

## Reviews

**Emigration Dynamics in Developing Countries: Volume I, Sub-Saharan Africa** edited by REGINALD APPELYARD  
Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998. Pp. xi + 365. £42.50.

Over the period 1993–7 the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) sponsored a major research project on ‘migration dynamics’ in various regions of the tropical world. This volume contains the findings for Sub-Saharan Africa. As the editor, Reginald Appleyard, for many years a leading authority on international migration, points out, although migration is increasingly perceived world-wide as a serious challenge, often a dangerous threat, to existing settled populations, traditional assumptions that it is primarily motivated by economic pressures (particularly by poverty, and landlessness) are plainly inadequate to account, for instance, for the vast present-day flood of political refugees over and out of Africa. The UNFPA/IOM project was designed to find out what makes people migrate in such large numbers (or, as it is styled, ‘Emigration Dynamics’).

Ten members of the research team contribute to the volume – five Nigerians and one each from South Africa, Botswana, Mali, the United States and (the editor) Australia. It begins with a general survey by Aderanti Adepoju showing how the various contributors have, from their own fields of expertise, provided data and insights which give more comprehensive answers to the project’s question. They include five regional case studies. A. A. Afolayan studies emigration from four selected areas in the Oyo and Osun states of South-Western Nigeria (the only contributor to be given a map) where he finds that it is less the economic factors, poverty and landlessness in themselves, that stimulate migration than the feeling that things are better elsewhere. Sally Findley and Salif Sow give a comprehensive, detailed survey of migration by the much-studied Soninke of the Senegal River Valley of Mali with their ancient migrant tradition. Dominic Milazi provides a perfunctory overview of migration in Southern Africa. John Oucho compares regional migration and labour mobility in Eastern and Southern Africa within the two big regional groupings COMESA and SADC, with a plea for them to make more effort towards achieving regional economic integration.

This rather patchy regional approach is supplemented by studies of specific aspects of Sub-Saharan migration. Bayo Adekanye examines the political stimuli to migration including the collapse of state capacity, made worse by indebtedness and SAP policies, with resulting failure to provide public services and employment, brutal internal and external warfare (in which, though he doesn’t mention it, as civilians, not soldiers, are the chief victims, it is bound to have a demographic effect), and forced expulsions. His findings are complemented by Okwudiba Nnoli who stresses, as does Adekanye, the importance of ethnicity in generating conflict, and hence migration, a factor that he feels has been persistently unrecognised. He concludes that ‘violent

conflict, especially ethnic conflict' is responsible for most of the large-scale sub-Saharan migrations. Aderanti Adepaju, on population policies, shows how governments over the past decades have tended to see their policies in terms of fertility and family planning projects, without realising that migration is a key population issue. He instances the vast migration (of women nowadays as well as men), into the cities with their 'built-in reproductive momentum'. There is a final contribution by Jadesola Akande on the legal treaties and instruments relating to migration. Plainly the volume has fulfilled its sponsors' basic aim of providing data for future policy makers. Its value has however been considerably lessened by the publisher's disgraceful failure to provide an index.

CHRISTOPHER FYFE  
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**Régionalisation, mondialisation et fragmentation en Afrique subsaharienne** edited by DANIEL C. BACH  
Paris: Karthala, 1998. Pp. 319.

This book emerges from the proceedings of a conference held at the Centre d'Etude d'Afrique Noire in Bordeaux in 1994. Its starting-point is the apparent failure of both nation-states and international organisations in Africa to promote the development of the continent. As a result, there has been an increasing focus in the 1990s on the role that regional integration might play in development. Africa has been no less affected by this trend than other parts of the world, and it is one of the key aims of this book to explore the particular characteristics of the regionalisation process in Africa, as distinct from, for example, Asia.

Using examples from throughout the continent, the contributors to this volume demonstrate how misleading it can be to talk of the economic marginalisation of Africa. While official figures show that Africa represents a declining proportion of world trade, trading patterns in many parts of Africa are actually a product of the integration of Africa into the global market. Daniel Bach underlines this point in his introduction: 'Le dynamisme du régionalisme transétatique repose désormais sur l'exploitation des opportunités qu'offrent les frontières extra-africaines' (p. 23). The nature of this integration reflects Africans' exploitation of the comparative advantage they can derive from the collapse of state controls and, in some cases, the opportunities this presents for the accumulation of wealth by illegal means. The emergence of sub-Saharan Africa as a centre for the global illegal drugs trade is one manifestation of this. The different contributors to this volume also show how the regional dynamic has both sought to replace a nation-state that has frequently proved unable to fulfil its traditional functions and, in so doing, has itself contributed to the process of disintegration of the state in Africa. Thus, whereas in other parts of the world regional integration has operated in conjunction with, and has formed part of the strategy of, national governments to promote development, in Africa it has tended to be the product of local responses to the deficiencies of national governments. So, whereas regional integration in Europe, for example, has been organised and promoted by

governments, in Africa it has been largely informal, 'bottom-up' and the product of lack of state capacity. The interventions of international bodies and of the vast array of NGOs working in Africa have also been, in part at least, a response to governmental failure.

However, as this volume shows, such generalisations cover a wide diversity of experience on the ground. Organisations, the vocation of which is to promote regional integration, have had to confront a range of obstacles: lack of political will on the part of national governments, institutional weakness, regional conflict, civil wars and the failure properly to involve the private sector have all played their role. As a result, the achievements in the field of regional economic integration have fallen far short of the ambitions of the main actors involved. Moreover, the debate as to whether the weakening of the control of African states is an obstacle to, or a pre-requisite for, successful regional integration remains unresolved here. Both parties to this debate will find support for their points of view in the contributions to this volume.

In an effort to find a positive dimension to the growth of trans-frontier regional trade which takes place outside the purview of national governments or regional organisations, some have suggested that this trade can be viewed as a resurgence of the type of social relations that were a characteristic of pre-colonial societies. The evidence from this volume suggests, rather, that such non-official trade tends to be controlled by entrepreneurs, politicians or high-ranking civil servants and to exploit the vulnerability of the poorest members of society.

The book is not always easy reading for a non-native speaker of French, since the language used is sometimes complex and rather abstract. And this style represents an uneasy contrast with the very material and down-to-earth problems of survival and eking out a living in the most difficult of circumstances that the failure of efforts at regional integration poses for many Africans. Indeed, more concrete examples of the points being made here might have brought home more clearly the human consequences of the economic and political failures analysed here. Nonetheless, this book makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the problems of regional integration in sub-Saharan Africa.

TONY CHAFER  
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**Socioeconomic Stress, Health and Child Nutritional Status in Zimbabwe at a Time of Economic Structural Adjustment: a three-year longitudinal study** by LEON A. BIJLMAKERS, MARY T. BASSETT and DAVID M. SANDERS

Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Research Report no 105, 1998. Pp 127. £40.00.

Richard Joseph, in *State, Conflict, and Democracy in Africa* (1999), calls for a 'realist' analysis of governance in Africa during structural adjustment. Based on the 'success' story of Uganda, which has been rewarded by the donors, he argues that the bitter medicine of structural adjustment has contributed to the enhancement of state capacity and legitimacy in Africa. Zimbabwe provides

an example that contrasts with these success stories. In Zimbabwe structural adjustment has not coincided with the dismantling of authoritarianism. Corruption has increased rather than decreased. In a rare statement in 1998, the IMF acknowledged that the targets of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme in Zimbabwe were unrealistic. According to the IMF, the fact that the programme was not politically sustainable was predictable, because there was no consensus in the government, the ruling party and civil society on the need for change.

The report by Bijlmakers *et al.* is an extremely well-documented and 'realist' study of the implications of adjustment in Zimbabwe to the well-being of ordinary people. Through three follow-up survey studies (1993, 1994 and 1995) among households in one high-density urban and one rural area (Chitungwiza and Murehwa), the authors look at the health status of the people and their ability to use health services. Their special focus is on the nutritional status and mortality of children. The design of the study allowed paired analysis as the same households and children were followed in all three surveys. The study shows that outpatient clinic attendance responded strongly to changes in user fee policies. Furthermore, both the quality and quantity of food declined and was reflected in the nutritional status of children. The increasing popularity of local savings clubs and funeral societies suggests that people are trying to find new modes of survival when their income level is decreasing. For example, drought and AIDS are important factors affecting people's health. On the other hand the effects of such unfortunate phenomena seem to be multiplied by the deteriorating economy and health care system.

In general the government's attempts to mitigate the hardships of ESAP by targeting disadvantaged groups through special programmes proved inadequate, slow and too complicated to have a real effect. Given that during its independence Zimbabwe's overall performance in welfare policy has been among the most impressive in the whole of Africa (noted in UNDP's world development reports for instance), this negative development during the 1990s has been dramatic. Of course it is difficult to establish the actual causality between ESAP and the health situation. This has not been the aim of the authors of this report. Yet it could be possible to investigate this causality from another angle, too. It would require detailed studies on the decision-making procedures in different policy areas along with research on the actual effects of these policy choices.

The implementation of adjustment in Zimbabwe suggests that the government has not simply followed the instructions coming from Washington and that it has not been consistent in some of its decisions. The introduction and radical changes in user fees are just some examples. During the election year 1995, user fees were abolished altogether in rural health centres. The same year the World Bank and other donors withdrew the balance-of-payment support due to the increasing budget deficit. One has to acknowledge that conditionality, as part of structural adjustment programmes, is as much about punishing as it is about rewarding some countries. The net result of these developments is that ESAP has not been able to solve or even mitigate the economic problems of Zimbabwe, but rather it has exacerbated them.

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**Lying Abroad: diplomatic memoirs** by HARRY BRIND  
London: The Radcliffe Press, 1999. Pp. 260. £24.50.

**You Have Been Allocated Uganda: letters from a district officer** by  
ALAN FORWARD  
Dorset: Poyntington Publishing Company, 1999. Pp. 170. £18.00.

Read in sequence these two books present a vivid, complementary impression of the life of dedicated British officials in Africa in a period of rapid political change.

Although some two fifths of Harry Brind's book are concerned with the author's career in England and Canada, there is much to engage the attention of the Africa enthusiast in the remaining three fifths. The story begins with a lively account of the author's experience of the wide-ranging responsibilities of a district officer during nine years which saw the transformation of the Gold Coast Colony into independent Ghana, and includes a provocative profile of the country's charismatic leader, Kwame Nkrumah. It then moves on to another transformation, that of the author himself, from active involvement in the administration of one territory, via intermediate appointments, to the more detached role of Her Majesty's government's senior representative in a succession of countries – Uganda, Mauritius, Somalia and Malawi.

In his new, diplomatic role, Brand was located at the political hub of those countries but was, perforce, condemned to operate on the periphery of events. (He is critical of colleagues who believed themselves entitled to interfere in the affairs of the countries to which they were accredited.) His frequent transfers from one country to another, must, without question, have limited the extent to which he was able to establish a close understanding with African ministers or other leaders of opinion. In any event, to sustain a measure of meaningful rapport with personalities as different but as difficult as Idi Amin and Hastings Banda can scarcely have been easy. Nevertheless the author offers informed if not particularly original sketches of both those characters. He provides, too, lively descriptions of the countries in which he served and, in the case of Somalia, a concise account of the political situation in the late 1970s.

The reader might, however, regret the paucity of detail concerning the significance of the role which the author himself played in those countries. Doubtless the demands of confidentiality impose severe restrictions on any revelations about intimate diplomatic exchanges. Unfortunately, because of those limitations, much of the 'lying abroad' of Brind's title would appear, from his own account, to have been done on tropical beaches entertaining visiting dignitaries rather than in covert negotiations in the corridors of power. To suggest that that was his main function would clearly do less than justice to the importance of his work. But the reader might still be justified in feeling a measure of disappointment at the only partial fulfilment of the promise offered by the subtitle, 'Diplomatic Memoirs'.

