

BOOK REVIEWS

Development for Health: Selected Articles from Development in Practice. Deborah Eade, ed. Published by Oxfam Publications (UK and Ireland), and Humanities Press International, 1997, 111 pp., paper \$15.

Health related behavior is defined broadly to encompass all activities that have a significant effect on health care utilization and health care delivery (including culture, social behavior, expenditures, and health policies). This Oxfam publication is based on material originally published in *Development and Health*, a journal devoted to health and developmental issues.

Practitioners and policy makers involved in health promotion or interested in the study of health behavior will find this book very helpful as it provides useful information about the pitfalls and constraints to be taken into account in health promotion policies, especially in developing societies. At the same time, the book offers the reader sufficient information about the social, cultural, and behavioral determinants of the health of women in developing societies. Most importantly, the book presents several aspects of health as seen through the lens of the social and health worker.

The book begins with a survey of the methodological issues relevant to the study of women's health and moves to a discussion of the factors that constrain or inhibit health utilization. Throughout the book, the articles draw the reader's attention to how macro level issues (such as Structural Adjustment Policies) can affect the cost of care as well as the utilization of health care services among poor women.

Another interesting aspect of the book is its concern with mental and psychosocial health issues, a subject infrequently discussed in the discourse about health care in developing societies. For instance, in the article "The Psychosocial Effects of Conflict in the Third World", Derek Summerfield asks a few interesting questions about the relationship between population processes such as migration (forced or voluntary) and mental health. What are the health consequences of post-traumatic stress syndrome on people from the third world? How have the various wars and conflicts prevalent in the developing world for the past three decades affected the lives of these people? Similar issues are articulated by Patel et al. who argue that mental health issues are genuine areas for research, and for intervention programs.

Sundari Ravindran's chapter on "Methodological Issues in Women's Health Research" provides a framework that considers the interaction between social, economic, political, and cultural factors in applied health status research, and in health utilization.

Anne LaFond's piece, "Deterrents to Immunization in Somalia: A Mother's Attitudes", is an important contribution to the literature on child survivorship. The question asked here revolves

<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v2/v2i1reviews.pdf>

around the best way to provide intervention strategies aimed at the health needs of young children. In this regard, LaFond draws on her experience in Somalia to alert program administrators in the developing world of the need to consider the structural and social constraints in existence in these societies since they can impede the acceptance of new ideas/innovations.

One of the interesting chapters in the book is Betsy Hartman's "Population Control in the New World Order." Hartman examines the population control movement and how its activities can affect basic human rights, especially the rights of women. She argues interestingly that with the end of the Cold War, there has been a shift in ideology from military expenditures to population control. The latter, she argues, has been refurbished and polished with feminist and environmental themes and marketed with the latest means of communication. In the North, the current emphasis is on immigration control, while in the South, efforts are geared to using what she refers to as "double-speak" (choice, female empowerment, environmental concerns, etc.) in discussing the population question in the developing world. Yet, in their attempts to reduce high birth rates in the developing world, Hartman argues that the advocates of population control have failed to consider the factors that determine the demand for children in the first place: increased infant mortality levels, the labor needs of agrarian societies, as well as the limited economic opportunities in these societies. While Hartman does not negate the need for contraception, she argues that the way planning is implemented undermines the health systems and targets women unfairly. Thus, to her, blaming poverty and environmental degradation, a typical Malthusian conception of population vis-à-vis development, obscures the real cause of the global population crisis--the inequities inherent in the socio-economic systems whereby resources are concentrated in the hands of a few.

The impact of AIDS is considered from the perspectives of changing gender and social relations. In "Widowhood and Orphans: Property Disputes in Rakai District, Uganda", Chris Roys informs the reader of some of the consequences of Africa's AIDS epidemic in relation to property and inheritance rights. While the issue of property rights and succession is one of the social problems facing many African societies, Roys argues that in the case of Rakai, the problems have been accentuated by the AIDS virus in that region of Uganda. In part, the problems derive from the early morbidity and mortality linked to the AIDS epidemic. Yet Roys suggests that there is the need to look at the main cause of the conflict between family members on property rights. The clan system, which is patrilineal and makes it difficult for women to inherit property, is seen as at the root of the "inheritance debacle" in Rakai. The empowerment of women, especially economic self sufficiency and changes in the laws of inheritance, are expected to help women in this regard.

