

Thursday 10 September 2015
Conference Centre, Edgewood Campus,
University of KwaZulu Natal

THE 2015 JOHN LINGALIBALELE DUBE MEMORIAL LECTURE

"Reconscientising South African Communities towards self-reliance: A 'ghost dance' with John LINGALIBALELE DUBE and Steve Bantu Biko?"

Guest Speaker Mr Dumo Ndlovu

Programme Director - Prof Simangaliso Kumalo

Prof S. R Kumalo welcomed all the participants. In his remarks, he said that Lectures are events that happened once in a while and they are easily forgotten. Lectures are done for a number of reasons and one of them educating people. They are mostly done on socially topics, but now we are looking on some very important characters. The lecture of John Lingalibalele Dube has moved from being an event to be a life event hosted every year with the aim of boating the lives of people J Dube has become an institution because of the work and legacy he left. This is the 13th one lecture today. For South Africa it's an opportunity to drink from our own wells - Gustavo Gutierrez.

Opening of Lecture and Welcome- The Deputy Vice -Chancellor and Head of the College of Humanities Prof Cheryl Potgieter

Welcomed all the guest who had come who included the Dube and families, Prof Mazibuko who was the former Deputy Vice Chancellor before her.

She advised the part the lecture is was co- hosted by the School of Education at Edgewood and the School of Religion Philosophy and Classics at PMB. The lecture rotates between PMB and Edgewood.

The John Dube lecture was translated in Zulu two years ago and was something very important. The facility is there today. She said if we are serious about development of language, it is important to have the lecture in Zulu and English. She also states that the lecture is important in the educational life of South Africa. It reflects on the life of Dube and it's our challenge to think of his contribution to higher education. We learn from the lecture the importance of education to be accessible to those without access to it and the decolonization, liberation and transformation of education.

UKZN is the first university with transformation policy .The University is working towards developing Black scholars and from January the next year the university will be sponsoring best students from honours and masters up to PhD and assure them of the job at the university. We need to intervene and not just to policy issues. She argues that she does not believe that someone should take ages to become a Professor mainly because of resources.

OVERVIEW OF THE LECTURE SERIES- PROF R MOLESTANE - chairperson

The lecture historical had been hosted by the School of Religion and theology in PMB since 2003 but it is now hosted in both colleges alternating.

History of the lecture in the past five years:

2010 – The nature of opposition politics in South Africa - Dr Mvume Dandala

2011 – How to return a renegade missionary -

2012 – John Dube' Challenges to the education and humanities in the 20st century

2013 – Isizulu language as an assert in developing education in higher education

2014 -

The theme introduces dialogue and engagement especially on the challenges faced by SA today. These challenges includes xenophobia attacks on the foreign nationals, high unemployment rate, rape, intimidation high levels of crimes in South Africa and the disappointment of the people by the government today. Unless things change, South Africa is on a bleak. We are torn apart as a nation and we need the prophetic message that will give us hope in a hopeless country.

The two scholars Dube and Biko are celebrated in their contribution in the life of South Africa today. The question is what are the two saying to themselves on the lives of South Africa posthumously and what are the messages to South Africans of today.

Introduction of the Guest- Prof Johannes Smit, Dean and Head of School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics

He highlighted the biography of Dr Ndlovu and emphasis that he is an asset of South Africa through his experience in academia.

THE GUEST LECTURE- Dr D Ndlovu

Dr Ndlovu started by highlight his life experience in Soweto and his passion to have a degree. He states that in the 1970s there were only 3 black universities and it was not easy to acquire a BA Honours. A lot of things were demanded to enrol for degree. Getting a degree would make someone very proud.

He emphasized that he spent most of his time with young people in the community because this is where people who want to be in the TV are found but they don't have education. His passion is to see the grassroots demonstrating their talents because not all are gifted intellectually.

In his lecture, he demonstrated that there is something significant on the life of Dube and Biko although the two are 75 years between each other. Dube died in 1946 the year Biko was born. Biko was brutally killed on 12 September 1977 in Pretoria prison after being dragged like an animal for over a thousand kilometres.

The sabotage had stated in 1901 when the black people rose to challenge the status quo that was aggressive to dehumanize the blacks. Among these people was John Dube. On the brutal death of Biko, there are many things that can be learnt from those actions. We need to learn that to what extent brutality was exercised to the black people of that time.

Dube and Biko did things that were different and yet similar in the history of South Africans. They lived in the two side of the centuries. We are forced to examine the linkages and start to explain the similarities of the work of the two opposite figures who died in the same century. Reincarnation can be a story the ancestors we can draw from the two but not very necessary for now. The similarities especially lies on their understanding of self-reliance as very crucial in our lives at South Africans.