Alan Forward works on a more limited canvas. His book, written as a series of retrospective letters, covers only eight years of overseas service. Like Brind at the beginning of his career, Forward spent those years in a country, in his case Uganda, making its way to independence. Like Brind, too, he describes though in rather greater detail, the varied demands made upon a young

district officer. The dedication with which those young officers set about their work which, in the volatile political circumstances of the time, was not infrequently dangerous, is never stressed but is self-evident.

Unlike Brind, Forward moved to the centre of affairs before independence. As private secretary to the governor (later governor-general) of Uganda, he was a close observer of the detailed negotiations leading to self-government, and later independence, and was an eye-witness of the immediate impact of independence upon the central government of the country. Those convoluted events, made doubly difficult to manage by the conflicting claims of different ethnic groups, are recorded with clarity and with sympathy for both the African and the British negotiators. Not surprisingly, in the light of his own experience, Forward was dismayed by the apologetic attitude of the first British high commissioner and his staff who seemed to think they must expiate the wrongs of their colonial predecessors. He himself argues convincingly that, whatever one's views of the rights and wrongs of imperialism, colonial servants who had been so wholeheartedly committed to promoting the well-being of those whom they had had the honour to administer had little for which to apologise.

Throughout the book, quotations from earlier European travellers in Uganda provide an invaluable historical setting for this account of more recent developments, while the author's own superb illustrations encapsulate both the beauty and variety of the country and the accoutrements of colonial administration.

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**The Anatomy of Power: European constructions of the African body**

by ALEXANDER BUTCHART

London and New York: Zed Books, 1998. Pp. 220. £42.50/\$62.50; £14.95/\$22.50 (pbk).

Described by the author as 'a radical challenge to conventional histories of the socio-medical sciences' (p. 174), *The Anatomy of Power* is about how the relationship between power and knowledge in European thought has changed from the Renaissance to the present, giving rise in the process to very different understandings of illness and varying strategies for the treatment and containment of disease. Though the book is a strict application of Michel Foucault's philosophy of power and his genealogical method to the South African situation, Butchart insists its insights are 'applicable to all situations of colonial occupation' (p. x).

Following Foucault, Butchart argues that 'the African body is not found but fabricated by these socio-medical micro-powers, not so much their discovery as an invention of their power' (p. ix). The Foucauldian understanding of power as a productive force (whereby the body is both an effect of power and an object of disciplinary practices) is contrasted to 'Whig histories of scientific progressivism and Marxist histories of liberal humanism' (p. xiv). Throughout the book, Butchart takes issue with those who treat

repression as the central problematic of South African race relations and liberation of a pre-given African subject as their central aim. His own (Foucauldian) frame of analysis is classified as ‘trans-humanist’, whereby ‘a continuous present is set in place in which the body is always contingent upon the force relations that concretize themselves in the procedures deployed to know it and the bodies of socio-medical knowledge that result’ (p. 33).

Butchart’s genealogy of the African body commences in chapter 3 (with accounts of Renaissance body myths) and culminates in chapter 9 with contemporary medical discourses about ‘whole person care’. This is not the first study of colonial power relations and African identity to draw inspiration from Foucault, and the substantive chapters are sometimes evocative of V. Y. Mudimbe’s *The Invention of Africa* (which used Foucauldian theory more than a decade ago to analyse changing epistemologies – including representations of the body in African art and African Studies); J. M. Coetzee’s *White Writing* (also published in 1988); and my own *Domination, Resistance and Social Change in South Africa* (published in 1992).

Yet even if *The Anatomy of Power* forms part of a tradition of writing about power relations in Africa and is not entirely novel in its philosophical approach, Butchart applies Foucauldian theory to analysis of the sociomedical sciences in a way that is entirely his own. It is not necessary to be a disciple of Foucault, a South African expert or a socio-medical scientist to appreciate the impressive array of historical documents excavated by Butchart in support of his main argument. The sheer breadth of this material is impressive, ranging as it does from depictions of monstrous men and cannibals to accounts of physical torture, missionary methods of healing, the mine medical examination, public hygiene rules and discourses of community health. In a rich array of quotations, Butchart demonstrates convincingly that different ways of seeing the body give rise to different medical practices and techniques of social discipline. In the heyday of sanitary science in the latter half of the nineteenth century, for example, obsession with the bowel and the mouth resulted in native health assistants keeping bodily inventories of people’s bowel movements. The 1888 proposal for ‘a sewage disposal system that would keep separate categories of human waste which did not belong together’ (p. 131) was an absurd yet eerie precursor of power relations to come. From apartheid of the toilet to apartheid in all walks of life, including the socio-medical.

No manuscript can do everything, and some (but not all) of the limitations of this one are freely acknowledged by the author in a concluding footnote (p. 185). This highlights the book’s restricted geographic focus, its failure to analyse indigenous practices and knowledges, and areas of socio-medical practice that are left unexplored (such as gynaecology, dentistry and nutritional science). Added to these should be the many questions left unanswered by this particular reading of Foucault, socio-medical science and Marxist histories of colonialism. For despite (or because of) its heavy reliance on Foucauldian theory, *The Anatomy of Power* is conceptually and theoretically underdeveloped and (curiously, for a study of power) largely apolitical.

To begin, the concept of trans-humanism is apparently crucial and yet with only two pages in total devoted to this, it is not clear whether trans-humanism is a shorthand for Foucault’s analytic framework or an attempt to move

beyond it. Equally brief and opaque are Butchart's comments on Black Consciousness, a complex philosophy that would have been better omitted than dismissed in six paragraphs. And if liberation is not a worthwhile political objective, then what is?

Another difficulty (especially for the social scientist trained to look for patterned relationships) is that concepts are not linked together theoretically. Butchart speaks only of correlations (of types of socio-medical discourses with particular regimes of control and punishment, for example) and eschews the language of causality. This may be consistent with the Foucauldian impulse to ask *how* rather than *why* questions, but the reader can only wonder about possible relationships between phenomena and speculate about why (rather than how) change occurs over time.

A further shortcoming of *The Anatomy of Power* is that neither the work itself nor the 'repression analyses' it critiques are related to broader theories of modernisation, colonialism, capitalism or race. It is thus not clear, for example, whether racial science (especially its use of craniology) was connected to the rise of natural history, or whether constructions of the 'dressed native' as a socio-medical problem were enabled by the sorts of racial theories analysed by Sander Gilman in *Difference and Pathology* – those linking hybridity ("miscegenation") to sexuality, madness and disease.

Even if Butchart's sole aim (as suggested by the concluding postscript) is to establish the relevance of Foucault to contemporary socio-medical science, there is one aspect of *The Anatomy of Power* that sits uneasily within a Foucauldian frame of reference. Unlike his predecessors noted above, Butchart does not question the category of African (or European) that lies at the very heart of his analysis. It seems to be taken for granted that African is a synonym for kaffir, native or black, even though debates about what it means to be African have been central to political struggles in South Africa from the early days of colonialism. The term *Afrikaander* (meaning 'people of that place'), for example, was first used in 1705 to distinguish Boers from both Europeans (a synonym for employees of the Dutch East India Company) and Hottentots (a derogatory term for the indigenous peoples at the Cape of Good Hope).

In the final analysis, *The Anatomy of Power* is not a theory of colonialism or of African identity, and will disappoint if judged in those terms. This is a Foucauldian perspective on power and the body as well as a rich repository of source materials that make, in their own right, for fascinating reading.

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**How Sanctions Work: lessons from South Africa** edited by NETA C. CRAWFORD and AUDIE KLOTZ  
Macmillan Press, 1998. Pp. 312. £50, £19.50 (pbk).

The debate over international sanctions has always been heavily politicised, with opinions often shaped more by ideological biases for or against a targeted government than an objective understanding of the mechanisms and impact of sanctions, much less the ethical and legal repercussions. Crass economic



interests can play a role as well, as was evidenced with apartheid South Africa, where the combination of a wealthy (white) consumer society and an underpaid (black) working class created such a profitable climate for foreign investors that Western governments resisted imposing sanctions for many years. Meanwhile, anti-apartheid activists in the West saw sanctions as a moral imperative and an act of solidarity with the African National Congress and other representatives of the black majority who were calling for such outside pressures on the white minority government. Despite their noble objectives, however, few of these activists fully understood how sanctions would actually work.

Neta Crawford and Audie Klotz, political scientists with backgrounds in both African studies and international relations theory, have brought together eleven American, Canadian and South African contributors to analyse the impact of a wide range of sanctions against South Africa's apartheid regime, ranging from the financial to the military, as well as efforts to isolate the country culturally and diplomatically. The study recognises the enormous complexities involved in these multifaceted sanctions and their differing impact on various sectors of South Africa. The conclusion, however, demonstrates the important and largely constructive role of sanctions in bringing majority rule.

This book is geared more to scholars and policy-makers concerned with sanctions as an instrument of international relations than to Africanists interested in what brought down apartheid. South Africa is presented as a case study. However, for the many of us who supported the anti-apartheid struggle, it serves both as a vindication that sanctions indeed 'worked', and more importantly, provides an understanding of why. By clearly defining what constitutes sanctions at the outset (including social and strategic sanctions in addition to the economic sanctions), the authors are able to move beyond the largely anecdotal and ideologically charged arguments to apply a rigorous and convincing analysis of both the immediate and longer-term consequences of sanctions against South Africa. Crawford and Klotz offer a detailed exploration of current theories and models addressing the issue of sanctions and offer their own framework of analysis focusing upon direct and indirect – as well as counterproductive – effects of sanctions, and the multiple loci of their impact.

A book this comprehensive is possible now because of material which was inaccessible or non-existent during the debate over sanctions a decade ago, enabling the contributors to examine particular segments of the population, the state, the economy and larger society and how each was affected. Rather than providing any single overriding lesson about international sanctions, *How Sanctions Work* provides a number of interesting insights regarding the interrelationship between international sanctions and domestic policies. Indeed, the editors' extensive knowledge of African politics enables them to avoid the tendency by many international relations experts whose state-centric approach to sanctions leads them to exaggerate the distinction between domestic and international politics.

The section on strategic sanctions makes a convincing case that despite South Africa's push towards military self-sufficiency, the embargo on arms and

oil – though far from comprehensive – indeed hurt the country’s war-making capability, severely retarding the military’s ability to modernise or even obtain spare parts for its aircraft. The section on economic sanctions recognises the importance of the decline in investor confidence and the resulting pressure for compromise by leading white business figures; it also refutes the predictions by opponents of sanctions that massive black unemployment would result. The section addressing the often-overlooked social sanctions, such as the well-publicised cultural boycotts and the inability of sports-crazed white South Africans to participate in international athletic competition, notes the significance of forcing such international isolation. The study also acknowledges some of the counterproductive effects of sanctions, such as the increased militarisation of South Africa’s government and society, a more defiant and isolationist attitude among many whites and the partly successful policy of import-substitution industrialisation. (Though, ironically, as with Zimbabwe, ISI has made the now majority-ruled nation less subject to neo-colonial dependency than many other African states.)

