

From Nationalist Rebellion to Pan-African Liberation: A Theory of the Apartheid Endgame in South Africa*

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Why did the apartheid's endgame favor the African National Congress (ANC) over other contenders? This article advances a path dependence argument, hypothesizing Mandela's 1962 trip across Africa as a "critical juncture" whose arc of counter-intuitive developments narrowed the ruling National Party's bargaining options down to its worst enemy—Mandela's ANC.

Keywords: African National Congress (ANC), apartheid, Dar-es-Salaam, liberation, Mandela, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), National Party (NP), Nyerere, Pan-African

Introduction

In politics, no matter how much one plans, circumstances often dictate events. (Mandela, 2013, p. 197)

Fortis fortuna adiuvat [Fortune favors the brave]. (Latin dictum)

Context

Modern South Africa is a byproduct of the double sin of white domination and black segregation dating back to the Dutch settlement in the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 followed by several waves of other European settlers, notably German and French. While these settlers fought the British colonial administration in the late 1800s, the outcomes of these intra-whites wars made the situation of the black populations even worse by paving the way for the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 as an all-white state. This development culminated in the birth of the apartheid regime in 1948, which dominated the political, cultural, and economic life of the country for the next six decades. This despicable regime eventually bowed to internal and external pressures in the late 1980s and initiated a negotiated settlement that resulted in the 1994 multiracial elections from which the African National Congress (ANC) emerged as the leading force, presiding over a multi-racial democratic government.

The Puzzle

Like any hard-won victory, the happy-ending struggle against the apartheid regime and the resulting triumph of Mandela-led ANC has many fathers. Yet, judging from dominant accounts, the pride of place that goes to Mandela seems counter-intuitive. To be sure, Mandela played a pivotal role in militarizing the anti-apartheid struggle and popularizing his brand of hardball bargaining during his trials in the courtroom. Yet,

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claims abound that Mandela's militarist approach "may have harmed the [whole anti-apartheid] movement, weakening the nonviolent campaigns (successfully linked to the nonviolent movement) and justifying the repression of all resistance efforts" (Kurtz, 2010, p. 1). In this regard, conventional wisdom wants us to believe that the lion's share of the anti-apartheid triumph goes to the South African non-violence movement emphatically theorized by American theologian Walter Wink as "probably the largest grassroots eruption of diverse nonviolent strategies in a single struggle in human history" (Kurtz, 2010, p. 2). "In the end", Kurtz (2010) concluded, "a concerted grassroots nonviolent civil resistance movement in coalition with international support and sanctions forced the white government to negotiate" (p. 1). It thus comes as no surprise that many expected the apartheid endgame to materialize into Smuts and Westcott (1980)'s prediction that "The Purple Shall Govern"—the purple referring to the multi-faceted non-violent movement incarnated by people like Desmond Tutu (1994). This begs the puzzle: How and why, in its search for a negotiated exit, the apartheid regime resolved to favor Mandela's ANC over other contenders? To address this puzzle, the author contends that one has to dig deep into what makes the ANC unique among other South African freedom fighters.

Argument

In light of the research findings, the author argues that the triumph of Mandela-led ANC within the anti-apartheid's endgame can be theorized as the legacy of Mandela's 1962 trip across Africa and the resulting Pan-Africanization of the anti-apartheid struggle. The relation between the two historical moments (1962 trip and 1990s triumph) is neither linear nor obvious, however. In fact, findings show that not only the trip seldom happened according to initial plans, it also yielded meager direct results. Yet, subsequent developments show that most of the initial missteps and setbacks eventually yielded beneficial unintended consequences and game-changer breakthroughs via several rough patches and unsuspected pathways to success.

To account for these counter-intuitive developments, the author puts forth a path dependence approach embedded in the logic of increasing return processes going back and forth between the variables of context, agency, and opportunity. To this end, the author hypothesizes Mandela's 1962 trip as a "critical juncture", that is, a new departure that does "establish certain directions of change and foreclose others in a way that shape development over long periods of time" (Mahoney 2000, p. 504). The result is a multifaceted, historicized, and balanced account of the complex and conflicting dynamics behind the under-studied process of Pan-Africanizing the anti-apartheid struggle, a step that set apart Mandela-led ANC from and above all other anti-apartheid forces in South Africa.

