

*Isidumo sokulwa e Richmond**

MOSES HADEBE

The weekly newspaper, *Ilanga laseNatal* under the editorship of John Langalibalele Dube reported widely on *intela yamakhanda* or *ikhanda lendoda*.¹ Articles about poll tax dominated the columns of *Ilanga* from mid 1904 to 1908. The other issues that dominated its columns were demands for land, better education, the question of franchise rights, the *amakholwas*' demands, Ethiopianism, the attitude of different chiefs towards the poll tax and stories about Dinuzulu. The government was deeply suspicious of Dube despite his position that the African people had to pay tax.

This paper will attempt to concentrate on the reports from *Ilanga* about the *isidumo* in the *amaFuze* chiefdom during the resistance of 1906.² Conventionally the resistance is considered to have begun with the killing of two Natal policeman in the Richmond district. The first article to report on the resistance was on the front page that was entitled: *Igazi Liphalele* – The blood has been spilt. The caption that followed was: *Ikanda le Ndoda Belu* – The man's head again, this was then followed by an article entitled *Isidumo sokulwa e Richmond* – The brawl in Richmond. The story in *Ilanga* went like this: In the *amaFuze* area, Upper Mid Illovo, under Chief Mveli kaHemuhemu, two men were carrying weapons in the presence of a magistrate who went there to collect tax. The Natal Police under Mr Hunt went to the area to arrest them. They captured the two men but the young men prevented them from taking the

* The brawl in Richmond!

¹ In the language of the colonial state *intela yamakhanda* (head tax) was referred to as poll tax. As the coverage of the events around the tax proceeded *Ilanga* sometimes referred to it as *ikhanda lendoda* (man's head).

² The objective of this paper is to look at how *Ilanga* reported the events leading to the Bhambatha uprising. *Ilanga* referred to the first incident that took place in Richmond as *isidumo* (brawl); as time went on it talked about the situation of unrest in the Colony as a situation of war. *Isiphithiphithi* / *isiphithi*: confusion; commotion; muddled up; confused affair, p. 666. *Isiyalu*: unintelligible; muddle up affair; commotion (of people or animals), p. 873. *Impi*: regiment; army; military force; encounter; fight; engagement; battle; war; hostile person; foe; enmity, p. 511. *T rebel*: *hlubuka*; *shokobeza*; *vukela amakhosi akuphethayo*; *hlangula*, p. 388. *Rebel* (n) *i(li)hlabuka*; *i(li)mbuka*, p. 388. *Rebellion*: *ukuhlabuka*; *ukwambuka*; *u(lu)thuthuva*; *ukwambuka*. *Resistance*: *umzabalazo*, p. 400. See C. M. Doke, D. M. Malcom, J. M. A. Sikakana, B. W. Vilakazi. *English Zulu Zulu English Dictionary*. *Isidumo*: stirring matter; a matter of moment or importance; alarming or exciting report. See *Colenso's Zulu English Dictionary Fourth Edition*, Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Greytown, Vause, Slatter and Company, 1905. See Appendix 3 for the names of few chiefs in the colony.

culprits away. An argument arose between the police and the young men – Hunt shot and killed one of the young men with his revolver. In the fight seven people died including Hunt and one of his men, and third a one was crippled. The news spread like wild fire in the whole of Richmond that blacks defeated whites, yet it was the police who started to fight.³ This paper investigates, this incident *isidumo* as *Ilanga* termed it.

On Wednesday, 7th February 1906 Mr T. R. Bennett, the magistrate of Umngeni Division visited Chief Mveli's people at Henley railway station to collect tax.⁴ Chief Mveli was present and he reported that 'certain natives were armed and in the neighborhood'.⁵ To be more precise 'some twenty seven members of his tribe refused to accompany him, and took up a position almost two miles away'.⁶ The magistrate sent a European trooper W. A. Mather (who 'spoke no Zulu'⁷) of the Natal Police, together with Jobe and Makuzi, to interview those armed men.⁸ The two African messengers were both related to the chief, in fact Jobe was the chief's brother.⁹ The twenty seven people were armed with assegais.¹⁰

When they (Mather, Jobe and Makuzi) encountered the group, they tried to count and record their names but they were met with a hostile attitude. Elderly two men Makanda and Mjongo, were the ones who approached the white policeman and the two representative of the chief, but they only wanted to talk to Mjongo. What

³ *Ilanga lase Natal*, February 16 1906.

⁴ James Stuart. *A History of the Zulu Rebellion 1906 and of Dinuzulu's arrest, trial and expatriation* London, Macmillan and Company, 1913, p. 124.

⁵ RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92.

⁶ Shula Marks. *Reluctant Rebellion the 1906 – 8 disturbances in Natal* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1970, p. 174.

⁷ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 174.

⁸ RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92.

⁹ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 174.

