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## BOOK REVIEWS

**South Africa: The Dynamics and Prospects of Transformation (1900–1994)** Edited by *Sipho Buthelezi*. Harare, Sapes Trust, 1994, 134 pp., ISBN 1-77905-033-X, Z\$80.

After reading Ibbo Mandaza's appetising Foreword, one looks forward to a sumptuous main course. At the end of the book, many readers are likely to be disappointed and yearning for a livelier, more rigorous and coherent analytical account of 'the dynamics and prospects of transformation in South Africa'. In fact, there is very little on the prospects of transformation in this volume. But the book has some redeeming chapters. The last bastion of White political hegemony in Africa, and arguably the continent's most powerful state, South Africa, 'naturally' commands considerable interest even beyond academic circles. The task that Buthelezi sets for himself and his five colleagues from diverse disciplinary backgrounds is to engage in a developmental analysis of the liberation struggle in South Africa.

In Buthelezi's introductory chapter, the editor seeks to provide a conceptual framework for the book, one that is anchored in a historical materialist paradigm. His thesis is that 'the national and class dimensions of the national liberation struggle are inseparable' (p. 9) and contends that imperialism is 'the fundamental contradiction with the revolutionary working people of South Africa' (p. 10). However, if this approach was designed to provide a conceptual orientation for the rest of the book, it did not have the desired effect. For the most part, the other contributors do not employ or even share these concepts and theoretical perspectives. As a consequence, the volume lacks a central organising concept and a coherent, unifying theoretical approach.

Contrary to Buthelezi's position, Devan Pillay tells us that the tripartite alliance comprising the ANC, COSATU and the SACP was a 'multi-class alliance' (p. 23) riven apart by ideological, racial, strategic, tactical, class and gender conflicts. In turn, Molefe Mafole highlights the racially exclusivist character of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and its slogan, 'Africa for the Africans', and not 'Africa for the Workers'. The five essays by Pillay, Molefe Mafole, Phil Mtinkuli, Mokgethi Motlhabi and Desiree Lewis all focus on a particular political organisation or movement within the South African struggle. A recurring theme — which serves as some kind of unifying thread — is one of tension, schisms, shifts and turns all simultaneously or episodically manifesting themselves along several faultlines and polarisations defined principally in terms of race, class, generation, ideology and gender.

In an incisive account of the Fanonist-like Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), Motlhabi outlines and analyses the BCM's philosophy

of struggle, its strengths and limitations and is all the time cognisant of the bewildering complexity and permutations of the South African 'question'. This chapter gives the reader a good insight into the dynamics of the struggle, the range of actors involved, their diverse agendas and differing conceptualisations of the nature of the liberation struggle and the modalities of achieving it. I liked this chapter.

Another good chapter is the last one by Lewis. Using an approach embedded in gender analysis rather than radical political economy, she notes the 'complex intertwining of race, class and gender' (p. 112) in the South African liberation struggle. Her treatment of the interface between gender struggles and liberatory politics is refreshingly penetrating. She systematically discusses the place of gender struggles in the context of the larger, more pressing and encompassing struggle for *national* liberation and concludes that the dominant stream within this national struggle was 'emphatically phallogocentric' i.e., male-centred (p. 117). Lewis persuasively argues that in South Africa, unlike in the Western world, the struggle against patriarchal structures and sexism was just one amongst other power struggles. Lewis does a commendable job in explicating the problematic and ambiguous relationship of the women's movement in the National Liberation Struggle.

The book can be faulted on a number of grounds. It fails to recognise, let alone probe, the salience of the ethnic factor in the liberation dynamics of South Africa. Ethnicity was already a deeply troublesome variable well before the book was on the drawing board. One suspects that in line with the revolutionary intellectual discourse at the time (though already losing its glitter), ethnicity was summarily dismissed as 'false consciousness' that would happily wither away through the healing powers of time.