Sources and Methods

The article originates from the field research undertaken in Tanzania over six years with a focus on the genesis and the genealogies of the political awakening and intellectual vibrancy that blossomed in the 1960s in Dar-es-Salaam—the economic and intellectual capital of the United Republic of Tanzania¹. A great deal of the materials thus collected includes a comprehensive literature review of the available literature (books, articles, online resources, etc.) and a vast archival research work in Dar-es-Salaam notably at the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation, the University of Dar-es-Salaam, the national public library, Mkuki na Nyota publishers, and several newspapers. It is also informed by insights from extensive interviews and chats the author has had with five dozens of privileged witnesses and keen observers including former and current officials, civilian, and

¹ The fieldwork includes a 2-year long stay in Tanzania during the period 2011-2012 followed by short summer trips in 2014, 2015, and 2017.

military alike, as well as researchers, journalists, and ordinary people who happened to be in the right place at the right moment to witness some of the issues of interest. However, updated information tailored to the scope and purpose of this article was collected during the author's fieldwork in Dar-es-Salaam in the summer of 2017. Additional insights were gathered from a wealth of South Africa's documents now accessible online as well as precious data received from and/or under the auspices of several institutions including the Nelson Mandela Foundation, the Desmond Tutu Peace Center, and the Boston-based Partners of South Africa, and the UMass Boston-affiliated O'Malley—The Heart of Hope website.

In terms of methods, the study puts forth the tools and techniques of critical social inquiry embedded in the "close-to-the-ground" descriptions and "explanations of reality" in the tradition of Shapiro (2005). In doing so, the analysis "moves back and forth between theoretical and historical levels, using one to amplify and illuminate the other" (Meierhenrich, 2008, p. 10). All along the way, the path dependence argument is validated through a rigorous process-tracing, meant to "uncover the causal mechanisms that link the constitutive events in the intensive type of processes" (Falleti, 2016, p. 455) with the aim to "investigate and explain the decision process by which various initial conditions are translated into outcomes" (George & McKeown, 1985, p. 35).

Originality and Contribution to Knowledge

The originality of this paper is to empirically document and critically test the validity of the hypothesized historical cause between Mandela's trip across Africa in 1962 and his rise to power in 1994. The impetus to an inquiry into this topic stems from the author's awareness of the longstanding knowledge gaps surrounding this historic trip. For, as one analyst has shown, "[a] literature review of Nelson Mandela's 1962 activities as Commander in Chief [of Umkhonto we Sizwe] identified information gaps and inconsistencies while recent publications perpetuate myths and factual distortions" (Benneyworth, 2011, p. 82). This situation is of particular concern because even the much-vaunted first accounts, such as "Mandela's memoir and Anthony Sampson's biography briefly mention certain military specifics, yet provide no detail of him" (Benneyworth, 2011, p. 82). Moreover, while "[t]he end of apartheid has opened up new research possibilities into the history of the African National Congress (ANC)", as Lissoni and Suriano (2014) had shown, "the scholarship on the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), remains largely restricted to questions of strategic, political and military effectiveness" while "the transnational character of the anti-apartheid struggle is mostly absent from nationalist historiographies" (p. 129). In this regard, the paper's major expected contribution to knowledge lies in digging deeper beneath the iceberg of "Mandela's 1962 activities" to shed light on the transnational dimensions of the anti-apartheid struggle from a Pan African perspective.

Outline

The article is structured into three major parts in addition to this introduction and the closing remarks. Part 1 sets the stage by situating the anti-apartheid struggle in a broader historical perspective. Part 2 addresses the puzzle of the ANC lion's share in the anti-apartheid's endgame. The focus is on the serendipitous nature and mixed results of Mandela's 1962 trip across Africa as well as the decisive role of Tanzanian President Nyerere in Pan-Africanizing Mandela's cause—a determinant factor that would take the endangered ANC through several rough patches towards unsuspected pathways to success. Part 3 synthesizes the insights from the previous parts to highlight the validity and limits of the hypothesized causal relation between Mandela's 1962 trip across Africa and his triumphal rise to power three decades later.

The Roots and Routes of the Anti-apartheid Struggle: A Brief History

Modern South Africa is a multi-racial country of 55 million people, bordered by Namibia to the northwest, by Botswana and Zimbabwe to the north, and by Mozambique and Swaziland to the northeast and east. While its coastlines border the Indian Ocean to the southeast and the Atlantic Ocean to the southwest, its eastern part includes an enclave called Lesotho, which is a sovereign kingdom. While little is known about early social and political life in this part of the world², linguistic studies (Mesthrie, 2002) suggest that early settlements resulted from three waves of the Bantu migrations from which emerged the current major 11 tribes: Zulu (28%), Xhosa (20%), Swati (3%), and Ndebele (3%) who belong to the Nguni group; Pedi (11%), Sotho (11%), and Tswana (10%) who form the Sotho-Tswana group; and Venda (3%) and Tsonga (5%) who form a group of their own (Statistics South Africa, 2011; 2017). As in many other African regions, these tribes had various forms and structures of governance ranging from a village-style government with a council of elders to kingdoms and empires with centralized governments.