The question is, is it possible to dance with that two without getting in their life? Dube's emphasis was on the freedom of education and Biko on Black consciousness. The two were freedom fighters as much as they were community activists. The two were concerned about revolution and freedom of the society. Dube founded an educational institution 'Ohlange' more than 100 years now. The school was very prominent and is still significant today. For Dube education is the key to unlock the closed white society. When he arrived in USA, slave trade had just been abolished 18 years before his visit. This is bravery. In 1901 - he build a school. 1904- founded the Sun ; one of the newspapers in Natal which was published in IsiZulu. In a period of three years of the foundation of the school the students could read already this is unlike the students of today the first readers of the Sun were his students. Amazing. The Sun is still available even today to fight the rights of the people. The school and the newspaper were the instrument of liberation during the time of Dube. The two were instruments for the blacks to rely on their resources. 70 years after Biko comes in the 1970 at the age of 20 appearing on the scene. Biko came at a time when the blacks needed freedom. Families were dividing every day, women and children suffered and Biko

could not just look and fold his arms. Biko was initially involved with the multiracial Union of South Africa. He also helped found South African Students Organization SASO whose agenda included political self-reliance and unification of university students in 'black consciousness'. The actions of the people during the times of Biko were led by Ubuntu. SASO had the purpose of restoring the humanness of human beings that had been crippled by the apartheid. Dube and Biko believed in religion and theology. To this end, Dube was a pastor. Biko founded a number of disciples who used the newspapers as a way to communicate the black consciousness. Of interest to note is that although Biko was not a minister of the word, but most voices from the church arose during his time and one of the critical voices is Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Most of the ministers came up during the time of the black consciousness because religion was used to subjugate the black people. . Black theology started during the time of Black consciousness.

Dube chose the path of freedom to free the blacks from the white oppression. South Africa was a defeated society, the society that had no fabric, but he did not use guns. He understood that the society needed repairing, regeneration and rebirth. Society does not need elder people but people with the will. Dube was 30 and Biko was 21 when they appeared on the scene to fight for the black lives in South Africa.

Dube came with a program's to regather the fabrics of the society. The school was a place of rebuilding the human mind. The arrest of Biko was unfortunate because he was an instrument of socially regeneration. Biko and Dube were called to do things that people could not do. It calls for years to have such people today.

On the death of Biko, there were a number of false reasons given by the police but the truth late came. There were a lot so efforts to try to make the blacks remain low. The acts of brutality were becoming worse by day. Cruelty was the order of the day. The killing of Biko is a reflection of how the blacks suffered. After killing Africans, they would go to the braai as if that was not enough. They could dine and wine after the killing. In African philosophy, any human being who once lived is not easy just to forget.

Dube and Biko' fought for the dignity of the blacks. When you want to drive a human being, take away his dignity. The coming into fold of Dube and Biko brought back dignity. They gave the blacks hope that it will be ok. The Soweto revolution was a message to say the war had stared. Hope was brought by the two gentlemen. Determination, led to more brutality but resilience helped the blacks to go ahead.

For Dube, dignity was restored through education. Dube is still effective hundred yeass later. The act of Mandela to vote at the home country of Dube' chapel at Ohlange in 1994 was a sign of respect for the work done by Dube. Failing to make connection makes us not to grow and not to progress. Mandela connected the struggle of South Africa to the one who deserved it in the history of South Africa.

Biko is an incarnation of Dube but he did not receive the support for fellow South Africans. It's surprising that today the young people are misdirected as they burn buildings and libraries in protest of poor service deliveries. The young people, are encourage to respect the elders in view of what was done by the two gentlemen. We need to join the dots that have been created by the two gentlemen for us to go ahead as a people.

For too long, Africans have failed to see the role played by those who came before them. Dube is the face of any revolution. We learn how South Africa can draw inspiration from Dube. Dube died the day he was born 11 February and the same day Mandela was released from prison. That is not coincidence. Dube is the father dancing with Biko the son he never saw. This is a wish that even the sons of today dance with their fathers.

Question and Answer Session- Prof Hewitt

Q- How does the education of today relate to the education of Dube? How can the education of today improve?

A - There is nothing wrong with our education. What is needed is to fix the laws of our society. We need to go back to the drawing board. The other challenges is that the father is no longer in the home and the home is controlled by one voice. The fabrics of the society needs to be reworked by those who are there today.

Q- Is the current education promoting self-reliance and respect?

A-The government is sponsoring to the disadvantaged families but this is wrong. Communities need to be united. Today communities cannot agree which is a thing that is needed today.

Q- South Africa is said to have the best constitution but implementation is poor. The biggest challenge is; why is the black person suffering when the black man is in power. Why are people destroying the few they have to get something they want just that moment?

A- No constitution runs a family. The family needs to be a family. People, are joining some people's agenda. It's important to run your family. Leadership in communities today was given on merit just like Dube. Today people, are chosen because they are selfish. The non-leaders have taken the centre stage and people who are able are quite. People need to take up their position in leadership.

Q -do we need to go back to the drawing board to talk about families?

A- In creating nature, God created some creations that are very important for us. The traditional family is important but we need to move as a society and accept what we are and make head ways. We should continue to encourage our children to marry if they want, we should also encourage the traditional family at all cost but we need to be conscious that we must not force people to do what they don't want to do.

Q- How can South Africa move out of the box?

Q- Given that South Africa education is being criticized so much, what is the role of the society to ensure that the black person is educated?

A - The world does not have thinkers and we need to be challenged to do our best. As a nation, we are like people coming from a war where you would have lost the relatives. What comes first is to make sure that I have food on my table and education is something else. We need to restore human beings as much as they can and then go back in the society to transform it. People are traumatized and they need to be rebranded. Humanity in the lives of blacks has been removed but we can still do something.

South Africans is full of people who know how to run things they don't know. We need to entrust the government on how to run the society. We need to keep quiet and play our part. Comments should be made from an informed position. We are a broken society, we need to come back and start to rebuild ourselves.

Vote of thanks- Prof Kamwendo, Dean and Head of School of Education

"The Best of all is God is with us" John Wesley 1791.