

**“The Fever and the Fret”: C.L.R. James, the Spanish Civil War and the Writing of *The Black Jacobins***

**Christian Høgsbjerg**

University of Leeds

**Abstract**

This essay explores some of the complexities of the black Trinidadian Marxist historian and activist C.L.R. James’s insider-outsider relationship to continental Europe, in particular the Spanish Civil War. The eruption of the Spanish Revolution in 1936 after a coup by General Franco overthrew the newly democratically elected Popular Front government was of tremendous hope to all those concerned about the rise of fascism. As a black colonial subject and Pan-Africanist thinker, James’s understanding of the Spanish Civil War was also viewed through the lens of colour, allowing us an important insight into how race and the colonial dimension of metropolitan politics manifested themselves in Europe during the 1930s.

This essay will use James’s little discussed writings for the Trotskyist and Pan-Africanist press during this period to elucidate James’s attempt to help build solidarity with the Spanish Revolution. In particular, as well as drawing inspiration from the eyewitness accounts of workers power in revolutionary Barcelona, James highlighted the importance of the colonial dimension to the Spanish Civil War with respect to the question of Morocco. Finally the question of how the Spanish Civil War shaped James's classic 1938 history of the Haitian Revolution, *The Black Jacobins*, will be explored.

**Keywords**

C.L.R. James, Haitian Revolution, Morocco, Pan-Africanism, Spanish Civil War, Trotskyism

**Corresponding author:**

Christian Høgsbjerg, [cjhogsbjerg@hotmail.com](mailto:cjhogsbjerg@hotmail.com)

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**‘The Fever and the Fret’: C.L.R. James, the Spanish Civil War and the Writing of *The Black Jacobins***

Stuart Hall once asked the black Trinidadian Marxist historian C.L.R. James (1901-89) ‘about the three great moments in which he could see a single artist speaking on behalf of a whole historical revolutionary moment’.

He told me about the Acropolis, even though its architect is unknown. He told me about Shakespeare, and then he told me about Picasso’s “Guernica”. He said, “Look at Picasso. Look at ‘Guernica’. A wonderful painting. What is it about? It is about the Spanish people. It is about the energies of the Spanish revolution. When you look at ‘Guernica’ you see the whole movement, the whole maelstrom of the Spanish revolution encapsulated in an aesthetic form.”

Hall recalls James ‘would take a postcard of ‘Guernica’ to cricket matches, and during intervals when play stopped he would take it out and study it. When play resumed, he would put it away.’<sup>1</sup> George Rawick once recalled that during the early 1960s, while enjoying ‘the privilege of sharing with James the details of everyday life for several years in London’, James would similarly keep a postcard of ‘Guernica’ close to hand.<sup>2</sup> Pablo Picasso’s 1937 masterpiece of ‘immeasurable chaos’, a response to the German bombing of a town during the Spanish Civil War, clearly held a special place in James’s heart.<sup>3</sup> Scholars have marvelled at James’s later critical appreciation of that painting, and other works of art in general.<sup>4</sup> Yet few scholars have discussed James’s response to the revolution and civil war in Spain itself, perhaps agreeing with Brett St Louis’s suggestion that James was ‘less fixated’ on ‘the struggle over the maintenance of international socialism, epitomised by the

Spanish Civil War, within the European arena than other orthodox Trotskyists were'.<sup>5</sup> This essay, though challenging such an assumption, will not detail James's response to the Spanish struggle, and how as a Trotskyist it confirmed for him the disastrous failure of a 'Popular Front' government to simply even adequately defend democracy from the menace of fascism, let alone challenge imperialism or capitalism. It will however suggest that the revolution and civil war in Spain, and particularly the profound imperial and racial dynamics and dimensions of the struggle, came to be in the forefront of James's mind when writing up *The Black Jacobins*, his magisterial history of the Haitian Revolution in Brighton in the winter of 1937. As James famously put it in his 1938 Preface to *The Black Jacobins*, evoking John Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, he felt 'the fever and the fret' of the Spanish Revolution. 'It was in the stillness of a seaside suburb that could be heard most clearly and insistently the booming of Franco's heavy artillery, the rattle of Stalin's firing squads and the fierce shrill turmoil of the revolutionary movement striving for clarity and influence.'<sup>6</sup>

### **From Port of Spain to the Spanish Civil War**

Just as Trinidad had once been a French colony, it had also once been part of the Spanish Empire from 1498 until its capture for the British Empire in 1797.<sup>7</sup> As James grew to intellectual maturity in and around Trinidad's capital, Port of Spain, he could have been only too conscious of this Spanish inheritance. There were 'Spanish' schools for 'sons of Venezuela', and the Roman Catholic Church was not without power on the island during the 1920s, as seen by the resistance when the British colonial government legalised divorce. Some of James's early short 'barrack-yard' stories used the Spanish inheritance as a backdrop, whether discussing Venezuelan politics in 'Revolution' (1931) or religion in 'La Divina Pastora'. James was not

unaware of the historic crimes of the Spanish Empire in the Caribbean and in his first book *The Life of Captain Cipriani* (1932) he noted ‘the Latin peoples’ have ‘been cruel and callous’.<sup>8</sup> Yet Spanish culture seems to have been far less of an influence on the young James compared to French and particularly British culture, though on moving from colonial Trinidad to Britain in 1932, he does appreciate some sketches by Picasso he comes across in London.<sup>9</sup> Nor does Spanish politics seem to come in for comment from James, still primarily a literary figure, at this early stage.

The long term causes for the Spanish Civil War are many and complex, but the immediate event had been the election of an extremely loose ‘Popular Front’ coalition involving liberal Republicans, social democratic Socialists and the Spanish Communist Party in February 1936 after five years of deep crisis and instability. The Spanish Right spread the idea the Left had stolen the elections in an illegitimate fashion and their electoral failure encouraged the ruling elite to turn to the extreme Right. Army officers began actively plotting the downfall of the hated Republic, launching their uprising under General Francisco Franco in mid- July 1936. The Spanish Civil War began as workers and peasants spontaneously began to resist, and popular resistance to Franco as the Republican state disintegrated led quickly to the eruption of a social revolution from below across much of Spain, in particular Catalonia and Aragon.<sup>10</sup>

C.L.R. James, by now a leading figure in the tiny Pan-Africanist and Trotskyist movements in Britain, was clearly as thrilled and excited by the outbreak of revolution in Spain as anyone. In mid-August 1936, Hans David Freund, a German-born Jewish Trotskyist based in Barcelona and now writing under the pseudonym ‘Moulin’, had sent an eyewitness report of ‘the insurrection of July’ to James’s ‘Marxist Group’, noting ‘great labour history is being made. In great red letters the

Spanish proletariat is engaged in writing the pages of it ... Night and day the revolution labours in Spain, and revolution is the finest architect in the world'.<sup>11</sup> In October 1936, James republished this article in the first issue of the Marxist Group's new journal, *Fight*, and in an editorial comment saluted 'the Spanish workers and peasants, men, women and children, fighting against landlord and capitalist tyranny with a gallantry and determination that stirs the heart of every fellow worker and drags a grudging admiration from even their bitterest class enemies'. International working class solidarity, James argued, was the only hope for the Spanish Revolution as there was no point 'begging capitalist Governments to help smash Spanish capitalism'.

