

# John L. M. Dube's Leadership: Evaluating Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane as Leaders

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## Abstract

Since 1898, various African Christian leaders have emerged and contributed to shaping the South African political landscape. One such leader is the late John Langalibalele Mafukuzela Dube, the first president of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), later called the African National Congress (ANC). This article uses a case study research methodology to identify the leadership qualities that influenced him, tracing them to the leadership qualities of Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane. It then evaluates how these leaders (in)directly applied these leadership qualities in the transformation of the post-1994 South African political landscape. This article then shows how the three leaders emulated John Langalibalele Mafukuzela Dube's leadership qualities in their efforts to contribute politically to the post-1994 transformation process in South Africa.

## 1. Introduction

The ruling party of South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC), has a proud legacy of being led by Christian leaders at national and local levels (Kumalo 2012; Odendaal 2016). This legacy elevated the integrity of the party. However, this legacy appears to have been compromised by developments that reflect a trajectory of moral decline associated with the ruling party in the past ten years. This decline is noticeable in two main controversies related to the ruling party, namely, the Nkandla scandal and the state capture allegations that led to the establishment of the Commission into State Capture led by a justice of the Constitutional Court, Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo. The commission has been subsequently known as the Zondo Commission. As a point of reflection, the article uses a case study as

### Keywords

African Christian leaders, leadership qualities, transformation, non-dichotomous perspective of *Ubuntu*, South African political landscape

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a research method. This method provides a detailed description of a given situation, organization, individual, or event (Joyner, Rouse, and Glatthorn 2018, 122) regarding the leadership qualities of John Langalibalele Dube nicknamed “Mafukuzela,” and three African Pentecostal/Evangelical leaders (Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane). Accordingly, this article first traces the leadership qualities that shaped and influenced the first president of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC, current ANC), John Langalibalele Dube, who was a Christian minister of the American Zulu Mission. Second, since he was a pastor and politician (Kumalo 2012), these qualities are also evaluated in the leadership of post-1994 renowned African Pentecostal/Evangelical leaders Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane, who occupy a similar national political space to John Langalibalele Dube (henceforth referred to as John Dube). Pursuant to the above objective, this article is divided into four sections: a discussion of John Dube, a preview of post-1994 African Christian leaders, a brief background of Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane, and finally, an evaluation of the last three leaders based on the identified leadership qualities.

## **2. Who was John Dube?**

Prior to John Dube’s tenure as leader of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), a range of African Christian leaders occupied the national and provincial political space. In 1898, Bishop James Dwane, then the General Superintendent of the African Methodist Church in Southern Africa, was the first Christian minister of an Ethiopian church to associate politics with religion when he attended and chaired the meeting of the Eastern Cape-based South African Native Congress (SANC) (Odendaal 2016, 150). The influential Pambani Mzimba, minister and leader of another

Ethiopian church, the Presbyterian Church of Africa, also attended the meeting (206–207, 210).

Later, in 1909, Dr. Mpilo Walter Benson Rabusana of the London Missionary Society (Kumalo 2012, 52–53; Odendaal 2016, 390, 396) became the first Christian leader to occupy a national political space when he was elected president of the South African Native Convention; he was joined by another African Christian leader, Dr. John L. Dube of the American Zulu Mission (Kumalo 2012, 17, 33–34), who was elected vice-president (Odendaal 2016, 390, 396). At that time Dr. Mpilo Walter Rabusana was the first and only religious leader to represent Africans in the Cape Provincial Council (449–452). On January 8 1912, at the inauguration of the SANNC held at Bloemfontein, Dr. John L. Dube was elected in absentia to become its first president (Kumalo 2012, 127; Odendaal 2016, 471). The name of the organization was later changed to the African National Congress in 1923 (Kumalo 2012, 60; Odendaal 2016, 474, 476).

Kumalo (2012, 38, 41) writes about the life and work of John Dube. He mentions that he was the child of *Amakholwa* (Christian believers), Nomanzi Elizabeth Dube and Rev. James Ukakonina Dube Ngcobo. His father was one of the first three Africans to be ordained as ministers in the African Zulu Mission (current United Congregational Church of Southern Africa) in 1870; he later became the overseer of the Inanda Mission (Kumalo 2012, 38–41). As the child of *Amakholwa*, he emulated his father and later became a minister (49–51), an “African Christian-activist” (38), and a “priest, and leader and civilized African” (56). He was one of the pioneers of African nationalism, nurtured through the work of the American Zulu Mission (36). His theology and politics were grounded in coalescing Christianity and his Zulu culture (37–38); an approach that resonates with Paul’s ministry philosophy of preaching the gospel to Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 9:19–22) as well as Bidiako’s (2000) approach of articulating an African Christology.