¹⁰ 'The Native Code prohibits, on pain of severe penalty, the carrying of lethal weapons by persons other than constables on duty'. Quotation from *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 122. . See Appendix 1 for the names of the men who were 'armed'.

followed then was that ‘the young men brandished their weapons and chased them away’.¹¹ As a result of the interview a deposition was made on the same day ‘and a warrant for arrest issued on that deposition’. The warrant mentioned the names of a number of men but did ‘not state all specifically’. The names of Mjongo and his sons were clearly stated. Other prisoners like Mjuju and Hawana were not personally mentioned.¹² ‘Depositions were taken and warrants for arrest issued on the charge of “taking part in an assembly of armed men without the authority of the Supreme Chief.”’¹³

According to Mjongo’s testimony during the trial in the Supreme Court he and another seven of the group went and slept in his homestead on that night. The same applied to other members of the group. They all had their homesteads on Henry Hosking’s farm, Trewirgie near Byrnetown. On 8th February that warrant was handed to the acting District Police Officer, Sub Inspector Sydney Herbert Keith Hunt, who was accompanied by 12 to 14 policemen and 3 to 4 African constables to arrest Mjongo and others.

The police arrived in Mjongo’s home ‘at a quarter past six in the evening, when it was misty and rainy’. The only person they could find was Mdutshana, Mjongo’s brother. Two women arrived soon after that, Nomkhuba and MaMlaba. The women had been sent by Mjuju’s father, who stayed at Thornville, looking for Mjuju and his brothers. It was reported that they had gone to Mjongo’s home the previous night. After some time two men arrived, Ncane (Mduthana’s son) and Ngcubu (Mjongo’s son), although they were not specifically mentioned in the warrant the police arrested them. Without any further advice the two men were handcuffed and Mdutshana was ‘requested to call the men that Hunt wanted to arrest.’¹⁴

¹¹ Benedict Carton. *Blood from Your Children, the colonial origins of generational conflict in South Pietermaritzburg*, University of Natal Press, p. 126.

¹² RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, F. 6.

¹³ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 123. See also RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, F. 6. “That warrant was made out for the arrest of these men, on the charge of contravening Section 2 of Act 47, 1903, which provides that there shall be no meeting of armed natives without special permission”.

¹⁴ RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, F d.

Though Mdutshana did not call a particular name, Mjongo came unarmed to Hunt who showed him the warrant. Mjongo proceeded to his home where he was arrested, and he did not resist the arrest.¹⁵ The two troopers searched around and discovered a group of armed men in ‘a stony place under a krantz, 40 or 50 yards from the kraal’. The number was estimated between 24 to 27 men. ‘Inspector Hunt parleyed with these men, went in amongst them tried to persuade them, to put down their arms’, but he failed. He summoned Mjongo who was fetched by Stephens to pacify the group. Mjongo was in the company of Nomkhuba and MaMlaba. Through their testimony we learn that he did everything in his power to ‘quiet the men’. ‘He requested them to lay down their arms and listen to what Inspector Hunt had to say.’¹⁶

Faced with the threatening attitude from the group, in self defense Mjongo grabbed two assegais from some young men. Witnessing all that, the police went back to Mjongo’s home and picked up the prisoners as well as Mdutshana and went away.¹⁷ ‘The Natives followed, jeering at and taunting the former in the most insolent manner.’¹⁸ The prisoners (Ncane and Ngcuba) were put between mounted men at the head of the party ...The two prisoners were there upon dragged away by the Natives.¹⁹ Hunt and a few of his police attempted to recapture the prisoners but the group resisted. According to Stuart ‘a disturbance arose, but owing to mist and darkness, it was impossible to see exactly what took place.’²⁰

According to the newspaper article in *Ilanga lase Natal*, the first shot was fired by Sub Inspector Hunt.

The man’s head tax has caused the spillage of blood in the upper Mid Illovo, in the area of Mveli, the son of Hemuhemu, at Mafuze. A small contingent of policemen was sent to arrest two people who were armed against the magistrate when he went there to collect tax. When the

¹⁵ *Ilanga Lase Natal*, September 7 1906, RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, F e.

¹⁶ RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, F e.

¹⁷ RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, J. S. I.

¹⁸ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 124.

¹⁹ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 125.

²⁰ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 125.

mounted police arrived, captured those people, young men went there carrying their *inswani*²¹ and *imibhumbuluzo*²². They said, leave them alone, the argument started and Mr Hunt their *induna* seeing the glinting on the spear next to him, he shot him dead with a revolver, fighting then started and the *induna* of the mounted police was stabbed with an assegai as well as another policeman, the other one was crippled, seven people died, the policemen started the fighting but they fled, leaving behind two of them.²³

Shula Marks concurs with this: ‘Hunt immediately fired his rifle and other police followed suit.’²⁴ She explained that despite the Africans, threatening attitude they did not strike first, but ‘the first shot was fired by Hunt at a handcuffed prisoner.’²⁵ Later in the year *Ilanga* reported during the trial in the Supreme Court that one of the policemen who was present testified that the Africans began to throw spears after the police had started to shoot.²⁶

In that conflict Inspector Hunt and Trooper Armstrong were stabbed to death,²⁷ Sergeant F. W. Stephens was wounded.²⁸ Stephens was the one who reported the incident. The *Ilanga* referred to the conflict as an unfortunate incident, ‘*nanso Zulu indaba embi eyehle kulele lakithi.*’²⁹

There was no doubt that Hunt was not suitable for the task. His attitude was demonstrated in a letter to his parents a decade before *isidumo sokulwa e Richmond*. ‘He wrote a letter in terms of “licking the niggers into shape” and “knocking hell out

²¹ *English Zulu Zulu English Dictionary* p. 772. A collection of assegais.