Following the Dutch settlement in the Cape of Good Hope in 1652, South Africa became home to three major waves of immigrants: White Europeans, Asians, and the Coloureds. The Europeans include three major sub-categories: Boers aka Afrikaners who are descendants of the Dutch, German and French who settled in South Africa from the 17th century onwards; English-speakers who were descendants of settlers from the British Isles who came to the country from the late 18th century onwards; and immigrants and descendants of immigrants from the rest of Europe, including Greeks, Portugueses, Eastern European Jews, Hungarians, and Germans.

The Asian community originates from indentured Asian workers who were brought from India to work on the sugar plantations in Natal in the 19th century. As to the so-called Coloureds, they are the descendants of mixed parentage from the black slaves (who were brought to South Africa from east and central Africa to the Cape Colony from 1653 until 1822) and people from other races, notably the Europeans and the Asians.

The descendants of the first Dutch settlers eventually fought, and then joined forces with the other Whites including the British colonizers to form the Union of South Africa in May 1910. To the chagrin of black populations, however, this “white minority state consolidated its grip passing more laws to dislodge African people, who had survived land dispossession through entering into sharecropping and tenancy in white-owned farms” (SAHO, 2017b).

It was in this context that a group of young men recently returned from Western universities³ formed on January 8, 1912, a trans-tribal organization known as the South African National Congress (SANC)—the future African National Congress (The Black Sash, 1976). The struggle led by this national platform will be largely nonviolent until 1948 when a supremacist white party, the National Party (NP), rose to power and established the apartheid system. In response, a new generation of educated young men including Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, and Robert Sobukwe launched within the ANC an insurgent movement known as the Youth League which eventually took the mother umbrella ANC from its longstanding non-violent stance

² One recent study contends that “evidence of early humans living on the coast in South Africa, harvesting food from the sea, employing complex bladelet tools and using red pigments in symbolic behavior” goes back to “164,000 years ago (Science Daily, 2007).

³ They include Reverend John Dube (1871-1946), a Zulu educated at Oberlin College (USA); Solomon Plaatje (1876-1932), a Soweto-born lawyer and writer educated at Berlin in Germany; and Reverend Waller Rubusana (1858-1936), a statesman from the Cape Colony who had strong ties to London.

towards a more militant and confrontational approach. Eventually, the scale of apartheid policies and practices would radicalize the young activists and brought them to embark on a new path, namely, the turn to violence (Landau, 2012) which was championed by two rival rabble-rousers, Robert Sobukwe at the helm of the Pan African Congress (PAC), and Nelson Mandela in command of Umkonto we Sizwe (MK)—a group initially conceived of as “a new military organization, separate from the ANC” (Mandela, 2013, p. 274).

Roughly speaking, the anti-apartheid struggle can be divided into five defining moments: (i) The nonviolence era I (1948- 1959) marked by a campaign of defiance and peaceful demonstrations under the leadership of the ANC in partnership with its multiracial allies; (ii) Underground armed resistance (1959-1970) dominated by violent acts of sabotage by the ANC through MK activists and to a lesser extent, the insurgent forces affiliated with the Communist Party (CP) and the Pan African Congress (PAC); (iii) the era of Black militancy movement (1970-1980) marked by massive labor strikes and student uprising; (iv) the nonviolence era II (1980-1990) characterized by mass mobilization and multiracial pro-democracy activism; and (v) the decline of the apartheid system (1990-1994) that coincided with a negotiated path to multi-racial democracy.

Of these periods, the last one marks a milestone of its kind, beginning by 1990, the year when “the world witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of the South African government and the African National Congress socializing, even bantering, with each other for the first time” (Adam & Moodley, 1993, p. 43). This historic spectacle consisted of a three-day meeting between top officials of the apartheid regime and the ANC exiled representatives at the foot of Table Mountain in Cape Town, few miles from the Robben Island prison where the ANC top leadership had spent nearly three decades in jail. This official meeting was actually the culmination of secret negotiations that had begun in 1986 (Rajab, 2017) in London. These informal contacts rapidly gained momentum under the auspices of F. van Zyl Slabbert and Alex Boraine and came to the fore, first during the historic meeting between ANC exiled representatives and a group of liberal Afrikaners in July 1987 in Dakar, Senegal, and later, in October 1988 in Leverkusen, Germany, at a conference including on the one hand, Soviet academics, ANC delegates and representatives of the South African Communist Party, and on the other hand, liberal Afrikaners (O’Malley, 2005). Meanwhile, while the government threatened the Dakar meeting organizers with charges of treason, top South African officials including President P. W. Botha began holding several meetings with the imprisoned Nelson Mandela (Rajab, 2017). However, it was the serendipitous rise to power of Frederick de Klerk in August 1989 to replace Botha (then incapacitated by a mild stroke) that set in motion a new era—what one scholar has termed the age of “the opening of the apartheid mind” (Adam & Moodley, 1993). All began with the lifting of the ban on the ANC and other anti-apartheid forces on February 2, 1990, followed by Mandela’s release on February 11. Then followed the gradual repeal of the discriminatory laws during 1991 which culminated in the historic D-day of March 17, 1992, when two-thirds of South Africa’s white voters approved a negotiated end of the minority regime and the apartheid system. For the next two years, “several meetings between the government and the ANC laid the basis for the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and a transition to democratic rule” (Rajab, 2017). The whole process culminated in the first all-inclusive democratic elections in April 1994 from which the ANC emerged as the big winner with 62.65% of the votes and with Nelson Mandela as the first black president of South Africa. Accounting for why the lion’s share of the downfall of the apartheid went to the exiled ANC and the imprisoned Mandela is the purpose of the next section.

