

Anarchism and Syndicalism in Southern Africa

LUCIEN VAN DER WALT

Anarchism emerged in southern Africa from the 1880s, and revolutionary syndicalism became a significant factor from the early 1900s. These movements faced the challenges posed by colonial racism, rapacious capitalism, state violence, and a large but fragmented working class. Although the pioneers were white immigrant workers and exiles, the movement set down local roots and assumed a more cosmopolitan character, developing a significant influence on local black African and Coloured/*mestiço* populations, local Indians (south Asians), and some Afrikaners. The current's heyday was before the 1930s, but it revived from the 1990s, reappearing in several countries by 2010.

Southern Africa had significant local states, including modest empires, prior to the modern European presence. Portugal had a presence in what is now Angola on the south-west coast from 1483, and Mozambique on the south-east from 1507. The Dutch Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) had bases in Mauritius from 1638 and in what became South Africa from 1652. São Paulo da Assunção de Loanda (now Luanda) and Cape Town were established in 1598 and 1652. With the exception of the Cape Colony – first ruled by the VOC, and then Batavia, followed by Britain – European imperial power was largely confined to coastal areas as late as the 1860s. Southern Africa was a patchwork of black African ('native', Bantu-speaking) polities including kingdoms; Khoisan clans; Afrikaner and Coloured republics;¹ and European colonies ruled from abroad. Economies were largely agrarian and often semi-feudal; the exports were slaves, mainly

¹ 'Afrikaner' refers to a permanent local white Afrikaans-speaking population, and 'Coloured' (or 'brown') to a diverse, racially mixed, and typically Afrikaans-speaking and Christian population, here including Basters/Griquas, Cape Malay, and Oorlam, with substantial overlaps with Khoisan and ties to Afrikaners.

from Angola, and wine, wheat, and wool from Britain's Natal and Cape Colonies in the south.

Several factors converged to change the situation and lay the basis for anarchism to emerge as part of local working-class politics. Commercial diamond mining in the northern Cape from the 1860s was followed by large-scale underground gold mining on the Witwatersrand (the 'Rand') in the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, or Transvaal, from the 1880s. Mining attracted vast European foreign direct investment, South Africa alone securing almost as much investment as the rest of the continent combined. By 1913 the Witwatersrand produced 40 per cent of the world's gold. Founded in the age of monopoly capitalism, mining was highly centralized: diamonds fell under the De Beers cartel, while gold was controlled by giant 'houses', co-ordinated through the Transvaal Chamber of Mines formed in 1887.

The mining boom drove railway construction from Cape Town, Durban (in Natal), and Lourenço Marques (now Maputo, in Mozambique), commercial farming, and early secondary industry. Older towns, like Cape Town, expanded; in two decades Lourenço Marques grew from a small outpost to a major harbour and rail complex. New towns sprang up overnight, like diamond-rich Kimberley, and the mining towns running east to west across the Rand, from Brakpan via Johannesburg to Randfontein. Johannesburg, to the south of the Transvaal's capital Pretoria, rose from a tent town in 1886 to a modern city of 250,000 in 1913, the economic hub of the whole region.

This was the era of the Scramble for Africa, and Britain expanded from the 1870s, independent polities either accepting protectorate status, as with Basutoland (now Lesotho), Bechuanaland (now Botswana), and Swaziland (Eswatini), or being conquered, as with the Zulu empire and Pedi kingdom in 1879, and the Transvaal and Orange Free State in 1899–1902. In 1909, Britain consolidated the non-protectorate territories into the Union of South Africa. The Cape, Free State, Natal, and Transvaal became provinces, with elected governments. The 'native reserves' were governed through indirect rule and customary laws. The new state was based overtly on white supremacy, with white men the overwhelming majority of voters in 1910. But as a self-governing Dominion, the new state had the same status in the British Empire as Australia and Canada. The population was around 6 million in 1911: 4 million black Africans, 1,276,000 whites, 525,000 Coloureds, and 150,000 Indians.

Portugal, faced with a British ultimatum, sought to secure its colonies' hinterlands in a process of (re)conquest lasting into the 1920s. The British South Africa Company (BSAC), sponsored by De Beers' Cecil John Rhodes,

established Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) between Bechuanaland, South Africa, and Mozambique. Its economic hub, Bulawayo in the south, was linked to the Rand; its capital Salisbury (now Harare) was connected by rail to Bulawayo, and to Beira in Mozambique, a port 1,200 kilometres north of Lourenço Marques. North of the Zambezi, it established Northern Rhodesia, with Ndola as a trading post in the north, Broken Hill (now Kabwe) and Lusaka in the centre, and Livingstone in the far south as the capital until 1935. Nyasaland (now Malawi), a protectorate, was enclosed by Mozambique and Northern Rhodesia.

South Africa dominated the region. Basutoland and northern Mozambique served as labour reservoirs for its mines; members of the growing local white bourgeoisie were major investors; its population was larger; its white population was larger than that of even Algeria; its economy centred on manufacturing from the 1940s; alone on the continent, its independent peasantry was destroyed. It also made efforts to expand its territory: South West Africa was its colony from 1915, Southern Rhodesia was invited to join once BSAC rule ended in 1922: and repeated claims were made on the protectorates. Southern Rhodesia alone came close, a self-governing, white-ruled colony from 1923, with an increasingly developed capitalist economy.

1880S–1910S

It was within the working class generated by these upheavals that anarchism emerged. The urban working class expanded massively, including large-scale immigration into Africa. There were 195,000 black African and 22,000 white mine employees on the Rand in 1913; this leaves aside the numbers in, for example, other mines across the country and region, as well as workers in construction, the docks, railways, power, factories, and catering, domestic work, the civil service and military, and so on.

But the rapidly growing working class was fragmented on several axes. One was a basic divide between ‘migrant workers’ in the southern African sense – workers who work in town for wages, to support rural homesteads where their families reside, and to which they retire – and those residing with families and completely dependent on wages. This overlapped to some extent with race and skill, but not completely: most migrants were black men, often labourers, but some were skilled; wage-dependent workers included urbanized black people and farm labourers, most Coloureds and Indians, and immigrant and local whites including Afrikaners; not all these workers were skilled, as a large multi-racial factory proletariat and ‘poor

white' population attested. Coloureds and Indians faced racist laws and practices, but black workers and the black population generally were subject to both racist and coercive laws, including an internal passport system ('pass laws') for men, contracts criminalizing desertion, and (for migrants) housing in large closed barracks ('compounds').

The first active anarchist was apparently Henry Glasse, who from 1881 lived in Port Elizabeth, a small Cape port between Cape Town and Durban.² He imported Freedom Press materials from Britain, including texts by Peter Kropotkin and Errico Malatesta and papers such as *Freedom* and *Le Révolté* (*The Rebel*), and he translated Kropotkin texts into English. Italians working in Cape Town, Pretoria, and Florida (near Johannesburg) donated to Malatesta's *L'Agitazione* (*Agitation*), *La Rivoluzione Sociale* (*The Social Revolution*), and *Volontà* (*Will*) from the 1890s into the 1910s. The Portuguese had a system of criminal deportees (*degradados*), including politicals, like anarchists. Anarchist deportees sometimes escaped into South Africa when the ships docked, as did João Manuel Rodrigues in 1896.