He strongly advocated for African self-reliance through education and disliked the supervision of American and British missionaries; as a result, he established two local churches and three schools (Kumalo 2012, 46–47), the first African-initiated school (*Ohlange Industrial Institute*), and the first *isiZulu* newspaper called *iLanga lase Natali* (50). He became the first African to be awarded an honorary doctorate at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in 1936 for his contribution towards promoting education and self-reliance among Africans (58). He represented freedom from greed and freedom from the love of money, as espoused in 2 Timothy 6:9–10 and 1 Peter 5:2. He also represented self-reliance, and the *Ubuntu* values of community and *seriti/isithunzi* (moral force) (59–60). He was inspired by the generation of uNtsikana ka Gaba, Tiyo Soga, and Nehemiah Tile, that displayed a non-dichotomous *Ubuntu* worldview of not separating the spiritual from the physical, through their involvement in both politics and religion (91). These leaders can be described as:

Christian leaders who sought to understand their place as an African people under the threat of the continually encroaching settlers and missionaries. These leaders reflected on what it meant to be an African and remain faithful to the best tenets of their culture and values whilst at the same time seeking to adapt to the new religion (Christianity) that was emerging. (Kumalo 2012, 92)

John Dube's influence later became the point of reference for subsequent presidents of the ANC, namely, Pixley Ka Isaka Seme, Bitini Xuma, Albert Luthuli, and Nelson Mandela (Kumalo 2012, 57–58). Although Boesak (2019, 3) mentions Albert Luthuli as another point of reference and argues that he was a remarkable Christian leader of the ANC in the 1950s, the focus of this article is on John Dube. His efforts in establishing an African school and the first *isiZulu* newspaper (Kumalo 2012, 50), demonstrate

two qualities of his leadership vision. This article identifies five leadership qualities associated with John Dube by Kumalo (2012). First, he placed the interest of the community at heart as Paul teaches in Philippians 2:3–4. His willingness to serve his community echoes Jesus's teachings about serving others in Mark 9:33–45. Second, he displayed an attribute associated with servant leadership views within contemporary Christian and secular leadership discourse. Third, the attention he paid to theological and socio-economic issues demonstrate that he did not separate the two (Kumalo 2012, 23, 25, 26, 114–115, 146); this is a quality this article calls a “non-dichotomous perspective of *Ubuntu*.”

The fourth quality is identified in his efforts to serve as a voice of the people; that is, he served as a prophetic voice like some Old Testament prophets (Elijah, Isaiah, Amos, and Micah) as he challenged the *status quo* through his writings (Kumalo 2012, 53–221). Such endeavor rendered him a great president, one whose efforts inspired future ANC presidents and members. This introduces the fifth quality, namely, *seriti/isithunzi* (moral force). African societies usually point to *seriti/isithunzi* (moral force) to associate good actions and behavior with *Ubuntu* (Setiloane [1976] uses the Sesotho-Tswana word *Botho*) and one's moral standing in the community. John Dube's actions and works display a moral standing associated with *seriti/isithunzi* (Kumalo 2012). His leadership qualities demonstrated a sound convergence of Christian praxis and African praxis. These qualities elevated his life and work as an epitome of effective witness within his community in the same way argued by Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23. Ultimately, he dispelled the artificial sacred-versus-secular division noticed in Christian public life.