One is also tempted to ask loudly: 'Where is Mandela in this book?' The lack of any sustained treatment of this towering figure with an obvious messianic aura and who was central in the democratisation process in South Africa is surely going to astound many a reader. The timing of the book is also regrettable. Many momentous and tumultuous events have intervened between the writing and reading of the book such that it is already outdated. There is very little on the dynamics that culminated in the 'miracle' transition to the 1994 election and the dethronement of apartheid as a ruling ideology. Similarly, the book is grossly deficient on the 'prospects' of transformation in South Africa. The reader will also miss a summarising chapter that synthesises the various themes and ideas in the book. I am also baffled by the reference on the back cover to 'South Africa's attainment of independence in 1994...' when what happened in that country was its democratisation.

Lastly, the editor could surely have done a more meticulous job in picking the numerous editorial and typographical errors and in insisting

on a consistent referencing style rather than allowing the free for all that is evident in the volume. Notwithstanding these criticisms, the book has something to offer to political scientists and historians, and it does suggest promising areas of investigation. That may well be the book's principal strength.

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E. MASUNUNGURE

**Peace and Security in Southern Africa** Edited by Ibbo Mandaza. Harare, Sapes Trust, 1996, xxiii, 183 pp., ISBN 1-77905-048-8.

We have in this edited volume a collection of five essays that furnish an important contribution to the study of peace and security in Southern Africa. This is an outcome of three years' research under the auspices of the International Relations Division of the Southern African Regional Institute for Policy Studies (SARIPS), the Research and Publications arm of Sapes Trust. This study with an 'Introduction' by Ibbo Mandaza, sought to examine, and interact with, the current discourse on peace and security in Southern Africa.

The Southern African region, for many decades, has been a theatre of wars and conflicts. The people of the region had to wage wars associated with the liberation of the region from colonialism, settler and apartheid systems of domination and racism. Naturally these wars and conflicts led to an increase in the flow and circulation of arms in the region. These wars and conflicts have now come to an end over the past three years, and the region as a whole is now under democratically elected governments.

It is for this reason that the study under review has adopted an all-encompassing definition of peace and security, reflecting a qualitative development of the discourse, from that which conventionally viewed these concepts as captured in the purely militaristic, to that which considers them in the context of fundamental social relations, at the global, inter-state and intra-state levels. *Peace and Security in Southern Africa* covers five chapters, each with a different task but linked together and designed to build upon each other. The 'Introduction' by Ibbo Mandaza provides an overview, as well as contending analytic approaches to issues of peace and security at global and regional levels.

The five chapters in the book are illuminating and valuable. Horace Campbell's chapter, 'From regional military destabilisation to military cooperation and peace in Southern Africa', in particular, does a commendable job in reminding readers of UNESCO's definition of peace:

There can be no genuine peace when the most elementary human rights are violated or while situations of injustice continue to exist; Conversely

human rights for all cannot take root and achieve full growth while latent or open conflicts are rife . . . Peace is incompatible with malnutrition, extreme poverty and the refusal of the rights of self-determination. Disregard for rights of individuals, the persistence of inequitable international economic structures, interference in the internal affairs of other states . . . The only lasting peace is a just peace based on respect for human rights. Furthermore, a just peace calls for an equitable international order which will preserve future generations from the scourge of war (p. 154).

Winnie Wanzala's chapter, 'Emancipating security and development for equity and social justice', introduces a unique conceptualisation and definition of security as one definitively linked to human development, implying a distinction between 'development policies' that should enhance human security and development on the one hand, and those that deepen underdevelopment, poverty and insecurity on the other. Her major concern relates to those disadvantaged sections of society, particularly women and children.

On the other hand, Thomas Ohlson in his chapter, 'Conflict and conflict resolution in the Southern African context' attempts to provide a framework for dealing analytically with peace, conflict, conflict resolution and security. He grapples with the definitions of all these key concepts.

Tiyanjana Maluwa's chapter focuses on the problem of refugees as yet another expression of the vestige of economic and political malaise in Southern Africa. He demonstrates how the problem will impinge on the peace and security equation in Southern Africa.