²² *English Zulu Zulu English Dictionary* p. 53. A large war shields.

²³ Igazi elibangelwe ilentela yakhanda lendoda licitekile enhla ne Lovu, kwe sakwa Mveli, indodanan ka Hemuhemu, kwa Mafuze. Isixukwana sa wo nongqayi sasitunywe ukuyobamba abantu ababili, abahlomele iMantyi mhla iyotelisa kuleyo ndawo. Bati nxa sebefikile onongqayi bekwele amahashi, bababamba labo bantu, zanikela kona ezinye izinssizwa sezitele inswani yazo ne mibhumbhuluzo. Zati bayeke, kwa kwa pikiswana njalo uMr Hunt oyena beyinduna yabo ebona umkonto usude umenzeze ubengezela eduze naye, lowo mfo wamshaya wamlahla phantsi nge volo – volo, yadumelana njalo bayipisela ngomkonto induna yo wo nongqayi no munye, omunye waba inkubele, kwafa abantu abasikombisa, bayisusa babaleka o nongqayi, beshiya ababili babo. See *Ilanga Lase Natal*, February 16th, 1906.

²⁴ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 175.

²⁵ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 176.

²⁶ *Ilanga Lase Natal*, September 7 1906.

²⁷ RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, J. S. I.

²⁸ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 125.

²⁹ *Ilanga Lase Natal*, February 16 1906.

of them.”³⁰ He seemed to be very arrogant, for example, he and his men proceeded to pursue the men they wanted despite Henry Hosking’s advice. Hunt could not speak or understand isiZulu but he was convinced of the existence of a widespread uprising even before going to the area.³¹ He had no knowledge of the area, the element of darkness as well as the gloomy weather were merely contributory factors to the failure of his mission.

On 9th February a party was out with Sergeant Charles Leigh Archer who had been with Hunt and Armstrong at the scene of the fighting, to search for the bodies. Both bodies were found near Mjongo’s homestead. ‘Armstrong’s body was lying about 30 yards from the kraal with his dead horse lying over his left leg’. Hunt’s body was ‘about 20 yards’ away. The bodies were brought to Maritzburg and a postmortem examination was conducted by the District Surgeon, Dr Ward.³²

Hunt had eleven punctured wounds on him which were evidently assegai wounds. Armstrong had received a blow on the penis and scrotum he also had an abrasion on the thigh, and he had sixteen punctured wounds, which were evidently assegai wounds, in his body.³³

The Active Militia was called out on the same day to gather at Richmond. ‘Martial law was proclaimed that same evening by the Governor, Sir Henry McCullum.’³⁴

³⁰ The letter was shown to Shula Marks. Dated 15 February 1896 it was written to his parents in Dorest as quoted in her book, *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 177.

³¹ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 175.

³² RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, J. S. 2.

³³ RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, J. S. 2.

³⁴ “The said Proclamation of Martial Law proceeded on the assumption that a state of war or insurrection in fact existed in the said Colony on the 9th day of February, 1906, and that by reason of such state of war and insurrection it was necessary for the preservation of good order, and for the protection of Your Majesty’s subjects in the Colony, to proclaim that the Colony should be placed under Martial Law. But the facts show conclusively that a state of war at the time of the proclamation of Martial Law had not in fact existed and was not then existing, and that the powers of the Common Law were in fact wide enough for the civil power in the ordinary way to disperse actual riot, the prevention of felonious outrage, and the apprehension of persons guilty of outrage, either with or without the military acting in aid, and that the said Governor had in fact no justification for annihilating all other forms of law and justice which Martial Law presupposes”. KCP 466, in Killie Campbell, pp. 3-4. The martial law was proclaimed at night. See Colonial Office 179/235/26738 in MIC 1/1/1/1 232, July 21 1906. Captain Walter Bosman. *The Natal Rebellion of 1906*. Longmans London, 1907, p. 2. “The said Governor thereupon returned to Pietermaritzburg at an hour’s notice and signed a Proclamation placing the said Colony under Martial Law,” see ”. KCP 466, p. 3.

The Richmond *isidumo* was further complicated by the existing feud between *amakholwa* and the followers of traditional religion within the *amaFuze* chiefdom. There had been at least three law suits about it. The first one went to the Magistrate who upheld the chief's decision, the second to the Native High Court, when Mr John Shepstone as Judge upheld the magistrate and then to the Supreme Court.³⁵ According to Marks 'antagonism may have been directed against the chief as a representative of a rejected tribal tradition rather than as a representative of the government.'³⁶

Towards the end of 1905 several reports were received from different magistrates about the 'native uprising.'³⁷ The most persistent rumors referred to the relationship between Dinuzulu and his brother Manzolwandle in 1903 to 1904. According to Stuart, the amaZulu had a common remark: 'The Zulu Crown is won by force'. Examples of this were Shaka and Sigujana, Dingane and Shaka, Mpande and Dingane, Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi (1856).³⁸ Dinuzulu's name was central to most of the rumors. There was pending bloodshed between himself and Zibhebhu. The much talked about rumor was that he had a regiment of young men at Osuthu as a personal bodyguard called *Inkomendala* who would undergo military training. There were rumors amongst the Africans that he was in contact with the Swazi Queen, chiefs in Northern Transvaal, Basuto in Basutoland, the Africans in Rhodesia, amaShangane and amaZengele in Barberton.³⁹ There was a common belief that Dinuzulu had immense powers to become anything he wished.

