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'We Want to Belong to Our Roots and We Want to be Modern People': New Farmers, Old Claims Around Lake Mutirikwi, Southern Zimbabwe[1]

JOOST FONTEIN

Abstract: Based on fieldwork carried out between June 2005 and July 2006, this paper questions common assertions which suggest that recent 'fast track' land reform in Zimbabwe did not fit with local understandings of land tenure. While fast track land reform was not officially planned as a form of 'land restitution', in Masvingo District members of different local clans who occupied areas of state land, earlier resettlement schemes or were allocated plots on resettled farms around Lake Mutirikwi, often made very specific claims to land which appealed to autochthonous knowledge of the landscape, invoking memories of past occupations and the burial of ancestors in the land. Such claims were reinforced by the official 'return' of the powers of chiefs over resettlement areas and often sat uneasily next to both the increasing participation of technocratic government planning departments such as AREX (Agricultural Research and Extension), and the waning authority of war veterans who initially spearheaded the land occupations of 2000. Dealing with contemporary events in the monumental presence of a large modern dam built under colonial rule in the 1960s, and set in the context of ZANU PF's revived, if severely narrowed, discourse of anti-colonial nationalist fervour and sovereignty, this case study points to the complexity of what has often been over-simplistically characterised as 'Zimbabwe's authoritarian turn', highlighting how for some 'new farmers' and others in the Masvingo area, fast track land reform was understood as a response to older, lingering imaginations of, and localised aspirations for, postcolonial stateness and 'modernity' in Zimbabwe.

Introduction

Gore rino ndinoda kusadza GMB nechibage changu!
[This year I want to fill up the Grain Marketing Board with my own maize!]
('New Farmer', Masvingo District)[2]

But in terms of the broader vision, I have to stress that I think this land reform programme is one of the most wonderful programmes for a third world country to embark upon…

JF - So you are actually very optimistic?

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Yes I am optimistic. I think it is a great thing for a third world country, it really is.
(Chief Lands Officer, Masvingo Province)[3]

You asked me right at the beginning what were the major changes that I have seen since the 1970s up to now, and I said that at independence that was when there were very dramatic changes in what had been going on in agricultural development and extension. But now, having had our conversation … I think that even the period we are going through now is one of profound … change. It is a very exciting period, especially in terms of land tenure, there have been very dramatic changes… Since the 1980s there were not many changes in land tenure, but then all of a sudden in 2000 there was this revolution, which has thrown up all sorts of new challenges for development agencies in this field. And some of us we need to have a paradigm shift in the way that we do things.
(Provincial AREX Officer, Masvingo Province) [4]

One remarkable feature of the comments above, which were made to me during fieldwork around Lake Mutirikwi in Masvingo district in southern Zimbabwe between June 2005 and July 2006, is the sense of optimism they convey. This optimism and enthusiasm, which was carried in the words and actions of many people involved in very different ways in Zimbabwe's recent land reform in that area at that time, is remarkable not only in the face of the huge volume of national and international criticism that has been levied at Zimbabwe's dramatic agrarian reform programme, but also in the context of the very severe economic, environmental, social and political problems which have faced the country and nearly everyone in it, including 'new farmers', in recent years.[5] It is well known that accompanying fast track land reform in 2000, there emerged a new brand of "authoritarian nationalism", which has involved an increasingly "extreme and violent political intolerance" of any perceived opposition to the ruling party, continuing economic decline, very high unemployment, and in May/June of 2005, a grossly disproportionate government attack on the informal economy and urban housing, all of which has been punctuated by several controversial and hard-fought elections (2000, 2002, 2005, and most recently March and June 2008, which witnessed the most extreme political violence in Zimbabwe since the 1980s), and ever more restrictive legislation on citizenship, the media and NGOs.[6] In addition to all of this, Zimbabwe has been terribly affected by the AIDS catastrophe, with thousands dying every week, and more recently, amid failing urban infrastructure and health services, a cholera epidemic that had infected 60,000 and killed over 3000 people by the end of January 2009.[7] Finally, between 2001 and 2005, much of the country experienced a series of severe droughts which dramatically exacerbated existing food shortages and hunger, and undermined, even among some apparent loyalists, enthusiasm for the government's land reform programme. By the time of the combined local, parliamentary and presidential elections of March 2008, these concerns had reached such a crescendo that even in ZANU PF's rural strongholds support was beginning to dwindle, and a few prominent politicians, 'new farmers' and war veterans across the country, including in the Masvingo area, renounced their support for the ruling ZANU PF party in favour of independent candidates or even Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC.[8]

In this broader context, one could wonder what the apparent optimism that I noted in 2005-2006 was all about, and an immediate answer may relate to the point above about drought and hunger, given that the 2005-2006 rainy season was, in much of the country, plentiful and

promising of good harvests.[9] A similar point is soil fertility and the productive potential of land on the resettled farms. Mafuma Mutsambwa, who came from communal areas in Zaka – "where the soil is now very poor"- to take up land on a resettled farm along Mutare road in February 2000, exclaimed there would be no need to use fertiliser on his land – "not for a hundred years!"- so good was the soil.[10] Rain, soil fertility and good harvests are important, but I think there was more to it than that. To adequately consider the origins of this optimism requires, it seems to me, careful ethnographic reflection on the overlapping and interacting trajectories of individual memories and aspirations within a context of shared, changing visions of a local, national, and even international future. This includes what we could call imaginations of, or aspirations for, what a good, functioning postcolonial, even 'modern', state is, could, or should be; or in Ferguson's words, the "expectations of modernity" that both people and states engage with and foster.[11] And here is the focus of this paper; to explore the complex entanglement of different, sometimes contested but often overlapping, aspirations for land, with broader imaginations of postcolonial stateness as they were manifest in the realisation of land reform around Lake Mutirikwi in southern Zimbabwe. In particular, the focus is on the way in which localised ideas and practises of landscape, livelihoods and the past were inevitably entangled with such contemporary discourses of the 'state' and 'modernity'.

Along with the mood of optimism that I came across in Masvingo district in late 2005, another often under reported aspect of land reform in Zimbabwe was the huge amount of hard physical work usually invested in resettlement plots and redistributed farms, which reflected importantly upon the individual commitment of the 'new farmers' concerned. There have been a lot of stories in both the national and the international independent press about poor take-up rates, abandoned plots and the underutilisation of resettled land, as well as poor farming techniques employed, the lack of agricultural knowledge, inputs and resources; and about cronyism, the corrupt allocation of A1 and A2 farms, and multiple farm ownership.[12] The government-owned press joined in these debates sometimes, although it has tended, not surprisingly, to emphasise success stories. It has taken an active part in a lively discourse surrounding resettled or 'new farmers', and began to publish a new, and obviously targeted, monthly magazine called the *New Farmer*. Less benign renderings of the label 'new farmer' for resettlement farmers, such as 'cell phone farmers,' or interestingly *varimi /varungu venhasi* [farmers/white people of today] appeared on the street, in muffled beer hall conversations and sometimes in the independent media, and point towards the dynamic and contrary nature of the ongoing conversation within the country about land reform. It is difficult to enter into this discussion without being shunted into one or other end of the polarised debate about 'Zimbabwe's crisis.'[13] Even academic observers have often found themselves trapped by the 'discursive divides' of this highly emotive and politicised debate, as was demonstrated again recently when Mamdani waded into the discussion.[14] Nevertheless, it is clear that for many new settlers, especially for poorer A1 farmers and their families (many of whom were landless peasants or from overcrowded communal areas), the experience of moving onto and establishing a farm on allocated lands on resettled farms involved huge personal commitments of labour, time and resources. As one war veteran and new farmer in Masvingo district described:

Yes, this involves a lot of effort here on the farms…it's not easy. You have to sacrifice…to achieve something. It is not that we can think, now we have land, and then demand only support from the government…It is not the government who will do the planting and harvesting. It is you yourself who will have to take the risk, and it will show at the end of the harvest if you have managed to do well.[15]

In January 2006, one prominent white commercial farmer, who had had several farms acquired and redistributed for resettlement by the government since 2000 but was fortunate, at that time, to remain with one to continue his farming operations, expressed some sympathy with the amount of work involved for new farmers on their allocated plots. As I recorded in my field notes:

Later on I ask them what they think of the new farmers. MHM stresses that many have no knowledge of farming at all, but ADM is more forgiving saying that some are obviously good farmers, and it is impressive what some have achieved given that they have no inputs what so ever, no tractors or anything, they just rely on DDF [District Development Fund] and some on their oxen. He adds "I wouldn't do what they are doing: cutting down bush and ploughing and planting without tractors… that is quite impressive given that they have no inputs whatsoever, but with them just relying on DDF it is very very hard for them." [16]

This huge investment of labour and resources suggests that people did have some confidence in their future on resettled farms (even if most people probably kept a foothold in claims to land in communal areas, or indeed employment in urban areas).[17] It also suggests that many people did have a serious commitment to their new opportunities, despite commonplace remarks about new farmers' lack of it. Thirdly, I would suggest that this investment of labour and resources, this material commitment, was accompanied simultaneously by an imaginative investment in, or creative engagement with, broader aspirations for the possibilities of postcolonial 'modernity.' It may be that some individuals were simply, and cynically, acting out of economic self-interest, looking for land and resources, and only that. On the other hand, I am inclined to share Lambek's view that:

Agents are always partly constructed through their acts – constituted through acts of acknowledgement, witnessing, engagement, commitment, refusal and consent. In assuming responsibility and rendering themselves subject to specific liturgical, political and discursive regimes and orders, people simultaneously lay claim to and accept the terms through which their subsequent acts will be judged. People are agents insofar as they choose to subject themselves, to perform and conform accordingly, to accept responsibility, and to acknowledge their commitments. [18]

The moral investment or engagement that I suggest accompanied the material commitment made by new farmers may have, for some, amounted to direct, active and uncritical support for the ruling party, its political aims, practices, ideologies and alliances. Clearly, it was not entirely coincidental that fast track land reform was unleashed when it was and in the way that it was, at a moment when the ruling party faced, for the first time in twenty years, a credible political threat to its success in forthcoming parliamentary elections.[19] But for other beneficiaries of land reform, perhaps a majority, this was and is not necessarily the case. They may have been aware of and engaged with several very different discourses and practises all of which invoke or appeal to different imaginations and aspirations of what the nature of the postcolonial state in

Zimbabwe should and could be, even as they were grounded within the particularities of very localised kinds of politics and livelihood strategies.

More to the point, to the extent that people do have a capacity for creative agency, even if they do not control the circumstances with which to be creative, then surely the subjectivities of new farmers and others involved in land reform mattered and continue to matter intensely. These subjectivities, as they emerge in both language and practise, are sites for the possible construction of alternative imaginations of what could be, from the those offered by either side of the polarised political debate in Zimbabwe, between the renewed, but narrowed form of African nationalism of ZANU PF, and the liberal appeals to civic nationalism, development, and human rights of opposition groups.

The intention of this paper then, is to describe these subjectivities as they appeared in the actions and words of new farmers, land occupiers, and others involved in land reform around Lake Mutirikwi between June 2005 and July 2006, and to investigate how they were situated within, yet utilised and engaged with different ideas of stateness, 'modernity' and the future. The article will suggest that those 'in power', whom Mbembe calls the potentate , are sometimes forced to engage with and respond to such alternative imaginings and aspirations.[20] I have addressed the same theme elsewhere in relation to the very specific interactions of spirit mediums and war veterans in the context of traditional '*bira* ceremonies' taking place in and around resettlement areas.[21] This paper deals with the ideas and practices not of just war veterans and spirit mediums, but rather those of new farmers more generally and A1 farmers in particular, as well as technocrats and government employees working in local government departments involved in the land reform programme in the Masvingo area.

New Yet Autochthonous Farmers

As Nyasha Pambirei, the provincial AREX (Department of Agricultural Extension) officer, mentioned during a long interview in April 2006, the Lake Mutirikwi area is particularly interesting for exploring the entanglement of different imaginations of and aspirations for postcolonial stateness in the context of fast track land reform in Zimbabwe, because of the variety of historically different landscapes that continue to co-exist in the same space.

Quite frankly, the fast track land reform programme has been significant in what we do and how it has affected the Mutirikwi area... Why? Because the Mutirikwi habitat is quite peculiar in the province because there is the water there from the dam...[and]…because there is quite a variety of different land uses in the area. Of course there are the commercial farms…which have been affected by the land reform programme, but also there are other commercial activities there, the hotels, the fishing industry, tourism, boating and so on all of which are part of the environment in that area. And of course some of those things Arex is not involved in at all. But Arex is concerned with the agriculture around the dam and there are both farms and communal area adjacent to that dam and in its broader catchment area. The reform process has affected that area; the farms have been taken up and resettled. Mostly it is model A1 resettlement but also some model A2, and we should not forget that there are still some old commercial farms operating in that area too. And apart from those models and commercial farms there are also some special settlement areas, like the small scale farms there at Sikato,

where there are 100 or 150 ARDA plots... Those ARDA plots are individual plots that pre-date the land reform that started in 2000. So in terms of the land scenario there have been changes, mainly the partitioning of the commercial farms into A1 and A2 models.[22]

Pambirei might also have mentioned that in the same area there exist several early post-independence resettlement areas that date back to the 1980s and 1990s, some of which involved irrigation schemes (Longdale and Oatlands irrigations Schemes) as well as areas of land which 'reverted' to communal lands, either when the dam was built in the late 1950s and early 1960s, to settle people removed from the dam (in the ZANO area - east of the lake), or after independence (Mzero farm – south of the lake); and there is a game park on the north of the lake which occupies several former farms, and a recreational park which roughly equates with a buffer zone or 'servitude' area immediately surrounding the entire lake.[23] The area also contains Zimbabwe's most important national heritage site, Great Zimbabwe, and several even older rock art sites. [24]

The area is host to the hotly contested and competing 'history-scapes' of different clans, their spirit mediums and chiefs, which refer not just to memories of past occupation, but to very real places on the landscape, including sacred hills, springs, trees, and importantly to *makuva* [graves] and *matongo* [sites of ruined past homesteads].[25] These history-scapes are not just articulated in ongoing disputes over high profile places such as Great Zimbabwe, or more recently, to land on former commercial farms that has become available though fast track land reform, they also include areas of state land which have been reserved as part of the 'servitude' area of Lake Mutirikwi, or for its recreational and game park, as well as the various 'old' resettlement schemes and 'reverted' communal areas that date back to the 1980s and 1990s.[26] In the early 1980s, soon after independence, there was a wave of spontaneous land occupation or 'squatting' in these areas by claimants from these related but competing local clans, in which several high profile chiefs and other 'traditional' leaders were directly involved. In most cases these people were later evicted when formally planned resettlement schemes were put in place, which settled many 'strangers' onto the land.

Similar to the situation at resettlement schemes in the Dande area of northern Zimbabwe that Spierenburg has discussed, this settling of 'strangers' – people from elsewhere in Zimbabwe who can make no autochthonous claims to the landscape, who have no specific 'history-scapes' to deploy – has been an ongoing issue of contention in these areas around Lake Mutirikwi.[27] In 2000, in the context of the 'farm invasions,' these resettlement schemes and areas of state land around the lake were re-occupied, often by the very same people who had occupied them in the early 1980s.[28] Many of these re-occupiers claimed to be occupying not only the very same areas they had occupied in the 1980s, but also the very same places where their own fathers and grandfathers once lived before being evicted by European settlers.[29] In their view, they were once again living amongst the *matongo* and *makuva* – ruined homesteads and graves - of their kith and kin. The history-scapes they deployed in order to legitimise their own re-occupations simultaneously undermined and denied the rights of those people, or 'strangers,' formally resettled on those schemes. Crucially, these claims and denials were based on the notion of knowing the landscape, knowing the sacred places - the springs, hills, caves and trees, as well as the graves, their occupiers, and the ruined homesteads that litter these landscapes – and the rules and taboos that apply to them. This knowledge, which is understood

as being more inherent than learned, is based on kinship and relatedness with the past and landscape, and often involves different performances of the past.[30]

All these different, co-existing landscapes around Lake Mutirikwi are, in a sense, the material manifestations of different ways of understanding of time and space, they are the sedimentations of different teleologies - different understandings of the past, the present and the future and the movement or 'progression' between them - into the material landscape. The question that becomes of interest then is how these different visions and materialities of time, intermingled in the context of current land reform around Lake Mutirikwi, and what the implications are for nature of the 'state' in Zimbabwe. As Ferguson noted, following Fabian and Appadurai, "modern western ways of knowing" - which includes anthropology – "have mapped out ethnologically 'different' places in a spatial array of distinct 'topics' and evolutionary 'stages' ….as if they represented a sequence of historical epochs or evolutionary stages, laid out in space instead of time".[31] In this way 'modern,' 'western' knowledge understood cultural differences in terms of time, and then laid them out spatially. It is not just anthropology which used this teleological, spatial technique to construct its 'other.' Colonial authorities used a similar technique to divide up land and authority, which in colonial Rhodesia manifested itself, through a long series of legislative measures (most importantly the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951), in the sharp division between Native reserves (later known as the Tribal Trust Lands), and European farming areas, with the Native Purchase Areas forming a kind of middle stage between the two.[32] The teleological nature of these colonial land divisions was apparent in the language often used to describe them. For example, it was only in relation to reified notions of 'traditional' and 'modern' forms of land tenure, and movement from one to the other, that the idea of land 'reverting' to communal land actually made any sense at all.

This racial, and teleological division of the land continued into the independence era, with only shallow cosmetic name changes serving as a reminder that something had changed. As Spierenburg and Alexander have both discussed, by the end of the 1980s, when initial, post-independence, land re-distribution efforts waned, the focus of the new state changed to the re-organisation of land use within the communal areas, in ways that recalled the 'high modernist' efforts of technocrats during the 1940s and 50s to 'remake' the Native Reserves.[33] There were some changes to developmental approaches at independence, as Pambirei himself noted (Masvingo Provincial AREX Officer, Field notes 28/4/06), with a renewed focus on agricultural extension in smallholder and communal farming areas having considerable initial successes in terms of increased maize and cotton production.[34] Some recent studies argue that when set against their original goals of poverty alleviation, welfare and increased agricultural productivity, and with a focus at the household level, many early resettlement schemes have performed well.[35] But despite these changes, and the fact that by 1999 more than 70,000 people had been resettled (far fewer than the famous target of 162,000), the old dualistic land division between commercial and communal areas largely continued right up to the land invasions of 2000. A fundamental question is, therefore, whether fast track land reform was understood as representing, at last, a determined effort to overcome this solidified, colonial distinction between commercial and communal land, between productive and subsistence farming, between so-called 'modern' and 'traditional' forms of land tenure.

To get a sense of this, it may be best to turn to a conversation I had with the chief land's officer for Masvingo Province, in which he described the differences between A1 & A2 resettlement in fast track land reform.

If you look at what we call A1 farms, that is almost like the communal areas, it includes villages which have communal grazing areas, or small plots. In those areas there really is a focus on the equity issue. The aim is to bring people from communal areas, where they live under their chiefs, and to preserve their value system. …For people to be allocated under the A1 scheme, that is allocated by the district land committees, in which the chiefs play an important role...