Accounting for the ANC Lion's Share: Mandela's 1962 Trip & Its Legacy

Gene Sharp (1980), among others, had forcefully contended the non-violent resistance movement trumped the apartheid's military in many ways. Among other achievements, the emphasis is on the non-violence movement's ability to boost maximum participation among nonwhites, to divide the white community and move some toward acting on behalf of nonwhites and to bring international pressures to bear on the government. "[I]n the end", concludes Kurtz (2010), "a concerted grassroots nonviolent civil resistance movement in coalition with international support and sanctions forced the white government to negotiate" (p. 1). But negotiate with whom and for what ends? Logically, one would expect to see the apartheid regime negotiate directly with the so-called nonviolent movement, which through the ebb and flow of its strategic actions and spectacular achievements had proven to be, in theologian Walter Wink's words, "probably the largest grassroots eruption of diverse nonviolent strategies in a single struggle in human history" (Wink, 1987, p. 4).

Surprisingly, against all odds, the apartheid regime opted for negotiating with the least nonviolent side incarnated by Mandela and the exiled ANC. The findings show neither being legally banned, nor having its leaders in jail didn't prevent the ANC from maintaining a unique position that made her indispensable in the endgame of the apartheid. This section documents how and explains why. The overall argument is that the ANC's upper hand resulted from its unique status as, in Nyerere's words, an "adopted child"⁴ For this new status provided the banned ANC with, not only a new home and family ties, but also a safe haven for its political and military activities, all of which would make its invisible hand to remain the major driving force behind the anti-apartheid movement inside the country.

Digging deep into the roots and routes of these dynamics, the findings point to Mandela's 1962 trip as a starting point. Paradoxically, as detailed below, the ANC's status as an "adopted child" and the resulting Panafricanization of its struggle was at odds with the anticipated outcomes of the trip as such. Instead, they emerged as unintended consequences resulting from numerous missteps, setbacks, and misfortunes. To make this case, the Pan African road that took the ANC all the way to power can be summed up in three points:

- 1). Mandela's trip as a bittersweet journey with mixed results;
- 2). The ANC coming into being a privileged "adopted child" and the resulting process of Pan-Africanizing the anti-apartheid struggle;
- 3). The exiled ANC's return to its roots in South Africa as an "emancipated child".

All along the discussion, the role of Tanzania's founding father and Pan-African prominent leader, Julius Nyerere, is explored as a crosscutting issue while light is shed on the counter-intuitive developments and paradoxical moves of various actors.

Mandela's 1962: A Bittersweet Journey With Mixed Results

Per ANC official accounts (see notably <https://www.nelsonmandela.org/content/page/timeline>), the trip happened roughly as follows: On January 11, 1962, Mandela leaves the country for military training and to gather support for the newly formed armed wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe [Spear of the Nation]. On January 21, 1962, he lands in Dar-es-Salaam where he meets President Nyerere and secures a travel document that allows him to embark on a seven-month long journey that takes him to other several countries including

⁴ Per one of his closest aide in the 1960s that I interviewed in Dar-es-Salaam in July 2017, President Julius Nyerere justified his commitment to host the headquarters of the exiled ANC in 1964, saying, "How do we treat watoto yatima [orphan kids] in our culture? Isn't it upon the large family to adopt them?"

Ethiopia, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Senegal, Morocco, and Algeria. He returns to South Africa via Botswana on July 23, 1962, only to be arrested at a roadblock near Howick in KwaZulu Natal on August 5, 1962. First sentenced to a five-year imprisonment, for incitement and leaving the country illegally in November 1962, this revolutionary-turned-prisoner will not walk tall and free any sooner until his release from Victor Verster Prison on February 11, 1990, only to rise to power as the first Black President of South Africa in April 1994.

While this rough summary cannot pretend to do justice to the existing accounts about this trip, it is striking to observe how the trip as such has received scant attention in both the primary accounts of the concerned players and the scholarly writings. Yet, like an iceberg of which we only see the tipping point, beneath this 7-month trip lies a vast ocean of, in the words of a keen observer, ‘information gaps and inconsistencies’ in addition to “myths and factual distortions” perpetuated by recent publications about “Nelson Mandela’s 1962 activities as Commander in Chief [of Umkhonto we Sizwe]” (Benneyworth, 2011, p. 82).

