

CHAPTER 6

Sarah G Millin, *The Herr Witchdoctor* (1941)

Lilian Smit, *Sudden south-easter* (1944)

Tom Macdonald, *Gate of gold* (1946)

INTERNAL IMPLICATIONS OF WORLD WAR II AND ITS PRELUDE

Surprisingly I found only three novels which represent aspects of the political situation in South Africa just before and during World War II.¹ Millin's *The Herr Witchdoctor*, first of the three to be published, also comes first in relation to the three fictional chronologies because of its focus on Nazi influence on blacks during the build-up to the war. The decision by the South African parliament to enter the war on the side of the Allies, part of the climax of Millin's work, is crucial to the early development of Lilian Smit's *Sudden south-easter* which was published just before the end of the war. Thus it takes second place in this scheme. Tom MacDonald's *Gate of gold*, published a year after the war ended, has to be treated last as it dramatises the actual experience of South African soldiers as well as the internal political conflict over virtually the entire duration of the war.

Contextualisation

This section focuses primarily on Fascist developments in South Africa during the period that included World War II, particularly the Nazi-inspired

Ossewa-Brandwag, which features prominently in two of the three novels discussed. Attention is given finally to the unsettling prospect that the end of the war by no means meant the elimination of Fascism/Nazism. Mostly I have relied on three journals, *The South African Opinion*, *Trek*, and *The Forum*, rather than historical texts, in order to re-create as vividly as possible a sense of the contemporary issues as they were represented in the most liberal South African publications of the period. For information about the formation and activities of the Ossewa-Brandwag, however, I have used three studies of the movement. As only one text by each of these writers is involved, I have used their initials for citations, and dispensed with dates:

J Crwys-Williams (1992) *A country at war: South Africa 1939-1945* – [JCW]

H Strydom (1996 [1984]) *The Fourth Reich* – [HS]

G C Visser (1976) *Ossewa-Brandwag: traitors or patriots* – [GCV].

Growth of Fascism in South Africa (c1935 – c1937)

In November 1935 the editor of *The South African Opinion* (henceforth *SAOP*) gave prominence to Hofmeyr's claim that 'the cause of freedom is to-day in real peril ... Communism and Fascism [are] fighting for the soul of Europe with democracy a poor third' (2(3):1 & 2). In Hofmeyr's view the main Fascist danger in the country was Minister of Defence Pirow; accordingly, his and Hofmeyr's discourses on the nature of the state are, notes the editor, 'violently conflicting' (1). A proponent of Pirow's 'New State' idea made this only too clear: 'The New State does not tolerate such lunacy as an official opposition organised to thwart the plans and efforts of the Government of the day' (2). In an article the following year entitled 'Hofmeyr and Liberalism', the *SAOP* editor refers to the hatred of 'General Hertzog and Co' for Hofmeyr, and the latter's disgust at the passing of the native Bills (2(22):1). As to whether 'Liberalism is for ever a lost cause in this country?', the editor argues in the negative because of the effects of rapid industrialisation and the force of external events. However, he agrees with Hofmeyr that 'the formation of a Liberal party in this country would for the moment be impolitic' (1).

Later in 1936 the *SAOP* sensed a greater Fascist danger (3(2):1-3). Having dismissed the Labour and Dominion parties as no longer influential, the editor goes on to examine the chances of the Purified Nationalist Party which is considered a 'serious contender for office' (1). However, the editor

warns that if Malan wants to shift out of opposition into the government, he will have to get rid of the extreme Republicans and especially their most vicious proponents, the Greyshirts, whose programme includes 'the criminal expropriation of the Jews', and placing South Africa 'under the aegis of German imperialism' (3). Further, Malan must win over and not antagonise the English section because the crisis of 1933 interrupted the 'natural political evolution of this country, namely the cementing of the English and Dutch [sic] into an independent South African nation tending gradually to divorce itself from the influence of Britain' (2).

In the same article Hertzog is praised for his wisdom in steering a 'course away from that extremist republicanism' (2). By the end of 1936, however, *SAOP* was somewhat less ready to speak in his favour. The article entitled 'General Hertzog, Hitler, Mussolini' (3(4):2-3) reveals dismay and indignation over Hertzog's admiration of Mussolini and Hitler for apparently uplifting their respective countries, and the editor is constrained to ask whether Hertzog has forgotten 'in what tones of indignation he condemned the immoral invasion of Abyssinia only a little while back' (3).

As a way of warning its readers with the utmost force about the menace of Nazi Germany, the *SAOP* published Thomas Mann's reply to the Dean of the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Bonn, which removed his name from the list of honorary doctors because of his loss of citizenship (3(17):4-5). Mann starts by affirming how previously he had 'felt [himself] in happiest accord with the temper of [his] nation and at home in its intellectual traditions' (4). Should a German author, he asks, be 'silent, wholly silent, in the face of the inexorable evil that is done daily in this country to bodies, souls and minds, to right and truth, to men and mankind?' (5). Convinced that such a course would be unthinkable, he gives voice to his anguish about the calamitous effects of Nazism:

[T]o what a pass, in less than four years, have they brought Germany! Ruined, sucked dry body and soul by armaments with which they threaten the whole world, holding up the whole world and hindering it in its real task of peace, loved by nobody, regarded with fear and cold aversion by all, it stands on the brink of economic disaster, while its 'enemies' stretch out their hands in alarm to snatch back from the abyss so important a member of the future family of nations ... (5)

South Africa's decision to participate in the war

Mann was, of course, only too correct in his prophetic utterances. Hitler's proclamation of war on 31 August 1939 was, for the Nazis, an occasion for exultation. Hitler was to be regarded as the German messiah (HS:66-67). In South Africa the Cabinet was split and the sharply opposing views were presented to Parliament on Monday 4 September (HS:68-71). In *The night is long* S G Millin, who was especially interested in the close resemblance to the parliamentary debate of 1914, reconstructs the essential points made by Hertzog and Smuts (which closely match those offered by L Smit in her novel, *Sudden south-easter*). (Note: the omissions signalled by ellipse are those of Millin herself.)

Here was a war, said General Hertzog (again, as a quarter of a century ago), in which the Union had not the slightest interest. If it were indeed true that the German Chancellor meant to dominate the world, he himself would be 'the most fiery in advocating that South Africa should enter the war'. But where was the proof that this was Germany's purpose? ... there was not the slightest proof of it. Hitler had increased his navy greatly, and extended his army, but it was not a proper deduction to say from this that he planned to dominate the world. He spoke for no other reason than to show the falseness of the interpretation that Hitler was trying to dominate the world. He could not see South Africa dragged into a war merely though an impression that the German people and Hitler wanted to dominate the world. Any impartial tribunal would vindicate his interpretation. He asked the House's approval and acceptance of the statement of policy which he had put before his colleagues in the Cabinet: 'the existing relations between the Union of South Africa and the various belligerent countries will, insofar as the Union is concerned, persist unchanged and continued as if no war is being waged.'

