Political and intellectual lineages of Southern African Anti-Fascism

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Abstract

The article is the introduction to a special issue of the *South African Historical Journal* on anti-fascism. It starts by explaining the contemporary relevance of the subject. It then places Southern Africa within the contemporary historiographical debates on anti-fascism. The article provides a broad overview of the history of the anti-fascist political ideas and practice within the region. It examines in detail both the impact of 'historical' anti-fascism in the era of Mussolini, Hitler and Franco, and how notions of anti-fascism subsequently impacted on the national liberation movements and in the post-colonial era.

Keywords: anti-fascism; national liberation movements; South Africa; Zimbabwe; Portuguese colonialism

Accusations of fascism are common in contemporary South African politics. Former President Jacob Zuma has been characterized as a fascist by some critics.[1] Both polemical writers and serious scholars have accused the Black nationalist-populist Economic Freedom Fighters of actually being a fascist organization.[2] Less surprisingly, such accusations have also been directed at the more extreme Afrikaner nationalist groups.[3] Regardless of the accuracy of these characterizations, those voicing these views are, implicitly, placing themselves in a political and intellectual lineage of anti-fascism. Why are they doing this? First off, it should be noted that a tradition of anti-fascist ideas has much deeper roots in the region than is often recognized. During the liberation struggles

[1] K. Moodley, 'The Rule of Law versus the Rule of War', *Daily Maverick*, 14 July 2021 https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-07-14-the-rule-of-law-versus-the-rule-of-war/
[2] P. Mashele, 'EFF's Racist Agenda Rapidly Clarifies Itself Through Malema's Outburts', *Sowetan Live,* 2 July 2018, https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/opinion/columnists/2018-07-02-effs-fascist-agenda--rapidly-clarifies-itself-through-malemas-racial-outbursts/; V. Satgar, 'Black Neofascism? The Economic Freedom Fighters in South Africa?', *Canadian Review of Sociology*, 56, 4, (2019), 580-605.
[3] B. Hans and K. Chetty, 'Afriforum No Crime Against Humanity Remark Outcry', *IOL*, 16 May 2018, https://www.iol.co.za/mercury/afriforum-no-crime-against-humanity-remark-outcry-14999814.

in southern Africa of the 1960s to 1990s, the apartheid government in Pretoria, the Portuguese colonial government in Mozambique and Angola, and the Smith regime in Rhodesia were often called 'fascist' by both their internal opponents and international solidarity movements. But back beyond that practice lay much earlier histories in all these countries, between the 1930s and the 1950s, of viewing the struggles against racial domination, as part of global battles against fascism. So when contemporary political commentators denounce 'fascism', fairly or not, they are in fact claiming the mantle of a history which is deep, and which attaches to the epic of the world wide fights against Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco.

This special issue seeks to explore the long-running strands of anti-fascist thought and practice in southern Africa. We are interested in exploring how the view of political opponents as fascist shaped the activity and the social and cultural production of the left, of African nationalists, and of liberals. It is our contention that Southern African historiography can be enriched by a greater appreciation of how global anti-fascism intersected with the politics of the region, and that the burgeoning field of anti-fascism studies internationally would benefit by a greater recognition of the southern African story.

The Special Issue does *not* focus on the question of whether particular regimes *ought* to be analyzed as 'fascist' or not. There is in fact quite a strong case for viewing the long-lasting Portuguese *Estado Novo* (1934-1974) as a classically fascist development. It certainly belongs amongst the 'family' of European authoritarians of the interwar period. But how it should be designated remains a matter of dispute amongst political scientists and historians.[4] Similarly, the Afrikaner nationalist movement of the 1930s and 1940s certainly had some strong Nazi influences. Consequently, many of its political opponents called it 'fascist' but this attitude often lived in uneasy tension with the view of it as a form a colonial regime, as in the South African Communist Party's notion of 'Colonialism of a Special Type'. Almost no serious historians of Afrikaner nationalism have adopted the 'fascist' characterization, mainly tending to view both the 1948-1994

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[4] M. Loff and L. Soutelo, 'Dictatorship and Revolution: Disputes over Collective Memory and Post-Authoritarian Portugal', in H. Garcia, M. Yusta, X. Tabet and C. Climaco, eds., *Rethinking Antifascism: History, Memory and Politics 1922 to the Present* (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 114-132.

South African political system as racial populist rather than fascist.[5] The UDI period in Rhodesia too, is usually regarded by scholars in the framework of racial populism rather than fascism.[6] But it is not our purpose to deal with such questions here. What we seek to address is how a politics of anti-fascism shaped the practice of Southern African political actors, both on their own terrain, and in terms of how they connected with like-minded global movements.

It also seems important to us to place the Southern African histories of anti-fascism in relation to the current explosion of literature on the anti-fascism as a global phenomenon. The immediate reasons for the interest in this body of scholarship are not far to seek. The rise to power, or to positions of influence, of the extreme right in major countries has reversed the optimistic predictions of a democratic, liberalizing future which were so widespread in the 1990s. Brexit, the governments of Law and Justice in Poland, Orban in Hungary, Modi in India, Erdogan in Turkey and above all of Putin and Trump have sounded the alarm bells.[7] This swing toward authoritarianism and extreme nationalism has created both an enormous amount of media speculation and political polemics on the question of the 'fascism' of these movements and regimes. But it also signals a complex and subtle academic debate on whether they are best characterized as 'populist', what the characteristics of such a populism are, and how these contemporary movements do or do not differ from historical fascism.

In this context, it is not surprising that opponents of right wing extremism have become interested in the very long tradition of opposition to the far right which can be designated as anti-fascism, stretching back to the Liberals, Socialists, Anarchists and Communists who fought Mussolini in the 1920s, to the era of the 1930s Popular Front, the Italo-Ethiopian War and the Spanish Civil War, and to wartime political mobilization and resistance movements of 1939 to 1945. An important feature of this literature is that is has recognized that anti-fascism took many forms and linked to diverse political ideologies, and thus that it is not reducible to a simple ideological instrument of the Stalinist regime, or any other regime for that matter. Of course it is true that the Soviet leadership instrumentalized the term for its own purposes, often with

[5] For instance, D. O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party 1948-1994* (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1997).
[6] P. Godwin and I. Hancock, *'Rhodesians Never Die': the impact of war and political change on white Rhodesia c.1970-1980* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
[7] C. Mudde, *The Far Right Today*, (Cambridge: Polity, 2019).

breathtaking cynicism. But internationally, much of pre-1945 anti-fascist activity originated outside the Communist camp, and much of what Communists did in its name escaped the control of Moscow. These anti-fascist political traditions, moreover, continued to shape global politics after 1945, as many of those who had fought Hitler and Mussolini continued to imagine politics through the prism of that formative experience. And so also, to a large extent, did the children of those militants and combatants, who tended to see their opponents as the lineal descendants of the two major fascist leaders. In the formerly fascist countries, young people who rebelled against their national histories and the complicity of their parents' generation, in their turn viewed those they saw as the political villains of their time as fascists. In Europe and North America solidarity movements with Southern Africa, while drawing on the rhetorics of anti-fascism were often complex, displaced, forms of 'working through' a reckoning with national histories of race and empire. This literature on anti-fascism thus promises to provide a broader framework for understanding some key features of modern Southern African history.

As impressive a body of work as it is, Southern African historiography, until recently, has tended to have an excessively inward-looking character. This has begun to be countered in recent years by a shift toward more global and regional perspectives. There is also increasing interest from historians in linking the history of the region to world ideological and political trends. But anti-fascism, in the view of some scholars, the most successful ideology of the Twentieth Century, has had almost no focused attention amongst historians of Southern Africa, and we hope correct that with this special issue. One feature that emerges from this collection is that Southern African political actors from across the oppositional spectrum were much more aware of, and responsive too, the global politics than are sometimes given credit for. Transnational anti-fascist movements and their ideological legacies shaped national and local politics. This perspective also helps in current attempts to take a more regionally integrated, rather than country-specific view of the region. Anti-fascism was a common ideology of left and nationalist movements in the Portuguese Empire, South Africa and to a lesser extent, Rhodesia. The growing literature on anti-fascism in the metropolitan countries might also be enriched by greater attention to Southern Africa. A welcome development in the realm of anti-fascist studies has been an increasing number of studies focused in the global South. But while Latin America, India and Asia are well represented in this field, there is much less on Africa.

By focusing on anti-fascism as ideology and practice of opposition, we can foreground the political consciousness of political activists: their experience of the regimes under which they lived and the historical reference points, as well as comparisons and analogies on which they drew as cultural resources. Living through political repression, extreme racism and clandestine resistance were common experiences that made the idea of a historical continuity with anti-fascist struggle both plausible and appealing. Whether or not at abstract analytical level the regimes were the same was less important than that they might be *experienced* as fascist. Drawing that connection gave access to the huge moral, cultural and political resource of being part of a history of struggle against the worst possible forms of political destructiveness. So concentrating on anti-fascism makes us look at how these political actors inserted themselves into a tradition of anti-fascism and how it affected their view of themselves, their enemies, and the actions in which they felt that they needed to engage.

