The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): Human Rights and State Transitions--The South Africa Model

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Abstract: Post-authoritarian regimes have struggled with the most appropriate way to deal with the former regimes' human rights abuses.Several schools of though have emerged as to how this should be accomplished.Into this framework the South Africa model, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), is discussed.The TRC has completed its charge and the results vary according to one's perception of that charge.An assessment of South Africa's attempt at truth and reconciliation and the TRC's viability as a model for other transitioning societies are discussed.

"Injustice is like having an eye gouged out, but looking away is losing both eyes."--Russian Proverb[1]

Introduction

In 20 October 1998, South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) published its final report.With the exception of a relatively small minority of supporters, the TRC and its subsequent report have been widely criticized.Many in both the former ruling white elite as well as the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) have called the TRC a witch hunt.Many of apartheid's victims believe the process failed them by both granting amnesties and failing to pay reparations.The minority of TRC supporters, led by Desmond Tutu, former Chairperson of the TRC, argue that the process has been both healing and necessary for the future of a South African society based on human rights. The idea of bringing to justice those within an authoritarian regime who committed human rights abuses during their tenure is not new. The evolution of a human rights paradigm and the development of mechanisms necessary for pursuing justice for the survivors of human rights abuses emerged at the end of World War II with both the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals. These tribunals have become the standard by which all others are measured. Duplications have been impossible, in large part due to the nature of the majority of transitions. As a result many varieties have emerged.

With roughly twenty commissions in more than fifteen countries over the past twenty-five years, it is evident that the "commission" has become an important transition tool. There are as

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factor to the results of Gibson and Gouws' study regarding attitudes toward the TRC.[45] They found that whites were much more willing to forgive whites, for example the security forces, and less likely to forgive ANC activists, and that blacks were more willing to forgive blacks, and the ANC, and less willing to forgive whites.

Women were disproportionally affected by laws regarding pass arrests, forced removals, and loss of jobs when associated with a male member of the resistance, and yet none of this, nor the economic effects of apartheid, which disproportionally affected women are considered "gross violations of human rights." Women, when arrested, and twelve percent of the state of emergency detainees in 1986-87 were women, suffered torture and other human rights abuses, but also suffered from gender specific abuses such as rapes, sexual assaults, and torture techniques such as flooding their fallopian tubes with water to make them unable to conceive.

Violence against women happened at the hands of the government within both the ANC camps and within townships. Women were forced to act as sex slaves in hostels and were the subject of attacks by such groups as the South African Rapist Association (SARA). This group sought to punish women for not acting appropriately, including, for example, not observing a boycott of a white owned shop. Women also suffered sexual harassment in ANC camps. While there was a special "women's hearing in 1997 in Johannesburg, many brushed aside women's concerns as "special circumstances." Yet pressing questions remain. Should rapists qualify for amnesty? Is rape a political act?[46] Can the failure of the process to acknowledge and take seriously the abuses women suffered be tied to the current epidemic of violence against women in South Africa?

Finally, victims have complained that they have not had input regarding the amnesties. One prominent human rights activist in South Africa, Rhoda Kadalie, draws the correlation between amnesties and future crime. She suggests that there has been an indiscriminate granting of amnesties and that this has had a negative effect on the country's crime rate.[47] The crime rate has exploded in South Africa and of particular concern is the escalating violence against women. South Africa now holds the dubious title "rape capital of the world." Estimates are that one of every three women in South Africa has been the victim of violent sexual assault. Further study needs to be done with regard to this correlation, if in fact there is one. However, it is not a far intellectual leap to raise the question of immunity here. If, as Valdez suggests, "the best way of ensuring that an emerging democracy breaks fully with an atrocious past is to accord complete respect to national and international human rights law," then perhaps the knowledge that the perpetrators of apartheid have gone unpunished has prompted others not to take the law seriously.[48]

Several issues are still left unresolved at this point. One is that of those who perpetrated abuses, but never came forward to tell the truth. According to the process, these folks are eligible for prosecution. Will they be? To highlight the problem let us look at the case of de Kock. He worked as an assassin for the South Africa government. His trial cost the state more than five million rand and prosecutors were tied up for more than two years preparing his defense. De Kock was a low level complicitor of the regime. It is safe to assume that going after bigger fish would prove even more costly. As judge Goldstone stated in a speech before the 1994 elections:

[t]here would be too many accused and adequate punishment would be too costly in human, political, as well as financial terms. Even if we had the human and financial resources, it would not be a sensible or practical route to follow. Criminal trials are unpleasant both for the accused and accusers. The technicalities and time necessary to ensure a fair trial are themselves a source of tremendous frustration. To compel the victims to be subjected to long and difficult cross-examination in many cases would be an additional punishment.[49]

This type of argument leaves many victims of apartheid cold. To suggest that trials would be costly is correct but how relevant? The TRC process itself was very expensive. No one would make such an argument about a thief or a murderer, so why is it acceptable when the thief or the murderer worked for a state? One should hope a trial would be unpleasant for the accused. For the accuser, perhaps they should be consulted before they are dismissed as not needing to face unpleasantness or "additional punishment." What of the relief of knowing justice has been done, or of knowing that criminals are behind bars? The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation's study indicates that apartheid victims do not share Goldstone's views regarding this.

Another issued still to be worked out is how reparations will be made. Where will the money come from? The issue of implementing reparations is left to the government, not the TRC, although it is likely that victims who do not receive anything for their troubles in appearing before the TRC will likely blame it for the lack of follow up. The TRC also may take the brunt of criticism when reparations are not forthcoming.

Conclusion

"It would be impossible for the world to be happy . . . [if] the innocent were not allowed to teach the guilty a lesson."[50]

If Vitoria was right, what has been South Africa's lesson and does it offer promise as a model for other societies? Like so many other questions, the answer seems to depend upon where you sit. If one takes a minimalist position, while entirely unsatisfactory, the process is not without its redeeming qualities. Tell the truth and be granted absolution. Likewise, a pragmatist may also find the TRC process acceptable because it sought to find the middle road between amnesia and justice. For the maximalist, however, the TRC is probably little more than a "get out of jail free card."

The history of dealing with post-authoritarian regimes demonstrates that a variety of mechanism have been used to varying degrees of success. Of course the central question must be: what is success?

The standard has been the tribunals of both Nuremburg and Tokyo which provided examples of some types of justice, albeit a victor's justice. These were unique because they were an international effort. Currently there are two such efforts underway to deal with the former Yugoslavia and with Rwanda. Both are ongoing and, as a result, it is too early to fully assess their impact, but several themes have emerged which are relevant to our discussion. Since the vast majority of authoritarian regimes of late have negotiated their own departure, bringing the leaders to justice is much more difficult then it was in the post World War II setting where unconditional surrender made indictment of the former leaders much easier. Additionally, the

legacy of Nuremburg, which tried leaders using their own government documents has ensured that future authoritarian leaders won't make the same mistake. The apartheid state destroyed thousands of documents upon realizing Mandela's ascent to office was immanent. Thus, given the nature of transitions today, it is unlikely that we will see the duplication of Nuremburg.

Even with the first two international attempts, we must question how successful they have been. Their success should be measured, in part, on what the victims had hoped to gain from the process. Certainly, the demand from the Holocaust was "Never Again" and yet, while not in either Germany or Japan, genocide has been repeated many times since. Germany has apologized for its actions in WWII, while Japan has not. And, while Germany and Japan have been peaceful, democratic societies since the end of WWII, we have not yet seen the end of history.

So, if the question we seek to address with regard to the first set of international tribunals is "success at prevention of such abuses," the answer is clear. While genocide of the Jews has not again happened, genocide has indeed happened. While totalitarian regimes have not re-emerged in Germany or Japan, they have indeed wrought their terror upon other societies. Perhaps instead all we can hope for is that the types of abuses perpetrated in one society will not reappear within that society. In evaluating South Africa's transition and its attempt to deal with its past, perhaps the only acceptable measurement is whether or not an "apartheid-like" regime re-emerges. Reconciliation may not be possible there or anywhere.

What is insidious about state oppression and repression is the ease with which citizens in whose names these abuses are carried out can walk away from the past without accepting responsibility for it. We have in the U.S. "Daughters" of the American Republic, for example, which seek to demonstrate familial pride at helping found this country. Yet there is no "daughters of slave holders" or "sons of Native American slaughterers" simply because we accept no responsibility for those actions the state carries out in our name. We seek only credit for that which is perceived as a societal good.

As a collective society we were unable to apologize to the Japanese for interment camps until the 1980s and we still have not apologized for slavery or the treatment of Native Americans. South Africa will likely be no different. Those who were abused will continue to feel so and those who did it or in whose name it was done will continue to seek to distance themselves from their responsibility. The recipe that South Africa has formulated for dealing with its past may in fact produce more ghosts then it hoped to lay to rest. As Simpson warns:

> Apartheid rendered it noble for most South Africans to be on the wrong side of the law and it must be acknowledged that there is a grave risk that a sense of impunity based on the granting of amnesty to confessed killers, may actually compound the problems of non-existent popular confidence in the rule of law or in 'politically polluted' institutions of criminal justice in South Africa. The result is sustained or growing levels of violent crime - or anti-social violence - which presents as if it is a new phenomenon associated with the transition to democracy, but which is in fact rooted in the very same experiences of social marginalisation, political exclusion and economic exploitation which are slow to change in the transition to democracy and which previously gave rise

to the more socially functional violence of resistance politics. The criminalisation of
politics and the politicalisation of crime are really flip sides of the same coin.[51]

Simpson also warns that one must beware of show trials which, while accommodating the
principles of international law, do little to restore faith in domestic criminal justice institutions.
Motala shores up this point in his 1995 study of the constitution, which set up the Promotion of
National Unity and Reconciliation Act. His conclusion suggests that the act is constitutionally
suspect. In addition, Motala argues that by giving "amnesty for individuals engaged in crimes
against war, crimes against humanity, and crimes against peace, violates peremptory norms of
international law, which call for mandatory prosecution for these offences."[52]

So restoring law and order requires extra-legal measures. This may be acceptable in
societies, such as those of O'Donnell and Schmitters's study, where people have felt comforted
by being outside the realm of politics,[53] but in South African society, where every act of daily
living has had political consequences, the reverse is proving to be the problem. South African
society is far from apathetic and is in fact incredibly political.