Yet James was optimistic as 'the smashing of the Unemployment Scales in Britain in January, 1935, the stay-in strikes in France and Belgium, and now the unparalleled courage and self-sacrifice of the Spanish workers and peasants have shown that the workers are willing to fight'. Before the Communist International had begun to organise International Brigades to Spain, James urged the raising of money 'not only for food and medical units but for guns, munitions and planes' and for the formation of 'battalions, large or small, that would carry in person the message of solidarity'. By doing this 'in all parts of the world' workers 'would build a steel ring of proletarian support for the United States of Soviet Spain, and by so doing carry themselves nearer to their own victory'.<sup>12</sup> On 4 October 1936, members of James's Marxist Group (then still active inside the larger socialist Independent Labour Party (ILP)) joined the victorious 'Battle of Cable Street' in the East End of London which saw over 100,000 workers successfully block a march by Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists through a predominantly Jewish area. The rallying slogan of the

antifascists, 'They Shall Not Pass', was inspired by the slogan of those defending Madrid, 'No Pasarán'.<sup>13</sup>

In November 1936, the ILP decided to organise volunteers to go and fight with the POUM, the 'Workers' Party of Marxist Unification', its Spanish sister party, who encouraged English supporters to 'FIGHT for the World Revolution - ENLIST in the POUM Militia'.<sup>14</sup> It seems James wanted to join the ILP contingent that was to leave from Britain for the Aragon Front to fight Franco with the POUM in early January 1937, just as he had wanted to go and fight Mussolini in Ethiopia in 1935.<sup>15</sup> However, December 1936 was to be the moment when the tensions between James's Marxist Group and the ILP leadership finally came to a head and James's group departed from the ILP.<sup>16</sup> Now burdened with the additional responsibility of leading an independent political group at a particularly stressful and crucial period, it seems James decided it was necessary to stay in London and raise solidarity for the Spanish Revolution from Britain, as he had raised solidarity for the people of Ethiopia during Mussolini's barbaric war.<sup>17</sup>

### **Building Solidarity with the Spanish Revolution**

As editor of *Fight*, James made sure the struggle in Spain was prominently featured in all its aspects, carrying regular eyewitness reports, organising fundraising appeals and maintaining unconditional support for the POUM, which embraced the slogan 'To conquer or die' and declared itself for the Spanish Revolution.<sup>18</sup> As *Fight* put it, 'the Spanish battlefield is the greatest present battlefield in the class struggle, and the only victory for the workers is the victory of international socialism'. James's Marxist Group, following Leon Trotsky's characterisation of the POUM as 'Left centrist', were prepared to be fraternally critical when this was felt necessary, for example with

the decision of POUM leader Andreu Nin to enter the ‘Popular Front’ Catalan government in October 1936 instead of working for its overthrow.<sup>19</sup> As it happened, in December 1936, Nin was to be thrown out of the Catalan government after direct pressure from the Soviet Union on the Republican authorities and amid a rising tide of ferocious Stalinist smears and violent repression against the allegedly ‘Trotskyite’ POUM. James’s Marxist Group now put itself forward as the most ardent defenders of the POUM in Britain, and began selling the POUM’s English weekly bulletin *The Spanish Revolution* alongside *Fight*, noting in January 1937 that ‘at this critical period in the revolution, the Communist International shows its counter-revolutionary role’.<sup>20</sup>

The co-editor of the English edition of *The Spanish Revolution* was Mary Stanley Low, a young English surrealist poet who had gone to Spain in July 1936, and joined the POUM women’s militia in Catalonia, working in their English-language radio service, ‘Radio POUM.’ *The Spanish Revolution*, from its offices on Rambla de los Estudios, Barcelona, reported regularly on the British ILP volunteers fighting with the POUM, including one Eric Blair or ‘Comrade Blair’ – better known as the writer George Orwell.<sup>21</sup> However, as the persecution against the POUM intensified, Mary Low and her partner, another surrealist poet, the Cuban born Trotskyist Juan Breá, who had fought with the POUM and twice been arrested by the Stalinists, got out of Spain in February 1937.

There was little more to keep us in Barcelona after January [1937]. The militias were over, with the coming of militarisation ... There remained the war to be won, certainly, but it was the revolution in which we were interested. For the time being it seemed to have gone into cold storage.<sup>22</sup>

Low and Breá wrote up their inspiring eyewitness account of their travels during ‘the first six months of the Revolution and the Civil War’ in Spain, and secured a contract with Secker & Warburg, who were then in the process of publishing James’s pioneering anti-Stalinist history of ‘the rise and fall of the Communist International’, *World Revolution*. James’s work appeared in April 1937 and he had concluded with a discussion of Spain.

Bourgeois democracy is doomed in Spain ... the choice lies between the capitalist Fascist dictatorship, or the Socialist Workers’ State. If the workers are to win against Franco and his German and Italian allies ... the war must be a revolutionary war by workers and peasants organised in Soviets or other workers’ organisations. But the Soviet bureaucracy made the fight for a democratic Spain a condition of assistance; and the bureaucracy and its agents, though active against Franco, are now preventing Spanish workers and peasants from doing the very things that created Soviet Russia.<sup>23</sup>

Indeed, James had predicted ‘the day is near when the Stalinists will join reactionary governments in shooting revolutionary workers. They cannot avoid it.’<sup>24</sup> In May 1937, a month after *World Revolution* came out, James was tragically proved right as the Republican government with Communist support repressed the POUM and anarchists in Barcelona by force, imprisoning thousands and murdering dozens.<sup>25</sup> Incredibly, one of those briefly arrested in June 1937 in Barcelona, Charles Orr, an American socialist who was working for the POUM, had actually been reading James’s *World Revolution* in the days before his arrest.<sup>26</sup> James was therefore one obvious person to be asked to write an introduction for Low and Breá’s *Red Spanish Notebook*, which came out later in 1937, priced 5 shillings. Secker & Warburg

marketed it as ‘the only study of the Spanish War written from the POUM viewpoint. Not only of political importance, but a brilliant piece of reportage recreating the atmosphere of the first six months.’<sup>27</sup> In his introduction, James praised Low and Breá’s achievement as having provided to the ordinary reader, ‘better than all the spate of books on Spain, some idea of the new society that is struggling so desperately to be born’.