Global histories of anti-colonialism and anti-fascism

The global history of anti-fascism is directly linked to the transnational world of international organisations, cross-border political activism and the creation of the global community; and it did represent an early instance of global political mobilization. Despite longer traditions of anti-fascism, the 1950s and 1960s have traditionally been seen as defining decades for the emergence of 'global civil society', when a vast network of non-governmental organisation and transnational social movements were developed.[8] However, already during the interwar years vibrant forms of internationalisms were created at the level of the civil society that had a significant impact on the formation of the global community.[9] Anti-fascism was one of these 20th century currents and was was not only entangled with the transnational worlds of anarchist, socialist, and communist

[8] H. Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid and the Emergence of Global Civil Society* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

[9] A. Iriye, *Global Community. The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); D. Laqua (ed.) *Internationalism Reconfigured. Transnational Ideas and Movements between the World Wars* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011); D. Featherstone, *Solidarity. Hidden Histories and Geographies of Internationalism* (London: Zed Books, 2012); T. Davies, *NGOs. A New History of Transnational Civil Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); H. Weiss (ed.) *International Communism and Transnational Solidarity. Radical Networks, Mass Movements and Global Politics, 1919–1939* (Leiden: Brill, 2017); S. Berger and H. Nehring, 'Introduction. Towards a Global History of Social Movements,' in *The History of Social Movements in Global Perspective. A Survey* ed. S. Berger and H. Nehring (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 1–35.

internationalism and New Left movements, but also with pan-africanism, anti-colonialism, Third Worldism, Black Consciousness Movements, and different anti-racist and anti-apartheid movements. There was emphatically not one anti-fascism, but a variety of anti-fascist responses, protest repertoires and political cultures that included both militant forms of resistance and cultural and intellectual manifestations of anti-fascism.[10]

Just like their diverse membership, constituencies and alliances might suggest, these movements did not embrace a unified definition of fascism. Throughout the last century Marxist, non-Marxist and liberal interpretations of fascism have failed to agree where the lines between 'generic fascism' and other far right movements should be drawn.[11] While preeminent scholars of fascism have searched for a 'usable taxonomic category of fascism,' George L. Mosse's cultural historical approach seems to have inspired a certain consensus. In Mosse's terms fascism needs to be studied from the inside out "seeing fascism as it saw itself and as its followers saw it, to attempt to understand the movement in its own terms. Only then […] can we truly judge its appeal and its power."[12] Mosse highlights the importance of taking the analysis of fascist ideology seriously, including how fascism developed an understanding of nationalism, racism and the notion of a fascist revolution through symbols, rites and the sacralisation of politics. We contend that the method to analyse fascist self-understanding and self-representation should likewise be a central starting point for the study of anti-fascism. Therefore, while commentators like Roger Griffin without hesitation dismiss Marxist definitions of fascism,[13] we cannot overlook the fact that anti-

[10] For a comprehensive overview of the latest scholarly discussions on the histories of anti-fascism, see the edited collections by Nigel Copsey and Andrej Olechnowicz (eds.), *Varieties of Anti-Fascism. Britain in the Inter-War Period* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); The special issue of Contemporary European History with an introduction by Hugo García, *'Transnational History. A New Paradigm for Anti-Fascist Studies?,'* Contemporary European History 25, no. 4 (2016), 563–572; Hugo García et al. (eds.), *Rethinking Antifascism. History, Memory and Politics, 1922 to the Present* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2016); Kasper Braskén, Nigel Copsey, and Johan Lundin (eds.), *Anti-Fascism in the Nordic Countries. New Perspectives, Comparisons and Transnational Connections* (London: Routledge, 2019); Kasper Braskén, Nigel Copsey, and David Featherstone (eds.), *Anti-Fascism in a Global Perspective. Transnational Networks, Exile Communities, and Radical Internationalism* (London: Routledge, 2021). See also the special issue on 'Global Cultures of Antifascism, 1921–2020' in *Fascism. Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies* 9, no. 1–2 (2020).
[11] R. Griffin, 'The Primacy of Culture. The Current Growth (or Manufacture) of Consensus within Fascist Studies,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 37, no. 1 (2002), 27.
[12] G. L. Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution. Toward a General Theory of Fascism. With a critical introduction by Roger Griffin* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2021), x–xv.
[13] See the substantial historiographical and conceptual discussion in R. Griffin, *Fascism. An Introduction to Comparative Fascist Studies* (Medford: Polity, 2018).

fascist activists to varying degrees were (and are) inspired and motivated by Marxist frameworks in their resistance against fascism.[14] This means that we need to centre the analysis on anti-fascism rather than fascism per se, and can embrace the different anti-fascist world views that were shaped by their self-definition and their understandings of class divisions, capitalism, colonialism, racism and gender.

This is why the many efforts of political scientists to define strict categories that confidently distinguish between different kinds of far right movements has not always been helpful from an anti-fascist perspective. Stanley Payne suggests for instance that the three faces of authoritarian nationalism contained for South Africa the Greyshirts (fascists), Ossewabrandwag (radical right), and the United Party (conservative right). In such fashion comparative fascist studies have tried to differentiate fascist movements from various non-fascist authoritarian right wing movements.[15] In hindsight it allows judgement of how 'valid' anti-fascist interpretations of fascism were and if they subsequently resulted in useful anti-fascist responses, but for the analysis of past anti-fascist agency such categorisations might befog rather than enhance the analysis. Moreover, the fight has been directed against right wing parties and movements that co-opted fascist narratives or were openly sympathetic to key fascist tropes and goals, then either viewed as proto-fascism or interpreted as incipient forms of fascism that also needed to be combatted. This broader range of anti-fascist activity connects anti-fascism with the intellectual endeavor of historians like Geoff Eley who have tried to identify the deeper societal causes and preconditions that enable the rise of fascism.[16]

While the study of anti-fascism has until recently primarily been framed historically and methodologically within national frameworks, the latest perspectives have re-framed anti-fascism as a research field that is especially suitable for comparative and transnational perspectives. The inherently transnational lives lived by socialists, anarchists, communists and other leftists have emphasised the internationalist character of anti-fascism. Links and connections were actively made through international organisations, travels and meetings at international conferences and

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[14] On Marxist interpretations, see D. Beetham, ed. *Marxists in Face of Fascism. Writings of Marxists on Fascism from the Inter-War Period*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983; L. Ceplair, *Under the Shadow of War. Fascism, Anti-Fascism, and Marxists, 1918–1939.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.

[15] S. G. Payne, *A History of Fascism 1914–1945* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1995), 14–16.

[16] G. Eley, *Nazism As Fascism. Violence, Ideology, and the Ground of Consent in Germany 1930–1945* (London: Routledge, 2013), 198–225.

congresses, and though the circulation of journals and newspapers.[17] This transnational condition makes it difficult, if not impossible to analyse anti-fascism without taking into account the cross-border influences and networks. The struggle was connected beyond borders and across continents, but it was at the same time integrated and acted upon locally and thereby translated into meaningful local engagement.[18] This translocal position must be the departing point for the analysis of anti-fascist histories in southern Africa too. South Africa was at a global junction point of vital geopolitical interest where crucial sea and air routes converged. South African society was linked across and beyond the Atlantic and Indian Oceans not only through colonialism and empire, but also through the African diaspora, European (especially Britain and the Netherlands, but also Germany and East and Central European Jews), South East Asian and Indian immigrants, and their respective connections to their old home countries, cultures and national identities.

Before looking more deeply into the southern African varieties of anti-fascist engagement, we need to acknowledge that the new histories of global anti-fascism are inherently related to the new global histories of fascism. Benjamin Zacharias has lucidly argued that research on fascism has all too long maintained a Eurocentric/North American outlook. If fascism has been studied beyond Europe, these movements have often simply been deemed as 'poor imitations'.[19] Fascist internationalism thus stands out as a fascinating new research field that has highlighted the existence of intense cross-border co-operation between fascist movements and regimes already during the interwar period.[20] This far right co-operation could also centre around shared core

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[17] See García, 'Transnational History,' 563–572; K. Braskén, D. Featherstone, and N. Copsey, 'Towards a Global History of Anti-Fascism: Introduction,' in *Anti-Fascism in a Global Perspective. Transnational Networks, Exile Communities, and Radical Internationalism* ed. K. Braskén, N. Copsey, and D. Featherstone (London: Routledge, 2021).
[18] B. Anderson, *Under Three Flags. Anarchism and Anti-Colonial Imagination* (London: Verso, 2005); S. Hirsch and L. van der Walt (eds.), *Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial and Postcolonial World, 1870–1940* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); B. Studer, *The Transnational World of the Cominternians* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); García, 'Transnational History'; Braskén, Copsey, and Featherstone, *Anti-Fascism in a Global Perspective*.
[19] B. Zachariah, 'A Voluntary Gleichschaltung? Perspectives from India towards a non-Eurocentric Understanding of Fascism,' *Transcultural Studies*, no. 2 (2014). Notable recent studies on fascism beyond Europe include the works of C. Dooeum, *Élitist Fascism. Chiang Kaishek's Blueshirts in 1930s China* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); F. Finchelstein, *Transatlantic Fascism. Ideology, Violence, and the Sacred in Argentina and Italy, 1919–1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); M. Framke, *Delhi–Rom–Berlin. Die indische Wahrnehmung von Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus 1922–1939* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2013); R. Hofmann, *The Fascist Effect. Japan and Italy, 1915–1952* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2015).
[20] S. Ugelvik Larsen (ed.) *Fascism Outside Europe. The European Influence against Domestic Conditions in the Diffusion of Global Fascism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); A. Bauerkämper and

beliefs like anti-communism and antisemitism, or like Kasper Braskén's article in this collection shows, focus on monitoring anti-fascist critics on the global scene, and to hinder anti-fascist efforts to tarnish the public image of the Third Reich.