Hillary Hughes's article on "Evaluating HIV/AIDS Programs" examines ways to assess a successful intervention program. She argues that a successful program often depends on the level of organization already in existence in the community as well as the involvement of the community. In this way, not only would knowledge of the existence of the disease be beneficial, but it would encourage "local content" and participation.

The list of references and the annotated bibliography is extensive and should be useful for a wide range of people--absolute beginners, health care workers involved in capacity building, and people with experience but little formal training in health promotion planning or

evaluation. I would not hesitate in recommending this book to anybody with an interest in health evaluation and program planning in the developing world.

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Encyclopedia of Pre-colonial Africa: Archeology, History, Languages, Culture, and Environments. Joseph o. Vogel, ed. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, A Division of Sage Publication, 1997, 605 pp., cloth \$124.95.

Joseph Vogel's edited volume is a welcome compendium of topics on pre-colonial Africa. It brings together an impressive array of authors, topics, and ideas that will allow the book to serve as a reference for those needing to venture outside their specializations on Africa. African history can suffer from the same problem that other colonized areas experience in the minds of many, that is the assumption that its history starts with colonialism because a comparative abundance of records from that era exists. This volume, then, serves the wider purpose of bringing, in an easily accessible way, some balance to this problem. The encyclopedia format is useful, not so much for ease of reference, but for the shorter pieces contained in the volume, allowing a much more amplified breadth than would otherwise be possible.

After a fairly comprehensive introduction, the book is organized into five sections dealing with African environments, histories of research, technology, people and agriculture, and the prehistory of Africa. Regrettably, the shortest section is on African environments. It covers an enormous range of time and space in too few pages. Given the large interest in various disciplinary communities with the type and extent of vegetation zones existing prior to recorded history, it is surprising that this topic is given such short treatment.

The section on histories of research contains, among others, pieces on the history of archeology in several regions, historiography in Africa, and a history of the search for human origins. It is largely about the individuals, institutions, and trends involved in African archeology, and seems a bit out of place with the other largely descriptive sections. Apart from those specifically interested in the discipline of archeology and the popular ramifications of archeological finds, this section may be of limited interest to the general reader. The subsequent sections on archeology itself, however, are the real meat and utility of the volume. With extremely limited existing documentation on pre-colonial Africa, it is archeology that must locate and interpret the available evidence on a wide range of topics--and this appears to be the driving idea behind the book.

The section on technology is quite good and is a very informative introduction to the ways in which human groups come to utilize aspects of the environment to make a living. The presentation style in a number of the pieces of mixing specific information regarding place, dates, and finds together with interpretations is especially appealing. Figure 14 in the section on

copper metallurgy could have been done with a little more care, however, as some of the political boundaries appear problematic, e.g., Somali-land, Western Sahara, Eritrea, Namibia.

The section on people and culture is longer than the previous sections and contains sub-sections on languages, forager lifeways, pastoral lifeways, farming lifeways, and ethno-archeology. While these topics are spatially distinct, both between and within lifeways, the only two maps in this section pertain to West African languages. Nevertheless, this section provides the reader with an important glimpse into the use of the environment by different groups in different regions.

The final section on the prehistory of Africa is the largest, comprising almost half of the book. It contains sub-sections on the emergence of humanity, first footsteps in Africa, advanced foragers, rock art, the ceramic late stone age, beginnings of food production, iron age, social complexity, trade and commerce, and historical archeology. The detail here is quite good, descriptive, and explanatory without being overly technical. In fact, the introductory, explanatory tone of the book is one of its hallmarks, and reveals a well thought-out-project. With a book of this breadth, it would be the rare reader who would be able to wade through technical language on so many fronts. The utility of this section is twofold: (1) as a treatment of humans in pre-colonial Africa; and (2) as a treatment of the early evolution of humans in general. In this regard, this final section will make the volume of interest to classes and scholars of human evolution, in addition to Africanists.

Graphically, there is a good selection of maps and charts, but most impressive is the large array of "rock art" reproductions. The analysis and interpretation of this art, in various sub-sections, is quite intriguing, with effective linkages made between culture and environment. This is a vast part of the book, virtually a volume on its own; its treatment of land use, political, economic, and cultural aspects of African development will be of wide interest.