The German-language magazine *Freiheit* (*Freedom*) had subscribers and correspondents in South Africa from the mid-1890s in East London – a small port near Port Elizabeth – and Johannesburg. The Afrikaner struggle in the Anglo-Boer War inspired anti-imperialists worldwide and attracted support from white immigrant workers on the Rand. German anarchist Fritz Brall helped found the Duitse Kommando (German Commando) in Johannesburg in 1899; *Freiheit* reported one reader killed, and another captured by British forces.

The Russian-language *Khleb i Volia* (*Bread and Will*), founded in 1903, had readers in Johannesburg. Yiddish-speaking Jews were the largest non-British white immigrant group, and Z. D. Fox was part of a group selling *Der Arbayer Fraynd* (*The Workers' Friend*) and *Fraye Arbayer Shtime* (*Free Voice of Labour*) in Johannesburg. In 1904, two alleged anarchists, John Sepoul and Henry

2 Useful material on South Africa into the 1930s may be found in F. A. Johnstone, 'The IWA on the Rand: Socialist Organising amongst Black Workers on the Rand 1917–1918', in B. Bozzoli (ed.), *Labour, Townships and Protest* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1979), pp. 248–72; E. Mantzaris, *Labour Struggles in South Africa: The Forgotten Pages, 1903–1921* (Windhoek and Durban: Collective Resources Publications, 1995); L. van der Walt, 'Anarchism and Syndicalism in South Africa, 1904–1921: Rethinking the History of Labour and the Left', PhD, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, 2007; L. van der Walt, 'Anarchism and syndicalism in an African port city: the revolutionary traditions of Cape Town's multiracial working class, 1904–1924', *Labor History* 52, 2 (2011), pp. 137–71; G. Rey, *Afriques anarchistes. Introduction à l'histoire des anarchismes africains* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2018).

Larsen, were arrested after making threats against Lord Alfred Milner, post-war governor of the Free State and Transvaal.

The early movement was based on circles of readers devoted to certain papers, or on involvement in broad left groups. Glasse, for example, helped found a Socialist Club in 1900 where he could expound his views. Jewish anarchists were involved in the local Bundist-inclined 'Friends of the Russian Freedom', founded in 1905. Wilfred Harrison, former British soldier turned anarchist, helped found a Social Democratic Federation (SDF) in Cape Town on May Day 1904. It was a broad group, but its lively anarchist section, of which another luminary was H. B. 'Barney' Levinson, set the pace. Soap-boxing and public events, including in the largely Coloured District Six, were the SDF's mainstay: Harrison was a famed orator; an SDF rally for the 1905 Russian Revolution at the City Hall attracted 1,500. The SDF ran a printing press and Socialist Choir, and published *Cape Socialist*, including Kropotkin extracts, courtesy of Glasse.

The SDF was active in unions, which started in southern Africa with the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners in Cape Town in 1881. Unionism's pioneers were typically immigrants of British descent, inspired by a craft union model that restricted membership to qualified artisans in specific trades. More inclusive general and industrial unions emerged, such as a short-lived Knights of Labour active in Kimberley by 1890. Most unions had colour bars: those in the western Cape and Cape Town were exceptional in (sometimes) admitting Coloureds. Harrison was active in the Carpenters and the larger Cape Trades and Labour Council. The SDF formed a multi-racial General Workers Union in 1905, with Council backing – it was not, however, a syndicalist union. That year the SDF, the Council and the African Peoples Organisation – the APO, a Coloured group – organized large multi-racial unemployed demonstrations that ended in riots, with Levinson and others arrested.

In Johannesburg maverick militant Archie Crawford founded the weekly *Voice of Labour*, which became the first local socialist weekly. Crawford, the editor, and his partner, publisher Mary Fitzgerald, were not syndicalists (as often claimed) but opened the paper to a wide range of left opinion, including Glasse and Harrison. By 1910, the *Voice* had decidedly syndicalist and Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) leanings. A South African tour by Tom Mann early that year galvanized enthusiasts, with two rival bodies formed: an IWW branch, claiming affiliation to the Chicago IWW, and a Socialist Labour Party, following Daniel De Leon and the Detroit IWW.³

3 For background information, see Chapter 19 in this volume.

The IWW, led by the blacksmith Andrew Dunbar and tram-driver Tom Glynn, organized spectacular strikes in Johannesburg in 1911, and spread into Durban and Pretoria, where it drew members of the Amalgamated Society of Railway and Harbour Servants (later the National Union of Railway and Harbour Servants, NURHAS). The De Leonists, such as Yeshaya Israelstam, Phillip Roux, an Afrikaner chemist, and Scots such as John Campbell, focused on newspaper sales and soap-boxing.

Several efforts by Crawford to unite the socialist left – anarchists, syndicalists, orthodox socialists, reformers, and so on – fell apart. Differences were too deep, as responses to the union-backed push to form a South African Labour Party in 1909 showed. The IWW boycotted it, and Crawford, Harrison, and others tried to get it to adopt a radical platform but left when it adopted a mixture of segregation and socialism, ‘White Labourism’; some De Leonists remained to bore-from-within.

Differences aside, Crawford, the anarchists, the IWW, and the De Leonists shared an antipathy to both the Labour Party’s reformism *and* racism. ‘Proletarian’, the pseudonymous syndicalist editor of the *Voice* in 1910–11, declared the need for ‘an organisation of wagedworkers, black and white, male and female, young and old’ to organize ‘a universal general strike’ for ‘seizing and running . . . South Africa, for the benefit of workers to the exclusion of *parasites*’.⁴ Despite their principles, neither IWWs nor De Leonists made inroads into the Coloured, Indian, or black populations. This was partly due to the segregated public sphere of towns such as Durban and Johannesburg – unlike the SDF’s Cape Town – and a failure to directly organize around issues of racist and national oppression.

The IWW and the *Voice* collapsed in 1912, and the De Leonists were apparently deep inside the Labour Party, when a massive wave of strikes burst out from 1913 to 1914. Anarchists and syndicalists had very little influence on the events, which did not keep Jan Smuts, then minister of defence, from blaming it on a ‘Syndicalist Conspiracy’.

But the big strikes did radicalize a new layer in the unions and the Labour Party, like George Mason of the carpenters’ union, Bill Andrews, unionist and Labour member of parliament, David Ivon Jones, Labour’s general secretary, and S. P. Bunting, an Oxford-trained lawyer. South Africa’s entry into the First World War on Britain’s side, and its subsequent invasion of South West Africa, helped provoke an armed Afrikaner rebellion; the war issues also led to splits in both the SDF and the Labour Party.

