



2021 WEBINAR SERIES

100 YEARS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY:

DEBATING LINEAGES OF SOCIALISM IN AFRICA

JULY TO NOVEMBER



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Introduction

South African History Online, the Wits History Workshop, the Department of History at the University of the Free State, the Department of Development Studies at Nelson Mandela University, the Archie Mafeje Chair in Critical Humanities and Decolonial Studies and the AC Jordan Chair at the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town, and the Department of History at the University of Johannesburg invite you to a series of webinars and other events to mark the centenary of the South African Communist Party in 2021. The programme, which runs from July to November 2021, aims to present new research on the history of the party and other left traditions, and to reflect on their role and legacy today.



WEBINAR

DEBATING LINEAGES OF SOCIALISM IN AFRICA

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Hosted By

University of Johannesburg

Convenor: Natasha Erlank

nerlank@uj.ac.za

Title: The CPSA and Early Socialist Traditions

Date: Tuesday 27 July 2021

Time: 15h00-17h00 SAST

Speakers:

Henry Dee, UFS, "From Garvey to Lenin, via Kadalie: The ICU's "Ginger" Faction and the Transformation of Interwar Black Radicalism"

Sheridan Johns, Richard Mendelsohn and Lucien van der Walt, Duke/UCT/Rhodes, "The Political Odyssey of Solomon Buirschi, South Africa: Traversing the Worlds of the IWW, the CPSA, Afrikaner Nationalism and the Jewish Diaspora"

Peter Limb, Michigan State University/UFS, "'Hundreds of Native Workers are Joining the Communist Party in Bloemfontein; ... which organisation ... ever faced calamities, persecutions and prosecutions as the CP did?': The Communists in the Free State, 1921-1940"

Robert Edgar, Howard University/Stellenbosch, "Josie Mpama and the Communist Party of South Africa, 1930-1948"

Discussant: Jon Hyslop, Colgate University



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Hosted By

Wits History Workshop

Convenor: Arianna Lissoni

arianna.lissoni@wits.ac.za

Title: Red Lives

Date: Tuesday 24 August 2021

Time: 15h00-17h00 SAST

Speakers:

Goolam Vahed, UKZN, "Dawood Seedat: The Communist who insisted that there was 'no middle road to freedom' "

Alan Kirkaldy, Rhodes University, "Everyday Communists in the South African Liberation Struggle: The Lives of Ivan and Lesley Schermbrucker"

Billy Keniston, University of Illinois, "A Sabotaged Life: Marius Schoon and the Apartheid State"

Nkosinathi Theledi, Rhodes University, "Slovo's role in the Congress Alliance and contribution to the liberation struggle of South Africa"

Ronnie Kasrils, "Crossing Borders: Portrait of the Peripatetic Communist Jabulani Nobleman Nxumalo – "Mzala" (1955-1991)"

Discussant: Teresa Barnes, University of Illinois

7-8-9 October 2021

Wits Anthropology Museum

Exhibition: "The Contribution of Women to a Communist Society in Heroic Soviet Union Posters, circa 1922-1974"

Curated by Caroline Coary Taylor (University of the Witwatersrand)

Exhibition launch: 5pm on 7 October



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Hosted By

South African History Online

Convenor: Omar Badsha

omar@sahistory.org.za

Title: Socialism, Culture and Networks

Date: Wednesday 15 September 2021

Time: 15h00-17h00 SAST

Speakers:

Judy Seidman, Wits History Workshop, "Culture/Creativity/Communism: cultural expression and South Africa's communist movement"

Steven Sack, "Karl Marx and The Useless Man"

Paul S. Landau, University of Maryland, "Geschwister: International Family and Sacrifice against Apartheid"

Elizabeth Visser, UCT, "Ethnic Networks and the Road to Radicalisation: Jews in the South African Communist Party"

Tom Lodge, University of Limerick, "Joining the Party: Communists in South Africa, from the beginnings to the present"

Discussants: Ari Sitas, Dilip Menon, Corinne Sandwith, Percy Mabandu

October 2021, date TBC

Online Book Launch (hosted by the University of Bristol):
Tom Lodge, Red Road to Freedom: A History of the South African Communist Party, 1921-2021 (Jacana)



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Hosted By

University of the Free State

Convenor: Tshepo Moloi

tshepo.moloi@gmail.com

Title: Strategic debates, the ANC-SACP alliance and the Soviet Union

Date: Wednesday 20 October 2021

Time: 15h00-17h30 SAST

Speakers:

Patrick Mangashe, UFH, "The role and influence of the SACP in the armed struggle"

Arianna Lissoni, Wits History Workshop, "The ANC, the SACP and bantustan 'independence' "

Rachel Sandwell, McGill University, "Women and Gender in the SACP in exile"

Hilary Lynd, UC Berkeley, "Living Together: The ANC-SACP Alliance, the Soviet Union, and the National Question"

Vladimir Shubin and Daria Turianitsa, Institute of African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, "Moscow and the SACP"

Discussant: Alex Lichtenstein, Indiana University



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Hosted By

Nelson Mandela University

Convenor: Janet Cherry

janet.cherry@mandela.ac.za

Title: Forward to Socialism/Socialist Futures

Date: Monday 15 November 2021

Time: 10h00-13h00 SAST

Panel 1: Socialism and State Power in South Africa

Lolonga Tali and Gary Prevost, NMU, The role of the SACP in formulating the development policies of the ANC: The case of the National Development Plan (NPD)

Pedro Mzileni, NMU, " 'NGOisation' of the African National Congress in post-1994: Revisiting SACP traditions of revolutionary critique"

Jeremy Cronin, SACP, " 'Socialism is the Future, Build it Now': The SACP's attempt to re-think the socialist struggle"

John Reynolds, Rhodes University, "Negotiating a socialist future through the South African state"

Patrick Brennan, NMU, "Industrial development from below: a decentralised, democratic, production model for the 21st Century?"



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Hosted By

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Convenor: Janet Cherry

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Title: Forward to Socialism/Socialist Futures

Date: Monday 15 November 2021

Time: 14h00-17h00 SAST

Panel 2: Ecosocialism, Feminism and Alternative Futures

Jenny Schreiner, SACP, "Has the South African development trajectory over the past 30 years germinated the seeds for gender equality in the NDR and the struggle for socialism?"

Devan Pillay, Wits, "In search of a democratic eco-socialist working class politics"

Mazibuko Jara, "The solidarity economy approach in resolving the land question"

Janet Cherry, NMU, "Emancipatory scholarship and prefigurative strategies for building socialism today"

Sidney Luckett, "A Feminist-Ecosocialist Future"



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Hosted By

University of Cape Town

Convenor: Shahid Vawda

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University of Cape Town

Convenor: Lungisile Ntsebeza

lungisile.ntsebeza@uct.ac.za

Title: Debating Socialist Lineages

Date: November 2021, date TBC

Time: Time TBC

Speakers:

Lungisile Ntsebeza, University of Cape Town, title TBC

Crain Soudien, HSRC, "A Review of Early Trotskyist Thinking in South Africa: 'The Spark' Newspaper, 1935-1937"

Asher Gamedze, Wits History Workshop, Unity Movement of the late 1950s/early 1960s