'I move,' said General Hertzog, and sat down.
General Smuts rose.

'I have never,' he said ... 'made a serious point of small issues. To-day I come to a big issue, and I have to adopt a different attitude.

'I do so because I am in my soul convinced that we are up against vital issues for the present and for the future of this country ... It would be wrong and it would be fatal for this country not to sever relations with Germany, to continue to treat Germany, after what

has happened, as the Prime Minister proposes, as a friend, to continue on the same footing as if nothing has happened in the world ... No nation, and certainly not Germany, would be under an obligation to recognize this position ...

'The Prime Minister's statement reads like a complete justification of Hitler and his actions ... I say that it is not only a question of loyalty and self-respect, which I presume we all feel deeply. It is a question of the greatest importance to South Africa and its future. Because, if we do this now, if on an occasion like this, when not only Great Britain but our other friends of the British Commonwealth of Nations have declared war and severed relations with Germany, we dissociate ourselves markedly, conspicuously and deliberately from their policy, and say Germany is our friend and we shall continue to deal with her on a friendly basis – if we do this we shall get what we deserve ... And when the day of trouble comes, and it is bound to come – when we are faced with the demand for the return of South West Africa at the point of the bayonet – then we shall have say whether we are going to meet that issue alone, for our friends will be against us ...'

And General Smuts too spoke as a quarter of a century ago.

He moved an amendment to the Prime Minister's motion: '[I]t is in the interests of the Union that its relations with the German Reich be severed and that the union refuse to adopt an attitude of neutrality in the conflict.' (15–16)

Hertzog was particularly bitter about Smuts's change in attitude regarding war in Europe with Britain as one of the warring parties. Smuts, however, argued that he had changed his mind because the situation had changed radically (HS:63). Because of the clash between Smuts and himself, Hertzog resigned as prime minister. He asked the Governor-General, Sir Patrick Duncan, for a dissolution of the government, but he refused 'on the grounds that a viable alternative government could be found'. Smuts was then 'entrusted with the formation of a new ministry ... This brought Fusion to a dramatic end' (Davenport 1977:231).

Trek undertook to justify, in some detail, the South African government's decision (4(9):7). Comparing the immediate situation with the gold standard debacle in 1931, the editor argued that in both cases world factors existed which made it imperative to take a stand. Hitler's seizure of successive countries in Europe, the war in China, together with the 'lying diplomatic and

barbarous military procedure of the fascists', meant that 'matters had to come to a head sooner or later, whether there had been a British Empire or not, whether there had been a Smuts or not' (7). In a later issue the editor of *Trek* vigorously dismisses Pirow's claim that the war is 'England's War'. On the contrary:

[I]t is a war that will decide whether humanity is capable of solving its problems of existence without concentration camps, lying, propaganda, pogroms, the seizure of the property of weaker nations, the stirring up of trouble and active intervention in the bosom of nations which have something another wants, poison-gas, secret weapons, and what-not. (4(10):5)

In opposition to Pirow's glib contention, the reader is offered Smuts's verdict: 'I feel profoundly that this struggle touches not only our civil liberties but also the moral and spiritual basis of our civilization and the claims of conscience and human personality as they have grown under the Sign of the Cross' (7).

In the next issue the editor employs universalising rhetoric to justify the cause of war: '[F]or the first time in the history of the world *humanity's conscience as a whole* has been stirred to its depths' (4(11):7). The '*real struggle*', in his view, is now 'that between Fascism and Nazism on the one hand, and democracy on the other' (7). Gratitude is accordingly owed to Smuts 'who realises that we are in for a desperate struggle' (7). Perhaps the editor's most persuasive defence of Smuts is that he has so much faith in democracy that he allows ... his political opponents liberties which they would not smell in the Nazi Germany so passionately defended by them' (7).

The Ossewabrandwag

The Ossebrandwag (henceforth OB) was formed in Bloemfontein in 1938 in response to the urge towards Afrikaner nationalism manifested by the centenary ox-wagon trek that year (JCW:116).

It did not take long before the movement was organised along military lines like Boer War commandos. According to G Visser, the original purpose of the OB was 'to preserve the culture and national traditions of the Afrikaners, and to enshrine the ideals of the Voortrekkers in their hearts' (11). However, a statement in 1942 by Van Rensburg, the OB commandant-general, gives a more accurate impression of the underground organisation which the OB became: '[T]he aim of the OB ... is to found a one-party, authoritarian

and disciplined state in which the people will not be allowed to say, write or do as they please to the detriment of the people and government' (JCW:117).

Together with the Purified National Party, the OB was bitterly opposed to South African participation in the war (HS:11). Because of lack of effective protest action, however, Van Rensburg as commandant-general formed a military wing, the Stormjaers (shock troops), independent of the OB itself, but consisting of handpicked men recruited from the parent organisation. In the Transvaal there were over 8 000 Stormjaers organised in fifteen battalions. The Stormjaer oath, as translated by Visser, gives a vivid idea of how insidious and ruthless the Stormjaers were likely to be:

Of my own free will I promise solemnly before ALMIGHTY GOD that I will IMPLICITLY subject myself to the demands which my people's divine call requires of me. My higher authority will find me obediently faithful, and all commands which I receive will be carried out promptly and kept secret. May the Almighty grant that I shall be prepared to sacrifice my life for the freedom of my people, and may the thought of TREASON never occur to me, knowing that I will voluntarily become a prey to the vengeance of a Stormjaer. May God grant that I will be able to call out with my comrades:

If I advance, follow me.

If I retreat, shoot me.

If I die, avenge me.

SO HELP ME GOD. (27)

Two interviews in *A country at war: South Africa 1939–1945*, one by a Stormjaer, and one by an opponent, offer interesting information on the actual state of affairs at the time:

- Manie Maritz, a member of the OB and a Stormjaer, was interviewed in 1990 (119–120). His father, General Manie Maritz, had originally been a contender for leadership of the OB: '[F]rom 1938 my father was organising a rebellion. If the Government carried on with the war against the Germans, he wanted to do something inside South Africa to stop it. He thought we should do *anything* to stop it' (119). At school, Manie refused to drill with the cadets, and even helped to draw up a petition requesting the expulsion of a number of Jewish children. More daringly, he helped steal all the .22s and ammunition from the school armoury as a present for the OB. Maritz admits to his own acts of sabotage such as blowing up a post office. However, his

father never wore a German uniform like Robey Leibbrandt (see below) whom Maritz thought of as a 'German jingo'. 'We didn't want the Germans here to start a German colony. We were happy to use the Germans, but we wanted to be a free country ...' (120).

