

**THE SUPPRESSION OF COMMUNISM, THE DUTCH
REFORMED CHURCH, AND THE
INSTRUMENTALITY OF FEAR DURING
APARTHEID.**

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**A mini-thesis submitted for the degree of MA in History
University of the Western Cape**

November 2016.

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DECLARATION

I declare that *The Suppression of Communism, the Dutch Reformed Church, and the Instrumentality of Fear during apartheid* is my own work and has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university. All the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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Signed: 

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

This mini-thesis has been carried out in concurrence with a M.A. Fellowship at the Centre for Humanities Research (CHR), University of the Western Cape (UWC). I acknowledge and thank the CHR for providing the funding that made this research possible. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the CHR. Great thanks and acknowledgement also goes to my supervisor, Prof Patricia Hayes, who guided me through the complicated issues surrounding this subject matter, my partner Charlene, who put up with the late nights and uneventful weekends, and various others who contributed to the workings and re-workings of this mini-thesis.



The experience of what we have of our lives from within, the story that we tell ourselves about ourselves in order to account for what we are doing, is fundamentally a lie – the truth lies outside, in what we do.¹



¹ Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (London: Profile Books, 2008): 40.

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ABSTRACT

Between the 1917 Russian Revolution and demise of the Soviet Union, the communist Other, as godless deviant and arch enemy of the capitalist state, inhabited a specific space in the minds and imaginations of much of the Western world. S/he was one to be feared, one to be guarded against, and if possible, one to be suppressed by political, ideological, or military means. Such conditions contributed to the widespread suppression and banning of communist and communist aligned organisations. In South Africa this coincided with the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, and the consolidation and reconfiguration of ‘white’ supremacy in the form of apartheid.² After a marginal National Party (NP) victory in 1948, the Suppression of Communism Act (1950) and the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ became synonymous with dissent and revolution within and beyond the apartheid state. For example, it was on these grounds that a series of high profile political trials – the Treason, Rivonia, and Fischer Trials – would be fought and lost on the first occasion. Each trial was based upon the assertion that the accused were communists or involved in a Soviet conspiracy that intended to depose the apartheid government through violent revolution. Conversely, communism is now popularly invoked in relation to narratives of struggle and the ‘triumph of the human spirit over adversity’, in which new and now old allies defeated the evil of apartheid, and ushered in an era of freedom, democracy, and reconciliation. As a result, communism and the SACP (the dominant political organisation associated with communism) have been incorporated into national histories that narrate the African National Congress’ (ANC’s) struggle and victory over apartheid, which culminated in Nelson Mandela and other political leaders returning to supposedly fulfil *their* destiny by ‘freeing the people’ from totalitarian rule.

Having said this, I argue that the suppression of communism goes far beyond the limiting horizons of popularised political and ideological discourse, or indeed, violent acts of torture and murder directed towards those deemed to be a threat to the ‘nation’. In other words, debates surrounding communism are not merely representative of the state’s oppressive policies towards anti-apartheid activists, the global conflict between capitalism and communism, or popular narratives of suffering and struggle against apartheid. Alternatively, they were (and are) intimately linked with a nation-building project which, unlike violence sanctioned by the state or reconciled – at least on the surface – through symbolic acts like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), has been difficult to exorcise, come to terms with, and diminish in the contemporary. Put another way, although communism is intrinsically associated with the class struggle and class politics in South Africa, it was in fact driven by and interwoven with racist ideologies upon which apartheid and British colonialism before that were founded.

With these debates in mind, this mini-thesis will attempt to remove communism from conventional discourses and re-place it within debates surrounding nation-building, and the formation of different subjectivities. This will be carried out not only as an attempt to “overcome the limitations of ideology”³ and further deconstruct legacies of oppression and violence, but also to think with the ways in which different groups perceive, mobilise and appropriate ideology as a means to foreclose resistance and reaffirm and maintain nationalist hierarchies of power within society. This mini-thesis will begin by exploring the ways in which communism has been perceived in South Africa. More specifically, it will consider how the *idea* of communism was mobilised and appropriated in relation to apartheid’s nation-building project. It will also thematically engage with the ways in which mythologies surrounding communism traversed the supposedly rational and irrational worlds, and, in the latter stages of this mini-thesis, will attempt to develop an argument – using Bram Fischer as subject – based upon Jacques Derrida’s notion of the communist spectre, and the importance of the messianic or, more importantly, the prophet in history.

² The Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) was banned under the Suppression of Communism Act, 1950.

³ Premesh Lalu, *The Deaths of Hintsa: Postapartheid South Africa and the shape of recurring pasts* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2009): 127.

INTRODUCTION.

This mini-thesis is interested in the ways in which the *idea* of communism has been appropriated and mobilised by different groups during moments of political transition in South Africa. More specifically, I aim to explore how communism was used as a means to consolidate power and reaffirm the limits of citizenry and the state during apartheid. Through an exploration of the communist as object of fear (spectre), I hope to further deconstruct the ways in which nations are conceptually formed in relation to what becomes their antithetical Other. Furthermore, this project aims to think with the imaginary, or what Michel Foucault refers to as the ‘Realm of the Fantastic’,¹ in an attempt to reveal how anti-communist ideology, or more specifically, the mythologised idea of communism in South Africa, policed and maintained desired disconnections within and between ‘nations’.

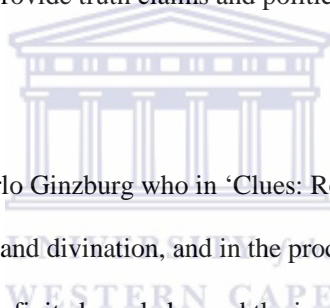
Working alongside this particular debate, I will attempt to think more generally with the ways in which particular epistemologies, discourses, and grammars are normalised as rational truth, and how they are mobilised as alibi to justify the enactment of violence and oppression or to legitimise the consolidation and reworking of long-standing power formations. In this sense we take up debates forwarded by Saul Dubow – or rather Martin Legassick’s critique of Dubow – who in *A Commonwealth of Knowledge* attempts to establish the genealogies of scientific discourses in South Africa, whilst at the same time, according to Legassick, problematically suggesting that science, specifically in the Cape Colony during the early twentieth century, merely represented “a neutral form of knowledge”.² Amongst other things, Legassick challenges the ways in which Dubow evades questions surrounding science and scientific racism as key modes of knowledge production during the colonial period. To support his argument, Legassick invokes Marx’s formulation of ideology and posits his own discussion on hegemony:

¹ Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization* (London: Routledge, 1989): 195.

² Martin Legassick, ‘Review: Science and South Africanism’: white ‘self-identity’ or white class and race domination?’, *Kronos*, Vol. 33 (November, 2007), pp. 245-258.

As Marx wrote, ‘The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force’. Or again, ‘The bourgeoisie... has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers’. Dubow is consciously discussing the ‘thinking of influential intellectuals’... yet there is not the remotest hint that these ideas are ideological for the assertion of class as well as race domination. ‘Hegemony’ signifies organising rule by ‘consent’ as well as by ‘force’, and therefore implies the concealment of class differences – precisely what Dubow also does. Hegemony creates a lived culture which hides or disguises exploitation and oppression. Dubow, I shall try to show, writes an apologia for this.³

Legassick’s use of Marx on ideology – although not wholly unproblematic – and his own formulation of hegemony are concepts that this mini-thesis will attempt to work with. However, I am not primarily concerned with the ways in which Dubow at this time may have, in the words of Legassick, “provided an apologia” for liberal hegemony. This mini-thesis is more interested in thinking with Legassick’s critique in order to unravel the ways in which different epistemologies or forms of knowledge are normalised, and how they work to provide truth claims and politico-ideological alibis for violent and oppressive systems of governance.



This particular question follows Carlo Ginzburg who in ‘Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm’ traces connections between science and divination, and in the process challenges the ways in which we differentiate between supposedly finite knowledge and the irrational.⁴ Here we also take up Luise White’s discussion in *Speaking with Vampires*, which rather than discounting and rejecting rumour and myth surrounding vampires in colonial and post-colonial Africa, attempts to reveal slippages between the so-called rational and irrational worlds, whilst deciphering the ways in which rumour and myth police and maintain community.⁵

I likewise consider truth and lies to be one and the same thing: that is, an arrangement of narratives and events which are, according to specific epistemological frameworks, at one moment accepted as truth, and at the next dismissed as fallacy. In other words, “true and false are [largely] historical and

³ Ibid. 247.

⁴ Carlo Ginzburg, *Clues, Myth, and the Historical Method* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989): 106.

⁵ Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

cultural constructions”.⁶ This mini-thesis is therefore interested in the ways in which particular narratives are imagined, appropriated, normalised, and mobilised as tools for the formation of different subjectivities. It is concerned with how such tools are made available to the state, and how these narratives within history produce contemporary communities, whilst at the same time necessarily creating the antithesis, the Other, the non-citizen, s/he who is marginalised, ostracised, and in extreme cases repressed by the nation. Although not universally reducible to the contemporary, it is this mini-thesis’ desire to use such discourses to begin to think about the continued polarisation of society, and the manifestation and return of what Anne Laura Stoler refers to as ‘Imperial Debris’.⁷

ORIGINS: ‘JOHNNY GOMAS, THE UNFASHIONABLE TAILOR.’

My initial interest in this project arose in 2014 when enrolled on the African Programme for Museums and Heritage Studies (APMHS), jointly convened by the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and the Robben Island Museum (RIM). The APMHS diploma constituted my first academic engagement with heritage discourses in Southern Africa. At UWC this entailed questioning and challenging dominant forms of historical production, and working to understand the role of history and heritage as, amongst other things, key modes of identity formation and nation-building. For me, a critical aspect of the programme was a curation module led by the late Emile Maurice, which required participants to engage with critical theories of curation, art, aesthetics, and heritage, with the aim of producing exhibitions (focusing on the notion of interruption as a guiding principle) that would be held at the Robben Island Gateway during the final moments of the academic calendar.

My own project – ‘Johnny Gomas: The Unfashionable Tailor’ – resulted in an engagement with the multiple and varied lives of Johnny Gomas (1901-1979). This engagement not only included his life-

⁶ Ibid. 30.

⁷ In *Imperial Debris* Anne Laura Stoler argues that scholars should attend to what she describes as ‘Imperial Debris’, “what people are left with” after colonialism, and how such ‘ruins’ manifest and return in the contemporary. Her approach recognises that all histories are unfinished, and that “to think with ruins of empire is to emphasise less the artefacts of empire as dead matter or remnants of a defunct regime than to attend to their reappropriations and strategic and active positioning within the politics of the present.” She goes on to argue that “to speak of colonial ruination is to trace the fragile and durable substance and signs, the visible and visceral senses in which the effects of empire are reactivated and remain.” Anne Laura Stoler, ‘Imperial Debris: Reflections on Ruins and Ruination’, *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2008), pp. 191-219: 194-196.

long commitment to South African trade unions, the ‘black’ working class, and the anti-apartheid struggle, but also his lives as a father, husband, tailor, nature-lover, and ex-resident of District Six. Amongst other things the exhibition questioned and unsettled communist stereotypes by revealing alternative narratives, such as Gomas’ outspoken criticism of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the African National Congress (ANC), and anecdotal accounts of Gomas who, contrary to popular belief, did not for example, object to his wife and daughters attending church and Sunday school. More generally, the exhibition was a product of my own academic engagement with biographical production in South Africa, which – following Ciraj Rassool’s critique of political biographies – attempted to think with more productive ways to commemorate the lives of ‘heroes’ of the struggle against apartheid.⁸

Curating ‘The Unfashionable Tailor’ was a labour of love, a difficult yet ultimately inspiring and collaborative experience that fuelled my own and my fellow students’ passions for curation as a dialogic medium through which to encourage conversations between the academy, the curator as interlocutor, and the public domain. ‘The Unfashionable Tailor’ was itself a product of conversations between myself, Maurice, fellow students – particularly Ri’aad Dollie – and Victoreen Gilbert, daughter of Johnny Gomas, who guided me through the lives of her father, and in hindsight her own life, which one could argue, served as a temporal link between the anti-apartheid struggle, the ‘everyday’, and the ‘post-apartheid’.⁹

⁸ Ciraj Rassool, ‘Rethinking Documentary History and South African Political Biography’, *South African Review of Sociology*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (2010), pp. 28-55.

⁹ Although the aim of the exhibition was to provide a more balanced biography of Gomas, it is important to recognise that ‘The Unfashionable Tailor’ was primarily a product of Victoreen’s memories of her father, my own subjective interpretation of his life, and, partly due to practical considerations in the ‘final cut’, the omission of certain narratives from the exhibition. Therefore, the exhibition – although based upon archival material and a reliable source in the form of Victoreen – should be understood as a product of mine and most importantly, Vicky’s memory, perception and, to some extent, imagination. What is more, the exhibition’s attempt to re-insert Gomas (through the medium of photography and an installation in the exhibition itself) into the contemporary landscape of District Six actively sought to create an *imagined* landscape in which Gomas was no longer frozen in the past, but alternatively connected with, and found within, District Six and contemporary South African society. Thus, in a sense transcending history and speaking to the contemporary socio-political milieu. This is not to suggest that ‘The Unfashionable Tailor’ misrepresented the life of Gomas, but does point toward the intrinsic role of subjectivity and the imaginary in producing different histories. In this sense, the imaginary should not be seen as a ‘lie’, but in terms of the contemporary interpretations and possibilities it provokes. The photographic section of the exhibition was influenced by Jorma Puranen’s *Imagined Landscapes*. In this work Puranen reinserted archival images of the previously dispossessed Sani people of Scandinavia, back

As with the production of 'The Unfashionable Tailor' this project stems from a conversation, or discursive interruption, which occurred after the exhibition's opening. This conversation was with an Afrikaans-speaking South African who after viewing the exhibition stated: "So communism wasn't always bad" – a statement referring to both communist ideology and Gomas as a 'normal' person.¹⁰ This comment in turn triggered a series of debates as to why there seemed to be an 'in-the-blood' tendency within certain sections of the Afrikaans community, to associate communism with an evil that was forever present and in need of suppressing. Besides the obvious observation that the above statement represented an all too familiar global debate,¹¹ critically for me it was also symbolic of an intersection between two temporal, spatial, and social plateaux, which met at the RIM Gateway on that day and presented the living with the everyday lives of the Other.¹²

To elaborate, this meeting served as a reminder that confronted the viewer with the everyday lives of Gomas as an anti-apartheid activist and communist, but more importantly as a 'normal' individual, a father, and a husband, living under dehumanising conditions that led to his and his family's oppression, poverty, and marginalisation on the outskirts of District Six. In other words, this meeting (for a moment) worked to counteract and disrupt the dehumanising effects of apartheid which have continued to adapt and transform in the contemporary – pervasively circulating under the guise of new socially acceptable discourses centred on 'culture' and multiculturalism as the official defining characteristic of South Africa and its people.¹³ The encounter also had the potential to confront and

into the landscape from which they were forcibly removed and objectified as a distinct Other, on the periphery of 'modern' European society. Jorma Puranen, *Imaginary Homecoming* (Oulu: Kustantaja, 1999).

¹⁰ Interestingly my interlocutor had no previous experience or knowledge of communist ideology or politics, and had never met a 'communist'. He did not necessarily know why communism was 'bad,' he just seemed to know, as if it was 'in the blood' (my assumption), that communism was the enemy.

¹¹ Polarised between those who naturally default to a standpoint of abjection and rejection of communism as the antithesis to the so-called 'free-world', and those who see communism as, amongst other things, a sign of hope in the face of the growth of capitalism and the neo-liberal world.

¹² An Other who, regardless of his or her humanity was demonised and oppressed as a non-citizen, and as a being who despite their existence, claim and connection with the nation, was left homeless, removed to a peripheral space on the edges of the city, out of sight and out of mind.

¹³ For a detailed discussion of post-apartheid South Africa's positive appropriation of 'culture' (famously encapsulated in the 'Rainbow Nation' thesis) as the official defining characteristic of South Africa and its people see: Gary Minkley, "'A fragile inheritor": The post-apartheid memorial complex, A.C. Jordan and the re-imagining of cultural heritage in the Eastern Cape', *Kronos: South African Histories*, Vol. 34 (November, 2008) pp. 16-40; Terence Ranger, 'The invention of tradition in colonial Africa' in Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Canto, 1992) pp. 247-262.

disrupt the image of the 'Rooi Gevaar' and the imagined notion of the demonic communist breaking down the apartheid laager. Here the 'real' (Gomas as 'normal' person) collides with the 'imagined' (communist/Gomas as devil, intent on destroying the Church, apartheid, and the so-called 'free world'), disrupting the blurred boundary between the actual threat that communism posed and the imagined fear of the communist as an un-human other, trained, like a machine, to destroy all that the apartheid state and its 'citizens' held dear.

Although somewhat dramatised, the above description corresponds with discourses circulating between various institutions, particularly the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), which took a strong stance against communism throughout the apartheid period. Take for example a speech made by S. P. van der Walt – principal at the time of the Theological College in Potchefstroom – at a 1961 ANTIKOM¹⁴ conference on communism in Pretoria.¹⁵ His appeal, which is clearly informed by a number of earlier arguments, was driven by the perceived 'Communist Onslaught', but also included a series of ideological, political, and social 'parables' that were justified by Afrikaner mythologies of oppression and triumph by the will of God.¹⁶ Such mythologies were in turn informed by Biblical histories such as the battle between David and Goliath, the fall of Jerusalem and the 'corruption' of the Israelites,¹⁷ and punctuated with debates surrounding the 'childlike Bantu' and the need to protect them from communist propaganda.¹⁸

¹⁴ ANTIKOM was brought into being in the 1940s. It was composed of many high ranking members from all factions of the DRC. As Wessel Visser explains: "The constitution of Antikom entailed the following, among other things: combating the communist way of life; the promotion of Christian-nationalist trade unionism among the 'white' workers of South Africa; and influencing the black population in the religious, social, educational, economic and other spheres of life in order to woo them to the Christian-nationalist viewpoint on racial apartheid and to combat ideologies opposing such views". Wessel Visser, 'Afrikaner anti-communist history production in South African historiography', in H.E. Stolten (ed), *History Making and Present Day Politics. The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*, (Stockholm: Elanders Gotab AB, 2007): 311.

¹⁵ S. P. van der Walt, *The Christian Answer to the Communist Onslaught*, Paper presented at the National Conference on Communism, Pretoria, 1961 (Dutch Reformed Church Archives, Stellenbosch: B224).

¹⁶ Ibid, 6.

¹⁷ Ibid, 14.

¹⁸ Ibid, 18.

Like discredited ‘pseudo sciences’ such as physiognomy and phrenology which worked to prop up and legitimise racist ideologies during the nineteenth-century,¹⁹ it would be too easy to dismiss such tomes as the ravings of religious fanatics, intent on discrediting a political and ideological entity, which threatened what Deborah Posel describes as the ‘Christian Theology of Power’.²⁰ On the contrary, such discourses represent much more than irrational fear and myth. They instead point towards the constitution of “how people participate in the states and civil societies that manage them”.²¹ In this sense we follow White who argues:

The very act of talking about oneself, or others, disciplines; the very practices of sorting out the epistemologies that shock and scandalize, creates and catalogues ideas about deviance and virtue, which are enforced with each telling. Modern subjects are not only studied, counted, and classified; they speak about these things for themselves. It is how they are managed.²²

In other words, far from being reducible to irrational fear and myth, discourses surrounding the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ functioned as an essential element of apartheid’s nation-building project. Such discourses simultaneously worked to define the limits of citizenry and the state, consolidate new and reinforce old hierarchies of power, absolve the Christian Afrikaner of guilt, and justify the prior implementation and perpetuation of apartheid’s repressive regime.²³ Put another way, anti-communist discourses and the ‘Rooi Gevaar’, more or less at different times, provided frameworks for different groups to rationalise their existence and status, normalise their behaviours, and constitute themselves in relation to historical narratives that in turn produced clear dichotomies and hierarchies between those who were loved – the nation – and those who were feared – the Other.²⁴

¹⁹ Allan Sekula, ‘The Body and the Archive’ in Richard Bolton (ed) *The Contest of Meaning* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988): 344-389.

²⁰ Deborah Posel, ‘The Apartheid Project, 1948-1970’, in Robert Ross et al (eds), *The Cambridge History of South Africa: Volume 2, 1885-1994* (Cambridge University Press, 2011): 325.

²¹ Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires*: 61.

²² *Ibid*, 61.

²³ This is not to suggest that individuals have no agency. This mini-thesis fundamentally accepts that the ways in which people interact, engage, and perceive the world around them are not solely shaped by discourses predetermined within the social milieu. In this sense, I depart from theories which universally privilege social constructivism. To do otherwise in this particular instance would be to produce apologist discourses, which by rejecting individual agency, implies the absolution of guilt. In addition, I reject existentialist theories which suggest that agency is solely determined by free will, rationality, control and “presence of the self”. Alternatively I follow Laura Ahearn who argues for a more nuanced approach that takes into account “the multiplicity of motivations behind all human actions”, and recognises that “actors are neither free agents nor completely socially determined products.” Laura Ahearn, ‘Language and Agency’, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 30 (2001), pp. 109-137: 114, 116, 120.

²⁴ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004): 68.

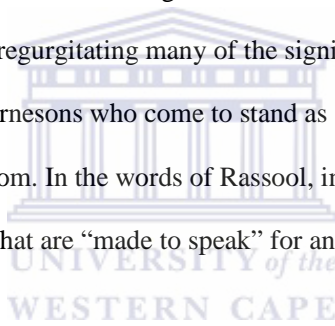
But how were mythologies surrounding the communist made available to the state? Was anti-communist propaganda appropriated as a means to explain ‘white’ resistance in an otherwise traditionalist, god-fearing population, and/or, mobilised as a regulatory discourse, which helped define the limits of citizenry and the state, and reinforce racist hierarchies of power? How did it function as alibi? And, how important were racist, anti-Semitic discourses and the fear of communism’s ‘psychological warfare’ (particularly in relation to the ‘black’ majority) in ensuring the adoption and acceptance of anti-communist propaganda and other repressive and violent acts during apartheid? To take these questions one step further, this mini-thesis aims to ascertain the *actual* significance of communism as ideological and political discourse, as opposed to its usefulness in creating an object of fear, and a mirror in which to project and compare the ideal, ‘pure’, and ‘morally true’ citizen with the ‘morally degenerate’ communist.

A NOTE ON COMMUNIST HISTORIOGRAPHY.

Whilst carrying out research for this mini-thesis I have, on numerous occasions, been reminded of the wealth of studies focusing on the history of communism in South Africa.²⁵ Indeed, many professors in the History Department at UWC dedicated their own post-graduate theses to the workers struggle or the communist political tradition. One might therefore argue then that this particular field of study is over saturated. However (although this is not my main focus) I would suggest that communism, particularly within the public domain, has often been too readily and problematically incorporated into conventional histories of struggle and sacrifice, and the *ANC*’s victory over apartheid.

²⁵ For a varied and conclusive analysis see: Alison Drew (ed), *South Africa’s Radical Tradition: A Documentary History, Volume one: 1907-1950* (Cape Town: Buchu Books, 1996). Alison Drew (ed), *South Africa’s Radical Tradition: A Documentary History, Volume two: 1943-1964* (Cape Town: Buchu Books, 1997). David Everatt, *The Origins of Non-Racialism: White Opposition to apartheid in the 1950s* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2009). Eddie Roux, *Time Longer than Rope* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1964). Jack Simons and Ray Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850-1950* (International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, 1983).

The latest instalment of ‘Rainbow Nation’ narratives which specifically focuses on communism, comes from an exhibition, *Red in the Rainbow*, currently showing at the Slave Lodge in Cape Town.²⁶ *Red in the Rainbow* – which as the title suggests, incorporates the history of communism in South Africa into broader narratives surrounding the ‘triumph of the human spirit over adversity’ – narrates the history of struggle through the lives of Fred and Sarah Carneson, who were both members of the CPSA and later the SACP. Sarah was secretary of the Railway and Harbour Workers Union in Cape Town. Whereas Fred worked for the *Guardian* newspaper, and was a Native Representative for Cape Town until votes for the ‘black’ majority were finally removed. Both were banned under the Suppression of Communism Act, and after detention and imprisonment, finally left in exile to Britain. *Red in the Rainbow* explicitly incorporates the CPSA, the SACP and the communist political tradition in South Africa, into broader narratives of suffering, sacrifice, and eventual ‘triumph of the human spirit over adversity’. It does so by regurgitating many of the signifying tropes of this historical tradition through the lives of the Carnesons who come to stand as symbols of the nation’s own trajectory and journey toward freedom. In the words of Rassool, in the exhibition the Carnesons become “units of national history” that are “made to speak” for and to the nation.²⁷



Although *Red in the Rainbow* implies otherwise, the anti-apartheid struggle was riven with contestation, rivalry and contradiction. Organisations, although working together against the apartheid state, were by no means harmonious and without conflict. The most obvious example in this context, comes from the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), which contained communists such as Johnny Gomas, and was opposed to the Native Representative Bill, of which, as we have seen, Fred Carneson, a communist, was a representative.²⁸ The ANC and their SACP allies were also not a homogenous organisations. There was internal contestation and conflict both in South Africa and in exile. Perhaps the most high profile during the latter stages of apartheid was between Chris Hani, who

²⁶ *Red in the Rainbow* (Exhibition), Slave Lodge, Cape Town (Visited: 19/08/2016). Running between 25/07/2015 – 30/04/2016.

²⁷ Ciraj Rassool, ‘Rethinking Documentary History and South African Political Biography’: 29.

²⁸ Doreen Musson, *Johnny Gomas: Voice of the Working Class, A Political Biography* (Cape Town: Bucchu Books, 1989).

was in the words of Jacques Derrida, “a communist as communist”,²⁹ and Thabo Mbeki who in exile, was, according to dominant narratives, increasingly influenced by the free-market system and globalisation.³⁰

Another example comes from what Alex Callinicos describes as the ‘New Marxist Tradition’, which during the late 1970s and 1980s attempted to re-analyse apartheid, particularly in relation to the development of capitalism during that period. As Callinicos suggests, scholars such as Legassick and Harold Wolpe were able to challenge “the orthodoxy common to both liberals and the ANC/SACP that there was a contradiction between capitalism and apartheid.” Legassick’s seminal critique – directed as much towards the ANC and the SACP as the apartheid state itself – rejected the theory of internal colonialism,³¹ and instead argued that “national liberation could be achieved only coterminously with the abolition of capitalism in South Africa.”³² This, one might suggest, is an early indication of the supposedly prophetic value of history.

Essentially Legassick departs from dominant SACP strategies – the principle one being the ‘two stage theory’ of revolution which was developed in the post-war years as a pragmatic response to the rise of nationalism in South Africa – which advocated for national liberation before the class struggle.³³ He instead argued, as part of the Marxist Worker’s Tendency (MWT) – an organisation internal to the ANC – for the immediate and practical development of a “proletarian class consciousness amongst workers in industry.”³⁴ For Legassick and the MWT, this would at best provide the necessary

²⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994): xiii.

³⁰ William Mervin Gumede, *Thabo Mbeki and the Battle for the Soul of the ANC* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2005): 31-32.

³¹ The theory of internal colonialism was developed as a response to the rise of Afrikaner and African nationalism in the post-war years. As David Everatt explains; “the central point of issue... was the place of the class struggle in a period dominated by nationalism and nationalist organisations”. With this dilemma in mind scholars such as Jack Simons called for an Africanisation of the struggle, and the adoption of the theory of internal colonialism. This theory stressed the existence of “two nations in South Africa, occupying the same state, side by side in the same area. White South Africa [was] a semi-independent imperialistic state. Black South Africa [was] its colony.” In other words, before the proletariat could be emancipated from capitalism, an African-nationalist revolution would have to emancipate ‘black’ Africans from the colonial state constituted within its own national boundaries. David Everatt, *The Origins of Non-Racialism*: 83-92.

³² Alex Callinicos, *South Africa between Reform and Revolution* (London: Bookmarks, 1988): 84.

³³ *Ibid.* 83.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 88.

framework for the emergence of a socialist state in South Africa, and at the very least, challenge and undermine the nationalist, bourgeois ‘revolution’ called for by the ANC and the SACP. The position of the MWT is captured most clearly in *The Workers Movement, SACTU and the ANC – a Struggle for Marxist Policies*, a pamphlet produced and distributed in 1979:

National liberation and democracy cannot be secured by the black workers of South Africa on the basis of capitalism... There can be no separation of stages... between its national democratic and its socialist aims... Just as national oppression is rooted in class exploitation, so the national liberation struggle is rooted in class struggle. The two great opposing poles of action and attraction in the struggle are, on the one hand, the capitalist ruling class and, on the other, the rising power of the black working class... In the struggle for power, the whole of society will inevitably divide itself between these two poles. The state power will more and more blatantly reveal itself as a sledgehammer wielded by the capitalist class against the movement of the black working class and its allies.³⁵

At its most fundamental level the above discussion demonstrates the contradictions and complications within the anti-apartheid struggle. Indeed, the fluid appropriation and adaptation of Marxist thought within the CPSA or the SACP themselves deserves far more attention than a brief account in this mini-thesis can provide. When debates are extended to organisations such as the Pan African Congress (PAC) and Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO) – organisations who are not traditionally associated with communism, but whom Callinicos suggests, adopted some form of socialism in the late 1970s as a response to the “degree to which the situation in the country ha[d] placed working class politics on the agenda”³⁶ – explanations become even more complicated.

It is therefore important to reassert and recognise the pluralistic nature of communism and the Marxist tradition in South Africa. Here we follow comments posited in *Specters of Marx*, which assert that “both communism and Marxism are historically sited, situated, inflected, mediated by particular traditions and histories.”³⁷ In other words, the complicated and pluralistic ways in which communism and Marxism are invoked ultimately depend on the specific socio-political or historical milieu in

³⁵ Martin Legassick, ‘The Past and Present Role of the Marxist Workers’ Tendency of the ANC’ in Ian Liebenberg, et al (eds), *The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa* (Pretoria, HAUM: 1994), pp. 173-186: 175.

³⁶ Alex Callinicos, *South Africa between Reform and Revolution*: 81.

³⁷ Bernd Magnus and Stephen Cullenberg, ‘Editor’s Introduction’ to Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994): xi.

which they are mobilised. Like other signifiers covered within this mini-thesis, they are not ‘rigid designations’ and cannot be reduced to any one dogma or political theory. In the spirit of Derrida’s reflection on the ‘death of communism’ and the future of Marxism, this mini-thesis accepts and attempts to work with the following ‘points of contact’: “(1) The proper names “Marx” and/or Marxism have always already been plural nouns, despite their grammatical form, and despite the fact that they have been understood as if they were rigid designators; (2) “communism” (in its own pluralities) is not the same as “Marxism”; (3) both communism and Marxism are historically sited, situated, inflected, mediated by particular traditions and histories; (4) the proper name “Marx” is – in a certain sense – entirely uncircumventable”³⁸

Considering that this mini-thesis focuses on anti-communist discourse and the ways in which the communist became an object of fear during apartheid, it may seem unnecessary to dedicate the above discussion to communist historiography in South Africa. However, by revealing some of the complications and contradictions both within the anti-apartheid movement, and surrounding communism itself, I hope to begin to undermine the ways in which numerous and divergent organisations (particularly those associated with the apartheid state) during and after apartheid, have depicted communism as a homogenous body of revolutionaries, a machine-like entity that was intent on destroying the ‘Western world’ and all that it held dear.

In sharp contrast to communist historiography, there is a relative dearth of work on anti-communist discourse during the apartheid period. Accounts are either isolated to interrelated issues, such as those surrounding anti-Semitism in South Africa,³⁹ or merely trace a genealogy of anti-communist ideology. The best example of the latter comes from the Wessel Visser’s ‘Afrikaner anti-communist history production in South African Historiography’. However this article, featured in *History Making and Present Day Politics*, predominantly focuses on the history of anti-communist ideology, rather than a

³⁸ Ibid. xi.

³⁹ Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa* (Virginia: University Press, 1994). Mark Israel and Simon Adams, ‘That Spells Trouble: Jews and the Communist Party of South Africa’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (March, 2000) pp. 145-162.

theoretical engagement with anti-communist discourse and its effects.⁴⁰ This mini-thesis aims to engage with this latter line of enquiry. This will be done not only as a means to understand and unravel how anti-communist discourses functioned, but also in order to begin to come to terms with the ways in which difference, and the organisation of specific classificatory systems have adapted and transformed in the contemporary.

This mini-thesis begins and ends with identity politics and discourses surrounding nation-building. Although work in this field is extensive and not wholly unproblematic, it is my hope that this research will contribute to issues surrounding diverse nationalisms and their fundamentally inherent drive to produce difference. This mini-thesis will therefore attempt to further problematise what to many appears to be a natural, taken-for-granted aspect of modern society. Along this critical vein, I will also attempt to undermine homogenous discourses emanating from different groups within the public domain. This is not to suggest that nationalism is homogenous or inherently destructive – as Partha Chatterjee has convincingly demonstrated, we must be cautious of reductionist analyses of nationalism⁴¹ – but it is to argue that racism and nationalism are never far apart. In the words of Etienne Balibar, nationalist manifestations “inevitably ha[ve] racism underlying [them].”⁴²

A variety of sources have been used throughout this mini-thesis. Most have come from newspapers and archives – most notably the National Archives in Pretoria and the Dutch Reformed Church Archives in Stellenbosch. Perhaps the most important sources however, have been two texts (Gerard Ludi’s *Operation Q-018*, and Henry R. Pike’s *A History of Communism in South Africa*) which are still in circulation within the contemporary public domain. These texts are not typical archival sources, but have nevertheless provided this mini-thesis with critical information regarding the discursive circulation – both historically and contemporarily – of anti-communist ideology within the ‘everyday’.

⁴⁰ Wessel Visser, ‘Afrikaner anti-communist history production in South African historiography’: 306-333.

⁴¹ Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London: Zed Books, 1986).

⁴² Etienne Balibar, ‘Racism and Nationalism’ in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (eds), *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London, New York: Verso, 1991): 37.

CHAPTER OUTLINE.

The first chapter of this mini-thesis will begin by tracing a genealogy of anti-communist discourse in South Africa. It will focus on one key document, the 1922 Police Commissioner's Report on communism, and will attempt to develop an argument surrounding anti-communist discourse and the ways in which it both legitimised 'white' supremacy and the British colonial project, and how it was mobilised as a means to prop up colonial hierarchies of power during the early twentieth century. This chapter will then go on to focus on a significant event, the Rand Revolt, during which the 'Bolsheviks', and Eastern European, specifically 'Jewish' migrants, were thrust into the public domain as key enemies of British colonial rule and, more generally, settler society.

This chapter will establish how anti-communist discourses, although commonly associated with the class struggle, were intimately linked with and driven by biopolitical discourses centred on race and ethnicity. Here I will employ Foucault's notion of 'biopower' in order to think with the ways in which the 'white' communist stereotype was mobilised and brought back within the conceptual control of colonial discourses of power.⁴³ On the one hand, I am interested to consider how anti-Semitic propaganda and conspiracy theories worked in relation to the communist Other. Whereas on the other, I will explore how racist discourses, focusing on the indoctrination of the "undeveloped non-European population",⁴⁴ may have reinforced existing colonial hierarchies of power, consolidated the colonial project and the mechanisms of the state, and reaffirmed or reconfigured the liberal ideal of European custodianship in Southern Africa. Threaded through this chapter will be a discussion that will begin to

⁴³ In *Race and the Education of Desire*, Stoler draws upon a series of seminal lectures presented by Foucault in 1976 and 1977, to forward an argument, outlining her understanding of the concept of biopower and the ways in which it may be applied to postcolonial scholarship. As she discusses, for Foucault the emergence of biopower represented a normalising tactic used to reinforce specific hierarchies that "'biologized' internal enemies, against whom society must defend itself". In other words, biopower emerged out of a desire to order society and define the ideal citizen in relation to its supposed biological antithesis. As a result, biopower became (at least in Europe) a critical tactic for defining the limits of citizenry and the state and the boundary between the 'ideal citizen' and those who deviated from or challenged dominant discourses of power. See; Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995): 59.