As with Klotz’ pioneering 1995 study *Norms in International Relations: the Struggle against Apartheid*, the crucial role of the international anti-apartheid movement is confirmed throughout the study. Though many of the reforms of the 1980s taken in response to such international pressure were justifiably dismissed as token gestures by anti-apartheid activists, this study also reveals that they had the unplanned effect of undermining apartheid’s very ideological foundations. Klotz concludes with an interesting analysis of the implications for sanctions in other situations, emphasising their usefulness, but with the proviso that they cannot work in all contexts. (Indeed, had the policies of the World Trade Organisation been in effect in the 1980s, most of the sanctions against the apartheid regime would have been ruled illegal.) The study enables the reader to understand how sanctions can indeed contribute to democratic transition, though often in subtle and complex ways.

STEPHEN ZUNES

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**In Search of Africa** by MANTHIA DIAWARA

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998. Pp. ix + 288. £17.50.

The Malian film-maker Manthia Diawara, author of *African Cinema* (1992) constructs his book with a double focus. Part is narrative, part is reflective ‘situations’, spin-offs from his teaching as director of Africana Studies at New York University. If the result seems somewhat disorganised it may be because ‘I wrote the entire book in cafés and hotel lobbies.’

The narrative is autobiographical. He grew up in Sekou Toure’s Guinea amid all the excitement of those euphoric early days of independence, inspired by the thrilling vision of an Africa revolutionised into ‘modernity’. Then, in 1964, Sekou Toure deported all the Malians. His family moved to Bamako where he became obsessed by African–American youth culture (he and his

friends organised a ‘Woodstock in Bamako’), and eventually moved to the United States, ‘my second home’. But he still retained a nostalgic vision of Guinea, and in 1996 returned to see what remained of it, also to locate a boyhood friend and hero, Sidime Laye.

Legends of Sekou Toure as a great magician survived in the mouths of taxi-drivers, but the vision of a modernising revolution had long faded into the reality of a corrupt, broken-down state and the memory of his brutal concentration camps. Sidime, when located, had reverted to his family’s traditional occupation as a sculptor, carving masks and figures in the styles defined by the Euro-American gallery and museum market (he was at work on a ‘Baga’ mask). Diawara contrasts his devotion to the market stereotypes with the work of the Zaïrean painter Chéri Samba (‘the Amos Tutuola of African art’ – an inspired analogy) who creates, not follows, his market, the stereotype striking back.

The ‘situations’ begin with the Harlem renaissance which had so deep an influence on the francophone *Négritude* intellectuals – though not, as Wole Soyinka has recalled recently in *The Burden of Memory, the Muse of Forgiveness* (1999), on the ‘tigritudinarian’ anglophones. But when it came to a real face-to-face Harlem/Paris conference, organised in 1956, Richard Wright dismayed the audience by denouncing *Négritude* as a reactionary colonial vestige that ought to be swept away by the revolutionary impetus of a modernised, industrialised Africa. He had already delivered this message in his *Black Power* (1954) which Diawara sees as ‘one of the most important books ever written on Africa’. For Diawara still clings to ‘modernity’ as the way to transform Africa – not the corrupting neocolonial modernity which has reduced it to its present state but the ‘authentic modernity’ of black America ‘which serves as a culture to conquer America and the world’.

This brings us to black culture which he defines, not from its particular manifestations in the church, the arts or politics, but ‘as a way of life aimed at producing the black good life...created through attempts to liberate everyday life from colonizing systems...the last frontier of American modernism’. He begins with Malcolm X, who at first exemplified the black modernist ‘homeboy’ culture but then turned away into the discourse of ‘conversionism’ which treats black culture as pathology. Diawara goes on with a survey of the ‘homeboy cosmopolitan’ black culture as he has observed it from his Greenwich Village domicile. The hip-hop youth culture he sees as creating ‘a heroic space for the wretched of the earth’. It is persistently demonised, he maintains, not for its anti-social violence, which already pervades American society, but because it is a manifestation of black creativity.

He notes the influence of increased immigration from Africa and the Caribbean whose young people know nothing of the traditional issues of Black American history (they ‘are to African Americans what post-Soviet bloc Jewish emigrés are to American Jews’), and share the hip-hop generation’s values, ‘shaped in the public sphere, where performance and competition define the individual’s worth’, creating a transnational mentality which celebrates difference and rejects the ethnocentrism of the melting-pot philosophy. And here Diawara stops. The search for Africa seems to have been

forgotten – or maybe only suspended. In 1997 he returned to Guinea and made a short documentary. Now perhaps he will go back and rework his provocative, idiosyncratic book as a film-script.

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**Corruption and Democratisation** edited by ALAN DOIG and ROBIN THEOBALD  
London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1999. Pp. 166. £32.50, £16.50 (pbk).

**Bureaucratic and Political Corruption in Africa: the public choice perspective** by JOHN MUKUM MBAKU  
Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 2000. Pp. 222. \$21.50 (pbk).

Measuring the scale of corruption is notoriously difficult, but if a survey of 18,000 households in Uganda is representative of African society, two-thirds of public service users pay bribes to the police and half pay bribes to the judiciary (*Corruption and Democratisation*, p. 46). Can democracy survive such levels of corruption, and in what form? Has the loosening of central control perhaps even exacerbated the situation? The link between corruption and democracy is one well worth exploring, but *Corruption and Democratisation* never quite realises its potential. Following a disappointingly indistinct chapter on corruption and development by Alan Doig, five case studies are given (Uganda, Mozambique, Hong Kong, Botswana, Australia) which examine the incidence and causes of corruption and consider some of the methods, particularly anti-corruption agencies, in combating it.

David Stasavage focuses on Mozambique and the factors responsible for the perceived increase in corruption in the last ten years. In his view (as for most of the other contributors) this is largely a case of civil servants (in particular, customs officials) with too little pay, training and supervision, overseeing rules that allow too much discretion and treating offenders who are caught too leniently. In other words, it is primarily an administrative problem requiring more and stricter policing and sentencing. Like other contributors he is convinced that poverty is a major cause of corruption, despite the fact that well-paid government ministers, judges, bankers, police commissioners and generals have been among the most corrupt people in the world. Surprisingly, he doesn't mention parliament or the press as institutions that can expose corruption and create anti-corruption public attitudes; nor does he mention the effect of corruption on anything other than the economy.

Robin Theobald and Robert Williams assess the effectiveness of the anti-corruption agency of Botswana. The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) was established on the model of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption (Jonathan Moran has a chapter on this), with its three-pronged strategy of investigation, prosecution and preventative education. In their view it has had a positive effect, even though its director has powers to authorise arrest, entry, search and seizure of property, all without a warrant. (Amazingly, Theobald, in the conclusion, can only offer

the lament that tapping telephones, and search and arrest without a warrant 'may be deemed essential' and that abandonment of the presumption of innocence 'normally seem to be necessary', p. 151). Though the authors do not have a very high view of the abilities of parliament or political organisations to scrutinise legislation and ministers, their concerns are not with how this might be rectified, but with enlarging the DCFC and the court system. Since we are largely talking about money it is not surprising that they are not optimistic that this model provides a solution for other African countries, which they perceive as being still poorer and more corrupt.

The only study that handles the democratic aspect of corruption is the chapter on Uganda by David Watt, Rachel Flannary and Robin Theobald. Unlike the other contributions with their focus on policy initiatives directly related to corruption, this also includes an evaluation of the strengthening of specific democratic institutions such as improving the role and status of parliamentary and civil society monitoring, and revitalising local government. Their evaluation of the latter is that it may have done little more than disperse corruption. But their narration of the calling to account of ministers and public employees by parliament and the exposure of corruption by the Press (however limited in resources), really does reassure one that these two democratic institutions are as important as an efficient well-paid bureaucracy and anti-corruption agency. This Ugandan evidence makes it all the more strange that most of the book is reluctant to examine the connection between corruption and democratic institutions. What is an interesting book on methods of improving public administration and reducing petty corruption, could have been one tackling how to restore the powers of parliamentary scrutiny, ministerial accountability, and the degree of erosion of democratic processes and values by pervasive corruption and egregious sleaze. The chief 'cost' of this course of action would be in overcoming the reluctance worldwide for executives and bureaucracies to be transparent before the representatives of the people and the unwillingness of political parties to allow criticism by backbenchers. With its eyes firmly on political economy this book inevitably sees corruption as a symptom of underdevelopment and hence, given the likelihood of the continuing economic malaise of Africa and much of the world, something that is not going to improve significantly, whatever new administrative methods are set up. As for whether democracy can reduce it, or will itself be eroded by it, we are left guessing.

John Mbaku's *Bureaucratic and Political Corruption in Africa* approaches the problem of corruption from a very different perspective. He sees it as 'a direct consequence of poorly developed institutional arrangements and distorted incentive structures' (p. 5). In other words, it is not more policing, more training and better remuneration that is required, but 'rules reform to minimize the ability of interest groups to subvert the rules' (p. 5). Adopting the 'public choice theory', he starts from the premise that 'public servants are not selfless benevolent individuals; instead, like their counterparts in the private sector are motivated by a desire to maximize their self interest' (p. 133). I have some sympathy with this perspective, with its emphasis on the need for new social structures and incentives rather than on policing old ones that by their very nature facilitate corruption. The first half of the book

illustrates only too well the scale and deep-rooted nature of the problem (although the material is almost exclusively limited to just four countries: Cameroon, Nigeria, Ghana and DRC). But Mbaku's practical solutions for tackling corruption are unconvincing. True, liberalisation of the market *should* eliminate bureaucrats from many of the discretionary decisions and active rent-seeking; true, constitutions that are written by all the people *ought* to remove elite privilege; true decentralisation *should* bring decision makers closer to the people and make them more accountable. But whether these new arrangements will actually make a significant difference is doubtful.

The book offers a good, if unduly repetitious, summary of the debates concerning the causes and cures of corruption, with a very comprehensive bibliography, but for remedies it is as disappointing as *Corruption and Democracy*. Would either the structural or the administrative approach have stopped Abacha's family seizing £2.7 billion from Nigeria's public funds; or have stopped Major-General Salim Salem of Uganda using a privatised bank over which he had influence, lending money to firms he partly owned; or have stopped the custom official demanding a payment off me to facilitate my departure from the airport?

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**Post-Conflict Eritrea: prospects for reconstruction and development** edited by MARTIN DOORNBOS and ALEMSEGED TESFAI

Lawrenceville, NJ and Asmara: Red Sea Press, 1999. Pp. xii + 362. \$21.95 (pbk).

This book is a collection of essays on post-1991 Eritrea, prepared in the context of the 1995–98 'War-torn Societies' project (WSP), set up by UNRISD and the Graduate Institute of International Relations in Geneva. This interesting and ambitious project studied three other countries besides Eritrea, and was meant to produce new ideas and information for international and donor-country policy on reconstruction and development in such societies. (Although Eritrea was not seen as 'war-torn' in the accepted sense, it was a post-conflict society detached from another state after a successful war of secession.) As the director of WSP says in his Preface, in the early nineties hopes for peaceful post-conflict development were high but were dashed in subsequent years (e.g. Angola, Cambodia, Somalia). Doornbos and Alemseged finalised their editing just before and during the outbreak of the Eritrean–Ethiopian armed conflict in May 1998, a turn of events which provided a sad illustration of the insecure future of these war-torn societies.

The eight chapters deal with a variety of issues: the programme of reconstruction and development; social integration of ex-combatants and returnees; infrastructure; food security; and human resources development. There is a wealth of relevant data and statistics. The book offers essential material for an informed debate on the challenges of independent Eritrea. The parameters of that debate are clearly set out in Doornbos's introductory chapter, where also the aims and operational structure of the WSP and the

peculiar background of today's Eritrea are discussed. A long and interesting chapter by Alemseged discusses issues of governance in Eritrea. The final chapter is an overview of the research findings for Eritrea of the WSP Project, also by Alemseged. The authors of this book are all Eritrean scholars and administrators, except Doornbos. The latter notes some of his initial reserve (pp. 15–16) when in the early phase of the project the Eritrean counterpart (a Ministry) came up only with government officials as potential contributors to the WSP. The 'neutral space' that the director in his Preface (p. xi) hoped for was thus not entirely realised, because these officials could not be considered as independent researchers. This reflected Eritrea's commendable aim to be independent of external prescriptions and agencies ('national ownership' as Doornbos says, p. 24), but it may have carried the danger of 'ideologising' and co-opting the issues at hand.