For a long time there was a lot of play with VIDCOs [Village Development Committees] and WADCOs [Ward Development Committees] or whatever, but those structures they never really took off the ground…They were meant to flatten out the administration but it was found that the strength of rural people is resident in the chiefdoms. When people have their problems they go and talk to the *sabhukus* [village heads] or the chief, they don't go to the VIDCO chairman. So the chiefs are linked to the land in the communal areas and people go to them to resolve their disputes. This value system is like a religion or a way of life, the chief as custodian of people's heritage...

So it was realised that those VIDCOs in communal areas were not effective, and in the old resettlements, the resettlement councils and chairmen, and even in the new resettlements, where that role was played by the base commanders, all of that is now going to be under the chiefs.

So that is the A1 model resettlement. In the A2 there is something different going on. In the A2 the aim is to distribute land to people who will be able to do commercial farming on those lands. Here the aim is to redistribute that wealth. The white farmers they were in a position of being like the custodians of those commercial farms, of that access to wealth. The aim of the land reform exercise in terms of A2 farms is to redistribute that access to wealth in terms of the commercial farms. It is a process of indigenising commercial farming. And it is solely the bureaucracy which administers that. That is the real territory of the Ministry of Lands, which is the acquiring authority. That is not really where the chiefs come in. Having said that, however, even here the chiefs have recently been saying that they want access to these farms for the *zunde remambo*. So there are discussions going on about providing particular farms for the chiefs to use to feed their people under the *zunde remambo*.[36]

From these words, it seems that, perhaps, something of the old dualistic land division between commercial and communal areas was being reproduced in new guises through recent land reform. This perspective was reinforced by the fact that all potential new farmers went through some form of 'vetting' and selection, which was not merely political but also relates to the perceived abilities and resources to farm productively. This is particularly the case for A2 farmers where there was considerable pressure not only to actually occupy farms, but to do so productively. New farmers needed to demonstrate that they were productively occupying their plots.[37]

In the context of continuing food shortages, high prices and the unavailability of foreign currency with which to import food, official concerns about the productive utilisation of resettled farms was increasingly expressed through statements from the very highest echelons of the Zimbabwean Government. There were a series of high profile 'land audits' and in November 2006 President Mugabe gave fierce warnings to new farmers on A2 farms, that the government retained the right to withdraw their '99 year leases' and remove them from the land, if they were not farming productively.[38] This concern with land utilisation and productivity recalled the concerns of both past and present opponents to land reform who argued "that the utmost caution should be exercised in transferring land from commercial farmers to inexperienced operators because of the risks posed to aggregate agricultural output," concerns that in the short term were proved dramatically correct in hungry post-2000 Zimbabwe.[39]

At any rate, Munyani did seem to suggest, in the quote above, that if A2 farming was supposed to be about indigenizing wealth and 'Africanising' commercial agricultural production, A1 farming was about preserving that 'value system' or 'way of life' in which chiefs were understood to act as custodians of peoples' heritage; a distinction which resonated in tones suspiciously similar to the teleological colonial distinction between white 'commercial' and African 'communal' farming areas. But if we were to be leaving Munyanyi's words at this point we would be missing something, which did seem to be profoundly different, or at least was understood as such, in the recent efforts at land reform. He hinted at this above where he mentioned the growing concerns of chiefs about accessing A2 land for participation in the re-formulated Zunde ramambo concept.[40] It becomes clearer if we allow Munyani to continue his tale:

And then the chiefs are saying in relation to those A2 areas, this is our land, so they are involved in that sense. …Because even though the A2 farms are distributed and administered through the provincial level offices, we are also responsive to the district land committees, which … have to be consulted in all A2 resettlement. And through those district land committees the chiefs are involved too. So for example in the issue of which white farmers are allowed to stay on their farms…this is often left with the chiefs, who might say this white farmer is ok, he should stay or whatever, because they will have the knowledge and experience of those farmers. So the chiefs do have role in the distribution of A2 land, but we at the Ministry of Lands at a provincial level we carry out the administration. If something does not have the blessing of the chief of that particular area, then we could go straight ahead, but it will cause us other problems in dealing with those areas, and so as stakeholders the chiefs are consulted...

But there is something going on here in terms of that 'value system'. You see along the way there was return to the chiefs by those people who initiated the land reform, those people who began the land invasions. The fast track land reform programme, we can say it was motivated by war vets, they started this, and they put up structures of authority, temporary structures in terms of base commanders and so on. You know the fast track it started as jambanja [violence, chaos or disorder] with the land invasions. I don't want to say it was chaos as such but it was jambanja, it was carried out with a great deal of speed. And initially those war vets they did not consult the chiefs, they ignored them, they went ahead with the land invasions, and they set up

their own structures of authority. But along the way those people went back to that value system, they went back to the chiefs to give them that custodial role...

On the A2 farms, like on the A1 and in communal areas, people still feel like they need to be under a chief. People still yearn for that value system. You know Zimbabweans we have like a dual citizenship. We want to belong to our roots, and we want to be modern people. So on A2 farms, most people they really want that traditional function, and no one says no to that...

Yes there are some people who are challenging the roles of the chiefs in those area. Many of those people are more educated and have more resources, that is part of the criteria of being granted A2 land. So some of these people may be saying 'what can the chiefs tell us?' but still then at the back of their minds, they still have that sense of allegiance to the chiefs, to that value system...[41]

This growing influence of chiefs, not only over 'communal' A1 resettlement areas but also, to some extent, over the 'commercial' A2 resettlement farms, suggests that maybe there was indeed something profoundly different going on across Zimbabwe's agrarian landscapes. Certainly informants often spoke of it in those terms. As Manyani described, the jambanja that characterised the early stages of fast track land reform, when war veterans set up their own structures of authority as 'base commanders,' did later change in response to concern among land occupiers for the autochthonous knowledge of the landscape that people making ancestral claims to the land were able to offer. In one interesting example, a war veteran now living on what used to be Desmondale farm explained how when they first occupied the farm in 2000, they relied on the autochthonous knowledge of some particular farm workers, who were not only intimately familiar with both the agricultural and the sacred aspects of the landscape through their long experience of living and working on the land, but also claimed direct kin relationships to the Chikwanda clan who were believed to have occupied the land before colonial appropriation in the 1890s, and in particular to Ambuya VaZarira, an influential spirit medium who was closely involved with war veterans occupying farms in the area, and who has her own particular claims to an area of land on nearby Mt. Beza.[42]

JF – so when you first came here, before the chief became involved, and you were living here, how did you know where the sacred places were and what you had to do? Or did you just do whatever, build houses anywhere and cut trees everywhere?

Kurasva - it was very easy. When we came here, we talked to the people who have been living here from long ago. There were people here like Sekuru Makwinye here, and others who have lived here a long time and they know all the sacred places which were not to be disturbed and the rules that had to be followed. When we first got here I was walking everywhere during those days with this *sekuru*.[43]

In addition to the recognition by war veterans of autochthonous knowledge, many new farmers I have spoken to themselves made autochthonous claims to land they were now occupying. Some such 'new but autochthonous' farmers described how when they first came to

occupy the land in 2000, accompanying war veterans spearheading the occupations, they made no mention of their own autochthonous claims, emphasising only their desire for access to the fertile land available on the farms. It was only later, when other settlers, war veterans and local government officials began to recognise the significance of these 'traditional' claims, that they began to announce their own autochthonous claims to the land they were now occupying.

Vavarirai M. Chikwanda – we came back here in February 2000, but how it was that it happened that we came back here, well, these things are things of the soil…

Mutsambwa –The war vets came in here first, they started the invasions, and then we followed… … when we first came here, we didn't come here saying we are coming back to our land. We just told the base commander that we were coming here for our own piece of land…But later on, when the farm was pegged and the people from the DA's office were saying we don't want to use the English name, we want real names of this area, and we want someone who comes from here, a son of the land, to tell us. So that is when we said we are from Chikwanda, and VaChikwanda here [pointing to his companion] was made a sadhunhu [headman] by the DA's office. That was 2001. They wanted someone who knew that land, who could appease the ancestors and who knows the sacred places.[44]

The significance of autochthonous knowledge of the landscape was often recognised when the new occupiers faced unexpected difficulties or problems that were believed to be associated with the unhappiness of the ancestral spirits resident in that area.[45] One 'new yet autochthonous' farmer who claimed that the land he was occupying near Mt. Beza was where his grandfather had once been a 'big chief,' explained how when he applied for land from the District Administrator, his name was recognised and he was granted not only land but also a position of authority as a (*sadhunhu*) headman under Chief Chikwanda.

This is what caused me to come here to this place, because they were looking in the books saying this person is a chief, so let him come and stay where his mapa [sacred site/graves of ancestors] are…

I went to the DA, saying I want a piece of land to farm. He asked me who I was. I told him my name was Solomon Bvungudzire Makasva, and then he said yes, you are the man we have been looking for, someone who knows and is from this land. Then I went to the dare or meeting of the Governor and the DA, and he said 'As he goes there to that land, give him the chieftainship. But the DA said 'No I have already given that land to Chief Chikwanda'. And I said 'But Chikwanda is of the same people as I am. So they said 'ok, go and take the chieftainship.' So I came here and I brewed beer and Chief Chikwanda gave me the title of *Sadhunhu* Bvungudzire. But the actual title has not yet arrived and I don't know when that will happen. [46]

In a strange twist, as war veteran 'base commanders' increasingly deferred to autochthonous knowledge, some 'new yet autochthonous' farmers began to describe war veterans, and other new farmers around them, as *vatorwa* (strangers) in a way reminiscent of the adverse attitudes taken against some 'foreign' beneficiaries of the earlier resettlement schemes to the south and east of the lake by disgruntled local people who had been evicted in the early

1980s to make way for the resettlements. Such denunciations should be understood as being part of a repertoire of rhetorical and practical means through which not only individual assertions of autochthony and right were established and reinforced, but also through which highly complex, localised struggles over legitimacy and authority were played out, implicating overlapping tensions and loyalties among competing political factions and different war veteran groups, as well as chiefs and spirit mediums, clans and kin, and even different churches.[47] Vavarirai Chikwanda and Mutsambwa explained how, as *vatorwa*, some war veterans were relying on the patronage of the incumbent Chief Chikwanda, who in turn relied on them to buttress his waning legitimacy among his own clan, many of whom were unhappy about his refusal, as a member an apostolic church, to work with the *svikiro* (spirit medium) Ambuya VaZarira.

Mutsambwa – You see VaChuma and Ziki [the war vets] are not our relations, we do not know them, they are *vatorwa*, so they go to that present chief and he is happy to put strangers here on the Chikwanda land as *sabhuku* [village heads] because he needs their support. The present chief is happy about having these strangers here because they won't oppose him. Right now, the *nyika* [land] of Chikwanda needs a chief who recognises the *svikiro* [spirit medium] Ambuya VaZarira.[48]

Unsurprisingly, while most war veterans described how their function as 'base commanders' had elapsed once the initial land occupations were over, several also made it clear that as war veterans they would continue to have a role to play on the new 'committees of seven' set up on farms to work alongside the village heads (*sabhuku*) and headmen (*sadhunhu*) that returning chiefs are to establish in all resettlement areas.

Chuma - We first came here to repossess the land, and then we went to seek for those who occupied this area long back, and we found them. So here it is up to Chief Chikwanda ..to come here to demarcate the land.

JF- so what happens now, are you still the base commander?

Chuma – Basa reBase Commander rakapera [the work of base commanders has finished] now I am the chairman here.

JF – of the committee of seven?

Chuma – yes I am the chairman of the committee here. And there will also be a sabhuku here who will be put here by Chief Chikwanda. [49]

Others explained that their continuing role, as the 'soldiers' of the 'Third Chimurenga' or the 'eyes of the government,' would be to ensure the political gains of the ruling party were not reversed.

So if they put a *sabhuku* here then that person will do the work of *kuchengeta vhu* [looking after the soil]... It will be good if they put a *sabhuku* here who is of the Chikwanda clan, who will know the land and all of its sacred places which must be protected and the trees which should not be cut down.

Yes I will be happy because of that issue of *mitemo wenyika* [rules of the land]. The committee of seven will not just disappear because that *sabhuku* has been put here. No we will go and do the other things, making sure the rules of the land committees are being followed. I am on the political side, that is what the committee of seven will do...we are like the eyes of the government, looking out for opposition and ensuring the government rules are followed. But then if someone does something that is wrong in terms of the traditional rules of the soil, they will have to go to the sabhuku, and from the sabhuku to the chief... [50]

Similarly, the District Administrator for Masvingo was at pains (in part, no doubt, for his own immediate political reasons) to stress to me during an interview that despite the now formally recognised role of chiefs as traditional leaders on the resettled farms, war veterans continued to have an important role to play in land reform, and their prominent, continuing presence on land committees at district and provincial levels certainly substantiated this.[51] This continuing, political role of some prominent war veterans in the Masvingo area also later materialised in the form of a new wave of political violence and farm invasions in the period leading up to the run off presidential election of June 2008, after ZANU PF's dramatic defeat in the elections of March that year.

If so called 'traditional' authorities did not entirely replace war veterans on resettled farms then they also did not merely displaced the system of rural councils, ward and village committees that was instituted after independence in order to build a new system of more representative local government. Rather, they nudged in alongside them in complex new ways. There was, in the words of Felix Chikovo, Provincial Administrator for Masvingo a marriage of "democratic leaders and traditional leaders."

FC – It is ministry policy that there should be sound local government. And we are under a mandate to emplace traditional leaders into the former commercial farming areas. It has been decided that the way to go is to establish the traditional leader who was in place prior to the change in land use [i.e. the colonial appropriation of the land for European farms]. Where there is no conflict over different claims to a piece of land and boundaries, then we are able to place the leader. Where there are one or two conflicts, we are in the process of resolving those disputes so that we are able to put the proper traditional leader in place.

JF – so this is quite a change because the early resettlements were not under chiefs....

FC – Those early resettlement schemes were definitely not under chiefs. It was the policy position that resettlement land was not communal. The new policy is to emplace all resettlements under traditional leaders. That includes both new resettlements and old resettlements.

[So] the traditional leaders now act outside of just communal areas. These things were the result

of two pieces of legislation: the Traditional Leaders Act and Rural District Councils Act. These acts married together the democratic leaders and the traditional leaders. For example, the village head is now also chairman of the village assembly, which is if you like, a substructure of the RDC [Rural district council]. So there has been a marrying of traditional leaders and development structures. The village head is the chairman of the VIDCO and the WADCO and the ward assembly is headed by the chief or headman, which then reports to the RDC. So the new policy has forced the move, what was once the preserve of the communal areas only, to all the areas....[52]

This quote illustrates something of the administrative complexity of the very dynamic processes at work in the re-structuring of authority over land in Zimbabwe. It amplifies the suggestion that land reform was understood by some, at least, as a decisive stage in overcoming the bifurcated system of land and authority that Zimbabwe inherited at independence. It also echoes Manyani's suggestion that the growing role of chiefs and 'that value system' as embodied by legislative and bureaucratic changes, reflected Zimbabweans' desire to both "belong to our roots, and …. to be modern people." This was further amplified, and the situation further complicated, by the increasing role of a wide host of different government technocrats – in the form of agricultural extension workers, National Parks' rangers, and officials from the Ministry of Lands, the Department of Natural Resources and ZINWA (Zimbabwe National Water Authority) – whose main concerns focused on not only the productive use of land but also soil conservation, and the protection of the environment. As the Chikovo stated, "there is an emphasis on sound government,"and around Lake Mutirikwi in particular, concerns were raised about the threats that soil erosion – and resultant siltation – caused by new farmers, could have on the long term future of the dam.

....so in some areas this involves putting those local government structures in place, and putting down environmental conservation plans... The thing that we find is urgently required is that the land that has been taken for resettlement does not become quickly eroded or over populated or overgrazed and or wrongly tilled. Around Lake Mutirikwi [this] is seen as critical, and even during the initial land reform stages we had to be careful in case we affected the dam. That is why there is not too much A1 villagisation there, because of the issue of soil erosion affecting the dam … [so] we concentrated on A1 self-contained schemes, plots where every one would have their own land, in order to encourage effective self-management by people of their own lands.[53]

Certainly concerns about 'sound local government,' environmental conservation and appropriate forms of land use continued to inform the perspectives of local administrators. At the same time, however, the official 'return' of chiefs and 'traditional' leaders to resettled farms, caused a seemingly endless series of disputes over boundaries, authority and sovereignty, in which many alternative and contested claims to autochthony and competing versions of landscape and the past were invoked.[54] In line with the larger argument of Alexander's recent book, that state-making in colonial Rhodesia was centrally about land, as indeed the politics of land was always about state-making– it seems clear that the many 'minor theatres of power' that emerged in the complex 'new political terrain' of post-2000 Zimbabwe, were minutely involved in an ongoing, and highly localised process of re-imagining and re-making the Zimbabwean state.[55] While Chaumba et al. identified a kind of 'reassertion of technocracy' as

war veterans employed technical planning measures to peg out settlements and fields on occupied farms - "in the process [of] turning occupied farms into 'resettlement areas' "-the re-assertion of autochthony that I have been discussing in the Masvingo area indicates that there was a variety of old forms and motifs that were being re-assembled into something new.[56]

On Modernity, State-Making and Zimbabwean Land Reform

In his important work *Expectations of Modernity*, Ferguson describes with great panache the pessimism, or defeated optimism, he encountered in a small mining town in Zambia's Copperbelt during fieldwork in the late 1980s, as the 'myth of modernity' and confidence of progress towards it, was replaced by a 'cynical scepticism' towards fading ideas of a modernising Zambia.[57] For many, this was a 'world-shattering life experience' that provoked depressing predictions of a kind of 'reversed modernisation,' with the future promising not modernising developmental progress, but rather irreversible decline. This was, as Ferguson put it, "modernisation through the looking glass, where modernity is the object of nostalgic reverie, and 'backwardness' the anticipated (or dreaded) future."[58]

Much of the recent literature on Zimbabwe today has employed a similarly reversed teleological perspective. Many commentators, particularly western journalists, have posited 'Zimbabwe's crisis' as a 'retreat from' or 'end of modernity', and metaphors of 'exhaustion' and 'plunging' have been similarly employed by some academic observers.[59] Such narratives suggest that as the 'developmental' and democratising imperatives of the state were abandoned and the Zimbabwean elite resorted to increasingly authoritarian rule, it traded in 'promises of development and modernity' for a narrow and divisive redistribution of resources.