The whites' fears were further increased by the killing of pigs, white fowls and the discarding of European manufactured utensils. The rumors were said to have emanated from Dinuzulu, but he strongly denied that at all times. The type of rumor that allegedly circulated among the Africans was

³⁵ RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92, K 3.

³⁶ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 180.

³⁷ Colonial Office 179/235/26738 in MIC 1/1/1/1 232, July 21 1906.

³⁸ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 111.

³⁹ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, pp. 112 – 115.

All pigs must be destroyed, as also all white fowls. Every European utensil hitherto used for holding food or eating out of must be discarded and thrown away. Anyone failing to comply will have his kraal struck by a thunderbolt when, at some date in the near future, he sends a storm more terrible than the last, which was brought on by the Basuto king in his wrath against the white race for having carried a railway to the immediate vicinity of his ancestral stronghold.⁴⁰

On 17th January 1906, H. S. Smith of Umlazi Road was murdered.⁴¹ A number of incidents of defiance followed when magistrates went out to collect tax. The magistrate R. E. Dunn at KwaMaphumulo reported that he was threatened and insulted by chief Gobizembe and his followers on 22nd January.⁴² Similar incidents of defiance took place in KwaMaphumulo at Butler's store, at Insuze on 29th to 30th January at Gaillards Store, and Umvoti Division involving members of three chiefdoms on 1st February.⁴³ The Colonial Government believed itself justified to act as it did. Marks writes: 'Taken against this background of rumors, the white animal killing and the isolated incidents of resistance to the Poll Tax, this was particularly threatening. It led to the declaration of martial law... after an event which in normal circumstances would have warranted not more than the reinforcement of the local police.'⁴⁴

The *Ilanga lase Natal* was very much against the use of the Active Militia to deal with the outbreak. It noted: '*Imbi lento yokuqoqa amabutho sengathi kuyaliwa kanti kusuke isidumo nje esingaphele mkhuba.*'⁴⁵ On the contrary the Natal Mercury was strongly in favour of the display of force to let the Africans know that, despite the absence of the Imperial force, the government had the means of enforcing its power no matter what. Furthermore, the efficiency of the Natal Active Militia system could also be tested on the occasion.⁴⁶ Although there were instances of defiance in various

⁴⁰ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 103.

⁴¹ Colonial Office 179/235/26738 in MIC 1/1/1/1 232, July 21 1906.

⁴² *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 121.

⁴³ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 122, It has been Meseni chief of Qwabe people who did not expose 100 people who insulted the magistrate when he was at the shop of Gailland on 1st February. See *Ilanga Lase Natal*, March 16, 1906. Note Gailland spelling in *Ilanga* differs from Stuart's book.

⁴⁴ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 180.

⁴⁵ The calling together of soldiers is totally unacceptable as if there is war. The brawl is merely a minor incident. See *Ilanga Lase Natal*, February 16, 1906.

⁴⁶ *The Natal Mercury* February 12 1906.

places the Government tried to allay people's fears by putting an official statement into the newspapers that the disturbance was purely local.⁴⁷ Even *Ilanga Lase Natal* reported: '*Ilanga liyanazisa ukuthi leso sidumo esakuleyo ndawo nje, futhi no Hulumeni uyasicima*' – '*Ilanga informs you that the incident is of a local matter, and the Government is suppressing it.*'⁴⁸

It is important to note that *Ilanga* was unique in that it protested immediately at actions of the Natal authorities. The *Ilanga* was very much opposed to the seizure of cattle by the state from those who were alleged to have acted in defiance towards the magistrates. It made the important point that because cattle were found in certain homesteads, this did not mean they belonged to the people in the homesteads. Some were not even at their homesteads during the outbreak of *izidumo*, they were in urban areas as migrant labourers. Others had no cattle but they had borrowed them from their relatives in other chiefdoms for a specific purpose, for example like ploughing. The cattle belonged to *abanumzana* who were not involved in all this, it had been the young men who had participated. Such behaviour on the part of government was forcing people who had once trusted the government to hate it. There were many other ugly deeds committed by the state such as the burning of the homesteads without even any thought being given to the shelter of the children. The Aborigines Protection Society at a meeting held in London resolved that the causes of *iziphithiphithi* in Natal should be investigated by the Imperial Government. The *Ilanga* had always advocated such a move. That resolution was very much opposed by the settlers of the colony.⁴⁹

It was reported in *Ilanga* that it was believed far and wide that the Richmond killings were the work of a black army which had attacked the police. *Ilanga* corrected this. The news that the police had been attacked and two killed 'came to everyone as a bolt

⁴⁷ *The Natal Mercury* February 10 and February 16, 1906.