⁴⁴ T. E. Holloway, Letter from High Commissioner in London, to the Secretary for External Affairs, South Africa, 6 February, 1958, 'Anti-Communist Organisations' (National Archives, Pretoria: BLO – 366 – PS17/193).

highlight the ways in which the so-called rational and irrational were employed by anti-communist agents. This aspect will become increasingly important in the latter stages of this mini-thesis.

Chapter two will specifically focus on the emergence of Afrikaner nationalism, the formalisation of apartheid, and the ways in which the 'Rooi Gevaar' may have functioned during the apartheid period. It will begin by giving a brief overview of Afrikaner ideologies, and will lead to a discussion that specifically focuses on the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) – and other Christian-nationalist organisations – and the ways in which, what Althusser describes as the 'Christian Religious Ideology' and 'Ideological-state-Apparatus', *may* have functioned during the apartheid period.⁴⁵

Chapter three will focus on the life of and mythologies surrounding Bram Fischer, who became the ultimate 'Volksverraier' during the 1960s. The section on Fischer will begin by problematising and revealing some of the ways in which biographies in general and, more specifically, mythologies surrounding Fischer were and are constructed. This will lead to a discussion of the importance of the messianic (the eulogy, the lament, and most importantly the prophecy) and the fantasmatic in producing biographies in the contemporary, and will begin to formulate an argument surrounding the communist spectre and how the 'Rooi Gevaar' operated as an object of fear within society. This mini-thesis will conclude by positing a series of arguments and questions surrounding identity formation in the contemporary, and – following Nicky Rousseau – what I, at this stage, tentatively call History-as-Spectre.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Press Review, 1971).

⁴⁶ Nicky Rousseau, 'Popular History in the 1980s: The Politics of Production' (M.A. Thesis, University of the Western Cape, 1994).

CHAPTER 1

CONSOLIDATING COLONIALISM: ANTI-COMMUNIST DISCOURSE IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY.

It was in factual stories that colonial states affirmed its fictions to itself, in moralising stories that it mapped the scope of its philanthropic missions.¹

When a negro talks of Marx, the first reaction is always the same: “we have brought you up to our level and now you turn against your benefactors. Ingrates! Obviously nothing can be expected from you”.²

One could argue that the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ and communism are synonymous with the ‘high apartheid’ period. By this time members of the South African Communist Party (SACP) were either in exile or working underground in South Africa, and communism had become a watchword for terrorism and a symbol of revolution in Southern Africa. Furthermore, in the 1960s the Suppression of Communism Act underpinned the case for prosecution in the Treason, Rivonia, and Fisher trials.³ Whilst during the period of ‘total onslaught’ in the 1970s and 1980s, the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ allowed those in power to justify and embark upon a fifteen-year clandestine war with the MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola), SWAPO (South West Africa’s People’s Organisation), the ANC/SACP alliance and MK (Umkhonto we Sizwe), and their Cuban allies in Angola and South West Africa (present day Namibia).⁴ More recently, communists within the ANC/SACP alliance, such as Chris Hani (assassinated by Janusz Walos and Clive Derby-Lewis in 1993), became prominent figures during negotiations with the apartheid state and the transitional period to democracy. Whilst during

¹ Ann Laura Stoler, ‘Colonial Archives and the Acts of Governance’: 90.

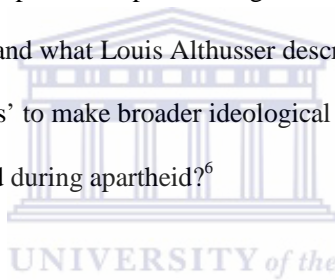
² Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Mask* (London: Pluto Press, 1986): 35.

³ For an accurate account of the political trials in the 1960s see: Stephen Clingman, *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary* (Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2013).

⁴ According to Alex Callinicos the concept of ‘total onslaught’ was influenced by the Brazilian military coup in 1964, and the establishment of a ‘national security state’. This was based upon two primary motivations: “The first stressed the fact that national security and economic development were inter-dependent, and that since the fighting of a *modern war required the active consent of the whole nation* [my emphasis], means must be found for mobilising its will, its unity and its productive capacity. Thus in addition to its traditional requirements, national security implied planning of the national life so as to optimise production and the economy whilst minimising internal conflict.” Alex Callinicos, *South Africa between Reform and Revolution*: 36.

the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), communism was often used and accepted as an alibi for violent acts committed during the apartheid period.⁵

Having said this, moments preceding the National Party (NP) victory in 1948 were instrumental in the formation of an idea which would take root and form one of the foundations of apartheid's mythologies. If one were interested in tracing the roots of anti-communist discourse then they would be found in the early twentieth century, a period in which colonial anxieties surrounding Union, reconciliation between the Afrikaner and British imperialism, and the future of 'white' supremacy, not only dominated the colonial public sphere, but also influenced the political thought of leading communists. But how were such discourses made available to the state? Were they merely used as an alibi and as a means to justify and implement repressive legislation? Or, through this act, did colonial discourses centred on communism and what Louis Althusser describes as Ideological-State-Apparatus also enable the state and its 'citizens' to make broader ideological claims on belonging and custodianship within the colony and during apartheid?⁶



This chapter is primarily interested in anti-communist discourse and propaganda as sites of identity formation and nation-building during the early twentieth century, and will begin to explore how anti-communist discourse may have been mobilised as a means to 'rationalise' and legitimise the British colonial state and later the apartheid project. It will thematically engage with various archival sources and will provide a working framework for further discussion in the following chapters.⁷ By way of

⁵ *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Volume One* (South Africa, Truth and Reconciliation Committee, 1998): 67.

⁶ In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, Althusser discusses the difference between 'Repressive State Apparatus' (RSAs), which includes military organisations, the police, the courts, and prisons, and 'Ideological State Apparatus' (ISAs), which encompass the Church, the education system, the family, the legal system, communications or mass media, and literature, arts and sport. Essentially RSAs and ISAs are distinguished between those institutions that, according to Althusser, primarily function through violence, and those that function through ideology. This mini-thesis argues that, in a South African context, ISAs were mobilised as a means to, on the one hand, repress and exclude the 'black' majority through violent subjection, and on the other, police and maintain the self-policing, 'ideal citizen' through a more benign process of subjection. Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*: 145.

⁷ Due to my limitation in Afrikaans, at times I have relied on secondary sources, such as Lindie Koorts' *D.F. Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism*. Koorts' biography of Malan provides extensive translations which have proved useful during the writing of this mini-thesis. The continued privacy of the DRC has also meant that it has proved difficult to access minutes from different diocese. One of the stipulations for access, was to gain

footnotes I will also present a narrative which focuses on the political thought of two dominant communist organisations – the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) and, much later, the South African Communist Party (SACP) – during this period.

THE POLICE COMMISSIONER’S REPORT ON COMMUNISM: EXPERT KNOWLEDGE, AND THE NORMALISATION OF COLONIAL ‘TRUTH’.

In 1922, the Police Commissioner, T.G. Truter, attached to the ‘Criminal Investigation Department’, presented a series of on-going reports on the activities and relative influence of ‘communists’ and ‘communist aligned’ organisations in South Africa. Largely focusing on Cape Town, the Witwatersrand, and the Eastern Cape, his report reveals the workings and discourses of state power, but also highlights colonial anxieties and ideologies which would, in the build-up to the NP victory in 1948, gradually intensify and help to define the ways in which the future of ‘white’ supremacy was conceptually secured and maintained.

Drawing upon a network of informants and a series of carefully compiled reports from regional offices, the Police Commissioner tracked the movements and activities of various organisations and individuals. They included “international socialists” such as British Trade Unionist and “out and out communist” Tom Mann,⁸ the CPSA (formed in the previous year)⁹ and *Jewish* members of the Young

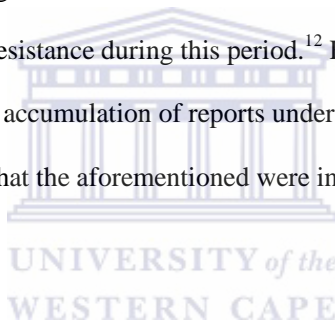
consent from all those present at different sermons. Coupled with this, there have been very few individuals willing to speak formally about the ‘Rooi Gevaar’, particularly when this involves speaking about the DRC as well. Therefore, I have had to rely on publications found at the DRC archives in Stellenbosch, which although not complete, points towards the different discourses and arguments that may have been presented at Church and within the everyday. Lindie Koorts, *DF Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism* (Cape Town, NB Publishers: 2014).

⁸ Tom Mann was sent by the Red International, as a response to the demoralising effects of the Rand Revolt. According to Drew “His aims were two-fold: to rebuild the demolished trade union movement and promote working class unity under the Rubric of the Red International of Labour Unions, and to fight for amnesty for those Rand strikers who had been sentenced to death”. Allison Drew, *South Africa’s Radical Tradition: A Documentary History, Volume one 1907-1950*: 18.

⁹ The CPSA were formed in response to the Third International’s twenty-one-point plan and declaration that all communist organisations should unite and mobilise in support of a “single, integrated world organisation”. According to the Third International, each organisation renamed the Communist Party of... would be under the tutelage of Lenin and the International. Accordingly, it would aim to purge itself of ‘reformists’, and most importantly “give practical aid to colonial liberation movements and to demand independence for colonial peoples”. This particular policy speaks to one of the defining contestations between different communist factions during the twentieth century. Lenin, and Stalin after him, advocated for the principle of a two-stage revolution (first national emancipation and then the natural teleological step from the dictatorship of the proletariat towards democratic socialism), which the CPSA adopted in the late 1920s. Whereas the Trotskyists

Communist League in Johannesburg, the ICWU (Industrial and Commercial Workers Union), the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) – an influential, pan-Africanist American organisation committed to ‘Garveyism’ and active in South Africa at the time¹⁰ – and the activities of Magwa Vubela and Pitwell Tahuntene, ‘natives’ who were ‘creating unrest’ in the Kei River district of the ‘Transkei’.¹¹

In a broad ranging and detailed series of reports the Commissioner makes comments on ‘communist’ meetings, ‘Sunday schools’ designed to ‘indoctrinate the nation’s youth’, public gatherings and the steps taken to curtail them, the financial state of the CPSA, and the possible links between different regions and communists abroad. As stated above, he makes observations on various organisations and by highlighting disputes and ideological differences within and between different groups, attests to the pluralistic and contested nature of resistance during this period.¹² Having said this, the Commissioner’s preoccupation and accumulation of reports under the rubric of communism implied, and was possibly used to confirm, that the aforementioned were involved or being manipulated in a broader ‘Bolshevik’ plot.



followed the notion of permanent revolution, the need for continual upheaval of the state, and the desire to return to the original principles of Marxism, which had according to Leon Trotsky, become corrupted by Stalinism. Jack Simons and Ray Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850-1950*: 55.

¹⁰ Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (London: University of North Carolina Press, 1983): 215.

¹¹ *Reports: Commissioner of Police in Respect of Communism, 1922* (South African Archives, Pretoria: GNLB-42/24/10, Vol. 39).

¹² At one stage in the report, the Commissioner speaks of a ‘dangerous liaison’ between the CPSA and the Labour Party, a ‘British’ socialist, parliamentary group who fundamentally rejected ‘black’ working class politics. The Commissioner’s reference possibly speaks to the brief alliance between the two organisations during the Rand Revolt. Although each party was loosely aligned at this time, the Labour Party never accepted the role of the ‘black’ working class, were always committed to reinforcing the Colour bar, and eventually amalgamated with the NP in the 1940s. There were also regional and ideological divisions within the CPSA, between African nationalists, and different ‘communist’ groups. The presence of the UNIA, a Pan-Africanist organisation who, in the United States, were opposed to the CPUSA, adds to the complexities of resistance against colonialism during this period. For an account of the alliance between the Labour Party and the CPSA see: Jack Simons and Ray Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850-1950*: Chapter 13. The Commissioner’s comments can be found in the following: ‘Report from T.G. Truter, Commissioner of Police to the Secretary for Justice, Pretoria: 06/07/1922’ in *Reports: Commissioner of Police in Respect of Communism, 1922* (South African Archives, Pretoria: GNLB-42/24/10, Vol 39): 3. For a detailed analysis of the UNIA, their ‘back to Africa’ ideology, and their relationship with the CPUSA, see: Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism*: 218-227.

The reports have a reassuring air, asserting that the authorities and the Commissioner himself has control of the situation, whilst at the same time forewarning against a general uprising masterminded by the ‘Bolsheviks’. The arrival of European communists into the country and the possible indoctrination of the ‘black’ majority at home or abroad (in Moscow for example)¹³ seems to have been of paramount concern for the Commissioner, who continually asserted that broader police powers were needed in order to curtail such action. The ‘white working class’, and more importantly the ‘innocent African’ were, according to this report and the vast majority of anti-communist propaganda throughout the twentieth century, susceptible to communist indoctrination and therefore, for their own good, in need of ‘protection’ in the form of legislation and ‘counter-propaganda’. In the conclusion to one of the reports the Police Commissioner wrote:

We have in our midst agitators whose ability is unquestionable and whose faith in the doctrines of Bolshevism cannot be shaken... Corruptive agencies with a common aim are at work among both Europeans and Natives and it behoves the government to oppose the propaganda (particularly that among the Natives) with equally active counter-propaganda, and to tighten the laws to enable the situation to be more adequately controlled.¹⁴

The reports resonate with Anne Laura Stoler’s ‘Colonial Archives and the Art of Governance’. Here, Stoler discusses how commissions “determine... the character of social facts and produc[e] new truths as they produc[e] new social realities,” which in this instance primarily focused on and reinforced the possibility of a ‘Bolshevik plot’ in South Africa.¹⁵ Critical to this process was the projection of colonial ‘truth’ embodied by the state expert (the Police Commissioner), who through the surveillance and documentation of ‘subversive elements’ provided the colonial state with observable ‘truth claims’ about communism, its followers, their social character, and the broader resistance movement. One could argue that these ‘truth claims’ and their continual reinforcement in the everyday, laid

¹³ In a discussion of Selby Msimang and the ICWU, the Police Commissioner refers to Msimang’s contact with European organisations and communists: “At a private gathering, Msimang mentioned that he was in fairly intimate touch with the representatives of the various European Unions, while, in a recent conversation in Johannesburg, he stated that some months back he was invited by the Cape Town Communists to proceed to Moscow to study Bolshevistic principles as applied to the organisation of workers, and although he did not think such were all that could be desired, he was nevertheless determined to proceed to Moscow at a convenient opportunity.” ‘Report from T.G. Truter, Commissioner of Police to the Secretary for Justice, Pretoria: 11/08/1922’, in *Reports: Commissioner of Police in respect of communism, 1922* (South African Archives, Pretoria: GNLB-42/24/10, Vol 39): 3.

¹⁴ Ibid. 3-4.

¹⁵ Ann Laura Stoler, ‘Colonial Archives and the Acts of Governance’ In Carolyn Hamilton et al (eds), *Refiguring the Archive* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 2002): 95.

foundations that contributed to and enabled the state to justify the future implementation of repressive legislation, such as the 1930 Immigration Quota Bill and much later the Suppression of Communism Act, 1950.¹⁶ Perhaps more importantly however, they allowed the Commissioner and the state to maintain a sense of control and authority in a precarious environment, which, if one were to follow media reports following the Rand Revolt (occurring earlier that year), must have seemed as if the ‘Bolshevik’ uprising was actually at hand.¹⁷

Through this process the report produced and reinforced ‘distinct social kinds.’ It marked off antagonists as outside, as foreign, or as troublesome elements within the state (by doing so it also made colonial claims of belonging, citizenship and custodianship in Southern Africa), and through ‘sustained monitoring’, described their movements, relationships, and most importantly “the ideas and tenets of their creed”.¹⁸ As we will see, it is no coincidence that the Police Commissioner chose to highlight and confirm that “the major proportion of... young speakers [in the Young Communist League of Johannesburg] consist[ed] of Jews.”¹⁹ In the Eastern Cape, by contrast, it presented resistance to apartheid in terms of the mythological and the irrational.

Here (in the Eastern Cape) the report focused on Vubela and Tahuntene’s ‘prophesies’, their ‘fanatical preaching’, and their ‘atheistic’, anti-missionary stance, rather than the reasons for the recirculation of

¹⁶ After increased pressure within the public domain and changes in the United States’ immigration policy, the ‘Immigration Quota Bill’, was implemented by the Pact Government in 1930. The Bill restricted the access of all those arriving from ‘non-scheduled’ and non-Commonwealth countries, which inevitably and purposefully discriminated against Eastern European countries and the majority of ‘Jewish’ migrants arriving at this time. Based upon an argument that would become all too familiar, D.F. Malan, who was at the time Minister of the Interior, distinguished between ‘Nordic kinsfolk’ and the Eastern European Other as different races, and asserted that ‘white’ South Africans were “called upon... to maintain western civilization, and the standards of western civilization... I do not think that we should, as a South African nation, further complicate our difficult task by uncontrolled and indiscriminate immigration”. Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*: 138.

¹⁷ A conclusive analysis of anti-Semitic and anti-communist sentiment during this period can be found in Milton Shain’s, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*. At the time there were numerous calls within the British and Afrikaans press to curtail the influx of Eastern European migrants. As Shain explains: “The constant influx of Bolshevik-oriented immigrants from eastern Europe had to be stopped in the opinion of the *East London Daily Dispatch*. These people, argued the *Natal Advertiser*, undermined liberty and threatened to overthrow an ‘easy going’ state that had ‘given them too much latitude.’” Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*: Chapter five. For an analysis of Afrikaner nationalist ideologies, including during the 1948 election campaign, see: Lindie Koorts, *DF Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism*.

¹⁸ ‘Report from T.G. Truter, Commissioner of Police to the Secretary for Justice, Pretoria: 06/07/1922’: 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 2.

deep temporal, narratives regarding the downfall of the ‘white race’, or for that matter, the conditions or cultural frameworks through which resistance was constituted. Clearly the Police Commissioner was concerned with the ‘how’ of resistance, not the ‘why’. However, for our purposes it might be useful to dwell upon and interrogate the above issues in order to come to terms with the differing representations and claims within the report. Before doing so however, it may be useful to provide a comprehensive account of this section of the report:

Movement Amongst Natives:

Two natives named Magwa Vubela and Pitwell Tahuntene, of the Fingo tribe, are creating a certain amount of unrest along the Kei River District in the Transkei. They profess to have died, visited heaven and hell and returned to earth for the benefit of their... compatriots. They are fanatical in their preachings, and in addition to impressing the natives in the Districts traversed, have succeeded in obtaining a fair following of Tembu and Gaika females. Their sentiments are undoubtedly anti-white, and they allege that they can foresee a terrible struggle between the two European races in the country, after which Africa will once again revert to black control. In the meantime the natives are told not to plough or pay taxes. Although to further their cause, the cloak of religion is used to certain extent, both Magwa and Pitwell repudiate Native Ministers and others who belong to Churches under European tutelage.

The seriousness of this movement is fully recognised, for having obtained a following of girls the acquisition of males is an easy step which, when accomplished, might have dangerous consequences. Close attention is being given to the matter with a view to suitable action being taken at the earliest opportunity. Although many of the utterances of these two men are... seditious, efforts to obtain evidence are, as is usual in this class of case, continually confronted with difficulty.²⁰

It is clear that the Commissioner merely paid lip-service to the ‘stories’ being told. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he was more concerned with Vubela and Tahuntene’s increased influence, and presumably, if one were to follow the general premise and mandate of the reports, the ways in which ‘Bolsheviks’ might manipulate the movement in the future. Perhaps their anti-missionary stance may have already alerted the Police Commissioner to the possibility of a quasi-atheistic, communist influence. But the call to stop ploughing the fields and paying taxes, represented much more than ‘fanatical preaching’. Above all it should be interpreted as a calculated attempt to come to terms with and undermine colonial power in the Eastern Cape. After years, in fact centuries, of violent repression, and possibly in recent memory of the Bulhoek Massacre of 1921 – where a 1,000 strong column of colonial police ruthlessly killed one hundred and ninety ‘African Israelites’ during a

²⁰ Report from T.G. Truter, Commissioner of Police to the Secretary for Justice, Pretoria: 17/11/1922’ in *Reports: Commissioner of Police in respect of communism, 1922* (South African Archives, Pretoria: GNLB-42/24/10, Vol 39): 4.

dispute over the settlement of land and their *passive* refusal to work for wages in the Queenstown area of the Eastern Cape – this form of resistance may have seemed like the only one available to people like Vubela and Tahuntene at this particular time.²¹ Importantly though, attempts to undermine and challenge colonial power in one form or another continued.

Having said this, it is the authority of the state and the Commissioner that defines the boundary between the ‘rational’ and the ‘irrational’. Through the assertion and confirmation of a ‘Bolshevik plot’ the report reinforces one set of assumptions and fears, which is not to suggest that communists were not ‘at work’ in South Africa. Whilst with the off-hand dismissal of Vubela and Tahuntene’s ‘prophesies’ it relegates this form of resistance to the ‘mythological’ and the ‘irrational’. Here the state and its discourse defines what can and can’t be said about resistance during this period. Each narrative (‘Bolshevism’, and the ‘Movement Amongst Natives’) and each form of resistance – both of which contained a messianic element and function – are presented in distinct terms. The former having an air of ‘truth’ backed up by the authoritative voice of the Commissioner, and the latter silenced, limited to hearsay and superstition, and contained within the Eastern Cape and the discourses of the past.

Of course one could argue that the above interpretation may itself be presumptive. However, the important thing to recognise is that in this particular report this type of analysis is absent.²² As Luise White discusses in *Speaking with Vampires*, this type of silencing is indicative of the ways in which colonial discourses defined the terms of how resistance was perceived and dealt with. However, White goes on to suggest that if we were to read this particular form of resistance under different terms it might offer us a means to further unravel the complexities, contradictions, and multiplicitous ways in which “people participate in the states and civil societies that manage them.”²³ To reiterate,

²¹ Interestingly, like the Commissioner’s description of Vubela and Tahuntene, the Israelites, who were massacred on that day, were described by the colonial press as being driven by ‘pure fanaticism’. See: Jack Simons and Ray Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850-1950*: 252-253.

²² This, as with Hegel writing about Africa in the nineteenth century, may well have been due to a lack of comprehension rather than interpretation: Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism*: 73.

²³ Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires*: 61.

this type of discourse, like anti-communist *and* communist propaganda, defined how people rationalised and came to terms with the political and social conditions in which they lived. The Police Commissioner's refusal or disavowal of the terms through which resistance in the Eastern Cape was constituted on the other hand, goes some way to demonstrating how colonial discourses worked to silence, contain, and know resistance in the Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole.

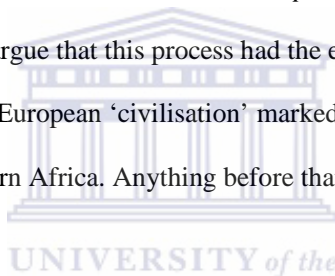
The recounting of Vubela and Tahuntene's 'prophesies' appears to have been used as a means to discredit and delegitimise their claims against missionaries and the colonial administration, as unfounded and based upon the irrational 'stirring up' of the local population. In this sense the invocation of the 'irrational' and 'mythological' worked to reaffirm colonial epistemologies that hierarchised the nation and reinforced the assumptions upon which power was justified and maintained. By framing Vubela and Tahuntene within a prophetic, fanatical discourse, whilst silencing their political agency and engagement with colonial oppression, the Police Commissioner's report worked to contain them within a pre-modern, irrational world, devoid of rational thought and driven by fanatical rhetoric. This, one might argue, follows James and John Stuart Mill – themselves colonial administrators – who, in the words of David Theo Goldberg: “viewed natives as children or childlike, to be directed in their development by rational, mature administrators concerned with maximising the well-being of all”.²⁴

Furthermore, by placing African nationalists and other political movements alongside communists, the Police Commissioner creates the impression, and on occasion implies, that any form of resistance must in some way be linked to *foreign* antagonists and communist revolutionaries. Or at the very least, that all resistance if left unchecked, served as – for want of a better word – a 'gateway' to the 'doctrines of Bolshevism'. Either way it eradicated the possibility of African agency. They were silenced subjects, either represented as 'irrational' followers of prophets, or 'useful idiots' and

²⁴ David Theo Goldberg, 'Modernity, Race, and Morality', *Cultural Critique*, Vol. 24 (Spring, 1993), pp. 193-227: 296.

‘innocents’, at the mercy of the communist’s ‘unquestioned ability’, and therefore in need of ‘protection’ by the colonial state.²⁵

In elaboration, one could argue that the report not only marked off antagonists within and beyond the state as the antithesis to the colonial subject, but also worked to prop up and legitimise colonial ideals regarding European ‘modernity’ and African ‘primitiveness’.²⁶ The assumption that any form of resistance must be influenced in one form or another by communism, or, in the case of Vubela and Tahuntene, manifest in the form of the fantastic and the prophetic, had the effect of isolating the supposed ‘science’ of Marxism and European ‘modernity’ from other forms of resistance.²⁷ By doing so, it reinforced colonial ideals and hierarchies which, according to this specific, racialised logic, naturally assumed that *European* communists and a rival *European* ideology were the main threat. Even more specifically, one could argue that this process had the effect of reaffirming, under different terms, the notion that the arrival of European ‘civilisation’ marked the moment in which ‘modernity’ arrived and history began in Southern Africa. Anything before that, and more importantly in this



²⁵ Anti-communist propaganda was almost always accompanied by paternalistic discourses focusing on the ‘innocent’ African and the need to protect them from communist propaganda. This would have had the effect of justifying colonial dominance in the Eastern Cape and further afield. After all, according to this discourse, if the ‘Bolsheviks’ were allowed to influence and indoctrinate the ‘black’ majority, then the otherwise harmonious balance between European settler society and the ‘black’ majority would be undermined and unravelled. The Commissioner’s Report was therefore one that reinforced the notion that ‘Africans’ were ‘not yet ready’ to govern themselves.

²⁶ There were various techniques and epistemologies that created or maintained the ideals of colonialism in Southern Africa. For example, in *The Birth of the Museum*, Tony Bennett demonstrates the ways in which the Great Exhibitions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, shaped the ways in which European nations perceived themselves in relation to other nations and most significantly the colonised Other. Closer to home, Andrew Bank’s extensive work on anthropology and race theories in South Africa, such as the Afrikaner ‘Volkekunde’ ideologies which emerged during the early twentieth century, reveals the ways in which racist discourses emanating from Europe (in this case Germany) influenced nationalist ideologies in South Africa and worked to reaffirm and legitimise racism, and nationalism in South Africa. See: Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995). Andrew Bank, ‘The Berlin Mission Society and German Linguistic Roots of *Volkekunde*: The Background, Training and Hamburg Writings of Werner Eiselen, 1899-1924’, *Kronos: Southern African Histories*, Vol. 41 (November 2015).

²⁷ This is not to suggest that communism and its various manifestations were not representative of the fanatical or the prophetic. However, the ways in which the two discourses are presented in the report are markedly different. On the one hand the Commissioner confirms the existence of radical ‘Bolsheviks’ within and beyond South Africa and stresses the reality of their threat. Whereas on the other, the Commissioner dismisses the significance of Vubela and Tahuntene’s ‘prophecies’ by implying that this is nothing more than the irrational stirring up of the local populace. It is therefore here where we can recognise the tenuous and fragile boundary between the so-called rational and irrational. It is the differing ways in which divergent discourses are represented, which is important. More specifically, it is the ways in which different superstitions or fears are, through the voice of the expert, provided with validity and canonised as actual threat, as opposed to irrational and irrelevant superstitions of the ‘African’ Other.

instance, *any resistance before communism*, particularly in the Eastern Cape, was seen and projected as primitive and pre-modern.²⁸

Within this context, communism not only represented a foreign ideological and political opponent to colonialism, but also had the potential to fundamentally challenge ideals of segregation, the relationship between settler society and the colonised non-European Other, and the conditions through which power was constituted and maintained in South Africa. Paradoxically however, one could argue that the Commissioner's focus on communism allowed the colonial state to distance itself from the question of race and racism in South Africa. Put another way, by disavowing Vubela and Tahuntene's politics and focusing on the threat of communism, the Police Commissioner's report had the effect of deflecting attention away from a more pertinent and difficult question – segregation, racism, and colonial power in Southern Africa – and from a form of resistance, which was primarily mobilised in response to racist systems of governance. This is not to suggest that the 'Race Question' and issues surrounding segregation were not 'on the table' during the early twentieth century. However, the ways in which such discourses were mobilised was from a distinctly European perspective that rarely took into account the views, opinions and desires of those classified as 'black'.

²⁸ This particular issue also speaks to political tensions between the CPSA and African Nationalists during this period. Until the CPSA's 'Africanisation' in the late 1920s, which came as a result of the adoption of the 'Black Republic Slogan' (a precursor of the Colonialism of a Special Type (CST) thesis), the 'white working class' were seen as the 'vanguard for liberation'. The CPSA's tendency to prioritise 'white' workers' rights at this time, suggests that some within their ranks accepted paternalistic discourses that considered Africans to be 'not yet ready' to govern or lead the revolution. The late 1920s saw a change in policy. James La Guma championed the 'Black Republic' slogan. The slogan, legitimised by Lenin and the Third International, was based upon the idea that a socialist revolution could only occur once the 'black' majority had been emancipated from British Imperialism. This was, according to those who supported the slogan, the first of two stages of revolution. However, not all supported its implementation. According to Brian Bunting (later expelled from the Party because of his stance on this matter) the 'Black Republic Thesis' "was 'directed not against the imperialists as such but against whites as such, against large numbers of workers and peasants because they are white". At this stage he still considered the 'white working class' to be the primary weapon for revolution. As Simons and Simons explain: "Bunting's arguments drove 'the non-European comrades [including La Guma] to the conclusion that the Central Executive of the South African Party consider[ed] that the mass movement of the natives should be held up until the White worker... [was] ready to extend his favour"". These contestations demonstrate the conflict between those who advocated for a non-racial revolution and, one could argue, tailored to the idea that Africans were 'not yet ready', and those who envisaged a liberation movement driven by the 'black' majority for the 'black' majority. The question of race or class as the primary motivations for oppression and resistance were developed during this period. Indeed, these debates continued to define the anti-apartheid struggle throughout the twentieth century. Jack Simons and Ray Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850-1950*: 395-396. For a critique of Marxism in relation to colonialism and the ways in which Marxist teleological histories contained the colonised as 'not yet ready', see: Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton University Press, 2000). Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism*.

To reiterate, this was not an archetypal class struggle (if there ever was such a thing) masterminded by the ‘Bolsheviks’. Following Ciraj Rassool one could argue that it was, and is, representative of a ‘cultural politics’, which “evinced a hybrid and seemingly contradictory political consciousness whose character was rooted in indigenous grammars”, and a specific experience of colonial oppression and racism in the Eastern Cape.²⁹ Again, having said this, by implying so elsewhere in the report, the Police Commissioner reinforces the liberal notion of colonial custodianship in Southern Africa. Under these terms British colonialism, and later the Afrikaner, was the nation’s protector. Communism or ‘Bolshevism’, as it was referred to at this time, was the enemy, an alibi that justified colonial belonging and dominance in Southern Africa.

COLONIAL ANXIETIES: THE PARALLEL MOBILISATION OF ANTI-SEMITISM AND ANTI-COMMUNISM AFTER THE RAND REVOLT.

In isolation the Police Commissioner’s Report demonstrates the extensive networks of surveillance and information at the disposal of the colonial state, as well as the ways in which different groups and different forms of resistance were treated and represented. Having said this, the report was not produced in isolation. Its striking resemblance with propaganda circulating within the national press suggests that the report was not the sole determinate of ‘social facts’. Instead it was just as likely mobilised as a response to general anxieties in the public domain, and appropriated as an alibi which worked to both confirm and allay fears amongst settler society, whilst reinforcing the terms and conditions through which ‘white’ supremacy was secured and maintained.

Through the mobilisation of ‘colonial truth’ the Police Commissioner’s Report worked to know, contain and legislate against subversive elements within the state. However, as Stoler reminds us, “commissions were [also] repositories of colonial anxieties”.³⁰ The report was not only mobilised as a

²⁹ As Rassool explains, conventional South African historiography often employs hegemonic, teleological forms of narration, which more often than not result in a simplified understanding and memorialisation of histories of struggle against apartheid and colonialism. By producing histories that conform to Eurocentric conceptualisations of time and the inevitable march of history under the guidance of heroic individuals, contestations, contradictions and subaltern histories are often silenced and side-lined. Ciraj Rassool, ‘Rethinking Documentary History and South African Political Biography’: 42-45.

³⁰ Ann Laura Stoler, ‘Colonial Archives and the Acts of Governance’: 96.

means to contain and control communism and other ‘antagonists’, but perhaps more importantly was the product of a desire and anxiety surrounding the unknowable and a need to simplify a complex and, to some extent, uncontrollable political situation. Therefore, rather than interpreting the report as a document expressing the state’s will to power, we should consider it in terms of what Premesh Lalu calls “colonial horizons of comprehension” and the necessary creation of ‘rational truth claims’ in the face of uncertainty.³¹ Under these terms the Police Commissioner and other forms of propaganda are not primarily understood in terms of state power or state knowledge, but instead in relation to a lack of knowledge, an uncertainty and a fragility, which was extricated by defining and ‘knowing’ the communist Other, simplifying the terms of resistance throughout the country, and enforcing a violent system of governance which maintained these terms.³²

³¹ In *The Deaths of Hintsa*, Premesh Lalu discusses, amongst other things, British expansion into the Eastern Cape not in terms of colonial certainties, but with regards to the unknowable and colonial desires to move “beyond colonial horizons of comprehension”. Lalu goes on to clarify his position, which provides a useful way of unravelling the motives of the Police Commissioner’s Report and other forms of knowledge production that aimed to know and contain the communist: “That which is unknowable must be confronted with an act of aggression. The unknowable always carries the potential to return and haunt those securities established by neat lines on the map.” Here Lalu speaks to the processes in which colonial knowledge aimed to provide security, or at least a sense of security in an otherwise confusing and incomprehensible world. In other words, British expansion (and one might argue, the colonial subjection of ‘communists’ and ‘Jews’) was not primarily determined by colonial power and, in the case of conflict on the Cape’s Eastern frontier, their inevitable march into the interior, but was instead driven by an inherent fragility and a subsequent desire within the colony to know, contain and control the unknowable. Premesh Lalu, *The Deaths of Hintsa*: 48-55.

