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The review should summarize what is important in the book, and critique its substance. The reviewer should assess the extent to which the author achieves the stated aim of the book. It is important that the reviewer should engage the material instead of simply reporting the book's contents. For this reason, the reviewer should try to avoid summations of book chapters or the separate contributions in an edited collection. Instead, the reviewer should assess the ways in which chapters and contributions are relevant to the overall context of the book. Reviews should be written in a style that is accessible to a wide and international audience.

Any use of references or additional references from other sources must be informed on in footnote style.

Format

The review should generally be between 800 and 1 200 words, and should include as little bibliographic data as possible. When necessary, use page references for quotations in the text of the review and provide complete bib-

liographic details of the source. The review should begin with a heading that includes all the bibliographic data. The elements of the heading should be arranged in the order presented in the following example:

The early mission in South Africa/Die vroeë sending in Suid-Afrika, 1799-1819. Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2005, 272 pp., map, chronology, bibl., index. ISBN: 1-9198525-42-8. By Karel Schoeman.

Do not indent the first line of the first paragraph, but indent the first line of all successive paragraphs. Use double spacing for the entire review. Add your name and institutional affiliation at the end of the review. Accuracy of content, grammar, spelling, and citations rests with the reviewer, and we encourage you to check these before submission. Reviews may be transmitted electronically as a Word file attachment to an email to the review editor. If you have additional questions, please contact the Book Review Editors.

*More on Soviet military personnel in Angola Cuito Cuanavale:
Frontline accounts by Soviet soldiers*

**(Translated by T Reilly. Auckland Park: Jacana, 2014, 222 pp.
ISBN: 978-1431409631)**

G Shubin, I Zhdarkin, V Barabulya and A Kuznetsova-Timonova (eds.)

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The battle between the invading South African armed forces and Angola's FAPLA around the small town of Cuito Cuanavale was a key moment in the so-called "Border War". The fighting lasted for several months between August 1987 and March 1988, and the battle ended – and judgements differ sharply on this – either in victory for the Angolans and their Cuban allies, who were able to prevent the capture of the town, or in success for the South Africans, who wanted to protect UNITA's territory in southern Angola, and hence to block access by SWAPO to the border between Angola and Namibia.

The SADF had been involved in southern Angola on and off since October 1975, supporting UNITA and defending South African control of South-West Africa (now Namibia) from incursions by SWAPO, the liberation movement fighting for national independence. However, by the mid-1980s

and with Soviet logistical help, the balance of forces was shifting significantly away from SADF dominance. Angolan military capacity had improved significantly, especially in terms of an extensive radar screen that, together with their access to modern MiG fighter planes, had helped FAPLA and the Cubans to gain control of the air. In August 1987, probably on Soviet advice, the Angolans therefore began to plan a conventional attack against Jamba, the main UNITA military base and headquarters. In response, the South Africans quickly mobilised large numbers of troops, and with their UNITA allies, were able to block the FAPLA advance on Jamba. They then counter-attacked, but were stopped in their turn by the Angolans and Cubans, dug in around Cuito Cuanavale. Despite the use of long-range artillery to bombard the town, and repeated assaults by UNITA infantry, the situation turned into a stalemate.

This battle has for many years been widely regarded as a turning point in Namibia's progress towards independence, and eventually towards the end of the internal conflict inside Angola between the MPLA government and UNITA as well. Nevertheless, in the intervening thirty years, opinion about what actually happened and what it meant politically and militarily has remained as sharply divided as ever. There is an extensive literature on the Border War and on the battle itself, much of it contentious (see, e.g. Scholtz's polemical 2011 review article on the battle in *Scientia Militaria*). Other books and articles include works by the late Thomas Ohlson, Horace Campbell, Fred Bridgland, and the multi-faceted collection edited by Ian Liebenberg, Jorge Risquet and Vladimir Shubin, *A Far-Away War: Angola, 1975-1989* (2015).

