

The Great Storm of South Africa's Liberation Struggle: Bridging the gap between APLA and post-apartheid public & collective memory.

By

Olwethu Dlanga

(17351988)

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree.

Masters in History

In the department of Historical and Heritage Studies

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SUPERVISOR: Dr G. Ncube

March 2023

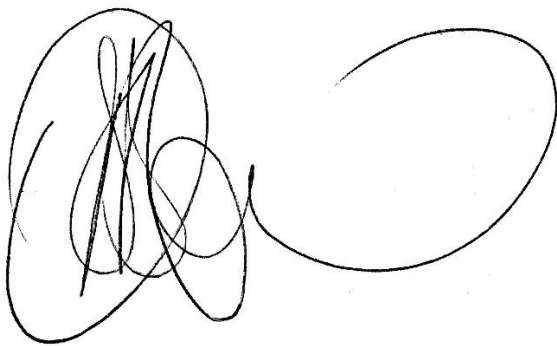
Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Personal declaration	4
Acknowledgements.....	5
List of abbreviations.....	6
Abstract.....	8
Chapter 1: Introduction	9
Research question(s).....	17
The Argument	19
Research objectives	19
Literature review.....	20
Research Methodology and sources of evidence	25
Chapter outline	28
Chapter 2: Public and Collective memory in post-apartheid South Africa's liberation historiography: A Conceptual analysis.	30
Introduction	30
Merging collective memory with public memory.....	30
A review into South Africa's post-apartheid liberation historiography, heritage, and curation of public and collective memory.....	32
Conclusion.....	40
Chapter 3: The Roots and the formative years: The Task Force, <i>uPoqo</i> and APLA	41
Introduction	41
The roots of confrontation and the founding of PAC.	42
The fighting force: A confrontational movement.....	48
The Early stages of the Great Storm	56
Conclusion.....	70
Chapter 4: PAC and APLA Navigating exile and prohibition.....	72
Introduction	72
Dispersed, Regrouping and disintegration.....	72
Basutoland mass arrests	80
Sailing the storm of Exile.....	86
Moshi consultative conference and the turn to APLA.....	90
Conclusion.....	92
Chapter 5: APLA- 'The People's army' and The Chinese influence	93

Introduction	93
PAC/APLA relations with Mao's China and the intra-cold war effects	93
A view on Operation Crusade in Villa Peri	100
The snooze and resurgence of the 1970's.	109
Humility, Patience, and Resilience: APLA cadres in Kampuchea	122
In the shadows of 'a tyrant': APLA Female cadres 'grappling' with Uganda: 1978-1979	127
The split: Organization and Army in disarray.....	135
Pokela and the unity initiatives.....	138
Towards the Home Front and APLA confrontations of the 1980s	142
Hiding in plain sight, hitting the 'enemy'	146
Betrayal, mistrust and 'turn coats'.	148
Pokela's legacy through Mlambo's reign	149
External-Internal coordination: APLA in the centre.....	152
Conclusion.....	156
Chapter 6: Coming 'home' with "The Great Storm"	158
Introduction	158
The unbanning of liberation movements and the intensification of the struggle: 1990-1994	159
APLA waging the armed struggle during the transitional negotiations	163
The Operation Great Storm: The Highest Form of Negotiations	170
Things fall apart: Beginning of the end.....	175
Conclusion.....	180
Chapter 7: 1994 and Beyond	182
Introduction	182
Home coming and its realities	183
APLA cadres at integration/absorption and demobilization	186
Creation of the periphery of public and collective memory: The Politics.	193
The Re-imagination of post-apartheid liberation history and heritage.....	199
Conclusion.....	201
Chapter 8: Conclusion	202
Return to the Public Collective Memory.....	202
References.....	207

Personal declaration

I, Thand'Olwethu Dlanga, with student number 1735199, declare that: the research described in this Master's dissertation, except where otherwise specified is my original work. Furthermore I declare that this dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university. It does not contain any other person's writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other scholars and researchers. Where other written sources and oral sources have been quoted, their words have been re-written however, the information attributed to them is referenced. In case that their own words have been used either in writing or spoken words, these are placed inside quotation marks and are referenced. This dissertation does not contain any photographs. All the sources that are detailed in this dissertation are presented in the references section.



Thand'Olwethu Dlanga

Acknowledgements

Ndiqala ngokunika udumo kuMvelinqangi, Omkhulu kakhulu osenyangweni nakumanyange wonke andenzele inceba andiphahlileyo, andikhapha, andipha impilo, ingqiqo nobulumko bokuphatha lomsebenzi. Ndibulela kumanyange am egazi, nawomoya, *Camagu!* Ndibulela nabazali bam, ndikulendawo nje kungenxa yabo, mpilo ntle, mpilo nde kubo. Ndibulela nakusapho lwam lonke ngokundithwalisa lomthwalo. Ndilandelise ngokubulela umphathi wam koluphando bendulwenza, *Ndatenda* Ncube. Kwakhona ndibulela kumphathi nakwisebe lezifundo zembali nelifa (DHHS) eyunivesithi yasePitori, *to you all, Thank you.*

Ikakhulukazi, ndibulela bonke abantu abazibandakanyileyo ngeendlela ezahlukeneyo kulomsebenzi umkhulu kangaka. Ekuwusunguleni kwam lomsebenzi, kwacaca ukuba ayingomsebenzi wam ndedwa, koko ngumsebenzi wama-Afrika ephela. Nyhani ke, abantwana bomgquba bandincedisile kwade kwasekugqibelele. Kuni nonke, ingakumbi ababesakuba ngamajoni womkhosi kaPoqo i-APLA, ndithi kuni *salamu wana na binti wa-Afrika. Bila wewe, kazi hii, haiwezekani.*

Kwindawo ngeendawo eniyakuthi nilufunde nikuzo oluphando, ndiyathemba luyakongeza ekwakhiweni koluncwadi ngomkhosi i-APLA.

Makudede ubumnyama kuvele ukukhanya.

i-Afrika, Izwe Lethu.

List of abbreviations

ANC	: African National Congress
ANCYL	: African National Congress Youth League
APLA	: Azanian People's Liberation Army
APRP	: Azanian People's Revolutionary Party
ARM	: African Resistance Movement
AWB	: Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging
AZAPO	: Azanian People's Organization
AZANLA	: Azania Liberation Army
AZANYU	: Azanian National Youth Unity
BCM (A)	: Black Consciousness Movement of Azania
BCP	: Basuto Congress Party
BMATT	: British Military Advisory and Training Team
BSB	: Burial Support Benefit
CODESA	: Convention for a Democratic South Africa
COREMO	: Mozambique Revolutionary Committee
CPLA	: Chinese People's Liberation Army
CPSA	: Communist Party of South Africa
DMV	: Department of Military Veterans
FRELIMO	: Mozambique Liberation Front
MK	: Mkhonto We Sizwe
NA	: National Assembly
NFLA	: National Front for the Liberation of Angola
NCOP	: National Council of Provinces
NEC	: National Executive Committee
NUMO	: New Unity Movement
OAU	: Organization of African Unity
PAC	: Pan Africanist Congress

PAFM	: Pan African Freedom Movement
PAM	: Pan Africanist Movement
PAIGC	: African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde
PASO	: Pan Africanist Student Organization
SACP	: South African Communist Party
SADF	: South African Defence Force
SANDF	: South African National Defence Force
SAP	: South African Police
SAUF	: South African United Front
SRD	: Social Relief of Distress
SWANU	: South West Africa National Union
UDF	: United Democratic Front
USSR	: United Socialist Soviet Union
IFP	: Inkatha Freedom Party
ZANLA	: Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZAPU	: Zimbabwe African People's Union

Abstract

The post-apartheid liberation historiography has been constructed and curated in a way that influences public and collective memory to assume that only one liberation movement (the African National Congress) was involved in the South African liberation struggle. The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and its armed wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), have largely been given perfunctory attention or totally ignored because of the selective politics of memory. In instances where the history of APLA and/or the PAC is given full attention, the focus has been on the leadership conflicts within it, at the expense of interrogating other important aspects within the movement. This thesis is a critical analysis of how public collective memory of post-apartheid South Africa has been curated, and it unpacks how victorious formations such as the ANC government have sought to entrench their political dominance by creating a skewed liberation narrative. This thesis further argues that this is related to the politico-philosophical inclinations of the dominant narrative that is hellbent on placing in the fringes radical ideas that are seen to have a potential of challenging the status quo. The thesis narrates the development of APLA, mapping its roots from the 1940's confrontational spirit of African Nationalism to the establishment of the PAC in 1959. It then shows that the prohibition of PAC in 1960 led to it being overtly operated as Poqo – not that Poqo was a military wing of the PAC. This thesis dispels this notion by proving that PAC is Poqo. Furthermore, this thesis presents some of the major military activities of the PAC up until the 'establishment' of APLA in 1968 by the Africanist Task Force, which was the real paramilitary formation of the PAC before APLA. Although the thesis extensively discusses APLA interchangeably with the PAC, in the main chapters it delves into APLA operations and the experiences of cadres from exile through 'return' home and their post-apartheid integration and experiences within the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and their communities.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the advent of the democratic era in South Africa, the 1994 election results presented the country and the triumphant ANC with political power to promote dominant liberation narratives. This study explored an alternative narrative to the dominant collective and public dialogue regarding South Africa's liberation struggle. While this study is grounded in historical analysis, it mobilised insights from other cognate knowledge domains to achieve the desired study objective. Instead of merely emphasizing the gaps in South Africa's post-apartheid liberation historiography, this study pieced together aspects of the history of Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) from the period of the establishment of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in 1959 to 1994 when the PAC suspended its armed struggle. Beyond that, this study investigates APLA cadres after 1994. This investigates PAC's APLA experience with integration initiatives of the post-apartheid era. While these are the main end goals, this study also examined and critically analysed the epistemic inclinations of the historiographers and the curators, as well as South Africa's liberation histories, politics, and power, and how these have directly impacted the curation of public and collective memory in post-apartheid South Africa. The reader is invited to think of the work as an assessment of how liberation history writing and heritage creation colludes with power [read as *coloniality*] and politics to produce a master narrative.

For some sections of the South African population, the 1994 political settlement obscured and omitted other actors, which led to the historic distortion of historical events and the obscuring of such voices. Others in the same society, are of the view that historical events automatically evaporate from the memories of the collective because of time and the development of the 'new' national identity.¹ This argument is mostly advanced on the basis of the 'ballot box failure' of the PAC since 1994. However, this study states emphatically that the said evaporation is the curation of public and collective memory owing to the epistemic inclination of liberation

¹ K Kondlo, 'From the Fringes to Fossils: The Pan Africanis Congress of Azania and the negotiated transition to Democracy in South Africa. 1990-1994', *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(1), 2017, p.55

historiographies. This study provides an alternative historical imagination of other liberation movements that have so far languished in the periphery of South Africa's liberation history, historiography and public heritage.

In 2020, when reading to compile an Honours research report in History at the University of Pretoria,² it became apparent that South Africa's post-apartheid liberation historiography has little written about the history of PAC, let alone its military wing APLA, to provide an adequate picture of their participation and contributions to South Africa's liberation struggle. This lacuna has resulted in the omission of significant historical insight into these organisations especially APLA, which was regarded as one of the most mentally, morally, and physically trained military wings in the country's liberation struggle.³ The history of the PAC was "isolated, fragmented and discrete piece"⁴ until Kwandiwe Kondlo, a Professor at the University of Johannesburg elevated some aspects of it. APLA and its combatants' story is suffering a similar fate with pockets of individual biographies emerging here and there.⁵ Their emergence is appreciated and reflects the modest strides in the contention in South Africa's post-apartheid liberation historiography. This study considers these and other intellectual efforts on PAC and APLA as crucial sources though in its pursuit to advance own arguments, it argues contrary to them.

The watershed negotiation period and its subsequent events that resulted in South Africa's democratic elections of 1994 ended the over forty years of the formal apartheid system (which was preceded by approximately 400 years of colonial occupation) intertwined with racial capitalism.⁶ This transition meant that liberation movements and their military wings were to abide by the agreements adopted at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) negotiations. CODESA was a political settlement that agreed, amongst other things, to the suspension of the armed

² O Dlanga, "Analysing the curation of collective memory in post-apartheid South Africa: the case of the Mpendulo brothers' massacre", Honours Dissertation University of Pretoria, 2020

³ M Pheko, *The hidden side of South Africa politics*, (Johannesburg: Tokoloho Development Association: 2009), p. 27.

⁴ K Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution: The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa) 1959-1994*, (Klosterberg: Basler Afrika Bibliographien: 2010), p. 3.

⁵ L Mphahlele: *'Child of this soil- my life as a freedom fighter'* (2002); Tebogo Lebakeng: *'They blunted us'* (2021)

⁶ J Kunnie, *Is Apartheid really dead?*, (Colorado: Westview Press: 2000), p. 1.

struggle, and mandated the belligerents to participate in the new democratic transition as political parties. The military personnel belonging to the armed wings of these political parties had to be integrated into what would be known as South African National Defence Force (SANDF), and other state security entities.

Amongst the liberation movements that accepted and abided by the decisions of this compromise political settlement, was the PAC which only re-joined the newly emerging dispensation in 1993, in stark contrast to the African National Congress (ANC) that started in the early 1980's to prepare its constituency for overt negotiations that had become the "new terrain of struggle".⁷ Although the PAC finally took part in the negotiations, its military wing, APLA (the main focus of this study) intensified military attacks, since the regime relied on security forces and the army to remain in power, therefore, a democratic settlement could be achieved if the security personnel is wiped out.⁸ Such was made known through various National Executive Committee (NEC) members, including Patricia de Lille that for the PAC freedom could only be won through the armed struggle, and not through a negotiated settlement.⁹ Similar to De Lille's logic, Letlapa Mphahlele, an APLA's Director of Operations at the time, argued that the land theft that indigenous people experienced during the colonial era is not a matter of reconciliation unless the thief has returned the stolen property.¹⁰ It was this understanding of decolonisation and democratic transition that PAC and APLA held about South Africa's liberation struggle that convinced the movement to intensify the armed struggle against apartheid and its precursor, settler colonialism.

Colonisation and its offspring, apartheid in South Africa, resulted in the forceful expropriation of land from Africans, thereby setting up serious grievances that could not be easily settled.¹¹ This colonial dispossession was the source of economic deprivation, social inequality, and political domination of the indigenous people of

⁷ K Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution: The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa) 1959-1994*, p. 257.

⁸ E Mantzaris, 'PAC politics after CODESA', *Indicator SA Vol 9, 3*, (1992), p.22

⁹ K Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution: The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa) 1959-1994*, pp. 257; 264-265.

¹⁰ L Mphahlele, *Shining the searchlight inwards*, (Wandsbeck: Reach publishers: 2012), p. 58.

¹¹ M B. Ramose, *African Philosophy through Ubuntu*, (Harare: Mond Books: 1999), p. 29.

South Africa. From the period of the arrival of European settlers and their usurping of the Land and the political economy of the region, Black resistance against such usurpation remained a constant feature of race relations in the country. The Khoisan struggles to repel attempted Portuguese intrusion in 1510,¹² the AmaXhosa wars of resistance in the Cape frontier wars of the 18th and 19th centuries (1779-1878), the 1906 Inkosi Bhambatha kaManciza Zondi rebellion in Gingindlovu, and the Sekhukhune revolt of the 1950s,¹³ are all examples of Black resistance to white domination. Julian Kunnie conceptualized Black resistance as a military option that Black people employed in defence of their territorial sovereignty and national survival.¹⁴

APLA, which developed from the Africanist Task force, a *Pogo* militia, was established fifty-five years after the Bhambatha resistance of 1906. It appeared to have had a similar conviction as that of the Bhambatha warriors. This is confirmed by an interview conducted with Madasa, when he stated, “as *Pogo* warriors, we decided to fight the Boers because we inherited the fight from our ancestors”.¹⁵ Up until 1994, APLA as a liberation army was a persistent participant in South Africa’s liberation struggle as the first army to take up both guerrilla and conventional warfare methods after the banning of all liberation movements in 1960. APLA's armed struggle and assaults were only suspended in 1994, making it the longest insurgency in South Africa. Such long participation permits me to argue that APLA deserves not only to be recognized in the official histories but in public memory as well. In its broadest sense, public memory refers to a circulation of recollections amongst members of a given community, while the official histories are mostly presented as formal, stable, and singular.¹⁶

PAC, and later APLA, emerged during a period of intense political and social oppression which came because of the rise of Afrikaner nationalism epitomised by the

¹² J Kunnie, *Is Apartheid really dead?*, p. 3

¹³ J Guy, *Remembering the rebellion: The Zulu uprising of 1906*, (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press: 2006), p. 6.

¹⁴ J Kunnie, *Is Apartheid really dead?*, p. 7

¹⁵ K Kondlo, *In the Twilights of revolution*, p. 233.

¹⁶ M Houdek, *Public memory*, University of Iowa and Kendall R. Phillips: Syracuse University, 2017, p. 1.

then ruling National Party (NP). From 1948 onwards, the NP established a racial system and promulgated pugnaciously repressive policies that sought to ensure 'the survival of the white race', and that 'whites' continue to dominate the country.

Forced to operate as an illegal organisation from 07 April 1960, the PAC converted into a form of fighting organ on 11th September 1961, which Pheko argues that this makes it the first liberation movement in South Africa to form a military wing.¹⁷ This inaugurated a new phase of military resistance among the African masses who had adopted a largely non-violent approach to the struggle since the Bhambatha rebellion of 1906.¹⁸ For over thirty years, through alternating periods of turbulence and calmness, successful and unsuccessful military operations, including betrayals and infighting, APLA used conventional war tactics and weaponry received from Cambodia, Libya, Egypt and China; Algeria, Nigeria and Uganda; Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe & Transkei 'till the formal suspension of armed struggle. Its combatants, loyal to their ideological tenets, sought albeit unsuccessfully to liberate South Africa settler-colonialism, apartheid with racial capitalism and usher in an Africanist Socialist Democratic society, a free Azania. With such an active history of participation in the liberation movement, it is astonishing that APLA is not significantly part of the formal and stable history that suffuses public memory in post-apartheid South African society.

Various reasons account for this lack of historical writing, with the primary one being the failure of post-apartheid liberation historiography to go against the dominant narrative. It is evident that the dominant historical narrative of South Africa's liberation history has been that of the triumphant ANC. Moreover, the curation of collective and public memory of liberation history is largely state sponsored, therefore painting a one-sided picture about liberation heritage. Robert Ross *et al* have condemned this tendency as "a dangerous body of work that presents contemporary history as a dichotomy between those who were on the right side and those who were not".¹⁹

¹⁷ M Pheko, *The Hidden Side of South African Politics*, p. 27.

¹⁸ M Pheko, *South Africa, betrayal of a colonized people: issues of International Human Rights and law*, (Johannesburg: ISAL Publications: 1990) p. 12.

¹⁹ R. Ross, A.K. Mager & B. Nasson, 'Introduction'. *The Cambridge History of South Africa, Volume 2*. 2011, p. 13.

This dominance does not only create a blemish in the country's post-apartheid historiography, it also illustrates how the politics of memory dominates the ways in which liberation struggle heritage, museums, monuments, and gardens of remembrance are constructed. Additionally, such curation depicts how the post-1994 ruling party presents itself as South Africa's main and only reliable liberation movement, with Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) being the only liberation army to have fought against apartheid. This posture has helped it entrench its legitimacy as the post-apartheid ruling party while maintaining (waning) electoral dominance.

However, as Kondlo rightly argues, "This needs to change, lest the next generation of scholars accuse us of tendentious scholarship"²⁰ since South Africa's liberation struggle produced several liberation armies, with Poqo/APLA being the first, Mkhonto weSizwe (MK) the second, and the African Resistance Movement (ARM) and the Azanian National Liberation Army (AZANLA), being the last. This essentially means that the ANC, and its MK protégé is not the only "authentic liberation movement" in South Africa. To continue with the current dominant historical narrative is equal to the erasure of specific memories and enriching others, resulting in the entrenchment of the dominant narrative.

Considering that there exists in modern societies the politics of memory, abuse of history, and the curation of collective and public memory which simultaneously rely on the availability and 'unavailability' of scholarship in a specific subject matter, this study is an attempt to shine a stronger spotlight on APLA's liberation history by collating some fragments of its story.

Although there exists a glaring gap in South Africa's liberation history writing, it should not be overlooked that APLA's history has been disjointed, with discreet pieces scattered across archives, including those beyond South African borders, and with much of this history being transmitted orally in tentative efforts to write APLA back into the historical narrative. The fragmentation is not only because of external influences but of APLA's weak institutional memory both in exile and inside the country. This

²⁰ K Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, p. 3.

limited availability of archived source materials has also contributed to the master narrative perpetuated in post-apartheid historiography. This leads us to ponder the historical debate about the influence of written sources as the only source and evidence of history. In the post-1994 curation of public and collective memory historiography, these written sources continue to be regarded as the 'only' reliable sources instead of histories themselves even though changes manifest in some areas. They are used to interpret the past events and in instances where there are no 'reliable' written sources, as is mostly the case with APLA, their memories tend to be 'forgotten' or 'neglected' in history writing and public memory. For the purposes of enhancing this research and to bridge the identified gap, oral sources were be consulted.

Historians who engage in post-apartheid historiography must develop the field to be a "site where different histories are produced, circulated and contested".²¹ Not only must writers acquire information as to what happened; but how, why, and which stories and in which forms did or did they not gain currency at certain instances and places. This is imperative as it seeks to understand how issues such as performance, narration, translation, presentation, archiving, and intersections with similar and [or] dissimilar accounts all come to constitute 'a voice'.

To overcome the skewed or triumphalist master narrative of post-apartheid South African liberation history, heritage and historiography, it must be firstly understood by all that the liberation struggle came because of unjust wars of colonisation and a brutal apartheid system that brutalised the ANC, PAC and Black Consciousness Movements (BCM) and ordinary people alike. These atrocities gave rise to a significant number of liberation movements and army wings, and all of them must find expression in the liberation historiography and public memory. History as a discipline must be open to free diverse expression and embrace democratic openness. Additionally, the curation of collective and public memory in post-apartheid

²¹ L. Witz & C. Rassool, 'Making histories' *Kronos* Volume.34(1), 2018: p. 10.

South Africa should shift from the politically loyal selected material that seeks to distort and abuse history to serve the political system, to one that is inclusive of other voices.

To be sure, the history of PAC and APLA is not entirely missing in the accounts of scholars of the PAC such as Bernard Leeman, Kondlo, Tom Lodge and Thembinkosi Khumalo. However, Lodge writes with a colonial perspective as he locates the PAC and APLA's ideology as race-based,²² an argument advanced in colonial apartheid circles. Kondlo dedicates only one chapter that does not necessarily focus on APLA *per se* but on "the development of PAC's military strategy".²³ Leeman contributes by tracing the uprising of *Poqo*, a precursor to APLA, beyond the borders of Transkei, and importantly provides the date on which the decision by PAC to turn to armed struggle was adopted.²⁴

While Khumalo attempts to bring a renewed perspective on PAC/*Poqo* and APLA, his study focuses on only twenty two years (1960-1982) of PAC/*Poqo* and APLA history. Unfortunately, not enough has been written on APLA for scholars in memory and heritage studies to analyse the recollections in public memory since these recollections are far from being adequate records of the past. This can be attributed to a lack of documentation by those who were part of APLA and the state repression (pre-and post-1994) who vilified APLA and labelled it as an 'unreasonable' terrorist group. While APLA formation came at a time when the PAC, an organisation admired globally, was popular, it has, however, lost its fame and place in post-apartheid public memory.²⁵ The investigation of that loss of popularity in the public's memory is essential to develop history in South Africa.

Reinventing the curation of collective and public memory in the post-apartheid era requires subtle interventions of political power to create space for ideas that provide a counter to the dominant narrative that stifles other histories as is currently

²² T Lodge, *Insurrection in South Africa: The Pan- Africanist Congress and the Poqo movement, 1959-1965*, (University of York, Centre for South African Studies, 1984)

²³ K Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, p229

²⁴ This is revealed in the research conducted by B. Leeman, published in the *Mail and Guardian*, 3-9 November 2000, Harare, pp 24-25.

²⁵ E.C Ejiogu, 'Post Liberation South Africa: Sorting out the Pieces', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 47, 3, (2011): pp259-262.

happening. It also requires the reconsideration of the method of studying collective memory. They must reject this dichotomous methodology to allow the historical participants to simultaneously represent, receive and contest memory.²⁶ This project occupies that space where the history of APLA is brought into the main discourse of South Africa's liberation historiography.

Research question(s)

The title of this research dissertation is "The Great Storm of South Africa's Liberation Struggle: Bridging the gap between APLA and post-apartheid public and collective memory" which signifies a quest to mend the gap between post-apartheid liberation historiography, public memory and APLA. During the formal apartheid-era spanning the years from 1948 until 1994, the PAC, its military wing APLA, AZAPO's AZANLA, the New Unity Movement (NUMO), and several other liberation movements played meaningful roles in South Africa's liberation struggle. Not only did APLA forces wage war against the racist Pretoria regime but they also fought in Uganda, Mozambique, China, and other countries. A more comprehensive narrative and written history of that part of the struggle will benefit the on-going quest for the transformation of South Africa's multiracial constitutional democracy.

To bridge the gap between the history of APLA and collective and public memory in post-apartheid South Africa, this thesis asked the following key questions:

The crucial questions are:

- *How post-Apartheid South African liberation struggle history is constructed and curated in ways that influence public and collective memory?*
- *What is APLA, how and when was it formed and who were the central figures of its formation?*
- *How did APLA and its combatants manage itself as an army wing of the PAC?*
- *What conditions influenced APLA combatants' experience in exile?*
- *Were there external factors and forces that impacted on how APLA operated as a liberation army?*

²⁶ A Confino: 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method', p1399

- *What was the characteristics of living circumstances in APLA camps and exile milieu?*
- *What was APLA's role in the South African liberation struggle?*
- *What was the approach of APLA to the unbanning of South Africa's liberation movements and how did it respond to this new environment, including the TRC?*
- *How did APLA manage the integration of its army personnel into the SANDF?*
- *What were the experiences of APLA combatants in the SANDF and how did this impact and shape their lives thereafter?*
- *Why APLA's status has since diminished in post-apartheid social consciousness although during the liberation struggle it was revered?*
- *How can the memories and experiences of individuals who were members of APLA be harnessed to enrich historical understanding of their role in South African history and what were their experiences post-1994?*

The secondary questions are:

- i. *What is collective and public memory, how is it conceptualised and how does it manifest in the post-apartheid South African historiography?*
- ii. *How do official histories influence the collective and public's memory?*

To answer these questions, this research explored the conceptualisations of collective and public memory and the influences of official histories on public memory. This will provide the basis of the study as this thesis navigates through APLA's liberation struggle history, its role, and critical reflection on its diminished status after 1994. This will be done through the examination of documentary and oral evidence relating to APLA as a way of contributing to the understanding of APLA while developing the scholarship for further research that engages this important aspect of South Africa's liberation history. Lastly, this thesis responds to the challenge of harnessing individual memories while submitting unapologetically that there is a need to diversify and democratize History and the production of historical knowledge by incorporating indigenous culture, languages, and other approaches such as oral histories, to challenge the dominant narratives.

The Argument

APLA made immense contribution through its participation in the anti-apartheid and settler colonial struggle in South Africa. Its contribution was far greater than the popular memory portrayed in history today. The military wing of the PAC has been either forgotten or written out of History by a dominantly ANC-centric History curriculum and official histories. For instance, very little is known of APLA's inception date and that it was the first military wing to be established by a liberation movement in South Africa after Sharpeville. Also, it is not widely known that APLA was the last to suspend the armed struggle just before the 1994 democratic elections. Historian Thula Simpson writes about the struggle waged by the ANC's military wing, MK, as the longest sustained insurgency in South African history,²⁷ thus displacing APLA from the historical record, or at least maintaining the status quo of post-apartheid liberation historiography with its ANC dominance. While understanding that the PAC's loss in the 1994 ballot box 'naturally' side-lined it from public memory, it is equally in the ANC's interest to trumpet its history, this being done to the detriment of others.

Research objectives

- To analyse the general conceptualization of collective and public memory and how this conceptualization has materialized in post-apartheid South African liberation historiography.
- Identify the gaps in the post-apartheid collective and public memory liberation historiography.
- Provide a historical overview of APLA from its formative years.
- APLA combatants' experiences endured during the height of the struggle and exile years.
- Reflect on the overall history of APLA, including the combatants' experiences during the democratic dispensation.

²⁷ T Simpson, *Umkhonto we Sizwe: The ANC's armed struggle*, (Cape Town, Penguin Random House, 2016), p. ix.

Literature review

Public memory entails the acts and processes through which memories move beyond individual remembrance to encapsulate a shared sense of remembering within a broader network where people gather a sense of collectivity.²⁸ These shared memories are mostly controversial, contested, and inconsistent; but they also help craft in 'us' a sense of the collective. The concept of public and collective memory has been defined as memory that is not consensually agreed upon but rather constructed differently in different segments of society. In the case of South Africa, like many other former colonised societies, memories are a continuous political discourse. The idea of the 'collective' in collective memory is debated where some scholars argue that "the collective is accepted not by choice but by coercion and elite hegemony".²⁹ To test the validity of this assertion, it is imperative to analyse how collective and public memory has been curated in South Africa, post-1994. Considering that the 'collective' in collective memory is a contested concept, some scholars in the field prefer to use 'historical', 'social' or 'public' memory to avoid the question of acceptance of those memories in a specific society. For this study, 'public' and 'collective' are understood to mean the same and will be used together or interchangeably.

The wider field of memory studies can be accessed from various sources. However, in the collective memory discourse, scholars follow sociologist Maurice Halbwachs' theoretical principle of collective memory as a shared representation of the past that is socially constructed and therefore it can be analysed through other social structure.³⁰ On the other hand, collective memory is represented by Wulf Kansteiner, a Professor of History as, "collective remembrance" and "social memory".³¹ Notably, Kansteiner feels uneasy about the anti-individual definition of

²⁸ M Houdek and K. R. Phillips, 'Public Memory', *Oxford Encyclopedia*. 2017, p. 2.

²⁹ C. Twala, "The African National Congress and the Construction of Collective Memory and its impact in the Post-Apartheid Era". *Journal for Social Science*, 41(2), 2014, p. 152.

³⁰ M Houdek and K. R. Phillips, 'Public Memory', 2017,p2

³¹ C. Twala, 'The African National Congress and the Construction of Collective Memory and its impact in the Post-Apartheid Era', p. 152.

Halbwachs' definition of collective memory and hence his social memory stance. This thesis similarly critiques Halbwachs' notion of history being only focused on the past.

History is a discipline that produces critical engagement with events that happened in the past with a broader perspective on events today, and provides those who embark on it with tools to analyse what is to happen tomorrow.³² As a discipline, History studies the human past and is constructed and decoded with human artifacts, oral evidence and written evidence for verification purpose.³³ The discipline of history, can be considered and understood in more than one way. It can be appreciated as an inquiry to human experience and or as a public pursuit. According to Hyde, as an inquiry to human experience, it insists for consideration of multiplicity of human experiences across time and place, while as public pursuit it requires effective communication to ensure the past is accessible for active citizenship and preserving and informing collective memory.³⁴ In this study, however, *public collective memory* is to be understood as conceptualised within the outcomes that came from the intellectual and cultural traditions that frame the representations of the past and the subjective selection of memory makers. It is a circulation of recollections amongst the members of a given society.

When considering the post-apartheid memory scholarship, there exists a common theme of memory and archives sharing a platform with politics fixated on the exclusive liberation struggle memory of the ruling ANC. Referring to memorial sites, Beater in her research demonstrated that the selection and manipulation of memory are for political desires.³⁵ To emphasise this notion, Gumede is of the view that there exists a glibly glossed-over history to suit the occasion.³⁶ Ponder the post-apartheid

³² L. Makhiwane. 'Mpondo, Imvubu', *Amathole Museum Newsletter* (22), 2011,p7

³³ A. Hyde, 'History Discipline Core', *American Historical Association*, 2016 found on <http://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/why-study-history/careers-for-history-majors/history-discipline-core#:~:text=As%20a%20discipline%20and%20change%20over%20time>. Access date 2023 February 12

³⁴ A. Hyde, 'History Discipline Core', *American Historical Association*, 2016

³⁵ S. Timcke, 'Discourse, Memory, and Post-Apartheid South African Archives', *SSRN Electronic Journal* (2015), p. 9.

³⁶ S. Timcke, 'Discourse, Memory, and Post-Apartheid South African Archives', p. 10.

commemorative projects; their selection seeks to establish a national identity that defines a certain type of heritage and public memory for post-apartheid South Africa.

We should note that public collective memory is not History- a discipline and it is not history as the past. Robin George Collingwood, the English philosopher, argued that history is objective and immediate, while memory is subjective and immediate.³⁷ In support of Collingwood, the British historian E.H. Carr in his book *What is History* (1961), wrote that the objective facts *in history* (my emphasis) are there but their selection and interpretation are subjective.³⁸ Importantly, history as the past should not be obfuscated with official history. Official history is a result of the efforts of the social collectives that craft and preserve it. Its presentation is often singular, stable, and formal since its roots are traced from the nation-state phenomenon that emerged as a political and cultural identity from the nineteenth century. This study argues that it is official history that has produced the dominant narrative in post-apartheid South Africa.

In pursuit of official history, the post-apartheid South African government facilitated the sponsoring of a plethora of liberation history publications and sponsored some memorials.³⁹ The memorials are curated to epitomise the metaphor of the rainbow-nation, while also creating what Ivan Vladislavic terms 'propaganda by monuments'.⁴⁰ The liberation memory master narrative is systematically and subjectively curated at the expense of other memories that are not linked to the ruling ANC's history. What we see with this systematic curation of collective memory is the resurgence of revisionism which systematically excludes those that do not share similar sentiments. A master narrative of liberation history espoused here is like the adoption and imposition of 'Western' modernity as the 'real' modernity against other modernities.

³⁷ R George Collingwood, *The idea of history*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press). 2005, p. 366.

³⁸ J. M. Wiersma, Edited by Hannes Swoboda and Jan Marinus Wiersa *Politics of the Past: The Use and Abuse of History* (Prague: RennerInstitut, 2007), p. 16.

³⁹ The Road to democracy in South Africa edited by SA Democracy Education Trust and South Africa's Liberation Heritage Route.

⁴⁰ I Vladislavic, *Propaganda by Monuments & OTHER STORIES* (Cape Town & Johannesburg: David Phillip Publishers), 1996, p. 13.

Established publications such as the two volumes, *The Cambridge History of South Africa*, which seek to provide, amongst other things, a basic account of modern South Africa's historical development,⁴¹ have at most instances explicitly placed more emphasis on the histories which have close relations with South Africa's post-apartheid governing party when it comes to liberation history and its historiography. This is somewhat justifiable considering that the ANC is one of the oldest political formations in South Africa. This permeates through post-apartheid South Africa's public and collective memory, commemoration, and national identity scholarship. A glaring lack exists, therefore, when it comes to narratives involving the PAC and APLA with only a few paragraphs dedicated to them.

Tom Lodge's chapter in the above-mentioned publication, titled 'Resistance and Reform: 1973-1994', presents a picture of resistance to apartheid as being the terrain of 'the workers' unions', 'the school children movement' and 'the ANC's internal reconstruction', including the United Democratic Front (UDF). In his argument, the PAC is presented as a footnote to an ANC discussion of 'specific guidelines in selecting targets for attack',⁴² while APLA is presented as a violent group of youths who killed sixty-one people mainly farmers.⁴³ In Lodge's rationale, I deduce that APLA is lacking positive attributes while the PAC deserves 'neglect'. His argument omits the fact that in November 1974, the PAC succeeded in obtaining the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations General Assembly and APLA engaged in the longest military struggle as compared to MK.

William Beinart's *Twentieth-Century South Africa* text provides no significant difference to Tom Lodge's work since he seems to also associate APLA with negativity. Beinart argues that: "at the height of a/the jubilant political compromise period, the (CODESA) settlement came close to being undermined by 'youths'

⁴¹ A Grundlingh, C Saunders, S Swart, & H Phillips. "Environment, Heritage, Resistance, And Health: Newer Historiographical Directions", in *Cambridge History of South Africa Vol. 2* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 600.

⁴² T Lodge, *Resistance and Reforms: 1973-1994: Cambridge History online Vol 2*, edited R. Ross et al. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press: 2011), p. 430.

⁴³ T Lodge, *Resistance and Reforms: 1973-1994*, 2011, p. 484.

identifying with APLA and the slogan ‘one settler, one bullet’ bombed a white suburban church during a service”.⁴⁴ For Beinart, it seems APLA was a bunch of misguided ‘youths’ who were ‘party poopers’ of the negotiated settlement. This view is compounded in Nigel Worden’s book, *The Making of Modern South Africa: Conquest, Apartheid and Democracy*, where he reiterates this view and says, “soon after the convening of the Kempton Park negotiations, the PAC was implicated in attacks on whites in both rural and urban areas, made by the guerrilla Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA)”.⁴⁵ This type of liberation historiography does not only offer up a bad APLA aesthetic but further misrepresents it as seen in Beinart’s misnaming of APLA as the African People’s Liberation Army instead of Azanian People’s Liberation Army.

Kwandiwe Kondlo, a prominent scholar of the PAC who claimed that APLA and PAC demise in public memory was because of poor electoral performance in the 1994 elections, has proposed the need to change the dominant historical narrative in post-apartheid South Africa. In his quest, he provides a consolidated account of the PAC history. While this is a commendable stride, his book *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, dedicates one chapter to APLA. The chapter does not have APLA as its focal point but rather the development of the PAC’s military strategy. While commendable, the undertone of Kondlo’s seminal work is that APLA as a military wing of the PAC was radar-less, and therefore bound to fail in its missions. Such an underlying message fails to consider that both the PAC with APLA and ANC with MK faced major challenges as exile organisations up until the collapse of white rule in Angola (1974), Mozambique (1975) and Zimbabwe (1979). Kondlo, Lodge, Beinart and Worden simultaneously conclude as per Thami KaPlaatjie’s rationale that ‘the PAC (and APLA) is a moribund organization’.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ W Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa 2nd Edition*. (New York, Oxford University Press: 2011), p. 283.

⁴⁵ N Worden, *The making of modern South Africa: Conquest, Apartheid, Democracy 5th Edition*: (Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell publisher: 2012), p. 151.

⁴⁶ T ka Plaatjie, ‘The PAC’s exile Politics, 1980-1990’ in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), Vol 4. p. 696.

The type of liberation historiography presented in these publications draws from a troublesome philosophical tradition. Reading the written sources that have contributed to the historical development of APLA or PAC above, they all have a common thread: violence. This violent depiction of APLA's historical experience is what Krune Mqhayi terms the gravest error that caused many to honour those to whom no honour was due [*translated: ebangela sicinge leminyaka ingaka [be]sinika imbeko kongafanelwe mbeko*].⁴⁷

While there is not only a glaring gap relating to APLA in post-apartheid liberation historiography, there is epistemicide as well. This study is an attempt to fill that gap while exposing how epistemic inclinations of the historiographer and the heritage curator, the politics and power, directly impact the curation of public collective memory in post-apartheid South Africa.

Research Methodology and sources of evidence

The research questions of this thesis focused on 'what', 'why' and 'how', in order to establish 'facts'. These in nature are exploratory questions, therefore they place the research methodology into a qualitative research category. Notably, the research also seeks to describe the prevalence of a phenomenon that can be associated with an academic and political temperament in post-apartheid South Africa. To resolve and uncover this difficulty, this thesis made use of APLA as a study focus and history as a guide. Due to the nature of the study, although that the research methodology is qualitative, a combination of other methods like archival research, conceptual analysis, narrative inquiry, pragmatism approach, data collection and analysis including interpretivism were used to offer a comprehensive understanding of APLA and its combatants' liberation struggle history.

The case study approach is preferred because it provides for a detailed analysis of the individual case and it is strong where quantitative studies are weaker.⁴⁸Case

⁴⁷ S.E.K Mqhayi, *History on Abantu Besizwe: Historical and biographical writings, 1924-1944* edited by Jeff Opland, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2001), p. 29.

⁴⁸ A.L George, A. Bennet, *'Case Studies and theory Development in the Social Sciences'*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), p. 19.

study approach tests views directly concerning phenomena, as they are practically unfolding and, most importantly, have a potential to achieve high conceptual validity and closely examining hypothesized role of mechanisms in the context of individual case.⁴⁹ Its sources of evidence include documentation, direct observation, physical artifacts, participant-observation, interviews and archival records,⁵⁰ and these evidence sources are used in this study.

While this approach is preferred, its disadvantage is that it can be misused as presented by Pohlman and Huwe (2019), when they used an existing case study for new objectives.⁵¹ Michele Jacobsen (1998) asks whether it is possible to generalize from the results of what applies to a small number to others.⁵² Some scholars (Streb, Mills, Durepos and Wiebe (2010) critique this approach and argue that case studies lack rigour, produce inadequate results therefore providing the researcher with liberty to a point of disregarding systematic procedures.⁵³ Based on the methods applied in this study, the research deduces information that is to it, and the researcher will implement generalizations (if any) with regards to the adopted theories, not just a mere statistical generalization.

Qualitative research is an orientation that notes that “reality is subjective, constructed, multiple and diverse”,⁵⁴ and is mostly conducted in the environment of those who participate in it. With qualitative methodology, the researcher used different qualitative methods like secondary analysis, interviews, document study, and observation to explore and explain the perspectives of the participants.

This research harnessed pragmatism approach, archival resources, data collection, history, and historical theory jointly to answer the research questions.

⁴⁹ A.B Starman, ‘The case study as a type of qualitative research’, *Journal of Contemporary Education Studies*, 2013, p. 36.

⁵⁰ A.M Kristine, ‘Distinguishing case study as a research method from case reports as a publication type’, *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 2019, p. 2.

⁵¹ C. Wolhin, A. Rainet, ‘Is it a case study? A critical analysis and guidance’, *The Journal of Systems & Software (Vol 192)*, 2022, p. 6.

⁵² M.D Jacobsen, ‘Adoption Pattern of Faculty Who Integrate Computer Technology for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education’, *University of Calgary*, 1998, pp. 5-6.

⁵³ C.K Streb, ‘Exploratory case study. In: Mills A, Durepos G, Wiebe E, eds. *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*. SAGE; 2010, pp. 372-373.

⁵⁴ S Sarantakos, *Social Research* 3rd edition, (New York: Palgrave Mac-Millan: 2005), p. 41.

Archival research model is a study of historical documents that were created in the past therefore providing us access to individuals, organisations, events,⁵⁵ and timelines which we would not normally have. The pragmatism was moreover considered since it involves research designs that incorporate operational decisions based on ‘what will work best’ to find answers for the questions under investigation and enable the research to be innovative. Historical theory is an approach that is adopted by historians to answer theoretical questions since historical questions can be more plausible than others.

Theoretically and methodologically, the study relied on published and unpublished literature. This literature was drawn from various fields of study, from social sciences, philosophy, history, psychology, theology and political sciences. Newspaper publications like the *Rand Daily Mail* and bulletins (such as the *Azanian Combat Bulletin*), web pages and written and audio source materials from the South African Liberation Struggle Living Archive Collection which is a joint archival centre that includes the Doxa production, University of Western Cape and Digital Imaging South Africa’s were consulted. Most of the existing research surrounding APLA and its combatants has focused on the reintegration, demobilization and ‘violence’ or leadership squabbles. This thesis deduced that this is because the scholarship is conducted by people who are and were not supportive of APLA or sought to bring the *legitimate* experiences of APLA combatants in the scholarship. To complement the literature and to ensure the voice of ex-APLA combatants in this study, this thesis also utilized semi-structured interviews since they are a ‘conversation with a purpose’. This thesis chose this additional approach as it provided an opportunity to explore and explain the perspectives of the participants. ‘Conversation with a purpose’ also allows the researcher to understand the experiences of the participants, including the meaning they attach to their experiences.

Due to the long period of time that this research covers and the fact that APLA has different generations from those of the *Pogo* years, twenty participants were interviewed. The interviews were conducted using the Nguni languages, Sesotho and

⁵⁵ M. J. Ventresca & J. W. Mohr, *Archival research methods*, (Oxford, Blackwell Business, 2002), p. 2.

English given the multi-ethnic nature of the interviewees. Interviewing ex-APLA combatants was an attempt to let them tell their story since we are aware of the proverbial intellectual diligence of the Ewe-Mina people of West Africa who coined the proverb, “until the story of the hunt is told by the lion, the tale will always glorify the hunter”.⁵⁶

Chapter outline

Chapter two discusses the concepts and conceptualisation of public and collective memory, including how they show expression in the post-apartheid South African liberation struggle historiography. Importantly, the purpose of this chapter is to conduct an analysis considering that these concepts are philosophical. The philosophical conclusions will be considered to bridge the gap between APLA and South Africa’s post-apartheid liberation historiography and public memory. The next chapter discusses the formative years of APLA by tracing it not to Poqo as many scholars have done but rather to the Africanist Task Force, which was adopted as conduit to implement the PAC’s armed struggle. This tracking will begin with *Task Force*, the PAC para-militia group that converted to APLA in 1968. The chapter covers the period 1960 until 1968, however it shows the development of confrontation from the Congress Youth League of the 1940s, the formation of PAC and Task Force, including its transformation into a fully rudimentary military force after its prohibition. The chapter further discusses the adoption of the name Poqo, which was a strategic decision but for easy identification.

Chapter four navigates the PAC and APLA with some of its cadres in exile beginning in Lesotho, to Tanzania, Libya and China, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and other places. The PAC is not easily detached from APLA due to their intricate relationship and therefore this chapter discusses them simultaneously from 1960 until 1993 when most APLA high command and operatives were in the ‘independent’ Transkei. Adding to this is chapter five, which focuses on APLA as a conventional guerrilla army.

⁵⁶ T.T. Xundu, *Foreword*: in Captain Wanda Zondi *No Easy Battles: How I overcame obstacles to achieve my dream*, (Pretoria: Ascension Book Publishers: 2020), p. iii.

Addition to that, this chapter deals with the relationship and influence of Mao's China on the PAC's military wing. The Operation Crusade that occurred in 1967 in Villa Peri is also discussed. In the chapter, an argument is presented that OAU pressured the PAC to infiltrate guerrillas into South Africa. This operation, it is argued in the chapter that it failed to achieve its objective, it rendered the PAC ineffective until 1974. The chapter further discusses the resurgences of APLA in exile after 1975 and 1976 when a cohort of young people went to exile for military training. There is also a specific focus on the female cadres of APLA who were trained in Angola under General Amin's command. In this aspect, a dedication to reflect on the story of female cadres which is hardly discussed in South Africa's liberation history is presented. In presenting this history, in narrating these stories, there is a conversation which emanates between the General Amin's relationships with women. This aspects provides one of the complexities of Amin.

Chapter five also discusses the split of the PAC and APLA in 1979 and the emergence of Pokela who reunited the warring factions. Then it is the 1980s which reflects the revival of the PAC's armed wing and its operations including the coordination of internal and external missions towards the beginning of the 1990s.

Chapter six is the unbanning and transitional period of 1990-1994. This chapter will overlap with some aspects of the previous chapter. Here we discuss transitional negotiation politics, which saw APLA intensifying armed attacks on the South African police and army, white farmers and white civilians, and black collaborators through its operations 'Great Storm' and 'Great Offensive' of 1993 and 1994 respectively. Chapter seven discusses APLA from 1994, it interrogates not extensively the experiences of ex-APLA cadres during the integration process and demobilization. Generally, the questions to study about integration are many, in this chapter we shall focus on the sliver of a sliver with the hope that other scholars would expound the study further. Chapter eight which is the final part of the chapter, we return to the main points of the study which relate to the curation and construction of post-apartheid liberation history and historiography.

Chapter 2: Public and Collective memory in post-apartheid South Africa's liberation historiography: A Conceptual analysis.

Introduction

This chapter considers the conceptual analysis of collective memory as a field of study which is located in various disciplines especially in the emerging memory studies. It draws from the 1920s theory of Halbwachs, who is credited as the founding theorist of collective memory (*memoire collective*). Though this concept has been popular in social sciences, as many scholars have written, it has proven that there are possible 'ambiguities' in the concept definitions. The ambiguity is between the aspect of 'public' memory and 'collective memory' and this chapter develops using the convergences in the ambiguities in order to use collective and public memory together and at times interchangeably. This assists the study to ensure a well-grounded analysis of post-apartheid South Africa's liberation historiography and heritage construction and curation. The analysis postulates that the post-apartheid government and liberation struggle scholars uses a dominant narrative which is ANC centric which slides to patriotic history.

Merging collective memory with public memory

To comprehend the conceptualisation of public and collective memory not only in the post-apartheid South African era but in general, it is vital to firstly interrogate the concepts of collective and public memories themselves. The result of such an understanding will provide a clear picture of how it manifests in the post-apartheid South African liberation historiography, heritage, and of public collective memory. Collective memory (*mémoire collective*) is an interesting topic that has engulfed the humanities and social sciences with a set of renewed interest. It has been seen as an essential part of the emerging interdisciplinary activity in "memory studies".⁵⁷ Scholars of Psychology, Wertsch and Roediger argue that it is one of the most widely used but

⁵⁷ H. L. Roediger & James V Wertsch, 'Creating a new discipline of memory studies', *Memory Studies*, Volume 1, Number 1, 2010.

poorly understood concepts in modern-day academic discussion.⁵⁸ It is a concept or word that has been part of the discourse since its introduction by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1887-1945) in the 1920s. The misunderstanding could be that it has several definitions because as a concept it does not fit precisely in the confines of a one academic discipline, let alone a coordination amongst these disciplines. The historian Wulf Kansteiner understands it as social memory and collective remembrance, Social Psychologists Laurent Licata and Aurélie Mercy define it as 'shared representation of a group's past based on a common identity'.⁵⁹ Many in the cultural studies understands it in its performative sense, which is a shared and contested recollection that forges a sense of place, time-consciousness, and social differentiation.⁶⁰ This is mostly reflected and argued as lack of organisation in the *collective memory* discourse.

Operating within this theoretical ambiguity, the very phrase and idea of collective memory is mostly applied interchangeably with 'public memory'. Communications and rhetoric specialist, Matthew Houdek, attests to the interchangeable use of public memory and collective memory. He opines that public memory extends across multiple disciplines as scholars from many disciplines have an interest in how the past is curated and constructed.⁶¹ While this might demonstrate the lack of organisation, it also evinces the array of perspectives in this discourse,⁶² which is not a cardinal intellectual transgression. For the purposes of clarity, public memory in its broader sense involves the unavoidable actions and processes through which memories transcend beyond the remembering [of] individual [memory] instead becoming a shared, passed on and to form a wider network where people assemble

⁵⁸ J.V. Wertsch & Henry L. Roediger III, "Collective Memory: Conceptual foundations and theoretical approaches", *Memory*, 16 (3), 2008 (Wertsch & Roediger III, 2008)-

⁵⁹ L. Licata & A. Mercy, "Collective Memory, Social Psychology of", in James D. Wright (Ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* 2nd Edition, (Florida, Elsevier: 2015), p. 195.

⁶⁰ M. Kurtz, 'Archives', in A. Kobayashi of editor, (ed.) 2020. *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*. Elsevier Science & Technology, Kingston, ON.), p 267

⁶¹ M. Houdek and K. R. Phillips, 'Public Memory', *Oxford Encyclopedia*, 2017, p1

⁶² H. L. Roediger & J. V. Wertsch, 'Creating a new discipline of memory studies', *Memory Studies*, Volume 1,(1), 2010: p 319

a sense of collectivity.⁶³ In this formulation of public or ‘*collective memory*’, the community tends to draw a sense of an “us” and “our” memories about history.