South Africa is a model, like the Chilean, Argentinian and El Salvadorian examples before
it, from which other transitioning societies may draw in dealing with a post-authoritarian
regime. It should be used as a format from which to garner that which seemed to work. What is
clear from the South African case, and certainly is also true of the other cases discussed here, is
that reconciliation is a personal endeavor that no state alone can deliver. No state mechanism
will satisfy the victims or the perpetrators. The best interests of the victims will never be the top
priority, because they will remain objects in the process where elites secure their own egress
and protect their own, all in the name of furthering the transition or some polluted sense of
democracy. Because without justice, democracy is shallowed and attempts at consolidation may
prove fruitless. The epidemic of violence in South Africa suggests that many refuse to accept the
parameters of the transition and instead are taking it upon themselves to continue to operate
outside the law to further their selfish aims. That is one of the legacies of the TRC.

Valdez suggests that a state which wishes to deal with its authoritarian past must include
four components in its efforts: "to investigate and make the facts known (truth); to put on trial
and punish the guilty (justice); to redress the moral and physical damage caused (reparation);
and to eradicate from the security forces those known to have committed, ordered or tolerated
the commission of abuses."[54] South Africa was somewhat successful at achieving truth, but
much less successful at the other three components. At this point, the main goal of the TRC--to
promote reconciliation--appears to be faltering.

Notes

1. Breyten Breytenbach as quoted in Boraine, et. al.
2. Parker, Peter. "The Politics of Indemnities, Truth Telling and Reconciliation in South
   Africa Ending Apartheid Without Forgetting." *Human Rights Law Journal*, Vol. 17, #1/2,
   1996, pp. 1-13.

3. Berat, Lynn. "South Africa: Negotiating Change?" in *Impunity and Human Rights in International Law and Practice*. Naomi Roht-Arriaza, ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 267-304.

4. Hayner, Priscilla B. "Fifteen Truth Commissions-1974-1993: A Comparative Study" in *Transitional Justice How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, Vol. I General Considerations*, Neil J. Kritz, ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995, pp. 225-261.

5. For further discussion regarding the maximalist position, please see Nino 1995.

6. National Public Radio, 7 October 1999.

7. Nino, Carlos S. "Response: The Duty to Punish Past Abuses of Human Rights Put into Context: The Case of Argentina" in *Transitional Justice How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, Vol. I. General Considerations*, Neil J. Kritz, ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995, pp. 417-436.

8. Parker, "The Politics of Indemnities," p.12.

9. O'Donnell, Guillermo and Philippe C. Schmitter. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions*. Baltimore, MY: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, p. 24.

10. Ibid, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, p. 30.

11. Asmal, Kader. "Victims, Survivors and Citizens–Human Rights, Reparations and Reconciliation." *South African Journal on Human Rights*, Vol. 8, #4, 1992, p. 498.

12. Orentlicher, Diane F. "Settling Accounts: The Duty to Prosecute Human Rights Violations of a Prior Regime" in *Transitional Justice How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, Vol. I General Considerations*, Neil J. Kritz, ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995, pp. 380-81.

13. Amnesty International. "Policy Statement on Impunity" in *Transitional Justice How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, Vol. I General Considerations*, Neil J. Kritz, ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995, pp. 219-220 and Human Rights Watch. "Policy Statement on Accountability for Past Abuses" in *Transitional Justice How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, Vol. I General Considerations*, Neil J. Kritz, ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995, pp. 217-218.

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15. Zalaquett, Jose. "The Dilemma of New Democracies Confronting Past Human Rights Violations." *Transitional Justice How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, Vol. I General Considerations*, Neil J. Kritz, ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995, p. 206.

16. Ibid, in *Dealing with the Past Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa, 2nd ed.* Alex Boraine, Janet Levy and Ronel Scheffer, ed. Cape Town: Institute for Democracy in South Africa.1997, p. 103.

17. Huntington, Samuel. "The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century" in *Transitional Justice How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, Vol. I General*

Considerations, Neil J. Kritz, ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995, p. 81.

18. Huyse, Luc. "Justice After Transition: On the Choices Successor Elites Make in Dealing with the Past" in *Transitional Justice How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, Vol. I General Considerations*, Neil J. Kritz, ed. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995, pp. 337-349.

19. In addition to those discussed below, commissions of inquiry have also occurred in The Philippines, Chad, Uruguay, Uganda, Bolivia, Germany, Rwanda, Honduras, and Guatemala.

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21. Kaye, Michael. "The Role of Truth Commissions in the Search for Justice Reconciliation and Democratisation: The Salvadorean and Honduran Cases." *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 29, #3, 1997, pp.693-716.

22. Hayner, Priscilla B. "Fifteen Truth Commissions-1974-1993," p. 236.

23. Ibid., "Fifteen Truth Commissions-1974-1993," p. 237. Pinochet has found himself subject to a different kind of justice, that of the international community. At this writing, Pinochet's return from Britain without having to face charges appears immanent, but precedent set in his case offers yet another possible route for dealing with authoritarian leaders.

24. Boraine, Alex. *Dealing with the Past Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa 2nd Edition*. Alex Boraine, Janey Levy and Ronel Scheffer, eds. Cape Town: Institute for Democracy in South Africa, 1997.

25. Kaye, Michael. "The Role of Truth Commissions," p. 709.

26. Sarkin, Jeremy. "The Trials and Tribulations of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission." *South African Journal on Human Rights*, Vol. 12, #4, 1996, p. 622.

27. Gibson, James L. and Amanda Gouws. "Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Attributions of Blame and the Struggle over Apartheid" *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 93, #3, 1999, pp. 501-517.

28. Goldblatt, Beth and Shiela Meintjes. "Gender and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: A Submission to the Truth an Reconciliation Commission" May, found at http://sunsit.wits.ac.za/csrv/papkhul.htm, 1996.

29. For the importance of truth as critical to a nations' healing, please see Asmal 1992; Boraine, Levy, and Scheffer 1994; Hamber 1995 and Zalaquett 1993.

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31. Ibid., "Dealing with thePast and the Psychology of Reconciliation" Public address presented at the 4th International Symposium on the Contributions of Psychology of Peace, Cape Town, 27 June, found at .,1995

32. Ndebele, Njabulo. "Moral Anchor" *Siyaya!* Spring, #3, 1998, p. 16.

33. Seremane, Wetsho-Otsile "Joe". "Where Lies my Brother?" *Siyaya!* Spring, #3, 1998, p. 47.

34. *The Economist*. "International: How Imparial?" 346, 8052, 24 January 1998, p. 44.

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37. Mamdani, "A Diminished Truth," p. 40.
38. Hamber, "Dealing with the Past and the Psychology of Reconciliation at http://sunsite.wits.ac.za/csvr/papdlpst.htm ,1995.
39. Arde, Greg. "Empty Chairs, Silent Voices" *Siyaya!* Spring, #3, 1998, p. 29.
40. Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation and the Khulumani Support Group. "Survivors' Perceptions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Suggestions for the Final Report," found at 1998.
41. Gibson and Gouws, "Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa."
42. Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.
43. Ibid, 1998, p. 40.
44. Bird, Edward and Zureida Garda. 1997. "Reporting the Truth Commission: Analysis of Media Coverage of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa." *Gazette,* Vol. 59, #4-5, 1997, p. 341.
45. Gibson and Gouws, "Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa."
46. Goldblatt and Meintjes, "Gender and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission."
47. Ngidi, Sandile. "Bitter Pill of Amnesty" *Siyaya!* Spring, #3, 1998, p. 25.
48. Valdez, Patricia. 1998. "Must the Victims Always Wait?" *Siyaya!* Spring, #3, 1998, p. 55.
49. Parker, P. "The Politics of Indemnities, Truth Telling and Reconciliation in South Africa." p. 9.
50. Vitoria. "Humanitarian Intervention and Just War" quoted in Mona Fixdal and Dan Smith in *Mershon International Studies Review.* Vol. 42 #2 1998, p. 298.
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53. O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*.
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The Land Of *Jilali*: Travels Through Kenya's Drought-Stricken North.[1]

PAUL GOLDSMITH

This is the journal of the journeys of a Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) team studying natural resource management in Marsabit District. Our mission--to assess environmental degradation, and how sedentarisation may be contributing to desertification around settlements and on the range.

As we zoom across the flat hardpan of the Chalbi desert, the sun is spreading its soft, brilliant blanket over the silhouette of Mt. Kulal. We pass small Rendille camels from the fora satellite camps, grazing in the twilight, unfazed by our speed. We are in no hurry, and on a twilight break we inspect the Chalbi's crusty, salt-impregnated surface. When precipitation exceeds evaporation, insoluble minerals and salts are leached out of the soil. Eons of rainfall have concentrated soda in the wind-scoured floor of this former inland sea. Once upon a time, this was a very lush land.

It is early June, 2000. Kenya is hurtling toward a massive combined crisis of power shortfalls, water rationing, and shrinking informal sector employment. The drought-crippled economy is fueling new and unique expressions of social tension: rioting school children in Nairobi capture a Tusker beer truck, and drink it dry.

But we are far from Nairobi. Out of the desert we suddenly enter glades of stunted doum palm. We have arrived in Maikona, a small collection of houses that in the glimmer of early starlight seem to have sprouted mushroom-like out of the Chalbi's sun-baked mud. A small crowd gathers. Over a plate of leathery meat I ask, "*Habari ya Maikona?*" "*Jilali tu*", is the reply. (What news of Maikona? …. Drought, only.) A hyena crosses our path on its way out of town.

On our way here we passed through Isiolo, immediately after the clashes there between the Waso Borana and the Degodia Somali. These cattle people were fighting over land rights; others are invading Laikipia ranches in search of grass. Here, in the distant north, the camel herding populations tread the thin line between survival and *jilali*-induced disaster.

Jilali describes the conditions in the rangeland of Marsabit after the rains have failed for the third straight season. Isiolo and Laikipia look lush in comparison. "Since El Nino," people tell us, "it has only rained once, for a few hours." Pressing on, we re-enter the Chalbi and proceed to Kalacha. As I discover during the coming days, the landscape appears far less bleak in the cool, muted light of night.

GABRASTAN

The Gabra people range into Ethiopia, but their main settlements are located on the edge of the Chalbi for the simple reason that this is where the most permanent water sources are found. Since 1971, each successive *jilali* has forced more nomads to settle around these springs.

Pastoral dropouts are swelling the size of Kenya's desert towns. Relief food provides the pull; loss of their herds exerts the push. This demographic shift is presumed to be driving environmental degradation. Fuelwood consumption is depleting tree cover around settlements; the herds of the settled degrade forage resources beyond the zone of naked plain. Actually, things have been going downhill since *Homo sapiens* crawled out of a local hole 1.8 million years ago.

Downtown Kalacha is a wide avenue of desert separating lines of modest houses and shops, giving way to tiny suburbs of traditional huts interspersed with the occasional block of more modern "maisonettes". Kalacha is sandwiched between the Chalbi and a barren expanse of lava rock that we will later cross on the way to Badhahurri. Decapitated stumps of *Acacia tortillis* along the roadside appear to confirm the human-impact hypothesis.