Southern Africa's British Connection

The rise of Nazi Germany represented a fundamental challenge for the international community, but it was seldom answered with steadfast anti-fascism. In Britain, the notion of appeasement ruled the late 1930s when Neville Chamberlain led British efforts to satisfy Hitler's expansionist demands. Furthermore, the concept of appeasement was not limited to Central Europe, but involved also discussions on redistributing African colonies. The basic idea of British 'colonial appeasement' was to neutralise German demands for living space with the (unwilling) help of Portuguese Africa, especially Angola. António de Oliveira Salazar (Prime Minister of Portugal, 1932-1970) officially refuted these claims in January 1937, but Chamberlain's plans about 'colonial appeasement' remained in play until the beginning of the Second World War.[21]

It was first during the Second World War that anti-fascism was made into a dominant element of British national identity.[22] British society, it should be emphasized, was neither immune nor free of fascist or Nazi ideas and movements during the interwar years.[23] Like in most other countries, respectable circles could openly articulate their support for fascist and Nazi ideas, which included both upper-class right wing extremists and fellow travelers of the right. In the words of Richard Griffiths, these British fellow travelers involved 'those respectable middle-class people who admired fascist regimes without belonging to any "fascist" group or undertaking any political activity.' Their political repertoire included whole hearted admiration of the Third Reich and the policies of the Nazi Party (NSDAP), although many did not necessarily agree with Nazi antisemitism. In response, the 1930s also saw the rise of popular anti-fascist activity in Britain that

G. Rossoliński-Liebe (eds.), *Fascism without Borders. Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945* (New York: Berghahn, 2017); M. Herren, 'Fascist Internationalism,' in *Internationalisms. A Twentieth-Century History* ed. G. Sluga and P. Clavin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 191–212.

[21] M. Gonçalves, 'The Scramble for Africa Reloaded? Portugal, European Colonial Claims and the Distribution of Colonies in the 1930s,' *Contemporary European History* 30, no. 1 (2021), 2–15.

[22] N. Copsey, *Anti-Fascism in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2017), 76.

[23] T. Linehan, *British Fascism 1918–39. Parties, Ideology and Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); M. Pugh, *'Hurrah for the Blackshirts'. Fascists and Fascism in Britain Between the Wars* (London: Pimclio, 2006).

was aimed against both international fascism and domestic fascist organisations such as the British Union of Fascists (BUF). With the beginning of the war, the majority of the far-right sympathizers swiftly prioritised the defense of Britain in a newfound patriotic fervor. A certain rehabilitation of the far right was first possible when Franco's Spain was accepted into the Cold War Western front and new room was provided for pro-fascist sentiments through expressions of sympathies with both the Portuguese and Spanish dictatorships.[24]

For histories of 20th century anti-fascism, South Africa forms a highly interesting case as leading far right figures of the interwar period gained governmental power in 1948, after the military defeat of the major fascist states. In Britain, enthusiasm for Nazism remained in the dark corners of society throughout the 1940s, but when South Africa took the path toward apartheid, critics in that country and elsewhere started describing it as a fascist state. To anti-fascists it was of major interest that direct links between the British post-war radical right and the apartheid regime were established. During the 1950s and 1960s, covert operations were executed by the South African security apparatus against both anti-apartheid activists and oppositional exiles in Britain. Strikingly, one of the most important far right figures in post-war Britain, Arthur Keith Chesterton, developed a close relationship with Hendrik Johan van den Bergh, the leader of the South African Bureau of State Security. Chesterton, born in South Africa, had already during the 1930s become closely involved in Oswald Mosley's BUF before departing from the organisation to work as a propagandist and speaker for different British fascist and antisemitic groups. Van der Bergh's far right credentials were of highest standards too: A former general of the OB, interned in South Africa during the Second World War due to Nazi sympathies, and significantly, the war did not convince him to abandon his sympathies for fascism.[25]

Fascist analogies: White rule and British colonialism as 'fascism'

Notably, the tradition of describing the white rule in South Africa as fascist was not invented in the Cold War context, but was already being debated among black internationalists during the

[24] R. Griffiths, *Fellow Travellers of the Right. British Enthusiasts for Nazi Germany 1933–9* (London: Constable, 1980); R. Griffiths, 'Anti-Fascism and the Post-War British Establishment,' in *Varieties of Anti-Fascism. Britain in the Inter-War Period* ed. N. Copsey and A. Olechnowicz (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 247–264; Copsey, *Anti-Fascism in Britain*, 37–75.

[25] G. Macklin, 'The British Far Right's South African Connection. A.K. Chesterton, Hendrik van den Bergh, and the South African Intelligence Services,' *Intelligence and National Security* 25, no. 6 (2010), 823–842.

1930s. The League of Coloured Peoples (LCP) became under the Jamaican doctor, Harold Moodduring the 1930s the most significant pan-African voice in Britain. It had a Christian framework and maintained that it was an apolitical body. In its journal *The Keys* it opposed racial discrimination in Britain and the British empire and one of its major concerns was related to South Africa. In an anti-fascist spirit *The Keys* in 1936–1937 made a comparison between how the German Jews were stripped of their political rights and how the Cape Africans' had lost their right to vote.[26] The most salient examples are offered by radical pan-Africanist George Padmore who noted in London in the Independent Labour Party's newspaper in 1938 that South Africa was "the world's classic Fascist State." According to Padmore, South Africa and Southern Rhodesia were totalitarian "long before Hitler began to institute similar methods in Europe".[27] In direct relation to Nazism in Germany, Padmore equated the suffering of the Jews in the Third Reich with the agony of the blacks in the British colonies. In Padmore's view this was particularly veracious true of the white settler societies, and here again Britain was singled out for ruling in the name of the "most blatant expression of racial superiority" in southern Africa.[28] His journalism in Gold Coast and Nigerian newspapers during the 1940s influenced African nationalists who soon would be full members of the international community.[29] Myra Ann Houser's article in this collection depicts likewise the importance of the South African independent press and Moses Kotane's *The African Defender* in connecting the interwar anti-fascist sentiments with the nascent anti-apartheid movement.

Memories of the anti-fascist/anti-colonial unity of the oppressed were later re-articulated in the diplomatic talks between Israeli and African leaders during the 1960s when Israel still was openly critical to apartheid South Africa. For example the Premier of the Democratic Republic of Congo expressed to the Prime Minister of Israel that "The African people like Israel, because we are all victims of racial discrimination, and we have had to fight for our liberty." Similarly in 1966, the Israeli Prime Minister Eshkol stated to the President of Liberia, William Tubman, that "none

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[26] D. Killingray, 'Rights, Land, and Labour. Black British Critics of South African Policies before 1948,' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 2 (2009), 392–394.
[27] Quotations from B. Schwarz, *West Indian intellectuals in Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 141.
[28] Schwarz, *West Indian intellectuals in Britain*, 141–142.
[29] L. James, *George Padmore and Decolonization from Below. Pan-Africanism, the Cold War, and the End of Empire* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 93.

have felt the lash of oppression down the ages of history, as have the Africans and the Jews."[30] For the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD), it was common during the 1950s to draw a parallel between the struggle against antisemitism and the broader battle against racist ideologies. The main point of such international comparison was not to equate the Nazi regime and the apartheid regime directly, but to emphasize the common experience of victimhood and oppression.[31] A last example could be taken from a spokesperson of the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) when discussing the so called 'Ghetto Act' (1946). It was compared to the racial persecution of the Jews in Germany, adding that the legislation contained "all the elements of Hitler's policy applied by a country that was Hitler's enemy, to its quarter million Indian subjects." As a part of the same debate, Yusuf Dadoo, the President of the Transvaal Indian Congress, connected Nazism with the local white rule by claiming that "The ghost of Hitler is haunting South Africa."[32]

The concept of fascism lived on in the public communications between the SAIC and the ANC, but not exclusively in connection to the white rule. When GM Naicker, the president of the SAIC, gave the opening address at the ANC's national conference in Durban 1954 he warned that

> A movement for national liberation can become reactionary in character. Nationalism under anti-democratic leadership can become a great threat to the basic values for which we stand. Afrikaner nationalism is an example of how a movement essentially progressive in its initial stages has today become a great threat to democracy, and has become the spearhead of fascism in South Africa. African nationalism too, under wrong leadership, can become an anti-democratic force giving rise to the emergence of Black fascism in the Union. It is to the credit of the leadership of the African National Congress that African nationalism has chosen the path of democracy, notwithstanding the environment in which it has emerged. The slogan of the African National Congress is not South Africa for the Africans but South Africa for all her peoples of all creeds and nationalities.[33]

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[30] Quotes from the anti-apartheid speech by Shlomo Hillel, Israel's Minister of Police, held at the United Nations on 6 December 1966, transcript in: J. D. Kreindler, 'South Africa, Jewish Palestine & Israel. The growing relationship 1919–1974,' *Africa Development / Afrique et Développement* 6, no. 2 (1981), 114–116.