- Also interviewed by Jennifer Crwys-Williams in 1990 was a Jew who had been a medical student before, and at the time war was declared: '[S]uddenly, wherever you went, in 1938 and 1939, there were these groups of greyshirts, young thugs with swastikas on their arms ... they were slavishly pro-Hitler ... Most of us were Jews, a lot of us medical students, and we had everything to lose if South Africa went Nazi. We couldn't infiltrate their ranks, but we could break up their meetings ... We became well organised. Fortunately, General Smuts was Minister of Justice; he was all for us and he armed us ... there were about 400 of us ... the first meeting that we broke up was in Benoni, where the police attacked us ... We had spies everywhere and we were very fit ... Eventually they got a bit fed-up with having their meetings broken up ... they never outwitted us. I think they were afraid of us (3).



The Commandant General giving the Ossewa-Brandwag salute

At this stage my focus moves to Robey Leibbrandt, the champion boxer who represented South African at the Berlin Olympic Games in 1936. (The reason for my entering into considerable detail concerning Leibbrandt's activities is



Robey Leibbrandt on the run from the police

that in the third novel analysed, *Gate of gold*, these are given great prominence; also that Leibbrandt so vividly typifies the fundamental Nazi attitude.) Hans Strydom offers a compelling impression of how these Olympics would have inspired Leibbrandt (42–44). The boxer's overt Nazi proclivities were enough to recommend him, via intermediaries, to Hitler as the right man to lead an uprising in South Africa (14). However, Leibbrandt was so intolerant of other views, and so driven to dominate (36) that during his training in Germany even a Nazi sabotage expert reported him as 'unsuitable for working in partnership with anyone!' (86) On the other hand, the same expert pointed out how his energy and fearlessness, together with his natural aptitude for work, made him the 'ideal lone sabotage agent' (86).

Karlowa, head of the office for former German colonies, also saw Leibbrandt as a useful 'tool to trigger the chaos from which the new National Socialist future can begin' (75–76). Leibbrandt was convinced that Smuts would have to go, and that he personally would have to carry out the deed. (HS:74) So came about 'Operation Weissdorn' (GCV:chapter VII), the plan whereby Leibbrandt was sent to South Africa with the purpose of assassinating Smuts, overthrowing the government, and establishing Nazi rule (JCW:200–202). To achieve his goal Leibbrandt would require about three thousand men whom he would train in sabotage and the National Socialist philosophy (HS:89).

On the yacht trip to South Africa Leibbrandt behaved as the Nazi sabotage expert had predicted: he forced the captain to obey *his* orders; refused to take the designated radio operator with him; and would not be put ashore at the appointed place, Lambert's Bay (HS:101,103). After landing elsewhere on the coast of Namaqualand on 10 June 1941, Leibbrandt walked all night, experiencing great problems with his luggage (110–111). When Leibbrandt appeared out of the mist before a bewildered herdsman, Hendrik Rietjie, the stranger was directed to the farm Driekop owned by Auret, Rietjie's employer (113). In fact, having missed Auret's farm in the dark and mist, Leibbrandt ended up at a farm owned by a Mr Engelbrecht. Although highly suspicious, Engelbrecht allowed him to stay the night. Once safely in Pretoria, Leibbrandt commenced to use his ex-girlfriend as a go-between to arrange contacts, and made a convert of Erasmus, the man chosen to accompany him to collect the transmitter he had been forced to leave behind on his overnight trek (120–127). Erasmus in turn recommended Kalie Theron as a recruit (127).

Leibbrandt was eventually betrayed by the OB itself, worried about losing members to his Nazi cause (JCW:202). Also Van Rensburg refused to

sanction civil war (HS:129), and in any case realised that Leibbrandt was challenging his leadership (134). Van Rensburg thus asked Advocate Pat Jerling to reveal to the Acting Minister of Justice, Harry Lawrence, information regarding Leibbrandt's presence in South Africa and his plans (148). When Leibbrandt tried to assault Van Rensburg during a quarrel, the leader decided that Leibbrandt would have to be eliminated (134). However, Van Jaarsveld, the OB member asked by Van Rensburg to carry out the killing, had already taken Leibbrandt's Blood Oath so the immediate vendetta was foiled (150). Meanwhile, Leibbrandt gained recruits, impressing them with his background, training, travels and, above all, his meeting with the Fuhrer. His mission, he proclaimed to them, was to help his nation rid itself of 'British-Jewish domination' (139).

Naturally Leibbrandt had to find suitable places at which to lie low. The first was Andries van der Walt's farm outside Louis Trichardt. However, rumours of mysterious men in the area spread, and eventually a police party arrived at the farm where the Nazi agent was trying (rather futilely) to get his transmitter to work. Fortunately for Leibbrandt, the sergeant in charge could not assert his authority because one of his subordinates was on friendly terms with Leibbrandt! Demonstrating his latent brutality, Leibbrandt later thrashed two farmers, Coetzee and Dames, who were apparently the source of gossip about his presence (HS:165-168). Next Leibbrandt stayed at the rectory of Dominee and Mrs Joyce - the Dominee, William Joyce, was Leibbrandt's mother's cousin and a strong National Socialist supporter (25). Through the Dominee's clever ruse, Leibbrandt once again gained a victory over the police, who had remained on his track (172-175).

When Smuts was informed that his name was at the top of Leibbrandt's 'death list', the prime minister wanted Leibbrandt brought in 'dead or alive' (HS:178; 186-187). Jan Taillard, an undercover agent who inveigled his way into Leibbrandt's Stormjaer group, was then used to lead the police to him. Leibbrandt was shaken by the death of Erasmus, who was killed by police when they raided Andries van der Walt's farm a second time (206-210). Theron decided that suitable vengeance for his associate's death would be the blowing up of a troop train at Denneboomspruit junction. However, the attempt failed, because a train ran over the detonator and cut the wire to the explosives (214). When the attempt was repeated on 14 December 1941, Theron did not know that the track had been damaged down the line. Thus neither of the two expected trains would have arrived. In any case an error on the part of Doors Erasmus, Erasmus's brother, caused the two rebels themselves to be blown up (216).