A mother and daughter talk to us as they make final adjustments on their load camels. The men have headed north in search of grazing. KARI research officer Godana Jilo Doyo remarks that the Gabra art of packing one's worldly possessions on a camel--a scene reproduced on Kenya's fifty shilling notes--is a disappearing tradition. The two camel, two women caravan sets off, perhaps for good, for Kalacha, forty kilometers of rocks and boulders away.

We continue on toward Badhahurri. Outrageously spindled *Acacia seyal* trees mark the approach to the Hurri Hills. The track rising from the desert pavement transits a series of small valleys. The hills on either side are tapered cones with uniformly scalloped windward slopes. Gravel and boulders segue into a dirty carpet of cropped brown grass as we pass through overlapping ecologies.

A few cows lounge inside a copse of *Erythrina burtii*, gnarled and deeply grooved trees closely related to *E. africana*, whose bright red-orange flowers add a dash of color across Kenya's central highlands. On the high plateau of Badhahurri, the area's dusty rain catchment, naked plots attest to the severity of the drought.

Several hundred Borana and Konso agropastoralists, immigrants here from the escarpment beyond Ferole, occupy scattered human settlements. Kulal, the sacred mountain of the Gabra, is a jagged silhouette marking the Kenya-Ethiopia border. This fairy-tale landscape is otherwise protected by its total absence of water; there is nothing here to fight over.

THE SANDS OF HORR

Ubiquitous rocks and boulders are the principle feature distinguishing Gabrastan from Rendille country, whose sands and intermittent stretches of gravel support significantly more bush and trees. North Horr, however, is the rockless and sandy exception; shifting dunes threaten to engulf the town. North Horr's periphery is devoid of trees and grass except for patches of the evergreen *Sueada monica*, which form a barrier of sorts against the Chalbi.

Average rainfall here is 150 mm per year, compared with 800 mm for Nairobi in a very dry year, and the soil is extremely alkaline, with a pH between 9.5 and 10.5. Not ideal tree-planting conditions, but this is what a local women's group is doing. One fenced-in enclosure protects a few dry sticks. But another *boma* shows off a mix of *Salvadora persica* (the *mswaki* or toothbrush tree), *Acacia tortillis*, and *Azidirachta indica* (neem)-most of which are flourishing. Women arrive during the late afternoon, each carrying a pair of one litre containers of precious water to share with their personal plants. Why did the plot next door fail? "Improper organisation." Will their twice-daily devotion make a difference? It's hard to say. On the other side of town another enclosure houses a small community of coconut palms. They are several feet high, and if they make it to maturity it may mark the start of a new agro-industry.

We depart. The vegetation begins to improve on the track south. One of our riders tells us about his life with the Dassenech, who snatched him from his Gabra manyatta at a tender age. He escaped back to his people many years later, and now runs a shop in the small oasis of Gas, on the southern fringe of Gabrastan.

LOYANGELANI

I last visited Loyangelani in 1976. During the interim, Loyangelani has evolved from a hamlet of drought refugees into a tourist town on the shores of the Jade Sea. Now it is a cosmopolitan community of Rendille, Samburu, El Molo, and growing numbers of Turkana taking the place of the Luo fishermen who have shifted to the Lake's west coast. This port could support a lucrative fishing industry.

A tan and slender European, escorted by several uncircumcised boys, walks his heavily panniered mountain bike up the main drag. He is Dutch. He began his journey in India; South Africa is his destination. Asia was easy, he says, but the heat nearly killed him in Sudan, and Ethiopia tested his limits. "It's good to be back in civilisation" (defined as food, water, and a common language) he tells us.

GATAB

On a landscape otherwise devoid of vegetation a Turkana boy tends a large herd of goats feeding on invisible shoots of *Spirobolus*, a spiky grass growing in the cracks between rocks. We leave the fortress-like walls of the Turkana escarpment behind and turn onto the road to Mt. Kulal, which passes through richer country dotted with trees and grass cover, undisturbed due to insecurity.

In the past, raiding was rare during droughts; basic survival is an all-consuming task. Driving weakened livestock across waterless countryside is a low percentage gambit; raiding after the onset of rain a conventional re-stocking technique. But the world is no longer normal; a Turkana raiding party successfully attacked a group of Samburu in this area several days ago. The bandits came from distant Lokorio, perhaps the inhabitants of a recently abandoned Turkana manyatta we passed on our way.

At the Kenya Telkom relay station above the small plateau which is home to Gatab, Kulal's only permanent settlement, we listen to the President's Madaraka day speech, in which he tells

the nation, "*Moi si mvua*" (Moi is not rain.) In the land of famine relief, rainmakers are redundant.

KARGI AND KORR

The Rendille are the true *wenyewe* of Marsabit District, by virtue of never having lived anywhere else. Their tenure in this exceedingly austere environment is the product of a resilient techno-cultural adaptation personified in the Rendille camel, a small but highly drought-and disease-resistant animal also herded by the Gabra. Though not prolific milkers, they boast attractive anti-*jilali* features, such as a narrow body profile designed to reduce radiation absorption in the absence of shade.

Marsabit's camel-centric communities' demographically-conservative strategy includes delayed age-set initiation, primogeniture favouring the first son, and a high canon of reles and centralised rituals. The cultural matrix makes for late marriage, smaller households, and in the case of the Rendille, a steady spin-off of individuals and groups responsible for the replication of their clans among the Gabra, Sakuye, and Somali Garre, Ajuran, and Degodia.

The Arial embody the transitional dynamic. Rendille by origin, they have adopted Samburu ways and cattle, while living in symbiosis with both groups. The Gabra are allied to the Borana; the Turkana are allied to no one.

Modern change had overtaken traditional cultural strategies. The settlements of Korr and Kargi reveal the most advanced environmental degradation we have yet seen. Korr enjoys the dubious distinction of being one of the most widely cited examples of the process of desertification. Over a decade ago, Herlocker and Dierk noted in *The Marsabit Range Management Handbook* that in many places erosion had worn soils down to the bare underlying rock. There is a point where environmental degradation is irreversible.

The concept of non-equilibrium environments is the new orthodoxy in African range management. Simply stated, it holds that the vegetation change and erosion formerly attributed to pastoralists and their herds is actually insignificant over time, that ecological changes are more the product of long-term rainfall patterns.

Empirical studies of range conditions and stocking rates in this region support the thesis. But permanent settlement is another phenomenon: the pressure on forage and fuelwood has now extended the naked perimeter around Korr to a radius of ten kilometers.

NETWORK SHUNGWAYA

Mobility has always been an important coping strategy in the face of environmental crisis. In Kalacha, I came across the following passage while rereading Gunther Schlee's brilliant work on proto-Rendille Somali clans, *Identities on the Move*.

"One group [of the Garre] moved to Giumbo, near the mouth of the river Juba, but after being repeatedly attacked were forced to cross the river and eventually moved north to Merca. A second group of Garre moved to the coast and then crossed to the Dendas Islands where they sought the protection of the Bajuni and were eventually absorbed by them."

On the same page, Schlee quotes a document from the Kenya National Archives which says that these "refugees" came from the Banna sections of the Garre, lending support to Jim Allen's interpretation of the Shungwaya legend.

Allen hypothesizes that Shungwaya, the homeland once shared by the Bajuni, Miji Kenda, and Segeju, was not the capital of an ancient multi-ethnic kingdom as depicted in oral history. Rather, he marshals archaeological and linguistic evidence showing that Shungwaya was actually the hub of a trade network linking early Swahili settlements to areas of the interior as far inland as Lake Turkana. Artifacts not found anywhere else connect the distant interior to ancient Baghdad and Cairo. Satellite photography shows that the Uaso Nyiro river once reached the coast, entering the sea through the channels of Mongoni and Dodori. Have water, will travel.

The people of Lamu town used to perform an annual ritual of purification called *kuzungusha ng'ombe*. A cow is led through the town's streets, prayers are recited, the animal is sacrificed and the meat roasted for a public feast. During a visit to Lamu last year, we were discussing the petty political infighting responsible for the community's disunity when I commented that perhaps the *kuzungusha ng'ombe* ceremony should be revived. A Bajuni friend responded that they had in fact performed a *sorio* only a few weeks before.

I double-check to make sure he really used this proto-Rendille cultural term for the important ritual in which dispersed herders gather at a central location and sacrifice an animal to invoke blessings for the community. Different communities now associated with the Borana and Somali still perform it, albeit cloaked in Islamic garb. The Bajuni-Shungwaya-Proto Rendille Somali link is just one variation on the precolonial pattern: almost every Kenyan tribe is composed of multi-cultural clans on the move.

FORWARD TO THE PAST

In late June, the team returns to Kalacha for the KARI/Marsabit field station annual review. We stay in several tourist bandas gracefully nestled among the doum palms that mark the spring. The ruffling (racket to some) of the palms I have come to associate with the oasis at night is interrupted by the yipping of a hyena, a voice that can agitate penned-up animals until they stampede.

Blustery wind and an overcast sky above the white sands give the following early morning landscape an oddly wintry cast. Could even the most brilliant of team scientists, operating with unlimited resources, devise technological alternatives approaching the complex of finely tuned resource management and cultural systems of the pastoralists who have survived and flourished in this impossible environment? No, they can only expand on it.

The traditional system included critical mechanisms for keeping population inline with carrying capacity. Though the more expansionary proclivities of cattle people contrast with the conservative strategies of the Rendille and Gabra, in the end the result was roughly the same:

small populations. But in modern Kenya, small populations mean social exclusion, the continuing post-*Uhuru* marginalisation of many northern and coastal communities.

Large-scale famine relief first appeared during the drought of 1971, and each successive *jilali* has quickened the rate of change and the number of pastoralists dropping out of the livestock economy. This time around, even the husky local camels are already dying, and the worst is yet to come.

Kenya's poorest districts are the ones where today's indigenous peoples were confined to ghettoes by *laissez faire* colonial policy. Our verdict: the problem is not so much environmental degradation as a lack of economic diversification. There are untapped resources in these remote regions, including nutrient-rich salt from the Chalbi, gum arabic, stunning landscapes for the high-end adventure tourist. But exploiting them has been constrained by a combination of poor infrastructure, restrictive laws, a lack of services, and the social prejudice engendered by separation. Isolation has bred war parties that roam the land with the unpredictability of rain-bearing clouds.

The trajectory of modernisation-for farmer, forager, fisherman, and herder alike-involves migration, settlement, and diversification of livelihood. As towns grow, degradation of the peri-urban fringe paves the way for expansion. Tree cover improves within the new pastoralist settlements even as it is denuded without. Tree planting, unless for generating future income, is unlikely to solve the environmental crisis.