### **3. A Short Preview of Post-1994 African Christian Leaders**

The following are some of the names of African Christian leaders who were at the forefront of the liberation struggle and served in the post-1994 national and provincial political structures: sister Bernard Ncube, former Member of Parliament and mayor of the West Rand District Municipality; Reverend Motlalepule Chabangu, a former member of Gauteng Provincial Legislature; and Pastor Johannes Tselapedi of the ANC of the North West Province. African Christian leaders associated with the Pan African Congress of Azania (PAC) are Bishop Dr. Stanley Mogoba and Dr. Motsoko Pheko. Bishop Dr. Stanley Mogoba was the former head of the Methodist Church of South Africa. Although not a minister, Dr. Motsoko Pheko earned a bachelor's degree majoring in Political Science and Systematic Theology. Bishop Dr. Mvume Dandala was one of the co-founders and leaders of the Congress of the People (COPE). He later resigned from politics after some rivalry within the party. Other African Christian leaders include the following:

- Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa of the Roman Catholic Church priesthood and a member of the ANC who occupied the provincial space as mayor of Tshwane Metro Council.
- Pastor Frank Chikane, a pastor of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa and a member of the ANC who occupied the national political space as the Director-General in the office of the President.
- The most interesting leader is Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma, whom a group of Pentecostal/Charismatic churches ordained as an honorary pastor at an event held at the Full Gospel Community Church before he assumed the presidency of the ANC (*Mail and Guardian* 2008; Onselen). He later became president of the Republic of South Africa.

Some African Christian leaders are not associated with the liberation struggle but later occupied the post-1994 national political space. Pastor Kenneth Meshoe of the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) occupied such national political space. He is a pastor and founder of an independent Pentecostal church called Hope of Glory Tabernacle. Mmusi Maimane, the former leader of the official opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), is the second renowned African Christian leader to occupy the national political space and was a pastor at Liberty Church (Msomi 2016, 21, 32, 141).

Flowing from the above background, we shall now focus on renowned African Pentecostal/Evangelical leaders Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane, who occupied the political space in post-1994 South Africa. I first present a brief background of each leader before providing an evaluation of their respective leadership based on five distinguishable qualities, namely: a non-dichotomous perspective of *Ubuntu, seriti/isithunzi* (a moral force), a prophetic voice, placing the interests of the community at heart, and servant leadership.

### **4. Brief Backgrounds of Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane**

Although their political backgrounds differ vastly, these renowned African Christian leaders share a common South African Pentecostal/Evangelical heritage, particularly Frank Chikane and Kenneth Meshoe. Interestingly, Frank Chikane and Kenneth Meshoe served together in different years at Christ For All Nations (CFAN) in the 1980s (Chikane 2012b, 56–60; Maxwell 2002, 52) before Kenneth Meshoe established his independent church which he continues to lead. Frank Chikane has now resigned as local church pastor of the Naledi Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) and is serving as the

president of the Apostolic Faith Mission International. Mmusi Maimane is still associated with an Evangelical church based in Johannesburg and has now resigned as the leader of the opposition party (the DA).

#### 4.1 *Frank Chikane*

Frank Chikane is undoubtedly the most renowned African Pentecostal leader (Anderson 2000, 96). He was born in Soweto and is the son of a pastor associated with the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa (AFMSA) (Chikane 2012b, 39). He followed in his father's footsteps and entered the ministry in 1976 (2012b, 52–58, 88; cf. De Wet 1989, 146) and was ordained in 1980 (Chikane 2012b, 61; cf. Lapoorta 1996, 71). Similar to Samuel's calling (1 Sam 3:1–11), Chikane ascribed his involvement in politics to his role in student politics and the influence of a senior pastor in the AFM West Rand who observed and shared with him that God had called him (Chikane 2012b, 52–55). Controversy characterized Chikane's life. He did not complete his degree at the University of the North (the current University of Limpopo) because of his involvement in student politics. He was suspended as the pastor of the Kagiso AFM church because of his political views, and was detained as a political prisoner several times (78–82; 88–89); and attempts were made to poison him (202–205).

He served as the general secretary of the Institute of Contextual Theology (ICT) (Chikane 2012b, 117; Ntlha 2017, 82) and the South African Council of Churches (SACC) (Chikane 2012b, 202; Ntlha 2017, 86). He was a founding member of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and one of its influential leaders (Chikane 2012b, 129, 137). He joined and worked with the underground structures of the ANC in the 1970s and continued with it after it was unbanned in 1990. He holds a diploma in theology, a master's in theology and a master's degree in public administration, and he is a visiting professor at the School of Governance at the University of Witwatersrand.

Post-1994, he served on the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and as the Director-General from 1999 to 2009 in the office of former president Thabo Mbeki.