Each of the ninety-four entries in the book (by almost as many authors) includes a short bibliography to get the interested reader started. The index is large and well done, enhancing the reference function of the volume. While the volume will be a significant addition to the shelves of Africanists, ecologists, and anthropologists, the price is fairly intimidating for the undergraduate, which clearly many, if not most, of the pieces were written for.

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Sol Plaatje: Selected Writings. Brian Willan, ed. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1997, 483pp., paper \$29.95.

Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje (1876-1932) was one of the foremost African leaders of his generation in South Africa. As the first general secretary of the African National Congress (ANC), founded in 1912, Plaatje was a prominent political spokesperson, interacting regularly with government officials and other leading whites in both South Africa and Great Britain.

Plaatje was much more than a political figure, however. Prior to the formation of the ANC, he was a court interpreter at Mafeking, where he became caught up in the famous siege during the Anglo-Boer War (1). After the war he became editor of two successive newspapers, *Koranta ea Bechoana* (Bechuana Gazette) and *Tsala ea Bechoana* (The Friend of the Bechuana), both published in Setswana and English. As one of the band of pioneering African newspaper editors, he viewed his role as that of a "mouthpiece" for his people. It was this role that brought him to prominence and led to his selection as ANC general secretary.

Plaatje was a significant writer. His political tract, *Native Life in South Africa* (2), was an angry denunciation of the 1913 Natives' Land Act. The first sentence is perhaps one of the hardest hitting political statements in South African history: "Awaking on Friday morning, June 20, 1913, the South African Native found himself, not actually a slave, but a pariah in the land of his birth" (Document 52, p. 186). His writing was not limited to political developments, however, for in the same year he published *Native Life*, he also published a book of Tswana proverbs in both the original language and in translation (3). Later in life, Plaatje increasingly turned his attention to literary pursuits, translating Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Much Ado about Nothing* into Tswana (4). Plaatje also wrote the first novel in English by a black South African, *Mhudi: An Epic of South African Native Life a Hundred Years Ago* (5). It is not surprising, then, that such a wealth of written material by such an important early political and literary figure in the history of African nationalism in South Africa would lead to an edition of his *Selected Writings* within three years of the electoral triumph of the party which he helped found.

Brian Willan is the natural editor for Plaatje's work, since he has not only written the authoritative biography of Plaatje (6), but also assisted in editing Plaatje's *Mafeking Diary*. The organization of *Selected Writings* is very much along the lines of the biography. Indeed, Willan utilized most of the material in the *Selected Writings* in preparing the biography. Part One deals with the Mafeking siege and Plaatje's editorship up to the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, which is covered in Chapters Four through Six of the biography. As the title for Part One implies ("All we claim is our just dues"), this was an era when African political leaders were seeking, in the words of a Plaatje editorial in the 20 April 1904 issue of the *Bechuana Gazette*, "equal rights for all civilized men" (Document 27, pp. 86-87).

Part Two, 1910-1923, covers the same ground as Chapters Seven through Twelve of the biography. Here the emphasis is on Plaatje as a political leader, as suggested by the section's title, "Champion for the cause of our peoples." Among the key themes are the fight against the 1913 Natives' Land Act, Plaatje's representation of African interests in England during the First World War, and his 1920-22 trip to Canada and the United States to foster ties with African-Americans. The third and final part of the book covers the period 1924-32 (Chapters Thirteen through Sixteen in the biography) and focuses on Plaatje's career as "A pioneer in literature." While documents relating to the Sechuana Proverbs (Document 54) and to his *A Sechuana Reader in International Phonetic Orthography* (7) (Document 55) appear in part Two, Part Three is where the bulk of the material for this facet of Plaatje's life is to be found.

As one would expect, *Selected Writings* contains excerpts from Plaatje's major published works, including the *Mafeking Diary* (Document One), *Native Life in South Africa* (Document 52), *Mhudi* (Document 98), *Diphosho-posho* (Comedy of Errors) (Document 95), and others, including