The Borana recall two famines of decades past by the blueflies that swarmed over the cattle, both dead and alive. Perhaps the system-level impact of the *jilali*, underscoring the national crisis of planning and resource management, will be reforms that promote the comparative advantage of cultural diversity, like the Shungwayan example. Kenyans, despite some parties' best efforts to prove otherwise, are poor tribalists simply because, over the long-run, the environment selects against it. The drought has exposed the futility of petty local agendas.

Our landrover dies in the Chalbi night. A jury-rigged repair gets us moving again. A hyena slinks across the track as we approach Kargi, where we diagnose the problem-a faulty wire to the fuel pump. Two cheetah streak across the desert rocks as we approach Marsabit mountain in the early morning light. I see my first bluefly.

Note

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REVIEW ARTICLE

The State and Economic Reform in Africa

MICHAEL CHEGE

Carol Lancaster, 1999. *Aid to Africa: So Much To Do, So Little Done*. University of Chicago Press. 303pp. paper $22.00.

David L. Bevan, Paul Collier, Jan Willem Gunning, 1999. *The Political Economy of Poverty, Equity, and Growth: Nigeria and Indonesia*. 464pp. Oxford University Press. Out of Stock

Thandika Mkandawire and Charles Soludo, *Our Continent, Our Future : African Perspectives on Structural Adjustment*. Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa. 176pp. Hardcover $79.95

To go by the press, and according to many objective observers in Africa, the African continent is in deep, self-made trouble in multiple dimensions-mass poverty, wars, famines, corruption, ethno-linguistic fragmentation, the AIDS pandemic, dictators, even inability to utilize external donor money to cure itself.[1] The press is right but its explanations are often wrong and tendentious. So is a growing number of academic publications on the subject.

In a recent cover story of this genre, *The Economist*, often well-informed and judicious in its coverage of the region, declared Africa "the hopeless continent", at a level below the deplorable standards of "the dark continent" which was customarily entitled to the hope of light, at the very least. It traced the root source of the continent's chronic problems to a perverse all-African culture, a servile lack of self-confidence among Africans on which tyranny, disorder and corruption perpetually thrive. It would be fair to remind ourselves that there are forty six countries in Africa south of the Sahara, a region with the largest diversity of languages, cultures, and national economic performance in the whole world. If the sweeping generalizations now in vogue about Africans as a people were made about all Asians in continental Asia, the Jews, or the Americans, there would be a global outcry of unprecedented proportions. According to conventional wisdom in the new discipline of all-Africa catastrophe studies, however, the shocking human mutilations and senseless carnage of the Sierra Leone and Liberian warlords become symptomatic of "Africa" in a way the violence in Sri Lanka or the Khmer Rouge could never be typecast as an "Asian" political affliction. Yet so widely publicized and accepted has the notion of a pitifully homogenous, lachrymose Africa become that a vocal squad of African intellectuals has now thrown its weight behind it, the better to give an authentic native voice to the cultural perversity theories of their own societies. Their school of thought should recall, however, that whether in Africa or elsewhere, the sweeping cultural model has historically been a weak weapon in solving the intractable social and economic

http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v4/v4i3a4.pdf

problems of the sort Africa now faces. On the contrary it has often served as a handy tool for aggravating them, if not inventing them in the first place.

We owe to the late Thomas Kuhn the observation that the most spectacular breakthroughs in scientific knowledge originate from accumulating *anomalies*, starting always with a few, that are observed between conditions normally assumed to behave identically. Contradictions to the norm stimulate the formulation of superior paradigms that enable us to transcend a problematic present. The all-Africa catastrophe tradition, in contrast, denigrates any anomalies in the shape of African success which it encounters as trivial, few, foreign-made and inconsequential. But given the demonstrated potential of anomalies in advancing both scientific and social transformation, it would be as foolhardy to ignore them as it would be to deny African culpability in the continent's well-rehearsed litany of disasters--a favourite tactic of the "white imperialists" baiting African left. Thank heavens then for these three newly published books which deal with the vicissitudes of development policy-making and implementation in Africa. Not only are they exceedingly well-documented and authoritative in their analyses, they also courageously take on board the norm of failure, the successes, and the gray zone in-between. Our Continent, Our Future in particular deserves a special accolade. A truly refreshing product from two of Africa's most outstanding economists, it draws heavily from the research efforts of their African colleagues, a group seldom heard from in Africa's raging debates. Each in its own way, the books provide uncommonly fresh and persuasive explanations of variations in African economic performance between countries and over time. They also deal with the problematic relations between African development initiatives and external donors--yet another controversial headline story relevant to the elusive search for the cure of Africa's multiple problems.

By most informed accounts on the subject, the seeds of the mushrooming official development aid movement in the second half of the past century were planted unwittingly by the British Colonial Development Welfare Act of 1940. Designed to alleviate mass poverty and modernize economies in the then colonial world, the movement's administrative framework of choice was government-to-government financial assistance, complemented by the efforts of official multilateral institutions like the United Nations' specialized agencies, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. Although, in their infancy, these efforts earned a stern rebuke from a few critics like Lord Peter Bauer, an advocate of free enterprise and local initiatives as the ideal path out of third world poverty, aid programs multiplied through the years under the benign indifference of Western voters and a grudging acceptance by their third world beneficiaries. But after six decades of chequered expansion, that uneasy honeymoon is all but over.

In mid-April, over 10,000 demonstrators converged on the mecca of the global development business-the World Bank and the IMF in Washington DC-determined to shut down their normally sedate annual gathering of the world' finance ministers and central banks governors. Fired by the their successful routing of the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle in November 1999, the demonstrators berated the IMF and the World Bank for pandering to multinational corporations at the expanse of workers, funding environmentally disastrous projects, aggravating world poverty, and consorting with third world dictators. With specific reference to Africa, western finance ministries and the multilateral agencies were

accused of saddling the countries with huge debts whose repayment now made it impossible for African states to vaccinate and educate the sickly children, and to feed the hungry-an outcome the protestors have compared to slavery. Pope John Paul II, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a coalition of chief rabbis have demanded a debt moratorium for Africa. In fairness though, it should be pointed out that nobody forced the African governments to take the external loans at gunpoint. More than anybody else, they should take responsibility for the fact that despite receiving the highest amount of foreign grants and loans per capita of any region in the world--$26 in 1997, as compared to just $3 for South Asia and $13 for Latin America-Africa's quality of life on average has deteriorated whilst it shows guarded promise in other parts of the third world. Even then, donor agencies still need to be put in the dock to explain why they kept the financial spigots wide open, long after it had become clear that the gushing dollars mostly ended up in the African quicksand or in numbered Swiss accounts.

What went wrong? Anybody who is curios about the internal functioning of the multiple official aid agencies working in Africa should be directed immediately to Carol Lancaster's Aid to Africa, a thorough compendium and evaluation of who is who among Africa's external donors. Invoking Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, it concedes at the outset that the aid fraternity has a case to answer since there has been "so little done, such things to be." A former deputy head of the United States Agency of International Development, Lancaster ploughs through a vast amount of published sources and unpublished government documents, supplemented with oral interviews, to provide detailed portraits of the aid bureaucracies of Africa's top bilateral donors (the USA, France, Britain, Sweden, Italy and Japan), before turning the analytical spotlight to the leading multilateral agencies (the World Bank, the European Commission). In a rhythmic, if sometimes tedious pattern, the structure of each one of these institutions is laid out, followed by its goals, levels of its funding over time, a list of the target African states, concluding with lucid evaluations of the organizational capacity to deliver aid effectively and the reasons behind it. Overall, she finds that "aid itself has been relatively ineffective in Africa." The principal reason, she argues, can be traced to the inchoate nature of the aid bureaux, and their mission creep into all aspects of African societies, combined with insufficient understanding of the latter. Compared to their counterparts in Italy, the US and elsewhere, the denizens of Britain's Department of International Development should be pleased with the top ranking they receive for combining professionalism and effectiveness with intellect, give or take a few scandals like the Malaysia's Pergau dam in the Thatcher years. Lancaster attributes aid's failure primarily to political interference by Western governments as they seek to promote "non-development" goals like culture in case of France, the welfare state by Sweden, and cold war strategic interests by the US. Predictably, Aid to Africa makes a spirited case for politically-insulated, technically-oriented aid agencies dispensing funds-under mutual consultation--to the best achievers on the basis of merit. However, growing doubts about aid in Western legislatures, more open political systems in Africa, the massed ranks of street demonstrators and dissenting non-governmental organizations, and mistrust of the donors' mecca by religious leaders, will all ensure that the opposite happens: more, not less political involvement in aid policy-making and implementation.

In that regard, it is a pity that Lancaster omitted the shadowy and unaccountable IMF in her study-"a law unto itself" according to Harvard's Jeffrey Sachs. Though technically not a

donor, its economic "stabilization" programs in Africa are now blamed, among other things, for aggravating poverty, dissipating good projects, and undermining democracy. Mkandawire and Soludo share these sentiments, while *Nigeria and Indonesia* is a little kinder. Though censored for incapacity to formulate workable national economic programs, African states get off far too lightly, even as the three books demonstrate how quickly they gave the game away to the donors. Strikingly, Lancaster arrived independently at a conclusion similar to those of the much-praised 1998 World Bank study, *Assessing Aid: What Works, What Doesn't and Why*: since aid is "fungible" (usable anywhere), it should aim not just at promoting sound macro-economic policies and projects, but also at wall-to-wall institutional reforms from the rule of law, secure property rights, participatory decision-making and accountability-a solution which resembles democratic rule. This root and branch approach, much beloved of revolutionaries in human history, is but the latest unwitting admission of how central political reform is to economic development. As the new "comprehensive" reform paradigm now attempts to refine its practical strategy from the divine oracles of mathematical economics, African policy-makers and intellectuals should weigh the doubtful prospects of a democratic capitalist revolution by algebra.

