

belief that protectionism would have damaged the country's attempt to be seen as an 'investor friendly' destination. Thus security is not separate from other forms of state and economic restructuring. The exclusions of the new security system and regime are also explored in the book, with Securicor staff in Cape Town moving beggars along, for example – a form of class apartheid.

This is a theoretically and empirically rich book, with broad implications for international relations and globalisation theory. It is exceptionally well written and will be of interest to scholars of these fields and also African Studies.

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The Front Line Runs through Every Woman: women and local resistance in the Zimbabwean liberation war by ELEANOR O'GORMAN

Woodbridge: James Currey, 2011. Pp. xv+192, £17.99 (pbk)

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Eleanor O'Gorman carried out the research for this book in 1993 and wrote her thesis in 1999. As she writes, 'revisiting a PhD sounds a warning bell to writer, reader and publisher'. The resulting book might have been bogged down in the problematics of a decade ago, or have curdled or rotted with time. O'Gorman, however, turns the delay to her advantage.

She gains three positives from it. First, it has allowed her to winnow out the preceding literature on women in the Zimbabwean war, a good deal of which was purely rhetorical and no longer needs to be considered. Second, it makes it possible to set the Zimbabwean case in the context of the developing general discussion of gender and violence. Third, it has enabled her to compare and contrast the violence to which Zimbabwean women were subjected in the 1970s with their experience in the 2000s.

This is a book rich in contrasts and comparisons. Its historiographical discussion is all the stronger for focusing on work which has demonstrated a continuing influence and leaving out the ephemeral and fashionable. O'Gorman is the last person to believe that women's participation in war has earned them improved rights. And she finds substantial and controversial continuities between earlier and recent gender violence in rural Zimbabwe.

In this book violence is something which happens to women rather than something they choose. Relatively little attention is paid to female combatants. Violence happens where the great majority of women are, in the villages or in the 'keeps' constructed during the guerrilla war, rather than on the battlefield. Women have agency but it allows them to survive violence rather than to embrace or avoid it. And because it is unavoidable, all women are in one way or another involved. The male combatants, whether Rhodesian soldiers or auxiliaries or guerrillas or *mujibas*, are hard to distinguish from each other in their arbitrary and ruthless demands – for food, for sex, for obedience. Gendered memory calls down a plague on all their houses. Even women who sang liberation songs at guerrilla *hungeves* remember that they were happy then – and they were terrified. Women whose soldier or camp guard lovers were killed by guerrillas defiantly remember that love was real, unpredictable and should have been spared violence.

O’Gorman’s is a ‘traditional’ rural story. We do not know what happened in the townships, once the site of much parentally imagined violence against women. We do not know what happened to women on the commercial farms. (We do unfortunately know what happened to women in refugee camps in Zambia and Mozambique.) Political rhetoric finds little place and when it is cited – like Mugabe’s famous promises to revolutionary women – it indicates not so much the hypocrisy of politicians as their irrelevance and impotence. This is a grimly realistic book. If you have time to read only one book on women in the Zimbabwean war then this should be it.

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Rethinking African Politics: a history of opposition in Zambia by MILES LARMER
Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011. Pp. xvii + 321, £66.50 (hbk).

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Miles Larmer has emerged as one of the leading authorities on post-colonial Zambian politics and history, and especially on Zambia’s opposition political movements. His latest work, *Rethinking African Politics*, confirms his reputation. In this fascinating study, he traces the evolution of political opposition in Zambia, and convincingly deconstructs the ‘myth of UNIP supremacy’. (UNIP is the United National Independence Party – the nationalist movement that ruled Zambia from 1964 to 1991 under founding president Kenneth Kaunda.)

Larmer skilfully demonstrates the breadth and diversity of opposition to Kaunda and the then ruling party’s authoritarianism, including the valiant efforts mounted by Simon Kapwepwe’s United Progressive Party (UPP), militant trade unions led by the influential Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) under Frederick Chiluba, and business-oriented, class-conscious Zambian elites such as Valentine Musakanya and Edward Shamwana, who rose above the spectre of ethnicity to challenge UNIP and Kaunda’s political hegemony.

Although a large part of the material in *Rethinking African Politics* has appeared elsewhere, it is the compelling manner in which Larmer has fused these previously isolated efforts into a comprehensive monograph that challenges our understanding of African political studies in general. Put in the context of current academic work on opposition parties in Africa, the study is a significant *volte face* on how we understand African political change. In contrast to works mostly by political scientists which have focused narrowly on systemic factors and the individuals and movements in power, *Rethinking African Politics* takes opposition movements seriously. In doing so, it remedies the woeful neglect of this important area within existing studies. Given the several factors that militate against them in post-colonial Africa, Larmer reveals the ability of opposition movements to build useful coalition strategies and working alliances with other autonomous bodies such as civil society, political parties, the church, the independent media and trade unions. He uses a multitude of sources including rare materials (UNIP archives, personal collections, court documents, intelligence reports on Zambia in the South African archives) seldom consulted by most researchers on post-colonial Zambia.