For Breá and Mary Low, despite their eye for picturesque personalities, are proletarian revolutionaries, and their little book shows us the awakening of a people. The boot-black who good-humouredly but firmly refuses a tip, showing his union-cards; the peasant who will not be kept waiting as of old because equality exists now; the hundreds of women stealing away from their men to join the women’s militia - and attend Marxist classes, throwing off the degrading subservience of centuries and grasping with both hands at the new life ... for the eager thousands who march through these pages, smashing up the old and tumultuously beginning the new, worker’s power emerged half-way from books, became something that they could touch and see, a concrete alternative to the old slavery.<sup>28</sup>

George Orwell, who had just returned wounded from Spain having ‘touched and seen’ both workers’ power and then Stalinist counter-revolutionary terror in Barcelona while fighting in the POUM militia, praised *Red Spanish Notebook* in his review in *Time and Tide* on 9 October 1937, for ‘by a series of intimate day-to-day pictures ... it shows you what human beings are like when they are trying to behave as human beings and not as cogs in the capitalist machine’. Indeed, on returning to London Orwell also picked up a copy of James’s *World Revolution*, which he thought

a 'very able book', and in July 1937 made inquiries as to how many copies it had sold, noting 'the people who read that book would be the kind likely to read a book on Spain written from the non-Communist standpoint'.<sup>29</sup> According to Louise Cripps, a good friend and comrade of James's in the Marxist Group, Orwell, presumably while working on what would become his classic *Homage to Catalonia* in the summer of 1937, met with James and was a 'serious enquirer' into Trotskyism. 'Since he was so vehemently against Stalin's regime in the Soviet Union, he read and approved the literature we had.'<sup>30</sup>

Meanwhile back in Spain, as 1937 progressed, the POUM steadily became overwhelmed by the state repression now engulfing them. In June 1937, the POUM was declared an illegal organisation and its leader Nin arrested as a 'counter-revolutionary' by the Spanish Republican government - later to be kidnapped and executed by Soviet agents. While the Marxist Group wrote letters in protest to the British press and Spanish Embassy, *Fight* was merciless in its criticism of the POUM leadership, for failing to have acted independently of those to the right of it at crucial moments. 'Emotionalism, heroism, good intentions, etc., play a big part in revolutionary struggles, but these qualities alone never did, and never shall, guarantee the success of the struggle.'<sup>31</sup>

Instead of being prepared and organised to go underground, many of its leaders were captured by the Government without the slightest difficulty. Many have shed their blood and fought bravely. But when will these sentimentalists learn that a revolution is not a football match, where you greet the vanquished with "Well played, Sir," and everyone goes home happy? The masses in a revolution have always shed their blood without stint and

displayed conspicuous bravery. What in history has surpassed the defence of Madrid and the self-sacrifice of the Asturian miners? And yet how very, very far are the Spanish workers today from the socialist revolution! We know the cursed treachery of the Stalinists, we know how hard they have made the task, *but we have to accept that.*<sup>32</sup>

### **Race, Empire and the Spanish Revolution**

When the 'Nationalist' rebels under General Franco launched their military uprising in mid-July 1936, it had began in Spanish North Africa. Franco commanded the Army of Africa, the local colonial army made up of some 45,000 men and including Moroccan troops, the Foreign Legion and regular Spanish troops. The Army of Africa were combat ready, and in late July 1936 Hitler and Mussolini sent aircraft to help transport them across the Straits of Gibraltar in what Durgan notes was 'the first great military airlift in history'. The rebels would be helped by far more foreign aid than the Republicans, including not just arms, ammunition and other material but also military training and advice from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. They also had more trained professional officers, for three quarters of the 9000 serving officers of the Spanish army fought for Franco. Yet recent research suggests that, as Durgan notes, 'the Army of Africa was so important in the first months of the war that the Nationalists would probably have been defeated without its participation'. The Army of Africa 'were used with devastating effect to spearhead the rebels' drive in the south and west of the peninsula' in a 'colonial style war' that relied on terror and small but highly trained units. In all, 'nearly 80,000 Moroccan troops fought in the war, playing a central role as the Nationalists' shock troops' all over Spain.<sup>33</sup>

In 1908, Spain had invaded Morocco, one of the last European nations to join the ‘Scramble for Africa’. The crumbling Moroccan Empire in 1908 was largely under French control, and in 1912, at the Treaty of Fez, France granted Spain a small strip of North-Eastern Morocco as a bribe for her support against Germany. The Spanish established an ‘Army of Africa’ which recruited Moroccans to fight under a brutal pro-colonial Spanish officer class, and the ‘work of civilisation’ began in earnest.<sup>34</sup> By 1936, when Franco turned to the ‘Army of Africa’ to spearhead his counter-revolution, Durgan notes ‘most Moroccan recruits were members of tribes that had traditionally collaborated with the colonial authorities so coercion was limited’.

The economic rewards, the main motivation for fighting, were quite high in a context where the failed harvest of the previous winter meant that hardship among many peasant families was greater than normal. Ideological pressure was also exerted, both in an appeal to participate in a war of the ‘great religions’ against the ‘atheist’ Republic, and, even more cynically, through vague promises of autonomy or even independence.<sup>35</sup>

The resulting contradictions, as Paul Trehwela has noted, were incredible.