Fortunately, there are compelling options on the policy menu, more inspiring than mathematics. Nigeria and Indonesia breaks from the econometric pack to provide a truly outstanding account of the anomaly between economic regress in Nigeria, and Indonesia's faster and more equitable growth between 1973 and 1990, using the comparative case study method which has largely disappeared from economics. In fact the book is part of a new World Bank publications series, intended to discover what reform policy lessons can be gained from the divergent national economic experiences between states which otherwise share broad similarities. Nigeria and Indonesia are large, multiethnic, agricultural yet oil-rich economies with long traditions of military rule. Until the 1997 Asian financial crisis, ribald, jokes were made comparing Indonesia's "functional" corruption with the self-destructive variety pursued by Nigerians. This book should disabuse anyone who believed in them. In highly intricate detail, it shows that although the initial economic conditions slightly favoured Indonesia, both states were for years prey to corrupt elites, wrong-headed economic nationalism, faltering commitment to liberalization, and sterile domestic factional conflicts. But while successive Nigerian governments failed to learn lessons from this, Indonesia made a clean break with the past between the 1973 oil boom and Mexico's default in 1982, courtesy of an unprecedented alliance between enlightened technocrats, the army, foreign investors, and powerful civilians. That almost accidental constellation of events, the authors hint, shows that large scale social transformation is subject to human choice, and that given current levels of technical knowledge it can occur in relatively short periods-in the case of Indonesia a mere twenty years. This should open a window of opportunity to the now problem-ridden Olusegun Obasanjo government in Nigeria. Whatever happens there, this book-a product of threes scholars associated with Oxford University's Center for the Study of African Economies--should be required reading for the Nigerian government, and for anyone else desirous of turning Africa's most populous country around at this, its greatest hour of need.

Part of the now controversial debts to Africa were incurred to finance the most expensive external "technical advice" per loan dollar ever given, and of the type Nigeria may be told it

now needs, given Indonesia's experience. But the research output of the twenty five African economists which informed *Our Continent, Our Future* should be cited as evidence that plenty of the technocratic talent for turning African economies around may be already at hand. Nigeria and Indonesia considers that true of Nigeria. Mkandawire and Soludo deplore any "paternalistic and contemptuous" attitudes to African technocratic talent, and proceed to demonstrate the need for case-specific remedies for a continent as diverse as Africa, without once shying away from the catastrophic conditions that afflict large parts of the region. While fully acknowledging the domestic origins of Africa's economic regress after the 1980 oil crisis, the book juxtaposes that experience with the more positive one between 1965 and 1975. Though not problem free, the earlier phase witnessed rapid growth, more local savings, and an expansion of education and health services under the tutelage of more effective African governments than we observe now. The book contains a stinging rebuttal of the World Bank's now defunct structural adjustment programs, an accessory to the regress that befell Africa after the 1980s, and concludes with a clarion call for African elites to begin the reconstruction of effective and broadly legitimate states, which an African market-led recovery now so desperately needs.

That of course will be easier said than done. The ideas of a state accountable to the governed, based on separation of powers and the respect of private property are essentially Lockean in origin. In practice they take diverse institutional forms. How to match them to specific African conditions is now the key challenge. Indonesia's current political problems ought to serve as a salutary warning that tolerating a fragile political constitution of dubious legitimacy can ruin the best results of any economic "miracle". Throughout the pages of these three remarkable books, the ideals of governmental reforms for Africa are presented primarily in formulaic and narrow technical terms. In line with that, the World Bank office in Kenya (and elsewhere) was in mid-2000 underwriting "governance" reforms for accountability, corruption prevention, better commercial laws, and an efficient executive branch---all this with an autocratic ruling party which would not countenance growing public pressure for a broad-based constitutional review. As they watch all this, the ghosts of the 1940 Colonial Welfare Act must surely feel tickled, knowing all too well how an anti-Lockean nationalism in the 1950s ruined their best laid plans and ultimately led to the havoc which the press is now reporting on Africa.

REVIEW ARTICLE

Justice and Morality in South Africa

DAVID R. PENNA

James Cochrane, John de Gruchy and Stephen Martin, eds. 1999. *Facing the Truth: South African Faith Communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. Athens:Ohio University Press. 238pp. paper $18.95.

Kenneth S. Broun. 2000. *Black Lawyers, White Courts: The Soul of South African Law*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 286pp. cloth $45.00; paper $19.95.

Almost a decade after apartheid began its death throes, South Africans are still considering the perversion of values and, at least implicitly, the consequences that survivors must pay almost daily at the turn of the millenium. Disparities in wealth, unequal ownership of land, and a rising tide of crime are the most visible and policy-related impacts of apartheid. The books under review, while touching upon some aspects of policy, address much more directly (and quirkily) the psychological and intellectual legacy of the South African past.

Facing the Truth confronts the role of "faith communities" during the apartheid era. The book's point of departure is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) hearings on this subject. The Introduction, written by the editors, a short historical and intellectual background to the issue and to the hearings, provides a rich summary of many of the themes to follow. Next comes the Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa's "Faith Communities and Apartheid." The Institute's report (largely written by one of the editors), which is the largest and most comprehensive contribution in the volume, is evidently intended to provoke reflection by the rest of the contributors. The report defines, describes, and attempts to evaluate the role of faith communities under apartheid. The report contends that faith communities should have been "prophetic" in denouncing apartheid and should have taken positive actions to resist apartheid. It evaluates the actions, omission, and reports of the various faith communities to the TRC very critically. The report itself is copiously documented with more than 300 footnotes and is written from a critical perspective that does not attempt to exonerate any faith community.

The rest of the contributions come from a variety of analytical perspectives, and most consider the roles of differing religious traditions. Most contributions assume the reader possesses a fairly thorough background in South Africa's constellation of religious traditions and organizations. But if one is not familiar with the Dutch Reformed Church, the Zion Christian Church, African Initiated Churches, the South African Council of Churches or the

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Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society, one should not choose this volume-it does not waste time giving background on these organizations.

Most of the contributions struggle with a similar set of issues-how to understand or evaluate the role of specific faith traditions during the apartheid era; how to evaluate the submissions (or lack thereof) by various faith communities to the TRC; how to achieve reconciliation in a post-apartheid society. While many of the contributions are necessarily abstract, a few ably illustrate the relevance of this debate for individuals. Striking is Carl Niehaus' description of meeting his torturer in post-apartheid society. An evidently genuinely sorrowful policeman called Niehaus out of the blue and asked to meet him to ask for forgiveness. Niehaus realizes that the torturer was also a victim of apartheid, taken in by an evil ideology and indoctrinated by a church that seemed to accept such actions as moral since they were done in defense of "Christian civilization." Niehaus admits that he has not yet forgiven the man, although he is trying. This, among other things, leads Niehaus to wonder if religion has much to offer to the reconciliation process in South Africa.

Other interesting contributions include Tinyiko Sam Maluleke's critical evaluation of the TRC from the perspective of a black theologian. This might strike one as initially confusing, since the TRC is headed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Further, the absence of the majority of the victims from the process threatens to result in their silencing if the TRC production of its narrative report is effectively equated with reconciliation. According to Maluleke, the experiences of the majority of apartheid's victims will become devalued if this is allowed to occur.

Equally interesting is Robin M. Petersen's consideration of African Initiated Churches such as the Zion Christian Church (ZCC). During the anti-apartheid struggle, many people within the movement looked down on churches such as the ZCC because they refused to engage in political resistance or criticism of the government. The churches professed an apolitical stance but were seen as giving aid and comfort to the apartheid state by interacting with various government structures and leaders. Petersen explains that criticism of the ZCC's refusal to admit any guilt to the TRC comes from a fundamental misunderstanding of the ZCC's theological perspective. Petersen suggests that the ZCC's focus on creating self-reliant individuals who would "refuse to be hurt" was a profound act of resistance. What mainstream churches and activists saw as disengagement and neutrality toward government, the ZCC saw as an act of empowerment.

While this book draws no conclusions about the role of faith communities in apartheid or in the reconciliation process, it issues a call for reflection and dialogue. It successfully presents a variety of perspectives and benefit those who have an interest in the reconciliation process in South Africa; however, it will not be very accessible to those lacking a prior understanding of the South African faith communities.

In contrast, Kenneth Broun's Black Lawyers, White Courts is accessible to both those outside of the legal profession and those with only a passing familiarity with South African events. At times, those with some background in the history of South Africa may feel that Broun includes too much basic information throughout the excerpts. In the early chapters this sometimes disrupted the flow of the interviews, but by the second half of the book the

intrusions are more limited. Overall, the book reads very well although Broun could have more clearly delineated the format in his Preface.

This interesting volume is based on interviews with twenty-seven prominent non-white lawyers who practiced law under the apartheid regime. Many of them were significant actors in the anti-apartheid movement and several are government officials in the post-apartheid government. The arrangement of the book is very unorthodox: two chapters, Chapters 1 and 12, are complete interviews with two lawyers; chapters 2 through 11 are organized around themes (Bantu education; university; starting practice, etc.) and contain excerpts of interviews with the other 25 lawyers. Broun provides background information about the interviewees and weaves the various excerpts together by providing perspective on the experiences of the lawyers and making comparisons to other interviewees.

Broun's book provides a rich description of the indignities imposed by both petty and grand apartheid: separate tables for non-white counsel in the courtroom; the inability to officially share office space among barristers from different racial backgrounds; the lack of a "colored" break room forcing a non-white barrister to eat a packed lunch rather than enjoying tea with his colleagues; the difficulty of meeting clients or investigating cases when contacts needed to cross racial lines; the attempt of a white secretary to force an African female lawyer to stop using the "white" ladies room. There were the unofficial attitudinal barriers as well: clients, judges, and colleagues who did not think non-white lawyers could be as competent as white ones; the difficulty of becoming an apprentice in exclusively white firms; the psychological impact of being the only non-white in an otherwise all-white firm. Of course, there are also stories of how all of these lawyers overcame the everyday challenges faced by all non-white South Africans during apartheid: an inferior educational system; poverty (at least in most cases); lack of housing; arbitrary arrest and imprisonment.

While the structure of the book seems unconventional, one of its effects is to more emotionally involve the reader in the last few chapters, where one discovers the experiences of the interviewees in post-apartheid South Africa. Several have served in political or judicial positions, and others have established profitable practices, suggesting that the tribulations of the early years have been recompensed-at least almost. Broun uses this as a nice transition to the chapter on Dullah Ohmar, who became Minister of Justice and is in charge of the process of creating a non-racial system of justice for the new South Africa. Broun and several interviewees note that the apartheid system had fostered an unusual respect for law, allowing black lawyers to win important cases even when police or the government had not followed the letter of the law. This respect for law, along with the introduction of constitutionalism, suggests that there may be some basis for hope in the new South Africa. On the other hand, there are many judges and lawyers who benefited from (and continue to benefit from) the old system of apartheid. Additionally, there is the problem of equalizing access to justice. The new South African legal system must provide representation for what is still a mostly poor black majority.

Broun draws upon these experiences to offer a few observations. He notes, for example, that one characteristic most of these lawyers shared was coming from families where education was valued. Indeed, many of these lawyers had at least one parent who was a teacher. Further, most lawyers saw the legal profession as a way not simply of bettering their own lives, but the lives of all non-whites in South Africa. Broun notes that all the interviewees were people of

extraordinary intelligence, but it is clear from the interviews that they were also people of extraordinary courage.