The answer to the query implied by subtitle of the book – *Prospects for Reconstruction and Development* – is probably: not good. Not only because of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia that started in May 1998, but also because of an authoritarian political system that sees development and reconstruction largely as a top-down project (cf. K. Tronvoll, 'The process of nation-building in post-war Eritrea: created from below or directed from above?', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 36 (1998): 461–82) and contains disappointingly few democratic elements and little respect for local social and cultural diversity. The chapters in this book nevertheless sketch some of the core elements that might have helped Eritrea in building a more peaceful and developed society. The country had made a promising head-start in 1991, without the burden of a national debt and amidst widespread enthusiasm. But by what can only be seen as a miscalculation it became engaged in the destructive war with Ethiopia the effects of which on local society – in terms of loss of young people, economic and environmental destruction, and the emergence of hatred – will be felt for a very long time. In the past two years the programmes and prospects set out in this volume have been seriously affected by it.

This is one of the reasons why one has to disagree with those who think that the outburst of the Eritrean–Ethiopian conflict itself does not have a direct bearing on the issues discussed in this book. That regimes revert to the option of using force is a sign of malgovernance, and one that impacts on other areas of national policy. Another reason is the apparent nature of Eritrean governance itself: too authoritarian, top-down, monolithic, and with an overgrown repressive apparatus – a general problem in Africa. Development and reconstruction policy should also be implemented in closer conjunction with the population itself, taking account of their perceived needs and social and cultural rights. In this context it is not clear that the 'participatory' aspects that ranked high in the program of the WSP (cf. pp. 3, 5) were fully realised in the Eritrean context: in the book there is little talk about or assessment of the views and needs of the various local communities in the country, what attempts, if any, were made to find out what these are, and how exactly these communities were 'in dialogue' with the project and the parties involved.

A review cannot deal with the contents of all the chapters, but it is clear that

much in them is very instructive and will retain its value. Reading them now nevertheless creates a sense of deception, realising what has been put in danger by a war the magnitude and disastrous effects of which are seriously underestimated. It is to be hoped that the insights and lessons of the WSP as laid down in this book will be taken up again very soon, with the appropriate policy adjustments. The material in this book can very well serve as a base for a real dialogue about future development policy and practice in Eritrea.

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**Die beiden deutschen Staaten in Afrika: Zwischen Konkurrenz und Koexistenz 1949–1990** (The two German states in Africa: between competition and co-existence, 1949–1990) by ULF ENGEL and HANS-GEORG SCHLEICHER

Hamburg: Institut für Afrika-Kunde, 1998. Pp. 463. Pb. no price given.

In many respects, Ulf Engel and Hans-Georg Schleicher have written a remarkable book. In spite of the fact that ‘Germany’ for a number of years has been among the top four donors of development aid, German aid policy and German Africa policy have attracted very little interest from German and other scholars. Solely for that reason, it is an important book. The German case is both unique and of special interest because of the historical split between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic. Therefore, it is necessary to talk about two German Africa policies from around 1949 until the fall of the Berlin Wall. One of the two authors, Hans-Georg Schleicher, has special qualifications for contributing to the understanding of the Africa policy of the GDR as he was in the diplomatic service of the communist regime from 1969 to 1990. During these years, he was ambassador to Zimbabwe in 1983–88, and in 1989–90 he was the head of the diplomatic mission of the GDR in Namibia.

It is a central argument throughout the book that Africa was only of minor interest to the FRG, which is largely to be explained by the insignificant economic and security interests of the Bonn government in the continent. Therefore, for most of the period 1949–90 the Africa policy of the FRG was equivalent to its development aid policy. In this context, it is worth noting that the development policy was heavily influenced by French priorities due to the high priority in those days of having close relations with France – and with other leading Western powers.

Only in the period 1959–72 was the relationship (or lack of such) with the GDR important as a determinant for Bonn’s Africa policy. In this period, Bonn deliberately used aid and promises of aid as an instrument in its policy with the clear aim of limiting the recognition of the Berlin government. Also, in the context of the Cold War, the FRG was looking for ‘friends’ in Africa, among other things in order to create a ‘vote block’ in the United Nations. These combined feelings of guilt and inferiority started to change when Willy Brandt became chancellor in 1969.

The foreign policy shift which started with Brandt did not affect the Africa



policy of the FRG, which continued to be influenced by what Bonn thought were the expectations of its Western friends. During the 1970s, a number of very weak domestic interest groups including government institutions came into existence. Due to the almost insignificant German economic interests in the continent, formulation and implementation of Germany's Africa policy more and more became the field of responsibility of the Ministry for Development aid (the 'BMZ') leaving the Africa policy of the FRG as a battleground of institutions and groups which were highly influenced by moral and ethical considerations.

It is no surprise that the Africa policy of the Democratic Republic was strongly influenced by the ideology of peaceful coexistence and 'anti-imperialistic solidarity'. Within this political-ideological framework, the relationship with the Soviet Union was the determining factor. Therefore, the GDR very soon started to support the 'national liberation movements' in Africa starting with Algeria in 1954 and Egypt in 1956. However, this activist policy lasted only until the international diplomatic recognition of the communist government in Berlin. Thus, after 1972–73 Africa lost its significance in the overall 'international class struggle' and in the 'anti-imperialist struggle', due to the importance of promoting peace and stability in Europe. Also, the 1970s experienced a shift in the main focus of the international class struggle away from Africa and towards the Middle East, Vietnam and Chile.

In spite of the fact that the title of the book signals that the analysis stops in 1990, the two authors fortunately add a final chapter discussing the perspective of German Africa policy after unification. The first foreign policy goal of the united Germany was and still is 'to continue the European integration process', including to 'integrate the former communist states in the political and security architecture of the West'. Within this set of priorities, Africa almost disappears from the foreign policy agenda. It is indicated by the continuing fall of the German ODA/GNP and by the reduction in development aid within the overall Federal budget. This low priority means that German Africa policy to a very large extent lacks an independent profile. Instead, it follows the guidelines on political conditionalities and economic reforms which are formulated first by the two Washington institutions and secondly by the EU. Thus, the current Africa policy of Germany is marked by a high degree of continuity which is founded on the limited German interests in the continent.

Engel and Schleicher have written an interesting and very informative book. It certainly fills a gap in our knowledge of one of the biggest Western powers. It covers both the foreign policy issues as well as the domestic actors influencing the Africa policy of Bonn and now Berlin. Though it is no surprise, it certainly is depressing to learn what a limited space Africa has on the political agenda of one of the most affluent countries in the world. For those interested in such issues, they can find a wealth of information in this book which is very well researched and also has a clear line of argument. However, it is a pity that it is written in German, which limits its readership.

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**Democracy without Borders: transnationalization and conditionality in new democracies** edited by JEAN GRUGEL  
 London and New York: Routledge, 1999. Pp. 189. £55.

Social engineering, intimidation, paternalistic ‘recommendations’, or whatever else the old game of domination is called, has long been played by the powerful in their own and other peoples’ backyards. Few players, however, realise how their interference fails to shape the target population in the way they expected. Ill-kept or non-existent borders make trespassing easier, but trespassers can still lose their way. This book portrays the puzzle of creating democracy in the Third World from the outside.

The contributions are based on two assumptions. First that citizenship, its creation and practice, lies at the core of democratisation, rather than the establishment of institutions such as elections. Overcoming authoritarian social practices, not simply authoritarian rulers, must be the goal. Second, that structural factors, particularly international political pressures, must be taken seriously. Thus, though the editor, Jean Grugel, concedes that voluntarism won the argument concerning the causes of democratic transition, she is convinced that structuralism is better equipped to explain differences between national and regional experiences of democratic consolidation.

Yet, though analysis of international influences is the aim of the book (with a theoretical section followed by six regional case studies), in practice many of the authors slip from analysis to normative prescription. Hence international agents not only play a role in democracy, but *should* play a role in contributing ‘towards strengthening the organizational capacity at the grass roots level of [Eastern European] society and encouraging the participation of the emerging middle classes as a step towards democratic consolidation’ (Kopecky and Barnfield, p. 91). It is a slip that those in a hurry to see good ideas take root often fall into.

Given the heterogeneity of ‘outside’ influences in liberalisation, transition and consolidation, Schmitz and Sell’s framework (ch. 2) is helpful. According to their conceptualisation, international norms, models of democracy and processes of transnational cooperation (such as trade, electronic communication and the network of international human rights organisations) come either through outside pressure, voluntary adaptations or socialisation and each impacts differently according to the stage of democratisation that has been reached.

With the international processes that promote citizenship at the centre of this book, many of the contributors assess the Western agencies that are engaged in building ‘civil society’. ‘Their incredible invasion... [into Latin America in the 1970–80s] was key for opening the social system and political debate’ (Freres p. 49). Yet to ‘build’ civil society they require a template of what it looks like and what sort of democracy it is supposed to be supporting. Oda van Canenburgh’s analysis (ch. 6) of donor assisted NGOs in Africa demonstrates that their primary focus is electoral assistance (civic education, support for political parties, election materials and election monitoring) because their aim is electoral democracy. Even that limited goal, however, is not straightforward, considering that the political parties supported can be

little more than ‘political machines’ and vehicles for their leaders; the pre-conditions of respect for human rights and the rule of law are often absent; and elections can actually exacerbate ethnic and religious rivalries and human rights abuses (e.g. Kenya and Zanzibar). Similarly, other authors question whether foreign NGOs can express local demands and at the same time exercise relatively autonomous powers; whether they can be sponsored by governments and yet maintain their own agenda; whether they undermine the credibility of national governments by undertaking service provision; and whether they weaken local NGOs.

The other chapter with a specifically African focus is Francois Prikic’s account of Nigerian intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the cause of democracy (ch. 7). The story is of course riddled with paradoxes: democracy (i.e. elected government) is imposed by force; the force originates from a profoundly undemocratic state; the intervening state is doing so primarily to prop up its own regime (or at least keep the lid on the military); and the ploy has the support of ECOWAS, the UN, the US and the EU, even as the latter two are applying sanctions to bring the Nigerian regime down. Prikic copes with these ‘profoundly disturbing’ facts by comforting himself that Liberia obtained peace and ‘the first ever elected president in the history of Liberia’ and that ‘Kabbah returned’. Those doubtful achievements in terms of ‘citizenship’ seem to me to sum up so much of outside efforts to promote democracy, namely doubtful means to achieve doubtful ends.

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**Recovery From Armed Conflict in Developing Countries: an economic and political analysis** edited by GEOFF HARRIS  
London: Routledge, 1999. Pp. xix + 340. £60.00.

In each year of the 1980s and 1990s, there have been between thirty and forty ‘major armed conflicts’ in progress’ (p. 3). This sobering if not highly depressing introduction begins what is an excellent and very interesting and enlightening book. Though the coverage of armed conflicts is usually quite extensive, the post-war reconstruction (or attempts at such) that follows when peace breaks out is rarely dealt with. This is a rather disgraceful omission as wars leave individuals, societies, political systems, economies and environments in utter disarray – often irretrievably so. This is particularly so in territories that had a low economic base to begin with.

