The Reduction of Zululand, 1878–1904', 221–22.

² Both Attersoll and 'Amagunyana' protest against the dehumanizing effect of industrialism. Given Blake's Swedenborgian background, a parallel might be drawn with his 'dark Satanic mills'.

³ *The Paperbook of South African English Poetry* version loses the effect through faulty paragraphing.

preternatural weapon; rather, it appears to ‘Melt like early dew’. The intruders succeed in asserting and entrenching their hegemony by dint of their vastly superior arms—and for no loftier reason. Amagunyana’s warriors learn the futility of armed resistance: personal valour is no match for that annihilating fusillade.

Having captured the trauma of the first colonial onslaught, Amagunyana’s plaint dwells on its sequel, as he reveals his chagrin at the unbridled cupidity and the galling impositions of the intruder:

The goodly herds of
 Choicest game which cropped the grass on yonder
 Plain, he’s run to earth and left me naught but
 Grass to eat. He’s sectioned out my choicest
 Lands and placed his captains over them and me.
 The very mountains he hath bored and crushed
 And made havoc of, and carted off to
 Whiteman’s home ten thousand man-loads of their
 Jewels and fine gold,—a precious lot of
 Rubbish.

With Grendon’s Namibian origins in mind, Dorian Haarhoff describes the above passage as ‘an epitaph to the whole process of frontier’. It depicts ‘the advance of the gun front, the annihilation of a people, the destruction of game, the appropriation of land and the expropriation of mineral resources’.¹

Haarhoff reminds readers that 1906—the year in which ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’ was published—was the year of the final Herero-Nama defeat by the Germans.² By implication, this would seem to claim the poem in some way for Namibia. David Attwell, on the other hand, identifies the poem as ‘informed by’ the Zulu Rebellion of 1906.³ In fact, Haarhoff’s and Attwell’s readings are equally correct, because Grendon followed closely both the reports of the uprising in his native Damaraland and the rumours of rebellion menacing Natal.⁴

¹ Haarhoff, *Wild South-West*, 114–15.

² Haarhoff, *Wild South-West*, 114.

³ Attwell, *Rewriting Modernity*, 58.

⁴ See, for example: ‘The Herero Rebellion’, *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4; ‘Native Abominations’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4.

By the same token, ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’ might be describing Swaziland’s fate at the hands of the foreign ‘adventurers’, as Grendon calls them, who sought to ‘gain and exercise undue influence over the weak-minded ema-Ngwane’—or Swazi.¹ Particularly during the latter 1880s, the Swazi were plagued ‘on an unprecedented scale’ by white concession hunters,² who “‘bought” the land and its minerals several times over’.³ The process began somewhat earlier when, as Grendon points out in *Abantu-Batho*, ‘the Piet Retief Boers’ succeeded in obtaining from Mbandzeni the parcel of land they dubbed ‘Little Free State’. Ever since wheedling that farming concession, they had ‘coveted the goodly country further east’ (plate 10e).⁴

In terms of its ‘Concession Partition Proclamation’ (No. 28 of 1907), Britain declared Mbandzeni’s concessions to be legitimate and binding according to the concessionaires’ own extravagant, partisan interpretation of them. Effectively, whites maintained that they had purchased Swaziland. Swazi denials of this were repeatedly fobbed off. The Proclamation also provided that one-third of Swaziland’s surface area be retroceded to the Swazi people as a tribal reserve. Thus, the Swazi lost two-thirds of their land in the space of a single generation. The ‘natives were aghast’ to learn that Britain had countenanced such wickedness.⁵ The new colonial power had indeed ‘sectioned out’ the Swazi’s lands.

There is however little point in attempting to ‘identify’ Amagunyana, or in locating him geographically.⁶ Grendon took a broad view of developments in Africa, and knew that—details aside—events in one region mirrored those in another. Amagunyana could be Dinuzulu, Mbandzeni, Maharero, or any other African ruler tracing descent to precolonial chiefs or kings.

Amagunyana has no patience with the white man’s ‘eternal work’—which he shrewdly identifies as no more than the frenetic pursuit of a ‘precious lot of | Rubbish’. He is not indolent, but he *does* have very different priorities from those of

¹ ‘Farewell Msindazwe!’ *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

² Bonner, *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires*, 182.

³ Macmillan, ‘A Nation Divided?’ 292.

⁴ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁵ Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, 30; Doveton, *Human Geography of Swaziland*, 33.

⁶ Peter Limb (personal communication, Dec. 2008) draws my attention to a possibility that Amagunyana may have been modelled—at least in part—on the historical career of Gungunyana (or Gungunhana, c. 1850–c. 1896), last sovereign ruler of Gaza kingdom in what is now southern Mozambique.

Plate 10e: Boer family,
Swaziland, late nineteenth
century.



the ‘whiteman’. In ‘A Voice from the Sea’, Grendon counters the charge that Africans are ‘lazy’:

That the natives are lazy we deny. Their wants are few, and consequently their exertions are demanded and applied accordingly. The gospel of work does not emanate from Christianity.... Work was preached long before the dawn of Christianity, and it is just as much the gospel of heathendom, as of any other belief under the sun.¹

This editorial states that the black man’s ‘wants are few’—a fact that Amagunyana bears out:

My home is all the
Vast horizon wide, my couch is earth, my
Blanket, quilted stars; while as to raiment
Half a pelt is plenty for a lifetime.

Unlike whites, Africans like Amagunyana are not obsessive accumulators of material goods. The moral fault does not lie with the rural African—who has yet to become an insatiable consumer and so does not share the whites’ enthusiasm for ‘work’. Rather, it lies with the avarice of industrialists and capitalists whom Grendon repeatedly assails in his journalism.²

In the concluding ten lines of his Soliloquy, Amagunyana turns from retrospect to prospect. His mood becomes pensive as he concludes his soliloquy:

’Tis true the Whiteman brings a Book which tells
Of many a vision yet unknown to mine.
I may not read the hazy mazes of
His much curved ink, but I read earth and sky
And men; and should it all prove true in hours
Not yet arrived, that his Eternal One
Is Great, or greater than our own Great-Great,
Then will I do Him homage and serve Him,
And in the manner He had fashioned me,
But not in theirs.

¹ ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4.

² ‘The Labour Problem’, *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4; ‘The Voice of a God’, *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4; ‘Labour Problem’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4; ‘The Old Year and the New’, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4; ‘Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side’, *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5.

Amagunyana cannot read the ‘hazy mazes’ of the coloniser’s ‘much curved ink’ any more than he can understand the mechanism by which an ‘assegai’ may cast a shower of ‘iron hail’. But there is something about the visionary Book that engages his respect and, in time, he may come to know its many visions—albeit by methods uniquely his own. Attwell observes that the ‘poem’s resolution endorses the possibility of a transculturated Christianity in the spirit of the independent churches’.¹ This is not saying too much. As already pointed out, Grendon was very much in sympathy with Ethiopianism.

Amagunyana professes an ability to ‘read earth and sky | And men’, and by this means he will do God ‘homage and serve Him’. In this respect he is like another of Grendon’s preliterate poetic speakers who endeavours ‘By aid of [his] dim, flick’ring light’ to ‘To strike a path whence to derive | The wisdom to lead life aright’.² It is by consulting their own inborn spirituality, rather than through the priestly offices of white men, that both these speakers desire reconciliation with their God.

Grendon is assured by Swedenborg that ‘those who could not have the Word, ... such as the Africans, who are destitute of the knowledges of it, are still able to be saved’.³ He also learns from Swedenborg that Africans ‘have also a Book which is the Word to them, but not like our Word; written in a similar manner by correspondences’.⁴ Perhaps this is why Amagunyana claims to have a book that does not yet contain the visions present in the Whiteman’s. With Wilkinson, Grendon sees in Africa ‘a race ... educated in the simple truths of the Word under the guidance of a New Church subject to the influx of the New Heavens. Nothing like it has existed before.’⁵ Amagunyana, who ‘reads’ the ‘earth and sky | And men’, shows his responsiveness to New Jerusalem’s influxes.



¹ Attwell, *Rewriting Modernity*, 58.

² In ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4. This stanza is discussed in Chapters 1 and 8.

³ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 36.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Diarium*, quoted in Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 69.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 13.

As Appendix 4 shows, there is considerable intertextual and contextual evidence to justify our ascription of ‘**The Spirit Song of Mehlokazulu**’¹ to Grendon. This evidence includes the occurrence in the poem of many unusual words, collocations, and figures that are common to Grendon’s known writing, as well as the underlying belief that men-spirits continue to wage war after death—which belief Grendon expresses also in prose.

There was an actual historical figure named Mehlokazulu—an influential ally of the Zulu rebel chief Bambatha. Both men perished in the battle of Mome Gorge on 9 or 10 June 1906.² The poem appeared in print just nineteen or twenty days later, on the 29th. We cannot be sure of Grendon’s whereabouts at this time, but we do know that he composed quickly, and that two or three weeks was sufficient time for him to have got the poem to Ohlange, whether he was resident in Swaziland or in Natal at the time. Mehlokazulu’s death is reported in the *Times of Swaziland* on 16 June.³

In view of Mehlokazulu’s identity as a prominent enemy of Natal’s Government and its militia, the poet must have known that he was working with hazardous material. White forebodings of an all-out black rebellion had never been more acute than they were at this time. It would have been foolhardy for anyone who wrote the line, ‘We thought in our fury with hate on the white’ to identify himself by name. Ohlange and *Ilanga* were under constant surveillance by the Native Affairs Department. Shortly after Dube returned from the United States in 1905, an undercover detective was sent to Ohlange in order to ascertain the identity and whereabouts of the author of a Zulu-language letter that had appeared in *Ilanga*. Posing as a reporter, the detective succeeded in extracting this information from Dube.⁴ As indicated earlier in this chapter, late in 1906, the Inanda police made inquiries about Grendon himself. Grendon likely knew that the authorities kept a hawk’s eye on everything published in the independent black press. For these reasons,

¹ *Ilanga* 3:166 (29 June 1906) 4. See: Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 38–39.

² Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 4; La Hausse, *Restless Identities*, 13.

³ ‘The Natal Trouble’, *Times of Swaziland* (16 June 1906) 4.

⁴ NAB, SNA I/1/319, ref. 830/1905.

the signature line, 'A. E. K., Durban, Natal', cannot be used to argue against Grendon's authorship of the 'Spirit Song'.¹

It was a mark of real courage on Dube's part that he permitted the publication of 'The Spirit Song of Mehllokazulu' to go ahead at a time when a hysterical Government and white press were striving to silence all negative comment in *Ilanga*. Martial law was operative in Natal. Dube's leader article entitled 'Vukani Bantu' had recently been savaged by the *Natal Witness*, which urged the Government to suppress *Ilanga* as 'seditious and treasonable'. This was history repeating itself. In 1901, *Ipepa lo Hlanga* had issued the same 'Vukani Abantu' appeal, the *Witness* had raised the same hue and cry, and *Ipepa* was silenced under martial law. Dube had reason to anticipate a similar outcome when he was hauled before the Governor and told to recant his criticism of the Colony's 'native' policies.² He published a rather obsequious apology, which, under the circumstances, may have been the only course open to him.

His public apology no doubt staved off forced closure of *Ilanga* by Government decree, but it drew strong censure from another black contemporary, *Izwi Labantu*, published in East London. Dube is there accused of not having the courage of his convictions. 'We have our opinion of Mr Dube', *Izwi* states, 'and his attitude strengthens our belief that a man without any principles worth defending or the moral courage to speak the truth so that all men could understand is a public danger We would rather lose a thousand papers than our self-respect, and in losing this Mr Dube has surrendered all that fits him to occupy the responsible position of Editor.'³ Dube walked a tightrope: on the one hand, he had to placate the white authorities; on the other, he could not afford to lose his status as spokesman for enlightened black opinion. Perhaps by publishing material such as 'The Spirit Song', he hoped to recoup his public image in the estimation of *Ilanga*'s readers.

'The Spirit Song of Mehllokazulu' comprises five sestets rhymed aabbcc. Most lines are of eleven syllables, and comprise an initial iamb, followed by three anapaests. The metrical arrangement and the diction may go some way towards

¹ I have traced no other poems by 'A. E. K.' The initials could stand for almost anything—even a Greek epigram.

² Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 4–5; *Izwi Labantu* 42:58 (sic) (5 June 1906) 2.

³ *Izwi Labantu* 42:58 (sic) (5 June 1906) 2.

explaining why Attwell detects in this poem an echo of ‘The Charge of the Light Brigade’. For him, ‘the self-conscious [stylistic] elevation here is not only imitation, it is also affirmation: Bambatha’s warriors deserve to be memorialised no less than those who made it into Tennyson’s iconography’.¹ To judge by the extent to which he engaged with Tennyson, Grendon was a great admirer of the late Poet Laureate,² and Attwell is likely correct in his surmise.

The penultimate stanza of ‘The Spirit Song’ reads:

As into the Shadows my warriors came,
Fording the river, I called each by name.
And now I’ve an impi of spirits to lead,
Yet nerveless our arms, and no valorous deed
In this Kraal of the Mist shall ever be wrought,
No war-cry be chanted, nor battle be fought!

In ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, ‘Shadows’ describe the afterlife.³ In the same poem, Grendon also associates ‘mist’ with death.⁴ The idea that Mehlokazulu continues to lead his band of warriors in the spirit realm resonates with an arcane passage in one of Grendon’s *Ilanga* editorials:

The struggle between black and white ceased when the Zulu power was crushed at Ulundi [in 1879]. Since then the struggle has been a secret one, between black and white spirits, if the spirits’ covering can be represented in natural language by the same differences as characterize the natural body. Since the awful day of Ulundi, the last traces of the black man’s material power, were effaced for ever from the face of this earth. The strife from that day onwards to this has been a spiritual one, and will continue such from this point onwards.⁵

¹ Attwell, ‘Reprisals of Modernity’, 268.

² In ‘Native Education’ (1904), Grendon refers to that ‘long-looked-for event to which the black “creation moves”’—a small intertextual borrowing from the conclusion of ‘In Memoriam A. H. H.’ In ‘Notes and Comments’ (*Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4), the embedded quotation, ‘That men may rise on stepping stones | Of their dead selves to higher things’, is drawn from the first stanza of that poem. Grendon quotes Tennyson, ‘Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington’ at length in his prose-piece, ‘In Memoriam: the Late Sir John Robinson’ (*Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4). He also draws on Tennyson’s ‘The Lotos-Eaters’ in *PKD* (Pt I, p. 2), in ‘Umdelwa’s Musings’ (*Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4), and again in his prose-article, ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’ (*Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5). An epigraph to Grendon’s prose article, ‘Justice Only!’ (*Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 3) is taken from Tennyson’s *Sir Galahad*.

³ Cf. ‘PAD’, Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4).

⁴ ‘PAD’, Pt 14, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4.

⁵ ‘Native Abominations’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4.

As a Swedenborgian, Grendon believes that Earth's inhabitants are poised between the conflicting influences of attendant angels and devils. In this respect, he resembles William Blake who gives a personalized rendering of Swedenborg when he states that unworthy 'Men who gain fame among Men, continue to govern mankind after death, and in their spiritual bodies, oppose the Spirits of those, who worthily are famous'.¹ These disembodied men engage in competition with a view to winning individual humans for Heaven or for Hell. By influx, they attempt to inject their own loves—good and evil—into men and women. Grendon believes implicitly that those who fell at Ulundi in 1879, or at Mome in 1906, live on perfectly intact in the spirit world, and that the spirits that were in conflict during the flesh-bound stage of their existence remain spiritual antagonists even after they shed their flesh. Wilkinson states that there exists 'communication through the heaven by spiritual African societies' with some 'natural African societ[ies] on this earth'.² Against such an ideological background, it becomes possible to view carnal warfare as the material, phenomenal outworking of conflict having its real origin in the spirit realm. Some such idea appears to inform Grendon's view of white-black struggles after the Anglo-Zulu War and Zulu Rebellion.



Judging by the tone of the official inquiry into Grendon's 'character', it seems unlikely that he secured employment of any kind under the Swaziland Government. He cannot have taught for more than a few months at Zombodze before the new teacher—recruited by no lesser personage than the High Commissioner himself—arrived. According to the 'Early History of Zombode School', Grendon's term of employment as royal tutor seems to have drawn to a close toward the end of 1906:

Owing to the difficulty of enforcing discipline and in order that the sons of the late Paramount Chief and other chiefs would be [educated?] on correct lines and under the control of the Administration, the then Resident Commissioner, Mr F. Enraght Moony, with the consent of the Chief Regent, obtained from the Cape an experienced and able teacher named Joseph James. His appointment dated from the 1st January 1907, and at first the only scholars were the present Paramount Chief [Sobhuza] and twenty other sons of Chiefs.³

¹ Blake, quoted in: Paley, 'A New Heaven is Begun', 78.

² Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 162.

³ Zombodze School, 'Early History'.

It is of course possible that Grendon had some difficulty in maintaining order among his pupils. Shortly after his dismissal from his headmastership at Edendale in 1903, it was claimed that ‘discipline on the boys [there had] been extraordinarily lax for some time past’, and that a ‘few delinquents’ had actually to be expelled by the new Principal, J. S. Morris.¹ All the same, we may take it that it was really Grendon’s politics rather than his inability to maintain order in the classroom that lost him his teaching post. As the above source indicates, this was an issue of ideological ‘correctness’ and Governmental ‘control’.

Kuper—possibly drawing upon her 1930s interviews with Grendon—states that at about this time, the ‘question of what the King should be taught in school and hence of who should be his teachers, was a matter of general concern and later controversy’. It was no secret that, given *carte blanche*, Grendon was sure to include in his curriculum subjects considered altogether unsuitable by colonial administrators. Recent African history would have been one of these contentious subjects, and Grendon would certainly have drilled his pupils on the record of ‘those three solemn treaty pledges’ involving Swazi independence that perfidious Albion had failed to honour.²

Robert Coryndon, the Resident-Commissioner who replaced Enraght-Moony, was ‘deeply suspicious of Grendon’s politics’, and so ‘forced a teacher of his own choice’ on Labotsibeni. This was Joseph James Xaba—or, simply, Joseph James, as he sometimes preferred to be called. According to Alan R. Booth, Labotsibeni ‘bitterly resisted’ Xaba.³ It is recorded that once when Xaba called into question the Queen-Regent’s occult powers, she ensured that his pupils boycotted lessons.⁴

Xaba was a Xhosa-speaking man, trained at Willowvale in the Transkei. He had been a Cape Colonial civil servant prior to his transfer to the Swaziland

¹ *Ipepa* 3:465 (30 Oct. 1903) 4.

² ‘Annexation of Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3.

³ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 44; Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland*, 293. Booth seems, like some other writers, to conflate the identities of two brothers, Joseph James Xaba, and the Rev. John James Xaba. John James replaced his brother as head-teacher at the National School, Zombodze.

⁴ Perkins, ‘A History of Christian Missions in Swaziland’, 437. It is unclear whether Joseph or John Xaba is meant here. Both brothers appear to have ingratiated themselves with the Mbabane administration.

administration.¹ Throughout his time in Swaziland, he maintained close contact with the Malan Mission, near Idutywa and not far from Willowvale, spending his annual vacations there.²

In December 1908, a 'large school-house on the Transvaal model with teachers' quarters' and 'completely fitted with educational requirements' was officially opened by Acting Resident Commissioner, de Symons Honey. In his speech, he 'remarked that if the present day chiefs had received education in their youth they would not now be so fond of listening to bad advice from whitemen'. This was the first Western-style schoolhouse that Sobhuza attended. Grendon recalls seven years later that at the age of just nine, the pupil 'clove fast to his books'.³ He might have been repeating hearsay, but given his closeness to the royal Dlamini family, it seems more likely that he spoke from firsthand knowledge.



When Britain announced in 1907 its intention to partition Swaziland in a way that greatly favoured the white minority, the proclamation caused universal consternation and outrage amongst the Swazi. Labotsibeni paid a call upon the Resident Commissioner to inform him of her 'desire to send to England a deputation similar to that of the Basuto Chiefs who [had] just returned'.⁴ The deputation was despatched in the same year, and returned early in 1908. It included Grendon's pupil, Prince Malunge—principal adviser to Labotsibeni, his mother.⁵ Knowing Grendon's preoccupation with constitutional and political history—and particularly with the record of Britain's broken promises to Swaziland—it is quite possible that he and the prince had some briefing sessions prior to the latter's departure for England.

Grendon later recalls that when the delegation arrived back in Cape Town, a newspaper reporter 'interviewed Chief Josiah Vilakazi, the Secretary to the Swazi Nation, and a member of the Deputation'. Vilakazi was asked if he did not think that Swaziland's interests 'would be safe in the hands of Generals Botha and Smuts'.

¹ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 44; F. F. Sepamla, 'African Progress in Swaziland 1908–1948', *Times of Swaziland* 26:38 (18 Aug. 1949) 4.

² *Abantu-Batho* (15 April 1915).

³ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916). Cf. 'The young chief is being educated at the native school at Zombodi, and is said to show promise' (Keith, *South Africa* (1913), iii:194).

⁴ 'A Swazie Deputation', *Times of Swaziland* 6:49 (4 May 1907) 2.

⁵ Sol Plaatje, 'The Late Prince Malunge', *Tsala ea Batho* 4:214 (10 April 1915).

Vilakazi replied forthrightly: ‘No I do not think so. ... We (Swazis) do not want to be under the Transvaal Government at all; and that was one of the things we laid before Lord Elgin, and he (Elgin) said he would consider the matter.’¹

Within a few years of settling in Swaziland, Grendon seems to have immersed himself in Swazi affairs. He was becoming more of a Swazi himself, and probably relished the *Star*’s description of him as ‘the scholarly and cultured Swazi’.² He gave his life to his country of adoption; his later marriage to Gwilikile Dlamini, together with the birth of their children, must have cemented his identification with Swaziland.³

In a few articles and letters (1913–16) that have been traced in newspapers, Grendon acquaints the wider world with Swaziland’s internal workings.⁴ In these pieces, he seems anxious to sketch a picture of greater interracial harmony in Swaziland than in the neighbouring Union. For instance, in December 1913, he reports that white farmers in Swaziland are in agreement that a proposed tax increase is ‘excessive with regard to the Swazis’, who are ‘already saddled with enough taxes’.⁵ He reports upon a kindly gesture performed by ‘His Honour A. G. Marwick, Esq., Assistant Commissioner’,⁶ and applauds the ‘sterling work among the ema-Swazi’ performed by the Resident Commissioner, Coryndon.⁷ The implication of all such commendation is clear: South Africa’s Union Government ought to take a leaf out of Swaziland’s book, and the Swazi want no part in the Boer-dominated Union.

In 1913, when the Union Government promulgated the Natives’ Land Act, the SANNC determined to send a protest delegation to England. Funds had to be raised amongst black African donors, and Saul Msane—a close associate of Grendon—‘was deputed to tour the country and ask for funds from the Natives. A Johannesburg committee was appointed to superintend this effort and take charge of the funds which

¹ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

² ‘Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives’, *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd edn, 6.

³ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa (Grendon’s daughter), Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

⁴ ‘News from Swaziland’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6 (article written in Dec. 1913); ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5; untitled notes on Swazi affairs reprinted from *Abantu-Batho* in *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5; ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁵ ‘News from Swaziland’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6.

⁶ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁷ ‘Farewell Msindazwe!’ *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

he might raise.’¹ *Tsala ea Batho* reported in January 1914 that Msane had ‘conducted a most successful campaign collecting information and funds to contest the Native Lands Act, 1913’. In addition to soliciting in the Transvaal, he ‘slipped over to Swaziland, won the confidence of the Imperial Authorities there, had several successful interviews with the Swazi Chiefs, and got an assurance that Malunge, the Prince-Regent, would attend the National Congress next month and bring the Swazi contribution’.²

In the vicinity of Lake Chrissie, close to the Swazi border, local white farmers took fright when mass rallies were held in connection with Msane’s fundraising drive. The rumour circulated that the Swazi royal family was orchestrating a rebellion amongst ethnic Swazi living in the Transvaal. For fifty miles along the border, white families fled their farms and went into laager.³ ‘Rumours of armed bodies of natives marching upon defenceless farms were current in the district for several days.’⁴

Msane wrote in the press that, behind the ‘Scare’, he discerned ‘some ulterior motive of a malignant kind which is bent on injuring the natives in the eyes of the country’.⁵ He controverted an accusation in the *Barberton Herald*

that this unrest is fomented by educated natives from Lovedale, the Cape Colony, Basutoland, or Edendale, who cherish ideas of racial equality, are far-fetched, and must be characterised as a gross and offensive libel on a class of men who have never taken up arms against any Government. On the contrary, the Governments of the past have drawn native contingents from Edendale to assist in the native risings. What better proof of loyalty could there be than that?⁶

Given his Edendale origins, Msane’s vehement refutation of the *Barberton Herald*’s calumny is understandable.

Grendon also makes no bones about the motives giving rise to the ‘Swazi Scare’ of late 1913. It is a ruse on the part of Transvalers to obtain what they have always coveted: full and unconditional ownership of Swaziland, its government and

¹ Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, 174.

² ‘Mr. Saul Msane’, *Tsala ea Batho* 4:157 (31 Jan. 1914) 5.

³ Lowe, ‘Swaziland’s Colonial Politics’, 279n.

⁴ ‘The Swazi “Scare”’, *Cape Times* (5 Jan. 1914), in BA CO 417/546.

⁵ Saul Msane, in *Transvaal Leader* (24 Dec. 1913), reprinted in *Cape Times* (5 Jan. 1914), in BA, CO 417/546.

⁶ Saul Msane, in *Transvaal Leader* (24 Dec. 1913), reprinted in *Cape Times* (5 Jan. 1914), in BA, CO 417/546.

resources. He writes in December 1913 that ‘possibly behind this rumour there lurks a motive which seeks to bring Swaziland under the wing of the South African Union’.¹ And in 1916, he states his suspicion more confidently: ‘The motive for that exaggerated and nonsensical Swazi Scare of 1913, which accounted for 300,000 armed Swazis chasing a certain phantom-ridden Field-cornet of Chrissiesmere (Lake Chrissie), prompts us to this very day to suspect that at that time some subtle, though foolish move was being made to hitch Swaziland to the Union Car.’²



The failure of the delegation of 1907–08 forced Labotsibeni to realize that appeals to Britain would not negate what concessionaires had wheedled out of her late husband Mbandzeni, or win back for the Swazi what the Partition Proclamation of 1907 had assigned in perpetuity to white owners. Acting in council with her numerous advisers, she resolved upon a scheme whereby to repurchase land then in white hands. In July 1909, her chiefs were given directions to collect three pounds from each Swazi man, to go into a fund from which white-held land would be redeemed for Swazi use. This campaign was stepped up two years later.³ According to Kuper, Labotsibeni

encouraged her people to go out to work, and in 1914 she sent out men to collect money from her people to buy back farms from European holders. Unfortunately, the Swazi had not acquired, in their contact with Europeans, honest methods of business, and large sums were misappropriated. On [Labotsibeni’s] request, the Administration had finally to take charge, and 36,404 morgen were purchased by the nation.⁴

Prince Lomvazi was deputed by his mother ‘to collect £5 from each Swazi male living in Johannesburg and Witbank in the Transvaal’.⁵ His elder brother Malunge also shared in the collection work.

It is possible that the Swazi royals were following the lead of the Edendale *kholwa*, who for a generation or more had been successful in acquiring ownership rights to farming land by purchase from the Crown or from white farmers. In several cases, where the deposits or instalments were too heavy for a single buyer, they pooled their

¹ ‘News from Swaziland’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6.

² ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

³ Kanduza, ‘You Are Tearing My Skirt’, 94.

⁴ Kuper, ‘Development of a Primitive Nation’, 363; Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, 31.

⁵ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 111.

funds, formed syndicates, bought the land for their communities, and then parcelled it out according to a pre-agreed arrangement. This is how such thriving farming settlements as Edendale and Driefontein had come into being.

Grendon was an advocate of collective bargaining, and pooling communal resources in the furtherance of a common cause. In 1905, when a decision of the Natal Supreme Court undermined the legal status of children born to black Africans ‘exempted from the operation of Native Law’, he proposed that all blacks in Natal club together to raise funds to finance an appeal to the Privy Council. He suggested in *Ilanga*: ‘As the matter concerns the whole race in Natal, and there are more than 100,000 persons at the least, who could be prevailed upon by careful tack and judgment to contribute, say sixpence a head or even half that sum. At the former rate £1250 could be collected in an hour. At the latter rate £650.’¹ Given his closeness to Labotsibeni, it is highly probable that Grendon threw all his weight behind her land repurchase scheme.

As quoted above, Kuper hints at the fact that some of the monies collected were misappropriated. Chris Lowe points out that rumours of fiscal corruption pointed even to Labotsibeni, Malunge, and the Edendale-educated Josiah Vilakazi, who was the Queen-Regent’s official secretary. A meeting took place in October 1914, at which Swazi chiefs agreed to support the campaign only if funds were collected and managed by the British administration.²

Grendon refers to this stormy meeting in ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’—a report published in *Ilanga* in May 1915. Effectively, Malunge and Vilakazi stood accused of embezzling public money. Malunge was ailing at the time, and would die just a few months later. Grendon writes after his death that,

like a wounded buck, with the ghastly, ghostly glare of Death before his eyes, Malunge stood ‘at bay’ in last October—in the presence of his sires, Mhlope [de Symons Honey, Government Secretary] and the Child of Madashamba—with his moral slayers there in yonder Court-House to defend himself and Vilakazi, from a secret or an open—from a founded or unfounded

¹ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4.

² Lowe, ‘Swaziland’s Colonial Politics’, 286.

charge—of being ‘thieves!’—in that they had set apart a portion of the Nation’s treasure for themselves.¹

Grendon appeals to Vilakazi to clear his name—and more particularly, Malunge’s—by unequivocally refuting the charges made against them both in October 1914: ‘Redeem Malunge’s character though he no longer lives—and vindicate your own!’²

In referring to Malunge’s ‘moral slayers’, Grendon likely has in mind Swedenborg’s ‘spiritual moral sense’ of the biblical commandment, ‘Thou shalt not kill’, *i.e.*,

that one must not hate his brother or neighbour, and thus not defame or slander him; for thus he would injure or kill his reputation and honour, which is the source of his life among his brethren, which is called his civil life, and afterward he would live in society as one dead, for he would be numbered among the vile and wicked, with whom no one would associate. When this is done from enmity, from hatred, or from revenge, it is murder.³



From the time of the National Conference of 1908–09, the possibility existed of Swaziland’s being drawn into the proposed Union of South Africa. Grendon fought strenuously against such an eventuality, opposing incorporation on profound philosophical grounds. The Union Government was Boer-dominated, whereas direct imperial rule was British. Spiritually, Boers and Swazi were so unlike as to be forever at odds; ‘conjunction’ was however possible between Britons and Swazi, since they were spiritually alike:

If the Swazis prefer the Briton to the Boer in friendship and in government it is because there is conjunction between the two [*i.e.*, Britons and Swazi]; and where conjunction exists there also is love,—be it small or great. But if the Swazis shrink from the Boers it is because there is disjunction or division between the two; and where disjunction or division is, there surely is no love. Thus it is manifest why the Swazis are so much averse to becoming part and parcel of the Union.⁴

¹ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

² ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

³ Swedenborg, *Apocalypse Explained*, n. 1012.

⁴ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

As already noted more than once, Swedenborg states that ‘every thing in the universe has its opposite’,¹ and Grendon states that ‘everything in this world seems to have its opposite’.² The opposition between ‘Boer’ and ‘British’ principles in governing Africa was considered in Chapter 6; the opposition of conjugal and scortatory love principles was treated in Chapter 9. Swedenborg cites several examples: the ‘opposite of light is darkness; ... of affections the opposites are joys and mourning, also gladnesses and sadnesses; of perceptions the opposites are goods and evils, also truths and falses’.³ Grendon employs similar examples: ‘There is *light* with its opposing *darkness*; there is *joy* with its opposite, *sorrow*; there is *goodness* with its counterpart *evil*. ... There is a *right*, and there is a *wrong*.’⁴

The irreconcilability of such ‘contraries’ is fundamental to Swedenborg’s philosophy. Spalding, a prominent Swedenborgian, states that ‘evil and falsity cannot enter heaven nor can goodness and truth enter hell, for they are irreconcilable opposites’.⁵ Blake was being impish when he wrote his *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, which ‘is widely recognized to be a satire directed toward Swedenborg and the Swedenborgians. The title unites what Swedenborg had perceived as divided; Angels and Devils are juxtaposed, but with subversive intent. Swedenborg’s static “equilibrium” is displaced by Blake’s dynamic interplay of contraries.’⁶ By stating that ‘Good & Evil are here both Good & the two Contraries Married’, Blake means to put Swedenborg in his place.⁷

Grendon could only have viewed belief in reconciled contraries as perverse. In South Africa, twinned and opposing political principles operate. They were mutually-exclusive and incompatible. *Paul Kruger’s Dream* describes ‘The Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa between Boer and Briton, or the Overthrow of “Corruption”, “Falsehood”, “Tyranny”, “Wrong”, and the Triumph of “Justice”, “Truth”, “Liberty”, “Right”’. Blake’s ‘marriage’ is preposterous under such circumstances. There is a ‘struggle’ between Boer and British principles; between ‘corruption’ and ‘justice’; between ‘falsehood’ and ‘truth’; between ‘tyranny’ and

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 425.

² ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

³ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 425.

⁴ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4.

⁵ Spalding, *Introduction to Swedenborg’s Religious Thought*, 27.

⁶ Paley, ‘A New Heaven Is Begun’, 74.

⁷ Paley, ‘A New Heaven Is Begun’, 67–68.

'liberty'; between 'wrong' and 'right'. In each oppositional pairing, the first abstract enumerated inheres in the 'Boer'; the second in the 'Briton'. According to the poem's title, Boer principles are 'overthrown'; British principles 'triumph'.

Grendon is remarkably consistent in his affirmation of this principle of the contest between 'unlikes' or 'contraries', and the affinity between things of a like spiritual state. The *Dream* (1902) may be read as a poetic statement of how contrary moral principles combat each other in South Africa. In 1904, Grendon writes that 'in all places under the sun, men are divided into opposite camps, some serving justice, equity, and truth; others worshipping, and magnifying injustice, wrong, and falsehood'.¹ In the same year, he writes in verse: 'Did wicked Souls with good unite, | And access thus to Heaven gain, | Whilst each to each are opposite | Could they endure the awful pain?'² In 1905, he affirms that 'Good can simultaneously | Not Evil be; for these are opposites, | Which, when they meet, must cause a deadly strife, | Whence one or other must at length prevail'.³ He writes also that there exist 'things that in all eternity can never be associated, since they are unlikes, and there is no comparison to be made with unlikes, but with things of the same nature, quality, and name'.⁴ In 1915, a decade later, he has not modified his standpoint. He states that 'there exists nowhere in all Creation sympathy and love between things opposite and diverse'.⁵ In 1916, he repeats that 'things opposite or diverse will always strive against each other until the weaker are blotted out'.⁶ In 1918, he writes of 'the conjunction of minds' that can only occur between those who share spiritual likeness.⁷

Grendon illustrates how this basic principle translates into practical terms in the diverging 'native' policies of South Africa: 'There is no comparison between the methods of the Boer and the Briton regarding their treatment of the native. Comparison can only come in with like things. Love and hatred; murder and saving are not likes; and therefore cannot be compared. The Boer is for trampling down; the

¹ 'Justice Only!' *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 3.

² 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

³ 'PAD', Pt 19, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.

⁴ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

⁵ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁶ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁷ 'Native Unrest', *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918).

Briton for raising. The Boer is for murdering and annihilating; the Briton is for saving.’¹

The years immediately following the South African War made a mockery of the *Dream*’s central thesis. There certainly *had been* a ‘struggle’, a ‘triumph’, and an ‘overthrow’; but in what seemed a bitter cosmic irony, the conquered former republics emerged as the real victors in the eyes of disappointed blacks, because their grossly illiberal race policies remained intact and were in fact systematically imposed upon the entire region. By 1905, Grendon considers that ‘the defeat of the Boers was imperfect’ and that ‘in spirit they are as hateful to their new rulers as ever before’. He ‘fear[s] that Mr [Louis] Botha and his confederates are not all sincere in their relations towards their fate, and we expect to hear something more of their attitude as time goes by’.²

Time did ‘go by’, and in 1916, Grendon finds occasion to slam the ‘South African or Botha-Smuts Party’ for passing a resolution in Pretoria ‘that Swaziland be incorporated in the Union’. Grendon sketches the prehistory of this resolution, which

evidently emanated from the Piet Retief Boers, who since the day when they succeeded in obtaining from MBANDENI that portion of his territory which they called the ‘Little Free State’, have coveted the goodly country further east. It is well known that for many years back the Transvaal has coveted the Land of the Swazis; and both before and after the Anglo-Boer War she has done her utmost—foul or fair—to bring that ‘California of South Africa’ under her sway. With the defeat of the Boers and their subjugation to the British rule, matters at first were quiet. Soon however after gaining a moral victory over their erstwhile foes, who since have handed back to them their two Republics together with the run of the Union Government, the Boers arose again assertive to tamper with the internal affairs of Swaziland, by clamouring for its incorporation in the Union.³

Grendon concurs with what Malunge told Lord Gladstone in 1913: ‘WE ARE VERY MUCH OPPOSED TO SWAZILAND BEING TAKEN OVER BY THE UNION GOVERNMENT, because of the fact that if we were now under the Union WE SHOULD BE SUFFERING UNDER THE NATIVES’ LAND ACT.’ In line with those words of Malunge, Grendon adds: ‘Certain as the Night succeeds the Day, the Swazis, and with them the Basuto will under the Union fare worse than under their present Administrations. This fate

¹ ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 4.

³ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

stares them sorely in the face.’¹ From his home in Swaziland, and later as editor of *Abantu-Batho* in Johannesburg, he campaigned through the press, and through what personal influence he possessed, to advance the cause of the Swazi royal house, and to forestall Swaziland’s incorporation into an Afrikaner-dominated South African Union.

In a petition of 21 August 1915 to Lord Buxton, British High Commissioner to South Africa, Labotsibeni and the Swazi Council expressed ‘grave apprehension’ concerning ‘any decision that will annex Swaziland to the Union of South Africa’. In particular, they wished to continue to ‘enjoy rights in the land of [their] fathers whereas from [their] kinsfolk in the Union such rights have been taken away by the Natives Land Act of 1913’.²

The Resident Commissioner was of the opinion that the petition had been written by Josiah Vilakazi, ‘an educated native who acts as the Chief Regent’s Secretary’.³ Vilakazi probably did have a hand in the petition’s presentation, but it seems likely that it was drafted—at least in part—by Grendon (see Appendix 5), who was undoubtedly the most highly-educated of those Africans loyal to Labotsibeni’s cause. The language of the petition closely resembles that of some of Grendon’s published writings. In its preamble, for instance, it describes the Great War as ‘a mighty struggle for the defence of Liberty, Justice, Truth, and Right’. These four are the very principles appearing in the full title of *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, which refers to the South African War as a ‘Struggle’ in which the British principles of “‘Justice”, “‘Truth”, “‘Liberty”, “‘Right”” triumph.

Grendon actually refers to this petition in an *Abantu-Batho* editorial, which he begins by quoting Malunge: ‘We view with great apprehension the application of the Natives’ Land Act in the Union, and we do not want that to happen to us.’ Grendon is adamant that Swaziland should resist all attempts to incorporate her into the Union.⁴

¹ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

² SwNA, RCS 459/15, ‘Address’ from Swazi Queen-Regent and Council to High Commissioner, 21 Aug. 1915.

³ SwNA RCS 459/15: Honey (Acting Resident Commissioner) to Buxton (High Commissioner), 8 Sept. 1915

⁴ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

In this editorial, as well as in his letters to other papers, and in his support of the 1915 petition, he argues strongly against Swaziland's incorporation into South Africa.¹



Dinuzulu, the so-called 'Last Zulu King', died in October 1913.² Grendon, who had studied Dinuzulu's misfortunes over the years, promptly launched into the composition of a new epic poem, to be entitled, '**Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand**'. Two fragments, published in *Izwe la Kiti*, survive. They are: 'A Tribute to Miss Harriet [sic] Colenso: the Staunchest Friend of the Zulu Race'³ and 'Dinizulu's Funeral'.⁴

Grendon's first stay in Natal (1889) had followed close on the heels of what he describes as 'that memorable trial of Dinizulu at Eshowe',⁵ after which the King was sentenced to exile on Saint Helena Island in the mid-South Atlantic. A footnote to *Paul Kruger's Dream* makes reference to 'Dinizulu, son of Cetywayo, together with two other Zulu Chiefs, who were banished to this island for rebellion against British rule'.⁶

Grendon was concerned that African oral lore should be preserved in written form. During his Ohlange stay, he had 'appeal[ed] to the more enlightened of the Zulu race to commit their knowledge to writing and so save the "deeds illustrious" of their race from passing to forgottenness'.⁷ With the new poem, Grendon evidently meant to show the way.

Late in 1912, Dr William Godfrey, an Indian man who had studied medicine in Scotland, found Dinuzulu 'suffering great bodily pain'.⁸ A project to send him to Carlsbad spa in Germany was not sanctioned by the Botha Government.⁹ In March 1913, the ailing man came to Johannesburg in order to receive medical treatment.¹⁰

¹ 'News from Swaziland', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6; 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

² 'Death of the Last Zulu King', *Tsala ea Batho* 4:145 (25 Oct. 1913) 4.

³ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5. See: Couzens and Patel, *Return of the Amasi Bird*, 41–44.

⁴ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:76 (4 March 1914) 5.

⁵ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 3.

⁶ *PKD*, Pt XXIX, p. 96n.

⁷ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁸ TAB, GG Vol. 1540, ref. 50/272: W. Godfrey (medical doctor) to Seme, 19 Nov. 1912.

⁹ TAB, GG Vol. 1540, ref. 50/272: Seme to Governor-General, 17 Feb. 1913.

¹⁰ TAB, GG Vol. 1540, ref. 50/282: W. Godfrey (medical doctor) to Governor-General, 17 March

While there, he stayed at the home of Pixley Seme in Sophiatown.¹ After Dinuzulu's death, Seme married one of his daughters.² The deposed King was attended by his indunas, Mankulumana and Ntombela. Seme called upon his royal guest 'to occupy leisure time by dictating the history of the Zulus'. Seme's assistant, Selby Msimang, was detailed to transcribe the King's reminiscences.³ It seems quite possible that Seme was toying with the idea of authoring the King's biography. Perhaps the prospect of such a project was in the air, because on the King's death, *Tsala ea Batho* suggested that a 'book on the life of Chief Dinuzulu written by a versatile pen like that of Mr P. ka I. Seme, and his concentrative faculties, could serve the useful purpose of convincing people how merciful and kind this world is to the rest of us, and compared with the dead Chief's experiences, what little we have to grouse about'.⁴

Another of Grendon's acquaintances, Cleopas Kunene evidently also represented himself as an authority on Dinuzulu's life history. In late 1916, when Evelyn F. Clarke of Inanda Seminary was planning to release a second edition of her 'little book for the assistance of native teachers and pupils', she obtained biographical information on Dinuzulu for it 'from Cleopas Kunene now of Johannesburg and editor of the native newspaper "Abantu Batho"—(formerly of Edendale)'.⁵ Harriette Colenso told Clarke that she did 'not know what grounds there [might] be for holding Cleopas Kunene to be an authority on Zulu history, but [she] differ[ed] from him' as to several details of the late King's biography.⁶

It is just possible that Grendon may have met the King during his stay at Sophiatown. Selby Msimang told Couzens in the 1970s that he and Grendon had had frequent meetings in Johannesburg from 'about 1910', and from Aurora Malumisa, Grendon's daughter, Couzens also learnt that Grendon had 'taught in Sophiatown at some stage'.⁷ Msimang 'opened a small greengrocery shop at Sophiatown' around 1913, after returning from the SANNC conference at which the deputation was

¹ 'Dinuzulu's Visit to the Rand', *Izwe la Kiti*.

² Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 63.

³ Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 53.

⁴ 'Death of the Last Zulu King', *Tsala ea Batho* 4:145 (25 Oct. 1913) 4.

⁵ Colenso Family Papers, vol. 55: E. F. Clarke to H. Colenso, 5 Oct. 1916; E. F. Clarke to H. Colenso, 17 Oct. 1916.

⁶ Colenso Family Papers, vol. 55: E. F. Clarke, Inanda Seminary, to H. Colenso, 5 Oct. 1916, and 17 Oct. 1916; vol. 76: H. Colenso, Sweetwaters, to E. F. Clarke, 29 Nov. 1916.

⁷ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 77.

selected that would travel to Britain.¹ His meetings with Grendon may have begun at about this time. T. D. Mveli Skota informed Couzens that Seme had headhunted Grendon ‘to edit the first edition of the *Abantu Batho*’.² If Skota’s memory served him correctly, this would place Grendon in Johannesburg-Sophiatown late in 1912, when the first issue of *Abantu-Batho* was issued.³

All the factual details in what survives of this poem are contained in an article published over two issues of Sol Plaatje’s newspaper, *Tsala ea Batho*, and it is possible that Grendon worked from that article or from a similar one in *Abantu-Batho* or in *Izwe la Kiti* as his source material.⁴ It is also possible that he interrogated Msimang—who had interviewed the King—or Seme, or even the indunas. In addition, in February 1914, Grendon made public his wish that a ‘speedy communication [might] be opened up’ between Harriette Colenso and himself—likely with a view to obtaining historical and biographical material for his projected epic.⁵

The published fragments are more-or-less self-standing. The first is a tribute to Harriette Colenso, Dinuzulu’s steadfast white supporter throughout his adult life. It comprises six twelve-line stanzas, rhymed abcbdefghjh. This passage is in accentual meter, rather than in the strict accentual-syllabic verse, in which Grendon usually composed. Lines vary in length from 9 to 11 syllables, but there are invariably four stressed syllables to each line. An irregular combination of iambs and anapaests creates a rhythm that more closely approximates ordinary speech than Grendon’s usual rigid iambic meter.

By labelling Miss Colenso the ‘staunchest’ white supporter of the Zulu people, Grendon expresses the view of many black intellectuals.⁶ Plaatje dedicates *Native Life in South Africa* to her, in ‘recognition of her unswerving loyalty to the policy of her late distinguished father and unselfish interest in the welfare of the South African

¹ Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 34.

² Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 77.

³ No later than October 1912 (‘Ezixoxa ngabantu’, *Izwe la Kiti* 1:6 (30 Oct. 1912) 3). Switzer and Switzer (*The Black Press*, 25) confirm the year as being 1912.

⁴ ‘Late Zulu King Dinuzulu’s Funeral’, *Tsala ea Batho* 4:147 (8 Nov. 1913) 5, and 4:148 (15 Nov. 1913) 4. Grendon also refers to *Izwe la Kiti* (5 Nov. 1913) which contained some material that appears in his poem (‘A Question for L. E. H.’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:73 (11 Feb. 1914) 6).

⁵ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5.

⁶ See, for instance Mboza Matshiwulwana’s poetic tribute to Harriette (1895) in: Couzens, ‘Early South African Black Writing’, 6. See also: Alice Werner, ‘The Praises of the Inkosazana’, *Ilanga* 4:213 (3 May 1907) 4.

Natives'. Grendon admires in Harriette the very qualities that we associate with him, because, like him, she fearlessly championed the cause of the underdog. Colenso rebuked her own race for the immorality of its conduct toward Dinuzulu and his people:

There be few like her, that have censur'd sin
In the strong, who trample the weaker down!
There be few like her, that have parried so well
The thrusts of detractors ever on watch
To further the vile intentions of Hell,
By exciting strife betwixt Man and Man!
There be few like her, that have splinter'd the fangs
Of Natalia's mamba, and its venom excis'd,
And depriv'd [it] of its swiftly fatal pangs!

The phrase 'betwixt Man and Man' is echoed in Grendon's prose writing. He commends the few courageous colonial magistrates who display a 'determination to mete out justice between man and man' and in so doing 'have launched themselves [like Miss Colenso] into the whirlpool of popular disfavour amongst their own countrymen'.¹ He appeals for 'simple justice and right between man and man',² and laments the fact that 'between man and man to-day there is no *charity*'.³ Moral fortitude is an attribute that Grendon prizes highly, and one that he applauds whenever he sees evidence of it.

Grendon also appreciates Miss Colenso for having 'splinter'd the fangs | Of Natalia's mamba'. As noted in Chapter 8, figurative 'serpents' abound in Grendon's writing, and are Grendon's creative application of one of Swedenborg's correspondences. By the 'serpent' of Genesis 3:15 is 'meant all evil in general, and specifically the love of self'; the 'head of the serpent' becomes 'the dominion of evil in general, and specifically that of the love of self'; to 'trample upon' that head means 'depression' of evil.⁴

¹ 'Justice Only!' *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 3.

² 'S.A.N.A. Commission', *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

³ 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 250.

The second published fragment of the poem treats ‘Dinizulu’s Funeral’.¹ It comprises ‘Mr G. W. Kinsman’s Speech on Behalf of the S. A. Union Government’ and ‘Mankulumana’s Reply Thereto’. The ‘Government of “Hope”’ addresses Mankulumana and the Zulu people ‘Thro’ Babanango’s Magistrate’, Kinsman. In a footnote, Grendon explains that ‘the name “Hope” is here used as a poetical contraction for “Good Hope”, an appellation which Southern Africa has enjoyed since the days of John II of Portugal, who bestowed this name upon the land, in place of Vasco da Gama’s name “Cape of Storms”’.

In several places, Grendon makes poetic wordplay with the renaming of the Cape in the late fifteenth century. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, ‘Great Diaz’, the Portuguese navigator is addressed: ‘[R]ightly didst thou name this land | “*The Cape of Storms!*” He err’d who rebaptiz’d | It “Cape of Hope”.’² After the Act of Union, Grendon applies ‘Hope’ synecdochically to mean the entire Union. If Botha and Smuts will allow black South Africans to play an active part in the Great War, they ‘will drive away the “Storms” that thickly—darkly—hang upon this Land, bereaving it of “Hope”’.³ In another context, the Swazi desire to remain under direct Imperial rule, because they ‘dread the look of Hope (i.e. the S. A. Union)’.⁴ Mankulumana and his fellow mourners at Dinuzulu’s funeral must reflect ruefully on the irony that the ‘Government of “Hope”’ spells no ‘hope’ for them.

In his speech, Kinsman acknowledges belatedly that, although first the Natal and then the Union Government demoted Dinuzulu’s status from ‘king’ to ‘chief’,

’tis a truth,
That we can ne’er eradicate
From Zulu minds this mighty fact
That Dinizulu was indeed
Your king.

In a prose piece, Grendon describes Mankulumana, Dinuzulu’s chief *induna*, as ‘that primitive Ndwandwe orator, whom Demosthenes, the prince of Greek orators

¹ *Izwe la Kiti* 3:76 (4 March 1914) 5.

² *PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 101.