#### 4.2 *Kenneth Meshoe*

Kenneth Meshoe was born in Pretoria and is the first post-1994 African Pentecostal leader to assume a leadership role of the ACDP. According to Maxwell (2002, 52), Meshoe holds a secondary teaching diploma from the University of the North (the current University of Limpopo), South Africa, and he completed a diploma in theology from Shekinah Bible Institute, Tennessee, in the United States of America. Similar to the experiences of biblical characters such as Jeremiah (1:4–7), Amos (7:14–15), and Paul (Acts 9:1–9), who were commissioned service by God, Meshoe mentioned that he received a “clear call from God to enter into ministry” in 1976. He later worked with the renowned German-born evangelist Reinhard Bonnke as an assistant evangelist of Christ for All Nations (CFAN). He also founded a church called Hope of Glory Tabernacle, based in Vosloorus, Gauteng, South Africa. In 1993, he mentioned that he received a “clear call from God” to initiate the establishment of a political party. It is worth noting that Meshoe predicted that “Christians are going to play a critical role in government and the political leadership of South Africa” (Maxwell 2010, 52) later in the twenty-first century.

#### 4.2 *Mmusi Maimane*

Mmusi Maimane, who is younger than the two Christian leaders mentioned above, was born in Dobsonville, Gauteng. He holds a degree in psychology, and two master's degrees, one in theology and the other in public administration (Msomi 2016, 32, 33). He served as a pastor of a Randburg-based church called Liberty Church (21, 32, 141) before he was elected as

the national leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA) at the Port Elizabeth Elective Conference in 2015 and a subsequent member of the National Assembly and leader of the opposition party (34). His election as the first African male party leader of the DA, after attempts by Joe Seremane to be elected as party leader some years earlier, placed him under the spotlight (18, 106). Ian Ollis, a DA Member of Parliament, is credited with convincing Mmusi Maimane to abandon his pro-ANC stance (26, 31) and join the liberal politics of the DA (19). Prior to joining the DA, he worked for two non-profit organizations, namely, the Scripture Union and Heartlines; and he was also a presenter of a Christian television show called Crux (64, 68–69). In addition, he also lectured at the Gordon Institute of Business (GIBS) and managed his own consultancy. His background categorizes him as a pastor, community worker, politician, and business consultant. It is intriguing that Msomi (2016, 32–33) narrates that Maimane ascribes his involvement in politics to a calling from God. Contrary to Kenneth Meshoe, who claimed to have received a direct call from God to establish a political party, Mmusi Maimane associated his claim with inner conviction and a sermon.

## **5. Evaluating the Three Leaders in Terms of the Five Qualities**

This section demonstrates that although Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane share the same Pentecostal/Evangelical heritage, they cannot be classified under one category, because of their different contexts and backgrounds. Their involvement in the South African political space displays an interesting parallel engagement in socio-economic activities prior to and post-1990. Frank Chikane was involved earlier (the pre-1990 liberation struggle) in one process, and Kenneth Meshoe and Mmusi Maimane were involved later (the post-1990 opposition party politics)

in another parallel process. The two processes ran parallel from 1990 to date. Their theological praxis is influenced by conditions of poverty, real and artificial needs, a sense of shared history (Maluleke 2005, 21). They serve in an era that was informed by the *Kairos* Document, and the related *Evangelical Witness in South Africa* critique. This was a context characterized by the Rainbow Nation metaphor and a National Reconciliation program that Maluleke (1998, 37) criticizes as “fashionableness of race-blind discourses in the ‘New South Africa’.”

### *5.1 A non-dichotomous perspective of Ubuntu*

Proponents of Ubuntu have emphasized the non-dichotomous characteristic of Ubuntu (Mzondi 2014, 136). To that end, Kumalo (2012, 23, 25) emphasizes that the life and work of John Dube address the false dichotomy between church and politics as his work and ministry demonstrated that he “was a person through others (*waye wumuntu ngabantu*)” (26). This perspective of not separating church and politics influenced the views of early African Christian ministers like Ntsikana ka Gaba, Tiyo Soga, and later Nehemiah Tile, Mangena Mokone, and John Mzimba in the 1800s. Similarly, African Pentecostal leaders emerged and later established their independent churches in the early 1900s (Daniel Nkonyana, Elias Mhlangu, Ingantius Lekganyane, Job Ciliza, Nicholas Bhengu, Isaiah Shembe, and Christinah Nku) practiced their Christianity from this perspective. None of these leaders created a dichotomy between the political and the religious spheres. It is not surprising that Africans who converted to Christianity upheld that perspective and passed it on to others through various political formations in the Cape Colony, Natal, Transvaal, and the Orange Free State. This was ultimately channelled through the SANC in 1909 when Dr. Mpilo Walter Benson Rabusana of the Congregational Church became the first African Christian minister to occupy a national political space when