³² Likewise, one could argue that the predominant CPSA critique during this period simplified political and ideological conflict in South Africa. They suggested that conflict and unrest was the result of an inherent contradiction between economic conditions and South Africa’s exclusionary politics. Through mass mobilisation and the nurturing of a working class consciousness, the apparent contradictions would be exposed and would, according to the principles of dialectic materialism and Marxist teleology, naturally result in the establishment of a socialist Republic. Eventually, this (perhaps correctly according to this logic) prompted the CPSA to adopt the ‘Colonialism of a Special Type’ (CST) thesis. Before this turning point, the CPSA were committed to the ‘white working class’ vanguard, who would through revolution, provide the conditions for equality across the Colour line. Afterwards, they were committed to the establishment of a ‘Black Republic’, and a nationalist revolution, which would then supposedly provide the conditions for class equality. In both cases, the principles of revolution were constituted through a reworking of political and economic power formations within society. However, one could argue that the CPSA grossly underestimated the strength of biopolitical discourses that privileged colonial grammars of power, silenced threatening antagonisms beyond parliament and the purview of the colonial settler, and most importantly worked to produce racialised subjects who, at this time, almost exclusively mobilised according to racialised categorisations. Cedric Robinson provides a useful critique of this process. In *Black Marxism*, Robinson reveals the heterogeneous nature of English working class consciousness during the nineteenth century, and by doing so challenges the ways in which Marx and Engels necessarily created the dialectic between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. By doing so, they simplified and distorted the means through which radical thought was mobilised during the twentieth century. From this point onwards, Marx’s dialectic “haunted” radical thought in Europe and elsewhere. In elaboration, one might argue that the CPSA were guilty of simplifying the heterogeneous nature of resistance during this period, and therefore were unable to come to terms with the complex and ever changing situation in South Africa. It might be added that their initial privileging of the ‘white working class’ as the vanguard for struggle, may have been the direct result of the application of the Marxist dialectic and Marxist teleology, and the racist assumption that the ‘white working class’ were at a more evolved stage of development and thus

The Rand Revolt (December, 1921 to March, 1922) brought such anxieties to the fore. It was ignited after mining magnates proposed putting a stop to – or at least tempering – what they saw as an economically unsustainable colour bar, by replacing ‘white’ labour with cheaper ‘black’ labour. This resulted in a general strike amongst ‘white’ workers who almost exclusively mobilised along colour lines. A gradual intensification of mass action resulted in attacks by vigilante groups known as ‘commandos’, the deaths of forty ‘black’ workers, and the eventual mobilisation of the army who violently put down the Revolt.³³

Although the CPSA were at times heavily involved – at one point they took over municipal buildings in Johannesburg – and loosely allied with the Labour Party and Afrikaner nationalists, they were by no means the strongest supported oppositional group during the uprising.³⁴ ‘white’ trade unions for example were more often than not opposed to the CPSA, who although driven by a desire to protect ‘white’ labour (their slogan, adapted from the *Communist Manifesto*, at the time was a racialised one: “workers of the world, unite and fight for a white South Africa!”), advocated for cooperation across colour lines. Furthermore, Afrikaner nationalists had, in the previous year’s election, begun to make inroads into the Afrikaner working class vote who made up seventy percent of ‘white’ miners on the Rand.³⁵ However, in the Revolt’s aftermath, the popular press erupted with reports of a ‘Bolshevik Revolution’ in South Africa, and subsequent calls for the government to expel foreign agitators and

closer to revolution. For a detailed analysis of socialist thought during the early twentieth century see: Jack Simons and Ray Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850-1950*. The above quote is taken from: David Everatt, *The Origins of Non-Racialism*: 92. For Robinson’s critique of Marxist historiography see: Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism*: Chapter 2.

³³ Allison Drew, *South Africa’s Radical Tradition: A Documentary History, Volume one 1907-1950*: 18.

³⁴ Although not originally in favour of a strike, the CPSA supported the ‘white’ miners. This placed them alongside Afrikaner Nationalists, the Labour Party, and ‘white’ Trade Unions who struck in order to protect ‘white’ workers and ‘white’ supremacy in South Africa. Although this position allowed African Nationalists to proclaim that the CPSA hierarchy supported ‘white’ supremacy, the CPSA conversely claimed to support the strikes on the basis that protecting ‘white’ wages would ultimately result in the improvement of ‘black’ wages and ‘inter-racial’ solidarity between ‘white’ and ‘black’ workers on the Rand. As Jack and Ray Simons explain: “The communists looked for a solution in their revolutionary vision. Capitalism... offered no hope for white or black. It degraded by causing enmity between them. Equality could be realised only after the revolution... The central task of all workers, irrespective of colour, was to destroy the whole capitalist class, irrespective of colour”. Attempts to encourage solidarity between ‘black’ and ‘white’ workers during the Rand Revolt ultimately fell on death ears. ‘white’ trade unions and workers were concerned only with the protection of ‘white’ labour on the Rand. Even in the Revolt’s aftermath, “[t]he communists were wrong in supposing that defeat would sharpen class consciousness, drive out national or racial antagonism, and imprint the moral of working class solidarity”. For a detailed account of the Rand Revolt and the history of the labour movement in South Africa, see: Jack Simons and Ray Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850-1950*: 290-303.

³⁵ Jack Simons and Ray Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850-1950*: 271.

Eastern European ‘Jewish’ immigrants who were seen as the carriers of communist ideology into the country.

The *Cape Times* was one of the most vocal. It questioned ‘Jewish’ assimilability and, quite openly, the ‘racial stock’ and ‘racial quality’ of Eastern European migrants, depicting them as a different race who arrived with ‘anti-social’ customs and an ‘anti-democratic’ ideology (communism) that had the potential to corrupt ‘poor whites’ and more critically the ‘black’ majority. Like other colonial newspapers the *Cape Times* invoked long-standing concerns and ideals surrounding the purity of settler society, the ‘fear of miscegenation’, and the colonialist’s relationship with the ‘black’ majority:

In the big towns the general debasement of our moral standards that even the most broadminded of observers must remark is a large measure traceable to the craze of exotic pleasures that aliens have first created and then ministered to.³⁶

Chief concerns of the press and the colonial government were the status of ‘white’ supremacy in Southern Africa and the role which the communists would play in stoking up resentment amongst the ‘black’ majority (These would become critical issues in the NP 1948 election manifesto, which combined the fear of an end to ‘white’ supremacy and ‘civilisation’ with the hope that the NP offered: apartheid).³⁷ Capitalising on general concerns within the public domain, both Smuts’ government and the Afrikaner Nationalist opposition (and their respective supporters within the media) manipulated “deeply entrenched fears” of a ‘Bolshevik invasion’ and anti-Jewish sentiment in order to undermine the opposition and gain support amongst the ‘white’ minority. The former attempted to divert attention away from the mismanagement of the political situation by blaming Bolsheviks and ‘aliens’ for the uprising (this analysis was confirmed by the Police Commissioner’s Report),³⁸ and the latter

³⁶ *Cape Times*, 18 March, 1922 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa).

³⁷ Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*: Chapter five.

³⁸ In one of the reports the Police Commissioner confirms that “[t]he recent strike was skilfully employed to cause a period of general public excitement during which the hatching of a revolt was comparatively simple. Attempts were made, as is known, to inflame parts of the country outside of the Witwatersrand, and had these met with little more success, law and order would have been restored by no means as quickly as they were. The experience endured, however, should be enough to ensure steps being taken to safeguard the country against the machinations of that small but fanatical band which is making more perfect and extending its organisation, and preparing to attempt Revolution on a much greater scale in its own good time and when conditions are suitable”: ‘Report from T.G. Truter, Commissioner of Police to the Secretary for Justice, Pretoria: 11/08/1922’: pp. 3-4.

claiming that ‘Bolsheviks’, foreign mining magnates, and the Smuts government were exploiting the Afrikaner working class.

Before proceeding it is important to recognise that in contrast to the apartheid period when the communist became one of the primary enemies of the ‘Volk’, the boundaries between friend and foe and Afrikaner and communist were far more blurred during this period. Like Stalin and Hitler before Operation Barbarossa, communists and the CPSA, and Afrikaner nationalists were often drawn together in opposition to British Imperialism. Indeed, before Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia went to war, General Hertzog, a leading Afrikaner Nationalist and member of the Pact Government declared that communists should be considered an inspiration to the Afrikaner:³⁹

Bolshevism, I say, is the will of the people to be free, to govern themselves, and not to be undermined by a foreign regime... If we say that we have the right to govern ourselves, and if we feel that it is our duty to see that it is properly fulfilled, then we are in fact Bolsheviks.⁴⁰

During the early twentieth century Afrikaner nationalists were at times – particularly during the Rand Revolt and the early stages of the Second World War – tacitly allied with communists and the CPSA. It was only after the formalisation of apartheid, and during the NP campaign in the 1948 elections, when Afrikaner opposition to communism became cohesive and, one might add, more uniform. Before this moment, ‘Bolsheviks’ may have been viewed as a symptom or by-product of British Imperialism and ‘Jewish’ exploitation, an expression of revolt which could, on the one hand, be used

³⁹ This type of pragmatic alliance extends to the anti-apartheid movement itself. For example, during apartheid, communism and the SACP’s affiliation with non-racialism often positioned Marxism and communist organisations in South Africa as an important ally in the anti-apartheid struggle. As John Soske explains: “Even its opponents, such as Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, recognised the force of the organisation’s [the SACP] political culture: ‘we knew that if someone was a communist it meant he had no colour prejudice. He accepted you as a human being, this you just knew’”. The assumption that communists in South Africa were universally unprejudiced toward the ‘black’ majority or other oppressed groups is a dubious one that requires further problematising. Immediately it invokes questions regarding the oppositional binary between ‘good’ and ‘evil’. Simply put, is it ever possible to claim that conflict and contestation is so easily divided between those who (being ‘good’) fight on the side of the ‘good’ and those who (being ‘evil’) fight on the side of ‘evil’. For Soske’s discussion of communism see: John Soske, ‘The Impossible Concept: Settler Liberalism, Pan-Africanism, and the language of non-racialism’, *African Historical Review*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (2015), pp. 1-36: 22. For an account of Afrikaner and British reactions to the Rand Revolt see: Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*: 93-94.

⁴⁰ Stephen Clingman, *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary*: 118.

as an inspiration for revolution, and paradoxically on the other, could be remedied with decisive action and the protection of the colour bar.⁴¹

During and in the immediate aftermath of the Rand Revolt, longstanding grievances against ‘Russian’ immigrants and stereotypes depicting ‘Jews’ as deceitful, unpatriotic, unassimilable, and not-quite-human, were manipulated and projected onto the ‘Bolsheviks’. As Sara Ahmed argues, ‘Jews’ and ‘communists’ became metonymical signifiers during this period.⁴² In this way Eastern European ‘Jews’, who had long stood as the archetypal foreign Other, “enabled a threatening ideology [communism] to be personified, captured and deflected”.⁴³ As with anti-communist propaganda during apartheid, anti-Jewish sentiments presented ‘white’ South Africans with a convenient “way of dealing with ideological conflict and opposition”.⁴⁴ Eastern Europeans – often racially distinguished from Western Europeans, the supposed descendants of the ‘Herrenvolk’⁴⁵ – were always already available as the archetypal foreign Other and as a result were mobilised by the state and its ‘citizens’ as conceptual spaces in which to imagine and think with ‘white’ resistance.

Critical to this process was the use of cartoons and caricatures within the national press, which not only inscribed and reinforced stereotypical images of ‘Jews’ and ‘communists’ within the public domain, but unlike the written word, would have allowed racist ideologies to circulate more easily

⁴¹ Amongst other things, the complications and contradictions of anti-communist discourses and reactions to communism might point toward how communism was primarily seen as a threat to state power, or those invested in the maintenance of ‘white’ supremacy. Put another way this might speak to the ways in which communism fundamentally threatened dominant power structures during the twentieth century, but often remained a necessary ally of groups in opposition to power – even if those groups departed from and often spoke against communism.

⁴² Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*: 76.

⁴³ Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*: 7.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 7.

⁴⁵ Although the origins of anti-Semitism lie in the deep historical legacy of European society, one could argue that this particular form of anti-Semitism can be traced to the concept of the ‘Herrenvolk’, which emerged during the nineteenth century. The notion of the ‘Herrenvolk’ canonised the ‘heroic Germanic race’ and denigrated other groups, such as the Irish, Slavs, and Jews, as biologically and racially inferior. As Cedric Robinson clarifies in *Black Marxism*, ‘Herrenvolk’ “explained the inevitability and naturalness of the domination of some Europeans by other Europeans”. By borrowing from Louis Snyder he goes on to state: “Racialists, not satisfied with merely proclaiming the superiority of the white over the coloured race, also felt it necessary to erect a hierarchy within the white race itself. To meet this need they developed the myth of the Aryan, or Nordic, superiority”. It was out of this initial process that the British, the Nazis, and Afrikaner nationalists for example, developed their own hierarchies and supposed biological superiority during the twentieth century. Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism*: 27.

amongst illiterate and semi-illiterate communities. As a more visual, visceral language of communication, cartoons and caricatures of communists and 'Jews' would have worked to enhance the viewers' imaginary perception of the communist in all his stereotypical glory. A comedic aspect may have also allowed media outlets to express racist ideologies in a more tolerable form.

In this way, colonial concerns regarding the future of the 'white race', and the authoritative voice of the press, blended with conspiracy theories which depicted a 'titanic global struggle' between the forces of 'good' (the Western world) and the forces of 'evil' ('exploitative Jews', 'revolutionary Bolsheviks', and, in the case of Afrikaner nationalists, the Smuts government, who were, according to *Die Burger*, in cahoots with 'Jewish' business and 'Bolsheviks'). All this was encapsulated in the image. This was not necessarily the physical image of the 'communist' or 'Jew' but the fantasmatic, stereotypical image produced through the circulation and proliferation of a matrix of visual and written representations and ideologies.

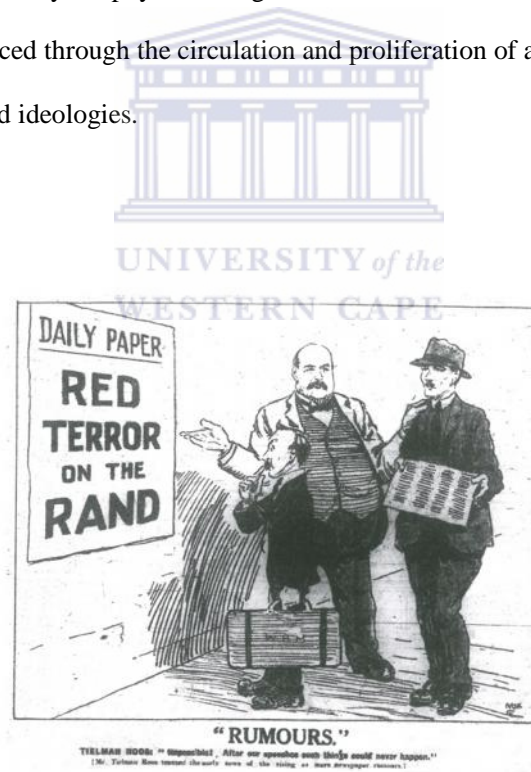


Figure 1: "'Rumours'. Tielman Roos: Impossible! After our speeches such things could never happen." *The Cape Argus*, 18/03/1922.



A SOPORIFIC.

In consequence of the recent attacks on the Police, martial law has been proclaimed on the Rand with the object of enabling the authorities to apply...

Figure 2: "'A Soporific'. The Cape Times, 11/03/1922.



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE
N' TWEDE TENTOONSTELLING.



Enn daar 'n tentoonstelling van die wapens, deur die staalers gebruik, in die Parlementgebou gehou word, and ons kunstenaar voor en ook 'n tentoonstelling in te sig van die wapens, wat die teenstanders van die staalers gebruik het.

Figure 3: "'N Tweede Tentoonstelling.' Die Burger, 18/03/1922.

HOE HY DIT BEWERK HET.



GENL. SMUTS: "Hy het hom plat geslaan!"
HOGGENHEIMER: "En ek het sy sakke leer gemaak!"

Figure 4: "Hoe hy dit Bewerk het". *Die Burger*, 26/04/1922.

VOOR DIE ROOI REWOLUSIE..



EERSTE VABOND VAN DIE SPEL: "We must solve things to
develop."
TWEDE VABOND VAN DIE SPEL: "En intussen hou ons ons
kruis" draag."
Die 20 Maas is Engelse vertaling van op 20 Januarie van al die doekende
probleme en "Kruis" is die Afrikaans woord vir kruis.

Figure 5: "Voor die Rooi Rewolusie". *Die Burger*, 08/04/1922.

As can be seen from the selected images, the *Cape Times*, *Cape Argus*, and *Die Burger* all used cartoons, which would – to some degree – have influenced popular opinion and reinforced stereotypes and ideologies throughout and after the period of the Rand Revolt. Caricatures were also a common representational trope during the early twentieth century.⁴⁶ As highlighted previously, there is a marked difference between those newspapers (the *Argus* and the *Times*) which represented British interests, and *Die Burger*, which was founded in 1915 to be the mouthpiece for the NP. For example, on 25 March, in the Revolt's aftermath, the *Times* chose to focus on the ways in which 'revolutionaries' and the Labour Party (who were at this stage loosely allied with the CPSA and in opposition in parliament to Smuts' government) had worked against the interests of 'genuine labour'.⁴⁷ Whereas the *Argus* places the blame at the door of Tielman Roos, leader of the Labour Party, and on March 11, depicted the 'communist hooligan' as a patient, gesticulating against his proscribed treatment; 'martial law'.⁴⁸ *Die Burger* however took a different stance. During the period of the Rand Revolt, they continually depicted General Smuts and Oppenheimer, a powerful 'Jewish' mining magnate, as conspiratorial partners, who, along with the 'Bolsheviks', ensured or encouraged the exploitation or violent repression of the 'white' working class – the majority of which, as we have seen, were Afrikaans.⁴⁹

The differing representations were of course the result of political competition and rivalry between different factions within South Africa. However, the specific imagery created around 'Jews' and 'communists' was more or less uniform. The 'hooligan', 'revolutionary', or Oppenheimer himself are repeatedly bedecked in the accoutrements of anti-Semitic physical and social stereotypes – either dirty, irrational, mad, treacherous, or sneaky, and clearly distinct from the 'Anglo-Saxon' who

⁴⁶ Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*.

⁴⁷ 'After the Spill', *Cape Times*, 25 March, 1922 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 9.

⁴⁸ 'A Soporific', *Cape Argus*, 11 March, 1922 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 1. 'Rumours', *Cape Argus*, 18 March, 1922 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 1. Amongst other things the proliferation of scientific discourses works to confirm the presence of what Maynard Swanson describes as 'The Sanitation Syndrome' – the affirmation that the African Other and the foreign European Other were dirty, unclean, disease ridden, and by association, a threat to the health of colonial body. See: Maynard Swanson, 'The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and the Urban Native Policy of the Cape Colony 1900-1909', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 18. No 3. (1977).

⁴⁹ 'Die Rooi Gogga', *Die Burger*, 25 March, 1922 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 8. 'Voor Die Rooi Rewolusie', *Die Burger*, 8 April, 1922 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 6. 'Hoe Hy Dit Bewerk Het', *Die Burger*, 26 April, 1922 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 6.

appears as the physical and moral antithesis, the paternal figure, working in the best interests of the nation and even the afflicted communist. Perhaps the most striking example of such stereotypes during this period comes from *Die Burger*, which on 18 March, in the immediate aftermath of the Revolt, displayed (in reference to the Smuts governments' parliamentary enquiry) 'evidence' of revolutionary terror in South Africa – tanks, bombs, and most importantly, a Bolshevik jack-in-the-box, the Eastern European trickster, ready to explode, and destroy the Union and the basis of 'white' power in Southern Africa.⁵⁰

Slavoj Zizek offers a useful description of this process and the ways in which caricatures and cartoons may have influenced the colonial settler. In a discussion regarding language and semiotics, its violence, and anti-Semitism, he stresses the following:

What the perpetrators of [anti-Semitic] pogroms find intolerable and rage-provoking, what they react to, is not the immediate reality of Jews, but to the image/figure of the 'Jew' which circulates and has been constructed in their tradition. The catch, of course, is that one single individual cannot distinguish in any simple way between real Jews and their anti-Semitic image: This image overdetermines the way I experience real Jews themselves and, furthermore, it affects the way Jews experience themselves. What makes a real Jew that an anti-Semite encounters on the street 'intolerable', what the anti-Semite tries to destroy when he attacks the Jew, the true target of its fury, is this fantasmatic dimension.⁵¹

Clearly the proliferation, circulation, and subsequent normalisation of stereotypes of 'Jews', communists, and any other marginalised or oppressed group have real, violent effects. It is therefore important not to claim that racist attacks are universally nothing more than a violent reaction to a piece of propaganda circulated in a newspaper. Indeed, it is clear that racism runs deeper than representations in the media and elsewhere. As Cedric Robinson reminds us: racism is not rooted "in a particular era [a particular class structure, or a particular ideology], but in European civilization itself".⁵² Having said this, by paraphrasing Zizek, it is important to recognise that it is often language, its symbolisation, and its representation and normalisation in the everyday, which makes it real and

⁵⁰ 'N Tweede Tontoonstelling', *Die Burger*, 18 March, 1922 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 6.

⁵¹ Slavoj Zizek, *Violence*: 57.

⁵² Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism*: 28.

manifest as potentially violent.⁵³ Here then, one could argue, the ocularcentric language of caricatures produces an image of the ‘Jewish communist’ that, through its continual reinforcement, comes to stand – in the eyes of the colonial state and its ‘citizens’ – for all ‘Jews’ and all ‘communists’. One look on the internet, through the dark space, or not so dark spaces of the far-right, and it is clear that such images are not easily diminished.⁵⁴

DEFINING ‘WHITENESS’, THE COLONIAL WAR ON SPIRITS, AND THE ‘INNOCENT’ AFRICAN.

In *Race: The Floating Signifier*, Stuart Hall argues that race, along with class, gender, sexuality and age (to this list we may add culture, nationality, ethnicity and numerous other signifiers) is one of the fundamental ‘floating signifiers’. In other words, signifiers are fluid, ever-changing *discourses* of power, which although often perceived as static, measurable realities, evolve and transform according to new systems of oppression and violence.⁵⁵ As Hall suggests, anything that disturbs the above process becomes a target of oppression and violence. In the words of Foucault – to whom Hall, in this instance, owes much – when discussing the emergence of disciplinary power in Europe: “It was the departure from the norm, the anomaly; it was this that haunted the school, the court, the asylum, the prison.”⁵⁶ In order to enforce its racist ideologies and to produce self-policing citizens, the colonial and later the apartheid state necessarily divided society and normalised this division. It did this by implementing repressive legislation and attempting to eradicate any threat, or anomaly, both within and outside of the ‘nation’. In effect, those who departed from the norm, were automatically labelled a foreign ‘Jew’ or increasingly during apartheid, a ‘communist’. They became an object of fear within the state, which paradoxically produced it, fed off it, and was driven by it.

⁵³ Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: 57*.

⁵⁴ The content of contemporary far-right organisations, often operating from abroad, does not deserve extensive comment within this mini-thesis. However, if one were interested, it would be relatively easy to find such propaganda on the internet. Generally, organisations such as ‘Genocide Watch’ work from a position of ‘concern’ for the ‘genocide’ of ‘white’ South Africans in the ‘post-apartheid’. However, this ‘concern’ works to veil racist ideologies which almost always invoke conspiracy theories surrounding communism, ‘Jews’, and the now violent oppression of the ‘white’ minority. See for example: *Genocide Watch* (online) http://www.genocidewatch.org/images/South_Africa_2013_08_27_Email_from_SA_Citizen.pdf (accessed 11/07/2016).

⁵⁵ Stuart Hall, *Race: The Floating Signifier* (film) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMo2uiRAf30>.

⁵⁶ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Random House, 1995): 299.

At a time when the conditions and future of the Union of South Africa were being rehashed within parliament and by the colonial press, anti-communist propaganda worked to distinguish between those who belonged in South Africa ('citizens' dedicated to the colonial project), and those who did not ('communists', 'Jews', and Eastern Europeans). By differentiating themselves from foreign 'agitators' and an 'alien' political discourse, the state and by association its 'citizens' were, through the mobilisation of colonial 'truth', the colonial press, and a network of knowledge systems marshalled by the state, able to claim belonging and thus justify their dominance and custodianship of Southern Africa.⁵⁷

As I hope to have begun to show within this chapter, biopolitical discourses that focused on the consolidation of 'white' supremacy after Union, colonial paternalism, and custodianship of South Africa were reinforced by colonial ideologies and mythologies surrounding communism that categorised and cordoned off different groups from one another. Eastern Europeans ('Jews') and a threatening, foreign ideology ('communism') served to create caricatured villains who had the potential to disrupt and paradoxically consolidate colonial belonging. They were seen as a foreign element which would unbalance the relationship between the colonial settler and the 'African' Other, but – as this mini-thesis will continue to argue – were also mobilised as a means to justify the continued dominance of 'white' settler society in Southern Africa. Put another way, anti-communist propaganda worked as a disciplining tactic which produced, justified, and normalised systems of power/knowledge, and enabled the state and its 'citizens' to 'rationalise' the settler's existence and status, whilst justifying the enactment or support of racist legislation and violence during apartheid.

⁵⁷ It must be stated however that the transition to apartheid was not an inevitable, teleological step. During this critical period there were rival discourses emanating from Liberal circles, which were attempting to conceptualise different ways of incorporating settler society and European interests into new systems of power that were emerging during this period. In a sense then apartheid was a departure from the norm. Having said this, apartheid like newly independent African states was, once formalised, incorporated into new global systems of government that more often than not privileged the interests of Imperialist powers, 'white' supremacists, or the emergent 'black' elite. Once these new relationships of power were inaugurated, discourses discussed within this chapter became valuable markers of difference, and signifiers that helped to realign and reaffirm 'white' supremacy in South Africa. For a full discussion of liberal discourses during this transitional period see: Suren Pillay, 'Identity, Difference, Citizenship, Or Why I am No Longer a Non-Racialist' (paper presented to the 14th General Assembly, CODESRIA, May 2015). And John Soske, 'The Impossible Concept': 22.

The pervasive circulation and proliferation of such propaganda prompted many within the 'Jewish' community, particularly during apartheid, to distance themselves from communism, by claiming that 'Jewish communists' were not really Jewish.⁵⁸ On the contrary they were – according to Henry R. Pike whilst defending the 'Good Jew' – possessed by the "Devil's curse of Marxism-Leninism".⁵⁹ They were not God's people, and therefore according to this mythology, not-quite-white, and distinct from the 'white' settler. For the national press and other authoritative institutions, the 'Jewish' community were effectively divided between antagonists who were automatically associated with communism, and the self-policing 'Good Jew' who had presumably by this time demonstrated his or her loyalty to the British colonial state and later the apartheid project and by association his or her ability to assimilate into society.⁶⁰

To a certain degree, assimilation into the British colony and later the apartheid state also meant becoming 'white'.⁶¹ Those not classified as such, were seen as a different 'race', a different ethnicity, or at least 'not-quite-white' (This of course implied that to become a citizen or to be regarded as such, one must become 'white', a status that during apartheid, those classified as 'non-European' were always already excluded from. This point is aptly demonstrated by the old Afrikaans phrase: *Jy's a*

⁵⁸ Mark Israel and Simon Adams, 'That Spells Trouble': 157.

⁵⁹ Henry R. Pike *A History of Communism in South Africa* (Germiston: Christian Mission International of South Africa, 1988): 211-214.

⁶⁰ During the British colonial period distinctions were continually made between the 'Good Jew' and the 'Undesirable Jew'. For example, after the 1917 Russian Revolution, the Anglo-European 'Jew' was differentiated from the Russian 'Jew' within the public domain. The former was seen as cultured and assimilated into Western society. Whereas the latter, in light of events during this period, were seen as a different, undesirable race, who brought anti-social and anti-democratic behaviours to South Africa. See: Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*: 81.

⁶¹ Here we follow Stoler who in a discussion regarding the 'Poor White Problem' in the Dutch East Indies, argues that "'Europeaness" was not a fixed attribute, but one altered by environment, class contingent, and not secured by birth". She goes on to suggest that "what is at issue here is not a shared conviction of the fixity of European identity but the protean nature of it... What sustained racial membership was a middle-class morality, nationalist sentiments, bourgeois sensibilities, normalised sexuality, and a carefully circumscribed 'milieu' in school and home". It seems as if public debates regarding Eastern European migrants and communism, were intimately linked with the colony's own 'civilising offensive' that sought to clarify and contain the conditions of settler identity and their relationship to the colonised Other. Concerns regarding the 'poor white' in South Africa were not only about the "poor and their needs, but the rich and their motives". It helped to simplify a complex social milieu which threatened to undermine and challenge colonial hierarchies of power during this period. Having said this, after the formalisation of apartheid racial and ethnic classifications became fixed. The NP argued that apartheid offered a solution to the colonial dilemma of segregation. It enabled a state-led social engineering project to determine, through legislation, the ways in which different groups would be perceived, conditioned, and policed by the state. In essence it was constitutive of an ideological claim that legitimised and enabled 'white' supremacy and dominance over the country's resources to be extended. Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*: 104-109.

witman, meaning ‘you’re a good guy’). Contained by discourses that refer to them at different times as either ‘not real Jews’, ‘devils’, ‘aliens’, ‘machines’, and by association not ‘real whites’, it seems as if the communist fits into this bracket.⁶² In this sense British colonialism (and apartheid after that) and its discourse ensured the ‘ideal citizen’s’ “subjection to the ruling ideology or the practice of that ‘ideology.’”⁶³ Through a complex process of interpolation (hailing ‘Jews’ as communists) and counter-interpolation (hailing ‘Jewish’ communists as ‘not really Jewish’), one could argue that some members of the ‘Jewish’ community, like other South African subjects, “became the principle of their own subjection.”⁶⁴

Importantly, for those classified as ‘white’, subjection under these terms merely meant adopting or accepting – often passively – the terms of apartheid capitalism and the benefits of a tiered socio-economic system. It did not necessarily mean accepting ‘Volk’ mythologies or taking part in acts of violence on behalf of the state. However, for those classified as ‘non-European’ it either meant succumbing to colonial hierarchies of power and becoming that despised figure – “the black man who wants to turn his race white”⁶⁵ – or according to revolutionaries like Frantz Fanon, freeing oneself from the prison of the ‘black’ soul, revolting against his or her subjection, and in return being violently repressed by the mechanisms of the state.

As I hope to have begun to show communism was critical to the above process. It helped to define the limits of citizenry and the state and the notion of ‘whiteness’, and by association ‘non-whiteness’. Clearly, the main targets of violent subjection were those classified as ‘non-European’. However, the communist enabled the state and its citizens to imagine and comprehend antagonism from within the ‘white’ community and South Africa as a whole. It worked to maintain and reconfigure the colonial ideal of ‘white’ supremacy in Southern Africa through subjection, not only in relation to the ‘white’

⁶² A wide range of anti-communist propaganda was mobilised during apartheid. They are not completely homogenous and do vary. However, all attempt to produce an image of the communist as not human, or as distinct from the colonial or apartheid citizen. Some have been highlighted already within this text. Others will be highlighted in the larger body of work.

⁶³ Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*: 133.

⁶⁴ Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford University Press: 1997): 85.

⁶⁵ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*: 10-11.

communist Other, but more importantly the ‘black’ Other. Legislation and apartheid’s Repressive-State-Apparatus, worked to enforce and maintain these terms for a further fifty years.

In order to legitimise and maintain the colonial project an elaborate blend of expert knowledge, ‘rational truth’, and the ‘fantastic’ were required. Such discourses were used to create an object of fear, and a mirror in which to project and compare the ideal, ‘pure’, and morally ‘true’ citizen with the morally degenerate communist, or the supposedly ‘primitive’ African Other. The synthesis was the colonial, and later the apartheid citizen. Everything outside was its antithesis and subjected to what Bernard Stiegler describes as the ‘colonial war on spirits’.⁶⁶

In elaboration, the genealogy of western thought and becoming through individuation can be understood as being characterised by processes of grammatical projection, or put another way, the projection, normalisation, and dominance of specific grammars (or epistemologies), which are used as weapons that govern and control idioms, signs, symbols, sensibilities, and different group’s moral compasses within society.⁶⁷ In other words, control of the processes of grammatization “enabled the West to wage its war on spirits – a war where it assures its control of (national) spirits through the control of their symbols”.⁶⁸ Thus, in the spirit of Stiegler’s critique, resulting in the alienation of colonised spirits, and by association their sublimation to a hybridised form of idealism, which after 1948 was supposedly fulfilled by the Afrikaner’s ascension to power.

But if this critical period marked a moment in which colonial power was consolidated, it also offers an opportunity to unravel and come to terms with the ways in which Eurocentric discourses determined, and continue to determine, the terms through which the nationalist ideologies and

⁶⁶ Bernard Stiegler, *Symbolic Misery - Volume One: The Hyperindustrial Epoch* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014): 55.

⁶⁷ Individuation refers to the essential process of becoming conscious of self and other (‘I’ and ‘we’), which according to Stiegler, following Simondon, is a performative action, constituted by the recognition that ‘I’ and ‘we’ are one and the same thing. Grammatization forms a critical aspect of this process, allowing ‘I’ and ‘we’ to subsume the Other, or the ‘counter tendency’, into the collective, and thus ensuring the ascendancy of the supposedly collective Western ‘spirit’. Ibid. 46.

⁶⁸ Ibid. 55.

resistance itself was mobilised during the twentieth century. By association, it might determine how such processes were and can be undermined in the contemporary.



CHAPTER 2.

AFRIKANER NATIONALISM, THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH AND THE COMMUNIST OTHER.

I dreamed, one night, that my entire family, all the Malans in creation, were living in a huge bare tree on the banks of a broad and mighty river. The tree stood on a vast dry plain, flat and featureless, like the Karoo, and overhung with a feeling of inescapable doom and dread. The world was about to end. Three giant waves would come down the river and sweep away every last vestige of our world... As I watched, a huge brown wave loomed over the horizon and came rumbling slowly across the plain, so high and broad it was as if a range of mountains was bearing down upon us. The terror was like a falling nightmare... It was too late. I looked at my Afrikaner father; he was staring upstream, with an 'oh, shit' look in his eyes. So was my mother. She was standing on a bough high above me, with that baleful yellow light playing across her face, her gray hair streaming out behind her in the wind of a gathering storm. The last wave was coming, and we were about to be obliterated.¹

It was out of the complicated political milieu that the National Party (NP) emerged and claimed a marginal victory in the 1948 election. Through the mobilisation of nationalist ideologies and the consolidation of church and state they were able to move towards greater homogeneity, 'unite the Volk' – who had long been divided by regional and political differences – and present apartheid as a solution to anxieties and long-standing concerns regarding Union and the future of 'white' supremacy in Southern Africa.² Critical to this process were the ways in which the NP under D.F. Malan, and the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) were able to combine biblical ideals and mythologies surrounding Afrikaner belonging and custodianship of Southern Africa, with economic, social, and political policies that would maintain 'white' supremacy through segregation and settler society's control of South Africa and its resources.

¹ Riaan Malan, *My Traitor's Heart* (London: Vintage Books, 1990): 91-92.

² Due to the South African constituency system and despite receiving more than 10% less than their rivals, the NP and their allies received 79 seats compared to Smuts and the Labour Party who received 71. Considering the electoral system established during Union, the NP only needed to garner the support of the Afrikaner majority in order to gain victory in the 1948 elections. This was to some extent achieved by building upon notions of Afrikaner homogeneity and identity, and through a series of careful negotiations between the various Afrikaner factions. The most critical of which was between Malan's Cape Party and Strydom's more hard-line Transvaal Party. This factionalism remained throughout the apartheid period, perhaps most critically when Malan announced his retirement from politics, and party power seceded to Strydom and Verwoerd, who were, even in the eyes of the NP 'old guard' seen as more extreme in their race politics. Although it would be problematic to argue that the Afrikaner nation were indeed one homogenous group with a single political identity, the implication that they were culturally homogenous and united by the same historical and biblical legacy, would have worked to produce a sense of shared destiny and interest amongst many during this critical period. As noted previously, the contradictions between and within various political organisations in South Africa, point towards the complications and difficulties of narrating the past in a coherent form. However, the oversimplification of politics and histories within the public domain, highlight the ways in which strong ideological narratives can contribute to swaying public opinion toward a change in political power. Lindie Koorts, *DF Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism*.