³ ‘Hooray!’ *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁴ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

would have applauded, had he been privileged to hear him speak,—whom Truth herself would not disdain'.¹ Selby Msimang shares Grendon's view:

I met Mankulumana Nxumalo in Middelburg, Transvaal. From what Dinizulu had told me I became interested in this old man, tall and quiet. But Dinizulu not only respected him but regarded him as a son to a revered father. Mankulumana was reserved, quiet and slow to express an opinion. When he spoke one would not be surprised why Dinizulu revered this man. He was a genius.²

Some whites felt similarly about Mankulumana. J. C. Krogh, a parliamentarian of the Union Government met with the 'old man' whom he admired 'for his straightforward yet courteous manner of expressing himself and for his gentlemanly bearing'.³

In the poem, Mankulumana, addressing Kinsman, describes 'Ye sons of Japheth'—biblical progenitor of whites—as 'a stock | Of glaring inconsistencies!' Whites hold not a single opinion, but a bewildering array of conflicting ones. During his life, Dinuzulu was forbidden to set foot in his native Zululand; yet when he died the Union Government did not prevent his earthly remains from being buried there. The Zulu have discovered that white men's 'tongues' 'Deny each other endlessly'. The Zulu royal house had a few consistent white supporters such as the Colenso family—represented at the funeral in the person of Harriette; on the other hand, whites on two occasions wrongfully sent Dinuzulu into exile. Since 'Dinizulu strove | Against you not, howbeit ye | Arrested him, and into exile drove[?]', Mankulumana asks, knowing full well that no answer will be forthcoming.

Mankulumana reprehends the white race not for the war it engineered in 1879, but for its unaccountable enmity with the Zulu people, even after their surrender and their tokens of fealty to their conquerors:

We dash'd—like surf upon a rock!—
Against you in Cetywayo's day,
And being o'ercome we yielded you
Allegiance, trusting that thereby
Good-will betwixt us would ensue.⁴

¹ 'A Question for L. E. H.', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:73 (11 Feb. 1914) 6.

² Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 54.

³ Colenso Family Papers, vol. 54: J. C. Krogh, Middelburg, Transvaal, to Miss Colenso, 31 July 1914.

⁴ 'Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:76 (4 March 1914) 5.

But ‘allegiance’ did not elicit ‘Good-will’. Instead, it merely ushered in an implacably arrogant overlordship, wholly devoid of graciousness:

*But, oh, how rigid—oh, how stern
Your service, since that ye do not
Adopt the orphan, or receive
The vanquish’d!*



In October 1914, Prince Malunge sought medical help for a heart complaint. He was hospitalized in December, released at his own insistence, and died on the night of 6–7 January 1915. Labotsibeni believed that her favourite son had been the victim of poisoning or witchcraft.

Malunge’s death was a severe blow. The Swazi people had lost a popular leader. Furthermore, as a hereditary ruler, he had become a figurehead of the SANNC’s aristocratic Upper House. The ‘Executive Commoners’—men like Dube, Seme, Kunene, and Plaatje—prized the credibility that Malunge’s patronage gave their newfangled Congress in the eyes of African traditionalists. When news of Malunge’s death reached Plaatje, who was then in London, he was greatly saddened, as he tells Harriette Colenso in a letter: ‘Among the dear friends I have lost by death was Prince Malunge-ka-Mbandeni of Swazieland who came to England with the Swazie deputation some years back. He was a stately Swazie of Royal mien—a gentlemaned friend.’¹

Plaatje’s description of Malunge’s regal bearing is corroborated by other sources. He was ‘a fine specimen of a man, standing about six feet six inches, and his tall body, broad shoulders, and other physical development, pleasant face and penetrating brown eyes made him a very conspicuous individual indeed’.² He was ‘handsome, intelligent, able and eloquent and, with an attractive personality, was clearly his mother’s favourite child’.³ Grendon reports that ‘when [Malunge] paced the floor of the Congress-Hall, the Child of Mbandeni commanded and inspired by his magnetic

¹ Colenso Family Papers, vol. 55: Sol T. Plaatje to Harriette Colenso, London, 26 Feb. 1915.

² Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 37.

³ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 119.

nature, admiration in the delegates, and caused them to rise to their feet in token of profound regard, and sincere esteem'.¹

For Grendon, however, Malunge's loss appears to have been of a different order. He was emotionally attached to his former pupil. If the sentiments expressed in his poem are taken at face value—and there is no reason to suspect their sincerity—then it becomes evident that Grendon loved Malunge, and felt profound sorrow at 'that superlative specimen and model of Bantu manhood [being] so ruthlessly smitten down, and snatched away in the prime of his life'.² He set about to work through his grief, and to leave a monument to Malunge's character, in a new poem, to be entitled, '**The Tragedy of Malunge**'.

The first-published fragments of the poem thus far discovered appear in *Ilanga* on 7 May 1915. They accompany Grendon's article on a visit to Swaziland undertaken by Dube in order to 'personally condole with the Swazi Regent-Queen and the Swazi Royal Family in particular, and the Swazi Nation in general, by reason of the loss sustained by the country through the recent tragic death of Prince Malunge ka-Mbandeni'.³ The first of these *Ilanga* fragments is a twelve-line stanza anticipating a joyous future day when the New Jerusalem comes to Swaziland:

The day in which the Swazi sheds
 His wilfully lethargic ways,
 May all the Earth reverberate
 With songs of gratitude and praise
 To Providence Almighty, Who
 In Love and Wisdom hath decreed
 That darkness unto Light should yield,
 And serfs from Bondage should be freed.
 May all the earth rejoice to see
 This 'jackal'—of the Bantu Race—
 Regenerated—and prepar'd
 To take 'mongst Men a nobler place!

¹ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5. Grendon paraphrases a speech made by Dube shortly after Malunge's death.

² 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

³ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

Grendon's reference to the Swazi's 'wilfully lethargic ways' implicates Swazi traditionalists—those who refuse to yield to the dictates of progress and enlightenment. Grendon predicts that 'the ruling caste in Swaziland, especially that portion of it that is contented to sit in indolence, apathy, and sloth, at Zombode and pass its time in worshipping the "Cup"—wooing the "woman"—and periodically engaging in the "Chase"—is doomed, unless it wakes to bestir itself and to indulge in worthier occupations, and nobler pursuits'.¹

Zombodze is the Queen-Regent's village capital. During her long rule, it was the spiritual hub of her country. Grendon's depiction of conditions at Zombodze is more than confirmed by Christopher Charles Watts, Archdeacon of Swaziland, who wrote a jaundiced description of the capital village in 1922:

The Royal Kraal is large, and is unspeakably dirty and untidy. Idlers dressed in dirty European rags squat in the dirt and dust around the large cattle kraal that forms one side of it, children covered with dirt and sores swarm about the passages which unite the labyrinth of ill-built grass huts, women carrying huge pots of native beer or portions of food pass to and fro with real dignity of carriage, which is only marred by the filth on their skin aprons and utensils. Flies swarm and render life unbearable in the heat of the day; scraggy fowls and a few mangy dogs wander at will among the garbage—and yet some semblance of dignity and royalty is preserved. An interview with the old queen takes some time to arrange, and there is a hurrying to and fro of minor officials before the visitor is admitted to the royal presence.²

The 'Cup'-worship to which Grendon refers may be linked to Watts's 'huge pots of native beer'. The 'woman' whom sycophantic courtiers and hangers-on 'woo' is Labotsibeni herself. The 'Chase' refers to ceremonial hunts periodically organized by the royals. Everything at Zombodze is backward-looking, clinging to the fast-disintegrating remnants of Swaziland's glory-days. Grendon singles out the Swazi as 'wilfully lethargic', but perhaps he has forgotten that he once levelled the same accusation against the inhabitants of Edendale, whose 'life is 'tywala'—maize—and meat, | And idle squatting on the sand'.³

Yet, 'Providence Almighty' has decreed 'That darkness unto Light should yield': the course of progress and true civilization in Africa is a divine fiat—and therefore

¹ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

² Watts, *Dawn in Swaziland*, ch. 3.

³ 'A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

foreordained. This decree is made ‘In Love and Wisdom’—the interrelated spiritual substance of God. In New Church theology, Love and Wisdom are the ‘goods’ and ‘truths’ that God infuses into the will and understanding of Man’s mind—without which constant influxes, Man would instantly cease to be. *Divine Love and Wisdom* (1763) is the title of one of Swedenborg’s books. In language not unlike Grendon’s, Swedenborg states that ‘the Divine Providence has for an end a heaven which shall consist of men who have become angels or who are becoming angels, to whom the Lord can impart from Himself all the blessedness and felicity of love and wisdom’.¹ One Swedenborgian text states that ‘God is Love and Wisdom. Life flows from God and is received by men as love and wisdom.’² Grendon imbibed this cardinal New Church teaching, as revealed in his elegy for Elias Tshabalala, where he describes ‘Infinite Love, and Wisdom’ as the ‘twin pilots’ of the human ‘Soul’.³

Grendon means ‘regenerated’ in the Swedenborgian sense. It is a process that takes place only ‘by placing God above self, not just in thought, but also in life’.⁴ Grendon will have read in Wilkinson’s *The African and the True Christian Religion* that ‘the New Church ... depends upon the gradual regeneration of men, and their rescue from the world, the flesh, and the devil; and no doctrinal profession, no Church-membership, no vicarious atonement, helps this painful new birth’.⁵ Wilkinson also finds ‘the African’ to be ‘the inmost race in the New Religion which is descending on the earth, and which is founded there in the regeneration of individual men—*i.e.*, in their waking into men by keeping the commandments of God-Man’.⁶ The Swazi will only be able ‘To take ’mongst Men a nobler place’ when they rise above self, and consent to render ‘use’ within the ‘Kingdom of Uses’, according to their distinctive racial genius.⁷

Grendon describes the Swazi *en bloc* as the “jackal”—of the Bantu Race’. In prose, he describes the almost-saintly Malunge as having been ‘in the midst of

¹ Swedenborg, *Divine Providence*, n. 27.

² Grange, *Psychology as Servant of Religion*, 18.

³ ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.

⁴ Dibb, ‘A Love Affair with Africa’.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 122.

⁶ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 239.

⁷ In his lecture on the ‘Links between the White and the Black’, Grendon is reported to have referred to the Africans’ desire ‘to play a higher and nobler part within the realm of uses’. (‘Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives’, *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd edn, 6)

“jackals” ever snarling, ever thirsting for his lifeblood’.¹ From the Swedenborgian heavens this is precisely how sly, crafty, duplicitous men and women would be *perceived* by correspondence. Illustrating his doctrine of correspondence, by which spiritual qualities are perceived by their natural manifestation, Swedenborg states:

The animals of the earth correspond in general to affection, mild and useful animals to good affections, fierce and useless ones to evil affections. ... Man is like an animal so far as his natural man is concerned, and is therefore likened to animals in common speech; for example, if he is gentle he is called a sheep or lamb, if fierce a bear or wolf, if cunning a fox or serpent, and so on.²

In the African context, ‘fox’ quite readily transmutes into ‘jackal’, by which Grendon means the ‘wily Swazi—male and female—of Zombode’³ and elsewhere in the reactionary, benighted land.

Grendon’s faith in ‘the Word’ and ‘the Writings’—the biblical canon and Swedenborg’s revelations for the New Church—leads him confidently to anticipate that day when ‘the Swazi sheds’ his spiritual inertia. It must come, despite all external appearances to the contrary.

All is not doom and gloom in Swaziland, since already ‘in Mbabane there [are] some, at any rate, who [are] rising to grasp the Light’.⁴ These ‘commoners are faring better’ than ‘the ruling caste’ centred on Zombodze and the aged Queen-Regent in her famous leather skirt. Commoners

at any rate, are striving to keep abreast with the times. Their efforts now may be weak, nevertheless a decade hence or more, Swaziland will have revolved like a wheel; and things will then appear more serious than now. In that day the commoner will verily have climbed to the top and the royal-blooded swain—he that was born in the purple—will be found slumbering at the root of the tree. In that day the commoner will be master of the situation, and he that was born in the purple will have woke [sic] to find himself a helot—a mere serf.⁵

Projecting himself forward ‘a decade hence or more’, Grendon sees the kindly hand of Providence vivifying Swaziland. Then will come to pass in that land what Grendon in

¹ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

² Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 110.

³ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁴ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁵ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

1904 anticipates will overwhelm all Africa as New Jerusalem's influence radiates and pulses through all its regions: 'This New Religion will the African receive in the spirit of a little child.'¹

Malunge evinced 'the spirit of a little child'. The last *Ilanga* fragment from Grendon's 'Tragedy' comprises 'Malunge's Character Stanzas 1 and last'. The first of these two stanzas extols the manifold virtues of the departed prince:

Reveal to me, ye Heights of Heav'n,
 Or ye, O Depths of Hell, why he—
 The Child just now departed, was
 So straight!—so generous!—so free!
 So truthful!—and so innocent!—
 So tender-hearted!—so polite!—
 So meek!—so sympathetic!—so
 Delightful in his comrades' sight!—
 So amiable!—so void of pride!—
 So void of hate, and jealousy!—
 So void of malice, and revenge!—
 So constant in fidelity!²

The speaker's wonderment is not so much that the late Malunge possessed such excelling virtues, but that 'the manners, the tastes, the desires, the aspirations, and the aims of the late ruler were so diverse—so utterly diverse!—from those of the ruled'. Indeed, it seems scarcely credible that 'the providence of God' elected that Malunge should rule over such spiritually-stagnant people.³ Speaking spiritually, Grendon finds Malunge to be poles apart even from his mother, Labotsibeni. He speaks of an 'icy current of diverse affection' that pervaded the Zombodze court.⁴

What therefore was the origin of Malunge's surpassing moral and spiritual traits? Grendon invokes Heaven and Hell to make known the answer. Such a petition is not without precedent in Grendon's verse. In 'Melia and Pietro', Pietro petitions 'High

¹ 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

² In 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

³ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁴ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5. Grendon appears to give the gist of Swedenborg, who speaks of 'diverse affections' that 'must needs be dissipated, for they are in collision with each other' (*Arcana Cælestia*, n. 9094). Interestingly, Grendon in 1904 perceives an analogous generational gap—'an unbridgeable gulf'—between Dinuzulu and Zibhebhu, his uncle and sometime guardian ('The Late Chief Usibepu', *Ilanga* 2:74 (9 Sept. 1904) 4).

Heav'n' to 'reveal [its] law',¹ and in *Paul Kruger's Dream*, the 'white-rob'd inhabitants, | Who grace the pearly courts of Heav'n' are called upon to 'Reveal' knowledge hidden from mortals,² while the 'Unfathomable Depths' are likewise called upon to 'reveal' their 'secrets'.³

Unfortunately, we do not have the respective replies of 'Heav'n' and of 'Hell', although Grendon almost certainly wrote—or intended to write—them.⁴ However, knowing as we already do something of Grendon's religio-philosophical background, we may hazard a guess at how the 'Heights of Heav'n' might answer. 'The Child just now departed'—Heaven might reply—was a man of the celestial order, a true remnant of the Adamic Church, in touch with his 'man internal' into which God's effluxes are infused. His outward beauty was nothing other than a material correspondence of his state of soul: he was therefore 'beautiful and noble in both the Inner and the outer man'.⁵ He was one especially fitted for the New Jerusalem.

Grendon hints that Malunge has become partially regenerated, when he says that the late prince 'strove to soar to higher planes of life and love!'⁶ This striving was the temptation combat that Malunge waged in an earnest endeavour to cast off the old 'ruling love' and to cultivate a new and more elevated one. Swedenborg states that 'life and love are one',⁷ because the defining quality of Man—the spiritual being—is identical with the overriding 'love' that directs and actuates him or her. Whereas Malunge's former 'love' may have been toward the self, he had succeeded to a marked degree in redirecting it towards 'use'. A passage from Swedenborg's *Conjugal Love* casts light on what Grendon means by 'higher planes':

Every man [Latin: *homo*] is born corporeal, becomes sensual, afterwards natural, and successively rational; and, if in this case he does not stop in his progress, he becomes spiritual. The reason why he thus advances step by step, is, in order that planes may be formed, on which superior principles may rest and find support, as a palace on its foundations: the ultimate plane,

¹ 'M&P', Pt I, *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) 2.

² *PKD*, Pt II, p. 5.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 114.

⁴ Consider, by way of analogy, Melia's address to 'Earth', and 'Earth's' subsequent reply ('M&P', Pt IV, *Citizen* 2:35 (23 March 1898) 3).

⁵ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁶ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁷ Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, n. 4.

with those that are formed upon it, may also be compared to ground, in which, when prepared, noble seeds are sown.¹

That Grendon accepted this explanation is clear from what he wrote while English editor of *Ilanga*. There he makes the thoroughly Swedenborgian remark that ‘a natural man can only speak concerning natural men’, and that one can only speak ‘of religion [if one’s] mind has been elevated to the spiritual, and celestial planes’.² Malunge’s mind ‘strove to soar to higher planes of life and love’—above the natural, to the spiritual and celestial.

The ‘last’ of ‘Malunge’s Character Stanzas’ continues to praise Malunge, while acknowledging his faults:

Whate’er detractors may assert,
 Howe’er they may the truth upset,
 Malunge was undoubtedly
 The Swazi ‘Lamb’—the People’s ‘Pet’!—
 He was not perfect!—He had faults!—
 But who is absolutely clean?—
 Imperfect as he was, his match,
 Ka-Ngwane, is in thee not seen!—
 I swear by thee, Mbandeni!—whose
 Dread name I shrink to take in vain—
 By thee, Nabotsibeni!—we
 Shall scarcely see his like again!³

Grendon again employs correspondence in calling Malunge ‘The Swazi “Lamb”’. He was a lamb amidst jackals. Swedenborg observes—as quoted above—that even in ‘common speech’, we are apt to call a ‘gentle’ person ‘a sheep or lamb’.⁴

‘Detractors’ might continue to tarnish Malunge’s reputation by broadcasting the rumour that he embezzled money collected for land repurchase. Even so, collectively, the Swazi will continue to acknowledge his excellence. Grendon recognizes that Malunge ‘had faults’. Principal among these was probably his polygamy, which constitutes a hindrance to the operation of the conjugal principle, and therefore also

¹ Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 447.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.

³ *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 110.

to the progress of the ‘True Christian Religion’. In addition, Grendon is perhaps unable to shake off a nagging suspicion that there may be substance to the charges that Malunge and Vilakazi misappropriated public funds. In asking if anyone is ‘absolutely clean’, Grendon paraphrases Job 14:4: ‘Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.’

The speaker swears by the King Mbandzeni, late husband of Labotsibeni. In an *Abantu-Batho* article, Grendon tells us that when ‘the Queen-Regent took an oath to confirm or back up a statement’ she ‘resorted to the custom of swearing by the name of MBANDENI or that of a former Swazi King’.¹ In the poem, not only does the speaker swear by Mbandzeni, but he also does so by way of a direct address to the dead man. The poet believes—no less than Labotsibeni (‘Nabotsibeni’) does—that Mbandzeni lives.

A further fragment from ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’ appeared in *Abantu-Batho* on 17 February 1916. Entitled ‘To Thee Sobhuza (Future Paramount of the Swazi Nation)’, it comprises six twelve-line iambic-tetrameter stanzas, rhymed abcdefghjh. It is a self-standing address to Prince Sobhuza, the dead man’s nephew and the future *Ngwenyama* of Swaziland.² Grendon—then editor of *Abantu-Batho*—specifies that the piece is ‘inserted here without explanatory notes’, implying that such notes already exist in sufficient quantity to clog the newspaper’s columns. There is also some reason to suppose that Grendon had completed work on the poem by this time. In May 1915, he describes the work as ‘Preparing’, but in *Abantu-Batho*, no such statement appears, and the poem has already been equipped with *apparatus criticus*.³

Tendentiously, Grendon offers to present to the fifteen-year-old Sobhuza some ‘Remoter Reasons for the Assassination of thine uncle Prince MALUNGE’. He was killed for two reasons: ‘His objection (thrice) to blot [Sobhuza] out, and seize the Swazi Throne’ and ‘His defence of [Sobhuza’s] claim’ to the throne. The opening stanza presents Malunge’s death as sacrificial:

¹ ‘Farewell Msindazwe!’ *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

² ‘To Thee Sobhuza’ also appears in: Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 57n.

³ *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5; *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916). In *PKD* (p. 135), Grendon advertises ‘An African’s Vision’ as being ‘in preparation’.

No greater love had he than this—
 No better off'ring could he give
 Than to resign his life that thou
 O Bhuza, orphan Child, might'st live,
 And in the fulness of thy time
 The throne of Ngwaneland ascend—
 To reign thereon a full-fledg'd King,
 Did destiny thus far intend.
 But I am sway'd by doubts and fears,
 That thou wilt manhood fully see.
 The fate, that overtook thy sires,
 Is verily pursuing thee!

The opening lines are a clear intertextual reference to John's Gospel: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.'¹ Grendon draws a parallel between the nobility of Christ's sacrifice and that of Malunge.

Grendon's solicitous concern for the welfare of the 'orphan Child', Sobhuza, reminds us that he too lost a parent at a tender age. His fear for the personal safety of the young prince was shared by many Swazi. A siSwati praise-poem for Sobhuza performed by his cousin, Makhosini Dlamini begins (in English translation):

They are full of threats!
 They threaten you!
 They threaten!
 It is the enemies and those at home.
 They are wrong.²

Leroy Vail and Landeg White comment upon Dlamini's praises:

With this image of Sobhuza as a king surrounded by enemies established, Dlamini rehearses the whole history of Sobhuza's reign. Even as an infant he was in danger, but he made the perilous journey from his grandmother's home at eZikhotheni to Labotsibeni's court at Zombodze safely, Dlamini combining the account of this journey with others made by Sobhuza in his youth, when he swallowed the insults of Madanda Mtsetfwa, governor of Zombodze, and survived the attempt of Mabhula at Langeni to feed him poisoned meat.³

¹ John 15:13.

² Ginindza's translation, quoted in: Vail and White, *Power and the Praise Poem*, 189.

³ Vail and White, *Power and the Praise Poem*, 189–90.

Early in 1916, when Grendon announces through *Abantu-Batho* that Sobhuza is about to ‘proceed to Lovedale where he will prosecute his studies’, he also mentions that a chiefly conclave is about to assemble in order to ‘invok[e] the blessing and the protection of the Ancestral Spirits (*emadhlozi*) on behalf of the lad during his sojourn in a strange land’.¹ There appears to have been real anxiety that dark forces were abroad that wished to snuff out Sobhuza’s ‘external’ existence before he attained his majority and could claim the title that his father once held. Only the ancestors—good spirits—could be trusted to combat these dark forces. Grendon makes no attempt to censure Swaziland’s elders for petitioning the ancestors: like them, he is confident that the *emadhlozi* take an active interest in their mortal kin.

These fears for Sobhuza’s safety may have been fed by Pixley Seme, who was a legal advisor to the Swazi royal circle. After the death of Dinuzulu, the Union Government indicated its intention to take charge of the education of the late king’s sons. At that time, Seme was reputed to have warned that ‘five of Lobengula’s sons had died while being educated by the Government’—which claim a white parliamentarian took to imply ‘that the Government had taken this means to put them out of the way’.² If Seme did indeed believe and propagate the idea that a white government had ‘put [Lobengula’s sons] out of the way’, then Labotsibeni and the Swazi elders would have had added reason to fear for Sobhuza’s safety at Lovedale.

Grendon warns Sobhuza that the ‘fate, that overtook thy sires, | Is verily pursuing thee!’ Sobhuza’s own father, Bhunu (1877–99) died under mysterious circumstances, and it was even rumoured that his mother, Labotsibeni, had poisoned him.³ When Bhunu’s brother Malunge died, Labotsibeni was reputed to have ‘consulted with witchdoctors who had indicated that [he] had been poisoned by certain persons’, and she ‘expressed her firm conviction that Malunge had been poisoned’, it being ‘a custom of the Swazis to poison each other’.⁴ There were also rumours that Malunge ‘had been poisoned by those loyal to Sobhuza’s claim’ to the kingship,⁵ although this

¹ ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

² Colenso Family Papers, vol. 54, E. Dower to H. Colenso, Cape Town, 27 March 1914.

³ Vail and White, *Power and the Praise Poem*, 158.

⁴ SwNA, RCS 23/19: Honey (Acting Resident Commissioner), to Buxton (High Commissioner), 12 Jan. 1915.

⁵ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 119.

is hard to reconcile with Grendon's representation of Malunge as a loyal champion of his nephew's claim.

Irrespective of the facts of the case, Swaziland was abuzz with rumours, the tenor of which appears to have been that evil spirits, poisoners, assassins, and ruthless whites had formed an evil axis expressly for the purpose of annihilating the royal Dlamini. Grendon, who was never in any doubt as the presence and operation of evil spirits—disembodied men and women—will not have dismissed these fears as far-fetched or as the products of 'primitive' minds.¹

In the second stanza of that part of the 'Tragedy' headed 'To Thee Sobhuza', Grendon reiterates that 'Malunge died for thee, frail Child!' 'Thro' fifteen fleeting summers'—the span of Sobhuza's young life—'The Devil tempted [Malunge] to blot | Thee out, and seize the reins of pow'r!' Here, Grendon again links Malunge's actions with those of Christ, who was three times tempted by the Devil in the wilderness.² But 'Thrice—thrice the Tempter fail'd!' Malunge proved incorruptible.

Although her infant grandson Sobhuza was designated his father's heir in 1899, Labotsibeni at times desired that the kingship should go instead to her son Malunge, whom she evidently believed was especially suited for the role. On one occasion, Malunge had to resist his mother's attempts to 'bathe him with potions reserved for kingship', to which he knew he was not entitled.³ Grendon does not specify on which particular three occasions Malunge had opportunity to 'blot out' Sobhuza. Having tutored Malunge—and, by this stage, possibly also Sobhuza—perhaps Grendon was privy to information of this kind. Grendon also knew that a jealous, senior relative might attempt to seize the reins of government while the chosen heir was still a minor. In 1904, he describes how, during Dinuzulu's minority, his uncle, Zibhebhu was suspected of wanting to 'use his power for violence in wresting the throne from the rightful heir'.⁴

¹ In 'Editorial Notes' (*Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916)), Grendon expresses belief in the reality of magic, and faults the 'average white man' who denies its operation, although 'a century ago his ancestors firmly believed in such practices'.

² Matt. 4; Mark 1; Luke 4.

³ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 119.

⁴ 'The Late Chief Usibepu', *Ilanga* 2:74 (9 Sept. 1904) 4.

According to Grendon's daughter, Kuku Malumisa, his self-confessed 'doubts and fears' for Sobhuza's safety were quite real. Like Malunge, Grendon was a faithful defender of Sobhuza's 'claim' as the lawful future ruler of the Swazi. Mrs Malumisa told a story that illustrates her father's loyalty to Sobhuza. The details are confused, but it appears to have some basis in fact, and must describe an occurrence during the first few years after Grendon's arrival in Swaziland.

According to Mrs Malumisa, her father was called upon to arbitrate in a dispute between the supporters of rival candidates for the future *Ngwenyama*. Sobhuza's mother, Lomawa (plate 10f), and her younger sister Nukwase were both widows of King Bhunu. Nukwase was mother to a boy who, according to the reckoning of some, had a superior claim to the kingship than Sobhuza had. This was likely Nukwase's eldest son, Prince Mshengu, who was a classificatory brother to Sobhuza, conceived by the levirate (*kungena*) marriage of Nukwase to Malunge, her late husband's brother.¹ Malunge's biological son would be considered the legal offspring of his dead brother. A succession dispute arising, Grendon was called upon by the royal family—at the particular urging of Lomawa—to 'evaluate' the two boys, in order to ascertain 'who met the required standards to be a king'.² After 'careful evaluation', Grendon recommended that Sobhuza should 'become the *Ngwenyama* of Swaziland and Labotsibeni agreed'.³ Since Labotsibeni is known to have favoured Malunge over Bhunu, it seems possible that she also preferred Malunge's above Bhunu's biological child.

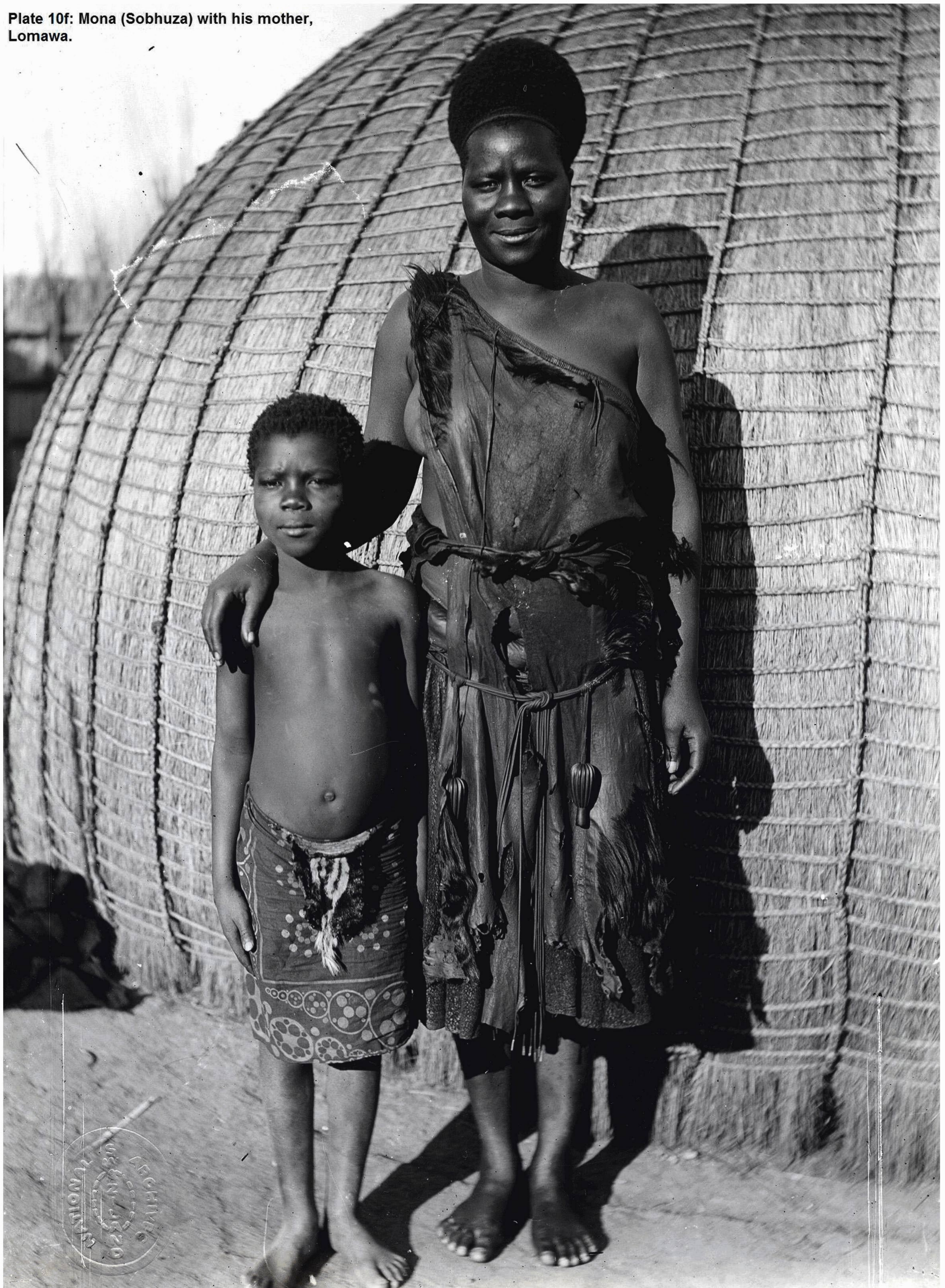
As has already been pointed out, by 'Devil', Grendon does not mean the conventional Devil of Christendom—Milton's Satan. He means Swedenborg's Devil—all the dark forces of Hell combined, those disembodied men and women who opted for Evil during their terrestrial existence and now pursue evil ends beyond the tomb. This composite Devil experienced 'wounded pride' when he was unable to corrupt Malunge by means of hellish influxes. Malunge's resolute adherence to

¹ Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa likely refers to Nukwase's eldest son, Mshengu, whom she mistakenly refers to this son as 'Abner'—no doubt confusing him with Prince Abner Dlamini who was the 'son' of King Mbandzeni by the levirate marriage. Prince Abner became the first Swazi university graduate in 1936. He also obtained an MA from Yale University. Interview: Richard Patricks, National Museum of Swaziland, June 2008; Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 35, 133, 139.

² Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

³ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008. S. S. Dlamini, manuscript. Dlamini obtained his information in interview with Mrs Malumisa.

Plate 10f: Mona (Sobhuza) with his mother, Lomawa.



honour and virtue aroused in the Devil ‘Revenge implacable’. It was this spirit of ‘Revenge [that] impell’d him next to stretch | Forth murd’rous hands to smite [Malunge] down, | That he in his appointed time | Might lure another with thy crown!’ Who ‘another’ might be is not clear, but perhaps Grendon has in mind Lomvazi, Malunge’s younger brother, who replaced him as prince-regent.

While on earth, Malunge’s ‘stalwart arm’ was ever ready to save Sobhuza ‘from threat’ning doom’, but now the youth must move ‘all alone amid | Both secret and avowed foes’. The white Government may offer assurances respecting Sobhuza’s safety, but these cannot be relied upon. After all, ‘Protection such as white men give | Insur’d Malunge not from harm! | And Sorcery, which they deny, | Will smite [Sobhuza] too with unseen arm!’

The fourth stanza calls upon Sobhuza, ‘frail child’, to revere the memory of his uncle who made this great ‘sacrifice’ on his behalf. Could a true biological father ever do more? ‘Could sire for son severer tests | Endure?’ In mid-stanza, Grendon changes tack, and offers assurances that the seeming ‘tragedy’ of Malunge’s passing is in fact a resounding victory. Those who live upon the natural plane of human existence see only the ‘failure’; those who rise to the spiritual and celestial planes understand the ‘victory’ that Malunge’s death achieves both for him and for Heaven:

To such as stoop to feed,—
Like beasts—on grass, Malunge’s life
A failure seems. To such as read
Him with their vision heav’ward set,
Appeareth no obscurity!—
His failure view’d from higher planes,
Suggesteth naught but victory!

As pointed out in the first chapter, the plane of ‘beasts’ is the purely natural one—the one that ‘stoops’, and cannot raise its gaze to Heaven. In his elegy for Michal Nkosi, Grendon speaks of ‘beasts, whose stooping nature scorns all thought | Of life beyond the tomb’.¹ But Malunge is no such beast. Although not a Christian, he aspired to Heaven and looked to the life hereafter.

¹ ‘In Memoriam, Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4.

Grendon is not entirely clear as to whether Malunge's assassins are entirely disembodied devils, or include some devils actually still in the flesh, and working in concert with the hells. The latter seems a more probable reading, since 'Malunge's foes do rest content | That they have wip'd him out for aye!' and it seems unlikely that disembodied humans, good or bad, could make such a fundamental theological error, whereas devils in flesh might do so. Grendon derides Malunge's killers:

How vain their energies were spent!—
The Spirit is the quick'ning pow'r,—
And this can never—never die!—
Hereafter shall his murderer
Fling back upon himself the lie!—
Malunge therefore, is not dead!—
This truth to many comfort gives;
And even Vilakazi now
Takes up the strain—'Malunge Lives!'

'Even' Josiah Vilakazi—National Secretary to Labotsibeni—'now | Takes up the strain—"Malunge Lives!"' But who, it might be asked, first piped that strain, so that it might now be 'taken up'? None but Grendon himself, the Swedenborgian who years earlier assured mourners, 'Elias is not dead!'¹ and what but seems to be death 'Is but the gate to Life more glorious'?²

In the final stanza of his address to Sobhuza, Grendon says of Malunge:

The tenth, the sixth and eighth commands
So far as these affected thee
And thy domain he strove by aid
Of Truth, that sway'd him visibly,
Inviolable to keep.

The reference is to the Ten Commandments—and in particular, it would seem, to those which prohibit murder, theft, and covetousness.³ As Regent, Malunge took seriously his responsibility to protect the interests of his nephew. Although a nominal pagan, he obeyed the Law of God out of natural goodness. Perhaps it was the vestige of his 'celestial' ancestry that prevented him from acting out of harmony with Truth

¹ 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4.

² 'In Memoriam: Mrs Sydney Strong', *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

³ Exodus 20.

and Goodness. In Grendon's view, precolonial Africans, untainted by European materialism, 'knew not what it was to violate the eighth and tenth commandments of the Decalogue'.¹

Because of Malunge's moral victory over the powers of Hell, 'His "Man | Internal" ... triumphant rose', even though 'his "External" fail'd amid | The plots of his invet'rate foes'. This 'Man | Internal' is at the divine spiritual core of Man—internal to the self-made *proprium*. Within this 'internal man', God preserves 'all states of good and truth', including 'states of innocence from infancy'. They are 'stored up, entirely without [Man's] knowledge, in his internal man, and are completely separated from the things that are proper to man [i.e., of the *proprium*], that is, from evils and falsities'.² Having waged victorious temptation combat, Malunge's internal man 'triumphant rose', unshackled to the *proprium* and the flesh.

In closing his address to Sobhuza, Grendon accuses both him and the Swazi in general of having 'forgotten' Malunge:

Tho' thou and thy dead tribesmen have
 Forgotten him, his victory
 Both echoes and re-echoes thro'—
 And thro'—ka-Ngwane's perfidy!

Sobhuza's Swazi 'tribesmen' are 'dead' because 'This "jackal"—of the Bantu Race' has yet to be 'regenerated'. Because they yet live beastlike on the natural plane, Grendon asks rhetorically if anyone should marvel that the Zombodze traditionalist coterie endeavours to 'stifle recollections of the dead Malunge, and to cherish and invite and magnify the bubbling things of transitory cheer?'³



By May 1915, Grendon was at work on his *Swazi-English Philological Dictionary*—a work that, if it survives, will likely compare in significance with Plaatje's *Sechuana Proverbs with Literal Translations and their European Equivalentents* (1916). Both

¹ 'Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 561.

³ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

works represent early attempts on the part of black intellectuals to take possession their own literary and linguistic heritage—a field hitherto dominated by whites.

Until at least the middle of the twentieth century, *isiZulu*—rather than the closely-related *siSwati*—was the literary language of Swaziland. As late as 1952, D. Ziervogel, in his pioneering *A Grammar of Swazi (siSwati)*, would ask his readers to bear ‘in mind that Swazi is an unwritten language’.¹ When Huw Jones was at Oxford, ‘it was Zulu that was said to be the language of Swaziland’.² The historian and politician James Shadrack Mkhulunyelwa Matsebula (born 1918) ‘credits himself with the creation of siSwati as a written language, which, amazingly, did not occur until the late 1960s. Prior to that, although siSwati was spoken universally within Swaziland and in portions of bordering Transvaal and Natal, isiZulu was used as the written language’.³

Grendon’s foresight and initiative must therefore be applauded in contemplating a *Swazi-English Philological Dictionary* more than three decades before a professional lexicographer attempted such a project. Regrettably, the work appears never to have gone to press. Denial of access to print is likely to have been its downfall. Such was undoubtedly the fate of many texts by aspiring African authors in the colonial period.

In Grendon’s estimation, it takes an ethnic African to produce a truly authentic account of an African language. Whites may write phrasebooks and primers, and compile dictionaries to assist others of their own race to come by the rudiments of an African language. Their works are of limited value. In Grendon’s opinion, ‘Colenso did not write his dictionary with the idea of posing as an authority on the Zulu language, neither did Father Bryant. The works of both these writers, are not reckoned authoritative as far as educated natives are concerned.’⁴

All too often Grendon had seen how white ‘experts’ garbled the African languages. He accused the *Natal Witness* editor of having ‘failed as a translator’ from the isiZulu,⁵ and he warned whites in general to keep their ‘hands off’ the Zulu language.⁶

¹ Ziervogel, *Grammar of Swazi*, xvii.

² Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, xi.

³ Woodson, ‘The J. S. M. Matsebula Collection at the University of Swaziland’, 381.

⁴ ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 3.

⁵ ‘Black Supremacy’, *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6.

⁶ ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4.

It is quite likely that his aversion to white self-appointed ‘experts’ on African languages and cultures stretched back to his childhood, when he learnt by hard experience that such learned men as Hugo Hahn (otjiHerero expert) and Theophilus Hahn (Nama expert) could be inimical toward the people whose cultures and languages they sought to document and codify.

One snippet only from Grendon’s dictionary survives. This is an ‘extract from Biographical Sketch of Msindazwe in R. Grendon’s Swazi-English Philological Dictionary (in preparation)’, parts of which Grendon publishes twice—once as an epigraph to an *Abantu-Batho* article (1916), and once as a smaller extract embedded in his ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’ article in *Ilanga* (1915).¹ The *Abantu-Batho* extract is the longer, and is therefore the one quoted below. It was published during the brief period of Grendon’s editorship of the paper. He succeeded Cleopas Kunene during the latter part of 1915, and was replaced, again by Kunene, around mid-1916.

‘Msindazwe’ is the name given by the Swazi to ‘R. T. Coryndon, Esq. C.M.G., Late Resident Commissioner of Swaziland’ (plate 10g); it is one of three Swazi names for him, for each of which Grendon supplies the meaning and etymology:

I.—MSINDAZWE—From *Sinda* ‘to weigh down, sit heavy upon, encumber, clog’ and (*i*).*li-zwe* ‘land, country’. Hence the compound signifies—‘HE WHO WEIGHS DOWN, SITS HEAVY UPON, ENCUMBERS OR CLOGS THE LAND’. Another derivation is that supplied by *Abantu-Batho* of Dec. 19, 1914, [*i.e.*] ‘HE WHO EXERTS TREMENDOUS INFLUENCE’. But this derivation is ambiguous, and may mean ‘influence’,—either *good* or *evil*—*praiseworthy* or *condemnatory*. The meaning of the word as current in Swaziland, is condemnatory rather than praiseworthy. N.B.—This name, by which Mr. Coryndon is more generally known, was conferred upon him by the members of the Swaziland Native Police in whose eyes His Honour—in the beginning of his Swazi career—appeared as a ‘holy terror’. Both the Queen-Regent and the late Prince Malunge were greatly opposed to the name, yet with all their imperial power, they yielded to the triumph of language.

II.—MAHAGANE—(From *u-Mahagane* ‘Lung-Sickness’. This name was bestowed upon Mr Coryndon in this wise:—*u-Mahagane uvusa ulunga etinkomeni; uyativedza masinyane. Naye Kolondwane u-Mahagane, ngobe abenelunya; wabacita laba lobashiyiwe Moony.*—‘Lung-Sickness rouses a violent temper in cattle; it soon exterminates them. Likewise Kolondwane (Mr Coryndon) is Mahagane (Lung-Sickness) because he is possessed of a violent temper; he

¹ ‘Farewell Msindazwe!’ *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916); ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5. The epigraph to Grendon’s *Abantu-Batho* article makes no reference to the source of the quotation. Youé (*Robert Thorne Coryndon*, 60) makes reference to this article.

Plate 10g: Robert Coryndon, Resident-Commissioner of Swaziland (1907-16), known to the Swazi as 'Msindazwe'.



dispersed those (servants) left behind by Mr Moony.’ This name was bestowed upon Mr Coryndon by his own native servants.

III.—KOLONDONI or KOLONDWANE.—These are mere adaptations of ‘Coryndon’, the surname of the subject of our sketch.¹

By correcting an earlier definition of ‘Msindazwe’ that appeared in *Abantu-Batho*, it seems probable that Grendon means to impugn the language scholarship of Cleopas Kunene, his predecessor as editor of the paper.²

Grendon claims that, initially, Labotsibeni and Malunge ‘were greatly opposed to the use of the name [‘Msindazwe’], yet with all their imperial power, they yielded to the triumph of language’. Elsewhere, he recognizes that language ‘is a living and a moving thing subject to growth and decay’;³ that it lives on lips and not in books. He counsels N. M. Lutuli

to distinguish between the spoken language and the written or printed language; between the language of the EAR [and] that of the EYE, between the language of the MOUTH, and that of the DICTIONARY, between the *moving* vocabulary of the street and the home, and the *stationary* or *fixed* vocabulary catalogued in books. Remember also that the language of the mouth commands that of the printed book, and must in all cases be respected.⁴

Language has a life of its own, and not even the great and influential can dictate the twists and turns it takes. In 1914, Grendon quotes from Locke’s *Essay on Human Understanding* (iii: 2), an ancient example of ‘the triumph of language’ not unlike that in the case of Labotsibeni and Malunge:

Capito is reported thus to have remarked to the Emperor Tiberius:—‘Tu enim, Caesar, civitatem dare potes hominibus; verbis non potes’—‘You Caesar are able to bestow the franchise on human beings; to words you cannot grant (the franchise).’ Claudius tried in vain to introduce his new letter ‘*Antisigma*’ (Priscian 1. De Literarum Numero); and Augustus himself in possession of that power that rules the world, acknowledged that he could not make a new Latin word.⁵

¹ ‘Farewell Msindazwe!’ *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916). I have introduced paragraphing here; the text is run-on in the original.

² Grendon appears to be mistaken about the date of the *Abantu-Batho* article, which he gives as on 19 Dec. 1914. See transcript from the leading article, ‘Lord Gladstone and the Swazis’, *Abantu-Batho* (19 Dec. 1913), enclosed in: BA CO 417/546, ref. CO 4176. In that article, ‘Umsindazwe’ is defined as ‘One who exerts tremendous influence over the land’.

³ ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 3.

⁴ ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4.

⁵ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:81 (8 April 1914) 6.

Grendon is remarkably ‘modern’ in his insistence that the role of language scholars is *descriptive*, rather than *prescriptive*. Where, for instance, ‘a word admits several prevalent modes of spelling’, Grendon maintains that ‘the lexicographer should register all the forms, and not make distinctions according to his individual taste’.¹ It seems probable that his siSwati-English dictionary embodied his professed regard for ‘the *moving* vocabulary of the street and the home’.

¹ ‘Zulu Orthography’, *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 3.

CHAPTER 11

CHRYSOPOLIS: CITY OF GOLD

JOHANNESBURG, SOPHIATOWN, *ABANTU-BATHO*.

They press | Towards Chrysopolis both night, and day¹



Late in 1912, South Africa's first 'national' paper intended for African readership, and wholly independent of white control, began to roll off its own press in Johannesburg (plate 11a).² Heralded as the 'Voice of the Native Races of South Africa', it was a brainchild of Pixley kaIsaka Seme (plate 11b), who had also been the prime mover behind the launch of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) shortly prior to this. H. Selby Msimang states that 'Seme conceived the idea of amalgamating the newspapers to form one *Abantu Batho*'.³ Edward Roux observes that 'this unification of Bantu newspapers was highly desirable. Numerous small, inadequately financed papers had sprung up in different parts of the country. Many were ill-managed and few endured. It was better to have one good national paper than many local poor ones.'⁴

After Seme returned to South Africa in 1910 from university studies in the United States and Britain, he set up his own legal practice and soon had the Swazi royal family among his clients. T. D. Mveli Skota's *African Yearly Register* (1931) states that the Swazi Queen-Regent Labotsibeni 'was the founder of the *Abantu-Batho*';⁵ also that the 'Abantu-Batho Printing and Publishing Company, Ltd. was formed in 1912 on the instruction of the Queen Regent Nabotsibeni of Swaziland, and under the direction of Dr P. Ka I. Seme, with a capital of £3,000'.⁶ Given that Labotsibeni was

¹ *PKD*, Pt XIV, p. 42. Said of Jameson's raiders.

² There appears to be uncertainty as to when the first issue of *Abantu-Batho* appeared. Different sources put forward 1912 and 1913 (Switzer and Switzer, *The Black Press*, 25; Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 77). The earlier year is correct, although the month is still undetermined. It was probably October or November. In October 1912, Kunene is referred to as editor of the paper ('Ezixoxa ngabantu', *Izwe la Kiti* 1:6 (30 Oct. 1912) 3).

³ Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, pp. 81–82.

⁴ Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, 111.

⁵ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 77.

⁶ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 443.

Plate 11a: Masthead of Abantu-Batho newspaper, founded 1912.

Esona 'Sitolo Sitshibhile
 E JOHANNESBURG ESAKWA
BIRCH.
 Uma ufuna IZINGUBO ZAMADODA,
 AMAHEMPE, IZIGQOKO, IZIGATULO, IMIBHALO,
 ONKUMBEZA, AMABHULUKWE EMOLS'KINI,
 AMABHANTYI EMOLS'KINI, AMAJAZI AFUDU-
 MALAYO, AMABOKISI ENSIMBI:
 Yana kwa **BIRCH,**
 Ecoleni kwe Natal Bhanga. Kubukana
 no Tolmi Holo Omutsho ngase
 Makete kupale le konke kona.

IPEPA **ABANTHATHU** INDHLU
 LOKUMELA. EMNYAMA.
 WONK' UMUNT' ONTSUNDU BABATSO KOPANANG
 AKABE MNYE NJE NGE KAOFELA LEBE JOALO
 BUMBA LIKA SIMENDE. KA LETSOPA LA SAMENTE.
 UMANYANO LUNGAMANDHLA **BATHO.**
 KORANTA EA HO BUELLA SECHABA.



LEBENKELE LE LE CHIPHISITSENG.
 PHOTO E CHIPHILE KOA GA
BIRCH,
 LIAPARO TIA BANNA, LIHEMPE,
 LIHUTSHE, LITLHAKO, LIKOBO tsa MEHUTA
 EOTLHE, MAKESE a TSHIPPI a POLOKELO a
 VANTLE, MARUKHUI a LIFOROBELE to LIBAKI
 tsa ona, LIJASE tsa MARICA tso LINTLE, I
 'umantsa teng ga
BIRCH,
 Koa MARKET STREET, go lobagana
 le Town Hall, go bapana le
 Natal Bank, Johannesburg.

“The VOICE of the NATIVE RACES of SOUTH AFRICA.”

A BANTU-ENGLISH PAPER REGISTERED AT THE G.P. O. AS A NEWSPAPER. (PUBLISHED WEEKLY)
 (Authorised to Publish all Government Notices Addressed to Natives).

“NIYAKUBA YIMBUMBA YAMANAMA”-NTSIKANA.
Largest Circulation of Any Native Paper in South Africa.

Plate 11b: Pixley kalsaka Seme, founder of the South African Native National Congress (ANC), and the Abantu-Batho newspaper.



herself illiterate, it seems highly improbable that the idea of a 'national' newspaper originated with her. Nonetheless, even despite the fact that the British Administration had slashed her private income shortly after assuming the government of Swaziland in 1904, she remained in 1912 one of the wealthiest black women in South Africa. How much of *Abantu-Batho*'s initial capital of £3,000 was put up by her is unclear, but she evidently made a sizeable investment.¹ In March 1914, *Tsalo ea Batho*, Sol T. Plaatje's paper, observed ruefully that '*Abantu-Batho* enjoys the unique privilege of being financed by a black capitalist. Consequently it can afford some luxuries which are beyond the reach of the other six [black-owned papers]. One of these luxuries is a staff of some half a dozen sub-editors.'²

Late in 1912, Seme travelled to Swaziland in order to purchase a printing press.³ This was almost certainly intended for the printing of his new paper. Since Allister Miller's *Times of Swaziland* had become defunct a few years earlier, it was likely his press that Seme hoped to acquire (plate 11c). According to Selby Msimang, Labotsibeni 'gave money to start [the] paper to Seme after his influence', and she also 'gave [the] printing machine for it from Swaziland'.⁴ In a mid-1915 poster advertising *Abantu-Batho*, its 'founders' are shown as 'The Queen of Swaziland, Zombode Kraal Bremersdorp' and 'Pixley ka I. Seme, Court Chambers, Joh'Burg'.⁵ Although the paper may have had premises in central Johannesburg, it appears that the printing plant was located in nearby Sophiatown.