Soon afterwards (24 December 1941) the arrest of Leibbrandt was accomplished through Taillard (HS:239–240). His was the most spectacular case of its kind. Numerous police were also relieved of their duties and placed in detention at this time. After the systematic cutting of telephone and telegraph wires throughout the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Western Cape, many other Stormjaer arrests were made (GCV:101; 103). Manie Maritz, in court for the outcome of Leibbrandt's treason trial (16 November 1942 – 11 March 1943), was astonished to note that he 'didn't turn a hair' when he was sentenced to death (JCW:122). Indeed, despite the judge's warning, Leibbrandt revealed his unshaken idealism in an impassioned pro-Nazi speech from the dock. Some excerpts, quoted by Crwys-Williams from the *Rand Daily Mail* of 12 March 1943, follow below:

'Democracy remains the pestilential young brother of Bolshevism and its ally, Judaism ...' I knew that it would probably cost me my life to return but that did not deter me, for I love my fellow Afrikaners. I came here not to win cheap leadership, but to implant the idea of Adolf Hitler in the hearts of all Afrikaners ... Our hope and future do not lie in democratic cross-making but in deeds and sacrifices – in him who was sent there by the Almighty to save the suffering peoples of this planet, in Adolf Hitler. Communism can never destroy National Socialism. The sword of Adolf Hitler must triumph in this great struggle'. (326)

At the end of his address Leibbrandt turned to the public, gave the Nazi salute and shouted, 'Die Vierkleur hoog' (327).

The alliance between the Nationalists and the OB ended late in 1941; thereafter there was open warfare between Malan and Van Rensburg. Malan in fact asked members of his party to resign from the OB (GCV:105–106). Comments made by Verwoerd and Malan on the OB in 1942 make their standpoint only too clear. As editor of *Die Transvaler*, Verwoerd launched an attack on Van Rensburg in the issue of 12 August 1942: 'It is quite clear that instead of pursuing the pure ideal of Afrikaner liberty, Dr van Rensburg is persuading his followers to imitate the black sheep in our history by trying to sneak into the favour of a mighty nation. Dr van Rensburg's followers have no experience of German violence in relation to the Union' (GCV:142).

Polarisation of views in South Africa; Fascist threats

When a leading article in *Die Burger* (August 1940) claimed that South Africa was experiencing great division, intolerance, bitterness and hatred, and that Smuts was responsible for this state of affairs, the editor of *Trek* replied, decrying the way in which 'the abuse of Smuts has become a favourite form of National sport' (5(5):5). A major cause of the bitterness and intolerance in the country, the editor claimed, was precisely such press-engendered hostility. However, it was not his purpose, he stated explicitly, to allege that the attitude of *Die Burger*, *Die Transvaler*, and other National party papers, was the *sole* cause of all the bitterness and intolerance in the country.

In 1942 a new element increased the political tension in South Africa. *Trek*, addressing 'Our coy government' invited it to take heed of the 'vast majority' of people in the country who are 'not allowed to bear arms', and who are nevertheless 'eager, pathetically keen' to offer themselves as recruits for the non-combatant forces (6(19):5). The editor effectively pointed the irony of the situation: 'South Africa is unique in a native population bursting to do its duty to a country which has not done its duty to it' (5). A few issues later 'An open letter to an average European South African' went a good deal further:

[W]e cannot hope to repel any invader unless the non-Europeans of our country are full-heartedly with us ... We must give them equal rights, democratic rights in no way inferior to those of the Europeans. That is a preliminary to arming them. To arm them without these rights is to run the risk of arming a potential enemy within our gates ... I am not asking you to overcome your colour prejudice ... I am asking you to appreciate that the retention of our colour prejudice in practice is less important than the saving of our lives. (6(22):13)

At about the same time *The Forum* commended Smuts for his far more circumscribed declaration that: '[B]efore the Japanese take this country I will see to it that every Coloured and Native man who can be armed, will be armed' (4(51):1). Unfortunately, the editor went on to point out, the Opposition in response had 'inevitably started another "black manifesto" campaign and was distorting the Prime Minister's promise to arm non-Europeans in order to scare the Platteland'. Clearly, in the editor's view, 'the Nazi wing – the Van Rensburg, Pirow, Hertzog axis – should be regarded as definitely hostile to the war effort and ready to sabotage it by all possible means' (1). By the end of

the following year, *Trek*, noting that racism was already 'deeply and ruthlessly entrenched' in the country, and that the 'nucleus of a Nazi movement is already in existence in the form of the OB', was deeply concerned about the emergence of a South African variety of Fascism (8(12):9).

When Hertzog died later in 1942 *The Forum* obituary tried to put his life in positive perspective: 'His single-minded devotion to the country of his birth must always remain his unquestioned monument in our record of distinguished leaders ... His life was battle; but he fought clear and he preserved the courtesy of a gentleman' (5(35):1). His chief merit was that, whereas 'he was the first to fight effectively for the cultural security of the Afrikaner', he '*fought on behalf of South Africa and not on a basis of isolation*'. Finally, however, the obituary writer has to acknowledge that: 'The war came as a personal tragedy to the aged General. One could have wished that he had been spared the last three years ... Misled by Mr Oswald Pirow ... General Hertzog formed a completely wrong estimate of the European position' (1).

End of the war approaches; fall of Germany; question of post-war South Africa

The line of pessimistic speculation about the possibility of a Fascist dictatorship in South Africa led Edward Roux to ask for a re-examination of the present form of government to 'discover whether it is really worth defending or not' (*Trek* 9(4):11). Roux found it 'difficult for a white socialist to avoid unconscious "rationalisation" in this matter, because in defending existing South African "democracy" he is defending a system which opposes the blacks and gives privileges to the whites' (11). The only hope 'of averting a fascist avalanche' lay for him 'in a rejuvenated and liberalised Labour party' (11). Daringly and unequivocally stating his belief in the equality of black and white, he concludes that the return of the Labour Party in strength

... is the only thing which will preserve for us the legal right to propagate our point of view among the whites and to help the blacks to organise for that fundamental change which will make the future of South Africa depend, not on a minority of privileged voters, but on the organised strength of those millions who are at present excluded from citizenship. (11)

When the Allies proved victorious, *The Forum* reported Nationalists generally as adopting the attitude that, 'whether one agreed with Hitler's policy or not,

the fact was that Germany, with 8,000,000 people, remained Europe's last bulwark against Russian Communism' (8(6):17). In this sense, lamented *Die Oosterlig* (Port Elizabeth), Germany's defeat was a tragedy for the world. The leaders of two of the Union's Fascist or quasi-Fascist organisations, the OB and the New Order, actually paid tribute to the memory of Adolf Hitler. For Pirow, '[Hitler] was the greatest man of his time and one of the greatest of all times' (17). In Van Rensburg's view Hitler died 'the most honourable death [[possible] for a hero' ... 'at the head of the struggle against Communism' (17). Mildly demurring comments in the Afrikaans Press included *Die Transvaler's* conclusion that Hitler had failed because he had departed from the programme laid down in *Mein Kampf*; and *Die Volksblad's* cautious finding that 'while Hitler was a political genius, he was anything but a military genius' (19).