This chapter will explore the ways in which these mythologies were produced and reaffirmed over time. By employing D.F. Malan as a link between the NP and the DRC, it will outline some of the key tropes of Malan and the NP's particular brand of neo-Calvinism, and will begin to discuss the ways in which such mythologies were mobilised in relation to the communist Other. Considering our focus on Bram Fischer and the 1960s in the following chapter, it will then move on to focus on anti-communist discourses emerging from relevant organisations during the 1960s. Before proceeding, it is important to state that the following discussion will not suggest that anti-communist discourses and other ideologies emanating from the DRC were universally accepted by all Afrikaners during the apartheid period.³ Instead It will attempt to demonstrate how a love for Church, 'nation', and God, *may* have worked to produce a specific aversion toward the communist Other.

D.F. MALAN AND THE CONSOLIDATION AND HOMOGENISATION OF THE 'VOLK'.

D.F. Malan, a former Minister in the DRC, was, like many Afrikaners, anti-Imperialist and anti-British. He, like the NP, was also initially anti-capitalist – this stance began to change once the NP were in a position of power. Although not seen as the architect of apartheid (that accolade is often reserved for the more hard-line Hendrik Verwoerd), he was, one might suggest, the father of apartheid and by association the father of the 'Volk'. According to Lindie Koorts (Malan's most recent biographer), he was seen as a fatherly statesman, the wise old oom who guided the 'Volk' out of British Imperialism and toward what was a firm, if markedly warped sense of hope for the future.⁴ Malan embodied many of the stereotypical characteristics of Afrikanerdom, and became the idealised model of the paternal, Afrikaner male. He was steeped in neo-Calvinist Idealism, a racist, Romanticised conceptualisation of the nation,⁵ as well as Social Darwinism, and the notion that

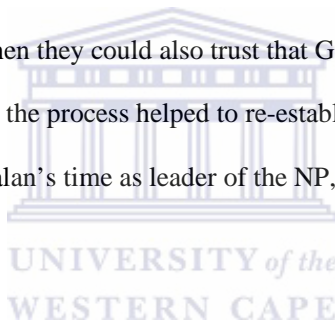
³ Furthermore, this mini-thesis also recognises that the DRC was merely one of many social and political institutions that may have influenced the 'white', specifically Afrikaner minority during the apartheid period.

⁴ When asked on his death-bed what his greatest political achievement was, he replied: "That I could serve my nation; that I could unite my people. The Lord had granted me that". Ibid. xi.

⁵ In 1930 when defending the implementation of the Immigration Quota Bill, Malan argued: "in every home by preference you would welcome not the stranger with a different outlook, but your own kith and kin. Nations desire to preserve homogeneity, because every nation has got a soul, and every nation naturally desires that its soul should not be a divided one. Every nation considers from all points of view that it is a weakness, if in the body of the nation, there exists an undigested and unabsorbed and unabsorbable minority." The assertion that

“ideals [as opposed to the material conditions of society] ruled the world and shaped the history of both nations and individuals”.⁶

According to Malan the role of the NP and the DRC was to ‘enlighten’ and to protect the ‘soul’ or – in the mould of Hegel’s ‘Geist’⁷ – ‘spirit’ of the Afrikaner ‘nation’, which according to him had been corroded by industrialisation and a lack of segregation in urban areas.⁸ To achieve this it was crucial that the flock could be permanently and inextricably reunited with the DRC and guided away from ‘debasement’ foreign influence, be it European or African. Following Irish Bishop George Berkeley – a prominent theologian during Malan’s education in Europe – Malan believed that “all perceptions or ideas originated in God’s mind.” God was the “great Engineer who had designed the road on which the Afrikaner nation travelled”.⁹ Therefore if the ‘nation’ were to trust in the ‘word of God’ (and Afrikaner ‘cultural gatekeepers’), then they could also trust that God’s divine will had delivered the ‘Volk’ to the New Jerusalem and in the process helped to re-establish the ‘natural balance of things’, in the form of apartheid. During Malan’s time as leader of the NP, these ideals were instilled and



every nation has a soul follows Hegel’s conceptualisation of the national spirit or ‘Geist’. Hegel’s philosophy was popular in Germany during Malan’s education there. He influenced the academy of the time and was eventually taken to his ideological limit by German Nazism and apartheid. Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*: 138.

⁶ Lindie Koorts, *DF Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism*: 73.

⁷ With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy for us to dismiss the ideals of Malan and apartheid as totalitarian state racism in (one of) its most obviously violent forms. However, when read in relation to the Hegelian dialectic and Hegel’s glorification of the state, one can understand how those who followed this philosophical proposition could conceivably come to terms with violence and oppression if it was seen to benefit the ‘nation’ as a whole. Ibid. 16.

⁸ During his years as a Minister of Montagu, Malan gave a speech on his conceptualisation of ‘man’, which was guided by his own convictions surrounding the Dutch Reformed Church, the ‘spirit’ of the Afrikaner, and a Romantic ideal of the role of Great men within the ‘nation’: “What is man? A man is someone with inner strength, someone who is not like the tide, moved and swayed by every wind, but who can assert himself in any environment. A man is someone who can leave his mark on others, because he has his own character. He is someone who has convictions, who knows what he wants, who is aware that he stands for something. A man is someone who knows there are principles he must hold onto no matter what the cost, and who would, if necessary, willingly give his life for these principles. That is a man.” Although written over thirty years before he became leader of the apartheid government, his years as a theological student and Minister, established an idealism which would help to form the foundations of ‘Volk’ ideologies. Malan’s emphasis on the individual was diametrically opposed to Marxist materialism. Therefore, one could argue that his rejection and violent oppression of communism during apartheid, was not only implemented as a means to repress political opposition to apartheid, but was intimately linked to his ‘formative years’ in the DRC and later the NP. Ibid. 72.

⁹ Ibid. 50.

incorporated into Afrikaner Nationalist politics. In the words of Dubow: “[t]he Enlightenment dethroned God; but Afrikanerdom crowned Him as sovereign of their Republic”.¹⁰

For Malan, the NP, and the DRC the solution to the ‘Poor White Problem’, which as we have seen was a prominent concern during the period of Union in South Africa, was also the solution to the ‘Native Question’. If they could consolidate and reaffirm segregation in South Africa, they could engineer the relationship and social and moral status of all South Africans, which would ultimately ensure the imposed superiority of Afrikaners and all those classified as ‘white’. In pursuit of this project, during the early 1950s a series of now-infamous apartheid laws were passed,¹¹ after which Malan ominously declared in the national press:

After years of uncertainty and fear about *our* [my emphasis] future, and more particularly about the position of the White race... we are now headed for safety and peace (gerustheid)... The laws on Population Registration, Immorality, Mixed Marriages, Group Areas and the Suppression of Communism, which lay solid foundations and protect them against all possible storms, stand to-day as the National Government’s lasting monuments.¹²

Critical to this new legislation, the Suppression of Communism Act, 1950, ensured that communists, or for that matter any dissenting voice or political activist who encouraged “feelings of hostility between black and white” were suppressed. (The implication and normalisation that any form of resistance was associated with communism may have had its roots in documents like the Police Commissioner’s Report.)¹³ Through this act communism became an official state target, but more importantly was mobilised as an object of fear and (like ‘Volk’ mythologies) as an alibi which justified acts of violence and repression of the ‘black’ majority. In the words of Bram Fischer whilst on trial in 1965 for his involvement in the Communist Party: “These laws were enacted, not to prevent

¹⁰ Saul Dubow (ed) *Christian-Nationalism and the Rise of the Afrikaner Broederbond, in South Africa, 1918-1948* (London: Macmillan Press, 1990): xxviii.

¹¹ As Deborah Posel suggests, such laws were “apartheid’s central and defining biopolitics: focusing the exercise of power on the regulation of large units of population, designating spaces for authorised residence, pathways of authorised migration, channels of authorised employment and the terms of political and communal organisation.”¹¹ However, as Foucault would argue, it was also defined and maintained by the normalisation of Eurocentric epistemologies, mythologies, and ideologies (some of which relied upon anti-communist propaganda and the notion that communism not Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid was the main threat to stability in Southern Africa) that propped up the apartheid project. Deborah Posel, ‘The Apartheid Project, 1948-1970’: 323

¹² *Cape Times*, 27 June, 1950 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa).

¹³ Eddie Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*: 380.

the spread of communism, but for the purpose of silencing the opposition of the large majority of our citizens to a Government intent on depriving them, solely on account of their colour, of the most elementary human rights".¹⁴

Having said this, communism was seen or, more accurately, projected as a threat to Afrikaner sovereignty and stability in Southern Africa. It did not 'respect' the colour bar and threatened to undermine the most prized possession of Afrikanerdom, the DRC – one of the first institutions to implement segregation before apartheid was formalised. Again, it may be useful to quote Malan at length:

Bolshevism will not only flood Germany, but the entire Europe, and not least the exhausted, heavily burdened and impoverished England. And then – the Deluge! [E]very country has thus far detested Bolshevism like the plague... Bolshevism is a destroyer of the foundations of civilisation and of everything the Christian nations deem to be holy. If this is the case in other countries, we in South Africa have a hundred more reasons to detest and fear Bolshevism... Bolshevism has long had its eye on South Africa. It wants to initiate a Bolshevik revolution here and therefore seeks its support mostly with the non-white elements. Under the leadership of Communist Jews it has nestled itself into a number of our trade unions. It does not acknowledge the colour bar in any sphere, and where it is legally possible, it agitates tirelessly – with the vehement incitement of the non-whites – to remove it. It does not know any patriotism. It is the sworn enemy of all religion, not least of Christianity. In short, Bolshevism is the negation of everything Afrikanerdom has stood for and fought for, suffered and died for, for generations.¹⁵

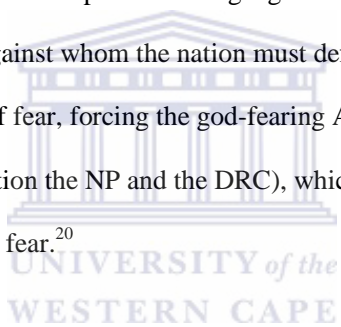
Written in 1941, Malan's argument goes some way to highlighting broader concerns that became one of the principles through which the 1948 election campaign was fought and won. As Koorts explains, it was primarily fought on two interrelated principles: hope and fear. The first, apartheid and its 'solution' to the race question, offered *hope* for 'white' supremacy in South Africa. Whereas the second was based upon the *fear* of communism (and other 'foreign' interference), and its apparent potential to incite protest and violence.¹⁶

¹⁴ Bram Fischer in: Mary Benson (ed) *The Sun Will Rise: Statements from the Dock by Southern African Political Prisoners* (London: International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, 1981): 36.

¹⁵ Lindie Koorts, *D.F. Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism*: 363-364.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 376.

As can be seen in the above passage, Malan unashamedly places ‘communists’ and ‘Jews’ together. He also highlights communist attempts to ‘indoctrinate’ the ‘black’ majority, who in this particular context, were seen – as with the Police Commissioner in the previous chapter – as the objects of “vehement incitement” and not the subjects of revolution and revolt. Interestingly, like his descendent Riaan Malan, writing in *My Traitor’s Heart* (highlighted at the beginning of this chapter) under markedly different conditions in the late 1980s and early 1990s,¹⁷ the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ is depicted in Biblical, apocalyptic terms. This was indeed the ‘realm of the fantastic’.¹⁸ The deluge or flood would come to destroy the ‘Volk’ as it had with Noah’s people, threatening the foundations of apartheid and the Western world, and bringing about a biblical struggle between ‘white’ and ‘black’, and communism and the West. As Ahmed argues, such manifestations are representative of a language or discourse of fear. In her own words: “fear speaks the language of ‘floods’ and ‘swamps’, of being invaded by inappropriate Others, against whom the nation must defend”.¹⁹ Here then communism and the communist become the object of fear, forcing the god-fearing Afrikaner to turn toward the object of love (the ‘nation’ and by association the NP and the DRC), which is embodied, like a father, with the potential to meet and dispel that fear.²⁰



Importantly, Malan depicts the communist as the antithesis to the ‘Volk’, and all those who lived by similar “Christian values”. According to him, “Bolshevism... [was] the destroyer of the foundations

¹⁷ In *My Traitor’s Heart* Riaan Malan vividly describes a dream (highlighted at the beginning of this chapter) regarding the destruction of *all* ‘the Malans in creation’, and by association the Afrikaner ‘nation’. Although written under different terms, it is interesting to note how biblical discourses, which were mobilised in defence of apartheid, survive and transform according to the specific social and political changes in society. Importantly, the infiltration of such fears into Riaan’s dream points toward the ways in which the ‘Rooi’ and ‘Swart gevaar’s’ may have penetrated the psyche of Afrikaners during apartheid. This, I tentatively argue, demonstrates how such fears were not wholly reliant on propaganda disseminated from government and the national press. Instead, it suggests that such fears were, at least by this time (1980s-1990s), embedded in the collective Afrikaner psyche, coalescing with an inherent fear of the Other, and, in its most destructive form, manifesting as violence toward the ‘black’ majority. This particular aspect of psychological fear also speaks to this mini-thesis’ introduction in which our interlocutor (the Afrikaner viewing my exhibition ‘Johnny Gomas: the Unfashionable Tailor’) exclaimed: “So communism wasn’t always bad”. As mentioned in the introduction, such comments suggest that the distrust or fear of communists was inherent and ‘in the blood’. Riaan Malan, *My Traitor’s Heart*: 91-92. For a genealogical study of anti-communist ideology during apartheid see: Wessel Visser, ‘Afrikaner anti-communist history production in South African historiography’: 332.

¹⁸ Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*: 195.

¹⁹ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*: 76.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 74.

of civilisation and everything the Christian nation deem[ed] to be holy... It [did] not know any patriotism. It [was] the sworn enemy of all religion... [and most importantly it was] the negation of everything the Afrikaner ha[d]... stood for and fought for". In one broad stroke he invokes several of the cultural, historical, and mythological foundations of the 'Volk' – religion, patriotism, and struggle against violent oppressors. Indeed, by the time the NP came to power, the Afrikaner could, according to cultural 'gatekeeper' Piet Meyer, be defined as one homogenous group, made up of 'white' Europeans who spoke Afrikaans, attended one of the three 'sister churches' of the DRC, were (initially) committed to rural, patriarchal values, and had legitimate historical grievances against the British and 'Africans'. The former had oppressed the Afrikaner in the Cape Colony and much later during the Anglo-Boer War, and the latter, according to Afrikaans mythology, amongst other things, 'betrayed' the Voortrekkers during the 'Great Trek'.²¹

Through the affirmation, enactment, and normalisation of such 'ideal values', Afrikaners were encouraged to uphold a strong sense of cultural independence, which involved buying into Afrikaner 'foundational myths', and as a result, remaining committed to and maintaining 'white' supremacy, and 'naturally' voting for the NP. To consolidate, maintain, and police Afrikaans homogeneity, all those who either did not conform to or willingly accept the mantle of the 'Volk', or simply and more conclusively those not classified as 'white', were suppressed and/or placed outside or on the edges of the 'nation' – thus counteracting the 'Fear of Miscegenation', and ensuring the independence, and supposed superiority of the Afrikaner and all those classified as 'white'.

Of course, this process was more complicated than any one account of this size can sufficiently do justice to. This was not just a case of indoctrinating the 'poor white Afrikaner' and waiting for the desired results. Indeed, there would have been many reasons why people, both 'British' and 'Afrikaans', voted or chose not to vote for the NP who, despite an Afrikaner majority dominating the

²¹ John Boje and Fransjohan Pretorius, 'Kent gij dat volk: The Anglo-Boer War and Afrikaner identity in postmodern perspective', *Historia*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (November 2011), pp. 59–72: 60-62.

electoral role, only received 39.85% (compared to General Smuts' 53.49%) of the vote in 1948.²² At the very least, such statistics suggest that, at this time, support for the NP and apartheid was not as total as conventional narratives might imply. As scholars such as Leslie Witz in *Apartheid's Festival* have shown, processes of 'Afrikanerisation' occurred over a long period and at different times had a different currency and power amongst 'white' settler society.²³ A more nuanced approach would therefore be to take into account the varied and often contested associations, appropriations and disavowals of Afrikaner identity over a much longer period of time. This is one of many reasons for focussing on Bram Fischer in the final chapter of this mini-thesis.

A NOTE ON WHITE SUPREMACY AND THE 'ROOI GEVAAR'.

As we have seen in the first chapter, Afrikaner nationalists were not always fundamentally opposed to communism. Having said this, once the NP came into power and began to rearrange economic and political hierarchies within the South African state, communism was projected as the primary threat to 'white' supremacy. This again highlights the necessity to create clear boundaries between the apartheid 'citizen' and what becomes its antithetical Other, and demonstrates how the affirmation and normalisation of such boundaries relied upon strong ideological claims that were, possibly even by this time, embedded within the Afrikaner psyche.²⁴

Along this critical vein it is important to recognise that the formalisation of apartheid and the emergence of a strong, partisan Afrikaner 'nation' is often interpreted as being a reaction to colonial oppression and the struggle against Imperialism.²⁵ Although this may have been a significant factor in fuelling Afrikaners' desire for autonomy and eventual independence from British rule, I argue that apartheid was not primarily designed to dismantle colonial power, but to reconfigure it under new

²² Lindie Koorts, *D.F. Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism*: 377.

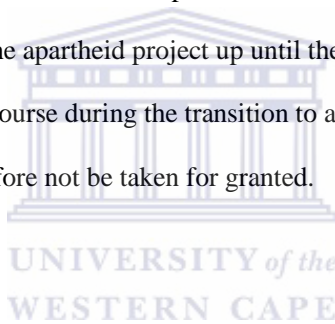
²³ Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's Festival: Contesting South Africa's National Past* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).

²⁴ Wessel Visser, 'Afrikaner anti-communist history production in South African historiography': 332.

²⁵ Andre du Toit and Hermann Giliomee, *Afrikaner Political Thought: Analysis and Documents, Volume one, 1780-1850* (Cape Town: David Phelp, 1983). Lindie Koorts, *DF Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism*.

terms. As previously stated, South Africa was the ‘New Jerusalem’, and the Afrikaner, with one foot in the Old World and one foot in the New, was imagined as the new custodian of that land.

Critically in the above passage, Malan depicts the ‘struggle’ between communism and what would eventually become the apartheid state within a global context. According to this narrative South Africa represented one of the last bastions of Western civilisation in Africa.²⁶ The mythologisation and subsequent normalisation of the global conflict between communism and capitalism, would not only have been one of the main factors in allowing British settlers and the Afrikaner to reconcile – a critical precondition for *sustaining* apartheid – but also one that attempted to write the ‘Volk’ in as an equal and ally to Britain and the Western world.²⁷ Although global discourses now depict apartheid in terms of the ultimate evil and an aberration, it is important to re-stress that the British and other Western powers tacitly supported the apartheid project up until the fall of the Berlin Wall. The effects of normalising anti-communist discourse during the transition to apartheid and its reinforcement throughout this period should therefore not be taken for granted.



²⁶ At the time of Malan’s declaration in the *Cape Times*, the colonial press – particularly the British press – primarily focused on the spread of communism throughout the world. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it seems as if the *Guardian*, the political mouthpiece of the CPSA, was one of the few newspapers concerned with the formalisation of apartheid and the onset of totalitarianism in South Africa. Communism and the Korean war were the central focus of papers like the *Cape Times* and the *Cape Argus*. Although the *Guardian* also reported on the Korean War, the language used is markedly (and unsurprisingly) different. On the one hand, the *Guardian* reported, on June 1, 1950, about the ‘Washington War Planners’, and Korean refugees on 3 August. By contrast the *Times* and the *Argus*, reported on the Korean War against the Chinese ‘Reds’ from an American and British perspective. Although the chosen reporting of each paper is to be expected, the ways in which this effects coverage of apartheid is significant. The contrast between the *Guardian* and the *Cape Times* and *Argus*, in this regard, is considerable. Whilst the *Guardian* on May 11, 1950, dedicates its front page to a report entitled: ‘Swart’s Gestapo Bill Rouses Widespread Alarm: Country Rushing Towards Police State’, the *Cape Times* on the same day merely pays lip service to the arrival of oppressive legislation, choosing instead to focus on the Korean War and the threat of communism in a global context. See: *The Guardian, Cape Times, Cape Argus*, May 11, 1950 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa).

²⁷ Given the tensions between British Imperialism and the Afrikaner ‘nation’ after the second ‘Anglo-Boer War’, it seems as if communism served as a convenient way in which to both deflect attention away from potential conflict between Britain and the Afrikaner, and enable the reconceptualisation of national narratives which attempted to unite European settlers under one banner. This is not to suggest that there was no conflict between British colonialism and the Afrikaner. For example, during the Second World War an Afrikaner uprising threatened to undermine the war effort. Having said this, by the time the NP election victory in 1948 and with a new enemy on the horizon, Afrikaner and British settler were able to renegotiate the terms of ‘white’ supremacy in Southern Africa. Critically, Afrikaner political domination in South Africa did not mean the complete destruction of British economic interests.

Within this framework I again argue that communism served as an ideological and political alibi. On a national level it was used as a means to deflect attention away from more sinister, racist ideologies, and on an international level it allowed those unwilling to intervene to dismiss the need to address apartheid oppression and violence on the basis of the global threat of communism. It would become one of the foundational justifications for Afrikaner *and* British dominance during apartheid (British economic interests were largely protected during this period) and (unofficially) ally 'white' South Africa with the West.

Under these terms it is impossible to understand apartheid solely as an aberration. Although some might argue (and not without justification) that apartheid most closely resembled the ideologies of German Nazism and European Fascism, the discourses and legislation that apartheid mobilised and implemented also echoed those of the British colonial state.²⁸ Remember that a form of segregation, the 1913 Land Act, which was, according to Bertus de Villiers, “the date on which formal legislative apartheid started”,²⁹ was first implemented by Cecil John Rhodes during the early twentieth century. As Denis Goldberg highlighted in the 2014 Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture at Rhodes House, Oxford University, it would be interesting to consider why communism in South Africa was dismissed as a foreign ideology, whilst other ideologies, such as nationalism and social Darwinism, were accepted as natural and taken-for-granted ‘facts’ about society and the ‘nation’.³⁰

²⁸ For example, anti-Semitism was present in South Africa before a surge in the 1930s and early 1940s, when German Nazism began to influence Afrikaner nationalism. Anti-Semitism was not only an aberration associated with Nazism, but was an intrinsic element of the British colonial, biopolitical state. As we have seen from the previous chapter, anti-communist discourses were incubated in the early twentieth century, during which the communist emerged as an object of fear. Perhaps most significantly, debates and legislation surrounding the ‘Poor White Problem’, the ‘Fear of Miscegenation’, the ‘Native Question’ and segregation had pre-occupied the British colonial state and its intellectual elite throughout its colonial territories. These came to stand as critical debates and political talking points throughout the apartheid period. For the ‘Roots of Anti-Semitism in South Africa’ see: Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*.

²⁹ Bertus de Villiers, *Land Claims and National Parks: the Makuleke Experience* (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1999): 20.

³⁰ Denis Goldberg in ‘Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2014 by Professor Goldberg, February 2014’ (film) <http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/bram-fischer> (Accessed 20/08/2016).

Like neo-liberal economic experiments in the global South after continental independence, apartheid emerged as an exacting, yet distinct form of Western governance in Southern Africa.³¹ Indeed, it was linked with and for periods sustained by globalisation and the growth of capitalism, and could be interpreted as one of many economic and political experiments which emerged during the reconfiguration of Imperialism.³² To put it simply, apartheid was an extension, or perhaps more accurately, a polymorphism of the colonial project, and like global discourses focusing on the ‘titanic struggle’ between ‘good’ (capitalism) and ‘evil’ (communism), it required an ideological construct that could be mobilised in defence of apartheid when necessary.³³

As Benedict Anderson has argued, the nation state is often constituted through the ideological mobilisation of a specific historical and cultural framework, which is, according to Anderson, ultimately imagined.³⁴ I like others would issue caution against a universalising, reductionist approach to Anderson’s top-down thesis. The assumption that every nation or community is solely imagined does not take into account the actual socio-historical experiences of different groups, and suggests that culture is homogenous, that people do not have control of their own identity formation. It also suggests that once formalised, culture is static and is appropriated or disseminated from cultural

³¹ Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism’s Stealth Revolution* (MIT Press, 2015): 51.

³² Here I follow Cedric Robinson who in *Black Marxism* unravels the relationship between slavery, the slave trade and the development of capitalism. By doing so he undermines Eurocentric discourses that continually affirm that slavery, particularly in the United States, was an aberration, an unfortunate episode in global history. The foundation of the United States, and the development of European wealth during this period, was however, built and dependent upon slavery. In Robinson’s own words: “Slavery... was not a historical aberration, it was not a “mistake” in an otherwise bourgeois democratic age. It was, and its imprints continued to be, systematic.” In the same way, we can understand apartheid as an extension, polymorphism, or transmogrification of the colonial project, and most importantly one that relied on the exploitation of the ‘black’ majority in order to maintain ‘white’ supremacy in Southern Africa: Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism*: 200.

³³ Foucault’s conceptualisation of power becomes particularly useful here. In an interview carried out by Allesandro Fontana and Pasquale Pasquino, Foucault suggests that, during periods of political transition and more specifically revolution, networks of power do not change, they merely change hands: “I would say that the State consists in the codification of a whole number of power relations which render its functioning possible, and that Revolution is a different type of codification of the same relations”. In this passage, Foucault addresses the Russian Revolution, and suggests that although it is conventionally understood as bringing about fundamental change in Russia, it merely reworked pre-existing formations of power into a new system dominated by the Soviets. He goes on to argue that revolutions and other types of socio-political change “leave essentially untouched the power relations which form the basis for the functioning of the state”. Without reducing this particular debate to a South African context, Foucault’s notion of power, its interconnections, and its multiplicitous social relations, might provide us a means to think with the transference of power from the British colonial state to apartheid. Michel Foucault, ‘Truth and Power’ In Colin Gordon (ed) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Writings: Michel Foucault* (New York: Random House, 1980), pp. 109-133: 122-123.

³⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1993).

'elites' without contestation, transformation and fluidity.³⁵ Under slightly different terms we should remember that imagined or not, once such ideologies and cultural indicators become normalised and appropriated by different groups, the ideological or imagined notion of the nation in a sense becomes real. In the case of the Afrikaner and apartheid, 'Volk' identities worked as a signifier of imposed superiority, power and privilege in South Africa, and as a result would have become a desirable identity that was appropriated and (to this day) defended at every turn by certain sections of the Afrikaans community.

Having said this it seems as if the ideological mobilisation of the 'Volk' as one homogenous entity had a particularly powerful effect during this critical period in South African history. Through this process the NP became protector and custodian of the 'Volk', and, under different terms, the 'black' majority and the land which they inhabited. After years of British rule, interference and oppression, belonging to what appeared to be one homogenous, united nation would have carried a certain attraction within settler society. Indeed, such processes clearly mobilised enough political power, particularly within rural, Afrikaner heartlands, to unbalance and, over time, reassemble already established hierarchies of power during the late 1940s and early 1950s.³⁶ The remainder of this chapter will once again turn its focus to one of the key cultural institutions of Afrikanerdom, the Dutch Reformed Church, which, as we will see, established lasting mythological frameworks of the 'Volk' and produced a narrative surrounding communism that, I will argue, allowed apartheid's ideological gatekeepers to extend the "triumph of Christianity over heathendom",³⁷ and "civilisation over barbarism"³⁸ into the contemporary.

THE 'BATTLE OF BLOOD RIVER'/IMPI YASENCOME: FOUNDATIONAL MYTHS.

In order to proceed further it may be useful to briefly deviate to the 'Battle of Blood River'/*Impi yaseNcome*, December 16, 1838, a moment which, during the apartheid period, provided both a

³⁵ For a discussion of this particular issue see footnote 21 in this mini-thesis' introduction.

³⁶ Lindie Koorts, *D.F. Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism*: 377.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 112.

³⁸ Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's Festival*: 45.

‘foundational myth’ for the Afrikaner ‘nation’, and a site of resistance and mourning as “the day that ushered in the loss of African independence and land.”³⁹ According to dominant Afrikaans mythology, it was here on the banks of what would come to be known as ‘Blood River’, where a small group of ‘Voortrekkers’ defeated a section of King Dingane’s Zulu army, and revenged the supposedly ‘treacherous’ murder of Piet Retief who became the first martyr of the ‘Volk’.⁴⁰ December 16th would later become a national holiday – ‘Dingane’s Day’ – first commemorated in 1864 by the Transvaal and the Orange Free State “as a day of universal thanksgiving... dedicated to the Lord”.⁴¹ According to the ‘Volk’ this was because the Lord had answered the Voortrekker’s prayer on the ‘Day of the Covenant’,⁴² by granting them a victory that, I repeat, demonstrated the “triumph of Christianity over heathendom”,⁴³ and “civilisation over barbarism.”⁴⁴

From a conventional historicist’s perspective, the ‘Battle of Blood River’ marks the culmination of the ‘Great Trek,’ in which colonial settlers despondent with the abolition of slavery, increased bureaucratic controls within the Cape Colony, and a lack of security on the Cape’s Eastern frontier,⁴⁵ struck out on “an odyssey of pre-ordained founding.” This, according to the above narrative, resulted in the establishment of “independent Boer republics in the north.”⁴⁶ Although now understood to be far more complicated than narratives popularised during the apartheid period, historians – particularly those aligned with Afrikaner Nationalist discourses – attributed the ‘Great Trek’ with a divine fate

³⁹ Sifiso M, Ndlovu, ‘Johannes Nkosi and the Communist Party of South Africa: Images of ‘Blood River’ and King Dingane in the Late 1920s-1930’, *History and Theory*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (Dec, 2000), pp. 111-132: 112.

⁴⁰ According to nationalist scholar Gustav Preller, Retief’s sacrifice for the ‘Volk’ made him the “only great Afrikaner of his time”. Ibid. 114.

⁴¹ The DRC was founded during the Great Trek. Therefore, this founding myth can be understood as being intrinsically linked with the establishment of specific biblical mythologies associated with the ‘Volk’ and the three sister churches of the DRC. Ibid. 112.

⁴² According to Afrikaner mythology, the ‘Day of the Covenant’ referred to the pledge made by Retief and his party, that if God granted the ‘Voortrekkers’ victory over King Dingane then they would build a Church in his honour and forever celebrate this day in the name of the Lord. Ibid. 112.

⁴³ Ibid. 112.

⁴⁴ Leslie Witz, *Apartheid’s Festival*: 45

⁴⁵ Andre du Toit and Hermann Giliomee, *Afrikaner Political Thought*: 17

⁴⁶ Leslie Witz, *Apartheid’s Festival*: 38.

that fulfilled God's plan for the 'Volk', and ultimately justified their position as the custodians of South Africa and ironically saviours of the 'black' majority.⁴⁷

Along with various other 'founding moments', such as the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in 1652, and the Anglo-Boer wars, the 'Battle of Blood River' and the 'Great Trek' came to serve as a cornerstone of Afrikaner heritage. This commemoration took the form of a series of elaborate ceremonies and festivals – including the 1938 Great Trek centenary celebrations and the 1952 Jan van Riebeeck tercentenary – that were incorporated into already existing biblical narratives. These not only worked to bind Afrikaners under a shared heritage, but also to inaugurate the new nation as a European and distinctly modern society, with an 'ancient' history binding the 'Volk' – as 'Volksplanters'⁴⁸ – to African land, and shining the 'light of civilisation and Christianity' at the tip of the 'dark continent'.⁴⁹

As Sifiso Ndlovu explains, conceptual spaces in history, such as the 'Battle of Blood River', are appropriated by different groups as a means to "legitimize... particular policies and practices by seeking precedence for them in the past".⁵⁰ In this sense we can understand history as a discipline which selects and arranges texts and historical events according to dominant epistemological frameworks, which are themselves determined by specific political, social, economic, cultural, and ideological agendas.⁵¹ As has been extensively discussed elsewhere, such agendas in turn produce distinct communities and collective memories,⁵² which are maintained through a variety of disciplines and technologies of power,⁵³ canonised by the church, the academy, the state, the archive, and the

⁴⁷ S. P. van der Walt, *The Christian Answer to the Communist Onslaught*, Paper presented at the National Conference on Communism, Pretoria, 1961 (Dutch Reformed Church Archives, Stellenbosch: B224): 8.

⁴⁸ Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's Festival*: 243.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 39.

⁵⁰ Sifiso M. Ndlovu, 'Johannes Nkosi and the Communist Party of South Africa: 131.

⁵¹ Jacques Depelchin, *Silences in African History. Between the Syndromes of Discovery and Abolition* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki Na Nyota, 2005): 2.

⁵² Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's Festival*: 32

⁵³ For a detailed discussion regarding the implementation of colonial technologies of power, designed to produce clinical and supposedly irrefutable scientific proof of hierarchies of race and class, see; Allen Sekula, 'The body and the archive'. For the mobilisation of the camera as a technology of power, See: John Tagg, 'Evidence, truth and order: Photographic records and the growth of the state' in Liz Wells (ed), *The Photography Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003): 257-260. Patricia Hayes, 'Northern exposures: The Photography of C.H.L. Hahn, Native Commissioner of Ovamboland, 1915 – 1946' in Wolfram Hartmann et al (eds), *The Colonising Camera* (Cape Town: University Press, 1998).

museum, and normalised through their continual reinforcement in the everyday. It is therefore here within this particular discourse, where we can begin to recognise the initial stirrings of processes of homogenisation, subjectivation, and identity formation amongst the ‘Volk’, which would work to define the limits of citizenry and the state, and underpin and maintain specific hierarchies of power.⁵⁴

Clearly the ‘Battle of Blood River’/*Impi yaseNcome* goes some way to demonstrating how supposedly static cultures⁵⁵ are provided with historical and mythological frameworks that rationalise their existence and status, normalise their behaviours, and place themselves within historiographical narratives that in turn produce clear dichotomies and hierarchies between those who are loved – the nation – and those who are feared – the Other.⁵⁶ In this sense heritage or tradition, which according to Friedrich Nietzsche, writing in 1878, is “above all for the purpose of maintaining a *community*, a people”, becomes representative of morality (good) as opposed to the immoral (evil), which goes against, or is outside of tradition.⁵⁷

In the case of the Afrikaner ‘nation’ and the canonisation of the ‘Battle of Blood River’, the community one could argue, is (at least in part) retrospectively legitimised by an imagined biblical parable that rationalises good fortune, suffering, and sin through the authoritative voice of the dominie. Within this particular discourse the ‘courageous’, ‘honourable’, god-fearing Afrikaner is canonised in the image of Piet Retief, and held up as the ideal and morally true ‘citizen’. In stark contrast to King Dingane who, true to the function of the colonial archive,⁵⁸ is demonised as a “treacherous, uncivilised barbarian... [and] an anti-white demagogue who was beyond redemption”.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's Festival*: 96.

⁵⁵ For a detailed discussion of the production of cultural identities during the colonial and apartheid periods and subsequently in the post-apartheid, see; Gary Minkley “‘A fragile inheritor’”.

⁵⁶ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*: 68.

⁵⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Aphorisms on Love and Hate* (London: Penguin, Random House, 2015): 23.

⁵⁸ Here we are thinking particularly of Foucault’s discursive analysis regarding the archive and Eurocentric systems of knowledge, which monopolise information and by doing so privilege a specific discourse, authorise scientific ‘truth’, and canonise Eurocentric epistemologies within institutionalised spaces such as the archive. See; Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse of Language* (New York: Random House, 1972). Premesh Lalu *The Deaths of Hintsa*. Achille Mbembe, ‘The power of the archive and its limits’, in Carolyn Hamilton et al (eds) *Reconfiguring the archive* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 2002), pp. 18-26. Anne Laura Stoler, ‘Colonial archives and the acts of governance’.