Tim Couzens learnt from T. D. Mveli Skota that Seme engaged Grendon to edit 'the first edition' of *Abantu-Batho*.⁶ If Skota is correct, Grendon's editorship did not last for long, because Cleopas Kunene (1866–1917) was editor before the year 1912 was out. A surviving letterhead of the Abantu-Batho Company, printed before 16 February 1914, shows the editors as C. Kunene and D. S. Letanka. C. S. Mabaso is

¹ Chris Lowe has thoroughly investigated the involvement of the Swazi royal family in early SANNC politics, and in the launch of *Abantu-Batho*. See Bibliography.

² 'Native Papers and Missionaries', *Tsalo ea Batho* 4:162 (21 March 1914) 4. It is possible that the 'black capitalist' referred to is Seme, rather than Labotsibeni.

³ 'Iso Lase Swazini', *Ilanga* 10:492 (8 Nov. 1912) 2.

⁴ Selby Msimang as interviewed by Mary Benson, 1961, in Folder 4, Mary Benson Papers, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, quoted in Lowe, '*Abantu-Batho* and the South African Native National Congress in the 1910s' (unpaginated).

⁵ TAB, GNLB Vol. 90, ref. 144/13 D205: poster advertising *Abantu-Batho*.

⁶ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 77.

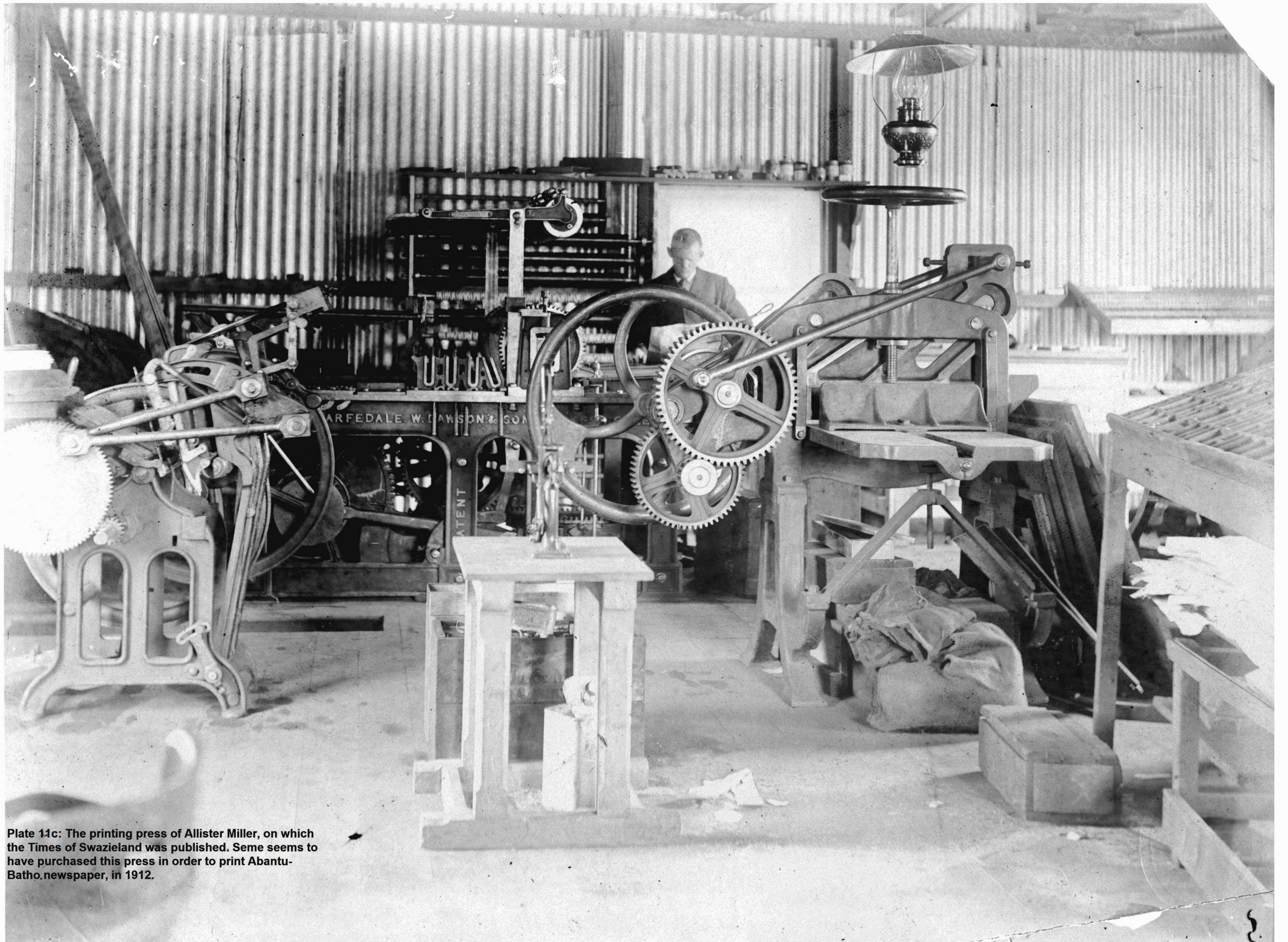


Plate 11c: The printing press of Allister Miller, on which the Times of Swaziland was published. Some seems to have purchased this press in order to print Abantu-Batho newspaper, in 1912.

described as ‘General Agent’.¹ The compositor in 1916—when Grendon was with the paper—had graduated from Lovedale the previous year. Perhaps he was flushed out in midyear with Saul Msane and Grendon, because he was working for the *Farmer’s Chronicle* of Cathcart in 1917, and for *Alice Times* from 1919–25.²

Grendon did have some knowledge of printing, which he appears to have learnt at Zonnebloem.³ He may have inspected the printing plant with Seme prior to its purchase, and then accompanied Seme back to Johannesburg—but this is no more than speculation. Labotsibeni’s financial stake in *Abantu-Batho* may have secured for her a voice in the selection of the paper’s editorial and administrative staff. At least, she may have required that matters of pressing importance to Swaziland be given full and sympathetic coverage in the paper.

Unfortunately, very little survives of this highly significant pioneer newspaper. Such clippings and transcriptions from *Abantu-Batho* as have been located in various archival collections show that the Swazi cause received thorough treatment in the early volumes. As far as may be gleaned from surviving evidence, while Cleopas Kunene was editor, he took care to publish the country’s political concerns fully and faithfully.⁴ From as early as December 1912, the paper began to serialize a bold Zulu-language exposé of whites’ unprincipled exploitation of Swaziland from the reign of Mbandzeni, shortly after the Anglo-Transvaal War of 1880–81.⁵

This history describes the concessions given first to Boer graziers, and then to prospectors, settlers, and speculators. These concessions were never intended as an outright sale and at no time did Mbandzeni resign his sovereignty. But when the whites had established themselves in fair numbers, they began to assert themselves politically. The Swazi invited Theophilus Shepstone, junior, to come to the country to resolve their differences with the concessionaires, but after a time he showed himself to be in league with the Boers. In 1894, the then Queen Regent sent a deputation to

¹ TAB, DNL 362/14/D80.

² Dodd, *Native Vocational Training*, 97.

³ *Inkanyiso yase Natal* 1:10 (1 Nov. 1889) 1; Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 69.

⁴ Examples: Series of isiZulu articles on the affairs of Swaziland, *Abantu-Batho* (25 Dec. 1912, 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Jan. 1913, 12 Feb. 1913) in SwNA, RCS 124/1913; ‘Lord Gladstone and the Swazis’, *Abantu-Batho* (19 Dec. 1913) and ‘The Swazi Scare’, *Abantu-Batho* (9 Jan. 1914), in BA, CO 417/546, ref. CO 4176; ‘The New Governor General: A Boon to Natives’, *Abantu-Batho* (18 Sept. 1914), in SwNA, RCS 754/1914; ‘Messages of Condolence to Swazi Queen’, *Abantu-Batho* (15 April 1915), in SwNA, RCS 23/1915.

⁵ *Abantu-Batho* (25 Dec. 1912), *et seq.*

Britain to plead for redress of Swazi grievances. The Transvaal Government announced that it had purchased Harrington's 'Revenue Concession', which gave the Republic the right to collect all rentals on behalf of the Swazi Regent. In return, the Transvaal promised to pay a monthly sum of £1,000 to the Swazi—a promise that was kept until the outbreak of the South African War. When the British arrived after the War, they upheld Mbandzeni's concessions, but refused to keep up the monthly payment of rentals to Labotsibeni.¹

Without consultation, and without furnishing adequate reason, the British issued a proclamation in late 1905 to the effect that the monthly rental was now forfeit to the exchequer of the new administration. The royal family could henceforth expect an *annual* payment of £1,000. The Swazi were scandalised, and countered by lodging a claim for £75,000—arrears since late 1899 on the 'Revenue Concession'. When the High Commissioner, Lord Selborne visited Swaziland in September 1906, the Swazi expressed their grievances to him, but he was unable to advance any justifiable reason for his Government's seizure of the monthly concession rentals. He did however promise a once-off payment of £24,000, the bulk of which was to be banked. Labotsibeni might draw the interest from it—£800 to add to her annual income of £1,000—but the principal sum was to remain untouched until Sobhuza attained his majority.

The Swazi said that since their concession had been summarily cancelled by the British, the concessions granted to whites should revert to Swazi use when the term of each concession expired. It was to protest against such injustices that a second deputation went to England in 1907. The writer of the series—possibly Kunene himself—promises to publish the report of the 1907 deputation in the next instalment, if he can obtain Labotsibeni's permission to consult her documentary archive. When the whole matter is published, the entire country will be able to judge for itself whether or not the Swazi have been the victims of wholesale robbery.²

The deputation returned utterly crestfallen from Britain. They had had a very brief audience with the King, who referred them to Lord Elgin of the Colonial Office, who in turn referred them to Lord Selborne in South Africa—the very person who had

¹ *Abantu-Batho* (25 Dec. 1912).

² *Abantu-Batho* (1 Jan. 1913).

been unable to give them satisfaction earlier.¹ In May 1909 Lord Selborne again visited Swaziland, and announced that it had been decided to partition the country. The concessionaires would obtain ownership of the land, and one-third of its surface area would be preserved for Swazi occupation. It was expected that by mid-1914 all Swazi who did not want to be tenants and labourers of white landowners should ensure that they were located on Swazi reserve land. Lord Selborne also sounded out the opinion of the Swazi as to a proposal that their country being incorporated into the Union of South Africa. They replied that they did not see how they might profit from inclusion in the Union, and they were content to remain out of it.²

Inconsistently, while the British issued title-deeds to whites in Swaziland, they were not prepared to offer blacks the same guarantee to their land. Swaziland has been called a British 'Protectorate', but how is the concept of protection compatible with Britain's dealings with this country? Britain annexed Swaziland unilaterally in January 1905. Her handling of Swazi affairs since then has been worse than that of the Boers before the South African War.³ As High Commissioner, Lord Milner aimed to break Swazi independence. His successor, Lord Selborne, at least detached Swaziland from the Transvaal Colony, and paid the Swazi some compensation for the loss of the Revenue Concession—paltry though that compensation was.⁴ But the great injustice of dispossession remains. The British set great store by their reputation for justice, but as far as Swaziland concerned, the Swazi have yet to witness this much vaunted justice. Britain has violated several solemn promises given in the Conventions of 1881 and 1884, and at other times.⁵

Kunene was interpreter to the Swazi deputation that went to Britain in 1894.⁶ In an *Abantu-Batho* editorial, he speaks about his firsthand experience of that deputation and of his brief audience with Queen Victoria. The purpose of his article is to welcome Lord Buxton, the new High Commissioner to South Africa. Kunene maintains that Buxton's appointment bodes well for Swaziland, since it was Buxton—then Under-Secretary for the Colonies—who received that first Swazi deputation in

¹ *Abantu-Batho* (8 Jan. 1913).

² *Abantu-Batho* (15 Jan. 1913).

³ *Abantu-Batho* (22. Jan. 1913).

⁴ *Abantu-Batho* (29 Jan. 1913).

⁵ *Abantu-Batho* (12 Feb. 1913).

⁶ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 332.

London. Being ‘a High Commissioner who knows from personal experience the *alpha and omega* of the Swazi question’, Buxton will ‘sympathetically hear [the Swazi’s] various grievances—more especially as regards the land—and have them satisfactorily redressed’.¹ When articles such as these were read to Labotsibeni by her literate attendants, she no doubt believed that her investment in *Abantu-Batho* had been money well spent.

Couzens reminds us that in 1921, no more than around 10% percent of black South Africans were literate, and that ‘writers like Plaatje or Grendon’ had of necessity to draw on this very restricted readership.² From its start, *Abantu-Batho* faced the challenge of competing successfully with other vernacular papers and achieving the requisite critical mass to ensure its survival. In mid-1915, as part of an ambitious drive to boost the total number of subscribers up to ten thousand, Kunene organized a ‘Native Choir’ to tour South Africa. In addition to being entertained by the singing, audiences would be lectured on the value of reading newspapers, and coaxed into taking out subscriptions to *Abantu-Batho*.³ At the time (June 1915), a twelve-month subscription to the paper cost 12s 3d.⁴ Whether or not Kunene’s scheme achieved the desired result is uncertain. Perhaps it did not, because a few months later, he had ‘severed his connection with the paper’.⁵

Why Kunene left the paper is unknown, but his reasons may have been financial. Selby Msimang describes Seme as ‘a wonderful spendthrift’. While in Seme’s employ, there were months when Msimang would have foregone his salary had he not ‘made provision for [him]self early in the month’.⁶ Seme was in dire financial difficulties in the early months of 1916. A court order of 16 March 1916 sequestered his effects, including the ‘galvanised iron buildings and fencing’ at his home, corner of Tobey Street and Milner Avenue, Sophiatown.⁷

Kunene was succeeded as editor by Grendon—another stalwart defender of the Swazi cause—who, for a period of less than a year, from late 1915 to mid-1916, was

¹ ‘The New Governor General; A Boon to Natives’, *Abantu-Batho* (18 Sept. 1914).

² Couzens, ‘Widening Horizons of African Literature’, 74.

³ TAB, GNLB, vol. 90, ref. 144/13 D205: Cleopas Kunene to Director Native Labour, 4 June 1915.

⁴ TAB, GNLB, vol. 90, ref. 144/13 D205: poster advertising *Abantu-Batho*.

⁵ TAB, DNL1329/14/D48: Acting Director of Native Labour to Secretary for Native Affairs, Cape Town, 16 Feb. 1916.

⁶ Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 62.

⁷ ‘Sale in Execution’, *Rand Daily Mail* (24 March 1916), in TAB, DNL1329/14/D48.

editor.¹ Early in March 1916, Swaziland's Acting Resident Commissioner makes reference both to 'Cleopas Kunene, lately Editor of the Native paper "Abantu Batho"' and to 'Robert Grendon, a half-blood', who is the 'present Editor of the paper'.² Early in June, the socialist newspaper, *International* describes Grendon as 'the accomplished editor of "Abantu Batho", the Johannesburg native newspaper',³ and the *Star* describes him as 'responsible editor of the native newspaper "Abantu Batho"'.⁴

It is unclear precisely when Grendon took over from Kunene, but it cannot have been later than 9 December 1915. An editorial note in the issue of that date is recognizably Grendon's.⁵ By 16 February 1916, it was reported that there were 'three joint Editors of this paper, Robert Grandon [sic] a coloured man who deals with the English portions, Saul Msane responsible for Zulu and Daniel Letanka who deals with the Sesuto portion'.⁶ During the greater part of his period as editor, Grendon was closely allied with Msane, a veteran activist and prominent founder member of the SANNC, who joined *Abantu-Batho's* staff sometime between 6 January and 16 February.⁷ For no immediately apparent reason, in one of his surviving editorials, Grendon directly addresses Msane twice by his well-known sobriquet, 'Mayimayi'.⁸

The association between Grendon and Msane (c.1856–1919) likely went back more than a decade. Both men had undergone a mission education in the Cape Colony—which fact provided common ground for a friendship. Msane appears to have been a close associate of Solomon Kumalo (died 1904), with whom Grendon

¹ Roux (*Time Longer Than Rope*, 111) mentions Grendon's involvement with *Abantu-Batho*, something passed over by Switzer and Switzer in *The Black Press*, their pioneering work on the history of the resistance press in South Africa.

² SwNA, RCS 124/16: D. Honey (Acting Resident Commissioner) to Viscount Buxton (High Commissioner), 8 March 1916.

³ 'A Unique Event, *International* 37 (2 June 1916) 3. See also 'Another Blow to Colour Prejudice', *International* 38 (9 June 1916) 1.

⁴ 'Loyal Natives Surprised: War-on-Warites and Kitchener', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916) 1st ed., 4; 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

⁵ Editorial response following 'Reply to Mr. Plaatje', *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5. Reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*.

⁶ TAB, DNL 1329/14/D48: Acting Director of Native Labour to Secretary for Native Affairs, Cape Town, 16 Feb. 1916.

⁷ TAB, DNL 1329/14/D48.

⁸ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916). Cf. La Hausse, *Restless Identities*, 17; 'Ezase Dundee', *Ipepa* 3:471 (11 Dec. 1903) 3. 'Mayimayi' is likely an Africanising of the English interjection, 'My! My!'

also enjoyed a friendly relationship.¹ As already indicated in Chapter 8, while Grendon was teaching at Edendale, he will have known Saul's elderly father, Matthew Msane (c.1816–1904). Matthew was a prominent village elder, and unofficial leader of the Edendale faction opposed to the autocratic governance of headman, Stephen Mini. In 1904, Grendon published in *Ilanga* an obituary for Matthew Msane,² and described his son Saul as one of 'the more enlightened of the Zulu race'.³

Many blacks and whites who knew Saul Msane spoke highly of him. Allister Miller, perhaps the most prominent of Swaziland's earliest white settlers, calls him 'an intelligent, responsible, and broad-minded native'.⁴ Following Msane's death in 1919, *Abantu-Batho* eulogized him as 'the courageous and doughty leader, ... typical of a cultured man in every way, [who] always commanded ... respect for the civilised blackman'.⁵ And S. M. Makgatho, who succeeded Dube as President of the SANNC calls him 'that venerable old man and greatest of Africans, ... my dearest friend and colleague and a great patriot'.⁶ He is described in Skota's biographical dictionary as a 'man of sound judgment, many seeking his advice on important matters'.⁷

However, there appears to have been an air of cultural arrogance about him. When he discovered that 'a raw man' could achieve exemption from the operation of Natal's Native Law Code, he opted not to seek exemption himself, because it 'seemed rather as if it was lowering oneself to do it'.⁸ The *International*—a socialist organ—also chides him for offering a 'little sop to white vanity' by appealing to whites 'to save the natives from the liquor evil'.⁹

An ethnic Zulu, Msane was born at Edendale in 1856, the son of Matthew and Segina Msane.¹⁰ He underwent his early schooling at Edendale and completed his

¹ 'Uku Hambela Kwami e Driefontein (Emhlanini)', *Ilanga* 1:3 (24? April 1903) 1; 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3; *SANAC*, iv, 853–60.

² Solomon Xaba, 'The Late Matthew Msane', *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4. Grendon seems to have intervened editorially in the precise wording of this obituary.

³ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4

⁴ A. M. Miller, 'The "Swazi Scare": a Correction' (letter to the editor, 26 Dec. 1913), *Cape Times* (5 Jan. 1914), in BA, CO 417/546.

⁵ 'New Year', *Abantu-Batho* (1 Jan. 1920), in TAB, GNLB, vol. 320, ref. 301/19/72.

⁶ Makgatho, *Presidential Address*, 1.

⁷ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 71.

⁸ *SANAC*, iv: 859.

⁹ 'The Red Herring', *International* 42 (7 July 1916) 1.

¹⁰ TAB, MHG 42409: Saul Msane.

education at the Methodist-run Healdtown Institution in the Cape.¹ In 1881, he received the Cape Colony's Elementary Teacher's Certificate,² after which he taught school for a period at Edendale.³ In 1892, he led a troupe of 'Natal Native Singers' to England. He is described as a 'good musician, and possessed [of] a deep bass voice'. His wife Rosaline, whom he married in Pietermaritzburg, and his sister, the Lovedale-educated Asiana, were members of this troupe.⁴ In 1893, he was involved with Unzondelelo—otherwise known as the 'Natives' Home Missionary Society'—an initiative on the part of Edendale and Driefontein Christians to bring the Gospel to their heathen neighbours.⁵

In 1895, he took up the position of Compound Manager at the Jubilee and Salisbury Gold Mining Company, in Johannesburg. His starting salary was the then princely sum of £8 per month; by 1904, it had risen to an unheard-of £26 10s. Although Johannesburg became his domicile, he continued to consider Edendale his real home,⁶ and when he died he still held property at Edendale and at its daughter settlement, Watersmeet.⁷ While in Johannesburg, Saul Msane compiled the *Miners Companion in Zulu* for the use of white mine workers.⁸

In 1896, he was induced to lend his support to the African Christian Union. This scheme was conceived by the eccentric Englishman, Joseph Booth—a missionary to Central Africa with a somewhat fluid sense of denominational allegiance. Booth is best remembered for the slogan, 'Africa for the African', which, although not coined by him, was given wide exposure by his pamphlet bearing that title. Msane's friend Solomon Kumalo, then in Durban, also teamed up with Booth.⁹ Among Booth's ambitious projects was the African Land and Transport Company. He planned to 'initiate such transport agencies by land, river, or ocean, as shall give the African free access to the different parts of his great country and people, and to the general commerce of the world'; also to 'initiate and develop the culture of tea, coffee, cotton,

¹ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 71; Marks, 'Harriette Colenso and the Zulus', 411; 'Healdtown Institution', *Izwe la Kiti* 1:12 (11 Dec. 1912) 5.

² Cape of Good Hope, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for 1883*, 196.

³ Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants and Politics*, 162.

⁴ Erlmann, *African Stars*, 116–17; Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 71; Meintjes, 'Edendale 1850–1906', 328–29; Lovedale, *Lovedale Past and Present*, 463.

⁵ 'Unzondelelo', *Umsizi Wabantu* 20 (16 Sept. 1893) 3.

⁶ SANAC, iv: 853, 856–59; Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 71.

⁷ TAB, MHG 42409: Saul Msane.

⁸ TAB, MHG 42409: Saul Msane.

⁹ Langworthy, *Africa for the African*, 78, 82.

sugar, &c., &c., and to establish profitable mining or other industries or manufactures’—all of these enterprises solidly in African hands.¹

John Tengo Jabavu roundly condemned ‘Mr Booth’s wild cat scheme’, and expressed surprise that men of the calibre of Msane and Kumalo should have been taken in by it. Msane, in turn, ‘threat[ened] to start another paper to oppose’ *Imvo Zabantsundu* and its editor, Jabavu.² It is significant that *Inkanyiso yase Natal*, which folded that same year, had been edited by Solomon Kumalo, so perhaps Msane’s ‘threat’ involved a projected national paper to include Kumalo in Natal, and Msane in Johannesburg. It is also quite possible that Msane’s longstanding interest in African cooperative societies—which interest later brought him into competition and conflict with Dube—was informed in part by his exposure to Booth’s African Christian Union.

In 1899 or 1900—authorities vary as to the date—Msane, together with Martin Lutuli and Josiah Gumede had consultations with Harriette Colenso that paved the way for the formation of the Natal Native Congress.³ In 1910 or 1911, he made good his promise to start a newspaper when he collaborated with Levi Thomas Mvabaza in launching the Xhosa-English weekly, *Umlomo wa Bantu* (‘Mouth of the People’). The two men became its first editors. The paper’s intention was advertised as being ‘the unifying of all African tribes into one people’—the same goal that would propel Seme a year or two later to set up *Abantu-Batho* as a paper with nationwide coverage. *Umlomo* merged with *Abantu-Batho* in September 1916, by which time Msane and Grendon had been ejected from *Abantu-Batho*’s editorship.⁴

At the annual congress of the SANNC in 1913, Msane was one of those deputed to gather and publish African objections to the Natives’ Land Bill. He spared no punches in castigating Botha’s Government for this racist legislation.⁵ In February 1914, the SANNC held an extraordinary meeting in Kimberley where it was determined to send

¹ Langworthy, *Africa for the African*, 79.

² ‘Yet Again’, *Imvo* 12:629 (12 Nov. 1896) 3; ‘The Booth Bubble’, *Imvo* 12:630 (19 Nov. 1896) 3; Langworthy, *Africa for the African*, 78.

³ Walshe, *Rise of African Nationalism*, 16; Meli, *History of the ANC*, 22, 74; Marks, ‘Harriette Colenso and the Zulus’, 409–10; Duminy, ‘Towards Union, 1900–10’, 403–04.

⁴ Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, 111; Lowe, ‘*Abantu-Batho* and the South African Native National Congress in the 1910s’, ‘Ezase Jozi’, *Ilanga* 14:689 (1 Sept. 1916) 2.

⁵ Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, 172–75; Msane, ‘The Natives’ Land Act’, *Tsala ea Batho* 4:144 (18 Oct. 1913) 6.

a deputation to Britain to urge the Imperial Government to veto the Natives' Land Act, and to acquaint the British public with the deep suffering that enforced segregation was inflicting upon blacks.¹ The deputation in its final form comprised John L. Dube, Sol T. Plaatje, Thomas Mapikela, Saul Msane, and Dr Walter Benson Rubusana.²

To obtain the requisite funds to undertake this costly exercise, and to collect data with which to demonstrate the plight of Africans rendered destitute by the implementation of the Act, the SANNC detailed some of its leaders to visit various parts of the country. Msane was appointed the organizer of the fund-raising operation, and he personally raised £360 from blacks living in the Eastern Transvaal.³ It appears that the fund-raisers were permitted to draw their 'travelling expenses' from the monies they gathered.⁴ This casual arrangement was of course open to abuse—and in the event, it *was* abused.

Christopher Lowe describes the unseemly 'scramble for cash' that tended to undermine the integrity of early Congress officials: 'Much of the turbulence in the Congress sprang from the need (or decision) to gather and spend money to send delegations to England. Saul Msane's conflicts with Dube were rooted in the corruption of such collections, first in 1914 and again in conflict over the Isivivane scheme'.⁵ Isivivane, founded in 1907, was also named the 'Native Centralisation Scheme'. Its 'central aim ... was to "provide means of cooperation whereby native ownership of land may be increased so as to cover all branches of agriculture" and to get trade "carried on by Indians" into African hands'.⁶ Msane held property scattered about Natal. The 'scheme' involving the 'Economic and Shilling Bank' in which he was engaged in 1916, immediately after his expulsion from *Abantu-Batho*, was a revival of Isivivane.⁷ At the time of his death in 1919, Msane had succeeded in interesting Solomon kaDinizulu in the establishment of an agricultural college in

¹ Willan in: Plaatje, *Selected Writings*, 174.

² Walshe, *Rise of African Nationalism*, 50.

³ Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, 180; Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 48.

⁴ 'Mr Saul Msane', *Tsala ea Batho* 4:157 (31 Jan. 1914) 5; Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 47.

⁵ Lowe, 'Abantu-Batho and the South African Native National Congress in the 1910s'; La Hausse, *Restless Identities*, 18–19.

⁶ La Hausse, *Restless Identities*, 17–18.

⁷ La Hausse, *Restless Identities*, 18; 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:684 (28 July 1916) 2.

Nongoma district of Zululand.¹ In 1919, shortly before his death, Msane visited Swaziland and made Grendon a business offer. This may relate to the resurrected Isivivane, or to Msane's projected college.²

According to Selby Msimang, Msane siphoned off some of the money belonging to the 1914 deputation, describing this as his 'salary'. In the end, the other fund-raisers, including Msimang himself, were also awarded such 'salaries'—perhaps in order to keep their lips sealed. After milking the fund in this way, sufficient money remained to get the deputation to England, but with little to spare. Msimang claims that Seme concealed Msane's alleged peculation.³ Fiscal probity and transparency were not conspicuous qualities in early SANNC transactions. Even Seme himself, architect of the SANNC, was—according to Msimang—'struck off the roll for accepting payment for a defence he did not do'.⁴

The SANNC deputation sailed for England in May 1914.⁵ It was recalled when the Great War broke out a few months later, Congress having 'decided to do nothing likely to interrupt the Government's war efforts'.⁶ The delegates, with the exception of Sol Plaatje, returned to South Africa. On returning to South Africa, Msane explained that their propaganda campaign had been aborted because of the outbreak of the European War, and because the deputation had wanted to demonstrate their 'loyalty'.⁷ In early 1915, Msane and Dube attended Swazi prince Malunge's funeral together as representatives of the SANNC. Msane interpreted for the Resident Commissioner on that occasion.⁸

By mid-February 1916, Msane had joined Grendon on the editorial staff of *Abantu-Batho*.⁹ Skota's biographical dictionary describes him as 'one of the best Zulu

¹ 'Um'fi uSaul Msane', *Ilanga* 17:42 (17 Oct. 1919) 2; 'An Appeal from the Natives of the Union of South Africa', *Ilanga* 17:50 (12 Dec. 1919) 5.

² SwNA, RCS 75/19: F. F. Sepamla to the Government Secretary, 22 July 1919.

³ Lowe, 'Abantu-Batho and the South African Native National Congress in the 1910s'.

⁴ Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 63.

⁵ Willan in: Plaatje, *Selected Writings*, 174; Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, 110.

⁶ Msimang, *H. Selby Msimang Looks Back*, 6.

⁷ 'Return of Native Deputation', *Tsala ea Batho* 4:192 (17 Oct. 1914) 4.

⁸ Lowe, 'Swaziland's Colonial Politics', 292; 'Messages of Condolence to Swazi Queen', *Abantu-Batho* (15 April 1915), in SwNA, RCS 23/1915.

⁹ 'Saul Msane and the S.A.N.N. Congress: an Essay', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

writers', and as having once been 'editor of the *Abantu Batho* newspaper'.¹ It is a striking fact that

with the exception of R. V. Selope Thema, all of the main English and Zulu language editors of *Abantu-Batho* up to 1918 had strong ties to the Methodist-founded *kholwa* community at Edendale near Pietermaritzburg in Natal, or its offshoots. So too did Business Manager C. S. Mabaso. And all of them except Thema and Msane had lived in Swaziland in circumstances that brought them into close proximity to the central Swazi royalty.²

Besides their joint involvement in *Abantu-Batho*, Grendon and Msane also shared an interest in the activities of the International Socialist League (ISL), a group whose leaders were keen to instil socialist principles into Africans.³



Because no early run of *Abantu-Batho* has yet been traced, I have had, for the period 1915–16, to make intensive use of a few clippings from the paper that survive in institutional archives. The first is an article by Sol Plaatje, published on 30 September 1915. It is located among papers of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society, housed at Rhodes House Library, Oxford.⁴ There is nothing of Grendon in this clipping, except perhaps the single line: 'It is to be sincerely regretted if the allegations herein set forth be true.—Ed. Abantu.' The next clipping is dated 20 January 1916, and includes two articles by Grendon: 'Farewell Msindazwe!' and 'Editorial Notes' (plate 11d). It is found in the Papers of R. T. Coryndon, also housed at Rhodes House.⁵ The last clipping that I have used is a full page from the issue of 17 February 1916. Besides journalistic articles by Grendon, it includes part of his poem, 'The Tragedy of Malunge'. The clipping is housed in the Swaziland National Archives.⁶

¹ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 71.

² Lowe, 'Abantu-Batho and the South African Native National Congress in the 1910s'.

³ Meli, *History of the ANC*, 59; Hirsion and Williams, *The Delegate for Africa*, 161–62.

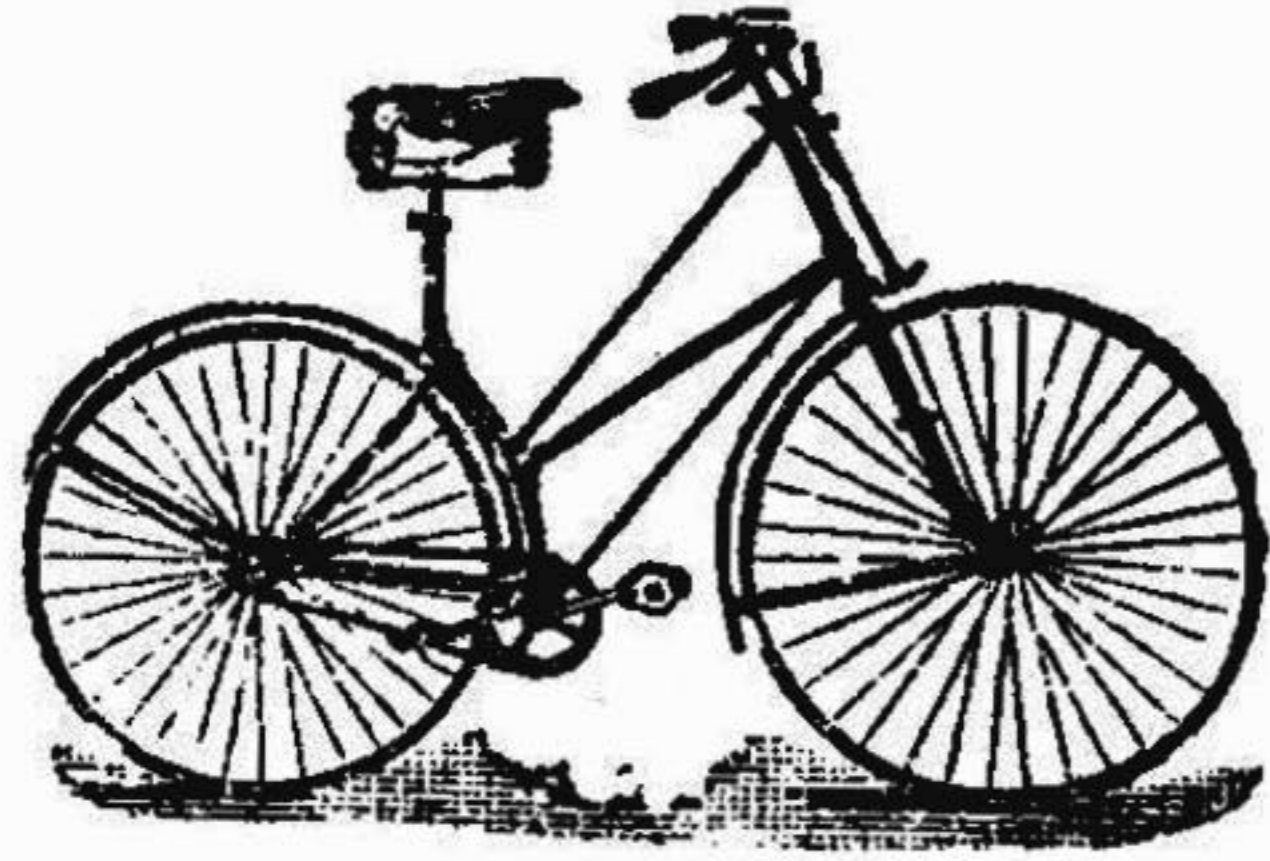
⁴ Bodleian Library of Commonwealth & African Studies at Rhodes House, MSS Brit. Emp. s.19 D4/8. Enclosure in S19 D4/8, Harris to Mrs G. Solomon, 26 Jan. 1916. The clipping is in fact from *Naledi*—a Basutoland paper (15 Oct. 1915), which republished the *Abantu-Batho* article. I am grateful to Miss Lucy McCann for making this material available to me.

⁵ MSS Afr. s. 633, box 10, file 1. I am grateful to Miss Lucy McCann for making this material available to me. Coryndon was Resident Commissioner of Swaziland, 1907–16.

⁶ SwNA, RCS 124/16. I am much indebted to Chris Lowe for bringing this rare material to my notice.

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Farewell Msindazwe!

R. T. CORYNDON, Esq. C.M.G.,
Late Resident Commissioner of Swaziland.

I.—NATIVE NAMES.

I.—MSINDAZWE—From *Sinda* to weigh down, sit heavy upon, encumber, clog and (i).*li-zwe* "land, country." Hence the compound signifies—"HE WHO WEIGHS DOWN, SITS HEAVY UPON, ENCUMBERS OR CLOGS THE LAND." Another derivation is that supplied by *Abantu-Batho* of Dec. 19, 1914, e.g. "HE WHO EXERTS TREMENDOUS INFLUENCE." But this derivation is ambiguous, and may mean "influence,"—either good or evil—praiseworthy or condemnatory. The meaning of the word as current in Swaziland, is condemnatory rather than praiseworthy. N.B.—This name, by which Mr. Coryndon is more generally known, was conferred upon him by the members of the Swaziland Native Police in whose eyes His Honour—in the beginning of his Swazi career—appeared as a "holy terror." Both

country as the "California of South Africa," and he recognized the accuracy of the analogy. What he could do to justify it, would be done. Whilst as a sportsman he sympathized with them in their shooting, trout-fishing and tennis, he saw a more serious side in the future; and every ounce of energy he possessed, would be expended in assisting the development of Swaziland. In concluding, he said—"Swaziland is a triumph of chaos, or rather I should say it was. The complications which have hampered its development are fast disappearing, and where could one find a better object to work for than in the three, four or five years, which are ahead of us, to transform this country into the home of a well-ordered, prosperous, and contented British community. When the time arrives that I must render an account of my stewardship, and that object has been attained, I feel that I will have secured it through the co-operation and good wishes of the inhabitants of the country, on which I rely."

During the earlier portion of his career in Swaziland Mr. CORYNDON proved distasteful to the emaSwazi, who represented him as arrogant, inflexible, stern, hard, unsympathetic. Hence his name "Msindazwe." And this opinion reached its climax in September 1909, when with words that issued from his lips, more terrific than the thunderclap, he passed the death-sentence upon NJINJANE, a prince of royal blood. Then again, Mr. CORYNDON suprised the judicial world, when on discharging MLOKOTWA NDWANDWE, a chief of South Swaziland, he thus delivered himself:—"I DISCHARGE YOU WITH VERY DEEP REGRET"—instead of congratulating the accused, as is the custom amongst experienced judges, in such cases. For this unguarded expression from the Bench His Honour was held up to public censure in the columns of the *Critic* a fearless "weekly" of Johannesburg.

At this time the emaSwazi looked askance and with aversion at their white ruler. But this feeling fortunately died its own death in time, when both ruler and ruled came to understand each other better. This is clearly proved during the latter years of Mr. CORYNDON'S career in Swaziland. Whenever the Queen-Regent took an oath to confirm or back up a statement, she no longer resorted to the custom of swearing by the name of MBANDENI or that of a former Swazi King, but by that of this British Chieftain. "I NO LONGER SWEAR BY MBANDENI,"—said she to the members of the Commission sent to Swaziland by the S.A. Union to discuss with her the Transvaal scare of 1913—"I SWEAR BY CORYNDON." By swearing by this

mitted its future to the intelligence and resources of the people occupying it."—*Rand Daily Mail*, May 29, 1914.

Mr. CORYNDON'S term of office in Swaziland is marked—so far as the Natives are concerned—by:—1. The establishment at Lobamba of a School for the education of the children of Swazi Royalty. The first fruits of this School under the tuition of Mr. JOHN JAMES, are next month leaving for Lovedale to prosecute further studies. 2. The determination of the Government—(when Mr. CORYNDON was on the point of quitting Swaziland for Rhodesia in 1914) to pilot the ema Swazi through the matter of purchasing land offered them by white concessionaires; and to set down a firm foot upon all "adventurers" who might gain and exercise undue influence over the weak-minded ema-Ngwane in this matter. Mr. CORYNDON—to his everlasting praise be it said—by his wise and timely intervention saved the ema-Ngwane from themselves just when they were yielding to temptations, whereby they have ever been beset—and repeating blunders, for which they are so flagrantly notorious, viz, of mistaking falsity for truth; flattery for friendship; cunning for wisdom; phantasies for reality; sound advice for censure; sympathy for apathy; well wishing for intrigue; and above all—abandoning ripe experience for new and fickle things, and well-tried friends for new-come foes. Thus he, who in the dawn of his career in Swaziland was named *Msindazwe* i.e., "He who weighs down, sits heavy upon, encumbers, the Land"—by his determination and exertions to render the ema Swazi secure in the possession of their land, outlived and reversed that, which is signified by this, his more common native name. But though this be so, the name, *Msindazwe*, must cling to him for the residue of his terrestrial life. The above is a rapid sketch of the career of the greater of the first two of Swaziland's Resident Commissioners. His loss to Swaziland will be Basutoland's gain. On the one hand we join the inhabitants of Swaziland in giving its genial retiring "Head" a hearty send-off. Plate 11d: Abantu-Batho, 20 Jan. 1916, with Grendon's leader article.

In addition to these clippings, there exist in *Ilanga lase Natal* a few reprints of *Abantu-Batho* material from the period of Grendon's editorship. For instance, *Ilanga* clips from *Abantu-Batho*—evidently the issue of 9 December 1915—a 'Reply to Mr Plaatje' signed by Travers Buxton and John H. Harris, both office-bearers of the Aborigines' Protection Society (APS).¹ Their letter is followed by an editorial paragraph which carries the unmistakable hallmarks of Grendon's writing style. *Ilanga* of 17 December 1915 reprints two untitled paragraphs on Swazi affairs, by Grendon, published in *Abantu-Batho*,² while *Ilanga* of 31 December 1915 reprints 'Gen. Smuts Answered', an article by Grendon, first published in *Abantu-Batho* shortly before that date.³

On 30 September 1915, *Abantu-Batho* published a letter from Sol Plaatje, the only member of the anti-Land Act deputation to remain in England when the others returned to South Africa. Plaatje states that he has learned from press reports that T. Mapikela claims that while the members of the deputation were in England, Plaatje was offered, but refused to accept, 'a pro-rata share out of a sum of £200'. Plaatje flatly denies this. If such a sum was offered, it was 'gobbled' by Mapikela and other members of the deputation, who kept the offer concealed from Plaatje. All he was offered was a *loan* of £26 by obstructionist office-bearers of the Aborigines Protection Society—which loan was made conditional upon his leaving Britain post-haste and not communicating with the media or 'friends' of the cause. Plaatje's sense of honour would not allow him to accept a loan on such 'gagging conditions'. The SANNC's other envoys to Britain may have turned tail and hastened back to South Africa as soon as they met with opposition in the Metropolis, but Plaatje had stuck his ground, remembering that his compatriots back home had reposed their trust in him.⁴

Plaatje also complains that the other members of the deputation who forsook their mission have misrepresented the reception he has enjoyed in England:

¹ *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5. A typewritten transcription of this letter from Buxton and Harris, dated 5 November 1915, and headed 'Copy from "Abantu-Batho" 9th Dec., 1915', is located in the Bodleian Library of Commonwealth & African Studies at Rhodes House, Oxford. Papers of Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society: Enclosure in S19 D4/8, Harris to Mrs G. Solomon, 26 Jan. 1916. I am grateful to Miss Lucy McCann for making this material available to me.

² *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5.

³ *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5.

⁴ Plaatje, 'Why I remained in England. And What I Am Doing', *Abantu-Batho* (30 Sept. 1915).

There was another ‘falsetto’ note which those colleagues of mine struck as soon as they trod on African soil. They are reported to have told the people that they know I could get no English audience to listen to me. Perhaps you will be surprised to hear that I have carried the message of the native difficulties to 59 English meetings.¹

Plaatje has impressed many audiences with the moral weight of black South Africans’ case against the Union Government. Inadequate funding from Congress is the only impediment to his advocacy of the cause. Were he not strapped for cash, he would be able to accept invitations to speak in many other English towns. It is at this point that *Abantu-Batho*’s editor adds the one-liner: ‘It is to be sincerely regretted if the allegations herein set forth be true.’ Because Kunene was succeeded by Grendon at about this time, it is unclear which of the two men is responsible for this comment—although, in view of the sequel outlined below, it seems likely that it was Grendon.

Abantu-Batho—probably in its issue of 9 December 1915—published a response to Plaatje’s letter from Travers Buxton and John H. Harris, the office-bearers of the Aborigines’ Protection Society who had endeavoured to thwart Plaatje’s mission in England. Harris, ‘a staunch segregationist’²—and therefore out of sympathy with the Plaatje’s campaign against the Land Act—believes that Plaatje has made some ‘misleading’ statements about his organization’s conduct toward the SANNC delegation.

Following this reply, the editor—who by now is unquestionably Grendon—calls upon the other members of the delegation—Dube, Rubusana, Msane, and Mapikela—to state why they have ‘not yet discharged [their] obligations to’ the APS and to the religious bodies in England who loaned them the passage money for their return to South Africa. He further calls upon Rubusana and Mapikela to ‘answer the charges made by Mr Plaatje against you two, who figure so prominently in his letter of Sep. 30, 1915. Come forth the lot of you and by a rendering of your stewardships set this matter to rest lest the people by whom you were sent become furious and loathe to believe in you in future.—Ed., *ABANTU*.’³ Apparently, the failed deputation produced

¹ Plaatje, ‘Why I remained in England. And What I Am Doing’, *Abantu-Batho* (30 Sept. 1915).

² Starfield, ‘Not Quite History’, 26.

³ ‘Reply to Mr Plaatje’, *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5, reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*, likely the issue of 9 Dec. Compare similar expressions in Grendon’s verse: ‘Mine eyes do loathe to look | On conquer’d men!’ (*Tshaka’s Death*); ‘My aid to him I loathe to lend’ (*PKD*, Pt XXI, p. 62); ‘That stubbornness which loathes to bow’ (*PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 81).

at least two controversies—both to do with financial misdoing. According to R. V. Selope Thema, while Plaatje complained that other members of the deputation had left him financially ‘stranded in England’, Msane accused Dube of having mismanaged the deputation’s affairs,¹ while Msane himself was charged with having misappropriated deputation funds.² At a SANNC meeting at Kroonstad, Msane challenged Dube openly on the question of Congress finances.³



The little that survives of Grendon’s journalism during the period of his editorship of *Abantu-Batho* is as strident and controversial as most of his earlier writing. For instance, in December 1915, he denies the truthfulness of General Smuts’s assertion that by taking part in the Great War, the ‘white race’ is ‘bleeding for the highest ideals of freedom’. ‘Freedom’ in South Africa, Grendon maintains, ‘has no meaning beyond its application to the White race’. He singles out three pieces of legislation that ‘do not corroborate the Minister’s statement’: the detested ‘Natives’ Land Act of 1913, the Native Pass Laws, [and] the Transvaal Marriage Laws in relation to White and non-White’. These laws are ‘abominations of abominations’.⁴

In respect of the last-mentioned legal ‘abomination’, Grendon had written eleven years earlier: ‘The one sidedness of certain of the Transvaal laws is intolerable. We have yet to learn by what process of reasoning the act of a black man cohabiting with a white woman becomes a crime. ... It is a crime for black m[e]n to cohabit with white women, but no ill for white men to cohabit with black women.’⁵

These iniquitous, racially-discriminative laws belie Smuts’s claim that the ‘white race’ is ‘bleeding for the highest ideals of freedom’. Also belying that claim is Smuts’s ‘refusal to allow the Black Man a share in the present War’. Grendon here gives voice to the desire of many black Africans to prove their ‘loyalty’ by active service in the Imperial armies. This ambition is lampooned by Johannesburg’s International Socialists, the *International* stating that ‘the native clamour to go battle-

¹ R. V. Selope Thema, ‘Its Achievements and Failures: II’, *Umteteli wa Bantu* 10:491 (21 Sept. 1929) 3.

² Lowe, ‘Swaziland’s Colonial Politics’, 273.

³ ‘Ezase Goli’, *Ilanga* 14:667 (17 March 1916) 2.

⁴ ‘Gen. Smuts Answered’, *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5. Reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*.

⁵ ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4.

fighting is as silly as the Russian Jews outcry which defeated a Bill exempting them from military service'.¹

But Grendon is much too earnest ever to be 'silly'. Smuts's Government has wounded the country's soul by wounding its black members:

We constitute a member of the Body Politic of this Union. The Government have sorely failed to discharge their duty to us, in the light of those 'highest ideals of freedom' to which one of its Cabinet Ministers here refers. The consequence is that the Government of which General Smuts is a member have hurt the soul of their people inasmuch as they have hurt the soul of one of its members, namely the dusky inhabitants of this land; so that it follows as a consequence that they will do a great injury to the future of this land.

The South African Government has yet to learn that the country has a corporate existence—that 'polluted is that State | Where class views class with jealous heart', and that the 'body politic' should 'command | That purity which bringeth peace'.²

In *Abantu-Batho* of 20 January 1916, Grendon protests against the Union Government's release of General de Wet and the other Boer turncoats during the current conflict: 'Since his release De Wet has taken his deliverance as an act of weakness on the part of his liberators, and said things that have roused the country to suspect that he disdains the act that set him free.'³ A little more than a decade earlier, Grendon 'often stated that the defeat of the Boers [in the South African War] was imperfect' and 'that in spirit they [were] as hateful to their new rulers as ever before'.⁴ To him, the action of the Boer 'Rebels' and the leniency with which they were subsequently dealt, seems confirmation that 'Boer' principles are ascendant in South Africa.

In the issue of 17 February 1916, he once again attacks Smuts's policy of keeping blacks out of the War.⁵ In the same issue, he explains why Africans are resistant to Afrikaner domination. 'Human spirits', he writes, 'smell each other. As with individuals so with nations. The Swazis—as indeed all Bantudom—have "smelt out"

¹ 'Firm and Just; or, Just and Firm', *International* 65 (15 Dec. 1916) 1.

² 'To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

³ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

⁴ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 4.

⁵ 'Hooray!' *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

the Boers; and having tasted the bitterness of contact with them, they prefer to remain beyond their control.’¹

Lowe observes correctly that Grendon here ‘draws on a well-known southern African idiom concerning the detection of secret evil-doers, especially witches and poisoners’.² Grendon’s language invokes the Nguni-language *ukunuka* (‘to divine, smell out, smell’).³ But in referring to ‘human spirits’ smelling one another, he simultaneously invokes Swedenborg’s doctrine of correspondence. According to the *Arcana Cælestia*, ‘spirits ... have also the sense of smell’.⁴ This is to say that they find one another’s spiritual odour or fragrance noisome or agreeable to the extent that they are opposed or allied in spiritual state. Wilkinson writes that in the ‘spiritual world’, ‘good and evil are seen, heard, smelt, tasted, and touched.... They become naked facts. ... For one instance, their fragrance, or their reverse, is evident.’⁵ It is primarily in this sense that Grendon means that ‘human spirits smell each other’, and that ‘Bantudom’ has discovered the ‘Boer’ odour to be disagreeable.



Couzens records that after ‘a serious dispute’, Grendon was dismissed as editor of *Abantu-Batho* in 1916.⁶ A Zulu-language note in *Ilanga* of 14 July 1916 reports that Saul Msane and Robert Grendon have both been expelled as editors of *Abantu-Batho*, and that Kunene will now return to editing it.⁷ A Zulu-language article in *Ilanga* on the 28th reports that Msane has recently busied himself with the ‘Economic and Shilling Bank’, travelling to Natal to present ‘the scheme’ to people there. The same article states that the present whereabouts of Grendon are unknown, but it speculates that perhaps he too will be part of this scheme of Msane’s. The same article reports that Kunene, prior to taking up his editorial position once again, has slipped into Swaziland and Natal—possibly on business for the paper. Grendon, Saul Msane, and Herbert Msane (Saul’s son) had together brought a lawsuit against *Abantu-Batho*,

¹ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

² Chris Lowe, ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, 64.