Geoff Harris’ edited book attempts to fill the gap in the literature by focusing upon the challenges that are faced by countries encountering post-war reconstruction. Questions of political, economic and social reconstruction are addressed by a fairly (geographically) wide list of contributors. Primarily focusing on African and Asian case studies, the book addresses a number of highly pertinent issues. One of the first under investigation is the economic cost of war to developing countries. It is obvious to all that war retards development and inhibits economic activity for the vast majority of a country’s

citizens. For instance, we are told that the Iran–Iraq War of the 1980s cost Iran approximately the equivalent of nine years' worth of GNP; Iraq lost ten years' worth. This phenomenal cost to the well-being of a country is depressing enough. However, other chapters, particularly on the effects of war on women and children, are most disturbing. For instance, figures are provided about war-affected children in Mozambique where 77 per cent had witnessed actual killings; 63 per cent had witnessed rape or sexual torture; and 37 per cent had watched family members being killed. Such figures obviously do no justice to the sheer horror experienced by young people in armed conflicts. Sadly, as we all know, Mozambique is not an isolated example: the boy soldiers of Sierra Leone and armed youth in Somalia bear sad testament to this.

Of particular interest are the five case studies presented to the reader: Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, South Africa and Sri Lanka. All studies contain a wealth of information and most look at the costs of the war, the progress and/or prospects of recovery and other topical analysis. All studies, indeed the general thrust of the book, emphasise that even before the fighting has officially stopped, individuals and communities begin diverse ways to build peace and solidarity. As a normative prescription, the authors urge planners, donors and international organisations to support *and learn* from this grass-roots level process of recovery-building. Only then can post-war societies be rebuilt along more equitable lines and thus help contribute to the elimination of some or many of the causes of conflict in the first place.

This book is an excellent read and has highly useful pointers for all interested in post-war reconstruction in conflict areas moving towards recovery. It will appeal to many Africanists. However, finishing the book, one can only reflect on the utter pointlessness and idiocy of humanity repeatedly going to war. This work should be required reading for all relevant policy-makers *and* armchair generals.

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**The National Liberation Struggle in South Africa: a case study of the United Democratic Front, 1983–1987** by GEOFFREY F. HOUSTON

Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999. Pp. 318. £42.50.

The guiding intention in this book is to examine the role of revolutionary strategy and tactics in 'generating popular protest and organisation to explain the emergence, nature, role and activities of the UDF and its affiliates' in South Africa during the 1980s (p. 5). Houston argues that the Front's role was 'best explained' by the Leninist/Gramscian united-front strategy (p. 259). This is the book's main claim to originality. Previous academic investigations of the Front have generally skirted the questions surrounding the motivations of its leaders as well as their relationship with 'revolutionary' ANC leadership in exile. In Houston's view, the Front's history exemplified a proletarian-led class alliance struggling for democratic freedoms with workers achieving a moral hegemony through mobilisation and ideological discourse. The inspiration supplied by Gramscian models of struggle help to explain why

‘revolutionary developments in the 1980s... did not lead to a general uprising and the seizure of state power’ (p. 27). They were not intended to. The objectives of united front movements are more modest: the organisation of civil society, the expansion of revolutionary consciousness and the creation of an ‘historical bloc in opposition to the ruling bloc’ (p. 27).

At least two competing explanations for the UDF have been offered by earlier scholarship. One is that the UDF was not especially influenced by working-class consciousness and indeed that middle-class African nationalists achieved near hegemony. The other is that the UDF was the sum of a series of localised and highly eclectic social movements, responding to immediate and material concerns. Both these arguments were influential in contemporary writing about the UDF during the 1980s, not least because tactical expediency prompted the Front’s academic sympathisers to play down its connections with any revolutionary organisation, but also because such contentions appeared to conform with whatever evidence was available.

The problem with Houston’s analysis is that he supplies no fresh evidence. It is quite easy to demonstrate that the UDF’s emergence and programme accorded with or conformed to Leninist/Gramscian models and met some of the ANC’s strategic requirements (p. 259). Detecting a correlation between a movement and certain kinds of organisational models does not prove that the latter inspired the former. The South African authorities discovered this to their cost in political trials when public prosecutors attempted to find the UDF guilty of treason using much the same argument. To prove the case one would need to have evidence concerning the inner life of the organisation, the political intentions of its leaders and the nature of their communications with the ANC exiles. In fact, at least some of this evidence has become available since 1994. Certainly there were Leninists within the UDF hierarchy, though how important their vision was in determining the course of events remains debatable. Whether the ANC leadership itself was united around Leninist/Gramscian prescriptions is also questionable; if they were, then their subsequent behaviour becomes very difficult to understand indeed. Houston, though, reviews no recently available source material.

Instead what he supplies is a very competent summary of the existing published work on the UDF. Bringing together the information contained in the wealth of descriptive writing from the period represents a helpful accomplishment, but it adds few new insights to what we already know about the Front’s formation, its membership and the life of its affiliates. Moreover in depending so exclusively on published sources, Houston makes no allowances for their weaknesses. Much of the work undertaken by this reviewer and other writers during the time of the Front’s existence was derived from press reportage and an extremely unrepresentative selection of UDF documentation. More recently, more textured ethnographic studies of different spheres of Front activity – Delius, Rictkin and Lucas’s work are cases in point – suggest a variegated and parochial politics which was shaped by very different exigencies from those that might have preoccupied whatever social revolutionaries existed within the UDF or ANC hierarchies. On the ground, popular activism was inspired by conflicts and identities arising from quite different social relationships than those of a modern industrial society. Given

the significance of popular consciousness in a Gramscian 'war of position', the omission in this book of any reference to such ideological complexities is puzzling.

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**African Entrepreneurship: Muslim Fula merchants in Sierra Leone**

by ALUSINE JALLOH

Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1999.  
Pp. xxix + 288.

The Fula (elsewhere in West Africa Fulani, Fulbe, Peul) of upland Guinea, have for centuries traded as itinerant cattle dealers with the coastal peoples. When Sierra Leone became British a new and profitable market opened for them. From the early nineteenth century Fula began settling in East Freetown, acting as agents and landlords for their itinerant countrymen, a thriving commercial community. Alusine Jalloh, a Freetown Fula, has followed his people's migrant tradition and moved to the United States where he teaches at the University of Texas in Arlington. His account of the Fula community concentrates on the twentieth century, taking as a cut-off date 1978 when Sekou Touré opened Guinea to free trade and there was a substantial Fula exodus from Freetown. Himself a member of a prominent Fula family, he has been able to draw on a mass of oral evidence which would be concealed from outsiders and has also made good use of the Sierra Leone government archives.

Importing cattle gave Fula entrepreneurs a virtual monopoly of the livestock and wholesale butchery trades, which, as well as control of the Freetown meat supply, brought lucrative government contracts. Then they branched out into merchandise trading, first as street hawkers, then as shopkeepers and into buying and selling produce – increasingly profitable after Sierra Leone independence when European firms began moving out – also into motor transport, both passenger and goods and eventually into the diamond trade, which proved immensely profitable for those with the skill to overcome its many hazards. Organised politically under their own elected and government-recognised *almamy*, isolated from the rest of the population, who perceived them as aliens and resented their success, they tended to keep away from national politics, doing their best to ingratiate themselves with successive governments by lavish donations

Family and clan loyalty, reinforced by devotion to Islam, underpinned their outstanding commercial success. Entrepreneurs recruited family members into their businesses, so keeping down wage bills and losses from theft and were ready to give them credit to start up on their own as small, perhaps one day large, operators, thus creating networks of obligation. Moreover Islam bound them in a 'moral community' (the phrase Abner Cohen used for the Hausa butchers in Ibadan) which underwrote their credit system (and reminded them that God will punish fraudulent debtors). Rejecting usury, condemned

in the Qur'an, they ignored the banks and put their, sometimes enormous, profits back into their own businesses or into the traditional Freetown investment outlet, house property. And, once rich, they could devote time to religious study. Only a few sent their children to the Freetown schools, perceived as corrupting. Most attended their own Qur'anic schools. Those who wanted higher education went to one of the Fula Islamic centres in Guinea.

Jalloh has enlivened his account by using brief biographies of representative entrepreneurs and holy men to illustrate the successive stages and aspects of the community's development, thus bringing his story to life vividly. He includes their photos, so that we see Alhaji Momodu Allie, 'legendary' (Jalloh's nice word) wholesale cattle importer and butcher of the 1930s, in his Muslim robe and headdress and then later on his son, Alhaji Abass Allie, a diamond dealer with an office in Brussels and, unusually, an international bank account, in suit, tie and dark glasses. Hence, despite a sometimes rather clumsy presentation of the material, the book provides a rare and illuminating insider's account of the development of a self-reliant, commercially successful African business community.

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**The African Economy: policy, institutions and the future** edited by  
STEVE KAYIZZI-MUGERWA  
London and New York: Routledge, 1999. Pp. 301. £55.

In 1990 (and anticipating perhaps the hollowness of impending millennium fever) the 'Beyond Hunger Project' published a vision of what Africa might look like in 2057, a century after Ghana and Sudan initiated the wave of political independence (Achebe *et al.* 1990). The book deliberately presented a more optimistic scenario than that suggested by prevailing trends. It then identified seven 'levers' that might lift the continent onto such a trajectory: greater self-reliance arising from marginalisation within the global economy; resolution of conflicts in Southern Africa; a cultural renaissance; accelerated population growth; improved regional cooperation and the growth of new social movements; scientific and technological progress; and more efficient utilisation of natural resources. Of course these are all 'double-edged' and less than a decade has passed. But the list nevertheless provides an interesting point of comparison for a new book offering a forward-looking overview of how economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa is progressing.

The big issue remains the relationship between external trade and economic growth. Bigsten starts the volume off with a fairly upbeat assessment of economic prospects in those areas where decision-makers will find it in their interest to stick with what he describes as 'now rather obvious' (Washington consensus) policy reforms. Mlambo and Oshikoya develop the theme by considering how to raise public and private investment rates and returns in the

face of high levels of political uncertainty. White emphasises that aid continues to have a crucial role in cushioning the effects of economic liberalisation, although Levin's Kenyan case-study illustrates its possible adverse effects too. Mwenda (with a detailed account of monetary policy reform in Zambia) and Murinde (with a broad overview of scope for domestic resource mobilisation) highlight the continued obstacles that central bankers face in strengthening local capital markets. Two technical papers on the Zimbabwe economy (one on the impact of minimum wages under different trade regimes, the other on mark-up pricing and productivity in manufacturing) illustrate the complexity of welfare impacts of policy changes in semi-controlled economies. But most striking is Kayizzi-Mugerwa's hope (political backlashes, local monopolies and regulatory shortcomings notwithstanding) that privatisation might prove 'the spark that got the continent moving', not least in addressing Bigsten's concern about how to make economic policy reforms stick. Thus, in contrast to the Hunger Project perspective, the core economic judgement expressed in this book is of faith in gradually accelerating economic growth, born of strengthening ties with global capitalism.

That said, this book successfully avoids the trap of over-generalisation. Lundahl, for example, injects a strong note of realism with his excellent overview of macroeconomic prospects and policy options for South Africa. Kimuyu is also appropriately guarded on the scope for increasing regional economic cooperation, while Hansson and Aguilar provide sobering reminders of the political economy of conflict in the Horn and in the Lusophone countries respectively. Further breadth is provided by competent (though less memorable) essays on rural development in Uganda, agricultural policy, poverty-environment interactions, microfinance and liberalisation in Zambia. Strikingly absent, on the other hand, is any discussion of debt politics, economic demography or gender. Developments in applied institutional economics (from social capital, through rent-seeking and corruption to group and intra-household dynamics and market interlinkages) are also poorly represented. With its breadth of subject matter and diversity of styles of analysis, this book nevertheless provides a useful compendium of how a more modest breed of economists are grappling with Africa's economic predicament. It certainly deserves to be accessible (if it is not already) in paperback at a more affordable price. But the book is also a reminder of the limitations of modern economics if separated too rigidly from other social science disciplines.