So what does the book under review add to our overall understanding of the nature of the battle, and to our knowledge of covert Soviet involvement in combat operations in Angola? The short answer is disappointingly little beyond the anecdotal. The book is described on the cover as a follow-up to *Bush War: the Road to Cuito Cuanavale* (2011), which this reviewer discussed in the pages of the *Journal of Southern African Studies* in 2017. In that review I pointed out that these Russian/Soviet memoirs of Angolan combat are part of a larger, self-referential body of work, the purpose of which is at least partly to secure legal recognition in Russia of the veterans' role in Angola, and consequently access to state pensions as former combatants in overseas wars (*veterany boevykh deistvii*). Struggles over formal and permanent recognition as war veterans (*uchastniki voiny*) – a legal status that has in the past carried multiple advantages such as cheap travel, access to interest-free loans, and special holidays – have a long history in Russia, going all the way back to

CPSU resolution no.907 of November 1978. Even in Soviet times, however, the right to the status (for participants in the ‘Great Patriotic War’) was narrowly defined. The association to which the Angolan veterans belong, the *Soyuz Veteranov Angoly* (Union of Angola Veterans) runs a website which contains a large amount of this kind of material, in Russian, by these and other ex-combatants, at least partly in support of their hopeful claims. The chapter in this book headed ‘Four Soviet Veterans’ is taken directly from the website.

This book, whose editorial team included the late Gennady Shubin as well as the veteran Igor Zhdarkin, himself a memoirist of note, consists of extremely lightly-edited memoirs by twelve different ex-Soviet ex-soldiers, the majority of whom are described as having served as military interpreters or translators. It includes sixteen pages of photographs printed on glossy paper, many of them in colour. As interpreters, the unfortunate Soviets do not seem to have been especially well-prepared or effective, although they were exposed to serious danger in combat situations. Igor Bakush describes how a colleague, Oleg Snitko, (who trained in Kiev and seems to have been a Ukrainian) died after being wounded in action near Cuito Cuanavale, despite being medivacked to safety by helicopter (p. 133-134).

Alexander Kalan writes that he completed ‘an accelerated ten-month Portuguese language course’ in 1986, but when he arrived in Angola with his compatriots “we could understand nothing of the Angolans’ speech” (p. 62). The book also includes a diary written by Kalan, covering four months from 13 July to 17 November 1987, with no explanation by the editors of how he was able first of all to write it, and second, to smuggle it home against regulations. Another non-Russian interpreter, Oleg Gritsuk, writes that he studied Spanish at the Minsk State Educational Institute for Foreign Languages (in what is now Belarus), but was sent to Angola to learn Portuguese “on the job” – presumably on the grounds that Spanish is fairly similar to Portuguese. He writes that to begin with he “didn’t understand anything in Portuguese and could not translate at all” (p. 145). One wonders, of course, what price was paid in combat situations for this inability to communicate effectively.

The Belarusian, Gritsuk, also testifies that there was “no particular enmity” between the uneducated teenage soldiers of FAPLA and UNITA:

When government troops captured UNITA prisoners they would immediately fraternise ... There would be a military counterintelligence officer ... who would supposedly conduct an interrogation, but the prisoner would

know nothing and understand nothing about maps as well. They would just feed him and let him go (p. 155).

Unhappily, the book is almost completely lacking in explanatory or contextual apparatus, presumably in the hope that the texts will be able to speak for themselves. Apart from the testimonies themselves, there is also an introduction, a conclusion (devoted to the debunking of several “myths” about the battle), and a “List of Major Weaponry” (p. 214-222). This is arranged in two sections, SADF and UNITA on the one hand, and Soviet, Cuban and FAPLA on the other. Within each section, the descriptions – whether of aircraft, trucks, artillery, or light weapons – are simply in alphabetical order, e.g. “M-38: Soviet-made 82-mm mortar”. It is thus left to the reader to try to make sense of the list.

The introduction consists of a broad brushstroke account of the military events of 1987-1988, including details of Soviet involvement, but offers no comment on the accounts by the Soviet participants which are the book’s *raison d’être*. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the editors conclude their introduction with the large claim that:

The failure of the South African offensive near Cuito Cuanavale and the appearance of units of the Cuban forces at the Namibian border forced the South African government to call off its military actions and to begin negotiations. As a result, on 22 December 1988 in New York, a three-sided agreement was signed between South Africa, Angola and Cuba ... A direct result of this agreement was the granting of independence to Namibia and the dismantling of the apartheid system in South Africa (p. 12).