³ Branford, *Dictionary of South African English*, 329.

⁴ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cælestia*, n. 322. See also Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 579.

⁵ Wilkinson, *The African and the True Christian Religion*, 203–04.

⁶ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 78.

⁷ ‘Ezase Jozi’, *Ilanga* 14:682 (14 July 1916) 5.

although *Ilanga*'s writer does not know the substance of their suit. The case is scheduled to be heard on 28 July.¹

In its issue of 1 September, *Ilanga* reports that the case that Msane and Grendon have brought against *Abantu-Batho* has been settled out of court. It also records the recent amalgamation of *uMlomo-waBantu* with *Abantu-Batho*, and states that Mr Letanka will preside over the entire paper. The lawyer Richard Msimang has spent some days in Johannesburg recently in connection with *Abantu-Batho*'s affairs. The nature of his business is not stated, but it may possibly have been to represent one or other of the parties to the lawsuit, or to facilitate the merger of the two papers.²

An open letter 'To the Editor, "ABANTU BATHO"', by Richard Victor Selope Thema (1886–1955), published in *Ilanga* on 28 April 1916 casts valuable light on the circumstances behind the ouster of Msane and Grendon.³ Thema complains that for three months an unseemly debate has raged in *Abantu-Batho* over the mismanagement of the SANNC deputation's funds—the issue broached by Sol Plaatje in his letter to *Abantu-Batho*.

Thema was a clerk for attorney Richard W. Msimang. In 1915, he became secretary to the Transvaal branch of the SANNC, and during Plaatje's absence in Britain, he also acted as secretary-general.⁴ Thema does not name Grendon in his letter, but it is evident that he has Grendon principally in mind, because he identifies the objectionable articles as being 'principally written in the language with which the large majority of the people are not acquainted'—*i.e.*, English. Instead of dousing the flames, the editor of *Abantu-Batho* has been fuelling them. Must the black peoples of South Africa be subjected to a further three months of this witch-hunt? Will the editor not rest until the blame for the fund's mismanagement is pinned upon either Dube or Msane? (Given that Grendon and Msane made common cause in the law-suit against the paper, it seems probable that Thema is accusing Grendon of favouring Msane, as opposed to Dube.)

¹ 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:684 (28 July 1916) 2.

² 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:689 (1 Sept. 1916) 2.

³ "'The Voice of the Races of South Africa' vs. the Bantu People of South Africa', *Ilanga* 14:673 (28 April 1916) 5. Jane Starfield ('Not Quite History', 27), by misdating Thema's article—she gives the date as 28 April 1917, instead of 28 April 1916—reads it anachronistically as having direct reference to Dube's ouster as President of the SANNC, in 1917.

⁴ *New DSAB*, i: 245.

‘Tshaka was a great Bantu—a man of noble and lofty ideas’, Thema points out. But ‘it was his lack of diplomacy [and] his harshness of character which frustrated his scheme of bringing about the Union of the Bantu race. Had he that tact which made Moshoeshoe the greatest Bantu diplomatist, he should have succeeded in his schemes, and Bantudom should have been saved.’ Tragically today, ‘Tshaka has appeared in the form of the Abantu-Batho & Co.’, which purports to unite *abantu*, styling itself the ‘Voice of the Native Races of South Africa’. But it lacks the tact of Moshesh, and emulates the ‘harshness’ of Shaka. Instead of uniting the people—which is its brief—*Abantu-Batho* ‘has created a bad feeling among the people; it has set Mr Msane against Mr Dube. It has formed and founded the Msanites and Dubites among the Zulu nation.... It has disorganized our Deputation, and shattered to pieces our national organization.’ Thema’s letter is published in *Ilanga*—an isiZulu paper owned by Dube, who is one of those under suspicion of having misappropriated delegation monies. Msane, who is on the staff of the ‘national’ paper, is the opposing party to this feud. Under such circumstances, it is unlikely that reports in either of these papers can be taken at face value.

Thema calls for a halt to *Abantu-Batho*’s campaign to identify the culprit in the deputation debacle: ‘It is not the proving of Mafukuzela’s [Dube’s] or Mayimayi’s [Msane’s] innocence or vice versa, that will strengthen this national organization, but union of all the leaders of the people’, he opines. Here he broaches an issue that has dogged political debate repeatedly in the decades since—the moral accountability of public figures. Thema is in favour of letting things slide; Grendon would never countenance such a thing, as we already know from his response to accusations that Malunge and Vilakazi had mismanaged the Swazi Land Repurchase Fund. Thema continues by arguing that pinning the blame on someone, or even unseating one or other politician, will achieve more harm than good:

Let us for the sake of argument assume that it has been proved that either Mr Msane or Mr Dube is responsible for the mismanagement of the Deputation fund. Is it possible, after showing the world that these men have misused the moneys entrusted to their charge, and even after kicking them out of the leadership of the National Congress, to reform the Congress and strengthen its foundation, or to get more money from the people? Certainly not. Not even if we can produce a spotless Bantu being. And that is the reason why the people are clamouring for amicable settlement of this question. But unfortunately the ‘Voice’ is determined to continue the struggle until it has no more bombshells to ‘shell’ the ‘cancer’ out of the race. But alas! it is the race that

is being shelled out of existence. Hence the people's clamouring for a withdrawal of this controversy from the press.

Thema believes that a few fiscal improprieties can be accommodated. After all, it 'must be remembered that the race is still at its infant stage, and in that stage, failures and mistakes characteristic of the period, are bound to be made'. But, when 'the people' 'clamour' for an end to the indecorous wrangling, 'the "voice" from behind the editorial desk of the so-called national organ, says: "HANDS OFF! WAIT and SEE!"'¹ Thema almost certainly quotes one of Grendon's editorials: 'Hands off!' is an imperative that Grendon uses elsewhere.²

Writing more than a decade later, Thema describes this 'quarrel' between Msane and Seme on the one hand and Dube on the other as 'the beginning of a disease that has been destroying the germ of the Congress life'.³ Because of it, the SANNC was 'crippled in its infancy'.⁴

Selby Msimang is another who expresses displeasure at Grendon's relentless media quest for the deputation fund peculator. However, since Msimang was 'Secretary of the Anti-Native Land Act Committee, 1913', and is reputed to have personally raised £1,000 for the SANNC, his objectivity is open to question.⁵ Msimang's letter, entitled 'Mr Msane and Native Congress', appeared in *Ilanga* on 24 March 1916.⁶ It is prefaced by a brief paragraph in which *Ilanga's* editor expresses the hope that 'it will be the means of stopping the controversy from which we have abstained for obvious reasons'. These 'obvious reasons' are that *Ilanga's* proprietor is himself implicated in the debate about where the fund monies went.

Msimang writes as 'Corresponding Secretary' of the SANNC. His letter is part of an ongoing polemic in which Msane plays a central role. In essence, Msimang states that all further debate on the misappropriated funds is closed by resolution of a Congress meeting held at Kroonstad. He describes the furore stoked up by *Abantu-*

¹ "'The Voice of the Races of South Africa" vs. the Bantu People of South Africa', *Ilanga* 14:673 (28 April 1916) 5.

² 'Zulu Orthography', *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4.

³ R. V. Selope Thema, 'The African National Congress: Its Achievements and Failures: III', *Umteteli wa Bantu* 10:497 (2 Nov. 1929) 4.

⁴ R. V. Selope Thema, 'Its Achievements and Failures: II', *Umteteli wa Bantu* 10:491 (21 Sept. 1929) 3.

⁵ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 218.

⁶ 'Mr Msane and Native Congress', *Ilanga* 14:668 (24 March 1916) 5.

Batho as the ‘nonsensical agitation about Congress Funds and etc.’, and puts it down to nothing more than ‘personal differences arising out of petty jealousies and self-aggrandisement’. Msimang believes that ‘Congress alone has the right to censure or condone at its own pleasure the actions of its leaders, but not individuals such as are struggling to ascend the ladder of historic fame at the expense of the nation’.¹ Msimang seems to be aiming this last jibe at Grendon rather than at Msane who *is* a ‘leader’ of Congress.

Thema and Msimang both skirt the issue—that donated monies have been misappropriated and that donors are entitled to know whose pockets their contributions currently line. Like Thema, Msimang seeks to gag the Press, in the belief that the ‘national’ interest is greater than the desire of a few that the truth be revealed. And yet, as Peter Limb finds, ‘the pro-ANC black press helped build Congress legitimacy among Africans and at the same time encouraged the development of a climate of openness inside the movement’.² Grendon, during his brief tenure as editor of *Abantu-Batho*, showed that he, for one, appreciated the proper role and independence of the fourth estate.

Msimang’s claim that those who sought to keep the debate running were ‘struggling to ascend the ladder of historic fame’ seems very like a case of pot calling kettle black. Jane Starfield, in a study of the autobiographical writings of Grendon’s critics, Msimang and Thema, discovers them to be ‘significant individuals, at once representative and idiosyncratic; deeply involved in SANNC politics, but also furthering their own careers. Their autobiographical writings both reveal and attempt to conceal important moments in their pasts and in so doing, exemplify the ways in which autobiographical writing may speak to the historian.’³ They are not disinterested commentators on the affairs in which they played active roles.



In December 1915, Grendon reports in *Abantu-Batho* that his former pupil, ‘Prince Lomvazi and party under the charge of Mr A. G. Marwick A.C., [of] Mbabane [had] passed through Johannesburg [recently] on their way to Lovedale to inspect the

¹ ‘Mr Msane and Native Congress’, *Ilanga* 14:668 (24 March 1916) 5.

² Limb, ‘Secrecy, Solidarity, and Survival’ (online).

³ Starfield, ‘Not Quite History’, 16.

Institution prior to sending the child Bhuza thither for his education'.¹ On 20 January 1916, Grendon takes up this story once again: 'The Child, (Bhuza) Paramount Chief of the ema Swazi will shortly proceed to Lovedale where he will prosecute his studies. He is to be accompanied by a number of Swazi youths, three of whom are girls.'²

On 18 February, *Ilanga* published a Zulu-language report taken from *Abantu-Batho* to the effect that Sobhuza and his entourage had arrived at Johannesburg's Park Station, where he was received by Cleopas Kunene. It was also reported that the prince was accompanied by Swaziland's Resident Commissioner, de Symons Honey, and by Major Gilson, Swaziland's chief of police. Sobhuza's uncle Lomvazi had already inspected Lovedale to ascertain its suitability and safety. He had been accompanied by Mr A. G. Marwick, a white official trusted by the Swazi. In consequence, *Abantu-Batho* states, there is good reason to hope that the prince will be well protected at Lovedale.

The writer opposes Swaziland's incorporation into the Union of South Africa. Should that eventuality befall Swaziland, Sobhuza will become a chief in name only. He will be stripped of his royalty, and it will be given to the Native Commissioner. The Imperial Government is called upon to witness that Swaziland's highest-ranking white officials have paved the way for Sobhuza's education in the Union; they have also attended upon Sobhuza when he travelled to Johannesburg. They thus honour him in a manner that would be unthinkable for Union Government officials.³

In an English editorial, Grendon reports that Sobhuza and other Swazi chiefs have been received by Lord and Lady Buxton at the Villa Arcadia, where the High Commissioner gave assurances of Sobhuza's future safety at Lovedale, presented him with a bicycle, and offered advice about his education and future role as paramount chief of the Swazi. Grendon adds:

We are thankful to His Excellency for the words of kindly admonition to the young Chieftain and we trust that he will heed them as a wise son heeds the counsel of his father. Seven years

¹ *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5, reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*. Grendon also refers to Sobhuza as 'the Child' in a later editorial ('Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916)), as well as in correspondence with Labotsibeni (SwNA, RCS 333/19: Grendon to Labotsibeni, 19 April 1919).

² 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

³ 'Ukuhlonishwa Komtane'nkosi eSwazini', *Ilanga* 14:663 (18 Feb. 1916) 3, reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*.

agone this child, then only nine years of age was similarly advised by Lord Selborne, who urged him to learn all he could whilst at school. The Child it must be admitted clove fast to his books; and now having drunk all the knowledge that could be drunk at Lobamba School, he passes out into the world to meet with people other than Swazis, and to adapt himself to manners and habits other than those of Swaziland. He will view life at Lovedale in another light. There he will meet with both friend and foe, and be put to tests severe by the latter. Some of these tests he will have experienced by now. There he will have to forget his 'purple' for a while, in order to strive in the race for 'knowledge', which will neither know nor favour 'royalty' save when it buckles perseverance to its task.¹

Grendon speaks as one who has personally watched 'the Child' mature. He knows that Labotsibeni had *him* in mind as Sobhuza's tutor when Lord Selborne paid his first visit to Swaziland late in 1906. On that occasion, the High Commissioner had promised the Queen Regent that he would build her a proper school especially for the training of her grandson and that he would ensure that it was appropriately staffed.² Grendon was thrust aside as unsuitable, in favour of Joseph James Xaba—the 'reliable' product of Lovedale.

Grendon's aim in offering humble thanks to the High Commissioner is transparent to anyone who knows his views on the superiority of direct Imperial rule over colonial rule. In 1906, an Order-in-Council was written by which Swaziland was stripped from the Transvaal Colony and placed directly under the High Commissioner.³ Grendon points out that two High Commissioners—first Lord Selborne and now Lord Buxton—have showered beneficence and fatherly concern upon Swaziland's future *Ngwenyama*. Such kindly influence is welcome. The alternative is rule by the vicious Botha-Smuts Government—architect of the Natives Land Act. The Union's native policy stands in stark contrast to that of the King's own representative in South Africa. Swaziland appreciates rule from London; it does not want Pretoria's harsh rule.

Boarding school is a great leveller. At Zonnebloem, Grendon fraternized with the sons of chiefs. Sobhuza will discover at Lovedale that Dlamini ancestry avails nothing when it comes to passing examinations. He will have to apply himself diligently like every other scholar, and forgo his 'purple' for the time being. Here, Grendon repeats a

¹ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916), reprinted from the *Star* (8 Feb. 1916).

² 'His Excellency: Final Indaba', *Times of Swazieland* 6:17 (22 Sept. 1906) 3.

³ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 39.

concern he expressed earlier while still in Swaziland. He discerned that educated Swazi commoners met the challenges of the new colonial order with greater readiness than those who hugged Labotsibeni's shadow. He anticipated a time when 'the commoner will verily have climbed to the top and the royal-blooded swain—he that was born in *the purple*—will be found slumbering at the root of the tree. In that day the commoner will be master of the situation, and he that was born in *the purple* will have woken to find himself a helot—a mere serf.'¹ Grendon's point is that if the Swazi royal circle wishes to survive and to preserve its privileges intact, it will have to modernize. Sobhuza's sojourn at Lovedale will go a long way towards achieving that goal.

Grendon now apostrophizes Sobhuza himself:

We wish you all success, Mona. You have striven hard in Swaziland.—

That thou might'st grasp the Lamp of Light,
Wherewith to shed vile tendencies.

Exert yourself to the very utmost at Lovedale. Drink there from every stream of knowledge that flows across your path! Spare none! Steal wherever and whenever you can from yonder big *izinkunzi*—*Nqatshana* (Rev. Jas Henderson), and *Lenaka* (Rev. J. Lennox), and from each and all of their *indunas*! Fill your sheaf with 'Lovedale arrows'—great and small—for use in days to come. Inspire the members of your company to do the same. Drink, Mona, drink the Light, so that when you return to Swaziland you may kindle a bon-fire on 'Indhlunkulu Rock' or 'Cakijane', that its rays may pierce the furthest corners of your country to enlighten your lethargic countrymen, who though amongst the first of Bantu tribes to hail that Light, in the days of Mneli (Rev. James Allison), are sad to say, amongst the last to grasp it.²

The two lines of verse are almost certainly Grendon's own. It is by acquiring education—and all of it that Lovedale can offer—that Sobhuza will be enabled to 'shed vile tendencies'. Grendon believes that advanced education counteracts 'vile tendencies'. In *Ilanga*, he appeals to 'You, Bantus' to 'seek education' in a context implying that violent crime and education are **mutually** incompatible.³ Like his uncle, Malunge, the youthful prince Sobhuza has also to wage Swedenborgian-style

¹ 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5 (emphasis added). Britannia wears a 'gorgeous purple robe' in *Paul Kruger's Dream* (Pt XIX, p. 53).

² 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

³ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.

temptation combat, in order to achieve the ‘higher planes of life and love’ to which Malunge aspired.¹

Grendon sees much that is ‘vile’ in a World that worships ‘Mammon’ and ‘Self’.² ‘Vile’ is an adjective of which he makes frequent use in his poetry. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, ‘vile’ qualifies such nouns as: ‘atrocities’, ‘deeds’, ‘enactments’, ‘foes’, ‘intent’, ‘sedition’, ‘seducers’, ‘serfdom’, ‘slander’, ‘threats’, ‘tidings’, ‘traffic’, ‘traitors’, and ‘wretch’. In ‘Pro Aliis Damnati’, it qualifies ‘air’, ‘assassins’, ‘beauty’, ‘belief’, ‘consort’, ‘conspirator’, ‘deed’, ‘devils’, ‘doctrine’, ‘dogs’, ‘entreaties’, ‘felons’, ‘intent’, ‘intriguings’, ‘love’, ‘musings’, ‘pleading’, ‘scenes’, ‘seducer’, ‘selves’, ‘soul’, ‘tempter’, ‘tones’, ‘traitress’, and ‘wretch’. Grendon ‘frankly admit[s] all that has been imputed as vile against the black man’ including ‘his atrocities, his cannibalism, and his wilful disrespect for the sanctity of human life’.³ Much of what is ‘vile’ is ‘inspired’—the evil influx of Hell. There are those humans who ‘further the vile intentions of Hell’,⁴ and those ‘inspired by vile affections’.⁵ Many of these associations are likely present in the ‘vile tendencies’ that Sobhuza is to ‘shed’ at Lovedale.

Grendon urges Sobhuza, when at Lovedale, to ‘drink ... from every stream of knowledge that flows across [his] path!’ He employs a similar metaphor in poetic address to Edendale, with its highly-regarded Native Training Institution. Edendale should ‘freely give’ to ‘all who thirst, and seek [its] Well | Of Knowledge’.⁶ The Rev. James Henderson, to whom Grendon refers, was the third Principal of Lovedale Institution, from 1906 until his death in 1930. Rev. John Lennox was a teacher and theological tutor at the College from 1892–1920, and acted as principal on occasion. He served as Chaplain with Native Contingent in France during the First World War.⁷

By way of correspondence, Swedenborg declares that ‘a “bow” signifies doctrine, and “arrows” or “darts” those things which are of doctrine’.⁸ Mounting up metaphors, Grendon also counsels Sobhuza to ‘fill [his] sheaf with ‘Lovedale arrows’—great and

¹ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

² ‘The Mission Native’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

³ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5.

⁵ ‘The Mission Native’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘A Second Warning to Edendale’, *Ilanga* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.

⁷ Shepherd, *Lovedale*, 155.

⁸ Swedenborg, *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 6421, see also n. 2686, and *True Christian Religion*, n. 86.

small—for use in days to come’. He should also ‘inspire’ the other young Swazi scholars in his party to do the same. Grendon employs precisely the same metaphor in an *Ilanga* editorial of 1904, in which he appeals to black parents to spare no expense in procuring an education for their children:

The best man is he who goes into the struggle with his quiver full of arrows for when he has spent one of his shafts of his shafts there yet remain others wherewith to continue the fight; but he who goes to battle with one arrow to his bow will fall a victim to his adversaries when that single shaft has been spent. In clear language, he who has a knowledge of different subjects and arts is better than he who boasts of only one; for when the former fails in any one of his trades or professions, he can rely on another but the latter, when he fails in the single talent that he possesses, must, unless Heaven be on his side assuredly go to the wall, and rue the fact that he had equipped himself with only a single weapon.¹

Grendon had pinned his hopes upon Malunge for Swaziland’s ‘grasp[ing] the Light’ of the African New Jerusalem. With Malunge out of the way, Sobhuza became his focus of concern. He predicts that Lovedale will equip Sobhuza upon his return to Swaziland to ‘kindle a bon-fire on “Indhlunkulu Rock” or “Cakijane”, that its rays may pierce the furthest corners of your country’. Earlier, in Natal, Grendon had predicted that when Africans take charge of their own education, ‘then we shall see such a candle lighted in the land, as will astound those who are responsible for the spark’.² In each case, Grendon appears to make an echo allusion to the words of the Oxford martyr Hugh Latimer to Nicholas Ridley as they were about to be burnt at the stake in 1555. Anticipating how the ‘light’ of Reformation Christianity would spread through all the realm as a result of their martyrdom, Latimer is reported to have said: ‘We shall this day light such a candle, by God’s grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.’³ A ‘bon-fire’ on Chakijane mountain also recalls an actual fire that arose on that mountain one night in 1910 and which swept across the veld, razing Zombodze royal kraal to the ground. It made an indelible impression upon Sobhuza when he was a boy. Rumours abounded as to who had started it.⁴

¹ ‘Educate Your Children!’ *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4. Curiously, Pixley Seme, in his prize oration, ‘The Regeneration of Africa’ (1906), employs a similar arrows-education simile. African students are to be found ‘in Edinburgh, Cambridge, and in the great schools of Germany. These return to their country like arrows, to drive darkness from the land.’

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4.

³ Foxe, *Book of Martyrs*, 309.

⁴ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 46.

James Allison was the first Christian missionary to the Swazi. ‘That Light’ which most of the Swazi failed to accept from him in the 1840s, and which they continued to reject in the decades since, is the light of the New Jerusalem, which has shone since its ‘descent’ commenced in 1757. It is that ‘flood of oratorical light with all its penetrating, and convincing power’ that ‘flashed upon, within, and around’ the ‘Ethiopian’ back then, and since that time.¹ It is the ‘revelation’ that Swedenborg divined in inner Africa and which was then ‘spreading round about from the region where it began’; a ‘new gospel [that would] be extended into the surrounding regions’.² This same revelation promotes the incoming African ‘civilization of a peculiar stamp’ that Swedenborgian Kinmont predicts, whom Grendon quotes—a civilization that will be ‘a reflection of the light of heaven’.³

Sobhuza, and the Swazi in general, need to ‘drink the Light’, to ‘hail’ it, and to ‘grasp’ it, according to Grendon’s stylized admonitory address to the young prince. Already in 1915, Grendon observes a quickening spirit among the acculturated black population of Mbabane, where some are ‘rising to grasp the Light’.⁴ Earlier, writing from Natal, he observes ‘amongst the natives of these regions [that] this “quickeningspirit” is clearly visible’, and ‘its foundation is seen in the general movement for education’.⁵ Education of the right sort—a liberal education in liberal quantities, does not merely satisfy the intellect, Grendon writes, but ‘purifies’ the soul—the ‘internal man’.⁶



Cleopas Kunene had edited *Abantu-Batho* from 1912 until late 1915. Then he was replaced by Grendon for a few months until mid-1916, after which Grendon was removed amidst much acrimony, and Kunene again became editor of the paper.⁷ In Natal, they had been friends; by 1916, they had become implacable enemies. It is unclear at what point their relationship soured, but the circumstances point to a rivalry for *Abantu-Batho*’s editorship and for influence over the Swazi royal family.

¹ ‘Slavery or Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:50 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.

² Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 840.

³ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

⁴ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁵ ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.

⁶ ‘Missionary Conference’, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3.

⁷ ‘Ezase Jozi’, *Ilanga* 14:682 (14 July 1916) 5; ‘Ezase Jozi’, *Ilanga* 14:684 (28 July 1916) 2; Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 78.

Peter Limb describes Kunene as ‘more moderate’ than Grendon¹—an impression that seems confirmed by Selby Msimang’s description of Grendon as ‘very radical’ and ‘inclined to be leftist’.² The ISL’s Sidney Bunting tried to convert Msimang to communism, but Msimang ‘never even thought’ of it, and replied: ‘Mr Bunting, I can never accept communism for one particular reason that I will never have the right of owning land in my own land, have a home for myself.’³ The accumulation of property meant a great deal to men like Msimang and Kunene, both of them descendants of Edendale’s first settlers, for whom freehold property and the accoutrements of ‘civilized’ attainment were cherished markers along the road of ‘progress’. Surviving records suggests that Kunene found it hard to live without money—and lots of it.

Cleopas Kunene, an ethnic Swazi, was born at Edendale in 1866, the son of Cornelius and Esther Ndhlovu Kunene. Cornelius was of Edendale’s Swazi community.⁴ Like Saul Msane, Cleopas attended the Healdtown Institution in the Cape Colony.⁵ In 1884, he obtained the Cape Colony’s ‘Elementary Teachers’ Certificate’⁶ and in 1889, he applied to the Natal Government for exemption from the operation of its ‘Native Law’ Code.⁷ He worked as an interpreter and clerk in the Natal Civil Service during the early 1890s, but was fired for alleged embezzlement.⁸ It was likely while in civil service that he married Rebecca Mapumula at Verulam.⁹

In 1894—the year in which he first visited Swaziland—he hired himself as an interpreter to the Swazi deputation that went to London to protest against Britain’s preparedness to resign Swaziland’s administration to the Transvaal Republic. Kunene later complained that the Swazi royal family still owed him ‘several hundreds of pounds’ for services he had rendered them on that occasion.¹⁰

He continued to shadow the Swazi royal circle even after the 1894 delegation. As Lowe points out, Kunene’s actions at about this time suggest some elasticity in his

¹ Limb, ‘Representing the Labouring Classes’, 93n.

² Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 77.

³ Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, p. 121.

⁴ TAB, MHG 31992; Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 332.

⁵ ‘Healdtown Institution’, *Izwe la Kiti* 1:12 (11 Dec. 1912) 5.

⁶ Cape, *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for 1884*, 182.

⁷ NAB, SNA I/1/112, ref. 1889/52.

⁸ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 332; NAB, SNA I/1/112, ref. 1889/42; NAB, CSO 2571, refs. C30/1893, C50/1893, C50A/1893, C50D/1893, C51/1893.

⁹ TAB, MHG 31992.

¹⁰ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 332; *Inkanyiso* (1 Feb. 1895) 3; (22 May 1896) 3.

principles because, after having supported the deputation opposing Transvaal administration of Swaziland, he went on to sell his services to that very administration.¹ It was rumoured that, in consideration of a bribe from the Transvaal, he and Alpheus Jasper Nkosi had persuaded the Queen-Regent to accept a less-than-equitable settlement to a ‘longstanding financial dispute’ with white concessionaires.² In March 1897, Kunene became a clerk in service to the Transvaal Republic’s administration of Swaziland. He used his influence to persuade the Queen-Regent to yield to Transvaal hegemony.³ Just prior to the outbreak of the South African War, he appears to have offered his services once again to the Boer Government,⁴ although when the War broke out, he opted instead to serve the British Army as an interpreter and scout.⁵

By early 1904, he was editing *Ipepa lo Hlanga* in Pietermaritzburg. Probably on account of his newspaper work, Kunene enjoyed wide recognition in African intellectual circles. In October 1903, an article in *Koranta ea Becoana* suggested that the all-white South African Native Affairs Commission would have enjoyed ‘more confidence’ if ‘some prominent Natives’ had sat on it—and Kunene is the one Natalian whose name is put forward by the writer.⁶

On 29 April 1904, Dyer D. Macebo, Government Civil Interpreter of Swaziland, wrote a strongly-worded letter in Zulu to *Ilanga*, in which he accuses Kunene of having entered Swaziland illegally, and of being one of those people who feign sympathy for country, but who are quite incapable of rendering it real service. If the truth be known, the sole desire of such people is to skim off Swazi wealth.⁷ Kunene had recently persuaded Labotsibeni to accept a white speculator’s services as ‘adviser and agent to the Swazi Nation’.⁸

Macebo’s representation of Kunene and his money-grubbing white principal resembles Grendon’s of ‘the average Swazi’, who is ‘like a “tick” [that is] content to

¹ Lowe, ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, 23.

² Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 332, 400–01, 459.

³ Lowe, ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, 25.

⁴ SwNA J 262/02, quoted in: Lowe, ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, 25.

⁵ NAB, CSO 1762, ref. 1904/4392.

⁶ ‘The Inter-Colonial Commission’, *Koranta ea Becoana* 61 (21 Oct. 1903) 5.

⁷ *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 2–3; ‘African Progress in Swaziland 1908–1948’, *Times of Swaziland* 26:38 (18 Aug. 1949) 4.

⁸ Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 402.

“skin” whatever unwary host he has been fortunate enough to alight upon; and when he has “sucked” up the last drop of blood by seeing the last penny pass from his victim’s purse, ... has relaxed his hold, turned to desert and renounce his benefactor, abuse his generosity, and hunt after other victims, whom he might similarly “sponge” upon’.¹ Perhaps Grendon fell out with Kunene—his ‘old friend’²—when he began to share Macebo’s view of the man.

Around 1910, Kunene became Secretary to the South African Native Convention—a forerunner of the South African Native National Congress.³ Early on in the history of the SANNC, Kunene campaigned to have its name changed to ‘Imbizo Yabantu’ (‘Bantu Congress’), in which proposal he was supported by Sol T. Plaatje. At the time, Plaatje’s newspaper referred to Kunene as ‘without doubt the greatest native penman South Africa ever produced’.⁴ (Coming from the quarter that it did, this was high praise indeed!) Plaatje’s paper later describes Kunene as a man of ‘exceptional abilities and Christian character’.⁵

It seems likely that Kunene was editor-in-chief of *Abantu-Batho* from its inception, or shortly afterwards.⁶ The Switzers identify him as the first editor of the English, isiZulu, and isiXhosa columns, and Daniel S. Letanka as first editor of the Sesotho and Tswana columns.⁷ He remained English and isiZulu editor until at least June 1915.⁸

Early in December 1915, the Resident Commissioner of Swaziland wired Kunene, asking that he meet the Swazi chiefs who were travelling by train to inspect Lovedale, preparatory to Sobhuza’s being sent there. Kunene was asked to arrange for their

¹ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

² ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.

³ Lowe, ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, 19.

⁴ ‘S. A. Native Congress: The Constitution Drawn Up: Name, Aims and Objects’, *Tsala ea Becoana* 2:77 (17 Feb. 1912) 3; Meli, *History of the ANC*, 39.

⁵ ‘Native Papers and Missionaries’, *Tsala ea Batho* 4:162 (21 March 1914) 4.

⁶ ‘Ezixoxa ngabantu’, *Izwe la Kiti* 1:6 (30 Oct. 1912) 3. Pixley Seme told James Stuart in 1924 that he had appointed Kunene as editor of *Abantu-Batho*, presumably at the time of its inception (Webb and Wright, *James Stuart Archive*, v: 269).

⁷ Switzer and Switzer, *The Black Press*, 25.

⁸ Lowe, ‘*Abantu-Batho* and the South African Native National Congress in the 1910s’. In November 1913, he is shown as editor of *Abantu-Batho* (‘Izinto Nabantu’, *Izwe la Kiti* 2:60 (12 Nov. 1913) 3). In March 1914, he is named along with C. S. Mabaso and D. S. Letanka as an editor of the paper (‘Ezi Xoxa Ngabantu’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:78 (18 March 1914) 3). And in August 1914, he is identified as ‘Editor “Abantu-Batho”’, while D. S. Letanka is described as ‘Sub-Editor “Abantu-Batho”’ (‘US. A. N. N. Congress eJohannesburg’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:100 (19 Aug. 1914) 2).

‘reasonable accommodation’ while they were in Johannesburg.¹ When Sobhuza passed through Johannesburg early in 1916, *en route* to Lovedale, Kunene was again instructed by the administration in Mbabane to receive his entourage. He chose to interpret his official brief in the most liberal terms, and staged a lavish entertainment in Sophiatown.² In all, Kunene incurred on behalf of the Swaziland administration expenses totalling £93.3.0.³

Taking full advantage of his editorial privileges, Grendon reports scathingly upon Kunene’s reception, accusing the host of cultural ineptitude and superficiality in his handling of the entertainment for Sobhuza. *Abantu-Batho* of 17 February carried the report:

The following is a specimen (*ex-parte*) of an Invitation Card that has fallen into our hands:—

‘Mr C. Kunene of Sophiatown, requests the pleasure of the company of
..... at the Concert and Dance at St Athanasius Hall, Sophiatown,
on Friday, 4th Feb. 1916, at 10 p.m., to be given in honour of Prince
Sobhuza, Paramount Chief of the Swazi Nation.’

With regard to the above function we learn that the Concert portion was rendered to the satisfaction of those who were present. In this portion the guest of the evening took a part together with his youthful retinue. With regard to the Dance we must confess that we are not at all satisfied. The host was certainly possessed and overwhelmed by the spirit of forgetfulness when he added this item to his programme, seeing that his guest was unable—through inexperience—to participate therein. This verily was a stupid way of introducing for the first time—to the various Sophiatown sections of the Bantu Race,—this child who is destined to be a ruler of men. Both he and his corpulent uncle were as fish washed up on dry land—thus clearly not at their ease during this portion of the evening’s proceedings; so that with the exception of Chief Josiah Vilakazi, who is no stranger to the dancer’s art, none of the young Chieftain’s company can be truly said to have enjoyed themselves with this portion of the programme.

The function is past and over. We regret that the invitation brought to Bhuza’s presence people of the lighter vein, and kept away the weightier members of the Bantu Race—men who would have exchanged with him views on current events, etc., etc., which to him would have

¹ SwNA, RCS 222/1915: Resident Commissioner to Cleopas Kunene, 3 Dec. 1915.

² ‘Ukuhlonishwa Komtane’nkosi eSwazini’, *Ilanga* 14:663 (18 Feb. 1916) 3, reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*; Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 332; Macmillan, ‘A Nation Divided?’ 295. ‘Mr Mabaso’ who telephoned Kunene’s instructions to him, is possibly Cleopas S. Mabaso, *Abantu-Batho*’s business manager.

³ SwNA, RCS 222/1915: Secretary, Native Recruiting Corporation, Johannesburg, to Acting Resident Commissioner, 21 Feb. 1916. Lowe (‘Tragedy of Malunge’) has commented extensively on this episode.

been of more importance than idle gazings upon couples 'wheeling round in fairy rings'. For our own part we should have liked to see the Dance replaced by some other function more in keeping with the tastes of the royal guest.¹

Kunene likely realized that he had allowed himself to get carried away, and so he wrote the Resident Commissioner, de Symons Honey, in an attempt to pre-empt his protest at Kunene's lavish expenditure:

You will perhaps be astonished at the enormity of expenses incurred. But the occasion having been the first appearance of the future Paramount Chief of the Swazi nation in this great industrial city, I thought it quite befitting his position and dignity to make the most of his short sojourn here. ... The account has been very much swelled by arrangements at the Reception in St Athanasius Hall. I could think of nothing to please him and his followers more.²

When the expenses that Kunene had incurred in discharging his commission were presented to the Swaziland Administration for settlement, the Resident Commissioner was none too pleased. Kunene was called upon to explain how he could have interpreted his mandate to include a public reception and the extraordinarily high cab fares.³ He wrote an obsequious letter of apology, the tone of which opens a window to his soul:

I took the occasion to be most important as it afforded an opportunity to introduce the future Paramount Chief of the Swazi people to the various members of the other native tribes Johannesburg draws together. Of course, officially, the Act[ing] Resident Commissioner may take strong exception to my action. But I wish to explain that as a Swazi I could view Sobhuza in no other light than that of my chief—young as he is—to whom I should give the greatest honour. I may have been over-enthusiastic; I grant that. But when a wave of enthusiasm envelopes a man he sometimes loses equanimity and almost exceeds proper bounds in what he does, only to regret it (as I do) afterwards. ... I am, I repeat, very sorry that I in any way exceeded my instructions in what I did, and can only say that it was altogether unintentional. May I beg the Resident Commissioner to take a lenient view and not to be too cross with me? I did not mean to be reckless.⁴

Honey was evidently mollified by this abject apology, because in presenting an account of the expenses to the High Commissioner, he mitigates Kunene's culpability: 'For a Native Kunene's attitude was not unreasonable in the circumstances, and there

¹ 'Notes and Comments', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

² SwNA, RCS 222/1915: Cleopas Kunene, Sophiatown, to Resident Commissioner, 15 Feb. 1916.

³ SwNA, RCS 222/1915: T. A. Steward (Government Secretary) to Cleopas Kunene, 11 March 1916.

⁴ SwNA, RCS 222/1915: Cleopas Kunene to Government Secretary, 23 March 1916.

is nothing to shew that he benefited personally, beyond the sense of authority and importance derived from the occasion.’¹

Kunene’s reference to the ‘opportunity to introduce the future Paramount Chief of the Swazi people to the various members of other native tribes Johannesburg draws together’ seems to echo Grendon’s *Abantu-Batho* report, in which he brands Kunene’s reception as ‘a stupid way of introducing for the first time—to the various Sophiatown sections of the Bantu Race,—this child who is destined to be a ruler of men’.

Grendon states that Kunene’s printed invitation card has ‘fallen into [his] hands’—by which he implies that Kunene has intentionally denied him an invitation. This can only have been an intentional snub on Kunene’s part, since Grendon was well-known to Sobhuza and to the Swazi royals. He would probably have had no difficulty in attending Sophiatown reception, had he been invited.

If Grendon’s references to the ‘various Sophiatown sections of the Bantu Race’ and to Kunene’s ‘fairy rings’ are anything by which to gauge, then Sophiatown had already acquired something of the reputation it would later enjoy for heady cosmopolitanism, music, and lavish entertainment. *Ilanga* reports in 1916 that prominent blacks such as Cleopas Kunene, and the lawyers Alfred Mangena and Pixley Seme, as well as other wealthy Sotho and Xhosa men, were purchasing houses in bustling Sophiatown.² During the Great War, Kunene lived, with his wife and daughter, at Stand 1451, Gerty Street, Sophiatown.³

Sophiatown had its origin in 1897 when a land speculator bought 237 acres of land 4½ miles west of central Johannesburg. He subsequently subdivided this into plots, which he sold as freehold to all comers, regardless of race. The suburb acquired a mixed-race character, but became increasingly black with the passing years. In time it became part of the ‘largest suburban black residential area in South Africa’. When Grendon knew it, *circa* 1915–16, it still had a fair proportion of white householders,

¹ SwNA, RCS 222/1915: D. Honey (Acting Resident Commissioner) to High Commissioner, 20 April 1916.

² ‘Ezase Goli’, *Ilanga* 14:667 (17 March 1916) 2.

³ TAB, DNL 362/14/D80; TAB, MHG 31992.

although they were in the minority.¹ In 1918, the coloured politician, R. Talbot-Williams spoke proudly of the fact that ‘during the last three years, ... the coloured man ha[d] become a property owner ... [and] filled three large townships (New Clare, Sophiatown and Alexander Township) with substantial buildings, absolutely his own property’.² It may have been around the time of the First World War that Grendon taught school in Sophiatown, according to his daughter Kuku’s recollection.³

Music was an important part of the lives of Cleopas and Rebecca⁴ Kunene. As early as 1903, Rebecca performed in the ‘Edendale native choir’ in Pietermaritzburg.⁵ Early in 1917, she and her daughter Gertie both sang in a concert held at Sophiatown.⁶ Grendon was not unmusical, and he reports that by all accounts the ‘Concert portion [of the reception for Sobhuza] was rendered to the satisfaction of those who were present’. But he had no time for frippery, or for ‘the bubbling things of transitory cheer’.⁷ There are indications that he was never entirely comfortable living in the city that Kruger calls ‘gay Chrysopolis’⁸—City of Gold—in *Paul Kruger’s Dream*. Embodied in the name is Grendon’s detestation of ‘Mammonism’⁹ and ‘glitt’ring gold’.¹⁰ These were direful times. *Abantu*’s birthright—the soil beneath their feet—was rapidly becoming the possession of aliens. And all Cleopas Kunene could think to do was to introduce royal-blooded Sobhuza to ‘people of the lighter vein’ and to regale his guest with the spectacle of ‘couples “wheeling round in fairy rings”’.

Kunene did not take Grendon’s insults lying down. One week after Grendon had labelled him ‘stupid’ in the very paper he had helped found, Kunene wrote to Swaziland’s Resident Commissioner, Honey, accusing Grendon of sedition, and citing in evidence Grendon’s verses, ‘To Thee Sobhuza’, which Kunene enclosed. Pointedly, Kunene clips from *Abantu-Batho* not just the poem, but also Grendon’s criticism of Kunene’s social ineptitude as Sobhuza’s host in Sophiatown. Perhaps

¹ Goodhew, *Respectability and Resistance*, 2–3; Coplan, *In Township Tonight!* 143; Maylam, *History of the African People of South Africa*, 150; Bernard Magubane, in: Mattera, *Sophiatown*, xi–xi.

² Talbot-Williams, *White Trade Unionism*, 4.

³ Interview: Aurora Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008; Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 77.

⁴ Rebecca’s name is given in papers relating to Cleopas’s deceased estate (TAB, MHG, ref. 31992).

⁵ ‘Native Choir Concert’, *Natal Witness* (30 June 1903) 6.

⁶ ‘Ezase Goli’, *Ilanga* 15:715 (2 March 1917) 2. For a further reference to Mrs Kunene, see: *Izwe la Kiti* 1:4 (16 Oct. 1912) 3.

⁷ ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁸ *PKD*, Pt XV, p. 44.

⁹ ‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4.

¹⁰ ‘M&P’, Pt XXII, *Citizen*, 2:78 (3 Dec. 1898) 3; *PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 38; ‘PAD’, Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

Kunene meant this as a subliminal plea to Honey not to take too harsh a view of his prodigality: after all, Grendon has already pilloried him mercilessly for it in the public press. Kunene's covering letter to Honey reads as follows:

Permit me to draw your attention to the poem appearing in last week's issue (17th Feby) of the native paper 'Abantu-Batho' English columns. I consider the whole poem libellous on the Swazi nation. Witchcraft has ever been regarded as one of the things that impede progress among the native races, and if utterances implying witchcraft are allowed in the press to go unchallenged there is no knowing how far it will poison the public mind against any particular community. In this case there is certainly a grave reflection on those responsible for the good behaviour of the Swazis. Don't you think, sir, there is ground for taking steps and calling upon the individual responsible for the production of that poem to prove the serious charges he makes as regards the death of late Chief Malunge? The whole language seems to me seditious.¹

Honey replied through his secretary that it was unlikely that anyone would take Grendon's poem too seriously. All the same, he informed the High Commissioner of Grendon's poem, and of Kunene's professed alarm at its seditious content.²

On the face of things, there isn't much in 'To Thee Sobhuza' that might be construed as seditious. Perhaps Kunene hoped that the British administration would take note of the fact that the poet expected that, on attaining his majority, Sobhuza would 'reign ... a full-fledg'd King' upon 'The throne of Ngwaneland'. The British were prepared to recognize Sobhuza's paramountcy, but they would not have been prepared to acknowledge a 'full-fledg'd King' within an Empire that already had its own supreme monarch.³ Grendon's poem also implies that Malunge died an unnatural death, and that 'Protection such as white men give' had failed him.



Somewhere near the start of July 1916, Msane and Grendon were expelled from their posts at *Abantu-Batho*, and it was reported that Kunene would now return to take up

¹ SwNA, RCS 124/16: Cleopas Kunene, Sophiatown, to Acting Resident Commissioner, 24 Feb. 1916. I am grateful to Chris Lowe ('Tragedy of Malunge', 36; *Abantu-Batho* and the South African Native National Congress in the 1910s') for drawing my attention to this file in the Swaziland National Archives.

² SwNA, RCS 124/16: Viscount Buxton, High Commissioner, to Acting Resident Commissioner, 23 March 1916.

³ As Dyer Macebo writes in a Zulu-language letter to *Ilanga* in 1904: 'Here in Swaziland there is no longer a black king; there's only one, a white king in the whole of South Africa, he is King Edward' (*Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 2–3).

the post of editor once again.¹ During July, Kunene visited Swaziland, likely on business related to the paper.² He also visited Natal, possibly on behalf of *Abantu-Batho*, but possibly also in his capacity as Chairman of the Natal Native Teachers' Association.³

We do not know the reason for Grendon and Msane's dismissal from *Abantu-Batho*, but it likely revolved around the feud between Dube and Msane over mismanagement of the Land Act delegation fund. It would seem that, as editor-in-chief, Grendon was unwilling to lay the matter to rest, and had therefore to be silenced by those who either had something to hide or sincerely believed that the scandal did the SANNC more harm than good. If this conjecture is correct, then Msane had the last laugh when his rival Dube was ousted from the SANNC presidency a few months later.

It is also possible that Grendon's much-publicized fraternization with the International Socialist League may have attracted to *Abantu-Batho* the sort of attention that more conservative members of the SANNC found embarrassing.⁴ This was wartime; patriotic feeling ran high, and the 'antiwarite' ISL was loved by few. Shortly before Grendon was displaced from the editor's chair, he had lectured an ISL meeting attended by whites and blacks. As Lionel Forman remarks, 'the Grendon meeting was roundly condemned in the daily papers. One Labour Party MPC called for the deportation of the socialists for telling the Africans to organise.'⁵ This was not the sort of publicity courted by those SANNC leaders who were anxious to project a 'loyalist' image.

Not to be overlooked as a possible contributory factor to Grendon's dismissal is his almost constitutional knack of making enemies. This propensity was particularly hazardous in the close-knit and interrelated community of black intellectuals who were associated with *Abantu-Batho*. An example serves to illustrate just how interconnected were the ties that bound this community together.

¹ 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:682 (14 July 1916) 5.

² 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:684 (28 July 1916) 2.

³ 'What Became of the Teachers' Conference?' *Izwe la Kiti* 3:75 (25 Feb. 1914) 5.

⁴ 'Loyal Natives Surprised: War-on-Warites and Kitchener', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916) 1st ed., 4; 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6; 'Notes and Comments: "Black and White"', *Star* 6792 (12 June 1916) 1st ed., 4.

⁵ Forman, *Chapters in the History of the March to Freedom*, 29. For more on the 'Grendon meeting', see below.

Cleopas S. Mabaso (or, Mvabaso), an uncle to Richard and Selby Msimang, was business manager of *Abantu-Batho* from its inception until well into the 1920s. He had been a teacher at Makhosini mission in Swaziland until 1903, where he taught his nephews. Selby Msimang claimed that his uncle played an important part in his ‘political development’ and that they ‘had almost everything in common’.¹ It seems likely that Grendon’s ex-pupil, Titus Maseko, who was teaching at Makhosini in 1904, replaced Mabaso there.²

When Couzens interviewed an elderly Selby Msimang in the 1970s, he recalled that during the 1910s, he often met up with Grendon in Johannesburg, and that he ‘used to criticize [Msimang’s] writings’.³ In two letters published in November 1915, Grendon reprimands Msimang for double standards and for racial bigotry towards coloureds.⁴ The letters both carry the same headline, ‘Thou Art the Man!’—which is a reference to the prophet Nathan’s words when he exposed King David’s adultery and hypocrisy.⁵

In the first of his letters, Grendon quotes a report by Msimang published in *Abantu-Batho* in December 1913, in which he expresses himself ‘in sympathy with segregation’ because by means of it ‘we can stop the increase of bastards in this fatherland’.⁶ As Hilda Kuper points out, the Swazi were apt to call people of mixed-race, ‘*Emabasitela* (bastards) and many a Coloured man, woman and child in Swaziland bitterly appreciates its European origin’.⁷ Msimang was playing to this prejudice, and he deserved all that he got from Grendon.

Grendon’s attack on Msimang may have been justified, but it was also dangerous, in that Msimang was not the only influential black African to hold racist views *vis-à-vis* coloureds.⁸ Msimang produced a significant amount of copy for *Abantu-Batho*, and Lowe suspects that he was editing the English columns by about a year after

¹ *Tsala ea Batho* 4:131 (5 July 1913) 5; Msimang Papers, PC 14/1/2/2, pp. 1–2, 5.

² ‘Isangoma’, ‘Ezase Swazini’, *Ilanga* 2:68 (29 July 1904) 3.

³ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 77.

⁴ ‘Thou Art the Man!’ *Ilanga* 13:648 (5 Nov. 1915) 5; ‘Thou Art the Man!’ *Ilanga* 13:650 (19 Nov. 1915) 5.

⁵ 2 Sam. 12:7.

⁶ *Abantu-Batho*, 18 Dec. 1913, quoted in: ‘Thou Art the Man!’ *Ilanga* 13:648 (5 Nov. 1915) 5.

⁷ Kuper, *Uniform of Colour*, 46.

⁸ As pointed out in chapter 7, even Dube stood charged with expressing such anti-coloured sentiments (‘Inexcusable Race Reflections’, *Izwi Labantu* 42:43 (sic) (6 Feb. 1906) 2).

Grendon's departure.¹ What was more, Msimang's admired uncle, Cleopas Mabaso would likely have taken his nephew's part, and may also have pressed for Grendon's dismissal.



The Union of South Africa came to birth in 1910. It was conceived by whites, for the benefit of whites. Most of its leaders were resolved not to admit black Africans to full citizenship of their new state, and they promptly set about implementing a policy of segregating the races territorially. Act No. 27 of 1913—better known as the Natives' Land Act—took effect on 19 June 1913. According to its provisions, black Africans were granted exclusive occupation in areas totalling just 7.3% of South Africa's land surface. They were debarred from purchasing land outside these areas.²

Grendon knew what he was seeing. In the *Dream* (1902), Grendon's Kruger confesses that his people 'from its true owners wrench'd this land',³ and a spectral van Riebeeck rises up at Paardekraal (near Krugersdorp) on the eve of the South African War to remind the Boer commandos assembled there: 'These lands we stole!'⁴ For Grendon, the Land Act of 1913 was the culmination of centuries of white land-theft and oppression.

In December 1915, Grendon expressed the view of everyone in the SANNC when he listed the Natives' Land Act first among those 'abominations of abominations' afflicting South Africa.⁵ Had he described segregation *per se* as an 'abomination', however, not all Congress members would have agreed with him. Plaatje, for one, shared Grendon's view, and saw clearly that there could be no equitable segregation where it was prompted and overseen by one class and simply thrust upon another. Plaatje's paper, *Tsala ea Batho* expresses regret that Cleopas Kunene, then editor of

¹ Lowe, 'Abantu-Batho and the South African Native National Congress in the 1910s'.

² Willan, 'The Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society', 84.

³ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 2.

⁴ *PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 77.

⁵ 'Gen. Smuts Answered', *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5. Grendon also describes as an 'abomination' the policy of 'one system of education for the white, and another for the black' ('Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb.1916)).

Abantu-Batho, should believe ‘in the segregation myth—an impossibility from our point of view’.¹

Grendon’s belief in Swedenborg’s *Maximus Homo* could not be reconciled with strict racial segregation. This may be one of the reasons why he and Kunene fell out. Kunene believed in the desirability and workability of a policy of racial segregation for the future South Africa. Like Dube, he greatly admired Booker T. Washington, renowned for his accommodationist policy towards the racial prejudices of white Americans, and as author of the controversial Atlanta Compromise (1895). In 1903, Kunene applied to American publishers, Doubleday, Page & Company, for permission to translate Washington’s *Up From Slavery* (1901) into Zulu. He hoped by this means to improve the lot of his countrymen, the majority of whom were ‘still lolling and weltering in darkness and ignorance and poverty’.² In an essay (1909), Kunene expresses a view very like Washington’s: ‘Socially, black and white can and should remain apart, but politically they should occupy a common ground as long as the requirements of the law are satisfied.’³ He is prepared to accept that ‘Europeans in this country’ should constitute ‘the aristocratic class’⁴—a concession that Grendon would never be prepared to make.