he was elected its president—and the subsequent election of John Dube of the American Zulu Mission as the president of the SANNC (later called the ANC) on January 8, 1912. Later, Anton Lembede, a devout Christian and the first leader of the African National Congress Youth League, argued that many ANC national and provincial leaders prior to and during his time were Christian leaders, who caused African churches and the ANC to be inseparable (Edgar and ka Msumza 2015, 160).

Chikane, Meshoe, and Maimane continue to display this non-dichotomous perspective of *Ubuntu*. The three grew up and were educated under the brutal rule of apartheid with its intention to perpetuate European superiority and African inferiority (Edgar and ka Msumza 2015, 150). Chikane and Meshoe were taught that African Pentecostal Christians should focus on heaven and distance themselves from addressing prevalent injustices caused by apartheid (Balcomb 2004, 27; Pillay 1987, 46). Chikane opposed this perception and became actively involved in fighting the system of apartheid during his student life while at the University of the North (the current University of Limpopo), a “bush” university established to perpetuate an inferior education designed for Africans. Like Ntsikana ka Gaba, Nehemiah Tile, Walter Rabusana, and John Dube, he refused to accept the Western dichotomous view and opted for a natural non-dichotomous *Ubuntu* perspective. This caused him to oppose apartheid, even if it meant dropping out of university and being expelled from the church. In 1981, Chikane was suspended from his church (AFM) for challenging the system of apartheid. He was ultimately reinstated in 1990 following concerted campaigns by fellow African pastors belonging to the Reinstatement Frank Chikane movement (RFC) (Kekane 2017, 35–56). During his suspension, he served as general secretary of the Institute of Contextual Theology (ICT), and as the general secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC). In addition, he was one of those theologians who penned the *Kairos*

Document, the Rustenburg Declaration, and was one of the founders of the United Democratic Front (UDF). He denounced what his church taught about politics and spirituality because he could not separate the two. For him, it was spiritually unjustifiable to confess a Pentecostal Christianity and not challenge apartheid. He found it strange that fellow “white” church members separated their spirituality from political life (EWISA 1986, 9–10, 24, 33; Chikane 1992, 123).

Unlike Chikane, Meshoe and Maimane fall into a different category of African Pentecostal/Evangelical leadership. Meshoe regarded his involvement in South African politics as a “clear call from God” to initiate the establishment of a political party (Maxwell 2002, 52). Prior to this call, he was one of those Pentecostal/Evangelical leaders who embraced the Western dichotomous perspective, that the Evangelical Witness in South Africa (EWISA 1986, 13) critiques as complacency and permissiveness in the face of the system of apartheid. He was not vocal against the system of apartheid as was Chikane. It is amazing that he only became active post-1990, when the ANC, Pan African Congress (PAC), South African Communist Party (SACP), Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), and other banned organizations were unbanned. It appears the God of Meshoe was blind to all that was happening in the country prior to 1990 and only came to see the atrocities Africans suffered post-1990. Just like Saul of Tarsus, who experienced his epiphany on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1–9), Meshoe experienced a sudden realization post-1990 to revert to his natural non-dichotomous *Ubuntu* perspective, after being convinced to form a political party (Maxwell 2002, 52); thank God that this happened!

As for Maimane, his involvement in the South African political space is an outcome of the pre-1994 era in South African, community-based political resistance. His pro-ANC stance, which can be traced to the influence of a Roman Catholic nun, sister Christine Obotseng (Msomi 2016, 26), showed

a non-dichotomous *Ubuntu* perspective. He did not follow Meshoe's path but, as mentioned above, he was exposed to community and township resistance politics under the tutelage of sister Obotseng. However, he was later convinced to discard his pro-ANC stance and to embrace a liberal DA stance. According to him, his involvement in politics is a calling from God (32–33).