In contrast to this apparently persuasive picture, Worby has argued that the current predominance of issues of sovereignty represents less a 'retreat from modernity' and than a redefinition of the nation/state. For 'political modernity,' Worby suggests, has always involved a tension between 'sovereignty' and 'development' and currently the "see-saw of political modernity has tipped to one side – the side of sovereignty".[60] This argument has strong echoes of Chatterjee's argument that the failure of postcolonial states has not been in the "inability to think out new forms of modern community but in our surrender to the old forms of the modern state."[61] In other words, the 'developmental' imagination of the 'modern' state enacted after independence in 1980, which some commentators now suggest is in 'retreat,' was never able to fully deliver on the promises and aspirations of postcolonial political 'stateness.' In this respect, ZANU PF's refocusing upon issues of sovereignty and the redistribution of resources, and the emergence of what Ranger has called "patriotic history", a new streak in Zimbabwe's "whole, coherent and self-perpetuating postcolonial master fiction,", were part of a revitalised nationalism that appealed to other, previously excluded aspirations.[62] While Zimbabwe's authoritarian turn has done much to exclude many, particularly the urban poor, farm workers, women and white commercial farmers, it did simultaneously managed to appeal to some of these other, localised aspirations which have often been thwarted since 1980.[63] In this sense, the redistribution of land to the landless, however corrupt, politicised and indeed violent the process may have been, along with the increasing involvement of both war veterans and

traditional leaders in local political structures (which itself is part of a trend common to much of southern Africa), were very astute political moves.[64]

It is here that those observers who have emphasised the continuities in the ideology behind post-2000 land reform with that of the 1980s and 1990s, do make an important point.[65] The desire for land reform in Zimbabwe has, since independence, continued to be a central tenet of many people's livelihood aspirations, and in broader terms, many imaginations of what a good postcolonial and 'modern' state should be about.[66] Of course, the motives of these aspirations and their materialisations differed, whether it involved the desire to return to ancestral lands, the opportunity to take forward the 'peasant option' using productive land on A1 plots, or the opportunity to follow "a renewed 'merchant path' of urban professionals, petty bourgeois and bureaucrats" on larger A2 farms; or any combination of these.[67] Some of these aspirations may have employed profoundly different teleologies, different ways of conceiving of movement through time (and space) towards a goal or destiny. This was best exemplified by the way ancestral claims to land invoked perspectives on time in which the colonial past, and specifically the appropriation of land for capitalist farming during it, was merely a brief interlude in a much longer continuity in the relationship between very specific kin based clan groups, their ancestors and particular territories.[68] Either or any way, it is important to realise that however much recent land reform has been accompanied by an increasingly authoritarian, violent and exclusive kind of nationalist politics, it is in no way only coercion, violence and force which enabled the land reform programme to be implemented, or provided the means for ZANU PF to keep a firm hold on the reins of power, up until March 2008 at least.

The repeated occupations and evictions of particular areas of state land and re-settlement schemes around Lake Mutirikwi since independence indicate the longevity of particular localised aspirations that were acted out in the context of land reform that was happening across Zimbabwe.[69] Both studies of the 1998 land occupations in Svosve, and deeper historical studies of the land issue suggest that such aspirations for land based on memories of eviction, and appeals to land restitution, recurred across Zimbabwe. Furthermore, as Marongwe has argued, referring to the "conspicuous examples" of the Tangwena people in Kaerezi, Sekuru Mushore's claims in the Nharira hills, the claims of Ndau people over Chiranda forests, and Chief Manhenga's claims over Gumbuli Farm, "one of the underlying causes of land demands and conflicts ….has been the non-recognition by policy makers of such historical claims,"[70] This ties in with Alexander's careful discussion of land reform in the 1980s, when the newly postcolonial state "certainly responded to popular demands, but they allowed little in the way of popular participation …. Only the state was deemed capable of ensuring that redistribution occurred in a rational and productive manner."[71]

In this context, the question of whether fast track land reform did, in contrast to earlier land reform efforts, successfully appeal to such widespread but localised, lingering aspirations for land in the form of a kind of land restitution, takes on particular urgency. In contrast to Manzungu's claim that "in Zimbabwe, unlike in South Africa, the concept of land restitution does not apply," statements by the Council of Chiefs, the very deliberate inclusion of chiefs on district land committees, and efforts to install chiefs, headmen and village heads on resettled farms, and more generally, the importance placed upon 'autochthonous knowledge of the

landscape' by war veterans, land settlers and other involved in land reform, suggest that it did.[72]

Similarly, conversations with war veterans in the Masvingo area make it clear that they felt strongly enough about the unresolved issue of land to act in 2000, and that the government then responded.

When we were fighting for this country we were fighting for the soil. So then in 2000 we had meetings… So after the refusal of that constitution…we sat down as comrades and we decided no, if we continue like this we will have no land until we die. So then we decided to force the landowners out and to occupy the land. But actually they are not landowners because the land is ours![73]

The dubbing of land reform as the 'Third Chimurenga' was not just a reflection of the central role of war veterans in it or the style of "political practice that celebrated lawlessness" and violence known as jambanja, but a deliberate attempt to emphasise that this was the final stage of an unfinished programme of national liberation, which appealed to the unresolved, rural nationalist aspirations of war veterans and others.[74] For many war veterans, the land occupations which started in Masvingo province in February 2000 were not merely a response by war veterans to the beleaguered ruling party's political need to harness rural support.[75] Rather, they were provoked by the need to complete a task directed by the ancestors, which many traced back to Ambuya Nehanda's legendary last words before being hanged by Rhodesian settlers in 1890.[76]

You see we have not yet finished the war of taking back the land…we have not yet finished the mission that was left by our ancestors. When Ambuya Nehanda said 'my bones will rise', you see, we haven't yet accomplished [what] we, the bones, were tasked to fulfil ... to liberate all the land that we were given by our ancestors. The land of our ancestors must be free...

So unless we fulfil this task… then there is not going to be any peace in this country. We are not going to rest. Even our comrades in arms, who died besides us when we were fighting the war, they are now the spirits that are driving us forward you see. So we have got a lot of pressure from behind … to do these things to liberate our country, to go forward, for our people.[77]

In this perspective, fast track land reform was a government response to not only the unresolved aspirations of living war veterans, but also those of the powerful ancestors of the distant past, and of the spirits of dead comrades killed during the war. It is this conviction of an ongoing legacy of ancestrally-guided struggle which the ruling party engaged with through its rhetoric of 'patriotic history.'[78]

If the 'liberation of ancestral lands' through fast track land reform can be seen as one result of the government's need to respond to the overlapping and previously thwarted or muted aspirations of war veterans and spirit mediums, then a host of other reforms, including the 'national biras' held in September 2005, the return of judicial powers to chiefs, their new found authority over resettled areas and on district land committees, the zunde ramambo project, the amendment of the Witchcraft Suppression Act and the high profile reburials of the liberation war dead across the country and in neighbouring Mozambique and Zambia, may similarly be seen as a government response to the diverse and overlapping aspirations of chiefs, and other traditional authorities, as well as of war veterans and spirit mediums.[79] All of these thwarted

and muted aspirations, and the delayed efforts by the state to respond to them, seem to suggest that at the centre of the grievances of war veterans, chiefs and spirit mediums was a shared sense of marginalisation and exclusion from processes of state-making at local and national levels.[80] By responding to these aspirations, the ruling party, in a sense, reopened access to the process of state-making, revitalising the possibility, at least for these particular groups, of making the state work towards their interests.

This is contrary to common-place suggestions that both 'traditional leaders' and war veterans, were, in different ways, merely co-opted by the ruling party into its hegemonic and authoritarian state project. Kriger's work certainly suggests a more complex picture than the framework of 'co-optation' allows, in which the ruling party and veterans have, since 1980, "manipulated and shaped each other as they have pursued their distinct and overlapping agendas".[81] Similarly, studies that have taken a deep historical perspective on particular districts, also suggest that the relationship between 'traditional leaders' and the state, whether colonial or postcolonial, have always been more nuanced and complex than is captured by the notion of 'co-optation.'[82] In Masvingo, although some chiefs were very closely involved in ruling party structures, my own recent fieldwork has suggested that most chiefs and headmen continued to occupy a very difficult position located between their own personal ambitions, the increasing demands of the bureaucratic local state, intense pressure from the ruling party, and a complexity of competing demands from below - the people they govern or represent.[83]

But if this increasing role of chiefs and war veterans in local state processes, and particularly on district land committees, does suggest that the ruling party had to respond to their lingering aspirations, what, then, of other important players in the complex 'new political terrain' created by land reform? While spirit mediums often complained that they were ignored in the land distribution process, it does seem that there may have been some sense of empowerment among other people at the receiving end of land reform.[84] In Marongwe's view, although the 2000 land occupations were instigated as part of ZANU PF's official campaign strategy, "this does not negate the sense of empowerment that some occupiers experienced during the process."[85] But he also argues that this sense of empowerment was later undermined by the lack of transparency of the controversial land committees.[86] Munyani, the Chief Lands Officer for Masvingo, was much more resolute about the confidence people now had to vocalize their demands for land, making his job politically difficult.

And part of the problem is that people are now bold enough to demand land that they want or land that they claim is theirs, and not just on the farms but even in the old resettlements and on other areas where land is not opened for resettlement. This is something that has resulted from this land reform programme. Its quite impressive really that people now have that power to demand their land back, and this means there is a need to involve all the stakeholders.

It needs politicians to engage with those issues, even though everyone knows that politicians are very good at promising to respond to peoples' concern and then never coming back to deal with it again. But this needs politicians to engage with it seriously. It's a very sensitive thing. You can't just send people off the land that they have occupied because they are living on the grazing area of an old resettlement scheme. You have to tread carefully, otherwise if I were just

to chase people away I would become a very unpopular Chief Lands Officer! You have to have a sensitive approach. And you have to be careful, if you upset the wrong people you might find yourself labelled MDC. So you have to be careful.[87]

I suspect strongly that the way in which fast track land reform enabled the realisation of these differing, localised aspirations for land may account for the seemingly out of place optimism and enthusiasm which I sensed among new farmers, government officials, war veterans and others in Masvingo district during the 2005-6 growing season. For some who have benefited from land reform, it represented not so much a 'retreat' or 'plunge' from 'modernity,' but the realisation, however imperfect, of aspirations which had been sidelined since independence. We could frame this, as Worby does, in terms of the tension between the demands of sovereignty, and those of development, and suggest that the see-saw of political modernity has swung to the side of sovereignty.[88] Or we could suggest, as Alexander has done, that the ideology behind the occupations of 2000 reflected a re-imagined nationalism that was "reconstituted as authoritarian anti-colonialism, not modernising developmentalism."[89] But the problems with both these positions, is that they imply that for new farmers the price of land was 'modernising developmentalism,' as if 'sovereignty' could only come at the cost of 'development.' I don't think this characterisation accurately reflects the aspirations of new farmers at all. The new farmers who I met resemble Eric Gable's 'Manjaco village cosmopolitans' much more than 'modernity's malcontents.'[90] For them, unlike the "broken lives and shattered expectations" of workers in the Zambian Copperbelt that Ferguson describes, the possibility of past promises being fulfilled, and of achieving entangled aspirations for land and livelihoods – of in Manyani's words "belonging to our roots" and being "modern people"- were not so much a matter of the past, but still of the future.[91]

Importantly, the different and overlapping aspirations of war veterans, new farmers and others involved in land reform, did not exclude the desire for technocratic interventions or commercial and productive agriculture normally associated with 'modernising developmentalism.' Most new farmers in the Lake Mutirikwi area emphasised their need for tractors, irrigation, soil conservation, agricultural extension, and all sorts of other things associated with 'development' and 'modern' productive agriculture. I was often asked by new farmers if I would be able to assist them by communicating with donors and NGOs, to enquire about the possibility of supporting local projects by supplying irrigation and tillage equipment. Another good example is the way in which several new farmers I spoke to discussed their need and willingness to dig their own contour ridges in their fields in order to prevent soil erosion – a remarkable assertion given the well known popular resistance that was engendered by the dramatically technocratic, and 'high modernist' soil conservation efforts enforced by officials of the Department of Native affairs during the 1940s and 50s in the context of the infamous Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) of 1951.[92]

When I asked both new farmers and government technocrats about this apparent contradiction, I was often given the same answer: "the idea behind contour ridges and the need for soil conservation was good, but it was the forced method of implementation that was wrong." For our purposes here this illustrates how past, 'high modernist' ideas of farming methods, productivity and centralised state planning, persisted on in fast track land reform in Zimbabwe. It also reiterates Moore's point about the 'articulation' and 'entanglement' of

localised and grounded livelihood practises with nationalist legacies of "promised postcolonial freedom."[93] There was often disappointment at the inability, but not the unwillingness, of government to provide the kind of 'developmental' assistance required, as became clear in one interview with a war veteran/new farmer:

JF – I was wondering about the role of Arex. You said they came and pegged the fields, have they also come to peg out contour ridges and/or to provide advice for farming?

Chuma – Yes they were supposed to do that, but AREX has a big shortage of manpower. In this whole area….there is only one Arex person, a woman, in charge of this whole area. From the Popoteke to Mhunga, one person. That area is too big for one person, it is too big for her to deal with.

So we are still in need of that Arex department. They need to have more field officers. What we would like is for them to have one officer for each farm. For example this farm here, Green Hills, it has 3100 hectares on which live 389 families. Some of the families live in the two villages, A & B, and the rest on the plots. ….

… The Department of Natural Resources have been running courses there at the Farmers Hall, just past Mhunga. There have been several courses they have run there but they have not yet really started to enter into the farms….

JF – In the courses are you told about makandiwa [contour ridges] and how to build them or are you waiting for people from Arex to come and peg them for you?

Chuma – Arex they came to peg but they only pegged the plots, not the fields. But I don't have to wait for them, I can build a contour ridge…This year, with all that rain we had, I have seen a place where the water is carrying away the soil from the field, so I will have to prepare a contour ridge there in that spot. I don't have to wait for Arex, because I can see where the problem is.[94]

For Munyani, the Chief Lands Officer, while fast track land reform was "a great thing for a third world nation," the scheme had been planned too quickly, without enough consideration for the huge amount of 'developmental' support that would be required.

But in terms of the broader vision, I have to stress that I think this land reform programme is one of the most wonderful programmes for a third world country to embark upon. If we can put the nuts and bolts together properly, and really follow up what has been done so far with proper resources for inputs and for extension services, then I think it really has got potential. The parcelling out of land to people who did not have access to it... Where as before on a farm you might have had a small percentage being cultivated, now you have the same farm distributed to nearly 100 people each of whom are trying cultivate almost the same as was being farmed on the whole land before. So the end result is that there is a huge amount more land being farmed. This means that there is huge potential being opened up by the programme, so

this programme has great potential for a third world country.

Maybe the only problem has been that it is too big. It was too much all at once, when all then systems were not yet geared up for it... It needed all the systems to be in place, so we could, say, have put a farmer into six weeks of training before he was granted his plot or farm, and then for the extension officers to have been able to go with him to the land to provide training there on the spot. so what we needed was a more holistic approach that included all these parallel support systems. They need a lot of resources. So yes perhaps the programme was just too massive… [95]

Conclusion

If the government's fast track land reform programme was an astute political move that pandered at last to the popular demands of certain sections of society (even as it facilitated the gross exclusion of other constituencies – like the urban poor and farm workers), then the need to provide 'developmental' support too was something the government had to respond to. Hence it is no surprise that there has been a great deal of effort in recent years by government to assist, or perhaps to be seen to be assisting, new farmers through providing access to loans, credit, and agricultural support in the form of tillage, seeds, fertiliser and fuel. Most recently, in the run up to the elections of March 2008, President Mugabe himself handed out substantial amounts of tractors, ploughs and other agricultural equipment to new farmers.[96] Similarly announcements in 2006 about the development of a new 100 hectare irrigation scheme to draw water from Lake Mutirikwi for communal farmers in Zano area to the east of the lake were for people in that area, a belated realisation of a promise that accompanied their removal to that area when the dam was built in the late 1950s.[97]

In this context the 'reassertion of technocracy,' that Chaumba et al. argued followed an initial period of jambanja was to be expected, because it reflected the fact that the multiple aspirations to which fast track land reform was, in a sense, responding, were not necessarily situated in opposition to notions of 'developmental modernity,' but rather invoked them alongside appeals to anti-colonial restitutive justice, and so called 'traditional' claims to the ancestral ownership of land, in very complex ways that deny, even as they often invoke, any dichotomy between 'modernity' and 'tradition' or 'sovereignty' and 'development.'[98] Of course the government has also had its own interests at stake here, in the need to demonstrate to the world the success of its land programme, and therefore issues of food security, productivity and the adequate utilisation of resettled land have become highly politically sensitive.[99] But surely this suggests further that the ruling party itself, despite the venom of its re-emerged anti-colonial rhetoric (and, of course, allegations of the corrupt distribution of farms, the looting of farming inputs, equipment and multiple farm ownership, as well as its huge capacity for violence which was demonstrated yet again between the March and June elections of 2008), was sensitive to the need to respond to other lingering, 'developmental' aspirations, and the grounded livelihood practices of new farmers on resettled land.

And if the ruling party's response to these developmental aspirations recalled a specific period of Rhodesian 'high modernism' in the 1940s -50s - when Native Reserves were

centralised into agricultural fields, communal grazing areas, and maraini (linear settlements), native cattle herds were drastically destocked, many miles of contour ridges and storm drains, were coercively constructed - then it could be argued that the 'return' of the powers of the chiefs and 'traditional leaders' begun with the Traditional Leaders Act of 1998, and hastened with various amendments since, recalled the period in the 1960s when the Rhodesian state "rejected the high modernist goals of the NHLA [Native Land Husbandry Act] in favour of settling the maximum number of Africans in the reserves under the 'customary' authority of chiefs and headmen."[100] Like the incorporation of 'developmental technocracy' into fast track land reform, the 'return' of the powers of chiefs also illustrated how past (Rhodesian & Zimbabwean) attempts at state-making, have constantly reappeared in ongoing efforts to redefine the postcolonial state.

In "the ambiguity of state-society relations" it is, as Dorman has pointed out, the politics of both inclusion and exclusion which has been central to Zimbabwe's recent crisis.[101] This has been one of the fundamental arguments of this paper, that however authoritarian, exclusive and indeed often violently intolerant the Zimbabwean state became since 2000, it also effectively managed to appeal, at times, to the unresolved, alternative, often overlapping, and sometimes highly localised aspirations of a variety of actors, including chiefs and autochthonous claimants, war veterans and government technocrats. This, I suggest, was reflected in the seemingly out of place optimism of new farmers, war veterans and government employees whom I encountered during fieldwork around Lake Mutirikwi during the rainy summer months of 2005/2006. It substantiates an argument put forward by Dean, and developed by Hammar, that "the exercise of government in all modern states entails the articulation of a form of pastoral care with one of sovereign power".[102] It may be an obvious point, but no ruling elite can operate in a vacuum, relying solely on the use of force to maintain itself. Importantly, in the highly charged debates circulating about Zimbabwe's crisis, this paper is not intended to produce an apology for ZANU PF's authoritarianism, but rather to recognise, to put it at its simplest, that the aspirations of the thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of new farmers on resettled farms, matter, not just for academics, but for Zimbabwe's ruling elites. While the literature on power and resistance has often sought to find those spaces where people resist the overbearing machinations of a powerful state, this paper has situated itself deliberately in a growing discourse which emphasises the importance of the margins in the continual, ongoing construction of the state.[103] This attempts less to find the agency and resistance of a subaltern against the overbearing power of the state, but rather to seek the limits of state power.

