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From *UPoqo* to APLA: the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and its  
armed struggle: 1960-1982

by

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“Izwe Lethu- iAfrika”

## Abstract

The Apartheid system can be categorised as one of the worst human rights violations of the last century. The total subjugation and oppression of the African race within South Africa (and in some cases Southern Africa) was as a result of one distinct pseudo belief. The belief was that the white race is superior to other races, particularly the “Black” African race. The policies of apartheid and the violence they promoted finally led to the African race standing up and fighting back. The most celebrated formation which stood against the oppressive regime is the African National Congress (ANC). Although the ANC contributed its share to the liberation struggle waged in South Africa, it is not the only movement to do so. In 1959 a little known faction of the ANC called the Africanist block broke away to form the Pan Africanist Congress. This group was disgruntled because of differing of approaches, with regards to the Programme of Action adopted by the ANC the previous year. The PAC quickly moved to adopt the Programme of Action as its own in rejection to the Freedom Charter, subsequently adopted by the ANC. The PAC boasts a long and bloody history within the struggle against oppression in South Africa. Today it stands as a forgotten memory of South Africa’s past. One of the roles of historians, ostensibly, is to bring the forgotten and significant voices out of the periphery. This study seeks to do this by focusing on the history of the PAC’s military formations, the *UPogo* and the Azania People’s Liberation Army (APLA) , especially in the context of the African National Congress’ (ANC) tendency to present itself as the only movement which liberated South Africa from apartheid.

## Chapter One: Introduction

Throughout the Anti-apartheid period (1948–1974) and the period of political awakening in South Africa, maturing in the 1950s, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), formed in 1959, consistently played a critical role in initiating active resistance against the apartheid government.<sup>1</sup> This awakening against the oppressive regime finds its roots in the Program of Action conceptualised by the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) in 1949.<sup>2</sup> The Programme of Action outlined a forward-thinking plan to initiate proactive steps in the resistance of all African people against white supremacy and its oppressive regime through civil disobedience such as boycotts, strikes and stay-at-homes amongst other actions.<sup>3</sup> The university students who were instrumental in the drafting of the 1949 Programme of Action were aptly known as the Africanist block.<sup>4</sup>

According to Leeman, after the formation of the ANCYL, university students at Fort Hare became affiliated to African Nationalism as they believed that communism had failed in South Africa. These Africanists believed that Africanism (African Nationalism) was a critical tool of analysis to help Africans imagine self-determination and an African state that does not thrive on the oppression of black people.<sup>5</sup> The Africanists went on to form the PAC as a counter action to the emerging complacency of the ANC and its new Charter. The Africanists believed that the ANC growing complacency showed itself in the “all-inclusive non-ideological character of the ANC” which prompted the formation of the Congress Alliance which consisted of South African Indian Congress (SAIC), the white Congress of Democrats (COD), the Coloured People Congress (CPC) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). The Africanists believed that this

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<sup>1</sup> Ejiogu, E.C., "Post Liberation South Africa: Sorting out the Pieces", *Journal of Asian and African studies*, Vol. 47, 3, (2011): pp.259-262.

<sup>2</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania: The Origins and History of the African National Congress, Pan Africanist Congress, South African Communist Party and Basutoland Congress Party, 1740-1994", Revised PhD Thesis. Germany: Bremen University, (2015): pp.170-171

<sup>3</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p.172

<sup>4</sup> Lissoni, A., "The South African Liberation Movements in exile, c.1945-1970", PhD thesis, The School of Oriental and African studies, University of London, (2008): p.13

<sup>5</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", pp 172-173

Alliance allowed the ANC to enable the overtaking of the African struggle by communists and white liberals.<sup>6</sup>

The PAC's long list of anti-apartheid struggle endeavours include their involvement as the Africanist block while still part of the ANC, such as in the Alexandra bus boycott of 1957 where profound leadership was displayed by PAC founding member Josias Madzunya.<sup>7</sup> According to Lissoni, the ANC had resolved that economic boycotts, which were acts of civil disobedience, were important for the conscientization of the African masses and, as a result, the bus boycotts were used to rally the African masses to resist the apartheid government by engaging in "self-denial". These boycotts were also used to induce economic distress on the international market, which would then internationalise the boycott of the South African economy.<sup>8</sup>

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of June in 1952, groups of volunteers went into Johannesburg and other towns, including Durban, to defy unjust apartheid pass laws. They had agreed that they would leave their permits at home in defiance of the pass laws. Other acts of resistance that were part of the defiance campaign were using European only entrances to train stations as well as walking the street of Johannesburg after curfew. These culminated in what was called the 1952 Defiance Campaign. Members of the PAC, such as Zephania Mothopeng and Josias Madzunya, were part of these mass actions in their capacity as members of the ANCYL. Another important hallmark of the struggle activities that contributed to the existence and activism of the members of the PAC was the 1960 anti-pass law campaign which was organised by a newly born PAC which led to the unfortunate death of 69 people in Sharpeville (Gauteng) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1960 and of 34 people in Langa (Western Cape).<sup>9</sup>

This particular campaign's fatal consequence led to a global widespread outcry against apartheid for the first time since the policy was introduced. Apartheid and its policy of white supremacy now found itself condemned by countries that had previously turned a

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<sup>6</sup> Lissoni, A., "The South African Liberation Movements in exile", p.13

<sup>7</sup> Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's Internal Underground Activities, 1960-1980*, Pretoria: Unisa Press. (2006): p. 670

<sup>8</sup> Lissoni, A., "The South African Liberation Movements in exile", p.64

<sup>9</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's Internal Underground Activities*, p.677-678

blind eye to its inhuman policies, such as the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom. PAC struggle veteran Motsoko Pheko has argued that this was the most pivotal point in the struggle against apartheid, as it led the Apartheid National Party Government to ban African centred political parties, beginning with the PAC and then the ANC and AZAPO.<sup>10</sup> This period also sparked a renewed spirit of defiance in the masses of African people who had occupied a largely passive role since the Bhambhatha Rebellion of 1906.<sup>11</sup> This rebellion was led by chief Bhambhatha of the Zulu nation, in opposition to the unjust taxes indigenous Africans had to pay to the British colonial government.

The purpose of this study is to focus on the activities and contributions of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania against the apartheid government and the challenges this movement faced along the way. With regards to Azania (South Africa), the PAC is seen by scholars such as former PAC member Thami Ka Plaatjie and the seasoned struggle veteran Bernard Leeman to have been the most active and influential struggle body to exist in the anti-apartheid era.<sup>12</sup> The Programme of Action of 1949 was a clarion call to the African masses urging them to engage in various mass actions of resistance, such as boycotts, stay-at home movements and protests, in order to take a stand against the human rights violations that were committed by the apartheid regime, including pass laws.<sup>13</sup>

The PAC was formed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1959 by a group of breakaway Africanists who left the larger body, the African National Congress, because of a dispute which was based on differing outlooks and political ideologies. Primarily, the Africanists felt that the Programme of Action adopted in the 1949 ANC conference in Bloemfontein was being abandoned in favour of the Freedom Charter and they feared that the tenets of Lembedism were being violated. Anton Lembede was the founding president of the ANCYL which was founded in 1944. Lembedism is a school of thought built on the

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<sup>10</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa, betrayal of a colonised people: Issues of international human rights law*, London, ISAL Publications, (1990) p. 1-11

<sup>11</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa, betrayal of a colonised people*, p. 12

<sup>12</sup> Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's Internal Underground Activities*, p 8

<sup>13</sup> Leeman, B., "Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo: The South African Communist Party and the Pan Africanist Congress", self-published academic essay, (2016).

principles of self-determination and self-reliance of the African masses and the African State. It soon became the political stance of the Africanists, as it was under Anton Lembede, that this perceived radical program was conceived.<sup>14</sup> The Program of Action outlined a number of principles which included the right of African people to self-determination and rejection of segregation, apartheid trusteeship or white leadership over black political and territorial independence.<sup>15</sup>

The Program of Action seemed too radical and drastic to the old guard of the ANC who much rather preferred an inclusive multiracial approach which included all South African progressive struggle groups. The question whether or not to include other races within the African struggle was constantly a high point of debate within the ANC/ANCYL. The Africanists had always been misunderstood by the leadership of the ANC. As Walter Sisulu stated, they considered the anti-Apartheid struggle as a Black only affair which went against the multi-racialism stance of the ANC. The Africanists protested against the inclusion of progressive whites in the struggle. They were concerned by the inability of white progressives to initiate and organise white resistance in their own white communities and white institutions. Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, who was the president of the Victoria East Branch of the ANCYL at the University of Fort Hare and later the founding president of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, as well as some of his colleagues, found this inability suspicious. The Africanists, who were then led by the ANCYL president A.P. Mda, argued that white progressives and, more especially, the Communist Party should not insist on coming to black organisations and leading there but rather they should lead in their own communities which were inaccessible to African people.<sup>16</sup>

The Africanists accepted the inclusion of other races but believed that these races should not be allowed to influence the trajectory of the African struggle. Walter Sisulu, Albert Luthuli and other members of the ANC National Executive Committee's collaboration with bodies such as the Communist Party was a mistake in the view of the

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<sup>14</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa: Betrayal of a colonised people*, p.18

<sup>15</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa: Betrayal of a colonised people* pp. 21 -25

<sup>16</sup> Kondlo, K.M., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution: The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, 1960-1990", PhD Thesis, Johannesburg: Rand Afrikaans Universiteit, (2003): p.99



Africanists, as they believed that Africans were capable of handling their own affairs and bringing about their own liberation. In 1959, this group of Africanists decided to break away from the ANC and form the PAC.<sup>17</sup>

Ideologically, the PAC followed the Pan Africanist example of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania in their reverence to the Africa-for-Africans viewpoint.<sup>18</sup> Pan Africanism was regarded by the Africanist group as the only ideology that could unite the African people and African states, towards a successful liberation struggle. The aim was to empower the masses ideologically and educationally and to imbue in them a determination to liberate themselves.<sup>19</sup>

Pan Africanism and Scientific Socialism, as inseparable ideological entities of the PAC, found support in Africa and abroad, particularly in the communist block during the Cold War. Nikita Khrushchev of the USSR stated that a united Africa was the only method of defeating the legacy of colonial rule. The adoption of the Pan Africanist ideology also ensured that the struggle against white supremacy would not only be relegated to a small corner of Africa (that is South Africa) but rather it allowed a struggle that was continental in scope. Tanzania, Ghana, Burkina Faso, China and Egypt were just some of the many states that assisted the PAC with resources, funding and ideological support particularly when the PAC decided to embark on armed struggle.<sup>20</sup>

In more practical terms the PAC held an ideology that allowed for the maximum prosecution of the cause of African independence by Africans themselves. “Leaders lead from the front” and “no lawyer, no bail” were some of the captivating slogans of the early PAC which were, particularly, said by the first elected president of the PAC Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe.<sup>21</sup> Sobukwe and the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the PAC organised the first successful anti pass law protest on 21 March 1960. This protest was set to shake the apartheid government and all political structures engaged in the

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<sup>17</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa: Betrayal of a colonised people*, p.30

<sup>18</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa: Betrayal of a colonised people*, p.9

<sup>19</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa: Betrayal of a colonised people*, p.12

<sup>20</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *The land is ours: The political legacy of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, Johannesburg, Pheko & Associates. (1994): pp. 1-30

<sup>21</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *The land is ours: The political legacy of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p.23

anti-apartheid struggle were invited, including the ANC.<sup>22</sup>The ANC refused to participate and, thus, the PAC went on alone.

In Sharpeville, 69 people were killed by the Apartheid state police and hundreds more were injured when thousands embarked on a march to the local police station demanding to be arrested.<sup>23</sup> Police shot live ammunition at the crowd and this became known as the Sharpeville Massacre. In Langa Township in Cape Town, police also shot at a protesting crowd and killed 34 people. The high rate of state murder created a sense of despair and grief over the lives lost during these massacres in the country and in the international community.<sup>24</sup> Robert Sobukwe, who was leading a march from the front in Orlando Township, was promptly arrested and sent to Robben Island where he was kept in solitary confinement for two years for his part in organising these activities. After this act, the government banned the PAC, ANC and other struggle bodies. It is important to note that other bodies like the ANC were actually banned because of an activity that was not their own but rather of the PAC. This raises the question why the PAC has been marginalised in post-apartheid narratives of the struggle.

After Robert Sobukwe's stint in prison, the apartheid regime under Prime Minister Vorster called for an emergency sitting of parliament in order to assess the severity of the situation.<sup>25</sup> This seating found Robert Sobukwe and the PAC so dangerous to the Apartheid government that a law was enacted to keep Sobukwe in prison without cause.<sup>26</sup> The implementation of the Sobukwe Clause, as it was called, is a rare case in modern history because it was one of a few special circumstances where a law was enacted in order to keep a particular individual in detention without cause and to imprison any other person who engaged in acts of resistance against the state.<sup>27</sup> After the banning of the PAC and the massacres at Langa and Sharpeville, the PAC

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<sup>22</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa: Betrayal of a colonised people*, p.16

<sup>23</sup> Maaba, B.B., "The PAC's war against the state, 1960-1963" in South African Democracy Education Trust. *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, Volume 1, 1960-1970, Zebra Press, Cape Town, (2004): pp 257-262.