⁵⁹ Sifiso M, Ndlovu, ‘Johannes Nkosi and the Communist Party of South Africa’: 111.

As we have seen in the first chapter, this particular discourse echoes those surrounding the communist, the Eastern European Other, and the ‘black’ majority during apartheid. In similar ways, such discourses worked to define the limits of citizenry and the state, and produced cultural and ethnic boundaries between those who were considered ‘citizens’ of the nation, and those who were on the edges, excluded and demonised by the ideological and political mechanisms of the state. The following discussion will further unravel the ways in which such discourses transformed over time, and how the communist Other became a central part of the extension of Afrikaner ‘originary myths’.

THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH, CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM, AND THE COMMUNIST OTHER.

As discussed in the previous chapter, anti-communist propaganda largely began to emerge after the 1922 Rand Revolt. During this period it was intimately linked to anti-Semitic propaganda, which was heightened during the Second World War when the Afrikaner Grey Shirts and other Nazi-inspired organisations rose to prominence. According to Milton Shain, anti-Semitism began to dissipate within the public domain once the Afrikaner had attained a more secure position within South African society.⁶⁰ Conversely, after the formalisation of apartheid and the Suppression of Communism Act, anti-communist ideology began to intensify. Although it is clear that the means through which communism was demonised evolved over time, the stereotypical image of the communist (and the foreign ‘Jewish’ migrant) as dirty, immoral, treacherous, ungodly, and not-quite-human (or specifically in the case of the ‘white’ communist, not-quite-white) remained embedded in anti-communist discourse.

Throughout this research it has become increasingly clear that the DRC and other Christian-Nationalist organisations – both nationally and internationally – were particularly invested in the demonisation and de-legitimisation of communism and the communist Other. This was perhaps in

⁶⁰ In Shain’s own words: “In South Africa a new Afrikaner bourgeoisie – well educated, confident and more optimistic than their forebears – enjoyed the economic fruits of racist exploitation and political power... The very scaffolding that had underpinned their sense of inferiority was thus removed as they began to experience power and social mobility. A sense of competition with, and fear of, the Jew declined”: Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*: 151.

some part due to not-unfounded reports emerging from Soviet Russia regarding the persecution of Church and religion, and the seemingly anti-religious stance which was generated from Marxist philosophy itself. However, as I have argued elsewhere, this demonisation went far beyond traditional Cold War discourses and communism's apparent threat to organised religion. It was also intimately linked with processes of nation-building and the formation of different subjectivities that propped up the ideological and political basis of apartheid. In other words, the three 'sister churches' of the DRC functioned as key institutional spaces in which apartheid and 'Volk' ideologies were reinforced and maintained amongst certain sections of South Africa's population.

Before continuing it might be useful to unpack Louis Althusser's argument – highlighted in the introduction – surrounding Ideological-State-Apparatus and Repressive-State-Apparatus, in order to begin to come to terms with the role that the DRC may have played within this specific milieu.

Firstly, Ideological-State-Apparatus are, for Althusser, distinct from repressive forms of governance – such as the military, the courts, the police, and the prison system – which he refers to as Repressive-State-Apparatus. They are instead “specialised institutions” that primarily function through ideology.⁶¹ In addition, Repressive-State-Apparatus and Ideological-State-Apparatus are mutually dependent. Neither can function without the other. When considering overtly totalitarian states (or indeed seemingly benign states), it seems plausible to accept that “no ruling class [or cultural group] can hold state power over a long period without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in the state ideological apparatus”.⁶²

For Althusser, the school increasingly becomes the chief protagonist of state propaganda and functions as the “universally reigning ideology”.⁶³ Following this argument one might surmise that the Bantu Education Act – which was implemented at a similar time as the Suppression of Communism Act – for example, functioned as a key ideological tool during the apartheid period. Indeed, it was employed to produce a specific ideological, political, and social function which aimed to reinforce

⁶¹ Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*: 143.

⁶² *Ibid.* 146.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 156.

apartheid hierarchies and the imposed superiority of the 'white' minority. In this context however, it is important to distinguish between different ideological apparatus and their effects. In other words, this process, particularly in an apartheid context, might have been more complicated than Althusser suggests. For example, many social institutions and programmes such as the Bantu Education Act were immediately rejected by many of those classified as 'black'. This suggests that what Althusser describes as Ideological-State-Apparatus are not always effective and all powerful. Within this particular milieu one could argue that apartheid's Repressive-State-Apparatus were more important. They were – in the absence of effective Ideological-State-Apparatus which, contrary to Althusser's argument, *were*, in the case of the 'black' majority, repressive – increasingly called upon to enforce apartheid's repressive policies. Conversely, it seems that more benign forms of ideology, functioning within and upon the 'white' minority, were more effective, working as an alibi that allowed many to justify their support for the apartheid project and in the process disavow the true fetish of apartheid.⁶⁴

As previously mentioned, Althusser considered the school to be the chief protagonist of ideology. However, he also rightly suggests that all Ideological-State-Apparatus derive from the church, which used to fulfil multiple roles, particularly in Europe. Althusser wrote the following about the role of the Church – or the 'Christian Religious Ideology' – in Western society. It was, for him, intrinsically linked to the interpolation of subjects and the subject's necessary interpolation as subject. It worked as a mirror-image that produced subjects in the vision of the Subject par excellence – God – which, in an Afrikaans context, was of course mediated through the DRC:

The Christian religious ideology says something like this:

It says: I address myself to you, a human individual called Peter... in order to tell you that God exists and that you are answerable to Him. It adds: God addresses himself to you through my voice (Scripture having collected the word of God, Tradition having transmitted it...) It says: this is who you are: you are Peter! This is your origin, you were created by God

⁶⁴ In *Violence*, Slavoj Žižek discusses communist support for Soviet Russia after their atrocities had been revealed, in terms of what Lacan would refer to as 'fetishistic disavowal' – the means through which different groups conveniently forget atrocities in order to prop up and legitimise particular ideologies, or support for one or another repressive form of government. Critically Žižek suggests that this is the means through which all ethical and political stances are constituted. Along this vein he asks: "What if... such a blindness, such a violent exclusionary gesture of refusing to see, such a disavowal of reality, such a fetishistic attitude of 'I know very well that things are horrible in the Soviet Union, but I believe none the less in Soviet socialism' is the innermost constituent of every ethical stance".

for all eternity... this is your place in the world! This is what you must do! By these means, if you observe the 'law of love' you will be saved, you, Peter, and will become part of the Glorious Body of Christ! Etc...

God thus defines himself as the Subject *par excellence*, he who is through himself and for himself... and he who interpolates his subject, the individual subjected to him by his very interpolation...

God is thus the Subject, and Moses and the innumerable subjects of God's people, the Subjects' interlocutors-interpolates: his *mirrors* his *reflections*. Were not men made in the image of God?...

Those who have recognized God, and have recognized themselves in Him, will be saved...⁶⁵

Althusser goes on to conclude:

The duplicate mirror-structure of ideology ensures simultaneously:

1. the interpolation of 'individuals' as subjects;
2. their subjection to the Subject;
3. the mutual recognition of subjects and Subject, the subjects' recognition of each other, and finally the subject's recognition of himself;
4. the absolute guarantee that everything really is so, and that on condition that the subjects recognize what they are and behave accordingly, everything will be alright: '*Amen – So be it*'.⁶⁶

Here then lies the essential role of the Church during apartheid. Through a process of interpolation (God or the Dominie naming his subjects) and self-subjection as the subjects of God, the 'good Christian' mirrors the Subject *par excellence*, who – according to this discourse – on earth is Himself reflected in the Dominie and his scripture. If one were to accept that one is the subject of God, and one were to accept the love of God, then one must also accept the teachings of the Church. In our specific but not wholly removed context, one must in turn accept that the Afrikaner, and more generally the European, is racially, ethnically, and culturally distinct from the 'African', that God, through his divine will has led the 'Volk' to the New Jerusalem, free from foreign influence and corruption. Importantly, once one accepts all of the above, and gives his or her love to God and to the people of God – the 'Volk' – then one must also accept that they can do nothing but love, work, sacrifice and if necessary (as Malan suggested previously) kill and die for the 'nation' and for God.

Conversely, anyone beyond the 'nation' and anyone beyond the DRC, is interpolated as outside, as an enemy, an Other, and fundamentally distinct from the 'chosen people'. As we saw previously, in the

⁶⁵ Ibid. 177-180.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 180-181.

case of the 'Battle of Blood River' / *Impi YaseNcome*, the 'black' Other is representative of the imagined notion of the treacherous, godless King Dingane. Whereas the 'Volk' are embodied in the Christian martyr, Piet Retief, the one who was, according to Afrikaans mythology, willing to sacrifice his life for the 'nation' and for God.⁶⁷ As has been highlighted elsewhere within this mini-thesis, anti-communist propaganda reverberating from the DRC and elsewhere was based upon a similar desire and necessity to demonise the communist as not-quite-human, and the devil incarnate. The 'white' communist stereotype, which signified the antithetical 'white' Other, became the betrayer of the 'Volk'. As van der Walt implies, they were the allegorical signifier of Judas, the one who betrayed Christ.⁶⁸

We will now turn our attention to publications produced by the 'three sister' churches of the DRC and other Christian-Nationalist organisations during the 1960s. Considering the final chapter's focus on Bram Fischer and the 1960s, I will, as previously highlighted, focus on the same period in the remainder of this chapter. Again, this is not to suggest that anti-communist propaganda remained unchanged throughout the apartheid period. Some of the transformations within this particular discourse have already been highlighted. However, the following discussion will allow us to focus more closely on the 1960s, a period during which South Africa left the Commonwealth and subsequently became more isolated from the outside world and possibly, one could argue, more distrustful of foreign influence.

THE CHRISTIAN-NATIONALIST CRUSADE AGAINST COMMUNISM.

The protection of the Church seemed to be one of the chief motivations for a range of anti-communist organisations (both nationally and internationally) during the 1960s. As seen in the introduction, ANTIKOM, formed in 1946 but still active and influential in the 1960s, simultaneously aimed to fight communism, promote Christian-Nationalism within the 'white' trade unions, 'educate' the 'black'

⁶⁷ The above discussion is not to suggest that all Afrikaners were dogmatically and unquestionably committed to the DRC, the NP, or apartheid, but it does begin to point toward the ways in which faith in God and Church *might* have worked during the apartheid period.

⁶⁸ S. P. van der Walt, *The Christian Answer to the Communist Onslaught*: 14.

majority, and counter communist propaganda. ANTIKOM was directly supported and funded by the DRC, and as a result it had some of the most prominent religious (as well as political) ‘gatekeepers’ within its organisations.⁶⁹

ANTIKOM focused on ‘educational’ seminars and publications, which were circulated amongst the DRC dioceses. Above all it saw itself as providing a valuable ‘education’ for those within the ‘white working class’ and the ‘black’ majority who supposedly being less aware of the ‘perils’ of communism, might be seduced by the rhetoric preached by its ‘fanatics’. Essentially, ANTIKOM – like the Police Commissioner in chapter one who called for “effective counter propaganda” – believed that if the ‘truth’ of communism was exposed, then all South Africans would ultimately come to understand the benevolence of apartheid and its leaders. S. P. van der Walt – principal of the Theological College in Potchefstroom – at a 1961 ANTIKOM conference on communism in Pretoria, forwarded a similar viewpoint.⁷⁰ He suggested that it was South Africa and the West’s responsibility (at this conference van der Walt was addressing an international audience of anti-communist delegates) to guide the ‘black’ majority in particular away from communism, which had according to him, taken root across the African continent. This was, according to him, because independent African leaders were ‘useful idiots’, and too naive to recognise the dangers of Soviet Russia and Maoist China.⁷¹

At the 1964 ANTIKOM conference A. M. Schoor again forwarded a similar argument. This goes some way to demonstrating the cohesive and uniform way in which communism was represented during this period:

I am afraid many South African innocents and useful idiots fail to see the subtle distinction [between the legitimate exchange or clash of ideas and the subtle technique of agitation, or subversion]. I am afraid even more African leaders on our Continent are going to fall prey to this delusion which they themselves have fostered. Starry-eyed many, here and elsewhere in Africa, are beguiled by the bewitching liberation ideas fostered by the Communist agitators... and lured by the Chinese guerrilla technique to achieve it.

⁶⁹ Wessel Visser, ‘Afrikaner anti-communist history production in South African historiography’: 311.

⁷⁰ S. P. van der Walt, *The Christian Answer to the Communist Onslaught*.

⁷¹ Ibid.

He goes on to proclaim:

Our own public opinion is dangerously ill-informed about the theory and practice of communism... clear thinking and positive action [apartheid]... are smeared with labels wholly irrelevant and unmerited... We must positively and vigorously demonstrate to them the fallacies of the communist theory and practice and its cancerous by-products in Africa today.⁷²

On an international level the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade (whose publications were in circulation in South Africa during apartheid) based in the United States, was driven by a desire to discredit communism as, in the words of Fred Schwarz, a false 'religion of promise'. In *The Heart and Mind of Communism*, Schwarz intimately links Christianity with "all absolute values associated with human life", and argues that all moral law comes from the Church, that to be beyond the Church is to be beyond morality and plunged into chaos. For Schwarz the communist and atheism were beyond redemption. They were representative of the godless, immoral, apostate. As with Francis Fukuyama's 'End of History' thesis, Christianity and the 'moral law' it instilled was the only means through which order is maintained and a higher form of spirit and political stability is achieved.⁷³

Communism without atheism is cancer without malignancy, a contradiction in terms. When communism rejects god it simultaneously rejects all supernatural moral law, all absolute criteria of truth and error. It abolishes heaven and hell and all absolute values associated with human life. Man is left in a battlefield where the laws are his own to make or break, where all codes of ethics and morality are relative, discretionary and subject to change. The criterion of moral value becomes objective success; the world becomes a pragmatists' dream.⁷⁴

Another organisation, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN) – who were ideologically aligned with other Christian-Nationalist organisations – were also active in apartheid South Africa in one form or another. On 28 January, 1958, apartheid's Minister of the Interior received a letter from Jaroslav Stetzko – 'former Prime Minister of the Ukraine'⁷⁵ – requesting that he be granted

⁷² A. M. Schoor *Brainwashing and Psychological Warfare*, paper presented at an International Conference on communism, Pretoria, 1964 (Dutch Reformed Church Archives, Stellenbosch: B2429): 4-8.

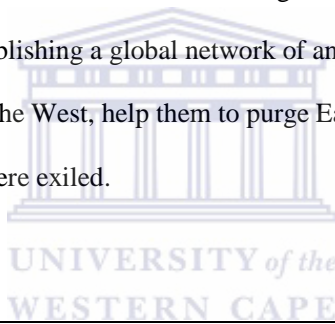
⁷³ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: 76.

⁷⁴ Fred Schwarz, *The Heart Mind and Soul of Communism* (California, Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, 1952): 12.

⁷⁵ Throughout the correspondence, Stetzko is referred to as if he were a concerned, respectable member of a legitimate anti-communist organisation. However, after further investigation it is clear that his past was far more sinister. Along with his leadership of the ABN, Stetzko – who had various aliases – was the trusted lieutenant of Stephen Bandera – gangster, assassin, and leader of the OUN/B (Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists), a group linked to ethnic cleansing of Jews and Poles during the Second World War. He (along with Bandera) was also a Nazi collaborator and self-declared Prime Minister of the Ukraine during the German occupation, a CIA

permission to enter South Africa, as President and representative of the ABN. According to Stetzko, his visit was of the utmost importance for the security of apartheid South Africa, the worldwide suppression of communism, and, in the words of South Africa's High Commissioner in London, T. E. Holloway; "the immunisation of our undeveloped non-European population against insidious Communist propaganda and infiltration".

After a series of correspondences between various government departments, Stetzko was granted permission to enter South Africa, on the condition that his visit was of a purely private nature, and did not require any official government support. Although the outcome of Stetzko's visit is unknown, it appears that he and other members of the ABN's 'leadership' – most of whom were deposed 'generals', 'princes', and 'prime ministers' of former sovereign states – were involved in a 'diplomatic' mission, intent on establishing a global network of anti-communist organisations, that would presumably, with the aid of the West, help them to purge Eastern Europe of the Soviets and regain the lands from which they were exiled.



'asset' and possible MI6 operative in the post-war years. He was also author of the anti-Semitic, *Two Revolutions*, in 1951. This text has become the guiding canon of contemporary neo-Nazi group, Svoboda (Freedom) party, in the Ukraine, who are one of the few remaining groups that "claim to be the heirs of Stephen Bandera". This brief résumé immediately invokes questions regarding Stetzko's continued and unchecked activity in the global theatre, as well as his insidious connection with both the Nazis, MI6, and the CIA. It also goes some way to confirming the West's corrupt and incongruous alliance with former Nazi collaborators against the Soviets, and points towards a global nexus of propaganda, espionage, and ideological suppression, which was employed as a means to stop the spread of the communism throughout the world. At the very least, collaboration with former Nazis, who were by this time no longer in power or a threat to the West, demonstrates the lengths to which the Western world were willing to go to in order to suppress and undermine the latest threat to Western Imperial dominance. Within the same collection at the National Archives in Pretoria, a series of anti-communist pamphlets, periodicals, and magazines, from various regions are assembled. Amongst the collection is a bimonthly journal, *Problems of Communism*, printed and produced in the U.S, and an 'informative' pamphlet, *Bolshevik Persecution of Religion and Church in Ukraine: 1917-1957*, printed in London by Ukrainian publishers. The presence of such material further attests to the global exchange and circulation of anti-communist propaganda during this period, and conceivably represents material that Mr Stetzko had sent to various officials, or possibly would have brought with him if and when he visited the country. Most significantly, the various sources open avenues of investigation into the various ways in which imagery of the communist was produced, circulated, and disseminated within and amongst various anti-communist aligned states. For a full account of the ABN and other organisations see: 'Anti-Communist Organisations' (BLO – 366 – PS17/193, National Archives, Pretoria). For a full analysis and discussion of Stetzko's war years, see: Richard Breitman and Norman J. W. Goda. *Hitler's Shadow: Nazi War Criminals, U.S. Intelligence, and the Cold War* (Michigan: University Press, 2010). In reference to the "heirs of Stephen Bandera", see Per Anders Rudling, 'The Return of the Ukrainian Far Right: The Case of VO Svoboda' in Ruth Wodak and John E. Richardson (eds), *Analysing Fascist Discourse: European Fascism in Talk and Text* (New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 228-255: 235.

As with Stetzko's narrative, which positioned him and his organisation as protectors of the Church and the West, anti-communist discourses in South Africa aimed to legitimise apartheid as a just, Christian cause, fighting against the evil communist Other. This narrative worked to both justify the implementation and the continuation of apartheid, and also worked as an alibi that would have allowed many to rationalise and come to terms with the apartheid state's inherently violent nature. Through this process the communist Other becomes the new enemy of the 'Volk', the one that might, if God's children are not vigilant, corrupt the innocent African and unbalance the fragile relationship between the 'white' settler and the 'black' majority. Again, it is important to stress that such propaganda and ideology would not necessarily have been universally accepted by those who associated as Afrikaans. However, it does point toward the ways in which the DRC and other organisations attempted to instil an inherent, in-the-blood aversion to communism and anything that deviated from apartheid and by association the Christian (read Western) world.

Importantly, the demonic Other is a necessary and intrinsic element of the Christian-nationalist ideology and the reinforcement of apartheid subjectivities. In the case of the 'Battle of Blood River' originary myth, Zulu King Dingane fulfilled this role. He had, unbeknownst to Piet Retief and his party, plotted to murder the Voortrekkers and expel them from 'their' land. As a result of this discourse the 'black' majority were depicted as 'childlike innocents', an Other who required protection and a paternal but stern father figure who could keep them from returning to pre-colonial paganism or from being indoctrinated by communism's 'false religion of hope'.

Within this imagined mythological milieu, the communist as antithesis to the Church and the Western world, and as godless deviant intent on destroying all that the 'Volk' held dear, became, on the one hand, the subject who could unbalance the tenuous and hard fought for relationship between settler society and the 'black' majority, and on the other, the object of fear and alibi that enabled many to justify their continued support of the apartheid project. Within this specific context it seems as if this subject, the communist (particularly the 'Volksverraaier') was fundamental to the extension of Afrikaner originary myths. It produced, within certain circles, an object of fear – a critical

precondition of Christian theology⁷⁶ – that instilled, reaffirmed, and extended the need to protect the ‘Volk’ and turn toward the object of love, the ‘nation’.

As Blaise Pascal suggests (when writing in defence of God) this discourse – the imaginary ‘realm of the fantastic’ – is often more powerful than other more, supposedly, ‘rational’ forms of reason. In his own words; “This is the dominant part of man, the mistress of error and falsity, and more deceptive because it is not always so”.⁷⁷ “It stamps the true and the false in the same die”, and it fills the gap which ‘reason’ and science can never fill.⁷⁸ But is this all it does? Was it (imagined biblical mythologies and anti-communist discourses) merely mobilised as a means to legitimise apartheid’s oppressive policies? And did it work as an alibi that allowed the apartheid ‘citizen’ to say “this is the way it must be”? I argue that at different times and in different degrees it did all of these things. Perhaps most importantly it enabled the apartheid state and its ‘citizens’ to rationalise and reinforce the imagined relationship between the ‘white’ minority and the ‘black’ majority. It reaffirmed the boundary between ‘black’ and ‘white’ by asserting that it is only the communist that could possibly incite violence against a system of segregation which was, according to the DRC, desired by God Himself.

Frantz Fanon may offer a means to further work through and depart from this complicated milieu. In *Black Skin White Mask*, he asserts that the metaphysical and psychological division between ‘white’ and ‘black’ “is a direct result of colonialist subjugation... . No one would dream of doubting that its major artery is fed from the heart of those various theories that have tried to prove that the Negro is a stage in the slow evolution of monkey into man.”⁷⁹ In other words, the ways in which subjects were produced in this instance was through discursive and often violent subjection inherent to colonialism and European civilisation. Or alternatively, through the mobilisation of colonial grammars of power that appropriated a wide range of arguments (Christian Nationalism as well as Social Darwinism,

⁷⁶ Jonathon Israel (ed) *Spinoza: Theological-Political Treatise* (Cambridge University Press, 2007): 5.

⁷⁷ Blaise Pascal, *Pascal's Pensees* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958): 60.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 61.

⁷⁹ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Mask*: 17.

Eugenics etc.) and sought to keep the 'black man in his place', whilst elevating the colonial settler to an unassailable position of authority.

Importantly, progress for Africans is seen in terms of emulating the colonialist. In the Francophone world (the one to which Fanon primarily wrote) Africans could only become 'modern' (or closer to the European) through the adoption and pursuit of *European* modernity, the rejection of African customs, religion, and language, and by mimicking the behaviours of European civilisation. It is important however to recognise that in an apartheid context this relationship worked differently. During this period the relationship between 'white' minority and the 'black' majority was designed to be one of separate and uneven development. Living in a tiered system, people classified in a particular way were banned from moving across and between segregated social, political, and economic circles. Having said this, there were still particular cultural indicators such as Christianity which were used to separate the 'Good African' from the antithetical, 'primitive' Other.

Regardless of the particular nuances within different systems of governance, modernisation and progress were seen to be on the European's terms. The idea of communism, or the threat that it posed, disrupted or had the potential to disrupt this metaphysical hierarchy. In one of his more sympathetic expositions of communism Fanon asserts: "When a negro talks of Marx, the first reaction is always the same: 'we have brought you up to our level and now you turn against your benefactors. Ingrates! Obviously nothing can be expected from you'"⁸⁰ In doing so they reject the church (as Vubela and Tahuntene in the first chapter do under different terms), the yardstick through which African civility is measured, and open themselves up to the 'dangers' of revolt and revolution. Therefore, for their own good they must be preserved and protected in their natural status – that is, according to dominant colonial epistemologies of the day, somewhere between man and animal, in perpetual backwardness, and necessarily under the lasting tutelage of the Afrikaner.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 35.

During this critical moment I argue that communism served as what Stiegler refers to as a ‘counter tendency’ – a discourse, a grammar, and object of fear that disrupted and challenged dominant epistemologies.⁸¹ In the interests and eternal pursuit of the completion of the colonial spirit – which in many ways was intimately linked to Christian-nationalist values – the communist had to be contained and sublimated to apartheid power, and its discourse. And yet, due to its tendency to slip between strict racialised categories, communism could not initially be sublimated by apartheid racism alone. In other words, the ‘white’ communist stereotype could not be hierarchised by apartheid’s ontology, and therefore could not be ‘rationalised’ completely by its discourse.

It is here when the DRC and other Afrikaner mythological frameworks becomes particularly important. They prop up apartheid ideologies by legitimising them through the word of God. They produce an additional framework that helps those – hovering between hope and fear⁸² – to rationalise and come to terms with an oppressive and inherently violent system of governance which is enacted and perpetuated in their name. It says: believe in the word of God and believe in the Church. This is God’s divine will, and the communist devil – “the negation of everything Afrikanerdom has stood for and fought for, suffered and died for” – is here to destroy the New Jerusalem and everything the ‘Volk’ hold dear.

Ultimately, the communist had to be known and contained, a role which the expert – whether from within government or the DRC – always already fulfilled. In this sense, the expert brings the communist back into the realms of Western grammars (that is primarily a racialising grammar) subjecting him or her to processes of grammatical subjugation. However, although one might argue this is achieved to some degree, the communist remains and acts as *spectre* (or revenant), haunting the apartheid project, the DRC, and the capitalist state, always returning – or invested with the potential to

⁸¹ Bernard Stiegler, *Symbolic Misery, Volume One*: 53.

⁸² Jonathon Israel (ed) *Spinoza: Theological-Political Treatise*: 4.

return – in different forms and at different moments.⁸³ This complex process is what I want to begin to unravel in the following chapter.



⁸³ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: 11.

CHAPTER 3

THE 'ROOI GEVAAR' AND BRAM FISCHER: COMMUNIST SPECTRES AND 'VOLKSVERRAAIERS'.

Marxism is not something evil or violent or subversive. It is true that propaganda against it (the Communist Party in South Africa) has in recent times been unbridled... It is also true that for sixteen years now its principles have been outlawed, and that prejudiced propaganda has made it almost impossible for our people to give unbiased thought to those principles which most closely affect their future. They do not even study what the people they choose to look upon as enemies, are thinking. In fact they have no idea what socialism means and the tragic stage has been reached where the word 'communism' evokes nothing but unthinking and irrational hatred... I am charged with performing acts calculated to further the objects of communism, to wit, the establishment in South Africa of a despotic system of government based on the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a gross misstatement of my aims and those of my Party. We have never aimed at a despotic system of government.¹

The imagined notion of the 'white' communist as antithesis to the 'Volk', became central for the production and normalisation of distinct subjectivities during the apartheid period. Falling back on Hall, this process – classifying and simplifying the terms of difference – may be a fundamental aspect of human culture that necessarily maintains order and control. Indeed for Hall it is one of the foundational 'cultural impulses' of society.² In this chapter I will turn our attention to an Afrikaner *and* a communist, an individual who threatened to unravel anti-communist ideologies, unsettle dominant notions of Afrikanerdom, and I argue, an individual who, for a time, became a spectre, a metaphysical figure who haunted the apartheid state from within. Perhaps within this specific rubric and during the specific time of our enquiry, this person was the chief dilemma and unwanted interlocutor, the figure who came to embody the 'Rooi Gevaar', and a figure who, one could argue, continues to haunt the 'Volk' in the contemporary. As already highlighted in the previous chapter this figure is Bram Fischer.

I will begin this chapter by touching upon and problematising some of the ways in which biographies are produced in South Africa. This will lead to a discussion regarding the different interpretations of

¹ Bram Fischer in: Mary Benson (ed) *The Sun Will Rise*: 39-41.

² Stuart Hall, *Race: The Floating Signifier* (film).

Fischer's life, and will specifically focus on how mythologies surrounding Fischer were constructed by the apartheid state. Three critical sources will be used within this chapter. The first being Bram Fischer's statement from the Dock, which has come to serve as a lasting legacy of Fischer's politics, morals, and commitment to the anti-apartheid struggle. Whereas the latter two – key anti-communist documents written by Gerard Ludi and Henry R. Pike – will serve as sources which will help to establish how and why mythologies surrounding Fischer, and more generally the communist, were so important to the apartheid state and 'white' settler society.

Considering the extensive body of work surrounding Fischer's biography, I will spend little time recounting his life-history. Instead I will focus on two critical events during which anti-communist mythologies surrounding Fischer were produced and proliferated within the public domain. The first is the Fischer trial, through which the apartheid state attempted to denigrate his morals and expose his communist and 'terrorist' affiliations. By contrast, the second is the period in which Fischer went underground, when rumour and myth lingered in the public domain and, one could argue, Fischer for a time became a ghost, a spectral figure inhabiting the underbelly of 'white' suburban South Africa. Throughout this discussion I will highlight the ways in which the lives of biographical 'heroes' are inextricably linked with the mythological and the quasi-theological – involving prophecy, sacrifice, and martyrdom – and will begin to formulate an argument surrounding Jacques Derrida's notion of the Spectre.³

THE MYTHOLOGISATION OF BRAM FISCHER: BIOGRAPHICAL PRODUCTION AND THE MESSIANIC.

The Eulogy:

*Man's dearest possession is life. It is given to him but once, and he must live it so as to feel no torturing regrets for wasted years, never know the burning shame of a mean and petty past; so live that, dying, he might say: all my life, all my strength were given to the finest cause in all the world – the fight for the Liberation of Mankind.*⁴

³ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*.

⁴ The above passage comes from Nicolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Was Tempered*, a 1936 Soviet novel based in Russia during the Second World War. It was recited by Denis Goldberg at the 2014 Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture at Rhodes House, Oxford University. Goldberg suggested that although written for a fallen Soviet

The Lament:

Imagine if Bram had lived. He'd have been old by now but we would have had years of his wisdom and of his guidance.⁵

The Prophecy:

All this bodes ill for our future. It [apartheid] has bred a deep-rooted hatred for Afrikaners, for our language, our political and racial outlook amongst all non-whites... It is rapidly destroying... all belief in future co-operation with Afrikaners. To remove this barrier will demand all the wisdom, leadership and influence of those Congress leaders now sentenced and imprisoned for their political beliefs.⁶

In sharp contrast to the 'father of apartheid' – and perhaps now it will become clear as to why I chose to focus on Malan in the previous chapter – Bram Fischer is predominantly remembered as a hero, a saint of the struggle, a communist, and an Afrikaner who abandoned the call of the 'Volk' and eventually many of his privileges as a 'white' South African, in order to take up what he saw as a morally just struggle against apartheid. His legacy has now become part of post-1994 narratives of the 'triumph of the human spirit over adversity', and has subsequently been placed amongst the pantheon of heroes and 'Great Men' who, along with Nelson Mandela, contributed to the downfall of apartheid.⁷

As with many struggle heroes Fischer's own life appears to be inextricably linked with major events and turning points of the anti-apartheid struggle. Fischer joined the CPSA sometime in the late 1930s and early 1940s and was elected to the SACP Central Committee in 1945.⁸ He is suspected to have

soldier, it could have just as easily have been a eulogy for Bram Fischer. Denis Goldberg in 'Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2014 by Professor Goldberg, February 2014'.

⁵ Nadine Gordimer in *Love, Communism, Revolution and Rivonia: Bram Fischer's Story* (Film), Courtesy of Shoot the Breeze Productions.

⁶ Bram Fischer in: Mary Benson (ed), *The Sun Will Rise*: 45. An extract taken from Stephen Clingman's *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary* reveals a similar prediction for the future: "[A] peaceful transition could only be brought about if the government agreed to negotiate with all sections of the people, 'in particular, with the non-white leaders at present gaoled on Robben Island or in exile.'" This extract was from a document originally written by Bram whilst on trial. According to Clingman, it was meant to be published abroad after his sentencing. Stephen Clingman, *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary*: 323.

⁷ Ciraj Rassool, *The Individual, Auto/biography and History in South Africa*: 5.

⁸ 'SACP statement on Honorary Doctorate Award to Bram Fischer'. <http://www.sacp.org.za/main.php?ID=2446> (Accessed: 19/09/2016).

been – although he denied it during his trial⁹ – involved, somewhat reluctantly, in the formulation of MK and possibly contributed to the creation of its manifesto in 1961.¹⁰ Most significantly, he was part of the Defence team in the Treason and Rivonia trials, and is credited with saving the lives of Mandela and others during the latter – the significance of which is felt and repeatedly invoked when considering Mandela’s role during the transition to democracy and as President of South Africa.¹¹ In this sense, Fischer and Mandela’s lives appear to be inextricably linked. They contributed to each other’s legacies, and point toward what Ciraj Rassool describes as the “biographical relations” of different individuals, who at least on the surface, seem to have inevitably and naturally converged on the same events to *make* and alter the course of history.¹²

A common feature of conventional biographical narratives is the existence of what Ruth Rice, daughter of Bram, recently described as ‘Damascus moments’.¹³ For Fischer this was the famous handshake, his wife Molly’s tragic death, and moments in which key decisions were made, such as returning from England to stand trial and later skipping bail to go underground.¹⁴ Along with the

⁹ Bram Fischer in Mary Benson (ed), *The Sun Will Rise*: 47.

¹⁰ George Bizos in ‘Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2011 delivered by Mr George Bizos SC’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsY9iIherw0> (Accessed 04/09/2016). Stephen Clingman, *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary*: 259.

¹¹ Denis Goldberg in ‘Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2014 by Professor Goldberg, February 2014’.

¹² Ciraj Rassool, ‘Rethinking Documentary History and South African Political Biography’: 46.

¹³ Informal interview with Ruth Rice, 18/08/2016, Noordhoek, and communications via email.

¹⁴ It is important to note that these ‘Damascus moments’ are not only constructed by biographers and historians but also by the individuals themselves. For example, Fischer himself stated that a handshake with a ‘black’ man – during which Fischer admits he felt revulsion – altered his own thinking and resulted in his commitment to the SACP and the anti-apartheid struggle. This particular moment was and is repeatedly referred to by Bram and others, perhaps most notably whilst Fischer was on trial, explaining in a prepared statement why he had joined the Communist Party. The following is an abridged account of his statement with regards to this issue: “Like many young Afrikaners I grew up on a farm. Between the ages of eight and twelve my daily companions were two young Africans of my own age... We roamed the farm together, we hunted and played together, we modeled clay oxen and swam. And never can I remember that the colour of our skins affected our fun, or our quarrels or our close friendship in any way”. Later in his speech he goes onto discuss the moment which altered the course of his life: “I arrived for my first meeting [Bloemfontein Joint Council of Europeans and Africans] with other newcomers. I found myself being introduced to leading members of the African community. I found I had to shake hands with them. This, I found required an enormous effort of will on my part. Could I really, as a white adult touch the hand of a black adult in friendship? That night I spent many hours in thought trying to account for my strange revulsion when I remembered that I never had any such feelings towards my boyhood friends. What became abundantly clear was that it was I and not the black man who had changed”. The statement again points toward the ways in which Afrikaner’s socio-political environment shaped the ways in which racist ideologies and hierarchies of power may have infiltrated the psyche of the ‘Volk’. What is more, it may demonstrate the ways in which communism, as well as the ‘black’ majority became a symbol of revulsion, superstition and fear within the Afrikaans community. For a full account of Bram Fischer’s statement in the Dock, see: Mary Benson (ed), *The Sun Will Rise*: 35-50.

prophecy, the lament, and the eulogy – all of which, I argue, have become key tropes through which to produce biographies¹⁵ – these ‘Damascus Moments’ create the impression of a saintly figure, an individual on a journey of discovery, awakening, and rebirth.