Postscript

Since the fieldwork for this paper was done, and the first drafts drawn up, events in Zimbabwe have developed at an accelerated rate. With the deeply exacerbated economic crisis, and inflation topping an estimated (and astonishing) 350 000 percent, and worsening hunger and food shortages, confidence that ZANU PF and President Mugabe himself, were able to deliver on their promises profoundly weakened, undermining support even in 'loyal' rural areas, and among new farmers and war veterans (as well as within the higher echelons of the party itself) in the run up to the March 2008 elections. With a new kind of optimism, some

turned to the MDC opposition and others to the campaigns of former ZANU PF members, such as Simba Makoni, who stood as independents for the parliamentary and presidential elections. Importantly, the opposition seems to have finally unburdened itself of the charge that it would reverse land reform if it won the election, an accusation whose resonance had often been utilised with devastating effect by ZANU PF and President Mugabe in particular.[104] As events unfolded after the March elections, and leading up to the run off in June 2008, a new, devastating wave of violence was unleashed against MDC supporters and voters in previously ZANU PF-dominated rural areas across the north, east and south of the country, including around Lake Mutirikwi where the ethnographic fieldwork for this paper was carried out. While some well-known war veterans in the Masvingo area turned away from President Mugabe, other hardliners were involved in a new wave of farm occupations targeting the few remaining white farmers in the area.

In the wake of this violence, and under the auspices of not entirely impartial mediation by Thabo Mbeki on behalf of SADC after the one-sided run off election, began a long process of negotiated settlement between the ruling and opposition parties. Punctuated, between periods of long frustration and delay, by key moments such the Memorandum of Understanding on the 21July 2008, the Global Political Agreement on the 15 September, and Tsvangirai's inauguration as Prime Minster on 11 February 2009, this troubled period witnessed continuing economic collapse, deepening, widespread hunger, sporadic state-orchestrated violence, failing infrastructure, and a devastating cholera epidemic. Amid mounting signs of power struggles within ZANU PF, and widespread concerns about its sincerity in the power-sharing process, a widespread scepticism about the prospects of a brokered Government of National Unity became increasing pervasive as 2008 turned into 2009. This scepticism amid Zimbabwe's deteriorating social and economic milieu led some commentators to suggest that the best alternative to political power-sharing was "an internationally sponsored, technocratically based transitional authority" to re-establish basic public services, and point the way forward to new, supervised elections in due course.[105] But it seems unlikely the 'technocratic' and the 'political' could be so easily isolated. As "Zimbabwe's fledgling power-sharing Government staggered into its fifth day" everything still seemed very much in the balance in mid February 2009.[106] What is clear, however, is that the entangled claims, aspirations, experiences and practices of new farmers and war veterans, chiefs and spirit mediums, administrators, technocrats, and others involved in the heavily localised contests of Zimbabwe's troubled politics of land, will, at least around Lake Mutirikwi, continue to be central to the ongoing and unfinished process of re-making the postcolonial state.

Notes

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2. Interview with Mafuma Mutsambwa, 19/12/05.

3. Interview with Joseph Munyani, Chief Lands Officer, Masvingo Province, 5/6/06
4. Interview withNyasha Pambirei, Masvingo Provincial AREX Officer, 28/4/06.
5. For examples of NGO reports critical of 'fast track' land reform see UNDP, January 2002, Zimbabwe land reform and resettlement: assessment and suggested framework for the future Interim Mission Report www.undp.org/rba/pubs/landreform.pdf; Human Rights Watch Report, March 2002, *Zimbabwe:* Fast Track Land Reform In Zimbabwe, Vol.14, No. 1(A) www.hrw.org/reports/2002/zimbabwe/; International Peace Academy, *IPA Workshop Report: Democracy and Land Reform in Zimbabwe*, 25/2/2002, (www.ipacademy.org/PDFReports /REPORT_ZIMBABWE.pdf); C.Fraser, "Black Zimbabweans suffer in Land reform", 7/11/02 (_); T.Lebert, "Backgrounder-Land and Agrarian Reform in Zimbabwe", 21/1/2003, (http://www.landaction.org/display.php?article=61). See also Derman and Hellum 2007; Sithole et al. 2003.
6. Raftopoulos 2003 and Alexander 2003, p.99. In August 2008 inflation rates reached an astonishing 350,000% ('Zimbabwe March inflation surges to 355,000%, Independent says' 16/5/08 Bloomber; see ZWNEWS.com). On Murmabatsvina see UN Tibaijuka Report, 18/7/05 "*Report of the Fact-Finding Mission to Zimbabwe to assess the Scope and Impact of Operation Murambatsvina by the UN Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe*"; also Sokwanele Special Report, 18 June 2005, *Operation Murambatsvina: An Overview and Summary*, (http://www.sokwanele.com). On legislation see AIPPA (Access to information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2002); POSA (Public Order and Security Act, 2002); ZEC ACT (Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Act, 2004); and the NGO Act (Non Governmental Organisations Act) passed by the Zimbabwean Parliament in December 2004 (see Amnesty International Report, 10/5/2005, *Zimbabwe: Human rights defenders under siege*. In August 2007 the Interception of Communications Act was passed which allowed state security organizations to intercept email and telephone communications (see *Financial Times*'New Law allows Mugabe to eavesdrop' 5/8/07).
7. Exact figures are impossible to come by but in 2003 most estimates suggested that between 1000 and 3500 people were dying from Aids every week in Zimbabwe (see *Zimbabwe Standard* 23/3/2003, "Zimbabwe Aids Statistics in Shambles", http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/mar27a_2003.html). On cholera see the World Health Organisation news release, 30 January 2009, 'Global, national efforts must be urgently intensified to control Zimbabwe cholera outbreak', http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2009/cholera_zim_20090130/en/index.html).
8. See for example 'Dumiso Dabengwa quits Zanu PF (Mugabe Faction) for Zanu PF (Makoni Faction)?' 1/3/08 *Zimdaily.com* (http://www.zimdaily.com /news/117/ARTICLE/2406/2008-03-01.html); 'Mbudzi warns CIO against making Makoni target', *newzimbabwe.com*, (http://www.newzimbabwe. com/pages/zanupf 14.17700.html); 'Zvinavashe concedes after recount, takes aim at Mugabe' 24/4/08 *newzimbabwe.com*, (http://www.newzimbabwe.com/pages/electoral244. 18100.html); also 'General Vitalis Zvinavashe concedes defeat, blames Mugabe' *The Zimbabwean,* 24 April 2008, see

(http://thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=comcontentandview=articleandid=12339:generalvitaliszvinavasheconcedesdefeatblamesmugabeandcatid=31:top%20zimbabwe%20storiesandItemid=66).

9. Other scholars researching land reform in Masvingo Province have also indicated that some new farmers on former commercial farms were able to produce good crops during the successful rainy season of 2005/6; see for example Cousins 2009 and Scoones 2008. This was not the case everywhere however. *Zim Online* (24/7/06) reported that in the southern districts of Chiredzi, Chivi and Mwenezi, in Masvingo province, food shortages continued after poor harvests in March 2006. Reports also indicate that at a national level, there continued to be serious food shortages despite the good rainy season experienced in most of the country (see *Reuters,* "WFP says 1.4 mln in Zimbabwe will need food aid" 11/10/06; *Zim Online* "Zimbabwe runs out of Mealie-meal" 15/8/06; *Zim Online* "Zimbabwe Officials admit severe food deficits" 24/8/06).

10. Fieldnotes 19/12/05.

11. Ferguson 1999.

12. Fast track resettlement involves two models: A1 and A2. The former focuses on small holder farming, on a villagised basis with communal grazing, or within self-contained plots, while the latter, involving medium and large-scale farming, is aimed at those with access to more financial resources. On multiple farm ownership see Alexander 2006, pp.187-193.

13. Hammer and Raftopoulos have argued that these shifting polarities are based upon 'core discursive divides' which posit 'an anti-colonial, historicised and racialised assertion of land restitution and justice' against 'ahistorical, universalist and technocratic insistence on liberal notions of private property, "development", and "good governance"(see 2003, p.17). Such dichotomies, they suggest, are the very sustenance of both the ruling party's hegemonic control, and of the 'counter-hegemonic moves of various opposition actors', and they state clearly that the aim of their volume is to undermine the 'misplaced concreteness' of these commonsense notions (2003, p.17).

14. See Mamdani's "Lessons of Zimbabwe" in the *London Review of Books*, 4 December 2008 (Vol. 30, NO. 23) and letters responding to it by R.W.Johnson, T.Ranger, and M.Tomczak published on 18th December (Vol. 30, No. 24) and by T. Scarnecchia et al. on 1st January 2009 (vol. 31, No.1). See also Patrick Bond, in *Links. International Journal of Socialist Renewal*, http://links.org.au/node/815, and Ben Cousins "Reply to Mamdani", unpublished. In contrast to common, and often shrill critiques of fast track land reform produced by some international commentators, more nuanced empirical research by Ian Scoones and others in Masvingo province has exposed some of the 'myths' associated with land reform, illustrating how, for example, livestock production and markets have remained vibrant despite the profound changes caused by the restructuring of authority over land. See Scoones 2008 and Mavedzenge et al 2008.

15. Interview with Robby Mtetwa, Fieldnotes 29/6/06.

16. Dinner with Ant and Helen Mitchel, Fieldnotes 9/1/06.

17. See Sithole et al. 2003.

18. Lambek 2002, pp. 37-8.

19. Alexander 2006, p.186.
20. Mbembe 2001.
21. Fontein 2006c.
22. Nyasha Pambirei, Provincial AREX Officer, Masvingo Province, Field notes 28/4/06.
23. For more on Oatlands and Longdale see FAO/SAFR 2000.
24. Fontein 2006a.
25. Fontein 2006a, chap. 2.
26. Fontein 2006b.
27. Spierenburg 2004.
28. These re-occupations of state land and old resettlements schemes have provoked difficult problems for technocrats and local government administrators who often try to reconcile these emotive relationships with the landscape with very different perspectives in which agricultural land use, soil erosion, river catchments and the siltation of Lake Mutirikwi are of central concern. Although these self-occupations have occurred regardless of distinctions between grazing and farming areas on resettlement schemes or fragile river catchments, I did get the sense that many re-occupiers were intensely aware of the finer concerns of land use planners, and some of the more articulate and indeed powerful (ie chiefs, and headmen) sited their own homesteads in accordance with both the technocratic perspectives and the necessities of their own 'history-scapes'.
29. An interesting point here is that although most of these areas were formerly granted or sold as farms between 1890 and 1910, many people remember losing their lands in the 1940s. This reflects the fact that although most farms had been formerly surveyed and acquired by white settlers by the end of the first decade of the 19th century, many of the African occupants were only evicted much later on, between the late 1930s and the 1950s, as a result changing colonial legislation on agriculture and land - most importantly the Land Apportionment Act (1930) and later the Native Land Husbandry Act (1951).
30. Fontein 2006a, chap. 3.
31. Ferguson 1999, p.24; Fabian 1983 and Appadurai 1988.
32. See Mamdani 1996, also Worby 1994. On African Purchase Areas see Shutt 1997.
33. Spierenburg 2004 and Alexander 2006, p.44.
34. Rukuni and Eicher 1994. This growth slackened in the late 1980s, and dramatically stalled in the 1990s with the combined effects of droughts, structural adjustment policies and general economic decline.
35. Kinsey 1999; Hoogeveen and Kinsey 2001.
36. Interview with Joseph Manyani, Provincial Lands Officer, Masvingo Province, 5/6/06. For an explanation of *zunde ramambo* see note 39.
37. This pressure on 'new farmers' to demonstrate productive occupation has striking resonances with concerns of the BSACo about absentee land ownership, which, from the late 1890s onwards, resulted in the formal requirement for settlers to demonstrate 'beneficial occupation' of their pegged and surveyed farms, in order to be issued with 'certificates of right' and ultimately title deeds (see *Rhodesian Herald*15/9/1897). Similarly,

requirements of productivity were also a key feature of the wave of land appropriations and settlement by ex-servicemen that took place after World War II.

38. See *Financial Gazette,* 15/11/06 'Yet Another Land Audit' and *News24 (SA)* 4/11/06. All resettled land is officially owned by the state, which grants 'permits of occupation' to A1 farmers and '99 year leases' to A2 farmers. These leases and permits are supposed to provide enough security of tenure for new farmers to take out loans against. In June 2004 (*The Herald* 8/6/04*)* John Nkomo, Minister Responsible for Lands, Land Reform and Resettlement, announced that all land was to nationalised, however this was hastily withdrawn a few days later by the Minister of Information Jonathon Moyo (*The Herald* 15/6/04*).* For now the 'nationalisation' of land only applies to resettled lands.

39. Bratton 1994, p.73.

40. *Zunde ramambo* refers to a pre-colonial 'customary' institution in which people worked communally in particular fields on behalf of chiefs and headmen. The produce from these fields would be set aside to help widows, the aged, orphans and others unable to grow their own food. Recently the concept has been formally re-instituted in communal areas (Kaseke 2006), and can be seen as part of a broader process of reformulating the authority and functions of chiefs.

41. Interview withJoseph Manyani, Chief Lands Officer, Masvingo Province, 5/6/06.

42. See Fontein 2006b and 2006c.

43. Interview with Pianos Kurasva, war veteran and new farmer, Desmondale farm, 17/4/06.

44. Interview with Vavarirai Chikwanda and Mafuma Mutsambwa, new farmers, Masvingo District, 12/1/06.

45. Chaumba et al. 2003b, p.601.

46. Interview with Solomon Makasva, Beza, Masvingo, 14/1/06.

47. Masvingo is well known for the intense factionalism of its local ZANU PF structures, which draws in complex alliances between chiefs, clans and spirit mediums, as well as bureaucrats, civil servants and competing war veteran groups.

48. Interview with Vavarirai Chikwanda and Mafuma Mutsambwa, new farmers, Masvingo District, 12/1/06.

49. Interview with Obediningo Chuma, war veteran and new farmer, Green Hills farm, Masvingo District, 12/6/06.

50. Interview with Pianos Kurasva, war veteran and new farmer, Desmondale farm, Masvingo District, 17/4/06.

51. Interview with James Mazvidza, District Administrator, Masvingo, 21/3/06. See also Mubvumba 2005.

52. Interview with Felix Chikovo, Provincial Administrator, Masvingo Province, 23/5/06.

53. Interview with Felix Chikovo, Provincial Administrator, Masvingo Province, 23/5/06

54. Around Lake Mutirikwi this was exemplified by the complex, historical disputes that have emerged recently over the legitimacy, authority, sovereignty and territorial boundaries of Chief Chikwanda. During the colonial period that chieftaincy was famously removed by the authorities, after most of the land was taken for European farms. It was 'returned' after independence, albeit with very limited territory. The recent 'return' of the farms to chiefs has provoked very complex disputes over the legitimacy of

different claimants to the position of Chief Chikwanda, as well as over the clan's historical/territorial relationship with other surrounding clans, headmen and chiefs.

55. Alexander 2006, p.10; Worby 1998, p.563; Chaumba et al. 2003b, p.604.
56. Chaumba et al. 2003a, p.543-4; Alexander 2006, p.191.
57. Ferguson 1999, p.14.
58. Ibid p.13.
59. For example see Bond and Manyanya 2003; Campbell 2003.
60. Worby 2003:68.
61. Chatterjee 1993, p.11 and 1996, p.222.
62. Ranger 2004; Primorac 2005, p.2.
63. On marginalisation of farm workers, women and others in fast track land reform see for example Rutherford 2001 and 2003, and Derman and Hellum 2007. For other histories of thwarted, localised aspirations for land between 1980 and 2000 see, for example, Alexander 2006, Moore 2005 and Hughes 2006.
64. Mubvumba 2005. For across the region see Buur and Kyed 2006; also Engelbert 2002 and Oomen 2002.
65. Moyo 2001; Moyo and Yeros 2005; also Marongwe 2003.
66. Moyo 2001, see also Alexander 2003, p.99.
67. See for example Marongwe 2003, p.174; also Fontein 2006b and 2006d. Ranger 1985. Moyo and Yeros 2005, p.195.
68. I must credit this point to a deeply engaging conversation with historians at the University of Zimbabwe in June 2006 when I presented a working paper (2006d) on my ongoing research around Lake Mutirikwi.
69. Knight 1999 and Marongwe 2003; Palmer 1990 and Alexander 2006.
70. Marongwe 2003, p.186, see also Moore 2005.
71. Alexander 2006, p.111.
72. Manzungu 2004:66. For chiefs see for example, *The Herald* (3/12/00) which reported that the Council of Chiefs was considering taking the Commercial Farmer's Union to court of its "reluctance to relinquish some of the Land owned by its members". Interestingly the President of the Council was quoted as saying "The president does not own the land. The land belongs to the Chiefs. The white settlers took the land from the chiefs and not the president. So any court action by the union should directed at the chiefs." More recently, in May 2004, during the National Assembly of Chiefs held at Great Zimbabwe, the chiefs re-affirmed their support for the land reform programme (*The Herald*, 6/5/2004, 8/5/2004; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 14/5/2004; see also *The Masvingo Star* 23–29/7/2004). See also Mubvumba 2005.
73. Interview with Obediningo Chuma, war veteran and new farmer, Green Hills Farm, Masvingo District 12/6/06.
74. Alexander 2006, p.193; Derman and Hellum 2007, p.161.
75. Manzungu 2004, p.54; Alexander 2006, p.186; Interview with VaMhike 26/6/01.
76. See also Fontein 2006c.
77. Interview with VaKanda, VaMadiri and VaMuchina, 16/03/01.
78. Ranger 2004.

79. On National *Biras*See *Zimdaily* 28/9/05 "Govt Blows Unbudgeted $95 billion On National Biras", (http://www.zimdaily.com/news; *Newsnet Zimbabwe*,25/9/05 "National Biras gather momentum in various parts of the country" (www.newsnet.co.zw/). On the *zunde ramambo* project see Kaseke 2006. On the amendment of the Witchcraft Suppression Act see *The Herald* 10/05/06. On the reburials of liberation war dead see Fontein 2009.

80. This point is amplified by the way in which war veterans in parts of Matabeleland gave expression to local grievances against local governments structures though a 'politics of disruption which McGregor has described, see McGregor 2002.

81. Kriger 2003, p. 208. For another nuanced account of the complex relationship between war veterans, the state and the ruling party see also Sadomba and Andrew 2006.

82. For e.g., Ranger 1999; Maxwell 1999; Alexander 2006.

83. Chief Charumbira, is good example of local chief deeply involved in ruling party politics, and a key member of one of Masvingo's infamous ZANU PF factions. As Deputy Minister of Local Government he was able to facilitate the appointment of loyalists into key local government positions. More recently he was removed from his ministerial position in a move orchestrated, as some rumours would have it, by influential ZANU PF figures in Harare determined to cut back his rather grandiose ambitions. As the new President of the Council of Chiefs, he has been at the forefront of efforts to re-establish the authority of chiefs.

