

generation of South African students for whom the events and texts that Coetzee describes do not strike quite the same kinds of historical and political resonance as for previous generations. Further, although for some the work as a whole might seem too forgiving, Coetzee's lightness of touch belies a deeper commitment to reflection and transformation at both personal and institutional levels: a commitment sensitive to the limitations of the kind of intervention that Coetzee herself can and should make, and informed too by current debates on the politics of translation and on what Robin DiAngelo has termed white fragility, among other things.

This is an important eye-opener for some, and a useful tool of contextualization and mobilization for those already familiar with the issues Coetzee interrogates; for this reviewer, *Accented Futures* is essential reading for teachers and students at all levels of higher education in South Africa, and complements well other recent publications such as *Being At Home: race, institutional culture and transformation in South African higher education institutions*, edited by Pedro Tabensky and Sally Matthews (2015). It is also a valuable resource for those who research South Africa's literatures and cultures. And yet, to think of *Accented Futures* as a book for South Africans and South Africanists only would be to underplay its wider resonance, for the insights and provocations that Coetzee offers here are by no means limited in relevance to the South African context. As the drive to decolonize higher education gains ground and momentum, the challenges that Coetzee poses to herself and others in *Accented Futures* will only become more pertinent to researchers, teachers and learners in universities in Europe, the United States, and beyond, and the template the book offers for reflective and transformative practices more valuable.

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JOEL E. TISHKEN, *Isaiah Shembe's Prophetic Uhlanga: the worldview of the Nazareth Baptist Church in colonial South Africa*. Bern: Peter Lang (hb £51 – 978 1 43312 285 9). 2013, 232 pp.

Isaiah Shembe founded Ibandla lamaNazaretha, the Nazareth Baptist Church, in around 1910, the same year in which the Union of South Africa was formed. Shembe himself was born around 1870 in Ntabamhlophe near Estcourt. In 1873, after Langelibalele of the Hlubi clan was deposed, the Shembe family was forced to move to the Free State to live on a white-owned farm. Six years later, in 1879, the Anglo-Zulu war broke out. Both these events are mentioned in 'Isaiah Shembe's Testimony' (Papini, August 1999 issue of *Journal of Religion in Africa*) and I suppose they played a role in shaping Shembe's world view.

The Union Government introduced a number of laws, many of them anathema to black people. Black educated elites, most of whom were Christians, resisted this formation and its laws, and in 1912 formed the South African Native National Congress (later the African National Congress). There has been much debate, however, regarding the involvement or otherwise of the African-initiated churches, including Ibandla lamaNazaretha, in the politics of resistance. Joel Tishken's is the first book-length study to tackle this issue with regard to Ibandla lamaNazaretha. It makes a convincing argument that Shembe and his Ibandla lamaNazaretha were neither resistant nor acquiescent. The church's foundation is its prophetic nature: prophecy was Shembe's *Uhlanga*, the source of his theology and world view.

Tishken is critical of those scholars who have sought to find resistance in churches such as Ibandla lamaNazaretha, claiming that ‘the focus on resistance in the 1960s–1990s says a great deal about who was doing the writing’ (p. 11). But, for Tishken, it is inaccurate to claim that all the people under the yoke of colonialism were always engrossed in feelings of hegemonic oppression, and that they were constantly searching for ways to resist their oppressors.

Tishken develops his argument by examining what he calls Shembe’s and AmaNazaretha’s world view, which he maintains saw the imposition of colonial rule as God’s plan and AmaNazaretha as God’s chosen people. He challenges those scholars who have argued for ‘Zuluness’ in Ibandla lamaNazaretha, and maintains that the foundational texts of the church make references to biblical and Christian history, and there is very little that links them to Zulu indigenous religion. He refutes the claim that Shembe’s intention was to resist Western culture and establish a Zulu ethnic religion. However, the argument for Zuluness has been made, I believe, based on the actual practices of Ibandla lamaNazaretha that challenged the views of the missionaries, who were the harbingers of the Christian faith. Rightly or wrongly, Christianity in (South) Africa was associated with Western civilization, so that when people wanted to convert to Christianity, they had to jettison their African ways. Shembe, on the other hand, allowed and even encouraged the observation of the African or Zulu traditions in his church. These included practices such as polygamy, African song and dance (reconfigured as the sacred dance), and slaughtering for the ancestors – all considered barbaric and uncivilized and therefore unchristian by the missionaries.

Tishken’s book is warmly welcome because of its attempt to look at the Nazareth Baptist Church from an emic standpoint, and, in a way, in that it seeks to recentralize the church in terms of the colonizer/colonized relationship. It is true that the kind of scholarship that has sought to find resistance in institutions such as Ibandla lamaNazaretha has tended to reinforce the importance of colonialism because it implies that all that happens in countries under colonial rule happens because of colonialism.

However, I think Tishken takes his argument too far when he claims that Shembe was completely against resistance, and that he meant every word when he stated: ‘I therefore realise that God has also placed the Authorities over us, and those who disregard or defy the Government, disregard the Will of God’ (p. 91). Tishken tells us that the interview in which Shembe uttered these words occurred in the wake of the Bulhoek massacre, and that McKenzie ‘explained to Shembe what happened to the Israelites at Bulhoek two years earlier’ (p. 90). Tishken considers the possibility of Shembe saying those words to please his interlocutors and concludes that ‘Shembe was revealing his genuine political convictions’ (p. 91). But in two cases that Tishken himself mentions in the book – the vaccination controversy of 1926 and the issue of the pilgrimage to Nhlankakazi in 1923 – Shembe did defy the authorities. He told his followers to do the opposite of what the authorities wanted, and went so far as to create hymns (hymn no. 3 and hymn no. 129, not mentioned in Tishken’s book) referring to the authorities as the ‘enemy’, something far removed from what he stated in the interview.

Having said that, I believe that Tishken’s contribution will be highly appreciated by scholars of Ibandla lamaNazaretha, African-initiated churches, African (religious) studies and studies on African Christianities.

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