In Fischer’s case, one could argue that he was considered a saint – particularly amongst his closest friends and comrades – during the apartheid period, and most notably whilst incarcerated in Pretoria Central Jail with other ‘white’, often younger political prisoners.¹⁶ It is perhaps in death that the messianic becomes increasingly important however. Here it speaks through key figures in history who serve as symbolic, moral, national, political or ideological pointers and parables in the contemporary.¹⁷ The messianic is the product of our own desires, motivations, and sometimes our nation-building projects, and works, one might argue, in opposition to the spectre, which above all has haunting qualities. Heroes become quasi-messianic through the specific meaning and symbolism we transfer to them. They are imbued with our hopes, our laments, and our fears for the future. However, the individual is far more complicated than such narratives might suggest. They are full of contradiction, frailty, and contestation. To unravel the messianic and the ways in which different mythologies are produced around specific individuals is, amongst other things, to attend to these contradictions.

¹⁵ Individuals are often conjured in the present to speak to and for the contemporary. In a recent interview with Ruth Rice, daughter of Bram Fischer, I asked what she thought Bram would say about South Africa today. She unsurprisingly stated that everyone asks this particular question, as if we need spectres and ghosts to speak and make judgement on our lives and the way we lead them. Fischer himself understood the importance of the prophet in history. During his now familiar statement in the Dock he invoked an allegorical lesson from one of the ‘great Afrikaner leaders’, Paul Kruger, presumably to instil a sense of tradition and moral obligation in his Afrikaner prosecutors, but also, one might argue, as a means to conjure and call upon the dead in judgement of the living. Fischer’s statement was read as follows: “In prophetic words, in February 1881, one of the great Afrikaner leaders addressed the President and Volksraad of the Orange Free State... ‘Met vertrouwen leggen wy onze zaak open voor de geheele wereld. Het zy wy overwinnen, het zy wy sterven: de Vryheid zal in Afrika ryzen als de zon uit de moren wolken [With confidence we lay our case before the whole world. Whether we win or die, freedom will rise in Africa, like the sun from the morning clouds].” Ibid. 41-50.

¹⁶ In the 2014 Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture at Rhodes House, Oxford University, Denis Goldberg described Fischer as... Denis Goldberg in ‘Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2014 by Professor Goldberg, February 2014’.

¹⁷ In this regard, Fischer’s political legacy and importance within the SACP and the anti-apartheid movement is the most obvious. However, he has become an important figure for a diverse community since his death. Notable literary works which have added to his mythological status include Nadine Gordimer’s *Burger’s Daughter*, a part-fictional novel based upon Fischer’s daughter Ilse after Bram’s imprisonment and death, and Mary Benson’s *At the Still Point* and Andre Brink’s *Rumours of Rain*, both of which, include characters based upon Fischer. See: Nadine Gordimer, *Burger’s Daughter* (London: Jonathon Cape, 1979). Mary Benson, *At the Still Point* (Boston: Gambit, 1969). Andre Brink, *Rumours of Rain* (London: Howard and Wyntham, 1979).

In the 2015 Bram Fischer memorial lecture at Rhodes House, Oxford University, Justice Edwin Cameron reminded us of some of these contradictions and complications, as well as the dangers of oversimplifying the lives of struggle heroes.¹⁸ For example, Fischer was a committed communist, but also protected, in his capacity as an advocate and member of the Johannesburg Bar, the interests of mining magnates on the Witwatersrand.¹⁹ The Fischer house was also maintained by ‘black’ servants, which must have served as a biting reminder of the privileges that the Fischers enjoyed compared to many of their comrades and compatriots.²⁰

At the same annual lecture series – this time in 2014 – Denis Goldberg highlighted some of the more personal nuances of the political activist and respected advocate. By noting his love for classical music, composition and ‘traditional’ African rhythms, as opposed to improvisations in modern Jazz and the “skat-singing of Ella Fitzgerald”, which he thought was “meaningless, childish noise”, Goldberg revealed a conservatism and traditionalism which was perhaps of Bram’s time, but I would argue nevertheless highlights instances where a specific conservatism remains long after moments of ‘enlightenment’.²¹ Here then was an individual naturally full of contradiction; a ‘conservative’ in some respects, and an ‘enlightened’ communist. An Afrikaner (inter)nationalist and a ‘Volksverraair’, and a respected advocate who was eventually – though unjustifiably – debarred after his flight underground. He was also a ‘terrorist’ in the eyes of the apartheid state, and a ‘freedom fighter’ who paradoxically, like Albert Luthuli, only reluctantly backed the armed struggle.

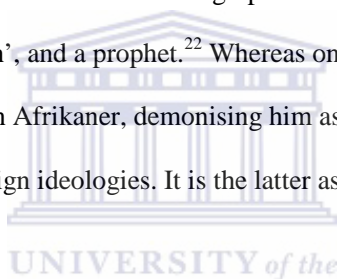
¹⁸ In the above lecture, Cameron used these complications to question whether Bram’s decision to go underground was a moral one, arguing that Fischer lived a life of compromise, a life of “moral pliability”. Cameron suggested that by going underground to skip trial Fischer forsook the legal code he had previously worked for. The controversy and contestations surrounding this particular issue were highlighted in the lecture’s Q and A, in which several members of the audience repeatedly challenged Cameron on this point. Edwin Cameron in ‘Justice Edwin Cameron delivering the Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2015 at Rhodes House’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aK3aIN9N4Io> (Accessed 31/08/2016). Perhaps the most thorough and productive critique of biographical production in South Africa comes from Ciraj Rassool’s PhD thesis on I.B. Tabata. For a full account of Rassool’s critique see: Ciraj Rassool, *The individual, Auto/biography and History in South Africa*.

¹⁹ Edwin Cameron in ‘Justice Edwin Cameron delivering the Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2015 at Rhodes House’.

²⁰ Dr Donald Markwell, introductory lecture for George Bizos 2014, Rhodes House, Oxford University. ‘Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2011 delivered by Mr George Bizos SC’.

²¹ Denis Goldberg in ‘Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2014 by Professor Goldberg, February 2014’.

The greatest battle over Fischer's legacy has been a moral one. As with other histories and biographies, his life has been simplified within the public domain, and, in Fischer's instance, polarised between two antithetical historical and political traditions. One might argue that each narrative settles on the establishment and legitimisation or de-legitimisation of the man. With the exception of Clingman's biography, there has been little attention paid (this includes political organisations such as the SACP and the ANC, and anti-communist propaganda of the apartheid state) to the more complicated aspects of Fischer's character or life. Perhaps – particularly in the latter's case – the complications and contradictions that I speak of, which highlight the 'other side' of the individual, would too easily disrupt these totalising narratives. Having said this, Fischer has either been memorialised as a hero of the anti-apartheid struggle, or been denigrated by the apartheid state. On the one hand, his friends, comrades and various biographers refer to him as a saint, the 'white Mandela', a moral, 'wise white man', and a prophet.²² Whereas on the other, his detractors and enemies undermined his status as an Afrikaner, demonising him as an immoral communist, who was ultimately turned in Europe by foreign ideologies. It is the latter aspect that we will attend to here.



ANTI-COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA AND THE MYTHOLOGISATION OF BRAM FISCHER.

Of course, there are always two or more sides to a story. In the eyes of the apartheid state Fischer was the ultimate 'Volksverraair', a traitor and an unwanted embarrassment, whose mere presence and actions shook dominant notions of Afrikaner identity. Indeed, in the contemporary he remains a controversial figure for some Afrikaners who, in 2004, violently protested against his honorary doctorate at the University of Stellenbosch. At this time, campaigner Yvonne Malan, who was attacked and received death threats for her support and nomination of Fischer's honorary doctorate, argued in an interview:

It's got absolutely nothing to do with his communism. I think he makes them very deeply uncomfortable and not because of the Rooi Gevaar or anything else. I think it's because he could have very easily have had a very comfortable life. He could have said; "no, I'll change the system from within." But he didn't, he led a very different life to them. He was brave. He gave

²² For a description of Fischer as a 'wise white man' see: Denis Goldberg in 'Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture 2014 by Professor Goldberg, February 2014'.

up everything for a future he didn't even see himself, and he never stopped believing in that future. What does it say about them? They did nothing. He makes them feel embarrassed. So they have to demonise him so they can't be measured against him.²³

There are several pertinent points in the above extract, some of which we will return to in the latter stages of this mini-thesis. For now it is worth noting that Fischer, in life, represented an embarrassment, an uncomfortable reminder for the apartheid state and its 'citizens'. Remember that Fischer was an Afrikaner from a prestigious and respected family, who, in the eyes of Afrikaner nationalists, forsook the 'Volk' by taking up the struggle against apartheid. Significantly, Clingman suggests that the state's decision to let Bram leave South Africa whilst on trial in 1963 may have been, amongst other things, because they "wanted him out of the picture, sidelined in futility forever". Indeed, if he had remained in England, it would have been much easier for the apartheid state to label him a coward – another stereotypically non-Afrikaner trait.²⁴

According to dominant narratives, after years of working tirelessly both as an advocate and as a member of the SACP, Fischer's life and that of the Party began to unravel. Years of repression from the state meant that most anti-apartheid activists from this particular generation, were, by the mid-1960s, either in exile or incarcerated. Shortly after the Rivonia Trial, Fischer became a prime target of the apartheid state. This coincided with his wife Molly's tragic death in a car accident, and is often referred to as the dark period in his life – a philosophical and psychological trial for both Fischer and the Party. After he and eleven others were arrested under the Suppression of Communism Act, Fischer and his co-accused were put on trial in what would come to be known as the Fischer Trial.²⁵ During its initial proceedings, Fischer requested to leave the country in order to attend a case in London. He was duly granted bail, and left for England only to return, labelled – to Henry Pike's displeasure – by the national press as a man "who lived by a code of honour".²⁶ Back in court, Fischer and his co-accused were faced with damning evidence from Petrus Beylveld (a former member of the Central

²³ Yvonne Malan in *Love, Communism, Revolution and Rivonia: Bram Fischer's Story* (Film).

²⁴ Stephen Clingman, *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary*: 310.

²⁵ Fischer's co-accused were: Eli Weinberg, Jean Middleton, Ann Nicholson, Paul Trewhela, Florence Duncan, Norman Levy, Esther Barsel, Hymie Barsel, Sylvia Neame, Dr Costa Gazides, and Pixie Benjamin. *Ibid.* 307.

²⁶ Henry R. Pike *A History of Communism in South Africa*: 421.

Committee) and, to a lesser extent, Gerard Ludi (an undercover agent who had infiltrated the Party) to whom we will now turn our attention.²⁷ Shortly after this Fischer decided to skip bail and go underground on the evening of 25 November, 1965.

GERARD LUDI: UNDERCOVER AGENT, ANTI-COMMUNIST EXPERT, AND SELF-PROCLAIMED HERO OF APARTHEID.

According to Ludi he joined the Police Force after realising that communism was “the biggest single threat to democracy and freedom in South Africa.”²⁸ In his autobiography, *Operation Q-018*, he paints a vivid picture of Soviet plots and communist conspiracies, and depicts himself as a hero, the man who provided testimony that led to the life sentence of Fischer.²⁹ For Ludi communists were everywhere, they controlled the ANC, the Congress of Democrats (COD), the PAC,³⁰ Amnesty International,³¹ and virtually all other anti-apartheid organisations.³² They were always the silent, clandestine figure, orchestrating operations from behind the scenes and turning the ‘black’ majority and the “white lunatic fringe of the left”, into a “vengeful menace”.³³ In *Operation Q-018*, communists were the “cunning revolutionary”, the “arch conspirator” with a “pathological hatred for mankind”,³⁴ who managed to convince, in the words of Ludi, the ‘innocent black’ majority – for

²⁷ There are differing accounts of the above revelations. On the one hand, Henry Pike, suggests that Fischer and his co-accused were in shock to find that the Security Police had outmanoeuvred them and infiltrated the Party. Whereas on the other, Clingman suggests that Fischer was well aware of Beyleveld’s cooperation with the Police and had been in contact with him throughout his incarceration. Ibid. 318.

²⁸ Gerard Ludi, *Operation Q-018* (Cape Town: Nasionale Boekhandel, 1969): 14.

²⁹ Ibid. This statement can be found in the back cover blurb of this copy.

³⁰ “PAC was a splinter group from the ANC formed in 1960. Initially observers thought it was a split between the Communist and the extremist black nationalist elements in the ANC, but later evidence proved that the Communist grip on PAC never waned. Despite bitter rivalry throughout the world between PAC and the ANC the Communists controlled both, though the South African Communist Party controlled the ANC while PAC was controlled from Communist elements in Marxist Africa, i.e. Nkrumah’s Ghana and Tanzania. When the Moscow-Peking rift shattered Communist world unity, PAC automatically moved into the Peking camp, while the ANC followed the line of its SACP masters, the Moscow line.” Ibid. 21.

³¹ Ibid. 196.

³² “The ‘movement’, incidentally, was a large amorphous mass of Communist front organisations which, to the outsider, were linked to each other in some mysterious fashion but in reality were closely controlled by the underground Communist Party.” Ibid. 20.

³³ Ibid. 25.

³⁴ Ibid. 212.

whom Ludi claims to have had sympathies³⁵ – that they were embroiled in a “threatening civil war between white and black”.³⁶

It is important to recognise that a recent study, carried out by Stephen Ellis, also suggests that the ANC were in fact heavily influenced by the SACP. Indeed, there is evidence within Ellis’ book, *External Mission*, that Mandela was a member of SACP Central Committee before his arrest. It is therefore difficult to dismiss the influence of the Central Committee, who often fulfilled similar roles within their own party structure and the ANC itself.³⁷ Having said this, to imply, as Ellis often does, that the ANC was in fact a communist front organisation does not take into account the complexities and contradictions within the anti-apartheid struggle, or the pluralistic nature of communism and the appropriation of Marxist thought during this period. This pluralism, I hope, was to some degree demonstrated in this mini-thesis’ introduction. We should add that Ellis’ analysis of the ANC/SACP in exile, and most importantly, more explicit accusations such as those emanating from conservative and Christian-nationalist discourses during the apartheid period, verges on the conspiratorial.³⁸

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³⁵ In Chapter 3 of *Operation Q-018*, Ludi states that, whilst studying at Wits: “I got on well with most of them [‘non-whites’]. In fact I preferred their company to the very smug White extreme left wing liberals in the faculty who were trying so very hard to prove to anyone with a dark skin that they were on HIS side. They were all so artificially intellectual. But coming back to the non-Whites. I found most of them quite ordinary fellows, not at all like my background racial prejudices had told me they would be.” Ibid. 11.

³⁶ Ibid. 36.

³⁷ Stephen Ellis, *External Mission: The ANC in Exile, 1960-1990* (Cape Town, Jonathon Ball Publishers: 2012): 20.

³⁸ In light of the ANC leadership’s increasingly pro-capitalist disposition and open rejection of socialism during the 1980s and the run-up to negotiations with the apartheid state, this mini-thesis argues that the ANC/SACP alliance represents far more than a negotiation or – in the spirit of anti-communist discourses – a conspiratorial power struggle between nationalist and communist interests, but instead points toward the complex, tangled, and ever-changing relations of power acting on and within the anti-apartheid movement. Here it may be useful to highlight comments made by Oliver Tambo, acting president of the ANC, in 1985 during negotiations with ‘white’ business leaders in Lusaka; “We do not want to destroy it [the capitalist system]. The Freedom Charter does not even purport to want to destroy the capitalist system. All that the Freedom Charter does is to envisage a mixed economy in which part of the economy... would be controlled, owned by the state... and the rest by private ownership – a mixed economy.” Similar statements were made by Nelson Mandela in jail on Robben Island, when meeting the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG); “the Freedom Charter was not a document designed to establish even socialism in South Africa”. Perhaps a more productive and accurate – if somewhat simplified – way of understanding the relationship between the ANC and the SACP, particularly in exile, would be to think of it in terms of a pragmatic and mutually beneficial political arrangement in which the former, amongst other things, gained access to Soviet and Maoist funding, and the latter maintained a foothold within the resistance movement, allowing them to, for example, influence the South African youth who, particularly after the 1976 Soweto Uprising, flooded the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) – the military wing of both the SACP and the ANC – in exile. For an account of Tambo’s comments during negotiations with the apartheid state see: Alex Callinicos, *South Africa between Reform and Revolution*: 134. For Ellis’ discussion on the SACP and their influence within the ANC see: Stephen Ellis, *External Mission*.

Ludi's whole account is based upon such a conspiracy. Throughout *Operation Q-018* he attempts to prove the existence of a communist plot, and to position himself as the expert and a James Bond-type figure. In contrast to the Afrikaner, Ludi positions himself as a 'rational' liberal³⁹ – an apostle of John Stuart Mill – who, because of this, became one of the few with the knowledge and foresight to recognise a "true communist":

In my experience the Afrikaans-speaking section of the community has a far better grasp of what smashing the Communist movements really meant to the country. But this, among Afrikaners, is again spoiled by dozens of self-styled experts on Communism who seek to further their own ends by leading the struggle against an enemy they have never known or met

I think this obsession with the Communist menace that has arisen in Afrikaans culture, from church to photo story, has in the past year bewildered the Afrikaans-speaking people to such an extent that they will now never be able to recognise a true communist.⁴⁰

Ludi demonstrates his argument by giving accounts of communists he allegedly worked with whilst underground. One family he describes in the following way:

They were important people. Both [mother and father] were on the executive of the Central Committee of the SACP...

Her father, a quiet ginger-haired man, was the *last person on earth* [my emphasis] one would have suspected of being part and parcel of the bloody plot uncovered at Rivonia.

Her mother had at one stage been a city councillor for the Communist Party – before it was banned – and besides being an efficient political worker was also a good cook and, to all appearances, a good mother.

In many ways the family did not fit into the 'Congress Crowd'. The house was neat and tidy, and despite the conspiratorial meetings in back rooms with Congress leaders, strangers were always welcome in a gesture of genuine South African hospitality.

And in the same trend, they discussed and complained about their African servants at their inevitable Sunday braaivleis (barbecue) as any South African family would have done.⁴¹

At another point Ludi describes how once, when at a meeting in a hidden room at the back of a Party member's shop, he watched, through a false mirror, an interaction between his cell leader's husband and a customer. Note how the communist is portrayed as the 'sneaky', 'treacherous' revolutionary, who on the surface appears to be a 'normal' individual, but beneath this façade, has violent intentions:

Where I sat I looked into the main shop. Her husband was showing an extremely well dressed woman and daughter a selection of their wares.

³⁹ Gerard Ludi, *Operation Q-018*: 12-13.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 41.

⁴¹ Ibid. 79.

Outside stood a black Pontiac with a chauffeur at the door. It was obviously theirs. While mother and daughter, with diamonds and pearls flashing, flitted about the shop I watched our cell leader's husband.

He smiled ingratiatingly as he spoke to them, but it was obvious from the cold look in his eyes that it was a smile of contempt.⁴²

Another critical piece of 'evidence' which Ludi provides within *Operation Q-018* and during the Fischer Trial, was the immorality of communists, and 'debaucherous parties' taking place at various locations, including the Fischer home. This 'debauchery', Ludi refers to as 'crashing the colour line':

With coarse, primitive, ritualistic love-making some White girls would automatically go for Indian or African men, while a percentage of the White men would do the same with African women. Cross-colour adultery was so commonplace that nobody even bothered to raise their eyebrows over it. At some of the wilder parties this would be followed by a wild, drunken bout of naked swimming by the multi-racial crowd... There was of course, also the occasional pleasant Communist. They were few and far between.⁴³

Ludi made a similar speech whilst giving evidence at the Fischer Trial, suggesting that the Fischer home was an immoral space and a nest for communist activity. Indeed it seems as if much of his account is based upon the de-legitimisation of the communist's morals. Throughout he produces a narrative that undermines and often mocks the 'white' communist, suggesting that they live in a fantasy which distorts the 'natural' relationship between 'white' and 'black', and undermines the 'rights' of all South Africans, who according to Ludi's narrative, would otherwise happily live in a harmonious 'democratic' society.

We are left with two critical markers within Ludi's account. The first is found in the above passage. Like other anti-communist accounts, Ludi attempts to establish that the communist is fundamentally different to the 'law-abiding citizen', he or (particularly) she is immoral, a fanatical Other who undermines the morals, laws, and freedoms of Western 'democracy'. The second aspect of Ludi's account, which I would like to draw particular attention to, is the attempt to establish an image surrounding the 'sneaky', untrustworthy 'white' communist who is difficult to spot and could be closer than you expect. As we saw in the above passage, he or she could quite possibly be stood at the braai stand alongside you.

⁴² Ibid. 72.

⁴³ Ibid. 23-24.

Critically it takes an ‘expert’, in this case Ludi himself to spot a communist, suggesting that the apartheid state and its agents are the only thing standing between ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom’ on the one hand, and communist revolution on the other. He also reinforces that the ‘average citizen’ must at all times be vigilant and on guard against this threat. Thus affirming that the role of the ‘citizen’ is to “look out for suspicious Others”,⁴⁴ be wary of those who break with the norm, and never completely trust the stranger, the neighbour, or the shopkeeper – the ‘terrorist’ “could be anyone and anywhere.”⁴⁵

Interestingly, Fischer features little in *Operation Q-018*. The Fischer trial for example is only covered in the final chapter, and mainly focuses on Ludi’s resilience and ability to evade aggressive cross examinations and accusations regarding his own morality from Fischer’s Defence team. Ludi does however highlight the few occasions in which he was in contact with Fischer. At one stage he claims to have been in his underground cell, describing how Fischer took pains to emphasise that “there needs to be a local resistance movement in order ‘to make it seem to be a local revolution and not a foreign aggression’”.⁴⁶ This account it seems was mobilised as a means to prove that there was a Soviet conspiracy in South Africa. Indeed, for Ludi all protests, including those at Sharpeville, Cato Manor, and Langa were orchestrated by communists, in order to “provoke bloodshed”.⁴⁷ According to Ludi, ‘communists’ were also behind the arms embargo against apartheid. Within *Operation Q-018* Fischer appears as a vital link between the KGB and ‘local communists’. He was, along with Mandela and Walter Sisulu, the arch conspirator, the silent figure who only put his head above the parapet on the odd occasion. This typified the difficulty in locating and capturing those orchestrating revolution behind the scenes.

⁴⁴ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004): 78.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 79.

⁴⁶ Gerard Ludi, *Operation Q-018*: 195.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 214.

HENRY R. PIKE: A *HISTORY OF COMMUNISM IN SOUTH AFRICA*.

This brings us to Henry R. Pike's *A History of Communism in South Africa* (from this point onwards referred to as *A History of Communism*), which under the auspices of 'frank and forthright' research carried out by a 'concerned citizen' unashamedly committed to the apartheid state and the Christian-nationalist cause, repeatedly invokes the image of the communist as non-human and the devil incarnate. Before continuing it may be useful to quote Pike at length:

The simplest and most fundamental fact about genuine communists is one of the hardest to grasp. They are not human, that is, in the selective and optimistic sense in which we habitually use the word. They neither think nor feel as we do. Communists do not see the world as we see it. They are not human because they have been subjected to a prolonged and intensive discipline, devised to purge them of all instincts and capacities that we regard as characteristic of man – *self-respect, independent judgement, conscience, pity, faith in God and Christ, love for home, country, flag and every form of decency and morality* [my italics]. This death-discipline is designed to make certain that anyone in whom these human qualities are not totally extinct is finally eliminated from the party. A true communist must be a perfect tool, a thoroughly reliable weapon which will shoot at any mark at which it is aimed.⁴⁸

Originally published in 1985, *A History of Communism* proved popular enough to be re-published in 1988. This of course is not to argue that such discourses were widely read and accepted by all.

However, the sheer proliferation and repetition of such debates throughout the apartheid period, coupled with the regular circulation of anti-communist propaganda within and between various institutional spaces and the public domain, suggests that many of these ideas and mythologies may have infiltrated the everyday social milieu and the family home in one form or another. What is more, I argue that the persistence of such discourses well into the 1980s demonstrates how anti-communist ideology remained, in one form or another, throughout and beyond the apartheid period.

Pike's book epitomises anti-communist discourse in its most fantasmatic form. With over 400 images – which are, along with the accompanying text, used as an unquestioned 'factual' source to corroborate Pike's account⁴⁹ – across 558 pages, it gives the impression of an epic, a conclusive if

⁴⁸ Henry R. Pike *A History of Communism in South Africa*: 290.

⁴⁹ At one stage Pike describes an image of protestors during the Soweto Uprising as a 'Savage Mob'. It is widely accepted that the Soweto Uprising was initiated by students who if anything appropriated 'black' Consciousness as its primary theoretical, political framework. This particular revolt was not initiated by the SACP or the ANC. However, Pike's photographs and accompanying texts work to produce a different meaning. In the words of

extremely critical account of communism in South Africa. However, coupled with various uncorroborated claims – some of which will be highlighted within this text – Pike openly states, in the introduction, that his book is not an objective analysis of communism, as this according to him is impossible, “tantamount to writing about the benefits of rape and murder”.⁵⁰

The hatred that the American pastor has for communism is clearly evident.⁵¹ *The History of Communism* is permeated by impassioned sermons about the communist devil and its threat to the apartheid state and the Western world. Like many of his allies in South Africa, Pike appears to have had an ‘in-the-blood’ aversion to anything communist – Ludi also states in the first chapter of his book that he “had an inborn abhorrence to Communism”.⁵² Having said this, as we have seen in the first chapter, at one stage he does distance the ‘Good Jew’ from the communist, and as a result attempts to dispel the stereotyped association between communism and *all* ‘Jewish’ South Africans, which was possibly used to convey a more appeasing nature.⁵³

A particularly remarkable passage, entitled ‘The Difference Between “Right” and “Left”’, uses the Old Testament to support the apartheid state and, in the name of God, to justify any act of violence enacted by the so-called ‘Right’:

The ancient Hebrews... saw in the terms divine blessings and curses. To them, the “left” signalled dissatisfaction (Isaiah 9:20), divine judgement (Judges 3:15-21), a sign of disinheritance and loss (Genesis 48: 13-20) and evil in general. The “right” was the place of power and glory from which all just and divine judgement issued (Exodus 15:6-7), the place of security and stability (Psalm 16:8), the place of true religious blessings and true pleasures (Psalm 16:11), and the place of salvation from one’s enemies (Psalm 17:7).

John Tagg, it “organise[d]... and produce[d] a new reality”. Writing against Roland Barthes’ ‘photographic realism’, Tagg, in *The Burden of Representation*, argues that “we must not look to some ‘magic’ of the medium [photography], but to the conscious and unconscious processes, the practices and institutions through which the photograph can incite phantasy, take on meaning, and exercise an affect”. He continues by suggesting: “That a photograph can come to stand as evidence... rests not on a natural or existential fact, but on a social, semiotic process”. Pike’s use of photographic images as documentary evidence in order to reinforce his own agenda, should therefore be understood as a specific process which reinforced a specific agenda – that of proving that communists were behind all protest in South Africa, and that the ‘black’ majority were irrational and primitive, vulnerable to the ‘superior intellect’ of the ‘white’, foreign communist. John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Minnesota: Minnesota University Press, 1988): 3-4.

⁵⁰ Henry R. Pike *A History of Communism in South Africa*: xvi.

⁵¹ Pike now lives in the United States, and has various sermons published online. I attempted to contact Pike via an associate who uploaded his sermons. However, he has as yet not responded to my requests.

⁵² Gerard Ludi, *Operation Q-018*: 9.

⁵³ Henry R. Pike, *A History of Communism in South Africa*: 211-214.

In New Testament language, the “left” and “right” are finally separated forever in an awful day of judgement when the nations of the “left” are damned and those of the “right” are received in God’s eternal bliss (Matthew 25: 31-46).⁵⁴

However far-fetched the above provocation might sound, this type of discourse is not too far from other arguments reverberating from the DRC, and more specifically from D.F. Malan. Throughout *The History of Communism* Pike employs every possible means to demonise communism. For him communists are non-human, they represent the devil incarnate, and are likened to a disease. They are also machine-like, purged of all humanity, and possessed by a violent, revolutionary zeal. Along with this, Pike is a loyal supporter of the apartheid project and its agents, stating at one point that the UN, who he describes as ‘political clowns’,⁵⁵ and ‘pseudo-liberals’ in South Africa,⁵⁶ are, like any anti-apartheid organisation, either in cahoots with the communists or blind to the dangers which they present.

At every turn, he attributes unrest – including the 1976 Soweto Uprising – to a communist plot, and praises or defends the security forces whenever possible.⁵⁷ Some of the most celebratory praise is saved for Ludi, who according to Pike “had served the country and the police so well in the battle against communism”.⁵⁸ In contrast to Clingman’s account, Pike claims that it was Ludi, not Petrus Beyleveld, who provided the prosecution in the Fischer Trial with critical evidence against Fischer and his co-accused. Considering that Pike carried out interviews with Ludi, it is hardly surprising that he confirms and props up Ludi’s version of events, which not only canonises Ludi as a hero of the apartheid state but also canonises the state as protectors of the nation and heroes in the struggle against communism. This assertion however, is perhaps based more upon Ludi’s ‘revelations’ about communist immorality and his claims about “proposals... for bombings, killings, arson and violence” and a “CPSA ‘coup d’etat’” – which significantly added to Pike’s own agenda of proving the

⁵⁴ Ibid. 534.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 390.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 288.

⁵⁷ For example, Pike suggests that the Soweto Uprising, 1976, was orchestrated by the SACP. He corroborates these claims by referring to a statement made by Joe Slovo during a ‘secret meeting’ – two months before the Soweto Uprising – in which he stated that South Africa was heading for “big trouble”. “How did Slovo know this?” Pike asked, suggesting that the SACP were fully aware of what would occur later that year. Ibid. 483.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 404-405.

existence of a conspiratorial and inherently violent Soviet plot in South Africa – rather than whether the evidence was of any benefit to the Prosecution.⁵⁹

The most useful passages in *The History of Communism* come from three chapters focusing on Bram Fischer. In these chapters Pike produces a conspiratorial narrative surrounding Fischer, the SACP – who Pike insists on calling the CPSA – and the KGB, who in his version of events, are always behind the scenes orchestrating and authorising SACP plans. For example, with no reference to any source, Pike claims that the decision for Fischer to go underground was first cleared by the KGB, giving the impression that Fischer, and others, took their orders directly from the Soviets.⁶⁰ Although there is evidence throughout the apartheid period of Soviet support for the anti-apartheid struggle – in Fischer’s case the Soviet Union did provide false documents for his new identity underground – there is little evidence to suggest – as Pike continually tries to do – that there was significant or, more importantly, direct Soviet orchestration on the ground in South Africa.

THE ‘ROOI GEVAAR’.



*If one is not afraid, how can one not be attracted.*⁶¹

It is this period during which Fischer was in hiding that this mini-thesis is interested in, as it is here when the notion of Fischer as spectre is most evident. Before this he was firmly within the public eye. Afterwards he became a ghostly figure, living as Mr Douglas Black (the irony of his chosen name was not lost on Clingman),⁶² a photographer and a recluse who wandered the streets in disguise. Although

⁵⁹ Ibid. 423.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 430.

⁶¹ Nadine Gordimer, *Burger’s Daughter* (London: Jonathon Cape, 1979): 141.

⁶² When discussing Fischer’s choice of name, Clingman states: “It was some six weeks before he resurfaced, taking the name ‘Mr Douglas Black’ – beyond the practical issues of gaining an identity, a felicitous identification with the majority of South Africa’s people. Nelson Mandela too had gone underground, but for him the mere anonymity of being black in South Africa constituted in large part a sufficient disguise. For Bram it was different: he was both himself and disguised into ‘black’. And yet the contradictions of the name for a white fugitive suggested the absurdity of racial assignments”. Stephen Clingman, *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary*: 333.

this episode – notwithstanding the apparently amateurish actions of some of those involved⁶³ – could belong in a spy novel, Pike sensationalises and describes events with a degree of artistic license, painting a picture of KGB spies, communist plots, and unsuspecting, innocent civilians such as Mrs Middleton who rented a house to ‘Mr Black’ in Rustenburg (Clingman refers to her as Mrs Milington and was uncertain if she was in fact ‘innocent’),⁶⁴ and Mr and Mrs Stoddart, a “young British couple [who] were shocked to learn they were “just a wall away” from South Africa’s most wanted man”.⁶⁵

In both Pike and Ludi’s accounts the specifically ‘white’ communist and Fischer are depicted as the sneaky, treacherous and violent enemy whose intellect and ability to ‘blend in’ made them a particularly dangerous threat to South Africa, its ‘citizens’ and more generally the Western world. In opposition to communism we have ‘innocent’ civilians who through no fault of their own are duped by the communist. As a result, they must rely on experts like Ludi and other agents of the state, who as we have seen, know how to spot a communist, and therefore become valuable assets to apartheid and protectors of the nation. It is important to recognise that Fischer, the SACP, and other anti-apartheid organisations were of course working for the downfall of apartheid, at this time through armed struggle, and that the apartheid state and its agents did not create a fantasy surrounding the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ out of thin air. However, the degree to which authors like Pike and others mentioned within this mini-thesis embellished such narratives, creates the impression that apartheid South Africa and its ‘citizens’ were embroiled in a global plot which aimed to destroy the West (of which ‘white’ South Africa was, according to this discourse, a part) and all that it held dear.

It is also important to recognise that these instances were not isolated to a small number of fanatical anti-communists. The press – upon whom Pike often relies for his account of events – during this period, added to the notion of the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ and the unseen threat within the fabric of the state.

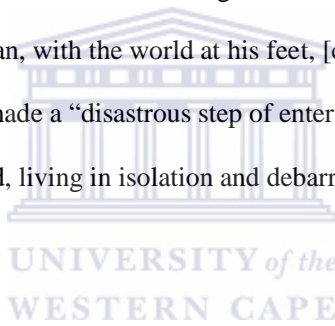
⁶³ According to Clingman, Fischer and his associates did not follow strict protocols whilst he was underground, taking little heed of potential tails and visiting his house on a regular basis. Communications and false documents arriving from the SACP in exile were also not forthcoming, causing Fischer to become isolated from and frustrated with his associates abroad. Ibid. 346-348.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 332.

⁶⁵ Henry R. Pike *A History of Communism in South Africa*: 441.

There were however varying degrees of attention paid to Fischer's escape. *Die Burger's* coverage of events was far more extensive – running the story for a longer period of time and dedicating it to the front pages – than the traditionally British press (for example the *Cape Times*) who, on the day of Fischer's disappearance, relegated the story to page three, and invested most of their time in covering the recent death and funeral of Winston Churchill.⁶⁶ This on the one hand suggests that *Die Burger* and their readership were more invested in the story, and on the other, demonstrates the continued connection the British affiliated press had with what they probably, in some sense, still considered to be the metropole.

Returning to the story at hand, on 31 January, a week after Fischer disappeared, Joel Mervis – who had been at school and University with Fischer – writing for the *Sunday Times* wrote of 'The Tragedy of Bram Fischer', asking how a "man, with the world at his feet, [came] to fall on such evil days".⁶⁷ According to Mervis, Fischer had made a "disastrous step of entering the communist fold," and had since been humiliated and disgraced, living in isolation and debarred from the profession upon which he built his life's work.



