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Southern African Liberation Movements and the Global Cold War “East”: Transnational Activism 1960–1990

Introduction

This volume explores ways in which the liberation movements of Southern Africa were connected to people and organisations in countries that were regarded as part of the “East” in the Cold War decades of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.¹ The many different forms such connections took have been little investigated. The chapters that follow showcase studies of such interactions, at both leadership

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1 We use “East” for countries that were considered in the Cold War decades not to be part of the “West”, but do not include socialist Cuba, located in the Western hemisphere (for its relations to Southern African liberation movements see, say, P. Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013). There was no single Eastern bloc. The Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China were at daggers drawn by the 1970s in what is usually termed the Sino-Soviet split (on which see in particular J.S. Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: the Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002). Yugoslavia, seen from the West as belonging to the “East”, was not a Soviet satellite. Even countries in the Warsaw Pact such as the German Democratic Republic (GDR) had a complex relationship with Moscow, which changed over time. Cf. also S. Marung, U. Müller and S. Troebst, “Monolith or experiment? The Bloc as a spatial format”, in: M. Middell and S. Marung (eds.), *Re-spatializations under the Global Condition. Towards a typology of spatial formats*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019. Alongside the debate on denomination and definition of Cold War spatial constructs the authors put forward the idea that “a multitude of infrastructures, institutionalizations, and networks emerged as the result of the activities of a wide spectrum of actors – both inside and outside the bloc” (ibid., pp. 9 and 23). We interpret this as the design of an imagined “space” consisting of multiple spatial layers where differentiated actors operate.

and grass-roots levels, seeking to explain why they took the form they did. Members of liberation movements not only worked together in various exile settings but travelled to Eastern Europe and elsewhere for military and political training or to receive vocational, secondary and university education. Little is known about the networks that were shaped through the movement of individuals and ideas from Southern Africa to the “East” and from the “East” to Southern Africa. In the studies included here some of these connections are teased out. This introduction attempts to bring some of the threads together and to provide general context.

Until recently, writings on Southern African liberation movements tended to focus on the history of particular movements and to ignore the connections between them. In the last few years some scholarship has been concerned with transnational connections between the different liberation movements.² But this often ignores or plays down the many and varied connections between these movements and the “outside world”.³ Our main concern here is not with connections between Southern African liberation movements themselves but with their links to third parties in the Global East. We hope that another volume will in time consider such links with those in the Global West.

Many different actors outside Africa supported the liberation struggles, ranging from non-governmental organisations, the United Nations, country governments, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of African Unity, and liberation movements in other parts of the globe. The aim of the Southern African liberation movements to keep open connections to all supporters, be it in the West, East, North or South, entangled their various agendas. Not committing to any one ideological line allowed for a range of cooperation. The wide spectrum of help for the goal of independence included scholarships, financial aid, humanitarian help as well as military hardware. Types, forms, and intensity of support varied not only from actor to actor, but also from country to country. In the global context of the Cold War, the relationship between liberation movements and the countries of the “East” was far from static. Forms of material aid and ideological encouragement underwent major changes over time. These

² See especially J. Alexander, J.-A. McGregor and B.-M. Tendi, “The Transnational Histories of Southern African Liberation Movements: An Introduction”, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 43 (2017) 1, pp. 1–12.

³ There are of course exceptions to this. See esp. H. Sapire, “Liberation Movements: Exile and International Solidarity: An Introduction”, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35 (2009) 2, pp. 271–286, and some of the chapters in H. Sapire and C. Saunders (eds.), *Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa: New Local, Regional and Global Perspectives*, Claremont: University of Cape Town Press, 2013.

chapters show that the traditional Cold War geography of bi-polar competition with the United States is inadequate to fully grasp these transformations. The question of which side of the ideological divide between the superpowers in the Cold War was more successful (or lucky) in impacting actors and societies in the Global South is still relevant, yet a Cold War perspective falls short in unfolding the complex geographies of connections and the multipolarity of actions and transactions, some of which continue to influence relationships today.

Acknowledging the complexities of liberation movements in globalization processes, the authors of these chapters argue that their actions need to be understood in local contexts, including personal agendas and internal conflicts, as well as through the traditional frame of Cold War competition. They point to the agency of individual activists in both “Africa” and the “East” and the lessons, practices, and languages that were derived from often contradictory encounters. Scholars from South Africa, Portugal-Angola, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Austria, and Germany ask: What role did actors in both Southern Africa and the “Eastern” countries play? What can we learn by looking at biographies of such actors, in a context of increasing racial and international conflict? What kinds of “creative solutions” were found to combine the efforts of actors from different ideological camps?

Notions and Concepts

Recent scholarship has emphasized the complexity of the concept of the Cold War, which cannot be seen in bipolar terms, as “West” against “East”. It is much too simple to think of the “West” as supporting the apartheid regime and colonialism in Southern Africa, and the “East” as sole supporters of the Southern African liberation movements. Sweden in particular was one of the most important supporters of those movements.⁴ In the last 15 years, scholars have increasingly emphasized that the Cold War in Africa needs to be understood as a history of many regional struggles, involving a wide variety of actors.⁵ Studies have highlighted the role of international organisations, non-governmental organisations, state-actors and their interplay, within African countries (and in relation to the superpowers). Other actors, mediators, and supporters, as well

⁴ See in particular T. Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa*, 2 vols., Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 1999 and 2001.

