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This book, a product of a PhD thesis, provides an historical perspective on the problems of underdevelopment in Africa, and shows how a developmental approach focusing on economic growth has resulted in the marginalisation of the majority of the African population. The author sees social development as an alternative development approach that views people as both the means and end of development. He, therefore, attempts to provide a conceptual framework for social development and discusses its constituent elements.

For the reader who is not familiar with the political and socioeconomic circumstances of Africa, the Introductory Chapter provides very useful background information and a useful analytic framework. Chapter 2 discusses the historical development of social welfare in Africa, and observes that before Independence social welfare services were provided by three systems: the extended family, the church and the colonial administration. Unfortunately this Chapter is not well organised and fails to provide a meaningful link between these three systems of welfare provision.

In Chapter 3 the author draws attention to the lack of progress in the area of social development between 1954 and 1960, but fails to clearly articulate the reasons for this apparent lack of progress. The author does not discuss at length the impact of the development approaches adopted by colonial governments. He does, however, observe that the majority of African people live in poverty, without access to basic life sustaining goods and services. Despite this weakness, the author provides a satisfactory conceptual framework for social development. He sees social development as “a crossbreed between social welfare and community development”, and argues that social welfare can only promote social development if it adopts a developmental outlook. Social development is seen as encompassing social service programmes, social welfare programmes, social security, youth programmes, labour relations programmes, population planning, agrarian reform and food security. The distinction the author makes between social welfare and social services is somewhat confusing as it lacks concreteness.

In Chapter 4 the author examines possible alternative approaches to African development. He points out that there are only two choices available to African governments, capitalism and socialism. He is quick to observe, however, that the “political and economic systems currently in operation in many African countries are the result of historical accident or internal pressures rather than properly chosen, properly adapted, and integrated policies”. Aid has in many cases influenced the ideological orientation of some governments in Africa. What is important in this connection is adopting strategies that promote self reliance and self sufficiency.
In Part 2 of the book the author analyses selected areas of social development: social welfare, education, health, housing, population planning, social security and social development training. However, the discussion on urbanisation is misplaced and would have been more useful if it had been part of the Introductory Chapter. The author's conclusion is that these areas of social development were moulded on the experiences and value premises of the former colonial powers, hence their inability to respond appropriately to the needs of Africa. The author sums up his discussion by pointing out that development in Africa is unbalanced as it favours the urban elite - whilst the rural people who constitutes 70% of the population remain impoverished and marginalised.

Social development is a topical subject, particularly in developing countries, and this book makes a meaningful contribution towards an understanding of social development. Unfortunately the author spoiled the flow of discussion by dwelling on unnecessary and unfocused details and the issues raised in the discussion do not seem to link. However for the patient reader the book provides an interesting analytic framework for understanding the problem of underdevelopment in Africa.

Reviewed by E Kaseke, Principal, School of Social Work, Harare.


The concept of community participation has gained enormous popularity in social development circles. It pervades the literature and is a recurring topic for discussion at international gatherings. A large number of reports, studies and journal articles on the subject have been published, and it is an integral element of the philosophies of large development agencies such as UNICEF which has been an avid proponent in recent years. Non Government Organisations (NGOs) have also campaigned for enhanced community participation, particularly at the local level where many of their programmes and services are focused. Community participation has a strong appeal for social workers.

Although community participation is frequently claimed as unique terrain for social development endeavour. It has attracted the attention of economists as well. As this report shows, hard headed economists at the World Bank's Economic Development Institute (EDI) have come to the conclusion that social factors are important in development and that (pvi) "the involvement of intended beneficiaries in the planning and implementation of projects, applications of social analysis in development planning, and gender issues in developing planning and project management" are worthy of careful consideration.

Founded by the World Bank in 1955, to train economists responsible for development planning, investment analysis and project implementation, the EDI has served as an important resource for World Bank personnel and senior civil servants concerned with economic development issues in member countries. Recognising that the social aspects of development have been neglected in its training programmes, EDI organised an international workshop on community participation in Washington in September 1986. Participants
came from government and NGOs throughout the world, from staff at various international agencies, and from the World Bank's departments of urban development, population, health, nutrition and rural development. Twenty two papers were presented at the workshop. The Report of the workshop, which was published in 1988, contains a summary of the proceedings.

Although it is commendable that the Institute involved itself in issues of social development and community participation, the report contains little that is new. Much of what was said at the workshop had been said previously in numerous United Nations reports and other documents. Indeed, given the anti-poverty emphasis of the MacNamara years, it is somewhat surprising that the Institute awoke (in 1986) to the realisation that it needed to be more sensitive to the social development perspective. It is almost as if the organisers of the workshop had never heard of the efforts of the United Nations to promote integrated socioeconomic development planning in the late 196Os, or of the World Bank's sponsorship of the redistribution with growth ideal in the mid-197Os. Similarly, discussions at the workshop on the definition of community participation, the need, benefits, and feasibility of community participation, etc, will be familiar to most social workers who have a knowledge of the issues.

Nevertheless, the fact that economists are interested in social development issues such as community participation is very important. The harsh austerity policies being implemented in many Third World countries today, by economists under International Monetary Fund conditionality policies, is having a devastating effect on the welfare of millions of ordinary people. Sensitising economists to these realities may mitigate the Darwinistic themes implicit in current economic development policies. More contact between economists and social development professionals is urgently needed. The Economic Development Institute is to be congratulated for initiating a dialogue of this kind. Hopefully, it will undertake many more similar ventures in the future.

Reviewed by James Midgley, School of Social Work, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, USA.


