

I find puzzling Aminzade's suggestion that seeing the larger patterns of history is part of the craft of sociology, not history. He furthermore observes a Eurocentric weakness and bias in sociological theory, and could have looked harder to find theoretical models from within African studies that might have been more useful than, say, Hans Kohn's. Nevertheless, *Race, Nation, and Citizenship* is remarkable in its scope and breadth of analysis, and can be recommended as a key reference for both specialists and nonspecialists.

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## **POLITICS, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AND GLOBALIZATION**

**Clive Gabay. *Exploring an African Civil Society: Development and Democracy in Malawi, 1994–2014*.** Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2015. vii + 123 pp. Bibliography. Index. \$75.00. Cloth. ISBN: 978-0-7391-8434-9.

This volume explores the significance of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Malawi over the last twenty years, with special reference to their role in economic development and democratization and their relationship to the state and the international community. Gabay asks three main questions: specifically, to what extent does civil society (1) check state power, (2) serve as an extension of state power, or (3) serve as a “market driven limitation on the state’s power in the economy” (98)? His answer, developed over three substantive chapters, an introduction, and conclusion, seems to lead toward the third position. Gabay argues that CSOs, as recent arrivals on the Malawian political stage (since 1994), are the product of historical processes both internal (the Banda regime and its legacy) and external (the Cold War, its end, and the neoliberal dispensation that followed), and this has led to a peculiarly extroverted CSO community. That is, CSOs, while purporting to champion Malawian needs, are driven by the same external economic agendas that influence the workings of the Malawian state and its governing elites. Arguing for Malawi’s exemplary status as a postcolonial state and also its uniqueness as one of the continent’s most impoverished countries, Gabay suggests that the country’s experience might have more general lessons to teach.

Gabay devotes an entire chapter to the ways in which international organizations, and particularly the World Bank, have come to adopt a certain type of neoliberal development strategy since 2000 in light of criticisms of Structural Adjustment Programs. This strategy manifests itself in a commitment to the realization of United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and an emphasis on “good governance” (26) to support

development along capitalist free-market lines. Preferring operational CSOs (those linked to specific development projects) over advocacy CSOs (those that advance particular causes associated with historically disadvantaged groups), civil society is also supposed to “keep an untrustworthy state in check” (30).

Gabay then turns to a consideration of how this policy plays out in Malawi, where extreme poverty has meant a heavy reliance on foreign funding for internal development and the running of the state. Consequently, both CSOs and the Malawi state must dance to the tune set by the World Bank and the MDGs, which may not address the fundamental issues at the heart of poverty (gender inequality, urban–rural and other regional divides, lack of economic diversification, economic extraversion, unequal access to land, and uneven income distribution). This subject leads into a discussion of CSO involvement in the move from a single to a multiparty system in Malawi that has been characterized by democratic elections contested by political parties with little ideological difference and an adherence to an externally driven “development” agenda for legitimacy. Corruption abounds, and not surprisingly CSOs, while they do sometimes critique administrations and individual politicians, are also deeply implicated in the system they support. If they want funding, CSOs are obliged to “perform” or pay lip service to MDGs. Even though they may be aware that doing so undercuts their original *raison d'être*. In a kind of self-loathing performance, CSOs blame their constituents and themselves for not doing enough to check “corrupt” politicians and failing to realize MDGs (70), rather than critiquing the international system that sets the agenda. Far from it. Gabay argues that CSOs only criticize corrupt practices when these threaten the neoliberal economic agenda. He cites CSO silence about the rising corruption of the Bingu wa Mutharika’s administration until the president insulted donors and refused to devalue the kwacha (making Malawi’s exports and investment opportunities less attractive to foreign business). He also notes how the Joyce Banda administration was a poster child for democratic and economic reform until an assassination attempt revealed the extent of government pillage.

Malawi’s state and governing elites cannot be anything but predatory, Gabay argues, as long as Malawi’s development and democracy are driven by external forces. The remedy for this depressing malady is unclear, but he seems to hold out hope for “non-formalized civil society” (94), including individuals and groups drawn from church groups, workers, students, independent farmers, and so on—i.e., the same actors who drove change in the early 1990s—although how this might happen is unclear. He reserves this question for future research. If Gabay is right, and we must look to the “informalized, urban and rural poor,” to the “‘political’ rather than ‘civil’ society” for real change (103), it remains to be seen what role, if any, today’s CSOs might play in this reform, even with their considerable international networks and media connections. At best, Gabay suggests, they may be able to “get behind” public anger: to follow rather than lead.

Concise and clearly argued, this book will interest African and Africanist social scientists and development studies scholars and should prompt debate on the role of civil society in Malawi and elsewhere on the continent. Unfortunately, the hardback and e-book versions retail for around U.S.\$75, making it prohibitively expensive for most Malawian readers—yet another negative consequence of economic extraversion.

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**Cedric de Coning, Linnéa Gelot, and Jonh Karlsrud, eds. *The Future of African Peace Operations: From the Janjaweed to Boko Haram*.** London: Zed Books, 2016. xiv + 154 pp. Abbreviations and Acronyms. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$95.00. Cloth. \$39.95 Paper. ISBN 978-1-7860-708-2.

*The Future of African Peace Operations* is a call for a new African peacekeeping model specifically tailored for deploying the type of short-duration, intense, multi-actor stability operations that have become essential to African security. The book's singular purpose is to propose specific mechanisms that will reconcile the way that African peace operations are planned and implemented with the new realities on the ground. In this sense, it is a narrowly focused book. There is little discussion of the broader role of the United Nations, the history of non-African peacekeeping, or models of regional peace operations that have been deployed elsewhere in the world.

Instead, the book delves deeply into the mandates and challenges of modern peace operations, the role of the African Union in these operations, newer mechanisms such as the African Standby Force, and other prominent issues currently facing African peacekeeping. Specifically, this volume was created to provide concrete recommendations, such as the need for a high-level comprehensive review of African peace operations in conjunction with the U.N., a greater focus on regional niche capabilities in these operations, and a new system of predictable, sustainable mission support and funding.

This collaborative work emerged from a 2014 seminar on the future of African peace operations held in South Africa. To its credit, the book reproduces the dynamic of this seminar as well as some of the more successful international conferences on peace operations—the value of experts with different subject-matter expertise coming together to address a common topic in a practical manner. The contributors to this book include outside (primarily Nordic) experts on African security, researchers from a number of peacekeeping training centers, and academics from a range of African universities.