⁴⁸ *Ilanga Lase Natal*, February 16 1906.

⁴⁹ *Ilanga Lase Natal*, February 23 1906. It was also mentioned in the same issue of the newspaper about Chief Gobizembe, although it is outside the scope of this paper: In KwaMaphumulo cattle were confiscated from people who were passing next to the court martial even though they were not Chief Gobizembe's people.

from the blue.’ ‘Nothing of that kind had been experienced since the affair in the Polela District in 1892’ when the police in attempting to arrest two Africans, had met with resistance and one of the police party had been killed (by an assegai that was thrown) and another wounded.⁵⁰

However, it appeared that the Richmond area was destined for war. The men of the Natal Carbineers moved to the area and started patrolling fully armed, reported *Ilanga*.⁵¹ The force mobilized and proceeded from different points on 10th February to concentrate at Thornville Junction, Elands-Kop and Richmond, consisted of Natal Carbineers, Border Mounted Rifles, one squadron of the Natal Police Field Force, and detachments of the Natal Medical, Natal Telegraph, and Natal Service Corps.⁵² ‘Colonel, now Brigadier General, Sir Duncan McKenzie, C. B., K. C. M. G., V. D., of the Natal Carbineers, was placed in command.’⁵³

Who was Colonel McKenzie? The Africans (especially the ‘loyal’ ones) called him ‘Great Chief Shaka McKenzie.’⁵⁴ An article in the *Times of Natal* (8th January 1908) described how he handled the 1906 and 1907 to 1908 situations: ‘In this colony we have two points of view with regard to the native population. On the one hand we have the Negro phile fanatic and sentimentalist as Miss Colenso... on the other we have a fanatic of another sort, of whom Col. McKenzie may be taken as the type, whose sole idea is of “keeping top dog” and whose simple cure for most natives is systematic and wholesale “walloping the nigger.” ’⁵⁵ Sir Mathew Nathan described McKenzie as a man who held, ‘in its utmost development the idea of governing the natives through fear’ and a ‘dangerous counsellor’ for Natal ministers.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 127.

⁵¹ *Ilanga Lase Natal*, February 16 1906.

⁵² *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 136 – 37.

⁵³ *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 137.

⁵⁴ *The Natal Rebellion of 1906*, p. 124.

⁵⁵ As quoted by Marks in her book: *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 189.

⁵⁶ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 189.

On 13th February the Richmond area was searched and the crops and homesteads of the participants in the killing of Hunt and Armstrong were destroyed.⁵⁷ Chief Mveli was instructed to supply 500⁵⁸ men to assist McKenzie and the Natal Field Forces to search the Byrnetown area and the Enon forest.⁵⁹ The *Ilanga* newspaper report differed Chief Mveli offered his assistance (in tracking down the participants in the killing) to the state and his offer was well received by the colonial government.⁶⁰ A week after the killing at Hosking's farm two of the twenty - seven men were captured through the assistance of a local farmer named Gibson. They were tried by a drumhead court martial and condemned to be shot. The sentence was carried out in the afternoon in the presence of chief Mveli and his men to whom the circumstances were fully explained.⁶¹ Marks noted, 'according to McKenzie, the chief expressed his thanks for "the prompt action I took in shooting the two men ... his only regret being that I did not shoot the women and children also."' ⁶²

'All was done with utmost humanity.'⁶³

The capture of the remaining participants was left to Chief Mveli's men, the Natal Royal Regiment and the Natal Police. A violent clash took place between Mveli's men and the participants, resulting in the death of three participants in the Enon forest. An article in *Ilanga* reported that twenty people were arrested on 2nd March under the martial law in connection with the killing of the police. It further stated that Mjongo and others did not attend the court proceeding because there were not well.⁶⁴ By 5th

⁵⁷ *The Natal Rebellion of 1906*, p. 3, *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 138.

⁵⁸ S. N. A. Minute Papers (328 - 500) 1906, 1/1/335, 1/S. N. A.

⁵⁹ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 189.

⁶⁰ *Ilanga Lase Natal*, February 16 1906.

⁶¹ *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 189, *A History of the Zulu Rebellion*, p. 138, *The Natal Rebellion of 1906*, p. 3. The two prisoners were Zondweni and Njwezi. See Cd. 2905. P. 15 Enclosure in 25, No. 1, Colonel Mckenzie, Richmond, to Prime Minister, Maritzburg, February 15 1906.

⁶² *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 189 – 190.

⁶³ C. O. 179/234/11604 in MIC 1/1/1/ 231, 3 April 1906. Telegram from the Governor Sir Henry McCullum to the Earl of Eglin.

⁶⁴ *Ilanga Lase Natal*, March 6 1906.