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**Changing Gender Relations in Southern Africa** edited by M. MAPETLA, A. LARSSON and A. SCHLYTER  
Lesotho: Institute of Southern African Studies, 1998. Pp. 336. £16.75 (pbk).

**Beyond Inequalities: women in South Africa** by T. FLOOD, M. HOOSAIN and N. PRIMO  
Harare: Southern African Research and Documentation Centre, 1997. Pp. 92. £7.50 (pbk). (Both books distributed in the UK through African Books Collective Ltd, Oxford).

*Changing Gender Relations in Southern Africa* and *Beyond Inequalities: Women in South Africa* are studies that form part of specific research projects. The former is the result of a three-year (1994–97) gender research programme on urbanisation, planning, housing and everyday life in southern Africa, funded by the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation and represents the second phase of a joint venture between the Universities of Lund and Lesotho. The project operated on the basis of a collaborative network of fifteen researchers from Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, Sweden and Zambia. *Beyond Inequalities* is also a joint project between the University of Western Cape Gender Equality Unit and the Women in Development Southern Africa Awareness (WIDSAA) programme based in Zimbabwe and forms part of a Southern African Development Community initiative. The study's priorities were to examine the roles and responsibilities of women and their relative access to resources and decision-making powers *vis-à-vis* men.

Although there is a large body of gender research in Africa, contributions that relate gender to urbanisation are limited. Mapetla, Larsson and Schlyter maintain that planning and housing affect the everyday lives of men and women and part of their research project has been to examine the differential aspects of urbanisation. One study on migration by Alison Todes considers a town outside Durban, created during the apartheid period as a result of the influx controls that restricted the movement of Africans into cities. Generally viewed as an artificial creation that would perish once apartheid disappeared, Todes found that, on the contrary, people, particularly women, regarded the town as a 'home base' in a way not dissimilar from rural areas. The dynamics of migration were not purely economic, 'social and emotional ties' (p. 326) profoundly affected female mobility. On a similar theme, Itumeleng Kimane and Matora Ntimo-Makara observed new migration patterns develop in Lesotho when men, retrenched from mines in South Africa, return to their villages. Women migrate to towns to support their families and two chapters look specifically at street vending and the taxi industry. Of course, domestic employment has long been the channel through which women migrate but living conditions can be arduous.

Miranda Miles reveals that women in Swaziland see domestic labour as a temporary solution or a last resort to overcome their basic needs. Poverty and coping strategies continually intrude into the lives of men and women. Housing is seen as a crucial factor in the way in which both men and women

deal with economic problems. Women develop strategies towards home ownership using friends, relatives and governmental programmes. In the deteriorating urban living environment in a quasi-urban area of Lusaka, Ann Schlyter demonstrates that household structures continue to be extended, often including families of three generations. Yet cooperation between relatives and sharing of resources is not always the norm. Nolulamo Gwagwa found money was a real 'source of tension' (p. 33) especially in homes where men retain income for their own use while women use their own resources for the household. At a fundamental level Kimane and Ntimo-Makara argue that ownership of a house, if only a shack, provides a woman with some degree of empowerment and strengthens her negotiating position with other members of the household. Housing, then, is not simply a shelter for women but a way of enhancing their position within the community as well as enabling them to control an important area of their lives. Perhaps one of the most important facts to emerge from *Changing Gender Relations* is the increase in the number of female-headed households within a range of African countries. In Botswana, for example, a woman heads every second household. Whether this development is the choice of the individual woman or not, it certainly indicates that the lives and living conditions of a large group of women have undergone a significant transformation.

*Beyond Inequalities* accepts that resource shortages and poverty are impediments to development and economic growth, but as its title implies, the study grasps the challenge of how men and women can move forward beyond their present environments. The WIDSAA programme, of which this study is part, collects and organises information on gender in an easily accessible way and the editors of this work, Flood, Hoosain and Primo, have established a clearly structured framework. There are numerous tables, figures and boxes containing a variety of gendered information from unemployment, literacy, numbers of hours worked, modes of transportation in urban and rural areas, fertility rates, contraceptive usage, rape incidences, enrolment at universities, access to sanitation and so on. With specific sections divided into themes and priority areas the book, quite apart from anything else, makes an ideal teaching text. The work recognises that the policies and programmes of the post-1994 South African government have upheld the principle of gender equality, although it does not shy away from highlighting areas where there is still much to be achieved. The observation is made that while many women work in the mass media, very few participate in policy or decision-making. There are also great divides between the life chances of urban women compared to those of their impoverished rural sisters. *Beyond Equalities* recommends that serious attempts should be made at all levels to involve women in decision-making in both the public and private spheres. Inevitably, women's ability to participate effectively in all aspects of society is enhanced by improved access to education, information and training. Certainly, South Africa's constitution commits itself to a non-sexist society and women's movements within the country have played a significant role in enhancing the rights of women. Flood, Hoosain and Primo urge women to continue to involve themselves in determining the direction and form of social change.

These two distinctive books, although very different in both content and

structure, provide valuable information and insights into the issues of gender equality in southern Africa and will be most useful reference texts for a range of undergraduate programmes.

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**Money Matters: understanding microfinance** by RACHEL MARCUS with BETH PORTER and CAROLINE HARPER  
London: Save the Children, 1999. Pp. 118. £3.95 (pbk).

The book is written partly as a contribution to knowledge, partly as an instrument to persuade policy makers, but mainly as a guide or manual for Save the Children and other practitioners potentially involved with microfinance programmes. Microfinance can be defined as small-scale credit and finance services for the poor. The book details SCF's experience with microfinance. Much of it is repetitive. There are problems both in making microfinance self-sustaining and in achieving aims such as targeting it at the poor – especially the very poorest. Add to this further aims, such as the empowerment of women and the mixture becomes almost impossible to brew – something perhaps the authors do not fully realise. Both sides of microfinance are covered, the provision of credit and savings facilities. Following the discussions of the issues and the evidence we get the manual or guidelines to practitioners in the field. Finally, and perhaps of most interest, we have details of SCF microfinance schemes. In Africa these cover Mali, the Sudan and Ethiopia. Mali has had three programmes with an estimated 20,000 beneficiaries in 78 villages since 1991. Details are given on all aspects of the schemes, including interest rates, objectives, impact and cost efficiency.

To my mind the book displays several weaknesses. No proper analysis of the data or the evidence of the effectiveness of microfinance is undertaken. Often conflicting aims are espoused, mixing charitable concerns with financial sustainability. Finally, and this is more a criticism of SCF than the book, inadequate monitoring of the schemes is evident. Econometric techniques could be used to evaluate their overall effectiveness, including secondary effects which extend beyond the immediate recipient of microfinance. There seems to me to be a clear role for organisations such as SCF to develop closer linkages with academia in a symbiotic relationship. The former have local knowledge and access to data sources, the latter have greater technical expertise in analysing data and hypotheses with fewer biases and more rigour than those close to the action bring with them.

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**Bleakness and Light: inner-city transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg**

by ALAN MORRIS

Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1999. Pp. 411. R130.00.

Post-apartheid transition in South Africa offers rich opportunities for social scientists to probe the unravelling of the spatial patterns created by apartheid and their socio-economic outcomes. Apartheid cities have been the subject of an extensive literature, recording and measuring the imposition of racial zoning, describing its outcomes and exploring its meaning for those affected. From the late 1970s onwards this literature began to record increasing challenges to the status quo, culminating in the repeal of the Group Areas Act in 1991. Changes are naturally occurring at different speeds in different cities and towns and there is no reason to suppose that all will follow the same model. It is clearly important that the process and experience of desegregation is thoroughly researched on as wide a front as possible and studied in the context of international experience. Alan Morris' book is the most significant contribution to such research yet to appear.

A decade ago a geographer at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg concluded that 'the ghettoization of Johannesburg has just begun' and 'the process of ethnic residential selection in South African cities is as yet in its infancy' (Hart, 1989: 86, 87). He was referring to the beginnings of ethnic residential segregation resulting not, as hitherto, from legal imposition but from the decisions of whites to move in the face of the 'greying' (racial mixing) of their hitherto all-white residential areas. This process had moved fastest in the central-city district of Hillbrow, an atypical residential area of traditionally cosmopolitan population with many recently arrived immigrants, particularly from Britain and Europe. This is the district chosen by Morris for this in-depth study of the desegregation process and its outcomes.

Morris draws very effectively from a very wide range of secondary literature, making comparisons between the Hillbrow experience and those of many other societies in the Americas, Europe and Asia (perhaps surprisingly, little reference is made to studies of post-colonial urban transition in Africa itself). Morris wisely eschews the method of literature review, preferring to use this literature where it is actually relevant to his own study. This is much more demanding of the author, but vastly more profitable for the reader. Primary sources include newspaper clippings and court case documentation. A face-to-face questionnaire survey of 396 Hillbrow households (1 in 25, excluding hotel residents) was supplemented by 176 in-depth interviews with flat-dwellers, landlords and managing agents, businessman, immigrants and others, all conducted by Morris himself. The combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods is one of the book's major strengths, while the number and range of in-depth interviews provide an exceptionally rich data base which enlivens the text with direct quotation.

Early chapters provide an excellent historical account of the 'greying' of Hillbrow, the responses of the government and the changing attitudes and defences of its original and new residents. In these chapters Morris is concerned to assess the desegregation process and ask why the apartheid

government allowed one of its most sacred cows, the Group Areas Act, to be so mercilessly flaunted. In later chapters he seeks to establish who the new residents of Hillbrow were and how they felt about their new environment. He questions the images of Hillbrow portrayed by the media. Was it such a terrible place to live? Were all its white residents anxious to flee as soon as possible? How much inter-racial contact occurred in such a high-density, racially diverse neighbourhood? How did Nigerian and Congolese immigrants react to the stereotyping and prejudice which they commonly endured? Morris' answers to these questions are detailed and convincing, but certainly not simple. He finds a complex range of experiences and attitudes that defy generalisation and invalidate much of the media stereotyping of Hillbrow and its residents.

This is an outstanding book which deserves to become a classic of South African urban literature, alongside Kuper, Watts and Davies' (1958) study of Durban before the implementation of the Group Areas Act and Western's study of 'outcast' coloured people in Cape Town. The former focused essentially on the measurement of segregation, while the latter pursued a more qualitative approach on the borders of anthropology and social geography. In many respects Morris' work combines the strengths of both earlier works. It also has the all too rare merit of being thoroughly readable. It is to be hoped that Morris and others will build on his pioneering work. In Hillbrow itself it is important to monitor the continuing transition of one of South Africa's most dynamic urban neighbourhoods: Morris' household survey was carried out in 1992–93 and so already needs updating. But Hillbrow is not South Africa and does not even represent the generality of inner-city experiences in South Africa. There are at least two other stories of post-apartheid transition to be told: the experience of the suburbs and that of the South Africa's small towns which have so far been largely ignored by geographers and sociologists alike.

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**Post Modern Insurgencies: political violence, identity formation and peacemaking in comparative perspective** edited by RONALDO MUNCK and PURNAKA L. DE SILVA

London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. 285. No price given.