Both of the books under review here offer us glimmers of hope for the new South Africa, yet both are sobering. Both contain astonishingly frank accounts of the injustice and immorality of the old system. Yet both books recognize that there are significant obstacles on the road ahead. How can faith communities who abdicated or misused their prophetic role under apartheid be seen as moral authorities after apartheid? How can a justice system that countenanced the unjust brutalization of the majority of the population be seen as an instrument of justice in a new millenium? Of course, control of these institutions is changing, even if slowly, and that will help. But the bigger question remains: can these societal institutions help contribute to the genuine reconciliation that South Africa needs to emerge from the shadow of apartheid? Niehaus, at the end of his contribution entitled "Reconciliation in South Africa: Is Religion Relevant?" suggests that perhaps the best that can be hoped for is individuals "struggling sympathetically" rather than any institution offering answers. It is also certainly true that law alone will not lead to reconciliation in South Africa. Any law, for example, that ratifies economic inequalities built up under apartheid is likely to be seen as unjust by the majority of the population. Any law that attempts to abruptly equalize wealth is likely to be seen as oppression of the minority. All such attempts (and there certainly must be attempts) can only succeed if they are understood by every sector of the population. Such understanding can only be the by-product of a genuine reconciliation which has yet to occur. Both of these books suggest that we might only be at the beginning of such a process of achieving justice in South Africa.

BOOK REVIEWS

Africa's New Leaders: Democracy or State Reconstruction? Marina Ottaway. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999. viii + 138 pp. paper: $10.95.

Africa's New Leaders is almost certainly the most authoritative study yet published on this subject. It is also far more significant than its brevity suggests. A critique of the politics of rising expectations, régime survival, and structural change in the 1990s, its analytic frame rests on two main pillars. One is modernization theory, at least its still-fashionable assumptions in US policy and NGO circles regarding the promotion of Western-style democracy in different climes. The other concerns structural spin-offs from Cold War's end, in particular opportunities for autonomous initiatives by new-generation state élites in Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaïre). The study's focal puzzles are no less clear. How did five of Africa's most prominent new "élites of means" seek to reconcile their régimes' military antecedents and weak social institutionalization with heightened expectations for government openness, political accountability, and economic reform? Are these leaders veritable agents of social transformation, or pragmatic tacticians seeking to reinvent - and put their own imprints on - the respective states? How had fundamental principles and incremental process blended under these régimes, and how did this effect state-society relations?

Ottaway's answers are expressed in original, accessible language, although few will fail to notice pointed similarities with modernization discourse of the 1950s and 1960s. New-generation leaders, she argues, are not politically chaste or ideologically naïve. Rather they are well-honed tacticians who rejected the "failed policies of their predecessors" and are willing to challenge the global order, promote new identities and interests, and "devise new strategies to overcome old problems" (pp. 1, 10, 83, 106, 110, 126). No exemplars of transformation (p. 5), all except Kabila have had the institutional landscape "unusually" inclined in their favor (p. 14). They also symbolize some craving for change best understood through a combination of empirical and interpretive methods. Hence, Africa's New Leaders does straddle policy and academic analysis. It probably will not excite readers seeking elegant engagement with theory, detailed documentation of sources, or an index. Surely, however, it offers down-to-earth lessons to Africa watchers - policy experts, aid managers, democracy activists, scholars.

The leaders' collective record, Ottaway concludes, has been mixed. In real terms "new-generation" rhetoric and praxis had differed very little from the founding fathers' (pp. 8-9). Yet the cases have varied significantly: Uganda, Ethiopia, and Eritrea stand far above Rwanda and the Congo in attainment. Ottaway herself doubts whether Laurent Kabila fits in the group élan (p. 13, 92-3) as others have doubted Ugandan President Museveni's putative grandfather status. Factors shaping differentiation within the bloc have included the character of domestic social

forces, the leader's personal rôle and régime leverage, and how the mix has shaped constructions of political and economic reform on domestic and international levels.

As the 1990s dawned, several African dictators saw power slip through their fingers. With local pressure for change reaching new heights, some of Africa's tyrants lost their once-gilded thrones. Successor régimes in turn courted groups and élites less beholden to foreign powers and more inclined to unorthodox methods, including force (pp. 10-2, 112, 126). Thus there was the emergence of "African solutions to African problems," a troubleshooting quasi-strategy that has met the leaders' propensity for forceful self-assertion without undermining the West's interests (pp. 115-6). For example, military intervention in the Sudan and in Zaïre not only showed how resolute the new régimes could be, but both adventures also hinted at some pro qui pro with US interests in the region and an all-too-easy blurring of principle and exigency in their policy processes (pp. 108-13).

The domestic arenas have been more convoluted still. All five societies were in some "protracted turmoil" (p. 10) through the 1980s. The leaders' bequests were institutionally bankrupt estates with high ratios of liabilities to assets. Little surprise then that the first overriding public priority was to restore or establish minimum conditions of collective existence - productive infrastructure, traditions of civil life, effective authority structures, and mechanisms for conciliation and participation. All this Ottaway calls "democratic capital," incorporating Putman's social capital (p. 13). Without plentiful supplies of it, she argues, periodic elections, competing political parties, independent media, free market economy, the attributes of democracy beloved of US policy and Western NGOs, are likely to accentuate pre-existing ethnic, religious, and social divisions in society, at least in the short term (p. 124). Better an unfashionable transition agenda then perdition by indiscretion!

Here lies the case for "sequencing of reforms" (p. 133), a re-affirmation of conventional wisdom on the "crisis of adaptation" in Africa. Such discourse had peaked coincidentally with "political order" in the 1970s, prompting the debate as to whether economic development and political liberalization should be pursued (and achieved?) one at a time before or after each other, hardly in tandem. In theory, a phased transition does offer a promising, "steady as she goes" process. In the hands of politically insecure state élites, however, it has long helped to reinforce self-serving experiments from colonial indirect rule to Uhuru and Ujamaa. Such paradigms proliferated in Africa through the 1970s, occasioning neither political liberalization nor economic development but near-total collapse that necessitated the structural adjustment programs during the 1980s. In this circumstance, the either-or format of the study's sub-themes, Democracy or State Reconstruction, may have, in effect, lent scholarly credence to the leaders' self-legitimizing platforms. At this stage some might ask what is new about the new leaders - apart from the delusions of élite cycles and vitriolic criticism of international actors. Others simply will murmur déjà vu in cynical resignation!

Ottaway's goal, it seems, is not so much to advance the leaders' claims. It is rather to show how unrealistic and insensitive to sub-optimal African conditions US policymakers and NGOs have been in pushing democratic reforms (p. 105). The "development first, democracy later" strategy is fraught with risks; Uganda, Ethiopia, and Eritrea's leaders, Ottaway asserts, admitted that, "if their present policies are successful, they will have to be modified radically in the future" (p. 9). This need not make them closet despots in the eyes of donors and opposition figures. But progress on the transient frame is not democracy either, only further confirmation

that the transition to democracy cannot begin in these societies until after "basic problems… are resolved to some degree" (pp. 12, 130). What constitutes "some degree" is open to interpretation. It is also open to abuse by wily rulers; but so too is precipitate unleashing of competitive elections and market forces on societies just emerging from long-running conflict. In this frame, Ottaway's innocuous realpolitik meets scholarly endeavor. Western donors and activists need to rethink their paradigms lest they become irrelevant (p. 5); leaders who had shown "much less concern for the final outcome" of their policies (p. 9) deserve the benefit of the doubt nonetheless (p. 9). Yet, because arbitrary reversals and even re-traditionalization are real possibilities, today's incremental choices might well be building blocks for tomorrow's personal or small-group empires (p. 130). So where are the new-generation régimes headed?

There are no definitive answers, only pointers. Economic restructuring was high on the agenda; production had improved dramatically in all cases except the Congo. Policy reform, including deregulation, decentralization, and privatization had proceeded apace, more intensely in Uganda and Ethiopia than in Rwanda and Eritrea. Some pluralism has emerged in Uganda and Ethiopia (pp. 120-1); moreover, Ugandan NGOs have been more receptive to incremental change than opposition parties (pp. 40, 44). Étatism has remained Eritrea's favored strategy (pp. 57-8), while Rwanda has prevaricated, and Kabila's Congo has slipped into virtual paralysis. In all cases, a ghoulish fear of the recent past has dominated popular imaginations nonetheless, fueled in part by official discourse (pp. 89, 128-9). As a result, domestic opposition has been ineffectual, or driven to embrace self-defeating measures, from obdurate insistence on principles through election boycotts to armed attacks on régime symbols (p. 120). The populace also seemed quiescent, keeping (or kept) well away from matters substantive as state-led mobilization subsumed popular participation (pp. 26, 43-5, 53, 79, 88) and rulers tried out new and not-so-new mechanisms constructed in their personal or small-group images (pp. 27, 118, 126).

Africa's New Leaders is strongly recommended, as much for its authoritative analysis as for its wider import. The study bears out several general lessons. First, to the extent that gaps between expectations and social reality are proverbial in institution-building the world over, the euphoria of the 1990s most certainly reflected dissatisfaction with ousted régimes rather than with the potential of the new. Second, new leaders' seeming rejection of institutional perspectives in favor of "everyday approaches" is far from realistic. While institutions themselves do not make social change any more feasible, change is not sustainable at all without institutions. Progress has been slow in these cases partly because of the leaders' high personal stakes in possible outcomes. If developmental states are almost always ruler-friendly, then opportunities to construct new mechanisms in situations of near-zero institutionalization must promise abundant payoffs, including variants of gerrymandering. Africa's new state élites have yet to face the challenge of creating an environment that includes all publics and encourages the growth of productive debate and countervailing viewpoints. The well-worn game of doing one thing at a time, although convenient, has merely postponed doomsday time and again, providing justification for sit-tight leaders of all hues. It is far too costly in the long term.

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North Africa in Transition: State, Society, and Economic Transformation in the 1990s. Yahia H. Zoubir (ed.). Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999. 299pp. Cloth: $ 59.95.

Yahia H. Zoubir has compiled a fine collection of essays about developments in North Africa in the 1990s. Although this collection of essays represents a variety of viewpoints, some even contradicting the others, the stress is always on the social, political, and economic explanations for developments in North Africa. In the Anglo-American academy, North Africa has not received much attention and, as such, the literature on the region lacks depth. By making use of his personal connections, Zoubir has elicited contributions for this book from the well-known scholars of Maghreb, adding to literature on this underrepresented region. While the focus of this book is North Africa, Algeria gets more coverage than other countries of the region, perhaps due to the Algerian focus of the editor himself.