<sup>24</sup> Maaba, B.B., "The PAC's war against the state, 1960-1963", p.263

<sup>25</sup> Maaba, B.B., "The PAC's war against the state, 1960-1963", P.267

<sup>26</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *The land is ours: the political legacy of Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p.20

<sup>27</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., "The land is ours: the political legacy of Mangaliso Sobukwe", p.22

leadership resolved to initiate an armed struggle. They decided to fight fire with fire when they created South Africa's first ever armed anti-apartheid struggle wing called *UPoqo*.<sup>28</sup>

According to Ka Plaatjie *et al*, the name *uPoqo* is a Xhosa word which means an army of pure Africans who do not beat about the bush (they were straightforward in their resistance and knew who their enemy was). *UPoqo* precedes *uMkhonto Wesizwe* by 4 Years.<sup>29</sup> *UPoqo* guerrillas were some of the first individuals to be captured and held in Robben Island in the early 1960s. Some claim that they were used as slave labour in the extension of the prison.<sup>30</sup> *UPoqo* members were also, unfortunately, the first armed activists to be sentenced to death for their activities against the Apartheid Government in the early 1960s. *UPoqo* cadres were trained in and had an office in Lesotho from 1962 until the raid of the PAC head offices in Maseru in 1964. They were also trained in Tanzania and China. *uPoqo* was subsequently formalised into the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), which was named after the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China whose military strategy was adopted by APLA. The Azanian People Liberation Army was formed on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 1961 as a military response to the police brutality that the African masses were subjected to because of their involvement in 1960 pass campaigns. The military activities of *uPoqo/APLA* are held up as heroic acts of valour by many activists, such as the 1976 generation of students, including Sithembile Khala who decided to get military training at APLA military camps according to the extensive arrest and executions records of the Apartheid state.<sup>31</sup>

Within the country, although banned, the PAC carried on their mission to shake the state. In the mid-1970s, the then president of the PAC Zephaniah Mothopeng, who was a teacher in Orlando Township, influenced learners to challenge Bantu education and provided them with ideological and military education in order to empower their activism.<sup>32</sup> Together with the South African Students Organization (SASO) and the

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<sup>28</sup>Kondlo, K.M., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution", pp.198-205

<sup>29</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa: Betrayal of a colonised people*, p.25

<sup>30</sup> Pheko, S. E. M., *South Africa: Betrayal of a colonised people*, p.15

<sup>31</sup> Maaba, B.B., "The PAC's war against the state, 1960-1963", p.262

<sup>32</sup> Hlongwane, A.K., "Reflections on the Pan Africanist Congress 'Underground', in the Era of the 1976 Youth Uprisings." *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol. 3, 4, (2009): p.58

Black Consciousness Movement, the PAC played a key role in the 1976 student uprising so much so that Zephaniah Mothopeng along with 17 other PAC cadres were the first accused in the Johannesburg high court during these riots. In the Bethal trial of 1977, where PAC leaders stood accused of instigating the student uprising, no less than 165 state witnesses were enlisted.<sup>33</sup> Zephaniah Mothopeng lost his Position at Orlando High School and was tortured by the police in a bid to obtain information from him. Later, he was sentenced to 37 Years in prison for his contribution in organising the Soweto riots of 1976-1977.<sup>34</sup> Four of the twenty two accused PAC cadres including Dr Naobath Ntshuntsha were beaten and tortured to death in detention, while one was thrown out of a fourth-floor window but survived.<sup>35</sup> The collapse of the leadership structures of the PAC did not stop it from continuing with the armed struggle, as in 1993, it carried out an attack on the Saint James church in Cape Town killing four white worshippers.<sup>36</sup>

### Problem Statement

The PAC played a pivotal role in the African anti-colonial struggle. Its contribution was titanic in comparison to the social consciousness reflecting its history portrayed today. The PAC, *uPoqo* and APLA have either been forgotten or marginalised in History by a dominantly ANC-centric History curriculum. For example, very little is known about the creation of APLA and the history of the PAC. Thomas Lodge traces the formation of APLA to a vacuum that was left by the capture of over 3000 *uPoqo* cadres in 1963.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the formalisation of APLA came from the remnants of *UPoqo*. However this history is missing in the accounts of scholars of the PAC history like Leeman. Unfortunately, not enough has been written on this subject in order for critical scholarly analysis to be made on the formalization of *uPoqo* into APLA. This can be attributed to a lack of documentation by the African people who were a part of APLA and state repression which vilified *uPoqo* and labelled it an organization of terrorists. Although its

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<sup>33</sup> Hlongwane, A.K., "Reflections on the Pan Africanist Congress 'Underground'", p.67

<sup>34</sup> Hlongwane, A.K., "Reflections on the Pan Africanist Congress 'Underground'", p.67

<sup>35</sup> Kgosana, P., *Lest We Forget*. Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers. (1988).

<sup>36</sup> Kondlo, K.M., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution", p.267

<sup>37</sup> Lodge, T. G., "Insurrectionism in South Africa: The Pan Africanist Congress and the Poqo Movement, 1959-1965", PhD thesis. Centre for Southern African Studies, University of York, (1984)

formation came at a time when the PAC was popular and even revered globally, it has lost its fame.<sup>38</sup>

History as a subject of scholarship has also not been kind to the PAC and thus there stands a threat of the PAC, *UPoqo*, and APLA being wiped away from memory. In a parliamentary address in 2013, the then PAC president Letlapa Mphahlele asked, the then president of the country Jacob Zuma to not forget *UPoqo/APLA* combatants when the government celebrates struggle heroes.<sup>39</sup> Mphahlele found himself promptly dismissed and ridiculed by the head of state. The ANC government showed no interest to either recognise or celebrate these PAC aligned individuals and the sacrifice they made. This attitude reflects a continuation of political jealousy and sabotage that has been a South African staple since the era of democracy, the continued narrow celebration of Nelson Mandela as the 'father of the nation' negates the political contributions that struggle icons like Robert Sobukwe made to the liberation of South Africa.

A more urgent issue concerning the refusal of the public and the governing Party to recognise the PAC is that there are still APLA and *uPoqo* cadres in jail till this day. APLA and *uPoqo* did not enjoy equal representation at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and, thus, many combatants who fought against oppression and committed crimes against the Apartheid regime are still languishing in jail without any future prospects of amnesty. Although many cadres and sympathisers in the legal field have attempted to have these combatants released, the lack of public outcry and high-profile status of these cases prevents the galvanisation of sympathy from the magistrates and judges.

There is, therefore, the need to investigate the history and activities of the PAC and its armed responses to the violence of the Apartheid settler colonial systems, mainly, by utilising first-hand accounts of former *uPoqo* and APLA members who were held in

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<sup>38</sup> Ejiogu, E.C., "Post Liberation South Africa: Sorting out the Pieces", *Journal of Asian and African studies*, Vol. 47, 3, (2011): 259-262.

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNDX4xwG1oE>> PAC of Azania leader Mr Letlapa Mphahlele, Accessed April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

Robben Island and were students during the 1976 riots. These elderly African struggle heroes are dying every year and their historical knowledge is dying with them. This research is thus, a matter of extreme urgency and importance. The focus on these counter-archival sources will be the only way this important history can be recorded before it is lost for indefinitely.<sup>40</sup>

### Research Question

Given the above, the question that arises is, to what extent is the scholarship on the PAC, *uPoqo* and APLA available and to what extent does it give fair coverage to these organisations that have been generally marginalised by mainstream accounts of the anti-apartheid struggle? Related questions include to what extent can the discipline of history remedy the unequal representation that exists in scholarship that is focused on the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggle, not only for the purpose of diversifying this particular field of historical study, but also to create an overall social consciousness within the public? How can the memories and experiences of particular individuals who were members of the three organisations (PAC, *uPoqo* and APLA) be harnessed to enrich historical understanding of these organisations and the role they played in South African history? Lastly, what was the nature of the relationship between the PAC and the ANC in South Africa and how did their approaches to freedom compare?

### Objectives

This study answers the question of how historians can go about rectifying the inadequate representation within the historical focus around the struggle against apartheid and settler colonialism. One way this can be achieved is through a process of identifying, highlighting and advancing arguments from existing scholarly works regarding the armed struggle of the PAC, *uPoqo* and APLA. In the light of this, the study seeks to:

- Evaluate the contributions of the PAC, APLA and *uPoqo* towards the struggle against apartheid by focusing particularly on the historical accounts of the PAC's township activism and military activities.

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<sup>40</sup>Ejiogu, E.C., "Post Liberation South Africa", p.254.

- Explore power relations between the activism in the townships and exile activities of the early 1960s
- Investigate how the transition from *uPoqo* to APLA took place and why
- Analyse the relationship between APLA and UMKhonto Wesizwe in exile to determine whether they were enemies or allied comrades?
- Create a lasting appreciation of the sacrifices the PAC and its many cadres made for the sake of the plight of the oppressed African masses

### Rationale

Traditionally, the discipline of History has relied very heavily on the written archive, namely, historical documents or records providing information about a place, institution, events, or people. The study of history, with particular reference to the modern age, has, therefore, strongly promoted the written source as a supreme form of reference material as opposed to other more seemingly unorthodox forms. In African societies, for centuries, orally transmitted accounts, stories, legends and praise songs have been a staple source of legitimate reference material when dealing with the past. Since there is no real Southern African produced written archive of the pre-colonial period, oral literature has been the main form of preserving collective memory. The oral archive has fed oral literature for centuries in Africa and it has served as a source of information especially in the study of History.

There is very limited scholarship on the PAC and even fewer scholars write about the armed struggle waged by its armed wings *uPoqo* and APLA. The existing scholarly work however gives strong indication of the fact that *uPoqo* and APLA were consistently active during the apartheid era. The reason for the limitation in scholarship can be attributed to the fact that the history of the PAC has, to a significant extent, been erased from the national consciousness of South Africa. In terms of visibility in popular culture, the PAC has resonated mostly with academics and young African radical activists in the narrow academic halls of privileged institutions like the University of Cape Town and the University of Pretoria. There stands no proof of Pan Africanism and the history of the PAC finding a home in the hearts of the African masses it sacrificed so much for.

However young African activists have continually reverted to Pan Africanist rhetoric when the need arises. An example of an exclusive alliance to the PAC ideological direction can be found in students who participated in and led the #FeesMustFall movement. These young radical Africans resonated with the Pan Africanist and Socialist ideals of the PAC when they called for all African masses to unite under the banner of an Afrocentric socialist education. Despite this fact, the general public, particularly the African majority population, is not familiar with the history of the PAC, its military wings, and the military operations these wings conducted.

The oral literature of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, namely, the accounts of the armed struggle by current and former members of the party has significant gaps in the sense that there are certain moments in history that have not been recorded due to the destruction of evidence by the apartheid police as well as the fact that security considerations and military vicissitudes did not always allow time and space for the documentation of the armed struggle, as a piece of paper outlining training regiments could compromise a whole camp site to the enemy. Therefore, this study seeks to understand and evaluate the role of the PAC in the armed struggle and the anti-apartheid struggle in general through the study of historical accounts written by scholars about the party.

### Methodology

The proposed study has drawn on published and unpublished primary and secondary sources. The bulk of the primary information that has been used has been obtained from the William Cullen Library (University of the Witwatersrand) archive as well as the South African History online archive. Such sources include the publications of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania: *The Afrikanist Magazine*, as well as the PAC's 1959 manifesto. Other primary sources are the letters and minutes of meetings written by the secretariats of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, the biographies and autobiographies written by and about influential members of the PAC such Robert Sobukwe and Letlapa Mphahlele, among others.

In addition, the research has also relied on the secondary literature on anti-colonial struggle in South Africa. The literature has been sourced from books, journal, article,



academic theses, the flyers of the PAC and the trial documents of the PAC sourced from the William Cullen Library archive. The library archives of the University of Pretoria, the University of Fort Hare and the University of South Africa have been digitally visited to acquire secondary literature. The qualitative research method has been used to select, organize, interpret and analyse the sources gathered from both textual primary and secondary sources.

### Literature Review

According to Ejiogu in “Post Liberation South Africa sorting out the pieces”, the radical Pan Africanist ideology of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania was a key tool used to imagine liberation and freedom.<sup>41</sup> The article offers a critical analysis that assists in understanding the ideological differences between the PAC and ANC and offers useful insights into how and why the PAC has been marginalised in history by the current ANC Alliance government. Ejiogu argues that the PAC must re-invent itself so that its ideas can assimilate into the country’s national consciousness. He maintains that the radicalism of the PAC provided ways for its leaders to abuse power as very little oversight existed to hold them to account within the underground movement and that they used the disciplinary code (which required all members to not challenge any decision made by authority in war time) to resolve conflict.<sup>42</sup> The article provides a useful road map towards identifying methods of conscientizing the African masses about Pan Africanism and the PAC and its history.

Tom Lodge, who writes from a colonial perspective, writes about something he was never a part of, namely, the struggle against white settlers. Not surprisingly, he believes that *uPoqo* was a movement of terrorists and refuses to acknowledge that the state’s terrorism led to armed resistance. He also refuses to call the PAC by its intended name; instead, he calls it the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa, which shows that he does not recognize the importance of that name and is, therefore, limited in his understanding of the PAC. Tom Lodge’s article is important, however, because it demystifies the origin and history of *uPoqo*, it shows that *uPoqo* came from the political

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<sup>41</sup> Ejiogu, E.C., "Post Liberation South Africa", p.252

<sup>42</sup> Ejiogu, E.C., "Post Liberation South Africa", p.252-254

consciousness that existed in the rural areas from 1948 -1960 and what was the PAC's role in radicalizing the amaThembu.<sup>43</sup>

As stated above, he has also never been part of any liberation movement like the PAC and, therefore, has no scope to understand the reasoning behind the *uPoqo* decision to use violence to repossess their land and why this violence was necessary. Lodge, however, gives detailed accounts of the causes for *uPoqo* early political activity in the Transkei and shows how these activities spread out into other areas, such as Paarl and Engcobo. Lodge's study is important in understanding *uPoqo* and its initial activities more broadly.<sup>44</sup>

Thomas, who writes from a privileged white male gaze in his article "Bloodier than black and white: liberation history seen through detective sergeant Donald Card's narrative of his investigations of Congo and *uPoqo* activities, 1960 to 1965", presents a different perspective of the activities of *uPoqo*. He explores the "evasions, omissions and twists" that can be found in the history of South Africa's liberation movement. The article is important because it offers a narrative view that is not featured in most scholarly articles on the PAC; the narrative of the Apartheid state. This source offers critical insights into the ways in which the anti-colonial archive is apparently deliberate in erasing the voices of state in order to vilify it. Thomas argues that the liberation struggle quickened into being a tool used to impose civil disobedience, strikes and boycotts, and the transition to violent struggle as a means to excoriate the apartheid regime as evil doers. He argues that certain events and developments, such as crime disguised as political activity, are ignored and romanticized. He maintains that the Pondoland uprisings, known as the Congo movements, captured the imagination of the South African community and that it seemed to be a typical peasant's revolt open to be romanticized, in the wake of the Maoist wave of military strategy in the 1950s.<sup>45</sup> Thomas writes in a racist tone, and deliberately erases the culture of the amaMpondomise by calling them the Pondo. He also refers to them as the Bantu (a derogatory term that was

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<sup>43</sup> Lodge, T.G., "Insurrectionism in South Africa", pp137-139

<sup>44</sup> Lodge, T.G., "Insurrectionism in South Africa", pp 139-144

<sup>45</sup>Thomas, C., "Bloodier than black and white: liberation history seen through detective sergeant Donald Card's narrative of his investigations of Congo and *UPoqo* activities of 1960-1965", *New Contree*, 50, (2005): pp 39-41

used by the Apartheid regime to refer to black people) and vilifies them without being considerate of the fact that the Apartheid regime was violent. This source however is important in giving a voice to the oppressor and will be useful in understanding the views of those who the liberation forces were fighting against.

Another important source for purposes of tracing the political activity of *uPoqo* is Leeman's revised PhD thesis that is titled: "Lesotho and the struggle for Azania: The Origins and History of the African National Congress, Pan Africanist Congress, South African Communist Party and Basutoland Congress Party 1780 – 1994". According to Leeman, the PAC took the decision to turn to armed resistance on the 20<sup>th</sup> of December in 1960.<sup>46</sup> His article helps with tracking the uprising of *uPoqo* beyond the borders of Transkei. It also offers insight with regards to the treatment leaders received in prison and some aspects of Nelson Mandela's political career: his encounter with the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) and his parting with the Congress Alliance. Leeman's article is useful mainly for its in-depth information concerning the rise of *uPoqo* in Lesotho and for giving voice to the PAC's main critics like Nelson Mandela. Both of whom were members of the ANC.

Kondlo's study on "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution: The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania" argues that one of the PAC leaders, Potlako Leballo used political blackmail to rule the PAC and factional politics to destroy the PAC.<sup>47</sup> Potlako Kitchener Leballo was the president of the PAC from 1962 until 1978. He began his political career following his affiliation to the ANCYL and getting suspended from Loveday College in the early fifty's. Ka Plaatjie also makes the same assertion when he claims that the press statement where Leballo said that the PAC was synonymous with *uPoqo* led to the capture of *UPoqo* cadres. He claims that Hans Lombard, who was a police spy and close associate of Leballo, influenced Leballo to make that statement so as to attract more international funders.<sup>48</sup> Because of this statement, according to Lissoni's, Leballo made the PAC vulnerable to arrest through his connection with

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<sup>46</sup>Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p323

<sup>47</sup>Kondlo, K., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution", p 243.