This publication focuses on the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. It is basically a collection of case studies of a variety of development projects, programmes and policies undertaken in selected countries. The common denominator, in the eyes of the authors, appears to be that all the case studies are based on activities that have been deemed successful. In Part I the case studies covered include an Agroforestry Project in Burkina Faso, an Ochoreciasis Control Programme in West Africa, a Gravity-Fed Piped Water System in Malawi, and the production and export of horticultural commodities in Kenya. In Part 2 the following activities are covered: a case study of the Export Processing Zone in Mauritius, the Economic Recovery Programme in Ghana, and the Macroeconomic Management of Commodity Booms, 1975-86, in Botswana.
The question that inevitably comes to the mind of the reader is: What is meant by the term ‘successful’ in this publication? The authors have, albeit with limited success, attempted to explain what is meant by this term. They concede that success has many dimensions, and also that there is always room for disagreement about how successful any particular policy or project has been. They then proceed to say that by successful is meant (pv) “that the policies achieved their intended objectives and that the economic benefits outweigh the costs”.

This definition can be criticised from the point of view that it seems to look at success from the perspective of the authorities and not from that of the intended beneficiaries. What is also curious is the fact that the authors state that they selected successful projects for inclusion, but they confess that no systematic measurement or analysis had been carried out in some of the projects. For example, with the Burkina Faso project, the authors clearly state that (p14) “the clearest way to measure the economic success of the PAF would be a cost-benefit analysis that compared the total cost of research and development, training methods and labour to the market value of any increases in yields”. Yet this was not done. The authors go on to say that, probably because the particular project is rather small, no one has yet done this, and so the dearth of accurate cost data makes the analysis a rather crude exercise. On the basis of this statement, it is unclear what criteria are used to declare particular projects successful.

Another example of the lack of clarity over what constitutes success is to be found in the West African case study of Ochorleriasis. The authors of this study also concede that (p38) “no one has attempted a complete cost benefit of the OCP, although the issue of how to do it (ie how to evaluate it) has sparked considerable discussion”. It is clear from this statement that the obvious method of evaluating the project was not employed. This adds credence to this reviewer’s concern that what was really meant by success was not clear, at least as far as choice of case studies was concerned.

Four of the case studies analysed development programmes, while the other three analysed micro-economic programmes or policies. The final chapter suggests some wider implications emerging from the case studies. The fact that micro studies have been included with macro studies is also cause for concern. The publication could have concentrated wholly on micro projects. The authors say that the case studies are intended for use in courses and seminars offered by the EDI, and that they should be of interest to officials and scholars concerned with effectively promoting economic programmes in other developing countries. However, the calibre of personnel identified as the target group would probably benefit more from lessons drawn from micro projects than macro projects. For example, it would be fairly easy for them to identify with a piped water project from Malawi, but not with Ghana’s Economic Recovery Programme. The former is likely to be more in line with their day to day activities, and the latter would be viewed as being the responsibility of those in the top echelons of government, the policy makers. In this view, the macro studies should have been omitted from the publication in favour of further micro studies.

The publication is, however, well laid out. Each study starts by looking at a particular activity in the context of experiences in carrying out the activity, the degree of success, and implications for similar activities in other settings. An important thread running the gamut of the publication is that of learning from experience and adapting in order to achieve desired
objectives. The inclusion, in the Introduction, of summaries of all seven case studies is most useful. This will make life easier for readers who are not really interested in the minute details of each project but do want a broad overview.

To enhance clarity, annexes have been included. However, with some of these annexes only those readers who are literate in statistics will find them useful. Useful references are also included at the end of each case study. Notwithstanding the flaws mentioned, the publication is a useful practical contribution to the area of development studies.

Reviewed by R Mupedziswa, School of Social Work, Harare.


This monograph has been compiled from papers presented at two workshops on agricultural extension in Africa. The first was held at Eldoret, Kenya, in June 1984. It is focused on Extension and Research. The second seminar, on Agricultural Extension and its link with Research in Rural Development, was held at Yamoussokro, Cote d'Vero, in February 1985. The articles in this volume deal with the practical applications of the different methods of agricultural extension in Africa.

The book is another addition to the debate on the extension strategies that are most appropriate for the diverse conditions of African agriculture, and discusses the relative merits of the various extension methodologies of the developing world. The editor's defence of the training and visit system is very informative. Other issues discussed include the cost-effectiveness of extension; the weaknesses of African systems in generating technology; the tendency of government services to respond more to bureaucratic imperatives than to farmers' needs; the difficulties in forging more productive partnerships between researchers, extensionists, and farmers; the limited participation of farmers in the management of extension; the ineffectiveness of public services; and the fragility of institutions and infrastructure in most of SubSaharan Africa.

Teachers, lecturers and students of agriculture, extension practitioners, policy makers in rural development, and aid administrators who want to invest in rural development and extension, will find this book interesting and informative. It is a good guide to the more effective extension approaches in Africa, where one approach can not be taken as the answer.

Chapter 1, an appraisal of the extension methodologies most commonly found in Africa, lays the foundation for the papers that follow. The strengths and weaknesses of the four major approaches to extension: the commodity-based approach, the training and visit system, and farmer participatory extension, are each illustrated with specific case studies. This makes the monograph down-to-earth and very different from other records of technical workshops. Instead of just describing the diversity of the approaches to extension in Africa, the papers in this book give the perspective or conditions in which these approaches operate. The examples enable people, who may be using different names for the same approach elsewhere in Africa, to understand and identify with the strategies being discussed.
Commodity-based extension is dealt with in Chapters 2 and 3, using the examples of the cash crops cotton and tobacco. In both cases the approach is top-down and the extensionists provide all the necessary resources. The next set of chapters are an exposition of the training and visit system. In Chapter 4, the editor argues in support of this system, but both sides of the case are well-presented. In Chapter 5, Gentil raises a number of questions on the T and V system, and a case study is provided.

Chapters 7 and 8 discuss, elaborately, farmer participatory extension methodologies, and Belloncle proposes group instruction. Chapter 9 is a case study of a Village Producers Association in Mali. The theory behind farming system research and on farm research is given in Chapter 10. Chapter 11 is a case study of farming systems research in Senegal. Morris discusses the merits and demerits of T and V and the farming system research methodologies under East African conditions in Chapter 12. He concludes that the two systems are complementary and are useful in the generation and dissemination of technology. In Chapter 13 the economic return on public investment in extension reforms is considered, and the management of field personnel is discussed. The final chapter, Chapter 14, is a review of issues in extension that require continuous attention.