⁵ O.A. Westad, *The Global Cold War. Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005; B. Greiner, C.T. Müller, and D. Walter (eds.), *Heiße Kriege im Kalten Krieg*, Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2006.

as the many connections and networks of liberation movements on a global scale, have tended to remain under the radar of academic attention. While this volume builds on recent research trends,⁶ it aims to go beyond them by looking at the “unexpected comrades”⁷ and third-party involvements in the Global East.

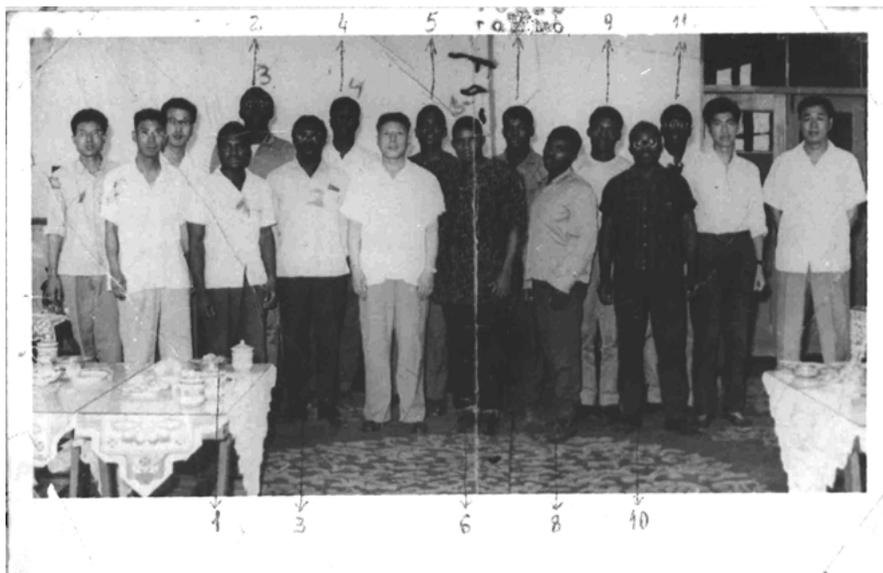


Fig. 1: Chinese political and military instructors and some of the first J.M. Savimbi’ disciples (the UNITA founders) in Peking, 1965, showing: 1. Isaias Massumba, 2. Samuel Chiwale, 3. José Kalundungo, 4. Francisco Mateus [Bandua], 5. Nicolau [Biago Tchiuka] (arrested), 6. Jeremias [Kussia] (arrested), 7. David [Jonatão] Chingungi, 8. Moisés Paulo [Paulino Moisés], 9. Jacob Inácio (arrested), 10. Manuel “O Keniata” [or Tiago Sachilombo], 11. Samuel Chivala [Chilimbo, Muanangola] [sources: ANTT: PIDE-DGS: Del A, Bases no Estrangeiro, p. 14, fl. 160 (NT 7372) and C.1. UNITA, Vol. 1, fl. 427–428 (NT 9093); S. Chiwale, *Cruzei-me com a História. Autobiografia*, Lisboa: Sextante Editora, 2008, p. 192]

⁶ E.g. J. Alexander and J.A. McGregor, “African Soldiers in the USSR: Oral Histories of ZAPU Intelligence Cadres’ Soviet Training, 1964–1979”, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 43 (2017) 91, pp. 49–66. On Dar es Salaam as a “hub of decolonization” see G. Roberts, “Politics, decolonisation, and the Cold War in Dar es Salaam, c. 1965–72”, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Warwick, 2016, and “The assassination of Eduardo Mondlane: FRELIMO, Tanzania, and the politics of exile in Dar es Salaam”, *Cold War History* 17 (2017) 1, pp. 1–19.

⁷ A. Moledo, “Unexpected comrades in the struggle for liberation. The transregional solidarity networks of Lusophone African anticolonial activists (1950s–1970s)”, Ph.D. thesis, Leipzig University, forthcoming.

As “East” must be broken down into its component parts, so “Southern Africa” was not a single entity, and its liberation movements represented a wide range of countries. The very meaning of “Southern Africa” has changed over time, with Julius Nyerere of Tanzania speaking of that region as including his country, for he was a keen supporter of the liberation movements fighting for the independence of the countries to the south of Tanzania.⁸ On the other hand, the liberation movements in Angola, a country now very much part of Southern Africa, sometimes saw themselves as belonging to Central Africa when they were based in the two Congos, Kinshasa and Brazzaville, though after 1964 their links with Zambia and Tanzania progressively increased.⁹ In her chapter in this volume, Natalia Telepneva writes of the Lusophone ties that linked both the Angolan and Mozambican liberation movements with Guinea-Bissau in West Africa.