<sup>48</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T. *The PAC's internal underground activities, 1960-1981*, p684.

Lombard.<sup>49</sup> Kondlo's dissertation is important to the proposed study because it provides a critique of one of the most infamous leaders of the PAC. Leballo is seen by Leman as a hero, while other scholars like Kondlo and Ka Plaatjie see him as a man who led the PAC into disrepute. This provides an insight into the varied nature of the PAC leadership over time.

According to Leeman, Kondlo and Lodge's doctoral theses make flawed claims when they claim that Leballo destroyed the PAC by crushing *uPoqo* because they were heavily dependent on information supplied by police informers and evidence provided by members of the PAC who were now affiliates of the ANC government by profession. He further argues that their lack of military training and experience disqualifies them from claiming that Potlako Leballo was an authoritarian and that Lodge's lack of knowledge with regards to African struggle activities of the period equally disqualifies him from making such claims.<sup>50</sup> Leeman's critique of both the position of Kondlo and Lodge allows the study to look again at dissenting views particularly when it comes to more detailed politics of leadership and struggle credentials within the PAC.

Another useful study is Arianna Lissoni's PhD thesis titled: "The South African Liberation Movements in exile, c.1945-1970". It offers additional insights into the claims made by ka Plaatjie that Potlako Leballo destroyed *uPoqo* and subsequently the PAC.<sup>51</sup> Lissoni also attacks the validity of some of the claims made by Leeman concerning Leballo on the premise that his close proximity to Potlako Leballo has compromised Leeman's objectivity and made him to refuse to acknowledge that Leballo's actions compromised the PAC no matter his intention.

In his PhD thesis titled "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution: The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania" Kondlo makes an important contribution to the scholarship on the PAC, *uPoqo* and APLA. He shows the impact of leadership conflicts in the PAC and describes Leballo's leadership era as the most disruptive time in PAC history. Kondlo who is also the nephew of Gerald Kondlo (APLA veteran), also had no military experience and or contact with pre-1986 APLA/PAC. This article is important,

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<sup>49</sup>Lissoni, A., "The South African Liberation Movements in exile", p194.

<sup>50</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p 323,

<sup>51</sup>Lissoni, A., "The South African Liberation Movements in exile", pp173-194

however, because it provides detailed analyses of four leadership eras of the PAC, namely, Leballo's, Vusi Make's, John Nyati Pokela's and Johnson Mlambo's eras. It points to the importance of considering the diversity in leadership and how this affected the PAC.

Kondlo maintains that the poor leadership of leaders like Vusi Make negatively affected efforts to acquire resources in the military camps of the PAC. The article is also important because it offers insight into the failures and successes of the PAC military infiltration as well as the ideological shifts in the PAC that led to the development of ever-changing military strategies.

Kondlo's dissertation is also important because it compares how the different leadership eras of the PAC and their administration of the PAC affected the ability of APLA to get training and to wage any military campaign against the apartheid state. Kondlo argues that Potlako Leballo led the PAC to its ultimate suppression, as it was under his leadership that the PAC was destabilized through mass arrests (more than 3000 *Pogo* combatants were arrested.) His views are similar to those of Tom Lodge in the sense that he argues that Potlako Leballo's recklessness led to the fall of the PAC because mass arrests occurred after Leballo delivered a speech in March 1963 aligning the PAC to *UPogo* as well as after the capture of two couriers sent to deliver letters that contained the names of thousands of *uPogo* combatants in South Africa. This article is lastly important because it gives a different perspective as to how leadership conflicts developed and how the underground revival of the PAC occurred after the 1970s.

The era of student uprising in South Africa also brought into perspective many important events for the PAC. Ka Plaatjie maintains that the revival of the PAC occurred mostly in Johannesburg and Pretoria. He asserts that John Ganya, Zephania Mothopeng, Mark Shinnars and Isaac Mafatshe were the key role players in the revival of the PAC underground during the 1970s. Ka Plaatjie's article is also important because it highlights how the PAC worked with other political formations like the BPC and SASO to revive its internal underground activities. He argues that the Soweto Uprisings intensified the underground activities of the PAC. The article also describes how the key role players of the revival of the PAC internal underground were drawn into the mission.

He maintains that contact with Mothopeng and the external leadership of the PAC, especially the PAC High Command in Tanzania, played a role in inspiring the revival of the internal underground<sup>52</sup>

An important source that focuses on the revival of the internal underground of the PAC during the era of the 1976 youth uprisings is A.K Hlongwane's "Reflections on the Pan Africanist Congress "Underground" in the era of the June 1976 student uprising". This article is important to the study because it also highlights how the youth uprisings of 1976 were essential to the revival of the PAC underground. However, this article dismantles the notion that the PAC was the only liberation movement that was responsible for the 1976 nationwide uprising.

Hlongwane argues that before June 1976, there was not enough pressure exerted on the South African state due to the lack of capacity or political will of organisations. However, he recognised that the hardships and challenges of building an underground movement contributed to this stagnation. He maintains that the underground machinery began to operate in Soweto, Kagiso and Pretoria. He also maintains that Mothopeng, Shinnars, Mafatshe and Ganya were key role players in the revival of the PAC underground. He claims further that the decision to launch a training program in Engwavuma was the reason why the PAC shifted to internal mobilisation in the country.<sup>53</sup> This article is also important because it highlights the different freedom routes that were used to transport recruits to exile: Botswana and Swaziland were used to transport PAC and BCM military recruits who were then sent further for military training. It also describes the activities of APLA activists and their subsequent arrests.<sup>54</sup>

Another important study is Houston, Plaatjie and April's "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, 1961-1981". The article highlights the PAC camps where training took place as well as allies of the PAC who offered PAC militants training. Houston *et al* argue that leadership conflicts caused the PAC to not infiltrate

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<sup>52</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities*, pp 685-694.

<sup>53</sup>Hlongwane, A.K., "Reflections on the Pan Africanist Congress 'Underground'", pp 55-61

<sup>54</sup>Hlongwane, A.K., "Reflections on the Pan Africanist Congress 'Underground'" 61-67

South Africa until 1968. The study highlights some of the PAC leaders how they affected the mission of infiltrating South Africa.

Another source that focuses on the internal camps of the PAC is Gregory Houston's report to the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2013. This report offers insight to the *UPoqo* units that were established in preparation for the planned uprising of April 8<sup>th</sup> 1963.<sup>55</sup> The article also discusses the freedom routes used by the PAC and the ANC during the 1960s. Houston argues that in the 1960s, the primary route into exile for members of the PAC was Lesotho. He maintains that in these years, PAC members also travelled through Botswana, Tanzania and Egypt to receive military training. The report also speaks about the military camps of the PAC that were outside South Africa and describes the conditions inside these camps. Houston uses Kwandile Kondlo's PhD thesis as a source of information when describing the conditions of the camp.<sup>56</sup>

He maintains that Botswana remained

One of the most active and widely used routes out of the country in the 1970s. Most South African youth that entered Botswana in the aftermath of the Soweto Uprisings were accommodated in the safe houses rented by the PAC and the ANC because there was no refugee camp there at the time.<sup>57</sup>

The source also describes the revival of the internal underground of the PAC.<sup>58</sup>

## Chapter Outline

### Chapter one: Introduction

This initial chapter has explored the published and unpublished literature on the question of *uPoqo* and APLA activities during their eras of operation. This chapter has

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<sup>55</sup> Houston, G.F., "Democracy, Governance, and Service Delivery (DGSD) Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). Military bases and camps of the liberation movement, 1961-1990", Amathole Municipality, (2013). pp 7-10.

<sup>56</sup>Houston, G.F., "Military bases and camps of the liberation movement, 1961-1990", pp 11-44

<sup>57</sup> Houston, G.F., "Military bases and camps of the liberation movement, 1961-1990", p 52

<sup>58</sup> Houston, G.F., "Military bases and camps of the liberation movement, 1961-1990", pp57-87

also reviewed and summarise the ideas found with the existing scholarly work with the intention of finding a gap for the research to fill. Another part of the initial chapter will be to firstly introduce the research focus, create and discuss a problem statement, propose a research question, give an outline of the research objectives, produce a research rationale, outline the methodology used during the research process and finally produce a comprehensive literature review along with a biography and chapter outline of the completed research paper.

#### Chapter Two: The Emergence of the Africanist Block: the ANCYL program of Action

This chapter focuses on the era of Anton Lembede and A. P. Mda as they led the ANCYL to an Africanist position<sup>59</sup>. The chapter will also discuss at length the Program of Action and why it was such a point of disagreement between the Africanist block and the nationalist block of the early ANC. This chapter will conclude with the account of scholars relating to the break away and creation of the PAC from the Africanist block of the ANC.<sup>60</sup>

#### Chapter three: From Sharpeville to *uPoqo*

This chapter examined the Sharpeville and Langa massacres, as these two incidences prompted the move from a passive resistance to a fully armed and militant resistance.<sup>61</sup>This transition will be explored thoroughly with the hope of tracking down the initial dates and accounts of the assimilation of *uPoqo* into a formal armed wing of the PAC. The creation of *uPoqo* and the movement's demographics will also be discussed in order to clarify the origins of *uPoqo*.<sup>62</sup>

#### Chapter four: The Formalisation of the Armed Struggle from *uPoqo* to APLA

Chapter four traced the development of the PAC after the arrest of the founding NEC, the missions conducted by *uPoqo* and how the leadership of Potlako Leballo actually

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<sup>59</sup> Leeman, B., "Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo: The South African Communist Party and the Pan Africanist Congress", <https://www.academia.edu/26707872/>, (2016),p.12

<sup>60</sup> Leeman, B., Hutchison, R., Schreuder, D., & Alexander P.F. "The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania. *In Multi-disciplinary Snapshot of the continent in 1995*, 172-195. Canberra: Goanna Press, Fyshwick, (1996).

<sup>61</sup> Kgosana, P., "Lest We Forget, Johannesburg".

<sup>62</sup> Lodge, T. G., "Insurrectionism in South Africa", pp.143.



initiated the downfall of *uPoqo*<sup>63</sup>. The formalisation of *UPoqo* into APLA and the creation of military bases across Africa was also examined in this chapter. It provides a summary of the formalisation of APLA, the ideology it followed (Maoist/Marxist), and some of the missions it conducted successfully for it to be held in such a high regard by scholars such as Leeman and Kondlo.<sup>64</sup>

#### Chapter Five: A Retrospective look into Military Activities of “Umbutho”

This chapter looked closely at the military failures of *UPoqo* and APLA, what caused these and how they affected the liberation movement of the PAC domestically and abroad.<sup>65</sup> A crucial look at the Leadership of the armed wings and how this leadership succeeded or failed was also a focal point in this study.<sup>66</sup> The rationale was to investigate the weakness of the PAC and its armed struggle and evaluate if these mishaps were a significant contributing factor to the dysfunctionality of the PAC during the late 1970s.<sup>67</sup>

#### Conclusion: “From the Archive to the Grave...”

The conclusion reiterates how the PAC has lost its historical place within the collective memory of the nation. It focuses on how this process has taken place and the dangers of forgetting those who have come before and have stood against injustice.

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<sup>63</sup> Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's Internal Underground Activities*, p 12

<sup>64</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p 18

<sup>65</sup> Lissoni, A., "The South African Liberation Movements in exile", p 31

<sup>66</sup> Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's Internal Underground Activities*, pp.669

<sup>67</sup> Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's Internal Underground Activities*, pp. 670-673.

## Chapter Two: The Emergence of the Africanist Block: The ANCYL and its Programme of Action

In order to comprehend how the ideological contestations that existed within the ANC led to divisions within the liberation movement, and, later, to the formation of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, one must acknowledge that the formation of the Africanist block of the ANC and its subsequent contestation with the non-racialist block of the ANC marks the beginning of the ideological differences in the South African political consciousness arena. I argue that the beginning of the ideological split within the ANC was a result of the discontent of the African youth, with the leadership of the old guard or rather the older leading generation within the ANC. This discontent can be traced to the political events that unfolded immediately after the launch of the ANCYL, which saw to the intensification of Nationalist conceptions of apartheid oppression.

The notion of an 'old guard' is used to denote the older and more conservative members of the congress movement, including members of its leadership like Dr. A.B. Xuma, Z.K Matthews, Albert Luthuli, amongst others. Noteworthy ideological differences existed between the old guard and the young militant African nationalists in the ANC, where the old guard did not believe in mass action, but championed a kind of 'civil disobedience' that sought the assimilation of non-European people into the institutions of the State. The 1952 Defiance campaign was, therefore, a programme of the 'old guard', more than it was of the young African Nationalists in the Youth League and was, in a way, a moment of disillusionment for them. It can be argued that the creation of the ANCYL afforded the disenfranchised African nationalists among the youth the opportunity to find intellectual expression through its leaders such as Muziwakhe Lembede and A.P. Mda. The development of 'Africanism' and African Nationalism doctrines in the Youth League under the influence of Mda and Lembede marked the beginning of the era of ideological conflict between the 'old guard' and the 'new guard'.

According to Leeman, the ANC held a conference in 1943 in Kimberley, where Dr. Xuma took an ideological decision to move towards a multi-racial alliance without

consulting the party, while Anton Lembede was elected the first President of the ANCYL after it was established at the same conference.<sup>68</sup> He further argues that the ANCYL was created during the same conference and that the Youth League attracted Africans who represented an emerging socio-economic class, that is, a class of young African people who were educated and urbanised.<sup>69</sup> These young people attended white institutions of learning, and most of them had converted to Christianity, for example, youth leaders like Lembede, who was doing his postgraduate studies at the University of South Africa during his presidency of the Youth League, and Robert Sobukwe, who was doing his undergraduate studies at the University of Fort Hare at the peak of his activism in the ANC Youth League. Lembede was writing his MA thesis and had been a Catholic before his development as a political scholar and activist. Furthermore, rivalries between the ANC leader Dr. Xuma and other anti-apartheid movements such as the African Democratic Party (ADP), the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), and the All African Convention (AAC) caused by their ideological differences, also contributed to the establishment of the Youth League. This was due to rigidity of the old guard, which hindered the intellectual and organisational development of the ANCYL. This caused young nationalists to be envious of the false sense of autonomy that the youth of the ADP possessed, where they did not have as much authority as the leadership and, as such, could not fully determine their own political agenda and youth organising.

Moreover, the changing socio-historical context of the country at the time, where African people were gaining access to areas of society such as religious institutions and the economy that had been reserved for white South Africans alone, and parallel to this, the changing and volatile political conditions characterised by the increase in economic boycotts; the rise of Pure Afrikaner thought, as well the conflict created by the 'infiltration' of the congress movement by Communism and the drafting of the Atlantic Charter against racism and Nazism influenced many young people, which meant that they were exposed to the growth of activism in the country and needed an organisation to fulfil their political aspirations.

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<sup>68</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p 172.

<sup>69</sup> Leeman, B., *Multi-disciplinary Snapshot of the continent in 1995*, p. 172.