A year after the war had ended, *The Forum* had cause to lament recent utterances by Van Rensburg, still head of the OB, and by Oswald Pirow, the New Order leader, which revealed that Fascism in South Africa was by no means dead, on the contrary that 'Fascists are growing bolder and that the threat of the anti-democratic forces is very real' (8(48):3). Two measures to 'clip the wings of our Fascists without doing violence to our conceptions of freedom and liberty' were recommended: make racial incitement a crime; and make it legally possible for a racial or religious minority to call upon its traducers either to justify their slanders or to suffer the consequences (namely a libel case). In order to balance this rather negative and punitive mode, the writer/editor reminded readers that 'the most positive method of combating this evil is to make democracy a living and vital reality' (5).

The novels

S G Millin: *The Herr Witchdoctor*

(published 1941; set 1920–1939)

The span of the novel is about twenty years, leading up to Britain's declaration of war and the South African decision against neutrality. Millin is principally concerned with South West Africa (henceforth SWA) and the Nazi infiltration there. The main focus is on Barry Lindsell and his half-brother, Carl Lindsell, whose coloured mother was a descendant of the Reverend Flood in *God's stepchildren*, as well as on particular members of the Bagamidri tribe who live on the border of the Union and South West Africa. As we know from *God's stepchildren*, Barry, obsessed with the thought of his tainted

blood, has sent his wife and child to England to escape further contamination; in *The Herr Witchdoctor* he rejects his wife's last appeal to return to him with their child. To alleviate his guilt Barry tries to carry on the educational work of his great-grandfather in which his greatest hope has been John Nsingasi, one of the deceased chief's sons: 'You are my best achievement,' Barry tells him (118).

John, however, is a 'wannabe' Prester John: regarding himself as a possible descendant of the legendary king, his long-term ambition is to win back Africa for the Africans. Till then, he believes, Africans will never be free. First he travels throughout the Union to rouse his people. He has no practical ideas, though; he does not ask himself *how* they would unite, points out Millin's narrator in characteristically sardonic fashion. Clearly, in Millin's view, it is inconceivable that the blacks would actually ever unite. John is aware of his people's oppressed lives, but in another barbed Millinesque revelation he acknowledges to himself 'How readily they served' (86). Much distressed by the history of African colonisation, he feels the Abyssinian crisis as a personal one. Thus he sets out to persuade the Abyssinian blacks not to help Italy. When this equally impractical mission fails (the money 'borrowed' from his union runs out and he has to stay and work in Kenya temporarily), he has no alternative but to return to the reserve.

Near the beginning of the novel we are told that the Germans started their conquest of Africa in the 1880s. *The Herr Witchdoctor* is Millin's fictional warning to her contemporaries that the Nazi infiltration of SWA constituted the latest and most alarming stage of the German objective. (In *World blackout*, the first of her World War II diaries, she claims to have informed Churchill personally of this increasing danger.) The German missionary, Mr Vogel, who precedes the Nazis in the Bagamidri area, is pained at the Nazi takeover. However, as we are told that his wife and daughter hated blacks, the narrator's hint is that the difference between the two sets of missionaries is marginal. One of the new German missionaries, Dr Schmidt, is a ruthless Nazi agent. His co-worker, Mr Ziegler, on the other hand, is a sincerely deluded Hitler-worshipper, who would 'gladly sacrifice himself for the good of the world under Hitler' (156), and is thus a ready pawn in Schmidt's hands.

At this time the regent, Sibane, is thickly involved in plotting with his witchdoctor, Popanyane, to oust the legitimate new chief, Puhlapi, as soon as he comes of age. In this process Sibane and Popanyane become the prey of Dr Schmidt. Having decided that Popanyane possesses no 'scientifically-based knowledge' (102), Schmidt proceeds to fire his imagination with the sources of power open to the Nazis through their 'god, Hitler' (103). Popanyane duti-

fully finds that his spirits endorse Hitler's unique status. Part of the plot to preserve Sibane's power, as far as Schmidt is concerned, will include the throwing out of John and Barry, who are only too likely to interfere in his scheming. The other part, more directly relevant to Sibane's wishes, involves the need for muti acquired through a pair of ritual murders, euphemistically referred to as 'two bucks without hair'. At the revelation of what lies encoded in this phrase, it is significant that Ziegler is shocked, but not Schmidt.

Meanwhile Carl, a sometime miner, arrives to exploit his half-brother. Tormented, like Barry, about his tainted blood, Carl's escape mechanism takes the opposite form of being viciously anti-English and anti-black. Thus he believes it is the 'English missionaries who are smashing up the country' (46), and objects to Barry and John's teaching in the same school (the latter a direct consequence of his frequent previous involvements in white miner strikes against 'niggers doing the same work as whites' (46)). Not surprisingly he too becomes an easy prey for Schmidt's devious manoeuvres. One of the most telling indications of Schmidt's ruthlessness is in fact his deliberate coldness to Carl as a way of maintaining his superiority. Through his hold over Carl and others of like sentiments, Schmidt develops a double-pronged approach, inciting (as John informs Barry) 'white people to fall on the black people, and ... black people to fall on the white people' (130). Later on, in a brief glimpse of the large-scale version of Schmidt's activities, we are told that guns are being 'distributed among both Europeans and Natives' (241).

The most surprising victim of the Schmidt's intrigues, however, turns out to be John. Originally he is sceptical about the new German missionaries because of his long-standing aim to win Africa for the Africans, not the Germans. Furthermore, he has knowledge of a German plan with regard to the takeover of SWA and the reserve. But his mother becomes a convert to the 'Nazi church' and makes one of the most trenchant speeches in the novel to justify her new allegiance: 'The new son of God the German missionaries have brought us, who is himself a god, does not say you must be good to be happy. He says you must be strong. And this, I think, is true. For this we certainly see' (107). The validity of her position is endorsed, she claims, by the friendship of the missionaries with Sibane and Popanyane. John's sense of disillusionment and failure is the crucial factor that makes him susceptible to Schmidt's overtures. When Barry argues that he is a greater failure than John, his disciple's reply – a dismal reversal of Barry's erstwhile belief – is that he is the 'worst of Barry's failures' (140).

Well aware of John's missionary zeal, Schmidt persuades him that 'We both struggle to better the African races' (219) but, with loaded irony, asks

him whether the Africans are 'anywhere masters of [their] own destiny?' (223). Although John does remember that Hitler considered Africans no better than apes, he becomes locked into a steady process of rationalisation. And so, when Schmidt appeals to him, 'I need an African like you to work for Germany in Africa' (277), and cunningly intimates: '[Y]ou will be the Prester John of today among Africans in the German Empire' (277), John is seduced into the conclusion that the Nazis are his only hope. So desperate is John for what seems a guarantee of power and fulfilment that he is virtually blind to the contradictoriness of becoming a Prester John in a German imperial context.