The book is divided into three parts. The first five chapters in part one address economic and political developments in the Maghreb. In particular, the authors try to account for the failure of the "development phenomenon" in the Maghreb. Pointing to constant political instability in Maghrebi states, the authors place the reason for this failure at the feet of a weak civil society with constant repression from above. While Henry Clement's chapter involves a dialectical exposition on the development of civil society in the Maghreb as a whole, Zoubir, Layachi, King, and Deeb focus on the development of civil society in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya, respectively. Both Zoubir and Layachi deal with the changes arising out of economic liberalization, and predict a bright future for civil society. With a comparative focus on East Asian cases, King attempts to account for the failure of Tunisia in fulfilling "Western expectations" (p. 61). In the case of Libya, Deeb advances a well-rounded argument that the health of the Libyan economy, in spite of oil revenues, remains fragile. All this is set to lead towards a conflict-filled transition if and when Qadaffi's rule comes to an end.

The second part of the book deals with more specific issues in the Maghreb. Claire Spencer cautions policy-oriented researchers to pay more heed to the history and diversity of Maghreb in their research, which she argues is focused heavily on Islam at the expense of other socio-cultural explanations. In the following two chapters, Mohammad Azzi and Yocef Bounandel deal with the topics of youth and human rights in the Maghreb, respectively. Azzi examines the prevalence of alienation among the youth, who form the majority-approaching seventy to eighty percent-of the unemployed in the Maghrebian countries. A worsening socioeconomic situation, according to Azzi, leaves the Maghrebian youths with violence as the only medium of expression. According to Bounandel, the worsening socioeconomic conditions over the last decade are also responsible for the worsening human rights situation in the Maghreb, although Morocco is an exception to this secular trend.

International pressure has proven especially important in bringing about improvement in the human rights situation in Maghreb. Francophone intellectuals in Maghreb, who have raised

human rights issues repeatedly, have not fared well in their own societies. This, according to Geesay, could be accounted for by the colonial baggage of the French language, which is viewed with mistrust by the Maghrebians. Nora Colton examines the emerging markets in Maghreb, and prescribes cautious liberalization because of the unpredictable political ramifications of speedy liberalization. Robert Mortimer rounds off the second part of the book by examining the rise and eventual decline of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), which he blames on the tensions between Algeria and Morocco over the Western Sahara.

The last four chapters are more or less in the field of security policy studies, with the first two-by Youbir and Volman-tackling the issue at the Maghrebian level, while the rest concentrate on the international level beyond the shores of the Mediterranean. Youbir's chapter on the geopolitics of the Saharan conflict, which has been a bone of contention between Algeria and Morocco, reveals that although France and the United States support the Moroccan position, Spain still supports the Saharawi people because of its historic guilt over not addressing demands for Saharawi self-determination. Following this, Volman looks at the military expenditure in Maghreb, which at this moment favors Algeria over Morocco, because of its oil and gas revenue receipts.

In the last two chapters, the authors deal with US policy in the Maghreb (Zoubir and Zunes) and the European Union's policy toward the Maghreb (Joffe). Zoubir and Zunes examination of the US policy orientation toward different members of the Maghreb finds a policy that, although mindful of the longtime friendship with Morocco, singularly emphasizes economic liberalization. They also notice that the US is moving to lessen the hegemony of France in the region. Lastly, George Joffe provides a well-rounded chapter on European Union policy toward the Maghreb, focused on economic issues at the expense of political and security issues. Although the EU agenda toward the Maghreb is mainly driven by Spain and France, of late Germany and Britain have started making their presence felt.

Although this is a fine collection and the editor has received significant participation of authors from the Maghreb, there is a paucity of references to Arabic sources. There is also a neglect of the cultural issues in explaining the events of the last ten years, which have been fostered mainly by the Islamic opposition challenge. Although the authors do address the issue of the international dimensions of the Maghrebian issues, there is no systemic treatment of how the Maghreb fits into global capitalism. Finally, even though women authored four of the chapters, there is no specific piece devoted to the roles of women in the Maghreb.

This being said, I would not hesitate to recommend this book to a wide variety of audiences. There is something here for all interested parties.

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Success and Failures of Microbusiness Owners in Africa: A Psychological Approach. Michael Frese (ed.). Westport: Quorum Books, 2000. Pp. 203. Cloth $59.95.

Which factors make for entrepreneurial success or failure in Africa's microbusinesses? Who do you ask and where do you go for answers? The authors of Success and Failures went into African cities to observe and interview microbusiness owners. They talked to real people enmeshed in the daily grind of survival, impregnated with the uncertainty of success and failure in a precarious business environment. Altogether five studies were conducted in Zambia, Uganda, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

The studies focused on two broad sets of factors that influence microbusiness success: psychological and socio-demographic factors. Psychological factors include entrepreneurial orientation, personal initiatives, innovativeness, proactiveness, planning strategies, and motivation of employees. Some of the socio-demographic factors include the age of the business, unemployment as the reason for start-up, employment of family members, and education. By investigating both of these aspects, the authors show that psychological variables are the better predictors of microbusiness performance. Frese and his collaborators challenge many stereotypes about microbusiness owners in Africa. For instance, they discovered that employing family members does not necessarily decrease success. The authors advise policy makers and researchers alike to pay more attention to psychological factors than the typical socio-demographic factors that have usually received more attention from governments, donors, and researchers.

The psychological factors identified in this book really amount to plain old management. This reveals a basic and commonly made observation: microenterprise owners in Africa need management skills. The authors are simply saying that owners who have applied some management principles (planning, goal setting, employee motivation, competitive analysis, etc.,) are more likely to succeed than their counterparts who have not recognized that management works. The researchers examine how thoughts, ideas, and attitudes regulate and control management actions. Their investigations reveal that psychological strategies (i.e., management techniques) are used when they are compatible with the personality characteristics of the owner and environmental constraints (resources and restrictions).

From this finding the authors argue that it is possible to find people with the "right" personality who are likely to succeed in entrepreneurial ventures. They advocate that training, selection, and support systems ought to be put in place to ensure that persons with the identified psychological factors are nurtured to success from adolesence. There are serious problems with this view. Advising African states to go beyond setting up proper economic and legal frameworks to selecting the "right" persons to succeed seems very unpalatable. Second, administering a test to ferret out who will succeed or fail is not in the spirit of competitive capitalism. This idea admittedly comes from the failed policies of communism. The authors state that "Many countries, particularly the early socialist ones (even poor ones), have used an early selection approach of high potentials in the areas of sports and music. Thus, often four-or-five-year-old children were selected in competitions and offered unique training opportunities in special schools. We think a similar model can be used in the areas of entrepreneurship" (p. 187). It is important to identify teenagers with high potentials in entrepreneurship, but this

should be left to parents and the market. Government and public institutions should not use taxpayer money to give privileged access to resources and skills.

There is yet another problem with the advice offered here. These scholars unfortunately "psychologise" the whole development process in Africa. No doubt it is important to understand the actions and motivations of entrepreneurs, but it is more important to understand the historicity, institutional framework, and dynamics of social forces in Africa. To sever entrepreneurs from the specificities of Africa's colonial and postcolonial experience places undue weight on psychological matters instead of the concrete socio-political conditions that have primarily fueled development efforts.

At this point, what is needed in Africa is a balanced approach to tackling the recalcitrant problem of underdevelopment, not another scholarly perspective or tantalizing tool. Psychology can help us formulate policies for the ubiquitous informal sector, but it is wrong to over-emphasize this in defiance of the logic and dynamics of social forces.

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Free Speech in Traditional Society: The Cultural Foundations of Communication in Contemporary Ghana. Kwesi Yankah. Accra: Ghana Universities Press (distributed by ABC Ltd, Oxford, UK), 1998. Pp 46. Paper $8.50.

Kwesi Yankah's 1997 inaugural lecture at the University of Ghana raises the question of how African structures and norms of communication have coped with European intervention. He asks,

"Are modern notions of free speech, free press, free expression which are already operative in our post-colonial regulative institutions, compatible with communicative norms and social structures in traditional society?"(p. 3).

Yankah identifies and describes the norms, modes, and functions of speech in pre-colonial Akan society, from instruments connected with speech (such as talking drums and the linguistic staff carried by the chief's orator) to forms and modalities (verbal taboo, silence, indirection, and open critique). All of these, according to Yankah, demonstrate the existence of a wide latitude for expressive freedom in pre-colonial Akan and other African societies.

Against this background, Yankah discusses the consequences of colonial intervention and new media such as print and radio which arose from and reflected the socio-economic system of capitalism. When introduced into Akan and other societies, these new media complicated the relationship between free speech and appropriate cultural behaviour. Although Africans were capable of both adopting and resisting the foreign systems, genuine tensions emerged, which remain today.

To illustrate his point, Yankah cites conflicts between leaders and the media in contemporary Ghana and, by extension, other parts of Africa. He highlights the problems of keeping inherited cultural communicative norms in the face of these new developments

resulting from European intervention. In pre-colonial African society, norms and parameters guided free speech, but European institutions and media forms destabilized these parameters. As a solution, Yankah suggests that the indigenous cultural norms need to recognize and adapt to certain exigencies of contemporary reality, such as electronic media and radio. Those involved in contemporary media and its institutions need to study and pay attention to the indigenous cultural norms.

In terms of identifying and describing the resources and modalities of speech in pre-colonial Africa, Yankah's book is very useful. His theoretical framework, however, is rather conventional, if not unhelpful. He sees Africa in terms of a dualism between "traditional" and "modern" and associates "modernity" with "western." This framework, well-entrenched in African studies, is very problematic, to say the least. Do we need this Eurocentric perspective, which categorizes pre-colonial African societies as traditional and equates modernization with "western" influence? Is there no African modernity? Did Africans sit still for millennia waiting for Europeans to come and modernize them? There must be a better way of theorizing the notions of tradition, traditional, modern, and modernity.

Each cultural institution, object, and practice must be seen as the result of many forces and processes. In every society, there were rebels and critics who challenged the norms; there were people who disobeyed, questioned, mocked, or ignored tradition; there were also pioneers. All these were the forces of change from within. Even such a "traditional" figure as the chief's orator, whose office and paraphernalia Yankah considers as having been there from time immemorial, has not been static (p. 9).

Another common error in African studies which also appears in Yankah's book is generalizing about Africa on the basis of a specific African society. Again and again, scholars of Africa study a culture -- Yoruba for example -- and then write as if Yoruba and African were synonymous. Since his study focuses on Akan society, Yankah needs to maintain that focus consistently and never confuse Akan with African, as he does occasionally.