4 ‘Proletarian’, ‘The Problem of Coloured Labour’, *Voice of Labour*, 27 October 1911.

The new radicals, many moving towards syndicalism, linked up with Dunbar, Roux, and other veterans, and sundry pacifists. to form a War-on-War League, also supported by Harrison. This held regular public events, and published an eclectic *War-on-War Gazette* in which Kropotkin, Karl Liebknecht, and Leo Tolstoy made appearances. Despairing of reforming the Labour Party, it reconstituted as the International Socialist League (ISL) in September 1915; the *Gazette* became the ISL's weekly *International*. It was not a loose group like the SDF, but had a significant degree of theoretical and tactical unity, the *International* representing official positions.

The ISL advocated 'the organisation of the workers on industrial or class lines, irrespective of race, colour or creed, as the most effective means of providing the necessary force for the emancipation of the workers'.⁵ In a major advance on its predecessors, it regularly affirmed the need for the working class to fight racist and coercive laws; organize among the 'helot' races, win 'equal industrial and political status' for black, Coloured, and Indian people; oppose imperialism; and win poor white people away from the National Party, heart of a rising Afrikaner nationalism.⁶ Rejecting craft and racially closed unions, the ISL favoured One Big Union to fight class exploitation and racial oppression, and take power; it dismissed nationalization as a pillar of an oppressive 'servile state' and aimed at a self-managed, union-based 'Industrial Republic'.⁷

The ISL spread countrywide, but never set up a section in Cape Town. Instead it had fraternal relations with the SDF, which still had real influence: in 1916, Harrison won 212 votes for a District Six municipal seat against an APO candidate's 543. It agitated within the orthodox unions, with limited success: the Building Workers Industrial Union, formed in 1916 and led by De Leonist Charlie Tyler, adopted a syndicalist platform. Andrews was appointed full-time ISL industrial organizer in 1918, the aim being to foster something on the lines of the Shop Stewards' and Workers' Committee Movement in Britain in the orthodox unions, and had some success among white workers in metals, mines, and rail.

But the ISL also took an unprecedented step: organizing unions among workers of colour. An Indian Workers Industrial Union was formed in Durban in 1917, then an Industrial Workers of Africa among black people in Johannesburg – the first black union – which spread to Cape Town, where it soon claimed 1,000 members, double the size of the largest affiliate of the

5 'The First Conference of the League', *The International*, 14 January 1916. 6 E.g., *ibid.*

7 'State Socialism', *The International*, 8 December 1916.

Cape Federation of Labour. From 1919, the ISL organized a Clothing Workers Industrial Union in Durban, Johannesburg, and Kimberley, and a small horse drivers' union. The ISL organized joint events with the APO and the South African Native Congress (SANNC, the African National Congress/ANC, from 1923), although it rejected all nationalism.

These unions were engaged in several notable strikes, among them an attempted general strike on the Witwatersrand by the ISL, Industrial Workers of Africa, and the SANNC left wing in 1918, and a joint strike by the Industrial Workers of Africa, representing mainly black workers, and the rival Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU), then mainly representing Coloured workers, on the Cape Town docks in late 1919 (this action was backed by the Cape Federation of Labour and NURHAS).

Through such work, the ISL recruited a growing cadre of black, Coloured, and Indian members, among them Johnny Gomas, Bernard Sigamoney, and T. W. Thibedi. Syndicalism made an appearance in the SANNC in the person of ISL members such as Fred Cetiwe and Henry Kraai, who (SANNC moderate Sol Plaatje recalled) addressed that party's 1918 conference 'in short sentences, nearly every one of which began and ended with the word "strike"'.⁸ Meanwhile, the ISL also had links to white ethnic minorities, with an important Yiddish-Speaking Branch and Greeks, such as Athonasis Pournaras, founder of a Greek Workers' Association among shop assistants in 1917.

In 1918, the SDF split, younger firebrands establishing a syndicalist Industrial Socialist League. Not to be confused with the ISL, it published the monthly *Bolshevik*: both leagues believed their syndicalist politics to be good Bolshevism, and the soviets just 'the Russian form of the Industrial Union'.⁹ Like the ISL, the Cape group started among white workers, often immigrants – besides attracting support from the ageing Glasse, it also included men like Solomon Buirski – but it soon claimed 'coloured and Malay comrades'.¹⁰ It worked with the Industrial Workers of Africa, but also formed a Sweets and Jam Workers Industrial Union, mostly Coloured but including black members such as Mpanpeni and Nodzandza. Key league members such as A. Z. Berman were in the leadership of the moderate Cape

8 Sol Plaatje, 'Letter to the General Secretary, De Beers, 3 August 1918', in B. Willan (ed.), *Sol Plaatje: Selected Writings* (Johannesburg and Athens, OH: Witwatersrand University Press and Ohio University Press, 1996), p. 237.

9 'Russian Workers Vindicate Marx', *The International*, 18 May 1917.

10 Letter from Manuel Lopes, *The Workers' Dreadnought*, 7 August 1920.



Fig. 23.1 Mass rally in Johannesburg, addressed by speakers from the Industrial Workers of Africa, the International Socialist League, and the Transvaal Native Congress, June 1918. (Used with permission, Patrick Pearson collection of photographs, Historical Papers Research Archive, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa.)

Federation of Labour, which included some Coloured workers, and managed to get some radical resolutions passed – but not implemented.

Some ISL and Industrial Workers materials got into the mines, and some black migrants attended meetings on the Witwatersrand, but a black miners' union did not emerge despite a big strike in 1920. Some ISL materials entered Mozambique with returning migrants, and the ISL had contacts in Lourenço Marques, where the *International* was available.

Language, however, was a significant barrier, and the anarchist and syndicalist movement in Mozambique arose from separate sources, and developed separately, from that in South Africa. It centred on Lourenço Marques, the colonial capital from 1898 and the most populous urban centre. Most white workers lived in Beira or Lourenço Marques, with a large part of the urban workforce concentrated in crafts, commerce, light industry, and public works. Lourenço Marques had around 27,000 residents in 1912, with a black population of perhaps 10,000 in 1916; the railway and harbour complex was the largest employer, followed by the state bureaucracy.

Mozambique had by far the largest union movement in Portuguese Africa. The concentrated Lourenço Marques workforce aided labour organizing, an important site for anarchist/syndicalist activity. Portuguese workers started unions with the União Operária (Workers' Union) in 1901, but the most powerful was the Associação dos Ferroviários e Portuários (Association of Railway and Port Workers), formed in 1910, based in the railway and harbour complex. A Confederação Operária (Workers' Confederation) was formed in 1910, and a Sindicato Geral da Província de Moçambique (General Union of the Province of Mozambique) in 1921, with a headquarters for labour activity,

the Casa dos Trabalhadores (House of Workers). Unions were small, if powerful, and generally reliant on expatriate militants. The Sindicato Geral represented just 2,000 workers in 1926: there were around 135,000 union members in South Africa in 1920, with 60,000 in the South African Industrial Federation (SAIF) in 1921. Few Mozambican unions organized black workers, and there were no black-based unions. The key exception was the Associação das Artes Gráficas de Lourenço Marques (Association of Graphic Arts of Lourenço Marques) formed around 1911, which included Goan Indians, *assimilados* – akin to *évolués* in Algeria – and *mestiços*, as well as white immigrants. Members of the Associação also had links to the Grêmio Africano (African Guild), a small *assimilado*- and *mestiço*-based advocacy group founded in 1906.¹¹

Anarchism and syndicalism had a presence from the 1890s. Some activists were *degradados*: anarchists Cruz and Just, deported after an 1896 crackdown, served prison terms in Mozambique; Francisco Antunes Soares was killed in 1905 after escaping to Portugal; in 1910, anarchist deportee José Estêvam set up a Liga Revolucionária (Revolutionary League) in Lourenço Marques upon his release from prison.

