

## POLITICS

**P. Eric Louw. *The Rise, Fall, and Legacy of Apartheid*.** Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2004. xiv + 255. Maps. Notes. Selected Bibliography. Index. \$49.95. Cloth.

If I had to recommend a single book to anyone interested in learning about the origins and effects of South Africa's apartheid system, it would be this one by Eric Louw. He has given one of the most succinct accounts I have ever read. The task was an ambitious and difficult one: to construct "a coherent narrative of apartheid" (vii). In short, he succeeds.

Louw lays out in great detail the theory of apartheid, arguing that "at heart, apartheid was a radical survival plan" (42), but he then shows how that theory changed with events. His historical account of apartheid is both comprehensive and readable, while his chronology of the building of apartheid provides an excellent teaching and learning tool. His distinction between "grand apartheid" and "petty apartheid," and between the *verkramptes* (closed thinkers) and the *verligtes* (the enlightened) is both useful and illuminating. The chapter on negotiating a settlement on ending apartheid is—if anything—too comprehensive! Nevertheless, it offers an excellent, detailed examination of the negotiating positions of the government and the ANC, and provides essential information for anyone trying to solve very difficult political issues anywhere (I am thinking, inter alia, of Israel-Palestine).

Louw does an outstanding job in demonstrating the regional economic affects of apartheid, and I hope his next book will go into even more detail in that area. His treatment of labor relations is adequate, but given the important regional effects of mine labor migration, perhaps more space here would have been merited, as would more on the early efforts of labor union reform (the Wiehahn Commission is only mentioned twice, almost in passing [68 and 136]). There are a few other weaknesses as well. The book suffers from poor editing, and the index is somewhat skimpy and not always accurate. Some of the chapters easily could have been shortened to avoid repetition. More important, Louw occasionally contradicts himself. For example, at one point he stresses that "for Afrikaner nationalists, their cultural survival took precedence over profits" (36), a theme he repeats several times. Later he maintains, however, that, "apartheid held out to the Afrikaner business sector the prospect of a government that could challenge the Anglo corporate dominance and promote new opportunities for Afrikaner capital accumulation" (40). Indeed, he spends considerable time detailing the economic importance of apartheid, and how in the end it was economics above all else that determined its demise. One could wish for more detail on this demise, but I very much liked his verdict on Botha's failed efforts: "So ironically, Botha's attempts at ending Voerwoerdian apartheid created not consociational democracy, but rather produced the most violent and brutal period of apartheid" (74). Here he

could easily have invoked Alexis de Tocqueville's comment on the French Revolution: "The most perilous moment for a bad government is one when it seeks to mend its ways."

Somewhat surprisingly, Louw does not refer to the work of Allister Sparks, especially to give a feel for day-to-day life under apartheid, although, admittedly this was not one of his goals. Also, it was disappointing that there is little mention of the role of the media in apartheid's narrative, especially given his expertise—Louw has published three books on this subject. Finally, the book ends with a curious chapter on South Africa and globalization. I found this out of place, since it deals mostly with the ANC's options and does not really add much to what is otherwise an excellent study.

These few faults aside, one cannot but praise the overall usefulness of this fine work.

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**Taiser M. Ali and Robert O. Matthews, eds. *Durable Peace: Challenges for Peacebuilding in Africa*.** Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004. xvi + 443 pp. Bibliography. Index. \$29.95. Paper.

This edited volume stems from a June 2000 conference at the University of Toronto on the challenges of peacebuilding in Africa—a most relevant subject for a continent plagued by insecurity. In their introduction, Ali and Matthews point out that peacebuilding takes longer than mere reconstruction; that conflicts can always reignite, even after a decade or more; and that peacebuilding should make possible the construction of new institutions that lead to open and inclusive political systems and then to economic growth and justice. The editors call for an international institution to take over the lead role that the U.N. Development Programme has played in peacebuilding and to improve on the work of that body.

While Ali and Matthews inveigh against slipshod peacebuilding that can lead to the resumption of conflict, it is unfortunate that there is no real consideration in the volume of the kind of peacemaking and peacekeeping operations that are necessary for establishing a cease-fire and keeping it from collapsing. These concepts are in fact considered elsewhere, in their 1999 volume, *Civil Wars in Africa: Roots and Resolution*. Here their analysis seems disappointing, however, since the editors tend to favor power-sharing in peacebuilding, although research and experience have shown that power-sharing becomes problematic over time and that a transition should be made to majority rule as quickly as possible.

Ali and Matthews pose five sets of questions that are addressed in the country case studies. First, what were the results of peacemaking? Second,