publications noted above, for a total of nine documents. Since these excerpts are readily available elsewhere, they are not as unique and useful as are the remaining ninety-five selections. The most numerous of these are forty-eight articles and editorials from the newspapers Plaatje edited and articles published principally in the English-language press over the course of his life. That newspapers such as the *Cape Argus*, the *Cape Times*, and the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* regularly published pieces by Plaatje suggests the respect accorded to his views by at least some leading English-speaking white South Africans. There are also thirty-three letters in the collection written to white officials and politicians, business leaders, personal contacts, fellow Africans, and others. Four manuscripts are also part of this collection, including a 1908/09 piece entitled "The Essential Interpreter" (Document 10). Willan drew heavily on this document in his biography (8) to illustrate the critical role of African court interpreters to the functioning of colonial administration and also to show Plaatje's implicit belief in the fairness of the Cape Colony's judicial system. Rounding off the collection are two pamphlets, two transcripts of interviews, three speeches/addresses, and three documents categorized as "other." All of these documents are English-language originals. If there is a significant shortcoming to the book, it is that Willan does not provide translations of any documents that originally appeared in Setswana, although the columns of Plaatje's newspapers contain plenty of this type of material.

Sol Plaatje today is the best known member of the founding generation of the African National Congress. In large part this is due to his prolific writing. John L. Dube, the first president of the ANC, was also a newspaper editor, but the range, scope, and diversity of his writing was far more limited than that of Plaatje. Plaatje had an original and fertile mind, and was able to express himself extremely well in both English and Setswana, as his highly capable translations of Shakespeare demonstrate. The appearance of his *Selected Writings* serves further to enhance his well-deserved reputation as one of the foremost South Africans of his era.

1. He kept a diary during the siege, which was published more than seven decades later. Sol T. Plaatje, *Mafeking Diary: A Black Man's View of a White Man's War*, edited by John Comoroff (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1973).
2. London: P.S. King and Co., 1916; new edition, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1995)
3. Sol T. Plaatje, *Sechuana Proverbs with Literal Translations and their European Equivalents* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Trubner, 1916).
4. Two of the translated plays were published: *Diposho-phoso* (Comedy of Errors) (Moriya: Morija Printing Works, 1930), and *Dintshontsho tsa bo-Juliuse Kesara* (Julius Caesar) (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1937).
5. Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1930; new edition, with an Introduction by T.J. Couzens, London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1978; new edition, with an Introduction by Tony Voss, Johannesburg: Ad. Donder, 1989).
6. Brian Willan, Sol Plaatje: *South African Nationalist, 1876-1932* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
7. D. Jones and S.T. Plaatje, *A Sechuana Reader in International Phonetic Orthography* (with English translations) (London: University of London Press, 1916; repub. Farnborough, Hants: Gregg International Publishers, 1970).

8. Willan, Sol Plaatje, pp. 68-70.

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Physicians, Colonial Racism, and Diaspora in West Africa. Adell Patton, Jr. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996. 343pp., cloth \$49.95.

The author is a medical doctor with Pan-Africanist concerns for the development of medical science and practice in Africa. He decided to write a social history of medicine in West Africa during the 19th and early 20th centuries. It appears that his initial aim was to employ the theory of professionalization--training and certification, corporate patronage, inter- and intra-professional conflicts, code of ethics, unionization--to analyze the growth of the profession. The bulk of the material that came his way, however, was biographical, and the dominant issue was colonial racism as a factor in the training and professional careers of generations of modern scientific doctors in West Africa. Patton has documented examples rather than analyze the history and nature of colonial racism. Moreover, he has not dealt with the history, let alone the social history, of the profession as such. As a result, many interesting issues have been raised but not followed up in-depth which would be too formidable a task within the scope of a single monograph.

After an overview of "African Physicians in Time Perspective", Patton has a chapter entitled "The Medical Profession in Africa from Ancient Times to 1800" touching on medical practice in Ancient Egypt and in Islamic West Africa (Timbuktu and Songhai), but no material on medical practice in non-Islamic West Africa. For example, in a later chapter he points out without explanation that while some Europeans claimed they could not allow African doctors (all male at the time) to examine their wives, African women initiated into Poro Society in the Sierra Leone hinterland also refused to allow African doctors to examine them unless they also had been initiated. Patton touches once or twice on the role of "the scientific public" in the advancement of science. He concludes that "Traditional institutions whose authority rested on claims of a privileged access to secret knowledge lost their stature in the judgement of an enlightened public informed by the rise of professionalism" (p. 253), but this is an issue he cannot explore without going into the practice of medicine in non-Islamic West Africa.