84. It is not clear how well spirit mediums have done out of recent reforms. Contrary to expectations at independence (Lan 1985, p.149), it has been chiefs and not spirit mediums who have been increasingly courted by the central government (Fontein 2006b and 2006c). Much as the Rhodesian state largely ignored spirit mediums, these recent reforms have tended to view spirit mediums as operating under chiefs, and some spirit mediums I have spoken to continue to feel marginalised from the state at local and national levels. I suspect this relates to the inherently ambiguous and ambivalent status of spirit mediums, and the difficulty of placing them in any kind of bureaucratic or administrative structure of governance. However, the potential political influence of spirit mediums does seem to have been recognised by the ruling party, much as the Rhodesian state belatedly did during the liberation struggle (Ranger 1982). Both my own recent fieldwork and the work of other scholars (Spierenburg 2004), suggests that the CIO [Central Intelligence Organisation] have been increasingly active in 'protecting', or 'managing' access to, spirit mediums.

85. Marongwe 2003, p.165.

86. Ibid. p.187. One problem with Marongwe's analysis is that it presumes that war veterans are simply a pliant arm of ZANU PF, but other studies (Kriger 2003; Fontein 2006c; Sadomba and Andrew 2006) suggest a more complex relationship that dates back to the struggle. Marongwe's broad characterisation of the post 2000 land occupations as war veteran led, in contrast to the 1998-9 occupations, also hides some of the localised complexities of post 2000 land reform such as in the Mutirikwi area, where the occupation of past resettlement schemes, national park and other state land occurred at the same time, and was much like the 1998-9 occupations he describes: led by particular members of local clans, and even some chiefs, claiming ancestral ties to the land.

87. Interview withJoseph Manyani, Chief Lands Officer, Masvingo Province, 5/6/06.
88. Worby 2003.
89. Alexander 2003, p.114.
90. Gable 2006.
91. Ferguson 1999, p.18.
92. Alexander 2006, p. 44-59; see also Drinkwater 1989 and Moore 2005.
93. Moore 2005, p.17.
94. Interview with Obediningo Chuma, war veteran and new farmer, Green Hills Farm, Masvingo District 12/6/06.
95. Interview with Joseph Munyani, Chief Lands Officer, Masvingo Province, 5/6/06.
96. Mugabe dishes out tractors, food, money to buy election votes' 7/3/08, *Afrik.com*, http://en.afrik.com/article12763.html.
97. Interview with Felix Chikovo, Provincial Administrator, 23/5/06**.**
98. Chaumba et al. 2003a.
99. Most recently Didymus Mutasa is alleged to have prevented the publication of the fourth 'audit' of the land reform programme, which highlights the systematic looting of prime farms by senior government officials, army generals and Zanu (PF) cronies' (See Mutasa suppresses damning land audit'*The Zimbabwean* 20/4/08).
100.   Alexander 2006, p.63.
101.   Dorman 2003, p.845.
102.   Dean 2001, p.53; Hammar 2003, p.130-131.
103.   Das and Poole 2004; Hansen and Stepputat 2001; Tsing 1994.
104.   See for example 'ZIMBABWE: Victory, "sweeter than a miracle!"' 3/4/08, *IRIN*, http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=77600; 'Opposition thugs seek to reverse land reform' *Sunday Mail*, No Date, http://www.sundaymail.co.zw/inside.aspx?sectid=436andcat=1. In fact the MDC has been refuting this accusation since 2004, but to little apparent avail, see 'We will not return farmers' land, says MDC', 4/4/04, *Sunday Tribune,* http://www.sundaytribune.co.za/index.php?fArticleId=392387.
105.   See Mary Ndlovu "Zimbabwe on the edge of the precipice" *Pambazuka News* 17/12/2008. See also "INTERVIEW: 'We would've set up compact, technocratic govt' Lance Guma speaks to Dr Simba Makoni" http://www.zimonline.co.za/, 16/2/09.
106.   "Robert Mugabe henchmen bent on sabotaging fragile partnership" http://www.timesonline.co.uk/, 16/2/09.

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Alternative Electoral Systems and the 2005 Ethiopian Parliamentary Election

JOHN ISHIYAMA

Abstract: What if an alternative set of electoral rules had been used to govern elections when an authoritarian regime introduces its first real competitive elections? Would this alter the trajectory of democratic transition, after the introduction of political competition? In this paper, I conduct a set of electoral simulations with different electoral systems using the results from the 2005 Ethiopian parliamentary election. Would the results have been different had something other than the single member district plurality system been employed in the 2005 election? Would the opposition parties have attained more seats and if so, how many more? I find that had certain electoral rules been employed (particularly the Block Plurality system), the opposition parties would have fared much better in the 2005 parliamentary elections, and this would have had an important impact affecting the course of events that immediately followed the 2005 election. This has important implications for the negotiations over the rules governing future Ethiopian elections.

Introduction

As many scholars have noted, electoral systems exert a powerful influence on the process of democratization.[1] Indeed first competitive or "transitional" elections are crucial moments for newly democratizing countries. Although these elections mark only a beginning point in an often arduous journey, their outcomes crucially affect the future course of democratic transition and democratic consolidation.[2] Whoever wins the transitional election often has the opportunity to re-write the rules of the game to their advantage and, hence, significantly influence future political developments.

Would the rewriting of such electoral rules have changed the outcome of the first real competitive parliamentary election in Ethiopia in 2005? The 2005 election was a crucial moment in the history of the transition period in the country. First, it produced a real electoral opposition that could challenge the ruling Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Second, the results of the election set the stage for a violent confrontation between the

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opposition and the regime in the summer of 2005 that ultimately led to the "arrest" of further democratization. In part, the violent repression of the opposition on the part of the EPRDF was a direct consequence of the election itself. On the one hand the opposition parties had won enough seats to challenge the regime (especially in Addis Ababa and the region of Oromiya) but not enough seats across the country (even in those areas that were not marred by electoral fraud) to force the regime to recognize them as legitimate coalition partners in a new government. Could the results have been different if the 2005 election had been governed by a different set of electoral rules, such as the adoption of a list Proportional Representation system that the opposition had called for prior to the election?

This paper utilizes a set of electoral simulations using the 2005 Ethiopian parliamentary election results and asks the question of whether the results would have been different had different electoral rules been employed (as opposed to the single member district plurality system)? Would the opposition parties have attained more seats if some variation of Proportional Representation (PR) system or Mixed Member District (MMD) system (similar to Germany's) been employed, and if so how many more? This paper takes the existing electoral returns (using only the results from districts which were not in dispute following the 2005 election) and subjects them to a variety of electoral systems (national PR list, PR list aggregated to the regions, a Mixed Member District system and a Block Plurality System). Finally, it examines the possible impact of the use of alternative electoral rules on the course of post-election Ethiopian politics.

There has been a long tradition in the literature of simulating the effects of different electoral systems using existing electoral data in order to ascertain whether the use of such alternative systems might significantly alter the results.[3] By re-running the national parliamentary elections using alternative electoral systems one can speculate as to whether changing the electoral formulae would have changed the composition of government and parliament. Much of the extant literature, however, has focused on electoral systems simulations in fully consolidated democracies in Europe, Asia, and Latin America, as opposed to systems in transition, or even "semi-authoritarian" regimes.[4]

Assessing the effects of alternative electoral systems for countries in transition would provide important insights as to the potential effects of such systems on the course of democratization. Electoral results in founding elections are critically important because who wins such elections has the opportunity to fashion the constitutional order to advantage their political interests. As Andrew Reynolds notes "the concept of a 'loyal opposition' is a difficult one to entrench when one segment of society sees that losing an election is equivalent to being completely shut out of governmental power… whether to constitute parliament by a plurality, majoritarian, or proportional representation type electoral system, become(s) critically important to the prospects for democratic consolidation in a divided society."[5]

This cultivation of a loyal opposition may be particularly difficult in a semi authoritarian regime, especially for what Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way refer to as "competitive authoritarian" regimes.[6] Such regimes are not democratic in that incumbents routinely manipulate politics to their advantage. However, such regimes are also not full-scale authoritarian regimes. They do not eliminate formal democratic rules or reduce them to a mere façade or ban opposition parties altogether. Rather, incumbents are more likely to use bribery,

co-optation, and subtle forms of suppression to "legally" harass, persecute, and extort cooperation. Further, in competitive authoritarian regimes opposition forces often pose significant challenges to the regime. So even though democratic institutions are seriously flawed in competitive authoritarian regimes, unlike in full-fledged authoritarian regimes, the incumbents must take the opposition seriously. Unlike "façade" electoral regimes which characterize full-blown authoritarian systems, in competitive authoritarianism, democratic institutions (such as electoral systems) offer an important channel through which the opposition may seek to pressure the regime into making democratic concessions. Indeed, such competition allows the potential for openings for the opposition to make significant inroads, at least enough to institutionalize their position, and from that point as a potential springboard for full-blown democratic transition. Whether that opposition remains "loyal" when an opening occurs may depend heavily on whether it "feels" included rather than excluded from the political process.

Electoral systems and democracy in Africa

There has historically been a rich literature on elections and political parties in Sub-Saharan Africa. Much of this past literature has centered on the formation of political parties in the shadow of decolonization and the early years of independence. Generally, the literature focused on either the emergence of ethnic parties (or parties that appeal to a particular ethnic group), which were often seen as divisive organizations, or on the emergence of nationalist parties that became the foundation for the later one-party states.[7]

However, this past literature on African parties really did not tap into the existing theories on electoral systems and political parties developed in Europe, Latin America and Asia--- little effort was made to link the African experience with the broader literature on these topics. As the "third wave" hit sub-Saharan Africa, there was a sharp rise in interest in elections and political parties as more and more countries experienced political liberalization and began holding elections.[8]

Since then, several studies have examined party development as a function of electoral systems in Africa.[9] Much of this new literature however has focused either on electoral systems effects on the development of party systems or the electoral performance of individual parties.[10]

Perhaps some of the best recent work (and most relevant given the focus of this paper) is that of Andrew Reynolds.[11] In particular, in his 1999 book he analyzed the election results in the five countries (South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi) examining the actual results as well as alternative results under a variety of different electoral systems simulations. Arguing that political institutions are important in affecting the development of an "inclusionary" or "exclusionary ethos" in the first competitive elections (and that this "ethos" is crucial in explaining the stability of the democratization process) he reruns elections for each country under alternative electoral systems. A key assumption he makes about voter choice is that voter preferences would have remained the same regardless of the electoral system— although he acknowledges some systems provide powerful incentives for minority party supporters to vote tactically where they believe their first choice party has no feasible chance of winning, particularly in a single member district—i.e. voters will behave differently under different electoral systems. Despite this possible problem, Reynolds argues that in the five

countries in his study party identification and voting preferences are very strongly held, which reflect polarized ethnic, linguistic, cultural, ideological and regional lines of cleavage. Thus, the probability is higher that voters in these countries will tend not to vote tactically.

The simulations he conducts provide a persuasive argument in favor of more proportional electoral systems, in that they better promote an "inclusionary" ethos early in the process of democratic transition. For example, he notes that the South African ANC would have been better off with single-member districts, although by supporting proportional representation during the constitutional negotiations this provided enough "voice" to the opposition to keep the varying political interests attached to the incipient political system.

Regarding Ethiopia more specifically, there has been some work on the historical evolution of the political parties in the country and several very good recent studies on the elections and the general process of democratization in Ethiopia.[12] There has also been some work that has recently appeared specifically evaluating the 2005 election and its immediate aftermath.[13] However, as far as the recent work on Ethiopia is concerned, there has been very little systematic work done on the relationship between the electoral systems and the political parties in the country and, to date, no work that has employed the technique of electoral simulations.[14]

What if Ethiopia had employed a different electoral system to govern the 2005 election? Would the adoption of proportional representation (as had been advocated by the Ethiopian opposition) have significantly altered the results? Would the opposition have been better represented (which may have helped avoid the violence and difficulties the country has faced since May 2005)? Before addressing these questions, I first turn to brief discussion of the historical background to the 2005 election.

Background to the 2005 Election

The overthrow of the Communist Derg regime in Ethiopia in 1991 by the Tigrayan Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) and its allies marked a new era in Ethiopian politics. Following the collapse of the Derg regime, the victorious TPLF (led by Meles Zenawi) moved quickly to establish its political dominance. The original aim of Tigrayan independence was abandoned by the TPLF when it formed the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) in order to depose the Derg regime. The EPRDF was an alliance of four other groups, including the Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization, the Amhara National Democratic Movement, and the Democratic Officers Alliance (in 1993 the South Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Front was added to replace this group) and the Tigrayan Peoples' Liberation Front. All four regional-ethnic parties were created by the TPLF. In reality, members of parliament from these parties consistently vote with TPLF and have no real independence outside the direction of TPLF.

An important structural change that the EPRDF has instituted under its rule is the reconfiguration of the country into an ethnic federation.[15] Many powers have been 'devolved' to the regions, and the right to use the local language in official dealings has been guaranteed. According to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, it is only through such constitutional guarantees for ethnic autonomy can the country be held together and future secessions be avoided. Critics, however, point to the fact that despite the federal arrangement, power is concentrated in the hands of the EPRDF (made up of four constituent parties). As a result, similar to the Soviet

federal practice of 'democratic centralism,' regional governments are, in practice, implementers of policies adopted by the EPRDF. Others have bemoaned both the financial costs of implementing parallel political and economic institutions across Ethiopia's reorganized ethnic 'states' and are concerned about the threat such ethnic divisions present to Ethiopian unity.

In the 1990s the EPRDF regime emerged as a semi-authoritarian regime and although an opposition was tolerated, it was quite circumscribed. It was within this context that the current Ethiopian opposition parties emerged. Although there are many parties registered at both the national and regional levels, only in 2005 did the opposition coalesce into a viable force that could challenge the EPRDF. In 2003, the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (or UEDF, sometimes known as Hibrit) was formed in Washington, DC and comprised five Ethiopia-based and nine exile opposition groups. These included widely disparate groups in ideological terms ranging from socialist, to liberal, to secessionist. The principal parties in the UEDF were the Ethiopian Social Democratic Federal Party (ESDFP – formerly the Coalition of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy in Ethiopia), the Oromo National Congress (ONC), the United Ethiopia Democratic Party (UEDP), the Southern Ethiopia Peoples' Democratic Coalition (SEPDC), and the All-Amhara People's Organization (AAPO).[16] The UEDF chairman was the political scientist Dr. Merera Gudina, a member of the faculty at Addis Ababa University and chair of the Oromo National Conference. The UEDF vice-chair was Beyene Petros, a leading figure in the Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy (CAFPDE) and later the United Ethiopian Democratic Party.[17] The UEDF has campaigned to shift greater power to the various ethnic groups and the UEDF insists that the ethnic-confederation model (which other opposition parties, most notably the CUD oppose) should not only be retained, but actually followed more faithfully.[18]

The other major opposition group in current Ethiopian politics is the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD—Kinijit). Kinijit was formed by four new political parties in 2004. It consists of the All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP), the Ethiopian Democratic League (EDL), the Ethiopian Democratic Unity Party-Medhin (EDUP-M), and the Rainbow Alliance/Movement for Democracy and Social Justice. The organization contains constituent groups with differing views regarding economic and political management ranging from social democrats to economic liberals.[19] The CUD is highly critical of the EPRDF led government's policy of promoting ethnic federalism. Its leaders challenge the EPRDF's definition of the Ethiopia as an ethnic confederation and contend that it is a recipe for the disintegration of the country.[20] The CUD had strong support in the Amhara region and Addis Ababa. It was led by intellectuals like Hailu Shawil and Berhanu Nega.[21]

These three parties (EPRDF, UEDF, and CUDP) were the main contenders in the May 15 2005 parliamentary elections, the third such elections since the adoption of the EPRDF-sponsored constitution of 1994. The Ethiopian elections were conducted using a SMDP system with 548 districts in the country. The 1995 election had been largely boycotted by the opposition groups, and the EPRDF won an overwhelming number of seats in the parliament. In the 2000 election, the EPRDF again won an overwhelming number of seats (472), with the opposition parties (which competed as individual parties) winning only twelve seats out of the total 547.

Under considerable pressure from the West (particularly after Meles Zenawi's prominent inclusion in British Prime Minister Tony Blair's Commission for Africa), the ruling EPRDF took

measures to reform the nomination and election procedure for the 2005 election. Earlier elections in 1995 and 2000 were marked by government harassment of opposition parties and a boycott of the polls by the most influential opposition organizations. In the lead-up to 2005, the EPRDF indicated that it wanted to run an election that was perceived as free and fair by the international community and that included greater participation by opposition parties within Ethiopia. The government agreed in October 2004 to meet some of the demands put forward by leading opposition groups, notably allowing international election observers and ensuring opposition access to state-run media. However, the opposition parties' demand that the electoral system be changed to a proportional representation system was not accepted.

On May 15, 2005, Ethiopia held its third general election for seats in national and regional parliamentary elections. Turnout was around 90 percent. The National Election Board (NEBE) announced that official results would be released on June 8. The initial returns indicated that the ruling EPRDF won over 300 seats, although the opposition parties won all 23 seats in the capital city, Addis Ababa. In addition, the EPRDF could count on their 'affiliated parties' (often referred to in Ethiopia as satellite parties or "Quisling" or even "Condom" parties). Beyond the official EPRDF parties (TPLF, OPDO, ANDM and SEPDO) the EPRDF has its affiliates also in the other states and smaller ethnic groups, such as the Afar National Democratic Party, the Benishangul Gumuz People's Democratic Unity Party, the Gambela People's Democratic Front, the Somali Peoples Democratic Party and others are all members of the EPRDF block and closely controlled by TPLF. Their candidates are selected by the EPRDF's agents, and these parties govern the remaining federal states on behalf of EPRDF. Thus the official results reported underestimate the true dominance of the EPRDF..

Following the election, the CUD and UEDF claimed massive electoral fraud and demanded an investigation of nearly 300 district elections. Anti-government demonstrations erupted in the capital in early June, and were met with violent suppression by security forces, resulting in the death of over 30 student protesters. Both the CUD and UEDF, which had agreed in June to a truce with the EPRDF, continued to allege that massive electoral fraud had stolen the election. The opposition parties had decided to boycott the related August 21 elections in the Somali Region. On September 5, the NEBE released its final results, in which the EPRDF retained its control of the government with 327 seats. Opposition parties won 174 seats (up from 12 in 2000), with the CUD winning 109 total seats, and the UEDF winning 52, and minor parties and independents taking the remainder.

Alternative Electoral Systems

As mentioned above, the intention of this paper is to assess whether the 2005 parliamentary election results would have been different if different electoral systems had been employed. Indeed, if the results had been different, and had the opposition's political strength been better represented in the results, perhaps, using Reynolds' term, an "inclusive ethos" could have been established in Ethiopia, and perhaps compromise would have replaced the violence that followed the election.