[31] S. Gilbert, 'Jews and the Racial State. Legacies of the Holocaust in Apartheid South Africa, 1945–60,' *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society* 16, no. 3 (2010), 34–35.

[32] Gilbert, 'Jews and the Racial State,' 39.

[33] Opening Address to the National Conference of the African National Congress, Durban, 16 December 1954, cited from F. Meer (ed.) *Monty Speaks. Speeches of Dr G. M. (Monty) Naicker 1945–1963. Compiled by E. S. Reddy* (Durban: Madiba Publishers, 1991).

Such examples emphasise the importance of the global turn in anti-fascist studies as they reveal the ways in which anti-fascist histories in crucial ways intersected with anti-colonialism and decolonisation.[34] As Priyamvada Gopal has shown, for the supporters of decolonisation there seems to have been a rising conviction that in the postwar context that 'imperialism could no longer hide behind anti-fascism' and that there seemed to have been a 'false opposition' between fascism and democratic imperialism.[35] As it turns out, it was not only the struggle against apartheid that was framed as a 'new anti-fascism' by the New Left during the mid 1950s and 1960s. Here, the Algerian liberation movement was actively compared to the Resistance of the Second World War, and European imperialism was in the process framed as the 'new fascism' by the New Left. The Algerian War of Independence was so to say the first war to 'reactivate' the anti-fascist front in the spirit of the Resistance.[36]

The analysis of South Africa's place in the world was ambivalent. In the communist's global analysis, they could not initially agree on what South Africa constituted: was it a colonial country or an imperialist one? Was opposition best understood as a national liberation struggle or a class struggle?[37] Unlike other 'settler colonies' like Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Kenya or Uganda, South Africa was significantly more industrialised and urbanised. It hence had a larger and more organised urban working class and the communist party was for a long time the only CP south of the Sahara.[38]

[34] T. Buchanan, ''The Dark Millions in the Colonies are Unavenged'. Anti-Fascism and Anti-Imperialism in the 1930s,' *Contemporary European History* 25, no. 4 (2016), 645–665; C. Bergin, 'African American Internationalism and Anti-Fascism,' in *Anti-Fascism in a Global Perspective. Transnational Networks, Exile Communities, and Radical Internationalism* ed. K. Braskén, N. Copsey, and D. Featherstone (London: Routledge, 2021).

[35] Quotes from P. Gopal, *Insurgent Empire. Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent* (London: Verso, 2019), 387.

[36] A. Brazzoduro, 'Algeria, Antifascism, and Third Worldism. An Anticolonial Genealogy of the Western European New Left (Algeria, France, Italy, 1957–1975),' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 48, no. 5 (2020), 960–962.

[37] For the international debate, see O. Drachewych, *The Communist International, Anti-Imperialism and Racial Equality in British Dominions* (London: Routledge, 2019).

[38] For a comparison between Algeria and South Africa, see A. Drew, 'Bolshevizing Communist Parties. The Algerian and South African Experiences,' *International Review of Social History* 48, no. 2 (2003), 167–202; I. Filatova and A. Davidson, ''We, the South African Bolsheviks'. The Russian Revolution and South Africa,' J*ournal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 4 (2017) p. 950.

Reactions on the civil society level

The first South African references to 'anti-fascists' in the commercial press seem to crop up in relation to the opposition to Mussolini in the run-up to the March on Rome in 1922. However, outside Communist Party circles, where developments in international politics were keenly followed, there was seemingly little interest in resistance to fascism in Europe. This dramatically changed in 1933 as a consequence of Hitler's seizure of power. The lead in South African opposition to Nazism was taken by Jewish organizations, motivated by the antisemitic attacks which the new government in Germany launched on the Jewish population, and the subsequent steady rise of South African emulators of Hitler's movement.[39] These protests received considerable support from liberal Anglophone clergy and intellectuals. Public meetings were held and a commercial boycott of Germany was launched, which achieved considerable success in 1933–1934.[40]

The South African left's initial response to this moment was fragmented. The Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) was at a low ebb of its fortunes, largely as a result of the self-inflicted wounds of ideological purges in the early 1930s.[41] Although beset by local weakness, South Africa had found a prominent place in the Comintern's main organisations for the anti-colonial struggle, the League against Imperialism (formed in Brussels, 1927) and the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers (formed in Hamburg, 1930) that spearheaded the global anti-colonial agenda and the envisioned the formation of a radical African Atlantic.[42] The CPSA membership was still largely white and the impact it had made in the late 1920s in black labour organizing through the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) was largely lost. The purges resulted in the loss of many of its most effective members and leaders, including SP

[39] M. Shain, *A Perfect Storm: Antisemitism in South Africa 1930-1948*, (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2015).

[40] R. Citino, *Germany and the Union of South Africa in the Nazi Period* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

[41] A. Drew, 'The New Line in South Africa. Ideology and Perception in a Very Small Communist Party,' in *In Search of Revolution. International Communist Parties in the Third Period* ed. Matthew Worley (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 337–359.

[42] For a more detailed account of the anti-colonial work see, F. Petersson, *"We are Neither Visionaries Nor Utopian Dreamers". Willi Münzenberg, the League against Imperialism and the Comintern, 1925-1933* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2014); H. Weiss, *Framing a Radical African Atlantic. African American Agency, West African Intellectuals and the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

Bunting, a major pioneer of non-racial left politics. In addition the party was burdened with the hang-over of the disastrous Stalinist policy of prioritizing opposition to Social-Democracy. The CPSA did start to create an Anti-Fascist League, but it appears to have had little appeal. The South African Labour Party (SALP), representing white workers, was dominated by conservative, racial-protectionist leaders, and at its 1934 conference rejected participation in the League. Black politics was in a period of relative quiescence, with the ICU weakened, the various political and religious sects influenced by the millenarian Africanist politics of Marcus Garvey in decline, and the African National Congress (ANC) pursuing a politics of lobbying government under a cautious elite leadership.

However, the mid-1930s did start to see the beginning of period of physical confrontations between leftist and fascist groups in the major South African urban centres, which was to continue all the way into the mid-1940s. The mid-1930s saw the emergence of a number of active fascist organizations, mainly affiliated with extreme versions of Afrikaner nationalism, in the cities of South Africa. The most prominent of these was the 'Greyshirts' led by Louis Weichardt, but there were some smaller ones such as the 'Blackshirts' on the Rand. These groups were fairly small, but violent and virulently antisemitic. Whatever the ambiguities of the attitudes of the CPSA and the SALP, Jewish leftists and some other militants wanted to challenge them directly. The Communist-orientated Jewish Workers Club in Johannesburg,[43] and a small but influential cluster of Trotskyists in Cape Town were to the fore of this tendency. Thus begun a long history of violent clashes between left and right.[44] The area in front of the steps of the Johannesburg City Hall, a favoured venue for left wing political meetings, became the classic venue for these battles.[45] These reached their height with a massive street fight between Blackshirts and leftists in central Johannesburg in November 1938, said at the time to have been the most violent incident in the city since the insurrectionary 1922 Miners' Strike. These confrontations became even more extensive

[43] T. Adler, 'Lithuania's Diaspora: The Johannesburg Jewish Workers' Club, 1928-1948', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 6:1, (1979), 70-92.
[44] R. Hodes, ''Free Fight on the Grand Parade': Resistance to the Greyshirts in 1930s South Africa', *The International Review of African Historical Studies*, 47, 2, (2014), 185-208.
[45] R. Bernstein, *Memory Against Forgetting: Memoir of a Time in South African Politics 1938-1964* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2017), 5-12.

from early 1939, when a mass fascist, pro-Axis movement of Afrikaner Nationalists, the Ossewa Brandwag, was formed, under the leadership of Hans van Resnburg.[46]

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 opened a new field of anti-fascist activity. The aggression against one of the two African-ruled independent states on the continent had a huge resonance for Black Southern Africans and led to the politicization of global pan-Africanism.[47] The Ethiopian war also highlights the importance of the earlier links made by the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA) that during the 1920s became the largest and most widespread black-led movement in the world. South Africa was, besides North America and the Caribbean, the area where Garveyism had its most profound impact. From its southern African headquarters in Cape Town, a key group of blacks from the British West Indies disseminated Garveyism throughout the region and thereby influenced both the ICU and the ANC. Interracial organising was also enabled through the cooperation between the UNIA, ANC and Cape Indian Council. In another anti-colonial link, Garveyites were inspired by Indian nationalism and other nationalist anti-colonial movements within the British Empire.[48] There was a wave of denunciations of Mussolini in the African public sphere in South Africa, and there were a number of remarkable instances of boycotts of Italian ships by dockworkers in South Africa and Namibia. The strength of the resulting movement along with the the relative roles of Communists, African nationalists and Garveyites needs further exploration. In particular we need to understand better how far this movement framed itself as nationalist, and how far fascism was constituted as the specific enemy. Johnson's article in this special issue is an important contribution to the scholarship on this question.