It is certainly defensible to argue that the battle was a turning point in the liberation of southern Africa as a region, but to claim that this was simply a “direct result” is to risk privileging the military over other factors in the process, including the political and the economic.

Memory against forgetting: Memoir of a time in South African politics 1938-1964

(Second Edition, Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2017, 359 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-77614-154-8)

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In “one of the longest and most testing journeys in history”, Rusty Bernstein’s *Memory Against Forgetting* stands, as testimony to the endurance of the human spirit, when confronted with adversity. More so, when pitted against a ruthless regime, determined in its quest to crush all opposition to it. Rusty Bernstein, his family and comrades did just that, stepping forwards, in defence of their principles. Pitted against the granite face of nationalism, fascism, apartheid; Bernstein’s memory and testimony covers an era in South Africa’s history and that of humanity, one which should never be forgotten.

Effortlessly weaving his narrative through key milestones of the historical milieu, a political consciousness emerges in the 1930s. These early years being shaped by the clouds of an international cataclysm. Serving in North Africa and Italy during the Second World War, Bernstein returned to a divided society, one to be further polarised and subjected to a new fascism – apartheid.

The Freedom Charter was a future vision for a society liberated from a direction in which it was being propelled. Bernstein articulated the submissions shaping this positional statement and, articulated many other keys positions, during his life in the liberation struggle. Always modest of his role in seismic events, he relates the Treason Trial with a sardonic, yet humorous narrative; the birth of his son, being arrested on a charge of Treason and jailed in the Johannesburg Fort, through to standing trial. A moment in the absurdity of it was that the evidence production line could lead to the gallows, yet the warning couldn’t be taken seriously. The accused were all bored to death and longing for a break for tea. Needless to say the state’s case collapsed.

A key point in *Memory Against Forgetting* is Bernstein's narrative in the build up towards, and that, of the Rivonia era. The 1961 Sharpeville Massacre, the banning of political movements, and the suppression of peaceful protests, often through methods of increasing state brutality. The days of petitions, strike action and boycotts were ending. New forms and methods of struggle were vital to enable the continuance of resistance to apartheid. Bernstein played a key role in establishing these new forms of struggle which started centring on underground activity. An organised armed struggle emerged in 1961, which by 1963 linked itself to places and spaces, including Liliesleaf.

The significance of Liliesleaf is that this is a tangible place where the transition into a new form of struggle, namely armed struggle occurred, making Liliesleaf an icon of that struggle for freedom. Liliesleaf represents a seminal shift in South Africa's liberation struggle. Numerous layers of significance exist. Today Liliesleaf is branded A Place of Liberation. Yet Liberation, indeed freedom, came at a cost.

Arrested at Liliesleaf, along with key leaders of the liberation movements, Rusty Bernstein stood trial in the Rivonia Trial, together with his comrades. Bernstein experienced the solitary silence of the cell; the stresses and horrors of detention and interrogation. The uncertainty of life and a future. Yet his family stood strong, as did his comrades. Despite all.

Bernstein's narrative of the trial itself, is that of a relentless yet ethically bankrupt prosecution, which sought to destroy and discredit individuals, along with the causes they represented. Facing the reality of the death sentence or life imprisonment for sabotage, Rusty defended himself with dignity, alongside Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, and other leaders of the African National Congress, Umkhonto we Sizwe and the South African Communist Party.

Bernstein's eyewitness account together with his unique insights into his comrades and their cause is invaluable to understanding the intricacies of the trial and the Rivonia era. A remarkable narrative of that social and political era, spanning almost four decades, told with a frankness and humility, which is rare. Once acquitted, he and his family faced ongoing persecution. The road into exile presented the only option, literally over and out, the title of his final chapter, immediately after the Rivonia Trial.

Yet no dream was ever abandoned. Two decades passed in giving support from exile to sustain and develop the liberation struggle. Thirty years later in May 1994, standing on the terrace of the Union Buildings, Pretoria this was a moment of vindication. Although the end of a single journey, it represented the beginning of another, opening stage of history. Yet not the end of a journey, merely the beginning of another for the faith and dedication for those who sacrificed.

In recording our history and preserving our heritage the lessons of the past and the voice of history can help us to understand that past accurately and honestly. For over the passage of time, it happens that memory changes, diminishes, or is forgotten. Bernstein's account enables both the recovery and preservation of memory and stands as a testament to the importance of memory, in recognising the lessons of the past.