While this network provides a shared set of memories, these are not uniform, undisputed, and unprovocative memories, compared to official history which have been presented as whole and unchanging. This official history presentation sought at most instances to provide identity and authority to a nation-state as its legitimacy depends on it. The merging of History and memory, a schema of rationalization process, makes up *official history*, which becomes the nation’s history and, subsequently, the nation’s history becomes public and collective memory. Such, at least to an individual, is presented as an unalterable order of things in which one must live, forcing them to live and conform to the official history rules of action. Collective memory *qua* public memory in praxis is therefore organized and standardized.

Thus far, I have presented separately various conceptualisation of *collective memory* and *public memory*. I therefore made a clarification of what is History and official history. I accept that the conceptual and formulation standard, *collective memory* and *public memory* do not produce a philosophical clash, but rather advance the discourse by providing a space to bring different perspectives into it. For this reason, instead of utilizing *collective memory* interchangeably with *public memory* as most scholars do, I fashion them together to formulate what we refer to as *Collective public memory*, the outcomes that came from the intellectual and cultural traditions that frame the representations of the past and the subjective selection of memory makers while accepting all other concepts as presented.

A review into South Africa’s post-apartheid liberation historiography, heritage, and curation of public and collective memory.

An analysis of the post-apartheid liberation historiography, heritage and curation of its public and collective memory requires an understanding of the ideas that

⁶³ M Houdek and K. R. Phillips, ‘Public Memory’, *Oxford Encyclopedia*. 2017, p1

preoccupied the post-1994 African National Congress led government. This implies getting an insight of the type of society it inherited, the vision of the new South Africa it sought to construct and how would that be achieved, including the type of history they support. This is an imperative exercise to conduct because most actions emanate from ideas and the governance approach of the post-apartheid South African government has been influenced by the ruling party's ideological framework, including the colonial apartheid thought.

The post-apartheid South African nation's social and political composition was based on 'withdrawing' and reversing legal apartheid. As such, the conception of its national identity was fashioned on the paradigm of reversal of the 'evil' system. Anthropologist Benedict Anderson (2006) describes the nation as "an imagined political community".⁶⁴ The first democratically elected President of South Africa presented the 'new South African nation', [the *imagined political community*] on May 10, 1994 by saying.

We have triumphed in the effort to implant hope in the breasts of the millions of our people. We enter into a covenant that we shall build the society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity - a [rainbow] nation at peace with itself and the world.⁶⁵

In building this new society there had to be some kind of reconciliation, multiracialism, democracy, and constitutional supremacy, to achieve Desmond Tutu's *inclusive human community* thought and action principles.⁶⁶ Unfortunately that left the colonial apartheid economic control with its beneficiaries, including undercurrents, not diversified and inclusive. For twenty-eight years most of the citizens especially the

⁶⁴ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism-Revised Edition*. (New York & London: Verso: 2006), p 6

⁶⁵ N. Mandela, 'Nelson Mandela's inaugural speech'. *University of Pennsylvania-Africana Studies Centre*. 10 May 1994 accessed on https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Inaugural_Speech_17984.html: access date 14 September 2020.

⁶⁶ N. J. Tshawane, 'The rainbow nation: A critical analysis of the notions of community in the thinking of Desmond Tutu- in fulfilment of Doctor of Theology'. *University of South Africa*. 2009 accessed on http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/3761/thesis_tshawane_n.pdf : access date 2020-08-20

black citizens, have been subjected to the fringes of economic control in the new society. Adding to this failure, governing structures have continued to push into the periphery recollections, commemorations, and honours of those who were considered as ‘enemies’ of the national identity constructed from the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) negotiated settlement.

To establish national identity and a political sovereign state, political elites use various strategies to diminish any contradictory message to their [envisaged] national identity.⁶⁷ These include big infrastructure development that will trigger economic growth, and influence education policies or political stability.⁶⁸ The post-apartheid South African ruling government adopted this as part of its strategy. Consider the government-funded Hector Pietersen Memorial Museum that opened its doors in June 2002 as one such example of commemorative infrastructure development.

These types of developments speak to the economic growth requirements through tourism, educational policies plus curricular influence, including the curation of public and collective memory. While they form part of a nation building project, these above strategies are equally tools for national branding. For the success of nation branding, profitable branding methods to reach wider audiences are necessary because nation branding is entangled with nation-building for it is used as a tool to activate national pride in the nation.⁶⁹ Post-apartheid South Africa rulers formulated on these elements as guiding principles for the envisaged democratic society’s vision.

Amongst the surrogates of this approach was Anglican Bishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) chairperson. The TRC was established in 1996 and Tutu was appointed by President Mandela to oversee the project. Using the biblical story of Noah after the floods, Tutu conceptualised a metaphor with religious connotations, the “rainbow nation” which he drew from the statement, “we South Africans are a rainbow people of God”.⁷⁰ In the

⁶⁷ R. Hoeffte & W. Veenendaal. ‘The Challenges of Nation-Building and Nation Branding in Multi-Ethnic Suriname’, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics Vol 25, issue 2*: 2019:p175

⁶⁸ R. Hoeffte & W. Veenendaal, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics Vol 25, issue 2*: 2019:p175

⁶⁹ R. Hoeffte & W. Veenendaal, *Nationalism and Ethnic*, p177

⁷⁰ D. Tutu, *The rainbow people of God: The making of a peaceful revolution*, (Cape Town: Image; 1996), p49

conceptualization of this metaphor, Tshwawane suggests that Tutu was to utilise the idea as a corrective hermeneutic from divisions created by apartheid.⁷¹ Delport and Lephakga (2016) claim that “the metaphor of the rainbow nation has become the brand of South Africa and, together with the *transformative* constitution, the TRC and over twenty years of democracy have become the main exports of post-apartheid South Africa”.⁷² The rainbow nation identity was affirmed by Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, the ANC’s chief negotiator at CODESA. He states that the signing of the 1996 constitution was “the birthday of the South African rainbow nation”.⁷³ The statement was uttered at Sharpeville on the 10th of November 1996, upon the promulgation of Act 106 of 1996, as the supreme law of the republic.

Onwards, as the project of nation building was proceeding, this branding had to be maintained since South Africa had just overcome legal apartheid. It is my view that the metaphor found social and political expression with most people, citizens and non-citizens, natives, and non-natives because the country was mesmerised by the project of re-imagining, rethinking, and conceptualising nationhood, and nationality. This paradigm provided a platform for post-apartheid South African national identity to be curated within the religious inferences that were overtly Christian-inclined. They included reconciliation, prosperity, human dignity, freedom, and justice.⁷⁴

While it was not only the national identity that was curated on these principles, but Bishop Tutu further wrote, “I lay great stress on humanness and being truly human; in our African understanding, part of *Ubuntu*- being human is the rare gift of sharing”.⁷⁵ The implication of this statement from such an influential figure at the time implied that there would be diversification of nation’s resources, economic wealth and platform in the memory of a collective humanity. This proved to be not the case as most people

⁷¹ N. J. Tshwawane, *The rainbow nation: A critical analysis of the notions of community in the thinking of Desmond Tutu*, (Doctor of Theology thesis, University of South Africa, 2009)

⁷² P. T. Delport & T. Lephakga, ‘Spaces of Alienation: Dispossession and justice in South Africa’, *HTS Theologies/Theological Studies* 72(1). 2016:p 05

⁷³ T. Madlingozi, ‘Social Justice and Neo-Apartheid Constitutionalism: Critiquing the Anti-Black Economy of Recognition, Incorporation and Distribution’. *Stellenbosch Law Review*. 2017: p 127

⁷⁴ N. J. Tshwawane, *The rainbow nation: A critical analysis of the notions of community in the thinking of Desmond Tutu- in fulfilment of Doctor of Theology*: p 56

⁷⁵ D. Tutu, *Crying in the wilderness*. (London: Fount Collins paperbacks: 1982),p 100

in South Africa lack basic resources, economic wealth is still controlled by mainly European settlers' descendants and the public and collective memory is skewed.

Politically, post-apartheid South Africa promotes socio-economic rights, human rights discourses, and a new system of democratic capitalism that reintegrated itself in the global capitalist economy along neoliberal lines. This political identity is understood to have been due to a solid foreign influence on the ruling ANC by American pressure groups and the fall of the USSR. Sampie Terreblanche argues that South Africa succumbed through finance Minister Trevor Manuel to the American neo-liberal model when the economic policy formulation reached climax upon the adoption of Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy in June 1996.⁷⁶ Terreblanche further opines, after GEAR's adoption, inequalities of apartheid were entrenched.⁷⁷ National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM) Thomas Ketsie agrees with Terreblanche when he uttered a statement during a wages and working conditions agreement with the Chamber of Mines in 1996 and said, "Employers have been contributing more in developing white workers more than black workers resulting in the disparity between white and black workers".⁷⁸

While this disparity was not only economical, it was manifesting in the curation of public collective memory by the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, "the custodian of South Africa's collective national memory and the chronicler of its current evolution".⁷⁹ The recognition of injustices of our past and honouring of those who suffered for justice and freedom in South Africa as its constitution preamble claims, has indicated to be implying recognising and honouring those of the Charterist persuasion therefore creating a dominant narrative that subsumes and frames other

⁷⁶ S Terreblanche, *Lost in Transformation- South Africa's search for a new future since 1986* (Johannesburg: KMM Review Publishing Company: 2012), p64-65

⁷⁷ S. Terreblanche, *Lost in Transformation*, p 67

⁷⁸ H. Deegan, *South Africa reborn: Building a new democracy*. (Padstow: UCL Press: 1999), p 132

⁷⁹ P. Jordan, Foreword by the Minister: Strategic plan 1 April 2004-31 March 2007, *Department of Arts and Culture*: 2004: 1. Accessed on http://www.dac.gov.za/sites/default/files/strat_plan04_07_0.pdf accessed date: 10 September 2020.

experiences into a homogeneous collective memory of ANC's idea of national identity.⁸⁰

Colonialism and apartheid produced a complex South African situation that mirrors itself in its historiography. Natives and their cultures, languages, and histories, ways of knowing, experiences and activities were disregarded by the colonial apartheid thinkers such as Jan Christian Smuts. Radical changes around 1994 resulted in what historians Witz and Rassool termed 'a historiographical rupture'⁸¹; a history writing that pushed beyond the traditional complacent professional history boundaries. In the South African historiographical rupture, the colonial archive was contested and critiqued. An example of the critique is Ndlovu's questioning of the claim that King Dingane was a weak king that was easily influenced by a 'woman', Queen Mkabayi.⁸² In his new perspectives, Ndlovu used isiZulu poems (*izibongo*) to argue that though Mkabayi was a woman, the Zulu poetry defined her as 'manly' implying that she was not weak.

While these intellectual debates were happening, a government-sponsored struggle history was emanating, and it developed to be a dominant liberation historiographical trend after 1994. Critics of the government sponsored liberation struggle historiography trend claimed it was "a dangerous body of work that presents contemporary history as a dichotomy between those who were on the right side and those who were not".⁸³ It was a [liberation] history that was visibly declared as "a truly South African project that wanted to draw in as many people as possible so that it reflects a truly national character".⁸⁴ Though contested by many scholars, the majority of the liberation struggle scholarship showed to be an ANC struggle history project that seeks to edit the society's collective memory.

⁸⁰ Thand'Olwethu Dlanga, 'A scheme of legitimization: South Africa's revisionism'. *Hood Communist*. 2021

⁸¹ L. Witz & C. Rassool, 'Making histories'. *Kronos Volume.34 no.1*. 2008:p 6

⁸² S.M Ndlovu, '*African Perspective of King Dingane kaSenzangakhona: The Second Monarch of the Zulu Kingdom*', (Pretoria, PalGrave-Macmillan, 2017),p 68

⁸³ R. Ross, A.K. Mager & B. Nasson, 'Introduction'. *The Cambridge History of South Africa, Volume 2*. 2011: p 13

⁸⁴ B. Magubane, 'The Road to Democracy in South Africa'. *South African Democracy Education Trust*: 2004. Accessed on http://www.sadet.co.za/about_us.html: access date, 2020 June 19

The coming to being of the democratic South Africa after April 1994 elections provided the country and the triumphant African National Congress with political power to foster dominant liberation struggle narratives. These had, amongst others two aims, to construct a 'new' nation and keep political control. Jacques Derrida, a French philosopher, exclaimed that there is no political power exclusive of the control of the archive [and] or memory.⁸⁵ This philosophy was adopted by the democratic South African government, and liberation struggle archives were collected, monuments were built, and public collective memory was curated for the objective of keeping political power. Public collective memory was therefore manufactured to be a subjective and narrow South African liberation struggle history in the public's imagination.

To sustain the political control, other liberation struggle histories and records in instances of the state sponsored archives were 'suppressed' to create a cohesive group identity, to legitimize institutions, and to socialize people into compliance with that legitimization. A trunk with APLA and PAC documents and literature was apprehended and never returned when Letlapa Mphahlele was arrested in Lesotho in 1996. Such documents have not been selected, packaged, and preserved as archival material in the national archive and other state institutions, let alone its custodians, APLA. As a result, there was a partial and selective reading of the liberation struggle past, leading to [struggle] history being used to create a specific identity of the citizenry for a certain political result.⁸⁶

In an attempt to maintain the ANC dominant monolithic narrative, South African government has sponsored liberation history projects to protract an understanding of liberation struggle as something to be defended therefore will achieve election victory. Focusing on a particular issue, namely *apartheid*, the ANC government engages in varying approaches starting with school curricula, then to public heritage, public broadcast messaging and in some way liberation historiography. Public History, which is the popular presentation and broadcasting of the past has been in the forefront of the strategies used by ANC regarding liberation struggle history. Jill Liddington

⁸⁵ J. Derrida, 'Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression'. *Diacritics*, Vol 25 No 2. 1995: p 11

⁸⁶ S. N. Timcke, 'Discourse, Memory, and Post-Apartheid South African Archives', *SSRN Electronic*, 2015, p 11

explains public history as a branch of history with its practice been about the popular presentation of the past to a range of audiences- through museums and heritage site, historical fiction and film.⁸⁷ The 80 million rand apartheid museum located in the Gold Reef City of Johannesburg, which is “acknowledged as the pre-eminent museum in the world dealing with 20th century South Africa and apartheid”,⁸⁸ is one example, while the Oliver Tambo monument at the OR Tambo International airport is another. Those public history is complex considering that its study as an intellectual field mostly concerns itself with how society acquire of the past, it is also fascinated about how the past is presented publicly. Having the ruling government with greater control of the public funds, broadcasting, and other public institutions, it has become simpler for organs like APLA to be edited out of liberation history for a liberation history that would show patriotism to ANC.

The ruling ANC is also propagating what the Zimbabwean Historian Terence Ranger terms a ‘Patriotic history’; a narrower historiography that resents and defines as inapt all history that is not political.⁸⁹ As the developments in Zimbabwe historiographical scholarship around the years 2000-2003 did South Africa paced after its neighbour, there emerged ‘patriotic history’ that intended to proclaim the continuity of Zimbabwean [and ANC’s] revolutionary tradition.⁹⁰ Most recently, a prevalent attitude is emerging of scholarship that uses the ‘neglected’ archives to provide counter-narrative in liberation history to that which is state sponsored.

The story of APLA has become one those that have been victims to realities of marginalization. The PAC and APLA historians in contrast to those of ANC and MK, have not extensively made an effort regarding the documenting of liberation struggle history but have resigned this vocation to others, including the government. This however is a situation that is slowly changing. This study is an addition to these slow,

⁸⁷ L Liddington, ‘What is Public History? Publics and Their Pasts, Meanings and Practices’, *Oral History*, Vol 30, No,1, 2002,p 84

⁸⁸ Apartheid Museum, ‘The Apartheid Museum’s Genesis’, found on <https://apartheidmuseum.org/about-the-museum> accessed on 18 December 2022

⁸⁹ T Ranger, ‘Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: the Struggle over the Past in Zimbabwe’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 30, Issue 2, (2004) 2013, p 218

⁹⁰ T Ranger, ‘Nationalist Historiography, p218

but necessary efforts in the post-apartheid South African liberation struggle historiography. Notwithstanding that this study exposes the singular narrative of liberation history to produce a plural understanding of other liberation histories, it undesirably upholds partly some patriotic history.

Conclusion

Conceptually, collective memory as developed in various disciplines have been identified to have been ambiguous. To ensure there is lack of clarity in the concept, public and collective memory was accepted by adopting the convergences of the various discipline definitions. This new approach used public and collective together and interchangeably to interrogate post-apartheid South Africa's curation and construction of liberation historiography and heritage. In the chapter, it was reflected that post-apartheid South African government and scholarship use a triumphalist approach. This, the chapter stated that this has promoted a dominant narrative therefore displacing other liberation voices.

Chapter 3: The Roots and the formative years: The Task Force, *uPoqo* and APLA

Introduction

The period of the formation of the PAC and its Africanist Task forces in 1959 proved a continuation of the confrontational approaches adopted by African Nationalist after World War II. Although the PAC adopted a more Nkrumahist/Gandhi approaches to the struggle, passive resistance did not imply that was not a confrontation. In the PAC, there exist a lingering resistance spirit which draws much of its historical tradition from as early as the beginning of the 20th century. In this chapter, the study uncovers the origins and the foundational drivers of the PAC and its subsidiary, the Africanist Task force. These origins are identified as being organisationally harnessed at ANC Youth League at Fort Hare but their historical tradition is as early as the beginning of the century.

It is historically recognised that post-Sharpeville, the PAC, which was formed in April 1959, adopted a more violent posture in its confrontation. This was not always the position, however, after the massacre of Africans in Sharpeville and Langa, the arrests of political leaders and the prohibition of the PAC and by extension ANC and SACP, violent means to liberation struggle was adopted. The chapter depicts the various stages of the development of the PAC, initially as an idea then as a liberation movement which includes conscripting APLA as its armed wing. Prior to APLA being established, the PAC and later *Poqo* (covert name) after its prohibition exhibited signs of transmitting the great storm. It is the period when PAC was famously known as *Poqo* that the study argues that these were the early stages of the great storm of South Africa's liberation struggle. This chapter of the study is fixated on the periods between 1940 and 1963 though it refers to periods earlier than that to emphasize specific points. Importantly, the chapter will show that *Poqo* was not a militia wing of the PAC, as many historians and scholars argue, but, rather the PAC was *Poqo*, a name adopted for strategic reasons after its banning.

The roots of confrontation and the founding of PAC.

Since the defeat of the African people by the imperialist forces in the earlier centuries, Africans in just about all colonies in the 20th century mostly resorted to indirect forms of resistance, including the affirmation of their sovereignty. They established their own organizations in which they administered their affairs almost independent of colonialist control. In South Africa, some of these organizations included the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) founded in 1919, Sofasonke Party established in 1935, the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU), formed in 1941 and the African Mineworkers Union (AMWU) of 1918, including the self-help the ANC established 'Department of Social Welfare' of 1940.

During the interwar years, in Africa there arose proto-nationalist movements with overtly political agendas, and these included workers' organisations, and ethnic associations such as the Kenya's Young Kikuyu Association and African Resistance Movement (ARM), including ANC Youth League (ANCYL) established in 1944 in South Africa. These groups challenged the colonial status quo, fought for Africans upliftment, and laid the foundation for future political protest as we have seen early in the 1950s with the ANC which was established as African Native National Congress in 1912.

The nature of Africans protest pre-1940s was markedly different from that of the post- World War 2 period. We know that pre-1940s the nationalist organisations in Africa and South Africa in particular relied on the moral susuation to persuade the British imperialist authority and Afrikaner nationalist regime to grant them 'rights'.⁹¹ Mxolisi Mgxashe argues that there was no other course open at the time but to protest as peacefully and in as disciplined a manner as possible.⁹² The ANC of South Africa pursued the non-confrontational, non-violence and passive resistance with even greater faith⁹³, the PAC opted for the same immediately after its launch in 1959. By

⁹¹ S Dubow, *South Africa's struggle for Human Rights*. (Ohio: Ohio University Press; 2012), p 11

⁹² M Mgxashe, *Are you with us: The story of a PAC Activist*. (Tafelberg: Mafube: 2006),p 40

⁹³ M Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p 40

1960 when it organised the status campaign, the PAC had not gotten rid of that non-violence culture bequeathed by Gandhi.⁹⁴ After W.W.2, the protest tone changed both in South Africa and in the continent and became harsher and confrontational as the emergent political activism of the period saw the flourishing of nationalist ideas.⁹⁵ The ANC, and later the PAC, utilized African nationalistic ideas towards their envisaged goal of 'liberation'. With the ANC leading 'old guard' like Dr. Alfred Bathini Xuma, Chief Albert Luthuli and Zachariah Keodirelang Matthews, such ideology got intricate with the emergence of the SACP and the Congress Alliance of the 1950s meanwhile its Youth wing held on to the confrontational outlook of African Nationalism.

It was at South Africa Natives College (renamed University of Fort Hare) in 1955 that some of these nationalist ideas were refined and harnessed through the insistence of two most trusted Anton Lembede's disciples; Godfrey Pitje (1917-1997) and Ashby Solomzi Peter Mda (1916-1993) that there would be the establishment of the ANC Youth League branch. After Godfrey Pitje's tenure as the first branch chairperson,⁹⁶ Mda had the foresight to realise that Fort Hare University would serve as home to the emergent group of African intellectuals that were destined to play a pivotal role in the quest for a new society.⁹⁷ True to this foresight, Robert Gabriel Mugabe who became Prime Minister and later President of Zimbabwe, Ntsu Mokhehle who would establish Basutoland Congress Party (BCP), and Duma Nokwe who became the Secretary General of the ANC, all came from ANCYL Fort Hare branch where they were intellectually and politically groomed in African Nationalism and the struggle for liberation.

Mda and Pitje, with some of the young students Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, Oliver Tambo, John Nyati Pokela, Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi and others, helped to establish and strengthen the league in that college. By September 1948, Mda had

⁹⁴ Mgxashe, Are you with us, p40

⁹⁵ A.K.Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed: The Biography of John Nyati Pokela*. (Skotaville:Johannesburg:2021), p 20

⁹⁶ L.M. Dondolo, 'Dr Godfrey Mokgonane Pitje Lecture', *Consciousness*: 2019 accessed at [https://consciousness.co.za/dr-godfrey-mokgonane-pitje-public-lecture/#:~:text=Dr%20Godfrey%20Mokgonane%20Pitje%20was,Soweto%20\(South%20Western%20Townships\)](https://consciousness.co.za/dr-godfrey-mokgonane-pitje-public-lecture/#:~:text=Dr%20Godfrey%20Mokgonane%20Pitje%20was,Soweto%20(South%20Western%20Townships).).

⁹⁷ A Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*,p 21

confirmed to Godfrey Pitjie the establishment of Congress Youth League in Orange Free State, Natal and the Cape.⁹⁸ In 1949, a Fort Hare Youth League delegation led by Sobukwe (with Pokela, who later became the PAC Chairman from 1980-1985) to an ANC annual conference held in Magasa Hall in Bloemfontein, successfully argued as Youth League for the adoption of the ANC's 1949 Programme of Action.⁹⁹ According to Leeman, the Programme of Action was a call to the African people encouraging them to take part in various forms of mass resistance to stand against human rights violations that were perpetrated by the apartheid regime.¹⁰⁰ The statement released on 17 December 1949 by the ANC on the Programme of Action stated,

The fundamental principles of the Programme of Action of the African National Congress are inspired by the desire to achieve national freedom. By national freedom we mean freedom from White domination and the attainment of political independence. This implies the rejection of the conception of segregation, apartheid, trusteeship, or white leadership which are all, in one way or another, motivated by the idea of white domination or domination of the whites over the Blacks. Like all other people, the African people claim the right of self-determination.¹⁰¹

The cohort of Youth League members from Fort Hare was introduced to the militant African Nationalism that had a continental and diaspora scope. Their political consciousness was influenced by their exposure to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe's newspaper titled *West African Pilot*. It is worth mentioning that Azikiwe was one of the delegates at the Pan African Conference of 1945. The militancy and change in political activism of the youthful generation can be witnessed in Sobukwe's 1949 speech when he was addressing students on behalf of graduates of University of Fort Hare. He argued that

⁹⁸ 'Letter on the Youth League, from A.P.Mda to G.M. Pitjie, September 10, 1948', in Gwendolyn M. Carter and Thomas Karis, eds, *From protest to Challenge*, Vol. 2, p 321.

⁹⁹ W. Gqaji, 'Pokela: Leader of the PAC', *New African: The Radical Review* July 1981, p 3

¹⁰⁰ B Leeman, 'Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo: The South African Communist Party and the Pan Africanist Congress', self-published academic essay, (2016)

¹⁰¹ African National Congress, '38th National Conference: Programme Of Action: Statement of Policy Adopted', 17 December 1949. Found at <https://www.anc1912.org.za/policy-documents-1949-38th-national-conference-programme-of-action-statement-of-policy-adopted/> access date 14 December 2022

young intellectuals must embrace new understanding of education, which it must be of service to Africa. He identified the decay of capitalism and exposed the brutal mercantile imperialism of the 17th -18th centuries as nothing but financial and economic imperialism. Sobukwe spoke of non-collaboration and underscored that the group in power has never voluntarily relinquished power but rather has to be forced to do so.¹⁰² It is at this moment of Mangaliso Sobukwe's life, and some of his comrades who became known as the Africanist block in the ANC, that a shift is witnessed in his political consciousness resulting in a more harsher and confrontational attitude which will embody the PAC from 1959 and APLA, its military wing, from 1968.

From 1950 onwards, the politics of the congress alliance between ANC, South African Indian Congress (SAIC), Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA- later renamed South African Communist Party), and South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), Coloured's People Congress (CPC) and Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) consistently undermined the 1949 Programme of Action. For instance, the aspect of rejecting white leadership which the 1949 Programme of Action identified as motivated by white domination was one aspect of the perceived disregard. Pokela, a member of the Africanist block in the ANC commented about the undermining of the Programme of Action:

You see after the adoption of the 1949 Programme of Action in Bloemfontein; it was clear that most of the elected [people] were going to water down the programme. So, some Youth Leaguers established the Bureau [newspaper] to be the watchdog published in East London under Alcott Gwentshe.¹⁰³

The congress alliance politics led to the adoption of what L.M Dondolo, a historian, terms a liberal and integrationist 'Freedom Cheater' document at Kliptown in 1955.¹⁰⁴ This document has since become the foundational basis of South Africa's post-apartheid constitutional democratic society. Critics, whom I agree with, of the Freedom

¹⁰² PAC Information Bureau, *M.R Sobukwe Address on Behalf of the Graduating Class at Fort Hare College*, (Nkapesa: Johannesburg: 2010), p8.

¹⁰³ J.N Pokela, 'Letter to Benjamin Pogrand, 24 December 1984', Benjamin Pogrand Papers, Historical Papers Research Archive, University of Witwatersrand.

¹⁰⁴ L.M. Dondolo, 'Dr Godfrey Mokgonane Pitjje Lecture', *Consciousness*: 2019

Charter argue that it has cheated the African native people in South Africa of their freedoms and liberties since it has not dealt with the origins of the unjust laws and racialized configuration of modern South Africa, including the coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being, as underpinned by white supremacy. On 26 June 1952, the defiance campaign, a mass based campaign adopted by the ANC at its December 1951 conference commenced in Port Elizabeth (currently renamed Gqeberha) and spread with civil disobedience beginning in Cape Town, then Pretoria, and to other major urban cities.¹⁰⁵

The campaign was a response to D.F. Malan regime's passing of the Suppression of Communism Act in 1950, the Stock Limitation Regulations, the Group Areas Act, the Separate Representation and Bantu Authorities Act, in 1952.¹⁰⁶ It is unclear how, who and when the Defiance Campaign was called off; however, Simpson notes that in 1953 Albert Luthuli, President General of the ANC published an op-ed where he acknowledged the failure of previous efforts but still pledged for the continued adherence to the non-violent Passive Resistance technique.¹⁰⁷ By 1954, the congress alliance had been extended by the inclusion of FEDSAW, which drew its membership from all races but not all members in the ANC accepted these 'new' congress alliance politics.

A group which emanated significantly from the Youth League referring to themselves as the Africanists from Orlando ANCYL "proclaimed unswerving adherence to the 1949 Programme of Action, criticising the congress alliance and stating that the struggle is being deflected by foreign ideologies, and that the slogan 'Africa for Africans' had been abandoned".¹⁰⁸ These were members of the ANC who wrote newsletters from November 1954 and signed them off under the name 'African Nationalists-ANC'. In a special conference held in Orlando from 31 March to 01 April 1956 to decide on the stance towards the [Charter] document, Simpson states that the delegates voted to embrace the Charter as an official ANC policy.

¹⁰⁵ T Simpson, *History of South Africa: From 1902 to the Present*. (Penguin: Cape Town:2021), p141

¹⁰⁶ T Simpson, *History of South Africa* pp 137-138

¹⁰⁷ T Simpson, *History of South Africa* pp 137-138

¹⁰⁸ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p138

Since the Freedom Charter was adopted in 1955, there were divisions between those who supported the new charter and the Africanists group in the ANC. Ezekiel Mphahlele of *Drum* Magazine witnessed these tensions at the ANC conference held in Bloemfontein in 1956, and reported on them, saying: “the Africa for Africans group discharged its buckshot saying the ‘Congress [ANC] must go back to its 1949 Programme of Action’. Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe and Dr Peter Tsele led the Africanists”.¹⁰⁹

What was argued by the Africanists with regards to the need to go back to the Programme of Action was to maintain the radical, confrontational, and harsher approach to political protest in apartheid South Africa, which was planted into the African Nationalists movement after WWII. In 1958, two years after the Bloemfontein conference, the ANC Transvaal region held a congress at Orlando Communal Hall in Soweto. At the congress, the Africanists were expelled from the conference on the basis that they did not meet the credential requirements of the conference.¹¹⁰ Upon exclusion, the Africanists who were concentrated in the Witwatersrand area at the period sent a letter signed by its representative Selby Ngendane and not by Robert Sobukwe,¹¹¹ as Thula Simpson claims in his book *History of South Africa from 1902 to the Present*’ though Sobukwe might have contributed in the drafting of the message.

The letter announced the parting of ways between the contending ideological groups (Charterists and Africanists), and that the Africanists will form an organisation that would further set forth what is entailed in the 1949 Programme of Action.¹¹² While the letter primarily referred to the split as caused by ideological differences, the origins could have been more complex than just ideological. An aspect of youthfulness could have played a major factor, including the personality clashes. The youth tend to perceive the ‘struggle’ and ‘revolution’ differently to the generations before them. It is

¹⁰⁹ E Mphahlele, ‘The ANC holds its Annual Conference in Bloemfontein’, in Jürgen Schadeberg ed, *Nelson Mandela and the Rise of the ANC* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1990),p96

¹¹⁰ A Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, p 33

¹¹¹ M Pheko, “Decoding Sobukwe” (paper presented at 95th Birthday celebration of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, Pretoria,South Africa, December 2019),p11

¹¹² ‘Letter sent to Mr. Speaker, ANC Conference Held at Orlando on the 1st to the 2nd November 1958’, *The Africanist* January 1959.

possible that the Africanist block, which was youthful, felt the 'old guard' in leadership role of the ANC was not rapidly striving for national liberation. In less than a year, on 4-6 April 1959, the Africanists held their inaugural conference at Orlando Communal Hall, chaired by Zephaniah Mothopeng, and the Pan Africanist Congress was formed, with Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe elected its inaugural President and Potlako Leballo the Secretary. The PAC presented and depicted itself as custodian of the ANC 1949 Programme of Action and continued in adopting ideas and acted radically and in confrontational ways towards protest politics, even though up to 1960, they still had not entirely rid themselves the Gandhian non-violence approach. Ideologically, the PAC was confrontation however non-violent in action.

The fighting force: A confrontational movement

The emergence of the PAC in 1959 did not only create an alternative organization or what Simpson terms the "competition between liberation movements"¹¹³, but it also witnessed the emergence of an organisation established within a specific posture of Positive Action i.e. to be confrontational to the regime's white supremacy and all its manifestations. According to Professor Sipho Shabalala, this posture could be translated into different formats as it was meant to fight against dehumanization and indignity of African natives in South Africa.¹¹⁴ The Positive Action Campaign was conceptualized at the inaugural conference of the PAC where all regions were represented, and the anti-pass campaign became part of Positive Action. For instance, Potlako K. Leballo represented Transvaal, Abednego Bhekabantu Ngcobo and John Dumdum Nyaoase Natal, Elliot Mfafa representing the EC as chairperson, Christopher Mlokoti for Western Cape.

While PAC had not rid itself entirely of the remnants and culture of non-violence, the positive action approach shows that inherently it was to be a radical, hasher and confrontational both politically and militarily since the All-African People Convention in Accra Ghana in 1956 had adopted the possibility of armed struggle for

¹¹³ T Simpson, *History of South Africa: From 1902 to the Present*, (Penguin: Cape Town:2021), p 161

¹¹⁴ Interview with Prof Sipho Shabalala, Telephone Call: Date, 2022/06/28

African independence. This was thought to be an appropriate approach considering that the apartheid regime proved brutal to African people and had promulgated the Riotous Assemblies Act 17 of 1957 which “remained the principal law on the statute books for combating political subversion”.¹¹⁵ In view of this, the PAC inaugural conference in 1959 realised it cannot be fully constituted without capacitating itself with a structure that would provide safety, security and discipline while implementing the concepts of the organisation.¹¹⁶

After the PAC formation, a safety and security organ was formed and branches were organised, and some members of the branches were recruited to serve as safety and security personnel. The organ became known as the Africanist Task Force (*Task Force*), “the foot soldiers of the organisations”¹¹⁷ who took care of security and discipline in the PAC that would later implement the confrontational approach of the organization under the strategically adopted name Poqo.¹¹⁸ Initially, the Task Force provided security against the infiltration by the special branch and police, including protecting the national leadership of the PAC while maintaining discipline within the organisation, as it would be instructed by Sobukwe at the 1960 non-violent anti-pass campaign. Similar to the Fruit of Islam (FOI) which stood in Harlem on April 26, 1957, bracing itself for another riot, the PAC Task Force would act like Africanist soldiers, rank upon rank to protect PAC members from saboteurs.

At a later stage, the Task Force was further tasked to organise safe venues for PAC meetings however, its ultimate purpose was to be the fighting organ of the PAC as it was witnessed in the 1962 Tlönze and Paarl uprisings.¹¹⁹ The song composed after the formation of the PAC, ‘*sifuna amajoni, amajoni kaSobukwe amajoni enkululeko*’ [translation. we want scores of soldiers, soldiers of Sobukwe and soldiers for liberation] shows the intentions of this newly established organization were militant, radical and it was readying itself for a military confrontation pre-1960. As

¹¹⁵ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p 136

¹¹⁶ Interview with Prof Sipho Shabalala, Telephone Call: Date, 2022/06/28

¹¹⁷ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us: The story of a PAC Activist*. (Tafelberg: Mafube: 2006), p 58

¹¹⁸ WhatsApp from Prof Sipho Shabalala, Instant Text message: Date, 2022/06/30

¹¹⁹ Interview with Prof Sipho Shabalala, Telephone Call: Date, 2022/06/26

such the Task Force was to be capacitated for such purpose since it was accepted to be a fighting arm of the organisation. Malcom Dyani, a PAC stalwart and a former East London Task Force commander argued that “the Task Force was never a formal or a component structure of the PAC but came about as a protective measure for the 21st March 1960 non-violent anti-pass campaign”.¹²⁰ For him, the Task Force gained usage when the PAC began to reorganize ‘underground’.¹²¹ Vuyani Mngaza, another PAC stalwart and businessman, who owned the Pan African Motors garage in Duncan Village, and who later became the sole PAC Representative in West Africa from 1966 to 1969, states that he got involved in the Task Force before the ‘launch of the revolution’ which was scheduled for 8th April 1963 until liberation was achieved.¹²² For Mngaza, irrespective of when and how it came to exist, he worked with it from his garage.

The Pan African Motors garage was the first ‘Black owned’ garage that was subsidised by Shell in South Africa at the time. It is where rudimentary, yet effective weapons were manufactured for and by the Task Force members under the instruction of Nkululeko Jako, a Task Force member from Cape Town. Jako died in London and his remains were repatriated back to South Africa with the help of Eastern Cape government in 2017. He was remembered as a crucial figure in establishing PAC and Poqo underground cells in the 1960s and was a functional cadre in Cape Town, in the Border region and the then Transkei region.¹²³

The members of the Task Force from Cape Town under Jako would travel to the ‘Border region’, including Transkei, to meet other Task Force members to consolidate plans for the ‘launch’. On route to the Transkei, Jako and company would pass by ‘the base’ i.e at Pan African Motors in East London then proceed to their envisaged destinations. Mngaza states that either through snitching or police intelligence, the police found the Task Force weapons at his garage ceiling in 1963,

¹²⁰ Malcom Dyani, Response to a FB messenger question: Date; 2022-07-03

¹²¹ Malcom Dyani, Response to a FB messenger question: Date; 03 July 2022

¹²² Vuyani Mngaza, Interview phone call: Date; 2022-07-04

¹²³ S. Goqwana, ‘PAC welcomes cadre Jako’s remains home’. Cape Times, 2017 April 17, accessed on <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/cape-times/20170420/281728384395626>

on the eve of the launch of the uprising that was announced by Leballo. This led to his arrest and detention at Fort Glamorgan, a historical site turned prison which was named after the Earl of Glamorgan and established in 1848 along the Buffalo River. It is a Fort that was utilized as troop barracks and to guard the supply line to King Williams Town.

Tom Lodge identifies the preparedness to employ “violent measures to attain liberation”¹²⁴ by PAC only after 1960. In the conception of the PAC by 1959 already, Sipho Shabalala opines, “the revolutionary and military approach was inherent in the PAC formulation, it was not an after Sharpeville massacre thought.”¹²⁵ It must be understood, he adds; that liberation struggle required strategies and tactics and the material conditions of the time required different strategic manifestation. It does not mean that since the launch of the uprising was scheduled for April 1963, the preparedness to employ violent measures was a post Sharpeville decision. Shabalala is amongst the founding members of the PAC, when he was in Basutoland [Lesotho] from 1963 when the PAC moved its headquarters there, he served as an Office Services personnel and later Security Officer for Potlako K. Leballo the acting President of PAC after the arrest of Mangaliso Sobukwe in 1960. It should be noted, adds Shabalala, membership to the Task Force was strictly made up of a certain section member of that PAC branch and it was a branch-based organ. It was not acceptable to be a Task Force member of one branch and be a PAC member of a different branch. It is unclear whether all branches had Task Forces.¹²⁶

In Dyani’s recollection of the Task Force he says, it was used to differentiate those PAC members who could not be interested in strict organisational work but only appreciated the message of imminent war of freedom as Africa and PAC was meant to be free by 1963.¹²⁷ Mgxashe identifies the Langa branch Task Force members as hard core angry looking young men, and Dyani of East London collaborates that Task Force members in East London were young people who were

¹²⁴ T. Lodge, ‘The Poqo Insurrection’, *University of Witwatersrand*, African Studies seminar, February 1986, p 2

¹²⁵ Interview with Prof Sipho Shabalala, Telephone Call: Date, 2022/06/28

¹²⁶ Interview with Prof Sipho Shabalala conducted by Olwethu Dlanga: Date, 2022/06/28

¹²⁷ Malcom Dyani, Response to a FB messenger question: Date; 2022-07-03 (interview)

war ready and enticed by the war rhetoric rather than ideology; however Sipho Shabalala says he was amongst the Natal Task Force members who were very interested in the PAC ideological and policy issues. All of these recollections and experiences reflect the different outlooks of these Task Forces and members, therefore one general description as reflected by Tom Lodge cannot be acceptable as an overview of all its members.

In the United States of America, Elijah Mohammed, the leader of the Nation of Islam (NOI) organised a program named the Fruit of Islam that transformed common and hardened criminals to become proud Black men of societal stature. It is these men who stood disciplined—awaiting orders in “a solid line a half block long” at New York’s Lennox Avenue waiting for Minister Malcom X’s instruction to disperse after one of their own was severely battered by a [racist] police officer.¹²⁸ After 21 March 1960, a day that became known as Sharpeville Massacre, a PAC stalwart Mgxashe opines that a contingent number of common criminals of Cape Town Langa section joined and became PAC Task Force members and were responsible for the maintenance of order during the march held on 30th March 1960 to demand the release of PAC leaders, a twenty thousand men march led by Phillip Kgosana.¹²⁹ As with the men of the Fruit of Islam, Task Force men (young and old) found a purpose to fight for and the PAC Task Forces was the conduit to that purpose. From then onwards, they lived by the words of their leader Sobukwe who said, “we must fight for the right to call our souls our own”¹³⁰, while the settler colonial regime vowed to *sit die kaffir op sy plek* [Loosely translated to mean keep the black man in their place].

At the call of the Anti-Pass Campaign, Mangaliso Sobukwe said it was an unfolding campaign where one campaign would lead to another until independence is won.¹³¹ He anticipated the settler colonial regime’s response as they were to confront

¹²⁸ Z Abdullah, ‘Narrating Muslim Masculinities, ‘The Fruit of Islam and the Quest for Black Redemption’ *Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Autumn 2012), pp. 141-177. Indiana University Press: URL <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/spectrum.1.1.141>

¹²⁹ M. Mgxashe, ‘Are you with us: The story of a PAC Activist’, p42

¹³⁰ PAC Basic document: Robert Sobukwe.

¹³¹ E.L Ntloedibe, *Here is a tree: Political Biography of Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe*, (Ga-Rankua: Century-Turn:1995), p 72

it and said, “we must meet their hysterical brutality with calm iron determination and strict non-violence must be observed with the Task Force dealing with the saboteurs.”¹³² For the anti-pass campaign’s success, in Sobukwe’s theory, the masses were the corner stone, and they needed to be protected at all cost but confrontation, non-violent on his side, was the only way. It was for this reason that there should be strict non-violence from the side of Africans. He argued:

If violence breaks out, we will be taken up with it and give vent to our pent-up emotions and feel that by throwing a stone at a Saracen or burning a particular building, we are small revolutionaries engaged in revolutionary warfare. But after a few days, when we have buried our dead and made some moving grave-side speeches and our emotions have settled again, the police will round up a few people and the rest will go back to bearing passes, having forgotten what our goal had been initially. Incidentally, in the process, we shall have alienated the masses who will feel that we have made a cannon fodder of them, for no significant purpose except for spectacular newspaper headlines.¹³³

Strangely, Sobukwe’s political detractors have continued to vilify him for the massacre of the African people both in Sharpeville and Langa claiming that he exposed the masses for popularity and competition with the ANC.¹³⁴ While the call of non-violence reverberated, the militant and confrontation outlook of these African Nationalists was not lost as Sobukwe continued to urge the people, “the oppressor will not take this lying down, but we are ready, come what may because we are marching forward to independence now, tomorrow the United States of Africa”.¹³⁵ John Nyati Pokela, who later became the president of the PAC in exile, says the following about non-violence;

from the time of the launch of the PAC, we knew that non-violence will not resolve apartheid and settler-colonialism however we needed to show the

¹³² E.L Ntloedibe, *Here is a tree*, p 73

¹³³ E.L Ntloedibe, *Here is a tree*, pp72-73

¹³⁴ T Simpson, *History of South Africa: From 1902 to the Present*. (Penguin: Cape Town:2021), p 201

¹³⁵ E.L Ntloedibe, *Here is a tree*, pp72-73

African people and the world that we have tried all we could to reason with an unreasonable regime.¹³⁶

From 21 March 1960, and days after that, the settler colonial regime unleashed machine guns, Saracens, and many of their military fire power upon the children of *Azania*, a name popularized by Black Consciousness Movement of Steve Biko in the 1970s referring to South Africa. Upon the silence of these guns, lay dead men and women at Sharpeville, Langa, Nyanga and Bophelong.¹³⁷ The world was shocked of the barbarism of the racist South Africa, but for the people of Azania and the PAC, the chapter of non-violent struggle seemed closed, passes were 'suspended' on 26 March 1960, the state of emergency declared, and the Unlawful Organisation Act was enacted. It is under this law that on 8th April 1960, the PAC and ANC as a collateral were banned. Ngila Muendane, a stalwart of the PAC, writes in his book titled *Sharpeville*: "Sharpeville [massacre] formed a watershed in the struggle for liberation and provided for a complete revolutionised outlook of the oppressed people with the armed struggle being the only efficacious means".¹³⁸ What we observed from Muendane's articulation is that the struggle as envisaged by the PAC from its formation was always revolutionary; however not completely until the African people 'were ready', and it is this view that Shabalala emphasises that the militant, radical and revolutionary posture of the PAC was always inherent from its inception, hence their organisational goal was always the complete overthrow of white domination by any means necessary.

The protest marches of 21st and 30th March 1960 resulted in the racist settler-colonial apartheid regime declaring a state of emergency. Phillip Kgosana, *Die naturelle leier* (The natural leader) according to *Die Burger* newspaper of the 30th of March in Cape Town, a UCT student at the time, states that he was shown a midday *Cape Argus* newspaper by a *Sunday Times* reporter Stanley Uys. The paper ran two major stories, one for the march and the declaration of the state of emergency in one

¹³⁶ A.K.Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, p 33

¹³⁷ Ntloedibe, *Here is a tree*, p 76

¹³⁸ Ntloedibe, *Here is a tree*, p 78

hundred and ten districts in Western Cape.¹³⁹ The regime's State of Emergency (SOE) announced on 30th March 1960 outlawed all public and political meetings which had more than three people and it had free reign to suspend civil liberties to neutralize any political dissent. Kgosana in his book writes that they were held under the SOE without the right to see lawyers or family members and in some instances held in solitary confinement.¹⁴⁰ This act became the precursor of the Unlawful Organisation Act promulgated on 7th April 1960. The SOE was only lifted in August of that year.

Due to this Unlawful Organisational Act, there was a sharp rise in the number of Black people arrested and detained. Robert Sobukwe and some of the PAC leaders were charged under these laws and on 4th May 1960, he was sentenced to three years in prison for inciting Africans to demand the repeal of the pass laws.¹⁴¹ Potlako Leballo and other National Executive members were sentenced to two years imprisonment; Jozias Madzunya and thirteen others were incarcerated for eighteen months, while one hundred and forty-two PAC supporters in a different trial to that of Sobukwe, Madzunya and Leballo were sentenced to three years imprisonment or a fine of three hundred pounds.¹⁴² The arrests and detentions were widespread and extensive for the PAC leaders after Sharpeville and Langa massacres. In the Western Cape, PAC Leaders, Clarence Mlamli Makwethu, who later became President of PAC, and Peter Mlokoti were also arrested and sentenced to serve prison terms on Robben Island.¹⁴³

Kgosana, Lawrence Mgweba, Manelisi Ndibongo (the Chief of the Task Force), Alfred Mampe and Enoch Magwa were arrested and detained at the Caledon Square Police Station under the state of emergency in the afternoon of 30th March, and later transferred to Roeland Street jail on 4 April 1960.¹⁴⁴ Their case, which included thirty two detainees, dragged until June 1961 when all the accused were acquitted due to lack of evidence. Out of the thirty-two detainees, Kgosana writes, "only sixteen were present on the last trial day as some were discharged, others got ill and others

¹³⁹ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council:2016),p 39

¹⁴⁰ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, p 40

¹⁴¹ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, p 47

¹⁴² P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, p 49

¹⁴³ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, p 49

¹⁴⁴ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, pp 41-42

(including myself- Kgosana) had absconded while out on bail”.¹⁴⁵ It was not unusual in those days to hear that most leaders and members of the PAC anti-pass campaign would ‘skip’ the country to exile, especially to Basutoland; however, Z.B Molete, the PAC acting President was opposed to it, citing it as cowardly. It is reported however that while Sobukwe was incarcerated, he gave an instruction [handwritten letter] that ten thousand youths must go abroad for military training to prepare themselves for the next phase of the struggle.¹⁴⁶ Phillip Kgosana was amongst the many who absconded their bails, and left for Swaziland, then Maseru, Bechuanaland (now Botswana) and then to Tanganyika (now Tanzania) and other African countries where he lived from 1961 until the early 1990s.¹⁴⁷ While many skipped the country for exile after the anti-pass campaign, other prominent leaders of the PAC like Nana Mahomo and Peter Molotsi were already in Blantyre, in Malawi a few weeks before the Sharpeville massacre. Many people from both the PAC and ANC left settler-colonial apartheid South Africa after the Sharpeville Massacre, leaving behind the Verwoerdian terror, murder, and violence as members of banned organisations. With the growing number of people in exile, turmoil, and disagreements and factionalism grew.

Before the 21 March 1960 non-violent positive action campaign, according to Sipho Shabalala, Sobukwe instructed Nana Mahomo and Peter Molotsi, who was the Secretary for Pan African Affairs, to leave the country and mobilize external support. It was anticipated that the regime was going to respond by force and therefore PAC must have established relations in other parts of the liberated African states. The departure of Mahomo and Molotsi set in motion the beginning of a difficult period of navigating exile.

The Early stages of the Great Storm

Proscribed to operate as an outlawed organisation, an ‘underground movement’ in the popular political discourse, with most of its national leaders arrested,

¹⁴⁵ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, p 50

¹⁴⁶ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, p 59

¹⁴⁷ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, pp 63-65

some in exile or in hiding, the PAC in the words of Justice Minister Balthazar Johannes 'John' Vorster "was dealt a technical knock-out".¹⁴⁸ This required a new tactical approach towards the very objectives identified in the 1949 Programme of Action. As mentioned earlier, liberation struggle experienced twists and turns, and at each turn, new strategies were to be devised. One Easter weekend in 1961, a PAC Consultative Conference was organized and held in the then Port Elizabeth in Eastern Cape where a skeletal national executive structure sought to patch up the gaps created by the outcomes of arrests and proscription.¹⁴⁹ At the time of this conference, a lot of strife and factional groupings as a result of power mongering had been evident, especially from the Western Cape where some of the regional leaders were removed from their democratically elected positions on the basis of the fact that they did not 'adhere' to the principles of 'no bail', 'no fine'.

Phillip Kgosana and Christopher Mlokoti were amongst the victims of this '*coup de tat*' and their removal process did not include an 'opportunity to explain their case'.¹⁵⁰ Amongst other resolutions adopted at the Port Elizabeth Conference was the unveiling of the next phase of the struggle and to have another conference in Maseru which also took place later in 1961. The usage of the word 'unveil' in the PE conference is imperative considering that it is the thesis of Shabalala that the radical, confrontational, and violent [read] armed struggle approach, was always inherent in the formation of the PAC.