Schmidt's support for the Sibane-Popanyane plot has appalling consequences for the tribe. All is of course grist to Schmidt's merciless mill. Popanyane does come to realise – though too late – that he is being used by the Nazis (209). Schmidt tells Sibane that 'when the whites are fighting each other, the natives can free themselves' (246–247). (At this point the narrator comments that '[t]hroughout the Union there were emissaries of Hitler ready to join in the strife they themselves had stimulated' (248)). The planned rescue of the jailed tribe-members (those who participated in the murders) by means of Nazi support is foiled, however, by the surprising decision of the South African parliament *not* to remain neutral.

Njubekane, the chief's right-hand man, is opposed when asked to undertake the murders; although he eventually yields to the request, he refuses *further* killings and ultimately hangs himself. Millin invites us to admire the integrity of the young counsellor, Paphas, whose remorse at betraying his friend, the old counsellor who warned Sibane not to undertake the killings, is so great that he insists on remaining in jail to await punishment even though he could have freed himself. After the murders Paphas had admonished Sibane, '[B]lood brings blood', but with a Macbeth-like sense of fate, Sibane replied: 'We have to wade in blood now' (196). Paphas asks himself: 'Aren't the new German missionaries the start of all the trouble?' (233), yet he is ready to claim that the chief is above moral rules. Although we are informed that murders for muti did not occur in the time of the previous chief, Silela, the Sibane-Popanyane plot is in motion *before* the Nazi machinations commence. Thus Millin does not invite an affirmative response to Paphas's question; the tribal code, it seems, was already in a state of erosion.

Barry is portrayed in an admirable light for his consistent opposition to Carl and the Nazis. He goes so far as to threaten Carl to stop his Nazi activities. Nevertheless, Barry is ultimately ineffectual – the ousting of Schmidt owes nothing to him. His valiant efforts have instead the quality of pathos. About John we do not hear much more. His delusion of grandeur utterly over-

turned, he is regarded as the one on whom the police can rely to help them deal with his tribe.

A further complication of Millin's intricate plot is the presence of the pro-Nazi Member of Parliament who wants to use the Germans to set up a South African republic. In an inflammatory speech to Carl's only too susceptible group, he reveals himself as anti-English, anti-Jew and anti-Indian, ready to promote Hitler as liberator of 'all who have the blood of the master-race in their veins' (128). He is especially keen to promote the idea that South Africa needs to retain a neutral attitude to the war in Europe. Schmidt at this time derives relish from announcing to Ziegler that 'Germany's holy war ... will begin in the European Autumn' (245), and to John that Russia and Germany are allies. Having gained the prime minister's assurance that South Africa will *not* fight (255), Schmidt is satisfied that everything is ripe for a rebellion in South Africa that will suit Germany's purposes. However, when the South African parliament votes against neutrality, Schmidt is totally foiled: the once supremely and arrogantly confident agent has to scuttle with great haste to destroy incriminating papers, and vanish before arrest.

L Smit: *Sudden south-easter*

(published in 1944; set in 1937–1939)

Smit's novel, a fairly blatant anti-OB piece of propaganda, encompasses a very brief period: the time of the South African parliamentary decision to join the Allies. Charles Roux, a theological student at Stellenbosch, is already – at the very beginning of the novel – totally convinced of the dangerous direction the OB is taking, and the way it is being manipulated by Nazis. He has a sense of cunningly subversive methods contaminating a cultural movement (14). Refusing to violate Christ's teaching, Charles feels particularly impelled as future parson to conquer prejudice and hatred. Explicitly contrasted with him is Dr Pienaar, the predikant at Paarl, who considers it the duty of a Dutch Reformed parson to promote the OB.

The German suitor of Charles's sister Leesa, Oswald Guepp, a Stellenbosch University student and erstwhile friend of Charles, is perceived by her as domineering, and is all too soon found to be a cruel deceiver (through information Charles receives from one of Oswald's former girlfriends). His and Charles's visit to parliament to hear the debate regarding participation in the war is to my mind the highlight of the novel. Smit has clearly kept close to the original speeches, though the proportionate space allowed Hertzog, Smuts

and Malan, as well as her overt indications of favour and disfavour, make her overall SAP standpoint only too evident. But she succeeds in capturing the tense atmosphere and sense of momentousness of the occasion.²

As prime minister of the Fusion Government, Hertzog explains that there has been a serious difference of opinion in the Cabinet, and in order to back his support for neutrality, boldly and astonishingly claims that there is no evidence that Hitler is out for world domination. Before Smuts speaks as deputy prime minister the favourable impression he makes on Charles naturally predisposes us to share the Minister's opposition towards neutrality. Although the brief summary of Dr Malan's speech gives an impression of a legitimate argument, Smit quickly dampens possible support from her reader by the simple device of inferring its boring quality: '[W]hen, at last, Dr. Malan had come to the end of his speech, largely a repetition of General Hertzog's ...' (77). On the other hand, Hofmeyr's warning about the implications of a possible defeat of Great Britain, and of the actual conditions prevailing in Germany is given its full weight without any undermining qualifications. The fierce disagreement between Charles and Oswald after the initial session makes the issues compellingly alive to the reader, and the close decision of 80 votes against 67 in favour of participation in the war has, accordingly, much dramatic impact.

Although the kind and hospitable Roux parents are Malanites, their children are all much closer in sympathy to the SAP – a plausible reaction of the new generation. Boet, the youngest child, in his boyish, frank irritation with Oswald, and annoyance with his parents for what seems to him their stubborn imitation of the Voortrekkers, is one of the more appealing (and convincing) characters in the novel. His eventual hope is that Oswald will hate the Rouxs so much that he will never visit again! Leesa too is given some effective speeches to challenge her parents' nationalistic fervour, as well as their fallacious process of thinking, whereby bitter hatred of England creates blind allegiance to Nazi goals. 'How can we have more in common with Nazis than with Democrats' (53) she asks challengingly, asserting: 'I've been taught to worship the independent spirit of the Voortrekkers' (53). She feels that her parents have remained children, and is furious to see Afrikaners like themselves being deceived by the Nazis.

Through Charles, however, Smit offers her most vehement criticism of rabid Afrikaner nationalism. Just before the parliamentary debate he reflects on how religion had become a 'cloak to cover up the nakedness of false spirituality ... a Golden Calf had been set up – the Ossewa' (62). After the visit to parliament, Charles thinks he sees a swastika on the armband of a member of

Oswald's OB group, and he is then told by the German student's previous girlfriend that Oswald is not to be trusted, besides being mixed up with Nazis. The subsequent revelation by Charles to his mother of Oswald's dishonesty leads them to enter deeply into a discussion of Afrikaner hatred and bitterness, an opportunity which Smit seizes to voice her own views. This Afrikaner tendency, Charles tells his mother, is like an 'acid biting deep into the emotional soil of the Afrikaner mind' (154). What is therefore important, he insists is 'to analyze prejudices because of Christ's teaching' (157). Afrikaners must not allow hatred to become a tradition, he warns. Furthermore, he tries to make Mrs Roux aware of how their people's hatred has led to their vulnerability in being deluded by Nazism. What Charles refers to as the 'irretrievable (surely Smit means 'inextricable') mixture of Afrikaners and English' is the reality which the author advocates as needing to be borne constantly in mind.

