that reifies what he calls 'history' and fails to recognize its disciplinary formation and the ways its own practices are always partial and structured by narrative forms that set the limits on its ability to provide new and different sets of 'truths'. The chapter on autobiographies provides a hint of different possibilities for history, but the judgments are about elisions, distortions, context, and purpose framed in the dichotomies he sets up.

Murray's book at times reads like an extended literature review. There is little evidence of new and sustained research and he draws heavily on previously published and unpublished material, such as Ciraj Rassool's work on the District Six Museum and Sabine Marschall's studies of memorial practices. The latter's accounts are used unquestioningly and extensively, reproducing some of its inaccuracies. For instance, following Marschall, he presents the practices surrounding the making and remaking of the Trojan Horse memorials in Athlone, Cape Town as one of vernacular versus state authority (p. 149). Yet, with the involvement of Human Rights Media Centre, it was the so-called 'state' project that appeared to involve a wider set of consultations and broader range of stakeholders and more closely approximated Murray's category of the 'vernacular'. Such complexities are glossed over.

As with all journeys, the views are selective and we are offered glimpses into a much broader field than Murray presents here. Much more in-depth research is required in order to understand some of the fraught and entangled processes of memory formation in post-apartheid South Africa. It would be more fruitful for the reader to go directly to the work that Murray recapitulates.

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MAKING A CASE FOR WAR

A Just Defiance: Bombmakers, Insurgents, and the Treason Trial of the Delmas Four.
By Peter Harris.
Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012. Pp. ii+314. $29.95, hardback (ISBN 9780520273641).
doi:10.1017/S002185371300090X

Key Words: South Africa, apartheid, law, protest, resistance, violence.

Many books written by lawyers about cases in which they were involved are at best tedious and at worst self-aggrandizing. Peter Harris's account of the 1985–9 trial of the Delmas Four is neither. The book, a gripping account of the last important trial of the apartheid era, is filled with personal accounts from the perspective of all those involved, most importantly the accused themselves. It reads like a legal thriller. Perhaps one of the reasons the author does not focus on his own role is the fact that the accused chose not to present a defense at all. Harris's involvement was as an advisor and friend. Although his own participation in the trial is downplayed, he clearly performed those roles with empathy, intelligence, and good judgment.

Harris captures the complex swings of emotion that existed in South Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Events at times seemed to be moving toward the end of the horrors of apartheid, yet at times it seemed that the violence and oppression would never end. For every movement in a positive direction, there were setbacks and – as graphically illustrated in this book – tragedies, including deaths of leaders and ordinary people. Just as in the 1963–4 Rivonia trial at which Nelson Mandela and others were convicted of sabotage, tragedy struck even the lawyers involved in the case.

The trial of the Delmas Four was not a typical trial, if anything in apartheid South Africa could rightly be labeled typical. But this was even more out of the ordinary. It was a political trial to be sure, but one in which the defendants chose to be spectators. There was no doubt that they had killed in the course of their duties, but their actions were those of soldiers in combat. After the end of the trial and their sentencing, the exposure of acts of violence by government agents brought home the point that the defendants' courageous stance had sought to make: this was a war.

The author's account of the role of the trial judge, Marius de Klerk, provides a model for the beginnings of the transformation of South Africa. Despite his superficial courtesy, everything in Judge de Klerk's background would predict that he would be hostile to the defendants and their actions. Yet, over the course of the trial, the judge was sufficiently transformed to be able to understand the defendants' state of mind. He was able to find 'extenuating circumstances' in conduct that even his assessors could only find blameworthy. In past trials, perhaps best illustrated by Rivonia, the court and most of the media would only condemn violent conduct. At the trial of the Delmas Four, there was the beginning of recognition of the nature of the struggle that would eventually lead to a new democratic South Africa.

Harris also provides interesting and enlightening descriptions of African National Congress (ANC) leaders who would later play major roles in the negotiations leading to the new constitution and in post-apartheid South Africa. He reminds us of the leadership of Chris Hani as well as the importance of people such as Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma to the ANC long before they would emerge as democratically elected heads of state. We know them today as men of official power. Harris remembers them as part of the revolutionary machinery.

Throughout the book, there is a foreshadowing of the disclosures that would shock us during the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The confessions of Dirk Coetzee were the beginnings of the world's understanding of government-sponsored terrorism. The public revelation of that terrorism was enough to save the lives of the Delmas defendants and to help bring both South Africa and the rest of the world to an understanding of the true character of the apartheid regime.

But all of this well-recalled and artfully collected assemblage of historical events should not detract from the real story of the Delmas Four. As powerfully portrayed by Peter Harris, this is the story of the defendants themselves – Jabu Masina, Ting Ting Masango, Neo Potsane, and Joseph Makhura. They were people who were willing to risk their own lives as soldiers in the struggle against oppression. Their soldiering continued from the battlefield of South Africa's townships to places of police interrogation to the courtrooms. Like their historical ancestors – the defendants in the Rivonia trial – the Delmas Four put their cause ahead of their lives. Their cause, as Nelson Mandela put it

35 years earlier, was one for which 'they were prepared to die'. Their ability to persist in that stance, facilitated by both their lawyers and the ANC leadership, contributed greatly to the process that eventually resulted in a new South Africa. Their bravery shines above all else in this account.

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THE VIEW FROM RUSSIA

The Hidden Thread: Russia and South Africa in the Soviet Era.
By Irina Filatova and Apollon Davidson.
Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers. Pp. 553. No price given, paperback (ISBN 9781868424993).
doi:10.1017/S0021853713000911

Key Words: South Africa, international relations, resistance.

Every year dozens of books on the history of South Africa are published worldwide, concerned with foreign influences on the development of South Africa's state structure, politics, and culture. Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Portugal, and China immediately come to mind. Yet few people know what a significant role another country – the Soviet Union – played in the events that make up the history of South Africa in the twentieth century. Irina Filatova's and Apollon Davidson's book *The Hidden Thread: Russia and South Africa in the Soviet Era* opens hitherto unknown pages on the relations between South Africa and Soviet Russia and offers the reader a fresh look at the recent history of these countries.

Filatova and Davidson have long studied the history of South Africa and authored books on this subject both in Russian and in English, among them the two-volume *South Africa and the Communist International: A Documentary History* and two recently published books in Russian: *Russia and South Africa: Three Centuries of Contacts* (2010) and *Russia and South Africa: Building Bridges* (2012). The most recent book, which is reviewed here, is a unique study of the ties between South Africa and Russia, starting in the seventeenth century with the first mention of 'Moscovy' in the journal of Jan van Riebeeck, the founder of the Cape Colony, and ending in the twenty-first century, when South Africa and Russia both became members of BRICS (a political and financial consortium of emergent economies convening Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). The authors pay particular attention to the Soviet era – from the 1917 revolution to the breakup of the USSR. Despite the fact that for most of this period there were no diplomatic relations between the two countries, it was at that time that Russia's influence on South Africa was the most significant, as the Soviet Union was right at the centre of the struggle against apartheid.

The early chapters of the book describe the reactions of South African communists to the Russian revolution. In the Soviet ideals of equality between classes, nations, and races,