## 5.2 *Seriti/isithunzi (moral force)*

Closely associated with the non-dichotomous approach of *Ubuntu* is one of the six values of *Ubuntu*, namely, *seriti/isithunzi* (moral force) (Mzondi 2014, 153). Various factors highlight *seriti/isithunzi*. In African contexts, a child's behavior will cause the elderly to ask, “*ngumntwana kabani lo?*” translated, “whose child is this?” as a pointer to one's family background and upbringing (139). Consequently, *seriti/isithunzi* (a moral force) shows one's spiritual presence and moral standing within the community. This aspect is identified in the life of Dube because he became the point of reference for some of the ANC leaders who succeeded him (Pixley Ka Isaka Seme, Bitini Xuma, Albert Luthuli, and Nelson Mandela). This influence was noticed when Nelson Mandela cast his first vote in 1994 in Dube's hometown. He first visited his grave and reported to him that the objective of attaining political freedom had been achieved. Some years later, the two former presidents of the ANC, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, also pointed to him as an example. The current president, Cyril Ramaphosa, also visited the grave to honor him.

Chikane's life also displayed such a moral force. He stood out as a prototype for many Evangelicals, particularly some African township Pentecostals, who became part of an organization called Concerned Evangelicals (CE), a group of Evangelicals who produced the Evangelical Witness in South Africa critique in 1986 (EWISA 1986; cf. Balcomb 2004,

28). It is indisputable that Frank Chikane “*o na le seriti*” (*Sesotho/Setswana*) or “*onesithunzi*” (*isiZulu*), which all translate as “possess *seriti/isithunzi* (a moral force)” (cf. Balcomb 2004; Burger and Nel 2008, 458). This is noticed in his stand against the practices of Jacob Zuma's ANC leadership. He became instrumental in the formation of the 101 ANC veterans who opposed the direction taken by Zuma's administration and leadership in the ANC. His two books (*Eight days in September: The removal of Thabo Mbeki* [2012a] and *The things that could not be said; From (A)IDS to (Z)imbabwe* [2013]) and his public stance provided fresh breath and momentum for those within and outside of the ANC structures to challenge the administration of President Zuma.

As though it was not enough, the administration of former President Zuma provided a necessary platform for Meshoe and Maimane to argue that their moral standing was better than that of the former president. They used their political space as MPs from the opposition (DA main official opposition and ACDP minority opposition) in the National Assembly and the public sphere by aiming at Jacob Zuma's moral standing and pointing to the fact that their moral standing was the antithesis of that of Zuma. This is captured in Maimane's debate speech in parliament, “[f]or you, honorable President, are not an honorable man. You are a broken man, presiding over a broken party” (Msomi 2016, 58).

## 5.3 *Prophetic voice and placing the interest of the community at heart*

*Seriti/isithunzi* (moral force) is the bedrock of being a spokesperson for the poor and one's followers. The socio-economic conditions of the poor in the early twentieth century did not escape the heart and eye of Dube. He established a school (Kumalo 2012, 65, 118–120) and promoted self-

reliance through education as the solution for Africans (187–191). In a similar style to the Old Testament prophets who challenged the political leaders and religious leaders of their time for misleading the nation as well as for abusing and exploiting the poor, he challenged the authorities to treat Africans with dignity (126–127). He was like the prophet Micah who challenged the political and religious leadership for abusing and exploiting the poor; and prophets Jeremiah and Hezekiah who challenged the political and religious leadership, as well as the false prophets who claimed to have received messages from God. These prophets set a precedent for Christian leaders in South Africa to challenge the apartheid government and denounce its practices. Chikane is one of those Christian leaders like Lebamang Sebedi, Molefe Tsele, Itumeleng Mosala, Buti Tlhagale, Takatso Mofokeng, Allan Boesak, Barney Pityana, Mokgethi Motlhabi, Beyers Naudé, Bonganjalo Goba, Desmond Tutu, and many others who assumed such a prophetic role by opposing apartheid and speaking for the poor (see Chikane 2012b). These efforts culminated in the famous Kairos Document in 1985, which articulated the position of the church regarding the political situation at that time (the 1985 State of Emergency proclaimed on 20 July 1985). It explicitly declared that God is on the side of the poor and the oppressed (Leonard 2010, 31). Later, in 1990, various Christian leaders, including those from the Dutch Reformed Church, penned the Rustenburg declaration to denounce apartheid (The Rustenburg Declaration 1990). Chikane was also one of the EWISA evangelicals.