For many students and scholars, intellectual forays into postmodern discourse can be intimidating and confusing. This is not the case for Ronaldo Munck and Purnaka L. de Silva's postmodern approach to political violence and identity formation. The collection of essays included in this volume, which includes four conceptual chapters and country case studies on Argentina, El

Salvador, Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Ethiopia and Somalia, are theoretically provocative and empirically rich. They are unified by an approach that emphasises, according to Ronaldo Munck, 'how insurgent political identities are constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed through struggle. Identities emerge through difference and are always relational' (p. 5). While this review will focus on the Africa-related chapters in the volume, the seemingly disparate collection of case studies present an excellent empirical sample of societies faced with the challenge of reconciling political violence and identity formation in the post-Cold War era.

In Alan Emery and Rupert Taylor's chapter on South Africa, the authors examine the post-apartheid transition to democracy in the context of racial identity formation. Emery and Taylor argue that the commonly held assumption that this transition was a 'black' versus 'white' struggle is not correct, since both of these communities were (and are) far too complex to be reduced to binary extremes. According to the authors, 'inappropriate and rigid categories' based on race obscure the dialectical transition process 'between all those who supported a non-racial democracy and those who did not' (p. 67).

Aregawi Berhe, the former head of the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front in Ethiopia, offers a unique perspective on the rise of the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front and the subsequent border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. For Berhe, the 'successful' transition from dictatorship to democracy in Ethiopia is incomplete, since 'conflicting political, social, cultural and economic interests lack space for compromise or broad-based consultation at the popular level' (p. 97). Berhe offers a wealth of information in this chapter, which is useful for experts and novices with a sincere interest in understanding the current situation in the Horn of Africa. His emphasis on the articulation of ethnicity in the process of political party formation and governance is especially useful for policy-makers and scholars interested in political change in transitional societies.

The third Africa-related chapter focuses on the tragedy in Somalia, which is systematically unravelled in Abdullah A. Mohamoud's conceptually provocative case study. Mohamoud persuasively argues that the Somali case is best understood when examining a complex array of inter-related historical, structural and external factors. According to the author, Somalia has been the site of colonial occupations, Cold War struggles and international humanitarian efforts. Structurally, these 'critical episodes' have occurred in a complex society 'compelled by the scarcity of resources in pastoral existence' (p. 151). For Mahamoud, the conflicts that emerged in the country were (and remain) linked to the interaction between traditional forms of social organisation and the local, national and international requisites of modern statecraft.

*Postmodern Insurgencies* is a timely testament to the challenges of the post-Cold War world of the twenty-first century. Rigid bipolar ideological markers have been eclipsed by the fluid landscape of relational identities at the local, national and international levels. In Purnaka L. de Silva's concluding chapter, he argues that 'control over group and personal phobias/identities is vital for positive change. Such processes take place in contexts of *changing values*

[emphasis in original], where the mixing of peoples as a result of societal transformation and increased globalisation is evident' (p. 261). As the case studies in this volume demonstrate, the process of changing these values will, unfortunately, be protracted and often violent.

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**Mercenaries: an African security dilemma** edited by ABDEL-FATAU MUSAH and J. 'KAYODE FAYEMI. Foreword by LORD AVEBURY  
London and Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2000. Pp. 334. No price given.

The literature on modern mercenary companies – also known by the less colourful name of private military companies – has grown fast in recent years. Many articles have been inspired (if that is the right word) by the scale and ubiquity of interventions by the South African originated firm Executive Outcomes and the scandal generated by its sister-company, Sandline, after the latter was caught breaching a United Nations arms embargo on Sierra Leone and promptly embroiled the British Foreign Office in the affair.

This generally well-researched and thoughtful collection is a further contribution. The two editors work for the London based Centre for Democracy and Development and the book's nine chapters are fairly equally divided between work by activists, journalists and academics. Among the most informative essays are Kevin O'Brien's general overview of private military companies in Africa in the 1990s, Johan Peleman's piece on Jean-Raymond Boulle and his attempt to create a mineral-and-mercenary empire in Congo and the chapter by Abdel-Fatau Musah, which is the best account of politics in Sierra Leone after the 1997 coup which this reviewer has seen.

As with most writing on private military companies, the general tone is condemnatory. Most studies, perhaps because they so often concentrate on the extraordinary story of Executive Outcomes, suggest that such companies have grown during the 1990s. One of the virtues of O'Brien's essay is to point out that private security companies also flourished more discreetly in Africa throughout the 1970s and 1980s and that it would be wrong to regard them as a uniquely post-Cold War phenomenon. Sierra Leone was home to a private security organisation in the diamond business almost forty years before Executive Outcomes was born. Although J. 'Kayode Fayemi allows that mercenaries are very hard to define, conceding that current definitions could include, say, Africans fighting for the liberation of a country not their own, the discussion in this volume is very much of white mercenaries. It would be interesting to see some research on, for example, the role of Burkinabe mercenaries in wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

For those who do not think that African states are on the verge of re-establishing effective monopolies of violence, the most profound conceptual problem is to imagine how security could be defined in new, non-state-centred ways (recommended by Fayemi) and to explore the possibilities of harnessing the technical expertise of the most experienced private military companies in fields such as logistics and mine clearance to combinations of sovereign forces

and international peacekeepers (recommended by some authors, although not in this collection). The general implication of the papers gathered here is that the presence of foreign mercenaries should be countered through legislation and the development of African regional security mechanisms. That, however desirable it may be, does not seem to offer much hope of success.

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**The 1995 General Elections in Tanzania. Report of the Tanzanian election monitoring committee (TEMCO)**

Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee, 1997. Pp. 336.

**Multiparty Democracy in Transition. Tanzania's 1995 general elections** edited by SAMUEL S. MUSHI and RWEKAZA S. MUKANDALA

Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of Dar es Salaam, 1997. Pp. 346.

**Political culture and popular participation in Tanzania**

Dar es Salaam: Research and Education for Democracy Project; Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of Dar es Salaam, 1997. Pp. xi + 174. £8.95. (Distributed in the UK by Africa Books Collective, Oxford.)

The election studies which have been conducted since independence in Tanzania are probably unique in Africa. Only one of the seven general elections after independence, that of 1975, has not been studied at all. The study of the 1980 elections is seldom referred to as it is only available in cyclostyled form. That in itself is sufficient reason for anyone interested in African elections to note the above mentioned edited volumes. These books are also to be welcomed as there are relatively few comments on the Tanzanian general elections of 1995. These elections had, however, a special importance among the spate of multiparty elections in that period as the one-party state has been more fervently defended and ideologically justified in Tanzania than elsewhere.

It is therefore regrettable that these books are not more accessibly written. They demand a persistent reader. A prime reason for this is the preponderant tedious style of the bureaucratic report in which paragraphing seems to be more important than building up a consistent and cogent argument. This may reflect an origin as studies commissioned by aid bureaucracies. The numerous typographical errors do not aid the readability of these texts either and are more difficult to excuse. Even more worrying is that this seems to be not merely caused by sloppiness, but may stem from a lack of understanding of what academic work entails. The name of one author – Stephen Feierman – is consistently misquoted as Feirman in one paper. Other papers refer in the text to books which are not to be found in the bibliography. Referencing seems to be done ritually, without an awareness that it needs to be done in order to



build up a general body of knowledge. Evidence is often lacking. For example: it may be true that only wealthy opposition candidates had a chance of winning, but then one needs to check as well whether some wealthy candidates may actually also have lost; similarly one needs then an indication of the way in which wealth of candidates was established by researchers (it seems to have been done on reputation). The various authors like to maintain various opinions at the same time without questioning whether they may be contradictory. For example: several pages are filled with examples of ethnic and regional appeals and this discussion is then concluded by the statement that these played no role in the elections. These defects are found throughout the volumes reviewed and it makes therefore no sense to point to individual contributions. The latter would be invidious in this case. However, the first volume mentioned above, the general report of the monitoring committee, is more systematic and informative than the other two. For example: the Nyalali commission which solicited views on the introduction of multipartyism is referred to in all publications, but only the monitoring report provides a clear overview of what its recommendations entailed.

There are more reasons to overcome possible irritations and read these books. First, because there are so many interesting aspects to the organisation of these elections. They vary from the attempt to provide candidates with state finance irrespective of party affiliation to the proscription of independent candidates and are most striking in the crucial role played by an ex-head of state – Nyerere – who was not a contender. Second, many of the contributions are interesting as political opinions. The authors tend to portray themselves as a suppressed lot during the era of the one-party state, and one even reads about the struggle for multipartyism. There is undoubtedly reason to think about erosion of rights and freedom under one-partyism in Tanzania, but it seems to me contrived to treat Tanzania's one party experience on a par with those of Malawi under Banda or Zambia under Kaunda. This lack of perspective is symptomatic of the provincialism emerging from these contributions. That is especially evident in one of the rare references to international experiences, where Malawi's appointment of the electoral commission is quite erroneously depicted as free from presidential interference. What can be regarded as a weakness in these volumes makes them a source of information in another respect. These books are valuable because of the original material they present, which is hardly analysed in the texts. For example: comprehensive overviews of election results can be found as well as a question by question tabulation of results of a survey on political attitudes.

These books are therefore valuable as a source for further analysis which these elections deserve. A prime reason is that these elections provide a test case to judge the effect of poor organisation on an election result. The monitors come to negative conclusions as regards these elections being free and fair. None of the elections got this verdict in an overview of seventeen observed regions. However, they mention administrative reasons much more than political ones for this judgement. It hinges more on incidents like lack of the proper forms or – to stretch the imagination – returning officers retaining results or registers unless they are paid. In fact, those administering the elections seem to be more interested in the monetary rewards than the actual

democratic content and there seems little reason to believe that recruitment of different people would have made much of a difference, as that attitude is dominant in virtually all actors mentioned in the text. Nyerere referred, for example, to the smaller parties as subsidy parties, as they were more a means to get hold of some state funding than an avenue to power. Despite all this, the crucial question which is not put is whether the result would have been substantially different if this maladministration had not been the case. That is not answered here; the conclusion is merely drawn that these elections are invalid because they are badly administered. That has a much wider importance in Africa as donors fund a more and more substantial part of elections and the question whether this is worthwhile, given the rampant drive to get hold of allowances and the relative disinterest in correct electoral procedure, is then poignant. In the Tanzanian case, the question whether these elections represent the will of the electorate is complicated by the fact that these were overwhelmingly won by the party that had ruled the country for close to thirty years as a one-party state. That has to be judged in conjunction with the finding of the Nyalali commission that close to 80 per cent of the Tanzanians wanted to continue with the one-party system. The survey findings also bear out the dominating strength of CCM as a party. The conclusion which presents itself, but which is not even remotely discussed here, is that one-partyism was in Tanzania to a considerable extent rooted in popular consciousness and not imposed from above.

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**Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams** by NGUGI WA THIONG'O  
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. Pp. 139. £19.99.

Consisting of four pieces originally delivered as the 1996 Clarendon Lectures at Oxford University, *Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams* is Ngugi's first book for several years and appears to confirm his shift from novelist to essayist. The subtitle: *Towards a Critical Theory of the Arts and the State in Africa*, raises readers' hopes, since a properly postcolonial African critical theory has frequently been called for, but not so far produced. It is, however, hard to see in what way the present diverse collection, whatever its many good qualities, would constitute such a theory (or even really a 'towards').

In 'Art War with the State', which sets the tone for the volume, Ngugi, rather than examining particular examples or strategies of state repression of artistic production, seems to be concerned with positing an essential antagonism between states and the artists who inhabit them. The 'nature' of art and that of the state as Ngugi sees them are inherently at odds with one another, the former being concerned with motion and change, the latter with stasis. This idea of an essential nature of art and the state is, in a general sense, surprisingly ahistorical and unmateriialist for someone with Ngugi's Marxist background; more specifically, we might want to ask how states in the modern capitalist world could hope to achieve stasis in the midst of a system which, as Marx pointed out a century and a half ago, is precisely based on relentless change.