A background investigation of Muziwakhe Anton Lembede's (1914-1947) ideological positions and beliefs helps to understand, albeit partly, how the Africanist position of the ANCYL originated. It can be argued that his election as the president of the ANCYL catalysed the 'Africanisation' of the urban and educated block of the ANCYL, which later came to form the PAC. This point will become clearer later when the study explores the School of Africanism started by A.P Mda and Anton Lembede. Although Lembede was a Catholic and a lawyer, his ideological and political beliefs were influenced by grassroots political and spiritual movements, such as the Black consciousness ideas of the Pan Africanist Garveyite movement, and other groups that adhered to different strands of black liberation theology and Pan Africanism. Furthermore, according to Leeman, despite having reservations and objections to the use of religion, Lembede tried to convince his colleagues to consider religion as a liberatory tool in the analysis of the native question (the plight of African people) instead of Marxism, since he believed that Africans based most of their socio-economic aspirations in the hands of a supernatural entity.<sup>70</sup>

Coupled with his belief that Africans can self-actualise and develop their religious organisations; Lembede also believed that Marxist ideological positions were inadequate in the diagnosis and treatment of the exploitation and oppression of the African masses. Leeman maintains that: "he dismissed Marxism mainly because he and most Africans interpreted it as just another form of white paternalism, and also because most Africans had spiritual beliefs."<sup>71</sup> Eventually, Lembede advocated for Africans to have pride in their African belief systems, and he advocated for self-determination as a founding principle of an African state. According to Leeman, the 1948 Basic Policy and the 1949 Programme of Action of the ANCYL, which advocated for an Africanist response and organisation against apartheid, can be partly considered products of Lembedism, since their inception from 1945 onwards. Lembedism is an ideological position built on a knowledge framework (Garveyism, African Nationalism, Socialist

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<sup>70</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", pp. 173-174.

<sup>71</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p.174.

Democracy, etc.), which advanced the idea of a pursuit for self-determination for the African masses and the restoration of African pride.<sup>72</sup>

A.P. Mda (1916 – 1993) shared the same beliefs as Lembede, and was the president of the ANCYL after Lembede's death in 1948. Gail Gerhart is a famous scholar, who wrote important texts offering a historical recount and accounts of political resistance in South Africa, including *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882- 1990*.<sup>73</sup> Gail Gerhart interviewed Mda in 1970. This interview is important for this work because A.P. Mda outlines different yet contrasting ideological perspectives, but also describes in detail the ideological nature of the conflict between the 'old guard' and 'new guard'. Mda describes himself as an African nationalist, who believed that the African masses ought not to adopt non-violence as an ideology for protest. He also believed in self-determination, and continental unity in Africa. He, like Lembede, also disagreed with Marxist ideology because it offers an inadequate critique of the oppression of the African masses, and was an incomplete analysis of the 'native question'. Moreover, Mda was constantly involved in attempts to avoid the infiltration of the ANC by communist and 'passive' organisations that advocated for aimless collaboration with white communists and non-racialist 'passive resistance'. His contestations with white liberals and African organisations such as the ADP, the AAC and others were due to the fact that at some point in his political career, he believed that non-violent resistance and communism had no solution to the state-sanctioned oppression and suppression of political activism.<sup>74</sup>

Within the ANCYL, the influence that Mda had on Lembede's political consciousness and vice versa was not a point of conflict. On the contrary, Mda and Lembede did not quarrel and boast about what they taught one another, but rather Lembede's intellectual career led to Mda's growth as a scholar, and Mda's leadership and analytical skills helped Lembede contextualise African Nationalism in the social situation of apartheid

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<sup>72</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania, pp 173

<sup>73</sup> Gerhart, G. & Karis, T.G. *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882- 1990*, vol. 5 *Nadir and Resurgence* (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 1997)

<sup>74</sup> Interview with A.P Mda, conducted by Gail Gerhart, Mafeteng, 1 January 1970

South Africa. They studied disciplines like philosophy and key political figures, which together equipped them with the ability to critically develop their own theories of leadership. Furthermore, they had a challenging partnership that helped them to sharpen their intellectual capabilities in terms of ideological standpoints; this led to Lembede developing the concept of 'Africanism', which was later developed into African nationalism by other Africanists, in particular Mda. Together they developed the Youth League Manifesto, along with Jordan Ngubane, who wrote the Manifesto. Mda argues that its political message was largely a product of Lembede's Africanist ideas. In a sense, Mda and Lembede's political relationship as both scholars and intellectuals was characterised by both cooperation and discipline.

After taking over the Youth League in 1948, Mda wrote the 1948 Basic Youth Policy to clarify its positions on various issues, such as their 'alleged' acceptance and incorporation of communism into the movement's ideological positions and organising tactics, as well as their rejection of liberalism.<sup>75</sup> The School of African Nationalism, founded by A.P. Mda and Lembede at Orlando East, which was the ideological home responsible for the radicalism of many of the Africanists in the ANCYL. Leeman further argues that Lembede and Mda established the School of African Nationalism to counter the ANC's assimilation rhetoric. This rhetoric of the 'old guard' preached the possibility of a mutual cooperation for racial unity between the racist Afrikaner State and the ANC, together working towards a democratic Republic of South Africa through parliament and representative democracy. According to Leeman, the Africanists believed in self-determination, but they also recognised that whites cannot be 'driven back to the sea', hence there was a contention as to how freedom would be sustained, with whites still being within the borders of Azania.<sup>76</sup>

It has been argued, and I concur, that perhaps what led to the creation of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania was the refusal by the 'old guard' of the ANC to adopt the 1949 Programme of Action as it was first presented in the Cape Provincial Congress of 1949. The first version of the 1949 Programme of Action was changed in order to decrease the militancy attached to the idea of African Nationalism, since members of

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<sup>75</sup>See Interview with A.P Mda, (1970), pp. 7-11.

<sup>76</sup>Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p. 175.

the ANC such as Moses Kotane and David Bopape, amongst others, believed it to be segregationist like apartheid. This refusal to adopt the original Programme of Action was fulfilled with the 1952 Defiance Campaign, which focused on 'passive resistance', instead of mass action. In many ways, non-violent resistance represented a communist position on political resistance, and thus one of the primary reasons that led to the split between the communists and nationalists within the ANCYL. The incorporation of whites and communists into acts of 'civil disobedience' was an indicator of how assimilationist and anti-poor policies were infiltrating the African nationalist sections of the ANCYL as well as the mother body.<sup>77</sup>

The 1949 Programme of Action was a programme that started being popular in the ANCYL as early as 1945, after being propagated by Lembede and Mda, until it was finally accepted as policy by the ANC in 1949. Leeman further argues that the Programme of Action was drafted by the Victoria East branch of the ANCYL at Fort Hare under the leadership of Robert Sobukwe and Ntsu Mokhele, who were members of the ANC.<sup>78</sup> He asserts that, unlike the Freedom Charter of 1955, which he regards as the 1955 SACP Kliptown coup,<sup>79</sup> the Programme of Action was discussed by ANC branches countrywide.

In the 1950s, the Africanists wanted to return to the 1949 Programme of Action so that the ANC could be a movement that would use mass membership to agitate against the State; and they wanted the ANC to lead the African masses to their liberation, even this it meant that they would be violent in leading the African masses to true self-determination. However, the ANC was without clear leadership; Dr. Xuma had since lost the confidence of the Youth League, due to his rigidity in terms of ideology and the 'communist' issue. Under his leadership, the ANC made an 'illegitimate' and negatively received decision, which contradicted the sentiments of the Africanist youth with regards to the stipulations of the Programme of Action, which did not advocate for the 'collaboration' of Africans with Indians and coloureds. On June 26 1952, the ANC launched the Defiance Campaign after meeting with non-African organisations to

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<sup>77</sup> See Interview with A.P. Mda, (1970), pp. 11-15.

<sup>78</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p. 180.

<sup>79</sup> Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p. 234.

discuss a programme of direct action.<sup>80</sup> This caused a sense of suspicion amongst Africanists, which prompted the creation the Bureau of African Nationalism. This was a secret movement that was meant to safeguard the interests of the black majority by convincing them to keep a ‘minority element’, such as the South African Communist Party (SACP), from further liberalising the Program of Action.<sup>81</sup> This is substantiated by Mda, who asserts that the Bureau was a means to shock out this spirit of assimilation through the dissipation of bulletins i.e. news articles and other kinds of writing that expressed and archived the Africanist voice of the ANC.

The 1949 Programme of Action was different from the 1952 Defiance Campaign in a variety of ways; perhaps the most important of these differences being its abolitionist positions on state power. The ANC aspired to assimilate into the racist apartheid state institutions, whereas the nationalists wanted them to be abolished, where, in a sense, “the communists valued Parliament, the Advisory Boards and the Provincial Councils, the very bodies the Program vowed to abolish”.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, the 1952 Defiance Campaign, which advocated for ‘civil disobedience’, was considered a form of ‘turning the other cheek’ by the Africanist youth, and quickly garnered disdain amongst the more militant members of the Youth League. This was also an instance in which contestation of ideas between the communists and the nationalists intensified, because collaboration between white communists and non-white communists was a key, although small, compromise, since only Patrick Duncan participated in the march.

The 1952 Defiance Campaign illustrated that the then leadership of the ANC was not dedicated to abolishing apartheid, but rather, sought State power at the expense of black people, in the sense that their assimilation into white structures would mean that they would only be interested in attaining political freedom for black people. In contrast, the youth league under Mda’s leadership was dedicated to self-determination. It was prepared to accept that because the white system was inherently violent, non-violence was reluctantly accepted, but constantly rejected as non-revolutionary: “We regarded

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<sup>80</sup> Leeman, B., “Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo”, p. 19.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>82</sup> See interview with Mda, p. 15.



civil disobedience as negative, as passive submission. It was “anti-revolutionary” because you could not strike back. You had to turn the other cheek.”<sup>83</sup>

The 1952 Defiance campaign, which was designed to usher in an era of non-violent and non-racial resistance against unjust laws like the pass laws, stood the risk of being overtaken by the communists, and was at its most critical stage, where police violence was anticipated. According to Leeman, the implementation of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and Public Safety Act, which the state weaponised to instil fear in the protestors, led to the abrupt end of the defiance campaign, and marked the beginning of 'legal' resistance by the ANC, which was championed by lawyers they acquired through their alliances with the Communist Party.<sup>84</sup> The Africanists were agitated when the positive action campaign was abruptly terminated, due to the suppression they were subjected to by Government. There were mass arrests, followed by the arrest of the leaders of the movement. The Africanists believed that the protests ought to have continued, because they would have eventually caused the National Party to negotiate. The inability of the Africanist nationalists and the African communists within the ANC to agree on the necessity of mass action and the abolishing of the apartheid state led to the intensification of disjuncture within the ANC, accounting for the formation of the PAC. It was an intellectual and organisational response to the ideological bankruptcy of the old guard of the ANC that held the movement hostage and vulnerable to infiltration by white communists.

The highly politicised Africanist youth of the ANC continued to be disgruntled, but stayed in the ANC. although with reservations, but their patience with the movement was pushed to its limits as the communist influence continued to sprout and resulted in the adoption of the Freedom Charter. Potlako Leballo was a co-founder of the Basutoland African Congress, which helped him in mobilising communities in support of the ANC in the Transvaal area; a constituency which had been very sceptical of the ANC's leadership.<sup>85</sup> Leeman argues that Sobukwe was a very unusual leader, whose arrival from the University of Fort Hare to the ANCYL Orlando Branch made the ANC a

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<sup>83</sup> See interview with Mda, p. 16.

<sup>84</sup> Leeman, B., “Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo”, pp. 25–26.

<sup>85</sup> Leeman, B., “Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo”, p 28

hostile environment for the leadership of the ANC, in the sense that Sobukwe's political charisma garnered him a large number of followers. He asserts that Sobukwe ushered an era of intellectuals into the ANC. He points to the launch of *The Africanist* in November 1954, a newspaper distributed by the Africanist youth, that replaced *The Bureau of African Nationalism* was one of the projects undertaken by the young intellectuals of the ANCYL under the leadership of Sobukwe. Leeman claims that Sobukwe was an unusual radical, who was ridiculed in 1959, after he predicted that South Africa would be free by 1963.<sup>86</sup> This youthful era of young intellectuals saw to it that the ideas of communism circulating in the party were always contested, and they later rejected the Freedom Charter. This was due to the fact that it deviated from the 1949 Programme of Action and was in favour of assimilation of the elite few ANC leaders into the apartheid government at the expense of the total liberation of African workers and masses.

The drafting of the Freedom Charter was an idea proposed during 1953, when the ANC leadership announced plans to host a Congress of the People. Leeman further argues that, in 1954, the ANC hosted a conference in Uitenhage (Eastern Cape), where the ANC leadership and various other organisations present, such as the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress, and the South African Congress of Democrats convened to discuss the next steps for the democratic movement in South Africa. Herein, members of these organisations discussed details concerning the Freedom Charter. Leeman further asserts that the ANCYL Orlando Branch, which was under the leadership of Potlako Leballo, was not recognised at this Congress. It can be argued that this was a tactic used to silence the nationalist stronghold of the movement, since this branch was home to most of the Africanists in the youth movement, such as Sobukwe and Lembede. The Freedom Charter was launched in Kliptown in 1955. Leeman argues that the adoption of the Freedom charter in 1956 signified the SACP takeover of the ANC. He further argues that the Africanists rejected the Freedom Charter because it was allowing the minority i.e. SACP communists to deter the ANC from the 1949 Programme of Action which was consequently a delay to democracy. He

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<sup>86</sup> Leeman, B., "Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo", pp 30-31

further argues that Joe Slovo was the author of the Freedom Charter.<sup>87</sup> This uncertainty as to who wrote the charter has remained a point of contestation and is made even more contentious by the belief that: "It is true that Luthuli did sign things that he had never seen, for example, the Freedom Charter."<sup>88</sup>

Luthuli was opposed to the Africanists because he believed that they were too extreme in their ideology, and he was alarmed by Sobukwe's ability to recruit gang members into the PAC i.e., Sobukwe was alleged to be affiliated with gang organisations from Moroka and other townships.<sup>89</sup> The leadership of the ANC claimed that the ideology of the Africanist faction of the Youth League and later the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania were racist, and that they were seeking to divide the country even further than racist white supremacists. This is one of the ways in which the communist influence of the CPSA and SACP overpowered the nationalist faction of the ANC. Leeman maintains that the Africanists were not satisfied with Luthuli's leadership of the Transvaal region and, as a result, Stephen Segale led a petition against Luthuli, calling for him to be dethroned so that he could be replaced by Sobukwe or Josias Madzunya, who had joined the ANC in 1958. Africanists in the ANC were agitated by the leadership over their decision to adopt the Freedom Charter, where the 1957 Conference became a hostile situation in which both sides had thugs guarding their interests at the Orlando Communal Hall. The Africanists lost the elections to the Charterists and the ideological split in the ANC widened. This exacerbated the division between Mda and the other Africanists, in the sense that: "There were two school of African nationalists. One had faith in being able to supplant the communists; the others had lost faith in it and advocated a new party".<sup>90</sup>

Leeman argues that the Africanists had doubts about staying in the ANC after the adoption of the Freedom Charter, but the 1958 conference worsened matters. According to Leeman, the Africanists were joined by Josias Madzunya in 1958. Leeman further argues that Ntsu Mokhele, who was the leader of the Basutoland African

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<sup>87</sup> Leeman, B., "Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo", pp 36- 39

<sup>88</sup> See interview with Mda, p.15

<sup>89</sup> Leeman, B., "Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo", p42

<sup>90</sup> See interview with Mda

Congress, advised Sobukwe to form a new political party, and to consider focusing more on politics that would oblige him to resign from his post as a lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand.<sup>91</sup> The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania was formed, using the funds donated by the Ghanaian All Africa People's Convention, on the 6-7<sup>th</sup> of April 1959. Leeman maintains that Leballo nominated Sobukwe for the presidency because he believed that the organisation must be led by an intellectual.<sup>92</sup> The first NEC was made up of Sobukwe, who was the president, Leballo, who was the Secretary-general, and A.B Ngcobo who was the Treasurer. There were provincial executive committees in Durban, The Cape region, and the Orange Free State. According to Leeman, Josias Madzunya did not get a position because Leballo and Sobukwe believed that his lack of education foreclosed his leadership potential.