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[46] P.J. Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika: The Impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1991); C. Marx, 'The Ossewabrandwag as a Mass Movement 1939-1941', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 20, 2, (1994), 195-219.

[47] W. R. Scott, *The Sons of Sheba's Race. African-Americans and the Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935–1941* (Bloomington: Indiana Univerity Press, 1993); T. Dedering, 'South Africa and the Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935–6,' *The International History Review* 35, no. 5 (2013), 1009–1030; J. Fronczak, 'Local People's Global Politics. A Transnational History of the Hands off Ethiopia Movement of 1935,' *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 2 (2015), 245–274.

[48] R. T. Vinson, ''Sea Kaffirs'. 'American Negroes' and the Gospel of Garveyism in Early Twentieth-Century Cape Town,' *Journal of African History* 47, no. 2 (2006), 284, 293, 299–302.

Governmental reactions and responses in Southern Africa

The attitude of white South African political leaders toward fascism poses an important question: how far can the hostility which the segregationist South African political establishment developed to both Hitler and Mussolini and those whom they identified as 'home front fascists' be thought of as 'Anti-Fascist'? 1933 saw the formation of a coalition government in South Africa with the leader of the mainstream Afrikaner nationalists, JBM Hertzog (Prime Minister between 1924 and 1939) and the pro-British General Jan Smuts as his Deputy. Afrikaner nationalists had a strong strain of Germanophilia, stretching back to at least the Kaiser's support for the Boers in the 1890s, and reinforced by the assimilation of German immigrants. Hertzog was instinctively authoritarian and attracted to Hitler. Smuts on the other hand was an individualist and elitist 19th Century liberal and hostile to Nazi doctrine from the start, although initially less concerned about Mussolini. However, both leaders took surprisingly strong stands against the dictators during the 1930s, largely for geopolitical reasons. The small but loud and visible German minority in South Africa played a significant role as they formed a potential security threat during the life span of the Third Reich (1933–1945).[49] A major concern was to maintain South African control of the former German colony of South West Africa, which South Africa had received as a mandate territory in the Treaty of Versailles. The Nazis rapidly hegemonized the small but economically powerful German communities in SWA and South Africa during 1933-1934 and set up a fully-fledged Party structures. According to some estimates 'the best organised Nazi support outside Europe' was established in SWA during the 1930s.[50] Hertzog and Smuts became alarmed at the danger this might pose in strengthening German claims for the return of SWA, control of which they saw as vital to South African strategic interests. Consequently, from 1934, the government repeatedly and energetically used police powers to repress Nazi organizations and activity.

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[49] A. Hagemann, *Südafrika und das "Dritte Reich". Rassenpolitische Affinität und machtpolitische Rivalität* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1989); P. J. Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika. The Impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1991); R. Citino, *Germany and the Union of South Africa in the Nazi Period* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991); A. Hagemann, 'Very Special Relations. The 'Third Reich' and the Union of South Africa, 1933–1939,' *South African Historical Journal* 27, no. 1 (1992); J.J. Guy, 'Fascism, Nazism, Nationalism and the Foundation of Apartheid Ideology,' in *Fascism Outside Europe. The European Influence against Domestic Conditions in the Diffusion of Global Fascism* ed. S. Ugelvik Larsen (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

[50] R. J. Gordon, 'The Impact of the Second World War on Namibia,' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 19, no. 1 (1993), 148–149.

Similarly, the Italian conquest of Ethiopia was viewed by the South African government as a strategic threat to communications with Europe: at the League of Nations, South Africa supported stronger sanctions measures against Italy than those which the major powers were actually prepared to take.[51] These developments are interesting in showing the extent to which segregationists, whether reactionary like Hertzog, or liberal-conservative like Smuts, could still be quite militantly hostile to the claims of the fascist powers.

In the Portuguese colonies, the 1930s saw an unambiguous descent in authoritarianism. Though there might have been different outcomes from the 1926 military coup, by 1934 the civilian Salazar had consolidated his domination within the regime and established his *Estado Novo* state model, with a clerical-authoritarian ideology, which was to last for half a century.[52] As the valuable contribution in this special issue by Fernando Pimenta shows though, semi-clandestine opposition casting itself within a discourse of anti-fascism became a feature of settler life in Angola through the 1930s and 1940s. This also appears to be true of Mozambique. In both colonies, the state repressed the trade union organizations of Portuguese workers, discriminated against settlers (as opposed to metropolitan officials) in employment, and in Angola, worsened the position of historic mixed-race elite. All of this added up to a situation in which settlers were remarkably politically restive, and notions of anti-fascism had some appeal for both whites and some people of colour in the colonies.

The idea of the Popular Front, the international Communist movement's attempt to ally with Social Democrats and Liberals against fascism, seems to have had a real resonance in South Africa and even to a small extent, Southern Rhodesia. Its attraction was largely been among white middle class people, intellectuals and to some extent, workers, although there is also some evidence of an impact among Coloured activists in Cape Town. The supporters of the CPSA were faced with a conundrum. The consequences of the Comintern's official turn to anti-fascism was that it toned down its anti-colonial propaganda for the benefit of maintaining friendly relations with France and Britain.[53] How can one explain the apparent gap between the weakness of the CPSA and the impact of its project? One possible explanation is that the crisis of the times,

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[51] T. Dedering,'South Africa and the Italo-Ethiopian War 1935-6', *The International History Review,* 35, 5, (2013) 1009 -1030.
[52] F. Ribeiro de Meneses, *Salazar* (New York: Enigma, 2009).
[53] Young, *Postcolonialism*, 232.

especially with the anti-fascist cause becoming dramatized by the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, relatively modest initiatives could pick up support. Thus for example, at a confrontation on the Cape Town Grand Parade in 1936, the party-initiated League against War and Fascism was able to mobilize a mass movement of white and coloured militants in a 'free fight' with the Greyshirts. Another explanation is the strong connections of white Anglophones with British politics and culture. The Left Book Club, the London Gollancz publishing houses' initiative to create political reading groups with a focus on anti-fascist issues, had branches in South Africa and Rhodesia. The SALP, because of its strong links to the British Labour Party, may also have been influenced by the growing anti-Fascist sentiment from that quarter. SALP members in Johannesburg raised money for Spanish Civil War causes, and a shift by younger members toward support for more progressive racial policies than those of the old white-labour protectionist leaders seems to have begun at this moment, and deepened during the post-1939 period.

The outbreak of World War II transformed white politics. Hertzog opposed South African participation in the war. Smuts was able to get a parliamentary majority for supporting Britain in the conflict, and took the Prime Ministership. Although leading Afrikaner nationalist voices, including Hertzog and DF Malan (Leader of the Opposition, 1939-1948; Prime Minister, 1948-1954) floated ideas about neutrality it was internationally expected that in case of war between Britain and Germany, South Africa would join the British war effort. With South Africa's declaration of war against Germany on 6 September 1939 the lines between two principal white groups were redrawn. From the Afrikaner nationalist side efforts were made to free South Africa from 'Britain's war' and in late 1940, Hertzog made an official motion for peace and Malan demanded South Africa's withdrawal from the Commonwealth.[54] The strongly divided South Africa constituted, as Patrick Furlong noted, one of the most problematic Dominions (or colonies) involved in the war against fascism.[55]

The government faced a complicated ideological paradox: fighting and a war proclaimed to be against fascism and in support of democracy, while presiding over a racially segregated system, in which the black majority had no access to political power. Although Smuts was

[54] A. Wessels, 'South Africa and World War II. The decisive first two years on the home front (September 1939 - September 1941),' *Southern Journal for Contemporary History* 24, no. 2 (1999), 4.
[55] P. Furlong, 'Allies at War? Britain and the 'Southern African Front' in the Second World War,' *South African Historical Journal* 54, no. 1 (2005), 16–29.

committed to segregation, he did turn in a somewhat reformist direction in terms of social policy, improving wages for some categories of black workers, introducing a pension system for black people and allowing progressive civil servants and academic to experiment with some remarkably progressive initiatives in public health. He also for a time reduced the enforcement of the pass laws. This created hope in some liberal circles that segregation itself might be dismantled in the long run. In these circumstances, Black political leadership was faced with a dilemma as to how to position itself in relation to the war. Should they identify with the idea of an Anti-Fascist crusade, based on hope that further reform was over the horizon and fear that the replacement of Smuts by an Afrikaner nationalist regime would make things worse? Or should they see African people as having no stake in the conflict? The ANC, as the premier black political organization, opted to support the war effort. But the strategy that developed for this was a very sophisticated one. The key ANC leaders, AB Xuma and ZK Matthews drew on the language of British and American liberal anti-fascism in framing their demands, specifically citing the high moral aspirations British-American agreement, the Atlantic Charter, and Franklin Roosevelt's statement of the values that America was upholding in his 'Four Freedoms' speech. They understood that the wartime alliance masked American hostility to British territorial Empire. Consequently, they played on the logical inconsistency between the Allied notion of a war for democracy and the Churchill government's continued defence of the Empire.[56] They hoped to leverage American pressure on Britain, and thence British pressure on Smuts, for political change in South Africa. Anti-fascism thus became a terrain on which to fight the government. And indeed the credibility built in this process did permit Xuma, immediately after the war, to intervene at the United Nations on Southern African issues rather successfully in 1946.