Speaking for the poor should be done with a pure motive. Hence, this article refers to Jesus who reiterated Deuteronomy 15:11 when his disciples objected that the expensive perfume the women used to anoint his feet could have been sold so that the money could help the poor (Mark 14:4–7). Consequently, those who speak for the poor should address real situations (Chikane 1988, 162) and be rooted in the love of Jesus Christ (Boesak 2019,

3). It is against this backdrop that, after serving as a public servant in the democratic government (1999–2012), Chikane continued this prophetic role during the two terms of former President Zuma. This was triggered by the Polokwane ANC conference in 1999 and the subsequent recall of former President Mbeki in 2001. He used the pen and the public platform to challenge the new ANC leadership. This reached a peak after the Nkandla scandal in 2013 and the subsequent public protector’s call for a commission of inquiry into state capture allegations in 2016. He vehemently supported the former public protector’s remedial recommendations that the former president pays back money not used for security purposes, and also called for the speedy establishment of a commission of inquiry into state capture allegations.

Ironically, at that time, former President Zuma was already ordained as an honorary pastor of one of the Pentecostal/Charismatic umbrella bodies in South Africa (*Mail and Guardian* 2007; Van Onselen 2008). This religious association placed him in clear contrast to the three Pentecostal/Evangelical leaders discussed in this article. In addition, he also became a recipient of sharp criticism from the three and countless others who objected to the millions of Rands spent on renovating his Nkandla home.

At that time, Zuma had publicly pronounced that the ANC would rule until Jesus comes (Claymore 2016). This statement echoed the stereotypical utterances made by white supremacist to justify their rule over Africans who were challenged by Boesak (1994), a contemporary of Chikane. Maluleke (2015, 35–37) added his voice to the chorus of critics by labelling Zuma’s leadership as toxic. He critiqued Zuma’s claims and use of biblical metaphors (see also Maluleke 1998) to convince people to vote ANC; as well as mentioning a phrase “*thixo wa se George Goch*”—a phrase used to refer to an induna who taught that he was the god of George Goch—during the 2015 presidential budget debate in parliament, as a means to draw attention away

from his Nkandla debacle. Similarly, Chikane challenged Zuma's unfounded use of biblical metaphors by reminding the ANC leadership that they would lose political support at the coming national election as they did during the 2016 local government elections.

Members of the ACDP consider Meshoe a prophetic figure. This is in contrast to Msomi's (2016) view that casts Maimane as prophet and puppet. In the twenty-four years since 1994, Meshoe used his position as a member of the South African Parliament to speak on behalf of the Pentecostal/Charismatic section of Evangelical Christianity in South Africa (Maxwell 2002, 52). He believes that Christians (will) play a critical role in government and political leadership, and hopes that his political career will bring change to the country. In pursuit of that perspective, he used his Christian convictions (Pentecostal background) to oppose the legalization of abortion (Ngalwa 2011), the introduction of same-sex unions (Institute for Justice and Reconciliation n.d.; Religious tolerance n.d.), and attempts by the Commission for Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Rights suggesting that Easter and Christmas be removed as South African public holidays (Nkosi 2015).

Msomi (2016, 17) observes that Maimane, despite the relatively few years as a member of the South Africa Parliament was to play an important role in South Africa's politics. Although his detractors called him a "rented black," Maimane convinced his DA followers and others that he could challenge Zuma in and outside of parliament (Msomi 2016, 13, 131). Through the courts, he forced the former state president to pay back some of the money used for renovating his Nkandla home. The court also ruled that both the president and parliament had failed to uphold their constitutional obligations (Economic Freedom Fighters vs. Speaker of the National Assembly and Others; Democratic Alliance vs. Speaker of the

National Assembly and Others). These rulings became one of the grounds Maimane used to put forward a motion of no confidence against Zuma.