Thus the paradox of the bourgeois counter-revolution, a crusade of the Roman Catholic Church *militans*, compelled to find its shock troops in Islam. The nation whose military aristocracy was formed through seven centuries of war aimed at expelling the Muslims to Africa, now depended on the return of the Muslim army of Africa for the preservation of its private property, Church and State in Europe.<sup>36</sup>

Franco had been forced to cynically make vague promises of future colonial liberation because of the Moroccan people's rich history of resistance. In the Rif mountain ranges of Morocco, a cluster of Berber agricultural and herding groups, famed as warriors, resided with a degree of autonomy from Spain. After 1919, when Spain attempted to extend its control over its whole Protectorate, one Berber chief, Mohammad Abdel Krim, born in Morocco in 1882 and educated in Spain, led the resistance. As the British socialist J.F. Horrabin noted in 1935,

[Abdel Krim] knew how to organise and how to possess himself of up-to-date arms and ammunition. Even better, he knew how to arouse the spirit of haughty independence and the fanatical courage of his compatriots. In 1921 he and his men fell upon the Spaniards at Anual, and wiped out the Spanish army ... It was the bitterest blow any European nation had suffered since the Russia of the Tsar had had to sue for peace from Japan.<sup>37</sup>

Indeed, as Sebastian Balfour notes, the defeat of the Spanish colonial army at Anual in July 1921 was more disastrous than the 1898 Spanish-American War, more devastating than the Italian military defeat by the Ethiopians at Adowa in 1896, and more severe than the British military defeats at Isandhlwana in 1879 at the hands of the Zulu army, in Eastern Sudan from 1882-85 during the Mahdi uprising, and at the hands of the Boers in South Africa. About 8000 to 12,000 soldiers in not just Anual but all over the east of Spanish Morocco perished in under three weeks, in part because of the behaviour of Moroccan conscripts in the Spanish army.

When faced with overwhelming odds ... the reaction of many Moroccan soldiers in Spanish pay was not to die for Spain but to join their brothers on the winning side and shoot the alien infidel ... Krim now commanded an army

in which most of the tribes of north-east Morocco had united in a new jihad to eject the ancient enemy from their land.<sup>38</sup>

The 'Disaster of Annual' led to a complete undermining of King Alfonso's authority and the decision of the military high command to seize power and suspend the constitution in Spain, installing General Miguel Primo de Rivera in 1923. The bloodied Army of Africa wanted to now take revenge in Morocco for their humiliation. From 1924 the Spanish air force waged chemical warfare (mustard gas, incendiary bombs and TNT) to try in vain to bring Krim to the negotiating table. In spring 1925, Krim, whose irregular army mustered about 20,000, launched a devastating surprise attack on the French, but this inevitably threw the French and Spanish into a military alliance, one able to call upon 90,000 men, with tanks and air support.<sup>39</sup>

In 1925 a combined Franco-Spanish offensive began against the Riff. Abd'el and his men fought superbly – and desperately. But the end was certain. In 1926 a victory at Alhucemas placed laurels on the Spanish dictator's brow; and later that year Abd'el Krim surrendered to the French. The last vestiges of Moroccan independence had gone. They did not shoot Abd'el Krim, as "military justice" in the case of a "rebel" might have demanded. But they sent him, an exile to the Island of Reunion, one of the French possessions east of Madagascar, in the Indian Ocean.<sup>40</sup>

Yet liberals and progressives who thought that the birth of the Second Republic in Spain in 1931 would mean an end to such a brutal and murderous colonial policy were mistaken. The centre-left government of 1931-33 did nothing to redress the historic injustices and crimes in colonies like Morocco, let alone grant

independence. Indeed, Franco's cynical promises of colonial 'liberation' were never matched by the 'progressive' leaders of Spain or France, even after the 'Popular Front' government was swept to power in 1936.<sup>41</sup> Moroccan nationalists who had appealed directly for independence to the Spanish Popular Front electoral coalition were rebuffed.<sup>42</sup> Durgan notes among many Moroccans who subsequently joined Franco's forces there was 'a desire to get revenge for years of humiliation and repression at the hands of the Spanish,' immaterial of whether Spain was monarchical or republican, autocratic or democratic.<sup>43</sup> Yet despite this, many Moroccans did still resist Franco, and Balfour records 'fierce opposition in certain areas of Spanish Morocco to the enlistment drive, despite the heavy-handed tactics employed by the Spanish army against any dissent'.<sup>44</sup>

In response to Franco's great mobilisation of Moroccan troops, anti-imperialists, including the POUM and the anarcho-syndicalist trade union federation, the *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo* (CNT), urged the Spanish 'Popular Front' government to try and trigger a revolt in Franco's rear by declaring Morocco independent. Some no doubt recalled how the Communist International in its early years had repeatedly warned precisely against the possibility of colonial troops being used by the old ruling classes to crush workers' revolution in Europe.<sup>45</sup> An appeal issued by the tiny international Trotskyist movement in late July 1936 paraphrased Marx, noting 'a people which oppresses another cannot emancipate itself' before demanding the Spanish Republican government 'free the Moroccan people! You will make of them a formidable ally...'<sup>46</sup> Yet Largo Caballero's government refused to do so, on the grounds that setting such a precedent might threaten British and French colonial interests.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, in early 1937, as Robin D.G. Kelley notes, 'the Caballero

government went so far as to offer territorial concessions to France and Britain in exchange for Western support'.<sup>48</sup>

In general, imperial 'respectability' and 'orthodoxy' in were the watchwords of the day, in order that the Republican government could try and maintain middle-class support at home and win support from the liberal democracies of Britain and France abroad.<sup>49</sup> As James put it succinctly in *Fight* in October 1936, 'had the Spanish Popular Front not been a capitalist Government it would have helped the Moors of Spanish Morocco to achieve independence and found allies instead of enemies'.<sup>50</sup> Yet, having rejected the idea that black Africans from Morocco could be part of a revolutionary solution to winning the war against Franco, 'General Franco's Moors' inevitably instead became part of the problem for the Popular Front governments of France and Spain and their supporters, including the Communists. All the old racial prejudices against Muslims and black Africans slowly came once again to the fore.<sup>51</sup> When racist 'explanations' of why many Moroccans had sided with Franco were made, they were often not challenged and even accepted by some Communist Parties, including the CPGB.<sup>52</sup> In London, George Padmore in his 1937 work *Africa and World Peace* tore into what he called 'the chauvinist attitude which reflects itself in the columns of even some of the so-called revolutionary papers in Britain today, which would disgrace the pages of even the most reactionary journals'.

Surely we shall not achieve fraternity and international solidarity between the workers of the oppressing nations with the toiling masses of the oppressed nations by calling the latter "black riff-raff", "scum of the earth" and "mercenaries", as supporters of the Communist Party now dubbed Franco's Moors.<sup>53</sup>

As a result, though many Pan-Africanists in Britain had been thrilled by the news of the struggle against fascism in Spain - which had after all seen many black Americans attempting to avenge Ethiopia by journeying to fight in Spain in the Lincoln Battalion, as well as Paul Robeson visiting Spain in solidarity – they also had to spend time accounting for the vexing issue of Franco’s Moroccan troops to the British Left.<sup>54</sup> Such reports were vital as the looming victory of General Franco was not just to be a devastating blow to all those who had hoped that the growing spread of fascism in Europe would at last be resisted.<sup>55</sup> That Franco had won with the assistance of black African troops only served to reinforce the still dominant idea on the European left that Africans among all colonised people were somehow particularly ‘backward’ and ‘primitive’.