On the other hand, the Unity Movement, which was relatively powerful among Black intellectuals in this period, rejected participation in the war effort. Instead, they appropriated the language of anti-fascism for a direct attack on the government, portraying the Smuts leadership as the equivalent of the Nazis, rubbing in the comparison by referring to whites in their press as the '*Herrenvolk*'. Their advocacy of 'non-collaboration' implicitly compared themselves to resistance fighters in Europe. What is striking though is that both of these diametrically opposed positions,

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[56] A.B. Xuma, 'African Claims in South Africa 1943' *African History Online* https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/african-claims-south-africa-dr-xuma-anc-conference-1943

that of the ANC and of the Unity Movement, drew on Anti-Fascist discourse.[57] Differing versions of anti-fascism dominated the language of black South African resistance politics.

With the conclusion of the Hitler-Stalin Pact in August 1939, Moscow forced the CPSA, along with its sister parties, to retreat from focusing on anti-fascism. This had interestingly paradoxical results. During the previous policy, anti-colonial themes had been played down to underwrite the Soviet Union's hopes of an alliance with France and Britain. Although the party experienced some difficulty in getting its white members to swallow the policy of 1939, it was able to be more militant in its politics in the African and Indian communities. As a consequence, the CPSA returned in June 1940 to the old questions: 'What is the difference to the non-Europeans between the Nazi regime in Europe and the Union Government in South Africa?' and ' How can we be interested in fighting Nazism thousands of miles away, while in reality we have a similar monster devouring us here daily?'[58] This period saw the beginnings of a decade of considerable success for the CPSA in building black trade unions and social movements around housing, transport issues and the like. Similarly, their opposition to the war resonated with Indian nationalism's position of the time, and the party started to make breakthroughs among South African Indians. With the invasion of the Soviet Union by Germany in June 1941, the course was reversed again. While the party was able to hang on to, and develop its gains in community organizing, anti-fascism returned as its central political focus.

A remarkable feature of this era was the extent to which a popular anti-fascism developed amongst white supporters of the war. In the first few years of the war white servicemen and pro-Nazi *Ossewa Brandwag* supporters engaged in regular physical fighting, ranging from punch-ups in bars and at bus-stops to a full-scale riot in the streets of Johannesburg. The servicemen by and large loathed the OB and anti-war Afrikaner nationalists who sought to oppose and even sabotage the war effort. This rough sense of popular anti-fascism began to be captured by the CPSA from late 1941. They established an organization known as the Springbok Legion, which was to be a kind of soldiers' trade union, aimed primarily (but not exclusively) at white combat troops (black

[57] C. Joon-Hai Lee, 'The Use of the Comparative Imagination: South African and World History in the Political Consciousness and Strategy of the South African Left, 1943-1959', *Radical History Review,* 92, (2005), 31-61.
[58] Cited from E. Smith, 'Against Fascism, For Racial Equality. Communists, Anti-Racism and the Road to the Second World War in Australia, South Africa and the United States,' *Labor History* 58, no. 5 (2017), 684.

soldiers were limited by the government to support roles). The SL advocated for the material needs of troops and their dependents, explained the need to fight fascism, and sought to nudge white soldiers toward more progressive views on race. It was astonishingly successful, recruiting a substantial proportion of all the serving troops.[59] Moreover, there was enormous wartime sympathy for the Soviet Union's military struggle against Hitler. Large-scale fund-raising initiatives in both South Africa and Rhodesia attracted strong support amongst the white middle classes and gained endorsements from important politicians, clerics and academics. George Bishi's study of the detention of enemy aliens in Southern Rhodesia provides an interesting basis for considering to what extent the hostility of ordinary Southern African whites' hostility to the Axis powers can be considered as anti-fascist, or whether it was simply a matter of imperial chauvinism. The internment camps became significant political spaces in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. Between 1941 and 1947 South Africa interned more than 100,000 Italian Prisoners of War from the North and East Africa fronts (most notably at the Zonderwater prison camp near Pretoria).[60] Fears of fascist and Nazi propaganda spreading in and beyond the camps was manifest in strong anti-fascist responses in the southern African press and carried these discussions to the broader public's attention.

The extent to which the Smuts government of 1939-1948 can be thought of as Anti-Fascist is an intriguing question. Smuts was effective as a war leader, with South Africa contributing significantly to the military campaigns in the Horn and North Africa, and more modestly to that in Italy. He was also the weaver of a rhetoric of opposition to fascism and of the creation of a 'better world' after the war. Smuts is sometimes credited with inventing the term 'human rights', and certainly played an important role in the formation of the United Nations and its legal frameworks. Because of the Portuguese regimes ambiguous wartime neutrality, which included the hosting of German and Italian delegations running intelligence and sabotage networks out of Lourenco Marques (Maputo), the South Africans also developed a strong hostility toward Salazar. A South African invasion of Mozambique at one stage came near to fruition, and as Pimenta notes in this collection, a similar intervention in Angola was contemplated. In the 1941-1943 period in particular Smuts attained a considerable international and national credibility as an Anti-Fascist

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[59] N. Roos, *Ordinary Springboks: White Servicemen and Social Justice in South Africa, 1939-1961* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005), 65-102.
[60] B. Moore and K. Fedorowich, *The British Empire and its Italian Prisoners of War, 1940–1947* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 54, 57, 64 174.

figure. Not only was he acclaimed by the British establishment but much of the South African left supported him in the 1943 election on the basis of his pro-war stance, which by definition and default was an anti-fascist one.

Although Smuts' supporters did not believe that he would abandon segregation, it is clear that there was a significant constituency of influential white Social Democrats and Liberals, such as Professor John Gray of Wits University, who saw the 'Anti-Fascist' and reformist moment of the Smuts government of opening up the possibility of securing the political succession to the General for liberal Cabinet Minister Jan Hofmeyr. Hofmeyr, it was hoped, might then initiate a period of gradualist racial reform. The SALP, which produced several young leaders who had broken from the racial views that had previously dominated their organization, played a key role in producing various policies aimed to edge toward racial egalitarianism. In this way anti-fascism connected to a white liberal and leftist hopefulness about the future.

The cultural influence of anti-fascism in Southern Africa in the 1930s and 1940s would repay greater investigation. An interesting case in point is the important Afrikaner literary figure, Uys Krige. In the 1930s Krige had been a professional Rugby player in France and travelled in Spain. During the Spanish Civil War he penned a famous Anti-Franco poem – quite an anomaly in the Afrikaans literary canon. During the Second World War he was one of the many South African soldiers taken prisoner in North Africa, and was then put in a POW camp in Italy. Escaping, he was hidden by Italian peasants, with whom he formed warm bonds. Krige's memoirs of his wartime experiences reflect a broadly Anti-Fascist sensibility.[61] It would be interesting to know more about the reception and impact of this type of literary production.

But during the war years little was to come of all this white left and liberal moment of anti-fascist optimism in terms of changing South Africa's trajectory. The Springbok Legion found it impossible to break the white troops of their commitment to the racial monopoly of political power. Smuts proved intransigent for segregation, Hofmeyr never took the leadership, and the modest progressive changes were mostly reversed when DF Malan's Afrikaner National Party came to power in 1948. White suburbanites' admiration for Russia transmuted into fear of social upheaval and Communism. Anti-fascism and fundamental social change proved not be the same thing.

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[61] U. Krige, *The Way Out*, (Cape Town: Maskew Miller, 1955).

Cold War Anti-Fascisms

The beginning of the Apartheid Era in 1948 roughly coincided with the outbreak of the Cold War; and in terms of international politics, this enabled the new government of DF Malan to use Red Scare politics to trump the power of Anti-Fascist ideology. Even though many of them had been Nazi sympathizers during 1939–1945, the Malanite leadership were able to rehabilitate themselves with the British Commonwealth and the Americans by adopting a Cold War politics which obscured their previous affiliations. Thus South Africa sent an Airforce contingent to participate in the Korean War, while their successful banning of the CPSA in 1950 was in lockstep with the Menzies government's failed attempt to do the same thing in Australia. In the new Cold War context, apartheid South Africa's main strategic role was in the global fight against communism. However, as Ronald Hyam and Peter Henshaw note, when South African anti-communism was made into a blunt and excessively used political instrument that could be charged against all opponents of apartheid, the regime was in itself becoming a cause of communism's attractiveness to African nationalists. By the early 1960s it was clear that South Africa was becoming more of a liability than a resource for the West in the Cold War struggle.[62]

Wartime anti-fascism nevertheless had powerful after-effects in both black and white politics. There was a genuine continuity of revulsion toward Nazism across broad swathes of society. As far as the left was concerned, it is important to understand how anti-fascist ideas were deployed both internationally and nationally in the politics of early resistance to Apartheid, and how this changed across time – something highlighted in the contributions in this special issue by Lubotzky and Areli. The trajectories of communist anti-fascism were distinct in the will to cooperate with the ANC. In the Cold War period, the CP forged a crucial alliance with the ANC and, according to Robert J.C. Young, "to be a communist became *de facto* the only way for white South Africans to demonstrate a genuine commitment against apartheid."[63] It was about balancing the national struggle with the class struggle, and it was this joint understanding that held the ANC/SACP alliance together.[64] But perhaps an additional, and overlooked 'glue' holding it

[62] R. Hyam and P. Henshaw, *The Lion and the Springbok. Britain and South Africa since the Boer War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 16.
[63] Young, *Postcolonialism*, 231.
[64] D. Everatt, 'Alliance Politics of a Special Type. The Roots of the ANC/SACP Alliance, 1950-1954,' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18, no. 1 (1992), 34–35.

together was the notion of white fascism in South Africa, and the belonging to a shared anti-fascist lineage?