As the Positive Action campaign was outlined, it was first going to be the anti-pass campaign, then the next phase will be unveiled, and another phase unveiled after the second and third phases and so forth until freedom is won. The Maseru conference keynote speaker, Ntsu Mokhehle, the leader of BCP and former ANC Youth Leaguer at Fort Hare, his main points revolved around the argument that "non-violence and passive resistance would lead us [the Africans] nowhere".¹⁵¹ After the Sharpeville and Langa massacres, PAC had resolved that the armed struggle was the

¹⁴⁸ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us: The story of a PAC Activist*. (Tafelberg: Mafube: 2006), p 77

¹⁴⁹ M Mgxashe, *Are you with us* ,p 98

¹⁵⁰ M Mgxashe, *Are you with us* , p 99

¹⁵¹ M Mgxashe, *Are you with us* ,p 103

only next available recourse and this decision was endorsed by the Maseru conference therefore providing it to go full steam on the violent offensive, namely mass insurrection or armed liberation struggle.¹⁵²

After the proceedings of the Maseru Conference, an extended national executive meeting held at BCP offices endorsed that PAC branches must recruit over twenty thousand youths for full blown conventional military training to be organised both abroad (*exile*) and inside South Africa. The Task Force or Task Forces were identified as the main vehicles to conscript the campaign.¹⁵³ While the Task Force was not an '*official*' structure of the PAC, it was regarded as an organisational task-based tool. Since it had already assumed a paramilitary outlook, it was more plausible to have it as a vehicle to carry the objectives of the PAC's armed struggle. Additionally, it already had youthful membership and volunteers who wanted to convert the war rhetoric into an armed fight to overthrow the settler colonial apartheid regime. In 1961, in the East London area, the volunteers were constantly being motivated by Zifozonke Tshikila as there was no Task Force in that area pre-1961.¹⁵⁴

The first approach to reviving the PAC from an alleged 'technical knockout' by Vorster was to call for branch leaders to establish contacts with the national and regional leadership, then to divide branches into small cell units for safety reasons since it was banned, and then to prepare for mass disciplined action which was to be a final decisive phase.¹⁵⁵ Lodge argues that this announcement still focused on 'the pre-Sharpeville strategy of mass civil disobedience as there was no explicit indication on it that violence was now the only preferred approach'.¹⁵⁶ I think his analysis of the announcement is faulty on the basis that primarily, PAC was banned therefore was beginning to operate in hiding and therefore it would not have been ideal to explicitly announce its violent plans. Secondly, the small units were not organised as the pre-banning branches, they were different. The old approach to communication needed

¹⁵² M Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p 104

¹⁵³ M Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p 105

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Mr. Malcom Dyani, Duncan Village, 15 July 2022

¹⁵⁵ T Lodge, *Insurrection in South Africa: The Pan- Africanist Congress and the Poqo movement, 1959-1965*, University of York, Centre for South African Studies: 1984, p 5

¹⁵⁶ T Lodge, *Insurrection in South Africa*, p 5

to be revised, enriched and cautious. That as it may, with the pamphlet used to transmit information clear or unclear message to the units, I don't think the pamphlet could have been the best tool to communicate the armed struggle plans, especially as a banned organisation but at the same time, the prohibited PAC used written communication to transport its ideas and plans.

When the 1961 Maseru conference was concluded, some of the leaders and attendees of the conference returned to South Africa while others remained in exile. This would begin the two fronts of the PAC, one in exile and another as an underground movement inside the country. With the consideration that PAC was now prohibited, Sipho Shabalala states that the name *Pogo* was strategically adopted and used mostly in South Africa. This 'new' identity, provided an opportunity for PAC members to openly recruit, speak and operate while having prospects of acquittal at the racist South African courts since there was no organisation named Pogo that was banned in South Africa.¹⁵⁷ It was due to this overt usage of the name that made it prominent in their collective memory, and Task Force members continued to operate as an organ of the same banned PAC with the unbanned name of Pogo, claims Shabalala. It should be noted that *Pogo* was not a new organisation, nor a new term within the PAC circles; instead it was a name that became popular after the banning of PAC.

The name *uPogo* emanates from an isiXhosa maxim, *thina singamaAfrika Pogo* [*we are purely/strictly Africanists*]. Many veterans in the PAC have different versions of how this phrase came about in the PAC and from who; however, most agree that it emanated from a question posed to Sobukwe at a rally in Cape Town regarding the differences between African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress. *Thina singamaAfrika Pogo* was the answer provided but not by Sobukwe. Andile Mgxashe argues that the word 'Pogo' emerged for the first time in February 1960 at Bhunga Square in Langa township of Cape Town. It was an explanation and translation of Pan Africanist Congress in isiXhosa which came from Allan Bula.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ WhatsApp communication from Prof Sipho Shabalala, 28 June 2022

¹⁵⁸ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us: The story of a PAC Activist*, (Tafelberg: Mafube: 2006), p 81

Bula belonged to a PAC branch of Kensington, which is located outside Langa Township. From the moment that these words were uttered by Bula, *Umbutho wama-Afrika Poqo* was then frequently utilised in the organisation's literature and in oratory, however only the abbreviated form *Poqo* was used and gained currency from the hard-core elements of Western Cape Task Force members, Mgxashe remembered. H Strauss, a former professor of History at the University of London says of the word *Poqo*; "it had frequently been used by members of the Africanist section of ANC prior to 1958, to separate them from 'the multi-racial' outlook of other [ANC] members".¹⁵⁹

Considering that the Maseru conference of 1961 had adopted the armed struggle, and that the Task Force would be the vehicle used to recruit and manage the process; hardcore elements, especially in Western Cape, were in the forefront to launch the armed struggle. Most of these young men who were responsible for security and were members of the Task Force, Mgxashe argued, spent most of their time in the bushes complaining about slowness in launching the underground armed struggle.¹⁶⁰ These Task Force members now operating under the name of *Poqo* referred to their political leaders as cowards.

According to Mgxashe, political leaders both at regional and local levels were overtaken by the military zeal of the Task Force in the Western Cape. As mentioned earlier, the Task Force was not an official structure of the PAC however, it was an accepted input of the organizational machinery. At the time, it surpassed the political and ideological leadership, then elements of *anarchy* in the organization manifested, mainly in the Western Cape region. It is my view that the lack of balancing between the political and guerrilla facets of the organization was inevitable considering that the organization was prohibited, and therefore, most decisions were taken in secret. Some could have identified this gap and utilized it for nefarious ends. However, at the same time, it is possible that the majority of Task Force members might have not been

¹⁵⁹ H Strauss, *South Africa 1960-66: underground African politics*, (London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies: 1977), p 136

¹⁶⁰ M Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p 82

properly trained politically, but rather were charged for a military fight especially in the region.

The first assault of *Poqo*'s Task Force, whether coordinated or uncoordinated, was staged in Paarl on November 22, 1962. The Cape Argus newspaper reported that a group of about 400 members of Poqo from Embekweni Township stormed the town of Paarl at about 4:00 in the morning brandishing pangas, singing struggle songs and marching towards the police station leaving a trail of broken windows and damaged cars on the way. At the Main Street of Paarl, a group burnt down a Truworths shop and other shops, while others surrounded and pelted Paarl police station with stones.¹⁶¹ While at the police station, the police on duty opened fire and killed about five attackers and wounding four others. In response, some *Poqo* members entered some of the European descendants' houses and in one house found Rentia Vermeulen and Frans Richard who were both hacked to death with the pangas. This *Poqo* riot and attack gained popularity in South Africa's liberation media because of its violent nature. The popularity could have been due to the victims being white considering that the popular media was more sympathetic to white victims in the hands of Black 'perpetrators'.

It should be noted that the *Poqo uprising* and riot was not the first of its kind to take place in Paarl. (Three years earlier on 9 and 10 November 1959, a riot mostly involving *colored's* organizing against the banning of Elizabeth Mafekeng, was exclusively from the ANC and PAC).¹⁶² The Mafekeng affair was violent, and its victims were white civilians, but this riot is not featuring extensively in the collective and public memory of post-apartheid liberation discourse and media. This is an interesting dynamic considering that Mafekeng was a member of the ANC, a National Deputy President of ANC Women's League and a Unionist linked to the ANC. Could this lack be as a result of the fact that the riot was exclusively organized by communities instead of the political party? Or else, could it be that the central figure

¹⁶¹ Cape Argus, November 22, 1962

¹⁶² A Rommelspacher, 'Let Mrs Mafekeng stay: An evaluation of the Paarl riots of 1959', *Historia*, Vol 62, No.1, 2017: pp 48-49

of the riot was a woman in a patriarchal society? This is a matter that can be interrogated by other scholars.

Other assaults of *uPoqo* include those that took place in eMbekweni location in April 1962, eMbashe where five European descendants were killed, in Ntlonze in the Transkei, in Queenstown (now Komani), Victoria West, Benoni and King Williams Town and other places between 1962-1963. During the *Poqo* uprisings, which were leading up to the 1963 revolution [year of freedom], clumsily coded 'the jive session'; some members of *Poqo* Task Force had murdered their own comrades who were accused of being spies. Also, some Black people who were seen to be collaborators with the racist apartheid regime were not spared by *Poqo* members. An example is Chief Kaizer Matanzima who was targeted in the Transkei; however, the plan to kill him never materialized, instead, his advisor was murdered. With the instruction from Task Force leaders and branch chairman, Klaas Hoza, (a municipal clerk) was hacked to death with rudimentary weapons on 27 January 1962 in Western Cape, and these weapons manufactured by *Poqo* Task Force members themselves.¹⁶³

The PAC, which in form was *uPoqo*, after its prohibition engaged in what I refer to as the 'Great Storm' even though that period of struggle had let some elements of anarchy loose on the organization.¹⁶⁴ It is this great storm that was continued by APLA Secretary of Defense, Sabelo Phama-Gqwetha when he announced 1993 as the "Year of the Great Storm" in reference to the heightening of the armed struggle inside the country. At the time, it was clear that the path to a negotiated settlement was paved and, in some way, Great Storm sought to disrupt while attempting to influence the discourse.

The activities of PAC in the form of *Poqo* raised the eyebrows of the racist apartheid regime as *Poqo* was the most publicized movement of the 1960s. This could be because of the racist apartheid settler regime choosing and adopting *uPoqo* as its main target, or it could have been the violent and brutal nature of their activities.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ T Lodge, *Insurrection in South Africa: The Pan- Africanist Congress and the Poqo movement, 1959-1965*, University of York, Centre for South African Studies: 1984), p 14

¹⁶⁴ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us: The story of a PAC Activist*, (Tafelberg: Mafube: 2006), p 82

¹⁶⁵ H Strauss, *South Africa 1960-66*, p137

Another possibility could be that most of the skirmishes of *Pogo* involved the killing of white civilians. Strauss claims that between 1960 to 1965, almost every day there was a trial involving *Pogo* members in South African courts.¹⁶⁶ However, as Strauss further states, by 1965 *Pogo* had been successfully infiltrated by the security branch [secret agents] due to their crude tactics and also unclear policies, leaving the movement with a critical set-back which it never fully recovered from.¹⁶⁷ The infiltration claim is substantiated in the Colben Vuyani Mngaza's case of 27 June 1967. Case records reflect Stephen Mofokeng as a secret agent who joined PAC in 1963, appointed as branch chairperson of Bophelong location near Vanderbijlpark and testified on behalf of the state.¹⁶⁸

Until the Snyman Commission of 1963 (which was set up to investigate the Paarl uprising of 1962), the unaware society, including members of the ANC, have explained *Pogo* and their outbreak as a sporadic violence that was due to people's frustrations, and PAC as political opportunists that had capitalized on it. At first, it seemed as if the regime did not link this *Pogo* movement as the continuation of PAC. It was perceived to be a separate armed movement, and this perception continues to be prevalent in the PAC institutional memory and in South Africa's liberation historiography. From the analysis of how the movement sprung, I am of the view that *Pogo* was a form of PAC and not a PAC armed wing. If there exists an urge to designate an army wing to the PAC before the formal constitution of APLA, then credit should be given to the Africanist Task Force. In his quest to confirm this argument, Strauss writes "it certainly is clearly claimed today by the PAC leadership that *Pogo* was the continuation of the [PAC] movement".¹⁶⁹

Through the Snyman Commission's interim report released in March 1963, the settler-colonial apartheid regime was able to make a clear link between the PAC being

¹⁶⁶ H Strauss, *South Africa 1960-66*, p 137

¹⁶⁷ H Strauss, *South Africa 1960-66*, p 137

¹⁶⁸ The State VS Colben Vuyani Mngaza, "Proceedings of the trial of Colben Vuyani Mngaza". Supreme Court of South Africa: Eastern Cape: 1967

¹⁶⁹ H Strauss, *South Africa 1960-66*, p136

Pogo. In his report, Justice Snyman found u*Pogo* to be the arm of the banned PAC and states;

the people who address *Pogo* gatherings, previously had addressed PAC gatherings. The entrance fee including subscriptions are the same as those of PAC. The aims are the same. The division of the work is the same.¹⁷⁰

For this reason, between the years 1961-1964, several arrests had been made against members of PAC in the form of *Pogo* owing to the successful infiltration and tactics of the police Special Branch. The State of Emergency promulgated in 1960 empowered the security forces while the rudimentary plans of *Pogo* exposed their operations. In the Western Cape, veteran Maliwa and Mxolisi Mgxashe were arrested in February 1962. Mgxashe was charged for not possessing a passbook, but on trial, the magistrate cautioned and urged him to get one immediately.¹⁷¹ Mgxashe's release prompted his resolve to leave the country to Maseru in Basutoland where the 'Night Club', the Head Quarters of the PAC were located and where some of the other PAC leaders and activists had left to after the 1960 non-violent positive action campaign. These leaders and activists included Nyakane Tsolo, a Sharpeville PAC activist who led the most famous anti-pass campaign. Tsolo had obtained bail in March 1961, absconded, and crossed the border to the land of Basuto.¹⁷²

In the Border region, Malcom Dyani remembers that they were pounced on by the police special branch in East London in the early hours of 22 November 1962, and they were detained at East London prison until 13 February 1963, their trial date. However, on 14 February 1963, their case was withdrawn due to witness perjury.¹⁷³ With the help of hindsight, Dyani remembered, "I believe that the police influence to pounce on us was as a result of the Paarl uprising, and they [police] expected that we were going launch an attack in the Border area". Unfortunately, Dyani added, "they found and arrested most of us at our homes sleeping".¹⁷⁴ On 8th April 1963, Vuyani

¹⁷⁰ H Strauss, *South Africa 1960-66*, p 136

¹⁷¹ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, pp 111-112

¹⁷² T. Lodge, *Sharpeville: a massacre and its consequences*. (Oxford university press: New York: 2011), p 164

¹⁷³ Malcom Dyani, Voice telephone call: Date; 2022-08-13

¹⁷⁴ Malcom Dyani, Voice telephone call: Date; 2022-08-13

Mngaza, also from the Border region, was arrested and charged for being a member of a banned organization and for sabotage. This arrest put in motion the beginning of a life-long political activism that included torture, arrests and re-arrests, loss of income and subsequently becoming a refugee in West Africa and the United Kingdom.¹⁷⁵

In the quest to ensure that freedom for African people was achieved in 1963, *Pogo* and its Task Forces embarked on various combative activities which bordered on zealotry skirmishes of which some were successful and others foiled. Many of the *Pogo* comrades were arrested and executed from 1962. Almost twenty members of *Pogo* were hanged for their involvement in the Paarl riot. One group executed in 1963 included Fenele Matikinca, Jonathan Sogwagwa, and Fezile Jaza; Lennox Madikane, Johannes Notyawe and Tembile Nyovu, with Task Force leader Baden Koboka; Jabavu Mzondi, McDonald Mgweba, Maggadaza Magushe, Goduka Galem, Edward Sikhundla, Livingstone Fatyela, Wellington Tyobeka Mteteleli Ntuli, Leonard Zambodla and Nkosencinci Maseti executed in 1967.¹⁷⁶ Other executed members included Zenzile May, Sqwayi Mhlaba, Goli Zanomzi, Khathazekile Philaphi Modi Mbizo and Nkosinam Ngalo, including Bonakele Ngcolongolo, Nothimba Mbozwana and Mtutu Apleni, who was also a group commander, were executed for the killing of a headman in the St Marks District, the clash with the police in Ntlonze, the killing of a police man and two civilians near Queenstown (now Komani) train station.¹⁷⁷

For the Mbashe river offence, where five Europeans were ambushed, five Vulindlela siblings who were members of *Pogo* were executed, including Patselo Xhego, Mtalatala Xhego, Mbaco Xhego, Weduwedu Nokulila, Tembeni Swelindawo, Light Mangqikana, Bawokaazi Mangikani, Luse Mtebekwana, Tusa Mzanywa, Manina Mzanywa, Nto Kani, Mqaba Memani, Tswepe Nonyukela, Natokolo Mhlabeni, Nkwenkwe Gaqa, Poli Mili and Bennet Mpetu, including Siwana Mlahleki. In Krugersdorp, four *Pogo* members were executed, Jos Motsumi, Petros Mtshombe, Richard Matsape and Thomas Molatlegi, with another six executed in Pretoria in 1965.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Colbert Vuyani Mngaza, March 2022

¹⁷⁶ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, pp 126-127

¹⁷⁷ Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p128

They were Phineas Mlotywa, Victor Mahlangu, Ceylon Mabaso, Isaac Mashigo Joel Leballo and Corry Tyini.¹⁷⁸

Poqo Task Force members in the Western Cape were also involved in fitness rituals which were conducted by the SAP Special Branch's most wanted fugitive, Malungisa Siyotula. Siyotula was a military instructor and PAC *sangoma* at the same time. He taught basic drilling, stamina and courage building, while inculcating in the minds of his *forces* the belief that the enemy bullets would be transformed into water after performing certain traditional rituals.¹⁷⁹ All these training and psychological efforts were in line with the 1963 – “Year of Freedom” dictum that was adopted by the PAC since the First All Africa People's conference in Accra in 1959. When the year 1963 began, most African people involved in PAC were hungry for freedom, and the Task Force leaders from branches and cells in South Africa came for a briefing from the Presidential Council led by Leballo in Maseru. Samuel Mosiya was identified by Stephen Mofokeng as part of the people who attended this briefing.¹⁸⁰

Sam Mosiya hailed from the Vaal and was the Task Force leader of the Bophelong branch, later went to exile in the United States of America.¹⁸¹ Task Force leaders were told to arm themselves with any weapons type they could get their hands on. Most importantly, Mgxashe writes, they were to wait for the directives when to strike.¹⁸² It was even suggested by Leballo that Kwameh Nkrumah and Afro-Asian countries had promised arms and funding to the PAC fighters. The reading of those who did not have much confidence in Leballo was that this was ‘his usual exaggeration’ self.¹⁸³ At this period in Maseru, Leballo had given a code name ‘Dancing Association’ referring to the PAC, bombs were referred to as ‘saxophones’, ‘guitars’ were revolvers and bullets were coded as ‘cakes’.

¹⁷⁸ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p 129

¹⁷⁹ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p 131

¹⁸⁰ The State VS Colben Vuyani Mngaza, “Proceedings of the trial of Colben Vuyani Mngaza”. Supreme Court of South Africa: Eastern Cape: 1967

¹⁸¹ Sipho Shabalala, Voice telephone call: Date; 2022-08-22

¹⁸² M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p 137

¹⁸³ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, pp 137-138

Organizing for the banned PAC inside South Africa, *Pogo* as it was popularly known especially in the Cape had not stalled even after the mass arrests, detentions, and executions. According to Mgxashe, PAC was now being organized in Pretoria (Northern Transvaal Region) under the stewardship of Ike Mthimunya and Jafta Kgalabi Masemola who was a *de facto* Task Force leader in the region. Masemola was a schoolteacher in Atteridgeville, a township established in 1939 and situated west of Pretoria. It was named after Myrtle Patricia Atteridge, a Chairperson of the Committee for Non-European Affairs on the City Council at that time; its first occupants were forcefully removed from Marabastad in May 1940 due to the Natives Trust and Land Act of 1936.¹⁸⁴ Houses in this location were built in varying sizes, each house was provided with lights, baths and running water therefore implies that these houses were of relatively high quality.¹⁸⁵ To attest to the view that not all Task Force members lacked a 'political theory' as Lodge argues in 1985, Mgxashe writes, "Pretoria had a stronger intellectual and professional element than the Cape members. Though they were affected by the general overzealousness [of *Pogo* at the time]".¹⁸⁶ Malcom Dyani articulates that the Northern Transvaal region PAC was only organizationally organized after 1962 though there were always radical political activism in the Black communities under the banner of the ANC.¹⁸⁷

Stephen Tefu, Dr. William Nkomo, an ANC Youth League founder and Trade Unionist Naboth Monyandioe Moreleba Mokgatle, including Dr. Peter Tsele, a staunch Africanist and wealthy doctor were some of the prominent African activists in Pretoria and Marabastad to be precise.¹⁸⁸ Dyani's articulation about the organization of the PAC in the Northern Transvaal Region to have re-organized in 1962 does not correspond with Tom Lodge's arguments that state that;

¹⁸⁴ Unknown. "Atteridgeville", *webarchive.org*: 26 April 2009, accessed on 19 August 2022 on <https://web.archive.org/web/20090426220347/http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/places/villages/gauteng/pretoria/atteridgeville.htm>

¹⁸⁵ T. Lodge, 'Political organisations in Pretoria's African Township: 1940-1963'. *Diacritics*, Vol 25 No 2. 1995: p11

¹⁸⁶ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p 139

¹⁸⁷ Malcom Dyani, Voice telephone call: Date; 2022-08-19

¹⁸⁸ T. Lodge, 'Political organisations in Pretoria's African Township: 1940-1963', p 81

Tommy Mohajana, a former pupil at Kilnerton High School, remembers PAC posters going up in the school on March 22, 1960. He joined a group of PAC adherents numbering about fifty in mid-1961. They helped organize a strike in June that year, ostensibly in protest against being kept in class after examinations. Several members of the group were thereafter expelled, one of them, Ernest Dikgang Moseneke, who later enrolled at Hofmeyr High School in Atteridgeville”¹⁸⁹

After the expulsion at Kilnerton High school, Moseneke occupied himself in PAC activities while at Hofmeyer, and an African Students Union of South Africa (ASUSA) that was established by PAC proponents from Turfloop was now regarded as an official PAC cell in Atteridgeville. With the PAC’s ‘old guard’, including Ntloedibe in prison, the new center base of PAC was now in Atteridgeville instead of Lady Selbourne.¹⁹⁰ After his release, Ntloedibe issued a leaflet denying the collaboration of the PAC with the police in the 1961 stay-at-home campaign, then moved to Maseru while his other comrades were either dead or still in prison.¹⁹¹

Zooming back into the set-up and the political culture in the Northern Transvaal region, we see that the Pretoria ANC in the 1950s had its own problems leading to splits within its leadership. By 1959, Dr. Tsele who was a ‘relatively’ new member of the ANC branch committee drafted a leaflet mobilizing [for] the women anti-pass campaign.¹⁹² Pretoria Municipality banned the march citing the tone and language of the leaflet, the ANC Johannesburg counselled that the Pretoria ANC adhere to the ban, but Tsele continued with the protest. After the banned meeting, his next meeting was bigger but was disrupted by police and he was arrested. Immediately after his arrest for these meetings, he defected from the ANC and formed his own Africanist organization, Pan African Freedom Movement (PAFM).¹⁹³ It seems that Dr. Tsele was more aligned with the radical thought of the Africanists than he was with the moderates

¹⁸⁹ T. Lodge, *Political organisations in Pretoria’s African Township: 1940-1963*, p 82

¹⁹⁰ T. Lodge, *Political organisations in Pretoria’s African Township: 1940-1963*, p 82

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p 82

¹⁹² Ibid. p 82

¹⁹³ T. Lodge, *Political organisations in Pretoria’s African Township: 1940-1963*, p 80

of the ANC. However, it is unclear why he opted to establish his own movement and not join the PAC. It could be that he did not see the prospects of leadership in the PAC.

Tom Lodge traces the first reports of PAC in the region in Lady Selbourne on 11 March 1960 where a meeting announcement for the next Sunday was to be held. Members of both PAFM and PAC turned out for the Sunday meeting where Sobukwe, Madzunya, Jacob Nyaoase, Z.B. Molete and P.K. Leballo addressed the meeting.¹⁹⁴ From the local PAC and PAFM was Elias Ntloedibe who was the Pretoria PAC chairperson at the time, Solomon Selo, Philip Tefu, SSM Maimela and Isaac Kopanye. Their various political experiences and professional lives could not help the local PAC men to source support for the 21 March 1960 non-violent positive action campaign. Considering this failure, they decided to hand themselves over at Hercules police station and after their arrest, they were sent to prison for six or twelve months, and little was heard of PAC there after until around November and December 1962. The failure to amass high numbers before the 1960 positive action campaign could be the reason why Dyani claims that the PAC in Pretoria only organized organizationally in 1962. It is referred to as a failure considering that it did not yield high numbers as it did with Sharpeville and Langa. However, by September 1960, African communal psychology, especially in Lady Selbourne, had a new hero, Phillip Kgosana.

Moreover, there were incidents where Africans in Pretoria town were heard shouting against white people "This is our land".¹⁹⁵ PAC political activism in the region stretched to Pietersburg (now Polokwane), Nelspruit (now Mbombela) and Pretoria where much of the members were situated. Due to the swift arrests that were taking place across the country at the time because the organization was 'well infiltrated', and because the date for the attack was fast approaching, with their plans uncovered by the regime, six trials in 1963 exposed PAC activities which included collecting and caching of unexploded mortar bombs from Skurweweg Artillery Range, establishing a group named "Twelve Disciples" from Atteridgeville and plans to assassinate police

¹⁹⁴ T. Lodge, *Political organisations in Pretoria's African Township: 1940-1963*, pp 80-81

¹⁹⁵ T. Lodge, *Political organisations in Pretoria's African Township: 1940-1963*, p 82

officers.¹⁹⁶ Most of the PAC suspected members from Northern Transvaal Region were arrested, receiving hefty prison sentences, and five accused sentenced to life imprisonment.

In the Northern Transvaal region, most PAC/ *Pogo* influential individuals were John Nkosi, Jafta Masemola and Peter Rikhotso who were teachers and amongst those that were arrested for the PAC activities. They included high school pupils who were in their late teens or early twenties. This confirms that the fundamental activities of PAC after the arrest of Ntloedibe in the Northern Transvaal region was taking place mostly within schools. By the end of 1963, many PAC or *Pogo* members were either in jail or in Maseru and most of those in jail were later executed.

All the activities that were taking place within the country after the prohibition of the PAC, including the so-called *Pogo* militia skirmishes were acts of the PAC through its Task Force members whom, as I have shown, were members of the PAC. However, there seems to be a misleading reading and interpretation of what is *Pogo*, Task Force and PAC in most of the South African Historiography. It is extensively argued that *Pogo* was a military wing or a militia of the PAC therefore diminishing the status of the Task Force which was the militia aspect of the PAC which is *Pogo* in the isiXhosa language.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the study has discussed the origins and developmental years of the PAC from the period pre and during the ANC Youth League, the breakaway of the Africanists from the ANC, the non-violent positive action campaign, which was a confrontational campaign and the PAC members flee to exile, first to Lesotho and then other parts of the globe. The campaign culminated in the famous Sharpeville Massacre, including the adoption of the armed struggle by the South African liberation movements. This is reflected to provide a historical progress of the PAC to when it

¹⁹⁶ T. Lodge, *Political organisations in Pretoria's African Township: 1940-1963*, p 83

was known as *Pogo*. The chapter revealed that *uPogo* is not the militia wing of the PAC, but rather it is the PAC itself considering that the organization was known as *Umbutho wama Afrika Pogo* amongst its Xhosa speaking members, especially from kwaLanga area at the time. The Task Force, established before the non-violent positive action campaign, albeit for different reasons later became the conduit of the organization's armed struggle. It is on the bases of this decision that we conclude that it is the Task Force that can be regarded as the militia of the PAC in the years 1961 until 1963 not *Pogo*.

Chapter 4: PAC and APLA Navigating exile and prohibition.

Introduction

After 1960, the political situation in South Africa became untenable for the anti-government movements, such as the banned PAC, ANC and SACP. Most of these organisations' leaders were arrested. However, a decision was made that they will wage an armed struggle from exile. To execute that political strategy, other independent African states who were sympathetic to the liberation struggle of South Africa were approached to host the PAC and ANC. Basutoland, Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique and others gave refugee to the members of the prohibited organizations from South Africa, thereby beginning the exile years of the liberation movements. In this chapter, the study implores the history of the PAC, and subsequently APLA, in exile, beginning in Lesotho, to Tanzania, Libya and China, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and other places. The chapter reflects on the regrouping and disintegration of the PAC because of factionalism, lack of resources, infiltration, and lack of planning, ideological differences, and rigidity. The chapter covers a period in the history of PAC/*Poqo* and APLA, beginning from the 1960s to 1968, which is the year of the Moshi conference, where APLA, as a conventional army and its military strategy, was adopted.

Dispersed, Regrouping and disintegration

Leading to the period when most liberation movements' activists were detained, the South African government with its abundance of informers planted in the PAC, put in place measures that sought to curb the 1960s uprising. Beginning with the state of emergency in 1960, the General Law Amendment Acts of 1962, 1963, 1964 and 1965; the movement [PAC] and its sabotage outbreaks appeared to have been ended.¹⁹⁷ General Law Amendment Act of 1962 enabled the Government to issue special proclamations when the need arose, to outlaw organizations, meetings, publications,

¹⁹⁷ H Strauss, *South Africa 1960-66: underground African politics*, (London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies: 1977), p 140

and persons. It introduced a house arrest system and laid down penalties ranging from a minimum of five years in jail to a death penalty. The General Law Amendment of 1963 prohibited all the organizations that were in existence since 1960, which included the ANC, SACP and ARM. The PAC, when these laws were promulgated, was equated, rightly so with *Pogo* since this was the overt name of the PAC after prohibition, but also the organization was known as *umbutho wama-Afrika Pogo* amongst the many isiXhosa speaking Africans. The new amendment would begin a long stint of detentions and arrests of many opponents of the government.

Persons convicted under these laws could be held in detention for an additional year even after they had completed their sentences. Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, the inaugural leader of PAC who was arrested on 21 March 1960, became the only victim of this law in the history of South Africa, leading to it becoming known as '*the Sobukwe clause*'. Under these harsh laws, which were enacted with the intention of crushing any opposition, people were detained in solitary confinement and in interrogation rooms for ninety days without trial or access to family and legal representatives. A case in point is that of Vuyani Colbert Mngaza who was detained from April 1963 until 1967 when his case was withdrawn due to insufficient evidence. When John Nyathi Pokela was kidnapped from Lesotho in 1967, he was initially jailed with Mngaza, who was awaiting trial, but when Pokela was moved to Robben Island, Mngaza was released.

Under this law, bail could be refused for no reason, and all acts that were deemed to be furthering the aims and objectives of a prohibited organization were applied retrospectively to 1950. The Amendment Act of 1964 was promulgated considering that many witnesses, especially Africans became reluctant to testify and or to give evidence for the state. It became illegal and punishable by one year imprisonment if one refused to give evidence. Most people testified with the fear of such imprisonment, others left political activism, while others 'skipped' the country. According to the Minister of Justice, B.J Vorster, by 29 January 1965 over 1100 people had been detained under the ninety-day provision, over five hundred and seventy were charged with offences and less than two hundred and eighty were convicted. According to Ka

Plaatjie, the apartheid government's reaction to the dissidents and members of the PAC/*Pogo* who were inside the country, instilled fear.¹⁹⁸ Ka Plaatjie, like many other scholars on PAC and *Pogo*, seem to place *Pogo* as a military wing of the PAC. He argues, “[*Pogo*] military activities had to move beyond the borders of South Africa after the many arrests in the 1960s.¹⁹⁹ This matter presented by Ka Plaatjie and others needs to be settled before a further academic and historical confusion is entrenched. From a proper reading of the history, *Pogo* was not a military wing of the PAC, secondly, PAC's departure to Lesotho was because of prohibitions rather than a choice.

The exile experience of the PAC and its members followed the mass arrests of its senior and National Executive Committee members after the Sharpeville Massacre. Several activists left the country, mostly to Lesotho, since at the time it was still a British protectorate and did not require any travel documentation. Some scholars mention that the 1961 exiting of mostly Black activists was the first exodus followed by the one after the June 1976 student uprising. If we accept this viewpoint, we can argue that most PAC members left to embark on the ‘first exodus’ and operated in Basutoland since “the struggle kept taking new forms depending on the tempo of the situation and limitations of what was possible and desirable”.²⁰⁰ Included in the exodus, was ZB Molete, the Acting President of the PAC after Sobukwe, who escaped arrest in 1961. Matthew Nkoana, a member of the NEC, left for Botswana in 1962.

However, Nana Mahomo and Peter Molotsi had already left the South Africa before 21 March 1960. Mahomo was a Pan African Affairs Secretary in the NEC that elected Sobukwe as President and he was instructed to travel to the liberated African states to establish contacts, source funds, political and technical support.²⁰¹ This was in anticipation by Sobukwe that the apartheid regime would respond by force considering that there was a polarized society where a minority regime sought to protect white

¹⁹⁸ T. Ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in Exile*, p 704

¹⁹⁹ Ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in Exile*, p 704

²⁰⁰ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council:2016), p 56

²⁰¹ T Ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in Exile*,p 704

supremacy, while the PAC sought for an Africanist Socialist Democracy- a democracy by the African people for the African people, with an economic model that was socialistic in character.

In 1962, P.K. Leballo was released from prison and had convinced the apartheid regime to 'deport' him back to his ancestral home Basutoland. Upon his arrival, he was received by Elias Ntloedibe and Joe Molefi who were already building a PAC community in Basutoland. He ousted ZB Molete who was the acting President of the PAC and established a Presidential Council of which he became its leader, as an Acting President of the PAC.²⁰² The members of the council included Leballo himself, Molete, Mfanasekhaya Gqoboshe, who was the Border region chairperson; Western Cape's TT Letlaka and Hamilton Ntantala, Elliot Mfana and J.N. Pokela, who arrived in Basutoland in 1963 and was dramatically kidnapped from Lesotho on 23 August 1966 by South African police and kept in detention for eight months before being formally charged and convicted.²⁰³ The council became engaged with the management of all party affairs [political to military], and instructed PAC and Task Force members to "go abroad for military training".²⁰⁴

The military training of Task Force members was to be used to "confront the Boers".²⁰⁵ Upon the arrival of Leballo in Lesotho, some resemblance of regrouping was also taking place in some parts of the continent. Peter Molotsi told Brown Maaba in an interview, "we were well received in most countries particularly by Nkrumah in Ghana and we set up offices there".²⁰⁶ While this is the case, in my interview with Vuyani Mngaza, who became the PAC representative in West Africa from 1967, Mngaza does not mention any established offices of the PAC in Ghana prior his arrival in West Africa although he mentions the meeting he had with Nkrumah whom he met through President Sekou Ture in Guinea Conakry. It is possible for Mngaza not to mention the office in Ghana considering that in 1964, he was still in South Africa. At

²⁰² T. Ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in Exile*, p705

²⁰³ A.K.Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed: The Biography of John Nyati Pokela*, (Skotaville: Johannesburg, 2021). Pp 52-57

²⁰⁴ Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*. p 43

²⁰⁵ Conversation of Ali Hlongwane with Gasson Ndlovu, 16 April 2003, Cape Town.

²⁰⁶ Interview with Peter Molotsi conducted by Brown Maaba, 7 January 2001, Kroonstad.

the time of the meeting with Nkrumah, the latter was an honorary co-president of Guinea with President Sekou Ture of Guinea Conakry after he had been deposed in Ghana in 1966. After the office's establishment in Lesotho, Ghana is regarded as the first office of the PAC outside the Southern African region and it is recorded to have been established by Vusi Maake, Nana Mahomo and Peter Molotsi in 1964.

Tanzania also had a PAC mission in Dar es Salaam, which was set up in 1964 immediately after the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) [now African Union] in 1963. The negotiations which led to OAU formation were led by two ideologically opposed groups of countries, the Monrovia and Casablanca blocs. The latter stood for development based on social planning while the former opted for a market-driven development.²⁰⁷ These blocs also had different approaches to international relations. However, by the end of the 1963 conference that established the OAU, a negotiated charter was signed.²⁰⁸

These developments made it possible for the establishment of the OAU's Liberation Committee which helped the PAC to open offices in the Tanzanian territorial sites provided for by the Tanzanian government. This became the PAC's external mission headquarters occupied by Leballo who had moved from Lesotho and left Gqobose, Mfaxes and Pokela there. Molotsi established another office in Lusaka in Zambia, and later moved to the United States of America after he was reported to have gotten ill in 1964. While in the USA, he established an office at the United Nations, while his counterpart Nana Mahomo established an office in the heart of London, and Vusi Maake moved to the Middle East.

The Presidential Council established in 1962 coopted Pokela as its Acting National Secretary in 1963 and he was then responsible for the administrative work of the underground movement. During this reconfiguration, APLA was not yet in existence but rather all military activities were led by the Africanist Task Force. The members involved in these activities included Gqobose, who was an underground

²⁰⁷ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council:2016), p 76

²⁰⁸ A.M Adejo, 'From OAU to AU: New Wine in old Bottles?', *African Journal for International Affairs*, Vol 4 No 1-2, 2001, p 130

recruits courier; Elliot Mfafa, Sipho Shabalala, Gasson Ndlovu, who was the Commander of PAC military efforts; and Kwenzile Hlabisa. Ndlovu, with other eleven Task Force members, was seconded by the PAC to Egypt for military training through the short-lived United Front of South Africa. In Egypt they did a nine-month commando training that entailed handling of light and heavy guns, explosives, and other military operations.²⁰⁹ The Egypt military training included a theoretical aspect which entailed guerrilla warfare and the reality that recruits were coming from a point of weakness, not only in numbers but also in terms of resources. The theoretical training exposed them to the literature of the Cuban revolution, Cyprus revolt of 1931 and Che Guevara's writings. Some in the group claim that they were also exposed to Mao Zedong ideas, while others like Ndlovu and Gqobose have a different recollection on when did they come across Mao's readings.

After training, the resource deficit which manifested itself through starvation at the different military camps located in Tanzania led to the disintegration of this trained group. The lack of food and clothing during the exile years was not peculiar to the PAC, as attested to by the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) combatants John Nankudhu and Israel Ijambo in 1965.²¹⁰ Ndlovu disagrees with the assertions presented above regarding the causes of disintegration. He claims that lack of proper coordination and political leadership squabbles that were emerging precipitated this disintegration. He subsequently left for the Congo and trained a group of PAC recruits who were sent there by Molotsi and Mahomo, however this initiative also collapsed. Ndlovu opted to return to Basutoland through Botswana and linked up with Pokela's group that had been recruiting cadres for military training.

On his return to Basutoland, over fifty recruits were assembled and Ndlovu's arrival meant that he would provide military training instead of having to send the recruits to Egypt, Tanzania, and Algeria. Again, the resources deficit was experienced in the form of lack of military ammunition since there was only one rifle available for training. Despite these challenges, the Presidential Council established a military camp in

²⁰⁹ A.K.Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, p44

²¹⁰ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p 201

Basutoland in a place called Quthing, situated near Mohale's Hoek. The Basutoland Intelligence Report of August 1964 has evidence that the activities of PAC in Basutoland were a result of the efforts of Gasson Ndlovu, a Chief Instructor of the PAC sabotage group.²¹¹ Though the report is dated August 1964, it is unclear whether Ndlovu only entered Basutoland in 1964 from Congo, since the confrontation with the Afrikaners in South Africa had been scheduled for April 1963. What is clear is that the activities of the PAC were being monitored throughout their stay in Basutoland by the local authorities with the PAC knowledge or not. Due to their lack of sophisticated underground work, they were exposed to Basutoland Intelligence, South African government spies and lack of proper coordination as their members shuttled between South Africa, Basutoland, and Tanzania in preparation for the launch of 1963.

Johnson Mlambo, a Task Force member from Daveyton, who later became the PAC chairman in exile, travelled to Basutoland between 1962 and 1963. Enoch Zulu, who joined the PAC in 1960 and was part of the Task Force operations in Mbashe and Paarl, travelled to Tanzania. Gqobose, another Task Force member travelled between Port Elizabeth and Basutoland, while Philemon Tefu also visited Maseru from the Northern Transvaal region between 1962 and 1963.²¹² Nyati Pokela, while executing his duties, was frequenting Aliwal North from Basutoland. This was in preparation for the big day, but this may possibly have created a footprint for authorities to detect them. During these planning stages, Leballo got involved in travelling outside of Basutoland to prepare other exiled cadres for the 'launch'.

Amongst the first 'official' tours the acting President embarked on was that of London in October 1962, then New York and Cairo, with the sole reason being that the external mission must prepare for the mass uprising scheduled for April 1963 by the PAC.²¹³ In London, he publicly revealed underground operational matters by mentioning that the PAC had underground cells in sixteen 'operational regions' across South Africa.²¹⁴ Leballo's disclosure in London and Basutoland regarding operational

²¹¹ Basutoland Intelligence Report: Leballo, August 64, UK National Library.

²¹² A.K.Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, pp 46-47

²¹³ T. Ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in Exile*, p 705

²¹⁴ T Simpson, *History of South Africa: From 1902 to the Present*. (Penguin: Cape Town:2021), p 187

underground matters could have come as a result of the statement of the House of Commons on 24 July 1962 where Nigel Fischer, the British undersecretary of Foreign Affairs announced that people will not be repatriated to South Africa to face charges that were either subject to death penalty or not punishable by law at the protectorates.²¹⁵ These sentiments from the House of Commons gave assurance to the South African liberation movement. This could explain the reason behind London being the biggest anti-apartheid location outside of South Africa. It could also be the reasoning that the Afrikaners National Party had dissociated the regime from the commonwealth and therefore British government used the anti-apartheid and liberation sentiments as leverage to square with their counterparts.

In 1964, Leballo moved the PAC headquarters from Lesotho to Tanzania and later claimed that the decision was influenced by the Leabua Jonathan's administration in Lesotho which was closely allied with the South African government. This justification is not sustainable considering that Jonathan assumed premiership of Basothololand in 1965. Secondly, Lesotho was landlocked by South Africa with all its mass media being controlled by South Africa, including its banking system, therefore posing a greater risk for the PAC. This potential risk was proven when there were instances where the Lesotho authorities would hand over PAC refugees to South Africa since the South African government informers frequented Lesotho. These international dynamics and other security concerns affected the regrouping and operations of the PAC in its first exile home, Lesotho. Amongst the people who were already establishing offices and 'functioning' in exile was Peter Raboroko who was among the people who were involved in the South African United Front (SAUF). This front brought together the PAC, ANC, SAIC and South West African National Union (SWANU) after the banning of these movements in 1960. It was an effort to reorganize the South African liberation movements, including the PAC; however, this does not seem to have succeeded as we would see the break-away of the PAC and APLA from the Front in the late 1970's.

From 1960 until 1964, Basutoland and Swaziland were the easiest places to run to for the exile regrouping of the PAC and its members. However, Basutoland

²¹⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, 25 July 1962

proved to be the 'original' epicenter of PAC disintegration, political factions, leadership squabbles and mass arrests. The Swaziland border, a gateway to another British protectorate, was also not guarded in 1960 and Kgosana used it to begin his exile life which was to take him to Tanganyika (now Tanzania). Upon arrival in Swaziland, he requested help from Julius Nyerere who was the leader of Tanganyika African Nation Union (TANU) to reach Dar es Salaam but was informed that he must travel to Maseru in Basutoland where there are locatable landing strips.²¹⁶

In Basutoland, where he was to catch a plane to Tanganyika, he spent two weeks in the refugee center of Maseru and met two South Africans who were the employees of the famous *Drum* magazine, Nat Nakasa and photographer Peter Magubane. Kgosana's stay in Basutoland, like that of many other refugees, was at times spent in hiding and/or evading local authorities in places like Koalabata village. When he finally arrived in Maseru, Kgosana could not immediately fly out with TANU plane because the authorities had known about his imminent departure; he was then informed by his sources that he must fly out through Bechuanaland (Botswana) as the authorities planned to arrest him at the Maseru airport. After a tedious travelling mission from Maseru to Bechuanaland by road, he finally arrived at Serowe and took a fight with a TANU pilot to Tanganyika, and they arrived in Dar es Salaam on 29 March 1961. There, he met the Tanzanian cabinet minister and Secretary General of TANU, Oscar Kambona, who took him to Julius Nyerere for a meeting that evening at his residence.²¹⁷

Basutoland mass arrests

Considering that the PAC and ANC had opted for the use of force against the apartheid regime, PAC Task Force members in the form of Poqo had been engaged in different operations by 1962. The 8th of April 1963 was identified as the D-day and 1963 as the year of freedom. With the Snyman Commission outcomes, the authorities were closing in on Poqo members in South Africa. In Basutoland, the authorities were

²¹⁶ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council:2016),p 61

²¹⁷ P. Kgosana, *Lest we forget*, p 68

working with the South African police to hand over PAC refugees to the latter. Noting that the net was seemingly closing in on them, as the apartheid regime was in full swing arresting known PAC branch and regional leaders,²¹⁸ a plan was devised by Ndlovu to try and free Sobukwe from prison. Gqobose tasked Ndlovu to write-up the plan considering that it was Ndlovu's military experience that was needed. This plan entailed kidnapping white school kids around the Basutoland border and keeping them in captivity in the PAC military camp in Basutoland. They would then use the children as leverage to call for the release of Sobukwe in exchange for the children, however the plan was never put in motion.²¹⁹ It is unclear what reasons could have led Gqobose and Ndlovu to devise this plan. The assumption is that they might have not been happy with the leadership of the Acting President, Kitchner Leballo.

On Sunday 24th March 1963, two weeks before the planned uprising, the PAC Presidential Council under Leballo's leadership held a press conference in the PAC Bonhomme House offices. The meeting was held around lunch time, and in attendance were members of the media, Leballo, Gqobose, Ntantala, Mfaxes, Molete and Nyati Pokela.²²⁰ In his memoir, *A High Price for Freedom* Sipho Shabalala explains about the press conference:

The Presidential Council under Leballo's leadership considered a strategy which would raise the morale of the PAC members and cadres in South Africa and further commit the PAC to fulfil its promise that, indeed, 1963 would be a year of destiny and that the uprising, which was bound to be violent, would be launched and pursued until final victory. The press conference was held in Leballo's main office and I sat on the other office, which one had to pass through in order to enter Leballo's office. The introduction to the business of the day was done by Leballo and a prepared press statement was read by Comrade Z.B Molete, as secretary for publicity and information. During the question and answer session, Leballo

²¹⁸ A Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, p 49

²¹⁹ A Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, p 48

²²⁰ A Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, p 49

and other members of the Presidential Council participated in answering questions.

Shabalala further notes that,

The gist of the statement was that the PAC's goal to launch an uprising in the near future would be attained. Further, the PAC cadres were ready to confirm that, indeed the PAC and Poqo were the same organisation, and all the reported Poqo activities were indeed those of the PAC. This confirmed what Justice Snyman had already pronounced and, as a result of his findings, members of Poqo were already being arrested in South Africa as members of the banned PAC. The statement was, therefore, not a betrayal of Poqo or PAC members but simply taking ownership of the work and activities performed by the PAC in liberating the country.²²¹

The account by Shabalala is contradicted in Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane's biography as it says:

Alerted by Potlako Leballo, the security police apprehended PAC leaders on their way back into the country after meeting with Leballo in Basutoland. Gordon Glen Ntsokoma, Mbuyiselo Hani, elder brother of Chris Hani; and Koos Hashe were amongst those apprehended after crossing the Caledon River. These were officials who were 'detailed to go to Lesotho and there give a progress report on the organisation, membership and the planned programme of action. That is how far we had organised. We had so many members because the idea was to launch something in '63, nationally, that was designed to confuse the whole state of affairs, throw the state into confusion, total chaos. We were ready. The membership was ready. It was a matter of 'Press the button' and all South Africa would have been on fire.'

However, thanks to Leballo, that Status Report became public knowledge and indeed, reached the hands of the government. There are conflicting

²²¹ S.R Shabalala, *A High Price For Freedom: Memoirs of Sipho Richard Shabalala* (Cape Town: The Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society, 2014), pp 47-48

reports. Some said Leballo was arrested on route to a meeting and incriminating evidence was found on him while others say he actually requested the reporters to come and interview him and there gave incriminating evidence regarding the state of preparedness of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania to stage a countrywide uprising on 21 March 1963...Also, delegates returning from Basutoland were apprehended and, according to Ndungane, ‘...in their briefcases, was the incriminating evidence that shook the security systems of the apartheid state.’²²²

Mlambo, who was in Basutoland at the time of the press conference and is known to have developed an affection for Leballo, says about the press conference: “Leballo statement to the press was that, if the government went ahead with arrests and hangings, as Justice Snyman was suggesting, Leballo forces would eliminate ten Boer boys a day”.²²³ He rejects any conspiracies around Leballo but rather credits the statements to P.K.’s ‘recklessness, boastfulness and overzealousness’, with Molotsi characterising it as ‘carelessness and thoughtlessness.’²²⁴ Simpson, highlights that on the day of the press conference, ‘Leballo was flanked by a number of senior PAC officials when he read a statement in Maseru’.²²⁵

He further outlines that Leballo verified Snyman [interim] report on the Poqo and PAC. According to Simpson, Leballo mentioned that Poqo was weak in Free State and strong[er] in the Cape and that the Mbashe Bridge and Paarl attacks were not officially authorised but were conducted by ‘angry and provoked’ cell members.²²⁶ Whatever the situation regarding the press conference, the press feasted on the revelation and gave them front-page coverage the following morning. The *Star* and *Rand Daily Mail* newspapers had both cited him in similar effect. However, on 28th March, Leballo wrote to the *Star* claiming he had been falsely quoted. On Sunday 31st

²²² S Magona, *From Robben Island to Bishops court: The Biography of Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane* (Cape Town: David Philip, 2011), p 61

²²³ Telephone interview by Ali Hlongwane with Johnson Mlambo, 13 January 2004, Johannesburg

²²⁴ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, pp 683-684

²²⁵ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p 187

²²⁶ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p 187

March, *Sunday Express* published its correspondents' handwritten notes from the press briefing to refute Leballo's claims.²²⁷

As if the revelations in the press conference were not enough to provide grounds to execute arrests on *Pogo* members, the secretary to Leballo, Cynthia Lichaba and her courier mate, Thabisa Lithala, were intercepted by the security branch police on 29 March 1963 on route to post letters in Ladybrand, a nearby South African town close to Basutoland. The bus they were travelling in was stopped and searched and about seventy letters addressed to PAC leaders across South Africa were found in the handbags.²²⁸ The letters were written by Leballo and they sought to advise that there was trouble in Basutoland and the instruction was that "stay where you are".²²⁹ In the letters, the written contact details were followed up and they lead to arrests of underground cell members and leaders in South Africa from the 3rd April 1963.²³⁰ On the 1st of April, the Basutoland police raided the PAC offices in Maseru and the plan devised by Ndlovu and the 'list of 10 000 PAC members'²³¹ landed in their hands. A big number of documents were seized from the PAC offices and Leballo's house. Shabalala, the bodyguard of Leballo at the time, says of the 1st of April 1963 Basutoland arrests;

the warrant of arrest targeted PK Leballo who went to the underground and could not be found. Two people got arrested at the PAC offices, Elias Ntloedibe who was later deported to Bechuanaland and myself Sipho Shabalala who was arrested for fighting the police therefore charged with obstruction of justice. There was, however, another group of about twenty Task Force members that got arrested. They had come to Basutoland for the [uprising] instructions. This group was handed over to the South African Police.²³²

²²⁷ *Sunday Express*, 31 March 1963

²²⁸ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p 187

²²⁹ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p 187

²³⁰ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, pp 187-188

²³¹ Anon., 'What Happened to those P.A.C Lists?' *Contact* (19 April 1963): p 4

²³² WhatsApp communication between the author and Prof Sipho Shabalala, 19 September 2022.

Mateu Nkoana, in his controversial report and later a book *Crisis in the Revolution*, writes about the warrant of arrest and Leballo's mysterious acquaintance, Hans Lombard²³³; five months later, the warrant of arrest against Leballo was quietly withdrawn and he was granted safe passage through South Africa to voluntary exile and Lombard had tipped Leballo of the imminent raid.²³⁴ A protest against these arrests came from the spokesperson of the House of Lords, through London *Daily Telegraph* newspaper. The House of Lords was of the view that 'the Basutoland police had no reason to hand over the information to the South African authorities about the PAC acts which did not constitute any offence under the law of the United Kingdom'.²³⁵ Other arrests of PAC and Task Force members known as Poqo took place in the months that followed with Gasson Ndlovu, Johannes Letsoha, T.T. Letlaka, Kwenzile Hlabisa, Wigram Twaigana, George Fako and Elliot Mfafa facing trial on December 1964 at Maseru Magistrate court.²³⁶ On the 11th of May 1965, Pokela and Gqobose were arrested, however he (Pokela) was acquitted on a technicality, while Gqobose was sentenced to three years imprisonment in Basutoland.