Finally, Mafa Sejanamane deals with the case study, 'The Lesotho crisis and regional intervention'. From a peace and security perspective, the author reminds us that the Lesotho crisis has shown that there is no satisfactory formal conflict resolution and peace-keeping mechanism in Southern Africa. He warns that the mechanisms which were used in the Lesotho crisis cannot be reproduced in other circumstances and in a country like Zimbabwe, for example (p. 82).

Perhaps the only flaw associated with the book is that it does not link the Southern African Development Community's peace efforts with the Organisation of African Unity's programme on 'Conflict prevention, management and resolution'.

In spite of this weakness, *Peace and Security in Southern Africa* is a significant addition to the literature on the region. The book makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of problems of peace and security in the post-apartheid era in Southern Africa and also raises a number of critical research questions along the way. As the UNDP *Human Development Report* states:

For too long, the concept of security has been shaped by the potential for conflict between states. For too long, security has been equated with

threats to a country's borders. For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security. However, for most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Job security, income security, health security, environmental security, security from crime — these are the emerging concerns of human security all over the world, including Southern Africa (1994, 3).

The book should do well as essential text for postgraduate courses in Strategic Studies in Southern African politics. It is also recommended for policy makers, diplomatic, and non-governmental organisations interested in Southern African affairs.

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**On The Frontline: Catholic Missions in Zimbabwe's Liberation War** By Janice McLaughlin, Harare, Baobab Books, 1996, xvi, 352 pp., ISBN 0-908311-79-6.

*On the Frontline* is a welcome addition to an already growing corpus of literature and knowledge on the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. The author, Sr Janice McLaughlin of the Maryknoll order, worked in Zimbabwe for a little more than half a year in 1977 before being deported to the USA by the Rhodesian regime because of her activities in the Justice and Peace Commission. McLaughlin returned to her ministry of working with the poor and oppressed by way of working in solidarity with the exiled Zimbabwean refugees in Mozambique. While in Mozambique McLaughlin made direct contacts, and even interviewed top leadership of the Zimbabwe National Liberation Army (ZANLA).

The book examines the interaction between the ZANLA guerrillas and the Church, ie, the whole people of God entailing the laity, religious and the clergy associated with a particular Mission. McLaughlin analyses this interaction at rural missions which were on the frontline at different stages of the war of liberation, located in four different dioceses of the Church, different guerrilla operational zones and under missionaries of four different nationalities.

Sr McLaughlin examines the Church where the grassroots communities were some of the most vulnerable sectors of society. One of her aims was to prevent the histories of these communities from being 'lost', altered or distorted (xii).

The first part of the book focuses on the history preceding the war of liberation, particularly the sowing of the seeds of racism by successive colonial administrations.

McLaughlin's main thesis is that in spite of the national identities of mission authorities and their differing views regarding the colonial governments, there were no notable ideological differences affecting the relations between the missions and the guerrillas. Rather the synergy that existed between the missions and the neighbouring rural communities became the variable that ultimately determined and qualified the direction of relations between the missions and guerrillas.

The overall assessment that McLaughlin makes is that the missionaries' concern for the suffering rural folk at the hands of government forces led the guerrilla fighters to revise their pre-conceived ideas about religion and the missionaries. They finally accepted missionaries and other mission personnel as collaborators rather than enemies.

The final part of the book considers some ethical implications of the violence associated with the armed struggle. The discussion leads towards the question of whether or not the armed struggle in Zimbabwe was a just war or terrorism. McLaughlin's arguments on this subject are refreshing and interesting. McLaughlin makes two related points on violence and just war. The first point is that the missions played a positive role of humanizing the armed struggle by fraternizing with, and assisting the guerrillas, treating the injured, providing medical supplies, food, clothing and rest. The second point is that the violence by guerrillas was selective and moderate; it never measured up to that of the Rhodesian Government security forces. Consequently, the author relates the victory of the guerrilla forces to ZANLA guerrillas' noble goals and tactics.

Another issue that emerges in Part III is the relationship between missions and mediums, or Christianity and African traditional religion. McLaughlin argues that spirit mediums offered spiritual and psychological support that proved to be good for the morale of guerrilla forces and the grassroots communities. For the guerrillas there was no contradiction between Christianity and African traditional religion; both had a place in the struggle.