Like Reynolds, I assume that voter preferences would have remained the same regardless of the electoral system— in Ethiopia as is the case elsewhere in Africa, party identification and

voting preferences reflect polarized ethnic, linguistic, cultural, ideological and regional lines of cleavage.[22] However, even with this assumption, there are certain limitations on what can be tested given the fact that this analysis can only be done post facto – i.e., only on the basis of votes that have already been recorded. Thus, for instance, since the ballot in Ethiopia was not ordinal (meaning no rank ordering was afforded to voters) one cannot assess popular alternative systems such as the Single Transferable Vote, the Approval Vote, or the Alternative Vote, all of which require a rank ordered ballot.

There are at least four alternative electoral systems that can be assessed using the available electoral data. The first is a plurality system called the Block Vote, which uses multi-member districts in which electors have as many votes as there are candidates to be elected. Counting is identical to a First Past the Post/Single Member District Plurality system (as was the system used in Ethiopia) with the candidates with the highest vote totals winning the seats. In this case I use as the natural multimember districts the "zones" which made for districts as large as twenty seats and as small as one seat. The second system is the Mixed Member/Parallel system in which the choices expressed by the voters are used to elect representatives through two different systems - Party-list Proportional Representation and a plurality/majority system. Unlike in some countries (such as Germany) where the PR list compensates for the disproportionality in the results from the plurality/majority system, the Parallel system is a mixed system in which the two components are separated from one another (as is the case in Russia from 1993-97). In addition there are two kinds of Party-List Proportional Representation systems. Generally under this system, each party or grouping presents a list of candidates for a multi-member electoral district. The voters then vote for a party, and parties receive seats in proportion to their share of the vote. However, there is a difference between systems where seats are aggregated nationally (such as in the Netherlands and Israel) or aggregated at the regional level (as in Belgium and Slovakia). Generally these types of systems are accompanied by a minimal threshold in terms of the percentage of the vote in order to qualify for seats (5 percent). There are several ways in which to allocate the seats (and remaining seats from the votes for parties that did not pass the threshold) but the most common is the D'hondt method.[23]

It is important to mention here that one system which is not included in the set of electoral simulations presented in this paper is the widely touted Alternative Vote which comes in both single seat and multi-member district versions.[24] Although not widely used (it has been employed in Australian senate elections, as well as in local elections in Canada and elsewhere) it has been touted as an institutional remedy for politics in ethnically divided societies (as is the case in Ethiopia). The Alternative Vote system allows for voters to express their preferences for candidates in a single member district. If there is not a single candidate who wins a majority (50 percent) of the first preferences votes, then the lowest polling candidate is eliminated and that candidate's second preferences are redistributed to candidates remaining in the race, until a single candidate surmounts the 50 percent threshold.[25]

Scholars have used the Alternative Vote in their simulations, but they were able to do this by inferring second preferences of voters via pre-election voter surveys which identified the party that was the second choice of most voters.[26] Such data, however, do not exist for the 2005 Ethiopian election—hence it would be highly speculative as to the second preferences of voters and thus not appropriate for the simulations in this paper.

Finally, there is another limitation in using existing voting results to estimate alternative possible outcomes from the 2005 election--- there remains considerable doubt as to the veracity of the election results. Indeed at least 139 districts were investigated for election irregularities, and there was some question of the results from the Afar region. Further, the Somali region did not hold its parliamentary elections until August 21, 2005. In order to take the veracity of the election results into account (to some extent) I remove the voting results from 172 electoral districts from consideration that were either protested because of irregularities by the opposition, the governing party, or were from the Somali region. This left the voting tallies from 375 election districts.

In addition, however, there were also questionable results in other parts of the country. For instance, the overwhelming voting returns for the EPRDF in Tigray (in some districts the returns for the EPRDF reached or exceeded 100 percent) can be viewed as somewhat questionable as well. Nonetheless, the results from the 38 districts in Tigray were not officially challenged, so they were not automatically subtracted from the sample of 375 districts. However, I do examine the simulation results with and without the Tigray region seats included.

Results

Table 1 presents voting results by percentage for the EPRDF (and its allies) the CUDP and the UEDF (as well as an aggregated column for "others" generally smaller regional parties not generally aligned with the EPRDF and independents) based upon the vote tallies from the non-challenged results from the 375 electoral districts. The EPRDF dominated in Tigray (93 percent) and did well in Benshangul (65 percent), Gambela (74 percent) and Oromiya (64 percent). The CUDP did well in the cities of Addis Ababa (74 percent), Dire Dawa (42 percent) and the Amhara Region (48 percent). The UEDF had its best showings in Oromiya and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR). Overall the EPRDF and its allies (based upon the results from the 375 non-challenged districts) won 59.5 percent of the national vote, the CUDP 21.9 percent, UEDF 10.9 percent and others (both independents and smaller parties 7.7 percent).

Table 1: Percent Vote by Party by Region				
Region	EPRDF and allies	CUDP	UEDF	Others
Tigray	93.0%	1.7%	0.0%	5.3%
Amhara	36.0%	48.0%	2.0%	14.0%
Benshangul	65.0%	16.0%	0.0%	19.0%
Dire Dawa	43.0%	42.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Gambela	74.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Oromiya	64.0%	10.0%	17.0%	9.0%
SNNPR	49.0%	22.0%	13.0%	16.0%
Addis Ababa	14.2%	74.0%	1.8%	10.0%
National Total (based on 375 non challenged districts)	**59.5%**	**21.9%**	**10.9%**	**7.7%**

Source: National Election Board of Ethiopia at http://www.electionsethiopia.org/ accessed May 2007.

What if a proportional representation system had been used? Table 2 compares seat allocations based upon the actual results from the 2005 election (from the 375 non challenged electoral districts) with a system where seats are aggregated and allocated by region, with a 5 percent threshold using the D'hondt method. Further, the seat totals are reported for all 375 districts in the sample, as well as the totals if the results from the Tigray region are removed. As indicated, when considering the sample of 375 seats, the EPRDF would have received six fewer seats than it actually did, but the CUDP would have received fifteen fewer seats, and the UEDF eleven fewer seats. The biggest beneficiary from using a PR list system with seat allocations at the regional level would be the small regional parties that were unaffiliated with the EPRDF that would increase their allocated seats from 12 to 44. When subtracting out the seats from the Tigray region, the EPRDF would lose four seats, the CUDP fifteen seats and the UEDF eleven seats. These results do not differ significantly from the seat allocation results from those of a national PR list system (see Table 4 below).

Table 2: Actual and Hypothetical Seats Distributions using PR list system aggregat Regions

Region	EPRDF and allies		CUDP		UEDF		Others	
	Actual	With 5% threshold	Actual	With 5% threshold	Actual	With 5% threshold	Actual	With thres
Tigray	38	36	0	0	0	0	0	2
Amhara	15	21	42	28	0	0	1	9
Benshangul	8	6	1	1	0	0	0	2
Dire Dawa	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Gambela	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Oromiya	87	95	16	15	36	25	10	14
SNNPR	64	46	16	21	12	12	1	15
Addis Ababa	0	3	23	17	0	0	0	2
Total	216	210	99	84	48	37	12	44
Total without Tigray	178	174	99	84	48	37	12	42

Total seats = 375

Source: National Election Board of Ethiopia at http://www.electionsethiopia.org/ accessed 2007.

Table 3 reports results from a Block Plurality system redrawing the single member districts into multi-member districts based upon the zones for each region. As indicated in the table, the number of seats for the EPRDF is reduced considerably to only 195 seats (to 158 seats when the Tigray region seats are separated out). The CUDP seat total amounts to 94 (93 when the Tigray region seats are removed) under the Block Plurality method (down from 99 in the actual results). The greatest beneficiary from the Block Plurality system is the UEDF which increases its seat total under this system to 61 seats (from the actual total of 48 seats). Minor regional parties that were not affiliated with the EPRDF would increase their share of seats from 12 to 25 (both with and without the Tigray districts included).

Table 3 : Hypothetical Block Plurality Results by Zone

Tigray	EPRDF	CUD	UEDF	Others
Central Tigray	14	0	0	0
East tigray	8	0	0	0
Mekele	1	0	0	0
South Tigray	6	1	0	0
West Tigray	8	0	0	0
Amhara				
Age Awi	0	4	0	0
East Gojjam	1	0	0	0
North Gonder	6	6	0	0
North Shewa	2	8	0	0
North Wello	1	0	0	0
Oromiya	1	0	0	0
South Wello	0	6	0	0
Wag Himera	3	0	0	0
West Gojjam	2	13	0	0
Beshangul				
Asosa	4	2	0	0
Kamashi	1	0	0	0
Metekel	1	1	0	0
Diredawa	1	1	0	0
Gambela				
Gambela Medebegna	1	0	0	0
Godere	1	0	0	0
Larei	1	0	0	0
SNNPR				
Alaba Liyu	2	0	0	0
East shewa	1	0	4	0
Ameya	1	0	0	0
Basketo Liyu	2	0	0	0
Bench Maji	4	1	2	0
Dawro	2	0	0	0
Gamo Gofa	6	6	0	0
Gedeo	7	1	1	0
Gurage	3	9	1	0
Hadiya	3	0	7	0
Keffa	5	0	0	0
Kembata Tembaro	1	0	5	0
Selti	4	0	0	0
Sidama	6	1	0	0
South Omo	5	1	1	0
Welayita	5	0	0	0
Oromiya				
Arsi	10	1	7	0
Bale	4	1	1	4
Borena	2	0	2	1
East Harege	4	0	3	9
East Shewa	7	2	4	0
East Wellega	4	3	4	2
Guji	3	0	0	1
Illububor	6	0	0	0
Jimma	5	1	0	0
North Shewa	7	0	0	0
Southwest Shewa	2	1	6	0
West Harage	10	0	1	0
West Shewa	0	1	11	
West Wellega	10	0	0	7
Addis Ababa				
Zone 1	0	4	0	0
Zone 2	0	4	0	0
Zone 3	0	4	0	0
Zone 4	0	4	0	0
Zone 5	0	5	0	0
Zone 6	0	1	0	0
Total	195	94	61	25
Total without Tigray	158	93	61	25

Total seats = 375

Source: National Election Board of Ethiopia at http://www.electionsethiopia.org/ accessed May 2007.

Table 4 below summarizes the seat allocations for each party by electoral system, comparing the SMDP system, the National PR list (with D'hondt with a 5 percent threshold), the Regional PR list system (with D'hondt and a 5 percent threshold), a Mixed Member District-parallel system with the 375 seats and 100 National PR list seats (for a total of 475 seats) and finally the Block Plurality system based on the country's zones. Table 5 summarizes the seat allocations subtracting out the seat totals from the Tigray region.

As indicated in Table 5, the EPRDF does best under a national PR list system (59.5 percent of the seats). This is because the EPRDF received an overwhelming majority in Tigray, and substantial majorities in Benshangul, Gambela, but also Oromiya. Even when separating out the districts from Tigray, the EPRDF performs best under the national PR list system (with 55.5 percent of the seats). The CUDP victories and the UEDF victories were by smaller margins, hence they did better in systems that used plurality competitions (the actual system used, the MMD/parallel system, and especially the Block Plurality system). The UEDF did particularly well under a Block Plurality system, especially since the lost several close single member district competitions (but had relatively high vote totals), and the EPRDF won some seats without a majority of the vote. This meant that in a multi-member plurality competition, the UEDF might have come in fourth or fifth in a five seat district and won seats, although in the actual election they may have lost each of the individual district competitions.

Table 4: Actual and Hypothetical Seat Distributions by Party by Electoral System (percent share of seats including Tigray)

	SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICT PLURALITY (ACTUAL)	NATIONAL PR LIST WITH 5% THRESHOLD	REGIONAL PR LIST WITH 5% THRESHOLD	MMD-parallel WITH 5% THRESHOLD (out of 475 seats, 375 SMD seats and 100 PR seats)	BLOCK PLURALITY BASED ON ZONES
EPRDF	216 (57.6%)	223 (59.5%)	210 (56.0%)	276 (58.2%)	195 (52.0%)
CUD	99 (26.4%)	82 (21.9%)	84 (22.4%)	121 (25.5%)	94 (25.1%)
UEDF	48 (12.8%)	41 (10.9%)	37 (9.9%)	59 (12.4%)	61 (16.3%)
Others	12 (3.2%)	29 (7.7%)	44 (11.7%)	19 (4.0%)	25 (6.7%)

Source: National Election Board of Ethiopia at http://www.electionsethiopia.org/ accessed May 2007.

Table 5: Actual and Hypothetical Seat Distributions by Party by Electoral System Without Tigray Region (percent share of seats)

	SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICT PLURALITY (ACTUAL)	NATIONAL PR LIST WITH 5% THRESHOLD	REGIONAL PR LIST WITH 5% THRESHOLD	MMD-parallel WITH 5% THRESHOLD (out of 437 seats, 337 SMD seats and 100 PR seats)	BLOCK PLURALITY BASED ON ZONES
EPRDF	178 (52.8%)	187 (55.5%)	174 (51.6%)	236 (54.0%)	158 (46.9%)
CUD	99 (29.4%)	82 (24.3%)	84 (24.9%)	121 (27.7%)	93 (27.6%)
UEDF	48 (14.2%)	41 (12.2%)	37 (11.0%)	59 (13.5%)	61 (18.1%)
Others	12 (3.6%)	29 (8.6%)	44 (13.1%)	19 (4.3%)	25 (7.4%)

Thus, despite the opposition's call for the adoption of a proportional representation system prior to the 2005 parliamentary elections, the above results suggest that the opposition would have performed better under some other form of district plurality competition (either the SMD plurality system, the MMD-parallel system, or the Block Plurality system). The CUDP performed best under the SMDP system (the one actually used) and the UEDF would have performed best under the Block Plurality system. The opposition overall performed best under the Block Plurality system. Indeed, if the results from the Tigrayan districts were removed from consideration, the EPRDF and its allies would have failed to reach a majority of the seats allocated (winning only 46.9 percent of the contested seats). This may be due, perhaps, to the regional concentration of electoral support for both the major opposition parties, the CUDP in Amhara and Addis Ababa, and the UEDF in Oromiya and SNNPR. The EPRDF and its allies, on the other hand, seemed to perform generally well across all regions, even when excluding the votes from districts where the results were challenged. Thus, if the opposition really wanted to adopt an electoral system that would give them an advantage, the Block Plurality System would appear most attractive in contrast to either a national list or regional list proportional representation system.

These results, however, should also be taken with a large 'grain of salt.' Although this study did not include districts whose results were officially challenged (or from the Somali region), it is likely that the voting results in many of the remaining districts and regions were still highly questionable. Nonetheless, even when taking that into consideration, the opposition would have done quite well in the Block Plurality system, well enough to potentially form an alternative coalition government that excluded the EPRDF, and at the very least, be close enough to potentially lure EPRDF defectors to the side of the opposition.

Conclusion

The above paper sought to reexamine the 2005 parliamentary election results using electoral systems other than the Single Member District Plurality system that was actually employed. Although one must be careful to note that the results did not include all of the districts, given that questionable seat competitions are excluded from the analysis, the results are nonetheless suggestive. As indicated above, and contrary to the opposition's general expectation that they would perform better under the conditions of a proportional representation system, the opposition parties would have performed best in terms of seat allocations under the existing SMD system or a Block Plurality system. This is largely due to the regional concentration of voter support for the CUDP and the UEDF and the more diffuse electoral support for the EPRDF and its allies. Thus, PR would not have been the panacea for the opposition that it was made out to be prior to the 2005 election.

Although I am not in a position to evaluate other highly touted electoral systems for ethnically or culturally divided societies (like Ethiopia) such as the Single Transferable Vote system or the Alternative Vote system (which may produce very different results in the Ethiopian context), of the systems considered in this paper a most promising alternative appears to be the Block Plurality system (at least from the perspective of the opposition). This system, if employed, would simply involve the amalgamation of existing single member district systems into multi member plurality systems, thus making it potentially easier to implement than completely overhauling the existing system via the institution of PR. If the Block Plurality system had been employed this may have produced, at the minimum, a closely divided legislature after the 2005 elections—and perhaps even an opposition-led coalition government. At the very least, it would have created what Andrew Reynolds referred to as an "inclusionary ethos" that may have provided a powerful incentive for the Ethiopian opposition to not take their grievances regarding the election outcome to the streets. Further, such an outcome may have provided an opportunity for both the EPRDF and the opposition to come to an accommodation that would have gone much further in promoting democracy (and pleasing Meles' western backers) than what actually transpired since 2005.

While this paper has examined only one case and one election, it does suggest that the use of such "simulations" allows us to understand the possible consequences of reforming the electoral system in Ethiopia. It is an issue which will undoubtedly gain greater attention as the 2010 legislative election approaches. Perhaps at that point another opportunity will arise in Ethiopia to put the country on the track towards democracy, and at that time the choice of electoral system will be crucial factor in affecting the course of that transformation of the country.

Notes

1. Taagepera and Shugart 1989; Horowitz 1985; Ishiyama 1997.
2. Olsen 1993; Schmitter 1992; Bermeo, 1987.
3. See for instance Baker and Scheiner, 2007; Jansen, 2004; Diaz-Caveros, 2005; Danache,

Mondak and Cabrera 2005; Bissey, Carini and Ortona, 2004; Dunleavy , Margetts and Weir, 1992.

4. An important exception is the work of Andrew Reynolds (1999) who has run such simulations using data from five African countries.

5. Reynolds, 1995:151.

6. Levitsky and Way, 2004.

7. For further explication of this common concept regarding the emergence of ethnic parties, see Ishiyama and Breuning (1998) and Chandra (2002); for one-party states, see Young 1966; Collier 1982; Liebenow 1986; Decalo 1990. .

8. Ottaway 1999; Bratton and van de Walle 1997.

9. Mozaffar and Scarritt 2005; Posner and Simon 2002; Reynolds, 1999;1995a; 1995b; Barkan 1995.

10. Mozaffar and Scarritt 2005; Bogaards 2004; van de Walle 2003; Mozaffar et al 2003; Kuenzi and Lambright 2001; Lumumba-Kosongo 2001 deal with the development of party systems. Ishiyama and Quinn 2006; Vengroff 1993 focus on individual parties.

11. Reynolds.1999; 1995.

12. For the evolution of political parties, (see Pauswang, Tronvoll and Aaleniegfried,) 2002; Clapham 1985; Ellingson 1977. Recent studies include Abbink 2006; Harbeson 2005; Harbeson 1998; Henze 1998.

13. Ishiyama, 2007; Abbink 2006; Harbeson 2005.

14. An exception is a recent piece by John Harbeson who does discuss the evolution of the party organizations in Ethiopia, but not their nomination behavior (Harbeson 2005).

15. The constituent parts of the Ethiopia Federation include 9 ethnically-based administrative regions and 2 chartered cities: Addis Ababa, Afar, Amhara, Benishangul/Gumaz. Dire Dawa, Gambela, Harar, Oromiya, Somali, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region and Tigray.