The chapters that follow focus mainly on the late 1960s and early 1970s, before the Carnation Revolution in Portugal transformed the situation in southern Africa, leading to the independence of Angola and Mozambique. The focus on that period in part reflects the fact that new sources have recently become available for that decade. Some of the chapters have a wider chronological vision and take the story to the end of the 1980s. Though the liberation movements them-

8 Consider Julius Nyerere’s statement from 1984: “Long before the armed struggle for Zimbabwe and Namibia started, the only frontline states were Tanzania and Zambia. President Kaunda and I decided that we should invite the representatives of the liberation movements in Mozambique and Angola. The two of us should not be discussing Angola and Mozambique without the leaders of Angola and Mozambique. This is how we began to invite the leaders of Angola and Mozambique to our meetings. I used to advocate at the time that after their independence these countries would have to follow different tactics from those of Tanzania and Zambia. At that stage Tanzania and Zambia provided the guerrilla camps. We would receive the recruits, train them, and equip them with arms to go out and fight. This is what we did in the case of Zimbabwe also. We had huge training camps. But we agreed that after independence the other frontline states, i.e., Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana, could not establish guerrilla camps in their territory to receive young people from South Africa and train them to fight in South Africa. They had to carry on the struggle quite differently after independence. Their primary aim should be to consolidate their states politically and economically so that they could reduce their economic dependence upon South Africa. Once we had these economically independent countries stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic, that would be a really powerful challenge and deterrent to South Africa. We all agreed on this.” J. Nyerere, “North-South Dialogue”, *Third World Quarterly* 6 (1984) 4, pp. 835–836. Various versions of this quote have been handed down.

9 See H.A. Fonseca, “Ideas of Southern Africanism: Portugal and the Movements of Liberation (1961–1974)”, paper presented at the 24th biennial conference of the Southern African Historical Society, Gaborone: University of Botswana, June 2013.

selves have different histories, with South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) tracing its roots back as far as 1912, it was in the 1950s that the ANC became a mass movement for the first time and that elsewhere in the region other liberation movements began to be formed. From the early 1960s they began to embark on armed struggles. The decades we are concerned with, then, are the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. As the latter decade came to an end, the Cold War, which began to thaw after 1985, approached its end as well.

Regional Scope and Range of Case Studies

These chapters do not only range over a number of decades, but also consider a spectrum of spatial units, from the nation state to the camps of liberation movements or the training facilities in countries of the "East". Using an actor-centred approach, the case-studies in this volume consider the endeavours of Namibian, Angolan, South African, and Mozambican liberation movements and activists to reach out to counterparts in China, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and the GDR. When studying transnational actors in the global Cold War decades, two apparently contradicting facets of encounters and entanglements become obvious: the transnational movements of individual actors, and the hindrances and obstacles to these border-crossings. Activists moved in different contexts and their activities were hindered or limited or, say, jeopardized by personal constraints or other interest groups.

Though the connections highlighted in these chapters include states, they are by no means limited to states. Recent scholarship has convincingly begun to question the concept of "national liberation".¹⁰ Connecting to this line of enquiry, either

10 E. g. S. Pampuch, "African Students and the Politics of Race and Gender in the German Democratic Republic" in: Q. Slobodian (ed.), *Comrades of Color: East Germany in the Cold War World*, New York: Berghahn, 2015, pp. 131–156; S. Pampuch, "Afrikanische Migrationserfahrungen mit zwei deutschen Staaten", in: S. Zloch, L. Müller, and S. Lässig (eds.), *Wissen in Bewegung: Migration und globale Verflechtungen in der Zeitgeschichte seit 1945*, De Gruyter: Berlin and Boston, 2018, pp. 247–246.; S. Pampuch, "Struggling against 'the exilic condition of the postcolonial world': The Socialist League of Malawi", in: F. Blum (ed.), *Socialisme africains/Socialismes en Afrique* [conference volume, 7–9 April 2016, Paris], Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, forthcoming; M.C. Schenck, "Socialist Solidarities and Their Afterlives: Histories and Memories of Angolan and Mozambican Migrants in the German Democratic Republic, 1975–2015", unpublished Ph.D., Princeton University, and "A chronology of nostalgia: memories of former Angolan and Mozambican worker trainees to East Germany", *Labor History* 59 (2018) 3, pp. 352–374; L. White and M. Larmer, "Introduction: Mobile Soldiers and Un-National Liberation of Southern Africa", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40 (2014) 6, pp. 1271–1274.

Eric Burton, by the lens of the Hubs of Decolonization, or Nedžad Kuč, in his study on educational experiences of Southern African studies in early 1960s Yugoslavia, recover the discussion on the ultimately “un-national” character of that national liberation. Other chapters in this volume address and revisit the question, teasing out entanglements between liberation movements and particular states, while pointing to a variety of cooperative channels (e.g. Eric Burton, Natalia Telepneva). These chapters show that transnational connections can include different kinds of geographical and social organisations, transcending and questioning the confines of “nation”. They highlight the importance of connections that transcend previous geo-political framings and show the open-ended and fragmented processes of units and histories in the making. As a concept, “nation” features throughout and serves as an anchor for individual positionings and argumentations.

Attention to particular historical contexts is required to understand, transnationally, active members of liberation movements and the entanglements they found themselves in. The studies in this volume exemplify how an actor-centred approach, and situating the study of liberation movements in a global history perspective, can help us understand the dynamics and mechanisms of cross-border connections and the mutual constitution of practices and organisations. These studies also depict the different notions and meanings of “staying abroad”, “home”, or “exile” for individual actors, who manoeuvred between a multiplicity of transnational fields of activity and spaces of belonging. The chapter by Anja Schade and Ulrich van der Heyden tackles the issue of “exile” specifically for ANC students in the GDR.

