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Dr Connal Parr of Northumbria University

Jan 23, 2018 16:53 GMT

IRA and African connections explored during talk

Connections between the African National Congress and Sinn Fein will be explored during a free lecture by Northumbria University academic [Dr Connal Parr](#) this week.

The talk focus on the links between the two formerly militant political groups, particularly those which have come to light following the death of South African lawyer Kader Asmal and the subsequent publication of his of posthumous memoir.

A major player in the Irish anti-Apartheid movement , Mr Asmal served as a minister in both Mandela and Mbeki's cabinets. In his book he revealed that the Provisional IRA had provided secret training and assistance to the African National Congress' armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, to carry out the Sasol oil refinery bombing of June 1980.

Dr Parr said: "The links between these two groupings have been memorized in Belfast murals and cemented by the IRA's nomination of the ANC's Cyril Ramaphosa as a weapons inspector during the decommissioning process in 2000.

"Both Sinn Féin and the ANC continue to navigate the tricky path between memory of the armed struggle of the past, present electoral strategy, and an increasing political neoliberalism."

The lecture, entitled *Not So Hesitant Comrades: The African National Congress and Sinn Féin*, takes place from 7.30pm to 10pm on Thursday 25 January at the Tyneside Irish Centre. For more information [click here](#).

Dr Parr is Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellow in [Northumbria University's Department of Humanities](#), which includes the subject areas of History, English Literature, English Language and Linguistics, Creative Writing and American Studies.

He has written articles for numerous media and academic outlets and teaches Modern Irish and British History and Politics. His first book, [Inventing the Myth: Political Passions and the Ulster Protestant Imagination](#), was published by Oxford University Press in last year.

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