16. Other parties that joined to create the UEDF are: Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front (ARDUF), All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement (MEISON), Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy (CAFPDE), Ethiopian Democratic Union - Tehadiso (EDU Tehadiso), Ethiopian National United Front (ENUF), Ethiopian People Federal Democratic Unity Party (HIBREHIZB), Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP), Gambella People's United Democratic Front, (ONC), Oromo People's Liberation Organization (OPLO - IBSO), (SEPDC), and Tigrayan Alliance for Democracy (TAND).

17. Beyene Petros and Merera Gudima alternated as chair and vice chair of the UEDF in half year cycles.

18. Harbeson 2005.

19. CUD Electoral manifesto at http://www.kinijit.org/static/KINIJIT-MANIFESTO-English-ver-1.0.pdf accessed March 1, 2006.

20. Harbeson 2005: 149.

21. Surafel 2001:1.

22. Harbeson 2005.

23. The D'hondt method is a commonly used "highest averages" method for allocating seats in party-list proportional representation electoral systems. The method is named after

19th century mathematician Victor D'hondt. For a discussion see Taagepera and Shugart, 1989, chapter 3.
24. Reynolds 1999.
25. One of its strongest proponents of the Alternative Vote system is Donald Horowitz (1991). Using the case of South Africa, Horowitz argued that unlike other electoral systems arrangements that promote post election coalitions (such as proportional representation) the Alternative Vote provided the incentive for compromise, which is the key to accommodation in ethnically divided societies. The Alternative Vote, encourages such preelection compromise because it encourages vote pooling and party appeals across ethnic groups, first, because of the need to obtain a majority of the vote, and also because it is in a party's interest to appeal as a "second choice" to voters, meaning toning down ethnically particular voter appeals.
There have been several critics of the Alternative Vote. Arend Lijphart (1991) and Reynolds (1993) have been particularly critical, arguing that it produces no better results than other electoral systems. Jansen(2004) found that in Canada AV had little impact on proportionality and voter turnout, and did little to facilitate the cooperative behavior among competing parties in provincial elections in Alberta and Manitoba, and on balance, differed little from the single member plurality system.
26. See for instance Reynolds, 1999.

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The 2007 General Election in Lesotho: The Application and the Challenges of the Electoral System

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Abstract: The key ingredient of representative democracy is participatory and contested elections which are perceived to have followed a legitimate procedure that translates votes cast into legislative seats. This mammoth task can only be achieved by an appropriate electoral system. It is through this mechanism that elections are formally structured and form a vital component in the achievement of participative democracy. It is therefore important for a country to adopt an appropriate electoral system that can be able to mitigate any election related conflict. Lesotho, like most developing countries, has experienced post election related conflict. The paper argues that, the adoption of mixed member proportional system (MMP) was intended to promote more inclusivity because MMP is known to solve many problems caused by plurality-majority voting systems. Conversely, the application of this model in 2007 election brought more discontent and challenges that were not anticipated. The paper therefore, examines the application of the electoral system in Lesotho's 2007 election and suggests remedies that can be used to ensure that the model delivers intended results.

Introduction

Elections are events intrinsic to democracy-building but do not determine whether the country is a democracy or not. The delivery of regular free and fair elections is one of the standards by which a country's democracy is judged. In fact, elections "perform two fundamental tasks: they confer authorization upon those chosen to represent the electors and they hold representatives to account for their actions while in office."[1] The choice of an electoral system is important for the structuring of the political competition between parties. It is also important with regard to managing elections related conflict. By definition, electoral systems are the mechanisms by which the preferences of citizens are translated into seats in representative institutions. An electoral system is therefore a mechanism that forms the inner workings of any democracy which centers on rules that allocates seats. There are several forms of electoral systems. These include but are not limited to plurality and majoritarian systems, proportional systems, and parallel systems. This study focuses primarily on the mixed member proportional (MMP) system, which forms part of the proportional electoral system that is currently operational in Lesotho.

According to Dieter Nohlen, all electoral systems can be traced back to either one of the two basic principles of representation: the principle of majority representation or the principle

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of proportional representation (PR).[2] The distinction between these two basic principles is mainly based on their respective political objectives regarding the nationwide electoral outcome. The major political aim of the principle of majority representation is to produce a parliamentary majority for one party. The major political aim of the principle of proportional representation is an accurate reflection of social and political groups in parliament. Since independence in 1966, Lesotho used the majoritarian first-past-the-post (FPTP) system. Nevertheless, there was growing uneasiness within Lesotho polity regarding the apparent exclusive character of this system. This uneasiness was often expressed by post-election discontent from most political parties. It was this unhappiness that probably motivated electoral reforms. Consequently in 1997, Lesotho adopted the MMP model. It would appear that this electoral system was not well understood by both the political parties and the general voters. It has been this lack of understanding of the model that created more challenges than anticipated.

The paper is divided into five sections. The next section below provides a theoretical definition of the MMP model. The second section discusses factors that motivated electoral reforms in Lesotho. The Lesotho MMP system is fully discussed in the third section of this paper. The fourth section focuses specifically on the challenges of the model which were not anticipated with the MMP adoption. These include but are not limited to the legislation, formation of alliances, and the intention regarding the formation of the model. The conclusion sums up the main arguments of the debates and maps out the way forward.

What Is A Mixed Member Proportional System?

Hague and Harrop opined that MMP is a system in which the choices expressed by the voters are used to elect representatives through two different systems–one is a list PR system and (usually) one plurality/majority system–where the list PR system compensates for the disproportionality in the results from the plurality/majority system.[3] These scholars argued further that, on election day, voters receive two ballots. They use one to elect the member of parliament for their constituency using the FPTP system, and they use the other to vote for their preferred party. The second (or party) ballot is used to determine the number of seats each party would receive if the system was fully proportional and thereby determines the proportion of the compensatory seats each party receives.

The party vote is used to elect candidates from the party lists and compensates parties who have won fewer constituency seats than they would be entitled to under pure proportional representation, or who have won no constituency seats even though entitled to under proportionality. Key to this system is that a party must submit both the party list and the PR list to be able to participate in the election conducted under MMP system.

The model provides more accountability and is good at dealing with issues that affect a constituency, but it lacks a good way to create consensus around national issues. This would mean that every electoral system has both limitations and merits. It was these limitations in Lesotho that have created a culture of post-election conflict. This mixed system is currently being used in a number of countries including Germany and New Zealand, and for regional assemblies in Wales and Scotland.

Why Reform Lesotho's Electoral System?

Electoral systems do not exist in a vacuum but are motivated by certain events. Some of these events revolve around intra-state conflict, as was the case in Lesotho. For instance, from 1966 to 1998, the country had experienced election-related conflict. It was this post-election conflict that necessitated the formation of the new electoral system. Since Lesotho's independence in 1966, not a single major party has accepted elections results. This was despite acceptance of the democratic process as a rule binding principle by all political parties. The culture of non-acceptance of elections results appears to be more alive than ever before, regardless of whether the elections were given a clean bill of health. While there are various factors that might have contributed to this behavior, the electoral system appears to have been the most prominent factor behind this conflict. In 1966, after the April elections, the country experienced election-related violence in December; in 1970, a few days after the 30 January elections, violence erupted. After the March 1993 elections, in September, elections violence became the order of the day; in 1998, following elections in May, the country engaged in election related violence in September.

Following the 1998 election-related conflict, political parties identified the first-past –the-post electoral system as exclusionary and therefore conflict prone. In order to remedy this situation, the political parties agreed to form a body known as the Interim Electoral Authority (IPA). Its mandate was to review the Lesotho electoral system with a view to making it more democratic, inclusive, and representative.[4] This conflict led to the birth of the new electoral model known as the MMP electoral system. This system tends to favour inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness. The more parties are represented in the legislature the better.

The Lesotho Mixed Member Proportional System

The IPA was composed of all parties that took part in the 1998 elections. Their main task among others was to come up with an inclusive electoral model. Consequently, on 25 August 1999, they unanimously decided to adopt the MMP electoral model for parliamentary elections. This model is a combination of the advantages of both the first-past-the-post and the proportional representation (PR) systems. In 2001, after extensive discussion of the ratio of FPTP to PR seats, the IPA decided that the number of seats in the national assembly should be 120, 80 of which should be constituency seats and 40 party seats. It was agreed that in order to ensure inclusivity, the electoral system should not have a threshold like those of Germany and New Zealand. The Lesotho Constitution (Fourth Amendment to the Constitution Act 2001) was amended to incorporate the MMP system with a ratio of 80/40 FPTP and PR (see seat allocation formula in appendix A). The MMP model was first used in 2002 elections. During this period, the challenges to the model were apparent and the political parties cooperated fully. It was the 2007 election that brought the system limitations to the forefront.

Before the 2007 election, the ruling party, the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), which had fragmented before the 2002 election, was still intact. It must also be noted that the LCD in 1997 splintered from the then Basutoland Congress Party (BCP). The LCD had a majority of 79 seats in parliament and thus implemented its legislative program without any

problem. Furthermore, no opposition political party entered into an alliance, and even if they had, the LCD still had more leverage in terms of its majority in parliament.

Towards the beginning of 2006, the LCD hegemony began to wane. Firstly, the party expelled one of its MPs while a rival was Speaker of the parliament. Secondly, the party fragmented yet again as seventeen of its members crossed the aisle and formed a new party known as All Basotho Convention (ABC). This situation created a hung parliament. It would appear that these developments motivated the LCD, together with the ABC, to devise the strategy of galvanizing more seats in parliament by forming alliances with other smaller parties.

In this vein, the LCD called a snap election. The LCD meanwhile formed an alliance with the National Independent Party (NIP) and the ABC established its alliance with the Lesotho Workers Party (LWP). The rationale for these coalitions was to contest the 2007 election. These parties (LCD and ABC) decided that they were going to field their candidates in all 80 constituencies. They further placed some of their members under the PR lists of both NIP and LWP. The fact of the matter was that the LCD had realized that it was not going to win more than 60 constituencies and as a result, it would not be compensated under the current electoral system. By placing its members on the NIP PR list and encouraging its members to vote for the NIP with their second ballot, it was guaranteed to have more of its people elected into parliament on the NIP ticket. This analogy was similar with ABC and LWP alliance.

While the NIP had problems of its own, for example its leader managed to field 8 candidates in constituencies in defiance of his national executive which signed a pact with the LCD, the LCD strategy worked. Both parties wanted to gain more power and be able to implement their legislative agenda unhindered in parliament. However, it was the LCD that managed to do this after elections. Unlike in the 2002 election, these strategies by ABC and LCD ushered more challenges for the MMP.

The Challenges of the Mixed Member Proportional System

The electoral system must provide equal opportunity to all contestants and ensure that the playing field is level. In short, the electoral process "must be free of fraud and all manner of manipulation."[5] Conversely, no electoral system is ever perfect, and there is always room for improvement. The Lesotho system has many positive attributes, and yet there are many areas where reforms and changes have been urged. The major challenge of the Lesotho MMP model has been how the system was operationalised. This challenge is clearly illustrated below by the current legislation, which vests the power to manage the MMP in Lesotho in the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in terms of Section57 (1) of the 1993 Constitution, which reads as follows:

(1) Lesotho shall, in accordance with the provision of section 67 of this Constitution, be divided into constituencies and each constituency shall elect one member to the National Assembly in such manner as, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, may be prescribed or under any law.

The above Section must be read with Section 57 of the Constitution, Fourth Amendment to the Constitution Act (2001), which states:

(1) The members of the National Assembly shall be elected in terms of mixed member proportional electoral system that-

(a) Is prescribed by legislation;
(b) Is based on a national common voters roll; and
(c) Provides for the constitution of the National Assembly as follows-
(i) Eighty members to be elected in respect of each of the constituencies contemplated by section 67 (1); and
(ii) Forty members to be elected to forty seats in accordance with the principle of proportional representation applied in respect of the National Assembly as a whole.

Note that the prescribed legislation in (a) above refers to National Assembly Election (No.1) (Amendment) Act, 2001 Section 49 B, (1) that deals with the procedure for submitting lists of candidates for election under proportional representation which states:

(1) A political party intending to contest an election may nominate candidates for election by proportional representation in terms of section 57 (c) (ii) of the Constitution and submit a list of those candidates for election to the Director of Elections in the prescribed manner before the date stated in the election.
(2) The list shall

(a) include at least 40 candidates but not more than 120; and
(b) Arrange the candidates in order of preference from top to bottom.

(3) The list may include any candidate who is nominated for elections for constituency in terms of section 49.
(4) The list shall be accompanied by-
(a) An undertaking, signed by the duly authorized representative of the political party, binding the party, persons holding political office in the party and its representative and members to the Electoral Code of Conduct (hereinafter referred to as "code")
(b) A declaration, signed by the duly authorized representative of the party, that each candidate on the list is qualified to stand for election in terms of the Constitution or this Act;
(c) A statement signed by each candidate consenting to nomination in the prescribed manner; and
(d) A deposit in the amount of M8000.00.

Section 49 B deals with the procedure to be followed for nominating candidates for election (nomination court). Subsection 3 also means that a person from any party may appear under a list of any party irrespective of whether that person stood for a constituency or not. While it is true that the MMP is a good system, the common assumption that PR is in every case the better system should be treated with much caution. For example the allocation of seats in the 2007

election is a case in point. The final allocation of seats was in variance with the model as Table 1 below illustrates. (Table 1 here)

What is clear from the above table is that the political parties did not actually play by the MMP rules since they submitted one list instead of two as the PR principle articulates above. Section 49 B (1) actually misapplies the model, and this has become a major challenge that was not anticipated by the system. The above table also indicates that the current parliament of Lesotho does not reflect the principle of proportional but rather majoritarian representation as will be discussed below. For instance, some parties presented one list only instead of two. This is wrong because the establishment of MMP was intended to produce proportionality in parliament.

From Table 1 above, the Lesotho Congress for Democracy and the All Basotho Convention used a FPTP instead of a MMP system. These parties also paid M200.00, a fee paid for parties fielding candidates for the FPTP. Second, the Lesotho Workers party registered for proportional representation and similarly paid a fee of M8000.00 for fielding PR candidates. Third, the rest of the parties fielded candidates for MMP and therefore, paid M800.00 for PR and M200.00 for FPTP.

While the application of the model was wrong in principle, it was however not legally wrong because the legislative application of the model permitted this. In fact, "it is very difficult to argue that the actual allocation of seats in February 2007 was improper. On the contrary, the seats were allocated meticulously, according to the letter of the law."[6] This situation on its own presented a legislative challenge more especially when Section 49B still permits this erroneous practice.

This situation is similar to that of South Africa where the PR system was equally misapplied by the introduction of the floor crossing legislation that was contrary to the principle of the proportional electoral system the country was following.[7] For instance, floor crossing allowed members of parliament, members of provincial legislatures and local government councilors to change political party (or form a new party) and take their seats with them when they do so whenever they wish. Amendments to the constitution of South Africa and other legislation passed by the South African parliament made such floor crossing possible. The amendment removed clauses requiring members of the national assembly to give up their seats should they change parties.[8]

Legislative Challenge

Every democratic country has an electoral law that prescribes a particular electoral system. That law defines the process clearly in order to insulate the model from undue manipulation by political parties. In this manner "the Constitution and the electoral law represent the social contract between the state and its people and, more especially, the manner in which they regulate the conduct of elections."[9] Conversely, the Lesotho electoral law is silent on various issues relating to electoral conduct. The electoral law does not force political parties to submit their PR lists. For example, section 49B (1) goes further to permit parties to submit PR lists if they so wish, meaning that they are under no obligation to do so. Put differently, there is no law that forces parties to submit both lists (PR or FPTP); it is entirely up to parties to decide for

themselves whether to submit either list or both. In principle, under MMP, failure to submit the PR list automatically disqualifies parties from benefits accruing from the PR compensatory list. This is another challenge that parties should take into consideration when amending the electoral law. These legal loopholes must be closed.

The MMP is also known as a compensatory model. This means that parties, which won more constituencies than others shall not be compensated under the PR list, just like parties that did not field candidates on the FPTP list. Conversely, the Lesotho Workers Party (LWP) was erroneously compensated even when the party did not field candidates under the FPTP. This must be corrected because this party should have done so. The MMP compensates only parties that failed dismally on the FPTP list, not those that did not. The law does not state in explicit terms that it is compulsory for a party to submit a list as well as field candidates in constituencies to conform to the nature of the current electoral model.

The failure to submit the PR lists by the All Basotho Convention and the Lesotho Congress for Democracy was yet another major challenge to the electoral system. They instead left submission of PR lists to their informal alliance partners- the Lesotho Workers Party and the National Independent Party respectively. The rationale here was to give preference to some candidates who were seen as likely to lose the in the election. They were candidates the party needed. Eventually, they did lose their constituencies but were able to enter parliament via the PR list of these parties, and others even made it to the cabinet (NIP members).

The current parliament therefore, reflects a higher degree of disproportionality between votes and seats than in the proportional representation system that it ought to be. The basic aim of the MMP is to represent both majorities and minorities in parliament and not overrepresenting or underrepresenting any parties, to translate votes into seats proportionately, as is the case in the Table 1.[10]

The Nature of Alliance and their Legal Status

The LCD and ABC appear to have taken advantage of the loopholes in the Lesotho electoral law to form informal alliances that gave them more parliamentary seats to the detriment of other smaller parties. Since the spirit of MMP in Lesotho has been defeated by major parties, it is clear that these parties did not take into account the specifics of the history, demographics, and political culture of Lesotho when they forged these informal coalitions before elections. They also did not take into consideration the rationale behind the 1999 adoption of the electoral system.

The above alliances were not formally registered with the appropriate government office and therefore, remained informal. They are pacts between parties with no force of law and no constitution, and the electoral law is silent on such informal pacts. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) cannot treat them as formal pacts but as individual parties when it comes to allocation of seats. Each party is treated independently on its share of seats. While the PR lists of alliances reflected names of candidates from other parties, this does not mean anything because the National Assembly Election Act 1992 is silent on the membership of a candidate who is nominated for the PR and the FPTP. The Act only says that a candidate can be nominated as a candidate or independent, but without mention of whether they should come from parties other

than his or her own. The Act also does not indicate whether PR candidates submitted to IEC should belong to a certain party. In effect the Act does not go into the merits or demerits of including names of individuals in the PR list. The weakness here is that names of candidates can come from another party rather than a party actually submitting a list as has happened with these alliances.