A turbulent South Africa: Post-apartheid social protest

(Translated by A Brown. Albany, State University of New York Press, 2018, 266 pp. ISBN: 9-78143846977-5)

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As I write this, South Africa is in the midst of a series of protests in the run-up to the country's elections on 8 May. In what has been described as the most contested elections of the country's 25-year-old democracy with 48 parties appearing on the ballot paper, protests have been a regular feature of the news cycle as residents attempt to grab the attention of politicians frantically campaigning for votes. By May, 140 service delivery protests had taken place nationwide, according to Municipal IQ, a data service monitoring municipalities.¹

Jérôme Tournadre, explores such protests in *A turbulent South Africa: Post-apartheid social protest*. As he correctly points out in his introduction, there

¹ N Gous, "Service delivery protests on the rise, with petrol bombs being used and journalists targeted", *Sowetanlive*, 11 June 2019 (available at <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/south-africa/2019-06-11-service-delivery-protests-are-on-the-rise-this-year-warn-experts2/>, as accessed on 12 June 2019).

is no shortage of scholarship on post-apartheid protest.² What distinguishes his study from many other works, which Tournadre views as taking “monographic approaches”, or which often tend “to interpret the revolts and resistance of the poorest strata of society... in the light of concepts forged by great “radical” thinkers, on in terms of some grand narrative” (p. xiii), he attempts to provide an overview of protest in post-apartheid South Africa within its historical context. He seeks to help the reader “understand the dynamics of protest movements” and “what is actually happening *in the field*” by considering the “ordinary social relations and apparently innocuous moments that make up daily life in the townships” (p. xiii).

Tournadre’s research is based on data gathered between 2009 and 2015 – essentially the first six years of Jacob Zuma’s presidency, which started in May 2009. He primarily focuses on organisations that have sought to oversee and direct protest, in particular the Unemployed People’s Movement in Grahams-town, Abahlali baseMjondolo in Cape Town and the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC). To a lesser extent, he also considers Abahlali baseMjondolo in Durban and the Anti-Privatisation Forum in Johannesburg. Interestingly, he does not include the *Rhodes Must Fall* and *Fees Must Fall* movements. This decision was perhaps influenced by the timing of their activities as his data collection ended in 2015 – the year both movements were born. However, it would have enriched his study to compare and contrast the character, strategies and tactics of the student movements with the organisations that formed part of his research. Two other important events that one would expect to receive attention in such a study, but are only briefly referred to, are the Marikana massacre of August 2012 and the formation of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) – currently the third largest political party in the national assembly.

Tournadre conducted approximately 60 semi-structured interviews during the time he spent with “militants, at their headquarters, while travelling to neighborhoods or on the occasion of demonstrations”. This “immersion”, writes Tournadre, “made it possible... to witness militancy on a day-to-day basis... the tasks, moments, and interactions, seemingly trivial, nonconfrontational, and disconnected from protest action in the strict sense of the term, that work to maintain things over the life of the organization...” (p. xxiv). Further interviews were done with individuals that have regular contact with

2 R Ballard, A Habib, and I Valodia (eds) *Voices of protest: Social movements in post-apartheid South Africa* (Scottsville, University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2006); J Brown, *South Africa’s insurgent citizens: On dissent and the possibility of politics* (London, Zed Books, 2015).

activists, including trade unionists and representatives from non-governmental organisations.

He introduces the idea of an “intermediate political space” (p. 201) – a fluid space without clear borders that does not belong to that of social protest nor institutional politics, but is also not completely detached from these worlds. It is rather an “in-between” (p. 202) space that has come to the fore since 2005/6 when activists began to lose faith in the capacity of their tactics to achieve a tangible impact and the marginalisation of the left in the ANC-led alliance. An example of a group operating in this space is the Operation Khanyisa Movement (OKM), formed before the 2006 local government elections, who participated in electoral politics while retaining some tactics more closely associated with those of a social movement.

Tournadre describes South Africa as “turbulent” (p. 224) in the title of his book, which he contrasts with the idea of the rainbow nation and the ideology of reconciliation, driven and epitomised by former president Nelson Mandela, and the description of South Africa as the “the rape capital of the world”. It is a country not yet settled where “the lines of demarcation between the worlds of protest and politics are not always drawn with a firm hand. They fluctuate in accordance with frequent and numerous interactions” (p. 223).

