

There is no place here for the patronizing obsequiousness characteristic of those authors now belatedly insisting that they were never nationalist historians but always historians of nationalism.

Finally, this reviewer must declare a personal interest. Growing up on the Copperbelt, and specifically in Mufulira (which was something of an ANC island in a UNIP sea), it was impossible in the early 1960s not to be aware of the frequent clashes between members of rival nationalist parties in the dying days of British rule. With the achievement of Independence, the losers, as elsewhere in Africa, and as noted above, were very largely written out of the turgid celebrations of orthodox nationalism. But even these suffocating accounts never entirely extinguished my interest in the subject, and in recent years it was rekindled first by knowledge of Dr Macola's pioneering work in the UNIP archives and then by reading his thought-provoking chapter on the roots of authoritarianism in nationalist Zambia, first published, and somewhat reprised here, in the collection he edited with Jan-Bart Gewald and Marja Hinfelaar, *One Zambia, Many Histories* (2008). The publication of this biography of Nkumbula, then, is something I have been greatly looking forward to, and I was delighted to have the opportunity of reviewing it. If anticipation was keen, then consummation was better still. This excellent book rescues Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula from the condescension of posterity, even as it marks the coming of age of Central African biography. *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa* stands as a benchmark of all that is best about critically engaged scholarship.

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LANDSCAPE, WHITE POLITICS, AND ANGLOPHONE NATIONAL IDENTITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Washed with the Sun: Landscape and the Making of White South Africa. By JEREMY FOSTER. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008. Pp. xiii + 336. £53.50/\$65, hardback (ISBN 978-0-822-94332-7); £24.95; \$27.95, paperback (ISBN 978-0-822-95958-8).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, architecture, identity, land, politics/political.

This is a rich and learned but sometimes frustrating book. Foster's question is whether something in the South African landscape itself stimulated a collective response among whites (actually British immigrants). His answer is that bodily experiences of the landscape interacted with memory and values to create a specifically South African identity.

The author is a South-African-born architect and landscape architect who frames his book with dense discussions of critical theory. His influences are wide, including J. M. Coetzee, Michael Pollen, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. A fundamental formulation comes from Eric Kaufman, who has distinguished between 'nationalization of nature' (an imaginary that exalts the imprint of national culture on passive nature) and 'naturalization of the nation' (an imaginary that stresses the regenerative effects of wild nature on national culture). The first imaginary is strongest in the countries of Old Europe; the second, which gives primacy to nature, is strongest in former colonies. This book describes the experiences of British 'traveling subjects' in the first decades of the twentieth century who

collectively moved from natural imaginings of South Africa as a European-like Cape littoral to an indigenized version known as the 'cult of the veld'.

Washed with the Sun summarizes the story of white politics and Anglophone national identity well. Other writers, including David Hughes, Lance van Sittert, and David Bunn, have also worked through the relationship between whiteness and the African environment, but the book at hand focuses on the early twentieth-century shift in Anglophone identification to the interior savanna. Evidence for this changing aspect of white South Africa is drawn from landscape painting, photography, travel writing, domestic architecture, monuments, museums, the view from a train, and texts.

Foster's argument is that material facts of the natural environment are taken up by humans through lived, tactile, multi-sensory experience. Architectural theory about the bodily experience of buildings influences the analysis. The relationship between landscape and human selves is interactive, and that between representation and lived experience is dialectical. Nationally significant landscapes were created through collective imaginings but, still, something really was out there in the veldt. Compared with other landscapes, the veldt is more starkly lit, more dramatically shadowed, more overwhelming at twilight, and has a stronger line of horizon. The book engages with the veldt mostly through the representations and reactions of travelers and immigrants, who constantly returned to its characteristics. British South Africans took the feelings they had under that broad sky, facing the wide horizon, and used them to create a distinctive national character.