In August 1966, Nyati Pokela, the Acting Secretary of the Presidential Council and administrator of the PAC military activities, was kidnapped suspiciously with the help of South African spies who were frequenting Basutoland. He was then handed over to the South African authorities as it had already been established that the Basutoland government was a puppet government working with the South African government. *The Guardian* newspaper on 29 August 1966 reported that the PAC sought assistance for the release of Pokela from the British government, stating that Pokela was arrested in Basutoland territory.²³⁷ On the same morning, *Morning Star* newspaper published a similar report with the headline 'Britain told: Get this man back', claiming that he was handed over to South African police by the Basutoland police.²³⁸ Pokela was later sentenced to thirteen years on Robben Island and

²³³ M Fischer, M Nkoana, S Fischer and T Rodolo, *Crisis in the Revolution: A Special Report on the Pan-Africanist Congress of South Africa*, (New York, United Nations centre against Apartheid: 1969), p 8

²³⁴ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us*, p 158

²³⁵ 'What Happened to those P.A.C Lists?': 4

²³⁶ A.K.Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, pp 50-51

²³⁷ Anon, 'British help sought 2023 to free refugee', *The Guardian*, 30 August 1966

²³⁸ Unknown, *Britain Told: Get this man back*. *Morning Star*, 30 August 1966

released in May 1980. He stayed nine months serving his banishment at his family home in Herschel, and thereafter left the country via Lesotho to Tanzania.²³⁹

The mass arrests at Basutoland PAC offices and other places that were taking place provided for a jubilant mood within the ranks of the apartheid regime, leaving the PAC's military wing and its military activities in disarray. It was a serious setback on the side of the PAC and its 'series of spontaneous' military activities leaving it to reappraise their guerrilla warfare approaches.²⁴⁰ The arrests created a serious mood of mistrust and other internal squabbles with contradictions being the order of the day. Pokela would come to grips with these upon reaching Tanzania after his release from Robben Island. The reality, as Simpson opines regarding the press conference, was that the "PAC leadership had made a serious mistake in issuing the statement in the tense climate after the Snyman's report as it precipitated a crackdown by the Basutoland colonial police".²⁴¹

Sailing the storm of Exile

The new conditions emanating from the hanging of Poqo Task Force members internally between 1962 and 1966, and the arrests of many Presidential Council and Task Force members and leaders in Basutoland from 1963 forced the external missions to re-evaluate their armed resistance approach. A consideration was made that the people's war was to be embarked upon and that principles and combat methods should be studied.²⁴² It was suggested that all people, men and women, young and old are required to take part in the war, they must be able to fight in units, in sections and platoons and must be able to plan and carry out ambushes during the day and at night. It meant that the PAC had to seek further military assistance for its cadres. This came at the expense of the neglect of educational opportunities.

²³⁹ A.K.Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, pp 73-74

²⁴⁰ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 707.

²⁴¹ T Simpson, *History of South Africa: From 1902 to the Present*. (Penguin: Cape Town:2021), p 187

²⁴² Pan Africanist Congress, *The Commissar's Field Manual*, p 8

The acting PAC representative in Germany sought candidates to take up scholarships from the headquarters but was informed that the focus of the organization was military training.²⁴³ The National Front for the Liberation of Angola (NFLA) was amongst the first to assist. Nkrumah of Ghana also helped with a military training base in Kumasi where Peter Molotsi conducted the training with the help of the Algerian government.²⁴⁴ PAC members were also trained in Egypt, Libya, Algeria and Nigeria, with President Nasser of Egypt and Libya's Qaddafi providing PAC with military bases in their countries, even though some of them after finishing the training were either dying of malaria or idling. These developments coincided with the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababba in May 1963. OAU established a Liberation Committee to harmonize assistance to movements that were still fighting settler colonial rule on the continent.²⁴⁵ Tanganyika (Tanzania) donated a site in Kongwa for liberation movements to establish their bases on condition that they were recognized by the OAU.

SWAPO opened a camp in 1963, and the PAC headquarters shifted from Basutoland to Tanzania in 1964. While the PAC and its acting President were in Tanzania, many of its members were scattered in various countries and at times different continents, and others in South African jails. For example, Loxley Mothopeng was living with Charles Lakaje and Peter Raboroko in Kenya. The scattering of members strained the cohesiveness of the organization since it was poorly resourced. This led to an inability by the party to hold its National and Consultative conferences, which meant some members were disgruntled by the state of the organization. Those who challenged Leballo's leadership style like Nomthetho Simelane, who was in Basutoland, and Nkoana, the chief representative of PAC in Botswana at the time, were labelled as 'initiator communists bent on usurping his leadership' and were expelled.²⁴⁶ All the military activities during this time were being implemented by the Africanist Task Force under the guidance of the Presidential Council until the Moshi

²⁴³ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 708

²⁴⁴ Interview with P Molotsi conducted by Thami kaPlaatjie, 13 November 1999, Kroonstad.

²⁴⁵ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p 200

²⁴⁶ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 709

consultative conference was held on 19-23 September 1967. At the conference, a Revolutionary Command, with P.K. as commander-in-chief, was formed, and the High Command was established, with Hamilton Ntantala as Commander.

The PAC exile period was mainly marred by leadership squabbles and financial misappropriation and abuse of funds. A number of sources have dedicated their time on the leadership conflicts of the PAC in exile. It is not my intention to dwell much on the matter considering that it is something that is on public record. Be that as it may, it is important to cite a few instances of the financial misappropriation which seem to have bedeviled the organization during the exile years. Towards the Moshi consultative conference of 1967, the PAC Treasurer General, Ngcobo prepared a financial report on these irregularities which was to be presented at the conference. However, 'Leballo demoted him before the conference and the commission of inquiry which was established with the help of OAU to streamline organization's financial troubles. Due to his demotion, the commission of inquiry could not consider Ngcobo's financial report'.²⁴⁷ At some point, while in Tanzania, Leballo censured Peter Raboroko, A.B Ngcobo and others regarding the Brasilia papers, but these decisions were overruled by the conference and a Revolutionary Command was established to streamline the army and its functions.

Raboroko and Ngcobo were at time Leballo's most trusted lieutenants but after the Brasilia conference, they fell out and addressed a press briefing expressing disillusionment with P.K.'s leadership therefore calling for a national convention. This occurred when the two sought to take over the PAC Tanzania offices in July 1967. The Tanzanian government, together with the OAU, intervened in the matter by closing the PAC offices and calling for a National Executive Committee meeting to be held at Moshi on 19 September. At the meeting Mr. Magombe, the head of liberation committee, appealed for conciliation.²⁴⁸ This led to the reversal and revoking of all the suspensions and an enquiry into the misappropriation of funds was set up, but Ngcobo was never provided an opportunity to present the financial report.

²⁴⁷ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 715

²⁴⁸ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 714

The apartheid security branch spies had not ceased their function of infiltrating the organization as it can be witnessed by, amongst others, Mr. Hans Lombard. Lombard was a self-styled freelancer, writer, journalist, and photographer who was provided credentials to work under the PAC representatives abroad by Leballo. Lombard had gained access to the PAC leader from Maseru and had been granted free pass in all the PAC exile activities, including the infiltration routes back to the country. Mgxashe and Nkoana biographies²⁴⁹ provide extensive information on some of the activities of Lombard during the exile years. These include his inability to stick to the mandate as per the credential provided to him by Leballo, denying information he had provided and his inability to explain the excess money he had. Nkoana became uneasy about Lombard and his never-ending questions even for a journalist, and he decided to dig up some more on him. An inconclusive decision was made by Nkoana that Lombard was a possible apartheid agent and might have used Leballo to source information about the PAC and its underground activities. When Lombard was asked by Mgxashe in 2004 whether he was an apartheid spy, he denied the allegation that he had been a spy and said even if he had been one, 'so what?'²⁵⁰

During these upheavals, the intervention of OAU and the government of Tanzania, which culminated in the Moshi consultative conference, provided for the creation of some sort of working relationship between the military and the political spheres of the party. Ka Plaatjie argues that the establishment of the revolutionary command decision was taken to accommodate 'China trained leaders such as Makoti and Ntantala and also with a function to set up and supervise the strategic and policy task of the armed struggle'.²⁵¹ These developments did not bring any semblance of order to the organization because the leader often appeared paranoid and accused his comrades of being sponsored by the American intelligence organization, the CIA.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us: The story of a PAC Activist*, (Tafelberg: Mafube: 2006), p 151

²⁵⁰ M. Mgxashe, *Are you with us: The story of a PAC Activist*, p 160

²⁵¹ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 715

²⁵² T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 712

Moshi consultative conference and the turn to APLA

Leading up to the period when the Moshi conference was held, various actions and inactions were happening with members of the PAC in exile. Some members were expelled from the party, others independently joined military training camps in various countries, Kgosana being one example. Other members left for Europe to further their studies, while others were managing PAC affairs in Basutoland, Zambia, Tanzania and Ghana, New York, London, Botswana, and other countries. Warring factions in the organization had infested it and some had opted to 'rebel' against some of the decisions that were being taken in the organization. This background is important as it gave Mr. Magombe, the head of liberation committee in the OAU, grounds to appeal for conciliation among the PAC comrades. In the spirit of conciliation, censuring of members and expulsions were revoked and a PAC revolutionary message (to the nation's paper) which included the idea of the 'protracted guerrilla warfare, was presented and adopted at this conference.

The cadets trained in China were given new responsibilities, with Ntantala appointed the Commander and Gasson Ndlovu, Gerald Kondlo and Theophilus Bidi as his deputies. George Rankoana was appointed as Political Commissar and Leballo the supreme commander of the army. This became known as the PAC Revolutionary Council and its establishment did not go without any skepticism considering the skirmishes that had engulfed the organization.

Some in the organization, especially those who were in the National Executive, which was mostly a political structure, saw the Revolutionary Council as Leballo's way of trying to remove and replace them.²⁵³ Nkula thought that since they in the NEC had strongly criticized Leballo's leadership mistakes, he did not want people who would criticize or question his authority hence he sponsored the establishment of the Revolutionary Council. Nkula's sentiment can be accepted with some level of skepticism too on the basis that the decision was a conference resolution and that

²⁵³ Interview with M.K Nkula conducted by Plaatjie on 14 October 1996, Johannesburg

many of the resolutions of that conference were reversing most of Leballo's heavy-handed decisions. Additionally, the military operations of the PAC in exile were in disarray and therefore a military structure would have been a necessity. My skepticism does not dismiss Nkula's feeling about the decision as he was present in the Moshi Consultative conference. Even with all these perceptions regarding the Revolutionary Council, the latter provided for a structured military approach and revitalized the hope that the armed struggle was to be continued on a stronger footing.

In December 1967, the newly established High Command setup its headquarters in Lusaka while the PAC training camps were in Morogoro in Tanzania. At the time, the high command argued that it wanted to direct the home going programme from Zambia. This programme was the infiltration of trained armed personnel into South Africa. Gqobose explained the logic behind this, saying, people were to be trained in Morogoro, then after the training they were not to stay there but would be sent home via Lusaka. Only those who were not trained in Tanzania, he added, were to first make a stop in Tanzania but the process after would be the same.

The High Command led by China trained cadres, and probably the Maoist influence of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (CPLA), established the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) in 1968. Ka Plaatjie cites Gqobose on the establishment of APLA saying; 'China has PLA; we are going to have APLA'.²⁵⁴ The mindset of those present in the establishment of APLA was that it was not a new structure. To them, it was a continuation of the Poqo activities²⁵⁵ or an elevation or graduation from rudimentary Poqo stage when people did not have access to (conventional military) arms.²⁵⁶ During the period when the interviews were being conducted, that is in the post-apartheid period, the popular discourse around Poqo being a militia of the PAC was prevalent, both in liberation scholarship and political

²⁵⁴ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p. 716

²⁵⁵ Interview of Peter Molotsi

²⁵⁶ Interview with Mxolisi Mgxashe conducted by Brown Maaba, 26 January 2002, Cape Town

rhetoric, and it is for this reason that most understood APLA to have been a transition from Poqo instead of the Africanist Task Force.

It is my view that the turn to armed struggle in South Africa was firstly adopted by PAC through the revived paramilitary structure, the Africanist Task Force, which is the predecessor to APLA. Poqo was a recalibrated form of PAC after the organization was banned following the PAC's anti-pass campaign and Sharpeville massacre in 1960. The PAC members and Task Force members who were sent to Algeria, Congo, Ghana and China for military instruction and training with about two hundred others convened in 1968, constituted APLA, the Azanian People's Liberation Army.²⁵⁷ During the Moshi conference, the PAC and APLA "acknowledged that to overthrow the National Party government would require a prolonged and carefully worked out military struggle".²⁵⁸

Conclusion

After the banning of the PAC in 1960, various models and approaches were adopted to continue with the struggle. It re-organized firstly in Lesotho and in other parts of the continent, then the world, under the stewardship of PK Leballo. In Lesotho, various 'mistakes' led to the arrest of many PAC members in Lesotho and South Africa, leading to many PAC members to be hanged. Many fled the country, while some ended up being sentenced to hefty prison sentences. In exile, PAC experienced a great strife that was internally and externally inflicted; however, the organisation sailed the stormy period. Though there was some resemblance of accomplishments, the disappointments were several. The establishment of APLA and the adoption of a conventional military strategy in 1968 was such an accomplishment in the quest to continue with the armed struggle against settler-colonial apartheid government.

²⁵⁷ T lodge, 'Soldiers of the Storm: A Profile of the Azanian Liberation Army', *About Turn: The Transformation of the South African Military and Intelligence*, 1996, p 106

²⁵⁸ K. M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution: The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa) 1959-1994*, (Windhoek: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 2009), p 241

Chapter 5: APLA-‘The People’s army’ and The Chinese influence

Introduction

The decision to configure the army by the PAC and its Revolutionary Council led to the establishment of APLA in 1968 and the subsequent adoption of its military strategy. APLA was then popularized amongst as ‘The People’s Army’ after the CPLA, which influenced greatly the ideas of those who were the PAC army commanders. This chapter focuses on the relationship between the then Communist world and their African counterparts, with a particular interest on PAC and Mao’s China. This includes the APLA cadres being trained in Kampuchea and China. It was in Kampuchea, the study will argue, that many cadres were taught humility, patience, and resilience. From 1975, after a lull in the military aspect of South Africa’s liberation struggle, APLA and MK were caught by surprise by a plethora of young people joining them in exile. The chapter considers and also reflects on the split within the PAC in 1979 when the APRP was formed. After the arrival of Pokela in Tanzania in 1981, a semblance of unity was achieved, and the PAC was united and the APRP was dissolved. The period of the 1980s brought about solid plans for the home-going program, however Pokela mysteriously died in Zimbabwe in 1985. While gone, Pokela had laid a foundation that led to a more coordinated confrontation and attack on apartheid security personnel inside South Africa. The chapter covers the period 1968 until 1990 when the PAC was unbanned.

PAC/APLA relations with Mao’s China and the intra-cold war effects

The relationship between PAC and Mao’s Communist China government must be understood within the context of the dominant geo-politics of the Communist World at period. During the period, in the Communist world, China and the Soviet Union were allies, and their relationship was based on power and national security.²⁵⁹ Since the 1940s and early 1950s, there was a lingering but controlled discord between Moscow

²⁵⁹ J D Pollack, *The Sino-Soviet Rivalry and China Security Debate*, (California: Rand, 1982), p 4

and Beijing, the Sino-Soviet relationship.²⁶⁰ However, the death of Joseph Stalin and the coming to the helm as the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) of Nikita Khrushchev intensified the division.²⁶¹ The separation became known as the Sino-Soviet split, which fully manifested itself in the outside world in 1969. Professor Josiah Lebakeng, a sociologist, argues that the Beijing-Moscow situation pre-1969 'was a silent intra-cold war within two major communist countries, and it had a negative impact on the liberation movements in Southern Africa.'²⁶²

This negative impact was further entrenched through the (authentic six treaty) which divided the Southern Africa liberation movements further.²⁶³ Most Cold War scholars and political analysts identify either one or two reasons for the Sino-Soviet split, I however argue that this intra-cold war split was not due to one or two issues, rather it was because of several complex issues. Pollack opines that these differences between Moscow and Beijing were profoundly about national power, political-military strategies, and leadership goals.²⁶⁴ Muendane, a PAC and APLA stalwart, identifies ideology as the main driver for the split.²⁶⁵

With the silent intra-cold war battle lines boiling between China and the Soviet Union from as early as 1952, South Africa's ANC, and later its military wing, Umkhonto weSizwe, from 1960 sided with Moscow because of their entrenched relationship with the SACP. In response, Beijing considered its national interests and some ideological similarities, then they opted to support the PAC after its formation in 1959. In the beginning of the 1950s, Mao's China had trained a cohort of SACP (ANC) members. The Chinese support towards the newly founded PAC would become beneficial and equally disastrous for the PAC, as it led to unceasing ideological and political divergences, and military debates that stifled the PAC in one way or the other much

²⁶⁰ P Roberts, S.I Levine, P Vamos, D Kaple, J Friedman, D.A Stiffler, 'The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, December 2010, p 121

²⁶¹ Roberts *et al*, *Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World*, p 122

²⁶² Interview with Professor Lebakeng, in Pretoria on 16 October 2022

²⁶³ It emerged in Khartoum on 20 January 1969 where AAPSO, in a conference named 'First International Conference of Solidarity with the Fighting Peoples of Southern Africa and Portuguese Colonies resolved to recognize and accredit certain organizations as 'representatives of the people'.

²⁶⁴ J D Pollack, *The Sino-Soviet Rivalry and China Security Debate*, p 1

²⁶⁵ Telephone interview with Michael Muendane, Pretoria on 16 October 2022.

of the time in exile. This is a reality that has not ceased to this day within the organization.

The support of Beijing to the PAC surely came at the '*perfect*' time considering that in 1963 there were mass arrests of its members in Basutoland and inside South Africa, and the organization was in tatters. There were limited to no financial resources, including military training support from anybody. Such a situation, led to the ideological influence and *capture* of the PAC's military strategy, including selected aspects of its political outlook by the Chinese ideology. Due to the Sino-Soviet split, liberation movements in Southern Africa were also divided. Those supported by Moscow were later ring-fenced under the concept known as '*The Authentic Six Liberation Movements of Southern Africa*'. The '*chosen six*' were FRELIMO in Mozambique, SWAPO in Namibia, ANC in South Africa, and PAIGC in Bissau; MPLA in Angola and ZAPU in Zimbabwe. Other liberation movements in these countries were either neutralized or destroyed. ZANU of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and SWANU Southwest Africa (Namibia), respectively, were sidelined by the USSR and subsequently obliterated after independence, while the PAC in South Africa was neutralized.²⁶⁶

In the late 1950s, the Africanists within the ANC left the ANC and established PAC on the grounds that there was a significant influence and *capture* of some aspects of ANC leadership by the SACP 'communists' which were under the Comintern. Mao's contest against Moscow was what he termed the Soviets' 'socialist imperialism'. In the turn of events, when Mao's China was supporting the PAC armed struggle, the PAC found itself in the very situation that they sought to circumvent when they left the ANC, and what Mao said he was avoiding from the Soviet Union. The *capture* of the PAC, its ideology and political outlook, not by the 'communists' of the ANC, was in a way done by the Chinese as we would witness in the formation and military strategies of APLA.

²⁶⁶ Telephone interview with Michael Muendane, Pretoria on 16 October 2022.

Cedric Masters of APLA and Mbulelo Musi of MK, who both trained in China in the 1970s, opine that the Chinese training provided them with experience, growth, and military careers in the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), and it benefitted those who pursued civilian careers in democratic South Africa and in other countries.²⁶⁷ This confirms the assertion that the support from China to the liberation movements in Southern Africa was individually beneficial, while, to a certain extent, to the PAC it was organizationally detrimental. Detrimental in the sense that PAC and APLA members have since been engaged in ideological and political outlook disputes which have *stifled* its organizational development. It was beneficial because, those who trained in China have had formidable professions that stimulated their careers to be senior officers in the post-1994 military of South Africa, as Masters has opined.

As opposed to the ANC which had its first batch of six going to China for military training in November 1961, the PAC's relationship with Beijing seems to have started after a seven member 'study delegation' visited China in October 1964.²⁶⁸ According to Ezekiel Mothupi, a PAC veteran who was in the 1964 group, the delegation consisted of himself (Ezekiel Mothupi), Edgar Modau, Normam Ndire, and Dingaan Maleka; including John Moredi, Jackie Mazibuko and Joe Mokgathlana.²⁶⁹ This group, after its military training, attended a leadership 'instruction' course and debates in the Peking City of China. It is unclear what the military training entailed; however, it can be confirmed that this was the beginning of the long and influential relationship between the Chinese People's Liberation Army (CPLA), PAC and APLA. It is during these debates at Peking that the members of the PAC debunked the idea from the Chinese that African Nationalism was reactionary, and they pointed out that the Chinese struggle for liberation, though it was 'championed' by the CCP, was a nationalistic struggle in character.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁷ Mbulelo Musi, Cedric Masters, 'The long-standing and enduring friendship between the Chinese PLA and the South African Military', *IOL* published on 1 August 2022

²⁶⁸ G. Houston, T ka Plaatjie and T. April, 'Military training camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa, 1961-1981', *Historia* 60, 2 November 2015, p36

²⁶⁹ Interview with Ezekiel Mothupi, 26 October 2022 in Pretoria

²⁷⁰ Ibid

In 1965, Edwin Makoti led another group to China, and this group included Kholisile Guma, P. Mboko, Keke Nkula, Nkululeko Jako, Theophilus Bidi, Cengwayo, Magwaza and Mani.²⁷¹ After the 1965 group, Hamilton Ntantala, who later became APLA Commander, led an additional group to China for military instruction and training in 1967. It is little known about the type of training the PLA provided to the first Task Force leaders and members from 1964, however, after APLA was established in 1968, its cadres were trained in revolutionary propaganda, mobilization work, with the intention to attack the enemy, and the Chinese influenced military drill. Of most significance, Houghton *et al* argue that the APLA structure was based on the Chinese People's Liberation Army.²⁷² In the trainings, the ideological teachings given to CPLA recruits were also imparted to Makoti, Ntantala and other groups; and the training entailed Mao's version of Marxism-Leninism.

Ideology was the key determinant in China's international affairs, and such was based on the reality that China at the time was an agrarian society which defined Marxism-Leninism within their context.²⁷³ The Chinese military training placed emphasis on the ideological orientation of the cadres, and this resulted in a military strategic *shift* of the PAC, its Africanist Task Forces and later influenced APLA. According to most cadres who were interviewed during this study, this ideological emphasis was the most peculiar aspect of the military training in China as compared to other countries, who provided Africanist Task Force and APLA with military training. Ka Plaatjie argues that during this period, PAC experienced a major shift in strategy where it elevated its training and ideology, therefore, adopting these as critical components of its warfare.²⁷⁴ This elevation in training and understanding was largely influenced by Mao's interpretation of Marxism-Leninism, and PLA instructors drew much of their knowledge on this understanding.

²⁷¹ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 717

²⁷² G. Houghton et al, Military training camps, *Historia* 60, p 36

²⁷³ Telephone Interview with Michael Muendane on 16 October 2022.

²⁷⁴ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, pp 719-720

The logical system of knowledge regarding war and national defense of CPLA before it evolved over the years (inclusive of the 2017 newly developed military approaches introduced by President Xi Jinping) was mainly ground force-centric and technologically unsophisticated. This ground force-centric approach was used by the Chinese in the invasion of Vietnam in 1979.²⁷⁵ Burke *et al*, reveal that the military theory of CPLA was developed and employed with the intention to reinforce the Communist Party of China's political authority.²⁷⁶ According to the CPLA Military Science academy, their theory reveals 'the stage[s], characteristics and laws of the military development'²⁷⁷; a systematic thinking relating to warfare and national defense issues; and it incorporates the ideas and thoughts of Karl Marx, Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao and the current leader of China, Xi Jinping.²⁷⁸ The mentioning of the previous China leaders in this aspect of the study seeks to reflect the metamorphosis of the military theory of CPLA and China's military orientation as influenced by each leader's leadership style and vision.

At the time that Ntantala's group had gone to China for military training, Houston *et al* argues that the Chinese revolutionary struggle approach was a 'schematic acceleration of operations.'²⁷⁹ The recruits were trained to implement their enemy attack in stages; firstly, they were to start at the guards dispatched at the military post, which would ensure the revolutionary guerrillas gain and capture ammunition and arms. The second stage included surprise attacks, raids and ambushes which were expected to achieve the acquisition and capturing of heavy weaponry, which itself will lead to the last stage. The final stage is the attacking of the whole enemy forces to create liberated zones. The initial stage in this developmental process does not only achieve the gaining of supply but is expected to help with the psychology and confidence of the guerrillas. It is this military theoretical framework

²⁷⁵ E. J. Burke, Kristen Gunness, Cortez A. Cooper III & Mark Cozad, 'People's liberation Army Operational Concepts', *Rand National Defence institute*, 2020, p2

²⁷⁶ E.J Burke *et al*, *People's liberation Army Operational Concepts*, p 2

²⁷⁷ E.J Burke *et al*, *People's liberation Army Operational Concepts*, p 2

²⁷⁸ People's Liberation Army Academy of Military Science Press, 2011

²⁷⁹ G. Houston *et al*, *Military training camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*, p 36

that the first group trained in China gave to the newly formed APLA, hence Ka Plaatjie and Professor Kondlo evoke the change in the PAC military strategy.

APLA's strategy to attack the European farmers inside South Africa to force them out of the farmsteads was a strategical significance. In the case of successful seizure of the farms, they were to be used as military bases for APLA guerrillas training, hide-out, and launch-pad to various protracted revolutionary operations. The success of this method would lead to the establishment of 'liberated zones' which would produce "an administrative and governmental apparatus of a new kind".²⁸⁰ The strategy and tactic sought to emulate to some extent the Soviet trained military groups like PAIGC and FRELIMO. Although PAC's APLA and ZAPU's ZIPRA sought to use the 'rural areas' (farms as bases and hideouts), APLA's was focused on the urban areas to execute its revolution. While there might have been a level of similarities in the theories of these liberation movements, the PAC and ZANU were to a large extent based on Maoist military approach.

This strategic approach, which Kondlo argues "was imposed from the top, never been debated and the nationalists from the *Pogo* era would not support".²⁸¹ In a document titled *Directive to APLA* delivered at the Moshi conference in 1967, an emphasis was made of the essence of this war strategy and tactics in the fight against the racist apartheid-settler regime. The paper further highlighted combat methods which were to be based on the possibility of initiating the confrontation to force the regime to battle at the APLA's chosen area, to widening the target area, then developing the control of operational forms, and spreading the battle tempo.²⁸² Besides these crucial operational methods, there were other tactics that were adopted by APLA for combat and these included luring the enemy troops away from their bases for APLA guerrillas to attack them at the most unexpected time far from their bases.

²⁸⁰ PAC Archives: Report on the National Executive Committee meeting, Moshi, 1967: 14

²⁸¹ K M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, p 243

²⁸² PAC Archives: MC: Directive to APLA, p. 3.

The latter strategy is different to Houston *et al* schematic acceleration of operations stages, which they argue defined the Chinese revolutionary struggle. Noticeably, the directive document which entailed the '*New Strategy*' was limited about ideological conscientization and mass mobilization, an essential pillar in the Maoist revolutionary strategy. This deficit was augmented when the document was revised in 1978 as the "*New Road of Revolution*". The revised military strategy emphasized the theoretical education of the masses to understand principles of democracy and the meaning of socialism. It also highlighted the contrast between collective property and private property and, most importantly, the role of the masses in revolutions, including that of the individual in society.²⁸³ While there were some differences between the *PAC Directive* and the Maoist military theory, it's imperative to note that the military command structure of APLA and the name itself, together with the principles of APLA's *people's war*, all mirrored the Chinese concept of revolutionary theoretical and strategic military war influences. The influences probably could not have been avoided but be traversed, considering that the Chinese catered for the greater chunk of APLA's military training.

Among the things that the PAC and APLA had to navigate was the theoretical, strategic, and political outlook of the organization, including the pressures of the OAU. Additionally, the political rivalry that was sponsored and exacerbated by the intra-cold war of Sino and Soviet blocks, impacted almost everything regarding the waging of a revolutionary war in South Africa. Vitally, the organization and the army had to circumnavigate its persistent internal leadership conflicts.

A view on Operation Crusade in Villa Peri

The members of the PAC had now regarded themselves as 'sufficiently' trained while hosted by different African countries with the financial assistance of the OAU's Liberation Committee since 1964; leading to 1967, pressure was exerted on liberation movements of Southern Africa, including the PAC to wage war with settler-

²⁸³ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 719

colonial apartheid regimes. By December 1967 a Kinshasa ultimatum against the PAC to infiltrate its forces and fight in South Africa was made, and if this ultimatum was not met, PAC was to be derecognized therefore will not be funded by OAU. On the other continental moves, victory of liberation in Guinea Bissau was achieved and the liberation fighting forces in the Southern African liberation movements were captured by the fervors of the revolutionary forces of Amilcar Cabral in Guinea Bissau. The Soviet supported block of the liberation movements was involved in what I refer to as intra-cold war proxy wars, as we observed in the Wankie-Sipolilo operation of ZAPU that was supported by MK.

Ian Van De Waag, an associate Professor of Military History at Stellenbosch University captures this and argues that both PAC and ANC had seemingly resigned themselves to exile after the Rivonia trial [of 1963], and in the case of the ANC, to be a support for the Zimbabwe African People's Union in its guerrilla campaign in Rhodesia.²⁸⁴ This approach could have been an instruction from the Soviet Union on how the struggle in South Africa must be waged. On the side of the PAC, some of its guerrilla forces insisted that they had acquired sufficient military skills and therefore must be sent back home to fight as this was the sole reason for *skipping* the country in the first place. They felt there was complacency on the side of the political leadership to embark on *any* military operations with the racist-apartheid settler colonial regime.

This insistence sentiment would also engulf the APLA camps from the group of soldiers that joined APLA after 1976 as they were of the view that exile was a phase to acquire military training and then return back home to fight the settler-colonial apartheid government.²⁸⁵ Seemingly, as a result of the pressures by OAU, ZIPRA forces made the first attempt at waging war against the minority rule; John Nankudhu of SWAPO followed and was infiltrated with five other guerrillas in 1965,²⁸⁶ then a

²⁸⁴ I van de Waag, *A Military History of Modern South Africa*, (Johannesburg & Cape Town: Jonathan Ball, 2015), p 265.

²⁸⁵ Telephone interview with Vusumzi Moyo, 21 October 2022

²⁸⁶ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p 201

Luthuli Detachment of the ANC in 1967; then the PAC followed with its two reconnaissance attempts where two guerrilla groups were arrested near Wankie; then a full attempt in July 1968, using an alternative route was taken. The PAC's attempt was known as 'Operation Crusade' and later operation Villa Peri, because of the geographical location where the combat between PAC guerrillas and Portuguese armed forces ensued.

This operation was conducted amid the leadership conflicts, which had characterized and would feature both in PAC and APLA until they 'returned' home to South Africa. The Operation Crusade was the first operation embarked on by PAC fighting forces ever since the organization started navigating exile. According to Vusumzi Moyo, an ex-APLA combatant, "Operation Crusade was distinctive considering that it was the only operation by a liberation movement operation in Southern Africa that intended to fight the war with South African government inside South Africa".²⁸⁷ With the leadership conflicts, and the PAC being pressured with an ultimatum by the OAU to embark on a military operation, PAC 'planned' Operation Crusade to infiltrate twelve guerrillas who were drawn from a Zambia based camp to march from Tanzania to South Africa via Mozambique.

In line with the newly adopted military strategy, influenced by the Chinese, the guerrillas were expected to establish base areas [inside South Africa] and build 'armed people's units' to get ready for the protracted people's war.²⁸⁸ According to Houston *et al*, the guerrillas who embarked on Operation Crusade were taken from Zenkobo Military camp near Livingston in Zambia, where Sipho Phiri, who hailed from KwaZulu Natal, was a camp commander.²⁸⁹ The Mozambique transit is said to have been negotiated and organized in coalition with Mozambique's Revolutionary Committee (COREMO), which was a rival of FRELIMO, and at the time, COREMO was suspected to be in collaboration with Portuguese government by some.

²⁸⁷ Telephone interview with Vusumzi Moyo, 21 October 2022

²⁸⁸ K M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, p 244

²⁸⁹ G. Houston et al, *Military training camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*, p 39

The choice of utilizing the Mozambique route could have been influenced by either the 'strong' relations between the PAC and COREMO, or the unwillingness of Botswana government to assist the liberation forces transit, or it was due to the Sipolilo Campaign which saw seventeen MK troops killed and forty-one ZAPU soldiers captured, even though the Ben Bella doctrine of 1963 believed that Mozambique was the weakest southern African territory under white rule.²⁹⁰ When ZAPU and MK troops embarked on what proved to be a catastrophic operation from Chirundu on the evening of 12-13 July 1968, the PAC guerrillas were on route through Mozambique having their sights set in South Africa. They had initially been guided by COREMO cadres led by a man named *Zindzo* and his armed forces through Villa Peri.

After weeks of walking and passing through villages, with the help of COREMO, they reached Chioko village where Zindzo and his crew left to meet the village Chief and never came back.²⁹¹ With the concern of time and the non-return of the escorts, the PAC guerrillas left the village for a 'safer place' and camped at the Mozambique forest in Chimanimani Mountains; however, they were detected by the Portuguese security army. A military battle of about sixteen hours ensued between the PAC guerrillas and the Portuguese colonial army personnel, with the reinforcement from South Africa.

The South African reinforcement was known as 'Operation Sibasa' and it had about 5000 (SADF) soldiers deployed for ground and air support in the Northern Transvaal countryside.²⁹² When the story of Villa Peri is told in the PAC and APLA circles, it is said that, when the guerrillas were in a fierce battle, they experienced a depletion of ammunition and their commander, Gerald Kondlo, instructed three of his force members to retreat back to Tanzania with the remaining ones holding the fort in the battlefield since he comprehended that they were not going to survive that battle.

²⁹⁰ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 722

²⁹¹ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 724

²⁹² E L. Ntloedibe, *Here is a Tree: A political biography of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe*, (Ga-Rankua: Century-Turn, 1995), p130

The available scholarship records that in the battle, eight guerrillas, including the group commander (Kondlo), died; two others were wounded and eventually got captured, while Enoch Zulu and Zebulon Mokoena escaped and returned to Tanzania.²⁹³

The Johannesburg Star Africa News Service, that reported on the (Villa Peri) operation, mentioned the names of the guerrillas as Gerald Kondlo, the Commander of the group, Samuel Madodana Guma, who was the Political Commissar; Marcus Mogoba, Oscar Ntoni, Moffat Qhasana, and Kholisile Menzeleli, John Twala, Sidney Mbuyazwe, Saki Jake Bele and Enoch Zulu; Zebulon Mokoena and Rankoana More. On the side of the Portuguese forces, it was reported that Antonio Azarias Chicavane, Eusebio Gonclaves Nobre, and Emildo Lopes Nogners were fatally wounded by the guerrillas.²⁹⁴ There is a belief amongst the PAC circles that the two wounded guerrillas *disappeared* under the watch of President Samora Machel's Frelimo government or even COREMO. What is unclear about this opinion when it is made is the link of FRELIMO government to the capture of the PAC cadres. This is with the understanding that Machel's government only took over power in 1976 while the guerrillas were captured in 1968. Bernard Leeman is of the view that Guma, who was captured at the battle, was hanged, while his comrades Markus and Mvuyazo were sent to Pretoria.²⁹⁵

The Operation Crusade has been celebrated as a heroic moment in the PAC's military history, though little is acknowledged of it in the public and collective memory of post-apartheid South Africa's liberation struggle history. This could be because of various reasons which include the lack of recording on the side of PAC, its former APLA combatants, or it is the 'othering' of PAC and APLA as a liberation movement, with an intention to embed that collective amnesia prevails, therefore, proving the 'myths' of liberation solidarity that has been part of official historiography in post-apartheid South Africa.

²⁹³ S Shabalala, "PAC Commemorates the 50 years since the Operation Crusade (1968) in Villa Peri, Mozambique", October 2018

²⁹⁴ These names appear listed in the TRC Report on PAC/Poqo/APLA, p. 14.

²⁹⁵ B Leeman, *Lesotho and the struggle for Azania*, (Pretoria: University of Azania, 1985), p 10

Though the operation was celebrated as a heroic act on the side of Kondlo and his group, some within the PAC, who are ex-APLA combatants, have argued that it was a mistake by the party leadership to launch and allow one of its daring and best combatants to participate in that operation.²⁹⁶ There are those who have also argued that Kondlo was a tenacious character whom when he has resolved on a position, it would be difficult for any other person to persuade him from it. With the upheavals of exile, the matter of the launch of the operation is said to have been discussed by the group that was trained in China before the operation, some in the group did not approve of the operation. Those who disapproved claimed that they did not trust the PAC-COREMO relationship, considering the suspicion of COREMO being collaborating with the Portuguese minority regime. A claim that has not been supported by any tangible evidence. When it was clear that they could not find each other, Kondlo, with the group, proceeded to launch and those who disagreed left the camps to Kenya at UN offices.

The guerrillas who did not approve also suspected PK as creating an environment for the guerrillas to be slaughtered and, if they were to remain in the camps, they feared that they would be subjected to victimization for not going to the 'lion's den'. Whatever the reasons regarding the conversations before the operation, the PAC guerrillas embarked on a significant battle, then inscribed their names in history of Africa's liberation struggle and subsequently 'convinced' the OAU that the PAC deserved the support of the Liberation Committee funding. One can view this as an ultimate sacrifice for the cause with which Kondlo and crew believed. It perhaps should be understood in line with the PAC's motto of serve (service), suffer and sacrifice even though after Villa Peri, most guerrillas, especially those of post'76 generation, had developed a mistrust in the PAC's political leadership.

The mistrust was due to the leadership squabbles and the suspicion of infiltration of the organization. After the operation in Villa Peri, the leadership conflicts between the PAC and its military wing APLA escalated, because some blamed the leadership for the 'failed' home going operation. These, and other disagreements, were

²⁹⁶ K M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, pp 244-245

reported to the OAU, and the funds were later withdrawn. The monetary support withdrawal by the Liberation Committee affected the distribution of funds to military cadres and as a result the conditions in the military camps depreciated even further and the execution of the PAC's armed struggle was disrupted until after 1975.²⁹⁷ John Vorster, the prime minister of South Africa, threatened to invade Zambia if any more liberation forces went through it,²⁹⁸ Portuguese colonial government attacked villages along the border of Zambia.²⁹⁹ And due to these actions, seemingly the Zambian government shivered and closed 'terrorists' military camps. A letter to Winnie Mandela written by Lawrence Makhubu, an ANC member who went in exile in 1963, highlighted the closure and stated, "All PAC and ANC camps in Zambia have been closed and the rank and file members, and some of the leaders, are back in Tanzania".³⁰⁰

According to Professor Kondlo, post the Villa Peri operations, very few APLA assaults were recorded until the mid-1980s and such should be appreciated against the background of internal conflict that dominated the PAC during the period of Leballo leadership.³⁰¹ This however is not historically accurate. There were other home going operations that APLA embarked on during 1978-1979. It should be noted that before the Villa Peri incident, in late 1967, a reconnaissance was conducted along Zambezi River by three PAC guerrillas. However, when they reached Pandamatenga, they were arrested by Botswana police, handed to Gaborone police, and sentenced to two and half years for crossing to Botswana without valid documents and being in possession of arms and ammunition. The Botswana police claimed that they were tipped by Zambian police, who were also tipped by the members of the PAC High Command.³⁰²

²⁹⁷ G. Houston *et al*, *Military training camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*, p 40

²⁹⁸ E L. Ntloedibe, *Here is a Tree: A political biography of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe*, p 130

²⁹⁹ M Nkoana, *Crises in the Revolution*, p79

³⁰⁰ T Simpson, *Umkhonto weSizwe: The ANC's armed struggle*, (Century City: Penguin Random House, 2016), p 167

³⁰¹ K M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, p 247

³⁰² Interview with Zebulon Mokoena by Thami kaPlaatjie

The aspect of operation Villa Peri discussed above does not provide an analysis of the operation and its failures. It is essential therefore to mention in summary some of the challenges that resulted in the operation's failure as they were determined after the operation. This is important to ensure that those who have celebrated Operation Villa Peri as a heroic moment, must equally acknowledge that it had its failures that could have been avoided. Therefore, I argue that operation Villa Peri's failure in general can be attributed to the division of the liberation movements involvement in the geo-political interests of the intra-cold war, secondly the cold war itself, and thirdly, the scrappy planning of the operation.

KaPlaatjie's seminal works identify the divisions of the liberation movements. However, he does not finger the Soviet and Chinese as perpetrators, he says instead, "the ultimate failure of the PAC's Villa Peri Operation and the ANC's Wankie Campaign of 1967, as well as subsequent operations of a similar nature, can be attributed to the political rivalry between liberation movements".³⁰³ While this might be the ultimate reason, it should be noted that there was a problem of planning, leadership conflicts and lack of sufficient ammunition that must be attributed to the failure.

Post Villa Peri, disenchantment in the camps escalated and the supreme leader of the organization PK Leballo was accused of betraying the guerrillas. This could have been due to the frustrations of the members about Leballo's leadership, or it was because of the years of *infiltration* of the PAC, which Leballo was already accused of as a 'spy'. These sentiments were exacerbated by the failures of Villa Peri considering that some within APLA and the PAC had raised concerns about the operation's preparations, execution, and objectives. Mothupi laments about it:

Villa Peri was a misconception from the start on the basis that the leadership of the Party felt left out in the 'spectaculars' of liberation wars that were taking place in Southern Africa at the time. The decision to launch was therefore ill advised. The leadership 'ignorantly' wanted to be part of the fracas even

³⁰³ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 727

though they knew about the Wanki-Sophilile operation that was a disaster in 1967. Additionally, we mentioned to the leadership that we do not have sufficient ammunition for the launch of the operation because the Algerians were only willing to give us arms, but the conundrum was how to infiltrate them inside South Africa. Importantly, we also argued against the Mozambique route as that country was still under Portuguese colonial rule and its borders and those of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) were fortified by SADF. We were of the view that the PAC must rather solidify the efforts of liberation by being involved in the ZAPU-ANC operations that were already taking place so that when they succeed, that would have created an exit corridor for us to enter racist South Africa and wage a people's war. Our proposals were shot down by Leballo and we were accused of being cowards and some of us were even expelled. After my expulsion, I stayed in Kenya, and I oversaw the UN educational programs for liberation movements' scholarships.³⁰⁴

Mothupi provides an understanding that there is another perspective to the story and that the operation was not only viewed as a heroic moment but also as an ill-conceived idea. In the later years, APLA military strategy which was reviewed and re-presented in *The New Road of the Revolution* commented on military lessons which includes Villa Peri; "our struggle must select a number of operational zones and ensure to lay down strong foundation with neighboring people who support the [liberation] struggle so that we have something to rely on when the reactionary forces strike."³⁰⁵ It further stated, we can no longer afford military adventurism, or brief bursts of occasional activity as before since the period of opportunistic experimentation is past and cannot be reconciled with life and death struggle.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁴ Telephone interview with Ezekiel Mothupi on 29 October 2022

³⁰⁵ UFH, Pan- Africanist Congress, PAC non-serial publication, *The New Road to Revolution*. Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, 1975, 14, (1980-1999 and undated)

³⁰⁶ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 729

The bitterness post Villa Peri in the camps manifested themselves in the Ntantala-Leballo squabbles, who were APLA commander and army's Commander in Chief, respectively. Those who sided with Ntantala were in support of "uniting the southern African liberation forces, while also accusing Leballo as a spy; and those for Leballo argued against PK being referred to as an enemy agent".³⁰⁷ These leadership conflicts, scrappy military planning of Villa Peri and mistrusts created a serious setback to the military prospects and operations of the Azanian People's Liberation Army. From 1969 until 1974, no military operations took place and "nothing was happening, but APLA cadres were just kept at Bagamoyo as it was the case with ANC's MK in Morogoro",³⁰⁸ until the arrival of the 'young ones' [referring to 1976 group], the PAC and APLA started to bubble".³⁰⁹

The snooze and resurgence of the 1970's.

The first half of the 1970s decade was indeed a quiet affair regarding APLA military operations, but politically the PAC's duo David Sibeko and Edwin L Makoti succeeded to have the apartheid South African government expelled from the United Nations General Assembly in November 1974. In July of 1975, in an OAU meeting held at Kampala, a document arguing the illegality of South Africa's international status prepared by the PAC was adopted as policy.³¹⁰ These achievements transpired despite the sectarian emergence of the 'authentic six' [badge] which emerged in Khartoum on 20 January 1969 where AAPSO, in a conference named 'First International Conference of Solidarity with the Fighting Peoples of Southern Africa and Portuguese Colonies resolved to recognize and accredit certain organizations as 'representatives of the people'.³¹¹ Such instances and actions where global initiatives were organized to discredit organizations like PAC, raise an enquiry about Prof

³⁰⁷ Interview with Ezekiel Mothupi

³⁰⁸ Interview with Ezekiel Mothupi

³⁰⁹ Interview with Ezekiel Mothupi

³¹⁰ K M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, p 141

³¹¹ A.K Hlongwane, *The Lion of Azania*, p 119

Kondlo's view that the PAC's loss in the 1994 South Africa's elections was because of merely misreading of the political changes in the country and their internal conflicts?

The 1970s were preceded by somber years within the APLA ranks; firstly, they experienced a military defeat in Villa Peri and then there were internal conflicts that resulted in APLA vs APLA shootings at Chunya military camp. According to Mothupi, this shooting was a clash that was not related to the liberation struggle in whatsoever way, but these chaps were shooting each other over personalities.³¹² In the midst of all these upheavals, PAC was involved in international diplomatic politico-relations while APLA's military campaign was experiencing a lull. The PAC diplomatic interactions, including the '*courageous*' story of the Villa Peri operation in addition to the PAC's partnership with Qibla, a South African Muslim guerrilla movement, encouraged Libya to support and provide a military camp to PAC and APLA by 1974.³¹³

The commencement of the 1970s saw APLA military activities, especially operations experiencing a silence, and only military trainings of a modest number of guerrillas was taking place at different military camps, including one in Ingwavuma in northern Natal.³¹⁴ According to Pitika Ntuli, "the base was a top secret operation that was initiated by a comrade known as 'Smeli' with the help of some people in the Swaziland government, and its establishment was catalyzed by murder of KwaMngomezulu princess."³¹⁵ Enock Zulu and Gxekwa were amongst the people who were operating in that camp around 1974.³¹⁶ There was a strong presence of APLA operatives at Ingwavuma who covertly ensured that young recruits leave Swaziland for Lesotho, while also making them to understand that APLA had weapons hidden somewhere.³¹⁷ A small number of APLA recruits were also sent to Libya in July 1974 with reinforcement from Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) members³¹⁸ and the APLA recruits were joined by members who came from the South African Students'

³¹² interview with Ezekiel Mothupi

³¹³ Imam Achmad Cassiem, 'Keynote address: anniversary of the invasion of Iraq', Trafalgar Square London, on 19th March 2005. Found at <http://www.inminds.com/article.php?id=10292>

³¹⁴ A.K Hlongwane, *The Lion of Azania*, p 118

³¹⁵ Telephone interview with Prof Pitika Ntuli, 20 November 2022

³¹⁶ Interview with Ngila Michael Muendane on 6 November 2022 at Pretoria

³¹⁷ Vusi Moyo response to semi-structured research questions, 15 November 2022

³¹⁸ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC in exile*, p 734

Organization (SASO) after they left South Africa after FRELIMO rallies.³¹⁹ The training offered by the Libyan's entailed map reading, the use of automatic weaponry, grenades and mortar bombs.³²⁰

At this time, the PAC political leadership spent much of its time discussing the [guerrilla] route to South Africa with some countries, which at times succeeded but SWAPO of Namibia did not agree to provide [any] access to PAC guerrillas because of the latter's relations with UNITA.³²¹ According to Mothupi, during these discussions, the OAU's Liberation Committee had advised the leadership of the PAC to 'cool' down on the operations to South Africa since it had experienced a serious setback in Villa Peri.³²² Kondlo however is of the view that PAC [military] efforts stalled because of a combination of diplomatic and political factors.³²³ Irrespective of what were the reasons of the stalling of operations, the final analysis provides that the first half of the 1970s found APLA snoozing until the skirmishes of the Viva FRELIMO (or pro-FRELIMO) rallies in 1974 that took place in South Africa resurrected it. These rallies were the outcome of the confrontational protests adopted by SASO and Black People's Convention (BPC), which had been formed in 1972. They influenced the expulsion of young people from universities and sometimes arrests in South Africa, and these led to some young people fleeing the country and being influenced to join military training in exile; it is at that moment that APLA was given a new life from 1975.

According to Julian Brown's understanding of SASO's historiography, it [SASO] was viewed in the context of earlier Africanist organizations in South Africa which are Congress Youth League and PAC.³²⁴ If this understanding is to be adopted, the confrontational characteristics of the 'young ones', as Mothupi refers to the SASO/BPC generation, it was drawn from African nationalists who were close to them and eventually ideologically influenced them. Zephaniah Mothopeng, a PAC stalwart, who

³¹⁹ G. Houston *et al*, *Military training camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*, p 42

³²⁰ A.K Hlongwane, 'Reflections on the Pan Africanist Congress 'Underground' in the era of the 1976 youth uprisings', *Pan African Studies Vol.3 Issue 4*, 2009: p 64

³²¹ K M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, p 247

³²² interview with Ezekiel Mothupi

³²³ K M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, p 247

³²⁴ J Brown, 'An Experiment in Confrontation: The Pro-Frelimo Rallies of 1974', *Journal of Southern African Studies* (38:1). 2012, p 56

had just been released from Robben Island for the 1960 anti-pass campaign, was closely involved with the BCM, and on 15-16 September 1974 he addressed a symposium organized by the BPC in Kajeje Hall, Durban; it is at that event that the viva FRELIMO rallies were proposed.³²⁵ Mothopeng's close proximity to the BCM saw him in 1975 addressing BPC's congress and his words were recorded in *Drum* magazine;

“Shaka was the greatest general Africa has produced, yet today you find the very descendants of Shaka asking Mr. Vorster where the boundaries of his country are. I ask you, how can you ask a foreigner where your country's boundaries are? The audience chanted, “Gatsha must go”.³²⁶

Through these interactions, and the secret Bethal trail of 1978, where Mothopeng was indicted as chief instigator of the 1976 students uprising, it is plausible to confirm Brown's reading of historiography that SASO and BPC were in some way influenced by the confrontational ideas of African nationalist of the Congress Youth League, who later formed PAC in 1959. Muntu Myeza, BPC General Secretary at the time of the viva-FRELIMO rallies, and Sath Cooper both of BPC epitomized the confrontational rhetoric and said, “we want to see them [apartheid police] shooting at us... this is an act of warfare and we must retaliate in a like manner”.³²⁷ The latter statement would engulf APLA camps post 1977, as the ‘young ones’ wanted to *retaliate* by going back home and engage in military fight against the apartheid regime. This was not to come to any fruition as many of them left the camps to settle abroad and find other careers, while others got *blunted* and remained idling soldiers in various APLA camps.