Although each chapter is clearly separated by section breaks and simple language is used, the presentation is marred by a lack of illustrations and other visual aids. Diagrams, pictures and other aids break the monotony of reading print continuously, help reduce the number of words used and enhance comprehension. However, overall, readers, especially academics, will find the book informative, educative and interesting.

Reviewed by Livai Chenjerai Matarirano, Agritex, Harare.


In recent months there has been much talk about Zimbabwe trying to join the ranks of the Newly Industrialising Countries (NICs). For those interested in pursuing such a course in this country, Nigel Harris’ The End of the Third World should be required reading.

The NICs are a group of Third World countries which have transformed their economies over the last two decades. Starting out as mainly primary producers they have moved to the production and export of a wide range of goods. There is little argument amongst economists that such transformations have taken place in the six countries studied by Harris: South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Brazil and Mexico. Indeed the rate of increase in production in these nations has been prolific. South Korea, for instance, advanced from a miniscule builder of ships (20000 tons per year in the 1960’s) to a 23% share of the world market by 1983 (4 million tons). Taiwan, which like South Korea oriented its economy toward exports, organised a sophisticated electronics industry which by 1982 made the Taiwanese the leading Third World electronics manufacturer. The city-states of Hong Kong and Singapore, as well as the two Latin American giants Brazil and Mexico, underwent similar changes to become large-scale exporters of goods ranging from textiles and office machinery to weapons’ systems.
The conclusions which economists have drawn from the advances made by these NICs vary widely. Conservative ‘liberalisers’ have been quick to praise the new industrial might of these countries as a success for free market forces. They view countries like Taiwan and South Korea as the first wave of a successful capitalist future for the underdeveloped world. This is certainly the prevailing view amongst international financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank.

As a Marxist, Harris dissents from this analysis. He details how history and international economic conditions were on the side of these NICs. His first point is that none of the countries noted are really ‘new’ industrialisers. By as early as 1950 all had success in some industrial fields. Their expertise and technology were at a level far above most underdeveloped countries when they began rapid expansion.

Even more importantly, the NICs growth took place at a time when the developed world was experiencing a boom. In the late 60’s and early 70’s Western powers were receptive to the importation of goods produced in places like Taiwan and Singapore. In addition, multinational banks were eager to finance overseas ventures. But, in Harris’ view, all this has changed. Since the mid-1970’s global capitalism, except for Japan, has somewhat slumped. Western countries now feel the need to protect their own industries. In the wake of mounting world debt, banks and international financial institutions are less willing to gamble on Third World enterprises. Thus the possibility for other countries to follow the path of the NICs seems somewhat remote.

Besides showing the limited chances for NIC style growth in the future, Harris details how the newly industrialising countries were not based on a free market system at all. According to traditional free market notions the state should play an absolutely minimal role in the economy. Yet during South Korea’s expansion period Harris claims the (p42) “state dominated the entire process of growth”. The government nationalised the nation’s five largest banks and the state controlled two-thirds of investment. Even the Chairpersons of Daewoo, one of South Korea’s largest corporations, complained that (p42) “the government tells you its your duty and you have to do it, even if there is no profit. Maybe after the year 2000 Korean businessmen will be able to put their company’s interests ahead of those of society or government”. With similar evidence, Harris concludes that all of the six NICs, with the possible exception of Hong Kong, were “state capitalist” rather than free market economies.

Harris’s last and perhaps most relevant point is that NIC type growth must be carried out at the expense of the majority. He alleges (p196): “The aim of the governments of the NICs has been to do all in their power to frustrate the growth of the most modest forms of worker involvement embodied in independent organisation and bargaining.” In other words, even if international conditions were favourable, an authoritarian state prepared to suppress moves to democratis the economic system is an integral part of NIC type growth. As Harris puts it (p195): “A regime whose main instrument to enforce conformity is terror for the majority and bribes for the few can keep up an impressive rate of growth of crude output regardless of what the workforce thinks”. Only in such a state can the type of low wages and industrial revolution style labour conditions, such as those found in South Korea or Mexico, be sustained.
As an advocate of democratic socialism Harris does not see the NIC model to be of benefit to the workers of underdeveloped countries. While he does argue that the NICs have changed the structure of their economies so that they can no longer be considered to be “Third World”, these changes have, in his view, merely brought new problems, not prosperity, to workers in the NICs. For Harris the only salvation for the majority of citizens in underdeveloped nations lies in the development of some type of international working class solidarity. The NICs blossomed in a period where technology, particularly in transport and telecommunications, gave multinational corporations the option of producing where labour costs were lowest. Frequently this meant relocation of factories from North America and Western Europe to cheap labour areas in underdeveloped nations. Foremost among these cheap labour areas were the NICs. It was this sort of foreign investment which was a precursor to the rise of locally owned multinationals.

But Harris does not think the future economic expansion of undeveloped countries should rest merely on the super-exploitation of the workforce. He contends that the type of labour exploitation which occurred in these NICs can only be stopped when labour becomes as international in perspective as the multinational corporation employers. No form of local nationalism is enough to deter the rising force of international Capital. Without any powerful international labour organisations, Harris believes multinational corporations will continue to gravitate toward nations where labour is cheapest. The result will be super-exploitation in these nations, and millions of unemployed in other countries whose chief hope for finding a job will rest in underbidding their fellow workers across the globe.

Clearly Harris would be no advocate of trade liberalisation programmes such as Zimbabwe’s new Investment Code. Those who are now championing the liberalisation cause locally would do well to consider Harris’s points. The author clearly knows his economics. Furthermore, unlike economists in general, and Marxists in particular, he writes in an accessible style that is devoid of rhetoric. His biggest shortcoming is that in offering international labour solidarity as an alternative vision to rapid capital accumulation, his suggestions are not very concrete. Some hints about what type of international labour organisation could effectively serve workers’ interests, and how they could develop into a global force, would go a long way towards making his arguments more worthy of serious contemplation as an alternative to the present world dominance of the free market idea.

Reviewed by John Pape, Harare.