Overall, the findings suggest that this trip is best understood as a bittersweet journey that yielded mixed results in many ways. First, unlike what the official narrative that Mandela left the country “for military training and to gather support” for the MK may suggest, the truth is that neither the trip had a prior room in the initial strategic plans of the MK, nor was Mandela enthusiastic about undertaking this trip in the first place. Worse still, Mandela left behind a divided ANC over the MK’s means and ways of carrying out the anti-apartheid struggle. Per Mandela’s own confession, even Chief Luthuli, then ANC president, felt that Mandela and his colleagues were conducting the MK business behind his back (Mandela, 2013, 285-290).

Second, the trip allowed Mandela to make his case and to cement strong ties with various African leaders including Senegal’s President Senghor who provided him with a passport and air ticket that allowed him to travel to London. The trip also allowed him to learn a good deal of guerilla warfare techniques from firsthand experiences of the battle-tested guerillos notably in Morocco, Algeria, and Ethiopia.

Third and worth noting, all along his trip, Mandela was “dismayed” and “shocked” by the fact that the vision and strategies of the MK were poorly understood, and therefore less appealing to African leaders including Tanzanian Nyerere, Ethiopian Sellasie, and Zambian Kaunda, all of the attention and support being given to the ANC’s rival, the Pan African Congress.

Fourth, Mandela’s sudden decision to return to South Africa in July 1962 apparently ruined all that he had accomplished. To begin with, he deceived his two prominent godfathers, namely, Haile Sellasie in Ethiopia where he completed only eight weeks of the six-month training course he was offered, and Nyerere in Tanzania who warned him against the risks of going back to a garrison state without proper backup. Alas, Nyerere’s fears were to be proven right when Mandela returned only to be arrested and sent behind the bars for the next 27 years with no chance to make good use of the contacts as well as the military training and weapons he had acquired abroad. Worse still, the police ended up seizing the military strategy, the famous *Operation Mayibuye*, which his comrades-in-arms, namely Joe Solvo and Govan Mbeki, had put together in light of his notes and instructions (Wieder, 2013).

Surprisingly, far from weakening the ANC, these setbacks and misfortunes would transform the ANC along with its MK army from an obscure underground rebellion into a true liberation movement at the center of African politics and politicking. Two interrelated factors can explain this spectacular move: Tanzania’s adoption of the ANC and the resulting Panafricanization of the anti-apartheid struggle.

An Orphan in the Good Hands: ANC Journey From Rivonia to Safe Haven in Africa

By the time Mandela was touring Africa, Nyerere was busy helping the freedom fighters from the southern Africa region to join forces and launch a coordinated armed struggle. However, while he succeeded to unify various Mozambican nationalist groups which met in Dar-es-Salaam in May 1962 and formed the FRELIMO, he tried and failed to unify MPLA, FNLA, and UNITA from Angola, and the ZANU and ZAPU from Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) (Mwakikagile, 2007, p. 209). He tried also in vain to convince Mandela of the opportunity to form a joint front with Poqo, the armed wing of the Pan African Congress.

Official sources in Tanzania suggest that during Mandela's stop to Dar-es-Salaam in July 1962 on his way back to South Africa, Nyerere begged him to stay and take the lead of a unified high command of the liberation struggle, not only in South Africa, but also in the whole region of Southern Africa⁵. While Mandela insisted that he could not afford to delay his return to South Africa any longer, it is not clear whether he rejected Nyerere's offer for good. In any case, Nyerere was reportedly so disappointed in Mandela's risky defiance that, for a while, he pondered the idea of supporting the Poqo at the expense of the MK⁶. It is reported that Nyerere changed his mind after Joe Solvo paid him a call in June 1963 and briefed him on the merits of the *Operation Mayibuye*, convincing him in the process that Mandela's arrest would not jeopardize the realization of the operation.

As it turned out, not only would Joe Solvo not return to South Africa any sooner to oversee the Operation on behalf of Mandela, the Operation itself was to be seized by the police on July 11, 1963. Nyerere could not be more disappointed in Mandela's poor appreciation of the need for a strong and reliable rear base before launching a successful guerilla warfare in a tightly controlled state. Yet, far from contending himself to blame Mandela and his colleagues, Nyerere surprised his aides by declaring unilaterally the ANC his "adopted child" and the anti-apartheid struggle an African affair par excellence.