The mobilization of the Black Consciousness Movement from 1970 gave rise to the 1976 junior secondary and high school students uprising, where black students were infuriated by the decision that several subjects, inclusive of Mathematics, Biology and Geography, were to be taught in Afrikaans.³²⁸ The 1976 student uprising meant

³²⁵ A.K Hlongwane, *The Lion of Azania*, p 71

³²⁶ Z Mothopeng, ‘The Whites, by Blacks’, *Drum*, 8 November 1974

³²⁷ M Lobban, *White Man's Justice: South African Political Trials in the Black Consciousness Era*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press: 1996), pp 41-42

³²⁸ T.J. Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, (Johannesburg: Ziabale Publisher: 2021), p 16

that the years' examination was aborted and the new date for writing these exams was rescheduled for March 1977 by the government.³²⁹ Lucky Moeketsi, who was supposed to write matric supplementary exams in June 1976, later joined APLA in December 1976, was amongst the students who were affected by the aborted exams.³³⁰

Moeketsi reflects, up until that year, he was not politically conscious and was only politically enlightened by his former Orlando West High school History teacher, Jackie Selebi, who was expelled from the University of the North (Turfloop) for the viva FRELIMO rally in 1974.³³¹ At the time of these domestic developments inside South Africa, the liberation movements in exile seem like they had no insight of the confrontational posture and its SASO-BPC mobilization. On the side of the PAC, only the internal mission (*underground*), with the help of Zephania Mothopeng and other former Robben Island prisoners, were in the '*heart*' of things. This limited contact between these structures was as a result of internal conflicts of exile leadership or the *underground* structures mistrust of the exile leadership.

It is for this reason that when *the young ones* fled South Africa for exile to source military training. The PAC and ANC military wings were caught by surprise. However, they did all they could with the meagre resources to accommodate the arriving students. While Mothopeng was in the centre of the SASO-BPC mobilization, other PAC veterans like John Ganya, Mama Elizabeth Komikie Gumede and Dr Naboath Ntshuntsha were also involved in the underground activities and helped recruit and guided students towards PAC armed wing after the 1976 students' uprising.³³² Moeketsi, whose combat name was Conty Chauke, states that about 100 'non-

³²⁹ S Mkhabela, "Action and Fire in Soweto, June 1976" in A. Heffernan and N Nieftagodien (ed), *Students Must Rise: Youth Struggle in South Africa Before and Beyond Soweto '76* (Johannesburg: Wits university press, 2016) p 63

³³⁰ Interview with Lucky Moeketsi in Pretoria, 08 November 2022.

³³¹ Moeketsi, 08 November 2022

³³² T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 30

politically' affiliated young people left Swaziland to Tanzania. Moeketsi outlines the travelling logistics, and he speaks:

Swati officials and the United Nations refugee office took photos of us the whole hundred at UN offices for the purposes of refugee statuses passports. We were then issued with the passports and on 3rd December 1976, in my group which included my former classmates William Nkonyeni, Reggie Khumalo and Paul Mohlothlo we departed from Swaziland and stopped in Mozambique then straight to Tanzania. Upon arrival in Tanzania, we were welcomed by two people who introduced themselves as Templeton Ntantala and Mboco. I only knew later that Ntantala was the commander of APLA.³³³

Teboho Lebakeng, a sociologist and a Professor in Security Studies, captures his journey to exile:

On 16 October 1976, one month and sixteen days after my eighteenth birthday, myself, Hosea 'Baros' Mohammed, Samuel Kometsi and a cousin of Baros we headed to the Swaziland border through Eastern Transvaal (Mpumalanga). We had no passports, and we were going to cross the border fence illegally, so the car we were driving with dropped us off a few kilometers away from Oshoek border and we walked hastily in the still of the night to Swaziland. Having successfully crossed to Swaziland, at sunrise we were discovered by the Swazi patrol car, and we were taken to Manzini, then to Mdtshane Correctional Centre in Mbabane, a centre that was cleared of prisoners and was being used as transit area. We stayed for six weeks in Swaziland, and about fifty of us we flew out on a chartered plane to Tanzania via Mozambique and arrived in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in early December 1976,³³⁴

This influx of the 1976 generation brought a bubble into APLA though it was caught by surprise, and the 'old timers' were probably very delighted to see *the young ones*

³³³ Interview with Moeketsi, 08 November 2022

³³⁴ T.J. Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, pp 26-27

bringing a new degree of impetus in the liberation struggle. Lebakeng writes of the lack of anticipation by PAC to receive such a high number of youths and says; “within a very short space of time, it became clear that the PAC (and stories from colleagues who joined the ANC pointed to the same) was caught literally napping”.³³⁵ Napping in the sense that they had not anticipated the unending incoming stream of young people coming from South Africa. In May 1977, a group of about seventy arrived in Tanzania, and subsequent to those, further new arrivals pitched up which resulted in the camps deplorable conditions.

The group that arrived in December 1976 was placed and housed at the Zanzibar hotel and a certain Dr. Khulu Mbata, who also travelled to Tanzania with the group, ‘disappeared from the PAC house and went to ANC camps’. “I asked him about his disappearance when we had returned from exile, he told me that he knew that he was going to the ANC camps however he could not share that detail with us”, remembers Moeketsi. Considering that most of those who were arriving in Tanzania had scanty clothing, they would be provided with bales of clothes to choose from although the size was not always the exact fit for a person, these came in very handy. The clothes were mainly donated by American and European sympathizers of the struggle, and they were fondly referred to as ‘*umphando*’.

The second half of the year promised to be a revitalization of APLA with the arrival of the *young ones* who were impatient, angry and in haste to receive military training, then go back home to fight the ‘enemy’. The group that was initially staying at Zanzibar hotel was then placed in PAC hired house in Manzese suburbs and at these new abodes, they were able to cook for themselves, a different life than that of at the Zanzibar hotel, where they were eating bread and milk three times a day. These new recruits were scattered at different houses, and a specific group of four recruits, Brian and Cedrick Masters, Teboho Lebakeng and Mpazamo Yonana all stayed at Kinondoni, spent much of their time discussing politics.³³⁶ According to Moeketsi, at all the time they were in these houses, they were agitated and militant, however some

³³⁵ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 30

³³⁶ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 35

of their militancy, he argues, was not politically and ideologically channeled. PAC leaders addressed us at times and asked for patience as they claimed they were organizing training in other countries.³³⁷ During the period while we were awaiting training, John Ganya was the one influencing the *young ones* to put pressure on the leadership to provide training and let them go back home and fight.

This influence was received with ease by our group; alludes Moeketsi because we saw the theory of “the politics leading the gun” as a delay and that the political classes were not viewed as a primary necessity. It was only later in my political life that I realized the importance of being politically and ideologically grounded, but at the time of my arrival in Tanzania, “it was all about gun, gun and gun”.³³⁸ In Tanzania at the time, APLA had Itumbi camp located in the line of Chunya and Mgagao which was in the cold mountains of Iringa.³³⁹ Due to its area of location which was in the centre of a tropical veld forest, Mgagao which was a town compared to Itumbi was infested with tsetse flies³⁴⁰ including jigger fleas which deposited worms under the skin of its victims.³⁴¹ Itumbi was a small scale military camp which consisted of red-brick building in the middle of the forest, with tents pitched near the building and there was a parade ground which was in front of the building nicknamed ‘Calton Centre’.³⁴²

The ‘international’ Eastern bloc of the communist world came through for the PAC’s military campaign in 1977 when China, Nigeria, and Kampuchea, officially known as Democratic Kampuchea at the time offered training to APLA cadres. “We the agitated ones”, remembers Moeketsi, “were encouraged and felt that finally things were finally moving”. The ‘good’ news of early 1977 coincided with the group of Libya trained cadres who came from Mbeya to confront and demand from PK a plan to go home since they were now ‘sufficiently’ trained. The repeat of the Operation Villa Peri spirit had engulfed these cadres. Moeketsi says, PK called on these APLA soldiers Fanyafuthi, Tanzanian Defence force, a rough group which can be compared to South

³³⁷ Moeketsi, Pretoria 08 November 2022

³³⁸ Moeketsi 8 November 2022

³³⁹ Houston *et al*, *Military training camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*, p36

³⁴⁰ Interview with Vuyani Mngaza, Koloni village (eQonce) 04 July 2022

³⁴¹ L Mphahlele, *Child of this Soil: My life as a Freedom Fighter*, (Johannesburg, Mwalimu Books: 2000), p 100

³⁴² Houston *et al*, *Military training camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*, p 46

Africa Police Service's *amabherethe*. Fanyafuthi arrested the trained cadres, including us the new recruits who knew nothing about what was happening.³⁴³ After a week, they were released, and this incident forced the military leadership to quicken further training hopefully with an intention to get rid of the 'problematic youthful' soldiers.

In between the period of the occurrences in Tanzania, the community located in the Swazi-South Africa border was benefitting from APLA guerrilla's military instruction program.³⁴⁴ With the internal strife prevalent in Tanzania, other guerrillas outside that country were implementing the people's war strategy in the quest for the attainment of liberation struggle objectives. Unfortunately, the instructors who were leading the program with the Mngomezulu tribe were later captured by the South African police resulting in the sudden stop of the program.³⁴⁵ In March 1977, about twenty-five members were seconded for military training in China. They departed from Tanzania around March 1977 and they were led by Zebulon Mokoena who had extensive military training from other countries before.³⁴⁶

After their departure, a group of female recruits, including Diana Thamage (Kibodya), Judith Masebe and others were also preparing to depart to Uganda for training.³⁴⁷ Another group which was bigger in number was sent to Libya. It included Hosea Mohamme. And upon the return of the Mokoena group, a group led by Sabelo Phama boarded the one Ethiopia airways flight with Ezrom Mokgakala, led recruits to China and Kampuchea respectively.³⁴⁸ The two groups left Tanzania in the early days of August 1977, flew to Beijing, and was accommodated at Beijing Hotel. According to Lebakeng, after a few days, the group which was led by Mokgakala was then transferred to Guangzhou province and they received orientation and preparation as the environment they were going to in Kampuchea was treacherous.³⁴⁹ The APLA trainees were given privilege treatment by the People's Republic of China government

³⁴³ Interview with Moeketsi, Pretoria 08 November 2022

³⁴⁴ K Kondlo, *In the twilight of the Revolution*, p 247

³⁴⁵ K Kondlo, *In the twilight of the Revolution*, p 247

³⁴⁶ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 35

³⁴⁷ Interview with Teboho J Lebakeng, [#APLA@60 Anniversary episode 5 with Teboho J Lebakeng Ph.D. An ex-APLA operative trained in China](#), Pretoria: 05 October 2021

³⁴⁸ Interview with Sgubhu Dube, Tembisa 17 November 2022

³⁴⁹ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 36

and in between their military training, they were touring historic sites, including going for a viewing of the embalmed remains of Chairman Mao-Tse Tung.³⁵⁰

Phama's group returned from China in the middle of October or around beginning of November 1977 equipped with skills of manufacturing home-made explosives, infantry military training, military intelligence and counter-intelligence,³⁵¹ and without wasting time, he was involved in the Home-going program to South Africa. This movement and organization for military training by military High Command saw another group of recruits travelling to Libya late in 1977 and it is in this group of over ninety recruits, including the Qibla cadres, Lucky 'Conty Chauke' Moeketsi was part of.³⁵² Upon Phama group's arrival at Dar es Salaam, Lebakeng remembers that there was a serious pressure from the Zebulon Mokoena's group that left for China in March 1977 as it was pushing the PAC and APLA leadership for a Home-Going program.

During this period, there was a sense of revival of APLA and its operations, and the various countries' military training lit the spark in the PAC military cadres. This reflected from 1978 when about twenty-five APLA cadres infiltrated back into South Africa to prepare the way for what I refer to as the 'great storm'; the espoused people's war. In conjunction with the revival of APLA and its operations re-occurring, a tense atmosphere had engulfed PAC leadership houses in Dar es Salaam on the return of the Phama group from China and it was claimed that the cause was the two 'main' protagonists, Leballo and Ntantala. This intra-leadership conflict so created splits amongst the recruits, soldiers, and members of the organization. It surely provided a conducive environment for enemy agents, spies and collaborators, including *askaris* ³⁵³ to flourish. In Dar es Salaam, there was a new phenomenon of categorization of people into the Soweto boys, *young ones*, and the Xhosa's, which

³⁵⁰ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 38

³⁵¹ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p35

³⁵² Moeketsi, Pretoria 08 November 2022

³⁵³ South African historical: a member of the liberation movement who changed side and worked with the apartheid government and security force.

lead to a situation where those who were lodging in Dar es Salaam [houses] to literally sleep with knives under the pillows.³⁵⁴

Considering that this dissertation has shown that PAC leadership had developed networks to facilitate military training for its recruits, in the later part of 1977 another APLA recruits cohort was sent to Libya for a six-month military training. Moeketsi traces these expeditious arrangements on the confrontation conducted by the cadres who were camping in Mbeya. These cadres, he says were the first group to be trained in Libya around 1974 and 1975. In the confrontation deed they demanded from the Central Committee to show the plan of how to return home the trained guerrillas. “It is then that the two propagandists, PK and Elias Ntloedibe called police on them”.³⁵⁵

As a result of pressure exerted by the young ones and raising critical questions about the lifestyle of the military High Command, an instruction that an infiltration program was to be embarked on in 1978. The infiltration was to be of twenty-five APLA cadres and it was initially intended for February 1978, and it was to be conducted by a mixture of cadres trained both in China and Libya. It was however postponed due to the premature death of the PAC President Mangaliso Sobukwe on 5th February 1978 at his banished town Kimberly. To pay deference to the much-revered leader of the organization, the operation was then delayed and was only embarked on in March 1978. According to Lebakeng,

the group consisted of Mthunzi Mazibuko, Kenneth Mkhwanazi, Sabelo Phama (Victor Gqwetha) and Tshepiso Gumede, Daniel Mofokeng (Romero Daniels), Xola Mketi, Mawethu Vitshima, Synod Madlebe and Mack Mboya, Teboho (Tongogara) Lebakeng, Philemon Nki, Steve Khumalo, Sello Mosikidi and Knox Thusi. With the group, we were driven by Thuli Justice ‘Majase’ Nkonyane to Gaborone, Botswana, and we stayed there for about four months, however I am not sure when did we depart Botswana, but I know by December 1978, we were inside the

³⁵⁴ Interview with Lebakeng, 05 October 2021

³⁵⁵ Moeketsi, Pretoria 08 November 2022

country [South Africa]. It should be noted that while Sabelo was with us in this group, he had already embarked on another mission to enter the country with comrade Tshepiso Gumede earlier in the year. While many might have assumed that there were no APLA guerrillas infiltrating into the country until our big group, which was not the case, there were cadres coming in and out of the country before us. When we arrived in South Africa, I, with Mthunzi Mazibuko and Kenneth Mkhwanazi, went to Soweto. Dan Mofokeng was to operate in the Free State and Sabelo with his crew were to go in the Transkei.³⁵⁶

In Botswana the group was split, and nine of the group was stationed in the Kweneng district not for military camping but for conducting intelligence operations, considering that the Botswana government was not supportive of ‘terrorists’. According to Lebakeng, a further ten APLA cadres arrived in Mmopane village in Kweneng district, but the Botswana intelligence detected them and argued that these operatives threatened their national security then it was agreed that they return to Tanzania.³⁵⁷

A few months later, after APLA cadres conducted reconnaissance from Botswana, it was realized that there was no clear coordinated plan from APLA high command on how the re-infiltration was to be conducted but instead there was a concerted effort by ‘some’ in the military high command to “mop up from the camp the perceived trouble makers”.³⁵⁸ These ‘*perceptions*’ from both the cadres and the military command are what Professor Kondlo terms ‘the internal enemy syndrome’, which is the belief that the enemy existed within the organization.³⁵⁹ Understandably, the hosting (Botswana) government was becoming uneasy with APLA cadres staying long in their country, considering that the South African government was viciously raiding the nearby states, an operation introduced by PW Botha known as counterinsurgency programme.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁶ Telephone Interview with Teboho J Lebakeng on 14 November 2022

³⁵⁷ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, pp 50-51

³⁵⁸ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 49

³⁵⁹ K Kondlo, *In the twilight of the Revolution*, p 118

³⁶⁰ van de Waag, *A Military History of Modern South Africa*, p 269

At the same time, there was an increasing suspicion of betrayal against Botswana government from the cadres. It is unclear what prompted this doubt, it could have been because of the reconnaissance conducted by Tshepiso Gumede and Justice Nkonyane, or it was a guerrilla intuition. That as it may, there is limited evidence of any action on the side of Botswana government that could ascertain the potential betrayal. The two cadres, notwithstanding that they had limited operational tools for any military combat, including their understanding of what were the real reasons for them being sent to the home front, they were “consciously trying to prove that they were worthy and consummate assailants” who converted the mainly intelligence operations into creating cells for (other) comrades to be brought into the country (South Africa).³⁶¹

The group decided to continue the journey to South Africa armed with merely hand grenades because Leballo, the PAC leader, and David Sibeko, the PAC’s Director of Foreign Affairs stationed in New York, claimed there was no money to buy ammunition. The procurement proposal, according to Lebakeng, came because of the ZIPRA forces who wanted to sell their arms, considering that they were in the eve of independence.³⁶² Amongst the APLA cadres who infiltrated was Philemon Nki, who was later discovered that he was a policeman working for the inhuman instinctive and impulsive apartheid Security Branch. This operation was amongst the many infiltrations that were successfully conducted in the liberation movements. Through the Ramatlabama border, the cadres entered South Africa, Lebakeng states,

We all spent the night in Mamelodi, then moved to Mabopane, and then to Meadowlands, which was a transit point. I parted ways with Tshepiso Gumede as he was to join Sabelo Phama to Transkei but instead went to Soweto. We spread out inside the country into smaller cells [as it was the tradition of PAC underground operations] considering that we were alive to the possibility that if one of the comrades were to be arrested, they would be tortured and might end up revealing the whereabouts of others. I

³⁶¹ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 49

³⁶² T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 52

stationed at Zastron, Dan Mofokeng somewhere in the Free State and Sabelo and his crew in Transkei.³⁶³

With the success of APLA cadres clandestinely entering South Africa, J.T Kruger, who was Minister of Justice, announced on the radio that there are APLA operatives spread throughout the country to conduct insurgency campaigns against Pretoria and they have named their operations 'Homecoming' and 'Curtain Raiser'.³⁶⁴ This led to a serious manhunt for APLA operatives, resulting in Kenneth Mkhwanazi being murdered by the Security Branch in an encounter that took place on 13 December 1978 at Zone 6 Diepkloof,³⁶⁵ Mofokeng and Lebakeng escaped back to Botswana, while Gumede and Nkonyane got captured.

In 1979 Sabelo Phama (Victor Gqwetha), Synod Madlebe, Xola Mketi, Mack Mboya and Mawethu Vitshima, who were operating in the Transkei area, were subsequently arrested by the Transkei government.³⁶⁶ This brought a halt to another APLA operation that was conducted by its cadres amid a troubled exile and organization without the proper plan and coordination by the military High Command. Those who managed to escape back to Botswana after the ordeal, not much they could say amongst themselves other than to simply say, "we did the best under the circumstances".³⁶⁷ Phama-Gqwetha and some cadres subsequently escaped from Transkei prison to Lesotho where they met a group of recruits who were sent from Ingwavuma base to Lesotho. Moyo remembers the meeting and says, "Phama-Gqwetha and other comrades introduced us to People's War theory and told us if things do not go well for a transition to Tanzania, we were going to be trained in Lesotho".³⁶⁸

Humility, Patience, and Resilience: APLA cadres in Kampuchea

³⁶³ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, pp 56-57

³⁶⁴ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 57

³⁶⁵ Interview with Teboho J Lebakeng, 05 October 2021

³⁶⁶ K Kondlo, *In the twilight of the Revolution*, p 247

³⁶⁷ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 66

³⁶⁸ Vusi Moyo interview, Johannesburg, 15 November 2022

Kampuchea, as it was with Mozambique, had just received its independence in 1975, during the intra-cold war which resulted in Sino-Soviet split, and was on the side of China while Mozambique was in the USSR bloc. Beijing had cordial relations with the PAC, which resulted in over forty APLA cadres travelling to China with twenty-two of them heading to Kampuchea, in Cambodia, for military training. In June 1977, these cadres boarded an Ethiopian airline plane from Tanzania for China, and the group to Khmer Rouge-ruled Kampuchea was under the leadership of Ezrom Mkgakala, it spent some weeks in China before continuing to Kampuchea.³⁶⁹ Among the Kampuchea destined cadres was Troy Msimang, Sgubhu Dube, and Chris Mbulawa. They stayed in China for a few weeks because they were being orientated about the Kampuchea environment regarding its war and what they should expect. According to Sgubhu Dube, an additional reason was that the schedule of flights between Beijing and Kampuchea had a 14-day interval and they had just missed one by a few hours.³⁷⁰

In China, the APLA cadres were received by Central Committee CCP with Deng Xiaping, the paramount leader present. This act displayed the significance that Beijing bestowed on APLA, PAC and the struggle for liberation in South Africa. The Ethiopian airplane to China had two mechanical problems and Sgubhu ordered a lot of alcohol as he thought he was going to die. "I thought it is better to die drunk than to drown in the Indian ocean while in full consciousness", he remembered.³⁷¹ The Chinese treated the cadres with dignity and granted them a very important status in the touring of the country. At some point, they were made to skip the line European tourists were in, something that they have experienced happening the other way in their own country of birth. In Kampuchea, they found the country still war torn and when the plane was in a taxiing, it had to navigate through and in between the rubble. Sgubhu, who became the deputy commander of the group, observed that the place was very hot even more than Tanzania. He tells of their arrival:

When we landed at the airport at around breakfast time, the temperature was already 40 degrees Celsius and the war machines were still on the ground. We

³⁶⁹ Houston et al, *Military training camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*, p 34

³⁷⁰ Interview with Sgubhu Dube, 17 November 2022

³⁷¹ Ibid.,

were driven on Jeep vehicles, three cadres with the Kampuchea driver in each vehicle and went to Phnom Penh suburbs where we were lodged at a duplex building house. Then, we were given a full briefing through an interpreter since they spoke mainly French and Kampuchea. A number aspects were mentioned during the briefing which stuck in my consciousness, and they were that the apartheid regime army is complex and powerful and therefore liberation fighters must learn to rely on themselves not on the Chinese, Kampuchians or anybody for their success.³⁷²

Training was started by the Kampuchean peasant instructor with Mokgalaka as leader of the trainees, and the first obstacle was to learn the language.³⁷³ The next phase of the training involved learning to be humble, patient and persevering. This was a personality development programme useful in instances of conducting military intelligence reconnaissance. This programme involved lessons on feeding domestic animals like pigs, chicken and goats and plant the pastures. The personality development program was a semester programme which was followed by a training in rudimentary military methods, and it involved knowing how to develop booby traps using sharpened tree branches and sticks.

This method, Dube says, was to be employed to secure the periphery of the guerrilla's location to ensure that no unwanted person/s gets closer to them in a combat zone. While training was in full swing, PAC leadership, Central Committee and military High Command initiated a conference which was to be held in Arusha, Tanzania, in 1978. This would become a watershed moment but also a sad moment in the history of PAC and APLA. It was at this conference that several cadres were dismissed and that a split organization emerged.

Mokgakala, the leader of the cadres training in Kampuchea had to attend the conference. He flew to Dar es Salaam, but he never returned to Kampuchea. It was after these stages that APLA trainees were trained in modern military tactics, which included the utilization and operation of firearm pistols, launching of bazookas and

³⁷² Interview with Sgubhu Dube, 17 November 2022

³⁷³ Houston et al, *Military training camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa*, p 36

other 'explosive devices. One member of the group recalls; “when we were about to resume with the heavy artillery training like tanks, airplanes and helicopters operating, the Vietnamese invaded Kampuchea and we had to evacuate from the city to the countryside with an intention of reaching the Thailand border as the country was in the middle of a severe war similar to that happening in Ukraine and Russia today”.³⁷⁴ The training of the cadres was therefore aborted and they had to flee for their lives since Pnom Penh was invaded.

APLA cadres found themselves in the middle of an intra-cold war that was launched by the Vietnamese forces on 25 December 1978 to force out Pol Pot's Khmers Rouge regime from its seat of power in Pnom Penh.³⁷⁵ When telling the story of the invasion, APLA cadres say, when the assault was approaching the city, they were updated by their instructors of the war developments, however, they were reprimanded from participated in it. The hosts firmly informed the APLA cadres that it was not their war but Kampuchean. The cause of Vietnamese's invasion includes, among others, imperial ambitions of Vietnam's elite leadership but also their foreign relations policy which aligned to the USSR bloc.³⁷⁶ According to Mphahlele, at the time of the invasion, the Vietnamese were bank rolled by Soviet Union in the war.³⁷⁷

The invasion prompted the APLA cadres to depart from Pnom Penh to Thailand. They were put in a bus, and transported to the envisaged destination, Kampuchean civilians were equally evacuating the city and moved towards Thailand. Mphahlele describes the situation as “Vietnamese planes rained bombs on the fleeing columns of marchers”.³⁷⁸ In the bus, the cadres were still armed, and their pistols, grenades and rounds were only confiscated by the Thailand border patrol and army officers. Dube, the acting commander of the group, explains their ordeal which included them walking through mountains and the crossing of many rivers:

³⁷⁴ WhatsApp message response from Chris Mbulawa, 20 November 2022

³⁷⁵ S J Morris, *Why Vietnam invaded Cambodia: Political Culture and Causes of War*, (Stanford CA, Stanford University Press: 1999), p 4

³⁷⁶ S J Morris, *Why Vietnam invaded Cambodia*, p6 & p16

³⁷⁷ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p 77

³⁷⁸ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p 77

The roads were congested, and the bus we were riding on was intercepted about 100 kilometers from the border by the MiG fighter jets and we had to alight and mix with the civilians. Seemingly the MiG fighters were only threatening us since we were within the masses. We walked with the help of the Kampucheans until we were intercepted again and we opted for another detour, now to the mountains. From the detour, we walked for five days to get back to the national road and about 15 kilometers from the border, we were intercepted again and we had to slide back, take another detour which costed us another ten days. In the ordeal, our food supply depleted and we ended up eating bamboo shoots and catch fishes at the nearby rivers. We began to experience sickness but we marched on until we reached Thailand border. At the border, we were screened, at first the border officials thought we were American citizens that were captured by Kampucheans but after one of the instructors who was amongst the people, informed the commanding officer, a Lieutenant General from Thailand, that we were liberation fighters from South Africa; we were then placed in a make shift tents for months. The Thailand authorities arranged for us passports, we were then taken to the airport clothed in white shirts, grey pants and sneakers like school kids. We arrived in Dar es Salaam in 1981 to the news that gave us the shock of our lives.³⁷⁹

The end of the traumatic episode of Kampuchean military training opened up other difficult and interesting experiences for the cadres. With the experiences of the two and half years in Kampuchea, they state that they felt privileged and thankful for the knowledge. Their resolve to entrench themselves in the Azanian liberation struggle was further influenced by the type of independence and independence celebrations they witnessed in Kampuchea. “South Africa’s 1994, was a child’s play in comparison to what we witnessed in south Asia”, said Dube.³⁸⁰

On their return in 1981, the Kampuchea trained cadres arrived in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and were received by Central Command member Joe Mkhwanazi

³⁷⁹ Interview with Sgubhu Dube, 17 November 2022

³⁸⁰ Interview with Sgubhu Dube, 17 November 2022

at the airport. Mkhwanazi informed the cadres of the reasons Mokgakala could not return to Kampuchea. According to Dube, at this time, they met new people who had come for military training and Mkhwanazi gave them a 'full briefing' of the Arusha conference. The briefing on the 1978 Arusha conference entailed that there was no longer APLA since the camps were now 'officially' closed; secondly, cadres who disregarded the 'closure' of the military camps were fewer as others left, and lastly, there was a new leadership of the army. Bongani Nkomo, one among the Kampuchea trained cadres, on receiving the update "became irate and insane".³⁸¹

During the period when the different groups of cadres were trainees in Kampuchea, in Uganda, Libya and Nigeria, developments inside the PAC and APLA in Tanzania were calamitous as they ranged from the murder of David Sibeko in Dar es Salaam, the execution of cadres by the Tanzania army forces, the expulsions and resignation of some members and cadres moved to other countries due to the Arusha conference decisions, the split of PAC and APLA resulting in most members who were in the military High Command establishing the Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP) and the dethroning of P.K. Leballo as leader of PAC. While the beginning of the decade resumed with quietness inside APLA, it concluded with a lot of turbulence. In that conundrum, the human spirit and courage epitomized by the cadres triumphed despite the circumstances. The goal was always to ensure that the 'great storm' of the liberation struggle does not subside.

In the shadows of 'a tyrant': APLA Female cadres 'grappling' with Uganda: 1978-1979

In the majority of South Africa's post-apartheid liberation historiography and public history, the stories of women guerrillas tend to be footnotes of men's story. A thorough research focused on such stories needs to be embarked on, and if there is any available, it needs to be improved. The history of APLA will not be sufficient if it

³⁸¹ Interview with Sgubhu Dube, 17 November 2022

does not consider its female cadres. This segment of the thesis seeks to highlight one of the many APLA cadres' stories with specific focus on female combatants. Far from being an exhaustive account of the entirety of APLA's female cadres, this section focuses on the twelve Azanian guerrilla women who were 'close' to the shadow of General Idi Amin, the then President of Uganda. Amin has been characterized extensively in historic text, with this, we might appreciate a different Amin from that of an 'image of evil' in his performance amid the Azania female combatants during their basic military and nursing training.

During the resurgence developments of PAC military activities, and the influx of students from South Africa to Dar es Salaam between 1975 and 1978, PAC leadership and its military High Command forged ties with Uganda's Idi Amin Dada. These resulted in a group consisting of twelve female recruits being flown to Idi Amin's Uganda for basic military and nursing training in 1978. Amin was a Ugandan army general who had taken control of the government from a civilian dictator, Milton Obote, on 25 January 1971. According to Jamison Martin, Amin's rule was characterized by the vanishing of people.³⁸² Alicia Decker, in the book titled *In Idi Amin's Shadow: Women Gender and Militarism in Uganda*, says women had a "complex and sometimes paradoxical relationship to Amin's military state".³⁸³ This was as a result of the use of violence by Amin's soldiers, which offered opportunities as well as threats for women.³⁸⁴

A British writer, Dennis Hills, described Amin as a 'village tyrant', while Mark Leopold depicted Amin as a 'Hitler like monster'.³⁸⁵ Henry Kyemba, a former Minister of Health in Amin administration, described his former boss as a person who had other countless women who bore him children.... He further states that Amin regarded his sexual energy as a sign of his power and authority, therefore did not attempt to hide

³⁸² J Martin, 'Looking back at the 1971 Uganda Coup', Blog on Sources and Methods, 19 April 2021. Found at <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/looking-back-1971-uganda-coup>

³⁸³ A.C Decker, *In Idi Amin's Shadow: Women Gender and Militarism in Uganda*, (Ohio, Ohio University Press: 2014), p 2

³⁸⁴ S Hynd, 'Book Review: In Idi Amin's Shadow: Women, Gender and Militarism in Uganda by Alicia C Decker', 10 July 2015. Found at <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2015/07/10/book-review-in-idi-amins-shadow-women-gender-and-militarism-in-uganda-by-alicia-c-decker/>

³⁸⁵ M Leopold. 'Idi Amin. Icon of Evil', *Journal for postcolonial writing*, 2009. p 252

his lust.³⁸⁶ Some, however, welcomed Amin's takeover of power. Winnie Mugeyi, a woman who experienced the takeover, stated a day after the coup of 24 January 1971, "We were so happy when we heard he had taken over (because) we knew we had gotten a good leader and was adored by people".³⁸⁷ Another example of acceptance is reflected in a letter sent to Rebecca Mulira, the President of Uganda Council of Women, which read, "we as mothers of the nation are happy of your actions and express a profound appreciation to Major General Amin for having liberated us from Dr. Obote's terrorist regime".³⁸⁸ In Amin, as opposed to Obote, several saw a liberator as they perceived him a '*savior of the nation*' when he took over.

The women who would later be victims of the Amin regime, as argued by Decker, initially saw a warrior in Amin. For the duration of the reign of Amin, the understanding of the term warrior developed anew in the academy, with Ali Mazrui giving it a pan-African theoretical expression. In celebrating the 'warrior' Amin, Mazrui described him as "an important sense, a reactivation of the ancestral assertiveness of warrior culture".³⁸⁹ The 'warrior' Amin, who at first claimed he was no politician and would organize free and fair elections soon after he took over, changed the tune a week later and promulgated an Armed Forces Decree which confirmed himself as a military Head of State, Commander In Chief of Uganda armed forces and then established a Defence Council which was responsible for the controlling of the administration of the armed forces.³⁹⁰

The declarations introduced by Amin on assuming power have some resemblance to those of P.K. Leballo of PAC, and it can be argued that the rapport that resulted in the twelve cadres ending up in Uganda for basic military and nursing training was partially influenced by these two men's 'thirst for power'. To ensure the capture and sustenance of their 'powerful' statuses, they 'performed' violent acts in ways that repeated hyper masculine military power and utilized a 'tough guy'

³⁸⁶ H. Kyemba, *A state of blood: the inside story of Idi Amin*, (New York, Ace Book publisher: 1977), p163

³⁸⁷ A.C Decker, In *Idi Amin's Shadow: Women Gender and Militarism in Uganda*, p 40

³⁸⁸ A.C Decker, In *Idi Amin's Shadow: Women Gender and Militarism in Uganda*, p 40

³⁸⁹ A Mazrui, 'The warrior tradition and the masculinity of war', in: *Ali A Mazrui ed., the warrior tradition in modern Africa (Leiden 1977)*, p77

³⁹⁰ A.C Decker, In *Idi Amin's Shadow: Women Gender and Militarism in Uganda*, p 41

posturing.³⁹¹ From this indulgence, the reader is petitioned to appreciate the persons fashioning the relationship, their performative environment, and the outlook of the political locality of Uganda as a ‘training ground’ for APLA female cadres.

In January 1978, Joyce Raboroko, Diana Thamage (later Kibodya), Mary Malapane and Caroline Badimo, Tshidi Muendane, Lizzy Ramaoka, Judith Molohe, Lenah Masango with Khensane Mawila, Thoko Mabuza, Rose Mopereo and Zola Ntshuntsha were selected for training in Uganda.³⁹² This was a trail blazing moment for APLA to have female cadres being sent for military training since it was still not a ‘known’ phenomenon in the organization. The patriarchal underpinnings of the post-colonial independent states culture were still rigidly intact as reflected by the actions of ‘forcing’ female recruits and cadres to terminate pregnancies if they were to be known that they are expecting. The underpinnings were entirely evaded as the group had to undergo nursing training as well. In Dar es Salaam at the time, some female cadres are said to have either by choice or cohesion aborted pregnancies under the instruction of some of the members of the military High Command since it was envisioned that soldiers must not have babies. Some female recruits and cadres wrestled the practice and kept their toddlers.

Most of the members in the group of twelve, just like the male cadres that were in Dar es Salaam, were influenced by the viva FRELIMO rally and incidents of 16 June 1976 student uprising. They left South Africa using approximately the same route, had almost the same experiences as their male counterparts and with the same objective and resolve with the male comrades. They were as agitated, energetic, and ready for a military battle even when an opportunity to go to school was proposed, they rejected it on the spot.³⁹³

Sgubhu Dube, an ex-APLA combatant from Soweto, trained in various countries, including Kampuchea, confirms that for them as the ‘76 *generation*’, going back to school was not a primary focus but rather they “wanted to do what FRELIMO

³⁹¹ A.C Decker, In Idi Amin’s Shadow: Women Gender and Militarism in Uganda , p 41

³⁹² WhatsApp message from Diana Thamage-Kibodya

³⁹³ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya, Midrand, 15 November 2022

did to the Portuguese”.³⁹⁴ Thamage-Kibodya remembers that when she, Gabisile, Thonto, Tshidi Muendane, the Mabhece brothers, Sonwabo and Mncedisi left Meadowlands to Swaziland in 1977, they were arrested by the Swazi police but upon their release, they were handed over to the United Nations (UN) refugee camp and were asked to choose between joining the liberation movements or to be arranged for a scholarship; in the *zeitgeist* of 1976, they refused the offer.³⁹⁵ The refusal show the influence of the FRELIMO independence and liberation struggle approach, including the anger of both female and male students at the time.

In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, the number of students flocking in from South Africa was increasing at a rapid pace and by the time Thamage-Kibodya and her group arrived, there were other older female cadres already exiled and the place was overcrowded. The overcrowding manifested in the ‘poor’ habitation state of the camps and the houses organized for the new recruits in Dar es Salaam. In the case of Thamage-Kibodya, on arrival they were placed in a house in Uphanga and she recalls, “we were crowded in one room the four or five of us”.³⁹⁶ Others were distributed amongst the other houses as it was the norm for new arrivals. The conditions of this nature were not unfamiliar to the PAC since their facilities were characterized by “ramshackle logistical systems, inadequate food, and inhabitability”.³⁹⁷ An immediate observation that came to Thamage-Kibodya was the people who left South Africa in their prime years that have now become ‘old’ grown individuals of Dar es Salaam seemingly resigned their hope of ever going home. They kept pleading with the new recruits, whom they called the *young ones*, to be patient upon noticing their zeal and oomph. Mama Wankie and Edith were the example of such old grown South African individuals in the vicinity, however they became ‘mothers’ to most of the female trainees in Dar es Salaam. They taught the young women recruits how to navigate in Dar es Salaam as most of them could not even communicate in Kiswahili. The patience that the older exiles were seeking from the

³⁹⁴ Interview with Sgubhu Dube, Tembisa, 17 November 2022

³⁹⁵ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya, Midrand, 15 November 2022

³⁹⁶ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya, Midrand, 15 November 2022

³⁹⁷ T Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, (Johannesburg, Ravan Press: 1983), p 308

new arrivals was not available, Diana Thamage-Kibodya recalls, “the luxury of patience was one thing we did not have, we wanted to train and go back home to fight the Boers”.³⁹⁸

One afternoon, the twelve were informed that that they will be leaving the following day for military and nursing care training in Uganda and they were excited of the news, considering that they were finally going to learn how to carry guns. For some of them their selection over the older cadres who were even closer to the Central Committee members was peculiar.³⁹⁹ Some wondered whether them being selected was due to their feistiness which they presented towards the High Command or even to the male cadres who would attempt to take advantage of the female cadres.⁴⁰⁰ Thamage-Kibodya recalls of the lead up, journey and stay in Uganda, she says:

On the day of departure from Dar, we were twelve female cadres with passports organized by the organization with names of people we did not even know. We were so excited and at the airport, I think we were collected by Amin’s soldiers. We left the Kampala airport, however the convoy had to turn back to the airport since Major General Amin wanted to take a picture with the twelve South African freedom fighters. This picture became one of my most treasured souvenirs but also was used as evidence to build an accusation that we were Amin’s wives. Since I was smaller in stature, in the picture I was sitting in between the legs of Amin like a little girl while he posed as a ‘big daddy’ to us.⁴⁰¹

The military training of the female APLA trainees in Uganda was conducted by senior officers at rank level of a Brigadier. Amin is said to have given a stern instruction that no ordinary instructor must conduct these and at times he would be physically present and give some instructions to the trainees. He developed a liking for one of the female cadres and Amin gave her a nickname.⁴⁰² The cadres were given a basic

³⁹⁸ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya

³⁹⁹ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya

⁴⁰⁰ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya

⁴⁰¹ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya, Midrand, 15 November 2022

⁴⁰² WhatsApp response from Kgomotso Matsebe on behalf of her mother Judy Molope; 03 December 2022

military training and some clandestine military approaches. One trick that was offered by Amin was using a handkerchief to strangle and kill a white person. “This is one skill I will never forget from Amin”, said Thamage-Kibodya smiling vividly. Beyond the military training sessions that were conducted by senior officers, there was a basic nursing care training which was part of the programme⁴⁰³ and for relaxations, cadres were treated as special guests, and they stayed at reasonable and elegant hotels at the cost of the Ugandans. The president would invite the cadres for state gala dinner parties and almost all the time, Kibodya says they were expected to travel together as a whole group of twelve.

The regime was known for its brutality and Amin for his love of women and sex, the ‘good’ treatment of the cadres gave a perception that “we are Idi Amin’s wives, which was not true”.⁴⁰⁴ As a trainee, “considering the atrocities which were transpiring in Uganda”, tells Thamage, “I enjoyed my stay in Uganda, in Amin as compared to Leballo who was the chief of our army, I saw what it means to be a real soldier and I was never abused, raped nor attempted to be by Amin or his soldiers during my training in Uganda”. During the training programme, some trainees including Judy Molohe were deployed at hospitals and mental institutions to experience the on-the-job training.⁴⁰⁵

In April 1979, after eight years of Amin’s rule and about twelve months for the APLA cadres in Uganda, the Tanzanian troops, with forces of the Uganda National Liberation Front, invaded and toppled Amin’s regime.⁴⁰⁶ According to Kibodya, just before the demise of the regime, Amin soldiers placed their APLA trainees in one of the middle-class hotels and left them. This could have been during the period when Amin’s soldiers were ‘fleeing’ Kampala to eastern Uganda as reported by Martha Honey in the Washington Post. As the story is told by Thamage-Kibodya, “the Tanzanian and UNLF forces kept on attacking the vicinity around the hotel which they

⁴⁰³ WhatsApp response, Kgomotso Matsebe, 04 December 2022

⁴⁰⁴ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya

⁴⁰⁵ WhatsApp response Kgomotso Matsebe, 04 December 2022

⁴⁰⁶ M Honey, ‘Ugandan Capital Captured’, The Washington Post, 12 April 1979: found at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1979/04/12/ugandan-capital-captured/1eb604a7-5ff0-4c51-9fa0-527169e5bffa/>

were left at by Amin's soldiers, it could be that their intelligence had already informed them of the 'Tanzanian citizens' in the hotel".⁴⁰⁷ They were not precisely Tanzanian citizens, but had Tanzanian passports organized by PAC when they left for Uganda. The ten female APLA cadres were then 'captured' by the new regime, Diana Thamage-Kibodya remembers:

the officer in command (OC) of the arresting team kept insulting us as Idi Amin's wives and produced the photo we took with Amin at the airport the first day we arrived in Uganda. In my feisty attitude, I fought with the OC, and I refused to go to jail. Finally, they succeeded with the arrest, we were detained at Luzira prison in Kampala from 1979 until the beginning of next decade. In detention, APLA High Command and PAC did not initiate our repatriation back to Tanzania or program to go home and fight. Some of us, had planned not to return to Dar es Salaam because we knew there was no coordinated plan that developed in synergy to ensure that we go back to South Africa and fight. We, at least ten of the twelve pleaded with the new regime like we did with Amin to formulate for us a plan to infiltrate occupied Azania. If this would have happened, we would have been the first group to embark on that operation.⁴⁰⁸

The cadres were later released from detention, ten of them registered as civilian refugees with the help of Phillip Kgosana, who at the time was working at the UN, while the other two had already returned to Tanzania. According to Kgomotso Matsebe, as told by her mother Judy Molohe, at the period of demise of Amin's regime, the military and nursing care training had been concluded in January 1979, hence only ten cadres were 'victims' of the coup.⁴⁰⁹ A story that has been told about the ten cadres is that they remained in Uganda because they had established romantic relationships and that the two who returned to Tanzania in January of that year did not have a reason to flirt since they had already such affairs in Dar es Salaam. Matsebe

⁴⁰⁷ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya, Midrand, 15 November 2022

⁴⁰⁸ Interview with Diana Thamage-Kibodya, Midrand, 15 November 2022

⁴⁰⁹ WhatsApp response, Kgomotso Matsebe, 04 December 2022

endorses this, considering that her father and mother were already dating at the time when Judy was completing her military and nursing care training in Uganda.

The toppling of Idi Amin in Uganda coincided with the breaking and expulsion of some members of the High Command in Dar es Salaam, however for the remaining female cadres they had ‘denounced’ their political party status and had developed bitterness against APLA and PAC because the party did not ‘extract’ them from Uganda. According to Thamage, “Uganda deported them back to Tanzania and Ray Phiri, an astute soldier, collected them from the airport, and informed them of the party developments, however at time, we could not care one bit”. On returning to Dar es Salaam, the lives of the twelve APLA cadres who trained in Uganda split in different directions, which saw Thamage-Kibodya going to stay at Tabora and subsequently study journalism which became her life-long career. She later married into the Tanzania family.

The shadow of Idi Amin and what he was accused of became a dark spot in the lives of some of the cadres for years. Subtle stories about what happened during and after their training in Uganda has been interpreted differently in the circles of APLA. What has been prominent in the story of these women is that their story has been omitted in the post-apartheid liberation struggle curation of public and collective memory until this dissertation. . These female cadres were the first group to be sent for military training in the records of APLA. They were a group of young militant cadres who blazed the way for the next seven APLA female combatants to be trained in Libya. Significantly, from the participants who helped in this work, Idi Amin was many things to many people and whatever image one wants to associate him and his regime with, it might be fitting to his rule and him on the basis that it was probably true. Judy Molohe told her kids that Amin was a funny guy who never manifested any ‘images of evil’ towards them as Azanian women liberation fighters.⁴¹⁰

The split: Organization and Army in disarray.

⁴¹⁰ WhatsApp response, Kgomotso Matsebe, 04 December 2022

In November 1978, PAC's leadership infighting had reached a pinnacle by the time a conference was held at Arusha town in Tanzania. Reuters media reported that 150 delegates and 50 observers attended the conference with the hope to reconcile the differences. However, the meeting flared into a knife fight, resulting in some injuries.⁴¹¹ The conference theme titled *Conference for Unity and Progress* and the envisaged conference objectives did not result in the envisaged objectives. Instead, the conference managed to show the resentment and extent of hostilities amongst the organizations' exiled communities that were scattered in different countries. The PAC failed to forge a united way forward and to agree on the official status of the party, with some blaming Leballo for the party's woes, while others identified the disruptions of post-Sharpeville as causes of the organization's harm.⁴¹²

For a certain group of conference delegates, the PAC problems emanated from a '*tribalist*' Templeton Ntantala, while for some it was the 'introduction' of a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology that caused disagreements. With no consensus in sight, the Arusha conference resulted in an expulsion of several cadres from the PAC and APLA. Mngaza remembers about the congress, "we were dismissed by Leballo-Sibeko's group in that conference, and we were given few weeks to leave Dar es Salaam".⁴¹³ According to Kondlo, T.M. Ntantala and the whole APLA High Command, which comprised of experienced cadres, were expelled at the 1978 Arusha conference due to the persistence of a group in the army that was loyal to Leballo.⁴¹⁴ As a result of these expulsions, a triumvirate leadership of P.K Leballo, Vusumuzi Make and David Sibeko took charge of the organization, with Make assigned to lead the army, and the High Command, as a commanding structure was abolished.

The PAC's split was officially confirmed with the establishment of the Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP) on 3 September 1979. The army was not spared

⁴¹¹ Reuters, 'Tanzania: Pan African Congress Of Tanzania (South Africa) Conference Opens', British Pathe, 03 July 1978. Found on <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/VLVA16J5N9GAH7N8HEHTBD5GULQ1Q-TANZANIA-PAN-AFRICAN-CONGRESS-OF-TANZANIA-SOUTH-AFRICA/query/TANZANIA>

⁴¹² M Matabage, 'Almost a revolution'. *Mail & Guardian*, Accessed from <https://mg.co.za/article/2010-03-19-almost-a-revolution/>, 19 March 2010.

⁴¹³ Interview with Mngaza, Koloni, eQonce, 23 March 2022

⁴¹⁴ K M. Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*, p 281

from the division, considering that it was an integral part of the PAC. At the South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, APLA submitted the following regarding the split:

As a result of the[s]e internal disputes, a consultative conference was held in Arusha, Tanzania, in 1978. This conference resulted in the expulsion of over 60 members. The expelled members subsequently formed an organization called the Azanian People's Revolutionary Party (APRP). Despite these expulsions, the organization continued to be unstable.⁴¹⁵

Amongst the expelled members were the PAC veterans Templeton Ntantala, Pitika Ntuli, Mxolisi Mgxashe, Zolile Keke Hamilton, Joe Mkhwanazi, Theo Bidi and Mfanasekhaya Gqobose.⁴¹⁶ Ntantala was the Commander of the PAC armed forces. To APLA guerrillas, the expulsions did not remedy the instable situation, but it intensified the conflict between leadership and cadres, which manifested itself in the death of David Maphumzana Sibeko, a member of the PAC triumvirate, who was murdered by six APLA cadres dispatched from Itumbi military camp.

Sibeko was assassinated in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on the 12 of June 1979, after P.K. Leballo and some of his supporters were expelled.⁴¹⁷ Leballo, the PAC leader had been expelled on 1 May 1979, and the Tanzanian government was instrumental in his expulsion. After Leballo's sacking, things became a bit confused as the triumvirate 'leadership' lost control of the Itumbi Camp, until the Tanzania Defence Force intervened on 11 March 1980 by indiscriminately shooting at certain APLA soldiers leaving four dead and scores injured. Joe Ngwenya, Mbuso Mbatha and Mphoki Mnqinileyo were amongst the deceased, while Xolisa Mkentane was lucky not to catch a bullet.⁴¹⁸ Most of the injured cadres, according to Lebakeng, were taken to Morogoro Medical School to study medical short courses and were later sent to Ruvu. Most of the soldiers resigned themselves to Tabora refugee camp.

⁴¹⁵ APLA submission at Truth and Reconciliation Commission, found on <https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/submit/apla.htm>.

⁴¹⁶ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 53

⁴¹⁷ APLA submission at Truth and Reconciliation Commission,

⁴¹⁸ Kgomotso Matsebe, 04 December 2022

These developments in Tanzania from 1978 until late 1979, obscured significant military arrangements which were planned and put in motion by Pele Sibeko, Lazarus, and Mfundo Njikelwa in Mozambique while they were in Botswana. These three APLA cadres were to negotiate the utilization of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) camps by APLA at a meeting that was to be held in Mozambique. The meeting between Robert Mugabe, Josiah Tongogara and APLA cadres finally occurred, but without the help of PAC's political leadership, and when Pele Sibeko returned to Tanzania with an update to finalize the arrangements for the utilization of ZANLA camps, Lebakeng writes, "the situation in the organization had degenerated due to multiple centers of power".⁴¹⁹ Make, Sibeko and Ntloedibe, the secretary for publicity and information, led the organization concurrently until Sibeko was killed, and Ntloedibe then moved to Botswana. In the years that followed, the PAC and APLA were in disarray due to incoherent military planning, way-forward and conflicts amongst its leaders. It was only after the arrival and election of John Nyathi Pokela as Party leader in 1981 that a semblance of order was restored.