Through Charles's passionate love for Laline, the illegitimate housekeeper/companion to the wife of Dr Pienaar, the predikant, Smit is enabled to achieve three aims: Charles's self-sacrificing Christian virtue can be celebrated as part of a melodramatic ending when he accepts the loss of Laline, who has been driven to suicide largely through Dr Pienaar's repressive and punitive attitudes; Dr Pienaar's meanness and hypocrisy in relation to Laline can be used to reinforce our impression of his misguided predilection for the OB movement; and Oswald's unscrupulous male chauvinism, which alarms the already distraught Laline and causes her to leap desperately from the train in which they both happen to be travelling, can be used to blacken his cause still further.

Oswald's presence on the same train as Laline is one of several strained coincidences in the novel. Another such coincidence is that the doctor who happens to be called to deal with the fatally injured Laline is John Twickenham, the Englishman with whom Leesa has become romantically involved. From the beginning of the novel, once she has made up her mind that Oswald is repugnant, Leesa is determined to marry an Englishman, and Smit most obligingly provides one for her. Charles's argument with his father in terms of his 'golden calf' analogy is effective in finally persuading Mr Roux to yield to Leesa's wish to marry John. The contrast between John and Oswald in relation to the circumstances of Laline's death of course also enables Smit to highlight her sense of where compassionate, as against cruel, agency is most likely to be found.

Totally missing from the novel are any people of colour – one is left with the impression that they do not exist in the Stellenbosch and Paarl of Smit's

imagination. Although Charles has much to say about the teaching of his leader, Christ, the fuller implications of that teaching in relation to racism do not seem to have been contemplated by Smit.

Tom MacDonald: *Gate of gold*

(published 1946; set in 1939 to c.1944)

This novel spans most of the war, starting when South Africans were signing up, and ending in about 1944. One reviewer refers to its simple moral – racialism is wrong (*The Forum* 9(32):17).³ Yet it is by no means a naive novel. A group of three young white men sign up for service (Hugh, from an affluent English-speaking family; Dirk, from a battling Free State farming family; and Michael, a fairly well-off German Jewish immigrant whose father was killed by the Nazis). Hugh is already in love with the Afrikaans-speaking Elsebe Joubert, a fellow Wits student (that formula beloved of Boer Rebellion novelists is clearly still alive and well!). They share a belief in the essential wrongness of racism, but she also finds, through the influence of Michael's wife, Magda, that her 'eyes are opened a little to the reality of blacks' lives' (46). Later, as a teacher, she finds herself at odds with colleagues who hate English people, Jews and blacks. While Elsebe's mother gives her emotional support, even if she is not as liberally minded, Elsebe's father, Piet, and brother, Carl, however, are not only fanatical nationalists but also members of the OB. In fact Carl becomes a general in its inner secret circle. He is led to believe that the time will come when OB commandos 'would swoop down on the rich smug Englishmen and Jews' (28); and convinces his father that the life of South Africans is dominated by the 'financial kings in London' (29). Piet, in turn, comforts Carl with the thought that when the Afrikaners have won back their land, they'll 'send the black back where he belongs, back into the reserves' (29). Nevertheless, although MacDonald leaves us in no doubt that Carl is extremely deluded, he is handled with a good deal of sympathy.

The author may seem to have abandoned a more creative kind of representation by bringing Robey Leibbrandt directly into the novel in the guise of the character Simon Nel. However, the narrative of his initial experiences after arriving back in South Africa; the account of the ceremony of blood commitment with his OB supporters; even the ruse which enables him temporarily to elude armed police, all tend to induce a certain feeling of imaginative sympathy which Smit, for example, does not allow for at all in her treatment of Oswald Guepp. Although Piet and Carl have the same political beliefs, ten-

sion arises between them as a result of Carl's dangerous and mysterious OB activities. When Piet expresses his fears of the implications, Carl brands him a coward. His mother is full of anxiety, an echo of the tension between Hugh Wayne's parents and himself over his joining up. Because of Hugh's friendship with Elsebe Joubert, Philip Wayne tries to rescue Carl from his OB commitment but to no avail. Interestingly, there is an implicit link in their views on capitalism, though neither is aware of this. Philip is aghast to find that Richard Jerrold, a magnate of his acquaintance, is concerned only with the state of the market when Europe is being overrun by 'Hitler's slaves' (57). Indeed, Philip, as a result of this dichotomy, becomes conscious of the 'many things he could do in South Africa with its many problems' (58).

The turning-point for Carl comes when two young OB members, Petrus and Bartel, are blown up in the attempt, overseen by Carl himself, to dynamite a troop train. Carl is broken and deserts the OB. Nel would have ensured his liquidation had he not been prevented from doing so. When Carl, at Nel's trial for treason, sees him mouth the word 'traitor', while looking straight at his former chief ally, the ex-commander is driven by feelings of overwhelming remorse and despair to commit suicide at the very crossing where Petrus and Bartel met their deaths. This is indeed the most compelling part of the novel – one feels that MacDonald has entered deeply into Carl's predicament, not simply tried to mete out moral punishment.

Some battle engagements and their consequences are represented, but no attempt is made to create an exciting war novel. On the contrary, the novelist seizes every opportunity to emphasise the inhumanity and folly of war, as well as the three friends' resolution to retain and promote the ideal of friendship. Hugh is sickened by his killing of a black Ethiopian soldier. He and Michael have no answer for Hans, the very young German prisoner-of-war, who asks them, 'I don't hate you or these fellows, and you don't hate me. Then what's it all about?' (104). Dirk is blinded by a hand-grenade, and Michael is killed (an event which has a devastating psychological effect on Hugh).

Before the war starts Dirk has initially been drawn to the OB, but gives it up when it becomes politicised. On his return to the Free State, discharged on account of his blindness, his 'picannin' guide (paid for by army pension) gives him a chance to practise the non-racism learnt from Michael, despite his father's and the local predikant's objections. Significantly, MacDonald makes it clear earlier that the members of Dirk's family are no more uniform in their political views than Carl. Friendship with Michael's widow, Magda, who is imbued with the same ideal of freedom for all, also offers an eventual

promise of love and marriage. This is an interestingly conceived situation, suggesting a healthy version of an Afrikaner-German (and Jewish) bond.