There were also several reports in the national press of rumoured sightings of Fischer. The *Cape Times* reported on 27 January that he had "gone into hiding in Swaziland or one of the other protectorates".⁶⁸ On 28 January, it moved its focus to the border with Bechuanaland (present day Botswana) where Fischer had apparently been spotted attempting to cross,⁶⁹ and on the 29 January claimed that he had been seen in Lusaka by 'exiles'.⁷⁰ On 28 January, *Die Burger* released a similar report, claiming that Fischer and eleven others were spotted crossing the border between South Africa and Bechuanaland. This group they suggested were on their way to Zambia, via Francistown,

⁶⁶ Reference to Churchill and coverage of his death can be found on the front page of the following Cape and Sunday Times articles. *Die Burger's* coverage of events continued throughout February.

⁶⁷ Joel Mervis, 'The Tragedy of Bram Fischer', *The Sunday Times*, 31 January, 1965 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 3.

⁶⁸ 'Raid by Police on Fischer's Home', *Cape Times*, 27 January, 1965 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 3.

⁶⁹ 'Border Hunt for Fischer', *Cape Times*, 28 January, 1965 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 1.

⁷⁰ 'Fischer Seen in Lusaka, Exiles Claim', *Cape Times*, 29 January, 1965 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 2

presumably to meet up with the SACP and the ANC in exile.⁷¹ The *Sunday Times* however, provided the most accurate assessment of Fischer's possible whereabouts, suggesting, with corroboration from the police, that the 'Red Pimpernel', had sought refuge in a densely packed area in Johannesburg.⁷² After a short period in Rustenburg, Fischer did indeed return to the Waverley suburb of Johannesburg, where on 11 November, 1965, he was recaptured by the Security Police.⁷³ This event was hailed by the *Sunday Times*, as "one of the Security Polices greatest triumphs".⁷⁴

Rumours regarding Fischer undergoing plastic surgery added to the intrigue around the case. On 14 February, the *Sunday Times* suggested that he may have had plastic surgery, and highlighted evidence in the Fischer Trial – continuing in his absence – which suggested "that the alleged underground communist party had a section devoted to studying and perfecting methods of disguise".⁷⁵ As it happened, Fischer was discovered with various disguises, including a woman's dress, hat, and gloves, which must have added to the notion of the communist ability to transform into multiplicitous forms. In *The History of Communism*, Pike offers as evidence two portrait photographs that he categorically claims depict "[a] Marxist metamorphosis [that] completely altered the appearance of Bram Fischer".⁷⁶ The images do suggest that Fischer underwent a transformation of types during his period underground. However, as Ruth Rice confirmed in a recent communication, this was accomplished by losing weight, dyeing his hair, and taking the advice of a local theatre company, who taught him to alter specific aspects of his character, such as his limp.⁷⁷ Regardless of the actual method of transformation, Pike creates the impression that if Fischer could undergo surgery then anyone could. According to this narrative, the communist and Fischer became a metaphysical figure, a silent unseen

⁷¹ 'Adv. Fischer is op pad na Zambia: Met 11 Ander oor die Grens', *Die Burger*, 28 January, 1965 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 1.

⁷² Margaret Smith, 'Fischer Seeking New "Rivonia" Hideout', *The Sunday Times*, 31 January, 1965 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 3.

⁷³ Stephen Clingman, *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary*: 343.

⁷⁴ 'A Fitter Man than when he Escaped', *The Sunday Times*, 14 November, 1965 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 3.

⁷⁵ 'Police Comb Fischer Home and Garden', the *Sunday Times*, 14 February, 1965 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa): 5.

⁷⁶ Henry R. Pike *A History of Communism in South Africa*: 436.

⁷⁷ Informal interview with Ruth Rice, 18/08/2016, Noordhoek, and communications via email.

individual, a spectre who could infiltrate the apartheid laager,⁷⁸ and disrupt the suburban bliss of 'white' South Africa. Clingman describes this most lucidly:

He became the negative in the camera, the translation whose inner reality negotiates with outer difference, the being whose edges were blurred... He was the ghost who managed to walk the streets in the places where once he lived.⁷⁹

And again:

Bram cast himself among the unseen and invisible world, in the way that blacks were normally unseen and invisible to whites... it was... a positive search, in a displaced identity for an alternative identification, a radical statement of the possibility and necessity of a new and undivided world. So long as he remained at large, these meanings remained at large with him... There he was, ranging over the land, both himself and someone else, present and in a sense absent, where he belonged and did not belong.⁸⁰

The above narrative implies that through this metamorphosis Fischer became a different man, a man who became a subversive figure and who – in the eyes of Ludi, Pike and the apartheid state – was a danger to stability and therefore an individual to be feared. According to this discourse, the specifically 'white' communist is difficult to recognise. As a result, he or she becomes a subject that undermines apartheid ontologies, potentially moving between different spaces that were designed to be maintained and regulated by apartheid legislation and its racial and ethnic categorisations. The communist, embodied during this period in Fischer, is nowhere, but everywhere at the same time, within the fabric of society, but also difficult to locate precisely. In this regard they act as spectre, haunting the apartheid 'citizen', and necessarily becoming an object of fear, which the state and its 'citizens', at different times and to different degrees, relied upon to either justify violent acts or their own passive acceptance of apartheid. The following discussion will attempt to unravel the effects, motives and reasons for this manifestation at different moments during apartheid.

⁷⁸ One of the tasks that Ludi alleges was given to him whilst working with the COD, was to "make sure that a good percentage of the left wing liberals chose the liberation movement, and kept out of the 'white laager'". Gerard Ludi, *Operation Q-018*: 44.

⁷⁹ Stephen Clingman, *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary*: 333.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 343.

MARX AND THE COMMUNIST SPECTRE.

The communist spectre has been with us perhaps before but certainly since Marx and Engels first coined the term in *The Communist Manifesto* (originally published in 1848), which opens with the famous words; “A spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of communism.”⁸¹ As Marx and Engels state, the *Manifesto* was to serve as a political declaration which would meet and dispel “the nursery tale of the spectre of communism.”⁸² In this sense, they aimed to *actualise* communism and provide clarity for the petty bourgeoisie and the as yet conscientised European proletariat who would, once ‘awoken from their slumber’, answer the call as ‘apostles’ of Marx,⁸³ usher in the downfall of the capitalist aristocracy, and enable the establishment of a Universal Worker’s Republic.

As one of the most accessible and widely read of Marx and Engel’s publications, the *Manifesto* itself undoubtedly contributed to the creation of the working class subject, which Marx would have seen as an impending sign of historical progress, a necessary teleological step toward emancipation of the working class and, as a result, the completion of history. As Giyatri Spivak points out, Marx, in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* published four years after the *Manifesto*, actively called for the creation of the working class subject, stating that if “the small peasant proprietors cannot represent themselves. They must be represented.”⁸⁴ Through the active production of the working class subject (the proletariat) and attempts to propagate class consciousness, Marx, for better or worse, creates the dialectic, the divided subject, and in effect, sets the initial foundations for the division that would, in different degrees during the twentieth century, dogmatically divide, at least on the surface, the world between two binary oppositions – capitalism and communism.

It is important to recognise that from this position Spivak questions the limits of Marxism by suggesting it merely represents another form of Western discourse that marginalises subaltern voices

⁸¹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969): 14.

⁸² Ibid. 14.

⁸³ Giorgio Agamben in ‘Giorgio Agamben on Biopolitics (Eng subs)’ https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=skJueZ52948 (Accessed 04/09/2016).

⁸⁴ Giyatri C. Spivak, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’, in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), pp. 271-313: 71.

(both colonial and post-colonial) as secondary to the grand narratives of Europe.⁸⁵ In a critical analysis of Marxist structuralism, she suggests that Marx, being “obliged to construct models of a divided and dislocated subject,”⁸⁶ took it upon himself to define the chief antagonists of the class struggle, and proactively speak for those he assumed to be incapable of representing themselves. Spivak goes on to suggest that discourses which privileged Marxism – although not entirely unproductive – inevitably robbed subaltern voices of their historical agency, and merely deposited them within Eurocentric, anti-colonial narratives of the class struggle and the overthrow of Imperialism.

Along a similar vein I argue that differing from its initial aim, the *Manifesto* served as a key text through which the fear of communism, including the idea of the communist as spectre, is not dispelled, but on the contrary, is canonised. In other words, by attempting to exorcise the spectre of communism, but in the process reifying and, in a sense, actualising its threat, Marx *stages* or *conjures* the communist spectre.⁸⁷ From this point onwards the communist is ever-present, on the margins of but paradoxically threaded within Western society, and instilled through the mass body politic, with an emancipatory potential that, in 1917, actually – for a moment – appeared to come into being.⁸⁸

Given the magnitude and historical significance of events surrounding the Cold War, the above argument is most easily invoked in relation to a European and global context. However, as I hope to have shown, the communist subject served as a key ideological tool in South Africa, working to define the limits of citizenry and the state, but also acting as an object of fear within the everyday. Indeed, it appears as if some had a particularly strong, ‘in-the-blood’ aversion to communism. As I have argued elsewhere, this was (and is) the result of a pervasive and powerful form of propaganda that enabled the state and its ‘citizens’ to justify violent acts enacted by the apartheid state.⁸⁹ But how

⁸⁵ Premesh Lalu, *The Deaths of Hintsa*: 19

⁸⁶ Giyatri C. Spivak, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’: 71

⁸⁷ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: 3.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 11.

⁸⁹ Slavoj Žižek, *Violence*: 44.

might this 'in-the-blood' aversion have manifest? How did the communist spectre work within the fabric of the state? And how important was fear in establishing distance between bodies?

JACQUES DERRIDA'S *SPECTRES OF MARX*.

We will now set our sights on Jacques Derrida's seminal presentation in *Specters of Marx*, which I propose mobilising as a means to begin to understand the ways in which the 'Rooi Gevaar' may have operated during apartheid. In his discussion regarding Hamlet's ghost (Chapter 1: Page 3-10), serving as allegory for the communist spectre, Derrida suggests that what Hamlet – and by association the West in reaction to the threat of communism – is experiencing during his encounter with his father's ghost, is a 'crisis of spirit'. In other words, Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and Hamlet's kingdom, being in a state of crisis, are involved in a pursuit to reconceptualise the 'definition of man', and "attempt to create what... [Derrida] venture[s] to call the spirit of spirit."⁹⁰ Essentially, the communist spectre, like Hamlet's ghost, prompts but also disrupts this eternal pursuit – which I read in relation to Bernard Stiegler's 'the colonial war on spirits'⁹¹ – challenging the European body and Western epistemologies of 'truth' with the unknown. Before moving on it may be useful to quote Derrida at length:

The specter is a paradoxical incorporation, the becoming-body, a certain phenomenal and carnal form of the spirit. It becomes, rather something that remains difficult to name: neither soul nor body, and both one and the other... It is something that one does not know, precisely, and one does not know if precisely, it is, if it exists, if it responds to a name and corresponds to an essence. One does not know: not out of ignorance, but because this non-object, this non-present present, this being-there of an absent or departed one no longer belongs to knowledge. At least no longer to that which one thinks one knows by the name of knowledge. One does not know if it is living or if it is dead. Here is-or rather there is, over there, an unnameable or almost unnameable thing: something, between something and someone, anyone or anything, some thing, "this thing," but this thing and not any other, this thing that looks at us, that concerns us [qui nous regarde⁹²], comes to defy semantics as much as ontology, psychoanalysis as much as philosophy.⁹³

By challenging the emergent bourgeois elite, and unhinging its 'natural' position within society, the proletariat (a subject which Giorgio Agamben, in concurrence with Derrida, suggests was and is

⁹⁰ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: 4.

⁹¹ Bernard Stiegler, *Symbolic Misery, Volume One*: 55.

⁹² "Watching us".

⁹³ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: 5.

metaphysical)⁹⁴ after (and before) being conjured by Marx and Engels, disrupts European epistemologies and grammars of knowledge. Here, as previously stated, the communist spectre undermines the metaphysical project of attaining a higher form of spirit, and haunts Europe with the possibility of devastation – a devastation that not only threatens the capitalist system, but also Europe’s and much later, one could argue, the ‘Volk’s “great unifying projects”’.⁹⁵

Critically, the communist spectre, analogous to Hamlet’s ghost, is, at least initially, the unknown subject, the subject whom cannot – in that instance – be named, known, and contained by dominant epistemologies of the time. As Derrida states, the communist “no longer belongs to knowledge. At least no longer to that which one thinks one knows by the name of knowledge.”⁹⁶ Marx and Engels alone have the ability to name and conjure the masses, which in itself, and because of itself – geographically transient and potentially embodied in all oppressed peoples – is pervasive and as a result uncontainable by any one judiciary, political, or military force. However – and this is where the imaginary becomes useful – if the subject cannot be contained by the ‘rational’ or dominant, Eurocentric knowledge systems and epistemologies (semantics, ontology, psychoanalysis, philosophy etc.) then I tentatively argue that it must be contained by another type of discourse – the ‘fantastic’ (for example, biblical narratives surrounding the ‘flood’ or ‘deluge’), which again I argue became increasingly important during apartheid.

Derrida, then goes on to discuss the ‘visor effect’:

⁹⁴ “[S]omeone who is not identifiable and, because of the lack of identity, will overthrow all classes... It is not an identity; we cannot say the ‘proletarian is that fellow there’. Anybody can be proletarian and nobody is”. Giorgio Agamben in ‘Giorgio Agamben on Biopolitics (Eng subs)’ https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=skJueZ52948 (Accessed 04/09/2016). ‘Giorgio Agamben on biopolitics’, article on Nomadic Universality, Intellectual Commons <https://nomadicuniversality.wordpress.com/2015/10/30/giorgio-agamben-on-biopolitics-the-greek-tv-interview-2/> (Accessed 04/09/2016).

⁹⁵ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: 3. Importantly, the European subject is, in this instance, predominantly seen as the embodiment of European aristocracy, not (and this is critical) the repressed peasantry, who according to Friedrich Nietzsche, writing at a similar time to Marx, existed only to provide the aristocracy with the means and opportunity to pursue certain virtues which they alone could obtain. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1946): 688.

⁹⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: 5.

This spectral someone other looks at us, we feel ourselves being looked at by it, outside of any synchrony, even before and beyond any look on our part, according to an absolute anteriority... and asymmetry, according to an absolutely unmasterable disproportion. Here anachrony makes the law. To feel ourselves seen by a look which it will always be impossible to cross, that is the visor effect on the basis of which we inherit from the law. Since we do not see the one who sees us, and who makes the law, who delivers the injunction... since we do not see the one who orders "swear" we cannot identify it in all certainty, we must fall back on its voice.⁹⁷

Injunction and *voice* are crucial here. Firstly, Marx, as conjurer of the communist spectre, not only presents and creates the working class subject, but also *knows*, arguably better than anyone writing at this time, the European elite. Thus creating an injunction that supposedly perceives and masters, amongst other things, processes of production, the notion of alienated labour, and the conditions for revolution within the capitalist system. By doing so he sheds light on the repression of the European majority, and helps to create (accurately or otherwise) the working class subject, supposedly with a powerful agency of their own. As has been intimated elsewhere, the communist remains largely unidentifiable, and as a result protected – within Derrida’s abstraction – by ‘armour’, or alternatively by a visor or mask:

We do not know whether it is or is not part of the spectral apparition. This protection is rigorously problematic (*problema* is also a shield) for it prevents perception from deciding on the identity that it wraps so solidly in its carapace. The armor may be but the body of a real artifact, a kind of technical prosthesis, a body foreign to the spectral body that it dresses, dissimulates, and protects, masking even its identity.⁹⁸

The mask or visor Derrida describes has an “an incomparable power, perhaps the supreme insignia of power: the power to see without being seen”.⁹⁹ In other words, the communist, being unknown, unseen, unintelligible, and being protected by a visor or mask (here I am thinking of the ways in which the ‘white’ communist stereotype subverts dominant ontologies of seeing and knowing the Other during apartheid, and more specifically how Fischer himself transformed into Mr Black), challenges and undermines dominant power structures and epistemologies of ‘truth’, and as a result undermines and threatens the very fabric of the state.

⁹⁷ Ibid. 6-7.

⁹⁸ Ibid. 7.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 8.

In Derrida's abstraction the communist is above all a spectral, metaphysical figure, haunting the West and polarising society between those who feared a dystopian revolution and those who desired a utopian one. During this mini-thesis, I hope to have demonstrated similar ways in which the 'Rooi Gevaar' functioned during apartheid. Here it became an object of fear that was forever present, threaded within the fabric of society, but paradoxically always out of reach. It necessarily worked as an object of fear that both rationalised the role of the NP and justified the implementation and continuation of 'white' supremacy in Southern Africa. The following theoretical discussion will further unravel this argument. For now we will continue to focus on the apartheid period. However, as Derrida implies in the second chapter of *Specters of Marx*, it also has important implications for understanding the period of transition to democracy in South Africa during which the Soviet Union and apartheid (almost) simultaneously began to unravel.



THE 'ROOI GEVAAR': AN IMPORTANT DETERMINANT IN SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS.

Perhaps Paul Virilio can offer us a way to further unravel the above proposition. Fear for Virilio is, increasingly, a means through which societies are administered and managed.¹⁰⁰ It is described as a climate or an environment that "occupies and preoccupies us", and has, according to Virilio, become one of the principles through which subjects are produced and nations are maintained. In his own words, "states are tempted to create policies for the orchestration and the management of fear... . [T]hey have to convince citizens that they can ensure their physical safety".¹⁰¹ In *The Administration of Fear*, Virilio develops an argument that begins with the so-called 'Fifth Column' – French Nazis working behind enemy lines during the German army's advance through France – and suggests that, during the Second World War, it was "omnipresent in everyone's thoughts and conversations".¹⁰² Virilio goes on to argue that "[t]he presence of this sometimes imagined army of 'saboteurs' and

¹⁰⁰ Paul Virilio, *The Administration of Fear: Volume 10 of Semiotext(e)/Intervention Series*, with Bertrand Richard, translated by Ames Hodges (Massachusetts: MIT University Press, 2012): 10.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 15.

¹⁰² Ibid. 14.

‘traitors against the nation’ turned every neighbour, priest and shopkeeper into a potential enemy”, sowing fear and whispering: “we are not there but we are always among you”.¹⁰³

Critically for Virilio, fear is intimately linked to the restriction of space – a restriction we can liken to apartheid segregation – which in turn encourages one to retreat to safety. “When the world becomes uninhabitable, we turn to cliques and tribes, even if they are largely imagined.”¹⁰⁴ What is more, “[f]ear not only creates its environment, with its ghettos, gated communities, communitarianism, it has also created its culture, a culture of repulsion... . It relates to racism and the rejection of the other: there is always a reason to push out, to expulse the other.”¹⁰⁵ Racism then is intimately linked to this fear, a fear of the Other that both produces and is fuelled by its affects.

This leads us to Steve Biko’s 1971 piece, ‘Fear – an important Determinant in South African Politics’, in which he recognises the existence of a “tripartite system of fear – that of whites fearing the blacks, blacks fearing whites and the government fearing blacks and wishing to allay the fear amongst whites”.¹⁰⁶ Fischer (who Biko stated was the only ‘white’ hero of the ‘black’ majority)¹⁰⁷ himself recognised the significance and dangers of this climate of fear, which for him had its roots in British Imperialism and the capitalist system, and its tendency to create pressures surrounding employment and the constant threat of poverty:¹⁰⁸ The following passage, taken from Fischer’s statement in the dock, not only attests to the ways in which the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ may have functioned during apartheid, but also has haunting and powerful reverberations in the contemporary – particularly in light of Brexit and Donald Trump’s recent rise to power in the United States:

Now it is the fear, bred by this system [capitalism], which is the fertile soil for producing racialism and intolerance. It was a similar fear which in Europe enabled Hitler to propagate his monstrous theory of race superiority which led to the extermination of five million Jews in Germany. It is this fear which provides scope for the ready acceptance by whites in South Africa of many distorted ideas: that Africans are not civilised; that they

¹⁰³ Ibid. 14.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 50.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 58-59

¹⁰⁶ Aelred Stubbs (ed), *Steve Biko: I Write What I Like* (London: Bowerdean Press, 1978): 87.

¹⁰⁷ Stephen Clingman, *Bram Fischer: Afrikaner Revolutionary*: 405.

¹⁰⁸ Bram Fischer in: Mary Benson (ed) *The Sun Will Rise*: 40.

cannot become so for many generations; that they are not our fellow-citizens but really our enemies, and hence must be ruled by extreme police state methods and must be prevented from having any organizations of their own; that their voice should be heard only through mouthpieces selected by our all-white Government; that their leaders should be kept permanently on Robben Island.¹⁰⁹

To Biko's tripartite system of fear we can add that the communist, the departure from the norm, also served as an object of fear during the apartheid period. Critically, following Biko I argue that the apartheid state was itself dependent on this and other fears, mobilising them as a means to both incite and allay anxieties within the public domain. One could in turn argue that this process worked to, or was mobilised as a means to ensure 'white' society's dependence on the NP, whilst justifying violent reactions to the perceived threat. In the words of Biko, it created a "vicious cycle that multiplie[d] both the fear and the reaction," in a self-perpetuating system that simultaneously fulfilled and fuelled apartheid's destructive and inherently violent nature.¹¹⁰ Interestingly – briefly returning to Riaan Malan's *My Traitor's Heart* – this fear remained and continued to haunt even those so-called 'enlightened' Afrikaners who could, according to Riaan Malan, see beyond apartheid propaganda and the demonisation of the 'black' Other, but could nevertheless not completely remove themselves from its pervasive and 'in-the-blood' reverberations.

Interestingly, it appears as if some of these reverberations, particularly those surrounding communism, remain. In a recent article published in *The Daily Maverick*, Riaan Malan railed against Richard Poplak and the EFF (Economic Freedom Fighters), who were, according to Malan, using "hardcore Marxist doctrines... [as] a feint, intended to catch the attention of those whose ears are straining for the sound of hope".¹¹¹ Of course Malan might be correct. The EFF and other organisations may well be playing the political game, invoking the tried and tested words of Marx in order to mobilise support in their opposition to the ANC. However, the regularity in which Malan refers to 'fanatics' and 'hardcore Marxist-Leninist doctrine', and uses atrocities which were carried out on the other side of the world (in Soviet Russia and Maoist China), over fifty years ago, suggests

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 40-41.

¹¹⁰ Aelred Stubbs (ed), *Steve Biko: I Write What I Like*: 85.

¹¹¹ Riaan Malan, 'Letter to Editor: Riaan Malan', *Daily Maverick* http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-07-28-letter-to-editor-rian-malan/#.V_H5GoVOLmI (Accessed 28/09/2016).

that some of the ‘in-the-blood’ aversions to anything that resembles communism may have remained. It is also clear that Malan’s commitment to free-market trade, globalisation, and capital produces a polarisation between capitalism (good) and communism (bad), echoing the narratives that were perpetuated during the Cold War and apartheid.

It is important to recognise however that the ‘Rooi (and Swart) Gevaar’ was not the same as the fear experienced by the ‘black’ majority at the hands of the apartheid state and its security forces. As Ahmed reminds us: “fear is felt differently by different bodies”.¹¹² Take as a small example the extreme violence and torture enacted by Donald Card in East London during the 1950s and 1960s. Allegations against Card – who became a controversial figure of reconciliation in the post-1994 era¹¹³ – range from extreme forms of torture over a long period of time, to the active and purposeful creation of a climate of fear in various locations in East London. As Leslie and Andrew Bank explain, “many of those spoken to [during their research into Card’s police career] had such a deep fear of Card that they shuddered and stammered when they spoke about him”,¹¹⁴ or, whilst in police custody, wet themselves at the “thought of him arriving in the interrogation room”.¹¹⁵

Although the SACP and other organisations committed acts of violence during the apartheid period, they obviously pale in comparison to those carried out by the state and its agents. Most ‘white’ South Africans would not have experienced this violence first hand either. For the large part MK, for example, only targeted ‘soft targets’ in order to limit the loss of human life. It was only in the 1980s that MK’s strategy changed. As with contemporary South African society, apartheid was almost exclusively a regime in which violence was enacted on the ‘black’ majority. The only space in which many of the ‘white’ minority were exposed to violence would have been in the media. Clearly there

¹¹² Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*: 68.

¹¹³ Nelson Mandela Foundation, ‘An Unlocking of Story: The Archival Threads Connecting Two Old Men’ in *Prisoner in the Garden: Opening Mandela’s Prison Archive* (Johannesburg: Penguin, 2005). Leslie J. Bank and Andrew Bank, ‘Untangling the Lion’s Tale: Violent Masculinity and the Ethics of Biography in the ‘Curious’ Case of Apartheid-Era Policeman Donald Card’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (2013), pp. 7-30.

¹¹⁴ Leslie J. Bank and Andrew Bank, ‘Untangling the Lion’s Tale’: 22.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* 26.

were exceptions, such as during the so-called 'Border War', in which many young 'white' and 'black' South Africans were, as demonstrated during the TRC, coerced into fighting apartheid's wars against alleged communists in Angola and Namibia, and then left to deal with their traumatic experiences alone.¹¹⁶ Having said this, the reality remains that experiences of violence would have been isolated to a small number of unfortunate bystanders, accounts in the media, and much later, the recounting of experiences of the Border and, more generally, through political propaganda surrounding 'total onslaught'.¹¹⁷

The 'Rooi Gevaar' was therefore largely representative of a different type of fear. An imagined, subjective fear. It was a fantasmatic fear of the unseen Other and the imagined notion of the communist spectre infiltrating and breaking down the apartheid laager. This type of fear has been purposefully invoked throughout this mini-thesis, and it was purposefully invoked by the apartheid state. It was produced by the government, the DRC, and the national media, and possibly by the 1960s, became embedded in the Afrikaner psyche. However, it is reasonable to suggest that the 'white' minority only experienced this fear intermittently and much of the time merely appropriated it as a means to disavow responsibility and justify support for apartheid. Therefore this fear should not be primarily understood as an oppressive condition. It was one that worked as an alibi that justified and defended the apartheid project. But nevertheless, it had powerful effects within the public domain, enabling the apartheid state to carry out acts of violence against the 'black' majority, whilst its 'citizens' passively enjoyed the fruits of this repressive system in the relative comfort of 'white' suburbia.

The most useful discussion surrounding this particular issue comes from Ahmed's 'The Affective Politics of Fear' in which she begins by invoking Fanon's famous passage in *Black Skin White Mask*: "Mama, see the negro! I'm frightened! Frightened! Frightened!".¹¹⁸ In opposition to the philosophy of

¹¹⁶ For a detailed analysis of the Border War and its effects on soldiers, see: *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Volume Four*.

¹¹⁷ Alex Callinicos, *South Africa between Reform and Revolution*: 36.

¹¹⁸ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*: 62.

Hobbes, who suggests that fear is a technology or symptom of government, Ahmed argues for an approach that positions fear as a language or discourse.¹¹⁹ This discourse is and can of course be employed by governments, however, the distinction between fear as technology/symptom of government and fear as language, enables one to think with the ways in which fear might penetrate the psychological imprint of the everyday, and how this language pervasively affects and is affected by every level of society. In other words, fear is not solely produced by states and does not merely filter down into the public domain. It is a discourse or language that fulfils various roles within society.

For Ahmed fear operates as a discursive network that, like Hall's 'Floating Signifier', works to "align bodies with and against each other"¹²⁰ and in turn restricts mobility, curiosity, and miscegenation.¹²¹ In her own words, "fear does something, it re-establishes distance between bodies."¹²² This argument is perfectly demonstrated through Fanon's passage – and one might add our discussion in the first chapter regarding the interpolation of 'Jews' and 'communists' as the antithesis to the British colonial and later the apartheid 'citizen' – in which an ontological statement, signified through language, determines the object of fear, the communist, or in Fanon's specific context, the 'negro'.¹²³ Importantly for Ahmed, there is always an object of fear – the Other – which works as the antithesis to the object of love – the nation. In a South African, specifically Afrikaner context, one could argue that there were two interrelated objects of fear – the 'black' majority and the 'white' communist stereotype – and two interrelated objects of love the 'Volk' and the 'nation'.

In order to perpetuate this fear it is essential that the object is permanently out of reach, on the edges of society. In the words of Ahmed: fear "is bound up in the loss of the object."¹²⁴ It is about containment but paradoxically it is also about the 'passing by' of the object: "The economy of fear

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 71-72.

¹²⁰ Ibid. 72.

¹²¹ Ibid. 69.

¹²² Ibid. 63.

¹²³ Ibid. 62.

¹²⁴ Ibid. 69.

works to contain the bodies of others, a containment whose ‘success’ relies on its failure, as it must keep open the very grounds of its fear”.¹²⁵ In this sense “the loss of the object of fear renders the world itself a space of potential danger”.¹²⁶ If one were to read this argument in relation to Biko’s ‘tripartite system of fear’ then we might better understand the ways in which this fear, specifically the fear of the ‘white’ communist Other, worked in a “vicious cycle that multiplie[d] both the fear and the reaction”. Again following this argument, we might argue that the apartheid state – and more generally the ‘modern’ capitalist state – requires an object of fear in order to invoke feelings of love, reliance, or reverence toward the ‘nation’. It is supposedly there to protect the ‘citizen’ from the unseen, potentially violent Other.

Taking this argument one step further, we might suggest that our particular subject, Bram Fischer, fulfilled this role. He was both contained by anti-communist discourses and communist stereotypes that worked to know the Other, but was also, during his time underground, necessarily out of reach, on the edges, with the potential to be anywhere at any time. Critically, at this particular time Fischer was symbolic of the ‘Rooi Gevaar’, however due to the potential to be anywhere at any time, the communist was also potentially behind every closed door, or garden fence. If Fischer could transform into other forms, into other subjects, then he could potentially be any-body.

Critically, the object of fear (Fischer, but more specifically the ‘Rooi Gevaar’) displaces a greater fear. In Ahmed’s text this greater fear is the fear of castration or of loss – the loss of life, loss of family, loss of nation. She draws this out by turning to Freud’s ‘Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety’, in which Little Han’s fear of castration, his fear of the father, is displaced through his fear of horses, which, however nightmarish, is ultimately more manageable than the fear of death, or the fear of loss. For Ahmed, following Freud, “fear’s relationship to the potential disappearance of an object is more profound than simply a relationship to the object of fear. In other words, it is not just [the object of]

¹²⁵ Ibid. 67.

¹²⁶ Ibid. 69.

fear that is at stake in fear”.¹²⁷ In an apartheid context, we could read this in relation to a fear for the ‘nation’, the ‘Volk’, the fear of the deluge or flood, the fear that *all* “the Malans in creation” would be destroyed.¹²⁸ Here one could argue that the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ – the alibi for violence, repressive systems of governance and, during the period of ‘total-onslaught’, military intervention in neighbouring states – is representative of this lesser fear. This fear is therefore a foil located in the imaginary, subjective realm, which enables the state and its citizens to both disavow the true fetish of apartheid, and come to terms with what is projected as an irrational explosion of violence and anger directed toward apartheid and South Africa’s ‘white’ minority. Importantly, communism is the foreign element. It, according to Afrikaner ideologies, arrives from outside, disrupting the idealised relationship between the ‘white’ settler – as custodian – and the ‘black’ majority – as innocent. Conversely apartheid is, one could argue, indigenous to South Africa, it is intrinsically linked with Afrikaner ideology, and as highlighted earlier in this mini-thesis, it came to stand “as the National Government’s [and one could argue the Volk’s] lasting monuments”.¹²⁹

The ‘Rooi Gevaar’ is therefore not merely an ideological construct, a reaction to the global threat of communism, or a technology employed by the state. It is above all a discursive alibi embedded within ‘white’ South African society. Importantly, it is intimately linked to a greater fear, the fear of the ‘black’ majority – those who were infinitely more repressed than any other – enacting revenge on the ‘white’ minority and the architects of apartheid. Ultimately Riaan Malan’s passage (highlighted previously) speaks of the ‘Swart Gevaar’. It speaks to the deep-seated fear that the Afrikaner’s support for apartheid would come back to haunt them. But the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ enabled many within the ‘white’ minority to continue to disavow this fear. It enabled them to rationalise and say that it was (foreign) communism, not (‘indigenous’ and ‘natural’) apartheid, that was creating “feelings of hostility between black and white”.¹³⁰ Even in the 1990s former President Botha, during an interview regarding his possible attendance at the TRC, stated: “I will not apologize for the fight against a

¹²⁷ Ibid. 66.

¹²⁸ Riaan Malan, *My Traitor’s Heart*: 91.

¹²⁹ *Cape Times*, 27 June, 1950 (Cape Town: National Library of South Africa).

¹³⁰ Eddie Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*: 380.

Marxist revolutionary onslaught... An Afrikaner doesn't go on his knees before people, he does it before God".¹³¹

In elaboration it is worth recognising that apartheid and its principles of segregation were seen – particularly during apartheid's inception – to reaffirm the natural balance between 'white' settler society and other 'nations' within South Africa. The following argument by D.F. Malan when discussing the 'Jewish Question' – highlighted within a previous footnote – perfectly illustrates the above proposition:

In every home by preference you would welcome not the stranger with a different outlook, but your own kith and kin. Nations desire to preserve homogeneity, because every nation has got a soul, and every nation naturally desires that its soul should not be a divided one. Every nation considers from all points of view that it is a weakness, if in the body of the nation, there exists an undigested and unabsorbed and unabsorbable minority."¹³²

Before continuing it is important to recognise that the 'Rooi Gevaar' also enabled many individuals during the TRC to argue that they were fighting against communism and not for apartheid. Indeed "[t]he Commission accepted that many people had clearly believed that they were fighting against communism and anarchy and not in the first place for apartheid."¹³³ It also became a critical means through which far-right, nationalist organisations, such as the AWB and the Inkatha Freedom Party, mobilised against attempts to introduce democracy in the early 1990s.¹³⁴ Although this has not been the main focus of this mini-thesis, I argue that the 'Rooi Gevaar' conversely enabled a form of reconciliation to take place in what is commonly referred to as the 'post-apartheid'.

It is again perhaps Riaan Malan who offers the most honest portrayal of this fear, the fear of the 'black' Other. We have already read one of his passages. Others intermittently jump off the page.

¹³¹ Antjie Krog, *Country of My Skull* (London: Vintage, 1999): 402-403.

¹³² Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa*: 138.

¹³³ *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Volume One*: 67.

¹³⁴ In a 2010 film, *The Bloody Miracle*, which covers the transition to democracy, the AWB and Inkatha justify their rejection of the election process, on the grounds that they will not 'be ruled by communists'. 'The Bloody Miracle' (film), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qp3jtJz17Q> (Accessed: 24/09/2016).

When covering the story of Simon Mpungose, a man who had killed several ‘white’ South Africans in their sleep, Malan offers this reflection:

The day was November 20, 1985, and Simon’s death was just one among many. It coincided with a massive upsurge in political carnage and merited only a few paragraphs on the inside pages of the newspapers. Still, it struck me as a remarkable parable of life in a country where blacks were being kept down lest they leap up and slit white throats. This was Dawid Malan’s law, and it fulfilled its own grim prophecy: If you treat a black man that way, he will indeed leap up and drive a hammer into your brain. That seemed to be Simon’s message. I heard no hatred or despair in his last words, just clarity, which he seemed to be offering as a man offers a gift – a gift of understanding, I thought, and a warning. It seemed a rare offering, and so, some months after Simon’s execution, I went to Empangeni to receive it.