Ka Plaatjie asserts that Josias Madzunya was a well-respected orator, whose charisma and courage appealed to the youth. He was able to stand up to the apartheid government; he defied Verwoed in public, and he also led the Alexander Bus boycott in 1957. Most of Madzunya's supporters came from Alexander township, owing to the fact that he ran the Alexander Branch of the ANC and was popular among the working class of the area.

According to Ka Plaatjie, the PAC was formed in order to outshine the ANC, and its leaders developed policies and ideological stances with the hopes of eclipsing it. While this popular and narrow interpretation is purported by most liberal and communist scholars, inductive reasoning would imply that it distorts history so as to fit the saviour narrative of the ANC. Moreover, owing to the fact that Ka Plaatjie was a member of the PAC who has since joined the ANC,<sup>93</sup> these sentiments could be biased, and may reflect a general disdain of the PAC's political ideologies and its constituents by Ka Plaatjie. The idea that the PAC is a derivative of the ANC reduces the PAC's generational mission to a popularity contest with the ANC. It erases the fact that the PAC wanted to lead the African masses to their rightful place, namely being a self-

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<sup>91</sup> Leeman, B., "Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo", pp. 44-45.

<sup>92</sup> Leeman, B., "Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo", p. 50.

<sup>93</sup> Houston, G, Ka Plaatjie. T and April. T, "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa, 1961-1981, *Historia*, vol.60, no.2, November, 2015, p. 24.

reliant and liberated African people. These ideals were rejected by the ANC, leading to the urgent need for another party, since the Africanists felt that the ANC could not be saved from its own affiliations with the Communist block as well as from its ideological shortcomings.

In conclusion, this chapter has shown that the ideological 'split' between the nationalists and the communists of the ANC can be traced back to the contestations between the 'old guard' and the 'new guard', which can be classified into different locations, political moments, and actions. The establishment of the ANCYL marks the first location of this conflict, where its establishment and the election of A.P. Mda and Muziwakhe A. Lembede as its presidents afforded the African nationalist faction of the ANCYL a means of expression, and led to a growing mistrust of the ANC's non-racial and communist leadership faction. Secondly, it is visible that the drafting of a watered-down version of the 1949 Programme of Action epitomised the formal rejection of African nationalism as a doctrine of revolution in the movement by communists in the ANC, which led to further disenfranchisement within the ranks of the Africanist movement.

Thirdly, the same adoption of a watered-down liberal version of the 1949 Programme of Action and its subsequent betrayal for the 1952 Defiance Campaigns marks the moment of the further split taking place within the ANC. The 1952 Defiance Campaign forced that camp of Africanists that only sympathised with communism within the ANC to accept non-violence and collaboration with communists, which exacerbated the conflict and contestation between the communists and nationalists. Furthermore, after the Defiance Campaign, the ANC adopted the 1955 Freedom Charter, which marks the location of the fourth political moment, an event that amplified ideological differences in the ANC. The 1954 and 1957 conferences of the ANC were highly politicised and criminalised moments which were characterised by the castration of the Africanist movement, as some of the stronger nationalist branches like the Orlando Branch were denied equal participation. This act that culminated in the total discontent of the African nationalists led to the founding of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania.

## Chapter Three: From Sharpeville to *uPoqo*

The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) is known for its radical politics, which gave birth to important moments in history, such as the 1960 Positive Action campaigns that occurred in Langa and Sharpeville Townships, as well as the advent of armed resistance. As explored in the previous chapter, the Positive Action campaign was an act of 'civil disobedience' meant to challenge the pass system imposed upon the non-European population to maintain apartheid. Some members of the ANC Youth League, such as A. P. Mda, P. K. Leballo and others, were not in favor of civil disobedience, but accepted it as a method of struggle that could yield certain results before the ultimate conclusion of violent revolution. As such, it makes sense to argue that the first campaign of the PAC was an act of civil disobedience, where the leadership's inclination to stay within the legal bounds of protest action while disobeying the 'dompass' laws can be understood as a militant act that marks advent of the more radical politics of the PAC. This chapter will illustrate how the transition into the armed struggle can be attributed to the acceptance of the need for an armed resistance, owing to the ramifications of the Positive Action Campaign. Subsequently, it will also explore the origins of *uPoqo*, by analysing the overlooked military activities and accounts of armed resistance in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape, as well as other parts of the country.

The 1960 Positive Action campaigns that included the anti-pass campaigns in Orlando, Sharpeville, Evaton and Langa, amongst others, were aimed at exposing the injustices that existed in the lives of the African masses as a result of the pass system, and the unfair capitalist labour conditions of the migrant system, as a result of the restrictions of movement due to the pass system. However, due to their defiant nature, the campaigns were destined to be extreme in the sense that civilians were encouraged to leave their passes at home and avail themselves for arrest. As a legal /offence and, as such, warranted state violence, and intervention as in any racist authoritarian state. For this reason, it can be argued that the insistence of the leaders of the PAC to follow the correct protocol for mass protest action not only solidifies the claim that this was an 'act of civil disobedience' in the sense that they made known their intentions to the State,

but also in the sense that it was an act of defiance. Moreover, the campaigns were a pathway to liberation, being a form of preparation for insurrection day, which leaders like Sobukwe argued would occur in 1963. By 1959, Sobukwe was considered an unusual radical for claiming that South Africa would be free by 1963, and was ridiculed for that.<sup>94</sup>

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1959, R.M. Sobukwe, the then president of the PAC, informed the Minister of Police, Major General Rademeyer, that there would be peaceful mass protest action on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1960. Leeman asserts that Sobukwe also hosted a press conference on the 18<sup>th</sup> at Mylur House, where he gave the same message. Sobukwe also gave instructions to his PAC constituency to leave their passes at home and go to the nearest police station in order to hand themselves in for arrest for not carrying their passes.<sup>95</sup> On the morning of the 21<sup>st</sup> of March, there were 200 members participating in the march in Orlando, 4000 members in Bophelong and Boipatong, 10000 in Evaton, and between 5000 and 7000 members in Sharpeville. Ka Plaatjie argues that the numbers were low in Orlando due to poor mobilisation, even though this was one of the PAC's strongholds.<sup>96</sup>

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1960, the police opened fire on the protesting masses in Sharpeville after they received a direct order, which Nyakane Tsolo heard on his way to the police station, killing 67 and wounding 86, amongst which were 40 women and eight children. He asserts that the PAC estimated the toll to be higher. Leeman also claims that some of the protesters saw the leadership of the ANC, including Mandela, Duma Nokwe, and Oliver Tambo, pass through the protesters mocking Sobukwe and demoralising the masses.<sup>97</sup> Leeman further asserts that the apartheid regime saw the actions of the PAC as a *swaart gevaar* that produced leaders who were unknown to the government. The violence suffered at the hands of the State was a clear testimony to the known oppression of black people for demanding their civil liberties, and this fuelled further resistance in other parts of the country.

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<sup>94</sup>Leeman, B., "Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo", pp. 30-31.

<sup>95</sup>Leeman, B., "Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo", p. 60.

<sup>96</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, p. 672.

<sup>97</sup>Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p. 296.

The Sharpeville massacre caused the international community to lose faith in the South African State. Kwame Nkrumah subsequently spearheaded a campaign that led to South Africa being kicked out of the Commonwealth. He further argues that, to the PAC, Sharpeville marked a moment of courage, whereby African masses showed their discontent with the apartheid regime. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, Phillip Kgosana led a march to parliament in Cape Town in which 15 000-30 000 PAC members were marching against the brutal murders that had occurred in Sharpeville. After the march had been diverted from Cape Town to the Caledon Square, Kgosana dispersed the protestors when he anticipated danger, and was promised a meeting with the Minister of Justice, who later had him arrested. Following mass incarcerations and the increased political unrest, The PAC was banned along with other African political parties, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 1960. The PAC had chosen to adopt the slogan of “No bail, No defence and No fine” to prove that they were not going to recognise colonial courts.<sup>98</sup>

The role of legislation in maintaining the rule of Afrikaner supremacy in the form of apartheid segregation was one of paramount importance, as it was a means for the state to suppress efforts to resist by those it oppressed. It can be argued, therefore, that the manner in which the leadership of the PAC responded to their incarceration was a political statement that professed the illegitimacy and illegality of the colonial courts. They availed themselves for incarceration because they believed and sought to prove that colonial courts were inherently unjust tools of oppression. For them, defying their statutes was a means to stand up to their oppressive nature through legislation such as the Criminal Law Amendment Act and Public Safety Act. It can be argued, therefore, that this ‘act of defiance’ was an expression of the radicalism of the politics of the PAC, which was a product of the political conscientisation as Youth Leaguers. It was the same rejection of colonial institutions emphasised by the Africanist Youth in the 1949 Programme of Action, and which guided their refusal to put up any defence and their decision not to pay fines or to post bail upon arrest.

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<sup>98</sup>Leeman, B., “Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania”, p 297-299



However, many attempts have been made to vilify and degrade the Positive Action campaign by claiming it was reactionary and ill-planned. According to Arianna Lissoni, the ‘no bail, no defence, no fine’ decision was based on “inspirational leadership” and “slogans” that ultimately left the PAC stranded and uncertain. This argument fails to recognise that the PAC had adopted a revolutionary stance that was not oblivious to the jeopardy that it put the masses, although it was naïve in the sense that they had no arms. However, it can be argued that the lack of armed resistance in the Positive Action campaign was a result of the Christian and idealistic values of Sobukwe, and others. Moreover, the author chose to ignore the fact that other PAC leaders, including P.K. Leballo, had anticipated the violence. She also fails to recognise that Sobukwe had taken measures to ensure that the party would have support should a situation like Sharpeville unfold by sending Peter Molotsi to seek international political support. He also insisted that John Nyati Pokela not be included in the National Executive Council (NEC) in case violence erupted so that he would constitute a second NEC after the incarceration of the first one.<sup>99</sup>

The Sharpeville massacre and the banning of the PAC and other political organisations led to a move towards armed struggle by many organisations, including the ANC, as they were forced to operate underground. The ANC’s military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe was founded to propagate the use of violence and armed struggle against the apartheid regime. Other movements which moved in the direction of the armed struggle were the African Resistance movement (ARM), which had mostly white middle class members and a few black members, the Yu Chi Chan Club (YCCC) and African Peoples Democratic Union of Southern Africa (APDUSA), which was the military wing of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), a movement founded by Dr Neville Alexander. This radicalisation of political resistance through the decision to move towards the armed struggle ensured that a good number of African people were ready to take up arms. This marks the formalisation of the military activities of *uPoqo*.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC’s underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, p677

<sup>100</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC’s underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, p677

The PAC took the decision to turn to armed resistance on the 20<sup>th</sup> of December 1960.<sup>101</sup> Houston and co-authors argue that the decision to turn to the armed struggle was taken at the PAC conference in Maseru, and the seating also planned a day of insurrection that was scheduled to take place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 1963.<sup>102</sup> Ka Plaatjie corroborates that the decision to turn to the armed struggle was taken in 1961, when Pokela was ordered to revive the Africanist Task Force.<sup>103</sup> Leeman further argues that, since 1960, peasants in Pondoland had been engaged in opposition to certain local injustices. As a result of this agitation, eleven were killed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1960. He also asserts that, in 1960, a state of emergency was declared in the Transkei, and that 4769 peasants were detained, while 20 were executed by hanging. He maintains that, in 1960, PAC militants were already committing violence, and that they were known as *uPoqo*.<sup>104</sup>

It can be argued that *uPoqo* emerged due first of all to the fact that the PAC and ANC were banned, creating a need for underground organising against the State. Secondly, migrant labourers in the Cape were attracted to the PAC, because it spoke to the issues that affected them. Thirdly, the Bantu Authorities Act led to political unrest in the Transkei after chiefs were granted the opportunity to carry out land rehabilitation measures, not all their constituents supported the initiative which led to peasant protests for land redistribution. The radicalisation of the rural folk was an important tool used to recruit members for *uPoqo*.<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, the dispossession of many families of arable land as a result of the formalisation of traditional authorities of governance led to further disenfranchisement, as this meant that the poor and 'common' members of society had to labour for their sustenance, often as migrants, which further exacerbated class antagonisms and simultaneously radicalised the peasantry.

The radical actions and militancy of *uPoqo* and of other movements of armed resistance were justified in their use of violence; their military activities were a response to the

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<sup>101</sup>Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p323

<sup>102</sup>Houston, G, ka Plaatjie, T and April, T., "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa, 1961-198", p30

<sup>103</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, p 678

<sup>104</sup>Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", p. 323.

<sup>105</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, p. 676.

gratuitous violence of colonial conquest and state suppression and, as such, were warranted. Tom Lodge is another important scholar who writes from a colonial perspective. His lack of sensitivity and empathy towards armed stems from the fact that he is a white male writing about something he has never been a part of; as such it is worth noting that he did not have the political imperative and priority to repossess his dispossessed land at the hands of white settlers. Furthermore, he also believed that *uPoqo* was a movement of terrorists, which strategically overlooks the State's own powerful terrorism that brought about such armed resistance. He also refuses to call the PAC by its rightful name. Instead, he calls it the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa, which shows that he does not recognise the importance of that name and is, therefore, both ignorant of and biased against the PAC. This kind of defiling and vulgarising of the political activities and objectives of *uPoqo* was equally a reactionary and redundant argument, when we consider that State violence would continue to be a nightmarish reality for the majority citizenry, regardless of the resistance mounted against it.

The origins of *uPoqo* can be traced to the political conscientisation of the inhabitants of certain rural areas from 1948 to 1960, and the PAC's role in radicalising the abaThembu region of the Eastern Cape. Lodge asserts that Africans in the Transkei were not content with government institutions like the land rehabilitation centres that were established by the chiefs, and they created peasantry because rural folk were not given sufficient land to farm and the herdsmen of various chiefs used to steal their livestock. The Bantu authorities act gave pro-government chiefs like Chief Matanzima and some headsman some authority over the people of Thembuland. In May 1961, paramount chiefs like Chief Dalindyebo opposed the Bantu Authorities Act. the All African Convention and other movements also engaged in acts of resistance to the Bantu Authorities Act.<sup>106</sup> This indicates that further land dispossession caused Africans to resort to violent measures to correct the injustices of the colonial courts. More than that, the decision to start *uPoqo* was yet another manifestation of an 'act of defiance' against the historical injustices of colonial conquest enforced by oppressive legislature.

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<sup>106</sup>Lodge, T.G., "Insurrectionism in South Africa", pp. 137-139.