Thus, the volume has the flavor of an amateur, with a love for anecdotal history, attempting to include every bit of available information. The copy-editing and proof-reading leave a lot to be desired, but this should not be allowed to obscure the serious intention and achievement of the book. Patton's book achieves some focus on the African physicians "who pioneered the constantly changing frontiers in the modern medical profession", at least in Sierra Leone. In particular, he assembled information on the remarkable Easmon family: their Nova Scotian origins; their partial descent from the McCormacks of Ireland and the Smiths of Yorkshire; their Creole network of intermarriages with "the Smiths, the Spilsburys, the Hebrons,

the Awooner-Renners, Coleridge-Taylors, the Lumpkins, the Wrights, the Hunters, the Randalls and Casely-Hayfords--in Sierra Leone, Gambia, the Gold Coast and Nigeria" (p.162), not to mention their "common-law relatives in the Sierra Leone hinterland" (p193). Training doctors involved a diaspora in itself as they had to go abroad, seeking opportunities wherever the prevalent racism would allow--in England, Scotland, the US, Canada, Germany and, later, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. It is the diaspora of the Easmons, however, that receives systematic attention.

Patton attempt to categorize the contribution of the different schools of medicine to the evolving pattern of medical education in West Africa. In particular, the medical schools at Ibadan and Accra followed the British pattern of general medicine and surgery, with specialization, controlled by professional groups outside the universities, coming at the post-graduate level. It was the impact of the products of the Soviet system that encouraged specialization as part of the basic training.

The racism that dominated the professional careers and struggles of the physicians was not a colonial invention. It was there at the beginning when William Ferguson arrived in Freetown from the West Indies. The high rate of European mortality, however, made it possible for him--in spite of the racism--to rise to the top and become Governor of the colony. Racism also encouraged the development of the Freetown Grammar School and Fourah Bay College, in addition to the training of medical students at government expense. It made possible such careers as that of John Farrell Easmon who qualified MRCS in 1879, went to practice medicine in the Gold Coast in 1880, and became Chief Medical Officer in 1896 at the age of 40. That was why, when the more general use of quinine had reduced the mortality rate, racism became institutionalized in the West African Medical Staff which specifically excluded those of African descent, even the Easmons who claimed to be partially of European descent. The experience was traumatic. John Farrell Easmon was removed in 1897 and ordered out of his residence, which probably contributed to his early death in 1900 at the age of 44.

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Picturing Bushmen: The Denver African Expedition of 1925. Robert J. Gordon. Athens OH, Ohio University Press, 1997, 325pp., cloth \$44.95, paper \$24.95.

With clear, readable prose, Robert Gordon pierces the smug detachment of academics who hold themselves blameless in perpetuating harmful stereotypes. He maintains that anthropologists, environmentalists, and other academics have a vested interest in perpetuating images of bushmen that play to middle class fantasies. Underlining that academics are as much products of their "environment" as any charter flight pleasure seeker, he notes that much research arises from the preconceived theories and needs of the researcher. Moreover, to remain viable, most academics define their results in ways that hold the interest of a larger audience.

Breaking down the division between traveler and tourist, consumer and scientist, Gordon demonstrates that many commonly held conceptions of bushmen grew out of the needs of the highly industrialized populations of the United States and Europe. He does this by analyzing the success of the Denver African expedition of 1925. Hoping to bring renown and fame to their city, Denver businessmen financed the expedition in the midst of a public fascination with human origins. In addition, then, as now, the American public had a particular fascination with technology. For the Denver expedition, one of the most important components of this new technology was the camera.

The photographs, films, articles, and well placed academic road shows of the Denver African Expedition helped to transform the European image of bushmen from "the lowest type of human being" to noble savage (p.61). At the heart of the creation of the new wild bushmen were questions of technology, knowledge, and power. Photographs and films made it possible to "picture bushmen" and sell the image to the more affluent. Through them, bushmen became a focus for the fantasies of the more mechanized and urbanized parts of the world. Gordon emphasizes the link between bushmen and nature for both the white South African soldiers of the 1990's and the white men of the 1920's. As these groups felt more and more ensnared by machines and unsure of their role in a rapidly changing society, bushman fantasies allowed them to dream of a time of freedom in which hunter/warriors had the power to take action and reshape their own relatively simple world (p.131).