Pokela and the unity initiatives

John Nyathi Pokela was released from prison in January 1980 after serving over twelve years in Robben Island, and he left South Africa for Dar es Salaam to take over the scattered APLA and PAC. After a year, Pokela was appointed the Leader and Chairman of the PAC Central Committee. In his acceptance speech he declared, "I will continue with the work that my old friend, colleague, and comrade in arms, Mangaliso Sobukwe, lived and died for. I will not fail the oppressed and struggling people of my fatherland".⁴²⁰ Through the aid of the Tanzanian government, he reestablished control over the rebellious groupings of APLA, reintegrated the dissenting PAC and APLA faction alienated by the previous leadership, mended diplomatic ties with African governments,⁴²¹ and he succeeded in convincing the

⁴¹⁹ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 54

⁴²⁰ W Ggaji, 'Pokela: 'Leader of the PAC', reprinted from *New African*, July 1981, p 2

⁴²¹ T Lodge & B Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*, (Cape Town, Ford Foundation-David Philip: 1991), p191&193

APRP leadership to rejoin PAC, then he “relieved Edwin Makoti as Secretary of Defence and replaced him with the youthful Sabelo Phama of the Operation Curtain Raiser”.⁴²² In an interview conducted in 1981 after assuming his new responsibility, he argued that he was even surprised by the [positive] response towards the call for unity of the movement.⁴²³ However, the unification process was not entirely accepted by all in the military as some accused Pokela of taking sides rather than unifying the movement, resulting in further expulsions. Many of the expelled either joined the ANC or left Tanzania and became refugees in Canada.⁴²⁴

Pokela’s leadership style was a hands-on and task-orientated type that was much needed in the military, more importantly in the movement. He divided his Chairpersonship mission into three objectives which are to unite the PAC and APLA, orientate every exiled cadre towards going home, and establish permanent links between the internal and external missions of the PAC.⁴²⁵ Lebakeng confirms the tasks and leadership style of ‘Poks’, as he was affectionately known, and he writes, “he was to establish unity amongst the warring groups, stabilize the organization, restore organizational discipline, and make the organization to be fit for purpose and roll out a home going programme for APLA combatants”.⁴²⁶ To ensure swift operations in the army, Pokela and Phama, the new Secretary for Defence, introduced a different management style and established a Military Commission with APLA High Command where accountability was to be a norm. The newly formed High Command consisted of Polite Xuma, Happy Mphahlele, Mbulelo Raymond Fihla, Andile Ntabeni, Bizza Ntsiki Mbete, Willie Nkonyani, Selo Kungwane, David Phillips, Enoch Zulu, Jan Shoba.⁴²⁷

⁴²² L Mphahlele, *‘Child of this soil’*, p 79

⁴²³ Interview with John Nyathi Pokela by an unknown reporter, Tanzania, 1 March 1981, found on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAGLGclMHrk>

⁴²⁴ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 78

⁴²⁵ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, pp78-79

⁴²⁶ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p 77

⁴²⁷ Interview with Teboho J Lebakeng, 05 October 2021

Letlapa Mphahlele, a Conakry-trained APLA combatant who got promoted to the High Command as Commander of Operations, captures fond memories about Poks in his memoir and says,

Pokela's arrival and rise into leadership as Chairman boosted the morale of the PAC cadres in the camps. The new lease of life that he brought in the military was testified to by the arrival of about thirty recruits who came via Lesotho.⁴²⁸

In addition to a hands-on leadership style, Mphahlele perceives *Poks* to be a humble person as he further reflects,

I was heading down the river when I saw a diminutive figure half submerged in the water. It was Pokela, bathing like the rest of us [guerrilla]. Other leaders bathed privately in their makeshift bathrooms and used hot water. He [Pokela] bathed where we bathed. I hesitated, wondering whether to go forward or turn back and wait until he was through. I went into the river and bathed side by side with him, and he chatted with me as if I enjoyed equal status.⁴²⁹

Pokela's humble character was confirmed by *The Sowetan* newspaper journalist Sam Mabe who observed in an article, "away from the political platform, he struck me as a very humble person. He was a very soft, but firm speaker".⁴³⁰ A leader and head of the organization who was considered humble, soft, and hands-on was not something ordinary in the PAC and APLA, considering that from 1962 until 1979, the top man was a rabble-rouser, a propagandist, and a suspected enemy agent, while the triumvirate was considered not closer to the people. The new leadership personnel in the military were encouraged to uphold professionalism, develop advanced procedures, and demolish dysfunctional structures while ensuring that

⁴²⁸ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, pp 75-76

⁴²⁹ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p 78

⁴³⁰ S Mabe, 'The Day that Didn't Dawn for Pokela', *The Sowetan*, 7 July 1985, p23

organizational practices and decisions were explained and understood at all levels of the military and organization.

Pokela's reign was very short and resulted in many positive outcomes for the movement, but it faltered at times at a diplomatic level. Examples include the PAC siding with Iraq in a conflict with Iran, leading to negative attention and the resignation of some cadres. The unity initiatives and army re-organization were not always welcome by certain cadres, and the disdain was mostly against those who came back from the APRP as they were being accused of promoting it inside the PAC. Some cadres were being attacked and murdered due to these allegations. Mphahlele writes about this ordeal,

Comrades who were in transit from Tanzania to Azania told me that the goddess of the unmerciful had begun to devour her own children even before they faced the enemy. They said Mncedisi Sabatana had been killed in Zambia or Tanzania. The killers had told some PAC members that they had been ordered by the leadership to kill him because he was still promoting APRP within the PAC.... The goddess went on to devour Mahoyi Mpondo, another former member of the APRP, and George Moletsane. Reports were that Mahoyi was stabbed to death in Tanzania, while George was shot in Zambia or Zimbabwe.⁴³¹

Lebakeng concurs with the difficulty of the period in his biographical memoir and says, [the] "unification was not plain sailing".⁴³²

Pokela died in June 1985 in Zimbabwe's Parirenyatwa Hospital, having diversified, grown, and stabilized the movement,⁴³³ He had restored self-confidence in APLA cadres who had been wobbling along. Furthermore, he developed a core team that would advance the military struggle and home going programme in the latter part of the 1980s. The Pretoria regime did not allow the remains of Pokela to return to South Africa and did not authorize his wife and family to attend the funeral in

⁴³¹ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p 109

⁴³² T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p78

⁴³³ A Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, pp73-74.

Zimbabwe.⁴³⁴ His funeral was held in Harare on 13 July 1985, with Zimbabwe Prime Minister Robert Mugabe authorizing a state-assisted funeral at the Heroes Acre, where *Poks* remains were buried.⁴³⁵

At the funeral, Mugabe eulogized Pokela and described him as an “indefatigable freedom fighter, a tried and tested leader of the oppressed and exploited Azanian masses who had a vision, revolutionary zeal, political direction and a sense of purpose and hope”.⁴³⁶ *Poks’* body is lying in the bosom of mother Africa, in the vicinity of ancient great Zimbabwe, leaving his comrades to pass the days with lonely hearts and adrift on an ocean of loneliness. His short reign stabilized APLA, but the departure of seasoned and experienced soldiers and cadres over the years leading up towards 1980, meant that the army could not be a devastating force to be reckoned with since the new soldiers were young people and had left South Africa in the early to mid-1980s.⁴³⁷

Towards the Home Front and APLA confrontations of the 1980s

1981 saw far-reaching changes in the PAC as the newly established High Command reorganized the army towards implementing armed struggle inside South Africa. The mood of the exiled cadres and APLA was becoming different, at times, serene though the exile experience had its psychological effects. The armed struggle was always the intention of genuine APLA guerillas against the settler colonial apartheid regime inside South Africa. With Pokela at the helm of the PAC and being Commander in Chief of APLA, these seemed possible. After 1976, many recruits came to join the liberation movements for military training, and by the dawn of the 1980s, the ANC had successfully recruited most South African youth into its army. However, they were not embarking on a sustained confrontational armed struggle inside the country. On the PAC end, many odds stacked against it with many global quarters, including the ANC pushing for PAC de-recognition by the OAU, but with the

⁴³⁴ The Zimbabwean Herald report, 12 July 1985, Harare.

⁴³⁵ A Hlongwane, *We must return Home Armed or Unarmed*, p 92.

⁴³⁶ ‘Pokela Buried in Zimbabwe: Tribute from Premier Mugabe’, *Azania News* vol.21, no.3 (1986), p4.

⁴³⁷ Interview with Teboho J Lebakeng, 05 October 2021

arrival of Pokela in 1981, it came out 'healthy' again.⁴³⁸ Unfortunately, while the organization was still reorganizing, Pokela died four years later, and he left the PAC and its army not fully coordinated.

Johnson Mlambo, took over after Pokela, and his coordination with Sabelo Phama resulted in APLA's modest resurgence in the late 1980s with attacks on apartheid security personnel. Phama was a popular figure amongst the cadres in the camps.⁴³⁹ Notwithstanding being well organized politically, better resourced organizationally and militarily, and better supported globally, the ANC was consumed by the propaganda struggle and window-dressing operations.⁴⁴⁰ Lodge identifies the ANC operations that occurred from 1980 and 1982 as "acts of sabotage that were directed at targets for psychological impact".⁴⁴¹ 'This window dress operation' was one of the two visions used within the ANC during the 1980s. The other vision was the creation of a social, political, and economic crisis due to economic recession, civil unrest and labour insurgency that was taking place inside the country.⁴⁴²

As the modest APLA resurgence took place, a successful infiltration of three APLA guerrillas, Abel 'Sgubhu' Dube, Busi Mabusela and Eric Sifadi, were conveyed to have reached South Africa on 21 April 1982. They were to establish military camps in Northern Transvaal, a project that failed.⁴⁴³ Dube and his other comrade were arrested and sentenced to Robben Island.⁴⁴⁴ During the period, continuous military training of recruits was also re-initiated in Tanzania and other places.

Phama, the army commander, organized a specialized training program in Guinea and Yugoslavia, with forty cadres sent to Guinea and another thirty to Yugoslavia. Sam Motau was commanding the Guinea group that had George Moletsane as Political Commissar, Letlapa Mphahlele, Mbulelo Raymond Fihla, Vusi Moyo and Rufus Zonyane arriving in Conakry on 6 July 1981 and trained at Centre

⁴³⁸ Interview with Vusi Moyo, Johannesburg, 15 November 2022

⁴³⁹ T Ka Plaatjie, *The PAC's exile politics*, p1253

⁴⁴⁰ Interview with Teboho J Lebakeng, 05 October 2021

⁴⁴¹ Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s'*, p176

⁴⁴² Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s'*, p189

⁴⁴³ T Ka Plaatjie, *The PAC's exile politics*, p1253

⁴⁴⁴ Interview with Sgubhu Dube, 17 November 2022

National Kwame Nkrumah.⁴⁴⁵ In Conakry, they spent one year under the tutelage of the Guinean military instructors, with six months dedicated to infantry and another three months towards specialized military training. While in Conakry, Mphahlele remembers that the training attendance of the instructors was erratic, and the trainees would find themselves loitering the city since the Guinean instructors did not keep to the schedule.⁴⁴⁶ After a year, they graduated from military training and met President Sekou Toure. He encouraged them towards the revolution in South Africa through his famous slogan, *Pret Pour la revolution* (ready for the revolution), and they departed back to Tanzania.⁴⁴⁷

The group that trained in Guinea was followed by another in the second half of the decade. This gesture showed the commitment of a needy but devoted Guinea government to the liberation of South Africa. In 1983, Pokela visited the Iringa camp and commented that the infiltration programme into South Africa rested firmly in the hands of the guerrillas.⁴⁴⁸ After 1983, APLA's Itumbi camp was left vacant for a cold but a better site in Mgagawa.⁴⁴⁹

The reform of APLA in Tanzania was emerging concurrently with the shift in the South African PW Botha's external security policy, where it sought favorable outcomes on the Namibian question by using carefully packaged incentives for friendly states while destabilizing the hostile ones.⁴⁵⁰ The strategy was to maintain domestic stability and regional peace to be able to implement 'reforms' in Namibia and South Africa. His strategy sought to achieve domestic stability and regional peace to implement 'reforms' in Namibia and South Africa. Through Botha's external policy, SADF conducted raids in Maseru on 9 December 1982 and killed ANC cadres, and in March 1985 at Qacha's Nek, near the Lesotho-South Africa border, PAC cadres were assassinated.⁴⁵¹ In June 1985, fourteen people got murdered in Gaborone, but

⁴⁴⁵ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p83

⁴⁴⁶ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil* ., p89

⁴⁴⁷ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil* ., p91

⁴⁴⁸ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil* ., p102

⁴⁴⁹ T Ka Plaatjie, *The PAC's exile politics*, p 1256

⁴⁵⁰ Van der Waag, 'A Military History of Modern South Africa', p 268

⁴⁵¹ Interview with Khaliphile Sizane by Thami Ka Plaatjie, Queenstown, 23 March 2007, SADET Oral History Project

Swaziland, which was friendly to Pretoria, enjoyed an open and pleasant relationship with the regime.

As these strategic manoeuvres partially succeeded, Pretoria was satisfied since they had secured non-aggression pacts with all its neighbours and created a cordon sanitaire that forced the armed struggle further up north. The environment created by Botha in the mid-1980s to implement his reform program was opposed by the tide of sustained unrest inside the country.⁴⁵² As SADF was busy cordoning the 'guarded line', APLA fearlessly, strategically, and stupidly deployed cadres to 'the front' either to fight inside the country or to work in countries around South Africa. Vusi Moyo and other APLA guerrillas went to Lesotho a few months after their return from Conakry. They trained young recruits but were detected by South African Intelligence.⁴⁵³ Lesotho was then invaded by apartheid security forces and borders were closed from 1982.

According to Moyo, the condition for reopening the border was the deportation of APLA guerrillas from Lesotho to Zimbabwe. Lodge reporting about the deportation in the *Weekly Mail* publication said, "50 PAC members were expelled from Lesotho in 1985".⁴⁵⁴ Due to the deportation, APLA's home-going programme experienced yet another setback. To achieve the programme's objectives, irrespective of the setback, Letlapa Mphahlele went to Botswana as the PAC's Deputy Representative, a cover for his APLA assignment in that country. His task was to fortify the networks with underground structures across the South African border.⁴⁵⁵ The raids that had become central in the security strategy for Botha compelled the quasi 'Chief Representatives' and guerrilla comrades to depart Botswana to Zimbabwe on *persona non grata* however, he returned a few years later under stringent underground rules to launch guerrilla operations.

⁴⁵² C Alden, *The Apartheid's Last Stand: The Rise and Fall of South African Security State*, (London, Palgrave Macmillan Publisher: 1996), p 120

⁴⁵³ WhatsApp message response by Vusi Moyo, 15 November 2022

⁴⁵⁴ T Lodge, *The Weekly Mail*, 5-11 August 1988, p 8

⁴⁵⁵ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p 105

Hiding in plain sight, hitting the ‘enemy’.

The small underground cells had been re-established inside South Africa, and some recruits were being trained in the mountains of the Ciskei town of Healdtown in 1985, and APLA operations were being rolled out.⁴⁵⁶ The linkage between the internal and the external structures yielded positive and negative outcomes. For instance, in the Seymour-Alice area, APLA recruits launched operations that resulted in the repossession of firearms, but an attempt in June 1985 to infiltrate cadres from Botswana to South Africa led to the detection and arrests of APLA cadres in Johannesburg and Mafikeng.⁴⁵⁷ Enoch Zulu and Jan Shoba, two members of the High Command, were arrested during this embryotic phase of infiltration of cadres from Botswana.⁴⁵⁸ Mphahlele, explaining the causes of the negative outcomes at the Botswana-South Africa route and says,

we had arms and personnel, but we did not have the right network to infiltrate them into Azania. We had a network of professional people who were not familiar with the guerrilla methods and ended up in the hands of the Boers.⁴⁵⁹

After the June arrest incident on the Botswana side, a network to help APLA was eventually secured with John Moatlhodi, a stocky man with a boozy face that spoke deep Setswana with family ties in the ANC in exile.⁴⁶⁰ He helped APLA guerrillas with reconnaissance of both sides of the Botswana border, tutored them on local villagers' signal codes and blazed the trail to Johannesburg for the guerrilla's path. Through Moatlhodi's work, Zonyane and Phikwane were successfully infiltrated to South Africa with a bag full of ammunition and two Skorpion vz61 machine pistols.⁴⁶¹ A Skorpion pistol is a Czechoslovak machine pistol developed in 1959 by Miroslav Rybář. It has

⁴⁵⁶ Interview with Daniel Zola Harmuns, at Chetty 491 in Gqeberha, 21 November 2022

⁴⁵⁷ Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*, p 194

⁴⁵⁸ J Seroke, 'Memorialising APLA forces in the Years of the Great Storm: Historical Perspectives', *Mayihlome news*, 15 October 2013, found on <https>

⁴⁵⁹ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p 114

⁴⁶⁰ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p114

⁴⁶¹ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p116

a 115 mm barrel length, a ten or twenty rounds capacity with a wooden original. Another variant of the pistol with a synthetic handle was later developed in Yugoslavia. These Yugoslav made pistols were utilized by APLA guerrillas in the late 1980s. Luvuyo Kulumani, an ex-APLA operative, considers Skorpion as “a gun not suitable for cowards because it is effective when the operator is nearby the target”.⁴⁶²

When Zonyane and Phikwane reached South Africa they found the country under the state of emergency. They separated, with Phikwane remaining in Alexandra Township, while Zonyane travelled to the Cape. Their operation was known as ‘programme grenade warfare’, which focused on the swift usage of grenades to strike targets. Themba Phikwane teamed up with the internal APLA operatives while SADF soldiers were roaming the streets of Alex enforcing the state of emergency. In three different operations, one on 16 December 1986, then that of January 1987 and another on February 1987, APLA guerrillas, Phikwane, Mandla Yende and Nkululeko Dlova, killed and wounded members of the apartheid security force; and on 21 April 1987, attacked Tladi police station in Soweto and wounded members of the apartheid security force.⁴⁶³ At the Tladi attack, APLA cadres tossed a grenade at the police station, injured over sixty police recruits and killing one.⁴⁶⁴ The local headlines proclaimed the group executing these operations as ‘a scorpion gang’ since they used the Yugoslavian firearm in the confrontations with security personnel.

The small guerrilla units operating inside South Africa from 1986 onwards clashed severely with the apartheid South African armed forces. One of their noticeable characteristics, observed by Tom Lodge, was their resistance to capture and fierce courage as they trained for close combat, and the Skorpion pistol (and grenade usage) were appropriate for a close contact battle.⁴⁶⁵ The influence of APLA guerrillas to resist capture had to do with their military code of conduct. The first rule of the 15-point code for APLA guerrillas was that ‘do not surrender to the enemy or

⁴⁶² Telephone conversation with Luvuyo Kulumani, 01 December 2022

⁴⁶³ Truth Commission Special Report, ‘TRC Final report vol. 2 chapter 4’, 29 October 1998, found on <https://sabctrc.saha.org.za/reports/volume2/chapter4/subsection22.htm>

⁴⁶⁴ L Von den Steinen, ‘Experiencing the armed struggle: The Soweto generation and after’, Doctoral Thesis at University of Cape Town, 2007. pp255-256

⁴⁶⁵ Lodge & Nasson, *‘All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s’*, p194

hand over ammunition or information'.⁴⁶⁶ Many of those who perished during these operations, did so during the actual clashes.

Betrayal, mistrust and 'turn coats'.

The Botswana contact continued his contribution towards the PAC's home going programme, an operation executed by APLA and Qibla cadres. In 1987, two Qibla guerrillas infiltrated through the Botswana border, but their operation failed since they were arrested and 'turned' against their comrades. Their conversion foiled an infiltration of four other Qibla guerrillas who were detained and perhaps murdered by the South African security forces.⁴⁶⁷ At the height of these operations, the Letlapa contact in Botswana had a deep mistrust of the ANC and PAC leadership. He claimed that they had squandered money meant for the liberation struggle. It was not only him, other APLA guerrillas had the same feeling. Some cadres experienced betrayal by their comrades and fellow operatives. Harmuns, who trained in Libya and Conakry, and Speelman who trained in Libya and Yugoslavia, remember a cadre who was their Political Commissar who turned to be an askari. He had told them that the security branch knew every APLA cadre in the camps.⁴⁶⁸ Notwithstanding that, the mistrust was from the *contacts* and cadres alike. Muammar Qaddafi and his officers is also believed to have not trust the PAC political leadership in their commitment to wage war in South Africa.⁴⁶⁹

On completing training, instead of transporting the trained guerrillas to Tanzania, Qaddafi would instruct that they be transported to Zimbabwe, considering that Zimbabwe was 'the home front and it is where the battle should be waged'.⁴⁷⁰ These claims created an uneasy situation even though the operations were taking place, the perceptions against the leadership were not subsiding from 1986 onwards. This was worsened by some 'military instructors' who were a form of a 'killing group'

⁴⁶⁶ Confidential M.C Directive to APLA, undated

⁴⁶⁷ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, pp118-119

⁴⁶⁸ Interview with Daniel Zola Harmuns and Xolile Speelman, at Chetty 491 in Gqeberha, 21 November 2022

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid

⁴⁷⁰ Interview with Xolile Speelman, at Chetty 491 in Gqeberha, 21 November 2022

that would punish trainees by making them eat their feces, or a suspected dissident would be covered in plastic and inserted in pit toilets.⁴⁷¹ According to Speelman and Harmuns, these and other tribalism perceptions from cadres who were in Zimbabwe had a negative impact on the home going programme.

Pokela's legacy through Mlambo's reign

After Pokela died in 1985, Johnson Mlambo became the PAC Chairman and, the partially reorganized APLA launched a series of guerrilla operations as already narrated. Several attacks were directed at members of the security forces.⁴⁷² Mlambo's task as chairman seemed to have been made easy by the preceding reign of his former Robben Island inmate. It gave the military high command a youthful feel that was eager and courageous in implementing the home going programme. The guerrilla actions inside South Africa from 1985 are amongst Pokela's legacies as he established a foundation for such military confrontations. While his legacy may be that of unification and re-organizing of PAC and its military, we should also note that romantic relationships that resulted in marriages were conceived during his tenure. An example is a wedding of a cadre officiated by Vusi Moyo in Zimbabwe. Other APLA cadres met and married their spouses in exile during and post-Pokela's reign.⁴⁷³ Considering this aspect, it is fair to argue that the mood and psych of the soldiers during Pokela's period suggest that aspects of socialising were not neglected even though the primary task of being in exile was the fight for the liberation of South Africa.

In early 1986, APLA sent another group of trainees to Libya. The trainees included Sandile Nontyi, Lucas, Magagula and Zola Harmuns for training in topography, the creation of homemade explosives, artillery, firearms, and aircraft operations. During training, the Reagan's United States attacked Libya's Benghazi airport. The airport was close to the base of APLA cadres, and Libyan forces had to move them to the desert.⁴⁷⁴ While different forms of military training were being

⁴⁷¹ Interview with Xolile Speelman, 21 November 2022

⁴⁷² Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*, p 194

⁴⁷³ WhatsApp message response by Vusi Moyo, 15 November 2022

⁴⁷⁴ Interview with Daniel Zola Harmuns, at Chetty 491 in Gqeberha, 21 November 2022

planned, organised, and executed in exile, actions of APLA both inside the country had escalated with guerrilla battles ensuing. One such occurred in the East Rand (today's Ekurhuleni) that resulted in the two APLA guerrillas being killed, with their commander Enoch Zulu being arrested.⁴⁷⁵

According to the reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the late 1980s saw an increase in the application of the PAC's strategy of a protracted people's war, involving infiltration of guerrillas into rural areas resulting in a number of confrontations and skirmishes with security forces.⁴⁷⁶ From 1987, APLA activities in the home front had taken a national character since Andile Gushu was spotted and arrested in Western Cape, Abraham Magagula in the Vaal Triangle, Lungisa Lumphondo operated in the Ciskei area and the murder of a Homeland police officer in Bophuthatswana.⁴⁷⁷ Such a spread was made possible by the emphasis made by Mlambo through a letter sent to Z.B. Molete, who was in Lesotho which stated;

there is a need to move away from a one-sided approach that deprives us of tactical flexibility. In contemplating propagating armed struggle, for instance, we should not lose sight of political, legal, or illegal forms of struggle that are a prerequisite to, and an enrichment of armed struggle.⁴⁷⁸

From 1988 to 1989, the activities of transportation of firearms and explosives for APLA guerrillas through, initially, unsuspecting couriers were taking place inside South Africa at an unprecedented pace. Lubabalo Stemele, before exiting the country for military training in exile, was an APLA courier between the rural village of Mount Coke and King Williams town in 1988.⁴⁷⁹ Other courier services were conducted in the Northern Transvaal area, which covered Venda, Musina, Tzaneen and Mokopane, Makgaledisa. Mphahlele was amongst the unknowing couriers in the area.⁴⁸⁰ In Cape

⁴⁷⁵ Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*, p194

⁴⁷⁶ Truth Commission Special Report, 'TRC Final report vol 2 chapter 4', 29 October 1998, found on <https://sabctr.org.za/reports/volume2/chapter4/subsection22.htm>

⁴⁷⁷ T ka Plaatjie, 'The PAC's attempt at internal revival,' in South Africa Democracy Education Trust, *The road to democracy*, Vol 4 (Pretoria, Unisa Press, 2014) p1283

⁴⁷⁸ University of Fort Hare, NHCS, PAC Tanzania, Box 1/85/18, Letter Johnson Mlambo to Z.B Molete, 14 July 1987, p2

⁴⁷⁹ Interview with Lubabalo Stemele, Virtual, 12 December 2022

⁴⁸⁰ WhatsApp response from Makgaledisa Mphahlele, 11 December 2022

Town, Transkei and other areas, this had become the *modus operandi* overseen by those who were released from Robben Island.

Military skirmishes and confrontations of APLA that were reported at the TRC were mainly initiated through Botswana with internal underground contacts since the Zimbabwe side, overseen by APLA's political commissioner George Mofokeng alias Romero Daniels, had little military action in comparison with the Botswana front managed by Ntsiki Mbethe, Junior Ntabeni and Castro Philips.⁴⁸¹ Seemingly the focus of cadres stationed at the Zimbabwe front was by now on educational vocations, which included various officer courses provided by Mugabe's government. Vusi Moyo is amongst those that requested to be 'deployed' to school as he was no longer sure of the prospects of a home-going programme, and he later received a scholarship to the USA where he studied Sociology as suggested by Sabelo Phama.⁴⁸²

From 1986 onwards, APLA commanders in Zimbabwe placed those who had no high school education at schools to study O&A levels according to the Zimbabwean education curriculum. Others went to Andrew University, where they studied administration and management courses, fashion design, accounting, and Journalism.⁴⁸³ Mbulelo Fihla, a member of the High Command, studied Social Welfare, and Buti Ramfelo went to Germany for further education.

By this time, compared to the 1970s, there was a slight change in attitude regarding the necessity of education in the army, this could have been another influence of Pokela and his youthful Secretary of Defence. At this juncture, the home going programme had been on the steady increase through the work of underground operatives inside the country, with the coordination of Mbethe and Ntabeni from Botswana. They would raise money from Gaborone to procure flight tickets for cadres to come to the home front.

⁴⁸¹ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p132

⁴⁸² WhatsApp response from Vusi Moyo, 09 December 2022

⁴⁸³ WhatsApp message response from Zoliswa Dauwa, an APLA cadre who studied in Zimbabwe

Thapelo Maseko, a 'Beauty Salon unit' commander, frequented the home front states from 1989 and was a beneficiary of such funds for travelling.⁴⁸⁴ With the program fully operational and escalated, a new problem of depleting ammunition arose, and APLA cadres either had to rob SADF or buy through corrupt Mozambique officials with the money that was not always available. A solution to the money problem was the establishment of a repossession unit whose initial idea was Mbethe's to Mphahlele while they were on route to Zimbabwe.⁴⁸⁵ According to the TRC, this unit was a 'robbery unit' that was politically justified by PAC as a source of funding for internal and external wings of APLA.⁴⁸⁶

External-Internal coordination: APLA in the centre.

After the reinstatement of the position of the President in the PAC and being bestowed on Zephania Mothopeng in 1986, who had been released from Robben Island, it was apparent that many guerrillas were being transferred inside the country, though another section of the army remained in the exile camps. The rolling out of the home going programme by the external mission yielded aggressive battles between APLA guerrillas and the apartheid security forces inside South Africa. For example, in 1988, the police reported another clash between APLA guerrillas and police in Lichtenburg, an operation that was initially claimed by MK.⁴⁸⁷

Mothopeng, who was prominent inside the country, was tasked to re-organise, strengthen and lead the internal PAC and promote mass mobilisation. His efforts led to the strengthening of the Azanian National Youth Unity (AZANYU) that was establishment on 10th February 1981 and the Pan Africanist Student Organisation of Azania (PASO). Especially in the East Rand metropolitan areas, since AZANYU and PASO were strong, organized and had young courages members, this area provided a fertile environment for APLA regional commanders and cadres to organise, plan and

⁴⁸⁴ T ka Plaatjie, *The PAC's exile politics, 1980-1990*, in South Africa Democracy Education Trust, *The road to democracy*, Vol 4 (Pretoria, Unisa Press, 2014) p1256

⁴⁸⁵ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p135

⁴⁸⁶ Truth Commission Special Report, 'TRC Final report vol 2 chapter 4', 29 October 1998, 12 December 2022

⁴⁸⁷ Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*, p 195

execute military operations.⁴⁸⁸ Concerning the establishment of AZANYU and PASO, Lodge and Nasson wrote that “the existence of a PAC internal group was a propaganda that was never confirmed” instead, they claimed that there was a “heightened expression of PAC traditions in the symbolic repertoire of legal, political groups”.⁴⁸⁹ For them, AZANYU and PASO were myths.

At this period, the South African business sector and other global actors had realised that a political transition was coming, but that was to be because the ANC had neglected its socialist alignment.⁴⁹⁰ Talks about talks between exiled ANC and some representatives of the National Party, including the business sector, were concurrently taking place. The Pretoria regime had imposed a state of emergency, the South African townships were made ungovernable, and APLA intensified its armed struggle. The Bramley and Alexandra confrontations between APLA's Scorpion Gang and security forces was an example of the intensification. At the TRC, APLA justified attacks on security personnel as that “the racist army and police kill, detain and harass people on a daily basis and are therefore the pillars of the racist regime which has to be relentlessly challenged by the oppressed”.⁴⁹¹ The TRC responded by noting but rejecting the explanation. Instead it held PAC and APLA leadership morally and politically responsible for the white peoples' farm killings.

As APLA intensified its armed struggle, Gora Ibrahim, the PAC secretary for International Affairs, stated that the armed struggle was to be internally based, considering that APLA had no bases in the Front-Line states and (it) has no interest in endangering those (frontline) states.⁴⁹² The sentiments of Ibrahim and other PAC leaders were not in isolation from the pressure by PAC exile hosts. Also, the townships were a battlefield with younger people from PASO seeking military training. Therefore, the internal mission and APLA had to find creative ways to cater for all these demands,

⁴⁸⁸ Thami ka Plaatjie, ‘The PAC’s attempt at internal revival,’ in South Africa Democracy Education Trust, *The road to democracy*, Vol 4 (Pretoria, Unisa Press, 2014) p1281

⁴⁸⁹ Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*, p 196

⁴⁹⁰ S Terreblanche, *Lost in Transformation*, (Johannesburg, KMM Review: 2012), p 59

⁴⁹¹ UFH, NHCS, PAC Tanzania, 1/41/1, Johnson Mlambo quoted in a PAC press statement issued by Maxwell Nemaizivhanane, 22 April, 1987

⁴⁹² Gora Ibrahim, PAC statement at the Latin American Regional Conference for Action against Apartheid, 16-18 September 1983, Caracas, Venezuela, p6

including the sustainability of its armed struggle. APLA initiated talks with Bantu Holomisa, the then Transkei homeland leader from 1987, and he agreed to provide APLA with access to military camps and arms to conduct their military training in his 'state'. Through the members of the Transkei Defence Force (TDF), APLA received weapons couriered by two APLA operatives, Sichumiso Nonxuba and Msileli Silimela.⁴⁹³

In the Transkei, in areas like Mthatha APLA cadres found a place of refuge, transiting and training recruits and planning and launching guerrilla operations. The externally trained cadres, Mbazo and Silimela Qukumbane, were received in Mthatha by Luyanda Gqomfa, another Tanzania-trained guerrilla. Qukumbane was introduced to the PAC by his great-grandfather as a courier in 1982 and became a close ally of Anele, an APLA guerrilla who operated in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage areas. Qukumbane executed his internal guerrilla operations initially at Sterkspruit and then in other places.⁴⁹⁴ In Mthatha, Qukumbane joined the code named 'Beauty Salon' unit, an APLA unit responsible for repossession or 'robberies' to support the cadres and the armed struggle.

This unit, at times would acquire money from as little as one thousand rands to over one hundred thousand of rands which would be surrendered to the Commanders. According to Qukumbane, his unit raided supermarkets, farms, and other institutions at Zastron, Lady Grey, Bloemfontein and Ngcobo.⁴⁹⁵ Kulumani, a mentee to Qukumbane, remarked that surrendering money to the commanders was not uncommon to them, considering they did not see the need to keep the money for themselves. After the repossession mission, Kulumane further recalled, "the commanders would give us some money and tell us to buy ourselves clean clothes and toiletry to ensure that we do not stand out as guerrillas".⁴⁹⁶ Unfortunately, the repossession operation did not always yield good outcomes. According to Mphahlele, APLA in the nineties suffered more casualties on repossession missions than those

⁴⁹³ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p163

⁴⁹⁴ Interview with Silimela Qukumbane, Gqeberha, 22 November 2022

⁴⁹⁵ Qukumbane, 22 November 2022

⁴⁹⁶ Interview with Luvuyo Max Kulumane, Gqeberha, 22 November 2022

who were in combat with the enemy, and he believes that revolutionaries should lead a crime-free life.⁴⁹⁷

With the success of the internal coordination, Qibla in the Western Cape, AZANYU, PASO and Transkei Defence Force (TDF) all became conduits of ensuring APLA conducts military operations with some degree of success although the prospect of betrayal from the organisation's members was always a possibility. Another sector that the PAC used to harbour its APLA guerrillas was the union formations. Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA), African Women's Organization (AWO), South African Black Municipal and Allied Workers Union (SABMAWU) and African Allied Workers (AAW) worked closely with PAC from 1985, and a younger generation of trade unionists established the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU) in 1989 and had close ties with PAC.⁴⁹⁸ NACTU spoke of the independence of the trade unions from political formations, however, its Secretary General, Cunningham Ngcukana, was close to the PAC.⁴⁹⁹ Lucky Moeketsi, a Libya-trained APLA cadre and incarcerated for five years at Robben Island in 1980, upon entering South Africa, 'worked' for SABMAWU while covertly being an APLA underground operative.⁵⁰⁰ Mothopeng's leadership was a catalyst for various political and military activities in the late 1980s, and this popularity seemed to have been entrenched most within the youth.

With the townships brought into a state of ungovernability and the youth politicized, AZANYU popularized the APLA slogan 'One Settler One Bullet'. Not only were they popularizing the war rhetoric, but they also supported APLA cadres in court cases and assisted in the burial of APLA guerrillas who perished in combat with the apartheid regime security forces.⁵⁰¹ Qibla, in the Western Cape, continued its support

⁴⁹⁷ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p144

⁴⁹⁸ Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*, pp 196-197

⁴⁹⁹ P O'Malley, 'The Heart of Hope - South Africa's Transition from Apartheid to Democracy', *O'Malley Archives*, 14 October 1999, Found on <https://omalley.nelsonmandela.org/index.php/site/q/03lv02424/04lv02730/05lv03163/06lv03171/07lv03172.htm>

⁵⁰⁰ Moeketsi, 08 November 2022

⁵⁰¹ AK Hlongwane, *The Lion of Azania*, p173

to APLA guerrillas and operations in what the police allege was an agreement between Muslim fundamentalists and PAC-sponsored military training.⁵⁰²

The external and internal coordination of the PAC during that period placed APLA at the centre of executing its objectives. With the winds of change blowing towards the negotiations mostly between the ANC and NP government, strategic decisions between PAC leadership based in Dar es Salaam, the internal group, and APLA resulted in the formation of the Pan Africanist Movement (PAM) that helped to lay the reconstruction of an unbanned PAC as announced on 2nd February 1990.⁵⁰³ Through PAM, the PAC entered into negotiations at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), the approach opposed by some sections of the organization bedevilled the PAC from then onwards.⁵⁰⁴ APLA operations across the country had not lessened, instead showing signs of increase with the recruitment and training of PASO and AZANYU members escalated. Nationally, APLA guerrillas were confronting security personnel and terrorising white civilians on the farms. The externally trained guerrillas worked with the locally trained youths by launching almost all military operations from Transkei. The increase in popularity of APLA in the later 1980s and early 1990s is due to work done by the external and internal missions of the PAC.

Conclusion

In exile, differences in ideas, plans and visions caused the split within the PAC and the formation of the APRP, which was later dissolved by Pokela when he became the leader of the PAC from 1981. In the 1980s, Pokela, and later Mlambo, put in motion a home going programme which began to yield results from 1986, a year after Pokela had met his demise. By later 1980s, a link between the PAC's external and internal missions was improved and a more organised APLA operations imprint was witnessed until the 2nd of February 1990 speech by FW de Klerk surprised many PAC members

⁵⁰² Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s'*, p197

⁵⁰³ Lodge & Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s'*, p197

⁵⁰⁴ T KaPlaatjie, *The PAC's exile politics*, p1295

and APLA cadres that all liberation movements were unbanned and that the time for peace had come.

Chapter 6: Coming 'home' with "The Great Storm".

Introduction

On the second day of February 1990, FW de Klerk announced the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoner. The announcement included the unbanning of the ANC, PAC and SACP, including other organisations. The leadership and the rank and file of PAC and APLA, as that of the ANC and MK, were caught by surprise by this move. The PAC and APLA 'disregarded' the announcement and continued with the armed struggle, while the ANC suspended its armed struggle. It was clear that a negotiated settlement was on the making as the 'secret' talks between the apartheid regime and the ANC exiled representatives had been in consultation from as early as 1983,⁵⁰⁵ though Alister Sparks contends these started in 1985.⁵⁰⁶ While many were looking forward to the settlement, APLA intensified its armed struggle and popularity through its attacks. Political developments continued with a rapid pace and, at times, the PAC seemed to be unable to catch up. Due to contradictions and disagreements within the PAC on the approach to negotiations, APLA implemented various operations across the country with an intention to influence the apartheid regime to negotiate with them. The death of Zephania Mothopeng, and later Sabelo Phama, threw curve balls both to the PAC and the army. The strategy failed to force the NP government's hand, and in 1994 the army crumbled. APLA soldiers got arrested, others were killed by their comrades, and others went underground. However, before these developments, APLA had inscribed itself in public consciousness as a liberation struggle apparatus. It gained sympathy and support from the public for its unwavering confrontations with the apartheid regime.

⁵⁰⁵ Constitutional Court Trust, 'A Historic Overview (1909-1980s) Background to the "pre-negotiations phase"', Johannesburg, n.d: accessed on https://www.concourtrust.org.za/uploads/files/Background_to_the_%E2%80%9Cpre-negotiations_phase%E2%80%9D.pdf

⁵⁰⁶ A Sparks, *Tomorrow is another country: The inside story of South Africa's road to change*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1996), p 168

The unbanning of liberation movements and the intensification of the struggle: 1990-1994

The start of the 1990s set in motion a dramatic landscape in South Africa's political scene, a landscape that was spearheaded by FW de Klerk, with the help of the ANC. De Klerk's swift political maneuverers caused a great suspicion within the PAC.⁵⁰⁷ APLA had held a view that the armed struggle continues irrespective of the regime's announcement, however from within, there were differing views on the continuation. The ANC had been emboldened by the potential burgeoning negotiations with the apartheid regime, while Zephania Mothopeng, the President of PAC, and Sabelo Phama, the Head of APLA, were unambiguously for the continuation of the armed struggle, while some within held a different view. The PAC's publication asserted "we cannot be told by the apartheid regime and F.W De Klerk when to stop fighting. Who are they to give us orders"?⁵⁰⁸

Prior the announcement, the MK had embarked on Operation Vula that was compromised following the vanishing of two operatives because of its security gaps.⁵⁰⁹ The capacity of the ANC's armed struggle was laid bare by its acting President Alfred Nzo at a press conference held on 17 January 1990 when he said; "looking at the situation realistically, we must admit that we do not have the capacity within the country to intensify the armed struggle in any meaningful way".⁵¹⁰ In exile, some people were [now] stranded, old and sick,⁵¹¹ and the OAU's Liberation Committee was beginning to withdraw its support for liberation movements.

De Klerk, a skilled politician, took advantage of these developments, including the global changes which were gearing towards the path of peaceful relations as exemplified by the withdrawal of Soviet Union troops from Afghanistan and the end of

⁵⁰⁷ K Kondlo, 'From the Fringes to Fossils: The Pan Africanis Congress of Azania and the negotiated transition to Democracy in South Africa. 1990-1994', *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(1), 2017, pp46-47

⁵⁰⁸ Azania Combat, 'the war goes on'. *Azania Combat* issue 16(2), 1993

⁵⁰⁹ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, pp 324-325

⁵¹⁰ P Waldmeir, *The end of apartheid and the birth of the New South Africa*, (New York, Norton, 1997), p232

⁵¹¹ Interview with Zephania Mothopeng conducted by an Unknown reporter, 'Interview with Mr Zeph Mothopeng, PAC President', *Weekly Mail*, 9 February 1990

the Cold War. He ‘unexpectedly’, at least from the side of the liberation movements, declared through the D’Nyala consensus minutes that the prohibition of the ANC, PAC, and the SACP, with several subsidiary organisations, is being rescinded.⁵¹² In the speech, De Klerk delivered in parliament on 2 February 1990, was revealing his program for the sweeping changes in the country’s political structure and Nelson Mandela was to be released ‘unconditionally’ and without ‘delay’.⁵¹³

In the address, the former apartheid Minister of Education and imbibed Boerdebond adherent hinted on the possibility of negotiations, when he announced that the agenda of the talks is open, and that the time for violence is over.⁵¹⁴ The PAC responded to the announcement by calling for the intensification of the struggle on all fronts, and cautioned the international community against the manipulations of George Bush, Margaret Thatcher and De Klerk, therefore pleading that sanctions must not be lifted.⁵¹⁵ APLA and PAC constantly pronounced that they will not abandon the bullet until the ballot is secured, a clear sign that they were not anti-elections.

The PAC seemed not fascinated by the announcement as it communicated that the “unbanning is meaningless as it will make little difference to its [military] program”.⁵¹⁶ A program that had taken a solid shape in the late 1980s through its army wing, APLA. Hardly a month after De Klerk’s announcement, APLA was involved in a shootout with SAP in a Nedbank robbery operation. This showed the PAC consistency with its pre-1990 posture that the negotiated settlement is not on their agenda and freedom must be worn through the barrel of the gun.⁵¹⁷ These views were mostly communicated by its President Zeph Mothopeng, who was unbendingly pro-armed struggle.

Such a rigid political stance from the PAC would later ‘*change*’ after Mothopeng’s death, and the organization would vacillate between being part of the negotiations and

⁵¹² T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p 323

⁵¹³ B Glad, R Blanton, ‘F. W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela: A Study in Cooperative Transformational Leadership’, *Presidential Studies Quarterly* Vol 27, No. 3, 1997, p41

⁵¹⁴ T Simpson, *History of South Africa*, p323

⁵¹⁵ SAIRR, ‘Race Relations Survey’ 1989/90’, Johannesburg, 1990

⁵¹⁶ Zephania Mothopeng, ‘Interview with Mr Zeph Mothopeng, PAC President’, *Weekly Mail*, 9 February 1990

⁵¹⁷ K Kondlo, ‘From the Fringes to Fossils’, p 46

not being part until 1993, when most of the foundations of the post-apartheid era had been established, agreed, and sealed from CODESA. Professor Kondlo argues that, throughout the transitional period, the PAC was inundated with contradictions where a group of influential PAC intellectuals pushed for CODESA participation while, on the other hand, the young and selected within the army were still anti-CODESA.⁵¹⁸ Thembinkosi Henge, who was an APLA operative, argues against the positing and claim that the contradictions about the approach to negotiations happened in 1992; for him, even in 1993, the PAC solidly promoted the armed struggle but the details of the negotiations were the contestation.⁵¹⁹ In March 1990, the PAC made public its position on negotiations, and it included the 'one man one vote' election of a constituent assembly that will develop the new society's constitution; it sought for the repeal of five 'political pillars' which were non-negotiable, including the maintaining of armed struggle and sanctions so they may be not prematurely abandoned.⁵²⁰ Jackie Seroke defended the PAC's stance on the armed struggle and specified that, the PAC was willing to consent the cessation of hostilities in principle, however, their implementation would need further deliberations.⁵²¹

The discussions, according to Seroke, were to include that cessation or suspension should imply that the SADF be resigned to the barracks. These principles which were viewed as essential to PAC were not 'addressed', instead a Pretoria Minute between the ANC and De Klerk's government was signed on 6 August 1990, and they entrenched PAC's negative views towards the negotiations.⁵²² The signing of the Pretoria Minute preceded what Jackie Seroke terms an "OAU enforced Patriotic Front which sought to have the ANC and PAC approaching CODESA with one voice concerning the two liberation movements".⁵²³ According to O'Malley, the PAC was not

⁵¹⁸ K Kondlo, 'From the Fringes to Fossils', pp 52-53

⁵¹⁹ Telephone Interview with Thembinkosi Henge, 12 December 2022

⁵²⁰ P O'Malley, 'The Heart of Hope - South Africa's Transition from Apartheid to Democracy', O'Malley Archives, 14 October 1999, Found on <https://omalley.nelsonmandela.org/index.php/site/q/03lv02424/04lv02730/05lv03163/06lv03171/06lv03214.htm>

⁵²¹ K Kondlo, 'From the Fringes to Fossils', p54

⁵²² K Kondlo, 'From the Fringes to Fossils: The Pan Africanis Congress of Azania and the negotiated transition to Democracy in South Africa. 1990-1994', p50

⁵²³ Jackie Seroke WhatsApp response to a question, 14 December 2022

forced into the United Front, but it called for the front through the OAU.⁵²⁴ According to Seroke, in a public meeting held on 20-21 December 1991, the PAC sponsored points were all rejected not in the session, instead after the session in a live TV broadcast under the pretext that the PAC “walked out of the United Patriotic Front”.⁵²⁵ This *public* meeting of 20th December 1991 had over 220 delegates from nine political parties, it was co-chaired by judges Petrus Schabert and Ismail Mahomed, with an objective to sign the declaration of certain intentions.⁵²⁶

The Pretoria Minute paved the way for the Groote Schuur Minute that ‘forced’ the immediate suspension of the ANC’s armed struggle.⁵²⁷ The PAC and APLA’s perspective was that the secret Pretoria Minute was proof that the De Klerk’s government was to continue negotiating with a military upper hand, while the liberation movement should grovel to their tune. According to Mothopeng, the ceasefire agreement entered into by the ANC was counter to the preconditions and principles set out in a declaration which South Africa’s liberation movements established in the Harare Declaration.

The Harare Declaration included the removal of all troops from townships and the intensification of liberation struggle and international pressure against the system of apartheid.⁵²⁸ The political drama of the transition period reflected some of the underlying contradictions, simmering tensions and emerging positions in the PAC,⁵²⁹ after 1992, but this was also the case within the ANC as well. For example, the ANC suspended the armed struggle unilaterally to move as fast towards a negotiated political settlement as possible, but this did not only cause trepidation within it but

⁵²⁴ P O'Malley, 'The Heart of Hope - South Africa's Transition from Apartheid to Democracy', O'Malley Archives, 14 October 1999, Found on <https://omalley.nelsonmandela.org/index.php/site/q/03lv02424/04lv02730/05lv03163/06lv03171/06lv03214.htm>

⁵²⁵ Jackie Seroke WhatsApp response to a question, 14 December 2022

⁵²⁶ N Barnard, *Peaceful revolution: Inside the War room at the Negotiations*, (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 2017), p48

⁵²⁷ N Barnard, *Peaceful revolution: Inside the War room at the Negotiations*, p 50

⁵²⁸ Organisation of African Unity, 'Harare Declaration: Declaration of the OAU Ad-hoc Committee on Southern Africa on the question of South Africa', Harare, 21 August 1989, p4. Found on https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ZA_HarareDeclaration-21Aug_1989.pdf

⁵²⁹ K Kondlo, 'From the Fringes to Fossils', p 47

placed the organisation in a tight corner when the wave of clandestine state-sponsored violence consumed black townships.⁵³⁰

The talks were subsequently suspended, the PAC criticized the negotiations and by October 1990, its President died and Clarence Makwethu took over the helm of the organisation, with Dikgang Moseneke as his deputy. These and other developments which carried over to 1992 bolstered the political posture of the PAC though the De Klerk's government and ANC would recover and run with the elite political settlement, leading to the ANC and NP's government of national unity in 1994.

APLA waging the armed struggle during the transitional negotiations

Since the announcement of 2 February 1990 when liberation movements were unbanned, APLA guerrillas had been confronting the security forces inside the country, while at the same time petrifying 'soft' targets especially on the farming areas. They had been doing this from as early as 1986. The announcement did not curtail the confrontations. Rather it created an environment for APLA leaders to intensify the war rhetoric and action. For them, it was going to continue with the struggle in different fronts, including the armed struggle because they believed it was morally right to do so.⁵³¹

Phama, based in exile, had to ensure the link between the guerrillas in exile and those inside coordinate with Mphahlele overseeing the successful implementation of all military operations through regional commanders inside the country. One operation in 1991 which comprised of guerrillas who were from Zimbabwe to South Africa via Botswana did not achieve its objective of in reaching South Africa, but they were rather arrested in Botswana. Daniel Speelman (who was amongst these guerrillas) remembers that they were supposed to be collected at the border between South Africa and Botswana, however upon their arrival at the border, SAP was 'waiting' for them with no sign of the vehicle that was to receive them. He adds, "we had to hide in the trees for a week and upon South Africa police's withdrawal, we

⁵³⁰ K Kondlo, 'From the Fringes to Fossils', pp50-51

⁵³¹ Daily Mail, 'South Africa on course to end apartheid'? , 7 August 1990

jumped back into Botswana but got arrested and placed at Gaborone maximum prison”.⁵³² After a few years, considering that it was a transitional period after De Klerk announcing the release of political prisoners and declared the release of political prisoners, Speelman and other MK guerrillas were released to South Africa. In hindsight, Speelman argued that the home going program, especially from exile, was infiltrated, cadres were sacrificed, and it seems like some people in the high command knew about these challenges and they avoided divulging certain operational information.⁵³³

Due to the political zigzags between the apartheid government and the ANC throughout the year, the negotiations stalled towards the end of 1991 because to the government sponsored violence in the townships. APLA, on the other hand, had conducted military operations and was reported to have been involved in about 48 incidents inside South Africa.⁵³⁴ The APLA Director of Operations would travel between Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa establishing units where there was none, assessing the work of some, disbanding, and changing some, if the need arose. When he went to inspect one unit in Hershel, he found that the cadres had been occupied with social pleasures of the area instead of their army tasks. He reformed the unit and appointed a new regional commander, Vusi Dolo who rejuvenated the area.⁵³⁵ In the assessment, he identified a strategic blunder which was not aligned with APLA’s military war strategy where most cadres were clogged in the metropolitan areas instead of the countryside to stretch the enemy towards the periphery. According to Mphahlele, most cadres went to the rural areas when they had nowhere else to hide and the police were hot on their heels. Zuko Hlulani, who was trained internally, says of the situation,

in the rural areas, some cadres instead of being deployed for operational attacks, they were ‘rented out’ to the local peasants and some regional commanders

⁵³² Interview with Xolile Speelman, 21 November 2022

⁵³³ Interview with Xolile Speelman, 21 November 2022

⁵³⁴ South African Police, ‘Memorandum submitted by the SAP to the Commission of Enquiry regarding the prevention of public violence and intimidation’, Port Elizabeth, 04 January 1993

⁵³⁵ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p 150

would financially benefit from that. Additionally, in the metropolitan the guerrillas were able to sustain themselves without reliance to the organisations with students of PASO being amongst the best providers of food.⁵³⁶

In urban areas, for food and other essentials, guerrillas would *fundraise* by robbing Greek, Jewish and white people's shops, while the rural areas had a potential of being a dumping site rather than military operational site.

In 1991, a small group of guerrillas from Tanzania were transported to Lesotho to assemble a unit that was to attack viciously the farmers in South Africa. The mandate of the unit was to remove the white farmers from those lands so they can be occupied by Africans.⁵³⁷ The Mantatise unit, as it was known, comprised of six guerrillas and their operations continued until most of them were arrested. Notwithstanding the mandate of the unit, other operations that the unit embarked on was raiding of supermarkets, as they did in Sterkspruit, to ensure that the guerrillas had sufficient food replenishment.

