



## Southern African liberation struggles: new local, regional and global perspectives

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### Abstract

Book synopsis: There has been a recent outpouring of memoirs and biographies of the 'great men' of the southern African liberation movements. But the writing of critical reflective histories of these movements by non-partisan, independent scholars is still in its infancy. This collection of essays illustrates the intertwined histories of southern African liberation struggles and those of regional and international solidarity movements from the 1960s to the establishment of a non-racial democracy in South Africa in 1994, reflecting the new directions currently taken by 'indigenous' southern-African based scholars, and those writing from abroad. Distinct from the polemical, hagiographic, justificatory or partisan accounts that have flowed since the inception of the liberation struggles, the essays probe beyond the heroic portrayals of armed struggles and nationalist resistance to examine the fissures and tensions that existed within them. The essays also provide insights into the more troubling and darker aspects of the movements' histories: human rights abuses perpetrated by the 'liberators'; the important, if ambiguous, roles played by other southern African states which hosted, and provided succour for, the ANC and its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) in exile; the support provided to the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) by the Lesotho government and the ways in which the fractious and personality-dominated politics of the organisation contributed to its weakness and ultimate eclipse by the ANC; the relationship between Muslims in Northern Mozambique and that country's liberation movements. These essays also seek to present more nuanced accounts of the solidarity movements that flourished alongside the liberation and exile movements, such as the British-based Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM), which in the 1970s found itself at odds both with international interest groups pursuing constructive engagement with the South African government and with elements in the country's grassroots movements. Even this organisation, committed to the downfall of systemic racial domination in South Africa, was beset by its own tensions of race, and had a difficult relationship with Black Britons. The collection's uniqueness lies in drawing together internal and external struggles in exile. And it provides new insights into the relationships that exiles and guerrillas developed with host societies and solidarity organisations, both within the southern African region, and in the United Kingdom.

### Metadata

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Southern Africa and South African Foreign Policy in Practice. 14. Peacekeeping, Mediation and Reconstruction: South Africa's Regional Leadership in Practice. 17. However, when the struggle for democracy and liberation of blacks (Africans, Indians and Coloureds) intensified, the conservative apartheid state would re-enter the African political geography in pursuit of countering the successful mobilization by movements in exile. Hence, South Africa's foreign policy engagements within Africa are not new: whether as part of the apartheid state's efforts to manipulate African countries' belief in the efficacy of political dialogue and non-violence or as part of the mobilization of African countries and peoples in support of the liberation struggle. The national liberation movements in southern Africa received strong support from African socialist states and pro-socialist governments, such as Ghana, Tanzania, Guinea, Zambia, the People's Republic of Benin and the People's Republic of Congo-Brazzaville, as well as countries like Libya and Nigeria. Tanzania hosted ANC training camps as early as 1962, and in 1978 allotted spaces to create an educational facility for young people who had left the country in the wake of the Soweto uprising. This new global situation reversed the tide of revolution and damaged the trend towards pan-African unity. Download Citation | On Mar 1, 2013, Rachel Sandwell published Southern African liberation struggles: new local, regional and global perspectives | Find, read and cite all the research you need on ResearchGate. This article shows how it may be possible to approach political biography and resistance history in new ways, through a focus on biographical production, biographical relations, the cultural politics of lives and institutions, and the idea of biographic contestation. Biographic research can be approached through questions about the conditions and relations through which biographic narratives came to be produced. On the latter, see Sapire, Hilary and Saunders, Chris, eds., *Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa in Context: New Local, Regional and Global Perspectives* (Claremont: University of Capetown Press, 2013); Dallywater, Lena, Saunders, Chris, and Fonseca, Helder Adegar, eds., *Southern African Liberation Movements and the Global Cold War 'East': Transnational Activism 1960–1990* (Oldenbourg: De Gruyter, 2019); and Alexander, Jocelyn, McGregor, JoAnn, and Tendi, Blessing-Miles, "The Transnational Histories of Southern African Liberation Movements: An Introduction," *Journal of Southern African Studi*