The failure to theorize afresh the notions of traditional and modern, or at least to realize the essentially neo-colonial ways in which these terms are used in relation to Africa, is the chief weakness of Yankah's book. This problem runs throughout the book to the very end. This problem aside, Yankah's book is very informative. It covers a broad range of issues and has a bibliography valuable for further study. This book is suitable for any library.

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Traditional African Names. Jonathan Musere. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2000. 400 pp. Cloth $65.

Until the publication of this book, it was extremely difficult to find any volume that collects and defines the meanings of African names in English. Africa is a diverse continent with many cultures, traditions, and languages. Names are part and parcel of all African traditions, and

virtually every African indigenous name has a distinct meaning or connotation. While it would be next to impossible to compile a comprehensive thesaurus of all African names, let alone their synonyms, this book compiles about 6,000 names from central, eastern, and southern African countries, such as Burundi, Congo-Kinshasa, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Although the compilation of African names is not entirely a new phenomenon, what distinguishes this book from previous ones is its simplicity in name descriptions and definitions. This volume looks at the in-depth meanings of indigenous as well as adopted African names. African personal names have multitudinous functions such as the association of one's occupation, habits, or personality. Many African names emanate from one's ancestry through clan, ethnic/tribal, or religious affiliation. Names can also be commemorative of ancient wars and conquests. Since most of these names emanate from the "Bantuphone" region of east, central and southern Africa, it is not uncommon for many of them to have a similar meaning, albeit different pronunciations. A word such as Muntu connotes a person, but actually it is derived from the common linguistic descent of people in this region. It is therefore not surprising that the word "ntu" is common among most ethnic groups in this region and carries the same meaning. For example, a word such as "Gahungu," which denotes a small or young boy, has a similar connotation amongst the Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa ethnic groups of Rwanda and Burundi.

The author also includes new African words that have been adopted from Western political and cultural contexts. For example, the word "Democracy" in most African contexts is pronounced as "Demokrasi." Like other African names given to people during a certain historical phenomenon, this word has been given to some newborns during the current democratic struggle on the continent.

The alphabetical listings of these names as well as the book's well-prepared index will be very helpful to those that are not familiar with African appellations. This book is highly recommended for scholars and students of African anthropology, linguistics, literature, history, and politics, as well as anyone interested in learning more about an important aspect of African culture.

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Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation. John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. Pp. 455. Cloth: $35.00.

Runaway Slaves addresses the still widely held belief that, in the slave system of the United States of America, "slaves were generally content, that racial violence on the plantation was an aberration, and that the few who ran away struck out for the Promised Land in the North or Canada" (p. xv). Throughout *Runaway Slaves*, John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger stress that the majority of slaves in the United States fought the system and their white oppressors. Moreover, they lived under constant threats of physical and mental violence and were

conditioned to respond in kind. Furthermore, slaves ran away in great numbers, and when they ran they did not necessarily go North. In fact, they more often ran to places where they had relatives or loved ones.

The book is well-organized, with chapters describing everyday acts of rebellion, reasons for running, how they tried to keep their families together, their reasons for becoming violent, how they planned escapes, and where and how they hid. Moreover, the book details how the slaveholders hunted fugitives, what happened to the slaves once they were taken back into bondage, and how the slaveholders attempted to manage their human property. The authors attach seven appendices, including advertisements, petitions, tables of locations and destinations of runaways, and examples of correspondence. Almost one hundred pages of notes detail the sources.

Franklin and Schweninger undertake a detailed analysis of hundreds of newspaper articles, advertisements, and court documents in order to establish many of the "facts" of life in slavery, as well as a foundation for the tenor of relations between blacks and whites. Their analysis of these documents addresses a gap in contemporary scholarship on slavery, which has focused on slave narratives, diaries of slave planters, and plantation records. In fact, the authors assert that newspapers and court documents have their own "unique strengths" as primary source materials. For instance, masters advertising for the return of their runaways "had little reason to misinform their readers and every reason to be as precise as possible" (p. 295). They gave graphic physical descriptions of the runaways and their known connections around the country. Moreover, court petitioners suing for release from slavery "realized that it behooved them to be as forthright and candid as possible" (p. 295). These petitioners often had nothing to hide, because all the community knew their circumstances; furthermore, presenting the facts in graphic detail could possibly sway the verdict their way. Therefore, contemporary white notions of slaves and black resistance to slavery are well-represented in these documents.

The bits and pieces of stories that the authors put together from the fragments of newspaper clippings and runaway notices are remarkable. This technique, however, can be a bit confusing when several different notices or runaways are mentioned in the same paragraph. Moreover, the reader may become intrigued by the ways a particular slave rebelled and wish to know more about that particular individual. The downfall of writing from advertisements is that, in most cases, one never does know what happened to the person in question. This narrative angst, of course, only replicates to a small degree the terrible anxiety that the friends and family of the slave must have felt. For as Franklin and Schweninger make clear, slave families often did not know where their loved ones had fled. They also understood very well the penalties inflicted upon captured runaways. For example, slave owners often contracted professional slave catchers with dogs to chase their runaways. One plantation owner admitted to using such methods: the catcher's dogs treed the man and pulled him out of the tree. The owner then had the dogs bite "him badly, think[ing] he will stay home a while" (p. 161).

In addition to detailing the reasons and the methods of those who ran, the authors "seek to analyze the motives and responses of the slaveholding class and other whites" (p. xv). To this end, they have detailed the owners' announcements about runaways, their rewards for apprehending the slaves, and their discussions of the tribulations that pursuing the runaways caused. The results of this analysis are telling. Masters were often incensed that trusted slaves

ran away without "any unjust or injurious treatment" and they would pursue those slaves until the time and expense became overwhelming (p. 169).

Franklin and Schweninger have done a thorough job reading runaway advertisements and court cases "against the grain" to determine the possible reasons why the slaves ran away and committed other crimes. For instance, they claim that "fear, anxiety, retaliation, frustration, anger, and hatred propelled slaves toward violence" (p. 79). When slaves ran, they often took more of their owner's property than just themselves. The owners described every item stolen. One runaway called Jerry took with him "a 'considerable quantity' of clothes, 'an aged sorrel horse,' a pistol, and eighty dollars in cash" (p. 145). A slave named Sam left wearing "a green frock coat with a black velvet collar, blue pants, a high-crown black hat; he carried with him a black leather trunk containing a variety of other clothing, including a reddish frock coat with a velvet collar, a green cloth coat and a white hat" (p. 80). What this detailing makes clear is the slaves' understanding that anything preventing them from acquiring material and intellectual resources was the basis of their continued enslavement. When they absconded, they took some of the materials that could help make them free.

Runaway Slaves does well in discounting the popular myth that slaves were docile and cowered in the face of white oppression. In fact, as Franklin and Schweninger show, a great deal of violence was inflicted upon slaves, and the slaves reacted in kind. The authors establish that "most of the violence was spontaneous, and most of it was directed against whites-owners, members of the owner's family, overseers" (p. 77). In nearly every Southern state, slaves were indicted for killing their owners or members of their owner's family. For this reason in particular, *Runaway Slaves* is a valuable resource for undergraduate courses dealing with slavery, as undergraduates often come to this subject with "romantic, Gone with the Wind" notions of the peculiar institution. Moreover, the authors cite all the primary sources they use, making this book a valuable resource for those interested in archival research on slave narratives, slave codes, and African American history.

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Women of the Sahel. 1995. Directed by Paolo Quaregna and Mahamane Souleymane, 52 minutes. Distributor: First Run/Icarus Films. 52 minutes / Color / Sale/video: $390; Rental/video: $75

This documentary presents women of Niger and the range of activities in which they engage to make a living. The video's title evokes Niger's geographical location, namely the Sahel region of West Africa. Niger's economy is based on herding, agriculture, and mining. The industrial sector is extremely small and people in salaried employment counted only about 150,000 out of a population of eight million when the film was made in 1995. As a result, women -- as well as men -- look to the so-called "informal sector" to generate cash. In the course of the film, its directors take the viewer on a journey across Niger, demonstrating the vital roles

women play in supporting themselves and their families. They do not dwell on the fact that most, if not all, of the women presented are Muslims, but it is noteworthy in light of the popular images of Islam in the United States. The women in the video provide a good counterpoint to prevailing stereotypes.

The journey begins in Gaya, a town on the banks of the Niger river close to the border with Benin and Nigeria. The narrator introduces "Mamou", who heads a busy household while her husband works as a truck driver. The filmmakers show how she takes advantage of available opportunities. In a peanut-producing area, but with no field of her own, she buys groundnuts in the market and turns them into oil and snacks; she purchases fish and fries them for sale; and she occasionally travels to Benin to buy goods for resale locally.

For enjoyment, Mamou still participates in rehearsals of the local dance troupe, although she has stopped going on tour with it as a singer. The narrator's explanations in English language voice-over are interspersed with Mamou's own commentary on what she is doing. Her words, spoken in Hausa, appear as subtitles in English. In like manner, the viewer encounters women in other parts of the country who extract and process salt from the soil; dig up gypsum and transform it into plaster; weave brightly-colored mats, or make pottery to sell to traders or leather products to sell at the local craft center.

The emphasis throughout is on women's activities, but ethnicity also is highlighted in the last segment dealing with Tuareg women. The comparison that is drawn here between "Tuareg women [that] are not exhausted by hard physical work ... [and] other women in the Sahel" implicitly resurrects colonial distinctions between the "noble" nomads and sedentary folk dulled by hard labor. It also ties labor to ethnicity rather than to class or social hierarchy. The statement that "[for Tuareg women] there is a great freedom of expression [in] celebrating births and marriages" reinforces this impression and glosses over the fact that women of nearly all ethnic backgrounds also celebrate life cycle events through dance and other forms of artistic expression.

Placed in the context of Women's Studies, the video uses a "women's roles" approach to the subject matter. This means that women's activities are presented and their contributions highlighted with no more than passing reference to gender relations and the wider political economy of which they are a part. Cooperatives are mentioned in several instances but their benefits and problems, the impetus behind their creation, or their relationships to local household and community structures are never seriously discussed. In spite of these criticisms, the video is suitable for use in a range of classrooms (e.g. women's studies, introduction to Africa, economic anthropology) at the secondary school and college levels and is a welcome addition to the available audiovisual resources on the subregion.

Instructors and students interested in complimentary readings may wish to consult: Marriage in Maradi: Gender and Culture in a Hausa Society in Niger, 1900-1989 by Barbara Cooper (1997); The Poetics and Politics of Tuareg Aging: Life Course and Personal Destiny in Niger by Susan J. Rasmussen (1997); Historical Dictionary of Niger by Samuel Decalo (1997).

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