Part of the problem is that, on the ‘art’ side, Ngugi tends to slip between discussions of culture and art as if they were synonymous, while on the ‘state’ side he sometimes talks about the absolutist state, at others simply about the state, which leaves the reader confused about whether he sees all states as essentially absolutist, or whether the state–art antagonism only really exists in those states which are definitely absolutist, not to mention whether the antagonism is between the state and art, or the state and culture. Some explanation for this lack of clarity may be contained in Ngugi’s statement that ‘ultimately the complex tensions between the social and imaginative powers, between the art of the state and the state of art, can only be suggested through images and hence the overall title: *Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams*’. The renunciation of an attempt to explain, in favour of suggestion via images, no doubt sides with the artistic, but does not necessarily do much for readerly comprehension. Similarly, Ngugi’s desire to work with patterns – ‘the art of the state and the state of art’ and others which recur through the essay – may be more satisfactory in terms of rhetorical practice than cultural analysis.

Similar chiasmic patterns form the basis of the second piece in the book, on the politics of performance space: ‘The war between art and the state is really a struggle between the power of performance in the arts and the performance of power by the state – in short, enactments of power.’ The focus on performance offers a different framework for examining the politics of radical theatre (including Ngugi’s celebrated involvement with the Kamiriithu project) but Ngugi also includes a discussion of prison, official punishment and prison writings in relation to performances of power and resistance. It is, finally, in areas such as these that the ‘old’ Ngugi can be seen in this collection and (his recent unhelpful incorporation of the categories of Western aesthetics notwithstanding) here that the urgent politics of culture, above all in the postcolonial world, continue to be articulated.

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**The ecology of practice: studies of food crop production in Sub-Saharan West Africa** edited by A. ENDRE NYERGES

Gordon and Breach, 1997. *Food and Nutrition in History and Anthropology*, volume 12. Pp. 259. (pbk).

This new input to an extended literature on the anthropology of African agriculture, which must go back at least as far as the pioneering studies of Richards, de Schlippe and others in the 1930s and 1940s, seeks to identify, by means of an editorial Introduction and a half dozen case studies, a new niche for anthropological insights in African human ecology. The editor (p. 2) aims to present a ‘sociocentric approach’ in terms of a ‘practice paradigm’. He traces an evolution in thinking from an earlier emphasis on ecosystems which drew strongly on equilibrium theory, through studies of adaption to disequilibrium systems, to ‘an actor-based model’. ‘The methodological implications of the ecology of practice are to distinguish actors according to social status, to examine access to and control over the means of production

and to show how conflict over control has consequences for the exploitation and management of specific resources as they are incorporated into individual social lives' (p. 11). The approach, therefore, goes beyond understanding humans and their behaviour merely as parts of systems, yet rejects an implicit policy orientation which he finds in political ecology, in favour of prodding ecological anthropology back towards 'the mundane activities of natural resource management' (p. 14).

Inevitably, the case studies offer a weakly integrated exposition of the practice paradigm, but a rewarding read for those who enjoy a cogent and disciplined presentation of grounded systems which can only be acquired through painstaking mastery of anthropological detail in the field. In the first (and, for this reader, the best), Olga Linares draws on her well-known work in the lower Casamance of Senegal to analyse responses to drought and long-term change in the farming systems of three remarkably different rice-producing villages, with the aid of a superb set of action photographs. The dilemmas which villagers face – to diversify or not to diversify, for example – are effectively portrayed. This is followed by two studies of the Senegal River Valley, the first a well-informed analysis of the political ecology of resource tenure (in particular, the Islamic institution of *indirass* or 'dead' or abandoned land) by Thomas Park; the second an account of the threat to food security which is posed by dam projects upstream, by John Magistro. Strong production data based on a sixfold classification of management systems are expertly woven into the argument. These studies add to the considerable literature on the Valley which casts doubt on both policies of water control by big dams and political interventions in indigenous resource management systems.

Melissa Leach writes on the changes in food production systems among the Mende of Sierra Leone since the 1960s, linking ecological variables with shifting social and behaviour patterns. In another part of Sierra Leone, Nyerges explores the 'related dimensions of coping and management' in Susu farming, to show how a practice paradigm draws attention to individuals' systems of 'bounded rationality'. Finally, Paul Richards analyses some data from 1987–88 on the adoption and use of local and modern varieties of rice in Sierra Leone, to show that here, at least, 'the Green Revolution failed'. Intricate and fascinating detail is here sandwiched in a political economic polemic which this reviewer finds neither necessary nor convincing, but younger readers will love it.

Labour emerges as a critical resource (and constraint), whose mobilisation (or resolution), in an infinite variety of patterns, holds the key to successful management of equally varied ecological portfolios, the natural resources which small-scale African food-producing systems inherit. Change and variability are primary challenges which these skilful and adaptive people have to face. Leach's conclusion applies more widely than her own Mende farming families: 'the activities, exchanges, combinations and recombinations and dilemmas people engage in when managing resources go far beyond the production of food' (p. 162). These studies illustrate the truth that the management of diversity, rather than the wholesale adoption of 'green revolution' technologies, has brought African families thus far: and diversity

extends off the farm into alternative incomes, migration and new patterns of interregional dependence. Some more attention to this broader context of practice would have strengthened the argument of the book.

Development policy will find no easy answers here. Although the editor appears to eschew a normative frame of reference, some of his authors (e.g. Magistro, Richards) are not so sure; and in any case it seems fair to ask, not only of anthropologists but also of others whose work constantly emphasises new dimensions of diversity, what the new empiricism has to say to governments, donors and NGOs. Poverty and deprivation – however defined or distributed – snap at the heels of the best of adaptive ‘practice’.

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**Diplomatic Offensive: an overview of ghana's diplomacy under Dr. Kwame Nkrumah** by S. E. QUARM

Accra: Afram Publications Limited, 1997. Pp. 77. \$7.50 (pbk).

To properly introduce the reader to this slim volume, one should dwell briefly on the pedigree of the author. S. E. Quarm spent thirty-six years in the Ghanaian diplomatic service, during which he was the country's ambassador to a number of Western and Arab countries. These were formative years during which the newly independent states of sub-Saharan Africa, of which Ghana was an illustrious pioneer, cut their diplomatic teeth. With a career spanning the better part of four decades, the author is thus eminently placed to illuminate an important period in Africa's diplomatic evolution. Naturally, therefore, one approached the book under review with a lot of expectations.

The first two chapters are devoted to a definition of diplomacy, a general review of the role(s) of the modern day ambassador and the impact of the technological revolution on such roles. The justification for these two chapters is not clear since there seems to be no thematic linkage between them and the rest of the book. In any case, they contain no new information that one cannot find in any standard text on diplomatic practice. The rest of the book attempts to situate Ghana within the diplomatic ferment on the African continent beginning from the late 1950s to the mid 1960s. Thus, there is a panoramic, if superficial, appraisal of the role played by Ghana in convening the All African Peoples' Conference in Accra in December 1958, the initiation of peace-keeping operations in troubled Congo, the formation of the OAU in 1963 and the introduction of a Plan of Action for the independence of Rhodesia. Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah, we are told, also played a leading role in the campaign for global nuclear disarmament.

Yet, most of the information provided here is rather stale. Apart from this, there is no clear attempt at a critical assessment. The general tone of the book seems moralistic, with every effort made to burnish the mystique of Kwame Nkrumah. Moreover, no visible capital was made out of the obvious advantage of insight which a period of more than three decades should necessarily confer. Nor did the author supply the kind of anecdotes that could

have given the reader an insight into how and why certain policies were adopted. This fault only vitiates the book further as a political memoir.

Four decades after independence, African countries are still trapped in the throes of political instability and economic destitution. Clearly, one of the things these countries have to do in order to transcend their present quagmire is to revisit the past with a view to determining what went wrong. Definitely, in this retrospective light, this book is of a certain value. Unfortunately, it will have to be remembered for the many things of value that the author left out.

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**Cultural Universals and Particulars: an African perspective** by  
KWASI WIREDU

Bloomington, CO and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996. Pp. 237.

The question of appropriate models of cultural exchange between Africa and its former colonisers has often dominated the recent practice of African philosophy and Professor Wiredu in this provocative study centres this discussion on the relationship between universalisable truths and norms (ideas and values that hold for all peoples in all cultures) and the particularity of truths and norms (ideas and values that hold for a specific culture and/or time period). Writing as a professional philosopher and as someone raised in the Akan culture of Ghana, he attempts to navigate a middle path between a hard doctrine of universals and a hard doctrine of relativism. 'Human beings cannot live by particulars or universals alone, but by some combination of both' (p. 9).

Wiredu argues for a universal characteristic by which all human beings, regardless of their particularities, are human beings. It is the case that *all* human beings communicate and that communication is grounded in a shared human biology. Despite the enormous difficulties of intercultural exchange, communication is, at least in principle, always possible. 'Nevertheless, the fundamental biological similarity of all human beings assures the possibility of resolving all such disparities, for the foundation of communication is biological' (p. 20).

Nonetheless, intercultural communication often runs into the notoriously thorny problem of ethical relativism. Although cultural exchange encounters heterogeneous normative practices, Wiredu finds it dangerous to conclude from this that there can be no impartial moral position to resolve competing moral claims. Following Kant, Wiredu searches for a moral precept that is not the unjustifiable universalisation of a particular custom. He injects 'a dose of compassion' into Kant's stern formalism and derives a kinder and gentler categorical imperative that he calls 'sympathetic impartiality'. Dedicated to the 'harmonization of interests in society', this moral precept, akin to the Golden Rule, holds that one has 'manifest due concern for the interest of others if in contemplating the impact of his actions on their interests, she puts herself imaginatively in their position and having done so, is able to welcome the impact' (p. 29).

Having established the possibility of universals, Wiredu turns to his most provocative set of arguments. It has been historically the case that cultures often coercively present particular customs and philosophical concepts *as if they were universals* and this was amply evident in colonialism. Using both the Akan language and Akan customs, Wiredu argues that certain philosophical problems are 'tongue dependent' and that certain Western normative practices confused morality (the universal condition for the possibility of ethical behaviour) with custom (particular cultural practices that were falsely universalised).

Such claims lead Wiredu to argue for the conceptual decolonisation of African thinking. Hence, for instance, when Akans attempt to understand their own 'tongue dependent' philosophical assumptions, but does so in English, they are falsely assuming that all philosophical terms are interchangeable. This is not to say that English and Akan speakers cannot learn each other's terminology (Professor Wiredu himself is proof that such an exchange is possible), but that philosophical terms come with deeply imbedded assumptions and to understand them, one has to understand the communicative context within which they are intelligible.

Furthermore, Colonialism fostered both the African acceptance of Western philosophical concepts, often without an adequate understanding of their accompanying conceptual framework and more distressingly, the misguided attempt to understand native African philosophical terms within a conceptual framework that is not sensitive to African 'tongue dependent' particulars. As an antidote to this, Wiredu proposes a rediscovery of one's native communicative world. 'Try to think them through in your own African language and, on the basis of the results, review the intelligibility of the associated problems or the plausibility of the apparent solutions that have tempted you when you have pondered them in some metropolitan language' (p. 137).

This lucid and sensitive book eloquently teaches some important lessons about the heterogeneity of languages in particular and the heterogeneity of human goodness in general. Along the way, it is an important introduction to some of the heretofore-unappreciated philosophical treasures of Akan culture.

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