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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SAUL 'MAYIMAYI' MSANE

DATE: TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER

PRESENTER: MR THAPELO MOKOATSI (PHD CANDIDATE)

TIME: 15H00 TO 16H30

PLATFORM: ZOOM

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ENQUIRIES ONLY:

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Thapelo Mokoatsi

B I O G R A P H Y

THAPELO MOKOATSI IS A NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (NIHSS) DOCTORAL FELLOW AT THE UNIVERSITY CURRENTLY KNOWN AS RHODES (UCKAR) IN MAKHANDA. IN 2017 HE WAS ON THE MAIL AND GUARDIAN TOP 200 YOUNG SOUTH AFRICA FOR HIS BODY OF WORK ON PIONEER JOURNALISTS OF THE LATE NINETEENTH TO EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES SOUTH AFRICA.

TITLE: REMEMBERING "MAYIMAYI...

KAMATIYOSE WASEEDENDALE" IN THE POST-1994 POPULAR MEMORY

A B S T R A C T

With over a centenary of his death, we remember Saul Msane (1856-1919) as one of the founders of the ANC. However, that is not the only thing we should remember him by because as one of the prominent figures of his generation he wore so many hats. He led the Zulu Choir to London in 1892, prior to that, he enjoyed a ten year teaching stint between 1882 and 1892. In addition, he was a lay-preacher of the Methodist Church and for close to two decades he was a Compound Manager at Salisbury and Jubilee Mine in Johannesburg from 1895 to 1914. His second London trip, as part of the ANC delegation, took in Edendale Institute and Adams College place in 1914.

MayiMayi, was labelled "isitha sabantu or the enemy of the people" a year before his passing, in 1918, for refusing to support black miners' strike action plan which was supported by the ANC. This condemnation ended his political career and his legitimacy within the ANC leadership in Transvaal. As a result, he was marginalised in the liberation struggle historiography of the ANC. This paper will bring him back to life and back into the centre-stage of the discourse of freedom fighters in the popular memory.

However, Msane should be remembered as one of "the best Zulu writers" and most importantly as "the father-figure of the Congress" as Sefako Makgatho eulogised him. Makgatho got to know Saul Msane as "an old friend" while he was serving under his presidency as the second secretary general of the ANC. In reconstructing his life writing, Saul Msane's life is teaching us that political figures of his generation had flaws and should not only be judged on their flaws due to complexities of the context of the time in which they lived.