In July 1938, Nehru raised the case of ‘the Moors in Spanish Morocco’ and how ‘the forces of reaction misled them and exploited them to their own advantage’ at the ‘London Conference on Peace and Empire’. ‘The subject peoples are no longer docile and capable of being used to suit the purposes of imperial powers’, Nehru declared.<sup>56</sup> Yet such a lesson was clearly lost on another keynote speaker at the conference, the British Labour politician and prominent advocate of the Popular Front Sir Stafford Cripps, who conceded that while India was strong enough to have freedom now, Africa for some time would have to be governed by ‘trusteeship’ under some sort of international mandate. Cripps was accordingly heckled from the conference floor by members of the International African Service Bureau (IASB) around Padmore and then savaged in the IASB journal *International African Opinion* by James.

It is clear that Sir Stafford Cripps has the typical vice of many European Socialists, even revolutionaries. He conceives Africans as essentially passive recipients of freedom given to them by Europeans. Possibly Sir Stafford thinks that the British working class will gain freedom by the ballot-box and the speeches of Major Attlee and himself. Thinking Africans know that ultimately they will win theirs, arms in hand, or forever remain slaves. The Moors are fighting with Franco for their further enslavement. If the Spanish Loyalist Government had offered them their independence, they would have fought with it. But on one side or the other Africans will have to fight. They will organise themselves, create armies, develop leaders. We have an historic parallel. The half-British and degraded slaves in San Domingo in 1791 joined the French Revolution. In six years illiterate slaves were Generals of division and able administrators ... The African slaves will do the same and more at the prospect of a new existence. Without them and the other colonial masses, the British worker can win at most only temporary success. Is it to leaders and people like these who have conquered their liberty in blood and sacrifice that Sir Stafford will offer his “trusteeship”?<sup>57</sup>

It was in order to fight such reactionary ideas on the British Left as ‘trusteeship’ that in part explains James’s motivation for concluding his great epic narrative of the Haitian Revolution in *The Black Jacobins* with his prediction of the coming ‘African Revolution’ rather than say, with the Caribbean labour rebellions of the 1930s which might have seemed a more obvious place for James to conclude.<sup>58</sup>

The Spanish Revolution also shaped James’s discussion of the Haitian Revolution in other ways than simply demonstrating that, as James noted in 1938, ‘as

Franco's Moors have once more proved, the revolution in Europe will neglect coloured workers at its peril'.<sup>59</sup> The sheer violence and terror involved had certainly reminded James that 'a revolution is not a football match, where you greet the vanquished with "Well played, Sir," and everyone goes home happy'. Nor was a revolution any sort of dinner party game for parliamentarians to play, given there was always the threat of counter-revolution at the door.

A black general dining with Lacroix pointed to his two daughters and asked him, "Are these to go back to slavery?" It was as if they could not believe it. So your liberal or social-democrat hesitates and dithers until the sledge-hammer of Fascism falls on his head, or a Franco launches his carefully prepared counter-revolution.<sup>60</sup>

There seem to be a number of other allusions to the Spanish Civil War in the *The Black Jacobins*, though many of the most explicit references to 'Franco's Moors' James made in 1938 were removed from the revised edition in 1963. James seems to have had the heroic International Brigades who rallied to fight Franco in mind when he noted that 'there were Jacobin workmen in Paris who would have fought for the blacks against Bonaparte's troops. But the international movement was not then what it is today, and there were none in San Domingo.'<sup>61</sup> James's discussions of the importance of moral as well as material factors in securing military victories for Toussaint's black army against various invading imperialist armies trying to re-impose slavery in Saint Domingue could only have been sharpened by Spanish Civil War. 'An army is a miniature of the society which produces it', James commented in *The Black Jacobins*, and he had followed the intense debates over 'militarisation' among the Loyalist forces which entailed the shift away from the revolutionary

democratic if amateur anti-fascist militias towards a traditional style professional Popular Army during 1936.<sup>62</sup> The failure of that Popular Army to triumph in the Spanish Civil War as the Red Army under Trotsky had done during the Russian Civil War was tragic, but came as no surprise to James. ‘Once more the masses had received a shattering blow – not from the bullets of the enemy, but from where the masses most often receive it, from their own trembling leaders.’<sup>63</sup> The shift from people’s militias built from below fighting in defence of a revolution to a hierarchical army solely concerned with winning a conventional war on behalf of representatives of liberal capitalism had helped to undermine the most precious resource of any military force – its morale.

Overall, the Spanish Civil War brought home once again to James the critical and fundamental importance of principled leadership to any successful revolution. The Haitian Revolution had triumphed in no small part thanks to Toussaint Louverture. When the sans culottes rose up in August 1792 in Paris to bring the Bourbon monarchy crashing down, initially the black rebels of Saint Domingue were persuaded to continue fighting against the new French Republic in alliance with Spanish imperialism. As James wrote in *The Black Jacobins*,

For the moment the blacks, like Franco’s Moors, did not know where their true interests lay. And if they did, it was not their fault, because the French Revolution, being still in the hands of Liberals and “moderates” was clearly bent on driving the blacks back to the old slavery. Thus, when the Spaniards in San Domingo offered the blacks an alliance against the French Government, naturally, and again like Franco’s Moors, they accepted. Here white men offering them guns and ammunition and supplies, recognising them as

soldiers, treating them as equals and asking them to shoot other whites. All trooped over to join the Spanish forces ... and Jean François and Biassou were appointed lieutenants-general of the armies of the King of Spain. Toussaint went also ... like all the other blacks, Toussaint attacked the godless kingless republic and fought in the name of royalty...<sup>64</sup>

Just as Franco had backed up his talk of war against ‘atheism’ and promises of some future liberation coupled with material rewards, so in Saint Domingue, James noted, ‘the British and Spaniards could second their propaganda with offers of money and guns’ and so imperialist Britain, like Spain, ‘got blacks to fight on their side by paying them’.<sup>65</sup> Yet in Toussaint, the Haitian Revolution had someone who could see clearly through even the most carefully planned imperialist plotting and propaganda. As James wrote of Toussaint,

One can feel his spontaneous horror at the news of a rising provoked by the British among the cultivators of a district in the North Province. “You will not have much difficulty in divining whence has come this terrible blow. Is it then possible that the labourers will always be the plaything and the instruments of vengeance of those monsters whom hell has loosed upon this colony? ... The blood of so many victims cries for vengeance, and human and divine justice cannot delay to confound the guilty.”<sup>66</sup>

No doubt James was thinking about his own ‘spontaneous horror’ when he read of the Army of Africa’s rising against the Spanish Republic. But while the Haitian slaves had a leader like Toussaint, the closest to a Toussaint the people of Morocco had in 1936 was languishing in a French prison thousands of miles away

from his homeland.<sup>67</sup> One wonders if Abdel Krim thought of Toussaint at all during the Spanish Civil War...