If Kunene believed that a species of benign territorial segregation might be made to work in South Africa, it is probable that he promoted such a view during his editorship of *Abantu-Batho*, 1912–15, and 1916–17. As already noted, in December 1913, Selby Msimang stated that both he and *Abantu-Batho* are ‘in sympathy with segregation’.⁵ But Msimang vacillated in his advocacy of segregation, because two years later, in *Ilanga*, he wrote (rather incoherently):

It is all very well to speak of territorial segregation between the aliens and aborigines as being the only salvation for the Natives, and, to think that the Natives could improve better under these conditions than when living in close contact with the aliens or adventurers. Such an idea

¹ ‘Native Papers and Missionaries’, *Tsala ea Batho* 4:162 (21 March 1914) 4.

² ‘Literary and Trade Notes’, *Publishers Weekly* 1639 (27 June 1903), published online, *Guttertype* [website] <http://www.guttertype.com/2008_06_01_archive.html>, accessed 14 July 2008.

³ Cleopas Kunene, ‘No. I. Prize Essay on Mr. H. E. V. Pickstone’s Pamphlet’ (1909), in Pickstone, *Reply to Lord Selborne’s Questions*, 45

⁴ Cleopas Kunene, ‘No. I. Prize Essay on Mr. H. E. V. Pickstone’s Pamphlet’ (1909), in Pickstone, *Reply to Lord Selborne’s Questions*, 46.

⁵ Quoted by Grendon, in: ‘Thou Art the Man!’ *Ilanga* 13:648 (5 Nov. 1915) 5.

can be fostered by a coward or by one who would rather do murder than abandon the best for iniquity and veracity [sic].¹

Grendon draws Msimang's attention to the inconsistency of his two statements. His response to Msimang's equivocation on the question of segregation illustrates the extent to which black opinion was divided on this issue:

From a comparison of the two statements made by Mr Msimang it is clear that he has gone back on his word of two years ago. He thus stands convicted out of his own mouth. 'Such an idea (as segregation) can be fostered by a coward or by one who would rather do murder than abandon the best for iniquity &c.' If Mr Msimang has renounced his first statement he cannot fly away from himself. He has proved himself double-tongued. In relieving himself of that melancholy pessimism so characteristic of him, he has in his endeavour to stab others [*i.e.*, coloureds like Grendon] woefully stabbed himself. If he now renounces segregation, he was nevertheless its champion two years ago, and at that time he, by virtue of his latest utterance, was indeed the coward and the murderer. You have bitten your own tail old fellow! See thou do it not again.²



In September 1915, a small group of white proto-communists who opposed South Africa's involvement in the Great War separated from the South African Labour Party in order to form the International Socialist League (ISL)—precursor of the South African Communist Party.³ They issued their own paper, the *International*, which directed its readers to 'the urgency of ending the war ... and the need to organize black workers'.⁴ Viewed against the backdrop of wartime jingoism and white South Africa's perennial racism, one has to admire the courage of the ISL leadership in advocating an end to the War and fair treatment for black labourers. Men such as Ivor Jones and Sidney Bunting pointed out that white socialists would never achieve their objectives until they made common cause with black labourers.

Jones, for one, stated that if the ISL were to 'deal resolutely in consonance with Socialist principles with the native question, it [would] succeed in shaking South African Capitalism to its foundations'. Only then would it be possible to talk honestly

¹ H. Selby Msimang, 'The Natives' Land Act and its New Phase', 15 Oct. 1915, quoted by Grendon, in: 'Thou Art the Man!' *Ilanga* 13:648 (5 Nov. 1915) 5.

² 'Thou Art the Man!' *Ilanga* 13:648 (5 Nov. 1915) 5.

³ Hirson and Williams, *Delegate for Africa*, 146, 148.

⁴ Hirson and Williams, *Delegate for Africa*, 150.

‘about the South African proletariat in our International relations’.¹ This is essentially what Grendon writes in 1918: ‘The White Socialist is in principle a brother to the Black Socialist—despite their differences in outward skin.’²

Grendon’s assumption of *Abantu-Batho*’s editorship coincided more or less with the birth of the ISL. In a campaign to interest black Africans in its objectives, the ISL held open-air meetings in Johannesburg. One of these meetings held in September 1915, is described in the *International*:

On the Johannesburg Market Square last Sunday afternoon members of the League as usual held forth to an attentive little audience. Comrades Tom Ward and Ivon Jones were the speakers. ‘The International’ was sold, as well as other anti-militarist and Socialist literature. A feature of these meetings is the little knot of interested natives and coloured men always there. Some buy the ‘International’. Let who will sneer, nothing convinces us of the universality of our appeal so much as this. We shall never be on bedrock until we can command the attention of the dark skinned proletariat of South Africa.³

It seems likely that Grendon found himself from time to time a part of that ‘little knot’ of blacks who gathered to hear the alfresco lectures. Although he did not share the Internationalists’ opposition to the War, his interest in socialism was already mature by this time, if we go by his condemnation in 1904 of a ‘faithless and perverse generation of capitalists, whose thirst for gold is unquenchable, and whose schemes are always directed against giving labour its due reward’. He put industrial problems down to the failure of capitalists to ‘deal fairly and squarely with the Natives’ and to uphold ‘this naked truth—“*That the workman is worthy of his hire*”’.⁴

On the evening of 8 June 1916, an unprecedented meeting was held in Johannesburg’s New Trades Hall, under ISL auspices. As reported in the Press, ‘Mr Robert Grendon, the scholarly and cultured Swazi’, and ‘responsible editor of the native newspaper’, *Abantu-Batho*, delivered a lecture entitled ‘Links between the

¹ Hirson and Williams, *Delegate for Africa*, 151.

² ‘Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side’, *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5.

³ *International* 4 (1 Oct. 1915) 4.

⁴ ‘The Labour Problem’, *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4. Grendon quotes 1 Tim. 5:18. In *Paul Kruger’s Dream* (1902), capitalists are ‘the slaves of Lucre’ who gravitate toward South Africa at the conclusion of the South African War, ‘Like carrion-fowl returning to their prey’ (*PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133). In respect of the question of the ‘importation of Asiatics into the Transvaal’, Grendon asks: ‘What have the capitalists beyond their desire of gain to put forward in argument?’ (‘The Voice of a God’, *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4). He notes that ‘tyranny in labour seems to have reached a lofty pitch in the Transvaal’ (‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4), and finds ‘the thirst for gold [to be] paramount to all else’ in the Transvaal (‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4).

White and the Black'.¹ A few days prior to the event, the *International* billed it as being of revolutionary significance:

Next Thursday at the Trades Hall at 8 o'clock Mr Robert Grendon, the accomplished editor of 'Abantu Batho', the Johannesburg native newspaper, will be the lecturer, his subject being 'Links between Black and White'. So far as is known this is the first occasion in the Transvaal on which a native has addressed a white audience on a subject of this kind, and as Mr Grendon has expressed a keen interest in the work of 'The International' his views on the major race problem of Africa and its connection with the working class movement, should prove of peculiar interest. The lecture is public and will be followed by the usual questions and discussion.²

With Grendon's lecture, the League exulted in having 'advanced another step in its fight against the Castle of Colour Prejudice'.³

The 'Links' lecture was attended by an audience of between 150 and 200, of which blacks constituted a slight majority. Present was Grendon's colleague Saul Msane, 'the veteran spokesman of the industrialized native'. Comrade Ivon Jones, secretary of the League and chairman of the meeting, introduced Grendon's 'address with a few remarks calling attention to the fact [that] Lafargue, the great Socialist leader of France, boasted of negro blood in his veins, and typically enough he was the author of that classic in Socialist literature: "The Right to be Lazy"'.⁴

An 'awkward little incident' occurred when Grendon took the platform. He proposed to the chairman that the meeting place on record an expression of sympathy

¹ 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

The following texts—arranged chronologically—refer to Grendon's 'Links' lecture: L. Forman, *Chapters in the History of the March to Freedom* (Cape Town, New Age, 1959), p. 29; J. and R. Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850–1950* (London, International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, 1983), p. 195; F. Meli, *A History of the ANC: South Africa Belongs to Us* (London, Currey, 1989), p. 59; W. Esterhuysen and P. Nel, *Die ANC* (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 1990), p. 42; E. Roux, *S. P. Bunting: a Political Biography* (Bellville, Mayibuye, new edn, 1993), p. 76; B. Hirson and G. A. Williams, *The Delegate for Africa: David Ivon Jones, 1883–1924* (London, Core, 1995), pp. 153–54; S. Johns, *Raising the Red Flag: The International Socialist League and the Communist Party of South Africa, 1914–1932* (Bellville, Mayibuye, 1995), p. 70; A. Drew, 'Will the Real Sidney Bunting Please Stand Up? Constructing and Contesting the Identity of a South African Communist', *English Historical Review*, cxviii, 479 (Nov. 2003), p. 1231; A. Drew, *Between Empire and Revolution: a Life of Sidney Bunting, 1873–1936* (London, Pickering & Chatto, 2007), p. 98. Several authors treat Grendon's lecture as a groundbreaking event in the history of South African socialism or communism, yet none deals in any depth with the content of the lecture or recognizes the striking ideological peculiarities of the lecturer himself.

² 'A Unique Event', *International* 37 (2 June 1916) 3.

³ 'Another Blow to Colour Prejudice', *International*, 39 (9 June 1916) 1.

⁴ 'Another Blow to Colour Prejudice', *International* 38 (9 June 1916) 1.

over the recent death at sea of Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener.¹ According to the *Star*, Grendon's motion was met with 'scornful laughter from a few of the extremists, and the lecturer and his dark-skinned hearers appeared somewhat uncomfortably surprised'.² Jones responded as a communist might be expected to: on 'grounds of humanity they passed by his death with reverence', yet 'as Socialists [they] could not honour his memory, for in his calling he was the agent of the class who exploit both native and white working-class and encompass the death of millions of our fellow workers'. Grendon 'remark[ed] that he was sorry he had not understood, [and] proceeded with the lecture'.³

Predictably, the *International* and the *Star* report very differently on Grendon's *faux pas*—if such it was. With mild disdain, the socialist organ ascribes the 'awkward little incident' to the fact that 'Native spokesmen have not yet outgrown the stage of loyalty to the Empire'. The *Star* describes Grendon as 'the scholarly and cultured Swazi'⁴ and considers his gesture in a positive light. It is an instance of 'Native loyalty ... remarkably contrasted with the disloyalty to be found among a certain class of Europeans'—*i.e.*, the Internationalists.⁵ Grendon 'was deeply loyal. He proved that right at the commencement when, as a preliminary, he invited an expression of sorrow at the Empire's loss of Lord Kitchener.'⁶

According to the *International*, the speaker dealt chiefly

with the philosophic grounds for a better feeling between black and white, and was followed attentively, and with appreciation in parts; even if some passages aroused suppressed impatience that the lecturer did not see what Socialists do: that the exploitation of cheap labour and colour prejudice by the capitalists and all their avenues of instruction are one in essence.⁷

Johannesburg's *Star* deals more expansively and, paradoxically, more appreciatively with the content of the lecture:

¹ 'Kitchener's Services: Sketch of a Great Career: Achievements in Peace and War', *Star* 6788 (7 June 1916) 6. In *Paul Kruger's Dream* (Pt XXIV, p. 70) Kitchener is the 'sterner lord' than Lord Roberts.

² 'Loyal Natives Surprised: War-on-Warites and Kitchener', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916) 1st ed., 4.

³ 'Loyal Natives Surprised: War-on-Warites and Kitchener', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916) 1st ed., 4.

⁴ 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

⁵ 'Loyal Natives Surprised: War-on-Warites and Kitchener', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916) 1st ed., 4.

⁶ 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

⁷ 'Another Blow to Colour Prejudice', *International* 38 (9 June 1916) 1.

The lecture itself, which was an appeal for a better and a right understanding between the native and European populations of South Africa, was upon a high plane, Mr Grendon devoting himself largely to the plea for an intellectual entente between the races. It was full of rich and highly-coloured metaphor, much of it religiously inspired The lecturer said in the course of his address that the two sections of the community which in this country went by the names of 'white' and 'black' had scarcely, since the day of their first contact, made any headway to a better and truer understanding. Having failed in this they had perpetuated an evil which in a well-organised State could not be tolerated too far. The ruling race of South Africa had forgotten its mission and had stifled, especially in the last two decades, the light that brightly burned in them and so had lost the confidence of the people of the country who had thought to find true friends in them. The link between the white and the black which had steadily been in progress of forging up to the time when Queen Victoria passed from hence had since vanished. He had been told it was within that very temple that the white man threw the die that sealed the black man's doom in both the industrial and political spheres. Yet he lived in hope that they who frequented that place would some day repent of their rashness, unbar their gates to their black fellowmen and permit them through the extension of equal opportunities, equal privileges, equal rights, to rise to a higher plane, to play a higher and nobler part within the realm of uses.¹

According to the *International* and the *Star* respectively, Grendon's lecture was an appeal upon 'philosophic grounds for a better feeling between black and white', or 'an appeal for a better and a right understanding between the native and European populations of South Africa'. This agrees entirely with all that we know about Grendon's message to his countrymen. His projected epic poem, 'An African's Vision', likely begun during—or even before—the South African War, was intended as 'An Appeal to the present various races inhabiting' South Africa.² As a coloured man, Grendon considered himself especially qualified to address 'an appeal' to both his father's and his mother's race.

As we might expect of Grendon, much of his lecture was 'religiously inspired', and dealt largely with 'philosophical grounds' for *rapprochement* between the races of South Africa. Here however he found himself—consciously or otherwise—at odds with the materialism of the Internationalists whom he was addressing. It was likely for this reason that 'a Biblical reference was received with scornful smiles by the white division' of Grendon's audience. After the lecture was over, one of the Internationalists remarked from the floor that he 'was particularly glad to hear ... that

¹ 'Blacks and Whites', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

² *PKD*, p. 135.

the dupe of religion had been weighed in the scale and found wanting'.¹ It was inevitable that Grendon's biblical citations should backfire. He had ideological peculiarities, but this particular audience had decided peculiarities of its own—one of which was intolerance for the 'opiate of the People'.

The *Star* reporter found Grendon's language to be characterized by 'rich and highly-coloured metaphor'. Such a description may seem to serve well for most of Grendon's surviving prose and poetry. What Grendon's contemporaries and subsequent commentators have failed to take into account is that his colourfully figurative language is informed by Swedenborg's correspondences, and Swedenborg insists that 'in the Word there are no metaphorical expressions or comparisons, but real correspondences'.² What appears on occasion in Grendon's writing to be an analogy or metaphor is in fact often a full-blown correspondence.

Grendon's observation that black and white 'had scarcely, since the day of their first contact, made any headway to a better and truer understanding' is a reiteration of his poem, 'To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa' (1903), where he refers to the 'wranglings, and disputes, | Which centuries twixt you their sway | Uncheck'd have held'. 'These devils' should now be 'blot[ted] out', and all should 'stand | For love—united black with white!'³ This is yet another indicator of the striking consistency of Grendon's vision across the years and in a variety of contexts.

Grendon's claim that the 'link between the white and the black ... had steadily been in progress of forging' during Victoria's reign repeats something he wrote in an *Abantu-Batho* editorial a little more than three months earlier. There he refers to 'that "retrograde-inverted" policy, which characterized the British statesmanship in Southern Africa's affairs, so soon as Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen VICTORIA the Good, had brought her earthly labours to an end'.⁴ By implication, during Victoria's reign, 'British statesmanship in Southern Africa's affairs' had been progressive, as opposed to 'retrograde-inverted'. As far as Grendon is concerned, during the

¹ 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

² Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, n. 8989.

³ 'To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

⁴ 'Swaziland and the S. A. Union', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

Victorian era, blacks were still able to reach their spiritual potential, and whites and blacks were able to render reciprocal Swedenborgian ‘use’ toward one another.

Grendon’s hope that the white man would one day facilitate the black man’s ‘rise to a higher plane, [so that he might] play a higher and nobler part within the realm of uses’, chimes with a plea he had made over several years, and is couched in unmistakably Swedenborgian terms. References to Swedenborg’s three ‘planes’ of the mind—natural, spiritual, and celestial—abound in Grendon’s writings, as do exhortations to readers that they ‘rise’ above the natural plane.¹ The much-admired Swazi, Prince Malunge (c.1881–1915)—Grendon maintains—‘strove to soar to higher planes’.² Grendon also predicts that ‘the Ethiopian Church will rise to a higher and purer religious plane’ when she locates the remnants of Swedenborg’s illustrious ‘celestial man’ in inner Africa.³ The ‘rise to a higher plane’ is integral to the process of regeneration, and will—as the *Star* reports Grendon—enable the black man ‘to play a higher and nobler part within the realm of uses’. In 1903, he pleads with white South Africans:

True genius seek not to despise
Nor crush the root from which it springs,
Encourage all who strive to rise
From brutalism to higher things.⁴

¹ Allusions to Swedenborg’s planes in Grendon’s verse, are to be found in: *Paul Kruger’s Dream*, Pt XXIV, p. 66; ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4, and ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916). The clearest exposition of the planes in Grendon’s prose writing is to be found in ‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4. Other references are to be found in: ‘Native Reform’, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 3; ‘God With Us’, *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4; ‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4; ‘Native Abominations’, *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4; ‘Polygamy’, *Ilanga*, 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3; and ‘Spread of Mohammedanism’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:70 (21 Jan. 1914) 5.

² ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5. See also ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

³ See ‘Missionary Conference’ (*Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3–4), where Grendon predicts that when the Ethiopian church ‘movement penetrates from the circumference to the centre of Africa’, it will fall in with ‘the best Africans’ who are known to be located there. This expectation is in keeping with Swedenborgian J. J. G. Wilkinson, whose work (*The African and the True Christian Religion*, 225) Grendon has read with evident appreciation: ‘The best African, we believe on Swedenborg’s authority, is central; the last of men, he is to be the first. And the Church will graduate and be ordained downwards from him, in a celestial and spiritual and natural organization, as the Coming Man, the New Church, on earth.’

⁴ ‘To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa’, *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.

In the words of the poem, blacks desire to ‘rise | From brutalism to higher things’. In the words of Grendon’s lecture, as reported in the *Star*, they desire ‘to rise to a higher plane’.

While ‘realm of uses’ may have been Grendon’s own expression, it is possible that he actually spoke of the ‘Kingdom of Uses’, to which Swedenborg’s writings repeatedly refer.¹ Grendon himself uses the latter phrase in his polemical writings around this time. In 1914, for instance, he chides a white segregationist adversary:

You forget that the Universe is a kingdom of uses, and that every single thing or creature in that kingdom is created for use. From every man therefore—be he black, white, yellow, or red—use is required. Uses are the bonds of society; and these bonds or uses are infinite in number. There is also necessity for the communication and intercommunication of uses; and these communicate and intercommunicate from primes to ultimates. What is use but the love of neighbour; and what holds the Universe together but this love?²

The ‘bonds of society’ in Grendon’s polemic are the ‘links’ in his lecture—the ‘uses’ or selfless services that each individual and each social or ethnic community properly renders to others. The above-quoted passage is essentially Grendon’s reworking of Swedenborg, who, in one of his wakeful visions, heard ‘eight wise ones’ formulate that

no one is wise for himself alone, or lives for himself, but for others at the same time: this is the origin of society, which otherwise could not exist. To live for others is to perform uses. Uses are the bonds of society, which are as many in number as there are good uses; and the number of uses is infinite.³

The doctrine of use is central to Swedenborg’s system. ‘Use’ is defined as ‘the faithful, sincere, and diligent discharge of the duties of one’s employment’.⁴ Angels and men may perform use ‘as of themselves’, but in truth, ‘all use is from the Lord’, and is performed by him ‘mediately’ through them.⁵ No individual—and no race—can exist in functional isolation. People are fulfilled only when they acknowledge their

¹ See for example, *Heaven and Hell*, nn. 112, 219.

² ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6. See Grendon’s use of the expression also in ‘Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side’, *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5. ‘Primes’ and ‘ultimates’ are very much part of the Swedenborgian lexis. See *Conjugial Love*, n. 68; *Arcana Cælestia*, n. 10634.

³ Swedenborg, *Conjugial Love*, n. 18.

⁴ Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 744.

⁵ Swedenborg, *Conjugial Love*, n. 7. Also: ‘the Lord does what is good or useful mediately through angels, and in the world through men’ (Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion*, n. 736).

function and discharge it wholeheartedly, because ‘to promote use is the delight of the life of all’.¹ For the health and vitality of humankind, viewed organically, it behoves ‘every individual, being a member of the common body, [to] be an instrument of use in the society to which he belongs’.² In this schema, there is no place for the ‘idle rich’ or for South Africa’s Randlords, whom Grendon describes in verse as ‘carrion-fowl’ and ‘slaves of Lucre’.³ He extols the wisdom of those that serve the Kingdom of Uses: ‘Tenfold wise is he, who out of various elements is able to erect—for the Kingdom of Use—a structure harmonious from base to apex. Tenfold foolish is he, who does the reverse.’⁴

In his ‘Miscegenation’ polemic, which predates the ‘Links’ lecture by two years, Grendon finds a special place in the Kingdom of Use for the coloured man:

The yellow man ... since his advent is destined to be the medium of communication and inter-communication between the two who produced him; but the secret as to what this communication or inter-communication means, is concealed from them both, because they have gone mad and are blinded by prejudice. ... The yellow man—be it known to you white men, and likewise to you blacks!—is a man created *for, by means of, and in* Use. He has a mission to fulfil, whether you desire it or not;—and as a unit in the Body of Man Universal he will and must, play his part in that great drama set out by the ‘Faultless Maker’—yours and his.⁵

This would appear to explain, at least in part, the identity of the ‘links’ of Grendon’s lecture, ‘Links between Black and White’. Grendon tells us in the polemic that whites constitute the ‘prime’, blacks the ‘ultimate’, and ‘yellow’ men the ‘mediate’. The ‘links’ or ‘mediate’ between white and black must therefore include the yellow man, or coloured. ‘Use’ is what holds South African society together, and the particular ‘use’ of the yellow man is to facilitate ‘communication and intercommunication of uses’ between white and black. This divinely-appointed role includes *liaison* between the African and the European genii—although Grendon does not specify in practical terms what forms that *liaison* might take.

¹ Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, n. 219.

² Swedenborg, *Conjugal Love*, n. 7.

³ *PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133.

⁴ ‘Native Unrest’. The meaning of the pyramid symbolism is unclear. It may derive in some way from J. J. G. Wilkinson’s *The African and the True Christian Religion*. Wilkinson writes: ‘The modern ground of work with Africa is very broad. Slavery is the base of the heavy pyramid, and what is the apex? The compulsory colonization of America and the West Indies with African slaves has forced the civilized world by slow degrees, and with varied directness on the part of its different nations, to become a great anti-slavery league.’ (p. 1.)

⁵ ‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6.

In claiming that the ‘yellow man’ is ‘a man created *for, by means of, and in Use*’, Grendon makes important claims: not only does he exist as ‘a unit in the Body of Man Universal’ *for* the sake of ‘use’ to the ‘Man Universal’; he also came into existence *by means of* ‘use’. That is to say, Grendon’s parents Joseph and Maria performed warranted ‘use’ when they coupled. ‘Yellow’ men exist in order to facilitate traffic, dialogue, the exchange of spiritual ‘goods’ and ‘truths’, between representatives of the two races that brought them into existence. *They* are the ‘Links between Black and White’.



The Internationalists’ much-publicised ‘war-on-war’ campaign had earned them considerable notoriety in South Africa. Grendon, by contrast, had campaigned in the columns of *Abantu-Batho* for the privilege of active participation in the war effort being extended to black Africans. There was ‘some sarcastic laughter’ from his audience when he defined the war as ‘a fight between principle and principle. It was “Wisdom versus Insanity”, “Go[o]ld versus Evil”, “Truth versus Falsehood” ... and coloured races were as much concerned in such a struggle as were whites’.¹

It is also unlikely that Grendon—who had campaigned politically for upward of two decades—would have taken to heart the counsel given him by one in his audience to ‘leave politics alone’.² The ISL advised blacks to wage an extra-parliamentary, class struggle. They should exert their ‘enormous economic power’,³ instead of wasting effort on genteel petitions and frock-coated deputations. In the question-and-answer session following Grendon’s lecture, it was put to him for comment that the ‘economic conditions in this country were responsible for the position of the native’. He declined to endorse such an idea. ‘No’, he replied, black men’s ‘grievances were manufactured in the place where the laws were made’.⁴ He was unwilling to abandon constitutional methods in seeking redress for the injustices that he and other blacks suffered.

¹ ‘Blacks and Whites’, *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

² ‘Blacks and Whites’, *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

³ ‘Blacks and Whites’, *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

⁴ ‘Blacks and Whites’, *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd ed., 6.

On these substantial grounds, Grendon was conspicuously out of sympathy with the Internationalists, and one has to wonder if he appreciated the irony implicit in his having been called upon to address them in the first place. There is no evidence that they ever extended the invitation again, and they can hardly have relished the negative publicity that surrounded the 'Links' lecture. Lionel Forman states that 'the Grendon meeting was roundly condemned in the daily papers', and 'one Labour Party MPC called for the deportation of the socialists'.¹

Within weeks of the lecture, Grendon, together with his colleague, Saul Msane, were dismissed from the editorial staff of *Abantu-Batho*. Grendon's movements over the following two years are unknown, although it seems likely that he left Johannesburg fairly soon. His name does not appear in the Government's secret files of 1917 relating to meetings of the International Socialists. They also contain no reference to Saul Msane, although his son, Herbert, appears in several reports.² It is possible that Grendon returned directly to Swaziland. He was settled there by July 1918. His rival, Kunene returned to the editor's chair.³

The *International* comments favourably upon an article that appeared in *Abantu-Batho* shortly after Grendon's dismissal. This article, written under Kunene's editorship, is hailed as a refreshing 'change from Native Contingent flag wagging, aping of Europeans, adulation of Government, pro-native-landlord protests against Land Acts, old-fashioned bookish aspirations for the vote as the be-all and end-all, and snobbish cravings by an educated few for social recognition as whites'.⁴ If this assessment was intended to reflect negatively on Grendon, it amounts to a crude caricature of the man and the ideals for which he stood.

Grendon did not break altogether with socialism. His identification with black industrial workers predated his association with the ISL, and by 1916, he had achieved a syncretic melding of his Swedenborgianism and his socialism. Although these seemingly disparate systems of thought have diverse points of origin, each

¹ Forman, *Chapters*, 29.

² TAB, JUS, vol. 255, ref. 3/527/17 Part I.

³ For the controversy between *Abantu-Batho* on the one hand and Grendon and Msane on the other, see: 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:682 (14 July 1916) 5; 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:684 (28 July 1916) 2; 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:689 (1 Sept. 1916) 2. For Kunene's death (1917), see: 'U Cleopas Kunene Kaseko!' *Ilanga* 15:722 (20 April 1917) 2. For Grendon's return to Swaziland by July 1918, see: 'Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side', *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5.

⁴ 'The Working Class', *International* 63 (1 Dec. 1916) 1.

embodies a cooperative rather than a competitive model of ideal human society. Grendon felt deep revulsion at social Darwinism's amoral insistence on 'survival of the fittest'. He identifies 'Dishonesty and Colour Prejudice' prevalent in South Africa as being 'relatives to the law of the Brute Creation, viz.: "eat or be eaten!"' Such false principles are 'the guiding-stars of your present day competitive system as opposed to the collective, or cooperative'. They are opposed to socialism's stress on the due reward for honest labour, just as they oppose Swedenborgian use. Grendon condemns the 'anti-Socialist, whose motto is "profits", in contradistinction to "use"—the watchword of the Socialist'.¹ Properly, 'use' is the 'watchword' of the Swedenborgian. By claiming it for 'the Socialist', Grendon syncretizes two great ideologies that claimed his imagination.

¹ 'Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side', *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5. Grendon challenges the popular conception of 'survival of the fittest' in 'Two Warnings: I. The Indian Invasion', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.

CHAPTER 12

SERVANT TO THE ‘KINGDOM OF USES’

SWAZILAND AGAIN

You are seeking ‘profits’ ... where I am labouring for the sake of ‘use’¹



Grendon’s whereabouts after he left *Abantu-Batho* in mid-1916 are unknown until July 1918, when he gives his address as ‘Twin Rock Farm’, Bremersdorp, Swaziland.² It is just possible that he may have gone in the interim to Lovedale or its vicinity, where Sobhuza and his Swazi fellow scholars were studying. Grendon’s family today are under the impression that he lectured at Fort Hare University while Sobhuza was there.³ In fact, Sobhuza did *not* attend Fort Hare, but the nearby Lovedale College (1916–18, plate 12a), and no independent evidence has emerged that Grendon ever taught either at Lovedale or at Fort Hare. All the same, the family believe that Grendon felt in some way accountable for Sobhuza’s safety and that he was with the young prince for at least part of the time that he underwent his education in the Cape Province. What *is* known is that Grendon was deeply attached to Sobhuza, whom he refers to as ‘the Child’ in his editorials and in a letter to Labotsibeni.⁴ According to Grendon’s daughter, Aurora Malumisa, he used to sleep at Sobhuza’s place—possibly in the role of a guardian of sorts.⁵

In later years, Grendon used to tell his daughter a Jonah-like tale involving the youthful Sobhuza. It relates to the time when Sobhuza went to the Cape for his education. On one occasion, Sobhuza was swallowed by a large fish. After two or three days, the fish disgorged ‘that boy’. Grendon was beside himself over the boy’s

¹ ‘Native Unrest’, *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918).

² ‘Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side’, *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5; ‘Native Unrest’, *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918).

³ Interviews: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa and Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008, 5 July 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

⁴ *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5 (reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*); ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916); ‘Editorial Notes’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916); SwNA, RCS 333/19: Grendon to Labotsibeni, 19 April 1919.

⁵ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

Plate 12a: Sobhuza as a scholar
at Lovedale College (1916 to
1918)



disappearance: how would he explain it to Sobhuza's family? Mrs Malumisa recalls that her 'old man used to cry when he tell us that'.¹

It is difficult to know what to make of this story. Clearly, it is an allegory of sorts, and reveals the personal sense of responsibility that Grendon felt for Sobhuza's safety. But whether or not it relates to some actual occurrence during Sobhuza's absence from Swaziland it is impossible to state. Perhaps Sobhuza *was* eaten by a correspondential 'fish' while at Lovedale. In one sense, the tale is corroborated by contemporary documentary evidence. Many of the Swazi elders were deeply concerned about the dangers Sobhuza would face if he left the country in order to receive his education. Labotsibeni told the Resident Commissioner that her 'chiefs and indunas' believed that it was 'not wise' to send the Swazi students out of Swaziland while the War was still being waged.² A senior prince asked Labotsibeni if, in sending Sobhuza to Lovedale, she wanted to 'kill the King'. Eventually, it was agreed that a high-level Swazi delegation should travel to Lovedale to ascertain if it would be safe for Sobhuza to stay there.³

Grendon reports in *Abantu-Batho* that the Swazi traditional council would assemble to invoke 'the blessing and the protection of the Ancestral Spirits (emadhlozi) on behalf of the lad during his sojourn in a strange land'.⁴ He also reports that the High Commissioner has guaranteed Sobhuza's 'safety during his absence from Swaziland'.⁵ But Grendon also shared the Swazi elders' fears concerning Sobhuza's safety, and predicted that the young man would encounter 'tests severe' from 'foes' at Lovedale.⁶ And in 'To Thee Sobhuza', Grendon is obsessed with 'doubts and fears' regarding Sobhuza's survival.⁷ He detects dark, invisible forces at work to destroy the legitimate heir to the throne of Swaziland.



¹ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

² SwNA, RCS 222/1915: Labotsibeni to Acting Resident Commissioner, 22 Jan. 1916.

³ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 48–49.

⁴ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

⁵ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁶ 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

⁷ 'To Thee Sobhuza (Future Paramount of the Swazi Nation)', extract from 'Tragedy of Malunge', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

In 1919, Grendon became the central figure in a protracted controversy between de Symons Honey, Swaziland's Resident Commissioner (plate 12b), on one hand, and the aging Queen Regent (plate 12d) and her circle on the other. It appears to have begun in mid-1918, when Labotsibeni's only daughter, Princess Tongotongo, died. Labotsibeni had already lost her beloved son Malunge, and perhaps she dreaded losing more of her close relatives. She required Sobhuza to return home from Lovedale in order to attend the mourning ceremony for his aunt.¹

Early in the New Year, he was still in Swaziland, and Labotsibeni informed de Symons Honey that she and her council had decided that Sobhuza 'should be formally installed this Year' and that, accordingly, he would not return to Lovedale.² Honey was surprised and disappointed, having 'hoped the young Chief would have spent two or three years more at school and college'. Possibly suspecting that Labotsibeni was acting without the full knowledge of the chiefs, Honey notified her that he would call a council meeting in April, at which the matter would be discussed.³

Honey had a personal meeting with Sobhuza, who told him 'of a suggestion that he should stay in Swaziland and study with Grendon for the Matriculation Examination and later he would like to go to the University in England'.⁴ As early as January 1913—before it was decided to send him to Lovedale—it had been rumoured that Sobhuza would go overseas for his education, 'so that, when he returns, he will be able to rule his father's people, and to transact his business with the White people in person'.⁵ This plan was abandoned because of the outbreak of the Great War, and because of the death of Sobhuza's uncle, Malunge.⁶

Chris Lowe is justified in observing that Sobhuza's desire for 'full university study in the metropole has the air of Grendon's views about it'.⁷ As Julinda Hoskins says of her grandfather William Grendon and his siblings Mary Ann and Robert, it was the intention of their father, Joseph, in the 1870s, to take them all to England to be educated: 'If they were to help their country at all, they would need much more

¹ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 54.

² SwNA, RCS 75/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 22 Jan. 1919.

³ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 25 Jan. 1919.

⁴ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 6 Feb. 1919.

⁵ *Abantu-Batho* (29 Jan. 1913). Translation from the Zulu, in SwNA, RCS 124/1913.

⁶ 'IziKulu Zase Swazini', *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5.

⁷ Lowe, 'Swaziland's Colonial Politics', 312–13.

Plate 12d: Sobhuza, with his mother Lomava,
and grandmother, Labotsibe.



Plate 12b: Swaziland's Resident Commissioner, de Symons Honey, with whom Grendon became locked in a stormy controversy over Sobhuza's tuition in 1919.



education, and so it was decided that their dad would take them to England to receive it.¹ Joseph would conduct them there, ‘see that they had the necessary education, and then return with them home to Damaraland’.² The rationale behind the plan of sending Sobhuza abroad for his education appears to have been much the same.

It appears that this goal of attending an English university was still held before Sobhuza in early 1919. He was of the opinion that ‘he will get on faster here’—*i.e.*, under Grendon’s instruction, rather than at Lovedale—as he prepared for the university matriculation examination. Honey was adamant that this was not the case, and implied that Sobhuza had fallen victim to bad advice. Sobhuza should return to Lovedale, where he had already ‘benefited greatly’. While Honey did not rule out an English University at some future time, he believed that it was premature to discuss such a step just then. Again, he believed that this was a matter for the chiefs to decide.³

The doughty Labotsibeni was not cowed by Honey. She told him that she saw ‘no danger’ in allowing Sobhuza to ‘remain in Swaziland, until the end of the current year’. Thereafter, the situation could be re-examined.⁴ But Honey did not like her proposal. If Sobhuza were to return to Lovedale at the time Labotsibeni suggested, he would ‘have forgotten most of what he has learned’. Honey was sure that there was no-one in Swaziland qualified to tutor Sobhuza properly, and he again suggested that Labotsibeni’s advisers were doing her a grave disservice.⁵

Labotsibeni met again with her grandson, who repeated to her his conviction that his studies would progress more rapidly under Grendon’s tutelage than they would at Lovedale. She informed Honey that if he wanted to persuade Sobhuza to return to Lovedale, he should do so himself, and a further meeting could be arranged.⁶ Honey agreed to this meeting and asked that Sobhuza be accompanied by his uncle, Lomvazi—who was acting as Prince Regent following the death of his brother Malunge. Ironically, Lomvazi was a former pupil of Grendon’s and, if anything,

¹ J. Hoskins notebook 1.

² J. Hoskins notebook 2.

³ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 6 Feb. 1919.

⁴ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 8 Feb. 1919.

⁵ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 10 Feb. 1919.

⁶ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 15 Feb. 1919.

would take his part.¹ The meeting duly came off and Lomvazi reported to his mother on what had transpired. She, in turn, requested Honey to visit her at Zombodze.

They met on 3 March 1919.² Labotsibeni appears to have persuaded Honey that Sobhuza should remain in Swaziland. The following day, he wrote the High Commissioner, conveying the gist of their meeting. Labotsibeni was in failing health, and was concerned that she might die while Sobhuza was out of the country. Sobhuza should be on hand, because

she is the only person who can communicate to him the secret rites appertaining to the Chieftainship, and the making of rain, and ... during the time of his novitiate it is necessary for him, from time to time, in connection with particular emblems of the Chieftainship, to undergo ceremonies involving short periods of isolation. I have consulted with her personally and I am of opinion that the request is one which cannot reasonably be refused.

Honey told the High Commissioner that he intended making arrangements so that Sobhuza could continue his studies in Swaziland. Labotsibeni was still expressing her wish that he might go overseas for further study after a year.³

A few days after her meeting with Honey, Labotsibeni informed him that Sobhuza had 'already made arrangements with Mr R. Grendon on the grounds that he advances more quickly under his tuition'. She added that she had given her personal consent to this arrangement.⁴ It is evident that it was not just Sobhuza, but also his old grandmother, who wanted Grendon as a tutor. As Kuper makes clear, 'Labotsibeni favoured Grendon', who had earlier tutored her sons Malunge and Lomvazi.⁵ It was, after all, she who had brought him to Zombodze as 'school master' in 1906. Honey cannot have been ignorant of this fact, since he had investigated Grendon's background and credentials at that time.⁶ Honey knew that Grendon had been resident

¹ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 17 Feb. 1919; Jones, *Biographical Register of Swaziland*, 111.

² SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 26 Feb. 1919.

³ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Resident Commissioner to High Commissioner, 4 March 1919.

⁴ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 8 March 1919.

⁵ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 55.

⁶ NAB, SNA I/1/352, ref. 1906/3437: Secretary for Swaziland Affairs, Johannesburg, to Under Secretary for Native Affairs, Pietermaritzburg, 16 Oct. 1906. See Chapter 10.

in the territory even before his own arrival. In 1916, he told the High Commissioner that Grendon had 'lived for many years in Swaziland'.¹

Lowe rightly points out that, from Labotsibeni's standpoint, 'the whole purpose of concession to colonial education was instrumental: education should render the children of Swazi chiefs and intellectuals politically and socially effective and formidable.'² Despite their very different cultural backgrounds, Grendon and Labotsibeni were of one mind in this view of education. The *Ndlovukati* knew she could rely upon Grendon to prepare the future *Ngwenyama* to deal effectively with white administrators.

Grendon was careful to ensure that the curriculum he followed would be of real long-term service to the young Swazi princes. For this reason, he 'taught not only school subjects but current Swazi history, pointing out that the education of a king is more than book learning'.³ 'Current Swazi history' did not reflect favourably upon the colonial power. As Grendon had been pointing out since before his move to Swaziland, Britain's conduct toward the Swazi had been in many respects disreputable. Because of Britain's failure to uphold Swazi independence, the country had suffered 'the pain of seeing herself preyed upon' by concessionaires. The British Government had not 'done its duty' by Swaziland, but had committed 'unpardonable blunders'.⁴

Such was the history that Grendon publicized in newspapers like *Ilanga* and *Abantu-Batho*; it is also the history he must have inculcated in Sobhuza. As Tim Couzens remarks, 'Grendon's development' was 'more and more towards a *local commitment*. He seems to be something of a pioneer in this respect within the teaching profession.'⁵ Grendon's account of Swaziland's plight from the time of Mbandzeni's reign was eloquent, erudite, and sympathetic toward the Swazi. Labotsibeni must have appreciated him for this. He taught the political history she wanted her grandson to know. Herein lay the seeds of controversy, however, because

¹ SwNA, RCS 124/16: Honey (Acting Resident Commissioner) to Buxton (High Commissioner), 8 March 1916.

² Lowe, 'Swaziland's Colonial Politics', 304.

³ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 55.

⁴ 'Annexation of Swaziland', *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3.

⁵ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 86.

it was also a history that the Mbabane Government preferred the royal Dlamini to forget.

When Grendon lampooned Cleopas Kunene's pretentious Sophiatown reception for Sobhuza in 1916, he criticized the host particularly for failing to invite those 'men who would have exchanged with [Sobhuza] views on current events', such as should interest 'this child who is destined to be a ruler of men'.¹ Grendon knew that to instruct Sobhuza was not to teach just *any* child. It was to train a king, who would be in a position to influence—for better or worse—the lives of thousands of Swazi men and women. He took pains to acquaint Sobhuza with relevant 'current events', and to make him 'politically and socially effective and formidable'.

Honey wrote once again to Labotsibeni, professing to 'know nothing about Grendon's qualifications' as a tutor. She should send him up to Mbabane for an official interview, and Honey would determine whether or not he was 'suitable' for the job.² Given that Honey had known Grendon by reputation for over a decade, his claim to being ignorant of the man's qualifications was self-damning. It also seems a little disingenuous. Grendon was, after all, likely the first black matriculant to settle in the country. If Honey did not know this, he ought to have. Racial snobbery was a trait he obviously shared with many other Swaziland colonials. As Kuper says of conditions in the early 1930s, 'social visits across the colour line were not part of the pattern of the time'.³

Word spread that Grendon was being considered for the role of royal tutor. When it reached Rev. John James Xaba, head-teacher at the Zombodze National School, he felt sorely aggrieved. As far as he was concerned, Grendon's politics unfitted him for the privilege. If Sobhuza was to obtain an education inside Swaziland, then it should be conducted at the National School.

Xaba was the brother of Joseph James Xaba, whom the Mbabane administration hired at the start of 1907 to teach the children of Swazi royals and leading commoners.⁴ The memory of having been pushed aside in the recruitment process

¹ 'Notes and Comments', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

² SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 8 March 1919.

³ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 5.

⁴ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 55.

probably still rankled in Grendon's mind. Both brothers often dropped the name Xaba, and preferred to be known by the more Christian-sounding 'Joseph James' and 'John James'.

John James Xaba was born circa 1866. A native isiXhosa speaker, he received his education at Lovedale College; at the Anglican Catechists' Training School, Umtata; and, like Grendon, at Zonnebloem College, Cape Town.¹ Ordained as an Anglican priest, he served the Cathedral Parish of St John's (Transkei) at St Cuthbert's, Tsolo, both before and after his years in Swaziland. Skota's biographical dictionary describes him rather grandiosely as 'chaplain' to Sobhuza, and as a 'Latin and Greek scholar'. Sobhuza, who was never formally inducted into any Christian denomination, would not have required a 'chaplain', and as regards Xaba's putative classical scholarship, it is unlikely to have been any better than Grendon's.²

Xaba came to Cape Town in January 1886 in order to serve with the Cowley Fathers, an Anglican order, and he was still there in 1891.³ Given that the Cowley Fathers had a close association with Zonnebloem College, and that Xaba attended Zonnebloem at some point, it is inconceivable that his and Grendon's paths never crossed in Cape Town—especially since both men were cricket fans.⁴ In 1907, as an alumnus of Zonnebloem, he was contributing a 'series of articles on Native Customs' to the college magazine.⁵

By 1916, he had joined his elder brother Joseph James in Swaziland. Christopher Charles Watts, Archdeacon of Swaziland, who identifies John James as 'a man of well-known character and ability', describes how he was released from his duties by the Bishop of St John's in order to take up his work in Swaziland.⁶ When he arrived at Mbabane, Watts conducted him down to Zombodze, and warned him 'that the religion, politics, and morality of the old queen's court being what they were, a big contest was inevitable'.⁷ It is clear from his description that Watts had no truck with

¹ Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 279; Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*, 28; 'School and College Notes', *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 5:21 (Trinity 1907) 27; *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 5:21 (Trinity 1907) 39; *Abantu-Batho* (29 Jan. 1913).

² Skota, *African Yearly Register*, 279; Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*, 29.

³ Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr*, 28, 65.

⁴ *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 5:21 (Trinity 1907) 39.

⁵ *Zonnebloem College Magazine* 5:21 (Trinity 1907) 27, 39.

⁶ Watts, *Dawn in Swaziland*, ch. 13.

⁷ Watts, *Dawn in Swaziland*, ch. 13.

Labotsibeni's 'Ethiopian' attendants, among whom he almost certainly included Grendon:

Mr Xaba survived an attack on grounds of sectarian jealousy ... but had to dismiss a subordinate teacher for gross immorality. The old queen resented this in her school. Such action reflected on herself and her court. The native Ethiopian adventurers at the kraal saw their opportunity. If they could get Mr Xaba dismissed a valuable billet might fall into their hands. The Government supported Mr Xaba, whereupon the old queen ordered a 'strike' of all children attending the school. This lasted six months, and Mr Xaba still stood his ground.¹

Clearly, Xaba's duties extended far beyond the ordinary ones assigned to a teacher. Watts praises Xaba for having fought 'against the immorality and political sedition of Ethiopianism in its stronghold'.² Though stationed at the Zombodze royal kraal, he took his orders not from the queen, but from the white men up in Mbabane. His brief included keeping a weather eye out for signs of 'political sedition', and reporting such signs to his superiors. When the elder Xaba retired in 1917 or 1918, John James assumed supreme charge of the National School at Zombodze in his stead. The school's matron was a Mrs E. Xaba, presumably a close relative of John.³

The National School (plate 12c) was funded by the Swazi people themselves. Grendon, newly returned from Johannesburg, where he had fraternised with socialists, did not appreciate the way in which the Swazi's own money was being used against their interests and those of their queen. It is almost certainly with the National School in mind that Grendon rants against

a gang of ... anti-Socialists, it does not matter where—who play the tyrant over a certain school run entirely by semi-private money, nevertheless they, who provide the gold wherewith to pay the teachers of that particular school, the people are forced to murmur, that foreign teachers are being engaged on a two-fold mission in that particular school; on the one hand to teach a smattering of knowledge, which is worse than useless; and on the other hand to play the spy upon the people. Under the Social System all [schools and other institutions] would belong to the people, and be worked both by, and for, the people.⁴

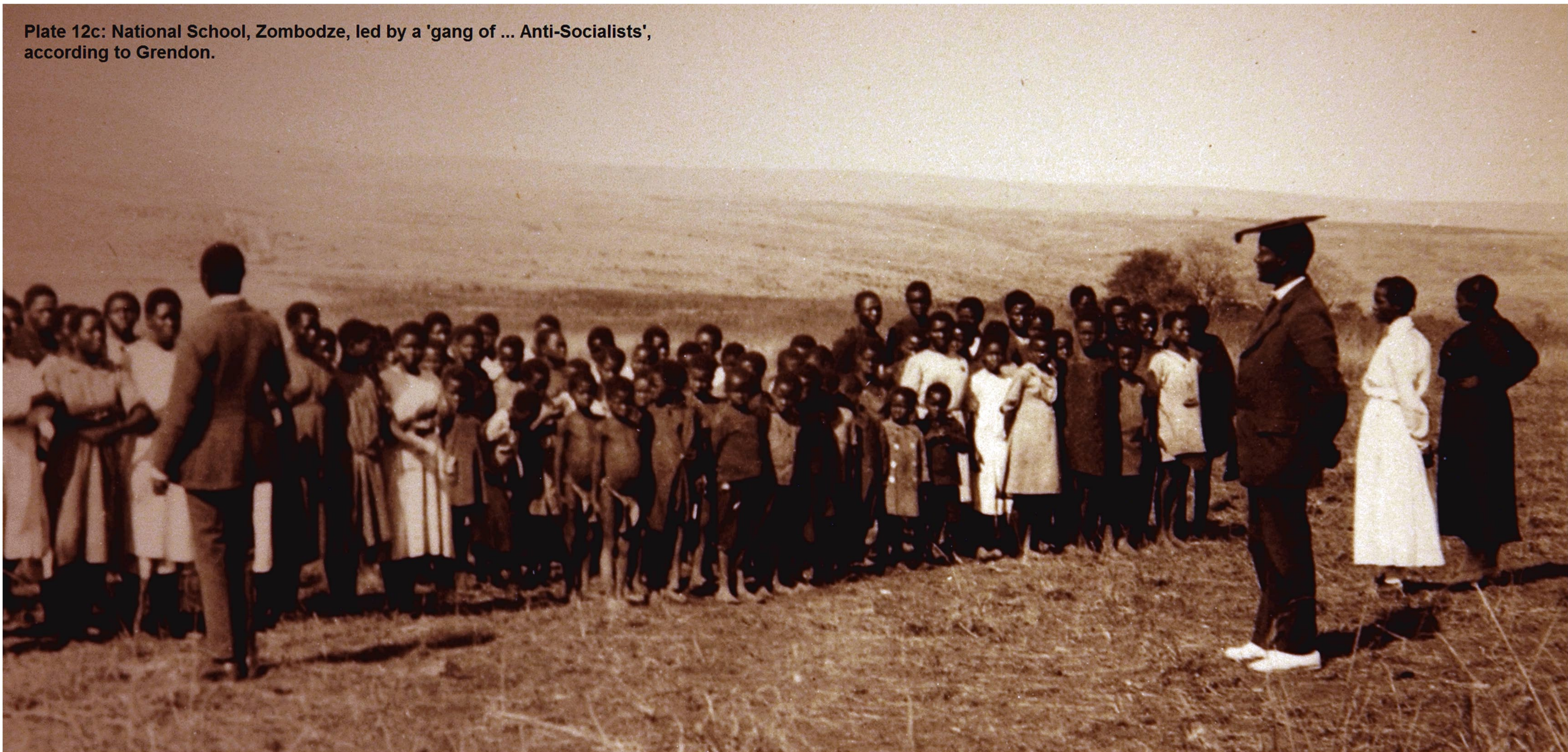
¹ Watts, *Dawn in Swaziland*, ch. 13.

² Watts, *Dawn in Swaziland*, ch. 13.

³ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 55; Great Britain, *Colonial Office List for 1916*, 358; Great Britain, *Colonial Office List for 1922*, 379; F. F. Sepamla, 'African Progress In Swaziland 1908–1948', *Times of Swaziland* 26:38 (18 Aug. 1949) 4. Kuper gives 1918; Sepamla gives 1917.

⁴ 'Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side', *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5.

Plate 12c: National School, Zombodze, led by a 'gang of ... Anti-Socialists', according to Grendon.