Ka Plaatjie, in his journal article entitled *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981* argues that the term *UPoqo* emerged from a meeting held in Langa between the PAC and migrant labourers who stayed in the same-sex hostels in that area. According to the recounts of Mfanasekhaya Gqobose, a founder member of the PAC, the term *uPoqo* was first heard from Comrade Bula during a PAC rally in Langa. Furthermore, the testimony of Ace Mgxashe corroborates this claim in the sense that he maintains that the name *uPoqo* came about after Mangaliso Sobukwe had asked members of PAC in Langa during a conference to translate the mission of the PAC into an isiXhosa name.<sup>107</sup>

Lodge maintains that *uPoqo* was a violent insurrection movement, which drew its support from migrant labourers. These labourers were resisting their working conditions and labour exploitation in urban areas. Members of the movement also resisted the increased insecurity concerning land that was caused by the Bantu Authorities Act of 1955, which dismantled the Bunga system of the chiefs. These chiefs stood against land reforms, as well as the fact that the Transkei peasantry were obliged to depend more on migrant labour after the introduction of the Bantu Authorities Act, which deepened their rage against apartheid institutions. Proclamation 400, a statute that gave Bantustan authorities the power to steal the livestock of their constituents created a state of emergency in November 1960, which led to more unrest in Thembuland. Lodge argues that there were chiefly rivalries that inspired the abaThembu resistance against the Bantustan authorities. The rivalry between Matanzima and Dalindyebo fuelled the masses' opposition to land rehabilitation measures and meetings to plan strategies of resistance, which started happening from as early as 1960 onwards.<sup>108</sup>

It is important to note that the violence committed against illegitimate Bantustan authorities and state institutions in the Bantustan reserves was a necessary tragedy and led to *uPoqo* gaining a reputation of being both violent and ruthless. However, it must be acknowledged that the positionality and occupation of Bantustan authorities had not only made them an organ of the status quo, but they were fully acting out on the authority they were afforded, and used it to oppress their constituents, which warranted

<sup>107</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, p 678

<sup>108</sup>Lodge, T.G., "Insurrectionism in South Africa", pp 139-140

violent insurrection against them. Moreover, the violence committed against white civilians were acts of vengeance in that they were meant to prepare the path for the day of insurrection in 1963. It can be argued that their targeting of white civilians was a violent yet justified message and response to the State, but more so, it was to remind the white settlers that their reign of comfort was soon coming to an end and that the African masses were prepared to lay their lives on the line for their emancipation.

Therefore, it is important to discuss and explore at length a few of the military activities of *uPoqo* in order to highlight their radicalism and convictions. The violent acts of resistance against Bantustan authorities marked the beginning of armed resistance against apartheid by PAC members under the banner of *uPoqo*. In January 1961, a headman was killed after Proclamation 400 gave headmen the right to confiscate the peasants' livestock. Two more headmen were killed that year. In 1962, there were three attempts to take Chief Matanzima's life. The first attempt was made on October 14<sup>th</sup>, after which another attempt was made by a group of 20-30 members travelling from Cape Town. These men were planning to free members of *uPoqo*, who were prisoners in Chief Matanzima's palace.

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1962, *uPoqo* killed some white civilians camping near the Bashee River. In February 1963, *uPoqo* also killed a headman in Qulugu, after he had introduced fencing as another form of land rehabilitation.<sup>109</sup> Lodge further argues that, in 1963, areas like Engcobo and Umtata were said to have been the most violent areas in the Transkei, and that 1963 was the peak of *uPoqo* insurrectionism. He further argues that, in 1964, pro-government chiefs like Matanzima were trying to stop the resistance by bribing and intimidating paramount chiefs that were against the land rehabilitation programmes, and that by 1965, *uPoqo* was building bases that were going to be funded by the PAC's external link in Basutoland.<sup>110</sup>

The emergence of *uPoqo* in the Transkei was proof that local discontent was politicised without the help of outsider organisations. Lodge argued that the Red Xhosas, indigenous Xhosa people that were identified by their traditional red blankets and red

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<sup>109</sup>Lodge, T.G., "Insurrectionism in South Africa", pp 141-142

<sup>110</sup>Lodge, T.G., "Insurrectionism in South Africa", pp 141-142

ochre, of the Transkei were not politicised in 1960. He further argues that *uPoqo* in Thembuland lacked coherence, unity, and the dramatic quality of the Pondoland resistance against the state and Bantustan authorities. He also argues that there was no strategy, and there were no demands for change that went beyond the causes of their hardship. He argues that the *abaThembu* saw politics in the apocalyptic terms of a general uprising, whereas the *amaMpondomise* had programmes like store boycotts that were able to separate the traders who collaborated with the state from those who were sympathisers of the resistance. He argues that *uPoqo* was not a vanguard movement as it failed to draw connections between the frustrations of the migrant labourers in urban areas and those of the rural peasantry. This would mean that there existed a contradictory relationship between the rural peasantry and migrant labourers, where the very same migrant labourers who moved from Cape Town to go protect their agricultural interests in Thembuland when *Poqo* operatives attempted to kill Chief Matanzima.<sup>111</sup> The claim that *uPoqo* was fragmented into the migrant labourers and rural peasants is ahistorical and ignores the origins and implications of the migrant labour system. Those who left the rural areas for the city were also dispossessed in their displacement, and were likewise affected by the fate of the rural areas.

Makwethu and Wellington Ishongayi and other militant members of the PAC took control of the local party structure in the Western Cape from less radical officials. On the night of November 22<sup>nd</sup> /23<sup>rd</sup>, members of *uPoqo* attacked the Paarl Police Station and Prison. Five members of *uPoqo* were killed, and fourteen were wounded, while two white people were killed. Some of the attackers were later hanged. In December 1962, the PAC reiterated its earliest promise that 1963 would be the year of liberation for Africa. *uPoqo* remained strong in the Cape but lagged behind in the then Transvaal. On February 5<sup>th</sup> 1963, five whites, including children, were chopped to death, and their dead bodies burnt next to the Bashee River in the Transkei.<sup>112</sup>

Leeman further argues that *uPoqo* activists were mostly urbanised African youth, who still retained strong rural connections, some of them had formal education, but they were for the most part unemployed. In March 1963, the PAC agreed that a national

<sup>111</sup>Lodge, T.G., "Insurrectionism in South Africa", 1984, pp. 143-144.

<sup>112</sup>Leeman, B., "Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania", pp. 324 – 325.

uprising would commence on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April that same year. On March 21<sup>st</sup>, the PAC issued a press statement declaring that the time was right for a knockout blow against whites, and that women as well as children were not exempt from this violence. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1963, the government was informed that the PAC and *uPoqo* referred to the same organisation. Judge Snyman claimed that “*uPoqo* is nou sterker as ooit” (*uPoqo* is now stronger than ever).<sup>113</sup> The Snyman Commission was, therefore, another tool of suppression designed to delegitimise *uPoqo* and the armed struggle in general.

In conclusion, the transition into armed resistance was a response to an increase in State suppression and the State’s violent response to mass action, namely, the Positive Action campaigns. Moreover, the transition signified the acceptance of the pessimistic and radical need for a violent response to colonial conquest and oppression. Subsequently, it can be argued that the anti-pass campaigns marked the beginning of active defiance and resistance by the PAC against segregatory legislation that restricted the movement of Africans in their land of birth. Despite the fact that the pass laws were only abolished 26 years later, the Positive Action campaigns succeeded in instilling the need for armed resistance, while also leading to the State intensifying its response to armed resistance, which contributed to the downfall of *uPoqo*, to be discussed in the next chapter. Owing to the transition into armed resistance, movements like *uPoqo* managed to use militancy in both rural and urban areas to advocate for freedom from colonial authorities, such as Bantustan traditional authorities and the apartheid state in general.

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<sup>113</sup>Leeman, B., “Lesotho and the Struggle for Azania”, pp. 325-326.

## Chapter Four: The Formalisation of the Armed Struggle from *uPoqo* to APLA

The transition to armed resistance, as argued in the previous chapter, was due to the banning of all liberation movements, including the PAC and ANC, as well as due to the mass murder and violation of the African masses during the anti-pass campaigns. The emergence of *uPoqo* and the Azania People's Liberation Army (APLA) marked the beginning of the PAC armed struggle initiatives, while also instilling a deeper disdain and hostility towards political parties in the apartheid government. Following the mass incarceration of PAC leaders, *uPoqo* and APLA were founded as military faculties of the PAC, aimed to be a response to the hostility and violence of the apartheid state. The downfall of *uPoqo* due to mass arrests and intensive state surveillance and interventions marks a point of contestation and distrust among the leadership of the PAC i.e., Potlako Kitchener Leballo was accused of causing the infiltration of *uPoqo*, due to his ties with white liberal Hans Lombard and being 'reckless'. Perhaps what is most significant about the term of P.K. Leballo as the president of the PAC was his acceptance of the need for armed resistance, and most importantly, the ideological refining of the PAC's ideological justifications of the armed struggles that occurred during and after his presidency.

The details of the policing interventions of the State and how it infiltrated *uPoqo* are important, in the sense that they offer insight into how the state carried out its devastation of the armed struggle. Moreover, it is important to understand these intricate details from the perspective of apartheid officials because, firstly, most of the arrests happened very swiftly, and many combatants of *uPoqo* were ambushed and could not record the arrests or inquire into how the infiltration occurred. With this view in mind, this study analysed the accounts of formal apartheid official Donald Card, as recorded by Thomas C. in his journal article *Bloodier than black and white: Liberation history seen through detective sergeant Donald Card's narrative of his investigations of Congo and UPOQO activities, 1960 to 1965*.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Thomas, C., "Bloodier than black and white: liberation history seen through detective sergeant Donald Card's narrative of his investigations of Congo and *UPOqo* activities of 1960-1965", *New Contree*, no.50, November, (2005).



Thomas argues that the liberation struggle had over been turned into a tool used to initiate civil disobedience, strikes, and boycotts, and the transition to violent struggle as a means to excoriate the apartheid regime as evildoers. He argues that certain events and developments, such as crime disguised as political activity are either ignored, or romanticised in the narrative of the history of the liberation struggle. He maintains that the Pondoland uprisings, known as the Congo movements, captured the imagination of the South African community, and that it seemed to be a typical peasant's revolt open to be romanticised, in the wake of the Maoist wave of military strategy in the 1950s.<sup>115</sup> This can be considered a narrow and naïve viewpoint of armed resistance and, ultimately, of *uPoqo*. It can be argued that this was the same sentiment that instilled in the racist Afrikaner state and its officials the need to dismantle and destroy *uPoqo*.

According to Thomas, *uPoqo* was a word coined the Chairperson of the PAC Western Cape region, in 1960, used to characterise the PAC. He further argues that the use of the word *uPoqo* stood in contrast to the multi-racial view of the ANC, but most importantly, it stood in contrast to the PAC's non-racial views, where an African is to be considered anyone who owes their allegiance to Africa. It seemed to advocate for a racialised violent insurgence that sought to liberate only Africans and cast the whites off to the sea. . He maintains that *uPoqo* worked undercover with the intention to kill like the Mau Mau. He argues that *uPoqo* instilled terror in the hearts of white civilians. Word of two courier women having been arrested reached the police in South Africa and, through informers, Thomas was able to discover that the PAC was planning a day of insurrection on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 1963. He argues that PAC members were planning to launch an attack called Operation Ransom, kidnapping white children for leverage to get the State to heed their demands. This is a suspicious assertion, because he is the only scholar who raises this point, and he asserts that PAC members denied this claim, making it hearsay at best.

Donald Card's narrative is important in the sense that it allows us to delve deeper into how the State carried out its infiltration of *uPoqo*, but more so, it highlights the cunning and oppressive nature of the policing system of the apartheid government, disguised as

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<sup>115</sup>Thomas, C., "Bloodier than black and white: liberation history seen through detective sergeant Donald Card's narrative of his investigations of Congo and *UPoqo* activities of 1960-1965", pp 39-41

public safety. Furthermore, it traces the infiltration of *uPoqo* and the military wings of the PAC to the infiltration of its cells in Thembuland and Pondoland of the Eastern Cape, and not necessarily the spate of mass arrests in 1963. In a sense, the infiltration of *uPoqo* cells began before the spate of mass arrests of the 1960s. Donald Card was a police officer who worked at the Fleet Street police station in East London. During his service, he built a network of informers. Thomas argues that the Pondoland revolt was a response to the land reform policies of the Betterment Act of 1939, which laid the groundwork for the Bantu Authorities Act of 1955. During the 1960s, resistance became violent, as many tribesmen and “foot soldiers”, known as iKongo, attacked pro-government chiefs and headmen, who had agreed to betterment and villagisation. He argues that this violence was a deviation from the ethics of war of the Bantu, which were against unjust wars and advocated for giving all a fair chance to retaliate.<sup>116</sup>

Different instances of violence against illegitimate chiefs, such as Chief Stanford Nomagqwatekana, and the murders of three other tribesmen, signify the resistance of *uPoqo* against Bantustan authorities, but more so, it allowed for the infiltration of Card as he used his opportunity to investigate these ‘crimes’ to gather intelligence on *uPoqo*. Most of the fights and wars between these men were also as a result of succession disputes. In spite of an alleged investigation into these murders, the Apartheid state prioritised the infiltration of *uPoqo*, in place of murders which were to be left without any form of justice; however, the activities of *uPoqo* were a consistent point of interest. The killing of Pondo rebels by paramount Chief Vukayibambe Sigcau, and the wounding of four other rebels, who were committed to fighting his illegitimate rule, was also not extensively investigated by Card. The amaMpondomise, however, recognised Donald Card as a force to be reckoned with, and some collaborated with him to ensure the arrests of rebels. Card hosted a series of meetings, where he urged members of *uPoqo* to surrender to arrest, whereupon some did so. Such an instance allegedly occurred when members of *uPoqo* surrendered themselves at Flagstaff Police Station. Card testified that members of *uPoqo* who surrendered themselves were executed. He

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<sup>116</sup>Thomas, C., “Bloodier than black and white: liberation history seen through detective sergeant Donald Card’s narrative of his investigations of Congo and *UPoqo* activities of 1960-1965”, p. 41.

further argues that amaMpondomise believed that Card practiced witchcraft, due to his excellent rate of conviction.<sup>117</sup>

Many scholars who have written on the Pondoland Rebellion have painted it as a prototypical peasant's revolt, based on their own imagination, and not the reality of the fact. The rebellion is said to be a case of State suppression of resistance against Bantustan authorities. Thomas maintains that the state had nothing to do with Card's conviction of suspects, and that many Pondos, such as Winnie Mandela's father, CK Madikizela, supported the Bantustan authorities. He maintains that regular tribesmen also became police informers, and that, together with the police, they worked towards bringing an end to the amaMpondomise uprising.

*uPoqo* units were spread throughout the country: in East London, Port Elizabeth, Tshwane, and Western Cape. Members of the PAC first received military training in Lesotho under the leadership of Mfanasekhaya Gqobose, and Templeton Ntantala during the 1960s. Despite the ability to establish these cells and camps, the camps did not survive for long, and were negatively affected by the political instability in the party. Houston et al. argue that the fall of *uPoqo* was also due to the fact that leadership conflicts resulted in little attention being given to military training and operations, which led to shortages in resources and arms. They further argue that international community withheld funding due to leadership conflicts, which meant that the cells did not have that sufficient means at their disposal.<sup>118</sup>

Houston et al. argue that the PAC conducted fewer instances of sabotage in comparison to ANC and NCL. The radicalism of the PAC also led to it not achieving as much as the ANC and NCL, because the former was a communist party masquerading as an African Nationalist liberation movement, and the latter was a liberal party, which were both appealing to the international community in the sense that they were considered non-violent. Furthermore, due to their affiliation to the neo-colonial ANC, scholars such as Houston et al. perpetuate the false and inadequate narrative that the

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<sup>117</sup>Thomas, C., "Bloodier than black and white: liberation history seen through detective sergeant Donald Card's narrative of his investigations of Congo and *UPoqo* activities of 1960-1965", pp. 39-58 .