The issues raised by Franco's Moroccan conscripts, together with the wider questions of race and empire in respect to the Spanish Civil War which it raised, shaped the arguments driven home by James about the lessons to be learned from the Haitian Revolution. At a time when most on the European Left felt confirmed in their prejudiced dismissal of the political potential of Africans after the role played by Franco's Army of Africa, James insisted on stressing 'the creative capacity of the African people' at the close of *The Black Jacobins*.<sup>68</sup> Yet it is worth also recalling how James's classic work was shaped by the days of hope in revolutionary Spain, themselves passionately recorded in another classic work also published by Secker & Warburg in 1938, *Homage to Catalonia*. As George Orwell noted, 'the Spanish militias, while they lasted, were a sort of microcosm of a classless society. In that community where no one was on the make, where there was a shortage of everything but no privilege and no boot-licking, one got, perhaps, a crude forecast of what the opening stages of Socialism might be like.'<sup>69</sup> The revolutionary spirit of those Spanish militias also found their way onto the pages of *The Black Jacobins*, helping to make it the enduring inspiration - and weapon - it remains.

The violent conflicts of our age enable our practised vision to see into the very bones of previous revolutions more easily than heretofore ... such is our age, and this book is of it, with something of the fever and the fret. Nor does the writer regret it. The book is the history of a revolution and written under different circumstances it would have been a different but not necessarily better book.<sup>70</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> Stuart Hall, 'C.L.R. James: A Portrait', in Paget Henry and Paul Buhle (eds) *C.L.R. James's Caribbean* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992), p. 15.
- <sup>2</sup> George Rawick, 'Personal Notes', in Paul Buhle (ed) *C.L.R. James: His Life and Work* (London: Allison & Busby, 1986), p. 235. In 1957, just before returning to Trinidad, James made a brief visit to Franco's Spain (as well as France and Greece) with his new wife Selma to work at writing what would become *Beyond a Boundary*. See C.L.R. James, *Beyond a Boundary* (London: Hutchinson, 1969), p. 151. 'Even as I write little Spanish boys in a little Spanish village are kicking a ball on a rough open space and shouting, "Gol", "Penalti" and "Corni."'
- <sup>3</sup> James, *Beyond a Boundary*, 152. See also C.L.R. James, 'The Olympia Statues, Picasso's Guernica and the Frescoes of Michelangelo in the Capella Paolina [1970]', in *The Future in the Present: Selected Writings of C.L.R. James*, Vol. 1 (London: Allison & Busby, 1977), pp. 226-234, and C.L.R. James, *Modern Politics* (Detroit: Bewick, 1973), pp. 138-39.
- <sup>4</sup> David Craven, 'C.L.R. James as a Critical Theorist of Modernist Art', in Kobena Mercer (ed) *Cosmopolitan Modernisms* (London: Institute of International Visual Arts, 2005), pp. 146-167.
- <sup>5</sup> Brett St Louis, *Rethinking Race, Politics, and Poetics: C.L.R. James' Critique of Modernity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), p. 96.
- <sup>6</sup> C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (London: Penguin, 2001), pp. xix-xx. For more on James's life and work in 1930s Britain, see Christian Høgsbjerg, *C.L.R. James in Imperial Britain* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).
- <sup>7</sup> Selwyn Ryan, *Race and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972), p. 4.
- <sup>8</sup> C.L.R. James, *The Life of Captain Cipriani: An Account of British Government in the West Indies* (Nelson: Coulton and Co., 1932), p. 3. This book also discusses the controversy over divorce legislation in Trinidad.
- <sup>9</sup> Nicholas Laughlin (ed), *Letters from London: Seven essays by C.L.R. James* (Oxford: Signal, 2003), p. 12.
- <sup>10</sup> Andy Durgan, *The Spanish Civil War* (Basingstoke, 2007), pp. 23-27, 31, 79.
- <sup>11</sup> Moulin [Hans David Freund], 'Struggle for a Soviet Spain: The workers in Catalonia', *Fight*, 1, 1 (October 1936).
- <sup>12</sup> 'Editorial: The Need for a New International', *Fight*, 1, 1 (October 1936).

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<sup>13</sup> On Cable Street, see Tony Kushner and Nadia Valman (eds) *Remembering Cable Street: Fascism and Anti-Fascism in British Society* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2000). On the ILP in this period, see Gidon Cohen, *The Failure of a Dream: The Independent Labour Party from Disaffiliation to World War II* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> For details of the ILP delegation of volunteers, see Christopher Hall, *'Not just Orwell': The Independent Labour Party Volunteers and the Spanish Civil War* (Barcelona, Warren & Pell, 2009); Peter Thwaites, 'The Independent Labour Party Contingent in the Spanish Civil War', *Imperial War Museum Review*, 2 (1987), pp. 50-61, and 'Fighting Men From Britain', *The Spanish Revolution*, 2, 2 (3 February 1937), available from Glasgow Caledonian Archive of the Trotskyist Tradition (GCATT), (Miscellaneous Journals Box).

<sup>15</sup> Personal information from Sam Weinstein, 2 February 2008, confirmed by Robert A. Hill, 3 February 2008. Presumably James would have gone with the ILP contingent still after 1936, which even though it did not officially accept married men, was open to non-members such as George Orwell.

<sup>16</sup> Sam Bornstein and Al Richardson, *Against the Stream: A History of the Trotskyist Movement in Britain, 1924-1938* (London: Socialist Platform, 1986), p. 257.

<sup>17</sup> The Irish socialist artist Patrick Trench, also known as Paddy Trench, was to be the only member of James's Marxist Group to fight in Spain. Trench had moved from Ireland to London in 1929, where he had joined the ILP. He would become a correspondent on Spain for the *New Leader*. In autumn 1936 Trench fought with the POUM militia and became a Trotskyist. In March 1937 Trench was in Barcelona where he was described by the American POUM supporter Lois Orr as a 'Marxist Grouper'. He was hospitalised with tuberculosis and returned to Britain in May 1937 before returning to Dublin in 1939 to help found the Irish Trotskyist movement. See Ciaran Crossey and James Monaghan, 'The Origins of Trotskyism in Ireland', *Revolutionary History*, 6, nos. 2-3 (1996), pp. 6-7; Hall, *'Not just Orwell'*, p. 96; and Gerd-Rainer Horn (ed) *Letters from Barcelona: An American Woman in Revolution and Civil War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 137, 160.