Chapter ten looks at the development in the mentality of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe from 1972, when the Justice and Peace Commission was formed, up to the Declaration of Intent in 1977, reflecting a new vision of the Church. From then on, McLaughlin argues, the Catholic Church became a Church of the People, through sharing in the persecution, arrests, detention and torture of the rural people. Through the war of liberation, the commitment of religious sisters to the grassroots communities was deepened. Equally, the sisters' status was raised. Lay leaders and sisters kept the Church going.

McLaughlin, however, regrets that 'in spite of the radical voices in the Church and involvement of many of the Church's personnel at the grassroots with the liberation forces, the church in Zimbabwe never

developed a full-fledged theology of liberation' (p. 271). As the crisis of war abated, people reverted to the familiar structures. In the epilogue McLaughlin highlights the tensions that existed between the Church hierarchy and the progressive Justice and Peace Commission after the war. The latter wanted to build on the foundation made during the struggle in terms of developing a fully-fledged popular Church. The hierarchy, however, was not comfortable with a new ecclesiology that would allow for a theology of liberation. Instead, they were keen to go back to the situation of the Church before the crisis of the war: if there was any theology to go by, then it was the theology of reconstruction.

In McLaughlin's perception the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe will live to regret the lost opportunity. Possibly, this is another level at which the revolution in Zimbabwe lost its way; not just at the political and economic levels.

*On the Frontline* is clearly an important milestone in the study of the interface between religion and revolution or Church and state. It is based on first-hand experience of the author, on over a hundred interviews carried out with top leadership, and a variety of archival sources, including those of ZANU and ZANLA, which she later catalogued for future use by other researchers.

There are few inaccuracies, however, which need to be brought to the attention of readers. It is true that the Catholic church is the single largest church in Zimbabwe. However, by the time of the publication of the book, it did not have only 'just under half a million members' (p. 5): membership was just under a million, which statistically translates to 9.5% of the national population (Catholic Directory, 1996). Figure 17 should have been part of Chapter 7, next to Figure 18 on p. 174. Zvavhera on p. 191 should read Zvavahera; Sheshe on p. 196 should read Chisheche; Tiresi on p. 202 should read Tirizi; and Regina Coeli convent on pp. 262 and 263 should read Regina Mundi convent (Highfield).

More significant than the inaccuracies above is the information related to the 'Gutu Massacre' (pp. 196-7) which, unfortunately, is based on evidence from 'interviews with other former ZANLA combatants who were not present when the incident took place' (p. 218). It is not clear why the author did not seek first-hand evidence from some of the many civilians from Kamungoma who were present at the event.<sup>1</sup>

Her evidence conflicts with surviving eye-witness accounts of the event and puts in doubt the author's claim that she is concerned with

<sup>1</sup> The reviewer has a detailed account of this incident based on interviews from survivors. Paul Mugarirwa, a technical assistant at the Department of Animal Science, University of Zimbabwe was one of the survivors who became my key informant (Interview with Paul Mugarirwa, 12 Nov., 1996 — He confirmed the account that I had got from Elias Chagonda and Silence Dizha in Chingombe in May, 1988).



histories of communities whose record she wants to save from loss, unaltered and undistorted.

In spite of these few lapses, *On the Frontline* is an important contribution to the study of the Church and its involvement in the war of liberation in Zimbabwe. This book is a most useful resource for all who are interested in studying the role of the Church in the armed struggle in Zimbabwe.

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**The Painted Hills: Rock Art of the Matopos** By Nick Walker. Gweru, Mambo Press, 1996, 102pp., ISBN 0-86922-638-X.

The prehistoric rock art of Zimbabwe, particularly that found in the Matopos Hills in Matabeleland, has been the focus of both academic and public interest since the early part of this century. Much has been written on it with writers covering such aspects of the art as its authorship, dating, meaning and significance. However, many of the published works on the Matopos art were published over 30 years ago (eg Cooke, 1959) at a time when rock art studies were at a very elementary stage in Zimbabwe and not as many sites had been documented. Interpretation, dating and general understanding of this heritage from the past were very simplistic and in some cases much influenced by the colonial background of the writers. Some of the art was for example attributed to exotic populations (eg Breuil, 1955). Those who saw it as indigenous interpreted it as 'art for art's sake' and therefore of no major significance to the painters (Cooke, 1959). Others, who saw a deeper meaning to it, associated it with hunting magic (Burkitt, 1928).