Methods and Disciplines

The complexity of networks and relationships, and the contradictory and changing nature of alliances and individual mobilities that have been outlined above, pose a challenge for researchers aiming to grasp the actual details of interactions. To encounter this challenging complexity of different voices and multiple actors, a portfolio of methods is necessary. This volume comprises contributions from the fields of social and cultural history, political history, anthropology, ethnology, and political studies. Chapters draw upon the subfields of the global history of anti-colonialisms, Cold War histories of national liberation in the Global South, and new studies on international solidarity with liberation movements in Southern Africa. These chapters relate to global narratives of migration and movements of people from the colonies to the metropolis, include research on transregional networks of people and ideas, consider accounts of global processes of decolonization, and build on existing studies of particular liberation par-

ties and movements. In addition to the explicit interdisciplinary approach of contributions, a number of the studies that follow attempt to look at aspects of the liberation movements from below, using an approach that highlights the networks and connections that individual actors shaped with their movements and ideas, both at leadership and grass-roots levels. The actor-centred methods employed range from micro-level analysis and biographical studies to prosopographical approaches.

A biographical approach allows us to take the multiplicity of concepts and ideologies, practices, and languages, and their interplay into consideration. It helps to reveal the fuzziness of interactions and influences at the micro-level that shape individual pathways and experiences. While experiences at the micro-level often mirror broader trends and contradictions, individual encounters and agendas can offer a better understanding of the unexpected twists, connections and conflicts, the positioning and re-positioning that may appear to be contradictory on a broader scale. Turning the focus away from high politics and governmental interactions does not challenge the insightful and extensive exploration in this field, but adds a new dimension to the scenario of Cold War rivalries and competing interests in a decolonizing world.

The individuals depicted in this volume were activists or supporters (e.g. chapter by Milorad Ladic) and mediators between liberation movements and actors in the “East” (e.g. journalists in Natalia Telepneva’s study).¹¹ They were rank-and-file members, refugees, fugitives, freedom fighters, guerrillas, students, instructors, and trainees. They became “radical political activists”, “spies” or “harmless scholarship holders”,¹² depending on the situation and the person classifying them. Shedding light on the different types of actors who fought and supported the struggle challenges these “labels”. Seemingly unambiguous roles are questioned (e.g. the case of Eduardo Mondlane, in the chapter by Natalia Telepneva) and individual motivations uncovered.

Motivations for being active within liberation movements differ significantly, as for example shown in Kuč’s study on individual trajectories and ambitions (and success-rates) of the first generation of Southern African students. Considering the sometimes successful, sometimes conflictual, endeavours of students,

11 Intriguing insights on the role of mediators, such as members of religious groups and embassy staff have recently been provided, in papers presented at the German African Studies conference, Leipzig 2018, by Christian A. Williams on the history of the chaplaincy to Namibians and Andrew Ivaska on the exchanges and connections of employees of the American embassy in Dar es Salaam with FRELIMO staff.

12 PAAA, B 130/2277 A, Reichhold (FRG embassy) to Federal Foreign Office, Accra, 7 December 1963, see N. Telepneva, “Letters from Angola” in this volume.

journalists, political leaders, and grassroots members leads to the question of what this means on the level of collective identities and experiences. A prosopographical approach investigates the common characteristics of a group where it may not be possible to trace a number of individual biographies. By considering the collective experiences of a group, similarities and differences become more visible. The prosopographical approach used in the chapter of Helder Adegar Fonseca gives us a more substantial knowledge of a number of key aspects of the relations of the liberation movements to the countries of the Global East: the movement of activists to those countries; the dynamics of the (ideological) openness and closedness of the assisted liberation movements in the competitive “East” and other progressive countries; the range of training and education that was provided to the activists, and the cultural factors that hindered that training and education; the social conditions of the reception of the activists; and the functional and social opportunities for the trainees who were directly involved in the various external experiences.

These chapters use individual examples and biographies as entry point and lens to bring relations into view. Both top-down and bottom-up connections are investigated. An entangled history approach emphasizes transnational and transcultural connections and entanglements. The benefits of employing a comparative framework are visible in the chapters by Eric Burton and Chris Saunders.

Sources

While the complexity of networks and interactions is one major challenge when researching Southern African liberation movements and their connections to the Global Cold War “East”, another methodological challenge is the availability of sources. Most of the liberation movements were (also) exile movements which operated on a transnational scale. Archives are fragmented, dispersed and often not easily accessible, and the existing literature is limited in scope and timeframe. These studies link often scarce sources and creatively combine material from archives, private collections and interviews from various regions in different languages. Not only do the individual chapters create this dialogue of methods and sources: they make it possible for us to consider the rapidly growing body of archival materials, secondary literature, published interviews, unpublished dissertations, correspondence, interrogation reports, different types of records, and personal narratives, in English, German, Russian, Portuguese, Afrikaans, and Yugoslavian. Bringing them into conversation with each other may add valuable insights into the research that has been achieved in this field thus far.

So these studies serve a threefold purpose. Bringing materials from different regions and languages into conversation creates a dialogue between research traditions and existing findings. This dialogue of methods and sources helps to create a broader and comparative perspective. And, through combining efforts it is possible to overcome the lack of a coherent “state of the art” and to give answers to the many open questions regarding Southern African liberation movements and their connections to the “East”.