The ‘foreign teachers’ are such men as the Xabas, who even now prefer to spend their vacations in the Cape Province. They have a double agenda: besides serving up a paltry education, they are also spies on the Government payroll. This ‘gang of ... anti-Socialists ... who play the tyrant over a certain school’ likely also includes Gertrude Tandekile Kunene (born 1894), the unmarried daughter of the recently-deceased Cleopas Kunene—who in the latter part of his life was probably Grendon’s most formidable foe. In April 1917, Cleopas Kunene returned to Johannesburg from a visit to Zombodze, on *Abantu-Batho* business, in company with the lawyer Richard W. Msimang.¹ Shortly afterwards, it was reported that his daughter Gertrude was leaving for Swaziland, in order to teach at the National School.² Kunene had contracted a bowel infection in Swaziland, from which he died on 15 April 1917.³ Gertrude was still at Zombodze, or in its vicinity, in mid-March 1918.⁴ Another of the Zombodze teachers was Lancelot Msomi, whose mother was a sister to Cleopas Kunene.⁵ Given these facts, and the recent feud between Grendon and Kunene, it is hardly surprising that there should be great animus between Grendon and the staff at the National School.

Grendon’s accusation of spying against the Zombodze teachers was not without foundation, as becomes evident from a letter marked ‘Private & Confidential’ and dated 12 March 1919, in which Xaba urges Resident Commissioner Honey not to consider Grendon as Sobhuza’s tutor:

Sir,

I think it right to report the following:—I met Grendon at Lobamba Kraal after I had been with you at Mbabane. From what I could gather, he, wrongly or rightly, is of opinion that he has first claim of being private tutor to the young Chief, since he had held the same post when Chief Lomvazo [*sic*; should be Lomvazi] was being educated. My opinion is, were he to be allowed to take the post he is anxious for; i.e. being private tutor to the young Chief, it would be *most disastrous* both to the young chief & Swaziland, at large. His views, and influence would mislead the young chief and many people to the detriment [‘of the welfare’ inserted here later] of the whole of Swaziland.

¹ ‘Ezase Goli’, *Ilanga* 15:715 (2 March 1917) 2.

² ‘Ezase Goli’, *Ilanga* 15:721 (13 April 1917) 2.

³ ‘U Cleopas Kunene Kaseko!’ *Ilanga* 15:722 (20 April 1917) 2; ‘The late Mr C. Kunene: An Appreciation’, *Ilanga* 15:724 (4 May 1917) 5; ‘Successor to the late C. Kunene’, *Ilanga* 15:726 (18 May 1917) 5; ‘The Late Mr C. Kunene’s Successor’, *Ilanga* 15:730 (15 June 1917) 5.

⁴ TAB, MHG 31992.

⁵ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 56.

I believe, Sir, you are aware of the fact that there are many Cliques in the country whose aim is to spy out the country. I am afraid the above mentioned gentleman is amongst them. The Government is not admired or loved by most of the above lot.

Should some one be found to come & teach the young chief may I humbly, again, repeat my suggestions? i.e. The young chief's education ought to take place here in his old school where we have school furniture & where his Tutor would be under our supervision.

In case the chief has to be in seclusion, the Tutor could have a class in the school to teach; and in any case if possible it could be so arranged that in addition to his work he would have a class in the school to teach as well.

Kindly excuse my presumption in writing to you

I have the honour to be Sir

Your most obedient servant

J J Xaba

PS. The Chief Regent's Solicitor has been here since last week I suppose, on private business with the Chief Regent. His name is M. Msimanga from Johannesburg. J. J. X.¹

Xaba faithfully fulfils his brief: telling Honey not only of what passed between him and Grendon at Lobamba, but also that Labotsibeni's legal representative, R. W. Msimang, is at Zombodze—and, according to the subtext, likely up to no good. It is interesting to note that Grendon and Xaba each accuse the other of spying on Swaziland—Grendon because he upholds the sovereignty of the precolonial ruling family, and Xaba because he sides unambiguously with Mbabane.

Lowe identifies Xaba amongst those African teachers who set great store by the status they believed they had acquired through a missionary education and 'links to white authorities'. Such men and women perceived themselves 'as an elite among Africans in the colonial order'.² A question with which Labotsibeni and her councillors must surely have grappled was: 'Who were the best teachers? Were they those Africans who had gained the most approval from white religious and political authorities, thereby having demonstrated that they had cracked the colonial code? Conservative teachers such as the Reverend J. J. Xaba certainly argued so, and got the

¹ SwNA, RCS 333/19: J. J. Xaba, Zombodze School, to Resident Commissioner, 12 March 1919.

² Lowe, 'Swaziland's Colonial Politics', 303–04.

backing of British officials.’¹ Men like Xaba were prepared to purchase status and a measure of material security by collaborating with an alien regime.

Honey told Labotsibeni that he wanted to see Grendon. She relayed his summons, but Grendon was unwilling to travel up to Mbabane, and cited poor health as his reason:

Dear Ndhlovukazi

With reference to my being called up by the Resident Commissioner re the Child’s tuition I beg respectfully to be excused from such an undertaking. I refrain on account of ill-health from exposing myself to alpine air at this particular time, as I have just recovered from an attack of fever. I am prepared, however to answer any queries which the Resident Commissioner may submit to me re the matter, on which he wishes to see me.²

Labotsibeni forwarded Grendon’s reply to Honey, and expressed her ‘opinion that he should commence duties at once as there [was] no time to lose’.³ Paradoxically—given Xaba’s recent letter—Honey agreed that Grendon might ‘take over Sobhuza’s tuition for the present’. But he stipulated, trickily, that the lessons should be conducted at the National School, where Xaba could keep a watchful eye on Grendon. He was prepared to pay Grendon £8.6.8 per month from the National Fund, and asked that Grendon call upon him as soon as he had recovered his health.⁴ Simultaneously, Honey was in correspondence with Rev. James Henderson, Principal of Lovedale College, who was asked if he could spare a suitable tutor for Sobhuza. Henderson offered to send C. E. Makiwane.⁵

Early in June, Grendon *did* brave the ‘alpine air’ and come up to Mbabane—but not in obedience to the Resident Commissioner’s summons. His old friend, Saul Msane was visiting in the little town, and had made Grendon a business proposition that needed to be discussed. Msane’s sister, Asiana Macebo, had lived at ‘East End

¹ Lowe, ‘Swaziland’s Colonial Politics’, 304.

² SwNA, RCS 333/19: Grendon, Bremersdorp, to Labotsibeni, 19 April 1919.

³ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 21 April 1919.

⁴ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 6 May 1919.

⁵ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Principal, Lovedale, to Resident Commissioner, 20 and 23 June 1919. Kuper (*Sobhuza II*, 55) gives his name as Quinton Makhiwane.

Cottage', Mbabane, until her death in 1909.¹ It is possible that Msane was staying with his brother-in-law, Dyer D. Macebo, a Government Civil Interpreter.

Word of Grendon's presence in town must have reached the administration, because on 5 June, Fynn F. Sepamla (1888–1949) was sent to summon Grendon to appear before the Resident Commissioner in connection with Sobhuza's tuition. Sepamla was a Hlubi man who became the first African clerk in Swaziland's central administration in 1909.² He reported on his meeting with Grendon:

I delivered the message to Grendon who in reply stated that he had nothing to do with the Resident Commissioner in this matter, on certain reasons which he stated to me, and therefore he cannot come—He stated that he could have gone if he was being called by Chief Lomvazi and not by the Resident Commissioner through a Government Servant. I returned to the Office and informed Mr Nicholson that Grendon has refused to come, adding that he says he would see Chief Lomvazi but not the Resident Commissioner.

In the afternoon of that day Vilakazi handed a letter to me addressed to Grendon which I delivered to him. After reading same Grendon repeated what he said to me when I was sent to call him. He stated that he is not going to see the Resident Commissioner as he did not come up here for that purpose but to meet Msane on their business, stating further that he had told the Chief Regent that if a Whiteman is brought in this matter he shall have nothing to do with it, and secondly that this matter has been hanging too long until Msane's offer came.

When the Resident Commissioner asked me as to when Grendon is coming to see him I informed the Resident Commissioner that Grendon has totally refused to come and see him saying that he is not up here to see him but on their business with Msane.³

The nature of Saul Msane's business offer to Grendon is not stated, but the two men were evidently still closely associated. Msane's occupation is described in 1919 as that of 'speculator'.⁴ At the time of their dismissal from the editorial staff of *Abantu-Batho* in 1916, its contemporary, *Ilanga lase Natal* reported that Msane had found employment with the 'Economic and Shilling Bank', and it speculated that Grendon might also be involved in this with Msane.⁵ In 1919, Msane was planning

¹ Advertisement for Mbabane Laundry, *Times of Swaziland* (8 Dec. 1906) 6; 'Obituary', *Ilanga* 6:313 (7 May 1909) 4; F. F. Sepamla, 'African Progress in Swaziland 1908–1948', *Times of Swaziland* 26:38 (18 Aug. 1949) 4.

² Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland*; Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 104.

³ SwNA, RCS 75/19: F. F. Sepamla to Government Secretary, 22 July 1919.

⁴ TAB, MHG 42409: Saul Msane.

⁵ 'Ezase Jozi', *Ilanga* 14:684 (28 July 1916) 2.

to start an agricultural school for Natives which he hoped in time would also embrace industrial training and live stock breeding. Knowing the best land under Native Reserves is to be found in Zululand, knowing too that very little use is being made of it by the Zulus and desiring to make it a National success, he thought it advisable to endeavour to get Solomon kaDinizulu interested and therefore his first step was to go there. He was also very much convinced and desirous that every possible effort should be made to influence Solomon. Mr Saul Msane was very fortunate in getting Solomon and his head men very interested in the matter of starting an agricultural school for the Natives in the Nongoma Division. ... It was ultimately agreed upon that Mr Saul Msane was to bring his family down to the Nongoma Division to live there under Solomon, after which it was hoped something good and useful might be started.¹

Since this project was uppermost on Msane's mind in 1919, it seems likely that his offer to Grendon was some sort of teaching post in the envisaged agricultural college.² Such a college would certainly have captured Grendon's imagination, who shared Msane's enthusiasm for improved agricultural practices amongst Africans.³ As it happened, however, Msane died unexpectedly in October at the home of Dr Titlestad, at Nkandla, Zululand. His dream of a college at Nongoma was not realised.⁴

On 24 June, Honey wrote Labotsibeni, telling her that he had engaged Makiwane, and claiming that Grendon had sent him a message to the effect that he was going to Johannesburg and 'did not wish to undertake the duty of teaching Sobhuza'.⁵ To this Labotsibeni replied that Grendon was present with her at Zombodze and 'ready to commence duties at once'. She also added that Sobhuza had no desire to be taught by Makiwane, since he had been under Makiwane's tuition at Lovedale in Standard VI, and had formed the opinion that the man was unqualified to 'prepare him for Matriculation Examination'.⁶ On learning this, Honey immediately communicated with Lovedale, asking that the offer of Makiwane be withdrawn,⁷ but Henderson replied that a replacement teacher for Makiwane had already been engaged at

¹ 'An Appeal from the Natives of the Union of South Africa (Continued)', *Ilanga* 17:50 (12 Dec. 1919) 5.

² Msane had also attempted to persuade the Chamber of Mines to fund a newspaper to counteract the influence of *Abantu-Batho*, which became too militant for his liking following his and Grendon's dismissal (Switzer, 'Moderation and Militancy in African Nationalist Newspapers', 39). It is just possible that he had an editorial role in mind for Grendon. However, a post at the proposed agricultural college seems more likely.

³ Grendon saw the 'Swazi spaces, vacant both on hill and dale', as 'inviting the husbandman's attention and energy' ('Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5).

⁴ 'Um'fi uSaul Msane', *Ilanga* 17:42 (17 Oct. 1919) 2; TAB, MHG 42409: Saul Msane.

⁵ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 24 June 1919.

⁶ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 9 July 1919.

⁷ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Government Secretary to Principal, Lovedale, 10 July 1919; Resident Commissioner to Principal, Lovedale, 14 July 1919.

Lovedale, and so Honey decided that, under the circumstance, Makiwane should be sent up at once.¹

Honey felt vexed that Grendon should continue to evade his summons. He complained to Labotsibeni that Grendon had ‘had lots of time to see me and has not done so’. He was ‘not prepared to agree that Grendon should act as tutor’.² Grendon finally decided to meet Honey in person. At the end of August, Labotsibeni requested Honey to send two motor cars to convey a party, including the would-be tutor, Grendon, to Mbabane.³ The meeting came off on 4 September. Grendon was accompanied to Mbabane by Sobhuza and by Prince Lomvazi’s representative, Mdabezimba.⁴ From Honey’s account of his meeting with Grendon, the latter did not accord him the degree of deference he felt to be his due as the principal representative of the Crown in Swaziland. He complained to Labotsibeni:

I have seen Grendon, but as he takes up the attitude that he is under your instructions and will have nothing to do with the Government—this is his attitude I gather from what he said to me—I cannot agree that he is a proper person to be in charge of the young Chief’s education, for which I am responsible as well as you.

I have also spoken privately to Sobhuza and have advised him to take lessons with Makiwane for a time. If he finds he does not get on well perhaps you will send him up to me and we can consider some other arrangement. I hope you will agree that this is the best thing. I am sorry that Mr Grendon’s own attitude makes it impossible for me to agree that he should be the young Chief’s tutor.⁵

Neither party was prepared to compromise. Grendon insisted that he took orders only from the royal Dlamini. Likely, he considered the Resident Commissioner conceited and intransigent. Three years earlier, he had written that, whereas the majority of ‘head-officials of the Swaziland Administration’ were considerate in their dealings with the Swazi, there were a few ‘whom pride inflates and borrowed pomp makes blind and silly’. Honey likely fell within this latter category.⁶

¹ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Resident Commissioner to Principal, Lovedale, 19 July 1919.

² SwNA, RCS 75/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 26 July 1919.

³ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 28 Aug. 1919.

⁴ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Josiah Vilakazi to Resident Commissioner, 4 Sept. 1919.

⁵ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 4 Sept. 1919.

⁶ ‘Swaziland and the S. A. Union’, *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).

It is noteworthy that Honey does not attempt to undermine Grendon's academic or pedagogical credentials. He would surely have done so had he found fault with them. His single objection is Grendon's refusal to acknowledge that the administration has any stake in the education of the future *Ngwenyama*. Couzens sees 'Grendon's fierce independence com[ing] through strongly' in the tone of Honey's letter,¹ and Lowe remarks that Grendon's unwillingness 'to show Honey the requisite deference when called to Mbabane to pay obeisance ... put paid to the appointment [as Sobhuza's tutor]. In Honey's eyes, Grendon's disdain for segregationist racial "etiquette" and his view that the Queen-Regent would be his primary employer made him an extremist.'²

When Labotsibeni heard from Honey that he would not consent to Grendon's becoming tutor to Sobhuza on the grounds that Grendon felt answerable solely to her, she not unnaturally considered Honey's stance a challenge to her own authority over her household and her people's future. She was unprepared to take 'No' for an answer, and neither were her councillors or Grendon. On the afternoon of 8 September, a large delegation of Swazi dignitaries, headed by the grand old lady, presented itself at the office of S. B. Williams, Resident J.P. of Bremersdorp. Among others, there were Josiah Vilakazi (Secretary to the Swazi Nation), Sobhuza and his mother, Lomawa, Benjamin Nxumalo (Lomawa's classificatory brother), Grendon, Mandanda, Lomagwaba, and Ndabezimbi.

Labotsibeni gave a verbal statement in siSwati, which she wanted Williams to relay over the telephone to the Resident Commissioner in Mbabane. Vilakazi translated:

I have taken the trouble to come to talk to the Resident Commissioner to express my views about the Paramount Chief's education. The R. C. said when he visited me that Makiwane should teach him; I ask that R. Grendon should be the Tutor. The R. C. said 'I asked Mr Grendon to come up and see me & he did not come' and he said 'I do not think Grendon will be the right man to teach the young king'. I am very anxious that Grendon should teach the young king and I ask the R. C. to allow this. There have been three Resident Commissioners and I have been pulling very well with them. Our present R. C. is the third and I don't think it is wise that we should be on bad terms. I am anxious that we should work in harmony and understand each other.

¹ Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 85.

² Lowe, 'Swaziland's Colonial Politics', 310.

I want Grendon to teach the young king. In a letter from the R. C., he suggests paying £8:6:8 per month. Previously I paid him £10 per month and I ask that he should be paid this and teach the young king.

I have taken the trouble to come here to ask the Resident Commissioner to work in harmony and to ask him to allow Grendon to be the tutor of the young king. During our last conversation the R.C. promised that Grendon should be the tutor and to send Makiwane to help the Rev. Xaba [as a schoolteacher at the National School, Zombodze]. I still request that Grendon be the tutor.

Following this, Grendon asked to be permitted to read a statement he had prepared 'in his defence', which he wanted communicated to Honey. Williams said that he could not wait for this, since by now the Resident Commissioner must be waiting beside the telephone for his call. At this, Grendon—with Labotsibeni's approval—asked that Williams read Grendon's statement to Honey direct from his writing. Williams went to the telephone and conveyed Labotsibeni's statement to Honey, who repeated that he 'absolutely refused to appoint Grendon as Tutor to the paramount Chief and that if [Grendon] took up the position [he] would have him removed from Native Area'.

Returning to the office, Williams conveyed Honey's reply to the delegation. Labotsibeni had nothing more to say, but Grendon said he had a further message for Honey. Williams refused to have anything to do with its transmission. Grendon then stated that, since Labotsibeni was 'on his side and wanted him as Tutor he would like to set forth an appeal to the High Commissioner'. Sobhuza and Vilakazi appeared to support Grendon in this intention.

Williams concluded his report on this frustrating meeting by calling Grendon's character into question: 'I know very little about Grendon but he is reputed to be a man of drunken habits though he was sober enough to-day.'¹ Concerning this last charge, Couzens states: 'To be fair to Grendon, one must regard this statement with circumspection. It might have been a political smear.'²

The Resident Commissioner was now in a fighting mood, and instructed Williams to let him know if he should 'hear anything further about Grendon teaching the young

¹ SwNA, RCS 333/19: S. B. Williams, Resident J. P., Bremersdorp, to Resident Commissioner, 8 Sept. 1919.

² Couzens, 'Robert Grendon', 86.

Chief'.¹ Labotsibeni's tenacity has to be admired, because she was still not prepared to yield to Honey's edict. In a further communication, she told Honey that she had gone to Bremersdorp 'with the hope of coming to a definite understanding with [him] through the Phone re Sobhuza's Education, but time was very short and did not enable me to express my views on the Subject'. She therefore requested that Honey should pay her a personal visit, so that they might 'come to a friendly understanding' in this matter.²

Honey agreed to the meeting, but made it clear that he couldn't 'hold out any hope that [he would] agree to the Young Chief being placed under anybody whom [he knew] to be unsuitable for the position'.³ He reiterated what he had earlier said: that Sobhuza needed 'the discipline of a school', and that he would learn little at Lobamba, irrespective of who his tutor was. Grendon had threatened an appeal to the High Commissioner. Honey now turned the tables: 'I should like to be in a position to report to the High Commissioner what you and I may agree upon because, as you know, His Excellency takes a great interest in Sobhuza's education and progress.'⁴

A few days later, Labotsibeni announced to Honey that Sobhuza had that morning reached adulthood, and that he had to be attended upon by traditional doctors in order that the ceremony might be completed.⁵ In congratulating Sobhuza, Honey expressed his hope that when he assumed 'the large responsibility' for which he was being groomed, he would come to be 'looked upon as a wise Chief as your Grandmother, the Chief Regent, is looked upon today, not only by the people of Swaziland but by all the people in South Africa'.⁶

In November, Labotsibeni stated in reply to a letter from Honey regarding Sobhuza's education: 'The matter is rather a difficult one since you have entirely objected to take Grendon over as his Tutor and therefore requires some very good consideration as to who would be the suitable and qualified person to teach him. I shall consider this affair and try to find the man and recommend him to you.'⁷ Once

¹ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to S. B. Williams, 11 Sept. 1919.

² SwNA, RCS 333/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 12 Sept. 1919.

³ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 13 Sept. 1919.

⁴ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 23 Sept. 1919.

⁵ SwNA, RCS 333/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 27 Sept. 1919; Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 58.

⁶ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Resident Commissioner to Sobhuza, 11 Oct. 1919.

⁷ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 10 Nov. 1919.

again, Labotsibeni asserted her right to hire or fire the future *Ngwenyama*'s personal tutor.

Honey expressed his disappointment at Sobhuza's disinclination to continue his studies at Lovedale, and his refusal to accept Makiwane as his tutor: 'I fear I must now report to the High Commissioner that Sobhuza takes no interest in his education and that my efforts to help him forward are not helped by you.'¹ Labotsibeni replied, saying in essence that since she had reluctantly acquiesced in Honey's insistence that Grendon should not tutor Sobhuza, Honey might deign to respect her wish that Makiwane not be employed in the same role.²



Honey had charged that Grendon was 'unsuitable' to tutor Sobhuza. The fact is that was altogether *too* suitable for the role. Honey distrusted Grendon for the same reason that he approved of such mission-educated Africans as John James Xaba. These men 'pursued a strategy of political compromise with white rulers in the interest of gaining their aid, and in hopes of being recognized as allies, as white missionaries persuaded them they could be'.³ In contrast, political compromise that entailed the denial of Swazi sovereignty was anathema to Grendon.

Labotsibeni favoured Grendon as a tutor because she knew that he was entirely loyal in the issue of Swazi sovereignty, and that he considered Britain bound by its 'solemn treaty pledges, which affirmed that "no inroad on [Swazi] independence shall be allowed"'.⁴ Britain could not maintain its prestige while renegeing on assurances already given. To Grendon, taking orders from the Resident Commissioner in respect of Sobhuza's education would be tantamount to condoning Britain's usurpation of the authority of the precolonial rulers.

Kuper presents the sequel to this contest between colonial and precolonial power in a positive light: 'A compromise was reached.' Sobhuza was tutored by Lancelot Msoni, 'and Grendon remained in Swaziland. Sobhuza would benefit by the wisdom

¹ SwNA, RCS 75/19: Resident Commissioner to Labotsibeni, 20 Nov. 1919.

² SwNA, RCS 333/19: Labotsibeni to Resident Commissioner, 1 Dec. 1919.

³ Lowe, 'Swaziland's Colonial Politics', 322–23.

⁴ 'Annexation of Swaziland', *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3.

and knowledge of both.’¹ It is doubtful that Grendon considered this to be a satisfactory compromise. Msomi’s and Grendon’s ‘wisdom and knowledge’ will not have run in the same tracks. All the same, Kuper does point to an ongoing advisory relationship between Grendon and the *Ngwenyama*. Given Kuper’s friendship with Sobhuza, and the fact that he commissioned her to write his official biography, we may accept that Grendon’s ‘wisdom and knowledge’ were indeed valued by him.²

From this time on, Grendon largely disappears from the official records. But he did not go into retirement; he merely went underground. Experience had taught him that he would need to behave with considerable circumspection in future, because even those Africans who represented themselves as friendly might be spies and informers for the colonial regime. The roles of tutor and adviser are not qualitatively different. If he could not be Sobhuza’s official tutor, he could be his unofficial and clandestine adviser. According to Grendon’s descendants, this is precisely the role that Grendon assumed.



Grendon enjoyed a close, though complicated, relationship with Labotsibeni. While he genuinely acknowledged her authority, he appears at times to have grown annoyed at her resistance to the inevitable changes sweeping Swaziland.³ The old Queen-Regent liked him. Apparently in return for his services, she assigned him land on the slopes of Mjingo mountain, which lies a little over three kilometres northwest of Manzini (formerly, Bremersdorp). This may be the ‘Twin Rock Farm, Bremersdorp’ where we find Grendon early in August 1918.⁴ This spot came to be known as ‘kaLabotsibeni’ in her honour; it was also called ‘Ekush’ on account of the presence there of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church.⁵ The AME is known popularly in southern Africa as Ekush, after the biblical Cush, progenitor of Africans.⁶

¹ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 56–57.

² Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 14.

³ S. S. Dlamini, manuscript; interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008. In ‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland’ (*Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5), Grendon attacks Labotsibeni’s spiritual character, and links it to the reactionary element in Swazi society, centred on Zombodze royal kraal.

⁴ ‘Native Unrest’, *Ilanga* 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918).

⁵ S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

⁶ Interview: N. D. Ntiwane, Malkerns, Swaziland, 7 June 2008.

Around 1923, Grendon married Gwilikile Dlamini—also known as Victoria (plate 12e). Gwilikile was born at Mankayana in western Swaziland, the daughter of Prince Ndlov'iyangena¹ Dlamini and laVilakati.² She had two full brothers, including Mankenga (or George), who subsequently came to live at kaLabotsibeni.³ Prior to her marriage to Grendon, Gwilikile had cohabited with a man surnamed Nkambule, by whom she had a daughter, Felicia (1922–64).⁴ Gwilikile was Wesleyan.⁵

Grendon was about fifty-six years old at the time of this marriage. Almost nothing is known of his private life: we simply have no concrete evidence that he was not a virgin when he met Gwilikile.⁶ All the same, despite his professed acceptance of Swedenborg's conjugal principle, it seems unlikely that this was his first relationship. Their first child was Kuku, also known as Aurora (1925–2008; see frontispiece and plate 12f). She was born at Ekush. Her brother Michael (1927–68) followed two years later.⁷ They grew up with Felicia as their sister.

Kuku recalls that things were quite wild at Ekush when she was a child. She remembers the large pythons that her uncle Mankenga Dlamini used to catch on Mjinggo mountain. He made some money by selling their skins for the manufacture of shoes.⁸ Grendon made several improvements to the farm, planting crops, as well as mango and orange trees. Kuku remembers feasting on mangos when she was a girl. Some of these ancient mango trees still survive.⁹ Her father kept a sizable herd of cattle, and grew crops besides. Gwilikile used to tend the farm, and also looked after cattle of her own. The Grendon home at Ekush was an unpretentious wattle-and-daub *rondavel*.¹⁰ Robert was always a scholar, and used to read and write a lot. He owned

¹ 'Enter the Elephant', as translated by Richard Patricks.

² *i.e.*, 'daughter of Vilakati', as translated by Richard Patricks.

³ S. S. Dlamini, manuscript; interviews: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008; 5 July 2008.

⁴ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

⁵ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

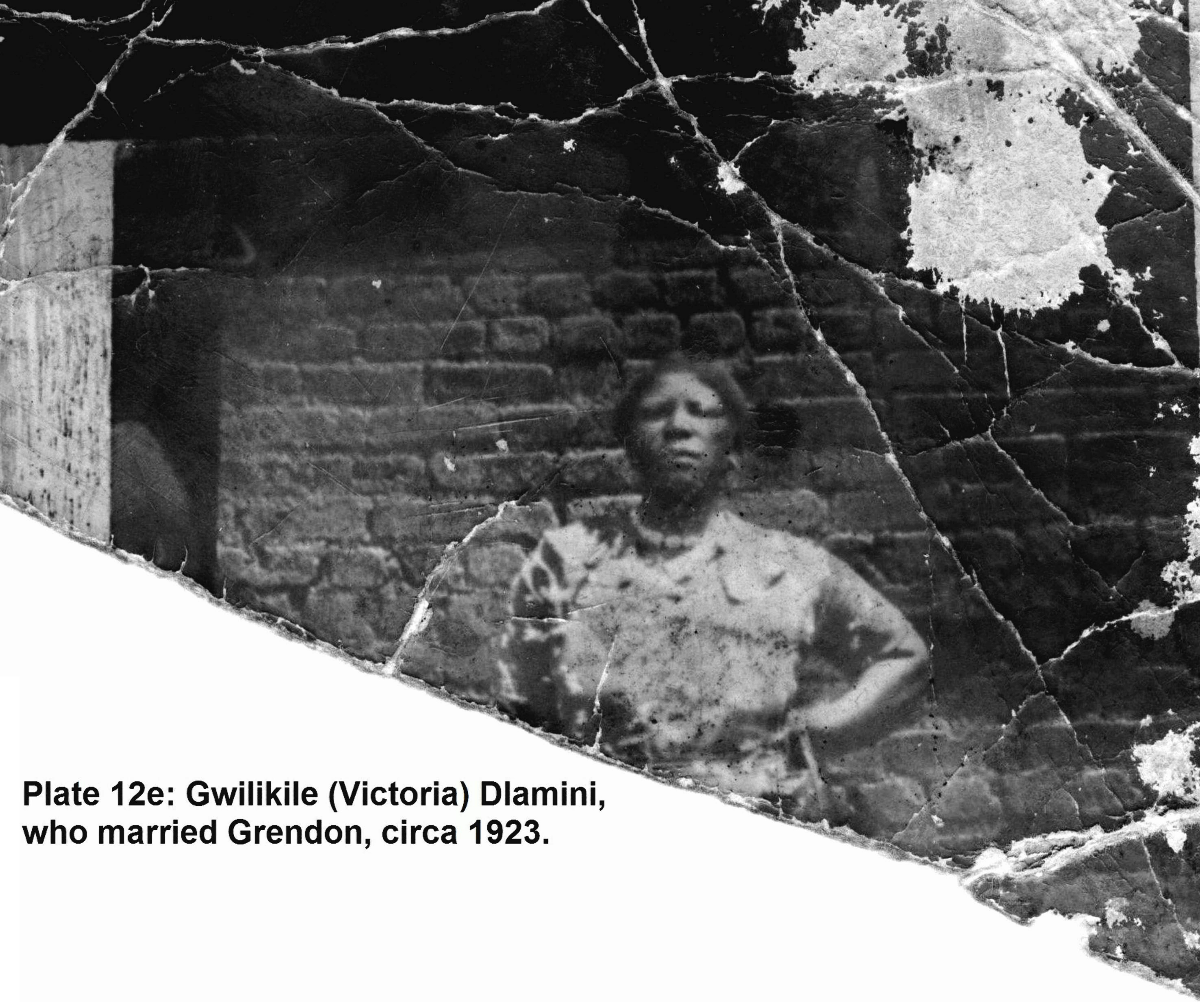
⁶ Their daughter, Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, told me that some time after her father's death, a letter arrived, the contents of which seemed to imply that her father had children by a previous relationship. She had had no reason to suspect this prior to his death.

⁷ S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

⁸ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

⁹ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

¹⁰ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.



**Plate 12e: Gwilikile (Victoria) Dlamini,
who married Grendon, circa 1923.**

Plate 12f: Aurora (Kuku) Grendon, as a young woman.



many books, and when he was at home, it was his practice to keep indoors much of time, where he would busy himself with his books.¹

In 1918–19, the African Methodist Episcopal Church operated a small school at Bremersdorp—apparently its only one in Swaziland at that time—where the average attendance was eight boys and seven girls.² It seems likely that this was at Ekush, and that Grendon was the teacher. The AME minister, Rev. Enoch William Ntiwane, came to Bremersdorp in 1918, at the request of the Sibaya family and of Benjamin Nxumalo. He served there until 1926. With him came his younger brother, Myotha Isaiah Ntiwane (born c.1905–06), whom Grendon taught at Ekush. Myotha's future wife, Silima Jenny Dlamini (born 1907) was also taught there by Grendon, until she was upgraded to the National School, on account of her relationship to the royal family.³ It seems clear therefore that Grendon was teaching at Ekush by the early 1920s. He did not however rely upon teaching for his income. The farm kept him economically self-sufficient.⁴

The cobbler's children go unshod. Despite Grendon being a highly-educated man and a pioneering pedagogue in Swaziland, he does not appear to have paid significant attention to the education of his own children. His daughter Kuku's schooling was fitful and elementary. She took her earliest lessons at Ekush, where her father taught her for a while. He was a good teacher, she remembers, but he used to scold his pupils when they made mistakes. She also attended a Methodist-run school for a time and, finally, she went to the Church of the Nazarene mission school on the outskirts of Bremersdorp. It was there that she learnt her skill as a seamstress.⁵

Sobhuza's mother Lomawa had at one time contemplated being officially inducted into the Methodist Church, with which she had been familiar since girlhood, but her mother-in-law Labotsibeni and the Swazi council had persuaded her that such a step would be inconsistent with her ritual duties. All the same, Lomawa retained an interest in Christianity, and her classificatory brother, the mission-educated and well-spoken Benjamin Nxumalo, was active in the African Methodist Episcopal Church,

¹ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

² SwNA, RCS 206/19: Annual Report for Year Ending 31 March 1919.

³ Interview: N. D. Ntiwane, Malkerns, Swaziland, 7 June 2008.

⁴ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

⁵ Interviews: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

with which denomination Grendon was also closely associated.¹ According to Kuku, it was Lomawa and Grendon who were prime movers behind the erection of the Labotsibeni Memorial AME Church, which was built on the land that the recently-deceased Queen Regent had assigned to Grendon.²

The church's foundation stone is dated 6 July 1930. It was laid in the presence of Sobhuza and apparently also of Texas-born George Benjamin Young, 52nd Bishop of the AME Church.³ The building was completed in dressed stone, as was a small manse situated close by. Grendon assisted in the construction of the church, contributing funds and taking a hand in the building.⁴ Others who played important roles in the establishment of this church were Benjamin Nxumalo, together with at least one of his brothers, and their nephew Sobhuza—although Sobhuza personally never professed Christianity.⁵

The AME school at Ekush was conducted in a separate building.⁶ During the 1920s, there was very little education offered around Bremersdorp. The one notable exception was the Church of the Nazarene school. Grendon and Sobhuza wanted to establish an AME school at Ekush to compare with the highly-regarded Wilberforce College at Evaton in the Transvaal. This was the flagship of the AME organization in southern Africa, where, in addition to the high school, such industries as shoe making, dressmaking, carpentry, and building were taught, and teacher training was also offered. Sobhuza asked the AME Church to build a college at Ekush. This ambitious scheme never got off the ground, as adequate funding could not be raised.⁷

The Labotsibeni Memorial School did however operate, and offered primary education. It was supported in part by the Swaziland administration, which sent out funds quarterly to the official grantees of those missions that ran schools. These grantees then disbursed the teachers' salaries. After the June quarter of 1930, the teacher at Ekush had not received his salary because the grant had been received very late, and the grantee, Rev. P. N. Selepe—who was also the presiding elder of the

¹ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 110; Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

² Interview: Isabel Tshabalala and Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

³ Cornerstone of the Labotsibeni Memorial Church.

⁴ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

⁵ S. S. Dlamini, manuscript; Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

⁶ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala and Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

⁷ Interviews: N. D. Ntiwane, Malkerns, Swaziland, 7 June 2008; Harry Mhlongo, Manzini, 7 June 2008.

Labotsibeni Memorial Church¹—had been absent from Swaziland. On his return, he discovered that the teacher had left his post, and was believed to have taken up another elsewhere.

Not unnaturally, the parents of pupils at the school were unhappy, and Robert Grendon wrote a letter of complaint on their behalf, dated 14 August 1930, to District Commissioner Sydney Williams. In it, Grendon suggested that government grants be paid direct to teachers in future, and not via a third-party grantee. In this way, ‘teachers would not be inconvenienced by delays in drawing salaries’. Williams read Grendon’s letter at a meeting of the Advisory Board on Native Education, held at Bremersdorp, on 10 October. This meeting was attended by high-ranking officials of the administration, including the Resident Commissioner himself, and clerics of several denominations. Selepe, who was present at the meeting, explained how the problem had arisen, exculpated himself, and blamed the teacher in question for leaving ‘without consent’ and not coming back ‘to claim his salary’. Grendon’s proposal was debated seriously, and Allister Miller, the most prominent white settler in the country, made the point that ‘it was perfectly obvious that smaller-salaried teachers should be regularly paid to stimulate their interest and keep them out of debt. It was a very important matter.’²

Grendon’s brother-in-law, Mankenga Dlamini, who lived periodically at Ekush, did not enjoy a good reputation. Kuku Grendon considered her uncle a *skelm* (Afrikaans for ‘rogue’), and one of his grandchildren describes him as ‘a very lazy man’. He was shiftless, improvident, and opportunistic.³ Mankenga cared little for his family, and frequently absconded for lengthy periods—sometimes to South Africa; at other times to Hlathikulu in southern Swaziland. On these occasions, his family might lose track of his whereabouts. Then he would turn up again—his arrivals unannounced like his departures.⁴ His wife Cecilia had a hard time of it, trying to support her children without his help. To earn money, she took in laundry from the

¹ Cornerstone of the Labotsibeni Memorial Church.

² Swaziland Board of Advice on African Education: Minutes, 10 Oct. 1930. See Archival Material in Bibliography.

³ Interviews: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; Seraphy Resting, Manzini, June 2008.

⁴ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June, 5 July 2008.

white folk of Bremersdorp, personally carrying it in large bundles, and delivering it to homes when once it was washed.¹

Grendon pitied Cecilia who was ‘stranded with the kids’ whenever her husband deserted. Mankenga had not acquired the traditional right to set up a homestead of his own, but had to be accommodated at Grendon’s homestead. Feeling for Cecilia, Grendon followed local custom by offering a beast as tribute (*khonta*) to the chief at Lo Goba, situated near Ekush, on behalf of Cecilia and her children. It was therefore through Grendon’s initiative that his brother-in-law obtained the permission to set up a separate homestead at Ekush. Grendon also erected a new *rondavel* (circular, single-roomed, mud-walled hut) so that Cecilia would have a place of her own.² Gwilikile Grendon adopted her nephew Raphael, Mankenga’s child, and cared for him.³

Kuku Grendon had happy memories of her early childhood at Ekush. She used to tell her daughter Isabel of the lovely quality of life she enjoyed while her mother and father were both still alive. She was the apple of her father’s eye. Had those days lasted, and had her parents lived, she believed that she would have enjoyed the best kind of life.⁴

Life in the Grendon household was seldom dull. Because Robert was intimate with the leading Swazi men and women, he frequently had distinguished visitors, or made visits on them. Most of his friends were black: as a general rule the white colonials kept aloof from even the best-educated blacks. Grendon was very closely associated with the Nxumalo brothers, of whom Benjamin was the best-known, although Kuku believes that her father’s best friend was ‘Elias’ Nxumalo, whom she identifies as a younger brother to Benjamin.⁵ They were classificatory brothers to Lomawa, Sobhuza’s mother. Grendon was very often to be found in company with Benjamin and Elias Nxumalo, Lomawa, and Sobhuza.⁶

¹ Interviews: Mrs Seraphy Resting, Manzini, June 2008; Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

² S. S. Dlamini, manuscript; interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

³ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

⁴ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

⁵ Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa seems to be mistaken about the name of Elias Nxumalo. There were four Nxumalo brothers—Benjamin, Philemon, Naphthali and Norman. Their father Elijah—conceivably Mrs Malumisa’s ‘Elias’—was ‘one of the first Swazi preachers of Christianity’ (Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 33).

⁶ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

Lomawa (died 1938) and Gwilikile were related.¹ Kuku remembers the *ndlovukati* Lomawa's fondness for her when she was a small girl. Lomawa would sometimes invite Gwilikile to visit her, and Kuku would accompany her mother on those visits. On other occasions, she would accompany her father on horseback to visit Lomawa, who would always give them plenty of meat to eat.²

Around 1935, when Kuku was about eight or ten, her mother Gwilikile died, although still a young woman. The children Felicia, Kuku, and Michael were left with their father.³ During the period immediately following their mother's death, Robert began to spend more time with his children, and became quite close to them.⁴ Perhaps he felt the need to console them; perhaps he was consoling himself. Kuku's best memories of her father date from this time.

She used to tell her daughter Isabel that her father was a great lover of music. He had a fine singing voice, and was forever singing or whistling. Sometimes he took Kuku and Felicia to sit with him by a chuckling stream. Isabel recalls something her mother used to tell her:

He just used to sing. When they were young, he would sometimes take her to the river. You hear the sound of water—*qung, qung, qung*—and he would tell them that he could make music out of that—and he used to tell Aurora and the other sister that he could make a very beautiful instrument with that reed. And people who knew him, when they asked about him, used to call him 'the humming bird'. He had a melodious voice.⁵

Grendon loved the sound of flowing water, as is evident from several of his poems. Scenes in both 'Melia and Pietro' and 'Pro Aliis Damnati' are played out beside babbling brooks or a waterfall. Melia delights in 'bubbles on the stream, that fun | With ferns upon their way',⁶ and in 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas', Grendon describes how

blending with the warbling of the birds
The crystal streamlets chatter over rocks

¹ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

² S. S. Dlamini, manuscript; Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

³ Interviews: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa and Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008, 5 July 2008.

⁴ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

⁵ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

⁶ 'M&P', Pt VII.

In ceaseless uninterpretable words,
 Which strange articulations Silence mocks.
 And chattering incessantly thro' wood,
 And over rock past Nomandafu's Pass,
 These silv'ry waters flow in joyful mood
 On their meandering way to Umkomazi.¹

In a small way, it seems that Grendon conveyed something of his poetic nature to his daughter. Kuku cherished the memory of those few, leisurely occasions she spent with her beloved father.

As a girl, Kuku used to embroider and to make beautiful doilies. Her father would sit and watch her at work. Frequently, he would say to her: 'If you do a thing, do it perfectly. Everything you do, do it right, do it perfectly.' According to his granddaughter, in everything that he tackled, Grendon's philosophy was that it should be done 'perfectly, with concentration'.² This tallies with the name that his Zulu pupils first gave him, 'Nongamu'—'Longamu' in siSwati. That name embodies the meticulous care with which Grendon took on most tasks.

His intimacy with his children did not last, however. His work called him away from Ekush, and so, once again, he began to have little contact with his children.³ Kuku does not know what her father's movements were at this time. He may have taken a teaching post somewhere—he may even have been in South Africa. She knows that her father lived for a while in Sophiatown, and that he may have taught school there, but she is uncertain as to the time and duration of this period away from Swaziland.

According to Grendon's granddaughter, Isabel Tshabalala, while he was 'in Sophiatown, he had some quarrel with General Hertzog, and then he ran away to Swaziland. That was why he never came back to South Africa. He had a quarrel with that guy, and then that's when he just decided to move to Swaziland, and King Sobhuza kept him there.'⁴ J. B. M. Hertzog was Prime Minister of the Union from 1924 to 1939. If Grendon did cross swords with him or with his administration, then it

¹ 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas', *Ipepa lo Hlanga* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.

² Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

³ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

⁴ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

was likely at some point during this time. Having returned to Swaziland, where Sobhuza gave him asylum, he evidently judged it imprudent to return to South Africa.

Grendon was at Lobamba royal kraal (plate 12g) of the *Ndlovukati* Lomawa for lengthy periods while Kuku was a child.¹ This may explain why Kuper describes Zombodze—which is not far from Lobamba—as Grendon’s ‘base’.² As Kuper points out, in Swazi culture, ‘the largest and most important royal village, the capital, is always that of the reigning queen mother’, and in 1934, Lobamba’s population was 265, although it fluctuated between the seasons.³ The village lay in the Ezulweni valley and in the 1930s was still ‘composed of bee-hive shaped huts ... surrounded by a fence of dead thorn trees’.⁴ It was not far from Sobhuza’s own residence at Lozitha.

During this time, it appears that Grendon was employed as a political adviser by Sobhuza—a role that would have been concealed as far as possible from the white government in Mbabane, and so cannot be verified in official records. While she was *Ndlovukati*, Labotsibeni had employed literate black foreigners in her country to keep a careful check on such official publications as pertained to the affairs of Swaziland.⁵ Perhaps Grendon was employed in a similar capacity by Sobhuza. He certainly took a keen and intelligent interest in politics and constitutional history, and would have been an ideal candidate for the job. According to Kuku, her father used to help Sobhuza a great deal. The British wanted to take the country from him, but Grendon ‘used to teach him everything’ so as to prevent this happening. Grendon had many books.⁶ For Grendon’s services, Sobhuza remunerated him with cattle.⁷

Kuku also tells a story to illustrate how her father looked after the wellbeing of Swaziland and its *Ngwenyama*, Sobhuza. On one occasion, one of the white settlers invited Sobhuza to dinner. Grendon suspected the host’s motives, and warned Sobhuza to be wary, because ‘these people were against Swaziland and wanted the country to be ruled by the British people’. As it happened, Sobhuza’s host had poisoned his tea, but the cups were adroitly swapped, so that the white man died,

¹ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

² Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 342.

³ Kuper ‘Development of the Military Organization in Swaziland’, 61.

⁴ Doveton, *Human Geography of Swaziland*, 33.

⁵ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, 56.

⁶ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

⁷ S. S. Dlamini, manuscript; Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008.

Plate 12g: Lobamba royal kraal (1920s) where Grendon spent much of his time.



LOBAMBA ROYAL KRAAL, SWAZILAND.

rather than his royal guest.¹ This tale, though clearly apocryphal, hints at the protective role that Grendon adopted during his mature years.

Grendon was often with Sobhuza, and used to travel about on the *Ngwenyama*'s business. Although more than thirty years separated them, they were very close. Kuku recalls that Sobhuza was very kind to her father. He was such 'a good somebody; he was respecting my old man a lot.' According to her, the Swazi chiefs were also fond of Grendon. She denies that the Swazi people ever disrespected her father on account of his mixed-race ancestry: the *Ngwenyama* would never have permitted that.² Because he was such an inveterate whistler, Sobhuza used jokingly to call him *isiba lendlati*, which Kuku translates as 'humming bird'. Sobhuza would tell everyone that they should 'whistle for that old man, because he is the only man who will look after them'. And in response, people would whistle vigorously.³



Some time after Gwilikile's death, her brother Mankenga approached Sobhuza to say that, since Grendon was so much absent from home, he would like to adopt Felicia, Kuku, and Michael. Sobhuza believed Mankenga to be sincere, and he instructed that the children be given over to his care. Because of Grendon's onerous responsibilities as adviser to Sobhuza, he acquiesced in this arrangement.

According to Kuku, her uncle's real motive was to acquire their property—including Grendon's cattle. He did not honour his commitment to care for Grendon's children, who suffered considerably from that time on. Mankenga was abusive and neglectful. He did nothing to provide for the children's education. They had cattle of their own that might have been sold to raise funds for their schooling. George kept these cattle for himself.⁴ Into old age, Kuku remains bitterly resentful of what her uncle did to her.

But her father must also be blamed for his children's suffering during these bitter years. In Kuku's opinion, he knew that Mankenga was no fit guardian for his children,

¹ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

² Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

³ Interviews: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008; Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

⁴ Interviews: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa and Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008, 5 July 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

and yet he never protested at what his brother-in-law was doing. Her father's culpable inertia caused her deep hurt and confusion throughout her life. She could not help holding this against her father. Many times when she sat alone in quiet reflection—then as a girl, and subsequently as an adult—she grew angry with her father because he had done nothing to alleviate her suffering. To compound her difficulties, she missed her mother. To Isabel she later confided how the anger still welled up whenever she reflected on how she was cheated out of her due and deprived of contact with the father she loved, and who—she felt sure—must love her too. As Isabel said in interview, 'She's just got questions about what did happen—but she doesn't have the answers.'¹

For all his achievements in the public sphere, Grendon was something of a failure in the domestic sphere. His mind brimmed with urgent political topics of the day; with his public duties; with his newspapers. He was simply not cut out as a family man; was never a hands-on parent. He educated other people's children, but had insufficient time to instruct his own. On the whole, there seems to have been little communication between him and his children. Kuku, for instance, knew that her father had gone to school in Cape Town, but she was never told about her Uncle William and Aunt Mary Ann in Natal. She did not even know that her father wrote poetry.² Grendon may have been an accomplished linguist, but his daughter's English language skills are unremarkable.

With Mankenga's failure to maintain the children, and employment opportunities being so few in Swaziland, Kuku decided to try for a better life in South Africa. While still a girl, she went to live for a short while with a female relative in Bethal. In the early 1940s, when she was no more than eighteen, she moved to Johannesburg and found work in a dress factory, where her skill as a seamstress stood her in good stead. After she had established herself in Johannesburg, she received a phone call from her brother Michael, who subsequently came to live with her, and began job hunting.³

Kuku returned to Swaziland as often as she was able before her father's death in 1949. She recalls that Grendon spent his last years in total blindness at Ekush. He

¹ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa and Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

² Interviews: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008; Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

³ Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008, 5 July 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

used to receive a small pension ‘from Pretoria’, which he paid over to Cecilia, who kept house for him, and did his washing and ironing. She and Felicia looked after the old man, and kept him looking respectable.¹

Kuku believes that Grendon’s failing vision was the consequence of cataracts. Generally speaking, her father enjoyed good health. While he still had partial eyesight, the *Ngwenyama* Sobhuza would take him from one traditional doctor to another, to see if any one of them could effect a cure. Kuku maintains that these doctors ‘helped him a lot’, but they were unable to prevent him from going blind. Sobhuza had been very kind to Grendon: ‘He used to look after my father. Really!’ A social complication of Grendon’s blindness was that people began to take advantage of him. When he could no longer see to count his herd, neighbours began to rustle his cattle. His brother-in-law Mankenga was either complicit in this, or failed to prevent its occurrence.²

Grendon died on 7 July 1949.³ This is the date that Kuku gave Couzens when he interviewed her in the 1970s. The date ‘1948’ that appears on a recent tomb-stone at Ekush, where he is buried in a small cemetery, is wrong, as is the spelling of his surname: ‘Grandon’. When her father died, Aurora was recalled to Swaziland. Together with Cecilia, she followed custom in visiting Sobhuza to mourn her father’s death. Sobhuza was saddened, but unable to attend the funeral, because as *Ngwenyama*, he was not permitted to come in contact with death. All the same, he personally bore the entire cost of the funeral. He made a gift of some cows to the Grendon family and sent his *emabutfo* (regiments) to Ekush to bury his old tutor and friend. These soldiers excavated the grave. According to Kuku, Sobhuza did not ‘want any ordinary persons to bury the old man’.

On at least two occasions after her father’s death, Sobhuza contacted Kuku in South Africa, and asked if she would send him any books or papers that her father had kept. On the first occasion, while she was living in Diepkloof, she sent him the few books she had. She understands that Sobhuza required her father’s books as source material for something he was writing. The second occasion was shortly before

¹ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

² Interviews: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008, 5 July 2008.

³ Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 55.

Sobhuza's death in 1982. He summoned Kuku to Lobamba royal kraal, and asked that she bring with her any papers that Grendon had kept. Unfortunately, Sobhuza died before she reached Swaziland, and she was present at his funeral, where she wore traditional mourning weeds.¹



Kuku remembers that the Swazi people held 'Longamu'—her father—in the highest regard. He had a distinguished bearing—so much so that strangers would frequently make inquiry as to his identity. He was handsome and very neat—always very careful about his dress.² He was acknowledged as doubly adept: steeped in the knowledge systems of both whites and blacks. There was an aura of mystique about him, too, and he had the reputation of being a spiritual 'healer'. He practised palmistry, and could tell people all about their concerns. They would come to him with domestic problems, or when they were 'suffering', or in search of employment.³

So highly esteemed was Grendon in Swaziland that at least two sets of parents decided to name their sons after him. One of these was Grendon Longamu Fakudze (born 1933). The other was Longamu Grandon Vilakati (1923–73), son of Raymond or Makhweleni Vilakati. Raymond was a son of Mkhulunyelwa Vilakati, a man trusted by Labotsibeni and Lomawa, who had been charged with the safe custody of the infant Sobhuza for a time during the South African War.⁴ Raymond was therefore among the elite of the Swazi youth when, in 1916–18, he and a few others accompanied Sobhuza to school at Lovedale. In January 1916, Grendon had announced in *Abantu-Batho* that 'a number of Swazi youths, three of whom are girls', were shortly to accompany Sobhuza to Lovedale.⁵ Upon his return to Swaziland, Raymond became Sobhuza's first private secretary. He married Margaret, who had also been one of the cohort of Swazi students attending Lovedale. Raymond and Margaret named their son after Grendon. When this boy grew up he married Princess Myingili, a daughter of Sobhuza.⁶

¹ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

² Interview: Isabel Tshabalala, Vanderbijlpark, 30 June 2008; S. S. Dlamini, manuscript.