In terms of relationships the main focus of course is Hugh's and Elsebe's love and marriage, cemented through separation and his temporarily mentally troubled state. But their relationship is more like a conventional romance, too harmonious for credibility. What does create interest is Hugh's mother's objection to their marriage on the grounds of their 'racial' difference; she even goes to the length of visiting Elsebe's mother to persuade her that the union would be unwise on this account. What one might have imagined to be a telling reminder from her husband that racial purity has been the concern of the Nazis and Afrikaner Nationalists has clearly had no effect. Her consciousness is a sobering and disturbing reminder of how prevalent were the potentialities for Nazism, even in their ostensible opponents, for Joan Wayne is nothing if not intensely patriotic in relation to England.

The Waynes' gardener, Nicodemus, is the only distinct black character in the novel; however, his devotion to Hugh, and then to Elsebe in turn, is rather sentimentalised, and his friendship with the Jouberts' maid is much too strained a coincidence. Least convincing of all is the two servants' conversation about that 'terrible man, Hitler' (59). More effective for MacDonald's purposes is Hugh's story of the fatally wounded soldier whom he had heard saying, in response to a black stretcher-bearer's bandaging, 'Christ is black' (125).

Conclusions

A major preoccupation of all three novels considered in this chapter is Nazism, and the prevalent South African obsession with race and nationalism is shown to provide a fertile ground for its infiltration. As the Afrikaner nationalists' hatred for England permits all kinds of dangerous allegiances English-Afrikaner unity becomes all the more crucial in these writers' eyes. Extreme Afrikaner nationalists (that is mainly members of the OB movement) believe that when in power they will be able to move blacks back into the reserves. Millin promotes the myth of black inferiority (not too ostentatiously of course) in the form of their supposed lack of practical ideas, and of ability to organise and unite. Indeed they are made to seem, through the eyes of her chief black protagonist, all too ready to remain in roles of servitude – a handy and comforting belief for whites!

In Millin's novel Barry Lindsell and John Nsingasi are the dissidents. Sympathy for them is mixed with pathos since they seem so vulnerable and ineffectual in relation to Nazi ruthless cunning. In the other two novels the major dissidents are the OB members. Smit has no sympathy for them, as conveyed by her protagonist, Charles Roux. Their leader, Oswald Guepp, is portrayed as domineering, manipulative and untrustworthy. MacDonald is more ready to try to understand their mentality, revealing some imaginative sympathy for Nel (Robey Leibbrandt's equivalent in the novel) in his extraordinary mission, and more still for Carl Joubert as his fanatically deluded disciple, especially after the bomb disaster.

Millin's tribesmen create appalling consequences for their tribe through their consorting with Schmidt, the new missionary, alias Nazi agent. Barry's brother, Carl, though less conspicuously at first, also turns out to be a dupe in the Nazis' hands. Ziegler, the resident missionary, is not a full-blooded Nazi, but he is no match for Schmidt's guile and unscrupulousness. In Smit's novel, although the Roux parents are typical Malanites, the children challenge their nationalistic fervour, and their fallacious thinking in relation to hatred of England ('acid biting deep'). MacDonald includes a range of non-OB characters and he is fairly successful in refusing to stereotype them in relation to racist obsessiveness and vulnerability to Nazi views. Thus Carl's mother and sister are shown to be liberally inclined, while Mrs Wayne (mother of the English-speaking Hugh) reveals racial prejudice in her attitude to Afrikaners, in particular to Elsebe Joubert, Carl's sister and her son's prospective wife.

Millin is totally opposed to the tribe's involvement in ritual murder (though she shows how ambivalent and divided they are amongst themselves); and to Carl Lindsell's vicious racism. In Smit's novel the only overt violence is Laline's precipitate suicide, culmination of a structure of emotional violence in which the mean, hypocritical predikant, Dr Pienaar, is deeply implicated. But it is made very clear via Charles's frequent stress on Christ's teaching that Smit does not approve of any form of group violence. MacDonald also questions the use of violence pervasively, both through the inhumanity and atrocities of World War II, and, though on a smaller scale, through the OB's terrorist bombing which kills their own members and causes Carl's unbearable remorse.

Barry Lindsell in *The Herr Witchdoctor* is constant, but ineffectual, in his opposition to the Nazis. His case is fully legitimate in Millin's eyes, but his own low self-esteem robs him of adequate agency. Whatever agency the black tribespeople have crumbles in the face of Nazi tactics and manoeuvres. The most notable and distressing case is that of John: disillusionment and failure

make him especially susceptible to Nazi overtures. Although his mission to rouse his fellow blacks throughout Africa to an awareness of their oppressed condition is regarded as legitimate, the regent's *illegitimate* desire to cling to power plays into the Nazis' hands, obscuring John's more altruistic aims. Unfortunately the Nazis are the very ones whose whole purpose is to strip him of agency. One of the most intriguing aspects of the novel is Millin's sympathetic attention to the remorse of Njubekane, the chief's right-hand man, and to Paphas, the young counsellor whose insistence on fulfilling his punishment in jail gives him a kind of nobility.

In *Sudden south-easter*, as Leesa Roux perceives, her parents are like children in the grip of bitter hatred (very like the Krige family in Mills Young's *Shadow of the past*). Because of Dr Pienaar's position of eminence and responsibility as predikant, he should be able to exercise more humane and compassionate agency. In fact he abuses his power to promote the OB and to persecute the helpless Laline. Charles Roux's inclinations are entirely opposite, but unfortunately he is not yet in a position of influence. Oswald too is clearly in possession of agency, though possibly one should read his OB commitment as making him a Nazi pawn. Laline's death helps to reveal the capacity of the Englishman, John Twickenham, for exercising agency with compassionate understanding, in complete contrast to Oswald, who is indirectly the cause of her death. MacDonald is daring and confident enough to grant some legitimacy to the OB, especially via Philip Wayne's perception of connections between their view of international economics and his own. Carl has an illusion of supreme agency in his work for the OB, even going so far as to brand his own father a coward. However, after the bomb disaster he cannot face undertaking *any* form of action. MacDonald reveals Nel (Leibbrandt) to be a real agitator, one who is responsible for deluding numerous young men like Carl.

For Millin a world-scale version of defeat of the Nazi, Schimdt, would almost be a utopian vision in itself. No other form of utopia can be imagined till the Nazis have been destroyed. Smit's utopia would surely involve the flourishing of Christ's gospel in close-knit, caring communities, free from any form of Nazi or OB influence. Leesa's marriage to John Twickenham, with its implication for Afrikaner-English unity, would also contribute to Smit's desirable society. MacDonald extends the hope-focused marriage symbolism used by Smit (and by previous novelists such as Mills Young), by including the marriage of Dirk (Afrikaner-German) to the widow of Michael, the Jewish serviceman who was killed in battle.