<sup>118</sup>Houston. G, Ka Plaatjie. T and April. T., "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa", pp. 30-33.

PAC was a leadership battlefield, and its failures are as a result of its inability to elect efficient and effective leadership.

According to Kondlo, the report of the Snyman Commission exposed the 'brutal' nature of *uPoqo*: the murdering of white women and children. Whilst agreeing to the claim that the military actions of *uPoqo* and subsequently APLA, this research has highlighted that the violence that the State unleashed against members of *uPoqo* and black African people in general was severe and was not committed for the benefit of the people, but rather to protect the status quo. I argue that the radicalism and 'extremism' of *uPoqo* can be understood as an adequate counter-response to the violent nature of the State, and its devastating consequences.

The report of the Snyman Commission, coupled with Potlako Leballo's press statement, issued on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1963, that associated the PAC with *uPoqo*, devastated both. The apartheid government responded by imprisoning and executing cadres of the PAC. By June 1963, 3246 members of *uPoqo* were arrested, after initially two women couriers were arrested by the Basutoland Police, and 128 were convicted of murder. In April 1966, thirty *uPoqo* members were accused of sabotage and conspiracy to murder warders at Gamkaspoot Prison, and on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June of the same year, seven *uPoqo* members were sentenced in the Port Elizabeth (PE) Court for conspiring to blow up municipality buildings and railway bridges. In 1968, twelve members of *uPoqo* were on trial for planning to attack a police station, a power station and a post office in Victoria West. In 1969, resident *uPoqo* activists in Graaff-Reinet and Mount Coke were arrested for disguising *uPoqo* as a religious organisation. Ka Plaatjie maintains that between 1963 and 1968, forty-two members of *uPoqo* were executed at the Pretoria Central Prison and sixty-one out of one-hundred-and-one political executions that occurred in the 1960s were of *uPoqo* members.<sup>119</sup>

One example of how the inefficiency and inadequacy of the leadership of the PAC led to the demise of *uPoqo* can be observed after the exiling of many members of the leadership of the PAC from 1962. When P.K. Leballo was exiled to Maseru in 1962, he failed to provide *uPoqo* members with ideological and political leadership. Instead of

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<sup>119</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, pp. 679-680.

admitting his shortcomings, he made false promises to provide them with arms. Kondlo argues that this produced a generation of militants, to whom action preceded political theory and, as such, most of them had very little political education. Kondlo compares *uPoqo* to the Mau-Mau movement of Kenya, both operating underground, drawing support from rural peasants, and having a similar target. Kondlo argues that *uPoqo* died, in part, because of Leballo's recklessness when he disclosed to the media that *uPoqo* was going to have a general uprising in South Africa. This directly led to mass arrests and trials.<sup>120</sup>

After the founding of *uPoqo* in 1961, and the banning of liberation movements, PAC leaders were forced into exile and received military training in Cairo, Algeria, and China. Phillip Kgosana and three other members of the PAC received military training in Ethiopia. Gasson Ndlovu led a group of 18 cadres in training during 1962 in Cairo. Zebulon Mokoena led a group of cadres from Durban through a commando course for nine months in Cairo during 1965, and Templeton Ntantala as well as Gerald Khondlo received training in Algeria. Houston et al. further argues that cadres of the PAC received training in China in 1964 and 1967, when Ntantala led comrades in training. The PAC shared a close connection with the Chinese PLA ideologically and through military strategy.<sup>121</sup>

From 1963 to 1970, there were three important PAC military camps. The first was Kinkuzu Camp in Congo, established in 1963 after the Prime Minister of Congo promised to offer the PAC a military base after he had failed to keep his promise to allow the PAC to share a camp with the National Liberation Front of Angola. The second camp was Chunya Camp in Tanzania, established in May 1964 after the PAC's headquarters were relocated to Lesotho in 1964. This camp constituted mere rudimentary structures and was never improved upon, because J.D Nyaose refused to use money donated by the Chinese government to start the Federation of Free Trade Unions of South Africa. The third camp was Zenkobo Camp in Zambia, established in 1966 after Leballo convinced Kenneth Kaunda to allow the PAC to set up a camp there.

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<sup>120</sup>Kondlo, K., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution", pp. 282-291.

<sup>121</sup>Houston, G, ka Plaatjie, T and April, T, "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa", pp. 33-35.

Houston et al. report that most PAC camps were inhumane; they had limited food, were overpopulated, and had limited medical facilities.<sup>122</sup> This period marked the realisation and manifestation of the PAC's military strategies, which receive discussion in the next chapter.

Houston et al. argues that after being exiled, leadership conflicts caused the PAC to not infiltrate South Africa until 1968. Leballo and Ngcobo and Raboroko forwarded differing views on the involvement of the international community in the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa where Ngcobo and Raboroko advocated for the involvement of the international community in the liberation struggle in South Africa whereas Leballo believed in self-determination of the African masses and advocated for independence. The second leadership conflict is that of Leballo and Ntantala. Templeton Ntantala used the failure of Villa Peri operation of APLA, a military operation where a group of 12 PAC guerrillas planned to infiltrate South Africa to build army bases and other military missions to attack Leballo. They also used the discontent in the camps in their attack. This led to killings and detention in the Zenkobo Camp, where both these leaders enjoyed substantial support, and where tensions between their respective supporters ultimately led Kenneth Kaunda to shut down the camp. In 1968, the OAU also withdrew its support from the PAC due to leadership conflicts. Furthermore, the discovery of the attempted coup in Tanzania by the courts of law where Leballo testified that a particular leadership faction in Tanzania had approached for help to overthrow the government and he also testified that some members of the ANC were identified as collaborators in the coup. This led to the ANC being expelled from Tanzania, after which other African countries began to become suspicious of the PAC, believing that it was involved in the internal conflicts of other countries.<sup>123</sup>

Another cause for the death and fall of *uPoqo* is that some amongst the ranks of the PAC were sceptical of *uPoqo* and its use of violence to resist the apartheid regime. Kondlo maintains that Peter Molotsi believed that liberation movements in South Africa

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<sup>122</sup> Houston. G, ka Plaatjie. T and April. T, "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa", p37-40

<sup>123</sup> Houston. G, Ka Plaatjie. T and April. T., "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa", pp. 40-42.

had no experience of guerrilla warfare, and were desperate to become their own liberators. Charles Lakaje believed that the PAC was unorganised, uncoordinated, and emotional during the time of the *uPoqo* attacks. It did not have a carefully planned out programme and its actions served as a spectacle of battle in the hopes of garnering the fear and respect of its adversary, their military activities did not bring the downfall of the apartheid government instead they were vilified and persecuted for them.<sup>124</sup>

Kwandile Kondlo in his thesis titled: *In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution: The Exile History of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania*<sup>125</sup> argues that leaders of the PAC held different opinions on matters of military strategy. He maintains that APLA was formalised as a military wing of the PAC in 1968 by members of *uPoqo*. Following the killings of white families by *uPoqo*, the apartheid government introduced the Snyman Commission to hunt down members of *uPoqo* and bring them to justice. The systematic suppression and devastation of *uPoqo* and APLA combatants through mass arrests and executions was an unwavering attempt to decrease the hope of the people in the PAC, but more so, it sought to weaken the elements of the South African political landscape that insisted on the need for armed resistance.

In conclusion, this chapter has illustrated that the fall of *uPoqo* was due to a variety of reasons, where in particular, the increased policing pressure from the State saw to the arrest of many *Poqo* combatants, which reduced the amount of foot soldiers the movement had to hand to achieve its aims. The leadership conflicts in the PAC led to the neglect of training camps, as resources were not spent on improving the conditions of the camps, and the lack of legitimate leadership as well as the withdrawal of support from the international community was also a concern. Furthermore, the radical politics of the PAC left it ostracised, and as such, other movements managed to achieve much more than it did, due to the fact that they had more international support since they were deemed non-violent and non-racialist. The fall of *uPoqo* due to the afore-mentioned reasons led to a series of spill-over effects in the military camps of the PAC. The chapter that follows will explore how this occurred.

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<sup>124</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, pp. 679-680

<sup>125</sup> Kondlo, K., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution".

## Chapter Five: A Retrospective look into the Military Activities of “Umbutho”

The isiZulu word “Umbutho” is used here to denote the Azanian People Liberation Army (APLA) and its military activities. The inability of the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA) to infiltrate and execute military missions successfully after the demise of *uPoqo* and the exiling of PAC leaders will be a core focus of this chapter. As previously discussed, the leadership conflicts that stifled the PAC from 1962 onwards presented many challenges to the liberation and the ineffective and inefficient regulation of APLA’s military camps is another consequence of these quarrels. However, it becomes important again to realise that guerrilla warfare is by nature a nemesis to colonial settler rulers, and as such its advances are to be targeted and suppressed by the “powers that be”. In a way, the structural and transborder challenges faced by the PAC played a major role in the failure of its military wing, APLA. The lack of international and continental financial support, as well the lack of from other African countries, played a major role in APLA’s failure to execute successful military missions. As such, it is important to understand how the military and political dynamics of the countries to which members of the PAC were exiled, and in which they trained, affected both the leadership capabilities and logistical conditions in the military camps.

During the period of 1970-1981, APLA combatants received military training in Libya, Guinea, Uganda, Nigeria, Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, Yugoslavia, China, and Kampuchea. The training in Libya occurred in the 1970s, when APLA recruits and the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) were enlisted for military training in the country; later in mid-1975, SASO students and nineteen APLA recruits joined the APLA and LLA combatants for military training. In 1976, Zebulon Mokoena underwent training in China, where he led a group of PAC cadres in training. In 1977, Ezrom Mokgala led twenty-one cadres in training in Kampuchea. A group of fifty cadres underwent training in Guinea in 1981 at Central National Kwame Nkrumah Camp, which had inhumane conditions, such



as poor food quality, and cadres loitering around. Sudan offered APLA cadres a six-month course at a training facility north of Khartoum.<sup>126</sup>

Houston argues that in the 1960s, the primary route into exile for members of the PAC was Lesotho. Botswana remained “one of the most active and widely used routes out of the country in the 1970s. Most South African youth that entered Botswana in the aftermath of the Soweto Uprisings were accommodated in the safe houses rented by the PAC and the ANC because there was no refugee camp there at the time”.<sup>127</sup>

P.K. Leballo held the leadership position in the PAC for the longest time. His leadership era spans from 1962 to 1979, and was characterised by an authoritarian political culture, as well as rigorous ideological development. Kondlo argues that the 1967 Moshi Conference of the PAC created more internal conflicts, instead of helping the PAC deal with its issues. Some members of the PAC had no confidence in him, and were prepared to call for his removal, but they were expelled by Leballo at this same conference. The leadership era following Leballo’s was not so different. Vusi Make’s leadership era (1978-1980) was characterised by corruption, indecision, factionalism, and cliques. Kondlo maintains that Make served his own personal interests and was always protecting himself. As a result of poor leadership structures that governed the party from 1979-1981, the PAC was characterised by poor administration of certain departments like the Department of Defence and Department of Education and Manpower. Make’s era was also characterised by mismanagement of funds, and a lack of accountability. Make’s reign also brought in an era of open criticism of leaders which led the discontented make public their grievances.<sup>128</sup>

The disfunction of the leadership meant that the ideological and military strategies of APLA were sometimes suspended in a state of limbo, and had many influences that were not always good for guerrilla warfare. As leadership changed hands, the military strategy of APLA also changed, in accordance with the leadership style of the PAC

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<sup>126</sup>Houston. G, ka Plaatjie. T and April. T, “Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa”, pp. 42-44.

<sup>127</sup>Gregory F., “Houston Democracy, Governance, and Service Delivery (DGSD) Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). (2013). Military bases and camps of the liberation movement, 1961-1990. Amathole Municipality”, p 52

<sup>128</sup>Kondlo, K., “In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution”, pp. 179-192.

superstructure. During Leballo and Ntantala's reign, APLA's military strategy was based on the assumption that rural peasants were hungry for land and, as a result of this, white farmers were their targets, and their liberation lay in the repossession of land from white settlers. After forcing the white farmers off their land, APLA would use some of the farms as military bases. Furthermore, APLA also emulated the Mozambique Liberation Front's (FRELIMO) strategy of setting up liberated zones that were under their control, and during this time, APLA identified as a both Maoist and Marxist-Leninist, as did ZANU PF in Zimbabwe. The PAC was not able to sustain a ruralitarian-based revolution, because the South African peasantry did not prioritise revolting against the mechanisms of exploitation, and the PAC did not have time to understand the particular kind of peasantry that existed in South Africa during the late 1960s, as they were exiled and banned in the country. This was in part due to the fact that some members of *uPogo* did not support the ideological shift to Maoism, where the majority of them did not understand it.<sup>129</sup> It can be argued that the PAC constituency at home had different ideological positions, as opposed to the PAC leadership in exile that were being exposed to new ideologies and military training. This created even greater disparities in the ideological and military strategies of different APLA military camps, which also translated into a lack of unity among combatants in the military camps as well.

The adoption of the New Road to Revolution, a military strategy that was implemented by Leballo in 1978, marked an important ideological shift from Maoism to Marxist Leninism in the military strategy of the APLA. The ideological shift was a victory for the Marxist Leninists over the Maoists and Nationalists. Ideology driven changes in the command structures of APLA from 1968-1993 intensified leadership conflicts and caused more internal conflicts in the PAC.<sup>130</sup> Nonetheless, what the scholar tends to overlook is the fact that although the changes in military strategies in APLA failed to properly respond to the changing socio-historical context, i.e. more black people were dispossessed of their land, and as such, had resorted to becoming migrant labourers. These 'workers' were still landless, and were still part of the rural base that APLA could recruit, as most of them were members of the PAC even in the cities. Therefore, it is

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<sup>129</sup>Kondlo, K., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution", pp. 292-297.

<sup>130</sup>Kondlo, K., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution", pp. 298-310.

important to note that these ideological changes were both facts of evolution and negative mutations of strategy due to changes in command structures. As a result of ideological shifts, this led to the success and failures of APLA and *uPoqo* military missions. Ideological shifts also meant that support was limited to those who sympathised with the current military strategy, and the armed struggle in general.