³ Telephone conversation: Isabel Tshabalala, 9 July 2008.

⁴ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, p. 34.

⁵ 'Editorial Notes' and 'Farewell Msindazwe!' *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).

⁶ Interview: Richard Patricks, National Museum, Lobamba, 5 June 2008.

It was in Swaziland that Grendon performed his greatest service to the Kingdom of Usus. To his mind, it was likely a particularly meritorious instance of use to champion and protect Sobhuza—a ruler in the direct line of precolonial Swazi kings. Kuku remembers that her father was always very jealous for Sobhuza’s personal safety and also—more generally—for the preservation of Swazi rights. Swaziland owes much to her father. Before he arrived, ‘there were no schools; they knew about this school because of my father. And their King, also. He [*i.e.*, Grendon] taught them about education.’¹ Grendon’s former students would remember him as a hard worker and a diligent teacher, who worked tirelessly for the uplift of the people.² As an editorial in *Ilanga* (1918) says, Grendon

qualifies his name for a high place in the history of the Bantu. We are writing our history day by day and the time will come when our penmen will compile it into books. Mr Grendon’s name should be found among many other good names of those who help to make the Bantu a great practical nation.³

Selby Msimang appears to accuse Grendon of ‘struggling to ascend the ladder of historic fame’.⁴ This is a jaundiced representation of the man whose talents, courage, and many labours certainly entitle him to ‘a high place’ in African history. To be sure, he had serious faults, but, as he himself inquires rhetorically, ‘Who is absolutely clean?’⁵

I stand beside his unkempt grave in a small cemetery near the Labotsibeni Memorial Church, within sight of Manzini, Swaziland. Two scrawny dogs slink past me, as I reflect upon a man, probably conceived in remote Ovamboland, whose remains now lie obscurely buried beneath my feet, a thousand miles distant from his childhood home—separated from their origins by almost the entire girth of a continent. If he were alive and could speak to me, he would probably say something consonant with his poetic address to the deceased Michal Nkosi. Like her, he *lives*—‘but not beneath yon clay-heaps dead’.⁶ Few today are able to share his vision of the cosmos and of the African Jerusalem. Even so, may his reputation as author of *Paul*

¹ Interview: Kuku (Aurora) Malumisa, Vanderbijlpark, 5 July 2008.

² Interview: Harry Mhlongo, Manzini, 7 June 2008.

³ ‘Critical Examination’, *Ilanga* 16:46 (15 Nov. 1918) 3.

⁴ ‘Mr Msane and Native Congress’, *Ilanga* 14:668 (24 March 1916) 5.

⁵ ‘The Tragedy of Malunge’, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.

⁶ ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.

Kruger's Dream live to the world! We say to him what he said to those intellectuals who undertook to collect African traditions and set them forth in writing: May 'posterity still unborn ... bless your memory, and look back upon you with feelings of gratitude'.¹

¹ 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4.

APPENDIX 1

AUTHORSHIP OF *ILANGA* EDITORIALS

In Chapter 7, it was argued that Grendon authored the anonymous English-language editorial material in *Ilanga lase Natal* during the fifteen-month foreign absence of John L. Dube, from February 1904 to May 1905. This table is intended to supplement that argument with intertextual evidence. In the left-hand column are passages and allusions taken from Grendon's onymous texts and from a few of his pseudonymous texts of which the authorship is not in dispute. In the right-hand column are the anonymous *Ilanga* editorials.

PAUL KRUGER'S DREAM

ILANGA

British rule characterized by "**Justice**", "**Truth**", "**Liberty**", "Right" (subtitle of *PKD*).

England serves 'the cause of **justice**, and of **truth** and equity' ('The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3).

British rule characterized by '**justice**, equity, **liberty** and **truth**' ('Annexation of Swaziland', *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 4).

'**Magna Charta**—| Keystone of thy liberty' (*PKD*, Dedication, p. v).

'**Magna Charta** of the natives' ('A Worthy Philanthropist', *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 3–4).

'the "**Magna Charta**" of the Hottentots' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 4).

The **Regicide** of Charles I (*PKD*, Dedication, p. v).

The **Regicide** of Charles I ('Native Taxation', *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 3).

'Slavedom's fallen **to rise no more**' (*PKD*, Dedication, p. vi).

'the greater part of his crew went down beneath the wave **to rise no more**' ('Brag and Die!' *Ilanga* 2:55 (29 April 1904) 4).

'Corpses stretch'd **to rise no more**' (*PKD*, Pt III, p. 11).

{*cf.* 'Those brothers twain will **rise no more**' ('In Memoriam', *Citizen* 20 (22 Dec. 1897) 2).}

England's **Asiento** with Spain to supply slaves to her American colonies (*PKD*, Dedication, p. vi).

England's **Asiento** with Spain to supply slaves to her American colonies ('Slavery of Not?' *Ilanga*, 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4; and 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3).

Britannia heeds '**some upright sons**' **denouncings**' and abolishes Slavery (*PKD*, Dedication, p. vi).

Britain heeds 'the fierce **denouncings** and pleadings of **certain** of her **upright** and true-hearted **sons**' and abolishes Slavery ('A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3).

Britain pays '**a mighty compensation**' to former slave-owners (*PKD*, Dedication, p. vi).

Britain pays '**a heavy ransom**' to former slave-owners ('A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3).

'**mancipation**' (*PKD*, Dedication, p. vi).

'Thou ... | Raisest now thy hand, and **purgest** | This polluted **Boer** domain' (*PKD*, Dedication, p. vi).

'**in ease, and plenty**' (*PKD*, Pt I, p. 1).

(Context: Lotus-eaters.)

Africans in their precolonial state likened to '**Lotus-eaters**' (*PKD*, Pt I, p. 2).

{Cf. The Swazi, 'like the **Lotos-Eaters** ... were loth to rise' ('Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5).}

Sir Theophilus Shepstone known to Africans as a '**Nimrod** or mighty hunter' (*PKD*, Pt VIII, p. 25n.).

'**scene of strife**' (*PKD*, Pt X, p. 31).

'**scenes of strife**' (*PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 41).

British interest in the Transvaal awakened suddenly upon discovery of gold (*PKD*, Pt XI, p. 32).

'Natives and persons of colour are addressed [by Boers] as "zwarte goed"; "zwarte **schepsels**"' (*PKD*, Pt XII, p. 36n).

{Cf. 'the Boer ... is wont to call ... those Africans not of his class and colour "**schepse!**"' ('Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916)).}

Boers' spurious biblical basis for mistreating Africans: 'The **Dutch** base their assertion upon the story connected with Noah's drunkenness. According to **Gen. ix., 20–25**, Ham was not **cursed**, but his youngest son **Canaan**' (*PKD*, Pt XII, p. 37n).

Transvaal requires blacks to wear badges: 'Your arms shall we with **badges** clasp | Like dogs with chains their necks about' (*PKD*, Pt XII, p. 37n).

Transvaal addresses its blacks: '**Bow down, ye dogs, when white men frown**, | And crouch submissive at their feet!' (*PKD*, Pt XII, p. 38).

'**mancipation**' ('The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3).

Transvaal Colony 'said to **purged of Boer** prejudice and hate towards the natives' ('Bow Down You Dogs!' *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4).

'**in ease and plenty**' ('Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4). (Context: Lotus-eaters.)

Addressed to Africans: 'The time of **Lotus-Eaters**, and Lotus-Eating has ceased' ('Two Warnings', *Ilanga* 1:37 (18 Dec. 1903) 4).

'no rising or insurrection will take place on the part of the natives, unless they are goaded thereto by certain people whose desire is to see war, in order that they may reap pecuniary advantages thereby. Such characters fill the pages of history from the days of **Nimrod** to this present day' ('Freedom is Love!' *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 3).

'**scenes of earthly strife**' ('Obituary: Late Mr John Gama', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4).

British interest in the Transvaal awakened suddenly upon discovery of gold ('Annexation of Swaziland', *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3).

'The Boers looked upon the natives as mere creatures—"schepsels"' ('Bow Down Ye Dogs!' *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4).

'These injunctions the **Boers** defied, and sheltering themselves behind the "**Curse of Canaan**" (**Gen. ix 25, 26**), subjected certain of the aborigines of this sub-continent to the most brutal atrocities' ('A Voice From the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3).

Transvaal's '**badge system**' for blacks ('Bow Down You Dogs!' *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4).

'consider your condition that of dogs, you natives in the Transvaal, and like **dogs bow down when white men frown** at you' ('**Bow Down Ye Dogs!**' *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4).

'commanding his inferiors to crouch, and **bow down** like **dogs** before his presence' ('The Tiger and the Lion', *Ilanga* 2:45 (19 Feb. 1904) 4).

'**laugh to scorn**' (*PKD*, Pt XIII, 38).

Paul Kruger warned by the fate that overtook **Herod** (*PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 40).

'Amongst the **beasts**—himself a **beast**—he roam'd; | And like them **stoop'd** on grass, and herbs to feed' (*PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 40).

{*cf.* '**beasts**, whose **stooping** nature scorns all thought | Of life beyond the tomb' ('In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4).

'To such as **stoop** to feed,— | Like **beasts**—on grass' ('Tragedy of Malunge', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916)).}

Jameson Raid took place because the British Uitlander community in the Transvaal were taxed, but inadequately represented in the Volksraad: 'Although they contributed **vast sums of money** to the State Treasury, they were not allowed any share in the Government' (*PKD*, Pt XIII, p. 40).

Kruger's contempt for the Uitlander British community: 'On his first visit to Johannesburg (1890), Paul Kruger prefaced his speech to the people thus:—"Burghers, **Murderers**, and **Thieves**"' (*PKD*, Pt XVII, p. 48n).

'**Awake—arise**—lest dangers overtake | Us' (*PKD*, Pt XVII, p. 49).

'At Duty's call **awake—arise!**' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 67).

'**Awake—arise**—exert thy pow'r' (*PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 101).

{*Cf.* also: '**Awake!—arise!**' ('To You Abantu').}

'vengeance **swift and dire**' (*PKD*, Pt XVIII, p. 51).

Seventeen lines from Grendon's poem, '**An African's Vision**' appear as a footnote to *Paul Kruger's Dream* (*PKD*, Pt XVIII, p. 51n.).

'**Exod. xii., 49; Levit. xix., 34**, xxiv., 22; and **Num. xv., 16**' cited as instances of '**God's law**' which 'despots' '**despise**' when they 'brother man degrade' (*PKD*, Pt XVIII, p. 52, and p. 52n.).

Bloemfontein described as the '**Flow'ry Fount**' (*PKD*, Pt XX, p. 59).

'even beasts of the field will **laugh to scorn**' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4).

'**laugh to scorn**' ('The Native Vote', *Ilanga* 3:95 (10 Feb. 1905) 4).

'the most stupid **laughs it to scorn**' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:103 (7 April 1905) 4).

Lord Milner warned by the example of **Herod** ('The Voice of a God', *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4).

'his body **stooping** like the **brute** towards the earth' ('Copy the Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4).

'Was this not proved in the Transvaal before the late Boer War started? Was **taxation** without representation not the immediate cause of all the recent bloodshed in this country?' ('Poor Personality', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4).

Kruger 'stood out as a champion against what he termed the "new civilisation" of "**murderers**" and "**thieves**"' ('The Late President Kruger', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4).

'Again we say to you "**awake—arise**—or be for ever fallen!"' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4).

'**swift and dire** in its consequences' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4).

The same seventeen lines of '**An African's Vision**' appear in 'A Voice From the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3. Here, they are quoted anonymously, with a liberty that could only have been taken by the poet himself.

Ex. 12:49, Lev. 19:33–35, and **Num. 15:15–16** quoted as '**injunctions** [that] the Boers **defied**' ('A Voice From the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3).

The same texts are cited again in 'The Native Question', *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3.

Bloemfontein described as the '**Flowery Fount**' ('A Worthy Philanthropist', *Ilanga* 2:75 (6 Sept. 1904) 3).

'greetings wont **'twixt man and man'** (*PKD*, Pt XX, p. 59).

{Cf. 'exciting strife **betwixt Man and man'** ('Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5).}

'prove if any can, | That GOD ordain'd, that **man might hold** | Full **property in man!**' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 74).

Lapsed time from Act of Emancipation (1834); Emancipation commemorated annually:

Boers: 'With deepest curses annually | We'll hail **Emancipation Day**' (*PKD*, Pt XII, p. 37).

'**Six decades** full have wing'd their flight, | Since upright Britons mov'd | To pity at the bondsman's plight, | Harsh cruelty reprov'd' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 74).

'what **hateful** was **in sight** | **Of Him**' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 74).

Redeemer (Briton) and redeemed (freed black African):

'The serf by gold **redeem'd**' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, 74).

'**Redeemer**, and **redeem'd** here stand | 'Gainst you to testify!' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 75). *i.e.*, Briton and African 'testify' against the Boer.

'The **Boers**, despite their religious piety, have often inclined towards the abominations of **divination**, and **sorcery**' (*PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 79n).

Kruger's lament over the late Gen. Joubert: 'The tower of our race is smitten down, | And wreck'd! Our chiefest Captain, Piet Joubert | Alas, is dead! His **trumpet voice** we'll **hear no more** | In **sound debate** within yon **Senate-Hall!**' (*PKD*, Pt XXX, p. 97).

'**The times are chang'd!** The customs of this world | Like tatter'd garments upon dung-hills flung' (*PKD*, Pt XXXI, p. 100).

'**Natalia** ... | Shalt rank a **jewel** of renown | 'Mongst those that deck **Britannia's Crown!**' (*PKD*, Pt XXXII, p. 103).

'justice **between man and man** ('Justice Only!' *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 3).

'justice and right **between man and man**' ('S.A.N.A. Commission', *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4).

'**between man and man**' ('The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4).

'the wild and guilty phantasy that **men can hold property in man!**' (Lord Brougham quoted in: 'A Voice From the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3).

'Yesterday Dec. 1. is a red-letter day in all British possessions where slaves existed, for it was on this day that the slaves gained their freedom **six and sixty years** ago. To perpetuate the memory of slave **emancipation**, it has been the custom for the descendants of the slaves to celebrate the **day** above referred to' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4).

'And render'd **hateful in the sight** | **Of them**' (anonymous verse fragment embedded in 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4).

'The Briton in that case was the **redeemer**. What shall we now say when that **redeemer** turns round and joins hands with the erstwhile persecutor to trample down them whom he professed to **redeem**?' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4).

'human diseases which no European doctors can diagnose. ... And of all Europeans in South Africa the **Boers** alone recognise their existence, and have been convinced by many proofs that "dirty niggers" **can cure** them' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4).

'Yet another of Natalia's pillars by the hand of destiny is smitten down to crumble into dust; yet another silver **trumpet-voice** is hushed to be **heard in sound debate in Senate hall no more**' ('In Memoriam: The Late Sir John Robinson', *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4).

"TEMPORA MUTANTUR, ET NOS IN ILLIS MUTAMUR"—
"**The times are changed, and we are changed with them**" ('The Black Man and his Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3).

Natal described as 'the colony which boasts itself, to be one of the brightest **jewels** in the **British Crown**' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:95 (10 Feb. 1905) 3).

God described as '**Heav'n's Eternal King**' (*PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 107).

{This expression also occurs in 'Pro Aliis Damnati', Pt 17, *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4.}

'These very multitudes which unto me | This day "**hosanna**" raise, **to-morrow** morn | 'Gainst me will rage, and shout forth "**crucify!**" (*PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 112).

'**mocking dream!**' (*PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 113).

{Cf. '**mocking dreams**' ('PAD', Pt 5, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4).}

'As there I lay **o'erpower'd** in the **flesh**, | Yet in my heart, and **soul invincible**' (*PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 117).

'**herself unbosoms**' (*PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 123).

Of South African capitalists:

'the slaves of Lucre sweep | In denser crowds, to quench their **thirst for gold**' (*PKD*, Pt XXXVII, p. 133).

PKD, Pt XXXVII, p. 126.

PKD, Pt XXXVII, p. 133.

'Jehovah, "**Heav'n's Eternal King**" ('God With Us', *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 3).

'To-day, whilst "fortune smiles," they hail their idol with a deafening "**Hosanna**." **To-morrow**, when fortune frowns—as assuredly it must!—their salutation will be changed to a furious "**Crucify!**" ('The Voice of a God', *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4).

'has proved a **mocking dream**' ('Native Education', *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 3).

'Tho' human **flesh** be **overpowr'd**, | ... The **soul** lives on **invincible**' (anonymous verse embedded in 'Natives on the Footpaths', *Ilanga* 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4).

'**unbosomed himself**' ('Poor Personality', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 3).

Of South African capitalists:

'O, faithless and perverse generation of capitalists, whose **thirst for gold** is unquenchable' ('The Labour Problem', *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4).

'In the Transvaal revelations lately made prove that the **thirst for gold** is paramount to all else' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 4).

{cf. 'the insatiable greed of capitalists ... in the struggle **for gold**' ('South Africa's Future', *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4).}

Four lines from *PKD* quoted anonymously as an epigraph to 'The Late President Kruger', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

The final 25 lines of *PKD* quoted anonymously in 'The Late President Kruger', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.

These passages from *PKD* are quoted anonymously, with a liberty that could only have been taken by the poet himself. Tim Couzens ('Robert Grendon', 74) correctly identifies Grendon as author of this obituary.

‘unto damnation hurl’d’ (‘PAD’, Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4).

‘hurl | Him to the World of Shadows’ (‘PAD’, Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4).

‘hurl’d me to the Shades’ (‘PAD’, Pt 14, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4).

{Cf. also: ‘The wicked to ruin Thou hast often hurl’d’ (*PKD*, Pt VI, p. 20); ‘To ruin hurl’ (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 69); and numerous similar constructions, in ‘PAD’, and *PKD*, ‘Tshaka’s Death’, ‘In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala’, and ‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’.

‘death of shame’ occurs five times in ‘PAD’ (e.g., Pt 1, *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4).

‘blast[s] the lives | Of men’ (‘PAD’, Pt 4, *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4).

‘Twin lives, which wantonly yourselves do blast’ (‘PAD’, Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4).

‘trample down’; ‘trampling down’ (‘PAD’, Pts 5, 13, 16 (twice), 17, 19, 20).

{Cf. *PKD*, Pt VI, p. 18, and Pt X, p. 32; ‘Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5.}

‘evil moment’ (‘PAD’, Pt 7, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4; and Pt 19, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4).

‘extends | To Memnon suppliant hands in pleading’ (‘PAD’, Pt 7, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4).

‘I’ve launch’d myself upon the Sea of Ill!’ (‘PAD’, Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4).

‘this ball call’d Earth’ (‘PAD’, Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4).

‘these untutor’d vapourings’ (‘PAD’, Pt 9, *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4).

‘In India in one week alone, as many as 40,000 souls have been **hurled to the Nether Regions** by this fell pestilence’ (‘Keep Yourselves Clean’, *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4).

‘the unfortunate infant victim who is said to have been **hurled to the shades** by the hands of its maternal uncles’ (‘Keep Your Breeds Pure’, *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 4).

‘they have been proved to have **hurled** nations and kingdoms and empires to ruin and oblivion’ (‘Poor Personality’, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4).

‘death of shame’ (‘Keep Your Breeds Pure!’ *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 4).

‘blasting the life of a helpless suckling’ (‘Keep Your Breeds Pure!’ *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 4).

‘trample down’ (‘Freedom is Love!’ *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 3; ‘The Mission Native’, *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4; ‘Native Education’, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4; ‘A Worthy Philanthropist’, *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4). ‘trampling down’ (‘The Black Man and His Period of Training’, *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3; ‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3–4; ‘Selfishness’, *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4). ‘trampled down’ (‘Snakes in the Grass’, *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 3).

‘evil moment’ (‘Annexation of Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3).

‘with suppliant hands outstretched’ (‘Slavery or Not?’ *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4).

‘launch this Colony upon the rocks of discontent’ (‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 3).

‘launched itself by its own hand upon the rocks’ (‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4).

‘this material ball called Earth’ (‘Copy the Greek’, *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4).

‘bombastic vapouring’ (‘A Voice from the Sea’, *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 3); ‘Some of those vapourings are not even worth the paper on which they are printed’ (‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4); ‘Over and over again have we been treated to vapourings from various sources’ (‘The Native Vote’, *Ilanga* 3:95 (10 Feb. 1905) 3).

'**Ten-fold** now | **More** treacherous' ('PAD', Pt 11, *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4).

{Cf. also: '**tenfold more** burdensome' ('To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4); and '**More heinous ten-fold**' ('A Plea for Justice', *Ilanga* 1:24 (18 Sept. 1903) 4).}

'the **guiding stars** of Helen's soul' ('PAD', Pt 12, *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4),

{Cf. also: 'Whose **guiding star** is Tyranny' (*PKD*, Pt XIX, p. 56); and '**guiding star** | Directs this mortal' ('In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4).}

'Shalt thou the penalty of thy dark deed | Escape, and in the world's esteem be **held** | **Respectable**' ('PAD', Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4).

'That he, and his belov'd **respectable** | In sight of all the prying world might **seem**' ('PAD', Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4).

'**Unto a contest** God Himself **invite**' ('PAD', Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4).

{Cf. also: 'to secure more space for a **contest**; **invites** TYRANTO to try his hands upon him' ('M&P', Pt III, *Citizen* 2:34 (19 March 1898) 3).}

'the **slave's word** ne'er is true' ('PAD', Pt 16, *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4).

'**by aid of flick'ring candlelight**' ('PKD', Pt 5, *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4).

{Cf. 'Beneath a **flick'ring Camp-light** pale' ('A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3).}

'Examine now thyself **aright**' ('PAD', Pt 18, *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4).

{cf. 'walk **aright**' (*PKD*, Pt II, p. 8, and Pt XXXVI, p. 121); 'walks **aright**' ('In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4); 'think **aright**' ('M&P', Pt VIII); 'pursue **aright**' ('To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4).}

'a devil **ten-fold more** evil—**ten-fold more** vicious—**ten-fold more** daring—**ten-fold** less correctable' ('Native Reform', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4).

'**ten-fold more** trustworthy' ('The Mission Native', *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4).

'**tenfold more heinous**' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4; also 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4).

'the **guiding stars** in this important work' ('S.A.N.A. Commission', *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4).

'however vile this system of polygamy may be in the eyes of foreigners ... it is infinitely better than white-washed, and **sham** Christian **respectability**' ('A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4).

'all the vice, and roguery of present-day **respectability**, which corruption you term civilisation' ('Native Reform', *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4).

'actual crime under the **cloak** of legal **respectability**' ('The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4).

'**invite** you to a **contest**' ('Freedom is Love!' *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 3).

'This negro **slave** ... could not sue in the courts of law and **his word** was never taken as evidence against a white man' ('Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4).

'**By aid of** my dim, **flick'ring light**' (anonymous verse fragment embedded in 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4).

'The wisdom to lead life **aright**' (anonymous verse fragment embedded in 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4).

'the laws of the Colony dispensed **aright**' ('Freedom is Love!' *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4).

'**The Judge unerring**' ('PAD', Pt 19, *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4).

'**Deny** it if ye dare!—| And if **unable**, bow your heads in shame, | And thenceforth **hold your peace** for **evermore!**' ('PAD', Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4).

'**the unerring Judge**' ('Native Abominations', *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4); 'Missionary Conference, *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3); 'News from Swaziland', *Izwe la Kiti*, 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6).

'an **unerring**, most gracious, and ever watching **Providence**' ('Selfishness', *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 3).

'To these questions we trust that the social champion will **reply, or else for ever hold his peace**' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 3).

OTHER VERSE

ILANGA

'**E'en tho'** ye're **forced to plod**' ('To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4).

'though his **natural body** be destroyed his love for MELIA could never be shaken' ('M&P', Pt V, *Citizen* 2:36 (26 March 1898) 3).

'*Stapelia*, that unseen did **blush**—| **Unseen** by roadsides grew' ('M&P', Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3).

'**we, Ohlange**' ('In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4).

'the **unlikes unlikes shun**' ('In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala', *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4).

'**Press on**, Ohlange—'muntu's truest friend | **Press on**' ('Press on Ohlange', *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4).

'**Press on!** With courage all aflame | ...; '**Press on!**' ('To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4).

'yon **spicy Orient** isle' (*PKD*, Pt XXXIII, p. 106).

'yon pest | Emitting fragrant **Orient spice**' ('A Second Warning to Edendale', *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3).

'**E'en tho'** I **needs must** pause, and **plod**' (anonymous verse fragment embedded in 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4).

'if the spirits' covering can be represented in natural language by the same differences as characterize the **natural body**' ('Native Abominations', *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4).

'born to **blush unseen**' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4).

'Full many a flower is born to **blush unseen**' (Thomas Gray quoted in: 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4).

'**We, Ohlange**' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 3).

'These are things that in all eternity can **never be associated**, since they are **unlikes**, and there is no comparison to be made with **unlikes**, but with things of the same nature, quality, and name' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4).

'we would encourage those who revolve around Dube as the centre to be steadfast in their work, and let their watchword be—"Press on!"' ('Rev. and Mrs Dube', *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4).

'The fragrant **spicy East**' ('The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 4).

'Illustrious **suns**, and **stars**, and **moons**, | Which now thy firmament adorn, | Ere long **will darken**' ('A Second Warning to Edendale', *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3).

'That sickly limbs contaminate | The trunk whereof they form a part; | And polluted is that State | Where **class views class with jealous heart**' ('To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4).

'all who strive to rise | From brutalism **to higher things**' ('To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa', *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4).

'no longer **lag**' ('To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4).

'those who're **fittest** must **survive**' ('To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4).

'The **tenth**, the sixth and **eighth** commands' ('Tragedy of Malunge', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916)).

'His life is **tywala**—maize—and meat' ('A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3).

'them, who for **dominion** **strive**' ('A Warning', *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3).

'**Star of Hope**' ('In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi', *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4).

'**To You Abantu**' ('To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4).

'**To you, Abantu**' ('Storm and Calm', *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4).

'By "*the sun shall be darkened etc.*" is meant *love* to the Lord, which is the **sun**, and *charity* toward the neighbour which is the **moon**; to be **darkened** means that the sun and the moon or love and charity would fail. By "*the stars—shall fall &c*" is meant that knowledge of good and truth shall be lost.' ('The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4).

'**one class viewing another with jealousy**'; 'if one member of the body suffers, all the other members suffer with it' ('Selfishness', *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4).

'Rev. & Mrs Dube ... have given their lives in order to raise their race **to higher things**' ('Rev. and Mrs Dube', *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4).

'you will become **laggards** in the race' ('Two Warnings', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4). This article appears in the same issue of *Ilanga* as 'To You Abantu'.

'the **survival** of the **fittest**' ('Two Warnings', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4). This article appears in the same issue of *Ilanga* as 'To You Abantu'.

'the **eighth** and **tenth** commandments' ('Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4).

'certain natives who are desirous of satisfying their thirst for **utywala**' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4).

'the crown it covets, and **strives** after, is the possession of, and the **dominion** over its kind' ('Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4).

'**Star of Hope**' ('The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4); '**star of our hopes**' ('Mr Barnett's Lecture', *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3).

'**to you abantu**' ('Copy the Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4); 'The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4).

'**you, Abantu**' / '**you Abantu**' ('The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4); 'Zulu Orthography', *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4; 'Poor Personality', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 3).

'**Ye Abantu**' ('The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4).

'**you Bantus**' / '**You, Bantus**' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4; 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4; 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3; 'Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4).

'Heaven bequeath'd her to Zululand' ('Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5).

'the sweet **warblings** of the feather'd race' ('A Glimpse of Umkomaas', *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3).

'The birds within this lovely wood | Do **warble** without fear' ('M&P', Pt VII, *Citizen* 2:38 (2 April 1898) 3).

{cf. 'the ema Ngwane of Swaziland, whose minstrels **warble** thus' ('Farewell Msindazwe!' *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916)).}

'**heaven-bequeathed** possessions will ere long be wrested from our grasp' ('Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4).

'the bard of Maine, who **warbled** to the world the following strain' ('Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4).

'to **warble** there the songs he had heard in foreign climes' ('A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 3).

'what that future **warbler** would need' ('Zulu Orthography', *Ilanga* 3:104 (14 April 1905) 3).

GRENDON'S KNOWN PROSE

ILANGA

'This is **not the only age**' ('Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side', *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5).

'The **language** from which you venture to translate is a subtle one, and it must not be thought that any random English words can exactly render what is expressed in **Zulu**' ('Black Supremacy', *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6).

'**ruling caste**' ('News from Swaziland', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6; 'Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:87 (20 May 1914) 6; 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5).

'Mankulumana, that primitive Ndwandwe orator, whom **Demosthenes**, the prince of **Greek orators** would have applauded' ('A Question for L. E. H.', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:73 (11 Feb. 1914) 6).

'You spend thousands upon thousands upon the importation of Catalonian jack **donkeys** for the purpose of breeding and multiplying **mules** whose qualities you fondly extol. These mules are but the analogues of yet more worthy mules—to wit the half-castes; yet you become inflated with prejudice and hate at the multiplication of the **Human Mule**' ('Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:86 (13 May 1914) 6).

'**class him in the Genus Homo**' ('Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6).

'**Fill your sheaf** with "Lovedale **arrows**"—great and small—for use in days to come' ('Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916)).

'The present is **not the only age**' ('The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4).

'Hands off **our language**, you Abelungu, We can manage it ourselves' ('Zulu Orthography', *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 4).

'**ruling caste**' ('The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4; 'Copy the Greek', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4; 'The Native Question', *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3; 'The True European', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4; 'Poor Personality', *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4; 'Bow Down You Dogs!' *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4).

'Copy that race in **oratory** and you too shall bequeath to the world such stars illustrious in their firmament as **Demosthenes** or Isocrates' ('Copy the **Greek**', *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4).

'There are many who pride themselves on the excellence of their **bovine cross-breeds**. These become horrified to their very souls when the subject of **human cross-breeds** engages their attention' ('Degrading Marriage', *Ilanga* 2:71 (19 Aug. 1904) 4).

'**classifies himself in the genus "homo"**' ('A Strange Question', *Ilanga* 2:61 (10 June 1904) 4).

'The best man is he who goes into the struggle with his **quiver full of arrows** In clear language, he who has a knowledge of different subjects and arts is better than he who boasts of only one' ('Educate Your Children!' *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4).

Echo allusion to Bishop Hugh Latimer (Oxford Martyr):

'you may kindle a bon-fire on "Indhlunkulu Rock", or "Cakijane", that its rays may pierce the furthest corners of your country' ('Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916)).

'The third class passenger is on the Union's **railways** the most despised, and his treatment at the hands of the railway officials is not always what it should be. If a comparison be made between the revenue which the Government draws from each of the three classes of passengers travelling on its railways, it will be seen that third class stands at the top of the tree especially in such towns as Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, and Johannesburg, where the trains are literally packed **like sardines** in their third class carriages. The Government should take particular note of this fact and see to it that those **despised "niggers"** who contribute the **bulk of its revenue**, should receive more consideration than is usually accorded them' ('Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916)).

'**dumb driven cattle**' ('Swaziland and the S. A. Union', *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916)).

'some day see **cause to modify his Reason** No. 4' ('Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:84 (29 April 1914) 6).

'perhaps **cause** you often **to retract or modify** its use at random' ('Hooray!' *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916)).

'perhaps help you some day **to modify** your **views**' 'you will see **cause to modify** your statement' ('Native Unrest: Hear the Other Side', *Ilanga* 16:42 (18 Oct. 1918) 5).

'**vanish as the mists before the sun**' ('Miscegenation', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:87 (20 May 1914) 6).

Echo allusion to Bishop Hugh Latimer (Oxford Martyr):

'we shall see such a candle lighted in the land, as will astound those who are responsible for the spark' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4).

'Now, we know only too well what treatment is meted out to blacks whenever they chance to be thrown into the company of whites, when travelling by **rail**. ... Abuse the **detestable niggers**; huddle them together **like sheep**; drive them like dumb cattle, this one thing remains a positive fact that they are the people from whom the Government derives the **bulk of its passenger profits** in the Railway Department' ('We Concur', *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904)).

'**drive** them like **dumb cattle**' ('We Concur!' *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904)).

'Had he come in touch with the upper class of natives he would probably have had **cause to reflect**, and **modify his opinions** before committing them to print' ('Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4).

'**fall away like mist before the sun**' ('Polygamy', *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3).

APPENDIX 2

A SINGLE VOICE IN *ILANGA* EDITORIALS, 1904–05

The following table complements that in Appendix 1. It shows by way of collocations and allusions that recur in the *Ilanga* editorials of February 1904 to May 1905, that there is *a single editorial voice* throughout this period. To a large extent, this exercise has already been accomplished in Appendix 1.

'both by lip and pen'	'The Mission Native', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4; 'The True European', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.
'despised and rejected'	'Missionary Conference', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4; 'Annexation of Swaziland', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3.
'assume/d another aspect'	'The Labour Problem', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4; 'Mr Barnett's Lecture', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3.
'quitted the shores' / 'quitting our shores'	'The Black Man and His Period of Training', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4; 'Mr Barnett's Lecture', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3.
'We cannot say'	'Notes and Comments', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4; 'Mr Barnett's Lecture', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3; 'The Native Franchise', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:98 (3 March 1905) 3. {Also in: 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland', <i>Ilanga</i> 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.}
'We have always held this doctrine to be false'	'Bathoen's Protest', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.
'We have always held the opinion'	'Natives on the Footpaths', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4; 'Notes and Comments', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4.
'Mirabile dictu!'	'A Marvel', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4; 'Befooled!' <i>Ilanga</i> 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4.
'England ... snatched from her Exchequer £20,000,000 and thrust that sum into the hands of slave-owners in her dominions'	'The Black Man and His Period of Training', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3.
'Britain, it is true, abolished slavery throughout her dominions at the cost of £20,000,000'	'Slavery or Not?' <i>Ilanga</i> 2:58 (20 May 1904) 4.
'Britain ... offer[ed] a heavy ransom (£20,000,000) for the emancipation of the slaves in her dominions'	'A Voice from the Sea', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904).

'sold like cattle for Christian gold'	'The Black Man and His Period of Training', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:47 (4 March 1904) 4.
'liable to be bought or sold at their pleasure. These were usually branded like cattle'	'Slavery or Not?' <i>Ilanga</i> 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4.
'a new faith born into the world'	'The Black Man and His Period of Training', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.
'A new spirit is born into the world'	'Umdelwa's Musings', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.
The black man 'is reproved for aping' whites	'The Black Man and His Period of Training', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.
Whites 'openly condemn the native for aping' them	'Native Reform', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.
'task-master'	'The Black Man and His Period of Training', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4; 'Notes and Comments', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.
'placard on their Church doors the following warning—"No ADMISSION FOR BLACKS AND DOGS!"'	'The Black Man and His Period of Training', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:57 (13 May 1904) 3.
'on the doors of some of their Churches was placarded this warning—"No ADMISSION FOR BLACKS AND DOGS".'	'Missionary Conference', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.
'THE PEOPLE WILL ADMIT OF NO EQUALITY WITH THE BLACKS IN CHURCH OR STATE'	'The Black Man and His Period of Training', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4; 'A Voice from the Sea', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 3.
'and all will remain and be confusion'	'The Native Question', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3.
'and all will be confusion'	'Notes and Comments', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.
'often and often'	'The Native Priesthood', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4; 'The Mission Native', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4; 'Notes and Comments', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4.
'a moral impossibility'	'South Africa's Future', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4; 'Notes and Comments', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.
'morally impossible'	'Native Abominations', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4.
'contempt and scorn'	'Notes and Comments', 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4; 'Notes and Comments', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4; 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.
'ridicule and scorn'	'Slavery or Not?' <i>Ilanga</i> 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4.
'the worst specimens of our race'	'Notes and Comments', <i>Ilanga</i> 3:107 (5 May 1905) 4.
'the worst specimens of the Ethiopian Priesthood'	'Missionary Conference', <i>Ilanga</i> 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.

- 'We look forward to the restoration of the True Christian Religion'** 'Missionary Conference', *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 4.
- 'We look forward to the time when these papers will unite in disseminating the same seeds of civilisation and religion'** 'The Native Press', *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.
- 'space forbids'** 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4; 'God With Us', *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4; 'The Old Year and the New', *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 4; 'Zulu Orthography', *Ilanga* 3:106 (28 April 1905) 3.
{cf. also: 'Editorial Notes', *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).}
- 'ventilate ... opinions'** 'The Black Man and His Period of Training', *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4; 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 3; 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904) 4; 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4; 'Native Vice', *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 3.
- 'ventilate ... knowledge'** 'Notes and Comments', *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.
- 'ventilate ... ideas'** 'A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4.
{Cf. 'ventilate ... views' ('Spread of Mohammedanism', *Izwe la Kiti* 3:70 (21 Jan. 1914) 5).}

APPENDIX 3

AUTHORSHIP OF ‘AMAGUNYANA’S SOLILOQUY’¹

Tim Couzens was the first to suggest that this ‘very sharp and moving poem’ may have been written by Grendon, and at least three scholars have repeated his tentative attribution.² By intertextual comparison between the poem and other texts—verse and prose—known to be Grendon’s, it becomes possible to show, beyond reasonable doubt, that Grendon did indeed compose ‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’.

‘AMAGUNYANA’S SOLILOQUY’

OTHER TEXTS KNOWN TO BE
AUTHORED BY GRENDON

The Solomon and Queen of Sheba *topos*:

‘in these swarthy veins doth course the blood |
Of ancient kings from **Sheba** until now’

‘The natives of Africa can put forward customs, and traditions &c., which find their parallels in the Jews, but we have never heard it admitted that they were kindred to the Chosen People, though of a truth there is some distant relationship between the two’ (‘Notes and Comments’, *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4).

‘Solomon (1 Kings iii. 1) who by the Ethiopian Queen of **Sheba** became the ancestor of the present Royal House of Abyssinia’ (‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:87 (20 May 1914) 6).

‘a **goodly** score’

‘Pay **goodly** heed’ (*PKD*, Pt II, p. 8)

‘a **goodly** portion of the Swazi people’ (‘Annexation of Swaziland’, *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3).

‘it includes a **goodly** number of “pirates”’ (‘Miscegenation’, *Izwe la Kiti* 3:81 (8 April 1914) 6).

‘at my own **behest**’

‘at his **behest**’ (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 70); ‘At **Destiny’s** behests’ (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 75); ‘Her sons obey’d her stern **behests**’ (*PKD*, Pt XXXII, p. 103); ‘at Father Time’s **behest**’ (*PKD*, Pt XXXV, p. 113).

‘to your **behests** she faithful stood’ (‘In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi’, *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4).

‘Thro’ thy **behests** thy trusty serfs are doom’d’ (‘PAD’, Pt 13, *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 4); ‘Forthwith the stern **behest** | Is heeded and obey’d’ (‘PAD’, Pt 15, *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 4); ‘stern **behest** is heeded, and obey’d’ (‘PAD’, Pt 20, *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4).

‘this grand old **Ethiopian** veld’

‘And **Ethiopia’s** swarthy things, whom we, | And our forefathers deep in bondage held’ (*PKD*, Pt XII, p. 36); ‘yonder Gulf | Twixt **Ethiopia**, and Man’s cradle-land’ (*PKD*, Pt XXXIV, p. 108).

¹ *Ilanga* 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4.

² Couzens, ‘Robert Grendon’, 78; Chapman, *Paperbook of South African English Poetry*, 300; Attwell, ‘Reprisals of Modernity’, 274; Attwell, *Rewriting Modernity*, 58; Haarhoff, *Wild South-West*, 114.

- 'My kin hath chased the striped herd and slain
| And roasted on the spit, and ate, and ate, |
Till kings could eat no more'
- 'my herds of | Lowing cattle **graze in peace**
along the | Grassy banks of Umswalisa's
cooling | Waters'
- 'Grassy banks'
- 'I remember Mandlakaza's raid'
- 'our spears | Were drinking human **gore**'
- 'That assegai of his, which hurls so fast | The
hurtling iron **hail**, which will not cease | Nor
rest till all is his, till foe there's none.'
- '**human flesh** however brave must | Melt like
early dew'
- '**naught but** | Grass to eat'
- 'I scorn his | Most **effeminate** ways'
- 'I scorn his | ... | His eternal **work**'
- 'I loathe his **work**. 'Tis only fit for slaves'
- 'should it all prove true in hours | Not yet
- 'And now the scatter'd groups of hungry serfs | With
clam'rings loud, assemble to receive | Their due; to
quell voracious appetites; | And re-invigorate their
weary frames. | See how they hasten to their wonted
seats, | Each other's masticating pow'rs to test, | And
then in sport thereafter to contend' ('PAD', Pt 10,
Ilanga 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4).
- 'Deepdale-broad—grass-grown—without a change, |
Save scatter'd farms, and fields of wither'd maize, |
Where scatter'd herds of horses—oxen—swine | Upon
the remnants of the harvest **graze**, | **In undisturbed
leisure**—line by line' ('A Glimpse of Umkomaas',
Ipepa 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3).
- 'grassy plain' ('M&P', Pt II, *Citizen* 2:33 (16 March
1898) 3).
- In 'The Late Chief Usibepu', Grendon displays some
knowledge of the uSuthu-Mandlakazi feud (*Ilanga* 2:74
(9 Sept. 1904) 4).
- 'In a pool of **gore**' ('M&P', Pt VIII, *Citizen*, 2:46 (4 May
1898) 3)
- 'a flood | Of **gore!**' (*PKD*, Pt IV, p. 12); 'kinsmen's
gore' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 73); 'Besmear'd with dust,
and **gore**' (*PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 78).
- 'stain, with **gore**' ('PAD', Pt 6, *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov.
1904) 4); 'yonder clotted **gore**' ('PAD', Pt 6, *Ilanga*
2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4); 'a pool of **gore**' ('PAD', Pt 7,
Ilanga 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4); 'harden'd **gore**' ('PAD',
Pt 15, *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 4).
- 'Phalanx after phalanx fell | Before our deadly, and
unerring **hail**' (*PKD*, Pt III, p. 11); 'flee | Before their
foemen's **hail**' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 70); 'retreat | Before
our deadly **hail**' (*PKD*, Pt XXVII, p. 90); 'Forc'd hither
by our foemen's **hail**' (*PKD*, Pt XXVII, p. 90).
- 'crav'd | For **human flesh**, and blood' (*PKD*, Pt
XXXIV, p. 108).
- '**naught—naught—but** glitt'ring gold'; '**naught but**
war'; '**naught but** blood, and war'; '**naught but**
praises' (*PKD*); '**Naught, naught save** one long line of
dusty cloud' ('PAD'); '**naught but** victory' ('Tragedy of
Malunge').
- 'Durst ye condemn—dare ye revile | With lips that are
effeminate | The common soldier...?' ('Defence of
Tommy', *Ilanga* 2:51 (1 April 1904) 4).
- 'That the natives are lazy we deny. ...The gospel of
work does not emanate from Christianity, as our critic
seems to think. **Work** was preached long before the
dawn of Christianity' ('A Voice from the Sea', *Ilanga*
2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4).
- 'We are often and often brought into contact with that
recurring and lying imputation that the native is
naturally a "lazy fellow"' ('Notes and Comments',
Ilanga 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 4).
- 'Such then are a few instances which cause the black

arrived, that his Eternal one | Is Great, or
greater than our own Great-Great, | Then will I
do Him homage and serve Him, | And in **the**
manner He had fashioned me, | But not in
theirs'

'Then will I do Him **homage** and serve Him'

'in these swarthy veins doth **course** the **blood**'

'these **swarthy** veins'

'**gaze on** me'

'Their **carrion carcass fouled** the air | For
months for miles around,—a **banquet fine** |
For many a foulest scavenger of night'

'foe **there's none**'

'The goodly herds of | Choicest game ... he's
run to earth'

"**Tis woman's** lot **to** work, | To till the soil, to

man to say that there are two Gods, one for the
whites—a White God; and another for the blacks—a
Black God' ('The Black Man and His Period Of
Training', *Ilanga* 2:57 (13 May 1904) 4).

'Truly is it said that the white man's God is not the
same as He to whom the black man prays' ('Notes
and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4).

'We have always held the opinion that Europe's
religion cannot be grafted on African stock' ('Notes
and Comments', *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 4).

Seven occurrences of '**homage**' in *PKD*.

'**homage** paid' ('In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala',
Ilanga 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4).

'bow in **homage**' ('Umdelwa's Musings', *Ilanga* 2:81
(28 Oct. 1904) 4).

'render with an undefiled tongue the **homage**, the
praises, and thanksgivings due to the Redeemer of
the World' ('God With Us', *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904)
3).

'Yon **torrent red**, | Which water'd yon grand structure
stands | Obstructed in its **course**' ('In Memoriam: Elias
Tshabalala', *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4).

'**swarthy** souls'; '**swarthy** foes'; '**swarthy** neighbours';
'Ethiopia's **swarthy** things'; '**swarthy**, hateful sons of
Ham'; '**swarthy** things'; '**swarthy** aborigines'; '*yonder*
swarthy Canaanite' (*PKD*).

'**swarthy** men'; '**swarthy** nurse-maid' ('A Faithful
Amazon', *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 4).

'**swarthy** men' ('In Memoriam', *Citizen* 20 (22 Dec.
1897) 2).

'**swarthy** men' ('To You Abantu', *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec.
1903) 4).

'**gaze on** yonder woes' ('A Faithful Amazon', *Ilanga*
2:47 (4 March 1904) 4).

'**gaze on** us' (*PKD*, Pt XXXVI, p. 116).

'How **foul** the stench | From those **decaying corpses**
rose, wherein | No living thing could live, save
carrion-fowl, | Which hover'd thick around, defying all,
| Who would frustrate them from so **grand a feast**'
(*PKD*, Pt XXVII, p. 90)

'flock around like **carrion** birds | To feast on Slander's
food' ('M&P', Pt II, *Citizen* 2:33 (16 March 1898) 3).

'Success **there's none!**' (*PKD*, Pt XXV, p. 81).

'like a wounded buck, with the ghastly, ghostly glare of
Death before his eyes, Malunge stood "**at bay**"'
(*Mafukuzela in Swaziland*, *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May
1915) 5).

'Like some fierce tigress by the huntsman's shaft |
O'erpower'd, and **brought to bay**' ('PAD', Pt 4, *Ilanga*
2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4).

Address to women in general: "**Tis yours** to bow |

find the food to feed | Her offspring and her
lord. 'Tis his to wield | The spear, to raid the
enemy afar, | Nor suffer him to ever enter ours'

And to obey; but **man's to rule**, command | And **to
defend!** So long as Earth revolves, | Frail creatures,
ye man's helpmates must remain!' (*PKD*, Pt XXXI, p.
100).

APPENDIX 4

AUTHORSHIP OF ‘THE SPIRIT SONG OF MEHLOKAZULU’³

This table demonstrates by intertextual comparison with texts known to have been authored by Grendon, that ‘The Spirit Song of Mehlokazulu’ is also his.

‘THE SPIRIT SONG OF MEHLOKAZULU’	OTHER TEXTS KNOWN TO BE AUTHORED BY GRENDON
‘the whizzing of spears’	‘the glitt’ring dagger wings Its whizzing flight’ (‘PAD’, Pt 4, <i>Ilanga</i> 2:83 (11 Nov. 1904) 4).
‘sweet sound in mine ears ’	‘Another blast She blew, which echoed thus within mine ears ’ (<i>PKD</i> , Pt XIX, p. 54).
‘my warriors yelled Like hounds ’	‘We turn’d like panting hounds , and fled away’ (<i>PKD</i> , Pt XXVIII, p. 93).
‘my warriors yelled Like hounds, as they leapt from the leash where I held Them straining and eager, to fly at the foe’	‘A hundred thousand assegais Are mine, and will assemble at my call Within a morning’s sunrise’ (‘Amagunyana’s Soliloquy’, <i>Ilanga</i> 3:160 (18 May 1906) 4).
‘All now is hushed ’	‘silver trumpet-voice is hushed ’ (‘In Memoriam: The Late Sir John Robinson’, <i>Ilanga</i> 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4). ‘ hushed , as voices crying in the wilderness’ (‘Mafukuzela in Swaziland, <i>Ilanga</i> 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5).
‘Valley of Woe ’	‘cup of woe ’ (<i>PKD</i> , Pt III, p. 10); ‘cloud of woe ’ (<i>PKD</i> , Pt V, p. 15).
‘We thought in our fury with hate on the white’	‘Within us swells the heart With hate! ’ (<i>PKD</i> , Pt XXXIII, p. 104).
‘in the darkness enveloped by night ’	‘Densely the clouds Envelop the hills’ (‘Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand’, <i>Izwe la Kiti</i> 3:72 (4 Feb. 1914) 5). ‘ Envelop ’d by the darkness of the night ’ (‘PAD’, Pt 10, <i>Ilanga</i> 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 4). ‘Wast thou envelop ’d in a mist ...?’ (<i>PKD</i> , Pt XX, p. 58).
‘Each warrior clutching his spears and his shield ’	‘Let your shields, and spears Tho’ famous in some by-gone day Be laid to rest’ (‘To You Abantu’, <i>Ilanga</i> 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4).
‘now we are vanquished! ’	‘ye <i>do not</i> <i>Adopt the orphan, or receive</i> <i>The vanquish’d!</i> ’ (‘Dinizulu, ex-King of Zululand’, <i>Izwe la Kiti</i> 3:76 (4 March 1914) 5). Eleven occurrences of ‘ vanquish ’ and cognate words in <i>PKD</i> ; three occurrences in <i>Tshaka’s Death</i> .

³ *Ilanga* 3:166 (29 June 1906) 4.

- 'sounds the weird cry | Of **wailing**
and weeping! Our **women** are
they | Who mourn for the fighters
who fell in the fray!'
- 'And **widows** fretful, and heart-rent, | **Bewailing** their distress'
(*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 71).
- 'the fighters who fell **in the fray**'
- Eleven occurrences of '**fray**' in *PKD*, including three of '**in the fray**'.
- 'tears are **in vain**'
- Twenty-three occurrences of '**in vain**' in *PKD*; seven occurrences in 'M&P'; three in 'PAD'; one in 'The Tragedy of Malunge'; one in 'A Warning'.
- 'We never shall march in **the sunlight** again!'
- '*Alas for me—* | Who shar'd **the sunlight** with the gods of heav'n'
(*'Tshaka's Death*', *Ipepa* 3:431 (24 May 1901) 4).
- 'But **sunlight** ceased not for aye | To shine upon your race' (*PKD*, Pt XXIV, p. 75).
- 'As into the **Shadows** my warriors came'
- 'I may encompass Zenzema, and hurl | Him to the World of **Shadows**' ('PAD', Pt 8, *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 4).
- 'And now I've an **impi of spirits** to lead'
- 'The struggle between black and white ceased when the Zulu power was crushed at Ulundi. Since then the **struggle** has been a secret one, between black and white **spirits**, if the spirits' covering can be represented in natural language by the same differences as characterize the natural body. Since the awful day of Ulundi, the last traces of the black man's material power, were effaced for ever from the face of this earth. The **strife** from that day onwards to this has been a **spiritual** one, and will continue such from this point onwards' (*'Native Abominations*', *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4).
- 'A **multitude of spirits** clad in robes | Of spotless white, appear'd'
(*PKD*, Pt IV, p. 13).
- 'Since, Michal, from thy crumbling tent of clay | Thou'st enter'd like a babe thy Second State, | Move therefore, act, and feel with yon **array | Of spirits** who their Final State await!' (*'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi*', *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4).
- 'this Kraal of the **Mist**' (*i.e.*, Death)
- 'To wake as from some **death-mist**—some deep trance' ('PAD', Pt 14, *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 4).
- 'O, Chaka! **Where art thou?** We call thee in vain!'
- 'My parted spouse—oh where | Am I?—Oh **where art thou!**' (Kruger to the deceased Mrs Kruger, *PKD*, Pt XXXV, p. 114).
- 'Where—where—oh, Zenzema, **where art thou** now?' ('PAD', Pt 2, *Ilanga* 2:80 (21 Oct. 1904) 4).
- '**this Valley of Pain**'
- 'arise | From **this place of pain!**' ('M&P', Pt VIII).
- 'The brave ones, **our sires**'
- Three occurrences of '**our sires**' and one of '**your sires**' in *PKD*.