In the Angolan case, where there are few accessible records of the liberation movements themselves, Helder Adegar Fonseca uses what is now accessible, the complex archives of the intelligence services of the Portuguese State (PIDE/DGS) and its army. The archives of the PIDE/DGS Angola Department in ANTT (Lisbon, Portugal), not only contain files generated by its vast spy network but also much extensive documentation provided by the security police and intelligence services of the different “White African” countries – including South Africa and white-ruled Rhodesia – and the police and other state bodies in independent African countries or obtained secretly from international organisations, such as the Organisation of African Unity (Addis Ababa) and its Liberation Committee (Dar es Salaam and Lusaka centres). In these archives there is an abundant, varied supply of documents produced by the liberation movements and their activists, sometimes captured in battle or raids on bases and other guerrilla facilities, inside and outside Angolan territory. These spoils included operational reports, strategic and tactical documents, personal and organisational correspondence, political and technical training manuals, memoirs and diaries, “individual notes”, “commander’s documents”, “notebooks”, and “journals”. Statements from imprisoned or captured guerrillas and members of the public and reports from agents in the field were extremely important in the preparation of Fonseca’s study. Such evidence will repay additional attention, and similar work needs to be done on the archives of intelligence and assistance services of those in the “East” who supported the liberation movements, in order to construct a narrative that draws upon sources that originated in Africa and Europe, as well as in other parts of “West” and “East”.

Key Aspects and Recurring Topics

The interplay of local contexts and global processes, the multiplicity and multipolarity of connections, the fluidity and re-positioning of actors and ideas, and the languages and lessons learned through the encounters of Southern African liberation movements with the global Cold War “East” are key topics in this volume.

The **interplay of local contexts and global processes** is shown through a focus on local contexts, including personal agendas and internal conflicts. The many layers of interaction complicate and exceed Cold War frames. These chapters provide a glimpse of features less often noted. This is, for example, done with regard to the impact of local contexts by Chris Saunders, who shows that there was no one-way development but multiple, partially contradictory trajectories. Urban centres, both on the African continent and in the “East”, served as hubs of decolonisation; centres of condensed action, they formed a nexus for connection. The chapter by Eric Burton provides insights into the role of such hubs in managing connections and mobilities and depicts the multiplicity of sites for activism in the Cold War decades. He also discusses the facilitation and regulation of mobilities and the hindrances and obstacles to movement and connection, for mobilities were facilitated, directed, blocked, and delayed. The global nature of networks of support also becomes clear in the study by Helder Adegar Fonseca, whose contribution highlights the openness and closedness of connections, for not all liberation movements could participate in them. Natalia Telepneva highlights the crucial role of communication and international publicity, an aspect that Eric Burton’s chapter also touches upon. These authors show that global media enabled African revolutionaries to engage local and capture international audiences.

When talking about **multiplicity and multipolarity**, we think of the multiplicity of connections of national liberation movements to each other and to the “outside world”. These chapters consider the complex geographies of connections and multipolarity of actions and transactions and the multiple roles of individuals. It is too simple to regard the relationship between the liberation movements and the countries of the “East” as one-way. Though those countries provided essential aid to the liberation movements, the movements were not merely passive recipients of that aid, but active in helping to shape the relationship, in part through refusing to adopt, beyond the occasional rhetorical flourish, the ideological positions of the “Eastern” countries. Building on the literature on trans-regional ties of Southern African liberation struggles and connections to the global Anti-Apartheid Movement as a cornerstone of international solidarity, these contributions shed light on the diverse routes of solidarity and alliance beyond nationalist identifications. They pluralize our understanding of Southern African liberation movements and their relations to the global Cold War “East”, and point to the role of intermediary countries and unexpected sites of exchange.

Notions of **fluidity and re-positioning** allow us to address the types, forms, and intensity of support and cooperation between individual actors and groups of actors, as well as changes in support over time. Activists both position them-

selves and are positioned in the global context of the Cold War. As the study by Natalia Telepneva shows, individuals could be journalists and members of the intelligence community at the same time. Allegiances were changing and pragmatic, and politics often messy and obtuse, with people aiming to keep open connections to different potential supporters. Individuals and groups of actors not only positioned themselves ideologically in debates, but also physically and geographically located themselves in new contexts, as Nedžad Kuč's research exemplifies. Repositioning in this physical, embodied sense is also relevant for Milorad Lazic and the ANC members in "exile" discussed in the chapter by Anja Schade and Ulrich van der Heyden. These chapters address the challenges that came with being positioned or re-positioned abroad.

The volume also addresses **lessons, practices, and languages** derived from often contradictory encounters. Languages spoken at the various sites of encounters facilitated as well as hindered exchange, and notions and concepts were developed in different contexts of interactions. Notions like "refugee", "activist", "socialist", "exile", and "home" were strategically employed and negated, debated, and developed. Concepts were politicized and actors from the various camps found themselves in a process of ongoing defining and re-defining, of positioning and negotiating positions. These chapters tackle the kaleidoscope of labels and classifications, attributed from outside and intentionally chosen from within. They also deal with strategies to counter official narratives, for example the Portuguese position that the liberation movements were little more than a bunch of "armed bandits", controlled by Moscow (cf. Natalia Telepneva's chapter in this volume).

Conceptually, there are intriguing comparisons to be made. The initial SWAPO members who went to the People's Republic of China (PRC) for military training were known as the Chinamen on their return to Africa. Similarly, those in the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) who had been trained by the Chinese were known as Black Chinese.¹³ Lessons are derived from these processes of learning and negotiating both on an individual and on a structural level. A positive view of socialist assistance sometimes clashed with personal experiences; imaginations were disappointed by the reality on the ground.¹⁴ And lessons also point to legacies, when we reflect upon the signifi-

¹³ Chapter by C. Saunders below and F. Bridgland, *Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa*, New York: Paragon House, 1987, pp. 92–94, citing the Austrian journalist Fritz Sitte, 1971.