Most free immigrants came from Lisbon, the hub of Portugal's powerful anarchist/syndicalist movement, centred on the União Operária Nacional (National Workers' Union, formed in 1914) and Confederação Geral do Trabalho (General Confederation of Labour (CGT), formed in 1919), publisher of the daily *A Batalha* (*The Battle*). In 1909, Lourenço Marques anarchists published *Pró-Mártir* (*Pro-Martyr*), a pamphlet about the anarchist educator Francisco Ferrer i Guardia, executed by the Spanish state in that same year. Ferrer had admirers in the local unions and labour press, which commemorated his death for years. A Grupo Libertário Francisco Ferrer (Francisco Ferrer Libertarian Group) operated in 1911. In 1915, an anarchist group called Ressurgir emerged.

Anarchists were part of the editorial board of the republican paper *O Incondicional* (*The Unconditional*), founded in 1910; *Os Simples* (*The Simple*), published from 1911, showed anarchist influences; the anarchist Eduardo Carlos Pereira was on the board of *O Germinal* (*Germinal*), a left-wing paper

¹¹ Key sources include J. Capela, *O Movimento Operário em Lourenço Marques, 1898–1927* (Porto: Centro de Estudos Africanos da Universidade do Porto, 2009 [1981]); H. Dousemetzis and G. Loughran, *The Man Who Killed Apartheid: The Life of Dimitri Tsafendas* (Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2018); J. M. Penvenne, 'João dos Santos Albasini (1876–1922): the contradictions of politics and identity in colonial Mozambique', *Journal of African History* 37, 3 (1996), pp. 419–64.

in 1914; anarchists and syndicalists formed part of the editorial group of *O Emancipador* (*The Emancipator*), a weekly founded in 1919, closely associated with the Associação dos Ferroviários e Portuários, and widely distributed across the colony. *A Batalha* was also readily available. It carried articles from Lourenço Marques, while *O Emancipador* reprinted *A Batalha* articles, supplied it with reports, sold subscriptions, and raised funds towards its costs. *A Batalha* had, notably, some subscribers among Indians at the port. Some anarchists were prominent in the unions, such as Pereira, João Maria Borges, Manuel Alves Cardiga, Eduardo Franco Martins, and João Vás. Willy Waddington, an anarcho-syndicalist and journalist, worked with the printers and railway workers. CGT members such as Raúl Neves Dias and José António de Almeida, who came to Lourenço Marques to work at the Imprensa Nacional, would have associated with the Associação das Artes Gráficas.

Greek anarchists also played a role. Michalis Tsafandakis became a prosperous partner in a Lourenço Marques ship repair firm. He was friends with anarchist Dimitrios Spanos, who arrived via South Africa and ran the city's leading bookshop. Spanos was in contact with the ISL and sold the International.

While the colonial system was profoundly racist, there was still something of a cosmopolitan culture in Lourenço Marques, drawing in *assimilados* and other literate black people, Goans, *mestiços*, and white people – but not the black population employed in low-wage, casual, or coerced (*chibalo*) labour. These were the core readership of the local press, patrons of Spanos' shop, the heart of an intense café culture, the participants in which ranged from white trade unionists to the famed João dos Santos Albasini, leader of Grêmio Africano; anarchist, Masonic, republican, and orthodox socialist ideas circulated.

Anarchists and syndicalists were not the leading left force, and the unions do not seem to have adopted their positions. The Sindicato Geral, for example, voted to affiliate to the CGT in Portugal, but on condition it was not obliged to adopt 'anarchist tactics'. The Associação das Artes Gráficas affiliated to its syndicalist counterpart in Portugal, but also set up close links with the moderate craft-based South African Typographers' Union (SATU). The local Partido Socialista Português (Portuguese Socialist Party), which ran the Centro Socialista de Lourenço Marques (Socialist Centre of Lourenço Marques), was the key force, including in *O Emancipador* and *O Germinal*. Anarchists were also affected by the repressive environment that existed even before the onset of dictatorship in 1926. Pereira was deported in 1916; Cardiga and Martins were arrested in 1917 after a strike and expelled from Lourenço

Marques; Borges and Cardiga were arrested during a 1920 strike; Cardiga was one of twenty-seven workers deported in 1921, although he managed to return.

There was a small anarchist and syndicalist presence in Angola, but nothing like Mozambique's. Angola's population, around 4.5 million in 1900, was second only to South Africa, but it was barely affected by the mining revolution and attracted few immigrants before the 1940s. There was little urban or industrial development outside rail and mining, and the latter employed just 8,697 in 1939, including 160 white workers. Urban *assimilados* and *mestiços* were important in Luanda; white numbers were too small to largely displace them in the government or trades, as in Mozambique: the colony's white population was 20,000 in 1920, plus 2,500 Afrikaners in the south.

Before the 1940s, anarchists in Angola tended to be *degradados*, some imprisoned, others exiled to remote areas. Deportees formed the Grupo Juventude Rebelde (Rebel Youth Group) in Luanda in 1906. António Caldiera escaped from penal servitude, but was recaptured in Lisbon in 1905, and sent to Guinea Bissau. More arrived in the deportations following the November 1918 general strike in Portugal. But unionism, syndicalist or otherwise, struggled to take root in the colony. The local labour movement was tiny, with small workplaces and unremitting repression. The civil servants' union Associação dos Funcionários Públicos da Província de Angola (Association of Civil Servants of the Province of Angola) was dissolved by the governor in 1921; another union was refused legal status for admitting black members; a big railway strike by white workers in 1923 was crushed by the military.

1920S–1940S

The anarchist and syndicalist movement in South Africa was, then, the oldest and the largest in the region at the start of the 1920s. Its key influences were those of the English-speaking world, like the IWW, De Leonism, and Freedom Press. In the Portuguese colonies, it was the Latin traditions that counted.

The ISL was also the largest, most important radical left group in southern Africa before the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA). Its project was impressive, but not without weaknesses. For example, the various syndicalist unions, and other small union initiatives, were not linked to one another in a federation, nor were they linked to the workers' committees.

