



University  
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination  
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

**FAELAN LUNDEBERG**

BSc (University of Victoria, 2010)

**““You Are a Political Soldier:” The People’s War in N’wamitwa  
1989-1994”**

Department of History

Monday, April 8, 2019  
2:00 P.M.  
Clearihue Building  
Room B215

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Elizabeth Vibert, Department of History, University of Victoria (Supervisor)  
Dr. Andrew Wender, Department of History, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Marlea Clarke, Department of Political Science, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Neil Ernst, Department of Computer Science, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

## **Abstract**

In the waning days of Apartheid, a man named John Ngobeni returned in secret to his home community of N'wamitwa after over a decade in exile. John's mission was to establish a presence of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) in the area and spark an insurgency. This mission was in line with the African National Congress's wider strategy of people's war. People's war represents an imported form revolutionary warfare first articulated by Mao Zedong during the Chinese Civil War. In this thesis I examine the political context in which the ANC chose to adopt the strategy and how it was imported into South Africa. The later chapters of this thesis use N'wamitwa as a case study examining how a people's war is successfully implemented on the ground. I argue that one can see the three phases of a people's war as articulated by Mao play out in N'wamitwa between the years 1989 to 1994. I also tie events in N'wamitwa to those taking place on the national level within South Africa to argue that N'wamitwa can be seen as a microcosm reflecting many of the trends seen nationwide. This piece was largely written and researched using oral testimony from nine former members of the MK in N'wamitwa and thus can also be seen as a collection of personal histories of the South African Freedom Struggle.