This fine collection of stimulating essays on Southern African historiography is a trifle over-generous towards its subject, WM MacMillan. His gentle Fabian approach to politics was wholly ineffective in the face of the rapaciousness of those who gave Southern Africa segregation and apartheid while removing the gold. His writings, in retrospect, have not the power of Eddie Roux’s Time Longer Than Rope, nor the understanding later to be found in Simons’s Class and Colour in South Africa. One who could write in 1930, when the
Communist Party already had a strong ‘black’ membership, that (p70) “the semi-barbaric masses are nowhere near ready to acquire a swamping vote” can hardly be called a liberal, let alone a liberator. The book bathes MacMillan in a warm, yet scholarly, light: the warts are visible, but their size varies in the beholder’s eye. Some chapter authors are kinder than others, and the work is characterised by healthy contradictions.

Introducing the book, Hugh MacMillan writes “the greatest virtue of MacMillan’s analysis was that ‘black’ and ‘white’ workers were the product of similar and related pressures of proletarianisation...by 1930 he had an enlarged and clarified vision of South Africa as a single political economy”. Jeremy Krikler’s penetrating chapter on MacMillan and the working class claims the opposite, that for MacMillan (p70) “economics and political struggle were radically divorced from one another”.

It must be remarkably difficult to assemble a fair academic analysis of one’s own father. Hugh MacMillan has proved himself a highly competent historian in doing so, with Shula Marks’ help. Chapter authors include scholars such as Christopher Saunders, William Beinart, Robert Ross and Jeffrey Butler, treating topics as widely varied as the Seretse Khama marriage and Dr John Philip’s work towards Ordnance 50 of 1828. Yet the book is best summarised by examining Jeremy Krikler’s excellent chapter.

Krikler traces how MacMillan, son of a minister-school teacher from Scotland, defined himself against the growing Afrikaner nationalism of his childhood town, Stellenbosch, as being more in sympathy with the (p38) “coloured people” than with his “white compatriots”. Yet sympathy is not the same as being able to achieve changes in the plight of the oppressed, and MacMillan’s social achievements were small.

A poor man on a Rhodes scholarship, MacMillan was driven by the activities of the aristocratic bloods of Merton College, Oxford, towards a worker Christianity, and towards reform not revolution (p40-1). In vacations he bicycled across England and Scotland, writing about the lives of the workers and peasants he saw. About the Scottish crofter he wrote (p45):

“The evils of landlordism have put the people ‘against the landlords’ at any price and made the most truly conservative people imaginable into the most ardent radicals...so we may well say with the suffering Gael ... ‘bas gha na feidh’ - Death to the Deer”.

Back from Britain, as lecturer in charge of Economics and History in Grahamstown, MacMillan at once attempted Fabian social reform, publishing on sanitary conditions and on economic conditions generally in the town, setting out how poverty was to be alleviated, or, rather, prevented, because charity would be inadequate.

No less a Fabian than Sidney Webb reviewed MacMillan’s work in the New Statesman, referring to it as being (p49) “on Booth, Rowntree, Bowley lines”. But Krikler notes the boundaries of Fabianism, which meant MacMillan did not challenge the racism around him (p49):

“The cheap unskilled black workers, argued Macmillan, through their competition in the labour market, tended ‘to degrade whites down to and below their level’; this, he suggested, was ‘the solid basis of the native menace’”.

In this period of his life, MacMillan effectively proposed an alliance of ‘white’ workers with the ‘white’ middle class, against the ‘black’ working class. Krikler observes that, logically, to end white poverty, the undercutting effect which MacMillan observed could
only be destroyed by raising the condition of the black workers, rather than by combining against them.

The travels in writing the Agrarian Problem exposed MacMillan to what he called the 'poor-black' question, and led to his major work, Complex South Africa (1930) (p60), "a scholarly and passionate intervention against the segregationists". By now MacMillan had come to see that the solution to South Africa's problems lay in raising the condition of black workers. In Complex South Africa MacMillan wrote (p60):

"Colour may be a peculiar social complication, but is is still only an accident, and in economics the blackness of the native makes no difference. The problem he represents is in essentials that of 'dilution', familiar enough to workers in Europe when the war brought about an invasion of the skilled engineering trades by women".

Krikler concludes this picture of MacMillan by analysing his writings about the 1919 and 1922 strikes on the Rand. MacMillan was strongly opposed to the 'Soviet' direction of the 1919 incidents, notwithstanding the follies of the City Council, which precipitated the strike. He consistently advocated moderation on both sides of the 1922 strike, and, unlike his friends, became neither a scab nor a special constable. "I knew that the best of the men had a case" (p63). Yet Krikler criticises MacMillan's writings on 1922 (p65):

"A gifted historian such as he should surely have perceived that an insurrectionary struggle cannot be explained by complaining of the implacability of the contending social forces that compose it....What made their clash so unremitting? An analysis of such questions was more likely to create the sympathy for the strikers which MacMillan, in his decency, sought to create. Such analysis, however, would have required an emphasis upon the essential class nature of the fateful combat of 1922. And it was precisely 'class struggle' from which MacMillan was taking flight".

In short, MacMillan's moderation prevented him from understanding the great social issues of his day. Just as one cannot be moderate about whether the earth is round or flat, a moderate, or classless, analysis of the 1922 revolt prevents historical understanding of that revolt. Similarly, no matter the degree of sympathy which MacMillan had for 'black' people, his racism in denying the (p70) "semi-barbaric masses a swamping vote" meant that he was politically the enemy of democracy.