March all the participants were all captured or had capitulated.⁶⁵ They were all tried by a court martial that sat from 12 – 17 March. Twelve men were found guilty and sentenced to death. *Ilanga* reported that the execution was to take place on 30th March, but due to the intervention of the Colonial Office it was delayed. The Colonial Office sent a telegram to the Governor of Natal Colony on Thursday 29th March. The white population of Natal was very angry about this and they were supported by Transvaal and Cape Town. The settlers sent a petition abroad, they stressed that Natal Colony was independent, all that was decided in Natal should not be opposed. They claimed that the decision of the martial court regarding the death sentence was a legitimate one. On the opposite side *amaZulu* were very happy about the news of the postponement. Ironically, on the following Saturday the bad news was that the settler population had what they wanted and the execution was to take place. The relief of the Africans was short lived after having commended Eglin and Churchill.⁶⁶ Thus the execution took place on Monday 2nd April.⁶⁷ The prisoners were taken six at a time to the place selected for the execution. At that place a firing party of the Natal Police and a Church of England clergyman, Reverend Algermon F. Fryer, the vicar of the District were awaiting them. The prisoners were resigned and showed great fortitude.⁶⁸ The white press reported that civilians were not allowed to witness the shooting of the twelve men. What it meant here was that white people were not allowed to attend. *The Natal Witness* reported that: ‘the scene evidently made a profound impression on the native spectators, who shouted “Bayete” after each volley’.⁶⁹ One can deduce from the tone of the newspaper article that the press approved the brutality of the state. *The Natal Witness* reported that the firing party consisted of 150 men of the Natal Police and ‘twenty native policemen’.⁷⁰ The

⁶⁵ *The Natal Rebellion of 1906*, p. 4.

⁶⁶ Law experts like Mr Morcom and Mr C. P. Robinson condemned the validity of the outcome of the sentence passed by the martial court since the martial law was not supposed to have been proclaimed and commissioned – there was no war. See *Ilanga lase Natal*, April 6 1906, *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 190.

⁶⁷ C. O. 179/234/11604 in MIC 1/1/1/ 231, April 3 1906. Telegram from the Governor Sir Henry McCullum to the Earl of Eglin. See Appendix 2 for the names of the prisoners.

⁶⁸ C. O. 179/234/14986 in MIC 1/1/1/ 231.

⁶⁹ *The Natal Witness*, April 3 1906.

⁷⁰ *The Natal Witness*, April 3 1906.

African people who attended the execution were spectators by *The Witness* as if it was a sort of celebration. The execution was carried out before the assembly of the people of the Chiefs Muskofeni, Kula, Laduma and Meseni. The chiefs were ordered to attend either themselves or to send their representatives and to be there at 10 o'clock for 12 o'clock so as not to delay the proceedings.⁷¹

Mjongo, Mjuju and Hawana were wounded during the conflict with Mveli's men and they were hospitalised. The *Ilanga* quoted Mjongo's words after he was stabbed: '*wo! Bangihlaba mina nkomankoma ekaze aba Sondini* – Oh! They have stabbed me, I the fearless one who fought at the Mountains of Ondini (Drakensburg Mountains)'.⁷² Mjongo's lawyer in the Supreme Court trial was Mr Renaud (uMfutshane) and the Judge was Beaumont (uMahluli uBomani) and the jury (ibandla) The trial took place on 4th September in Pietermaritzburg. The first witness was Dr Carte who looked after Mjongo. He testified that he had many wounds that looked like assegai wounds and injuries caused by being beaten with sticks. The second principal witness was his brother Mdutshana who maintained that Mjongo was present during the killing of Hunt and Armstrong. During the cross examination of Mdutshana by Mfutshane it became clear that there was a misunderstanding between Mjongo and his older brother over *ilobolo*. Mfutshane tried to show that the evidence by Mdutshana was not based on facts but instead on his personal hatred. He was poor; therefore he wanted his brother Mjongo to be executed so that he would get *ilobolo* when Mjongo's daughters were grown up (*Latike iloya nxa u Mjongo efa uyozuza kakulu ngelobolo lamantombazane ake...* the lawyer said that if Mjongo died Mdutshana would gain a lot by accumulating *ilobolo* from his daughters). I'm reminded that on 7th February the state made use of Mdutshana to call out the men who were in the hill for Hunt and his police. The state knew about the family feud and it promoted it in the family, especially in extended families like that of Mdutshana, in order to undermine the base of protest. Mdutshana falsely identified Mjongo as the leader of the twenty-five men. Mfutshane told him that the leader had in fact been amongst the twelve men executed earlier.⁷³ Why was Mdutshana a principal witness?

⁷¹ 5 April 1906, S. N. A. Minute Papers (831 - 1020) 1906, 1/1/338, 1/S. N. A.

⁷² *Ilanga Lase Natal*, September 7 1906.

⁷³ *Ilanga Lase Natal*, September 7 1906.

In addition to the charge of murder, the indictment comprised two other charges, namely: charge no. 1, public violence, charge no. 2 being in arms against the Government and actively resisting constituted authority and aiding and abetting rebels against the Government. Five prisoners were convicted of charge no.1 and sentenced to twenty years hard labour, fifty lashes and confiscation of all property. Three prisoners were convicted of charge no 3 and sentenced to twenty years with hard labour and twenty-five lashes. One prisoner Koqoloza was convicted of charge no. 3 and sentenced to two years hard labour and twenty-five lashes.⁷⁴ Koqoloza was later found not guilty and discharged.