He also discusses competing claims to the heritage of the struggle against apartheid – the past, and who has the right to claim ownership of its interpretation and deployment, continues to occupy a prominent space in current political battles. Activists, he argues, frame their protests as a continuation of the struggle, essentially “an extension of *yesterday’s* fight” (p. 170). The idea that the struggle is not yet over³ is a tactic also regularly used by members of the ruling party, including former ANC president Jacob Zuma, who demonstrates this through his deployment of struggle songs. Tournadre refers to such performance modes, including the *toyi-toyi*, which he describes as being part of “attempts to forge an ancestry for the current social struggles” (p. 170). Here I would argue that he is being too dismissive of the potency found in these performances, the way they reactivate and mobilise collective memories of the struggle, and the rich meanings they generate and convey.⁴

3 C Kros, “Twenty years of heritage studies – the showbiz of history?”, *Social Dynamics*, 43(3), 2017, pp. 358-373.

4 L Gunner, “Jacob Zuma, the social body and the unruly power of song”, *African Affairs*, 108(430), 2009, pp. 27-48; L Gunner, “Song, identity and the state: Julius Malema’s Dubul’ ibhunu song as catalyst”, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 27(3), 2015, pp. 326-341; R Suttner, “The Jacob Zuma rape trial: power and African National Congress (ANC) masculinities”, *Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 17(3), 2009, pp. 222-236.

Scattered in between his analysis, Tournadre includes 11 sub-sections, mostly anecdotes, separated from the rest of the text by their placement in grey boxes. One features the 57-year-old Levy who works as a reconstructor for the SECC. Another tells the story of a Abahlali baseMjondolo mass meeting held in Khayelitsha, featuring speeches, singing and dancing. At times these short narratives feel out of place between his dense writing, but they do bring the reader slightly closer to the on-the-ground tactics of these organisations.

Finally, Tournadre ambitiously aims to provide the reader with an overview of post-apartheid protest while also giving us a sense of “what is actually happening *in the field*”, the “ordinary social relations and apparently innocuous moments that make up daily life in the townships” (p. xiii). He succeeds in the former but leaves the reader rather disappointed regarding the latter as one experiences a degree of distance between the author and the activists and organisations he studied.

South Africa versus Rommel. The untold story of the Desert War in World War II

(Review in Afrikaans)

(Delta Books, Johannesburg en Kaapstad, 2018. ISBN 978-1-92824-807-1)

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Alhoewel daar alreeds ’n hele korpus van literatuur oor Suid-Afrika se deelname aan die Tweede Wêreldoorlog en spesifiek die Unieverdedigingsmag se aandeel aan die veldtogte in Oos-en Noord-Afrika bestaan, is hierdie publikasie deur David Katz nie maar slegs ’n gewone toevoeging tot daardie militêre historiografie nie.

Katz benader die onderwerp vanuit die oogpunt van ’n militêre akademikus deur voor die aanvang van die inhoudelike hoofstukke eers behoorlike bronnekritiek toe te pas op die bestaande gepubliseerde literatuur oor Suid-Afrika se betrokkenheid in Oos-Afrika en by die sogenaamde woestynoorlog in Noord-Afrika. Die skrywer het ’n indrukwekkende lys van boeke, amptelike en semi-amptelik gepubliseerde staatsgeskiedenis, biografieë, tesisse, internetbronne en akademiese tydskrifartikels geraadpleeg. Daarbenewens het hy uitgebreide

en instensiewe navorsing gedoen in die Militêre Argief Dokumentasiesentrum van die Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Weermag en die Nasionale Argief van Suid-Afrika te Pretoria, asook in buitelandse argiewe soos die Britse Nasionale Argief. Katz is een van min militêre historici wat ook 'n intensiewe studie van die vertaalde Italiaanse en Duitse weergawes van die militêre veldtogte in Noord-Afrika gedoen het ten einde 'n meer gebalanseerde siening van die verskillende weermagte se betrokkenheid by die stryd weer te gee, alhoewel sy fokus uiteraard die Unieverdedigingsmag is. Hy verklaar dat baie historici die uiters belangrike aandeel van die Koninklike Italiaanse Weermag tot die aanvanklike militêre suksesse van die *Deutsches Afrika Korps* van veldmaarskalk Erwin Rommel in Noord-Afrika misgekyk het as gevolg van die mite van die Italianers se veronderstelde minderwaardige militêre optrede en vermoëns.