¹⁴ E. Burton, "Hubs of decolonization", this volume. Activists like Shafi for example imagined Cairo as their gate to Europe. Similarly, ANC students had visions of the GDR based on what they had heard at home, see U. van der Heyden and A. Schade, *GDR Solidarity*, this volume.

cance and consequence of liberation movements and their connections to the global Cold War “East”.

Contributions and Gaps

The case studies provided here are in many respects illustrative; they are inevitably far from comprehensive and we need far more such studies before we can get a rounded picture of the relationship between the liberation movements and the “East”. Few scholars are working in this area,¹⁵ and the relevant sources are often difficult, or impossible, to access. The authors of these chapters had to rely on the accessibility of sources for their studies. Further research will be undertaken as new sources become available. It is to be hoped that this will include a study of, say, the Zimbabwean liberation movements, and that this will connect to the research being done for, say, South Africa and Angola. This is an ambition for further volumes and monographs to come.

The limitation in this volume to a few cases can be a strength. Actors in and from Yugoslavia and Angola for example feature in a number of chapters, and their historical analyses speak to each other in a complementary way. Joining two studies from different angles may provide new insights and create a dialogue. Secondly, these examples can serve as an entry point to understand the broader dynamics and structures of interaction. Struggles and positionings from students, activists, leaders, and members of liberation movements in, for example, Angola mirror what has happened in other contexts. The individual and local differences teased out in this volume should be considered in the light of patterns of movements and engagements on a larger scale. Following this logic of a broader connexion that needs to be studied in local settings and regarding individuals and groups of actors and their multiple engagements, the first two chapters enter the dialogue by giving a broad overview. Guiding the reader into the situation of liberation movements in times of the global Cold War, they introduce urban hubs as sites and “portals” of exchange and depict patterns and instances of support in a comparative way. Other chapters enter into the detailed analyses of local developments and global entanglements in a vari-

¹⁵ In the social sciences and humanities, we can think of e.g. Andrew Ivaska, Christian Williams, Godwin Korne, George Robertson, James Mark, Justin Pearce, Elizabeth Banks, Sebastian Pampuch, Konstantinos Katzakioris, Steffi Marung, Bence Kocsev, Ana Moledo, and others, who have recently conducted studies in this field. We wish to thank all colleagues who were involved in discussions and who have inspired this publication with their work.

ety of contexts. First, actors in and from Africa come into view, as chapters move to settings further in the “East”.

Eric Burton introduces the different local contexts of liberation movements in selected settings on the African continent. His chapter deals with the role of hubs between Africa and Eastern Europe. It exemplifies mobility, and its regulation, in African urban centres such as Cairo, Accra, and Dar es Salaam. He sheds light on the local circumstances the activists found themselves in, the mobility of people and the circulation of ideas, and the fluidity between categories such as liberation fighter, student, and refugee. Months of waiting until destinations were decided and travel arrangements finalized challenged both local infrastructures as well as the emotional capacities of those in the “waiting loop”. Local encounters and exchanges also left an imprint in the imaginaries and ideas that individuals had about post-colonial societies.¹⁶

Chris Saunders then focusses on the activities and involvements of the South West Africa People’s Organisation (SWAPO), which led Namibia’s liberation struggle. SWAPO received support of many different kinds from a wide variety of countries and organisations. Among the most important countries to give it support were four that were, in Cold War terms, seen as “Eastern”: the PRC, North Korea, the Soviet Union (USSR), and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Only some aspects of SWAPO’s connections with these countries have been explored, and then mainly from a perspective shaped at least in part by the authors’ involvement in the politics of the Cold War. This chapter draws heavily upon the work of Vladimir Shubin for the USSR and of Hans-Georg Schleicher for the GDR. SWAPO’s changing connections with the socialist bloc headed by the Soviet Union were influenced by its relations with other countries, such as Cuba and Sweden.

The chapter by Anja Schade and Ulrich van der Heyden connects to that by Chris Saunders. Starting in the 1950s, the ANC received assistance from the Socialist Bloc, particularly from the GDR. Their study depicts how contacts were established between the East-German ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), as well as between the East-German Free Federation of German Trade Unions (FDGB) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). East German media accompanied those growing bonds

¹⁶ Cf. unpublished Ph.D. thesis by A. Moledo, forthcoming; J. Neves, “Marxismo, Anticolonialismo e Nacionalismo: Amílcar Cabral, A Imaginação ‘A Partir de Baixo’”, paper presented at 4^o Congresso Marx/Engels, Campinas, CEMARX/Unicamp, 2005, pp. 1–11; B. Davidson, *The Black Man’s Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*, New York: Times Books, Random House, 1992.

with critical reporting on the living conditions of the black majority within South Africa. Within a few years, solidarity structures to support the South African freedom struggle were strengthened and resulted not only in the training of ANC military personnel, but also in the provision of scholarships, in the medical treatment of wounded guerrilla fighters, and, last but not least, in the printing of *Sechaba*, the internationally-known official organ of the ANC. Whereas the first part of the chapter provides an overview on the multifaceted forms of solidarity, the second part engages with the experiences of ANC exiles in the GDR.