Reviewed by Renfrew Christie, University of the Western Cape, South Africa.
(no references supplied. Ed)


In the wake of increased international interest in South Africa, the Women's Press of London has issued an updated and revised version of Jacklyn Cock's Maids and Madams. This volume has virtually become a classic of South African social science. Based on Cock's PhD research in the Eastern Cape in 1978-9, Maids and Madams forcefully depicts the lives of black women domestic workers under apartheid.
This work is representative of a range of writing by South African academics who are committed to the overthrow of the apartheid system. Cock makes no attempt to hide her bias in collating data from interviews with 175 domestic workers and 50 employers. Her research was "undertaken in the belief that sociologists in South Africa have a particular obligation to record the injustice and exploitation that surround us and of which we are all too often a contributing part". The main thrust of this work was not lost on at least some ultra rightwing white South Africans. Maida Maida and Madams elicited a steady campaign of harassment of Cock. Attacks against the Witwaterstrand University lecturer culminated in late 1980 with a bundle of dynamite being thrown through her front window as she ate a late night dinner. Only a faulty fuse saved Ms Cock from the lot of other assassinated white South African intellectuals such as David Webster, Ruth First and Richard Turner.

Even ten years later there is much in this book that would anger a significant portion of the white population of South Africa. The power of this study lies in the repeated use of the voices of the domestic workers themselves. The sensitive rendering of the interview material was a product of Cock's diligence and the efforts of 'field worker' (co-author might be a better title) Nobengazi Mary Kota. Kota, herself a former domestic worker, did all the in depth interviews with the women. By dwelling on essential aspects of the domestic workers' existence, Cock and Kota have presented a grim portrait of the lives of these 'trapped' women labourers.

Perhaps the most compelling chapter is entitled "Deprivations". Here many workers reveal the intimate details of the oppressive routine apartheid has carved out for them:

"We leave our children early in the morning to look after other women’s families and still they don’t appreciate us" (p44).
"I never sleep at home with my husband and children. Even if I have a half day off, I have to come back and sleep at night" (p54).
"I don’t have time for friends visiting" (p46).

Similarly telling were the responses the workers gave when asked to name the best thing about their job or employer (p55):

"There is nothing good to say. My job is hell".
"Perhaps that sometimes her daughter gives me a tip or a jersey but then my employer moans and says she is spoiling me".
"She swears at me in a polite kind of way".
"She does greet me in the mornings".

If the comments of workers seem to reveal an excessively negative picture of their employers, Cock’s chronicling of employer responses hardly vindicates white ‘bosses’ and ‘madams’. When asked to describe their workers, typical depictions were:

"An impossible thing, very self-willed, she is the first girl I’ve had that’s gone to school...The completely raw ones are better (p113).
"She is all right as long as she doesn’t drink out of my cups" (114).
"In Rhodesia (sic) a boy does three times the work these do" (119).

In addition, employers’ general comments about black people often showed the most undiluted racist views (p140):

"They have got a long way to go in evolutionary terms. Putting them in European clothes doesn’t make them civilised".
Through the extensive use of such excerpts from the interviews, Cock has produced a harsh yet readable indictment of the effects of apartheid on a major sector of the black workforce. This trimmed down version of the original has lost none of its strength. In fact the elimination of certain sections which focused on somewhat esoteric academic debates enhances the essential message of the author.

Yet for all its power, Maids and Madams has not completely stood the test of time. In the 1970s most writers on the South African experience were primarily concerned with showing the oppressive nature of the apartheid system. However, more recent scholarship has also embraced the various ways in which black people in general and workers in particular have resisted apartheid. Writers such as Van Onselen and Bozzoli of the Witwatersrand History Workshop, among others, have examined both trade union organisation and nonformal methods of worker resistance (such as theft, desertion, go-slows, and sabotage). By drawing attention to resistance, these authors have emphasised that black workers are far more than passive victims of an apartheid system.

Cock’s work does not give us this fighting side of the domestic worker. She has tried to address this problem by adding a short chapter entitled “Struggles”. This briefly describes the role of the domestic workers union during the 1980s. But “Struggles” seems cursory. While domestic workers have become somewhat unionised, their organisation has hardly approached that of the metalworkers or mineworkers. Much more important than formal union resistance are the informal ways in which domestic workers resist their oppression. In fact, the domestic workers’ environment presents a wide variety of opportunities for such informal resistance - from the classic ‘borrowing’ of large quantities of sugar to wearing the madam’s best dress to a wedding and sneaking it back into the wardrobe on Monday morning. In her excessive focus on the oppressive nature of labour under apartheid, Cock has omitted another important side of the work experience of the women she and Kota interviewed.

In addition, Cock’s main concern here is with race and gender. While the position of the South African domestic work force is largely conditioned by these two factors, the writer has avoided giving much weight to class. As we are hopefully near the downfall of the apartheid regime, one wonders if black women domestic workers will fare much better under a majority rule government. If Zimbabwe is anything to go by, there is little reason to think that rule by the ANC or some coalition of forces will spell total liberation for domestic workers. Cock could have given us a hint of things to come by including in her sample some black households which employed domestic workers.

In spite of these shortcomings, Jacklyn Cock’s Maids and Madams remains a masterpiece of both research rigour and political commitment. She and Kota deserve to be commended and creatively emulated by other social scientists who share their concern to eliminate race, gender and class inequalities.

Reviewed by John Pape, Harare.

References


This slim, accessible volume describes the author’s experience during six years in detention in South Africa, on charges under the Terrorism Act. She was arrested and detained in October 1976 for involvement in the Bantu education riots (that were met with the Sharpeville Massacre), her whereabouts having been disclosed by her policeman father. She was only convicted a year later, and then given a five year sentence. She was released in October 1982, aged 27, having been in solitary confinement in various jails for almost her entire sentence.

The book is written in a very immediate, informal style, expressing from the heart, the anger, frustration, commitment and courage of this powerful woman. She describes day to day life in various jails, and the continuing battle to improve conditions - with many successes over the years, because of her relentless determination. Despite the harshness of the conditions she maintains her objectivity and even a sense of humour, allied to a sharp sense of irony and justice.

It is the descriptive detail that brings her experiences alive - such as the time a letter to a cousin was rejected on the grounds she had quoted the Bible, the only book to which she had been allowed access for two years. The sheer pettiness of the prison system is amply illustrated, quite apart from the generally inhuman conditions, and, of course, the underlying injustice of an elaborate apartheid system even within prison walls.

For anyone concerned to learn more of the daily reality of political imprisonment in South Africa, Cde Makhoere’s book provides a graphic, disturbing and inspiring personal account.