Bogenoemde is dan ook 'n kenmerk van Katz se ewewigtige benadering tot die studie. Hy draai geen doekies om nie en die foute en prestasies van die bevelvoerders en die Suid-Afrikaanse en ander Gemenebes leërs wat aan die Britse Agste Leër in Noord-Afrika verbonde was, sowel as dié van die Duitse en Italiaanse magte, word sonder aansiens des persoons bespreek en aan die kaak gestel.

Die boek betaan uit agt inhoudelike hoofstukke. Soos baie ander Geallieerde leërs was die Unieverdedigingsmag met die uitbreek van die oorlog nie juis gerat of opgelei vir grootskaalse oorlogvoering nie maar het tog deur die mobilisering van die plooibare Suid-Afrikaanse oorlogseconomie daarin geslaag om die Eerste Suid-Afrikaanse Infanterie Brigade onder leiding van kolonel (later generaal) Dan Pienaar gevegs gereed te kry. Hoofstuk twee bespreek die Suid-Afrikaanse veldtog van Julie 1940 tot Junie 1941 in Oos-Afrika. Die relatiewe plat landskap van die streek het die Suid-Afrikaanse voorkeur vir mobiele oorlogvoering en omsingelingsmaneuvers soos 'n handskoen gepas en die veldtogte van 61 Gemeganiseerde Bataljonggroep onder leiding van genl.-maj. Roland de Vries tydens die Grensoorlog van die tagtigterjare sou ook grootliks op hierdie taktiese doktrine gebaseer wees.

Na afhandeling van hierdie susksesvolle veldtog, waarin veral die Italiaanse steuntroepe nie veel weerstand aan die Suid-Afrikaners gebied het nie, is die Suid-Afrikaanse leërenhede na Noord-Afrika in die Libiese woestyn ontplooi waar dit deel gevorm het van die Britse Agste Leër onder die opperbevel van genl. Wavell en later genl. Auchinleck. Tydens die woestynoorlog sou die Suid-Afrikaners, in teenstelling met hulle ervaring in Oos-Afrika, dikwels egter meer teenspoed as voorspoed ervaar. In hoofstuk drie ontleed Katz die

moontlike aanleidende oorsake tot hierdie situasie en skryf dit toe aan die verskillende benaderings in militêre doktrine tot oorlogvoering tussen die Britse en Duitse opperbevelstrukture. Tydens die woestynoorlog het die Duitse *Wehrmacht*, soos vergestalt in sy *Afrika Korps* onder leiding van Rommel, van die beginsel uitgegaan dat die oorhand oor die vyand ten beste verkry kon word deur 'n konsentrasie van voldoende mannekrag en mobiele, gekombineerde krygstuig bestaande uit infanterie, artillerie en panser by die gekose aanvalspunt (*Schwerpunkt*).

Daarteenoor was die Britse benadering eerder op statiese verdediging van verdedigingslyne ingestel en geneig om hulle magte eerder daarvolgens te versprei in sogenaamde "Jock Columns", as om maksimum vuurkrag op 'n stra-tegies voordelige punt soos die Duitsers te konsentreer. As gevolg van hulle voorkeur vir mobiele oorlogmaneuvers was statiese gevegstellings en hulle aversie vir hoë ongevalle tydens frontale aanvalsinisiatiewe volgens Katz 'n vervloeking vir die Suid-Afrikaners. In hierdie opsig het veral genl. Dan Pienaar, as bevelvoerder van die Eerste Suid-Afrikaanse Infanterie Brigade (later Divisie), dikwels met die Britse opperbevel gebots en soms amper tot op die punt van insubordinasie geweier om sekere bevels uit te voer waar die Suid-Afrikaanse magte die vyand trompop sou moes loop, of het dit probeer omseil deur sekere voorafbepaalde strategiese opmarspunte nie betyds te bereik nie.