The incident reflects the division within African society in Natal. The fault line followed allegiance, amongst different groups, to the state, Christianity and Ethiopianism. The government wanted to enhance its hegemony; it then resorted to violence by making use of its institutions of power, the police, the army, the courts and the co-option of the indigenous leadership for a simple reason to divide and rule. It was suspected in many areas that there was a network that was linking the groundswell of dissatisfaction about the white administration that was beginning to affect more deeply to affecting land and stock. The punishment was severe for those who raised voices of dissatisfaction. The invitation to the African people to witness the execution of their fellow beings reflected the naked brutality of the state. This had a tremendous impact on the emerging division within African society. As has been shown during the trial of Mjongo, his own brother turned against him. The responsibility of tracking down the suspects was put on to the 'loyal' Chief Mveli and his men. The African people on the ground experienced double oppression from their traditional leaders and from the colonial state.

It was the view of the government that during the first 3 months of 1906 *Ilanga* published a series of seditious articles about the resistance. The authorities attributed these to Dube because he was a pronounced Ethiopian himself who had landed in jail during the South African War, having been arrested under martial law by the military.

⁷⁴ C. O. 179/234/14090 in MIC 1/1/1/ 231.

Throughout the period of the resistance Dube rejected the idea of an Ethiopian conspiracy. In his newspaper Dube challenged the white population who claimed *isidumo* was caused by Ethiopians and not by resistance to the poll tax. “Other whites reject the idea that the cause of the current *isidumo* in the land, that was triggered by the killing of police, (they claim) that it was not caused by the poll tax but by the Ethiopians who preached sedition to people to rebel. We totally reject this, the poll tax is the direct cause of these *iziyalu*, they began on the day when it was announced in Durban and Pietermaritzburg’.⁷⁵ Another white man calling himself Perambulator alleged that *amakholwa* of the African Congregational Churches, the Ethiopians, instigated people to rebel. ‘*Siti tina beLanga kuhle amangalelwe lomlungu aveze izizatu ati lelibandha lihlubula ngazo abantu*’ – we people of *Ilanga* say this white man should be reported so that he can justify his allegations that this church is involved in inciting people to rebel’. He publicly requested these churches to investigate the insults (allegations) and to come clean; if they refused they would be regarded as guilty. Perambulator also alleged that in Nanda there were troublesome Ethiopians who were against Reverend S. C. Pixley. Dube blamed the American pastors for all the allegations and claimed that it was they who had gone to Pietermaritzburg to report the Ethiopians. He challenged Maydon who put the blame too on the Ethiopians about *isidumo* of *Lovu* (Mid Illovo). The fact that the participants in the Richmond *isidumo* were wearing clothes does not mean that they were Ethiopians. Maydon rejected the poll tax as the cause of *isidumo*, ‘*nxa etsho kanjalo akazi luto ngalendaba*’ – ‘if he says so he doesn’t know anything about this story’.⁷⁶ Dube’s position was well defined about *intela yekhanda*, he consistently persuaded people to pay. ‘Listen to what *Ilanga* tells you go and get money and pay tax’.⁷⁷ He did not hide his feelings that chiefs had lost power, respect and integrity because the state had eroded their powers. In the eyes of officialdom a policeman was respected much more than a chief.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ ‘Bayapika abanye abelungu bati isidumo lesi esikona pakati kwezwe, esisuswe ukubulawa ko nongqayi, asibangwa intela yekhanda lendoda sibangwa amatopia ahambe eshumayeza abantu eti, abahlubuke embusweni. Siyapika tina siti yiyo intela yekanda eyimbangyi yalezizalu, zaqala kona mhla imeyzelwa eTekwini naseMgungundhlovu’. The main caption is IZIYALU, and the sub caption is Ikanda Lendoda Belu. See *Ilanga lase Natal* February 23 1906.

⁷⁶ *Ilanga lase Natal*, February 23 1906.

⁷⁷ *Ilanga lase Natal*, February 9 1906, *Ilanga lase Natal*, December 22 1905.

⁷⁸ *Ilanga lase Natal*, March 6 1906.

The reading of *Ilanga* has facilitated my understanding of the tensions and contradictions suffered by Dube. On one hand I see him sympathetic to the state injunction of paying tax. At the same time he was very bitter against the government for bringing about the degraded role of the Chiefs. It bothered him greatly and he bemoaned the fact that the police had more powers than chiefs. It is a fair extrapolation from Dube's experience that these contradictions may have affected a wide range of *amakholwa* and such insight could only be gained from the reading the viewpoint of the *amakholwa* in *Ilanga*. They seem to accept that poll tax was a necessary evil.

Another tension that comes through a close reading of *Ilanga* is that on one hand there is a negative portrayal of state violence, and on the other hand to avoid state reprisal against the newspaper, he uses diminutive phrases to describe the so-called *isidumo*, *isiphithiphithi* and *iziyalu* in the published reports. Dube's reporting and writing in the newspaper comes as a nuanced and complicated response to the actions of the state. I deduce that he was trying to manipulate the state as a way of protecting the African people against its brutal violence. As a pastor maybe it was a way of minimising the bloodshed, rather than encouraging a direct encounter, like other traditional leaders and their followers. Was it a strategy to mediate between the state and the people by denouncing violence and on the other hand using diminutive words to describe serious actions?