Reviewed by Helen Jackson, School of Social Work, Harare.


One of the frequently heard statements in our lives today is ‘this is the status of women in such and such a country’, as if women in that country live a uniform life and they have the same concerns. For those with this false notion that one can talk about women as one group Angela Davis’ book is the book to read. Women Race and Class is a journey through the history of American women: black, white, poor, rich, and other groups. Davis shows that even in their struggles for equality women in America were not united. Middle class white women had their own concerns which were different from those of working class whites and from black women.

Says Davis, white middle class women “viewed male supremacy as an immoral flaw in their otherwise acceptable society”. For them, being franchised was the only issue. Thus, in the very beginning of the franchise movement both black women and working class white women were not involved. Davis shows that it was only after working class women realised that getting the vote would also enable them to fight for better working conditions that they took up the franchise issue.
Although Davis does not push Marxist rhetoric she analyses the women's struggle in Marxian terms. The alliance between race and class and its relationship to the capitalist system is clearly explained. Early feminists, who were not really economically disadvantaged, only analysed issues in the narrow perspective of men versus women. For working class women, economic conditions were the issues that they were fighting on. Women in the Socialist movement also saw beyond the race and sex issue, and took up the working women's cause, ie both black and white working women.

Davis also analyses the issue of rape in a new way, to show how the capitalist system has made the problem of rape worse, and how sometimes it may lead to it. During the slavery era white men raped their black slaves, not because of lust but "as a weapon of domination, a weapon of repression". Again Davis refutes one of the myths about rape, that it is committed by lascivious men. She shows that rape is used as a way of dominating by those who feel they have the power to dominate. Davis shows that black men, and other working class men in America, can rape women just as privileged men can, but (p200):

"since they (the disadvantaged classes) do not possess the social or economic authority... guaranteeing them immunity from prosecution, the incentive (to rape) is not nearly as powerful as it is for the men of the capitalist class".

Davis goes on to say

"The class structure of capitalism encourages men who wield power in the economic and political realm to become agents of sexual exploitation".

The full import of what Davis says is not difficult for people in the Third World to grasp. Women are at the bottom of the pile in economic and social terms, and rape and the sexual harassment of women are daily occurrences.

The most vivid parts of *Women Race and Class* are those dealing with the struggles of black women. Unlike other books that have been written about women under slavery, Davis' book does not dwell on the 'sexual role' of these women. In fact Davis shows that, unlike their white counterparts, black women have been taking part in the making of American history in their own name. Black women have always had to work outside the home and this gave them a measure of equality with their men. They fought side by side with their men against slavery:

"If black women bore the terrible burden of equality in oppression, ... they also asserted their equality aggressively in challenging the inhuman institution of slavery".

The Harriet Tubmans of American history made their mark in their own names, not just as wives of great men.

Davis goes on to show, however, that even though black women had a measure of equality with their men, they still suffered sex discrimination. Black women suffer the double burden of working outside the home and having to come home and do all the work. The important theme of this book is that while women's struggles are the same to a certain extent, the issues they grapple with in their day to day lives are quite different. Thus their responses are different. In this respect race and class play an important role. The temptation of talking about 'women' as some kind of homogeneous unit must be resisted.

This is a very vivid and powerful analysis of women's struggles in a so called 'First World' country, and is a must for all feminists and women-in-development analysts.

Reviewed by Everjoice J Win, Women's Action Group, Harare.

This short publication includes a letter written from prison by Nelson Mandela to President P W Botha in July 1989, five speeches made at rallies in South Africa after his release from prison in February 1990, one speech at a rally in Luanda, Angola, and another speech to South African Business Executives. The book also includes the Freedom Charter of the African National Congress (ANC).

In all the speeches, Mandela stresses the central issue of the need to abolish racism and apartheid, and all that it stands for. Even in his address to the business executives he stresses the need to support the struggle, to ensure that all the people ultimately enjoy a decent standard of living in conditions of freedom. The speeches aim to mobilise, educate and help the masses to understand the need to “intensify the struggle to abolish apartheid”.

The book marks a new stage in the struggle for a non-racial democratic South Africa, Mandela urges the people to strive for peace, democracy and freedom for all South Africans, intensifying the struggle, even if it means promoting sanctions against South Africa. He also stresses the need for committed mass action to bring peace and security. He defends the armed struggle as a “defensive action against the violence of apartheid” and stresses the need for the struggle to continue while the factors leading to its beginnings still exist.

Mandela calls for mass action which is disciplined, with no violence, but intensified on all fronts, including schools, factories, mines and communities everywhere. The unbanning of the ANC is a vital step in the intensification of the struggle since it serves as a vital mouth piece for the people. Mandela’s speeches too provide this mouth piece. Mandela attacks the apartheid education system as interior and labels it “a crime against humanity” which needs to be attended to by all concerned with it, ie students, parents, teachers, workers, and all organised sectors of the community. He appeals to the youth to struggle for a just education, and commends them for their leading role in the army Umkhonto we Sizwe, but he also calls on them to demonstrate a high degree of political maturity.

While encouraging the activities of Umkhonto we Sizwe, Mandela stresses the sanctity of life and abhors violence for the sake of violence. He says people, especially youth, need to respect each other’s point of view and should not resort to violence as a way of settling differences amongst them. There is need to unite as brothers in the fight against apartheid, not each other. He urges women to join hands in supporting each other and, especially, their menfolk to take action against deprivation.

For justice and equality, Mandela stresses the need for the redistribution (sharing) of the wealth of South Africa, to replace the situation in which a racist minority monopolises economic wealth at the expense of the majority of the oppressed and poverty stricken black people. All talks, therefore, between the government and the ANC have to be genuine negotiations seeking strategies to resolve conflict, based on the acceptance of the basic rights of every human being. While the Pretoria regime should be commended for taking steps to negotiate with the ANC and unban it, this is not enough without the end of apartheid. Mandela makes a pointed attack on some of the homeland leaders for siding with and supporting an oppressive South African government rather than siding with the majority and promoting equality and justice.
In all his speeches, Mandela commends and thanks groups of individuals throughout the world whose support led to the unbanning of the ANC and his release from goal. Romanticism and emotiveness is apparent in Mandela's speeches and makes his references to past history and personalities, and his use of comparisons, emotionally striking. These are the speeches of a politician seeking to sway people to his cause. For those interested in the politics of the South African situation, and the story of the ANC, this book will be useful.