APPENDIX 5

GRENDON'S HAND IN DRAFTING THE SWAZI PETITION OF 1915?

This table demonstrates by intertextual comparison with texts known to have been authored by Grendon, the likelihood that he had a hand in drafting the Swazi petition to Viscount Buxton, British High Commissioner, 1915.⁴

TEXT	EVENT			BRITISH PRINCIPLES	BENEFITS TO BLACKS
1902: <i>Paul Kruger's Dream</i>	South African War viewed as a	'struggle'	for the British principles of	'justice', 'truth', 'liberty', 'right'	Britain 'makes the <i>black man equal with the white</i> ' ⁵
1904: 'Annexation of Swaziland' ⁶	Annexation of Swaziland welcomed		for the British principles of	'justice', 'equity', 'liberty', 'truth'	Swazi freed from Boer oppression
1904: 'The Black Man and His Period of Training' ⁷	Britain's emancipation of slaves (1834) seen as	a triumph	'for the cause of'	'justice', 'truth', 'equity'	African slaves receive their liberty
1904 'S.A.N.A. Commission' ⁸	South African Native Affairs Commission should have as		'guiding stars'	'truth', 'equity', 'justice'	Africans to receive equitable government
1904: 'Umdelwa's Musings' ⁹	Imperial rule brings		'the kindly protection of the British Nation', with	'justice', 'equity'	to 'the dark races of this globe'
1904: 'A Worthy Philanthropist' ¹⁰	The 'black man ... called upon to serve in the interests of his [British] rulers' during the South		in 'the expectation, and the hope of witnessing'	'justice', 'truth', 'right'	bestowed upon everyone, including blacks, after the War.

⁴ SwNA, RCS459/15: Petition from Labotsibeni and Swazi Council to High Commissioner, 21 Aug. 1915.

⁵ *PKD*, Pt I, p. 2.

⁶ *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3–4.

⁷ *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 3.

⁸ *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.

⁹ *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.

¹⁰ *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) 4.

African War

<p>☞ 1915: Swazi petition to the British High Commissioner for South Africa¹¹</p>	<p>Great War viewed as a</p>	<p>'mighty struggle'</p>	<p>for the British principles of</p>	<p>'liberty', 'justice', 'truth', 'right'</p>	<p>and is fought 'not only in their own [i.e., the British] interest but also in that of other races of the world'</p>
<p>1916: Grendon's 'Links' lecture¹²</p>	<p>Great War viewed as a</p>	<p>'struggle'</p>	<p>'between principle and principle', in which British</p>	<p>'wisdom', 'good', 'truth'</p>	<p>triumph, 'and coloured races were as much concerned in such a struggle as were whites'</p>

¹¹ SwNA, RCS459/15: Petition from Labotsibeni and Swazi Council to High Commissioner, 21 Aug. 1915.

¹² Reported in 'Blacks and Whites: An Amazing Meeting: Socialists and Natives', *Star* 6790 (9 June 1916), 2nd edn, 6.

APPENDIX 6

GRENDON'S HOLINSHED?

This table illustrates the extent to which Grendon used Robert Russell's *Natal*¹³ for historical material when composing *Paul Kruger's Dream*. In the left-hand column, page numbers are shown; in the right-hand column, part and line numbers.

NATAL: THE LAND & ITS STORY**PAUL KRUGER'S DREAM**

'A homeward-bound Dutch Indiaman, the *Haarlem*, was wrecked in Table Bay in 1648' (91).

'The crew spent some time ashore, and were so charmed with the country that on their return to Holland they urged on the Chamber of Seventeen the advisability of forming a settlement in South Africa' (91).

'Jan Van Riebeeck ... arrived at the Cape and ... took possession of the land on which Capetown is now built. Mr Van Riebeeck was the first Commander or Governor of the first settlement of white men in South Africa' (91–92).

'there was a most unexpected change in the aspect of affairs. ... an English fleet under Admiral Elphinstone sailed into Table Bay. Troops were landed under the command of General Craig, who took possession of the Cape Colony for his Britannic Majesty King George' (96).

'The granting of liberty to the slaves gave great offence to the boers. They entirely disapproved of blacks "being placed **on an equal footing** with Christians, contrary to the natural distinction of race and religion". ... ¶The want of adequate protection against the depredations of the frontier kafirs, and the losses sustained, and the resentment caused, by the emancipation of the slaves were the chief reasons which in 1836 led to a large emigration of Dutch farmers beyond the borders of the Cape Colony' (144–45).

'A band of Dutchmen—sailors—homeward bound | With treasures from the East, was shipwreck'd | cast' (i.4–5).

Five months they sojourn'd in that pleasant land (i.6).

'Adieu—adieu! A shipwreck'd band—| We'll not return again—| But *conq'rors*—and in thee, fair land, | Shall we for aye remain!' (i.36–39).

'In that cool month three ships in Table Bay | Appear'd. The strangers disembark'd, and trod | Once more upon these sunny shores, thereon | To dwell as undisputed lords for aye' (i.48–51).

'But, ah—a mighty change came o'er that bliss, | ... | As we from its true owners wrench'd this land, | So from our bosoms was it harshly torn | By them—the Britons' (i.59–65).

These ... | ... made us bow to the accursèd law, | Which makes the *black* man equal with the *white*; | And sets the *slave* degraded, and abas'd, | **On equal footing** with his *lord*. Our sires | Unto the heart were stung with wrath, and hate. | They rose forthwith to quit the land, and seek | New fields where they might live unfetter'd—free. | Throughout the land spake loud and clear, a Voice | Inviting our embitter'd injur'd race | To regions northwards, where Britannia's sway | Detested we might scorn—ignore—defy' (i.66–77).

¹³ Robert Russell, *Natal: The Land and Its Story: A Geography and History for the Use of Schools*. 8th edn. Pietermaritzburg: P. Davis and Sons, 1902. I have used the eighth edition, since it was published in the same year as the *Dream*.

'Dingaan was kindness itself to the farmers.... The morning of the 6th February arrived. ... the Dutchmen were preparing to saddle-up and depart, when an **invitation came from the king to drink utywala** with him in his great place. ... the unsuspecting Dutchmen ... entered the parade ground to **drink the stirrup-cup** and to bid farewell to the king. ... They were dragged from the king's presence to the hill of slaughter outside the town and there done to death with knobbed sticks' (152–53).

'Dingaan ... excelled [Shaka] in cunning and treachery' (133).

'The encampments were at ... Blauwkrans, ... and other places along the Bushman River. ... Men, women, and children were ruthlessly stabbed ere they could see the glint of the death-dealing spear or the hand that wielded it. ... Family after family was butchered without mercy all through that dreadful night' (153–54).

'a tower of strength was added to the emigrants' cause in the person of Andries Pretorius ... In the new Commandant, wary as well as brave, the crafty Zulu at last met his match' (158).

'At early dawn on Sunday, the 16th December, Dingaan's whole army fell on the laager by the Blood River. Four times the kafirs made a rush to storm the camp, and each time the deadly fire from the muskets and the discharges from the cannon placed at every entrance drove them back with fearful loss. When the fighting had continued for two hours, Pretorius ordered his men to leave the laager and charge the enemy in the open. ... The kafirs fled before them. **Four hundred were shot in the ravine** and the river was red **with blood**. On that day of **slaughter** over **three thousand** kafirs perished' (159).

'The more ignorant of them believed themselves to be the "chosen people", and the Bushmen and Kafirs the Canaanites whom they had a Divine command to smite and utterly destroy' (95–96).

'From the Blood River the boers moved further into Zululand. About a day's march from the Umfolosi the patrol saw dense smoke rising in the direction of Umgungunhlovu. When the commando arrived there on the **21st December**, that dark place of the earth was found completely deserted and the royal kraal **burnt to the ground**. The "humbled **bloodhound**", as Pretorius called the Zulu King, had retreated...' (159–60).

'Can Dingaan even with true penitence, | And tears, restore to life *them* whom he pray'd | To linger at his royal place awhile, | And drink the *cup of friendship*, whilst his heart | Was brooding schemes of treachery and death?' (ii.15–19).

Dingane was 'brooding schemes of treachery' (ii.19).

'neither Time, nor Space | From my remembrance ever will efface | The horrors of that awful day which hurl'd | To yonder *World of Shades*, where Silence reigns, | The flower of our race. Can I forget—| Can I forget those scenes of massacre | Which redden'd *you*—Blaauwkrantz, and Bushman streams?' (ii.22–28)

Forthwith they rise to force | Their way towards the savage blood-hound's den, | Our mightiest chief,—Pretorius—in the van. (iii.4–6)

'In vain | The savage Zulu cohorts strove to burst | Thro' waggon-barriers and acacia stakes. | Line after line of their impetuous rush | Was shatter'd. Phalanx after phalanx fell | Before our deadly, and unerring hail. | Within *yon* dark **ravine four hundred** met | Their doom. As many at the river's fords | Fell **slaughter'd** in their utter helplessness. | **Three thousand** swarthy souls, and more, were hurl'd | To Silence. Corpses stretch'd to rise no more | Lay thickly strewn, like wither'd leaves, upon | That river's banks; and on the plain beyond; | And in the stream, whose waters roll'd **with blood**. | The residue to flight betook themselves. | Such were our fortunes that December day' (iii.36–51).

'Thus did the God of Heav'n into our hands | Deliver those accursed Canaanites' (iii.52–53).

'Without delay the conq'ror onward sped, | And enter'd five days thence [*i.e.*, after the 16th December], the **blood-hound's** den. | It was deserted. Naught of it remain'd | Save dust, for it had yielded to the wrath | Of fire' (iii.55–59).

'It was a **hill of death**' (150).

'On the mimosa-covered hill near the kraal, the farmers beheld terrible witnesses of the massacre of February. There lay the **skeletons** of their murdered friends, most of them easily known by the shreds of clothes attached to the bones. The sticks with which they had been beaten to death **lay thick around** them. Retief was recognised by his clothes and by the **leather** hunting-bag slung round his shoulders. In it was found **clean** and **uninjured** the document by which Dingaan **ceded** Natal to Retief and his people "for their **everlasting property**." Sadly and **solemnly** the bones of the murdered men were collected and **buried in one large grave**' (160).

'The year 1839 was a peaceful one for the emigrants' (162).

'a vow should be made to the Lord,—that if He **vouchsafed** them the **victory**, a house should be raised to His great name' (158).

'The vow made before the battle was religiously kept. ... **Dingaan's Day**, the 16th of December, when Pretorius and Landman and 460 farmers avenged the blood of their countrymen and broke the power of the Zulu tyrant, is still observed by **all Dutch people in South Africa** as a holy anniversary' (159).

'No important undertaking was ever entered upon without **prayer and praise** being offered to the Almighty' (145–46).

'The Republic of Natalia was formally and finally abolished on the 10th of May, 1843. On that day Natal became a British Colony' (184).

'After an interview between **Panda** and a deputation from the boers, ... it was agreed that he should **assist** the farmers in the overthrow of Dingaan ¶Panda's force ... crossed the Tugela about 20 miles below **Krans Kop**. ... After a desperate fight, in which two of the king's regiments were destroyed to a man and a third deserted to the enemy, Dingaan with his two remaining regiments **fled to the Pongola River** closely pursued by both the boer and native forces. Thus hemmed in, Dingaan sought refuge in the country of the **Amaswazi**, his **hereditary foes**. He was captured by their king **Sobuza** and **tortured to death**' (166).

'Many of his countrymen who had a rooted dislike of English rule had crossed the Berg with him and joined the boers of the Orange River Sovereignty. ... The discontented Dutch trekked over the mountain and never returned' (191–92).

'Yet farther on Pretorius pass'd, | Until he halted on the "**Hill of Death**". | Ah—what a ghastly scene now met his gaze! | *Here*—lay the mould'ring **skeletons** of them, | Who victims unto violence had fall'n. | Around them *there*—lay blood-stained, **thickly strewn** | The instruments of torture. *There*—Retief, | The leader of the luckless band. Unto | His bones still clung the **leathern** pouch, wherein | Was found **inviolate**, and **clean**, the scroll, | Which ceded unto him, and to his seed | Natal, for **everlasting heritage**. | In sorrow, and in anguish gather'd they | Their kinsmen's bleach'd remains; and rev'rently, | And **solemnly interr'd them in one tomb**' (iii.59–73).

'How greatly alter'd are our fortunes now! | And the comparison how vast, betwixt | This Dingaan's Day, which now we celebrate, | And that grim Sabbath just one year ago' (iv.1–4).

'Oh sacred edifice, which dost adorn | Yon market-court, in Pietermaritzburg, | Thou standest there a monument to Him, | Who **vict'ry** o'er our foes to us **vouchsaf'd**' (iv.12–15).

'And thou, great **day**, whereon proud **Dingaan's** pow'r | Was crush'd, from year to year a day of thanks | And rev'rence shalt be held by **us, and ours** | **Throughout these lands**' (iv.18–21)

'a multitude | Of kinsfolk bend the knee in **pray'r, and praise** | To Him, Who unto them had vict'ry giv'n' (iv.36–38).

'Paul Kruger ... bursts into impassionate and violent strains at the recollection of the subsequent annexation of this land to British territory (1843)' (v.argument).

'Three gloomy years our sway o'er this fair land | We held, and hunted Dingaan like a dog | From place to place. To crush his dreared pow'r | For aye, we sought his brother **Panda's aid**. | Near **Krantz Kop** we o'erpower'd him, and he | Was forc'd **towards Pongola stream to flee**. | Thence he escap'd, and fatal refuge sought | Amongst the **Swazis**, his most **deadly foes**. | And whilst with **Sobuza** he pleaded, he | Was **tortur'd**, and to shameful **death** was hurl'd' (v.1–10).

'whilst we greet thee thus, fair land, | We curse Britannia's race!' (v.78–79)

'To other regions now we pass | Across Quathlamba's heights' (v.88–89).

'In **1852** a treaty was concluded with the English Government called the **Sand River Convention**, by which **the independence of the South African Republic** was acknowledged' (195).

'**Both Pretorius and Potgieter died in 1853**' (195).

'In **1855 Marthinus Wessels, son of Andries Pretorius**, was **chosen first President** of the Republic' (195).

'Every man did what was **right in his own eyes**' (192).

'To remedy this state of affairs, Sir Peregrine Maitland in 1845 proclaimed the whole country English territory under the name of the Orange River Sovereignty.' (193)

'Andries Pretorius at the head of **400** boers had forced the British Resident and the troops to retire' (193).

'At **Boomplats**, ... the soldiers found the Dutchmen strongly posted behind a ridge and among broken ground. There was a sharp contest of about three hours ending in the complete discomfiture of the farmers. **Pretorius** escaped with some others and succeeded in crossing **the Vaal**' (193).

'**Moselekatse** was unable to cope with the terrible newcomers. He ... retreated across the Limpopo, leaving Potgieter and his followers in undisputed possession of the vast territory between that river and the Vaal. In 1839 **Potchefstroom** was founded. Its name is derived partly from the leader.... Meanwhile Andries Pretorius, who had escaped from Boomplats, fled over the Vaal. Jealousies and disputes about the leadership soon arose between him and **Potgieter**' (194–95).

Pretoria founded and named after Marthinus Pretorius (195)

'The **Republic north of the Vaal** was not destined for many a year to enjoy the uneventful and prosperous existence that fell to the lot of the Orange Free State. There was almost continual war within her gates both with native chiefs and among the boer leaders themselves. When the Rev. **Thomas Burgers** was **elected President** in **1872** many of the people hoped that better days had dawned for the Transvaal. These hopes were not fulfilled. Mr Burgers was a man of liberal ideas and possessed of great talents and eloquence, but his new-fangled notions were not acceptable to the majority of the boers and he never gained their confidence' (217–18).

'the recognition by Great Britain, at the **Sand River Convention (1852)**, of **the independence of the Transvaal Republic**' (vii.argument).

'**both Potgieter and Pretorius died (1853)**' (vii.argument).

'The people ... **elected Marthinus Wessels, son of Andries Pretorius** to be their **first President (1855)**' (vii.argument).

'We knew no law—each did what **pleasing** was | **In his own eyes**' (vii.3–4).

'The British Lion | His foot now laid upon yon tract of land, | Which lies betwixt the Orange, and the Vaal' (vii.8–10).

'A band | Of **twice two hundred** trusty men obey'd | That Great Commander's call' (vii.13–15).

'On **Boomplaats**' plain | He stood oppos'd to British steel. Our front | Gave way, and we were forc'd to yield, or flee. | ... | **Pretorius**, our great hero, where is he?—| Beyond **the Vaal**, a fugitive—a wretch!' (vii.15–21).

Of Pretorius: 'Aspiring to be chieftain in this land, | He rais'd the wrath of Hendrik **Potgieter**, | **Umzilikazi**'s conqueror and lord, | Who sev'ral years had liv'd in quietness, | And peace, at **Potchefstroom**, his happy seat. | This land beyond the Vaal, *to us was now* | *Secur'd*' (vii.24–30).

Pretoria founded and named after Marthinus Pretorius (vii.58–59)

'After the establishment of **Republican Government in the Transvaal**, matters grew worse, and contrary to the expectations of the people. **Anarchy** prevailed amongst the burghers. In **1872, Thomas Burgers**, a Dutch Reformed Minister, was **elected to the Presidency**. With him it was believed all trouble would vanish, but he, being a man of idle dreams and empty schemes, all his ventures ended in failure. The people consequently became more discontented, and lost faith in him.' (viii.argument)

'the affairs of the Republic were hopeless. ... The public coffers were empty and the people would no longer pay taxes. Trade was entirely destroyed' (219).

'The Government had no power either to control its own subjects or to defend them against **their native enemies, Sikukuni and Cetywayo**, who might at any moment **overrun** the Republic' (218–19).

'**Marthinus** Wessels, son of Andries Pretorius, was chosen first President of the Republic. **Pretoria**, the capital, was then laid out and named in his honour' (195).

'Disputes and fighting among the boers themselves and almost continual wars with the natives to the north and north-east make up the history of the Republic until its annexation to England' (195).

'Mr **Shepstone** was then **diplomatic agent at Fort Peddie**. He there acquired the name of **Somtseu—a Nimrod, a mighty hunter**—the designation by which he has ever since been **known to the natives of South Africa**' (161).

'their native enemies ... might at any moment overrun the Republic. ... Sir Theophilus Shepstone considered that the only way **to save** the country was to proclaim it English territory. ... No resistance was openly made to the **annexation**, it being regarded by the majority of the Dutch as a necessary evil at the time' (219).

'**Sir Theophilus Shepstone** continued in office as Administrator of the new colony until **March, 1879**, when he was **succeeded** by **Sir Owen Lanyon**' (219).

Of Sir Owen Lanyon: 'After his appointment **matters grew** rapidly **worse**. There was then an **unpopular** governor added to an unpopular government. Sir Owen Lanyon had **no sympathy** with the history or ways of the people he was called upon to govern. **His manners** were not conciliatory and **his attitude** very much **aggravated** the **feeling against English rule**' (241).

'An **appeal** for release was once more made **to the English Government** by the boers. **Mr Gladstone, who had seemed while in Opposition to favour the restoration of their independence**, returned a decided "no" to their petition' (242).

'The country became bankrupt, and the nation was practically on the verge of ruin' (viii.argument).

'**Their native foes, Cetewayo and Sikukuni**, threatened to **overrun** the State' (viii.argument).

'Marthinus is our right, and lawful king. | On yonder waste with weeds o'ergrown, his town—| **Pretoria**—from the desert sand has ris'n' (viii.2–4).

'strife, and discord, wranglings, and disputes, | And violence prevail'd throughout the land! | Now here we strove with arms, amongst ourselves, | Now there by swarthy foes were we assail'd' (viii.6–9).

'**Somtseu—'Nimrod or mighty hunter'**, is the name of Sir Theophilus **Shepstone** acquired whilst he was **diplomatic agent at Fort Peddie**. By such he was **known to the natives of South Africa**' (viii.28 footnote).

Shepstone 'now appear'd | **To save** us from ourselves, and from the foes, | Who hover'd round in black array, athirst | For our life's blood, and for the land wherein | We dwelt. We yielded to that *Nimrod's* words, | When he our land **annex'd** to Britain's Crown' (viii.28–33).

'the appointment of **Sir Owen Lanyon** to the governorship of the Transvaal, in **succession to Sir Theophilus Shepstone (March 1879)**' (ix.argument).

Of Sir Owen Lanyon: '**matters grew worse**. The Governor was arrogant, **unpopular**, and **unsympathetic** with the Boers. **His manners**, and **his attitude aggravated** their **feelings against British rule**' (ix.argument).

'Their third **appeal to the British Government** was by **Mr Gladstone (who while in the Opposition seemed to favour the restoration of their independence)** rejected' (ix.argument).

'**Paul Kruger** and **Dr Jorissen**, went to England and protested against the annexation. Lord Carnarvon gave them no hope that the country would be **restored** to the Dutch. ... [A]t the **end of 1878** another appeal was made to England. The envoys were **Mr Kruger** and **Mr Joubert** They had no more success than had the first deputation' (241).

'An **appeal** for release was once more made to the **English Government** by the boers. **Mr Gladstone** ... returned a decided "no" to their petition' (242).

'After **Sir Garnet Wolseley** met the **Zulu chiefs** at **Ulundi** on the **1st of September** he **proceeded to the Transvaal**. As **High Commissioner** he issued a **proclamation** to the effect that the country would "**for ever**" form part of the **Queen's dominions**; and he more than once made the now historic **assertion** that "**so long as the sun shone in the heavens**", so long would the Transvaal be **English territory**' (242).

'A great meeting of the boers was then held **from the 8th to the 13th of December** at Paardekraal, **now Krugersdorp** and a gold-producing centre, on the road from Pretoria to Potchefstroom' (243).

'A **Triumvirate** was formed consisting of **Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius**, and they issued a long **proclamation** "making it known to everybody" that the Republic was re-established' (243).

'A **Triumvirate** was formed consisting of **Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius**, and they issued a long **proclamation** "making it known to everybody" that the **Republic** was **re-established**' (243).

'**O'Neill's farm house** under **Amajuba** witnessed the last scene in the ever-to-be-lamented conflict between the two white races in South Africa. There, on the **23rd of March**, Sir Evelyn Wood and his staff met the boer leaders **Kruger, Pretorius, and Joubert**, and agreed to a **treaty of peace**. **Complete self-government** with regard to **internal affairs** was given to the boers **with the Queen as Suzerain**' (252).

'**three commandoes** were organised. One was ordered to prevent the **94th Regiment** on the march from **Lydenburg** from reaching **Pretoria** and to **intercept Captain Froome** with two companies of the same regiment **between Wakkerstroom and Standerton**. Another went to **Potchefstroom** The third and largest **marched to Heidelberg** and took possession of the town without difficulty. There, ... **the flag of the Republic** was once more **hoisted**' (243).

'The Transvaal made three fruitless attempts to secure the **restoration** of independence:—

(1) By deputation consisting of **Paul Kruger**, and **Dr Jorissen** (1877).

(2) By deputation consisting of **Paul Kruger**, and **Piet Joubert** (**end of 1878**).

(3) By **appeal** to the **British Government**, which by **Mr Gladstone** was flatly refused (1880). (ix.5 footnote).

'**Sir Garnet Wolseley**, on his departure from Zululand, where he held a conference (**Sept. 1, 1879**) with the **Zulu chiefs**, after the battle of **Ulundi**, **proceeded to the Transvaal**. There in his capacity as **High Commissioner**, he issued a **proclamation**, wherein the following occurred:— "**That the country would for ever form part of the Queen's dominions**" and he more than once asserted that—"so long as the sun shone in the heavens, so long would the Transvaal remain **British territory**" (ix.10 footnote).

'Paardekraal | Receiv'd our hosts' (ix.11–12).

'**From the 8th to the 13th December**, 1880, at what is **now** called **Krugersdorp**, about 20 miles from Johannesburg' (ix.12 footnote).

'**Three captains** from amongst the hosts were chos'n—| **Joubert, Pretorius, and myself**—to whom | The people look'd for guidance in the fray | Impending, and deliv'rance from the yoke | Of bondage' (ix.16–20).

'A **triumvirate** was formed consisting of **Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius**, who issued a **proclamation** announcing the **re-establishment of the Republic**' (x.argument).

'At **O'Neill's farmhouse** on the Natalian side of **Amajuba**, a **treaty of peace** was signed [footnote: **March 23, 1881**], which gave to the Boers **complete Self-Government** with reference to their **internal affairs**, **with the Queen** of Britain as **Suzerain**' (x.argument).

'**Three Commandoes** were raised: The first was ordered to check the **94th Regiment** between **Lydenburg** and **Pretoria** and to **intercept Captain Froome's** column **between Wakkerstroom, and Standerton**. The second went to **Potchefstroom**. The third **marched to Heidelberg**, where the **Republican flag** was **hoisted**' (x.2 footnote).

Anstruther beaten at Bronkhorst Spruit (243–44).

Colley beaten at Laing's Nek (246–48).

'Sir George Colley moved on up the **Ingogo heights** and was there attacked on a triangular plateau close to the main road. ... The Ingogo, knee-deep when the soldiers crossed in the morning, had become a **raging torrent**, and many of the men were swept down in attempting to ford it' (249).

'The destination of the party was the top of Amajuba Mountain[.] ... Continuous musketry fire, steady and fatal on the one side, wild and ineffectual on the other, broke the quiet of that hitherto tranquil height. Gradually the attacking boers reached the summit and then poured in a **deadly** volley. A **panic** seized the soldiers. They broke and **fled for their lives** down the **rudded steep** up which they had climbed. Sir George **Colley** was among the killed' (249–50)

'To an Englishman the name of the mountain recalls only sorrow, **disaster**, and death' (251).

The Boers 'regarded the annexation of their country as an unrighteous act and a direct violation of the laws of God' (246).

'Kruger ... responded that "the God of our fathers has done great things to us and hearkened to our prayers". That was the Dutch view of the fight on Amajuba' (251).

'The Transvaal Republic was **ruled** for more than a year by the Three who had brought the boers triumphant out of their contest with England. **Ultimately Paul Kruger was elected President**, an office he still holds. Piet **Joubert** was made **Commandant-General**, and **Marthinus Pretorius retired** from public life. Gradually the Republic once more drifted into **trouble**' (255).

'The **gold-fields** brought **prosperity**' (256).

'The Transvaal was no longer English territory and **the sun** still shone **in the heavens**' (252).

'Native chiefs became contumacious and rebellious. Wars were carried on with **Mapoch and Mampoer in the north**, and with **Mankoroane and Montsioa in the west**' (255–56).

'An almost empty treasury, caused by the expenditure on these wars and by the general mismanagement of the government, confronted the country. Trade languished, and **discontent** became louder and louder among all classes of the community' (256).

Anstruther beaten at Bronkhorst Spruit (x.8).

Colley beaten at Laing's Nek (x.9).

Of Colley: '**Ingogo's heights**, and **treach'rous stream** beheld | That luckless British chieftain's second fate' (x.10–11).

'Majuba echoed with disaster, death, | Disgrace, and sorrow to the British race. | Our foemen broke like surf upon a rock, | Before our **deadly**, and unerring fire. | They broke, and **panic-stricken fled for life** | Adown yon **rudded steeps**, whilst **Colley** lay | A lifeless form upon yon mountain-top' (x.12–18).

'Did ever such **disaster**, and disgrace | O'ertake the British Lion?' (x.19–20).

'Tis madness unto them, | Who strive with men, whom "Might", and "Right", and GOD | Defend!' (x.23–25).

'For a brief period the triumvirate **ruled** the State, but **ultimately Kruger was elected President**, with **Joubert** as **Commandant-General** of the Forces; whilst **Marthinus Pretorius retired** into private life. **Troubles** soon began to threaten the State' (xi.argument).

'**Gold** was discovered, and the **prosperity** of the land revived' (xi.argument).

'**The sun in heav'n** | *Still shines*, and we from Britain, and from thee | At last deliver'd, are for ever free!' (xi.6–8).

'Our swarthy neighbours rush'd to arms, and tried | Our pow'r. To crush whom, our State-chest deplete | Became. Grim languor fortune harshly seiz'd, | And **discontent** the hearts of desp'rate men' (xi.19–22).

'**Mapoch, and Mampoer in the north**, and **Mankoroane, and Montsioa in the west**, became defiant, and challenged Boer authority' (xi.19 footnote).

'When the fortunes of the Transvaal were at their worst they began to mend. **Gold was discovered in paying quantities in the Kaap district in 1884** and a **rush of people** from the neighbouring states at once took place. ... The mines attracted thousands of people and there are now nearly as many Englishmen as Dutchmen in the Transvaal' (256).

'**The gold industry of the Transvaal** and the growing trade and importance of its centre, **Johannesburg**, had **attracted** great numbers of people of all nationalities, but chiefly **British subjects**. **These** immigrants, or **Uitlanders**, at the end of 1895 comprised **four-fifths of the white population of the great mining town** and **contributed** enormously to the public revenue. They were, however, by the laws of the Republic, denied **any share in the government**. They complained also of undue **taxation**, of the unsatisfactory **administration** of justice, and of the defective system of education. The **Uitlanders petitioned the Volksraad to redress their grievances** without success. Their discontent culminated at the end of 1895. A **Reform Association** was formed to **agitate for their rights**, and **four thousand men were armed in case of possible disturbance**. An **appeal for aid** was likewise sent to **Dr Jameson**, the ruler of **Matabele Land** under the Chartered Company' (274–75).

'Dr Jameson left Mafeking with about **five hundred** of his armed police and six maxim guns with the intention of marching to Johannesburg. He reached **Krugersdorp**, 15 miles from the town, on the first day of 1896. He was there encountered by a hastily raised burgher force, **defeated**, surrounded, and forced **to surrender**' (275).

'Meanwhile the **promoters of the Reform movement** in the Transvaal, numbering **sixty-four**, all men of wealth and influence in Johannesburg, were arrested and put in prison in Pretoria. They were tried in May' (276).

'The **four** leaders, Mr Lionel Phillips, Mr George Farrar, Mr John Hays Hammond, and Colonel Rhodes, were sentenced to **death**' (276).

'This sentence was almost immediately commuted to a long term of imprisonment, and finally to payment of a heavy fine' (276).

'**Gold was discovered in payable quantities in the Kaap district (1884)**. Since then, there has been a continual **rush of people** into the Transvaal from all parts of the world' (xi.24 footnote).

'**The gold industry of Johannesburg** attracted vast multitudes of people from all parts of the globe. The greater part of these consisted of **British subjects**. **These** new-comers, termed by the Boers "Uitlanders", totalled **four-fifths of the white population of Johannesburg**. Although they **contributed** vast sums of money to the State Treasury, they were not allowed **any share in the Government**. Groaning under excessive **taxation**; and unjust, corrupt, and rotten **administration**, they vainly **petitioned the Volksraad to redress their grievances**. They next formed an association—the **Reform Association**—for the purpose of **agitating for their rights** by constitutional means. When these failed, they **armed 4,000 men in case of disturbance**, and they **appealed for aid to Dr Jameson**, ex-Administrator of **Matabeleland**, who with **500** men crossed the Transvaal border and marched as far as **Krugersdorp**, where he, and his force were **defeated**, and compelled **to surrender**' (xiii.94 footnote).

'Woe—woe—to them, the luckless **sixty-four**, | **Promoters of a luckless suppliant band!**' (xiii.103–04).

'Woe—woe—to them, the luckless **four**, who'll grasp | The helm of such a frail, ill-fated skiff! | When storms assail, on cruel rocks 'twill land, | Whereon 'twill rest a prey to ruthless waves. | Ah, luckless swains! Their recompense—a **death** | Of shame will be!' (xiii.105–10).

'naught—naught—but glitt'ring gold | Can for their evil deed atonement make!' (xiii.112–13).

'On the **last day of 1895** a **terrible railway accident** took place on the Natal line **near Glencoe**, whereby **forty** persons lost their lives and many were seriously injured. The **passengers** were **mostly women and children** sent away from possible disturbance in **Johannesburg**. ... ¶In **February 1896**, eight trucks full of **dynamite exploded** in the station of **Vrededorp**, a working **suburb of Johannesburg**. A hole was **torn in the earth 30 feet deep, and 200 feet long**; every house in the suburb was **levelled**; and the **loss of life** was **enormous**. ¶... In addition to this plague the farmers had to contend with a long-continued drought and in 1897 with **rinderpest**, which had been raging in the neighbouring states since the beginning of the previous year' (276–77).

'Dr Jameson, his officers, and men were conveyed as prisoners to Pretoria. They were thereafter **handed over** at the border to **Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, the Governor of Natal**, and sent to **England** to be **tried** by the British Government. ... Dr Jameson and his officers were tried and **found guilty** of making a hostile raid into a friendly state, and were **sentenced** to various terms of imprisonment' (275).

'**Simon Van der Stell**, who ruled at the Cape from 1677 to 1699, was anxious that the cultivation of the land by free burghers should be continued. He wished to see the corn-fields and vineyards which already extended for many miles round Table Bay greatly increased' (92).

'The more ignorant of them believed themselves to be the "chosen people"' (95–96).

'**Uys** was struck by an **assegai** in **his thigh**. He pulled it out and then fainted from loss of **blood**' (156).

'After galloping about a hundred yards, young Uys looked back and saw his father lift his head while assegais gleamed thick around him. In an instant the boy was back at his side, and shot three Zulus before he too was overpowered and speared. Young Dirk Uys **laid down his life for his father**, and won the cross "For Valour" in that wild ravine' (156).

'On the night of the **23rd May**, Captain **Smith** put his scheme into execution. ... To avoid marching through thick bush, the men were led from the camp down through what is now Aliwal Street to the beach of the **Bay**. ... Twenty-five Dutchmen, hidden by the trees, lay on the ground levelling their long guns against the trunks and shooting down their antagonists as they came out into bold relief against the moonlit **sands**' (172–73).

The three plagues were as follows:—

(1) **Terrible Railway Accident (Dec. 31, 1895)** in Natal, **near Glencoe Junction**. The **passengers** on that ill-fated train, **mostly women and children**, were fugitives from threatening trouble in **Johannesburg**. **Forty** were killed and many seriously wounded.

(2) **Dynamite Explosion (Feb. 1896)** at **Vrededorp**, a **suburb of Johannesburg**. The **earth was torn 30 feet deep and 200 feet long**. Every structure **levelled** to the ground. **Loss of life** terrible, and **enormous**.

(3) **Rinderpest**, which decimated the cattle of the State. (xiii.115 footnote).

'The arrest of the prominent spirits of the insurrection, whilst the leading filibusters are **handed over to Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, Governor of Natal**, by whom they are transported to **England** for **trial**. Arraigned before the Court of Justice, the Reformers are **found guilty**, and **sentenced**' (xv.argument).

'And next spake **Simon van der Stell**, who left | To his posterity and race the fruits | Of industry, and toil; and monuments, | Which long have brav'd the storms of treach'rous skies; | And which will last for centuries to come—| A tribute, and a glory to his name' (xxv.51–56).

'We believ'd that we were God's elect, | And we swore we were Israel's race' (xxv.74–75).

'And now Piet **Uys** stepp'd forth before his race, | The Zulu **spear** still settling in **his side**, | Wherefrom his **blood** in copious torrents flow'd' (xxv.126–28).

'And next into the dark arena rush'd | The boy—Dirk Uys—the bravest of our race—| Who **for his father's** life **laid down his own**' (xxv.142–44).

'The leader of that rustic band | Am *I*, who on that day—| The **Twenty-third of May**—in **sand** | Lash'd **Smith** at Durban Bay' (xxv.231–34).

'Diaz named it "Cape of all the Storms". King John II, with happier augury, called it the "Cape of Good Hope"' (84).

'After the defeat of **Dr Jameson**, the **Emperor** William II of **Germany** sent a **telegram to** President **Kruger** in which he **congratulated** him on having maintained the independence of his country against foreign aggression' (275).

'Great Diaz, rightly didst thou name this land
"*The Cape of Storms!*" He err'd who rebaptiz'd
It "Cape of Hope"' (xxxi.42-44).

'Allusion is here made to the **German Emperor's congratulatory telegram to** Paul **Kruger**, on the overthrow of **Dr Jameson** and his band (1896)' (xxxiv.207 footnote).

- 'A Faithful Amazon.' *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) 4.
- 'A Glimpse of Umkomaas.' *Ipepa* 3:454 (14 Aug. 1903) 3.
- 'Ilanga.' *Ilanga* 1:6 (15 May 1903) 3.
- 'In Memoriam.' *Citizen* 1:20 (22 Dec. 1897) 2.
- 'In Memoriam: Elias Tshabalala.' *Ilanga* 2:72 (26 Aug. 1904) 4; 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 4.
- 'In Memoriam: Michal Nkosi.' *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 4; 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.
- 'In Memoriam: Mrs Sydney Strong.' *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.
- 'Melia and Pietro.' *Citizen* 2:32 (12 March 1898) to 2:81 (24 Dec. 1898).
- Paul Kruger's Dream: The Struggle for Supremacy in South Africa between Boer and Briton; or the Overthrow of 'Corruption', 'Falsehood', 'Tyranny', 'Wrong', and the Triumph of 'Justice', 'Truth', 'Liberty', 'Right': a Poem.* Pietermaritzburg: Munro Brothers, printers, 1902. Parts I–III are also published in *Ipepa* 3:435 (21 June 1901); 3:436 (28 June 1901); 3:439 (19 July 1901).
- 'A Plea for Justice.' *Ilanga* 1:24 (18 Sept. 1903) 4.
- 'Press on Ohlange.' *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.
- “‘Pro Aliis Damnati’: For Others Doomed.’ *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) to 3:108 (12 May 1905).
- 'A Second Warning to Edendale.' *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3.
- 'The Spirit Song of Mehlokazulu.' *Ilanga* 3:166 (29 June 1906) 4. See Appendix 4 for Grendon's authorship.
- 'Storm and Calm.' *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904) 4.
- 'To the Whites and Blacks of South Africa.' *Ilanga* 1:28 (16 Oct. 1903) 4.
- 'To You Abantu: What Man's Accomplish'd Ye Can Do.' *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4.
- 'The Tragedy of Malunge.' *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5; *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).
- Tshaka's Death: a Poem.* Pietermaritzburg: Munro Bros., printers, 1901. Also in: *Ipepa* 3:430 (17 May 1901) 3; 3:431 (24 May 1901) 4.
- 'A Warning.' *Ipepa* 3:445 (15 May 1903) 3.

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- 'Annexation of Swaziland.' *Ilanga* 2:76 (23 Sept. 1904) 3–4.
- 'Mr. Barnett's Lecture.' *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 3.
- 'Bathoen's Protest.' *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.
- 'Bayete!' *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904) 3.
- 'Befooled!' *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4.
- 'The Black Man and His Period of Training.' *Ilanga* 2:47 (4 March 1904) to 2:57 (13 May 1904). Five-part serial.
- 'Black Supremacy.' *Natal Witness* 57:9065 (20 April 1901) 6.
- 'Bow Down You Dogs!' *Ilanga* 3:97 (24 Feb. 1905) 4.
- 'Brag and Die!' *Ilanga* 2:55 (29 April 1904) 4.
- 'Copy the Greek.' *Ilanga* 2:62 (17 June 1904) 4.
- 'Degrading Marriage.' *Ilanga* 2:71 (19 Aug. 1904) 4.
- 'Editorial Notes.' *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916); (17 Feb. 1916). This appears to have been a regular feature of the paper during Grendon's editorship.
- 'Educate Your Children!' *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4.
- 'Farewell Msindazwe! R. T. Coryndon, Esq. C.M.G. Late Resident Commissioner of Swaziland.' *Abantu-Batho* (20 Jan. 1916).
- 'Farmers' Conference.' *Ilanga* 2:54 (22 April 1904) 4.
- 'Farmers' Congress.' *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 3–4.
- 'The Franchise Act.' *DFA* 15:3720 (23 Sept. 1892) 2.
- 'Freedom is Love!' *Ilanga* 2:73 (2 Sept. 1904) 3–4.
- 'From Patriotism to Sedition.' *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4.
- 'Gen. Smuts Answered.' *Ilanga* 13:656 (31 Dec. 1915) 5. Reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*.
- 'God with Us.' *Ilanga* 2:89 (23 Dec. 1904) 3–4.
- 'The Herero Rebellion.' *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4.
- 'Hooray!' *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).
- 'In Memoriam: the Late Sir John Robinson.' *Ilanga* 1:32 (13 Nov. 1903) 4.

- 'Justice Only!' *Ilanga* 2:86 (2 Dec. 1904) 3–4.
- 'Keep Your Breeds Pure!' *Ilanga* 2:56 (6 May 1904) 4.
- 'Keep Yourselves Clean.' *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.
- 'The Labour Problem.' *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4.
- 'Labour Problem.' *Ilanga* 2:78 (7 Oct. 1904) 4.
- 'Labour Question.' *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4.
- 'The Late Chief Usibepu.' *Ilanga* 2:74 (9 Sept. 1904) 4.
- 'The Late President Kruger.' *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 4.
- 'The Late Sir H. M. Stanley.' *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 4.
- 'Mafukuzela in Swaziland.' *Ilanga* 13:623 (7 May 1915) 5.
- 'A Marvel.' *Ilanga* 2:41 (22 Jan. 1904) 4.
- 'Miscegenation.' *Izwe la Kiti* 3:73 (11 Feb. 1914) to 3:87 (20 May 1914).
- 'The Mission Native.' *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.
- 'Missionary Conference.' *Ilanga* 2:70 (12 Aug. 1904) 3–4.
- 'Move Ye On!' *Ilanga* 3:94 (3 Feb. 1905) 4.
- 'Native Abominations.' *Ilanga* 3:92 (20 Jan. 1905) 4.
- 'Native Education.' *Ilanga* 2:87 (9 Dec. 1904) 3–4.
- 'The Native Franchise.' *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 3.
- 'The Native Press.' *Ilanga* 3:100 (17 March 1905) 3.
- 'The Native Priesthood.' *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.
- 'The Native Question.' *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3.
- 'The Native Question.' *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 4; 3:100 (17 March 1905) 4.
After a brief editorial introduction, *Ilanga* reprints material from the *Times of Swazieland* (not Grendon's).
- 'Native Reform.' *Ilanga* 2:88 (16 Dec. 1904) 3–4.
- 'Native Taxation.' *Ilanga* 3:107 (5 May 1905) 3.
- 'Native Unrest.' *Ilanga* 16:41 (11 Oct. 1918) to 16:49 (29 Nov. 1918). Grendon's polemic with the editor of the *Lake Chrissie Chronicle*.

- 'Native Vice.' *Ilanga* 3:99 (10 March 1905) 3–4.
- 'The Native Vote.' *Ilanga* 3:95 (10 Feb. 1905) 3–4.
- 'Natives and Crime.' *Ilanga* 2:52 (8 April 1904) 4.
- 'Natives and Law.' *Ilanga* 3:101 (24 March 1905) 3–4.
- 'A Native's Execution.' *Ilanga* 3:98 (3 March 1905) 3–4. After a brief editorial introduction, *Ilanga* reprints material from the *Natal Mercury*.
- 'Natives on the Footpaths.' *Ilanga* 2:50 (25 March 1904) 4.
- 'A Need of Leaders.' *Ipepa* 4:490 (22 April 1904) 3. Attribution of this article to Grendon is conjectural. See p. 505.
- 'News from Swaziland.' *Izwe la Kiti* 3:69 (14 Jan. 1914) 6.
- 'Notes and Comments.' *Ilanga* 2:75 (16 Sept. 1904) to 3:108 (12 May 1905). A regular weekly feature.
- 'Notes and Comments.' *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).
- 'Obituary: Late Mr. John Gama.' *Ilanga* 2:82 (4 Nov. 1904) 4. Most of this piece is reprinted from *Times of Swazieland* (not Grendon's).
- 'The Old Year and the New.' *Ilanga* 2:90 (30 Dec. 1904) 3–4.
- 'Polygamy.' *Ilanga* 3:102 (31 March 1905) 3–4.
- 'Poor Personality.' *Ilanga* 3:96 (17 Feb. 1905) 3–4.
- 'Reply to Mr. Plaatje.' *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5. *Ilanga* evidently 'clipped' this from *Abantu-Batho* issue of 9 Dec. 1915. It is followed by an editorial paragraph by Grendon.
- 'Reply to Rev. Bridgman.' *Ilanga* 2:85 (25 Nov. 1904) 3–4. After a brief editorial introduction, *Ilanga* reprints material from *Naledi* of Basutoland (not Grendon's).
- 'Rev. and Mrs Dube.' *Ilanga* 3:108 (12 May 1905) 4.
- 'S.A.N.A. Commission.' *Ilanga* 2:60 (3 June 1904) 4.
- 'Selfishness.' *Ilanga* 2:59 (27 May 1904) 3–4.
- 'Slavery or Not?' *Ilanga* 2:50 (25 March 1904) to 2:58 (20 May 1904). Four-part serial.
- 'Snakes in the Grass.' *Ilanga* 2:48 (11 March 1904) 3–4.
- 'South Africa's Future.' *Ilanga* 2:46 (26 Feb. 1904) 4.
- 'Spread of Mohammedanism.' *Izwe la Kiti* 3:70 (21 Jan. 1914) 5. Letter to the editor.

- 'A Strange Question.' *Ilanga* 2:61 (10 June 1904) 4.
- Swazi affairs (untitled piece). *Ilanga* 13:654 (17 Dec. 1915) 5. Reprinted from *Abantu-Batho*.
- 'Swaziland and the S. A. Union.' *Abantu-Batho* (17 Feb. 1916).
- 'Taking S. A. Natives to England.' *Looker-On* 242 (28 March 1899) 5. Reprinted from *Coloured South African* (24 March 1899).
- 'Thou art the Man!' *Ilanga* 13:648 (5 Nov. 1915) 5, and 13:650 (19 Nov. 1915) 5.
- 'Three Notable Speeches.' *Ilanga* 3:105 (21 April 1905) 4.
- 'The Tiger and the Lion.' *Ilanga* 2:45 (19 Feb. 1904) 4.
- 'The True European.' *Ilanga* 3:91 (13 Jan. 1905) 4.
- 'Two Warnings. I. The Indian Invasion.' *Ilanga* 1:36 (11 Dec. 1903) 4. 'II—The Chinese Plague.' *Ilanga* 1:37 (18 Dec. 1903) 4.
- 'Umdlwa's Musings. No I. His Nation's Destiny.' *Ilanga* 2:81 (28 Oct. 1904) 4.
- 'Visits England.' *Ilanga* 2:44 (12 Feb. 1904) 4.
- 'A Voice from the Sea.' *Ilanga* 2:79 (14 Oct. 1904), to 2:84 (18 Nov. 1904). Six-part serial.
- 'The Voice of a God.' *Ilanga* 2:49 (18 March 1904) 4.
- 'We Concur!' *Ilanga* 2:77 (30 Sept. 1904).
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{Several English translations are available and have been consulted. Short-titles are shown below.}

Apocalypse Revealed / Apocalypse Explained

Arcana Cælestia

Conjugal Love

Coronis

Divine Love and Wisdom

Divine Providence

Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture

Earths in our Solar System / Earths in the Universe

Heaven and Hell

Spiritual Life and the Word of God

The True Christian Religion

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TITLE	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	DATE CONSULTED	RANGE
<i>Abantu-Batho</i>	Johannesburg		1913–16
<i>A. P. O.</i>	Cape Town		1912
<i>Church News from Natal</i>	Pietermaritzburg		1890–93
<i>Citizen</i> ²	Kimberley		1897–98
<i>Comet and Local Advertiser</i>	Kimberley		1897
<i>Diamond Fields Advertiser</i>	Kimberley		1890–97
<i>Ilanga lase Natal</i>	Ohlange, Phoenix, near Durban		1903–24
<i>Imvo Zabantsundu</i>	King William's Town		1892–99
<i>Inkanyiso yase Natal</i>	Pietermaritzburg		1889–96
<i>International: the Organ of the International Socialist League (S. A.)</i>	Johannesburg		1915–16
<i>Ipepa lo Hlanga: The Zulu Nation: An Anglo-Zulu Weekly Newspaper</i>	Pietermaritzburg		1901, 1903–04
<i>Izwe la Kiti</i>	Dundee		1912–14
<i>Izwi Labantu</i>	East London		1906
<i>Koranta ea Becoana, and Bechuana Gazette</i>	Mafeking		1903–04

² This paper is also known at various times during its short existence as *South African Citizen*, *Kimberley Elector*, and *Kimberley Citizen*. For simplicity sake, and because the numbering is consecutive despite the name changes, I have referred to it as the *Citizen* throughout this thesis.

<i>Looker-On</i>	Port Elizabeth	1899
<i>Natal Diocesan Magazine</i>	Pietermaritzburg	1899
<i>Natal Government Gazette</i>	Pietermaritzburg	1901
<i>Natal Magazine</i>	Pietermaritzburg	1880
<i>Natal Mercury</i>	Durban	1904–05
<i>Natal Witness</i>	Pietermaritzburg	1901
<i>Native Teachers' Journal</i>		1921–25
<i>New Church Life</i>		1892
<i>Rand Daily Mail</i>	Johannesburg	1905–16
<i>South African Spectator</i>	Cape Town	1901–02
<i>Star</i>	Johannesburg	1916
<i>Times of Swazieland / Times of Swaziland</i>	Swaziland	1906–08, 1949
<i>Tsala ea Batho</i>	Kimberley	1913–15
<i>Tsala ea Becoana (The Friend of the Bechuana)</i>	Kimberley	1911–12
<i>Umsizi Wabantu</i>	Edendale	1893
<i>Umteteli wa Bantu</i>	Johannesburg	1929
<i>Vineyard</i>	Pietermaritzburg	1881–87
<i>Zonnbloem College Magazine</i>	Cape Town	1901–10

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Cape of Good Hope. List of Persons Residing in the Electoral Division of Kimberley.

Cape of Good Hope. *Report of the Select Committee Appointed to Consider and Report on Damaraland Affairs*. Cape Town: Saul Solomon, printer, 1881.

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