Drawing from his long experience working on the Stone Age archaeology of Matabeleland, as well as from the developments in rock art studies in southern Africa pioneered in South Africa by such leading scholars as Lewis Williams, Nick Walker, in *The Painted Hills*, provides the most comprehensive and most up to date coverage of the Matopos rock art. The book is divided into nine sections (which are not numbered) in which Walker brings together discussion of most of the questions both members of the public and academic researchers have always asked about this art — By whom, when, why, and how were the paintings executed? Using archaeological evidence from his own, and other researchers' excavations and cross-referencing with work from other parts of Zimbabwe and southern Africa, Walker convincingly demonstrates that most of the Matopos art dates from 9 000 years ago and continues up to after 1 500 years ago. Several thousands of years before and during this period, 9 000 to 1 500 years ago, the Matopos Hills, in common with the

rest of the sub-region, was the home of Late Stone Age hunter-gatherer communities. The art was thus the product of these populations before the arrival of iron-using farmers around 1 500 years ago. These Late Stone Age communities are generally agreed to be the ancestors of groups of contemporary hunter-gatherer people still found in parts of southern Africa, including south-western Zimbabwe. Using a combination of a study of the subjects, themes and content of the art and ethnographic data gathered from historical and contemporary hunter-gatherers in the region, whom he refers to as Bushfolk as opposed to the popular but derogatory name Bushmen, Walker is able to depart from the traditional superficial interpretations of the Matopos art. He of course draws substantially from the ethnographic and quantitative approaches pioneered by Lewis Williams (1981) and Patricia Vinnicombe (1976) and taken up in Zimbabwe by Peter Garlake (1987a; 1987b; 1995). Using these approaches, Walker argues that the consistency with which some subjects occur in the art, the context of the paintings and other considerations clearly show that most of the art had social and economic significance to the Late Stone Age populations. Some of it is linked with rain-making rituals while some is associated with the trance experiences of the shamans in the society. Walker dwells at some length on the importance of the trance model to the Matopos art and provides many examples to illustrate its relevance. He rightly cautions, however, that there are several paintings to which this model cannot be applied. Ultimately, the art is argued to have occupied a central position in the social organisation as well as resource utilisation of the people. In this sense, he concludes that we can rightly see the art as magico-religious.

*The Painted Hills*, in common with most publications of this nature (eg Garlake, 1995) is lavishly illustrated with good quality photographs and tracings of the Matopos art. This gives the reader good supporting evidence of the issues that are central to the subject of the book. Walker also includes a clear map which shows how to get to some of the more interesting sites. At the end of the book, Walker provides tables of useful statistical analyses of different aspects of the art, including the techniques used, colour combinations (monochrome, bichrome and polychrome paintings), animal, human and artifact representations. The book also provides an extremely useful glossary of technical jargon as well as a comprehensive list of references thoughtfully divided into specific aspects of rock art studies in the region. However, the arrangement of the illustrations is somewhat confusing. There does not appear to be a systematic arrangement of the numerous illustrations. This makes it difficult to relate the illustration numbers provided in the margins of the text to the actual illustration.

*The Painted Hills* is a very welcome contribution to previous writings on the rock art of Zimbabwe, very nicely complementing another recent

work on this subject, Garlake's (1987a) *The Painted Caves*. That the two books have similar titles should not confuse the reader, as Garlake's book is on the rock art of Mashonaland. Although Walker's book may at the beginning sound like a standard visitors' guide because it starts off with a list of sites to visit, it goes well beyond the normal guide book and offers important academic insights into the subject of rock art. It therefore should be important for both the ordinary visitor to rock art sites in the Matopos and the serious researcher into this rich area of our distant past.

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