Most guerrillas who were conducting the offensive would be well dressed in the standards of western dressing code. Maseko remembers, "we were dressed in township camouflage".⁵³⁸ Kulumane, an APLA operative, also claimed that after an operation, they would hand over whatever they had repossessed to the member of the high command and the member would share it amongst the cadres so that they could take care of themselves by buying clothes and other essentials. Hlulani agrees that the guerrillas would be well dressed. However, the dress code was always influenced by the area of operation.⁵³⁹ These repossession decisions were adopted considering that after the Harare Declaration of 1989, the Zimbabwe and Tanzania governments, PAC main supporters, had decreased their financial and other support citing the irrationality of APLA's continuation of the armed struggle. Such lack of

⁵³⁶ Interview with Zuko Hlulani, Silverton, 12 December 2022

⁵³⁷ Interview with Luvuyo Max Kulumane, Gqeberha, 22 November 2022

⁵³⁸ Telephone Interview with Thapelo Maseko, APLA regional commander, 10 December 2022

⁵³⁹ Interview with Zuko Hlulani, Silverton, 12 December 2022

support from these governments resulted in the overflowing of recruits in Tanzania being starved, affected by diseases, mainly malaria and HIV-Aids.⁵⁴⁰

In December 1991, at Kempton Park's World Trade Centre, an attempt to launch peaceful negotiations was brokered between the ANC and apartheid government, and the international attention was on South Africa. Neil Barnard, a former spy official in the De Klerk's administration, says of the meeting, "Mandela who was already on course to become the country's first democratic president arrived at a buzz of ill-concealed hero worship".⁵⁴¹ African states, on the other side, who were allies to the PAC and APLA began to be an unsafe haven, then Holomisa's Transkei harboured most APLA guerrillas inside South Africa.

In the following year, in 1992, the PAC partially went to the negotiations, though a certain group within the PAC and mostly APLA leaders and guerrillas inside the country opposed the decision. APLA bases, and most of its fighting personnel, entrenched and reporting in Transkei attacks of 'soft' and 'hard' targets were being reported both in the public media and to Mphahlele, the Head of Operations. Cadres used the Mpendulo residence located at 47 AC Jordan Street in Northcrest suburb of Mthatha as their reporting base and a transit house until it was closed as an operational site due to security reasons. At the house, five school going kids accused of being APLA guerrillas were murdered by the South African security forces on 8 October 1993.⁵⁴² The results of SADF operation were broadcasted on live tv some; few hours later De Klerk announced that residence 47 AC Jordan Street in Northcrest suburb of Mthatha was a base for APLA, a PAC armed wing.⁵⁴³ The SADF operation where a SADF military hit squad shot and killed the five teens occurred a few days

⁵⁴⁰ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p145

⁵⁴¹ N Barnard, *Peaceful revolution: Inside the War room at the Negotiations*, (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 2017), p 15

⁵⁴² T. Bell, "Fighting because only the truth can bring peace". 11 October 2011, found on <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/sunday-times-1107/20091011/282020438351442> Access 01 June 2020.

⁵⁴³ O Dlanga, 'Analysing the curation of collective memory in post-apartheid South Africa: the case of the Mpendulo brothers' massacre', Research Report, University of Pretoria, 2020, p7

before De Klerk received a joint Nobel peace prize for ending apartheid with Mandela.⁵⁴⁴ The teenagers were executed in a 27 minute-long raid at the residence.⁵⁴⁵

Various APLA units, included the Mantatise, attacked farms in different areas including in Komga where a farmstead was burnt down but no fatalities were reported. Also in the Free State, a Ficksburg old age home was bombed by three APLA guerrillas, Lerato Khotle, Phila Dolo and Kulumane, with Danside attack being conducted in December 1992.⁵⁴⁶ An Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) member was disarmed of his pistol and killed by an APLA guerrilla in an unsanctioned APLA operation in the Engcobo area. The pistol, according to the operative, had an AWB insignia and he was arrested with the firearm a few hours later. “When I was at the TRC for amnesty of the Boere operation”, Kulumane recounts, “the pistol which was evidence presented was changed and I was accused of lying, leading to my prison card being written *veroordeel*, [condemned]”.⁵⁴⁷

APLA guerrillas inside the country continued with their assignment, a confrontational mission against the people whom they considered kept the oppressive system intact, however, no serious operations were being reported or claimed in ‘small towns’, especially in the Karoo area. The military action taking place inside South Africa stirred an appetite amongst other guerrillas who were in Zimbabwe to want to come inside South Africa and fight since they felt they were deliberately stalled by some members of the exile High Command. One operative stated that they were frustrated by the continuous call up instructions for courses that they had already completed and the lack of clear briefing on when the infiltration inside the country would be done. They further claimed that some exile High Command members in Zimbabwe were only known for drinking whiskey and smoking cigars.⁵⁴⁸

⁵⁴⁴ C. McGreal, “Apartheid-era murder of sleeping teenagers returns to haunt De Klerk”. 6 August 2007, Found at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/aug/06/southafrica.topstories3> accessed on 01 June 2020.

⁵⁴⁵ S. Majangaza, “Slain twins mom in limbo”, 8 October 2011, Found at <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/daily-dispatch/20111008/page/8/textview> accessed on 01 June 2020.

⁵⁴⁶ Truth and Reconciliation Commission Amnesty Committee, ‘application in terms of section 18 of the promotion of national unity and reconciliation act, no.34 of 1995’, 4 May 1999, found on <https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/decisions/1999/ac990182.htm>.

⁵⁴⁷ Interview with Luvuyo Max Kulumane, Gqeberha, 22 November 2022

⁵⁴⁸ Interview with an APLA operative, name withheld, 12 December 2022

At the time of the heightened negotiations, which was known as CODESA 2, cadres from exile kept on coming into the *front* to fight. Amongst them was a group of five which arrived at a safe house in Transkei unexpectedly. Some from the five cadres were then placed in the special operations unit, which was responsible for very hazardous operations of stealing ammunition and guns from police and army sites, conducting high valued operations like that of St James church and Heidelberg tavern in Western Cape, the attempt to blow a fuel tank in West Bank in East London, including the assassination of *askaris*.⁵⁴⁹

During the political upheaval of the period, a government sponsored violence engulfed the townships between the Inkatha supporters, who were predominantly Zulu speaking, against the UDF members, who were isiXhosa speaking. Maseko, an APLA regional commander who arrived from Lesotho in Diepkloof to assess some of the units, was almost caught in the crossfire, he says of the ordeal,

I arrived late at night in the area, I found myself surrounded by a number of people carrying weapons and they seem like they were ready to kill me. They asked who am I and whether I am *umdlwembe*. I told them kemoSotho and they sought for proof, fortunately my Lesotho passport was stamped the previous day at the Lesotho border. They were convinced and asked me the destination of my journey, I informed them and accompanied me to the house with a warning that I should not walk at night there. That evening, I appreciated the Lesotho passport because it had saved me from being hacked to death.⁵⁵⁰

Many of internal APLA cadres were suspicious that the PAC was going to opt to partake in the negotiations, which it did after secret meetings between Cyril Ramaphosa and Roelf Meyer managed to bring the 'warring' parties back onto CODESA on 15 May 1992.⁵⁵¹ Sabelo Phama, with his internally based members of the high command, was not persuaded with the suspension of armed struggle on the

⁵⁴⁹ APLA cadre, name withheld, 12 December 2022

⁵⁵⁰ Telephone Interview with Themba Maseko, Pretoria, 10 December 2022

⁵⁵¹ Stellenbosch University, 'The road to democracy in South Africa', 16 September 2019, found on <https://study-democracy.sun.ac.za/study-guide/part-1intoduction/the-road-to-democracy-in-south-africa/>

bases of negotiations. Zuko Hlulani, says the approach was always that the ceasing of hostilities was supposed to include SADF instead of it being a cessation that is forced towards MK and APLA.⁵⁵²

This form of approach, according to Hlulani, was going to create a 'neutral venue' militarily and would then 'secure' the ballot for a free and fair elections. The neutral venue phenomenon, according to Hlulani, did not merely refer to a location as it was reported in the media at the time, however its meaning could have been extended to a location. When the NP and ANC, the main players in negotiations, did not succumb to the proposal, with the political leadership of PAC under Makwetu, Moseneke and Benny Alexander (alias Khoisan X), warming up to an elite political settlement there was an acceleration of the guerrilla war to force Boers rather to negotiate with the PAC.⁵⁵³ For APLA, though at this time the political developments had been clearly on the side of the ANC in coalition with NP, they still envisaged a kind of negotiation that encapsulated a strategy understood as 'bark and bite', meaning that PAC negotiates while its army was fully intact.⁵⁵⁴

The resuscitation of CODESA in May 1992 produced a Multiparty Negotiating Forum (MPNF), which the PAC was part of. This paved a smooth 'transition' towards 27 April 1994 that subsequently resulted in Mandela's inauguration as South Africa's democratically elected president on 10 May 1994. The period of the CODESA 2 talks began to manifest the negotiation versus non-negotiation contradictions within the PAC and its army, which Professor Kondlo argues that they had always been the feature of the organization since 1990, an argument that is contested by some in the PAC army. At the height of CODESA 2, the political leadership apparently was breaking ranks with the approach of some section of the army, especially that of PAC Secretary of Defence who was also the army commander.

Towards the end of 1992, irrespective of the negotiations, political developments which were argued that they were represented by a minority which held

⁵⁵² Interview with Zuko Hlulani, Silverton, 12 December 2022

⁵⁵³ Interview with Lubabalo Stemele, Virtual, 12 December 2022

⁵⁵⁴ Interview with Thembinkosi Henge, Telephone, 12 December 2022

the levers of administrative control of the party, Sabelo Phama announced 1993 as 'The year of the Great Storm'. The declarations of years by PAC have been a *revolutionary* tradition throughout the reign of Chairperson Johnson Mlambo. In 1986 speaking on Azania combat, an official APLA bulleting, Mlambo stated, "1986 has been a year with momentous events with APLA having scored great success in expanding its ranks and training the masses therefore we declare 1987 a Year of Arming the People".⁵⁵⁵ According to Maseko, Phama informed APLA guerrillas that they must continue with the armed struggle and this was a consistent attitude he held since his appointment to the post in the late 1980s.⁵⁵⁶ Phama who was to enter and depart South Africa with limited detection from the apartheid security personnel, was identified as the key figure in the nourished PAC's militant rhetoric of the period which was condemned by some Christian religious churches.⁵⁵⁷ As the criticism against APLA operations and their continuation of armed struggle intensified, since the unbanning of liberation movements by De Klerk's government, they on the other hand believed their course towards liberation laid in ensuring that the master-slave dialectic must be overcome. It did not matter what the OAU, religious churches and political opponents were postulating, "it was morally right for them to fight until death".⁵⁵⁸

The Operation Great Storm: The Highest Form of Negotiations

The character of the transitional negotiation period was uncertain and had multiple layers that defined it. There was an urge for the construction of the 'new' society from the 'old'. According to Professor Madoda Fikeni, the appetite was there from all to have a new society, however, the birth of the new took long while the perishing of the old took a while.⁵⁵⁹ For the PAC, which sought the new society, the death of the old society meant the birth of a new Azania instead of new South Africa. Such a society, according to it, could not be achieved without confrontational methods-

⁵⁵⁵ Combat Reporter, 'Mlambo New Year Message: 1987 is the Year of Arming the People', *Azania Combat Issue* 3, December 1982, p3

⁵⁵⁶ Telephone Interview with Thapelo Maseko, APLA regional commander, 10 December 2022

⁵⁵⁷ K Kondlo, 'From the Fringes to Fossils' p 54

⁵⁵⁸ Daily Mail, 'South Africa on course to end apartheid?', 7 August 1990

⁵⁵⁹ S. Fikeni, 'The Polokwane moment and South Africa's democracy at the crossroads'. in P Kagwanja and K Kondlo (eds), *State of the nation. South Africa 2008*, (Cape Town, HSRC Press, 2008), p. 34.

armed struggle. Since the 1960s, the PAC, as the custodian of the Africanist political tradition of the 1940s, sought and politically confronted white settler colonial apartheid regime; at first through peaceful means, then through rudimentary military approaches, and later through conventional guerrilla tactics.

The apartheid regime, according to Letlapa Mphahlele's submission at the TRC, was the representative of white people (the Afrikaners), who are criminals and invaders [in South Africa].⁵⁶⁰ Using APLA, its military wing, the PAC clashed with settler colonial apartheid regime, however, it restricted its targets to individuals, armed forces, and some economic transmitters rather than buildings. In the TRC, one of the APLA commanders, Dan Mofokeng argued that their military operations strategy in the 1990s sought to derive a political and psychological benefit for the organisation [PAC].⁵⁶¹ Henge, an APLA operative in the Karoo area, gravitates towards a similar inference as Mofokeng. He agreed that the deeds of APLA desired to compel the apartheid regime to directly negotiate with the PAC instead of the ANC, IFP and other sixteen 'political' parties.

The strategy failed, considering that the political developments had already took a certain foundation when the guerrilla terror was being intensified. Instead, APLA operations in the "Year of Great Storm" and years preceding that were 'disruptive'. They were disruptive in the sense that the 'talks about talks' had laid the foundation, the CODESA sessions had somewhat took some form of resolutions and the appetite of a 'new' and 'free' from apartheid South Africa was stirred amongst the population domestically, continentally, and globally.

Operation Great Storm is hailed as the period where APLA had made a significant feature in the consciousness of the people inside South Africa. Until it launched its campaign, Jerelyn Eddings says, it rated little attention in South Africa's political debate.⁵⁶² O'Malley ascertains the period as APLA's greatest active era,

⁵⁶⁰ South African Broadcasting Corporation, 'TRC Episode 69, Part 02: Director of Operations', *SABC News*, 2011 June 13, YouTube video 12:41, found on <https://youtu.be/PeuZofA5wbg> accessed on 15 December 2022

⁵⁶¹ Dan Mofokeng submission on TRC, accessed 15 December 2022

⁵⁶² J Eddings, 'Radical blacks in South Africa attacking white civilians in terrorist campaign', *Baltimore Sun*, 13 December 1992, found on <https://baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1992-12-13-1992348026-story.html>

where an upsurge of military attacks was visited on generally civilian targets, predominantly on the Western and Eastern Cape, including the farm attacks in the Free State.⁵⁶³ Mphahlele, APLA Chief of Operations, praises the period as “a time when APLA was engraving itself on the Azanian military landscape”,⁵⁶⁴ while Maxwell Humbelani Nemadzivhanani, a PAC national executive member during great storm, branded Operation Great Storm as the “highest form of negotiations”.⁵⁶⁵

The offensive, which stretched from late 1980s until mid-1990s, was deemed a political necessity by PAC and APLA. However, this necessity was reported in 1997 by the South African Press Association (SAPA) as a ghost that returned to haunt PAC and APLA. The SAPA headline read, “PAC’s (APLA) great storm returns to haunt it as it seeks a new political identity through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission”.⁵⁶⁶ The Operation Great Storm was conceived at the backdrop of the negotiation transition period, and it was preceded by many other military operations from 1986 which initially focused on security forces, but later directed to civilians. These APLA attacks were widely condemned by the apartheid regime, the media and many moderate citizens and organisations, including Chris Hani, the Secretary General of the SACP and disbanded MK commander.

According to former cadres of APLA, its attacks sought to expand to a national spectrum, though in practice they were concentrated prominently on metropolitan areas neglecting the countryside. It was only late in 1993 that the Karoo area, a semi-rural area, came under the sting of APLA cadres’ when Thembinkosi Henge and ‘Mandla’⁵⁶⁷ attacked a Translux bus.⁵⁶⁸ From the beginning of the 90s, APLA claimed operations and attacks that occurred in Westonaria in the Transvaal, Batho police

⁵⁶³ P O'Malley, 'The Heart of Hope - South Africa's Transition from Apartheid to Democracy', O'Malley Archives, 14 October 1999, Found on <https://omalley.nelsonmandela.org/index.php/site/q/03lv02424/04lv02730/05lv03163/06lv03171/06lv03214.htm>

⁵⁶⁴ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p160

⁵⁶⁵ P. Laurence, 'Arms and the PAC Man'. *The Canberra Times*. 1993: p21

⁵⁶⁶ South African Press Association, 'PAC's Great Storm Returns to haunt it', 29 August 1997, found on <https://justice.gov.za/trc/media/1997/9708/s970829a.htm#:~:text=The%201993%20offensive%20aimed%20at,Azanian%20People's%20Liberation%20Arm%20cadres>. Accessed 15 December 2022

⁵⁶⁷ Real name withheld.

⁵⁶⁸ Telephone Interview with Thembinkosi Henge, , 12 December 2022

station in Bloemfontein, Korsten in Port Elizabeth and Lady Grey in Herschel; Khayelitsha in Cape Town, Port Alfred in Natal, and Spur restaurant in Queenstown; in Vereeniging in the Vaal, Newcastle in Natal, and East London, including the Eikenhof operation that was improperly attributed to Sipho Gavin, Siphiwe Bholo and Boy Ndaweni of the ANC instead of APLA's Phila Martin Dolo, who is currently a lieutenant colonel in the SANDF.⁵⁶⁹

In the course of the study, it seemed that most of APLA's military operations that are 'on record' are those that were presented at the TRC, with a specific focus on the famous ones that included the bombing and shooting on 25 July 1993 at St James church in Kenilworth. These 'famous attacks' victims were mostly white people, and the St James church attack was also condemned by the PAC and some members of APLA High Command which they distanced the army from the attack.⁵⁷⁰ One wonders if the South African media reported these operations due to the colour of the victims or it was mere coincidence. It should be noted that during the Paarl uprising, the South African media 'hyped' the uprising that resulted in the death of two white civilians and neglected Mafekeng's uprising of 1959. The attacks on white civilians and the response of the apartheid regime forced the government to take violence seriously, since a large number of Black people were being killed in the township by police without any concern. One delegate remarked at the TRC regarding the situation, within the oppressed African communities, it was seen to be very right because it was at the time when there was a lot of violence committed against ordinary innocent people.⁵⁷¹

Considering the extent to which political violence had engulfed the country during transitional negotiation period, with APLA's confrontations, South African

⁵⁶⁹ IOL newspaper, "APLA man seeks amnesty for Eikenhof attack". *IOL*: 2000. Accessed date 2020 November 04. Accessed on <https://www.iol.co.za/travel/south-africa/apla-man-seeks-amnesty-for-eikenhof-attack-44552>.

⁵⁷⁰ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p202

⁵⁷¹ Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 'Armed forces hearing PAC/APLA, 7 October 1997, Cape Town

Police had made a barrier around Transkei since March 1993,⁵⁷² then SADF initiated Operation Iron Fist. Through this operation, the regime devised a possible ‘retaliation’ on the killing of white civilians and farmers when they invaded Transkei and killed unarmed children at the Mpendulo residence in Mthatha Northcrest on 8 October 1993 at *the graveyard*- a name given to the house by APLA cadres. “The killing of the teens pained and angered us” remembered Henge, “and I received a call that we must hit back, which we did very strong”.⁵⁷³ “Our instructions after the Mpendulo massacre were for APLA to ‘hit hard’ irrespective of the target was a civilian or a security personnel”, reminisced Hlulani about the aftermath.

After the massacre in Northcrest, a rapid increase of APLA operations was witnessed. The first was the operation at Gardiner Street in Durban on 30 November where an APLA cadre was killed, another is the Crazy Disco operation in Newcastle on 14 December, then the Heidelberg tavern attack of 30 December. All these operations could be classified as retaliatory attacks on top of being politically motivated, therefore confirming Henge’s assertion that as APLA operatives the massacre of the teens saddened and angered them.

In December 1993, Sabelo Phama was infiltrated back into the Transkei with the help of General Holomisa, while the PAC political leadership was devising ways of approaching negotiations and planning for a conference in Mthatha from 15 December 1993. *Sabs* (Phama), as he was affectionately known by his peers, announced on Radio Transkei that the PAC continues to hold the principle that “one must negotiate from a position of strength”,⁵⁷⁴ and that the following year [1994] was to be identified by APLA as ‘The Year of the Offensive’.⁵⁷⁵ According to the sources, at the instance of the public announcement on Radio Transkei on 31 December 1993, the PAC and APLA had not yet suspended its armed struggle, even though there were

⁵⁷² P O’Malley, “Chapter7- Political Violence in the Era of Negotiations and Transition, 1990-1994”. *O’Malley: The heart of hope*. 1998. Accessed on <https://omalley.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02167/04lv02264/05lv02335/06lv02357/07lv02372/08lv02379.htm> accessed date: 2020 November 11.

⁵⁷³ Telephone Interview with Thembinkosi Henge, 12 December 2022

⁵⁷⁴ P O’Malley, ‘Chapter7- Political Violence in the Era of Negotiations and Transition, 1990-1994’

⁵⁷⁵ Zuko Hlulani, Lubabalo Stemele & Thembinkosi Henge

internal and external commentators who raised thoughtful objections about the continuation of the armed struggle.

Externally, the Tanzanian and Zimbabwean governments, who were still harbouring a hefty number of APLA cadres, objected to the continuation of the armed struggle. According to Zimbabwe based APLA Chief of Staff Barney Hlatshwayo, most African States, including APLA's main backers, were irritated by PAC's continuation of armed struggle and therefore had reduced their support.⁵⁷⁶ The reduction of support was a form of exerting pressure on PAC and APLA to cease its armed struggle to a point that Zimbabwe became a very useful actor in the cessation of hostilities between APLA and South African government.⁵⁷⁷

The strategy managed to split APLA High Command on the issue of cessation. The Year of Great Storm ended with APLA under the Command of Sabelo Phama having an understanding that the armed struggle continues while there was another meeting that was held in Zimbabwe with other APLA commanders and PAC leaders who agreed to a moratorium on 'violence' and armed struggle. One section of APLA High Command had settled to the cessation, while another High Command group, especially one operating from Transkei, had not agreed to the cessation. The divisions within the army spelt the beginning of an end to a once revered PAC's guerrilla movement and some of its cadres.

Things fall apart: Beginning of the end.

The New Year opened with an operation which occurred on 4 January 1994 where APLA cadres attacked and robbed a Nedbank branch at Caledon Street in Uitenhage. A month later, on 10 February 1994, PAC confirmed that Sabelo Phama- its Secretary for Defence and Commander of APLA "has been killed in a car accident

⁵⁷⁶ L Mphahlele, 'Child of this soil', p152

⁵⁷⁷ K Kondlo, 'From the Fringes to Fossils: The Pan Africanis Congress of Azania and the negotiated transition to Democracy in South Africa. 1990-1994', p55

in Tanzania after a car he was travelling in collided with a truck near Morogoro”.⁵⁷⁸ A day later, Los Angeles (LA) Times also published a headline ‘*South Africa Guerrilla Leader Dies in Crash*’. According to Stemele, prior to the departure of Phama back to Tanzania from his infiltration in the Transkei, he briefed the guerrillas about issues on the political front and maintained that there must be a mutual cessation of hostilities, meaning restraining of all military forces, including SADF and not APLA and MK alone. Secondly, he said, there should be an absolute unconditional amnesty for all [army soldiers], there should be free and fair elections, and that there should be an integration of all forces not with the standards determined by the SADF.⁵⁷⁹

The death of Sabelo Phama presented APLA cadres who were operating inside the country with a different challenge, and several became resentful of the whole negotiation process as they continued with the armed struggle. The resentful cadres placed the death of the Commander squarely on the negotiations. They believed that Phama was assassinated as he was perceived as the stumbling block to a negotiated settlement. The death demoralized other ground forces because they observed Phama as a reliable, upright, and visionary leader.⁵⁸⁰ After the demise of Phama, the PAC’s National Working Committee announced a suspension of armed struggle, and the pronouncement was communicated by Clarence Mlamli Makwetu, who was the PAC President in 1994. Immediately after that, as time was against the PAC as they were late comers in the mix, an election campaign was in full swing in the political front.

The announcement to suspend armed struggle in January 1994 by political leadership was surprising to many APLA cadres as it was firstly communicated in the media rather than to the army leaders-at least those who were based in the Transkei. Mphahlele remembers that he heard of the news when a news reader droned, “the PAC has suspended its armed struggle, the organisation’s leader, Mr Clarence

⁵⁷⁸ A. P. News, ‘Black Nationalist Guerrilla Leader Killed in Car Crash’, Johannesburg, 10 February 1994, found on <https://apnews.com/article/936280a2e9bd4bb991422aa7a4fae95a> ::Accessed on 15 December 2022

⁵⁷⁹ Interview with Lubabalo Stemele, Virtual, 12 December 2022

⁵⁸⁰ Interview with Zuko Hlulani, Silverton, 12 December 2022

Makwetu told a press conference in Johannesburg today”.⁵⁸¹ That as it may, some APLA operations and attacks continued even after the suspension announcement. The PAC claimed this was a problem of communication because some cadres had not yet heard of the announcement. Letlapa disagrees with the reasons of the lack of communication, and he says it was a considered approach which he and other members of as the High Command in Transkei agreed that they were to defy the order of suspension of armed struggle. He writes, “everyone agreed to defy the PAC leadership. In a short meeting we had, we agreed to formally inform all the cadres across Azania to ignore and continue with their operations”.⁵⁸² The decision to defy meant that the cadres operating inside South Africa will no longer have the political protection. Hlatshwayo recalled of the period while in Zimbabwe, “the political leadership made a decision to suspend armed struggle, but then we had people who did not want to comply, it was our duty as commanders to ensure that people complied”.⁵⁸³ Hlatshwayo further stated that his visit[s] (*probably to APLA units*), was to try to convince cadres that they are only correct if they have a political cover, if they do not have such protection, then they are criminals.⁵⁸⁴

One APLA operative who was based in the Transkei problematizes Hlatshwayo’s assertion and he enquires whether the PAC election campaign which resumed after the funeral of Phama was Hlatshwayo’s way of ‘visiting’ the defiant units? A further enquiry is made by the operative on the meaning of ‘ensuring that people complied’ since they do not remember him coming to inform them about the cessation of the PAC’s armed struggle.

In the Transkei, where internally based High Command was and where most APLA cadres were established, for months after Sabs’ death and funeral, mutiny was committed amongst cadres. According to Thapelo Maseko, a split in the army increased between those who supported the negotiations and those who did not, or

⁵⁸¹ L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil*, p170

⁵⁸² L Mphahlele, *Child of this soil* , p171

⁵⁸³ Interview conducted by Lynda von den Steinen with Barney Hlatshwayo

⁵⁸⁴ L Von den Steinen, “Experiencing the armed struggle: The Soweto generation and after’, Doctoral Thesis at University of Cape Town, 2007, p288

were perceived as such, and that split led to drive-by shootings where APLA cadres were killing other APLA cadres.⁵⁸⁵ Some had to flee from Mthatha, Port St Johns and other hide outs to hitch hike back to their homes because of the chaos that ensued in Transkei which extended until August 1994.

Five APLA cadres were reportedly killed either by TDF soldiers or MK cadres in Port St Johns while they were preparing a journey away from Transkei. The reasons for this killing are unclear. Amongst the murdered was Faltenjwa Nkanyenzi from Beaufort West. His decomposed remains and those of his comrades were found near a riverbank in Port St Johns and they were buried by APLA cadres in an unmarked mass grave next to Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe's gravesite in Graaf Reinet [eRhafu]. The cadres who conducted the funeral claim that due to the chaos that was in Transkei, they could not leave their comrades there, they opted to bury them at the feet of Robert Sobukwe so they can be remembered as '*amajoni kaSobukwe*', soldiers of Sobukwe.

During the dissipation of APLA, some commanders and cadres went underground, with the intention to dodge the unknown. Others got arrested on route to their hometowns, while others went to hide with some family members. APLA cadres got scattered away from Transkei at different moments and took diverse journey. For example, due to mistrust of his comrades and what they could do to him, Zuko Hlulani went to the rural home instead of his original home, Henge set off into hiding in Pampierstad, Stemele 'repossessed' guns and ammunition from TDF, then returned home to King Williams Town, while Letlapa Mphahlele, the operations' Chief of APLA inside the country, 'disappeared' until it was later discovered that he is in Lesotho. Cadres who had not been in Mthatha to witness and hear of the muting, sustained the armed struggle operations however had no way of reporting to the commanders since the command structure had decimated as well. The ultimate era of APLA and its armed struggle military operations ended abruptly when things fell apart.

⁵⁸⁵ Telephone Interview with Thapelo Maseko, APLA regional commander, 10 December 2022

With the intention to not only communicate its political stance, APLA's operations sought to 'interrupt' the events of the day. They disagreed with the method towards the democratic dispensation. While having two different conceptions of freedom, APLA and the AWB were disrupting the processes leading up to the negotiated settlement. On 25 June 1993 the AWB stormed in at Kempton World Trade Centre and invaded the multi-Party negotiations. However, APLA had resumed the disruptions as early as 1986. By 1993, it was at its peak. Unfortunately, APLA failed to forestall the processes but significantly proved a courageous, significant, and formidable opponent not only to the Apartheid security forces but to the white civilians and its media publications which sought to ignore it.

The *Financial Mail* recognised the upsurge of APLA attacks, while the police tended to dismiss APLA, the guerrilla activities grew popular that the highly censored apartheid print media featured APLA to a greater extent in their reports. The significance of APLA in the public consciousness was also observed in the South Africa's National Soccer League (NSL) currently ABSA Premier League, when Joas Magolego, a former Mamelodi Sundowns defender, due to his swift attacking and playing tactics was nicknamed APLA. Additionally, in 1993, Pretoria City football club that was scheduled to play against Mthatha Bucks at Independence stadium cancelled its game due to high intensity of APLA cadres' operations.⁵⁸⁶ A source that did not want to be revealed said about APLA, "as young police officials, we were constantly warned about the existence of APLA, and that those guys operated in the shadows".⁵⁸⁷ It is plausible to submit that the significance of APLA during the 1990s had enlarged.

When there exists a reflection on liberation struggle historiography and public memorialisation in the post-apartheid South Africa, although APLA failed in its objectives, it should be of significance that it is not disregarded. Lynda Von den Steinen illustrates about APLA in the 1990s,

Inside the country, APLA cadres carried out a number of tasks. Their units had the responsibility to recruit and train new members, capture arms,

⁵⁸⁶ Telephone conversation with Simphiwe Nofuma, 30 December 2022

⁵⁸⁷ Name withheld, interview conducted in Pretoria on 14 December 2022

ammunition, and funds for the continuation of the struggle and carry out operations. Policemen, farmers, and even white civilians faced attack from the APLA soldiers. While the media and the more moderate South Africans vilified their policies, the attacks often sparked enthusiasm and support from the more militant masses. In the early 1990s, APLA came to its own. With MK's armed struggle suspended, APLA remained the only armed wing still operating. With many high profile attacks that received copious media coverage, the star rose in the minds of many people. Their popular slogan 'one settler, one bullet' entered the national lexicon and drew much support from more militant South Africans opposed to the compromises promised in the negotiations with apartheid government.⁵⁸⁸

As an army that draws from the tradition of confrontation, APLA's strategies and rules on what comprised a target differed remarkably from those of its counterpart, the MK. APLA claimed superiority to MK for they claimed that they were attacking apartheid personnel in the form of police and soldiers instead of "just blowing up symbols".⁵⁸⁹ Such manifests the rivalry between these movements who viewed themselves as competitors, and therefore, whichever one emerged victorious, it was to strangle the survival of the other. Notwithstanding this reality, most ground operatives and trained cadres from both PAC and MK had a cordial respect for each other. The popularity and public support that APLA received during the transition period could not be converted to PAC's first democratic elections on April 1994, and the ANC emerged triumphant to lead the post-apartheid government, while APLA had to find their way in the post-apartheid South Africa.

Conclusion

The political manoeuvres from De Klerk in the beginning of the decade were so efficient that the liberation movements inside and outside South Africa were caught

⁵⁸⁸ L Von den Steinen, *'Experiencing the armed struggle: The Soweto generation and after'*, Doctoral Thesis at University of Cape Town, 2007. pp247-248

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., p 260

surprised. While the PAC and APLA cadres continued to operate from underground since they had not suspended the armed struggle, this provided a space for APLA to come to her own. Various operations and attacks conducted by APLA in the quest to force concessions from the apartheid regime did not yield positive results, however, public sympathy and support was gained. At the beginning of the CODESA talks, there was no ambiguity of APLA and PAC position in relation to the continuation of the armed struggle though there were intellectuals and African States who were not supportive of the continuation. The political developments dramatically moved, South Africa was engulfed by violence and confusion. APLA initiated 'Operation Great Storm' which saw the upsurge of its popularity. Until the death of Mothopeng and later Phama, APLA had gained an unprecedented support from the masses and had executed efficiently most of its operations with limited resources. These attacks did not yield the expected results, however, remained to some a blemish, while to some they were the pride of their youth. The army fell apart, its cadres disintegrated, others were arrested, while some paid the ultimate price.

Chapter 7: 1994 and Beyond

Introduction

For many, 1994 came with the revived hope of a new South Africa as the dates for the first democratic elections had been promulgated. For APLA, though Phama had declared it the 'Year of the Great Offensive', it proved to be a year of the beginning of disaster, the decimation of APLA. Through the pressure from both internally and externally, the armed wing of PAC could not rise above the euphoria of the elections even their most senior commanders were swept by the mood. The death and burial of Sabelo Phama exposed the army, the announcement of the suspension of the PAC's armed struggle that was disobeyed by many cadres and some High Command members in the Transkei, led to the muting of cadres. Those in exile were repatriated and dropped off at various military camps and let loose to fend for themselves. F.W De Klerk's political manoeuvres benefitted the former SADF members in the new defence force, but it was mostly hell for those from MK and APLA. Many ex-combatants clung onto the harassing environment, others could not tolerate and resigned, and others demobilised voluntarily and involuntary. The majority of the demobilised found themselves living in abject poverty, being homeless, and involved in crime. Their sacrifice seemed to have not yielded positive outcomes in their personal lives and in the public memory. APLA cadres who at most instances were regarded as smarter as and more disciplined than their counterparts in the MK, have found little to no recognition in the post-apartheid liberation struggle history and public memory. They were once affected by the politics of negotiated settlement, currently they are affected by politics of memory.

The politics of memory have been entrenched by the dominant political party through various commemorations, curations of statues and other forms to influence public perception. In the Eastern Cape alone, more than five monuments and commemoration sites have been developed since the dawn of democracy, but none is dedicated to Sabelo Phama, APLA commander. In this chapter we proved these disparities by citing media reports that reflected that most public commemorations

benefit the ANC. The final part of the chapter engages what is to be done to preserve post-apartheid liberation public memory. Democratization, openness, and collectivism should be central in the curation and construction of post-apartheid liberation history and historiography.

Home coming and its realities

Paul Laurence of *The Canberra Times* reported that the envisaged path towards democratic South Africa and an end to apartheid was being “under attack by radicals on the Right and the Left”.⁵⁹⁰ This view emanated from the assassination of Chris Thembesile Hani of SACP, and APLA’s Operation Great Storm of 1993. These acts coincided with the emergence of the Interim Constitution of 1993, which was seen as a breakthrough towards a democratic South Africa. However, in a remarkable turn of events, a new South Africa arose from the democratic election of April 1994 where “a truly South African project that seeks to draw in as many people as possible to reflect a truly national character”.⁵⁹¹ The Interim Constitution, amongst other things, made it possible for the establishment of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) on 27 April 1994, and in broad essential policies, it called for the ‘new’ force to be balanced, modern and technologically advanced, and central to this policy, was the integration of the statutory and non-statutory forces (NSF) into SANDF.⁵⁹²

As a policy and newly established defence force were being adjusted, APLA was reeling in the chaos of the death of their military commander, Sabelo Phama, who had died and was buried in March 1994. The turmoil included the slaughtering of one another as cadres in the Transkei, the arrest and hiding of internally based commanders and cadres alike, including the exerted pressure from Tanzania and Zimbabwe governments on APLA High Command to close exile camps and marshal

⁵⁹⁰ P. Laurence, ‘Nation on the Brink, *The Canberra Times*.1993: p3

⁵⁹¹ B. Magubane, “The Road to Democracy in South Africa”. *South African Democracy Education Trust*: 2004. Accessed on http://www.sadet.co.za/about_us.html: access date, 2020 June 19

⁵⁹² van de Waag, *A Military History of Modern South Africa*, pp284-285.

their troops to South Africa. Sabelo Phama's funeral was organized jointly by PAC/APLA and the Transkei government through the TDF. Various leaders of the PAC and APLA were in attendance, including, Dan Mofokeng, APLA Political Commissar, and Hlatshwayo, the Chief of Staff. They formed part of the High Command that was based in Zimbabwe and after the funeral, there is no proof that they returned to Zimbabwe. While many of the cadres and leaders of APLA attended the funeral, Mphahlele was not in attendance as he was trying to evade arrest by the SAP.

Arthur Tseleng states of the historic changes in the country, "APLA cadres were fetched from Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Uganda by SADF military planes to return to home.⁵⁹³ An anomaly was that the very military planes that were used to transport SADF to pursue APLA and MK cadres in exile were used to transport them back home. According to Hlatshwayo, this was a political decision, considering that politics precedes the gun, and secondly, due to the lack of funds to transport APLA cadres from their camps into South Africa.⁵⁹⁴ The cadres (APLA and MK) who were flown from Tanzania landed in Hoedspruit air force base on 26 May 1994 where they spend a month at the military base, then were released to their respective homes.⁵⁹⁵ Another cohort of cadres who were mainly stationed in Zimbabwe returned to South Africa during 1996, and others in 1998 two years after the members of the High Command had been in the country. The cadres in Hoedspruit were given R350.00 instead of the UNHRC-stipulated R13000.00 to go to their homes and beyond that, many cadres had to fend for themselves.⁵⁹⁶

For many cadres in exile, either at the camps or elsewhere, it was a relief to set their feet on the home soil and see some of their long-missed families. Lerumo Kalako expressed his joy and remarked "it was good to be back and sitting in South

⁵⁹³ Arthur Tseleng comment on APLA @60 years anniversary, 29 September 2021

⁵⁹⁴ Interview conducted by Mphai Mabote with Barney Hlatshwayo and Xola Tyamzashe, *APLA @60 Anniversary Webinar Series*, 29 September 2021

⁵⁹⁵ Interview conducted by Mphai Mabote with Xola Tyamzashe, *APLA @60 Anniversary Webinar Series*, 29 September 2021

⁵⁹⁶ I Mugodi, *Remember Me!*, (Makhado, Vhakolo Press, 2018), p 35

Africa again, when we were in prison, we did not think it will be so soon”.⁵⁹⁷ Zola Bongco also remembered, “on the 26 June 1994 when I came back to South Africa it was one of the happiest moments of my life”.⁵⁹⁸ The families of the cadres were ecstatic to witness some of their sons and daughters still alive. Various homecoming ceremonies and celebrations were organised, however not all families had the joy of meeting their children alive. Equally, not all cadres received happy welcoming receptions since some of their loved ones had perished. An example is that of a woman who recollected her heartbreak on arrival at her home. She says she was excited that she was going to see her mother however when she got home and went to her mother’s bedroom, she realized that she had died a few years ago, and she became numb and angry.⁵⁹⁹

For some cadres, it was not the family members who had perished, but there was no home to return to. One man recalled his ordeal and recounted that his family had been decimated, the mother was deceased, and he had no stable home and had to seek refuge at the aunt’s house.⁶⁰⁰ The APLA exile returnees experienced the return to South Africa differently and some found their families in terrible conditions than when they left them. For many cadres, who operated inside the country, their return home had some or similar outcomes to those returning from exile. The struggle for subsistence and other needs ensued, and troubles of integration and lack of ‘proper’ organizational thoughtfulness for the cadres led to the usage of repossession skills for criminal activities.

A legion of APLA cadres that were operating inside the country was subsequently arrested, and many were condemned to prison sentences that ranged from thirty-five to eighty years; while others remained in hiding until it was safe to join the integration processes. Sipho Nxusana, an APLA cadre, was arrested in 1993 for killing an unnamed white farmer in 1989, he was released from prison in 2017 after

⁵⁹⁷ Von den Steinen, ‘Experiencing the armed struggle’ , p302

⁵⁹⁸ Von den Steinen, ‘Experiencing the armed struggle’ , p302

⁵⁹⁹ M Zonke, *Exiles and Homecoming: The untold stories*, (Johannesburg, Heinemann), 1995

⁶⁰⁰ Von den Steinen, ‘Experiencing the armed struggle’ ,p304

spending 27 years in prison.⁶⁰¹ The political process of the 'new' South Africa was moving with a rapid speed and a need for a National Peacekeeping Force (NPKF) was established. APLA cadres were left out of the NPKF, which was the initial test of integration. The NPKF comprised members from SADF, MK and some from the Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei forces (TBVC), and its main training base was at De Brug military camp near Bloemfontein.⁶⁰² It is at the De Brug that some APLA cadres went to register themselves for integrating into the newly established SANDF. Xola Tyamzashe remembers that while they were at the De Brug, Welile Mafilika, an operative in the Great Storm Operation, was still being 'hunted' by the Afrikaner security personnel, and he had to be hidden with the MK cadres who were already conscripted into the NPKF.⁶⁰³

APLA cadres at integration/absorption and demobilization

As part of the negotiated settlement and integration processes, the newly established SANDF allocated positions in the senior command structure, APLA cadres and leaders were few. Georg Meiring (a former SADF member) became Chief of the Army, while MK's Sphiwe Nyanda became his deputy, and later succeeded Meiring in 1998.⁶⁰⁴ From 1994 until 1996, when the Constitution of South Africa was promulgated, APLA did not meet the legal provisos of integration as stipulated in the Interim Constitution. Their inclusion was subsequently included on 4th February 1997, which made it possible that between that period and February 1997, they could be regarded as criminals instead of liberation fighters. The gap provided for by the law regarding APLA commanders and cadres, especially those who operated from the Transkei, made it relatively easy for the continuation of their arrests.

Some of the cadres who were arrested or shot and killed experienced these at the SANDF bases where they were to be processed for integration. Lubabalo Stemele

⁶⁰¹ R Mpofu, 'APLA operative to walk free after 27 years in jail', IOL, 1 October 2017, accessed on <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/gauteng/apla-operative-to-walk-free-after-27-years-in-jail>

⁶⁰² van de Waag, *A Military History of Modern South Africa*, p289

⁶⁰³ Interview conducted by Mphai Mabote with Xola Tyamzashe, 29 September 2021

⁶⁰⁴ van de Waag, *A Military History of Modern South Africa*, p 290

reported for integration processes assuming that he will be spared from the sweeping arrests of APLA cadre, instead, he was called to the Officer Commanding (OC) office and was charged with murder and robbery.⁶⁰⁵ The charges related to the operations he was involved in as an APLA cadre. The arrests and killings in various military sites of APLA cadres became a trend, resulting in some cadres fleeing the process, while others endured whatever was happening until they were rescued by the TRC's amnesty committee by avoiding criminal prosecution. Since APLA came late in the process, they had a miniature say in how the integration process transpired. A negotiator for APLA cadres in the process remembers that they received gut-wrenching deals that they were enforced to consent to, including many other decisions.

In the SANDF Certified Personnel Register of 1994, APLA members who integrated were just above 6000, MK was above 14000, TBVC was just above 11 100 while SADF towered with over 80 000 members.⁶⁰⁶ Many cadres were upset and felt disadvantaged by the integration process, citing the framework that governed the process, and importantly, the attitude of the former SADF members who at times were aided by ex-MK and ex-APLA former senior officers. In the integration process, for former SADF members, it was business as usual, considering that all systems, rank insignia and uniforms, were still the same.

For APLA cadres in Wallmansthal camp in Pretoria and the De Brug, it was a dramatic and humiliating experience, firstly at the entrance, until the assembly ground where force numbers were 'presented'. MK cadres who were at Wallmansthal camp, a measure of suspicion was rife as they assumed that the camp was a concentration spot where they are cordoned off before slaughter at SANDF camp.⁶⁰⁷ Their suspicions were compounded by the poor state of toilets and bathrooms, insufficient bedding, tents, and clothes, including the poor diet as compared to former SADF

⁶⁰⁵ Interview with Lubabalo Stemele, Virtual, 12 December 2022

⁶⁰⁶ T Motumi and A Hudson, 'Rightsizing: The Challenges of Demobilisation and Social reintegration in South Africa', In J Cilliers, ed, *Dismissed: Demobilisation and Reintegration of former Combatants in Africa*, (Midrand, IDP, 1995), p114

⁶⁰⁷ P Frankel, *Soldiers in a storm: The Armed Forces in South Africa's Democratic Transition*, (Oxford, Westview Press:2000), p. 74.

members. Notably, the De Brug camp had better conditions than Wallmansthal, but the suspicions of APLA cadres did not subside.

Cadres appeared before a placement board comprising the British Military Advisory and Training Team (BMATT) and representatives of constituent forces.⁶⁰⁸ On exiting the board, many ex-APLA and MK cadres felt hard done by the process and felt 'sold-out' by their leaders. One MK cadre protested: Integration was skewed as it obligated only MK and APLA cadres to present themselves before the panel, while those from SADF continued as they were. It looked like MK and APLA were joining the SADF and not forces [are] being integrated.⁶⁰⁹ In comparison to MK cadres, who presented themselves before the British, observers by Phillip Frankel, an author of the book titled *Soldiers in the Storm: The Armed Forces in South Africa's Democratic Transition* is;

...despite the challenges of leadership in APLA and the large number of people who received [military] training on the ground inside South Africa, APLA leaders [and cadres] were smarter, better disciplined, and more politically-oriented. There were very few members of APLA that were rejected, but those who did not pass the bar was due to age, levels of training and physical abilities.⁶¹⁰

APLA cadres that reported for the integration processing had varied experiences, however, what was common amongst them was that they felt they were not ranked according to what they deserved. Hlatshwayo claims that he deserved to be ranked a Major General but was ranked a Colonel,⁶¹¹ others who supposedly should have assumed the rank structure at Lieutenant Colonel level were either ranked Lieutenant, Captain, Corporal or private. Zuko Hlulani, an APLA cadre, observed that the Hoedspruit military camp had mostly MK cadres while the De Brug harbored mostly APLA. He remembers that;

⁶⁰⁸ van de Waag, *A Military History of Modern South Africa*, p. 295.

⁶⁰⁹ Interview with ex MK operative, quoted in T Motumi and P McKenzie, 'After the War: demobilisation in South Africa', in J Cock and P McKenzie, eds, *From Defence to Development: redirecting military resources in South Africa* (David Philip, Cape Town, 1998), p. 191.

⁶¹⁰ P Frankel, *Soldiers in a storm*, p. 76.

⁶¹¹ Interview conducted by Mphai Mabote with Barney Hlatshwayo, 29 September 2021

...the reception at the camp was hostile as we were received by the very Boers whom we were fighting with and they were processing our names. I observed that most of the MK guys had been ranked as officers, probably because they were there during the NPKF. Upon presenting my credentials to the board, I was informed that I am new in the military and therefore granted a private rank. Due to my ignorance of the defence force norms, I accepted the ranking and for years the SANDF lacked transformation. As the Boers continued to wield the yoke of oppression on us, I developed myself academically until I obtained a B-Tech degree then I left the army.⁶¹²

In Hoedspruit camp, an MK cadre experienced a similarly hostile reception upon arrival on 27 May 1994. An all-white Military Police personnel received us with their dogs and searched the cadres as though they were criminals.⁶¹³ Another ex-APLA cadre, who was arrested at one of the military camps in 1995, reminisced that integration was a flawed process that was a guise to absorb non-statutory forces into SADF. The BMMAC board would comment that in some instances APLA cadres are 'highly qualified in terms of army techniques' but they would be ranked lower. Silimela Qukumbane, who was arrested in 1993 and sentenced to 69 years, was paroled and integrated on 14 December 2000.

The beginning of the millennium shows a much-improved attitude in the SANDF regarding APLA cadres however the 'cold war' had not simmered. Some cadres, who did not integrate in the 90s due to their prison sentences, were granted an opportunity to petition various offices to be integrated. The cases of Thapelo Maseko and Luvuyo Kulumane are examples of some difficulties the cadres experienced. Maseko and Kulumane were arrested in 1993 and 1994, respectively, for the Great Storm operations and were victims of identity theft. While in prison, they claim that their cadres used their names to process other people who were not APLA cadres into the system.

⁶¹² Interview with Zuko Hlulani, Silverton, 12 December 2022

⁶¹³ I Mugodi, *Remember Me!*, (Makhado, Vhakolo Press, 2018), p 35.

It was the case of someone manipulating the system therefore corruptly administering someone who was not supposed to be in the SANDF. Maseko, through the Public Protector, was finally integrated at Sgt. Major rank, but categorized as physically and psychologically unfit. He argues, “I had to take whatever they were giving me because, at the time, I was very poor”.⁶¹⁴ Maseko retired from the SANDF in 2016, however Kulumane was not that fortunate. His matter was not resolved until the integration process was closed, and to this day he, and many other ex-APLA cadres, live in squalor.

Corruption also played a role in how ex-APLA cadres were being integrated. Lebakeng, who is currently a Security Studies Professor and a China-trained APLA cadre, sought to integrate but his name was mysteriously expunged from the list.⁶¹⁵ He comments about the process and says;

...those responsible for the running of the process made a lot of money out of this dog-eats-dog process. Many people, including relatives, friends and siblings who did not even qualify found themselves integrated into the military. It was an injustice as many of those who genuinely should have been absorbed were not and their struggle credentials were questioned. The irony was that those who were in the military leadership were able to get employment for their relatives and siblings in the military and intelligence.⁶¹⁶

Many ex-APLA cadres experienced difficulties in the newly established SANDF, others clung onto the system despite the adverse challenges and endless harassment by racist white supervisors and ‘harsh conditions taken against them on the grounds of ‘maintaining standards’, including discontent about the staff composition.⁶¹⁷ For many, clinging onto the integration process was a matter of life and death as it was an opportunity of formal employment and source of income. Without exception, including

⁶¹⁴ Telephone Interview with Themba Maseko, Pretoria, 10 December 2022

⁶¹⁵ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, pp. 111-112.

⁶¹⁶ T.J Lebakeng, *They Blunted Us*, p. 12.

⁶¹⁷ van de Waag, *A Military History of Modern South Africa*, p. 297.

those who were in APLA leadership, all those who amalgamated from the NSF were placed at depressingly low rankings.⁶¹⁸

Additionally, there is a group that did not attempt to be part of the integration process, and another that opted for the second process that was associated with integration, the demobilization process which had a once off gratuity. Unfortunately, many ex-combatants did not receive their payments. Some study reveals that a third of their participants did not receive gratuity either due to dismissals, resignation after joining the SANDF, administrative problems and non-qualification to the demobilization package.⁶¹⁹ Lucky Moeketsi opted for demobilization since he wanted to work at the civilian intelligence. Other ex-combatants found trouble fitting into the system, and accepted voluntary severance packages, while others like Thembinkosi Henge, who is currently a specialist in local government economic development, did not envision a career in the army.

Then some cadres did not subject themselves to the process, rather they boycotted it in its entirety. Most of the cadres who either demobilized or boycotted the process were introduced to a life of misery, hunger, unemployment, broken families, and homelessness. They form part of the cohort that is currently demanding over a million per military veteran from the South African government. The harsh experiences were not peculiar to APLA cadres but were equally experienced by some who were 'non-favoured' in the MK, either due to their stance on the new dispensation or other ANC and MK-related politics. It is well documented by some ex-combatants that white supervisors made life difficult for former members of MK and APLA intending to frustrate them thus forcing them to exit (the system).⁶²⁰

Besides other technicalities used against former combatants, the attitude of white commanders was the most critical problem in the early years of integration. One ex-combatant reported that the Afrikaners were harassing them and telling them that

⁶¹⁸ Interview with Professor Lebakeng, in Pretoria on 16 October 2022

⁶¹⁹ L Mashike. M Mokalobe, 'Reintegration into Civilian Life: The case of former MK and APLA combatants'. In *Track Two*, Vol 12, Nos. (1 -2) (26), 2003, p. 17.