Furthermore, an analysis of the joint military interventions between APLA and other liberation armies from African countries also offers insight into some of the failures of APLA to infiltrate the country. Operation Crusade was a collaboration between the PAC and Revolutionary Committee of Mozambique (Coremo) to infiltrate twelve troops into South Africa to open military bases. Kondlo argues that this operation failed because of some mistakes, such as Gerald Kondlo leading the operation. Some members of the PAC believed that it was irresponsible to send the best soldiers they had to offer, as the organisation would be jeopardised by the failure of the mission. It can be argued that Operation Crusade also failed because of the intensive retaliation from the Portuguese armed authorities, which led to APLA combatants being overpowered, and some losing their lives.<sup>131</sup>

A leadership conflict between Leballo and Ntantala developed in the 1970s, and, because of the influx of new recruits, Leballo felt threatened by the growth of APLA under the leadership of Ntantala, fearing that the High Command would become more powerful than he was. This conflict caused spill-over effects, even in the military camps. APLA had two camps, namely Itumbi Camp and Mgagao Camp in Tanzania. Mfanasekhaya Gqobose testified that the camps in Tanzania experienced problems such as “ill-discipline, disobeying of orders, flight from camps, disagreements, as well as tribalism”<sup>132</sup>, as a result of the conflict between Leballo and Ntantala. In 1971, PAC cadres moved to the Itumbi camp at Mbeya after Zanu cadres were transferred to Magagoa Camp. Upon arrival cadres found that the camp was run by LLA cadres. Itumbi Camp, like Mgagao Camp, was a waiting camp where trained personnel were held and there was no further training. Moreover, Leballo and Ntantala’s leadership conflict also affected the ability of APLA to adequately plan their military training course,

<sup>131</sup>Kondlo, K., “In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution”, pp. 298-310.

<sup>132</sup> Kondlo, K., “In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution”, p. 305

Houston et al. argue that the fact that the PAC simply took advantage of any offer of military training, without considering its strategic purposes, indicating that there was no strategic direction behind the training provided to APLA cadres as a result of that conflict.<sup>133</sup>

The lack of military and monetary support was the result of the fact that PAC alliances with other liberation movements in Southern Africa were negatively affecting their ability to set up strategic military camps. For instance, after Zanu came to power in Zimbabwe in 1980, it refused to grant the PAC permission to establish a camp in Zimbabwe. This meant that APLA could not set up camp closer to home, and thus limited its ability to easily infiltrate South Africa. There was also relatively little to no support for the PAC from other African countries after they gained independence. and any such support was affected by leadership quarrels and corruption. Furthermore, the leadership conflicts, especially between Ntantala and Leballo, brewed discontent in the military camps. The Arusha conference held in September 1978 came as a result of pressure from the OAU to mend scars of conflict. Instead, Leballo suspended seven members of the PAC, including Ntantala. A three-man presidential council consisting of David Sibeko, Vusi Maake, and Ellias Ntloedibe took over the leadership of the PAC nine months later after Leballo's resignation due to conflicts that were still brewing in the party due to the Arusha conference. The leadership eras that came after Leballo had many challenges, and these will be explored next.<sup>134</sup>

The leadership era of John Nyathi Pokela (1981-1985) brought about a rise in morale and motivation amongst PAC members to revive and re-invent the PAC. Pokela could not perform duties of re-organising and reconstructing the PAC due to the fact that he had been incarcerated in the years before his reign. However, he was still able to restore order and a sense of direction. He did this by, firstly, making diplomatic visits to various countries in order to introduce himself as the PAC leader. He visited Iraq in June 1981, and sided with Iraq during its conflict with Iran. This move led to Libya and

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<sup>133</sup>Houston. G, Ka Plaatjie. T and April. T, "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa", pp. 45-48.

<sup>134</sup>Houston. G, Ka Plaatjie. T and April. T., "Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa", pp. 45-49.

Syria withdrawing their support for the PAC. Interestingly, his period was also characterised by discontent in the military camps, as most PAC members were not satisfied by his decision to bring in corrupt leader Vusi Make into the central committee. Chaos erupted when Ntantala was allowed into the party after his suspension by Potlako Leballo, however, the implementation of leadership code of conduct by Pokela, as well as the Commission of Inquiry in 1983, helped minimise the strife caused by leadership conflicts. Kondlo maintains that even during Pocola's era, mismanagement of funds still occurred in the PAC.<sup>135</sup>

The era of Johnson Mlambo (1985-1990) was characterised by the fact that this was when APLA's infiltration of South Africa was at its peak. The number of APLA attacks increased between the late 1980s, and 1993. Although Mlambo tried to implement a military programme of action by implementing the PAC's official organisational systems and procedures, he was not able to put an end to the internal strife caused by leadership conflicts, the lack of accountability, ideological shifts, and mutual mistrust.<sup>136</sup> Leeman, however, disputes these claims, by arguing that the Pokela's leadership was characterised by timidity, confusion, defections to the ANC and further disintegration. He draws from the testimonies of Henry Isaac and Benedict Sondlo to show that some PAC members were not content with Pokela's leadership. He corroborates the fact that military action increased during the era of Johnson Mlambo, but argues that this period saw alleged illegal activities like drug smuggling, and that, during this era, the PAC was mimicking the ANC. He further maintains that the era of Mothopeng's leadership was not enough to save the PAC from further deterioration. It seems that Leeman's proximity to the Ntsu Mokhele and Potlako Leballo led to him believing that leaders of the PAC provided poor leadership, with the exception of Leballo and Mothopeng.<sup>137</sup>

Leeman also argues that British commentators on the PAC like Lodge have interpreted Leballo's career from a class perspective in that his class position was used to determine the kind of leader he was. It was argued that he represented a new class of leaders who were working class but were violent unlike the educated and non-violent

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<sup>135</sup>Kondlo, K., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution", pp. 193-218.

<sup>136</sup>Kondlo, K., "In the Twilight of the Azanian Revolution", pp. 242-246.

<sup>137</sup>Leeman, B., "Multi-disciplinary Snapshot of the continent in 1995", pp. 188-189.

previous leadership of the PAC. British scholars like Lodge were obsessed with Leballo's status and class, almost destroying his reputation. He maintains that Lodge overlooks the fact that Leballo was not an elite intellectual, but was despised because of his radicalism.<sup>138</sup> Ka Plaatjie also argues that the situation of the PAC worsened when Potlako Leballo took over as the president of the PAC, since his name became central in the leadership conflicts from 1964 onwards.<sup>139</sup>

Owing to the failure of APLA to carry out successful military missions in the country, there was a vacuum created in the armed resistance, as there were no PAC members willing to train. Owing to the rise of radical politics in the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and the PAC, the political conscientisation of the youth in the 1970s meant that a considerable number of young people were willing to join the armed resistance and go into exile to receive military training. This led to the revival of the PAC, which occurred mostly in Johannesburg and Pretoria. John Ganya, Zephania Mothopeng, Mark Shinnars and Isaac Mafatshe, who were in positions of leadership, were the key role players in the revival of the PAC underground during the 1970s.

Hlongwane's study focused on the resurrection of the PAC in Johannesburg, which was closely linked to the growth of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). The PAC worked with political formations like the Black People's Convention (BPC) and the South African Student's Organisation (SASO), which were elements of the BCM, to revive its internal underground through the Soweto Uprisings. This, ultimately, intensified the underground activities of the PAC and the BCM. An important character in the revival of the PAC in Johannesburg was Zephaniah Mothopeng (1913-1990) who, in his capacity as a school teacher and exiled activist and the external leader of the PAC, especially the PAC High Command in Tanzania, played a role in inspiring the revival of the internal underground.<sup>140</sup>

Hlongwane argues that before June 1976, there was not enough pressure exerted on the South African state due to the lack of capacity or political will of organisations. However, he recognised that the hardships and challenges of building an underground

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<sup>138</sup>Leeman, B., "Multi-disciplinary Snapshot of the continent in 1995", p. 190-192.

<sup>139</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, p. 680.

<sup>140</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, pp. 685-694.

movement contributed to this stagnation. He maintains that the underground machinery began to operate in Soweto, Kagiso, and Pretoria. He also maintains that Mothopeng, Shinnars, Mafatshe, and Ganya were key role players in the revival of the PAC underground. He claims further that the decision to launch a training programme in Engwavuma was the reason the PAC shifted to internal mobilisation in the country.<sup>141</sup>

The second important role players in the revival of the PAC underground were the Matsobane brothers, who were instrumental in the revival of the PAC in the Johannesburg region. The Matsobane brothers were at the forefront of the revival of the PAC in Kagiso, Krugersdorp. Mike Matsobane, Johnson Nyathi and Aaron Khoza were leaders of the Youth African Church Movement, which they allegedly used to recruit the youth to the PAC. The youth were, reportedly, told at meetings that the PAC needed recruits for its military wing. Mike and Dan Matsobane were charged with inciting or participating in activities of violence in Kagiso related to the Soweto Uprising on about 17 June 1976. Many youths left the country for military training around the end of June 1976. About sixty youths left the country for military training and for safety. They were mainly transported by John Ganya.<sup>142</sup> Hlongwane argues that, before June 1976, there was not enough pressure exerted on the South African state, due to the lack of capacity or political will of organisations. However, he recognised that the hardships and challenges of building an underground movement contributed to this stagnation. He maintains that the underground machinery began to operate in Soweto, Kagiso, and Pretoria.

In conclusion, this chapter outlined the effects of state suppression and leadership conflicts on the ability of APLA and *uPoqo* in their efforts to infiltrate South Africa after receiving military training abroad. The causes of the leadership conflicts were mostly ideological shifts, and differences in military strategy, which ultimately affected the conditions of military camps. However, it has been demonstrated that, although leadership played a big role in the failures of the movement, it also helped the movement to grow, and allowed other leaders like Mothopeng and Pokela to

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<sup>141</sup>Hlongwane, A.K., "Reflections on the Pan Africanist Congress 'Underground' in the Era of 1976 Youth Uprisings", pp. 55-61.

<sup>142</sup>Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, pp. 697-700.

concentrate on building stronger ties with the non-partisan African youth. The role of the youth in the armed struggle remains one that requires more exploration. However, this chapter has illustrated that their political conscientisation afforded left-wing liberation movements the ability to resuscitate and maintain their underground military wings. As this chapter has shown, the failures and successes of APLA between the years 1965 and 1990 were due to a complexity of reasons, and not simply due to leadership conflicts.



## Conclusion: “*From the Archive to the Grave...*”

It can be argued that the lack of adequate and relevant historical archives on the PAC as well as on the South African history of the armed struggle is one of the consequences of the distortion of history by the apartheid government and after it, the ANC government post-1994. In a sense, this was one of the biggest pitfalls in this research: the lack of unbiased and adequate secondary research in the PAC has created a void in the narrative of the anti-apartheid movement. It is for this reason that we have, in South Africa, witnessed historical moments wherein calls for a decolonised version of South African history being prioritised by political movements in South Africa such as the #FeesMustFall movement, the #RhodesMustFall movement etc. It can be argued that the militancy of the student movement (i.e. FMF and RMF) is rooted in the ideologies of various militant organisations such as the Azanian People Liberation Army (APLA), uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), *uPoqo* etc.

It stands to reason that this reliance on such ideologies partly resulted in students and other stakeholders of the South African Society recognising the need for a complete and detailed analysis and representation of the history of liberation movements in South Africa. This research is therefore an important step in the quest to fully document and understand the history of the PAC. The narrative of the Sharpeville and Langa massacres is currently being dominated by the ANC propaganda and being painted as merely the fight for human rights, a narrative that shadows over the PAC’s mission with the anti-pass campaign. The commemorations of human rights day should be centred on the actions of communities persuaded by and led by the PAC or at least pay the necessary and equal homage to its patrons. This reduction of the anti-pass campaigns to human rights marches has led to the contributions and military activities of the PAC and its component structures to be erased in our imagination of how the struggle was undertaken.

Owing to the fact that the PAC and other liberation movements were considered a threat to national security by the apartheid government, many efforts were taken to suppress their wave of activism in the country through various laws, such as the Suppression of Communist Act of 1950. It can be argued that another important aspect

of this political erasure, was the confiscation and banning of the literature of the PAC during the mass arrests of members of *uPoqo* in the 1960s,<sup>143</sup> by the police which would result in most of these works to be hidden from the public and in the state archives. The available literature on the organizational structure, the history of the PAC and the different military activities it waged against the state is limited even more due to the advent of digitization in the archiving process. This is due, in part to the militant nature, and thereby 'radical' nature of the PAC and its component structures which made it an enemy of the state.

Furthermore, most of the military activities of APLA and Poqo were only known by the operatives at the time and most of the intricate details of military strategies were not written down. This led to these narratives being concentrated in the memories of people where they eroded over time and were lost to the archive. "Archives are the product of a process which converts a certain number of documents into items judged to be worthy of preserving and keeping in a public space, where they can be consulted according to well-established procedures and regulations".<sup>144</sup> This process of judging and assigning the achievability of documents necessitates that some documents are not deemed worthy of being preserved which means that some documents are left out of the narrative of the history of a particular society.

In a way, the archives that have stored information about the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and the armed struggle do not account fully and adequately about the armed struggle. Furthermore, archived documents are generally those archived after the death of their authors and actors in the events recorded and they are kept for a certain period before being available to the public.<sup>145</sup> Furthermore, the history of the PAC's contributions to the armed struggle poses a particular challenge to the ANC: the general rejection of assimilation into Western ideals and institutions by the current PAC's predecessors, as discussed in *Chapter Two: "The Emergence of the Africanist Block"* created animosity that has survived till this day. The PAC argued that the anti-

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143 Ka Plaatjie, T., *The PAC's underground internal activities, 1960-1981*, pp 679-680

<sup>144</sup> Mbembe, A. The power of the archive and its limits. In *Reconfiguring the archive*, (Cape Town, David Phillip, 2002), p.20

<sup>145</sup> Mbembe, A., "The power of the archive and its limits", p.21

apartheid struggle was considered to be strictly racialist and non-inclusive of whites because they believed in the principle of self-determination where Europeans could only enjoy the 'fruits of freedom' and not dictate to the Africans how to wage the struggle against colonialism.<sup>146</sup> This is and was in direct conflict with the ANC's notion of a rainbow nation which advocates for non-racialism and an integrationist outlook in governance and nation-building.

Through the institutionalization of memory through museums, archives (physical and digital) and the creation of avenues such as public libraries and university libraries for the public and scholars to gain access to these archives, the ANC government has attempted to control how and when we get access to the archives on the liberation struggle through the commemoration of certain political events and the distortion of others. This has resulted in there being limited secondary research on the subject matter of political events such as the Sharpeville and Langa massacres and the military activities of *uPoqo* for scholars who cannot afford to perform their own research. Moreover, the inaccessibility of these institutions also has resulted in the forgetting of these events in that they are not properly represented and popularising in mass media for mass consumption in a way that prioritizes the proper representation of the PAC's contributions in the anti-apartheid struggle. Ultimately, this poses a limitation that privileges those with high class mobility since they can afford to jump the economic hurdles that prevents scholars from getting access to these institutions. The available scholarship also seems to follow a regressive trend: it is at times in favour of the 'human rights' march narrative or it is not fully representative the PAC's history due to the aforementioned reasons.<sup>147</sup>

The South African state has done this: "by democratising the act of chronography and returning to an order where the consumption of the archive becomes a communal tool of the state and of society..."<sup>148</sup> This has both positive and negative effects in that it can promote peace and protect future generations from forgetting their history through museums and commemorative gestures etc. but it can also discourage those who visit

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<sup>146</sup> Ejiogu, E.C., "Post Liberation South Africa", p 258

<sup>147</sup> Mbembe, A., "The power of the archive and its limits", p.24

<sup>148</sup> Mbembe, A., "The power of the archive and its limits", p.24

the archive from repeating the acts they learn about in the archives. It is the hope of the author that this research becomes available at such archives to retain and sustain the memory of the PAC and to ensure that it inspires a sense of pride in honouring the contributions of all the activists in the anti-apartheid struggle.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Mbembe, A., "The power of the archive and its limits", pp 24-25

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