By the early 1950s, the now underground Communists had attained significant influence in the ANC and the Indian Congress, and other allied organizations, and there began to be a substantial overlap of Communist and Nationalist leaderships. While the security police began to tighten up on opposition in South Africa, the level of state violence and legal restrictions in the late 1940s and early 1950s was comparatively low compared with what would come later. An effect of this was the surprising mobility of many Communist and Communist-sympathizing South African activists to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, which were utilizing the history of the war against fascism to sanction their projects of state construction. These activists were powerfully affected by the encounters with the memorialization of Nazi crimes, but also arguably influenced by the new Eastern European model of the People's Democracies, which were legitimized by the idea of a break with the fascist era. The great scholar of ANC political theory, Peter Hudson, argued that the Freedom Charter, adopted by the ANC and its Congress Alliance allies in 1955 was in fact deeply shaped by a theory of 'National Democratic Revolution' derived from People's Democracy model.[65] The now-underground Communists may have been blind to the realities of Stalinism, but it was in a sense, a blindness underwritten by their investment in anti-fascism.

Perhaps even more remarkably, there was a significant groundswell of early 1950s political activism among white ex-servicemen, who saw the authoritarianism of the National Party through the lens of their wartime anti-fascism. For many of them, the Malan government were the continuators of Nazism. Triggered by government attempts to rewrite the Constitution, notably its intent to remove Coloured voters from the common voters' roll, a mass movement of white former soldiers known as the War Veterans' Torch Commando, was born. The Torch Commando launched a campaign of spectacular mass demonstrations, and made a considerable national and even international impact. However it foundered, like the Springbok Legion, on the rocks of racial politics. The leadership of the Torch Commando was predominantly moderately liberal, and had no coherent political programme. While Commando members could agree on detesting the pro-Nazi pasts of government leaders, on deploring the blatant political manipulations that were being

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[65] P. Hudson, The Freedom Charter and the Theory of the National Democratic Revolution', *Transformation*, 1, (1986), 6-38.

used to 'fix' the Constitution, and perhaps on the need for paternalistic improvements in black social conditions, there was little appetite amongst them for a fundamental political democratization. Ultimately, the Commando, uncertain where to go politically, petered out.[66]

Torch Commando leaders pitched their campaign as a continuation of the wartime struggle against fascism, describing the NP government as 'Malanazis', and drew on the idiom and imagery of anti-fascism. The war against fascism and Nazism was not over, and they were now fighting 'home front fascism'. Yet despite the movement's explicitly anti-fascist orientation, the Torch Commando shows something of the paradox of anti-fascism in a racial state, particularly how the moral, political and ideological foundations of anti-fascism sustained key fault-lines of race and gender in racially segregated South African society. For one, even as the primary political development motivating the emergence of the Torch Commando was the NP's attempt to remove Coloured voters from the common voter's roll, Coloured war veterans were prohibited from joining the movement, or participating in its events and rallies. This was white man's business. At a Torch Commando rally in May 1951, leader of the Torch Commando AG 'Sailor' Malan tapped into the circuits of white power and white opposition of which the Torch was part: 'Who has the greatest claim to talk about saving white civilisation? The moles who now pay lip service to it, or the men who fought for it?'[67] The Torch Commando, Roos has argued elsewhere, did not challenge the fundamental racial hierarchy of early apartheid South African society. Rather, it had white veterans commissioning the *language* of anti-fascism in their struggle over the allocation of the benefits of whiteness. This history represents a cautionary tale, that the idea of anti-fascism was polyvalent, could be deployed to unlikely ends, and should not be taken uncritically.

A more long-lasting tradition of anti-fascism was the way in which a small but influential number of white Communist World War II veterans in South Africa came to see the struggle against Apartheid as a literal continuation of the war against fascism. This led them, by the end of the 1950s to advocate guerilla warfare, along the lines of wartime resistance movements. Their characterization of the Apartheid government as 'Fascist' made them tend to discount the possibilities of continued mass mobilization as the most effective strategy to counter the 'fascist' state. Although the ANC remained a black organization at this stage, activists like Jack Hodgson

[66] Roos, *Ordinary Springboks,* 45-63.
[67] Roos, *Ordinary Springboks*, 129.

who supported this armed struggle position had considerable influence within it through the Communist network.[68] Following the 1960 Sharpeville crisis, after a considerable internal battle, the ANC, over the next year and a half, turned to warfare.

Although the Portuguese Colonies remained under the thumb of Salazar's regime, there were interesting indications of anti-fascist sentiment in the colonies during the post-war period. One manifestation of this was that many of the future leaders of the independence movements in Angola and Mozambique were, in quite a number of cases, students in Portugal in these years, where they were influenced by the underground Portuguese Communist Party.[69] The PCP viewed the dictatorship as fascist, and their politics was in the mould of continuing anti-fascist struggle. The anti-colonial movements in the colonies made extensive use of this rhetoric as well. Speaking at an Italian Communist Party rally in Italy in 1973, Mozambiquan Frelimo's Samora Machel said that: "The fight against Portuguese colonialism and fascism is not different from in essence from the fight against fascism and Nazism which took place in Europe".[70] While no doubt Machel was framing his speech for an audience amongst whom the myth of the partisan struggle in 1943–1945 was foundational, it was also not a great departure from a quite habitual use of 'fascism' as a characterization of the regime by Frelimo.

Another element was the surprisingly significant sense of rejection of the dictatorship among colonists in Angola and Mozambique. When in 1958, Salazar sought to improve the image of his regime by opening a fake democratic window in a presidential election, the experiment got out of hand.[71] The rival candidate, the left-centrist General Humberto Delgado, did better than intended, and may well have had a majority of the settler and '*assimilado*' voters in Angola and Mozambique on his side.[72] But the election was fixed against Delgado, and he was later assassinated. White settler hostility to the regime did not necessarily translate into later support for

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[68] R. Hodgson, *Foot Soldier for Freedom* (Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2010)
[69] P. Chabal, 'Aspects of Angolan Literature: Luandino Vieira and Agostinho Neto', *African Languages and Cultures*, 8, 1, (1995), 19-42.
[70] S. Machel, ' Solidarity is mutual aid between forces fighting for the same objectives', Reggio Emilia, 25 March 1973, https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/machel/1973/solidarity.htm
[71] Ribeiro de Meneses, *Salazar*, 420-438.
[72]G. Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire 1825-1975* (Manchester, Manchester University Press), 178. *Assimilados* were the small minority of colonial subjects who were granted Portuguese citizenship rights.

African nationalism. Though there were to be some important white participants in both the Angolan MPLA and Mozambiquan Frelimo, there were limits to white anti-fascism. And it must be added, such support as there was largely thwarted in the later period of decolonization, by the descent of Angola into chaotic warfare, and by Frelimo's initial heavy-handed policies, on coming to power, of expropriating even small businesses and private housing.

With the emergence of Anti-Apartheid movement (including activism on Rhodesia and Portuguese colonies) internationally, widespread ideological connections were made by both Southern African movements and their foreign allies to the struggle against fascism. Especially in Europe, the Anti-Apartheid Movements and other Southern African solidarity organizations drew much of their strength from anti-fascist memory; in the countries that had been occupied in the war, from identification with the resistance, and in Britain from a sense of continuity with the military struggle against fascism. In Germany, it connected to younger activists with the need to express a break with the older generation's complicity with Nazism. Yet for all the important work that these movements did, it is important to interrogate their dynamics more closely, as Barbara Henkes does in her article in our current special issue. In European societies experiencing global immigration and right-wing xenophobia backlash to it, activism on southern Africa could be in a sense a metaphorical way of engaging with (or distancing from) race and racial justice in one's one society. Such an adoption of anti-fascist discourse might, at worst, allow displacement of these issues, with protagonists seeing themselves as modern and egalitarian, and racism and the extreme right to be located elsewhere. Yet it is equally true that drawing on histories of anti-fascism enabled others to look at their own societies more critically. In the late 1970s in Britain for example, there was a considerable overlap between the Anti-Apartheid Movement and campaigns against the extreme right at home. Southern Africa became quite an important axis of left-right confrontation in the British Isles and America. Figures such as the British anti-immigration leader Enoch Powell and the anti-integration Governor of Alabama, George Wallace, and their acolytes backed Ian Smith's Rhodesia and BJ Vorster's South Africa, and a small but significant number of American extreme rightists actually joined the Rhodesian Army.[73] Opposition to these alliances, often