The first sight that greeted my eyes as I drove into town was a giant black fist, huge as a train, smashing through the price barrier on a billboard. It was just an ad for Power Stores, but in that time, in that place, it was easy to see it as a symbol for rising black rage. Indeed, it was very easy for me to see Simon himself. He was there in my mind’s eye, a black man barely six years older than me. His life had surely been shaped by forces I knew and understood – by DF Malan’s apartheid, by Verwoerd’s Bantu Education policies, and by Vorster’s barbaric prisons.¹³⁵

Another Afrikaner author and poet, Antjie Krog, writing on the TRC and the guilt of the Afrikaner during this critical moment in South African history, offers a different rendering of such manifestations:

[T]he basis was not a fear of Communism, Kaliski says. ‘We believed black people were not human; they were a threat, they were going to kill us all, and then waste away the country until it was nothing but another African disaster area’¹³⁶

Critical to this process was the necessary functioning of the mythological, the imagined notion of the communist devil, and the ways in which it worked as an alibi and a foil against the reality of apartheid. On the mythological Krog states:

A myth is a unit of imagination which makes it possible to accommodate two worlds. It reconciles the contradictions of these two worlds in a workable fashion and holds open the way between them. The two worlds are the inner and the outer world.

Myth makes it possible to live with what you cannot endure.

And if the myth has been learnt well it becomes a word – a single word that switches on the whole system of comforting delusions.

This fantasy, this word or two words was the ‘Rooi Gevaar’. It played a crucial role that distorted the true fetish of apartheid and the fear of the ‘black’ Other. According to Siegfried Kracauer when

¹³⁵ Riaan Malan, *My Traitor’s Heart* (London: Vintage, 1990): 204-205.

¹³⁶ Antjie Krog, *Country of My Skull* (London: Vintage, 1999): 140.

writing about film and its role as a ‘distorting lens’ in modern society, the fantasy is a mode of “imagining a way to uphold the longing for a different world in the face of overwhelming facticity”.¹³⁷ But what happens when the fantasy, the imaginary realm, in a sense becomes reality? How does it contain and uphold community? In the face of a world that increasingly mobilises fantasy – fantasy surrounding the ‘terrorist’, the migrant, and the Islamic Other – as a means to demonise, expulse, oppress, and suppress, how should we engage with the so-called fairy tale? Should we, as militant atheists do, insist on undermining and dislodging the ‘irrational’ fantasy that appears on the surface to drive fanaticism and violence? Or, like Luise White, should we attend to the ways in which “people participate in the states and civil societies that manage them,”¹³⁸ and perhaps at the same time, come to terms with the continual transformation, adaptation, and manifestation of processes that ultimately work to demonise, exclude, and repress the supposedly abject Other.

For Freud, fear and love co-exist, they work off and against each other. Without fear there is no love. In the same sense, extreme forms of nationalism – or should I say all forms of nationalism – require an object of fear. Individuals become closer to the nation through a fear or cultivated revulsion of the Other. But the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ was something more than the revulsion of those who rejected and fought against the apartheid state. It went much deeper than this. It allowed those who supported apartheid to rationalise and come to terms with its oppressive system and its violent manifestations. Invoking the words of Blaise Pascal – writing under different terms in the seventeenth century – it, the imaginary, or more specifically in our context, the imagined notion of the communist infiltrating and breaking down the apartheid laager, “stamp[ed] the true and the false in the same die”.¹³⁹

Communism clearly threatened the apartheid state, as it did NATO. If one were to accept Ellis’ portrayal of the ANC in exile, then we might also accept that the anti-apartheid struggle was all along driven by communists. This mini-thesis does not accept the above proposition, but it does argue that

¹³⁷ Siegfried Kracauer in ‘Film, Medium of a Disintegrating World’ in Siegfried Kracauer et al (eds), *Cinema and Experience American Writings: Essays on Film and Popular Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012): 13.

¹³⁸ Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires*: 61.

¹³⁹ Blaise Pascal, *Pascal’s Pensees*: 61.

the 'Rooi Gevaar', at different times and in different degrees functioned as a crucial component of apartheid's mythology and enabled such mythologies to be extended into the contemporary. It worked as an alibi, and it hid within its discourse a greater fear, the fear of the 'black' Other. During the transition to democracy, both fears manifest in its most violent, and many might argue most tragic form: the un/timely murder of Chris Hani.



CONCLUSION.

This mini-thesis has attempted to explore the ways in which anti-communist discourses and the 'Rooi Gevaar' functioned during the apartheid period. It did this by first examining the antecedents of anti-communist discourse in South Africa, which I argue predominantly began to emerge after the 1922 Rand Revolt. It then went on to specifically examine how the communist Other as an object of fear worked, both in relation to the apartheid state and more specifically, the Afrikaner 'nation'. This focus was not to suggest that the 'Rooi Gevaar' and its effects were isolated to Afrikaners. As we have seen, many of the anti-communist publications focused on within chapters 2 and 3 were produced by those who primarily identified with other cultural or national groups. However, considering the role of the NP, the Dutch Reformed Church, and other cultural gatekeepers in producing anti-communist propaganda during the apartheid period, it seems reasonable to suggest that the 'Rooi Gevaar' had specific, lasting effects amongst many Afrikaners. The following conclusion will summarise and draw upon certain aspects within this mini-thesis' main body of work, both in order to unravel some of its historical implications and to come to terms with its contemporary manifestations.

THE COMMUNIST OTHER AND THE 'ROOI GEVAAR': AS ALIBI.

As has been demonstrated elsewhere, truth and lies, depending on the political, social, or cultural agenda, often converge to form imagined histories.¹ However, it is also here where the imaginary becomes reality, normalising our understanding and interaction within the everyday, producing communities who associate through common historical, social, ideological, and mythological constructs, and projecting a particular narrative as 'truth' as opposed to the 'false ideology' of the Other. Furthermore as Balibar suggests; "no nation... has an ethnic basis... 'peoples' do not exist naturally any more than 'races' do". However, "they do have to institute in real (and therefore

¹ For a detailed discussion regarding notion of truth and lies within the public domain see for example; Jabulani Sithole and Sibongiseni Mkhize, 'Truth or Lies? Selective Memories, Imaginings, and Representations of Chief Albert John Luthuli in Recent Political Discourses', *History and Theory*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (Dec, 2000), pp. 69-85. And; Luise White, 'Telling More: Lies, Secrets, and History', *History and Theory*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (Dec, 2000), pp. 11-22.

historical) time their imaginary unity against other possible unities”.² In other words, nations are conceptually formed, maintained, and defended, primarily through the ontological process of imagining and canonising the nation in relation to what becomes its antithesis. In this sense, ontological categorisations and its imaginary assemblages enable the ‘nation’ to “make claims based upon the past against manipulable ‘rational’ processes of the present.” Thus explaining “why things are the way they are and shouldn’t be changed, or why things are the way they are and cannot be changed.”³

Such agendas in turn produce distinct communities and collective memories and experiences,⁴ which are maintained through a variety of disciplines and discourses of power, and normalised through their continual reinforcement in the everyday. In turn such discourses produce clear dichotomies and hierarchies between those who are loved – the nation – and those who are feared – the Other.⁵ This process perpetuates the divide between those who associate with a particular group and subsequently adopt, assimilate, and/or appropriate different cultural indicators, and those who on the margins, dismiss and/or deviate from the dominant norm, and as a result become disqualified and invalidated by authoritative power.⁶

Critically in an apartheid context this debate centres on how specific racialized discourses – including those which defined who was ‘white’ and who was ‘not-quite-white’ – had the effect of providing “truth claims about how the social world once was, why social inequalities do or should exist, and the social distinctions on which the future should rest.”⁷ In relation to this mini-thesis I hope to have revealed how a ‘community’ – the Afrikaner ‘nation’ and more broadly ‘white’ settler society – was, at least in part, retrospectively legitimised by an imagined notion of the communist spectre that

² Etienne Balibar, ‘Racism and Nationalism’ in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (eds), *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London, New York: Verso, 1991), 37-68: 49.

³ Immanuel Wallerstein, ‘The Construction of Peoplehood: Racism, Nationalism, Ethnicity’ in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (eds) *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London, New York: Verso, 1991), pp. 71-85: 78.

⁴ Leslie Witz, *Apartheid’s Festival*: 32

⁵ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*: 68.

⁶ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Random House, 1995): 223.

⁷ Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*: 91.

operated as an object of fear and enabled the ‘white’ minority to rationalise violence, oppression, suffering, and sin through the authoritative voice of the state and its agents. This in turn provided an alibi and reassurance during an uncertain period for those who, in the words of Benedict De Spinoza, “hovering between hope and fear... are quite willing to believe anything.”⁸

In the first chapter we saw how discourses focusing on the communist as an object of fear enabled the British colonial state and its ‘citizens’ to make claims on belonging and custodianship, by polarising debates between those who supported the British colonial project and as a result became or were reaffirmed as being ‘white’, and those who rejected colonialism, and were subjected as ‘communist’, ‘Jewish’, and the non-citizen. Through this process British colonialism and later the apartheid state – admittedly in different degrees and in subtly different forms – were able to produce ‘distinct social kinds’ and justify acts of oppression and violence against the communist Other and more importantly the ‘black’ majority. Fundamentally, the parallel mobilisation of anti-communist and anti-Semitic propaganda, and more importantly discourses which demote the ‘black’ majority to the status of the ‘innocent’ or ‘useful idiot’ highlights the pervasiveness of apartheid racism. In other words, the circulation of racist discourses within this particular context reaffirms the presence of what Balibar describes as “racism’s polymorphism” – “its overarching function, its connections with the whole set of practices of social normalization and exclusion”.⁹

As a supposed antithesis to apartheid and the Afrikaner ‘nation’, communism served as an alibi which justified the enactment of violence against perceived enemies of the state. Within this specific context – here we briefly shift our focus to the second chapter and Afrikaner nationalism – it enabled Afrikaner ‘foundational myths’ of the struggle between good and evil to be extended and projected into the contemporary as part of the global struggle against communism. Along this critical vein, the language and discourse of apartheid, and in particular anti-communist propaganda, was one that canonised historical and biblical frameworks of the past within the present. This represented the

⁸ Jonathon Israel (ed) *Spinoza: Theological-Political Treatise*: 4.

⁹ Etienne Balibar, ‘Racism and Nationalism’ in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (eds), *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*: 49.

extension of what Leslie Witz describes as the production of an ““original narrative”... built on themes of “struggle, sacrifice, and victory,” [which along with other mythologies, became]... the cohesive mechanism for community formation.”¹⁰ In short, anti-communist propaganda contributed to the ways in which the *future* of ‘white’ supremacy would be secured. It simplified the terms and conditions through which the ‘nation’ would be defended, and, at certain times it was mobilised as an alibi, a means to silence racist ideologies upon which apartheid was formalised, and much later to distance specific individuals and institutions from apartheid racism.

In elaboration, by focusing on the ‘titanic struggle’ between two opposing European systems of power, apartheid attempted to deflect attention away from the question of race and racism in South Africa. In short, anti-communist discourse, like other ideologies elsewhere, allowed the apartheid ‘citizen’ to disavow the true fetish of apartheid and the racist systems of power it was founded upon.¹¹ As we have seen throughout this mini-thesis however, the very essence of anti-communist discourse was permeated and at times driven by the very same racist ideologies which, I argue, it paradoxically aimed to silence. As Verwoerd attempted to do in his famous 1948 speech about apartheid and its principles of ‘good neighbourliness’, the apartheid state could endeavour to deflect attention from its racist foundations, but it could never leave its racist ideologies behind.¹² Put another more succinct way, “racism... [was and is] internal to the biopolitical state, woven into the weft of the social body, threaded through its fabric”.¹³

Amongst other things a discussion regarding this particular issue points towards the ways in which racist discourses defined how various groups and organisations were produced and/or self-policed as racialized subjects. What is more it contributes to longstanding debates regarding the primacy of, on the one hand, the class struggle and capitalism and, on the other, race and racism as primary motivations for oppression and violence in South Africa. But if this is the case, how is one to work

¹⁰ Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's Festival*: 32

¹¹ Slavoj Žižek, *Violence*: 44.

¹² ‘Hendrik Verwoerd Defines Apartheid’ (film), <http://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/hendrik-verwoerd-defines-apartheid> (accessed 11/07/2016).

¹³ Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*: 69.

through this problem in the contemporary? As the question of race – or rather systemic racism – and a renewed reliance on difference in South Africa (and further afield) continues to define the ways in which different groups engage, experience, and come to terms with the contemporary political milieu, is there space for a critique which simultaneously unravels the above issues, whilst attempting to think beyond a future that seems to be primarily and inevitably defined by hybridized colonial classificatory systems?

However idealistic the above proposition may sound, this is not to think toward the (im)possibility of a non-racial utopian society devoid of racism, but it does set a foundation for recognising the necessity to continually question the existence and polymorphism of historical discourses of power that foreclose the possibility of other futures and ways of seeing in the contemporary. Here we owe much to Suren Pillay who in a paper given at the 2015 CODESRIA (The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa) summit, challenged the audience to move beyond conventional notions of race, ethnicity, citizenry, and subject in order to conceptualise new ways of understanding self and citizen in the 'post-apartheid'.¹⁴ This is a paper which I only came across toward the end of this study, however it reverberates with some of the questions and problems I have attempted to think with throughout (and beyond) this body of work.

CONTEMPORARY MANIFESTATIONS: 1) THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE AND THE SEEMINGLY NECESSARY OBJECT OF FEAR.

As we have seen, after the 1948 election anti-communist discourses began to intensify. From this point onwards communists became a main subject of apartheid propaganda, mobilised as a means to repress a range of anti-apartheid activists. In the 1960s a series of high profile political trials – the Treason, Rivonia, and Fisher Trials – would be fought (and lost on the first occasion) upon the assertion that the accused were communists or involved in a Soviet conspiracy that intended to remove the apartheid government through a violent, Marxist revolution. After the Rivonia Trial and the imprisonment of a number of important leaders of the anti-apartheid struggle, Bram Fischer

¹⁴ Surenden Pillay, 'Identity, Difference, Citizenship, Or Why I am No Longer a Non-Racialist'.

became the number one target of the apartheid state, and was depicted and disavowed as a ‘Volksverraaier’ within the public domain.

In the third chapter of this mini-thesis I attempted to reveal how, whilst underground, Fischer became the embodiment of the ‘white’ communist stereotype, the unseen, often unrecognisable Other who always already potentially infiltrated the apartheid laager. Through this discussion I hope to have shown how the communist Other, functioned as an antithesis to the apartheid ‘citizen’ and simultaneously undermined apartheid’s ontology by potentially moving between segregated spaces – both physical and metaphysical. In this embodiment the communist functioned as a necessary object of fear, who in the words of Ahmed, “re-establish[ed] distance between bodies,” and, one might argue, worked to ensure the ‘white’ minority’s dependence on the apartheid state.¹⁵ Just as importantly however, the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ worked as an alibi, enabling the apartheid state and its ‘citizens’ to justify the enactment of violence and oppression of the ‘black’ majority.

I argue that this particular aspect also has important implications for understanding the period of transition in the 1990s. For example, during this period the ‘Rooi Gevaar’ was mobilised by the right-wing as an alibi to justify their denouncement of negotiations between the NP and the ANC.¹⁶ Interestingly it also appears to have taken on new forms, becoming an alibi that allowed many, particularly during the TRC to argue that they were fighting against communism not for apartheid. In a sense then communism became a critical signifier that enabled previously opposed groups to supposedly undergo a process of reconciliation during the late 1980s and early 1990s. This particular aspect of this study is one which I plan to engage with in the future, as it appears to have serious implications for understanding South Africa’s contemporary political milieu.

In a society where a large proportion of South Africans appear to remain – to different degrees – in fear of the Other and rising crime levels, and when security fences – both physical and metaphysical –

¹⁵ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*: 63.

¹⁶ For example: *The Bloody Miracle* (film) (2014) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qp3jtJzf7Q> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VBQp7668KI> (Accessed: 01/11/2016).

continue to be constructed, reinforced and reaffirmed, it seems that this mini-thesis' subject continues to hold some currency. As we have seen, recent xenophobic (or Afrophobic) attacks on African migrants in 2015 – which were allegedly fomented by comments made by Zulu King Zwelithini about foreign 'lice' and leaving the 'ants out in the sun' – have highlighted the ways in which the manifestation and normalisation of difference continues to have violent effects.¹⁷ If one were to expand debates to a global context – the fear of the 'hyper-mobile terrorist' within Europe,¹⁸ and the current demonization of Islam, which Derrida convincingly argues replaced the communist as the West's primary object of fear and target of violence¹⁹ – then it is possible to trace echoes of this mini-thesis' subject into the contemporary global milieu.

It is therefore of paramount importance to recognise that the issues this mini-thesis has attended to are not historically isolated to apartheid, or – in the contemporary – other overtly totalitarian states, such as in Israel. Indeed, similar discourses are still at work, or are returning, benignly, throughout the so-called 'civilised' world, and in the European Union – a body of nations which was supposedly formed in order to eradicate this type of violent return. Perhaps the most explicit manifestation has recently emerged from the United States in the form of Donald Trump and a resurgent far-right. However, considering my own connection with Britain, it seems pertinent to highlight a recent, post-Brexit speech made by Prime Minister Theresa May on immigration and her vision to make Britain 'fair for all'.²⁰

It is important to recognise that although May's speech is laced with rhetoric regarding fairness and a desire to protect the less fortunate in society, the Conservative Party's recent proposals – which have since been withdrawn after pressure from various human-rights groups, the political opposition, and the media – to force companies to publicly disclose the names of foreigners in their employ, suggests

¹⁷ 'Foreigners Must Go Home – King Zwelithini', *The Citizen*, <http://citizen.co.za/349347/foreigners-must-go-home-king-zwelithini/> (Accessed: 12/10/2016).

¹⁸ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*: 73.

¹⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: 75.

²⁰ 'Theresa May's conference speech in full', *The Telegraph* <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/10/05/theresa-mays-conference-speech-in-full/> (Accessed: 11/10/2016).

that the government will continue to mobilise such rhetoric as a means to deflect attention away from policies that have purposefully attempted to corrode society, and produce an object of fear (the specifically Muslim migrant) which works as alibi within this specific context.²¹ In her speech May discusses the consolidation and apparent reaffirmation of what it means to be a British citizen in the post-Brexit era:

[W]ithin our society today, we see division and unfairness all around. Between a more prosperous older generation and a struggling younger generation. Between the wealth of London and the rest of the country. But perhaps most of all, between the rich, the successful and the powerful - and their fellow citizens. Now don't get me wrong. We applaud success. We want people to get on. But we also value something else: the spirit of citizenship. That spirit that means you respect the bonds and obligations that make our society work... That spirit that means recognising the social contract that says you train up local young people before you take on cheap labour from overseas... But today, too many people in positions of power behave as though they have more in common with international elites than with the people down the road, the people they employ, the people they pass in the street. But if you believe you're a citizen of the world, you're a citizen of nowhere. You don't understand what the very word 'citizenship' means.²²

In this speech May speaks of a national spirit. By implying that those who wish to be a part of the 'nation' must conform in some way to the values set out by the current government, she also defines who is and who is not a member of the nation, who is inside and who is outside. Through this statement she suggests that those who do not conform to the new 'social contract', will be excluded and demonised as either foreign, criminal, or 'not-quite-British'. May also argues that those who would rather associate as citizens of the European Union or 'Citizens of the World', are deluded and unwanted. She also speaks of the centre ground – the supposedly ideological and political space between radical 'leftists' and right wing liberals – suggesting that a new nationalism which 'cares' for all members of the 'nation', is the only way to progress in the post-Brexit era. Above all May speaks of fairness. However, her comments hauntingly echo those of the past (namely fascism), which it seems are returning in new, seemingly benign forms that preach togetherness and solidarity, but merely work to produce difference, demonise, and to justify the continued implementation of oppressive policies and state funded violence at home and abroad.

²¹ 'Government U-turns on plan to force firms to list foreign employees after just a week', *Independent* <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/foreign-workers-u-turn-list-shame-companies-theresa-may-amber-rudd-justine-greening-a7352466.html> (Accessed 11/10/2016).

²² 'Theresa May's conference speech in full', *The Telegraph*.

CONTEMPORARY MANIFESTATIONS: 2) BIOGRAPHICAL PRODUCTION AND THE MESSIANIC FIGURE OF HISTORY.

Like many heroes of the struggle Fischer is now invoked as a quasi-messianic figure. The three quotes – in the previous chapter – at the beginning of our discussion on Fischer (Eulogy, Lament, and Prophecy) testify to the ways in which the lives and people of the past are conjured in the present as saintly figures and as lessons in history. In a sense then Fischer's life is not only inextricably linked with other heroic figures and major historical events of the anti-apartheid struggle, but also our present and our possible futures. He is like others, continually called upon to question and judge the contemporary, to guide us into the future, and to suggest where we might have gone wrong. This is 'History-as-Lesson' in its purest form.²³ But how is the messianic invoked and mobilised in the contemporary?

Remember Yvonne Malan argued that in death Fischer remains an embarrassment for certain Afrikaners. Here, Fischer and others, serve as a painful reminder for individuals and institutions who at worst supported and propped up the apartheid project, and at best passively and silently submitted to its policies, choosing to ignore or attempting to justify signs of oppression and violence enacted on the 'black' majority. Critically, Malan suggests that the demonization Fischer received in the contemporary had "nothing to do with communism". However, this rejection is more complicated than she suggests. Of course the embarrassment of actively or passively supporting the apartheid project whilst being held up in comparison to Fischer might produce a dismissive and, as we have seen, a violent reaction from certain sections of the Afrikaans community. Having said this, the deep-seated fear and revulsion of communism would have made an indelible impression that I argue remains in one form or another in the contemporary.²⁴

²³ Nicky Rousseau, 'Popular History in the 1980s: The Politics of Production' (M.A. Thesis, University of the Western Cape, 1994): 18.

²⁴ In response to protest regarding Fischer's honorary doctorate the SACP prepared a statement, which read as follows: "Those who have led the posthumous witch-hunt against Fischer, like the deputy editor of *Die Burger*, Leopold Scholtz, and so-called academics (Herman Gilliomee and Jannic Gagiano), will roll their eyes in disbelief that the majority of South Africans recognise the contribution Fischer made, as a communist and Afrikaner, to a democratic South Africa. These elements seek to reduce communism to the gulag. Rooi-gevaar is lovingly preserved in the mausoleum of their newspaper columns denying their Afrikaans readers once the

If as I and others suggest, anti-communist ideologies became embedded within ‘white’ settler society, then accepting Fischer as a hero of the Afrikaner ‘nation’ would have been all the more difficult.²⁵

Perhaps my conversation with the Afrikaner interlocutor – referred to in the introduction to this mini-thesis – points towards this deep-seated fear or mistrust of anything communist. It was after all Stellenbosch University that created the Institute for the Study of Marxism (ISMUS) – led by Dirk Kotze, ‘renowned (anti)Marxist historian’ – in 1980, which primarily aimed to study and understand Marxism from a critical, academic perspective, and to undermine its continued influence in South Africa.²⁶ Considering the University’s relatively untransformed character in the contemporary, it is not surprising to see the same reaction (it must be noted however that Fischer was eventually granted a doctorate) amongst certain sections of the Afrikaner community, to a communist who after years of demonization and exclusion once again threatened to infiltrate the hallowed halls of Afrikanerdom.

In an article recently published online by *The Conversation*, Christi van der Westhuizen, asked if it is possible to re-imagine Afrikaner identity in what is commonly referred to as the ‘post-apartheid’.²⁷ By drawing upon the notions of ‘Eendersdenkendheid’ (an Afrikaans word, used by Strydom, Prime Minister between 1954 and 1958, to enforce “a condition of thinking the same” amongst Afrikaners) and ‘Andersdenkendheid’ (again a collective term, but also “a countervailing action against conformism in that one adopts a posture of questioning and critical thinking”) van der Westhuizen attempted to unravel the ways in which Afrikaans homogeneity can be productively undermined in the contemporary.

In the article she highlights the lives of ‘non-conformist’ Afrikaners, such as the socialist ‘Volksmoeders’ (mothers of the nation), who, during the early twentieth century in the then diverse

knowledge and information of what communism has meant for this country”. See: ‘SACP Statement on Honorary Doctorate Award to Bram Fischer’.

²⁵ In his genealogical study of anti-communist discourse in South Africa, Wessel Visser argues that the “average white South African, especially during the period 1974-1984, was imbued with the psychosis of a fear of a world-wide communist threat”, see: Wessel Visser, ‘Afrikaner anti-communist history production in South African historiography’.

²⁶ Ibid. 319.

²⁷ Christi van der Westhuizen, ‘How Afrikaner Identity can be re-imagined in a post-apartheid world’, *The Conversation* <http://theconversation.com/how-afrikaner-identity-can-be-re-imagined-in-a-post-apartheid-world-56222> (Accessed 31/08/2016).

communities of Johannesburg, broke free from Afrikaner patriarchy, and organised themselves in militant organisations such as the Garment Workers Union. For van der Westhuizen women such as Hester and Johanna Cornelius, Anna Scheepers, Katie Viljoen, Dulcie Hartwell and Anna Jacobs “serve as a democratic pointer today”, attesting to the ways in which Afrikaners were and are heterogeneous and not necessarily contained by common preconceptions produced by those who claim to be cultural ‘gatekeepers’ of the ‘Volk’. Jacobs for example “drew on the courage and militancy of the Boer women in the face of British imperialism. But she did so in an expansive mode of advancing equalisation. It was a proposition that was anathema to Afrikaner nationalism.”²⁸

Bram Fischer is also held up as a “democratic pointer”, a figure who undermined totalitarian and homogenous Afrikaner identity, but nevertheless remained an Afrikaner, and made many of his political choices and actions with a strong sense of duty as an Afrikaner in Africa. As the SACP stated after his honorary doctorate at Stellenbosch: “Bram Fischer was always deeply proud of his Afrikaner roots and heritage. He saw no contradiction between the republican and anti-imperialist traditions of his Free State family, and his own espousal of communism.”²⁹

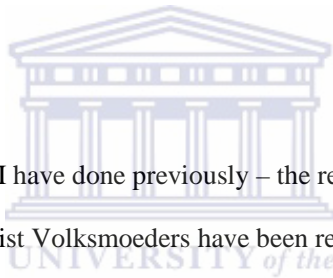
Critically van der Westhuizen suggests that “[i]n the post-apartheid... socialist *volksmoeders*, [and] Fischer... can be used as guides. What sets these so-called traitors or *volksverraaiers* apart from the *volk* is their ability to identify with the racialised other through a sense of common humanity.” She concludes by arguing: “There are again attempts to re-enforce *eendersdenkendheid*, to narrow down and simplify Afrikaner identities, and to corral Afrikaners into a laager with a view of the world filled with suspicion, fear and arrogance. The *volksverraaiers* point the way out of this inhumanity. They have done so by claiming the tradition of *andersdenkendheid*. With that they have provided Afrikaners with a place to build the vibrant democracy that is South Africa.”³⁰

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ ‘SACP statement on Honorary Doctorate Award to Bram Fischer’.

³⁰ Christi van der Westhuizen, ‘How Afrikaner Identity can be re-imagined in a post-apartheid world’.

Unlike van der Westhuizen it is not my intention to point towards more productive ways of conceptualizing what it means to be an Afrikaner in contemporary South African society. This is of course an important project, particularly when considering the recent explosion of racist, Afrikaner nationalism emerging after ‘black’ students at Stellenbosch University and the University of Pretoria, questioned and challenged the role of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at these institutions.³¹ Although one might argue that such violence is the expression of a small minority within the Afrikaans community, the silence from others in this matter, heightens the sense that the Afrikaner of old has returned to haunt post-1994 South Africa. Coupled with this, new nationalist projects that are attempting to re-establish segregation and Afrikaner independence, add weight to the argument that such manifestations – along with others highlighted within this conclusion – should no longer be tolerated by the South African government or those Afrikaners who disassociate with this type of violent nationalism.³²



It is also important to consider – as I have done previously – the reasons why anti-apartheid activists such as Bram Fischer and the socialist Volksmoeders have been rejected by some sections of the Afrikaans community. In my own experience, it is not so much the rejection of the individuals themselves, but is rather due to a lack of knowledge and comprehension of these figures. Perhaps this demonstrates how effective anti-communist discourses were in disassociating such figures from the Afrikaans community at large. Regardless of the specific reasoning, it appears as if Fischer and others are still seen as being on the outside, primarily figures of liberation – tied to closely to the ignominious shame experienced during the transition to democracy³³ – and not ‘real’ Afrikaners. When considering the case of Afrikaners like Breyten Breytenbach, a figure also discussed by van der Westhuizen, this particular issue becomes even more complex and nuanced. Amongst what might be described as more cosmopolitan Afrikaners, Breytenbach is held up as a powerful cultural icon.

³¹ ‘Students protests use of Afrikaans as a teaching language in South Africa’, *Youtube* (film)<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dolluO9hM5s> (Accessed 05/09/2016).

³² See: ‘Only Whites Will be Welcome in this Eden’, *Weekend Argus*, 01/10/2016. And: ‘Bou Jou Afrikaanse Universiteit’. <https://solidariteit.co.za/bou-jou-afrikaanse-universiteit/> (Accessed 13/10/2016).

³³ This shame is most vividly highlighted in Antjie Krog’s *Country of My Skull*, in which she narrates her experiences as an Afrikaner and journalist working on the TRC. Antjie Krog, *Country of my Skull* (London: Vintage, 1999).

However, this has more to do with his role as Afrikaner artist and poet, than as an anti-apartheid activist. At the very least, the former appears to be a comfortable space for Afrikaner ‘born-frees’ to inhabit.

CONTEMPORARY MANIFESTATIONS: 3) HISTORY-AS-SPECTRE.

In a groundbreaking M.A. Thesis, which many claim to have opened up historiography in South Africa to a more critical and nuanced field of enquiry, Nicky Rousseau deconstructs and critiques dominant modes of producing public history, and suggests that it can be divided into three distinct but interlinked sub-categories: History-as-Lesson, History-as-Mobilisation, and History-as-Politics.³⁴ In this thesis Rousseau problematizes the ways in which the first two (lesson and mobilisation) tend to simplify and distort our historical past, working as tools of identity formation and nation-building, whilst silencing complications and contradictions which may enable us to rethink the history of Southern Africa in new more productive ways. History-as-Politics is for Rousseau a mode of thinking which attends to the above problematique. It enables an engagement that problematizes the role of the historian, whilst unraveling the processes of production (what Rousseau at this time calls ‘processes of creation’) involved in any historiographical exercise.³⁵

Perhaps here is where we can locate the contemporary spectre of history – or what I am tentatively calling History-as-Spectre – the figure who insists on challenging homogeneity in the present, and over-simplified and unproblematised renderings of our historical past. Perhaps the spectre also refers to what van der Westhuizen names ‘Andersdenkendheid’, the collective spirit of the past, embodied in heroic figures, who are invoked, whether welcome or not, and conjured through the eulogy, the lament, and the prophecy, to challenge us in the present. This is not to suggest that they should be conjured, it merely highlights the fact that they are. I myself have done so throughout this mini-thesis, purposefully invoking Fischer on several occasions to speak – as interlocutor – to and within different moments of our discussion.

³⁴ Nicky Rousseau, ‘Popular History in the 1980s: The Politics of Production’.

³⁵ Ibid. 50.

Interestingly, during a recent tutorial in which third year undergraduate students were asked to discuss Rousseau's thesis, members of the 'Fees Must Fall Movement' invoked the memory of Oscar Peterson (as student martyr), and Steve Biko and Frantz Fanon (as radical black philosophers) to demonstrate the productive capacity of History-as-Mobilisation. Such figures were conjured, and through the medium of history and the voice of the student activist, were mobilised in judgement of what these students saw as a continued system of 'white' oppression – in the form of 'white' capital – on the 'black' majority. Indeed Marx himself is conjured in the 'post-apartheid', most recently by Vashna Jagarnath in an article published by *The Daily Maverick*. Here Jagarnath mobilises Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* as allegorical lesson, and compares his critique of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte's 1851 coup d'état, with Jacob Zuma's political ascension in South Africa. Although she warns against reducing *The Eighteenth Brumaire* to the contemporary political milieu, she dwells upon certain aspects of Marx's thought and brings it forth as prophecy and lesson so that we may 'learn from the past'. In this way Marx is conjured yet again to speak to and judge South African politics, most pertinently within this particular article, in relation to ideology and state driven propaganda:

Marx offers invaluable illumination into the basic logic of the spin and outright propaganda coming from the Zuma camp. He notes that in times of crisis there is a temptation to "anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, borrowing from them names, battle slogans, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in time-honoured disguise and borrowed language."³⁶

Clearly this project goes far beyond the 'Rooi Gevaar' and 'white' settler identity. More importantly it speaks to South Africa as a whole. It speaks to the reaffirmation of difference and the reconfiguration of apartheid categories – pervasively circulating under the guise of new socially acceptable discourses centred on 'culture' as the (official) defining characteristic of South Africa and its people.³⁷ It speaks to the 'Rainbow Nation', and processes of reconciliation and social change that for many have merely served as symbolic tokens that silence newer, more benign forms of oppression and violence.

³⁶ Vashna Jagarnath, 'Op-Ed: Lessons for the Zuma era in Marx's account of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte's coup d'état', *Daily Maverick* <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-09-28-op-ed-lessons-for-the-zuma-era-in-marxs-account-of-louis-napolon-bonapartes-coup-detat/#.V-zO-4VOLmI> (Accessed 29/09/2016).

³⁷ Gary Minkley (2008) "'A fragile inheritor'". See also; Terence Ranger, 'The invention of tradition in colonial Africa'.

If History-as-Lesson and History-as-Mobilisation serve as key tools through which new notions of identity, nationality, citizenry, and *difference* are canonised, then History-as-Spectre – along with History-as-Politics – might work to undo History-as-Lesson/Mobilisation in their most dangerous and unproductive forms. Importantly, unlike History-as-Lesson/Mobilisation, History-as-Spectre does not canonise the past in the present. It does not normalise our understanding of chronology and teleology (because the spectre is without teleology and chronology, it is at once dead, in the past, but at the same time, alive and speaking to us in the present) and does not allow us to presume that improvement and development are natural teleological steps.

Most importantly it does not prop up new regimes of truth and systems of control. It does not do these things because it cannot do these things. Instead, it speaks to us from the past and simultaneously in the present. It is in a sense timeless, it does not “belong to time”, it “speaks across time, in time”.³⁸ It is conjured for a fleeting moment, as with Hamlet’s father’s ghost, to question and challenge dominant notions of history and identity in the contemporary. But, being in a peripheral, liminal space, on the edge of the ‘real’, it does not remain to reconfigure and freeze new knowledge and new systems of power. What I am suggesting is that perhaps there is something else, something that can’t be located in History-as-Lesson, History-as-Mobilisation, and History-as-Politics. This may well be the spectral haunting of history and its ghosts.

Importantly, the spectre cannot be contained by the historian – including myself – because memory and the imaginary works in multiplicitous, pervasive, and unpredictable ways. If one were to canonise the spectres of the past in a biographical text for example, there would and should be many other versions of this particular life which necessarily undermine and unravel the established canon. This in itself may be one of the most critical aspects of the discipline of history – The practice of conjuring spectres. For what else is history than the act of speaking with the dead? That is what historians do. We speak for and with the dead, and allow the dead to speak through us.

³⁸ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: xix.

But is this sounding too much like History-as-Lesson? That the spectre returns to us so that we can learn from the past and become better people? No, the commitment to History-as-Spectre, is a commitment to allowing the past and the figures who are invoked to question and challenge the ways in which we too easily learn and take note in order to state that everything is ok, that this, apartheid, genocide, and world war, ‘won’t happen again’. To allow spectres to speak freely is to recognise that we do not fully know the past, we do not know the present, and we can only make predictions on the future. In the words of Jacques Derrida, we should be with the spectres of history, and attend to the politics which they invoke, simultaneously challenging: “a politics of memory, of inheritance, and of generations”.³⁹



³⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*: xviii.

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EXHIBITIONS.

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INTERVIEWS.

Informal interview with Ruth Rice, 18/08/2016, Noordhoek, and communications via email.