<sup>18</sup> The POUM had grown rapidly in the first few months of the civil war, and by the end of 1936 claimed 30,000 members. It published five daily as well as numerous weekly papers, and controlled radio stations in Barcelona and Madrid. See Andy Durgan, "Marxism, War and Revolution: Trotsky and the POUM", *Revolutionary History*, 9, 2 (2006), pp. 27-65.

<sup>19</sup> 'Spain', *Fight*, 1, 2 (December 1936).

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<sup>20</sup> The POUM paper's *La Batalla* was suppressed and the party was denounced by the Spanish Communist Party as 'fascist provocateurs', 'a vanguard of the Fascists in our own camp'. James's Marxist Group declared 'against the pogrom attacks of the Spanish Stalinists we stand with the POUM.' See 'Spain: The Sharpening Struggle', *Fight*, 1, 3 (January 1937).

<sup>21</sup> '[Orwell] is now fighting with the Spanish comrades of the POUM on the Aragon front. In a postcard which he sent us, he says: "When I have persuaded them to teach me something about the machine-gun, I hope to be drafted to the front line trenches."' 'British Author With the Militia', *The Spanish Revolution*, 2, 2 (3 February 1937). For more on Radio POUM and the *Spanish Revolution*, see the memoir of Lois Orr, an American socialist who worked with Low in Barcelona. Horn (ed) *Letters from Barcelona*.

<sup>22</sup> Mary Low and Juan Breá, *Red Spanish Notebook: The First Six Months of the Revolution and the Civil War* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1937), pp. v, 114, 217, 230. Low and Breá had met in 1933 and then travelled to Cuba and through Europe before going to Spain with their friends, including the French surrealist poet Benjamin Péret. See J.J. Plant, 'Mary Stanley Low (1912-2007)', *Revolutionary History*, 9, 4 (2007). Breá had joined the official Trotskyists, the Bolshevik-Leninists, in Spain, and had nearly been killed outside a POUM meeting. Low was sympathetic to the Trotskyists and attended meetings in Barcelona. They got married in London in 1937, shortly before the book came out. They later edited *La Verdad Contemporanea* (Havana, 1943), the first full-length work of surrealist theory published in the Caribbean. See Franklin Rosemont, 'Pioneers of West Indian Surrealism', *Urgent Tasks: Journal of the Revolutionary Left*, 12 (Summer 1981) and Emily Robins Sharpe, 'Mary Low's Feminist Reportage and the Politics of Surrealism', *Journal of Surrealism and the Americas*, 5, 1 (2011), pp. 77-97.

<sup>23</sup> C.L.R. James, *World Revolution, 1917-1936: The Rise and Fall of the Communist International* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1994), p. 406.

<sup>24</sup> James, *World Revolution*, p. 389.

<sup>25</sup> Durgan, 'Marxism, War and Revolution', p. 51.

<sup>26</sup> Horn (ed), *Letters from Barcelona*, 172. Orr and his partner Lois were released after nine days and later returned to America where they became Trotskyist activists (and met James himself).

<sup>27</sup> See the advertisement in *Fight*, 1, 11 (November 1937). In mid-1937, like many other intellectuals and writers including George Padmore and Marcus Garvey, James was asked to comment on the

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Spanish Civil War by Nancy Cunard for *Left Review*, responding that he was ‘against Fascism, against Franco, but against bourgeois democracy too. For the independent action of the workers in the struggle for a Soviet Spain; the defence of the USSR, and international Socialism.’ See Nancy Cunard (ed), *Authors Take Sides on the Spanish War* (June 1937).

<sup>28</sup> C.L.R. James, ‘Introduction’, in Mary Low and Juan Breá, *Red Spanish Notebook: The First Six Months of the Revolution and the Civil War* (London, 1937), pp. v-vii.

<sup>29</sup> Peter Davison (ed) *The Complete Works of George Orwell*, vol. 11 (London: Secker and Warburg, 1998), pp. 38, 87. For more on Orwell and ‘literary Trotskyism’, see John Newsinger, *Orwell’s Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999).

<sup>30</sup> Louise Cripps, *C.L.R. James: Memories and Commentaries* (London: Cornwall Books, 1997), p. 21.

<sup>31</sup> ‘POUM, the ILP and Spain’, *Fight*, 1, 8 (July 1937). Hans Freund (1912-1937) was last seen in Barcelona in August 1937, a year after he had written his article to James’s *Fight*, presumably having been kidnapped and murdered by Stalin’s agents.

<sup>32</sup> *Fight*, 1, 11 (November 1937). For a succinct devastating attack on Stalinist policy in Spain by James under the pseudonym ‘C.L.Rudder’, see ‘The Leninist Policy for Spain’, *Fight*, 1, 5 (April 1937).

<sup>33</sup> Durgan, *The Spanish Civil War*, pp. 32-33, 37-38.

<sup>34</sup> The first high commissioner in Spanish Morocco, Alfau, quickly resorted to beheading Moroccan prisoners to instill fear, remarking in 1913 to the minister of war, ‘It is very useful to decapitate the Moors for the moral effect it has on the masses, but it is best not to say that we agree to it.’ See Sebastian Balfour, *Deadly Embrace: Morocco and the Road to the Spanish Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 41-42.

<sup>35</sup> Durgan, *The Spanish Civil War*, p. 33. See also Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939* (London: Phoenix, 2007), p. 62, and Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, pp. 272-73.

<sup>36</sup> Paul Trehwela, ‘George Padmore’, *Searchlight South Africa*, 1, 1 (September 1988), p. 48. For how the Nationalists managed the ideological contradictions, mainly through anti-Communism, see Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, pp. 280-86.

<sup>37</sup> J.F. Horrabin, *How Empires Grow* (London: N.C.L.C. Publishing Society, 1935), p. 23. About 10,000 Spanish soldiers were killed at Anual, 4000 taken prisoner and the division’s commander, General Silvestre, committed suicide. Beevor, *The Battle for Spain*, p. 18.