[73] D. Geary, C. Schofield and J. Sutton, eds., *Global White Nationalism: from Apartheid to Trump* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020); Kyle Burke, *Revolutionaries for the Right: Anti-Communist Internationalism and Paramilitary Warfare in the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2018).

characterized as fascist, became a minor theme of international anti-apartheid and anti-racist campaigning. South Africa's place in the global anti-fascist struggle was foregrounded by British far right groups who perceived apartheid South Africa as their political ally. Oswald Mosley also re-entered far right politics with his Union Movement that took on to physically attack the activities of the Anti-Apartheid movement.[74] In another example, when South Africa was defended by neo-fascists like the National Front or British National Party they did so by targeting and threatening to attack the anti-apartheid picket outside South Africa's Embassy in London in the late 1980s. This encouraged the Anti-Fascist Action to patrol the area to keep the fascists away from the Picket. The histories of South African fascism and anti-fascism were thereby not only relevant in southern Africa, but engrained into the global movement's local struggles. Such incidents have led scholars to conclude that at least in Britain "anti-apartheid solidarity activism could never be separated from anti-racist and anti-fascist work."[75]

An emblematic figure of the global connection between the struggles in Southern Africa, the international solidarity movement and the history of anti-fascism was the British writer Basil Davidson. During the 1960s and 1970s Davidson became world-famous for his popularizations of the emerging field of African history in mass-market books and television series. But he also used his prominence to promote the cause of the southern African liberation movements. His life can best be understood in the perspective of a culture of anti-fascism. A journalist and sometime British intelligence agent during the 1930s, after the outbreak of war, Davidson joined the Special Operations Executive, the British unit responsible for supporting resistance movements in Europe. He was subsequently deployed in Yugoslavia in support of Tito's guerillas in their fight against the Nazi and Italian occupation, and became the partisans' great admirer. A subsequent mission in Italy saw him working closely with the Italian resistance during the Nazi capitulation there. The leftist convictions he developed in the 1930s and 1940s remained with him for life, but his alignment with Tito also made him sceptical of Stalinism. Thus the 'Anti-Nazi War', a term he used in the title of his memoir of that time, shaped Davidson.[76] As a journalist covering Africa and anti-colonial activist in the 1950s, he strongly advocated for the African nationalist movements.

[74] Macklin, 'The British Far Right's South African Connection,' 832.
[75] G. Brown and H. Yaffe, *Youth Activism and Solidarity. The Non-Stop Picket against Apartheid* (London: Routledge, 2018), 88.
[76] B. Davidson, *Scenes from the Anti-Nazi War* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1980).

When the guerilla movements in the Southern Africa developed after 1960, Davidson saw them as the heirs of his wartime partisan comrades. He was one of their most effective supporters and publicists; his activities included a foray into the war-zone in Angola with Agostinho Neto of the MPLA.[77] Davidson provides perhaps a prime example of how anti-fascist memory galvanized global Southern African solidarity.

For the exiled liberation movements, the close alliances, of, especially, the ANC, the Zimbabwean ZAPU, the Angolan MPLA and the Namibian SWAPO, with the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact countries in the armed struggle, exposed them intensely to political cultures in which the struggle against Hitler played a central role. In the early stages of this, in the 1960s, Southern African military cadres were trained by Soviet personnel who had actually fought in the 'Great Patriotic War'.[78] In this context it is not surprising that the term 'Fascist' featured prominently in the rhetoric (although not always the analytical thought) of these movements in describing their opponents. In the case of South Africa, the characterization of the regime as 'fascist' arguably had some negative effects though. As indicated above, it reinforced the belief in the impossibility of above-ground organizing, which led the ANC to being taken by surprise when very effective mass black trade unions did emerge in the late 1970s and 1980s.

It is perhaps also important to remember the extent to how significant the downfall of the Portuguese regime in 1974 – precipitated by its African wars – was in the international political imaginary of anti-fascism in that era. The liberation wars of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau occupied a much bigger place in the imagination of liberals, leftists and black nationalists in the west during the late 1960s and early 1970s than is often recognized today. As of that time, their colonial ruler was one of three 'western' countries under a dictatorial regime, alongside Spain and Greece. These regimes were often thought of at the time as the anomalous survivals of 1930s fascism, and were the focus of international obloquy. Their collapse during protracted political crises in 1974 to 1977 was seen, in different ways by liberals and leftists, as the ultimate triumph of the anti-fascism of the 1930s and 1940s. In this sense, the crisis of colonialism in Southern Africa intersected in a very important way with notions of anti-fascism in Europe during an

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[77] A. Sivanandan et.al, 'A Celebration of Basil Davidson', Special Issue of *Race and Class* on Basil Davidson, 36,2, (1994).

[78] R. Kasrils, *Armed and Dangerous: From Undercover Struggle to Freedom* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1998), 81-92.

epochal shift in European politics. It is notable that there was a considerable circulation of activists and ideas between metropolis and colony. The anti-fascist anthem of the Portuguese Revolution, *Grandola Villa Morena*, was the work of composer Jose Afonso (Zeca), who had spent much of his life in Mozambique and Angola, while the revolutionary slogan of *Poder Popular* (People's Power) resonated in both Angola and Portugal in 1974-5.

A particularly interesting role in supporting the southern African liberation movements was played by East Germany (DDR – the German Democratic Republic). The DDR provided military and especially intelligence expertise and training, hosted large numbers of Mozambiqan workers and trainees in East Germany and even published the ANC's magazine, *Sechaba,* in East Berlin. The DDR foregrounded the 'anti-fascist' basis of its solidarity, as a state founded by the Communist opponents of the Nazis. The Ulbricht and Honecker leaderships liked to present its antagonist, the West German Federal Republic, as the political descendants of Nazism, and the intervention in Southern Africa usefully allowed the DDR to highlight the economic and political collaboration of the West Germans with the South African 'fascists'. Despite its internal repressiveness, and the on-the-ground racism experienced by some African 'partners' in East Germany, the DDR was certainly highly successful in coming to be viewed by the Southern African liberation movements as staunch 'anti-fascist' allies. The DDR was particularly active in supporting Namibian SWAPO, with East German volunteers working in guerilla and refugee camps in Angola – a pointed contrast to the historically reactionary German population in South West Africa.[79]

The themes of anti-fascism in global views of South Africa returned in dying days of the Apartheid regime, when the possibility of an extreme right-wing coup to block the transitional agreement between the National Party government and the ANC loomed on the horizon. International media attention was drawn by the *Afrikanerweerstandsbeweging* (AWB), an overtly fascist group, whose khaki-clad militia, Swastika-like flag and histrionic leader, Eugene

[79] U. van der Heyden, I. Schleicher and H.-G. Schleicher eds., *Die DDR und Afrika: Zwischen Klassenkampf und neuem Denken* (Münster: LIT, 1993); T. Weis, 'The Politics Machine: On the Concept of Solidarity in East German Support for SWAPO', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 37:2 (2011), 351-367; E. Burton, A. Dietrich, I.R. Harich and M. Schenk eds., *Navigating Socialist Encounters: Moorings and Disentanglements between Africa and East Germany during the Cold War* (Berlin, De Gruyter, 2021).

Terreblanche, rang all the bells of the memory of fascism. But this attention was a misreading which reflected the tendency to read South Africa, a little too simply, through anti-fascist lenses. A much more serious threat came from the Freedom Front of the much more presentable former army commander, Constand Viljoen. However a joint coup attempt by the combined forces of the far right failed, and the televised killing of some AWB members appeared to put a symbolic end to a their threat.[80] Anti-fascism could be a distorting mirror.

A striking feature of political culture in post-liberation South Africa, as elsewhere in the world, has been the prevalence of discourse about the Holocaust. References to it were frequently made in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process of the 1990s. Progressives in the Jewish Community addressed issues of comparison between the Nazi era and Apartheid, notably through Holocaust Museum Initiatives in Johannesburg and Cape Town. The issue of the fascist past was also evoked by instances of antisemitism, particularly emanating from Neo-Nazi and Muslim Fundamentalist groups, although these were, by and large, politically marginal.

The historian Tony Judt, writing of post-war Europe, made the argument that all subsequent politics had been shaped by the experience of the Second World War.[81] But whereas Judt, writing nearly two decades ago, saw the reaction against Nazism as leading to a more inclusive, internationally integrated and egalitarian social order, we now have much reason to doubt that narrative. Yet the salience of references to the time of classical fascism, and to struggles against it remains massive in the Global North. To a perhaps surprising extent, that is also true in Southern Africa. This special issue is intended as a contribution to looking more analytically at the region's anti-fascist histories and their present-day resonances.

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[80] J. Hyslop, 'Why was the White Right Unable to Stop South Africa's Democratic Transition?', in P. Alexander, R. Hutchinson and D. Schreuder (eds.), *Africa Today: A Multi-Disciplinary Snapshot of the Continent in 1995* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1996), 145-166.
[81] T. Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (London: Penguin Press, 2005).

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