



- I. Author, journalist, linguist and political publicist, Plaatje was one of the most outstanding Africans associated with the African National Congress at the time of its founding.
2. Born in the Boshof district of the OFS in 1879 of Setswana speaking parents he spent his youth at the Pniel mission station of the Lutheran Berlin Mission Society near Barkly West. There Plaatje received an education in the elementary grades.
3. In 1894 he went to Kimberley where he worked as a postman and continued with his private studies distinguishing himself in the Civil Service examinations.
4. On the Eve of the Boer War he was sent to Mafeking as an interpreter and during the siege of Mafeking in 1899-1900 he acted as both court interpreter and clerk to the Mafeking Administrator of Native Affairs. In 1972 his Mafeking diary, discovered in 1969 and edited by John Comaroff was published under the title 'The Boer War Diary of Sol. T. Plaatje: An African at Mafeking. It is an important record of the siege.
6. Plaatje was proficient in at least eight languages including German, Dutch, English and all the major African vernaculars.
7. Plaatje established the first Setswana-English weekly paper 'Koranta ea Bechoana (Newspaper of the Tswana) in 1901. This existed under Plaatje's editorship for 6-7 years after which he moved from Mafeking to Kimberley. There he established a new paper 'Tsala ea Bechoana' later named Tsala ea Batho (The friend of the People'. Plaatje contributed to other papers such as the Kimberley Diamond Fields Advertiser.
8. When the South African Native National Congress (later called the ANC) was formed in 1912 Plaatje was chosen its first secretary-general. An articulate opponent of tribalism he exemplified the new spirit of National unity among African intellectuals. He married a Fingo.
9. Plaatje went to England in 1914 as part of the SANNC deputation to protest against the Land Act and stayed behind in Britain to work as a language assistant at London University. During this period he produced 3 books including a detailed and moving appeal against the Land Act. 'Native Life in SA before and since the European War and the Boer Rebellion (1916).
10. In 1919 he took part in a meeting with British Prime Minister Lloyd George and before returning to SA travelled widely in Canada and the USA. In 1923 he returned to SA where he continued to write and to cover sessions of parliament and to lobby for African interests as a representative of the ANC. He became involved in the Joint Council Movement and joined the African People's Organization and was active in civic affairs in Kimberley.
- II. In December 1930 He accompanied an ANC deputation to the Native affairs department to register African complaints against pass laws. He died of pneumonia while on a trip to Johannesburg in 1932.
12. He wrote
  1. Mhudi, a novel
  2. An Epic of South African Native Life a Hundred Years Ago (1930)
  3. The Mote and the Beam
  4. An Epic on Sex-Relationship 'Twiixt White and Black' in British South Africa.
  5. Translation of 4 Shakespeare plays into Setswana.

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4. Plaatje was proficient in at least eight languages including German, Dutch English and all the major African vernaculars.

Batswana

5. Plaatje <sup>edited</sup> established the first Setswana- English weekly paper 'Koranta ea Bechoana' (Newspaper of the Tswana) ~~from 1901 to 1908. In 1909 and in that year became editor of the 'Tsala ea Boko' in Kimberley.~~
6. When the South African Native National Congress (later called the ANC) was formed in 1912 Plaatje was chosen its first secretary-general. An articulate opponent of tribalism he exemplified the new spirit of National unity among African intellectuals. He married a <sup>white</sup> Fingo Fingo.
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8. Plaatje returned to SA after extensive travells in Canada and the USA and having met with British Prime Minister Lloyd George in 1919. He accompnied and ANC deputation to the Native affairs department to register African complaints against pass laws in 1930. He died of pneumonia while on a trip to Johannesburg in 1932. *His novel Mhudi written in English, was published in 1933. His death was a great loss to the African national movement.*

In 1916 he published a book between

Reference pages 127-129 "From Protest to Challenge Volume 4 Edited by Thomas Karis and Gwendolen M. Carter. Hoover Institution Press - Stanford University- Stanford California - published 1977.

↳ he opposed the formation of the new Union of South Africa, and foresaw the erosion of African rights. He realised the true meaning of the Land Act of 1913, and toured South Africa on a bicycle to investigate its workings. This led to ~~and published~~ another book 'Native life in South Africa'. He founded welfare assoc<sup>s</sup>, entertained lepers in asylums with an ancient projects & films, & supported the temperance movement.