In hoofstukke vier tot ses word die Suid-Afrikaanse deelname aan gevegte in Noord-Afrika as deel van Operasie Crusader bespreek. Katz ontleed indringend die gemengde suksesse en neerlae van die Suid-Afrikaanse magte by Gazala en Sidi Rezegh. Hy beskryf die redes waarom Rommel se *Afrika Korps* ten spyte van minder troepe en wapentuig die Geallieerdes met die Duitse *Schwerpunkt*-taktiek uitoorlê het en onder andere die Vyfde Suid-Afrikaanse Infanterie Brigade feitlik vernietig het. Katz wys veral op twee punte wat nie in diepte in die bestaande literatuur oor Suid-Afrika se deelname aan die woestynoorlog belig word nie.

Ten eerste het die Italiaanse troepe in Libië baie sterker en verwoed weerstand gebied om die Suid-Afrikaanse aanvalsinisiatiewe by Gazala af te weer, selfs tot die mate dat die Suid-Afrikaners in sommige gevalle die aftog moes blaas. Oorhoofs skryf Katz die Suid-Afrikaanse flaters deels ook toe aan die Britse stellingkrygstaktiek wat eerder op statiese verdediging ingestel was en aanvalsinisiatief aan Rommel oorgelaat het. Hier word genl. Dan Pienaar, wat in bestaande literatuur, op enkele werke na, oorwegend as 'n onbesproke Suid-Afrikaanse militêre held voorgelê word, egter in meer kontroversiële

terme geskets. Met sy obstruksionistiese houding en weerstand teen statiese oorlogvoering verset Pienaar hom daarteen om sekere militêre maneuvres in opdrag van die Britse opperbevel uit te voer. Hy het min vertroue in die Britse bevelsvermoë gehad wat, volgens hom, onnodig troepe deur sinnelose taktiek opgeoffer het. Aan die anderkant is die oorversigtigheid en aarseling van die Suid-Afrikaanse magte onder bevel van Pienaar om tot aksie oor te gaan in sekere kringe in die Britse Agste Leër selfs as vorme van lafhartigheid beskou.

Dit was ook verhelderend om te lees van die invloed wat politiek op die Geallieerde krygsmaneuvres tydens die woestynoorlog uitgeoefen. Katz beskryf gevalle waar Pienaar ten opsigte van die Suid-Afrikaanse magte en Lt.-genl. Bernard Freyberg, bevelvoerder van die Tweede Nieu-Seelandse Infanterie Divisie, van hulle politieke konneksies tuis (in Pienaar se geval genl. Smuts) gebruik maak het om in weerwil van Britse militêre gesag afwisseling vir hulle beproefde magte na swaar veldslae te bewerkstellig. Dit is 'n goeie illustrasie van die ou gesegde van Carl von Clausewitz dat oorlog niks anders is as 'n voortsetting van politiek deur die toevoeging van ander middele nie.

Hoofstuk sewe beskryf die rampspoedige val van Tobruk in die hande van die Duitse magte in 1942. Katz skryf dit veral aan twee faktore toe. In die eerste plek was daar klaarblyklik verwarring of 'n kommunikasiegebrek tussen Winston Churchill, die Britse Eerste Minister, en die opperbevel van die Britse Agste Leër, of Tobruk daadwerklik en ten alle koste as 'n strategiese Geallieerde vesting verdedig moes word en of die Britse magte moes terugval na 'n posisie in die rigting van Egipte om vandaar vir 'n teenaanval teen die Duitsers te hergroepeer. Tweedens, weens 'n sameloop van bevorderingsomstandighede, is die verkeerde persoon op die verkeerde tydskop in bevel van Tobruk geplaas. Genl.-maj. Hendrik Klopper is sonder enige oorlogservaring direk vanuit Pretoria as bevelvoerder van die ewe onervare Tweede Suid-Afrikaanse Infanterie Divisie na Tobruk oorgeplaas. Hierdie ongelukkige sameloop van omstandighede, asook verwarring oor die verdediging van die behoud van Tobruk, aldan nie, het daartoe gelei dat toe Rommel se magte met misleidingstaktiek die vesting aangeval het, Klopper en sy bevelvoerders te lank geaarsel het om tot aksie van watter aard ook al oor te gaan en toe in verwaasde verstarring, sonder veel slag of stoot, aan die Duitsers moes oorgee.