One anecdote the author learned from Dar-es-Salaam is that Nyerere reportedly asked a couple of his aides sometime in July 1962 what a typical African extended family should do for an orphan child who just lost his father. After a good chat on how extended families had historically been relied upon to accommodate orphans (Kandiwa, 2010, p. 2), Nyerere asserted that the same cultural norms and practices should apply to the case of Mandela's ANC. What he eventually did by giving the exiled ANC special treatments. First, the ANC was invited to relocate its headquarters from London to Tanzania in 1964. Second, Tanzania fully backed the exiled leadership of the ANC incarnated by Oliver Tambo all along the way. This became particularly evident in 1969 when Tanzania helped the ANC to hold a congress that revived the organization, which was until then dormant and marred with tensions and suspicions between the exiled leadership and the underground movement. Meanwhile, the ANC's struggle was already an African affair.

From a Nationalist Rebellion to an Africa-Backed Liberation

The process of Pan-Africanizing the ANC-led anti-apartheid struggle can be summed up in three institutional frameworks: The Organization of African Union (OAU), the Frontline States (FLS), and the web of Africa-led global initiatives.

The first move materialized on May 24, 1963—the day the Addis Ababa Conference of Independent African States adopted the Charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In the margins of this

⁵ Personal interviews, Dar-es-Salaam, July 2017.

⁶ Idem.

assembly, Tanzania's leader Nyerere "led his colleagues to create a subsidiary organ of the OAU, the OAU Liberation Committee, which, at his invitation, set up its headquarters in Dar es Salaam" (Sahnoun, 2009, p. 61). For the next three decades, this committee proved an ideal forum through which African countries managed "to navigate through the choppy seas of big power priorities and conflicts with consummate mastery" and thus "build a broad front of solidarity and support, material and diplomatic, from Africa, Asia, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Nordic countries and of course, both China and the USSR" (Sahnoun, 2009, p. 61).

The second framework emerged from the momentum of the coming into power of the sister liberation movements, namely, MPLA in Angola and FRELIMO in Mozambique in 1975, and later, ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe in 1980. In addition to providing the ANC fighters with military bases closer to the home country, they joined forces with the neighboring Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, Zambia, Malawi, and Tanzania to form a common front known as the Frontline States group. This front played a vital role, not only in supporting the ANC with increased diplomatic, political, and military facilities, but also in containing the apartheid regime's efforts to destabilize its neighbors through proxy wars, notably in Angola and Mozambique (Tvedten, 1997, pp. 29-36). Per a report submitted by Angola to the United Nations on August 3, 1979, Angola registered 25 attacks by South African ground forces and 24 aerial bombardments between March 1976 and June 1979. To face such incursions, the Frontline States' coordinated efforts benefited much from massive support from Russia and Cuba. For instance, when South African troops launched a massive military campaign in the late 1980s that destroyed the headquarters of SWAPO in Angola and damaged several ANC military bases, they failed to dislodge the anti-apartheid forces thanks to the direct intervention of Cuba whose troops increased from 35,000 men in 1982 to 40,000 in 1985 (Franklin, 1997, p. 212).

As to the diplomatic front, two developments are worth noting. First, the ANC remained a unifying factor in Africa despite numerous personal, ideological, and ethnic divisions that hampered the efforts to unify the continent around a common political and economic Grand Strategy. One telling case is the fact that the ANC continued to receive support from both Morocco and Algeria at a time when the former was excluded from the OAU for its occupation of the Algeria-backed Western Sahara. The same paradox is true for the support from Gaddafi's Libya despite its nasty relations with other major ANC sponsors including Tanzania and Egypt.

On the other hand, in addition to isolating the apartheid regime through diplomatic, political, and economic mechanisms across the continent, Africa succeeded in getting the regime of Pretoria expelled from international forums, such as the Commonwealth or repeatedly condemned by the United Nations and other international organizations. By the same token, while the ANC had strong ties with the West, starting by London, which hosted briefly its headquarters in the early 1960s, its Africa-backed struggle attracted extra support, notably from North Europe in the late 1980s (Sellström, 1999, 2000; Soiri & Peltola, 1999).

Thanks to these Africa-based operational frameworks and efforts, the ANC flourished abroad and managed to increasingly drive behind the scenes the various forms of resistance that shaped the political landscapes from the labor militancy and student uprisings in the 1970s to the massive pro-democracy campaigns in the late 1980s. The ANC's show of strength became particularly a reality in the late 1980s when its activists and sympathizers "created alternative community-based institutions—such as cooperatives, community clinics, legal resource centers, and other organizations—that increasingly marginalized and replaced official governmental institutions" (Kurtz, 2010, p. 3).