Reviewed by Eulita Nyatito, Social Work Diploma student, Harare.


"The ecological problem of our time lies in modern science's uncontrollable desire to break everything down into parts which can be neatly analysed." I cannot remember whose quotation this was, probably an obscure farmer or gardener. But it is one that I am forced to recall almost daily. This was especially so reading this World Bank Technical Paper. There is no doubt it is a good paper, well researched, well planned and carefully put together. And it will be useful to students of agroforestry, providing an overview of pertinent points in the dynamic development of agroforestry as a discipline. But, like the discipline of agroforestry itself, the paper insists on separating out an aspect on the land (ie the use of woody perennials in agriculture) which perhaps should not be seen as a separate entity. Reading numerous agroforestry papers one senses this struggle going on: the struggle between the rational scientist of the twentieth century, trained to specialise and present specific data, and the very nature of agroforestry which is a first step in seeing the landscape as an interconnected web. Perhaps, however, because of its integrating characteristic, agroforestry can lead the way to seeing the land and the people on the land as a whole. But the worrying question is: will the scientists drink when still tethered to a methodology of division into parts?

Agroforestry in Sub-Saharan Africa is divided into five chapters:

I. Introduction: which explains how the study was carried out.

II. Agroforestry in Africa: which divides existing agroforestry practices into 10 different categories ranging them in an order which starts with the more passive and ends with those which involve much more active planting and management of trees. Their categories are as follows: savanna, grazing, farmer parklands, tree crops and shade trees, forested fallow, planted farm trees, homegardens, farm woodlots, forest plantation farming (taungya), fodder trees, alley cropping.

III. Seven case studies: which is the main part of the paper and looks at seven situations in which agroforestry is being practised. The case studies are from East and West Africa, cover new and indigenous practices, and are drawn from three different environments: humid lowlands, semi arid lowlands and cool highlands. Research for the case studies included spending a week at each place conducting interviews with a cross section of the communities concerned, the point being made that "most of the time was spent in the field with villagers", presumably justifying the subtitle of the paper: "A Farmer's Perspective"! The seven case studies are:
1. CARE, Kenya Agroforestry Extension
2. Chagga Homegardens, Tanzania
3. Agro-Pastoral Project, Rwanda
4. Alley Farming in Western Nigeria
5. Agroforestry in Northern Nigeria
6. Acacia albida in Southeast Niger
7. Maijia Valley Windbreaks

IV. Identified Issues: which cover lessons learned both from reviewed literature on agroforestry and from the case studies.

V. General conclusions and recommendations for future project design and implementation.

I enjoyed Chapter III the most but then I'm a farmer at heart and not an academic! Chapter III is interesting and alive. Chapter II is useful for someone wanting to pass an examination in agroforestry while Chapters I, IV and V are very dry, but if you are a patient reader and a policy maker they are useful. It is a pity that Chapter III was not developed more fully (including diagrams/drawings) and that Chapters I, IV and V were not put in as appendices, leaving readers the chance to develop their own conclusions from the case studies. Unfortunately, as a reviewer, I had no option but to plough through the very precise, carefully presented and sub heading list of identified issues, conclusions and recommendations. I actually absorbed far more of these from my own deductions while reading the case studies.

The points that come through most strongly in the paper are:
* agroforestry already exists all over Africa and has its roots in traditional practices.
* agroforestry must be integrated into the whole farm, the technical aspects must not ignore the social
* farmers are looking more for short-term financial returns than long-term environmental benefits
* success of agroforestry is not more closely linked to private ownership compared to situations of communal land tenure. Success is far more complicated than such a simplification
* the only experts on the land are the farmers themselves.

The first four come into the author's conclusions in some form or another. The fifth is mine. The trend in agriculture is to start to recognise this latter point and this paper reflects this trend: the importance of the farmers is emphasised again and again but the fact that they are the only real experts is not spelt out. I cannot help feeling that when it is discovered that every situation on the land is so unique that the only experts can be the users themselves, research will start to move in a useful direction. This paper, however, is a step in that direction as reflected by the statement in the Preface: "The challenge now is to find ways to integrate the new knowledge with the knowledge that farmers already have, so that widespread adoption of agroforestry systems will improve the welfare of farmers today, as well as the prospects for sustainable economic growth in the future."

The final 30 pages (of 94) is a comprehensive bibliography of agroforestry publications.

Reviewed by John Wilson, Fambidzanai Training Centre, Harare.
(no price stated).

Along with Mandaza's The Political Economy of Transition, these two volumes represent the most serious attempts to analyse Zimbabwe's version of socialism. Writing nearly a decade ago, Astrow was probably the first author to predict that newly independent Zimbabwe would never become anything approaching a socialist state. For Astrow this was a foregone conclusion, a "predictable result of the nationalist leadership's class interests and the nationalist movement's entire strategy" (p2).

A Marxist of the orthodox Trotskyist variety, Astrow repeatedly stresses that the working class was never really a significant component of the struggle to liberate Zimbabwe. Without working class involvement, Astrow argues, any transition to socialism after 1980 was impossible. This situation Astrow blames on two factors. First, he targets the trade unions. Before 1980 he contends that the role of trade union leaders was "policing the African working class" (p25) rather than mobilising the workers for action. The author documents how the pre-independence federations such as the Southern Rhodesia Trade Union Congress actively tried to keep unions out of nationalist politics and steer them in a capitalist direction.

Aside from the historic weakness of the workers' movement in Zimbabwe, Astrow also criticises what he calls the "Political Programme of the Petit Bourgeoisie" (p135). The writer argues that the leadership of both ZANU and ZAPU, despite rhetorical remarks to the contrary, never were genuinely socialist. The goals of the liberation movements, in Astrow's view, was "to democratis the existing political structure, in order to eliminate racial discrimination" (p136). However, due to the intransigence of the settler regime, a moderate political leadership was forced to take up arms and make radical promises to the masses in order to enlist their support.