Maimane also added his voice to those asking the Public Protector to investigate allegations of state capture involving Zuma. He also led his party the DA in two court cases against the former state president, namely, seeking to have the corruption charges against him reinstated (Democratic Alliance vs. Acting National Director of Public Prosecutions and Others) and to have him pay back all the legal costs (Democratic Alliance vs. President of the Republic of South Africa and Others). The DA won both these cases. This was a "sweet victory" for Maimane who was claiming that the former state president was corrupt and should stand trial. Later, after the election of Cyril Ramaphosa as the new president of the ANC in 2017, the ANC pressurized Zuma to resign as president of the party and the country. He finally bowed to internal and public pressure and resigned as president of the country on February 14, 2018. For Maimane, this was mission accomplished. He had achieved his goal of removing Zuma as president of the country. Later in 2019, Maimane resigned as leader of the DA after its poor performance in the 2019 national elections and, subsequently, after the election of former national DA leader and premier of the Western Cape, Helen Zille, as Federal Council chairperson in 2019 (Madisa 2019).

#### *5.4 Servant Leadership*

Two scriptures underscore servant leadership, Acts 13:36a, "For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation he fell asleep" (NIV), and Matthew 20:26, 28, "Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant ... just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (NIV).

It has been observed that the life and work of Dube reflect his service to the masses (Kumalo 2012, 240). Therefore, this sub-section establishes whether Chikane, Meshoe, and Maimane did the same. Chikane has always served, and continues to serve, the interests of the poor, the marginalized, and oppressed. He has relentlessly advocated for them in difficult situations over a long period of time. The title of his biography, *No Life of My Own* (2012), encapsulates this characteristic. In addition, Chikane has been serving the entire nation by raising matters of national interest before 1990 and post-1990. His prophetic voice, amongst others, displays a spirit of serving the national interest rather than serving the interest of a section of the nation. From a different socio-economic perspective, Meshoe serves as a local church pastor, party leader, and Member of Parliament for the ACDP, where he has always raised the concerns of his party, and indirectly those of the Pentecostals/Charismatic churches. Meshoe mentions that his role in government and his political leadership in South Africa is to promote family values and policies based on biblical principles (Maxwell 2002, 52–53).

Maimane served the nation as a national leader of the official opposition party (DA) in the National Assembly and as a Member of Parliament until he resigned in 2019. Since the 2016 local government elections, and the DA's success in unseating the ANC in the Tshwane, Johannesburg, and the Nelson Mandela Metro councils and the Mogale City council, both Meshoe and Maimane have learned to include the concerns of the poor and marginalized in their agenda. However, a few years later, the coalition lost Mogale City after the election of a new speaker and executive mayor by that council (Nicholson 2017). It also lost the Nelson Mandela metro after a vote of no confidence against the mayor, Athol Trollip of the DA (Biznews 2018).

It is intriguing to observe that these three African Pentecostal/Evangelical leaders contributed to the transformation of the nation from two different political convictions. Although Meshoe and Maimane are no longer national leaders of the ACDP and DA respectively, their leadership continues to be expressed at local and provincial levels. In the same vein, Chikane continues to express his leadership influence, a fact projected in his caution that unless the ANC self-corrected, it would lose support in future provincial and national elections—as was seen in the 2016 local government elections. All three are convinced of, and advocate that their political affiliations are the best avenues available to them to serve the country's national interest.

These developments identify two interesting observations. First, political affiliation has divided three of the most influential male African Pentecostal/Evangelical leaders. Their different political affiliations have enabled them to contribute to the transformation of South Africa. Meshoe and Maimane have contributed to a new political direction, namely, coalition politics in the interest of the electorate. This development vindicates Meshoe's view that Christians will play a critical role in government and politics. Second, as for Chikane, his contribution is evidenced by the removal of the system of apartheid and the birth of a new democracy in South Africa. His leadership skills are unquestionably seen in his internal campaign for the ruling party (ANC) to self-correct in the interest of the nation.

## **6. Conclusion**

This article identified five leadership qualities in the life and work of John Dube and traced them in the leadership of three African Pentecostal/Evangelical leaders (Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane), evaluating their contributions to the transformation of the post-1994 South African political landscape. It was argued that the efforts

of the above-mentioned leaders remind us of John Dube—the president of the South African National Native Congress, (later known as the ANC)—a pastor and politician who placed the interest of the nation at heart and, in doing so, contributed to the remarkable transformation of ordinary people in Natal and nationally. In emulating John Dube, the three figures mentioned contributed to the transformation of South African politics post-1994.

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