The old IWW/De Leonist divide, centring on running in state elections, also came to a head. Dunbar and other IWW veterans in the ISL, along with most of the Yiddish-Speaking Branch, opposed the De Leonism of Andrews, Bunting, and Jones, and eventually moved over to the Industrial Socialist League, which renamed itself the Communist Party in October 1920. The first communist party in Africa, it adopted an anti-parliamentary One Big Union position, and linked up with Sylvia Pankhurst's 'council communists'. This party and the ISL sent rival applications to the Comintern, which replied by demanding unity. The two groups merged with the SDF and others to form the official CPSA, whose leadership included Andrews, Bunting, and Harrison.

While the CPSA accepted the Comintern's 'Twenty-One Conditions', the party history admits 'syndicalist concepts remained . . . for many years after its foundation'. Dunbar's circle remained in the CPSA, working with Pankhurst's newspaper *Workers' Dreadnought*. In 1922, white mine-workers went on strike; the showdown snowballed into a general strike by the SAIF. Workers' militias ('commandos') proliferated; control passed to a Council of Action. Founded in 1921, this emerged from the workers' committees, led by syndicalists including Percy Fisher, Ernie Shaw, and Harry Spendiff. Expanded into a Committee of Action, including Andrews, it pushed the strike into armed insurrection. This was crushed by Smuts with martial law, with thousands arrested, including CPSA leaders, the *International* briefly suppressed, and four executed; Fisher and Spendiff committed suicide.

Few from the syndicalist unions joined the early CPSA, which initially focused on white labour. In mid-1920, the ICU, Industrial Workers of Africa, and other small black and Coloured unions merged into an expanded ICU banner. The ICU was a home for Kraai, Gomas, and others. ICU leaders, notably Clements Kadalie, a charismatic Nyasa immigrant, often showed syndicalist influences: they spoke of One Big Union 'abolishing the Capitalist Class' with 'industrial organisation', and an emancipatory strike. In 1925, it adopted a version of the IWW preamble. In 1927, the ICU was approaching 100,000 members in South Africa, mostly black farm labourers and tenant farmers. Rumours swept the country that the union would return white farms to black workers and tenants on Christmas Day.

It is, above all, by reference to the ICU that we can speak of syndicalist elements in other British southern African territories.¹² The 1920 unity congress resolved to organize beyond the borders of South Africa. The ICU

12 For a partial overview, see L. van der Walt, "'One Great Union of Skilled and Unskilled Workers, South of the Zambezi': Garveyism, Liberalism and Revolutionary Syndicalism in the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa, 1919-1949',

attracted interest in Mozambique, championed by journalist Dick Khosa, but no branches were formed. However, the ICU soon spread into southern South West Africa. The colony had 14,000 white residents in 1914, and 200,000 others.¹³ The arid south had a large Coloured population that blurred into Khoisan and some white farms, but copper and diamond mining dominated from 1907. Small mining towns spread across the southern desert, like Elizabeth Bay, Kolmanskop, and Pomona, and were connected to the Atlantic (and supplies) by Lüderitz, which also had a large fishing industry. The mines and railways were worked by a small white working class, South African black and Coloured workers recruited in Cape Town, and black migrant workers from the northern region. Lüderitz itself also had a small population of Afro-Caribbean people and Liberians. German workers pioneered unions in 1913, and a small federation was formed by 1920. German socialist papers were available, and the ISL and International had a presence.

South Africa's occupation was followed by a strike wave. Jimmy La Guma, a young Coloured worker from Cape Town, initiated a strike at Pomona in 1918. Arrested and blacklisted, he found work in Lüderitz, contacted Kadalie, and set up an ICU section in December 1920. When he returned to South Africa in 1921 to work for the ICU (and then the CPSA), he was succeeded by John de Clue and William Adriaanse. Lüderitz was represented at the 1921 and 1923 ICU congresses in South Africa. Branches were also established in Keetmanshoop, an administrative and railway hub in the farming region, in 1922, and in Elizabeth Bay in 1926. Two black South Africans, Timothy and Naphtali, were deported for ICU agitation in Walvis Bay that year. South West African delegates were apparently present at the December 1927 ICU congress.

There were two delegates from Basutoland, a small landlocked protectorate with a population of around 600,000, enclosed by South Africa, at the 1920 unity congress. ICU branches were established on the border in 1926. The union's April 1927 congress resolved to send an organizer, and two

European Social Science History Conference, Vienna, Austria, 23–26 April. The definitive study of Kadalie is H. Dee, 'Clements Kadalie: Trade Unionism, Migration and Race in Southern Africa, 1918–1930', PhD dissertation, University of Edinburgh, UK, 2020. P. Wickens, 'The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa', PhD dissertation, University of Cape Town, South Africa, 1973, remains outstanding.

- 13 See T. Emmett, 'Popular Resistance in Namibia, 1920–1925', in T. Lodge (ed.), *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Societies* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986), pp. 6–48; L. van der Walt, 'The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union in South West Africa: Syndicalism, Garveyism and Resistance in South African-ruled Namibia, 1920–1925', paper presented at the 27th Biennial Conference of the Southern African Historical Society, Rhodes University, Makhanda, South Africa, 24–6 June 2019.

Basutoland delegates attended the December 1927 congress. Finally, in 1928, the ICU's Keable 'Mote established seven branches.¹⁴

Anarchist and syndicalist influences entered a serious decline in the second half of the 1920s. There is little sign of the ICU in South West Africa after 1927. There was a small group of German-speaking anarchists in Windhoek in the 1920s, but details are scarce. The ICU's Basutoland branches were short-lived.

Portugal came under a series of dictatorships from mid-1926. The CGT was driven underground, *A Batalha* was banned, and the crackdown spread to the colonies. The Associação dos Ferroviários e Portuários held big strikes in 1925 and 1926. The latter lasted eight days in the face of intense repression, the railways were militarized, strikers were evicted from their homes and fired, leaders were deported, *O Emancipador* was suppressed, the Casa dos Trabalhadores was seized: the gains won by the unions over decades were, in short, dismantled. Local anarcho-syndicalists were among the workers' leaders deported. Those who remained active in the labour movement, like Borges and Cardiga, had their hands full trying to rebuild the battered unions. The repression effectively ended labour action into the 1930s.

There were more deportations from Portugal to Angola.¹⁵ Mário Castelhamo, editor of *A Batalha*, was deported in November 1927. He and other anarchists were sent to Novo Redondo (now Sumbe), some 300 kilometres south of Luanda, then inland to the villages Amboiva, Conda, and Vila Nova de Seles (now Seles). Castelhamo and fellow anarchist Manuel Henrique Rijo found clerical work at a local plantation. Castelhamo's memoirs of this time were harshly critical of colonialism, arguing for class-based unity across race.