While aesthetically appealing photos and films allowed the audience to consider their fantasies fact rather than fiction, burgeoning consumerism created a market for "exotic" people and their products. This, in turn, caught the attention of the colonial authorities within Namibia. Besides the income generated by the sale of curios to foreigners, interest in bushmen also attracted tourists and potential settlers from nearby South Africa. Furthermore, the new image of bushmen served to pacify the local settler population. According to Gordon, the new "tamer" image of the wild bushman "halted the imaginations of the rather unsettled settlers--those who believed that bushmen were cannibals and other nightmarish ghouls; it contributed to the self-pacification of the settlers by visually claiming a potentially troublesome environment" (p. 116). Ultimately, the image of the peaceful simple bushman became so entrenched that apartheid authorities of the 1950's and 1960's used it to receive good international publicity even as they forcibly removed the Hei/omn bushmen from their land.

In Namibia, control of technology allowed those in positions of economic dominance to perpetuate interpretations of reality that helped them maintain their position. Within this context, it is not the photos and films themselves that are troublesome. In fact, the Denver expedition could not have taken these photographs without the collaboration of the Hei/omn bushmen who, in exchange, often used them to gain access to international assistance (p.138). It is the inability of those who posed for the photographs to shape their interpretation in the larger world that poses an important ethical question for Gordon. He states, "Fairy tales almost always have happy endings, but the Denver expedition case demonstrates how we can impose our fairy tales upon people and force them, for their survival to conform to our story line. . . . My concern is to question the ethicality of the spectator having the power to define the structure of remembrance and the voyeuristic quality of much of what is defined as 'knowledge of the past'" (p.134).

During the 1920's, efforts to popularize knowledge brought "scientific" information to the masses and carried them away to far off places. At the same time, improved transport and greater affluence made pleasure travel more possible for Europeans and Americans. The Denver African Expedition took place at a moment in time when western consumer society had acquired the technological power to visualize and place demands on the "others" that they have imagined. In *Picturing Bushmen*, Robert Gordon asks what that means for them and for us.

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Transculturation and Resistance in Lusophone African Narrative. Phyllis Peres. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1997, 168pp., cloth \$39.95.

As a result of the turmoil that has engulfed the former Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique, both prior to and following independence, and the recent efforts to forge a major bond that would include Portugal and Brazil among them, scholarly interest in Lusophone Africa has heightened over the last decade. Phyllis Peres's work underscores this recent trend and adds to the emerging literature of the area.

Centered primarily on four Angolan literary giants of the 1960's-1990's--Luandino Vieira, Uanhenga Xitu, Pepetela (Artur Mauricio Carlos Pestana dos Santos), and Manuel Rui--this work brings into focus the tradition of resistance to colonialism among the most distinguished Angolan humanists, and their ideas (or "imagination") regarding what liberated and independent Angola ought to have been socially, culturally, and politically. The underlying theme shared by the four was their hope that Angola would emerge democratic, free of strife, and capable of creating a unique identity. Peres states, "Writers ... who emerged from the nationalist struggle in Angola produced both poetry and fiction that did indeed negate colonial identity, but more relevant to this study, they also participated in the textualization of an Angolan nation, or perhaps more aptly phrased, Angolan nationness" (p.vii).

As such, therefore, this work is a political and social history of Angola during the last three decades as viewed and expressed by some of the most important Angolan writers. Yet, the enthusiastic "imagining" of a peaceful, proud, democratic, and culturally unique Angola was flawed with ethnic misunderstandings, poisoned by contradictory theoretical underpinnings and practical realities (e.g., Marxism versus capitalism), and retarded by the personal ambitions of the country's leaders. As a result, this uneven national panorama led to dispute and civil war, undemocratic governance, and despair--the nemesis of the nationalistic hope of most Angolan poets and fiction writers.

In spite of its clearly market-driven deceiving title (which gives the impression that the focus is Lusophone Africa when, in fact, it is narrowly Angolan--comparable to a drop of water in the sea of Lusophone African literary creation), Peres's work nonetheless is outstanding as it attests to the author's penetrating insights and her superb analytical skills regarding the

Angolan literary movement. Indeed, Peres succeeds in placing the four Angolan writers squarely in the context of the Angolan nationalist movement.

I hope Professor Peres will continue her work along these lines and venture into comparative studies of Lusophone African literature to discern either a common or a diverse but unique thread within the textualized aspirations of the pre- and post-nationalist independence movements in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, and Sao Tome e Principe. As it stands, the work at hand is of great importance to those scholars interested in understanding the nature of the former Portuguese colonies and the obstacles they faced during their journey toward liberation and nationhood.

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