This paper through the reading of *Ilanga* demonstrates that there can be no one 'interior account' of the revolt. There were certainly several interior accounts that the reading of *Ilanga* has provided an opportunity to bring out. It gives better understanding of the complexity and fluidity of the conflict between the African elite.

APPENDIX 1⁷⁹

1. Makanda kaMngcindo
2. Mngcekwana kaMncindo
3. Maci kaKokabanye
4. Kuzubane kaKokabanye
5. Takanye kaMaci
6. Songelwa kaMaci
7. Mtawini kaPugwana
8. Hawana kaPugwana
9. Ncome kaQokobanye
10. Mvengi kaQokobanye
11. Pokoyani kaSepamu
12. Nkanyezi
13. Ntalane
14. Lujaja
15. Onde
16. Mjuju
17. uSibi
18. Mpathi (Mjongo's brother's child)
19. uSomndeni
20. Bonjana kaMjongo
21. Muntayi kaMjongo
22. Ngcubu kaMjongo
23. Mambuko kaMdutshana
24. Kucani kaMdutshana
25. Muki
26. Mjongo

APPENDIX 2⁸⁰

1. Makanda
2. Mqukwana
3. Ntsiba
4. Lawini
5. Dambuza
6. Pukunyane
7. Msongelwa
8. Mambuka
9. Majaja
10. Mantayi
11. Mbadi
12. Bunjana

⁷⁹ RSC Supreme Court Criminal Cases (nos 25 - 38) 1906, 1/1/92.

⁸⁰ C. O. 179/235/25725 in MIC 1/1/1/ 232, 2 April 1906, in Enclosure in Depsatch No. 125 of June 21 1906.

APPENDIX 3⁸¹

1. Muskofeni
2. Mveli
3. Sibindi
4. Silwane
5. Gobizembe
6. Meseni
7. Swayimana
8. Kula
9. Sigananda
10. Jack
11. Ndlovu
12. Bambada
13. Mehlokazulu
14. Tilonko
15. Fynn

APPENDIX 4⁸²

Shwele Baba

1. Sishweleza kuwe baba Sir Henry McCullam,
2. Sitayizela kuwe lu Siba Lukulu,
3. Sitandaza kuwe ndlunkulu,
4. Sikuleka kuwe luhlanga lwezwe,
5. Siti shwele ndlamadoda,
6. Wena odle u Bambata ka Mancinza, kwa ngaba ndaba zalutho,
7. Wadla u Sigananda wa kwa Shezi, kwangaba ndabazaluto
8. Wadla uMehlokazulu eMome, kwangaba ndaba ndabazaluto
9. Wadlovokula ao Meseni ka Musi, wabuye wenza isisa
10. Wabamba ao Ndlovu ka Timuni
11. Nge sidlozana, wabodla,
12. Bubesi elikonye e Mgungundlovu
13. Kwe tuka o Mafukuzela bao Dube,
14. Weza nao Gobizembe nao Kula,
15. Waba welisa imifuyana baye
16. Bema emva kwe zintsibi:

⁸¹ These are the names of chiefs that I have selected randomly from the issues of *Ilanga Lase Natal* in 1906.

⁸² *Ilanga Lase Natal*, September 21 1906.

17. SHWELE NDLUNKULU.

18. Sishwelezela ao Mjongo no Mjuju,
19. Bodla baba, nangomuso ku
20. Sayozenzela wena, baba.
21. Sicela banga buluwa,
22. Izinja zako baba ziyacela.
23. Pakamisa ingalo ye sihle.

Forgive us

1. We appeal for your love and kindness Sir Henry McCullam,
2. We appeal again and again to you a man of authority,
3. We pray to you son of the King,
4. We appeal to you who is the son of the land,
5. We are asking forgiveness you who have power to destroy / wipe out even our men,
6. You who “ate up” (destroy) Bambatha son of Mancinza, there was no outcry,
7. You who “ate up” (destroy) Sigananda of Shezi people, there was no outcry
8. You who “ate up” (destroy) Mehlokazulu at Mome, there was no outcry
9. And you destroyed Meseni the son Musi, yet you were merciful
10. Afterwards you held Ndlovu the son of Timuni by his throat, and you forgave,
11. The lion who growl at the shelter of the mighty elephants
12. That amazed Mafukuzela the son of Dube,
13. You came back dragging on the ground Gobizembe and Kula,
14. And you made them to cross little rivers
15. And they stopped at the fortresses of ntsibi:
16. **DISPLAY MERCY YOU OF THE HOUSE OF POWER.**
17. We are pleading for Mjongo and Mjuju,
18. Forgive them man of power, even tomorrow this may
19. May happen, and your kindness maybe called for.
20. We ask for your forgiveness, may they not be executed,
21. Your humble servitors appeal to you.
22. Lift up the arm of mercy.