The second half of the book offers place-specific 'soundings into some of the multiple layers of geographical and cultural meaning making at work in white South African society' (p. 88). The 'soundings' are usually associated with an individual's experience of a place and are plumbed in: Baden-Powell's besieged Mafeking, the northern escarpment as described in John Buchan's book *The Africa Colony*, the mansions designed by Herbert Baker and others along Parktown Ridge, the Komati Valley as painted by Bertha Everard, and the landscape made emblematic through railroad travel. This is a good-sized and diverse set of cases, and Foster works out each thoroughly. He does not shrink from empirical research or theoretical consideration of the secondary topics arising in each chapter. The many, many black-and-white photographs and dozens of color plates testify to the thoroughness of the book.

The chapters on Herbert Baker (and the architecture that followed him) and on Bertha Everard best convey the book's assessment of bodily experiences of landscape. Foster's analysis of the design, location, and use of materials in Baker's buildings delivers good evidence for his assertions that British aesthetics were attenuated and bodily experiences of the landscape were powerful. Compared with Baker, Bertha Everard is a minor historical character but, through empathetic discussion of her paintings, Foster shows us how an immigrant woman reflected upon herself through the landscape of her new home. These chapters are well written and compelling. To this reviewer's mind, the chapters on Baden-Powell and Buchan were less successful, relying on extended and difficult theoretical exposition with weaker evidence, and delivering tenuous conclusions. The extended analysis of Baden-Powell's map of the territory surrounding Mafeking requires his later persona as founder of the Boy Scouts to explain its impact on the British imagination during the war. Foster's theoretical excursions are far-reaching and well informed, but some passages are mystifying.

Much of the book is intriguing and impressive. Yet its focus on British South Africans is a limitation not entirely explained. Its starting point – a refusal to make race or South Africa's status as a 'uniquely flawed society' (p. 4) central – is legitimate. But, the particular nature of race in South Africa never becomes

a significant aspect of the analysis. Readers will note that 'white' in Foster's usage means 'of European heritage', not 'differentiated from black'. In this book, white South African identity arose through an attenuation of British heritage in a new, sunny, grassy, high country. The social realities and indigenous inhabitants of that country do not figure strongly. As a telling indication, consider that the First World War battlefield at Delville Wood in France (where South Africans died in great numbers and where a Herbert Baker monument was built) figures more prominently than the landscapes of all the black reserves within the country itself.

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SOUTH AFRICAN UNDERSTANDINGS OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

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Darkroom: Photography and New Media in South Africa Since 1950. Edited by TOSHA GRANTHAM. Charlottesville, VA and London: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts/Richmond: University of Virginia Press, 2009. Pp. vi + 150. £31.50/\$35, paperback (ISBN 978-0-917024-89-6).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, apartheid, media, photographs.

Prior to the Football World Cup, sections of the international media reportedly warned that sports fans visiting South Africa took their lives in their hands: stab-proof vests were flagged as essential to those who survived the earthquakes and the hungry lions roaming city streets. As Tumelo Mosaka notes in conversation with Isolde Brielmaier and Tosha Grantham, the curator of *Darkroom: Photography and New Media in South Africa since 1950*, 'the media and the cultural environment in the West are still very much fixated on the myth of Africa as the "Dark Continent"' (p. 20), and certainly media reports around the Football World Cup confirmed that South Africa continues to be framed by this racist discourse. In representing 'a brief survey of photography, photo-based installations, and video art made in South Africa since 1950' (p. 2) this catalogue, and the exhibition it accompanied, aims to present a challenge to this 'dark continent' mythology by foregrounding South African understandings and perspectives of continuity and change over the past sixty years. Prefaced by Deborah Willis, the catalogue begins with an introduction by Grantham that is followed by essays from Isolde Brielmaier and Tumelo Mosaka. Brielmaier traces change in academic approaches to visual images in a critical essay that draws attention to the ways in which photographers have both challenged and worked with dominant understandings of photography. Mosaka comments on the increasingly rapid dissemination of visual images around the globe since the beginning of the twentieth century, while insisting on the importance of context in shaping competing and often contradictory understandings of such images.

The images that follow these essays are grouped into eight loosely chronological categories that flesh out and illustrate some of the points raised by Brielmaier and Mosaka. The first of these categories contains a range of 12 contrasting images that examine 'the complexities of life in South Africa after social, economic, and political restrictions based on race were codified' (p. 22) over the course of the 1950s–1970s. A central theme is the multifaceted resistance to apartheid,