

Educator, journalist, church leader, author and first president - general of the ANC, Dube has been described as SA's Booker T. Washington, after the American black leader whose cautious approach and emphasis on racial pride, education and self-help were a continuous influence on Dube throughout his life. One of the most influential leaders of his day, Dube developed close ties with racially moderate Whites and as a Zulu patriot he was also a leading figure within the African educated Elite.

1. Born in 1871 at the Inanda mission station of the American Zulu mission in Natal, where his father was a pastor and related to the Ngcobo line of chiefs, he maintained close ties with Zulu traditional leaders, including the Zulu Royal House throughout his life.
2. He studied at Amanzimtoti Training Institute (Adams College) and then went to America to attend a preparatory school at Oberlin College.
3. In 1892 he returned to SA and became a teacher for the American Board Mission at Amanzimtoti. Two years later he left to become superintendent of a Christian industrial school.
4. In 1897 he returned to America to study Theology at a seminary in Brooklyn. After 3 years study he was ordained by the Congregational Church.
5. On his return to Natal he set about the establishment of Ohlange Institute, a school modeled on the principles of self help and vocational education as pioneered by Washington at Tuskegee and Hampton Institute in the US. Dube formally opened the School in August 1901. ////
6. In 1900-1901 he helped found the Natal Native Congress.
7. In 1903 he launched Natal's first African paper, the weekly Ilanga lase Natal in English and Zulu and remained its editor until 1915.
8. With Walter Rubusana he convened the South African Native convention in 1909 to oppose the colour Bar in the Act of Union and the same year he accompanied a multiracial deputation to England to lobby against the act.
9. Dube was unable to attend the conference in January 1912 when the South African Native National Congress (later renamed the ANC) was founded but he was elected in absentia as the ANC's first president because he was a figure neutral between rival Cape and Transvaal Leaders.
10. In 1914 he led the ANC deputation to England to protest against the 1913 land Act.
11. Discord within the ANC over how to respond to the government's Land Policy led in 1917 to Dube's resignation as president - general of the ANC.
12. He retained the Natal presidency until ill health forced his resignation in 1945.
13. In 1936 he was the first African awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of SA for his contribution to African education.
14. He was elected to represent rural Natal on the Native's Representative Council in 1937 and 1942. He died of a stroke in 1946.

Dube's writings include

1. Isita Somuntu Nguye(The enemy of the African is himself)
2. Insila Ka Tshaka (Jeje the Bodyservant of King Tshaka)
3. UShembe.(1936)

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