Helder Adegar Fonseca is concerned with the experiences of Angolan “freedom fighters” who underwent military training in socialist countries, and the impact of those experiences on the Angolan liberation struggle. Drawing on Portuguese Military and Policy Security Services interrogation reports covering the period 1961–1974, his prosopographical history of a small group of Angolan fighters and people from other liberation movements explores three aspects: the geography and types of military training outside Southern Africa; what happened to Angolan military trainees in what were often regarded as “progressive” and “socialist” sanctuaries; and, by comparison, the experience of the so-called “heaven” of the “Simferopol” military camp in Crimea. Fonseca develops three main arguments: the impact of “Eastern” and Russian socialist assistance on a specific group of liberation movements, including the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola or Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA); the positive vision of life experienced by the military trainees in socialist society; and military training in the socialist world as an opportunity for social promotion in the guerrilla army, and as legacy.

Natalia Telepneva is also concerned with individual actions and positionings in the context of the Angolan liberation struggle. Her chapter explores the content of print journalism on the liberation movements through major Soviet publications, as well as the many functions of Soviet international journalists as translators of revolution. While we know quite a lot about the role of Western journalists and their role in the popularisation of the anti-colonial struggle in former Portuguese Africa, we know little about their counterparts in the Soviet bloc, who produced large quantities of publications about the liberation struggles and about specific leaders, such as the leaders of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) and MPLA, Amílcar Cabral and Agostinho Neto, respectively.¹⁷ Telepneva’s study focuses on the career of the

¹⁷ One of the most well-known cases is that of the imaginative Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuściński (1932–2007), author of, among other works of literary journalism, *Another Day of Life* (*Jeszcze dzień życia*), London: Penguin Books, 2001 (orig. ed. 1976). See A. Domoslawski, *Ryszard Kapuściński: A Life*, London: Verso, 2012.

Soviet journalist Oleg Konstantinovich Ignat'ev, who wrote prolifically about the anti-colonial struggles in Portuguese Africa. Her chapter highlights the many functions of Soviet journalists as they shaped dominant narratives of liberation struggles and liaised with African revolutionaries through informal channels at critical moments during the anti-colonial wars. Her chapter thus complicates the agency of Soviet internationalist journalists such as Ignat'ev, highlighting their role in the transnational solidarity networks that sustained anti-colonial movements in Southern Africa.

Milorad Lazic, who uses the Yugoslav archives, examines relations between liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau and Yugoslavia during the 1960s and 1970s. In this period, Yugoslavia donated military equipment, money, and provided training and medical services to the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), the PAIGC, and the MPLA. Yugoslav aid to these movements was part of the broader Yugoslav military assistance efforts in Africa that spanned the entire period from the 1950s until the dissolution of the South Slav state in 1991. Yugoslav military aid was sometimes driven by pragmatic considerations related to the country's security or economic benefits, but was sometimes motivated by less tangible categories, such as ideology, psychological identification, or prestige, Lazic argues. Liberation movements perceived Yugoslavia as a desired partner because, unlike other socialist countries, Yugoslavia did not require ideological compatibility from aid recipients; support came without any attached political conditions. Yugoslavia's military internationalism in Africa has been addressed only sporadically in previous literature. Lazic's study builds upon these works to show – through an analysis of previously untapped Yugoslav sources – that Yugoslav military aid went beyond a single policy issue, simultaneously including questions about issues such as economic development, the acquisition and transfer of technology, relations with superpowers and regional powers, national security, ideology and politics, and prestige and status in global affairs.

Nedžad Kuč focusses on another group of actors: Southern African students in early 1960s Yugoslavia. His chapter analyses Yugoslav relations with liberation movements in Southern Africa with a focus on the educational aid provided by the Yugoslav state, which led to student mobility from Southern Africa to the Balkans during the Cold War. Based on archival documents consulted in Belgrade, the paper explores biographies, experiences and educational trajectories of students from Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Rhodesia, and Namibia in Yugoslavia. The widespread failure of the scholarship recipients suggests that, with many students fleeing to the West, educational aid had more political relevance in terms of international solidarity than benefit to those who received it.

New Perspectives

This edited volume points to the agency of individual activists in both “Africa” and the “East” in the decades of the global Cold War. Through detailed studies on the micro-level we can better understand the roles these actors played in the struggle for liberation on the African continent and their connections to the “outside world”. Shedding light on the lessons, practices, and languages that were derived from the multiple interactions and bringing sources, archives and disciplinary approaches into a conversation with one another, is one of our main aims. These chapters show that, in the study of Southern African liberation movements, we cannot continue to think of the “East” as a uniform “bloc”, but should pay more attention to the differentiation and multi-polarity of contexts, ideologies, and personal agendas – on both “sides” of the Cold War. This volume also points to the mechanisms that are developing and changing in this multi-polar web of personal journeys and agendas. Contributions depict the role of mediators and translators for orientation and navigation, they exemplify the importance of infra-structures for communication, like radio stations and publishing houses, to connect and to reach out, and they reveal the unexpected meeting points and platforms that emerged alongside political programmes and positions (e.g. church groups in the GDR).