Francisco Quintal, Arnaldo Simões Janário, and Alvaro Ramos formed an anarchist organization in Sá da Bandeira (now Lubango) in the interior around 1928. Antonio Inacio Martins, deported on the same ship as Quintal and Janário, served his term as forced labour on the railway from Luanda to Malange in the north, and was in contact with the Sá da Bandeira group. Sustained work was difficult. Quintal escaped Angola in 1929, joining the Portuguese underground. Castelhamo and Rijo were deported to the Azores in 1930. Castelhamo was then shipped to Cape Verde, but escaped to Madeira *en route*. Castelhamo and Janário (back in Portugal from 1933) were involved in

14 S. Neame, *The Congress Movement: The Unfolding of the Congress Alliance 1912–1961*, vol. 11, April 1926–1928 (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2015), pp. 244 n. 454, 357, 384–5, 486.

15 There is no study of anarchism in Angola. Useful sources include M. Castelhamo, *Quatro anos de deportação* (Lisbon: Seara Nova, 1975); E. Rodrigues, *Uma visão da história do movimento libertário em Portugal*, www.agrorede.org.br/ceca/edgar/AnarPort.html (n.d.).

an unsuccessful CGT-Partido Comunista Português (Portuguese Communist Party) uprising, following which they were sent to the notorious Tarrafal concentration camp in Cape Verde.

In South Africa, an independent syndicalist presence in the orthodox unions ended in the 1920s with the destruction of the Council of Action. Men like Fisher and Spendiff had tried to steer into revolution a strike that had been provoked by replacement of white workers by cheap black labour, and opposed the racial clashes that broke out, but the racist tide flowed against them. In 1924 the Labour Party and National Party replaced Smuts with the coalition Pact government. The Pact government sought to break the country's reliance on the gold mines and economic dependence on Britain through a programme of economic nationalism, with new state industries and import-substitution industrialization. It also introduced state welfare for Coloureds and whites, mechanisms for setting minimum wages, and the first national collective bargaining system. This system was open to Coloureds, Indians, and whites, but specifically excluded pass-bearing black people. Discrimination in wages and welfare remained, and job colour bars were legally entrenched. These measures did, however, help bureaucratize the union movement, reeling from 1922, and dampen militancy.

The Comintern's Third Period helped uproot syndicalist traces in the CPSA. The CPSA cut ties to bodies considered reformist, including the ANC and ICU, and set about Bolshevizing itself. By the early 1930s, membership had fallen by 80 per cent, and most of the old guard was gone. Some on the left, like Harrison, gave up or, like Dunbar, drifted away; others, like Thibedi, moved towards Trotskyism; some, like Andrews, were later reinstated; others, like Gomas and La Guma, remained in the CPSA throughout.

There were a few anarchists in the 1930s, like Sarah Neppe, an elderly Jew who attended CPSA events, and English anarchist Leonard Motler, who was in South Africa in the early 1920s, returned in the late 1930s or early 1940s, and had connections to SATU and the party. Sholem Schwarzbard, the anarchist who assassinated Ukrainian nationalist leader Symon Petliura in 1926, moved in 1937 or 1938 to Cape Town, where he is buried.

The ICU in South Africa did not deliver on the millenarian hopes it inspired. Instead it entered into a dramatic decline. Repression played a role, but the ICU also had serious problems, including over-reliance on charismatic leaders, corruption, in-fighting, and a lack of a coherent strategy. It also lost experienced militants when it purged CPSA members like Gomas and Thibedi. Membership collapsed and the union splintered.

But the ICU had a new lease of life to the north. Northern Rhodesia initially developed via white-owned farms in the south, mining and railways at Broken Hill, peasant farming, and exporting migrant labour. With the expiry of the BSAC charter, the colony reverted to the crown; a small, limited white legislature was established. Migrant workers and others returning from South Africa and Southern Rhodesia came back with subversive ideas, Kadalie had local correspondents, and the ICU's *Workers' Herald* reached Livingstone and Lusaka.¹⁶ Kadalie also had connections in Nyasaland, where, for example, Isa Macdonald Lawrence was prosecuted for receiving the *Workers' Herald* and Marcus Garvey's *Negro World*.

Southern Rhodesia developed on the basis of coal, chrome, large-scale white commercial farms, and peasant cash-cropping – there was significant land expropriation. The white population rose from 12,596 in 1904 to 49,910 in 1931; the black population was around 2 million. A self-governing colony from 1923, it adopted racial laws and policies similar to South Africa's, including a 1930 Land Apportionment Act formally allocating 51 per cent of land to white people. A significant white working class emerged, mainly English-speaking and of British descent. Unions were formed from 1913, like the Rhodesia Railway Workers' Union (RRWU), founded in 1917 – active in Mozambique and both Rhodesias – and the Rhodesia Mine and General Workers' Association, founded in 1919. A Rhodesia Labour Party was established in 1923, and a Southern Rhodesia Trades and Labour Council in 1939, with a White Labourite outlook.

The ideas of the ICU were circulating by the mid-1920s, and a formal request for aid was sent to the ICU in South Africa in 1926.¹⁷ Robert Sambo was dispatched to Bulawayo in 1927, and worked with John Mphamba to set up a branch. Sambo was deported and replaced by Masotsha 'Sergeant' Ndlovu, who rebuilt the ICU in Rhodesia. Charles Mzingeli established a Salisbury branch, and others followed, especially in rural areas hit by the Land Act. Its ideas, like those of the ICU in South Africa, were a mishmash, but did include some class politics: 'The ICU is for proletarian people', its enemies the 'capitalist class'.

16 For Malawi, see Dee, 'Clements Kadalie'; for Zambia, see H. Meebelo, *African Proletarians and Colonial Capitalism: The Origins, Growth and Struggles of the Zambian Labour Movement to 1964* (Lusaka: Kenneth Kaunda Foundation, 1986).

17 See P. Nyathi, *Masotsha Ndlovu* (Ardbennie and Harare: Longman Zimbabwe, 1998); B. Raftopoulos and I. Phimister, *Keep on Knocking: A History of the Labour Movement in Zimbabwe, 1900–1997* (Harare: Baobab Books, 1997), pp. 1–54; T. Ranger, *The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia, 1898–1930* (London: Heinemann, 1970).

The ICU was the largest black mass movement in Southern Rhodesia between the wars, lasting into the late 1930s, also making an organized appearance in Northern Rhodesia. The latter had been transformed by the opening up of the Copperbelt around Ndola, the colony soon becoming the world's second-largest copper supplier. New mining towns were formed along with a large working class. In 1939, the mines employed 24,900, including 2,700 whites; the total population was 1.5 million black people, 15,000 whites, and 1,000 Asians. In 1931, Joseph Kazembe – deported from South Africa – made an effort to found the ICU in Livingstone. In 1932 black mineworkers, mainly migrants, went on strike: Kazembe made a fiery speech at Ndola and was arrested. There is no evidence of the ICU starting the strike, and it was marginalized by new unions in the 1940s, like the Rhodesia Railways African Employees Association (RRAEA) founded in Bulawayo in 1944 and the Northern Rhodesian African Mineworkers' Union in 1947. Most white mine workers were expatriates, founding strong but economistic unions; some workers came from radical backgrounds. Tommy Graves, who arrived in 1930, had been an IWW organizer in the United States, where he was jailed and then deported. He was dismissed from Roan Antelope Mine on the Copperbelt in 1939, partly due to this background.