On the battleground, until then the ANC guerilla strategy was to limit its operations to occasional bombings of government facilities and thus avoid civilian deaths⁷. By the late 1980s, however, the guerilla had multiplied and reinforced its military bases in the neighboring countries while intensifying recruitment and training of new fighters. For instance, alongside other Frontline states' troops and the MK commandos, Mugabe's North Korean-trained unit elite, the famous Fifth Brigade, is credited to have played a major role in the planning and execution of massive guerilla operations including the September 1984 massive attacks against police stations and military installations in response to the Vaal Uprisings, the 1985 Amamzimtoti bomb attack, the May 1987 car bomb explosions outside the Johannesburg Magistrates Court which killed four policemen, the July 1987 massive car bomb that severely damaged the South African army's Witwatersrand Command complex in Johannesburg, and the 1989 military attack on a South African Air Force secret radar installation at Klippan in the Western Transvaal which caused extensive damage and undisclosed casualties (O'Malley, 2005). While these attacks were no closer to dismantle the apartheid military power, it cannot be an exaggeration to endorse the idea that, for the first time in its history, "[th]e NP realized, through the ANC's campaign of mass action, that revolution was possible" (Meierhenrich, 2008, p. 194).

All being considered then, a strong case can be made that the privileged position of the ANC as an Africa's adopted child and the resulting Panafricanization of its struggle proved a necessary, though not sufficient, condition that forced the apartheid regime to negotiate a peaceful settlement. In this regard, the resulting rapport can be best understood as a forced, but useful marriage as beautifully summed up by Adam and Moodley (1993):

The ambivalent alliance between the two major contenders for power, the National Party (NP) and the African National Congress (ANC), results from a balance of forces where neither side can defeat the other. It is their mutual weakness, rather than their equal strength, that makes both longtime adversaries embrace negotiations for power sharing. Like a forced marriage, the working arrangement lacks love but nonetheless is consummated because any alternative course would lead to a worse fate for both sides (p. 9).

Yet, as the author has demonstrated in the foregoing, it would have extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the apartheid regime to reach out to the ANC, if the later had not been adopted, housed, and supported militarily, politically, and diplomatically by Nyerere's Tanzania first, and later the African continent as a whole, all along the way from the Rivonia Trial to the negotiation table. In this view, Mandela's encounter with Nyerere in 1962 appears as a critical juncture that set in motion the complex chain of events that made the ANC the ideal partner that the ruling NP could only ignore on its own peril and the peril of South Africa as a nation.

From Adoption to Emancipation: The Africa-Backed ANC's Triumphant Return to Its Roots

Shortly after behind-the-scenes negotiations between the government and the ANC gathered pace, the officially Africa-backed leadership of the exiled ANC announced its intent to emancipate from its adoptive status to return to its roots. This materialized in January 1990, when eight underground ANC operatives, together with the leader of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) left South Africa to meet the hierarchy of the exiled ANC at its headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia. One of the resolutions of this meeting was to endorse Nelson Mandela's acceptance of the apartheid's

⁷ A case can be that this strategy was one of the lessons learned from the counter-productive Wankie and Sipolilo battles, which raged from August 1967 until late 1968 opposing the famous "Luthuli Detachment"—a group of fighters comprising ANC and ZAPU guerrillas—against South African and Rhodesian armies.

offer to release him and legalize the banned political organizations including the ANC. Boosted by this endorsement, Mandela ensured the government of the ANC's full commitment to a negotiated settlement. In response, President F. W. de Klerk announced in a historic speech of February 2, 1990, the lifting of a 30-year ban on the anti-apartheid organizations including the ANC and the PAC. A week later, upon his release on February 11, Mandela addressed a crowd of approximately 50,000 people from the steps of the Cape Town City Hall. Yet, Mandela had still to pledge his allegiance to and consult with the Africa-backed ANC headquarters in Zambia. What he eventually did on February 27, thus paving the way for his election as Deputy President of the ANC on April 2, 1990. Meanwhile, the MK military commander, Joe Modise, had announced in an exclusive interview with *The Herald* on March 14 that his troops were open to the suspension of the armed struggle to facilitate negotiations (SAHO, 2017a).

The ANC emancipation culminated in a formal "return to the roots" ceremony of April 28, 1990, when the exiled leadership including Joe Solvo, Thabo Mbeki, Alfred Nzo, and Ruth Mompati returned to South Africa. Once reunited, the ANC confirmed its legitimacy and bargaining power through the Groote Schuur talks of May 2-4 upon which it signed with the government a memorandum that outlined the two parties' commitment to reach a peaceful settlement (SAHO, 2017c). From there, like a typical African emancipated son whose first harvest products must be presented to his father, Mandela was soon to leave South Africa on May 9, 1990 to embark on a thanksgiving six-nation African tour, starting by Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzanian Affairs, 1990)—yes, Dar-es-Salaam where the journey had started in January 1962. The struggle had gone the full cycle. A new era was in sight. For better or worse, freedom was within the reach of every South African.