⁶²⁰ T Molotsi, *The 'unfinished' Revolution: Memoirs of an MK Combatant*, (Johannesburg, Teboho Tommy Molotsi, 2017), p 197.

the army belongs to SADF not MK, to a point that white commanders would conduct training in Afrikaans. Ishmael Mugodi, a former MK camp commander in Angola, was affected by the technicalities and was denied a lieutenant rank on the basis that he was 'young' and does not have a matric. He was integrated on a 3-year renewable contract as a troop from May 1994 until May 2009 when he decided to quit.⁶²¹ The many challenges that were experienced in the process and as a result of the process, should be noted that the unintended impact of the integration process was the concerning reports of alienated former guerrillas who got involved in crime, and violence, including cash in transit heists and bank robberies to 'feed themselves'.

In post-apartheid South Africa, Ex-APLA combatants occupy different levels in the social strata, with the majority languishing in abject poverty, homelessness, and unemployed because they are disadvantaged in South Africa's shrinking job market. Some of the others who died after returning home, were languishing in similar abject impoverishment, and most were buried as paupers, until the diminutive but important Burial Support Benefit BSB) and Social Relief of Distress (SRD) from the Department of Military Veterans (DMV) came to the fore.

These government interventions were promulgated by the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans under section 24(1) of the Military Veterans Act of 2011.⁶²² While there exists such veracity, there are some ex-APLA combatants who have developed themselves either in business, academics and professional careers, including the SANDF. This cohort tends to live a comfortable life that is better than the rest. A heart-breaking condition for these ex-APLA combatants, who managed to avoid such difficulties, is to witness some of their comrades losing themselves from alcoholism, insanity, homelessness, and many other social ills. Notwithstanding the fact of these various experiences, many ex-APLA combatants, irrespective of their social strata, unambiguously state that their involvement in the fight against settler colonial

⁶²¹ I. Mugodi, *Remember Me!*, p. 35.

⁶²² RSA Department of Military Veterans, 'The Military Veterans Benefits Regulations, 2014', Gauteng, Pretoria, accessed date 16 November 2022, found at <http://www.dmv.gov.za/benefits.htm>

apartheid did not harvest the fruits of real freedom as they envisaged it. However, for some, it is better than apartheid years.

During this study, another glaring finding was that a sizable number of ex-APLA combatants do not regret their participation in the armed struggle, however, are disappointed with the indignity that they and their families have come to experience. While interviewing ex-combatants in Gqeberha, they argued that even a basic necessity is social welfare, if it is brought to them, it is a once-in-a-while exercise. These, and the lack of real opportunities, have led several ex-APLA combatants to resort to criminality. For most, their lives show no form of any tangible compensation and in the lives of their families the situation tends to be the same, while in the public and collective memory and heritage construction of post-apartheid liberation history and its writing, APLA and its ex-combatants remain in the margins of recognition.

Creation of the periphery of public and collective memory: The Politics.

The marginalization of APLA in the curation and construction of post-apartheid liberation struggle history, historiography and public memory is not entirely due to the absence of writing by former APLA cadres, as Khumalo suggests when he wrote; “this can be attributed to a lack of documentation by the African people who were a part of APLA”.⁶²³ Secondly, the ostracism is not exclusively due to none availability of archival material as the basis of documenting APLA’s liberation struggle contribution. It is, furthermore, not only a result of the secluded, disjointed and distinct segment of the past, as Kondlo contended. At the same time, it is not simply a result of the tactics, strategies, and policies APLA engaged to confront the apartheid regime. While these can be reasoned as contributors, they should not be grappled in isolation from the ANC’s post-apartheid South Africa’s politics of memory. Politics are developed from the rationale that neglects some archival works and collects and promote some to erect mostly public monuments for political appropriateness. A politics that manufactures a biased and confined South African history in the public imaginings.

⁶²³ T.S Khumalo, ‘From UPoqo to APLA: the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and its armed struggle: 1960-1982’, Master’s Thesis, University of Pretoria Department of History and Heritage Studies, 2020, p. 12.

In the public domain, this is done by brandishing ANC-associated heritage sites, monuments, state-sponsored funerals, and ‘important’ calendar days like the 18 July being Mandela Day. To influence their permanence in the public recollection and consciousness, these politics are broadcasted repeatedly on unrestricted mass media, and at schools, the History curriculum is slanted towards a mound of Patriotic history. These, and other forms of politics of memory that are active in post-apartheid liberation history, led Khumalo to conclude that, “(Patriotic) History, as a subject of scholarship, has also not been kind to the PAC, and thus there stands a threat of APLA being wiped away from memory”.⁶²⁴ A threat that this study has attempted to seal.

Immediately after 1996, the South African government embarked on several national legacy endeavours and these projects were to be commemorative symbols. Using these commemorative representations, the government was to applaud and commemorate South Africa’s history and heritage. The government communicated that the selected commemorative representation purpose was to honour the people who struggled against apartheid and they would not simply focus on ANC and its leaders, but will consider all.⁶²⁵ Construction and curation of museums (Apartheid museum, Hector Pieterse), outdoor/ public art, (29.5 foot Nelson Mandela sculptor in front of the Union(s) Building, heritage trails (Long March to Freedom), plaques and over twenty monuments, with many other representations, then done to create obvious reminders of, and commemorate, the numerous features of South Africa’s history.

Amongst the 20 monuments that were erected by 2020, especially those with a specific focus on modern history, only one was devoted to Steve Biko, another one dedicated to the Khoi-San people, a single one to the Pondoland revolt and over eight dedicated to the ANC.⁶²⁶ In the list of the commemoration sites and monuments

⁶²⁴ T Khumalo, ‘From UPogo to APLA’ , p. 13.

⁶²⁵ Brand South Africa, ‘Liberation Route to honour heroes’. *BuaNews*. 2011 found on <https://www.brandsouthafrica.com/people-culture/history-heritage/liberation-route-210911>

⁶²⁶ O Dlanga, ‘Analysing the curation of collective memory in post-apartheid South Africa: the case of the Mpendulo brothers’ massacre’, Research Report, University of Pretoria, 2020, p. 29.

constructed and curated in the Eastern Cape province, which boasts with above five hundred of them, ten are in Mthatha, the former Transkei capital city. In the ten, the gravesite of Sabelo Phama, APLA's Commander who is buried in Bhaziya is not on the list. Additionally, house number 47 AC Jordan Street, Northcrest in Mthatha, where school kids accused of being APLA cadres were executed by SADF in a 27-minute-long attack on 8th October 1993,⁶²⁷ has not been considered and declared a commemorative site.

The attack on the school-going kids (the Mpendulo brothers' massacre) was considered like a three-hour SADF raid in the Matola suburb of Maputo, Mozambique on 30 January 1981, where several MK operatives were killed. In the Matola raid, which occurred at night as it was the modus operandi of SADF, a Mozambican citizen was murdered, and Sizinzo Skweyiya and Pietermaritzburg-born Mduduzi Guma were also fatally wounded.⁶²⁸ As one of the projects of post-apartheid South African government to create obvious reminders of the liberation struggle, the former President launched a Matola Memorial Monument in Mozambique, intending to "honour the deceased martyrs of the Matola raid, while paying tribute to the sacrifices made by Mozambicans towards a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa".⁶²⁹

A few years before the Matola monument unveiling, the Eastern Cape provincial government held a twentieth anniversary of the Bisho massacre, which occurred on 7 September 1992. The massacre was a result of Ciskei soldiers, under Brigadier Oupa Gqozo, who shot dead over twenty marchers in a picket led by ANC's Ronnie Kasrils, Cyril Ramaphosa and SACP's Chris Hani. At the Bisho massacre commemoration held in 2018 by the former Premier of Eastern Cape Province, Phumulo Masualle

⁶²⁷ S. Majangaza, 'Slain twins mom in limbo', 8 October 2011, Found at <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/daily-dispatch/20111008/page/8/textview> accessed on 01 June 2020.

⁶²⁸ South African Broadcasting Corporation, "Truth Commission Special report transcript, Episode 82, section 3". SABC News. 1998: Accessed on <http://sabctrc.saha.org.za/tvseries/episode82/section3/transcript9.htm?tab=victims>: access date: 14 September 2020

⁶²⁹ Department of Military Veterans, 'Unveiling the Matola Raid Monument and Interpretive Centre': 2015

stated that they were remembering and giving respect to the Bisho massacre (victims) 25 years on.⁶³⁰

Clearly, from how these two ANC aligned commemorations have been conserved, endorsed, and funded, they serve as South African liberation struggle past, a skewed history but equally reflect the effort that is being done by the post-apartheid government to imprint them in the public and collective memory. In making a quantitative comparison regarding the liberation commemorations in Eastern Cape Province alone, it can be concluded that the ANC's government is systematically marginalizing certain liberation struggle memories in its curation and construction of post-apartheid South Africa's liberation history. Such a curation of the past is defined by the politics of the past to abuse historical account for political gain.⁶³¹

Critics who are having an opposing opinion about my rationale in this study, especially regarding the systematic marginalization of some liberation struggle memories, and the abuse of the past, probably may argue that will be based on the renaming of the former Kimberly hospital to Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe hospital, which was unveiled in 2018 was an attempt to counter the dominant narrative. It would be in defence of the ANC government that does not only focus on its former members, but wider liberation movements.

Unfortunately, the defence is not easily sustained, considering that the unveiling of the 'new name' was organized under a theme titled after a former ANC president stating, *The Year of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela: Promoting and Deepening a Human Rights Culture Across Society*.⁶³² The theme itself, without delving deeper on other meanings, gives away the systematic nature of how post-apartheid public and collective liberation struggle history is curated. Thando Sipuye raised a sharp

⁶³⁰ S. Gosa, 'Bisho massacre commemorated today'. *GO! & Express Live*: 2018. Accessed on <https://www.goexpress.co.za/2018/09/07/bhisho-massacre-commemorated-today/> accessed date 11 September 2020

⁶³¹ M. Schurlz, 'Preface Never again', in H Swoboda and J Marinus Wiersa, (ed.) 2009. *The Politics of the Past: The Use and Abuse of History*. Frankfurt: :RennerInstitut.), p. 7.

⁶³² South African Human Rights Commission, 'Arts and Culture commemorates Human Rights Month through dialogues'. *SAHRC Media*. 2018. Accessed on <https://www.sahrc.org.za/index.php/sahrc-media/news/item/1188-arts-and-culture-commemorates-human-rights-month-through-dialogues>: access date 15 September 2020

objection to the theme and argued that Mangaliso Sobukwe deserves to be honoured in his own right without being made a junior and a footnote to Nelson Mandela's legacy.⁶³³ According to Sipuye, the theme reinforces the memory of Sobukwe, like that of APLA, to wander in the obscurities of post-apartheid South Africa's public and collective memory. The wandering of an APLA combatant memory can be manifest in the comparison between APLA's former commander, Sabelo Phama, and MK's former Chief of Staff, Chris Hani. The latter has had various public buildings and institutions renamed after his name by the post-apartheid government to ensure his legacy is sustained and entrenched, while the former has little to no name after him.

In addition to earlier curated public commemorative symbols, in 2020, the South African government unveiled a magnificent bronze 9-metre public statue of OR Tambo. The statue was erected and unveiled at OR Tambo International airport by the President of the Republic of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa and the Minister of Transport.⁶³⁴ The media reports stated that "the statue showed Tambo with his hand stretched out in front of him holding a book, which resembles that of the freedom charter".⁶³⁵ However, the report did not reveal another significant detail in the statue, that the public statue had an ANC insignia consigned to it. One ponders as to the motives of the insignia in a tax-funded public heritage site other than to influence the public and collective memory for narrow political ends.

Another significant aspect that is prominent in the curation of public memory in post-apartheid South Africa has been the state-sponsored funerals. They have become sites of entrenching patriotic history to those who attend them or who watch them through various media platforms. In April 2018, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, because of President Cyril Ramaphosa, the South African and ANC President, granted the former ANC Women's League President a special official funeral category

⁶³³ T. Sipuye, 'Sobukwe's legacy must be remembered', DispatchLive. 2018: accessed on <https://www.dispatchlive.co.za/news/opinion/2020-03-20-reader-letter-sobukwes-legacy-must-be-remembered/>: access date 15 September 2020

⁶³⁴ M Lindeque, 'Ramaphosa unveils 9-metre statue of OR Tambo', EWN, Ekurhuleni: 2020, found at <https://ewn.co.za/2020/10/27/ramaphosa-unveils-nine-metre-statue-of-oliver-tambo-in-kemton-park/amp>

⁶³⁵ M Lindeque, 'Ramaphosa unveils 9-metre statue of OR Tambo', 2020

1 state funeral.⁶³⁶ Later in the same year around August, Zondeni Veronica ‘Mother of Azania’ Sobukwe, the spouse of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe was granted a Special official funeral category 2 as compared to category 1 of Madikizela-Mandela. In both these instances, the approval came from President Cyril Ramaphosa but the categorization of funerals was different. The presidency claimed that Mama Sobukwe was a ‘distinguished person’,⁶³⁷ so was Mama Winnie.

Both these great African women endured the brunt of the apartheid regime, with their families being severely affected. The difference between the two was that one was an ANC while the other was the PAC. Category 1 official funeral was bestowed to ANC and the below category can then be granted to PAC. Through this process, it is evident that the politics of memory are expressed via state-sponsored funerals. It should be noted that in South Africa, only two categories are enacted by the law, category 1 which is for the President of the Republic, the president-elect, and former presidents of South Africa.

State funeral category 2 is reserved for Deputy President, an acting president and former Deputy Presidents. Spouses of serving presidents are eligible for an official funeral, which has two categories as well. Category 1 of State funeral is for serving ministers, premiers, Speaker of the National Assembly (NA), Chief Justice, Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and any other designated persons whom the President deems. Category 2 of the State funerals are for spouses of the serving president, the serving Deputy President, the Deputy Speaker of the NA, the Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP, the Deputy Chief Justice and the President of the Supreme Court of Appeal. In the categories outlined above, there is no category for spouses of former presidents.

⁶³⁶ T Ntwasa, ‘7 things you didn’t know about: State funerals in South Africa’, *Sowetan*, 13 April 2018, found at <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/amps/s-mag/2018-04-13-7-things-you-didnt-know-about-state-funerals-in-south-africa/>

⁶³⁷ N Gous, ‘Presidency declares official funeral for Mama Zondeni Sobukwe’, *TimesLive*, 18 August 2018, found at <https://www.timeslive.co.za/amp/news/south-africa/2018-08-16-presidency-declares-official-funeral-for-mama-zondeni-sobukwe/>

While these public monuments and commemorations entrench a public discernment of liberation struggle history, they also have a way to influence the writing of liberation history. The dominance of one narrative can even though not explicitly spill over to South Africa's post-apartheid liberation historiography. This one narrative directed Professor Kondlo to posit that the master narrative needs to be transformed, so as not to be accused by the following generation of researchers of subjective scholarship. Kondlo's observations are a result of modern African political societies, and some academics tend to rely on patriotic history, the abuse of the past, and politics of memory to write post-apartheid liberation history. Such produces the unkindness that Khumalo refers to especially towards PAC/*Pogo* and APLA.

The Re-imagination of post-apartheid liberation history and heritage

Though the 27 April 1994 elections provided the ANC with victory and political power, they additionally created an opportunity for the promotion of a liberation struggle master narrative. The post-apartheid ANC government has successfully achieved this as it has curated and constructed public and collective memory subjectively and presented a narrow version of South African liberation history. In the process of creating this version, some archives have been neglected, while some are promoted. Archivists who can be proxies of change are burdened with dilapidating infrastructure; archaic material that has not been converted to more recent technological versions. The most affected of these archives and archivists are those in the former homelands, however, in all these difficulties, they have helped in this study to provide sources to develop a counter-narrative.

Considering that it has been identified that there is a problem with a master narrative in post-apartheid liberation history and historiography, the question is how to resolve this reality. Firstly, there must be no room for marginalization, but a space for a wider range of voices, ontologies, and epistemologies.⁶³⁸ Secondly, there must

⁶³⁸ S.N Timcke, 'Discourse, Memory, and Post-apartheid South African Archives'. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2015, p. 5.

be a democratization of history as a discipline, and lastly, public liberation history, which influences public memory, must be collective. To create a space for a wide range of voices and knowledge, Mark Green proposes that archivists and researchers and state must craft, acquire and sort available (source) material that documents the voices in our society that are marginalized.⁶³⁹

In the case of post-apartheid South Africa, APLA and PAC/*Poqo* are marginalized. With regards to the democratization of history, David Lempert, who is an education historian, suggests that the discipline of history be sympathetic towards diversity, democracy, openness, and free expression.⁶⁴⁰ The adherence to these principles has the potential of stimulating human vision instead of a history that is a snobbish tool that pursues short-term objectives. In the post-apartheid era, the short-term objectives are mainly political, and based on Lempert's proposal, South Africa's post-apartheid public and collective memory must shift away from politically loyal selected memorialization that strives to mislead the public by abusing history.

While democratization is noble, it cannot arise on its own but through a historian. The historians, in the quest to be an agent of democratizing history, must endeavor to demonstrate all events as part of the whole.⁶⁴¹ The events of the liberation struggle in South Africa cannot be whole with the omission of APLA, the army wing of the PAC. Overall, for liberation public history and historiography to assist in preserving liberation struggle heritage, there needs to be a reinvention of the construction and curation of the post-apartheid public and collective memory where intelligent interpositions of the political power are made to free up space for notions that provide a historical critique and different interpretation. These elements will bring about many historical accounts that defy the overriding historical narratives.

⁶³⁹ M.A. Green, 'The Power of Archives: Archivist's Value in the Postmodern Age'. *The American Archivist*, Vol 72 No 1. 24.2009, p. 26.

⁶⁴⁰ D.H. Lempert, 'Taking people's History back to the People'. *Democracy and Education Journal* Vol 21 No 2. 2013, p. 3.

⁶⁴¹ W. Von Humboldt, 'On the Historian's task'. *Social History and Theory* Vol 6 No 1. 1967, p. 65.

Conclusion

After the dawn of democracy, APLA combatants who were in exile returned home with excitement while many of those, who operated in the Transkei, were either underground or in prison. The death of Phama and the initiation of the election campaign by the PAC spelt an abrupt end to APLA operations, while it began the realities of life beyond APLA camps. The integration processes were then taken up by some, while others snubbed them, and others opted for demobilization. Those who opted for demobilization, few were compensated, and those who snubbed the process, proved to be the ones who would bear the brunt of poverty and be susceptible to criminality. For most who stayed through the course of the integration, tolerance of harassment, racism and mistreatment was the order of the day. The mistreatment of former APLA cadres did not only happen at the SANDF, but it continued and continues in the post-apartheid South Africa's liberation public memory. Through various proposals, and principles, the master narrative in liberation history can be averted only if all stakeholders are willing to create a space for a plurality of ideas.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Return to the Public Collective Memory

This study aimed to investigate the curation and construction of post-apartheid liberation historiography and public memory, with the intention to detect the ‘fading’ of PAC, mainly APLA, in public and collective memory. The initial outcomes mainly pointed to the influence of the political superstructure and state/ANC-dominated liberation struggle history narrative post-1994. This has affected how the history of the liberation struggle (especially in relation to PAC and APLA) is being harnessed, developed, tutored, written, circulated, and projected. The study showed that the ANC led government, through various projects, has employed various strategies that promoted its struggle history, credentials, and ‘revolutionary’ character at the expense of other formations. Therefore, legitimising itself as the sole liberator of the people via ANC aligned ‘public’ monuments, political statements, funded publications and commemorations that obfuscate other liberation movements’ contribution in the liberation struggle. Such posture presented a single narrative that edited formations like APLA out of the public collective memory. This narrative did not only affect public memory but has prejudiced the teaching and writing of South Africa’s liberation struggle history which therefore indicates that it has become a history that is patriotic to the ruling party.

This study also argued that: (1) the influence of the ANC-led government has contributed to the vanishing of PAC and APLA in public and collective memory and, (2) those who were involved in PAC and APLA have made minimal contribution, in writing and participating in the liberation struggle history discourse. This was proved to be one of the limitations in the process of conducting this study, although it was also clear that some snippets of that part of liberation struggle history are beginning to emerge, therefore assisting in building the PAC/APLA scholarship archive.

Further results of the study showed that APLA (as an army wing of the PAC) emerged from the *Africanist Task Force* rather than from Poqo, which has been the argument advanced by most historians and scholars. Through the examination of

sources and enquiries from PAC/APLA stalwarts and cadres, it indicated that Poqo was PAC in another form and APLA, as the military wing, metamorphosed from the Task Force. Tom Lodge,⁶⁴² Bernard Leeman,⁶⁴³ Siphokazi Magadla⁶⁴⁴, and Thembinkosi Khumalo,⁶⁴⁵ have claimed, in various ways, that Poqo was an army wing of the PAC. This study has disproved that. Moreover, the study identified the global actors, mainly the USSR and China, as being the main supporters and influencers of South Africa's liberation movements. However, they also contributed to exacerbating divisions among Southern African liberation movements due to their Sino-Soviet split.

During the study, there were indications that there is a trove of information that is not easily accessible. Additionally, some participants were neither willing nor comfortable sharing insights on the subject. These participants mentioned that they do not want to relive experiences that they have 'forgotten' and 'healed' from. Others mentioned the protection of some people's information and stories. Few participants mentioned that they will not be able to divulge certain information because of the limitations imposed by the TRC. The results of the information retrieved and found indicated that APLA, a militant and confrontational military wing, drew its inspiration from diverse ideas and contexts, namely African nationalism of the 1940s, the warrior courage of the Task Forces (who were known as Poqo in the 1960s) and the Marxist-Leninist- Maoist inclinations of the Mao's China.

Although these became important pillars for APLA in exile and in the execution of the liberation struggle, the study indicates that they too became an 'Achilles heel' for the movement. The condition of being a prohibited political formation in your homeland was not an easy journey for APLA and its cadres and such is reflected in the study. The movement between various countries in search for military assistance

⁶⁴² T.G. Lodge, *'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)

⁶⁴³ B. Leeman, *'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, 1940-1994'*, Revised PhD Thesis. Germany: Bremen University, (2015), p. 323.

⁶⁴⁴ S Magadla, *Guerrillas and Combative Mothers: Women and the Armed Struggle in South Africa*, (Pietermaritzburg: UKZN Press, 2023), p. 4.

⁶⁴⁵ T.S Khumalo, *'From UPoqo to APLA: the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and its armed struggle: 1960-1982'*, Master's Thesis, University of Pretoria Department of History and Heritage Studies, 2020, p. 12.

had different outcomes for the army, its cadres, and the PAC. Be that as it may, it can be argued that a great number of governments came to the aide of APLA, Idi Amin being one of the state presidents that hosted twelve female cadres for military training.

In the study, weaknesses of PAC/APLA in exile are shown, and these were not characteristics peculiar to the PAC but to other liberation movements as well. The weaknesses of limited resources, leadership strife and the global actors did not diminish the PAC liberation intentions. The study showed that the weaknesses though not overcome were compensated for in the late 1980s and during 'Operation Great Storm'.

Throughout the study, APLA and its cadres fought and intended to fight militarily for the liberation of South Africa. In the study, not even one who was involved raised any regret but rather reflected disappointment of the approaches of the democratic government and the single narrative of liberation struggle. The dominant revelations that the study identified are the persistent divisions that engulfed the army because of the PAC and how APLA cadres had to constantly navigate these divisions. Through bravery of some in the PAC, APLA became a force to be reckoned with in a context of apartheid police state from the late 1980s until 1994; however, the wheels of peaceful change had already passed them and the local and international media, religious groups, sections of the society and NP and the ANC, including some in the PAC, vilified APLA as 'angry blood thirsty youths'.

A blood thirsty group driven by a 'one settler one bullet' slogan descriptor and argument could not be fully sustained; rather, the study established that the political and ideological convictions of confrontation drawn from Lembede's (ANC) Congress Youth League of the 1940s were the drivers of the continuation of the armed struggle even when transitional negotiations were taking place between 1990 and 1994.

In the liberation history of South Africa little is said about the input of APLA female combatants, thus this study has blazed the trail for other researchers to delve deep into not only APLA female combatants but to women combatants of the liberation movements as Siphokazi Magadla has done in her publication titled *Guerrillas And Combative Mothers, women and the armed struggle in South Africa* (2023).

Considering that there is an observation that APLA and its contribution is fading in the public and collective memory, this study is a contribution towards the rebuilding of the scholarly archive and a call to return APLA into South Africa's collective memory.

There are of course some limitations to the study, including the inability to verify certain information, because some of the people who actively participated in the struggle were either deceased or not available as participants. This led the study to rely on other available sources such as newspapers, news bulletins, and published books. In the case of oral sources, participants tended to forget certain aspects of their experiences due to age, or because they were not present during a certain historical moment or for other reasons. The study had intended to engage the former members of APLA High Command to confirm, interrogate and bring about their voices, however, many of them were not available to participate.

The non-availability of the PAC and APLA literature, confiscated by police in the 1963 Basutoland mass arrests and the documents confiscated during Letlapa Mphahlele's arrest in Lesotho after 1994, proved to be a hindrance to the study. Another aspect for consideration as a limitation to the study is the aspect of archives. Mbembe argues that archives are an invention of a procedure of converting several documents and papers into items that are adjudicated to be worthy to keep and preserve in a public space for further use.⁶⁴⁶

While there exists an appetite from many scholars, the ANC and MK alike, to want to centralize ANC/MK in the activities of South Africa's liberation struggle, there is PAC and APLA which was thinly resourced but internationally active in the drive against colonial apartheid. To further illustrate this point, it was not only ANC/MK and PAC/APLA that were involved and central in the liberation struggle, there was BCM (A), ARM, local young activists and the global anti-apartheid movement, which depended on the interlocutions of PAC and ANC alike. It is for this reason that no one formation has sole ownership of the history of the liberation struggle in South Africa.

⁶⁴⁶ A. Mbembe, 'The Power of the Archive and its Limits, in *Reconfiguring the Archive*, 2002, p. 20.

The non-curation of APLA in the public consciousness of post-apartheid South Africa and liberation struggle history has its roots in the past. Its maintenance promotes the antagonisms between two former liberation movements and their members. It does not ‘heal the divisions of the past’; rather, it entrenches them even when the country has been viewed and considered free and democratic. To be a truly democratic society, it is imperative that government sponsored liberation struggle history must be harmonised across all former liberation struggle movements and people. The office which Robert Sobukwe practised law from in Galeshewe and the gravesite of APLA’s Sabelo Phama are in a ‘sorry’ state of affairs juxtaposed with MK’s Chris Hani gravesite which has achieved the status of a shrine is an example of a lack of harmony in post-apartheid liberation public history. The democratization of public memory will humanise former APLA cadres, and the collective will remember them as heroes rather than villains of liberation struggle. The creation and curation of memory, especially public memory, is a human right that ensures the “*humanness*” of the people who are being remembered. The study has identified that APLA merits a return to the public collective memory in post-apartheid South Africa.

References

- Adejo, A. M. (2001). From OAU to AU: New Wine in Old Bottles? *African Journal of International Affairs*, Vol 4 No.1-2, 119-141.
- African National Congress. (1949, December 17). 38th National Conference: Programme Of Action: Statement of Policy Adopted. Bloemfontein, Orange Free State, South Africa: ANC. Retrieved December 14, 2022, from <https://www.anc1912.org.za/policy-documents-1949-38th-national-conference-programme-of-action-statement-of-policy-adopted/>
- Alden, C. (1996). *The Apartheid's Last Stand: The Rise and Fall of South African Security State*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Alicia , D. C. (2014). *In Idi Amin's Shadow: Women Gender and Militarism in Uganda*. Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- AP NEWS. (1994, February 10). Black Nationalist Guerrilla Leader Killed in Car Crash. Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa. Retrieved from <https://apnews.com/article/936280a2e9bd4bb991422aa7a4fae95a>
- Apartheid Museum. (2022, December 14). *Apartheid Museum*. Retrieved December 18, 2022, from ApartheidMuseum.Org: <https://apartheidmuseum.org/about-the-museum>
- Ayegboyin, D., & Ishola, A. S. (1997). African Indigenous Churches: Chapter two. *Factors Responsible for the Emergence of Indigenous Churches*.
- Azania Combat. (1993). The war goes on. *Azania Combat Issue 16 (2)*. APLA.
- Barnard, N. (2017). *Peaceful Revolution: Inside the war room at the Negotiations*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- Beinart, W. (2011). *Twentieth Century South Africa: 2nd Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bell, T. (2011, October 11). *Daily Dispatch* . Retrieved from Press Reader: <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/sunday-times-1107/20091011/282020438351442>
- Brand South Africa. (2011, September 11). Liberation Route to honour hereos. Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa. Retrieved December 14, 2022, from <https://www.brandsouthafrica.com/people-culture/history-heritage/liberation-route-210911>
- Brown, J. (2012). An Experiment in Confrontation: The Pro-Frelimo Rallies in 1974. *Journal Of South African Studie*, 38:1, 55-71.
- Burke, E. J., Gunnes, K., Cooper III, C. A., & Cozad, M. (2020). People's Liberation Army Operational Concepts. *Rand National Defence Research Institute*, 1-32.
- Collingwood, R. G. (2005). *The Idea of History (Revised edition)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Combat Reporter. (1987, September 1). Mlambo's New Year message: 1987 is the Year of Arming the People. *Azania Combat*(3).
- Confidential M.C. (undated). Directive to APLA.
- Constitutional Court Trust. (n.d). A Historic Overview (1909-1980s) Background to the "pre-negotiations phase". Johannesburg, Gauteng, Republic of South Africa. Retrieved July 6, 2023, from https://www.concourttrust.org.za/uploads/files/Background_to_the_%E2%80%9Cpre-negotiations_phase%E2%80%9D.pdf
- Daily Mail. (1990, August). South Africa on course to end apartheid? London, United Kingdom.
- Department of Military Veterans. (2014). The Military Veterans Benefits Regulations, 2014. Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa. Retrieved November 16, 2022, from <http://www.dmv.gov.za/benefits.htm>
- Department of Military Veterans. (2015, September 18). Unveiling the Matola Raid Monument and Interpretive Centre. Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa.
- Dlanga, O. (2020). *Analysis of the curation and construction of collective memory in post-apartheid South Africa: The case of Mpendulo brothers' massacre*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- Dlanga, T. (2021, November 04). A Scheme of Legitimation: South Africa's Revisionism. New Mexico, New Mexico, United States of America.
- Dlanga, T. (2022, July 03). The Fighting force: A confrontational movement. (M. Dyani, Interviewer)
- Dlanga, T. (2022, June 28). The Fighting Force: A Confrontational Movement. (S. Shabalala, Interviewer)
- Dondolo, L. M. (2019, August 15). Dr Godfrey Mokgonane Pitje Public Lecture. East London, Eastern Cape, South Africa.
- Dubow, S. (2012). *South Africa's Struggle for Human Rights*. Ohio : Ohio University Press.
- Dyani, M. (2022, July 15). On Task Force, Poqo and APLA. (T. Dlanga, Interviewer)
- Eddings, J. (1992, December 13). Radical blacks in South Africa attacking white civilians in terrorist campaign. *Baltimore Sun*. Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from <https://baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1992-12-13-1992348026-story.html>
- Ejiogu, E. C. (2011). Post Liberation South Africa: Sorting out the Pieces. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol 47, issue 3.
- Evans , J. M. (2009, February 21). *BlackPast*. Retrieved from Black Past Organisation: www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/apartheid-1948-1994/
- Fikeni, S. (2008). The Polokwane moment and South Africa's democracy at the crossroads. In P. Kagwanja, & K. Kondlo, *State of the nation. South Africa 2008* (pp. 14-31). Cape Town: HSRC Press.

- Fischer, M., Nkoana, M., Fischer, S., & Rodolo, T. (1969). *Crisis in the Revolution: A Special Report on the Pan-Africanist Congress of South Africa*. New York: United Nations Centre Against Apartheid.
- Frankel, P. (2000). *Soldiers in a Storm: The Armed Forces in South Africa's Democratic Transition*. Oxford: Westview Press.
- George, A. L., & Bennet, A. (2005). *Case Studies and theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Ggaji, W. (1981, July). Pokela: Leader of the PAC. New York, United States of America.
- Glad, B., & Blanton, R. (1997). F. W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela: A Study in Cooperative Transformational Leadership. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. Vol 27, No.3, 565-590.
- Goqwana, S. (2017, April 20). PAC welcomes cadre Jako's remains home. East London, Eastern Cape, South Africa.
- Gqaji, W. (1981). Pokela: Leader of the PAC. *New African: The Radical Review*, 3.
- Grundlingh, A., Saunders, C., Swart, S., & Phillips, H. (2011). Environment, Heritage, Resistance, and Health: Newer Historiographical Directions. In R. Ross, *The Cambridge History of South Africa* (pp. 600-650). London: Cambridge University Press.
- Guy, J. (2006). *Remember the rebellion: The Zulu uprising of 1906*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Hlatshwayo, B., & Tyamzashe, X. (2021, September 29). APLA @60 Webinar Series Episode 2. (M. Mabote, Interviewer) Pont De Politique.
- Hlongwane, A. K. (2009). Reflections on the Pan Africanist Congress 'Underground' in the era of the 1976 youth uprisings. *Journal of Pan African Studies* (Vol.3 Issue 4), 55-71.
- Hlongwane, A. K. (2021). *The Lion of Azania: A Biography*. Johannesburg: Skotaville .
- Hlongwane, A. K. (2021). *We must return Home Armed of Unarmed: The Biography of John Nyati Pokela*. Johannesburg: Skotaville.
- Honey, M. (1979). *Ugandan Capital Captured*. London: The Washington Post.
- Houdek , M., & Phillips, K. R. (2017). *On contemporary Contours of Public Memory*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Houdek, M. (2017). Public Memory. *Department of Communication Studies*, 1-24.
- Houston, G., ka Plaatjie, T., & April, T. (2015). Military training and camps of the Pan Africanist Congress of South African, 1961-1981. *Historia* 60, 24-50.
- Hyde, A. (2016). *American Historical Association*. Retrieved February 12, 2023, from Historians: <http://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/why-study-history/careers-for-history-majors/history-discipline-core#:~:text=As%20a%20discipline%20and%20change%20over%20time>.

- Hynd, S. (2015, July 10). Book Review: In Idi Amin's Shadow: Women, Gender and Militarism in Uganda by Alicia C Decker. London, Britain.
- Ka Plaatji, T. (2010). The PAC in exile. *South African Democracy Education Trust: The road to Democracy Vol 1*, 669-701.
- Ka Plaatjie, T. (2006). The PAC in Exile. In S. A. Trust, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Vol 2 (1970-1980)* (pp. 703-748). Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- Ka Plaatjie, T. (2014). The PAC's exile politics, 1980-1990. In SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 4, 1980-1990* (pp. 1227-1229). Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- Kgosana, P. (2016). *Lest we Forget*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- Khumalo, T. S. (2020). From UPoqo to APLA: the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and its armed struggle: 1960-1982 (A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master in History. *University of Pretoria*, 1-71.
- Kondlo, K. (2017). "From thefringes to Fossils" The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania and the Negotiated Transition to Democracy in South Africa, 1990-1994. *Journal for Contemporary History Vol 42 (1)*, 39-58.
- Kondlo, K. M. (2009). *In the Twilight of the Revolution: The Pan Africaist Congress of Azania (South Africa)1959-1994*. Windhoek: Basler Afrika Bibliographien.
- Kristine, A. M. (2019). Distinguishing case study as a research method from case reports as a publication type. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 1-5.
- Kunnie, J. (2000). *Is Apartheid Really Dead?* Colorado: Westview Press.
- Kurtz, M. (2020). Time and Historic Geography. In A. Kobayashi, *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography: 2nd edition* (pp. 1-275). Kingston, ON: Elsevier & Technology.
- Kyemba, H. (1977). *A state of blood: The inside story of Idi Amin*. New York: Ace Book publisher.
- Laurence, P. (1993, April 17). Nation on the Brink. Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa.
- Lebakeng, T. (2021, October 05). #APLA@60 Anniversary episode 5 with Teboho J Lebakeng Ph.D. A ex-APLA operative trained in China. (T. Dlanga, Interviewer)
- Lebakeng, T. J. (2021). *They Blunted Us*. Johannesburg: Ziabile.
- Leeman, B. (1985). *Lesotho and the struggle for Azania*. Pretoria: University of Azania.
- Leeman, B. (2016). Mandela, Sobukwe and Leballo: The South African Communist Party and the Pan Africanist Congress. *Self-published*.
- Lempert, D. (2013). Taking people's History back to the People. *Democracy and Education Journal*, 1-38.
- Leopold, M. (2009). Idi Amin: Icon of Evil [shortened from] Sex, violence and historyin the lives of idi Amin postcolonial masculinity as Masquerade. *Journal for postcolonial writing 45.2*, 321-330.

- Licata, L., & Mercy, A. (2015). Social Psychology of Collective Memory. In J. D. Wright, *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2nd Edition* (pp. 194-199). Florida: Elsevier.
- Liddington, J. (2002). What is Public History? Publics and Their Pasts, Meanings and Practices. *Oral History*, 30(1), 83-93.
- Lindeque, M. (2020, October 27). Ramaphosa unveils 9-metre statue of OR Tambo. (EWN, Ed.) Ekurhuleni, Gauteng, South Africa. Retrieved from <https://ewn.co.za/2020/10/27/ramaphosa-unveils-nine-metre-statue-of-oliver-tambo-in-kemton-park/amp>
- Lipton, M. (2007). *Liberals, Marxists and Nationalists: Competing interpretations of South Africa*. Michigan: Palgrave Mac-millan US.
- Lobban, M. (1996). *White Man's justice: South African Political Trials in the Black Consciousness Era*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Lodge, T. (1983). *Black politics in South Africa Since 1945*. Johannesburg: Addison-Wesley Longman & Ravan Press.
- Lodge, T. (1984). *Insurrection in South Africa: The Pan Africanist Congress and the Poqo movement.1959-1965*. Heslington: Centre for South African Studies.
- Lodge, T. (1986). The Poqo Insurrection. *African Studies Institute* (pp. 1-44). Johannesburg: Univerity of Witwatersrand.
- Lodge, T. (1987). Political Organisations in Pretoria's African Townships : 1940-1963. 75-87.
- Lodge, T. (1988). *The Weekly Mail*. Johannesburg: WM Publications (Pty).
- Lodge, T. (1996). Soldiers of the Storm: A profile of the Azanian Liberation Army. *About Turn: The Transformation of the South African Military and intelligence*.
- Lodge, T. (2011). *Sharpeville: A massacre and its consequences*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lodge, T., & Nasson, B. (1991). *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s*. Cape Town: Ford Foundation-David Philp.
- Luthi, L. M. (2008). *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Mabe, S. (1985). *The Day that Didn't Dawn for Pokela*. Johannesburg: The Sowetan.
- Magadla, S. (2023). *Guerrillas And Combative Mothers: Women and the Armed Struggle in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg, KZN, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
- Magona, S. (2011). *From Robben Island to Bishops court: The Biography of Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane*. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Magubane, B. (2004). The Road to Democracy in South Africa. *South African Democracy Education Trust*, 8-19.
- Majodina, Z. (1995). *Exiles and Homecomings: The Untold Stories*. Johannesburg: Heinemann.

- Mantzaris, E. (1992). *PAC Politics After CODESA*. University of Durban-Westville, Sociology. Durban: Indicator SA.
- Martin, J. (2021, April 19). *Sources and Methods: A blog of the History and Public policy Program*. Retrieved from Wilson Center: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/looking-back-1971-uganda-coup>
- Mashike, L., & Mokalobe, M. (2003). Reintegration into Civilian Life: The case of former MK and APLA combatants Vol 12. *Track Two*.
- Mataboge, M. (2010, March 19). *M&G*. Retrieved from Mail & Guardian: <https://mg.co.za/article/2010-03-19-almost-a-revolution/>
- Mazrui, A. A. (1977). The warrior tradition and the masculinity of war. In A. A. Mazrui, *The warrior tradition on modern Africa* (pp. 69-81). Leiden: E.J Brill.
- Mbembe, A. (2002). The Power of the Archive and its Limits. *REFIGURING the ARCHIVE*, 19-26.
- Mgxashe, M. (2006). *Are you with us? The story of a PAC Activist*. Tafelberg: Mafube.
- Mkhabela, S. (2016). Action and Fire in Soweto, June 1976. In A. Heffernan, & N. Niefertagdien, *Students Must Rise: Youth Struggle in South Africa before and beyond Soweto '76* (pp. 55-64). Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Molotsi, T. (2017). *The 'Unfinished' Revolution: Memoirs of an mk combatant*. Johannesburg: Teboho Tommy Molotsi.
- Morris, S. J. (1999). *Why Vietnam invaded Cambodia: Political Culture and Causes of War*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Mothopeng, Z. (1974). *The Whites, by Blacks*. Johannesburg: Drum.
- Mothopeng, Z. (1990, February 9). Interview with Mr Zeph Mothopeng, PAC President. (Unknown, Interviewer)
- Motumi, T., & Hudson, A. (1995). Rightsizing: The Challenges of Demobilisation and social reintegration in South Africa. In J. Cilliers, *Dismissed: Demobilisation and Reintegration of former Combatants in Africa* (pp. 148-175). Midrand: IDP.
- Motumi, T., & McKenzie, P. (1998). From Defence to Development: redirecting military resources in South Africa. In J. Cock, & P. McKenzie, *After the War: demobilisation in South Africa* (pp. 184-206). Cape Town: David Philip.
- Mphahlele, E. (1990). The ANC holds its Annual Conference in Bloemfontein. In J. Schadeberg, *Nelson Mandela and the Rise of the ANC* (pp. 94-103). Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball.
- Mphahlele, L. (2000). *Child of this soil: My Life as a Freedom fighter*. Johannesburg: Mwalimu Books.
- Mphahlele, L. (2012). *Shining the searchlight inwards*. Wandsbeck: Reach Publishers.
- Mqhayi, S. E. (2001). History. In P. M. Jeff Opland, *Abantu Besizwe: Historical and Biographical writings, 1902-1944* (pp. 28-31). Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

- Muendane, N. M. (1988). *Confrontation with Apartheid Colonialism: The Role and Influence of Sobukwe and Africanism in the Azanian Struggle*. London: Jacobin Book and Muendane Publishing.
- Mugodi, I. (2018). *Remember Me!* Makhado: Vhakololo Press.
- Musi, M., & Masters, C. (2022, August 1). The long-standing and enduring friendship between the Chinese PLA and the South African Military. Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa.
- Ndlovu, S. M. (2017). *African Perspective of King Dingane kaSenzangakhona: The Second monarch of the Zulu Kingdom*. Pretoria: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nkoana, M. (n.d.). *Crises in the Revolution*.
- Ntloedibe, E. L. (1995). *Here is a Tree: Political Biography of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe*. Ga-Rankua: Century-Turn.
- Ntwasa, T. (2018, April 13). 7 things you didn't know about: State funerals in South Africa. (S. Live, Ed.) Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa. Retrieved December 13, 2022, from <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/amps/s-mag/2018-04-13-7-things-you-didnt-know-about-state-funerals-in-south-africa/>
- O'Malley, P. (1999, October 14). Chapter 7: Political Violence in the Era of Negotiations and Transition, 1990-1994. *The Heart of Hope*. Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from <https://omalley.nelsonmandela.org/index.php/site/q/031v02167/04lv02264/05lv02335/06lv02357/07lv02372/08lv02379.htm>
- O'Malley, P. (1999, October). *O'Malley: The Heart of Hope*. Retrieved from O'Malley Archives: <https://omalley.nelsonmandela.org/index.php/site/q/03lv02424/04lv02730/05lv03163/06lv03171/07lv03172.htm>
- Organisation of African Unity. (1989). *Harare Declaration: Declaration of the OAU Ad-hoc Committee on Southern Africa on the question of South Africa*. Harare: OAU. Retrieved from https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ZA_HarareDeclaration-21Aug_1989.pdf
- PAC. (1967). *Report of the National Executive Committee Meeting*. Moshi.
- Pheko, L. L. (2018, July 18). The Mandela Debate: Did the Mandela government set South Africa out to fail? (E. Mckaiser, Interviewer)
- Pheko, M. (1990). *South Africa: Betrayal of a colonised people: Issues of International Human Rights law*. Johannesburg: ISAL Publications.
- Pheko, M. (2009). *The Hidden side of South African Politics*. Johannesburg: Tokoloho.
- Pokela, J. N. (1981, March 01). CHAIRMAN OF PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS INTERVIEWED ON WHITE RULE. (Unknown, Interviewer)
- Pollack, J. D. (1982). *The Sino-Soviet Rivalry and Chinese Security Debate*. California: RAND.

- Ramose, M. B. (1999). *African Philosophy through Ubuntu*. Harare: Mond Books.
- Ranger, T. (2004, June). Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: the Struggle over the Past in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 30(2), 215-234.
- Reporter. (1985). SA 'no' to Mrs Pokela's funeral trip? Harare: The Zimbabwe Herald.
- Reuters. (1978, July 03). *British Pathe*. Retrieved from British Pathe: <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/VLVA16J5N9GAH7N8HEHTBD5GULQ1Q-TANZANIA-PAN-AFRICAN-CONGRESS-OF-TANZANIA-SOUTH-AFRICA/query/TANZANIA>
- Roberts, P., Levine, S. I., Vamos, P., Kaple, D., Friedman, J., & Stiffler, D. A. (2010). The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World (review). *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 120-165.
- Roediger, H. L., & Wertsch, J. V. (2008). Creating a new discipline of memory studies. *Memory Studies* 1 (1), 5-17.
- Rommelspacher, A. (2017). "Let Mrs Mafekeng stay": An evaluation of the Paarl riots of 1959. *Historia vol.62 n.1*, 48-72.
- Ross, R., Mager, A. K., & Nasson, B. (2011). Introduction. *The Cambridge History of South Africa: Volume 2*, 1-16.
- SABC News. (1998, October 10). *SAHA Archives & Justice*. Retrieved from DMMA: <https://sabctr.c.saha.org.za/reports/volume2/chapter4/subsection22.htm>
- Santos, B. d. (2016). *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Seroke, J. (2013, October 15). Historical Perspective: Memorialising APLA forces in the years of the great storm! Gauteng, South Africa.
- Shabalala, S. (2018, October). PAC Commemorates 50 years since operation crusade (1968) in Villa Peri, Mozzambique Carried out by 12 PAC Soldiers under the command of General Gerald Kondlo. Durban, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa.
- Shabalala, S. R. (2014). *A High Price For Freedom: Memoirs of Sipho Richard Shabalala*. Cape Town: The Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society.
- Simpson, T. (2007). The Historical Revolution in South Africa. *Unpublished paper*, 1-189.
- Simpson, T. (2016). *Umkhonto weSizwe: The ANC's armed struggle*. Century City: Penguin Random House.
- Simpson, T. (2021). *The History of South Africa: From 1902 to the Present*. Cape Town: Penguin .
- Sobukwe, M. R. (2010). Address on Behalf of the Graduating Class at Fort Hare College. In P. I. Bureau, *Speeches of Mangaliso Sobukwe* (pp. 1-70). Johannesburg: Nkapase.
- South African Broadcasting Cooperation. (2011, June 13). TRC Episode 69, Part 02: Director of Operations. Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from <https://youtu.be/PxuZofA5wbg>

- South African Human Rights Commission. (2018, March 21). Arts and Culture commemorates Human Rights Month through dialogues. Kimberly, Northern Cape, South Africa. Retrieved September 18, 2020, from <https://www.sahrc.org.za/index.php/sahrc-media/news/item/1188-arts-and-culture-commemorates-human-rights-month-through-dialogues>
- South African Institute of Race Relations. (1990). *Race Relations Survey 1989/90*. Johannesburg: SAIRR.
- South African Police . (1993, January 04). Memorandum submitted by the SAP to the Commission of Enquiry regarding the prevention of public violence and intimidation. *Location of APLA camps, arms, ammunition, personnel and operational activities*. Port Elizabeth, Cape Province, South Africa: SAP.
- South African Press Association. (1997, August 29). PAC's Great Storm return to Haunt it. Bloemfontein, Free State, South Africa. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from <https://justice.gov.za/trc/media/1997/9708/s970829a.htm#:~:text=The%201993%20offensive%20aimed%20at.Azanian%20People's%20Liberation%20Arm%20cadres>.
- Sparks, A. (1996). *Tomorrow is another country: The inside story of South Africa's road to change* (1 ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Starman, A. B. (2013). The case study as a type of qualitative research. *Journal of Contemporary Education Studies* , 28-43.
- Stellenbosch University . (2022, September 16). The Road to democracy in South Africa. Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa. Retrieved December 14, 2022, from <https://study-democracy.sun.ac.za/study-guide/part-1intoduction/the-road-to-democracy-in-south-africa/>
- Strauss, H. (1972). South Africa1960-66: Underground African Politics. *Institute of Commonwealth Studies*, 130-143.
- Streb, C. K. (2010). Exploratory case study. In A. Mills, G. Durepos, & E. Wiebe, *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research* (pp. 372-373). SAGE.
- Swoboda, H., & Wiersma, J. M. (2017). *Politics of the Past: The AU Use and Abuse of History*. Prague: RennerInstitut.
- Talekau, P., & Nayak, J. (2019). History. *Delhi Online journal*, 1-72.
- Terreblanche, S. (2012). *Lost in Transformation*. Johannesburg: KMM Review .
- The State versus Colben Vuyani Mngaza (Supreme Court of South Africa: Eastern Cape Division June 27, 1967).
- Timcke, S. (2011). Discourse, Memory and Post-apartheid South African Archives. *SSRN Archives Electronic Journal*, 1-15.
- Timcke, S. N. (2015). Discourse, Memory, and Post-apartheid South African Archives. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission. (1999, May 4). *Department of Justice*. Retrieved from TRC Amnesty Committee : <https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/decisions/1999/ac990182.htm>
- Twala, C. (2014). The African National congress and the Construction of Collective Memory and its impact in the Post-Apartheid Era. *Journal for Social Science*, 41 (2), 151-157.
- Unknown. (1966). *Britain Told: Get this man back*. Dar es Salaam: Morning Star.
- Unknown. (1966). *British help sought to free refugee*. Dar es Salaam: The Guardian.
- Unknown. (2009, April 26). *WayBack Machine*. Retrieved from WayBack Machine: <https://web.archive.org/web/20090426220347/http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/places/villages/gauteng/pretoria/atteridgeville.htm>
- van der Waag, I. (2015). *A Military History of Modern South Africa*. Johannesburg & Cape Town: Jonathan Ball.
- Ventresca, M. J., & Mohr, J. W. (2002). *Archival research methods*. Oxford: Blackwell Business.
- Vladislavic, I. (1996). *Propoganda by monuments & OTHER STORIES*. Cape Town: David Phillip Publishers.
- Von den Steinen, L. (2007). Experiencing the armed struggle: The Soweto generation and after. (H. Studies, Ed.) *Unirsity of Cape town, Doctoral Theses*, 1-406.
- Von Humboldt, W. (1967). On the Historian tas. *Social History and Theory*, 6(1), 63-89.
- Waldmeir, P. (1997). *Anatomy of a miracle: The end of apartheid and the birth of the New South Africa*. New York: Norton.
- Wertsch, J. V., & Roediger III, H. L. (2008). Collective memory: Conceptual foundations and theoretical approaches. 16 (3). *Psychology Press*, 318-326.
- Witz, L., & Rassool, C. (2018). Making Histories. *university of Western Cape*, 6-15.
- Wolhin, C., & Rainet, A. (2022). Is it a case study? A critical analysis and guidance. *The Journal of Systems & Software (Vol 192)*, 1-15.
- Wooden, N. (2012). *The making of modern South Africa: Conquest, Apartheid, Democracy: Fifth edition*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Xundu, T. T. (2020). Foreword. In W. Zondi, *No Easy Battle: How I overcame extreme obstacles to achieve my dream* (pp. iii-iv). Pretoria: Ascension Book Publisher.