1940S–1990S

Anarchism and syndicalism were in the doldrums until the 1990s, overtaken by communists and nationalists.¹⁸ Kadalie ran a remnant of the ICU from East London into the 1940s. Réshard Gool's semi-fictional account of Cape Town on the eve of apartheid, *Cape Town Coolie*, features several anarchists, including the narrator. Motler wrote a very mild introduction to SATU's official history in 1952 – perhaps understandable given the wide scope of the 1950 Suppression of Communism Act; the CPSA was dissolved and reconstituted as the underground South African Communist Party (SACP) in 1953. After the ANC was banned in 1961, it joined the SACP in armed struggle through uMkhonto weSizwe (MK). At least one self-described anarchist tried to join MK. The New Left arrived belatedly: it had some libertarian elements, which left an imprint on the rising unions of the 1970s, notably the Federation of

18 See L. van der Walt, 'From Below: An Overview of South African Politics at a Distance from the State, 1917–2015, with Dossier of Texts', in K. Helliker and L. van der Walt (eds.), *Politics at a Distance from the State: Radical and African Perspectives* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), pp. 111–63.

South African Trade Unions (FOSATU, founded in 1979). FOSATU's radical 'workerism' had some parallels with syndicalism, but was distinct from it.

Augusto José Godinho, veteran of the 1934 Portuguese uprising, moved to Luanda, Angola, after 1945. He stayed in contact with comrades abroad, returning to Portugal in the late 1950s. Manuel Firmo, who fought in the Spanish Revolution and survived Tarrafal, also immigrated, later joined by his brothers, also anarchists. He worked in forestry and then the Benguela railways, before returning to Portugal. They were part of massive post-war migration to Portugal's African colonies: in 1975, the white population was 500,000, 10 per cent of the total.

Luis Laranjeira taught in Luanda before independence, and for some years afterwards. The Partido Comunista Português had a small presence from the 1940s, fostering a Partido Comunista de Angola (Communist Party of Angola) in 1955, which then helped found the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA). The MPLA came to adopt Marxism-Leninism and armed struggle; it was a non-racial formation, including *mestiço*, Asian, and white members. Inocêncio da Câmara Pires, an anarchist and *mestiço* from a prominent Luanda family, joined the MPLA in France in the 1950s. An accredited representative of the MPLA's foreign department, he died in 1966. The MPLA established a one-party state in 1975, replacing the Estado Novo state-run unions with its own state-run União Nacional de Trabalhadores (National Union of Workers).

World-renowned botanist and anarchist Aurélio Quintanilha worked in Mozambique from 1943, blocked from university jobs in Portugal. He became a supporter of the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Liberation Front of Mozambique, FRELIMO), a non-racial national liberation movement allied to the MPLA, and close to the ANC and SACP. It established large 'liberated zones' in northern Mozambique and set up a one-party state in 1975, complete with state-run Organização dos Trabalhadores de Moçambique (Workers' Organization of Mozambique). Quintanilha became an honoured citizen. In 1981, he stated that he retained anarcho-syndicalist sympathies, but accepted the need for a revolutionary state. Waddington, meanwhile, edited the FRELIMO-controlled newspaper *Notícias* (News) after independence.

Both Marxist-Leninist regimes faced armed counter-revolutionary movements, backed by South Africa; in addition, Angola became a Cold War hotspot with Chinese, Cuban, Soviet, and United States involvement. By the time peace arrived in the 1990s, FRELIMO and MPLA had dropped Marxism-Leninism, and millions had died.

In Southern Rhodesia, a Reformed Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (RICU) was established in Salisbury by Mzingeli.¹⁹ Mzingeli, who later recalled following Kadalie 'like Jesus', was a popular speaker and tireless tribune who also had contacts among white liberals and radicals. The RICU was really a community-based protest group; it had a Women's Club and won elections to the township Advisory Board. It lost influence as new unions emerged, and was driven from the public sphere by a new generation of intolerant nationalists, later crystallized around the leftist, non-racial Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), linked to the ANC/SACP and the blood-and-soil nationalist Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) of Robert Mugabe. Mzingeli died a few months after ZANU won the first non-racial elections in 1980, while Ndlovu ended up in ZAPU, which was markedly less militarized than Mugabe's ZANU. Small Marxist groups emerged after 1980, and, although Dambudzo Marechera's 1980 novel *Black Sunlight* provided a sympathetic engagement with anarchism, there was no local anarchist current until the 2000s.

1990s–Present

A second wave of anarchism and syndicalism started in South Africa in the 1990s, spreading to Zambia, Swaziland (Eswatini), and Zimbabwe.²⁰ It had no direct connection to the older tradition, was smaller and drew heavily on Platformism and Latin American *especificismo*, emphasizing anarchist political organizations with theoretical and tactical unity, and working within and with existing movements and struggles. In southern Africa, this included efforts to reform existing unions into syndicalist ones, rather than forming new unions. There were also some short-lived efforts to form 'workers' assemblies' and an IWW branch among the unorganized.

Strong anarchist support for engaging existing unions also reflected their impressive role in anti-apartheid and post-independence struggles and ongoing power. South Africa's economy grew 450 per cent from 1948 to 1994. Union membership reached 2.7 million in 1991, concentrated in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). COSATU was formally allied to the ANC

19 Raftopoulos and Phimister, *Keep on Knocking*, pp. 55–90; T. Scarnecchia, *The Urban Roots of Democracy and Political Violence in Zimbabwe: Harare and Highfield, 1940–1964* (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 2008).

20 Rey, *Afriques anarchistes*; L. Maisiri, P. Nyalungu, and L. van der Walt, 'Anarchist/syndicalist and independent Marxist intersections in post-apartheid struggles, South Africa: the WSF/ ZACF current in Gauteng, 1990s–2010s', *Globalizations* 17, 5 (2020), pp. 797–819.

and SACP in the Tripartite Alliance in 1990, but was willing to confront the ANC government elected in 1994 with general strikes. The Zambia Congress of Trade Unions and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions shook off state control, the former sponsoring the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) that installed its former chairman as state president in 1991, the latter confronting but defeated by Mugabe. The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) worked with the illegal People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and its Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) against the absolute monarchy of King Mswati III. A small land-locked kingdom between Mozambique and South Africa, Eswatini had an economy based on migrant labour, commercial farms, forestry, and mining, closely linked to South Africa.

Anarchist circles emerged in South Africa in the early 1990s, the first public one being the Azanian Anarchist Alliance in Johannesburg in 1991. Others included the Anarchist Awareness League, the Durban Anarchist Federation, the Anarchist Revolutionary Movement (ARM), and Zabalaza (Struggle) Books. In 1995, ARM's 'class struggle' wing became the Workers Solidarity Federation (WSF), which embraced Platformism and published *Workers Solidarity*. The WSF recruited students and workers, especially from COSATU, and helped establish a 'workers' assembly' in 1996. It expanded into Durban and Cape Town, and helped form the Anarchist and Workers' Solidarity Movement in Lusaka in 1998. The latter's Wilstar Choongo opposed the corrupt, neo-liberal MMD government. He died of meningitis in 1999, aged thirty-five.

