

ited considerable anxiety and insecurity about being challenged over intellectual or cultural matters. Such a political culture is not unique to Namibia, and pockets of this type of behavior can be found from time to time even in more firmly established democracies. Bigotry can claim a near-universal citizenship. An especially useful chapter provides an exegesis of Namibian President Nujoma's recent autobiography, and it is quite probable that more works of this genre will appear as more of the charter members of several liberation groups retire and begin to write their (selective) memoirs.

All things considered, however, the Nordic Africa Institute is to be commended for commissioning such a gracefully written, fully documented, and nuanced evaluation of postindependence Namibia. It can be regarded as a remarkably astute report of those who could be considered, in the idiom of parliamentary life, as the Loyal Opposition.

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**James Barber. *Mandela's World: The International Dimension of South Africa's Political Revolution 1990–1999*.** Athens: Ohio University Press/Oxford: James Currey Ltd., 2004. viii + 214 pp. References. Index. \$44.95. Cloth. \$29.95. Paper.

Many observers predicted an apocalyptic end of white rule in South Africa. Instead, in the post-Cold War world bogged down in a labyrinth of civil wars and chaos, the Caesarian birth of a democratic South Africa came as "a beacon of light" (85). It is hardly surprising, therefore, that South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy has spawned a growing body of scholarship. James Barber's book is a welcome addition to it.

Despite the title, *Mandela's World* is not about Nelson Mandela as an individual; rather, it looks at "the international aspect of South Africa's development during the 1990s" (4). In this third book in a series on South Africa's foreign policy from 1945 to 1999, Barber describes and analyzes the international aspects of what he calls South Africa's "political revolution." The book is divided into four chronological sections. The first section presents the interaction between South Africa's domestic and international affairs from World War II to the end of the 1980s. In the second part, Barber focuses on the period of negotiations when the African National Congress and the National Party government were vying for external support to strengthen their negotiating positions. The third section explores the contrasting views about the foundations of the new South Africa. The final section examines the different international roles that the new government had cast for itself.

One of the strengths as well as weaknesses of this book is its brevity—a

strength because Barber is able to capture succinctly the broad scope of South Africa's transition; a weakness because at times one is left begging for more. For example, in a mere sixteen pages, the chapter on the domestic–foreign affairs interface attempts to cover a slew of subjects including migration, labor, HIV/AIDS, crime, the drug trade, the environment, tourism, and elections. Added to this is the dearth of theoretical rigor and debate. Barber makes a laudable attempt to employ international relations theoretical approaches such as neorealism and idealism. However, these are discussed all too briefly, and the author does not vigorously mine their analytical import, especially their relevance to the South African situation.

One of the most insightful treatments of the international dimensions of South Africa's transition deals with the country's role as a middle power. Barber argues that in the international arena, South Africa was able to "punch above its weight" (152, 196). In Mandela's time it was able to play a prominent part in international affairs, one that was more influential than its quantifiable resources appeared to warrant. Barber attributes this to four factors: the prestige South Africa gained from its negotiated settlement; its relatively powerful and stable position in a continent beset by troubles; the respect it gained from positive contributions to international organizations; and finally the remarkable personality of Nelson Mandela himself. Although there is no doubt that South Africa has played an important role in the international arena, one wonders if Barber is overstating the country's ability to punch above its weight. What favorable international policies has South Africa won by chairing international conferences? Moreover, Pretoria has either been reluctant or unable to flex its muscle in the most significant matters (e.g., in Zimbabwe).

Although it is a short book, the scope of *Mandela's World* is unquestionably large. It is gracefully written and draws on excellent recent scholarship and primary sources. Readers interested in a broad account of the complexities of South Africa's transition will be well served by this book.

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**Tom Young, ed. *Readings in African Politics*.** Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004. 254 pp. Figures. Tables. Notes. References. Index. \$60.00. Cloth. \$24.95. Paper.

The essays in *Readings in African Politics* represent a sampling of some of the most interesting material written about political life in Africa in the past thirty-five years or so. An excerpt from Aristide Zolberg's *Creating Political Order* (1966) kicks off the volume, and it ends with a reprint of one of Adam Ashforth's many explorations of witchcraft in contemporary Soweto, South Africa (1998). In 1966, Zolberg argued that understanding West African