Churchill se vroegtydige vervanging van Auchinleck deur veldmaarskalk Bernard Montgomery as opperbevelvoerder van die Britse magte in Noord-Afrika voor die beslissende Slag van El Alamein, wat in hoofstuk agt bespreek word, was nie net voordelig vir die Geallieerde magte aldaar in die algemeen nie, maar

in die besonder ook voordelig vir die lotgevalle van genl. Dan Pienaar. Anders as in die geval met sy voorgangers, het Pienaar Montgomery se verandering van die taktiek van statiese oorlogvoering met ope arms aanvaar en laasgenoemde onvoorwaardelik ondersteun. By El Alamein is die Duitse opmars uiteindelik gestuit waarin die vuurkrag van die Suid-Afrikaanse artillerie 'n deurslaggewende rol gespeel het en waarna die Eerste Suid-Afrikaanse Infanterie Divisie aan die oorlogsteater in Noord-Afrika onttrek het.

'n Paar punte van kritiek op Katz se studie is wel ter sake. In die aanloop tot die Slag van El Alamein word 'n kontroversiële beeld van genl. Dan Pienaar ten opsigte van sy militêre leierskap geskets. Het dit bloot daaroor gegaan dat hy minagting en wantrouend teenoor die militêre strategie van die Britse opperbevel gestaan het of was hy aarselend of bang om te waag? Aan die ander kant, gegewe sy populariteit onder die Suid-Afrikaanse magte, het dit werklik oor sy besorgdheid gegaan dat sy troepe volgens sy oordeel onnodig ongevalle kon opdoen? Daar was manoeuvres en veldslae tydens die Oos- en Noord-Afrika-veldtogte waar Pienaar hom uitstekend van sy taak gekwyt het. Katz verklaar dat sou Pienaar nie tragies en voortydig in 'n vliegtuigongeluk in Kenia in 1942 op pad na Suid-Afrika gesterf het nie, hy sonder twyfel die Sesde Suid-Afrikaanse Panser Divisie in Italië sou aanvoer in voortsetting van Suid-Afrika se militêre betrokkenheid by die Tweede Wêreldoorlog. 'n Volledige oordeel oor Pienaar se militêre vermoëns is dus by implikasie nie moontlik nie. Tog, op grond van sy optrede tot en met sy afsterwe, sou mens wou sien dat die skrywer bietjie meer oordeel fel en standpunt inneem aangaande Pienaar se militêre karakter, op soortgelyke wyse as wat hy Klopper se karaktereienskappe en militêre vermoëns beoordeel het.

Vanaf hoofstuk vier tot sewe word die deelname, suksesse en mislukkings van die Suid-Afrikaanse magte in detail beskryf. Dit sluit ook 'n aantal nuttige gevegskaarte in wat die militêre manoeuvres en veldslae van die Geallieerde, sowel as die Spil-magte illustratief goed uitbeeld. Alhoewel die Eerste Suid-Afrikaanse Infanterie Divisie slegs aan 'n flankgedeelte van die Britse Agste Leër aan die Slag van El Alamein deelgeneem het, en daarna ontbind is en na Suid-Afrika teruggekeer het, was hulle aandeel aan die slag, soos reeds genoem, onontbeerlik om Rommel se opmars te help stuit. Daarom sou mens tog bietjie meer van 'n gedetailleerde beskrywing van die Suid-Afrikaanse troepemaneuvres in hoofstuk agt wou sien. Verder is die gebrek aan 'n gevegskaart, wat die manoeuvres van die Geallieerde en Spil-magte tydens die Slag van El Alamein illustratief sou kon uitbeeld, 'n groot leemte in hierdie hoofstuk. Ter wille van leke-lesers van militêre geskiedenis sou

dit ook van nut kon wees indien die skrywer aan die begin van die boek 'n skematiese uiteensetting kon gee van militêre terme soos brigades, divisies, korps, ensovoorts.

Nietemin is hierdie studie van David Katz 'n uitstekende voorbeeld van hoe krygsgeskiedenis, wat militêre doktrine, taktiek en manewers ontleed en bespreek, geskryf behoort te word. Dit behoort ook as verpligte leesstof oor militêre geskiedenis vir offisiere in opleiding aan die Suid-Afrikaanse Leërkollege te dien.