Astrow demonstrates this dynamic between the leadership and the masses by concretely examining ZANU and ZAPU's positions on the land question. While the military wings of both groups mobilised peasants with promises of land, according to Astrow at no point did either movement promise unequivocally that they would expropriate a large proportion of settler farms. While ZANU often suggested that all land would be nationalised, Mugabe's quote of 1978 puts these suggestions in context (p139):

"You cannot start off by nationalising everything. You have to take into account the realities of the situation".

Reading Astrow's work nearly ten years after it was written is an interesting exercise. The hindsight of ten years of independence can surely verify some of his points, many of which seemed outlandish in the early 1980's. Yet for all Astrow's documentation of what he calls the "petit bourgeois interests" of the liberation movements, his analysis is too facile and formulistic. One reason for this is that the book was based on a PhD thesis Astrow wrote without ever visiting Zimbabwe. While he displays a comprehensive knowledge of historical and political documents available to overseas researchers, his work lacks the critical insights that can only be gained by actually talking to participants in a struggle.
Although even the best researcher cannot gain a full understanding of political and historical dynamics in just a short visit to a country, to so comprehensively condemn the outcome of a liberation struggle without any direct contact with those involved smacks of the worst type of First World academic arrogance. Astrow's words would ring much truer to residents of Zimbabwe if they were supported by primary sources which were readily available to him had he managed to visit Zimbabwe or neighbouring countries before 1980.

Aside from this major shortcoming Astrow's work suffers from the rigidity of his ideological outlook. Like many dogmatic Marxists, Astrow simply reduces things to the lowest common denominator. According to Astrow's party line, there is no progress without the total overthrow of the capitalist system. Though independent Zimbabwe may be a disappointment to many, the situation is more than Astrow paints it: a simple change from white leadership to black leadership. The whole intertwining of change and continuity in post-1980 Zimbabwe is much more complex than black leadership replacing white. Many of Astrow's conclusions may be valid but he doesn't quite grasp the subtlety of the social forces which are involved in the class struggle in Zimbabwe.

Certainly a richer work than Astrow's is Zimbabwe: Politics, Economics and Society by Colin Stoneman and Lionel Cliffe. Like Astrow, the two authors are leftwing critics of Zimbabwe's brand of socialism. However, unlike Astrow they have been frequent visitors to Zimbabwe and display a much deeper understanding of the country. In this relatively short work (slightly more than 200 pages) Stoneman and Cliffe review various aspects of Zimbabwe's political and economic landscape, from party structures to the agricultural sector to the development of the working class. Their approach is far more systematic than Astrow's and the work is further enhanced by the availability of a wide range of data on Zimbabwe's first years of independence.

Of particular relevance is Chapter Five, "Class and Race". Here the writers try to analyse the position and power of various class groupings which they label the bourgeoisie, the black petty bourgeoisie, the working class and the peasantry. They also include a very superficial section on "the special position of women". Unlike Astrow, they do not present a rigidified class structure, but one in flux. With respect to the bourgeoisie, the authors try to explore to what extent Zimbabwean capitalists represent a "national bourgeoisie" (ie one devoted to local economic development) as opposed to a "comprador bourgeoisie" (one which is totally the servant of transnational corporations). While they do not reach definite conclusions on the question, they do neatly detail the battleground where a large degree of Zimbabwe's fate has been and will continue to be decided. In light of the present moves toward trade liberalisation, the authors' depiction of this power struggle is useful for assessing the contradictions of the future.

In examining the working class, Stoneman and Cliffe also display an emphasis different from Astrow's. In fact they label Astrow a "Marxist purist" for making the blanket conclusion that workers had nothing whatsoever to do with the liberation struggle. Though the organised trade unions gave little assistance to the liberation movements, many individuals "did participate or give support to the nationalist struggle, but often clandestinely" (p65). Astrow's classical Marxist vision of the Zimbabwean working class sees them either as the inevitable emissaries of a socialist order or nothing at all. His portrayal of Zimbabwean workers neglects the links that many workers still have to the rural areas.
Cliffe and Stoneman are aware of this nuance of the Zimbabwean working class when they observe that “workers and peasants cannot yet be regarded as distinct classes” (194). In this context there is little wonder that Zimbabwean working class history has been something different than Marx’s traditional characterisation.

In concluding, Stoneman and Cliffe do not self assuredly give a prescription for the revolutionary path as Astrow has done. Nonetheless, they do project a negative view of the country’s attempts at socialism (p192):

“Certainly there has been precious little attempt so far to transform the socioeconomic structure or to change the terms of the country’s involvement with the world economy in directions that would suggest a transition to socialism and that are differentiated from a more Africanist-oriented path of capitalist development after the decades of racial capitalism”.

In the end, for Stoneman and Cliffe, Zimbabwe’s “Marxist ambitions” may be merely a “camouflage for an ambiguously neo-colonial and capitalist project” (p195), nonetheless they back off from a view of total predetermination (p194):

“In these circumstances Zimbabwe’s prospects are still not completely determined. They are, however, limited ...”

Both of the volumes reviewed here are important contributions to an indepth analysis of post-independence Zimbabwe. The views of all authors represent a leftwing critique of Zimbabwean political parties which rarely sees the light of day within the country outside the pages of SAPEM or Social Change and Development. Despite both volumes almost total neglect of women they do ask many of the right questions. Astrow’s key concern is whether the liberation movements ever were socialist in character. His answer is an unwavering no. Stoneman and Cliffe focus on to what degree the present problems in the country are a product of the failures of government policy and political orientation. They present this as a dynamic situation rather than succumbing to Astrow’s more static view. Of the two, Stoneman and Cliffe’s work is more valuable and comprehensive, but both should be carefully read by those at all concerned with the path this country has followed and where it will go from here.

Reviewed by John Pape, Harare.

References