

Report on Workshop on Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa,

4-6 September 2008

1. There were lively discussions at every session. Some thirty to forty people attended, an ideal number for the venue. Unfortunately, our intended keynote speaker, Arnold Temu, cancelled for medical reasons not long before the workshop, and I then invited Dr Bull from Zambia, but she too could not come, and I then invited Dr Ibbo Mandaza from Zimbabwe. In the end four scholars from Zimbabwe, and one each from Namibia, Lesotho and Mozambique, attended. Efforts to get people from Angola (having an election), Swaziland (having a 40th anniversary conference) and Botswana were unsuccessful. But a new generation of scholars was represented by such people as Chitya Twala (Free State) and Brad Brockman (UCT; students were included as 'helpers', as the workshop was only open to participants). A public event was held on Saturday evening at which Vladimir Shubin (Moscow), Thula Simpson (University of Pretoria) and Raymond Suttner (UNISA) spoke, followed by cocktails.

2. The African Studies Library mounted an exhibition of appropriate posters and prepared a leaflet to go with the exhibition. Dr Colin Darch spoke about the exhibition on the opening morning and at the public event. We thank Sandy Shell and her staff in the ASL for their help with regard to the exhibition.

3. Various students at the Centre for African Studies helped organise, and Lilian Jacobs and Lucinda Diedricks were most helpful with administrative matters.

4. It is planned to publish some of the papers either in *Social Dynamics* or the *South African Historical Journal* or in a collected volume. I have sent off an initial enquiry to UCT Press.

5. While it was unfortunate that we did not have the presence of a visiting scholar some time before the workshop (Temu was to have come on from a SADC summit he had to attend, but then informed us that he had to have surgery after that meeting, then had to return to Dar-es-Salaam, and it then became too late to invite another visiting

scholar in his place), our guest from Lesotho, Sethoi Santho, remained on after the workshop and gave a lecture to students on Monday 8th, which was very well received.

6. One of the most important things about the workshop was the good spirit that prevailed throughout. Here are a few comments from emails received after it finished:

Proscovia Svard: `This is to congratulate you upon the organisation of such a successful workshop. It is usually hard to keep the enthusiasm of the participants that high during a three days' workshop which you managed to do! It was a rewarding experience.';

Chitja Twala: `Thanks for having invited me to the workshop last week. It was really an eye opening workshop on the Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa. I learnt a lot from the other speakers who attended the workshop. Please invite me in future if such opportunities avail themselves.';

Mai Palmberg: thank you for a very good workshop, with good and relevant discussion, and an inspiring spirit of search for better understanding of background and ongoing processes.

Gerald Mazirire: Just a note to add my voice to a well organised and executed workshop and to thank you personally for going the extra mile to make sure that I attended. I can also add that I was indeed treated to a warm reception and comfortable living. I look forward to the outcome and many more occasions of working with you in future.

=====
7. Last, but of course most important of all, I thank the Harry Oppenheimer Institute and the Nordic Africa Institute for their generous funding, without which the workshop would not have taken place.

Chris Saunders

17 September 2008