The dynamics and structures of support were not stable or exclusive. At decisive moments conditions changed both for liberation movements and for actors in the “East”. From the chapter by Milorad Lazic, for example, we learn that there was one specific moment when Yugoslavian support became relevant; and times when opportunities were not taken, by both sides. Developments and levels of support are neither determined, nor predictable, these chapters show. Individuals see opportunities, choose ways and changing situations lead to ever new decisions and ways of cooperation (or non-cooperation). The action of individuals is located in a very complex process; they are not always sure what they should do and what will come out of it. Bringing their biographies, roles, and networks – within liberation movements and outside – into view makes the unexpected or seemingly contradictory positionings and re-positionings more intelligible. Focusing on individual journeys and experiences helps to reveal the gendered and racialized structures of mobilities and educational opportunities and the relevance of political and social capital for establishing relations and gaining support (e.g. Natalia Telepneva on the composition of a group of internationalist journalists, Eric Burton on every-day experiences in training camps).

The interactions between Southern African liberation movements and the global Cold War “East” were not uniformly successful. While SWAPO was successful as a liberation movement in part through the military means it obtained from the Soviet Union and the GDR, personal failures, disappointments, and frustrations at the human level were also part of this process. Those who encountered a negative atmosphere in training camps expressed their feelings in songs of ridicule, complaints about conditions, and expressions of disappointment with unpopular instructors. Being supported could go hand in hand with feeling humiliated, as revealed in personal accounts (e.g. the chapter by Eric Burton). At some moments, strategies worked, as Milorad Lazic shows, while at others adaptation to frustrating conditions was a necessary consequence (e.g. the chapter by Helder Adegar Fonseca).¹⁸ These studies point to the need for a deeper exploration of the way the liberation movements were shaped by specific connections with the “outside world”. The roles of Southern African children, intellectuals, and activists, whether labelled as Chinamen, Black Chinese, Black Czechs, “Namibian Czechs”, or “GDR-Children of Namibia”, draw our attention to the little that we still know about the place of the “East” as a constitutive part of the contemporary African diaspora.¹⁹ Demystifying the role of the “West” and the “East” in Cold War terms enables us to focus on these imaginations and revisit links with struggles against imperialism and colonialism from new perspectives.

This volume also shines historical light on issues of contemporary importance, such as the relationships between Africa and Europe and Africa and East Asia. In current historical writing, academic and non-academic narratives are found that romanticize or condemn either of the perceived “sides”. Through its research-based approach, this publication can help to counter those ahistorical depictions and bring to the present this entangled past, from a more substantive and objective standpoint. Today, when African migrants are not welcomed in Eastern Europe, and European solidarity is viewed with suspicion in some African circles, the past forms of interaction discussed in this book should not be forgotten. This volume offers more substantive historical knowledge on dynamics, complexities and contingencies of liberation struggles and their connections to a global public space that is

18 Cf. also E. Banks, New York University, Ph.D. thesis in progress on relations between Mozambique and the Soviet Union, 1962–1991.

19 See M. Popescu, “On the Margin of the Black Atlantic. Angola, the Eastern Bloc, and the Cold War”, *Research in African Literatures* 45 (2014) 3, pp. 91–109; K. Mildnerová, “‘I feel like two in one’: Complex Belongings among Namibian Czechs”, *Modern Africa: Politics, History and Society* 6 (2018) 2, pp. 55–94; M. Scatassa “Cold War migration: Mozambican workers, students and troopers in East Germany”, Tesi di Laurea, Padova: Università degli Studi di Padova, 2018.

finding itself in processes of heightened polarization and incitement. Whilst new superpowers emerge, migration and mobilities from and to Africa and Eastern Europe challenge understandings of “self” and “other” in societies in North, East, West and South. Islamophobia, xenophobia, increasing nationalism, and populism are only a few of the social consequences.²⁰ As these new trends develop, this volume stimulates a re-evaluation of popular understandings of solidarities between Global South and Global East and points to new framings and cooperations: new forms of interactions are being opened between African countries and the PRC in particular. Though Global East is used here in a particular sense, this volume is, hence, a contribution to thinking about the meaning of the Global East more widely, as a grouping of countries that do not belong to the Global North or the Global South.²¹ It is hoped that it may contribute to a re-framing of transnational solidarities in times of increasing nationalism and populism.

20 Cf. A. Yendell (ed.), *Understanding and Explaining Islamophobia in Eastern Europe*, EEGA Special Issue, Leipzig, 2018, <https://www.leibniz-eega.de/open-access/special-issue-islamophobia/> (accessed 8 April 2019). See also J.G. Carew, “Black in the USSR. African diasporan pilgrims, expatriates and students in Russia, from the 1920s to the first decade of the Twenty-First Century”, *African Black Diaspora: An International Journal* 8 (2015) 2, pp. 202–215; M. Matusevich, “Probing the Limits of Internationalism: African Students Confront Soviet Ritual”, *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 27 (2009) 2, pp. 19–32; H. Whitfield and B. Ibhawoh, “Problems, Perspectives, and Paradigms. Colonial Africanist Historiography and the Question of Audience”, *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 39 (2005) 3, pp. 582–600.

21 Cf. e.g. M. Müller, “In Search of the ‘Global East’: Thinking between North and South (April 4, 2018)”. published as: M. Müller, “In Search of the ‘Global East’: Thinking between North and South”, *Geopolitics* (2018), pp. 1–22, SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2881296> (accessed 8 April 2019) or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2881296>. Müller uses “East” “not so much for a geographical region, but for an epistemic space – a liminal space in-between North and South”.