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- <sup>38</sup> Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, pp. 52, 70, 81-2.
- <sup>39</sup> Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, pp. 104-105, 108, 113-15, 128.
- <sup>40</sup> Horrabin, *How Empires Grow*, pp. 23-24. Abdel Krim died in 1963, having been granted amnesty in 1947. Beevor, *The Battle for Spain*, p. 19. On the brutal 'pacification' of Morocco after 1927 see Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, pp. 118-120.
- <sup>41</sup> Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, pp. 244-45, 251-56, 273. General Franco had used the Army of Africa to help crush the 1934 October rebellion in the Asturias, a dress rehearsal for the 1936 uprising.
- <sup>42</sup> Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, p. 265. See also Felix Morrow, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain* (New York: Pathfinder, 1976), p. 110.
- <sup>43</sup> Durgan, *The Spanish Civil War*, p. 33.
- <sup>44</sup> Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, pp. 275-76.
- <sup>45</sup> As Trotsky noted in 1923, 'There is no doubt whatever that the use of coloured troops for imperialist war ... is a well thought out and carefully executed attempt of European capitalism ... to raise armed forces outside of Europe, so that capitalism may have mobilized, armed and disciplined African or Asian troops at its disposal, against the revolutionary masses of Europe. In this way, the question of the use of colonial reserves for imperialist armies is closely related to the question of the European revolution, that is, to the fate of the European working class.' Leon Trotsky, 'A Letter to Comrade [Claude] McKay [1923]', in *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Vol. 2 (New York: New Park Publications, 1972), pp. 354-56.
- <sup>46</sup> For official Trotskyist statements on Morocco, see Will Reisner (ed) *Documents of the Fourth International*, (New York, 1973), pp. 143-45, 148-50.
- <sup>47</sup> Durgan, *The Spanish Civil War*, p. 33. For the worries of the British and French about revolutionary unrest in Morocco, see Pierre Broué and Emile Témime, *The Revolution and the Civil War in Spain* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 1972), pp. 266-67.
- <sup>48</sup> Robin D.G. Kelley, "'This Ain't Ethiopia, But It'll Do'", in Danny Duncan Collum (ed) *African Americans in the Spanish Civil War* (New York: G.K. Hall and Co, 1992), p. 33. See also Maria Rosa de Madariaga, 'The Intervention of Moroccan Troops in the Spanish Civil War: A Reconsideration', *European History Quarterly*, 22 (1992), pp. 90-91.
- <sup>49</sup> Durgan, *The Spanish Civil War*, pp. 34-37. See also George Padmore, 'Why Moors Help Franco', *New Leader*, 20 May 1938.

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<sup>50</sup> ‘Editorial’, *Fight*, 1, 1 (October 1936).

<sup>51</sup> As Kelley notes, ‘Spanish Loyalists felt utter hatred for the Moroccans fighting on Franco’s side - a hatred whose roots go back at least a millennium ... Race, as well as a thousand years of history, undeniably complicated the way in which Republican Spain viewed Franco’s Army of Africa.’ There were honourable exceptions to this trend, and ‘the Communist Party of Spain, while supporting this policy, tried to improve relations by helping to bring about the Hispano-Moroccan Anti-Fascist Association ... to win North African support for the Republic and to educate Spaniards about racism and colonial oppression, but failed miserably to win large numbers of Moroccans to the Republican side.’ Kelley, “‘This Ain’t Ethiopia, But It’ll Do’”, pp. 32-33.

<sup>52</sup> As Brian Pearce once noted, ‘*Challenge*, the organ of the Young Communist League, used to refer to Franco’s soldiers from Morocco as “black troops” and publish “anti-wog” type cartoons about them.’ See *The Newsletter*, 15 March 1958. For one such ‘anti-wog’ cartoon from this period, see *Challenge*, 17 June 1937. See also Susan D. Pennybacker, *From Scottsboro to Munich: Race and Political Culture in 1930s Britain* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 92-93, 241, 334.

<sup>53</sup> George Padmore, *Africa and World Peace* (London: F. Cass, 1972), p. 267.

<sup>54</sup> On the British Pan-Africanist movement’s enthusiasm for revolutionary Spain during this period and links with the tiny anarchist movement in 1930s Britain, see Christian Høgsbjerg, ‘A “Bohemian freelancer”? C.L.R. James, his early relationship to anarchism and the intellectual origins of autonomism’, in Dave Berry, Ruth Kinna, Saku Pinta and Alex Prichard (eds) *Libertarian Socialism: Politics in Black and Red* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 143-66. Cunard herself had visited revolutionary Spain in 1936. See for example, Nancy Cunard, “‘Only a Black’”, *African Sentinel*, 1, 2 (November-December, 1937). For more on the experience of Moroccans on the front line, see Balfour, *Deadly Embrace*, pp. 278-79.

<sup>55</sup> Orwell discussed the issue in *Homage to Catalonia*, noting ‘the first necessity, to convince the Moors of the Government’s good faith, would have been to proclaim Morocco liberated’, but instead ‘the best strategic opportunity of the war was flung away in the vain hope of placating French and British capitalism’. George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (London: Penguin, 1989), pp. 212-13. See also Orwell’s famous essays ‘Marrakesh’, and ‘Looking back on the Spanish War’.

<sup>56</sup> Pennybacker, *From Scottsboro to Munich*, pp. 197, 252.

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<sup>57</sup> C.L.R. James, ‘Sir Stafford Cripps and “Trusteeship”’, *International African Opinion*, 1, 3 (September 1938).

<sup>58</sup> James, *The Black Jacobins*, xviii. See also Christian Høgsbjerg, “A Thorn in the Side of Great Britain”: C.L.R. James and the Caribbean Labour Rebellions of the 1930s’, *Small Axe*, 35 (July 2011), pp. 24-42.

<sup>59</sup> C.L.R. James, *A History of Negro Revolt* (London: F.A.C.T., 1938), p. 13.

<sup>60</sup> James, *The Black Jacobins*, p. 281.

<sup>61</sup> James, *The Black Jacobins*, p. 230.

<sup>62</sup> James, *The Black Jacobins*, p. 248.

<sup>63</sup> James, *The Black Jacobins*, p. 265.

<sup>64</sup> C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint Louverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (London, 1938), pp. 98-99.

<sup>65</sup> James, *The Black Jacobins*, p. 123.

<sup>66</sup> James, *The Black Jacobins*, pp. 123-4.

<sup>67</sup> Maria Rosa de Madariaga demonstrates well the distinct lack of other credible alternative Moroccan nationalists who might have organised a revolt in Spanish Morocco against Franco’s forces in 1936. See Madariaga ‘The Intervention of Moroccan Troops in the Spanish Civil War’, p. 90.

<sup>68</sup> James, *The Black Jacobins*, p. 304.

<sup>69</sup> Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia*, pp. 83-4.

<sup>70</sup> James, *The Black Jacobins*, pp. xix-xx.