In 1999, the WSF dissolved, its projects reorganized as Bikisha Media Collective in Johannesburg and Zabalaza Action Group (ZAG) in Durban. Bikisha members became deeply involved in the Workers' Library and Museum, a workers' centre, and campaigns against neo-liberalism. They helped found, and were deeply involved in, the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) coalition formed on the Rand in 2000. ZAG was involved in the Concerned Citizens Forum and another 'workers' assembly', and tried to foster an IWW branch. The groups published *Zabalaza*, established an Anarchist Black Cross (ABC), and ran workshops called Red and Black Forums (RBFs). Other anarchist groups emerged among unemployed youth in the Soweto APF: the Black Action Group in Motsoaledi shack settlement, and Shesha Action Group in Dlamini.

On May Day 2003, all these groups plus Zabalaza Books joined the Zabalaza Anarchist Communist Federation (ZACF). The ZACF, like Bikisha before it, formally adopted the WSF's positions, but the focus shifted steadily to township-based struggles and the APF, based among the black unemployed,

pensioners, and poor. The ZACF focused on work with the APF and its own Phambili Motsoaledi Community Project. This had a 'people's library', shack, and food garden, and published *Vuka Motsoaledi* (*Awake Motsoaledi*). In 2005, the ZACF initiated the Motsoaledi Concerned Residents association, which joined the APF. That year Phillip Nyalungu, a founder member of the Phambili project and the ZACF, was arrested for anti-election protests. Through the ABC, it won over Abel Ramarope, a jailed former guerrilla, who set up an anarchist study group in Pretoria Central Prison.

The ZACF always had Swazi members. Mandla Dlamini and Mandla 'MK' Khosa had come to South Africa for work, and helped found the Motsolaedi project and the ZACF; they also established a small ZACF presence in Swaziland, into which materials were smuggled and where MK ran a study circle with SWAYOCO activists. In 2005, he was among those jailed after police attacked a SWAYOCO demonstration in Manzini. In 2006, the ZACF was falsely accused of involvement in a bombing campaign, and MK fled to South Africa. He died in Swaziland in 2019.

By 2007, the ZACF was under strain, with burnouts, resignations, and faltering projects. The December congress restructured the organization into the Zabalaza Anarchist Communist Front, the name signalling the adoption of a new, tighter structure and focus. The ABC was hived off, the Swaziland section became a separate, allied group, and all the remaining collectives in the ZACF became branches. The rebooted ZACF published *Zabalaza News*, and ran RBFs with APF affiliates in Orange Farm, Sebokeng (near Sharpeville), and Soweto; set up a reading group with the Landless People's Movement (LPM) and APF members in Protea South, Soweto; co-founded the Coalition Against Xenophobia in 2008; and participated in the 'Nope!' anti-election campaign. There was some return to union work, including with outsourced workers, and joining the Solidarity Committee for a union-led factory occupation near Krugersdorp on the Witwatersrand in 2010.

WSF materials were sent to Harare in the 1990s, but anarchism emerged in the 2000s. Unions fought the regime and helped launch the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), but Mugabe's increasingly predatory state cracked down and eventually collapsed the economy. The ZACF made contact with anarchists at the 2004 Zimbabwe Social Forum in Harare, recruiting at least one. The Zimbabweans were involved in the MDC left, and in the political hip-hop scene through Toyitoyi Artz Kollektive and the Uhuru Network. The Kollektive described itself as 'an anti-capitalist, anti-authoritarian, affinity group', the Uhuru Network as 'a class conscious

movement . . . against the capitalist slave masters'.²¹ These activities inspired the founding of the Cape Town-based, anarchist-influenced Soundz of the South hip-hop group in 2008.

The APF collapsed in 2010, but its affiliates survived. The ZACF continued to work with them, and was also a co-founder of the countrywide Democratic Left Front in 2012. In 2013, ZACF militants from Benoni, Khutsong, Sebokeng, and Soweto attended the National Assembly of the Unemployed, in Makhanda (Grahamstown), a small Eastern Cape town where the ZACF had established a presence. RBFs were complemented by ongoing Anarchist Political Schools from 2010. The schools fostered the ZACF-linked Inkululeko Anarchist Collective and Tokologo Anarchist Collective, the latter publishing *Tokologo*.

The whole radical left struggled to gain ground especially from the 2010s, a period marked by ANC and COSATU schisms, economic crisis, rising populism, and sectarianism. The ZACF's influence can still, however, be seen today in various spaces for popular, worker and union education and engagement.

Further Reading

- Capela, José, *O movimento operário em Lourenço Marques, 1898–1927* (Porto: Centro de Estudos Africanos da Universidade do Porto, 2009 [1981]).
- Emmett, Tony, 'Popular Resistance in Namibia, 1920–1925', in T. Lodge (ed.), *Resistance and Ideology in Settler Societies* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986), pp. 6–48.
- Maisiri, Leroy, Phillip Nyalungu, and Lucien van der Walt, 'Anarchist/syndicalist and independent Marxist intersections in post-apartheid struggles, South Africa: the WSF/ZACF current in Gauteng, 1990s–2010s', *Globalizations* 17, 5 (2020), pp. 797–819.
- Mantzaris, Evangelos, *Labour Struggles in South Africa: The Forgotten Pages, 1903–1921* (Windhoek and Durban: Collective Resources Publications, 1995).
- Penvenne, Jeanne Marie, 'João dos Santos Albasini (1876–1922): the contradictions of politics and identity in colonial Mozambique', *Journal of African History* 37, 3 (1996), pp. 419–64.
- Raftopoulous, Brian, and Ian Phimister, *Keep on Knocking: A History of the Labour Movement in Zimbabwe, 1900–1997* (Harare: Baobab Books, 1997).
- Rey, Guillaume, *Afriques anarchistes. Introduction à l'histoire des anarchismes africains* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2018).
- van der Walt, Lucien, 'Anarchism and syndicalism in an African port city: the revolutionary traditions of Cape Town's multiracial working class, 1904–1924', *Labor History* 52, 2 (2011), pp. 137–71.

21 Toyitoyi Artz Kollektive, 'We Are Toyitoyi', 22 October 2013, <http://toyitoyi.blogspot.com/2013/10/we-are-toyitoyi.html>.

'Bakunin's heirs in South Africa: race, class and revolutionary syndicalism from the IWW to the International Socialist League', *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 30, 1 (2004), pp. 67–89.

'The first globalisation and transnational labour activism in southern Africa: white labourism, the IWW and the ICU, 1904–1934', *African Studies* 66, 2–3 (2007), pp. 223–51.