Conclusion

Like the long journey on which South Africa has embarked from racist policies to multi-racial democracy through the brutal system of apartheid and enormous sacrifices of the anti-apartheid forces, this article has taken unexpected turns. In the end, the rough paths the author went through obliged to let the research findings lead the process, generally in disregard of the initial plans. For instance, my initial research proposal intended to document and demonstrate how the intellectual vibrancy and political awakening that blossomed in Dar-es-Salaam in the 1960s put Tanzania at the hub of the successful wars that culminated in the fall of the White-minority controlled regimes in the Southern African region. To this end, I devoted my initial efforts to gather and review the available written materials on this topic before embarking on the fieldwork part to collect new data by the means of interview using a pre-established set of open questionnaires.

However, after I spoke to a number of keen informants in Dar-es-Salaam⁸, it became clear that most of the pre-determined research questions were too simplistic, if not naive, to capture the unique and challenging features of Tanzania's involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle. In the process, like Monsieur Jourdain who spoke in prose without being aware of it, it later came to my attention that free-style of allowing my sources and the resulting data guide the research endeavor was in line with the (de)constructivist school according to which, in Derrida's words, "every discourse...carries with it a system of rules for producing analogous things and thus an outline of methodology" (Derrida, 1995, p. 200). Taking this view as a clue, I started treating each

⁸ My primary sources include 20 one-on-one chats and 12 focus groups of 3 to 5 people. Yet, the chats I had were too informal to meet the classic format of interviews constrained by the rules of confidentiality, yet risk-free and generally mutually enriching like typical discussions among the strangers who debate a hot topic of common interest. More importantly, meaningful insights generally did not emerge until the end of my trip when I invested extra time and energy on follow-up exchanges through cutting-edge tools of communication, notably Skype and Whats App.

of the available pieces of information—along with their contradictions and gaps therein—as a discourse that has something to reveal about the way forward. It was in this regard that I embarked on the journey to demonstrate how Mandela’s 1962 trip across Africa, notably the disconcerting, but game-changer Mandela-Nyerere encounter in Dar-es-Salaam in January 1962, proved a “critical juncture” that set in motion a complex set of self-reproductive, but nonlinear sequences that ended up reuniting the exiled ANC and its jailed leadership to bring about what the ANC had fought for: a multi-racial democratic South Africa.

I am not suggesting, however, that Mandela’s trip and its outcomes were the only causal factors—or sufficient conditions—that brought about the apartheid’s endgame as we know it. As discussed throughout the article, many other factors were necessary to end the dishonorable apartheid including internal uprisings and external pressures as well as geopolitical developments, such as the collapse of the Portuguese colonial rule in the neighboring countries and the end of the Cold War-era rivalries. Additionally, the shrinking support of the apartheid policies among the Whites resulted in the rise of a moderate and democracy-bound leadership within the ruling National Party. And yet, had the banned and decapitated ANC not received a safe haven in Dar-es-Salaam in the early 1960s and coordinated military and diplomatic support, first from the Organization of African Union’s Liberation Committee, and later from the Frontline Zone countries in the 1980s, it would hardly make it to the negotiation table. All along the way, the whole dynamics proved consistent with the logic of increasing returns process according to which, when the benefits of pursuing a charted path outweighs the cost of switching to plausible alternatives, the probability of further steps along the same path increases with each move down that path (Meierhenrich, 2008, p. 192). To explain this phenomenon, the findings are consistent with the view of a path dependent process as a tree in the language of Levi as quoted in Meierhenrich (2008):

From the same trunk, there are many different branches and smaller branches. Although it is possible to turn around or to clamber from one to the other and essential if the chosen branch dies the branch on which a climber begins is the one she tends to follow (p. 192).

In this regard, the enduring survival of the outlawed and exiled ANC as the principal driving force behind the anti-apartheid struggle can be best conceived of as an “irreversible branching process” (David as quoted in, Meierhenrich, 2008, p. 192) within and against which the NP-led despicable regime found the Africa-backed ANC in a better position to help save face by satisfying both local demands and external expectations. Above all, the ANC’s strong ties with Africa were even more vital to the regime which, “despite its powerful security forces, mineral wealth and industrial capacity” was dependent on southern African neighbors (Kurtz 2010, p. 2). In the end, political developments in South Africa have so far proved consistent with the path dependence premise that, “agents do not select outcomes, they select strategies” (Meierhenrich, 2008, p. 192). For,

[a]lthough the nonwhite population gained what former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere called ‘flag independence’ by gaining the vote and electing an ANC-dominated government, the country’s economy, civil service, and military remain largely dominated by the white minority, forcing continued compromise and power struggles. (Kurtz, 2010, p. 2)

But for how long? Only history will tell. Yet, while this puzzle is beyond the scope of this article, it is the author’s view that the rise of the rainbow government from the ashes of the apartheid’s regime is a new critical junction which is likely to prevail for a while, narrowing the options of choice available to current and future leadership in such a way to force them to play by the rules of “continued compromise and power struggles” rather than violating them.

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