The ABC/LWP and LCD/NIP alliances have used the drawing of the list as an intra-party negotiation strategy.[11] For instance, in their attempt to defeat the principle of inclusivity, which the original intention of the MMP system, the ABC-LWP specified that ABC should not submit its PR list but leave that in favour of the main alliance partner LWP. The LCD/NIP alliance "stipulated that the first five positions in the PR list should be reserved for NIP candidates in exchange for NIP's support in the constituencies," while the following ten places should go to LCD candidates then, followed by the NIP five and so on. The result has been that both alliances have not only distorted the model but also flouted its original inclusivity principle.[12]

In view of the fact that they (these parties, LCD and ABC) have benefited from both the constituencies and PR seats, they have essentially seized other parties' compensatory seats, more especially the smaller parties. The ABC and the LCD are equally accountable for distorting the model. According to Matlosa, the allocation of seats in Lesotho's 2007 parliament took the form of a mixed member parallel, which does not take into account the compensatory factor.[13] The key elements of inclusivity, reconciliation, and compensatory were therefore abandoned. While I agree with Matlosa on part of his observation, I also disagree with the parallel analogy, because the LCD and the ABC did not appear in the PR list and the LWP did not appear in the FPTP list, while the NIP appeared only in eight places. Therefore, this does not accurately reflect a mixed parallel system. In a mixed parallel system, the legislature consists of a block of seats that are elected by plurality or majority from single-member constituencies, and another block of seats that are elected in multi-member constituencies under a proportional system. The proportional seats are awarded independently of the outcomes in single-member districts.

There are two forms of the mixed system. When the results of the two types of election are linked, with seat allocations at the PR level being dependent on what happens in the plurality/majority (or other) constituency seats and compensating for any disproportionality that arises there, the system is a mixed member proportional (MMP) system. Where the two sets of elections are detached and distinct and are not dependent on each other for seat allocations, the system is a parallel system. While an MMP system generally results in proportional outcomes, a parallel system is likely to result in the proportionality that falls somewhere between that of a plurality/majority and that of a PR system. The parties non-compliance with the MMP system pointed towards the weakening of Lesotho's democratic consolidation.

The Intention behind the Introduction of MMP in Lesotho

While the introduction of the MMP model was well intentioned, it tends to produce unintended consequences during operation. The rational for adopting the MMP system was to

guard against one dominant party system. Conversely, from the 2007 elections the LCD appeared still dominant. It seems that the MMP this time around offered Basotho what one might expect of the Westminster model that the country tried to run away from in 2002, a one dominant party system. The Lesotho MMP in the current parliament is therefore not different from the FPTP that concentrates power on the single party crown authority executive model (an unchecked prime minister, cabinet, and bureaucracy) as practiced in Britain and Canada.

The greatest oversight of the Lesotho Interim Authority has been to leave the national assembly with a set 120 seats that includes 40 proportional seats. This has made an inflexible parliament in terms of the quota of PR votes. They should have allowed an expanding parliament in terms of the quota. The challenge is that when the current quota was operationalised for the first time, it provided more seats (119) than 40. This created a crisis because it has to be reworked until it produces 40 seats. The law is also silent about what has to happen if the required numbers of seats are not met for the first time. It is this factor that has created the current political crisis in Lesotho with no expanding parliament. One thing is clear: MMP will not survive unless or until Lesotho political parties accept the modest power position that MMP awards small parties and most list MPs. The MMP therefore makes every vote and parliamentary seat potentially important.

The other challenge for the MMP has been the fact that it allows coalition politics in general, and they are usually prone to pernicious combinations of ideological incoherence, policy stalemate, and political instability. The interesting development in Lesotho is that the LCD has gone into coalition with the NIP, a party that boasts of a far different ideological position. The NIP is a breakaway of the archenemy of the LCD, the Basotho National Party that is conservative in character and pro-capitalist, while LCD has transformed itself from a socialist party to a social democratic party in orientation.

The LCD appointment of ministers from the NIP PR list has been one of the most interesting developments. While the prime minister has the prerogative to appoint ministers from any party, the ministers who have been appointed from NIP PR list are known to be LCD members who lost their constituencies under the LCD constituency list. This does not only make a mockery of Lesotho's democracy, but it also remains to be seen whether this marriage will last.

In relation to the ABC, the party itself appears to be a middle of the road party and tries to integrate all factions from different parties. It is a populist party that has no strong roots or any ideological orientation. Like the LCD above, the question is how long is the party going to be able to manage these different and challenging interests from different parties. This is one of the fundamental weaknesses of the model. Only time will tell. What is clear is that, though all these alliances are informal, the fact of the matter is that they have produced uneasy coalitions. For instance, the LCD has not appointed bonifide members of its partner NIP to the cabinet, while the ABC appears in no rush to convene party executive elections but rather has engaged in a drive to bring more political parties to the grand coalition; that is the Basotho National Party, the Lesotho Workers Party, the Alliance of Congress Parties, the Marematlou Freedom Party, and a faction of NIP which is led by Clovis Manyeli who appears to have broken ranks with his erstwhile executive committee that remained with the LCD. What is most telling about these parties is their diverse ideological orientation. This is because the MMP leads to more diverse

opposition. This does not bode well for democratic consolidation. The likelihood of these stalemates and instability motivated by a lack of concrete issues is therefore high under this system. The result of these alliances is that they would alienate many voters by perpetuating tight party solidarity and exposing dealings between parties.

The MMP system also enhances transparency by publicizing inter-party relations, especially between coalition partners. That is, much of the intra-party bargaining and divisions of the past that a single party often could conceal have been replaced by inter-party relations for all to see. Canadian Liberal party strategist Warren Kinsella warns that the media thrives on backroom shenanigans and things that go wrong while they exploit all evidence of "misfortune, conflict, and an unkillable distrust of political success."[14] The media insures that no good reform goes unpunished. Thanks to MMP-facilitated transparency, they now can uncover more "sleaze" than ever. The formations of alliances will make it easy for the media to know what is going on within parties, and its ruthless weapon will be unleashed.[15]

It is also important for Lesotho political parties to be aware that MMP has alienated many by perpetuating tight party solidarity and exposing dealings between parties in many countries where this model is in operation. MMP makes smaller coalition parties' internal divisions more apparent by directing attention to their strange political bedfellows and by exposing many parliamentary processes to public scrutiny.[16]

A further consequence of MMP (in this case less noticed in the media) that was more apparent in Lesotho's sixth parliament than party leaders, personalities, and "sleaze", concerns inter-party parliamentary activities. To be sure, MMP has not weakened the parliament's partisanship or most parties' cohesiveness, nor has it changed the atmosphere of the place in a collegial consensus seeking direction. Across party lines MPs do not work better together, they are not more comfortable with each other, and they do not like each other better than before MMP.[17]

Inter-party coalitions resemble hostage situations. In theory, smaller partners make large parties hostage to some of their demands. If a large party cannot satisfy small parties, the latter can transfer their support to another large party or force an early election. Germany's small center pivot party model, in which the Free Democrats abandoned the Social Democrats for the Christian Democrats in 1982 and helped keep the new coalition in power for sixteen years, shows how coalitions can give small partners considerable leverage.

Conclusion

It appears that the Lesotho electoral system has been abused and manipulated. This system in 2007 elections allowed two types of cheats, those who formed informal alliances and those who were unduly compensated without submitting two lists (FPTP and PR lists). With no legal protection in existence, it was clear from the start that the MMP model was going to be gerrymandered by parties. The allocation of seats in the 2007 parliament was not based on the fundamental premise of MMP. It is evident that political parties manipulated the MMP model. The irony is that these parties were supposed to be the custodians of the model in the first place.

Political parties will always be challenged by the electoral system whenever changes within the society occur. The environmental challenges should be regarded positively not negatively

because it is with them that the system is nurtured. Therefore, it is important for Lesotho's parliament and political parties to make the following amendments on the 1992 Electoral Act:

- That the law should make it mandatory for each party to submit both lists, that is the constituency and party lists.
- A candidate from each party be forbidden to appear in another party list while contesting a constituency on a different party ticket.
- The formula of the PR be explained clearly in the law which is being reworked twice to arrive at the quota that will produce 40 seats.

These recommendations though not exhaustive will go far in tightening the MMP system and protect it from manipulation by political parties.

Notes

1. Hanna, 1967: 38-59.
2. Nohlen, 1996 and 2000.
3. Hague and Harrop, 2007.
4. Likoti, 2007.
5. Likoti, 2007.
6. Molomo, 2006, p.26.
7. Elklit 2008, p.18.
8. Constitution of South Africa, 1996.
9. Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (2002-08-24). "General Notice of a Bill Amending the Constitution". Retrieved on 2006-12-12.
10. Molomo, 2006, p.32.
11. Lijphart 1999, p.143.
12. Matashane-Marite et al. 2007.
13. Matashane-Marite et al, 2007, p. 13.
14. Kinsella 2001, pp.187, 219, 222.
15. Boston 2000 b.
16. Boston 2000 a.
17. Boston 2000 b, MMP Review Committee 2001.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Kwasi Konadu. Indigenous Medicine and Knowledge in African Society. New York: Routledge, 2007. 240p.

The historical analysis of conceptions of health and healing in many traditional African societies offer an interesting avenue for the study of the contradictions and ambivalences within definitions of medical knowledge and the concept of disease. *Indigenous Medicine and Knowledge in African Society* brings to mind the challenges of writing and investigating the therapeutic knowledge of indigenous societies and provides important suggestions for the study of medicine and knowledge systems in Africa. As much about therapeutic knowledge as about culture, it adds to our understanding of the resilience of traditional practices in contemporary Africa. Kwasi Konadu consciously modeled his discussion of traditional Bono-Takyiman (Akan, Ghana) medical knowledge to refute the work of Dennis M. Warren in "Religion, Disease, and Medicine among the Bono-Takyiman," which relied on the healing knowledge of one traditional healer (Nana Kofi Donkor) as the baseline data in looking at the work of several indigenous healers.

Konadu argues that although Warren's work is laudable, "it must be stated that the experiences, perceptions, and levels of competence amongst healers are not identical, and to use one person as a standard or benchmark seems problematic in the articulation of an 'ethnomedical system' authenticated by so few sources that possess equivalent levels of in-depth medical knowledge and aptitude" (xxix). Konadu also hopes for his work to serve as foundation on which future research into indigenous medicine and knowledge would be embedded. He laments that the production of indigenous knowledge from the perspectives of producers and users has received the disdain and little consideration from African scholars and medical practitioners (12). Konadu contends that these Africans have failed to recognize or even accept that the process of indigenous medicine has now been "scientifically demystified," in addition to the vast medicinal knowledge acquired through pragmatic experiences and close natural observations (172).

For his own part, Konadu relies on oral interviews, material culture, linguistic data, historical, and other archaeological sources to investigate the ways in which "Bono-Takyiman healers and indigenous archives of Akan cultural knowledge conceptualize and interpret medicine and healing" (xxx). In so doing, he provides a complete outlook of how indigenous healers conceptualize medicine and how that conceptualization translates into their healing practices. *Indigenous Medicine and Knowledge in African Society* will undoubtedly appeal to the intellectual response of scholars in various academic areas, particularly, scholars in West African and African history, African Diaspora, and in Atlantic history. Others interested in

health, disease, medicine, ethnicity, and identity will find the author's thesis and direction of argument insightful.

Ghana's colonial past and political economy reflects in the country's traditional health and healing practices. As Konadu asserts, the colonial administration, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, suppressed indigenous medicine specialists with an introduction of biomedicine into the country. The postcolonial era interfaced with military coups and economic failures equally affected the nature of the indigenous healers' vocation (2-3). The dependence of West African nations on "foreign aid" and their continuation of colonial economic policies have resulted in rapid ecological changes, which not "only disturb and facilitate vectors of infectious diseases, but also severely limit crop and medicinal plant development." From hence, Konadu discusses the activities of the practitioners of Bono-Takyiman therapeutic system in the context of Bono socio-political history. The discussion provides an overview of the Bono cosmological system with the author arguing, "Bono cosmology is a 'living' entity, arising out of the process of culture development—which may be impeded but is continuous as long as people of that culture exist—and from an experiential reference for Bono existence," (38). Thus, specialists of Bono-Takyiman therapeutic system situate their curative ideas and conceptions directly in the Akan cosmology. In the Akan tradition, the human being is "spirit encapsulated" rather than "matter-animated," thus, the fundamental nature of the human being is spirit and any attempt at healing the human body should be spirit-oriented. By such a design, traditional healers serve as experts of the complex cultural system and its spiritual conventions.

A brief overview of the traditional healers' perspectives on the environmental context of their healing practices ends the discussion in chapter one; with the author using chapters three to five to elucidate the indigenous conceptions of medicine as held by the Bono healers. Konadu describes the essence of both tangible and abstract ideas as they relate to medicinal notions and practices, and a cultural-linguistic analysis of those medicines most commonly used because of their effectiveness. He also explores some of the central Akan indigenous knowledge annals, for instance, proverbs, gold weights, adinkra symbolism, and oral narrative, to gain a better perspective on what these annals reveal about Akan medicinal conceptions. In his conclusion, Konadu reiterates his overall disenchantment with African scholars and biomedical practitioners and his earlier objection to the work of Warren. He argues that in order to access the depth of knowledge and sensibilities that provide more than a 'glimpse' into the nature and workings of traditional healing institutions, a person has "to be 'born into' the varied spiritual-cultural Bono institutions, rather than arrive as a researcher or participant-observer," (158). African scholars who ignore indigenous knowledge systems, according to Konadu, "are largely divorced from their indigenous cultural reality and values." These intellectuals "uncritically" accept and identify with Eurocentric conceptualization of Africa to the extent they have "created African versions of Western things," (179).

Konadu's final analysis is that the Bono spiritual-temporal forms the foundation upon which the healing practices of indigenous healers depend. Konadu's account is thoughtful, well researched, and likely to provoke discussion from African historians of health and medicine and even from scientists. The inclusion of a comprehensive glossary containing the translation of some Akan words, an example of Akan libation, a map of Ghana, and the map of the district of Bono-Takyiman complements the actual content of the book. Nonetheless, the extensive use

of Akan words, while useful and easy for the Akan language speaker, becoming distracting and confusing for the non-speaker having to sometimes go back to the glossary to check the meaning of some words not explained in the text. As a Ghanaian and presumably an Akan, Konadu's mistranslation of some Akan words leaves much to be desired. Writing that *mmogya* (blood) is synonymous with *abusua* (lineage) and translating it as "matrilineage" gives the wrong implication. His intention was to show that in the Akan tradition, lineage comes through the bloodline of the maternal side, yet blood is not necessary identical to lineage. I must however stress that the minor translation errors in the book only serve a distraction for the native speaker of the Akan language and does not, in anyway, mar the author's trajectory of thought, discussions, and arguments. The text is well written and accessible to a wide range of researchers and graduate students of African history.

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Donald A. Yerxa, ed. Recent Themes in the History of Africa and the Atlantic World: Historians in Conversation. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press. 2008. 128p.

In 1963, Hugh Trevor-Roper dismissed the idea of an African history, let alone that of the Atlantic world, stating, "Perhaps in the future there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none, or very little: there is only the history of Europe in Africa."[1] Such a dismissive remark would be absurd if made today because of the inundation of scholarships produced in recent years on Africa and on the Atlantic world. Now we can all call ourselves Africanists or Atlanticists, or so it appears, as the history of Africa and Atlantic world have become the subjects of interest among scholars of the Caribbean, North and South America, Africa, and Western Europe. Indeed, African and Atlantic histories have taken an important place in recent historiographical developments and there is no challenging of this fact, yet there remains an important question, "how adequately the history of Africa is being integrated into world history. And when the attempt is made, does the African past get flattened out, as Patrick Manning notes, with single, civilization-wide generalizations."[2]

The need to conceptualize Africa's place in world history and address other pressing questions about the Atlantic world, is what resulted in Donald Yerxa's book under review here. The book is a compilation of academic debates drawn from *Historically Speaking* and written by outstanding African, Atlantic, and world historians who have investigated the links between Africa and the rest world, particularly the Atlantic world, and reviewed the growing field of Atlantic history. The book is simply as the subtitle suggests—historians in conversation. The various works have been thoroughly researched, presented in a lively argument and counter-argument approach, and touches on several issues that contribute to a better understanding of Africa's elusive past. The state of the field of Atlantic history, the principal theories in the field, and the nature of academic contestations regarding the spirited Olaudah Equiano, are some of the themes the contributors situate in the context of colonialism.

The African past is perhaps the only past in world history that is compressed and interpreted within frameworks of other historical pasts to such an extent that it leaves Africans without their own history. Joseph C. Miller takes this challenge on by arguing for an alternative approach, a "multicentric" world history that accentuates the African past on its own terms. Miller argues that if we see African history in world history through the lens of European or Asian standards we hold the African past in intellectual oppression (14-17). Eight historians respond to Miller's thesis, and indeed, their counter-theses signify a lot. The exchanges indicate how historians are wrestling with the important conceptualizations and the complexities in world history. Patrick Manning, for instance, argues that while "multicentrism" is essential for writing Africa into world history, doing so "does not resolve problems in interpreting the world and Africa's place in it. Instead, they reveal further complexity," (26).

As the debate on Africa's proper place in world history continues, that of the growing field of Atlantic history takes on a life of its own. One of the prominent scholars in the field, Bernard Bailyn, has cautioned against understanding Atlantic history as "the aggregate of four or five discrete European histories together with the regional histories of the native peoples of West Africa and America," (76-77). Against Bailyn's argument, Trevor Burnard argues that the "principal theme of Atlantic history is that from the fifteenth century to the present, the Atlantic world was not just a physical fact but a particular zone of exchange and interchange, circulation, and transmission," (76). Hence, we must view the various component parts of Atlantic history as "additives" to the making of the Atlantic world.

What Atlantic history conversation goes without a reflection on one of the most prominent figures of the field, Olaudah Equiano? In Atlantic history, Equiano's narration of his life as an enslaved person has often been used as the reference point for the horrors of the "Middle Passage" as well as with life in eighteenth century North American and West Africa. Vincent Carretta opens the discussion with the observation that Equiano was "a central figure in the reconstruction of Atlantic history, and to our understanding of the Atlantic world" (81). Yet, he questions, what if Equiano was actually born in South Carolina and had fabricated his African identity, (83-84)? Although Carretta notes that Equiano was "an Atlantic Creole whose life and writings demonstrate the challenges and opportunities of the Atlantic world," he concludes Equiano probably fabricated his story; hence, there is the need for re-examination in the way historians interpret and use Equiano's autobiography (90). Paul Lovejoy, Trevor Burnard, and Jon Sensbach disagree with Carretta's assessment that Equiano lied about his identity; pointing out that the document, which Carretta based his argument on cannot be authenticated.

Although originally intended as a course companion for students of African and African Diasporic history, world history, and Atlantic history, this book will undoubtedly appeal to the intellectual response of scholars in various academic areas, particularly those interested in race and identity formation. It also holds a real treasure in historical analysis by providing in a single volume not only arguments and counter-arguments, but also opportunity for the proponents of the arguments to respond to the counter-arguments.

Notes

1. Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Rise of Christian Europe," Listener, (1963): 5, cited in Donald A. Yerxa, *Recent Themes in the History of Africa and the Atlantic World: Historians in Conversation*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2008, 1.
2. Ibid. See Patrick Manning, "Africa in World History and Historiography," *Historically Speaking*, Vol. 6 (2004): 15.

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Roy Armes. African Filmmaking: North and South of the Sahara. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006. 214p.

African Filmmaking North and South of the Sahara is a study of African filmmaking that links the production of film in the Maghreb (comprising of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco) to what is often referred to as Francophone sub-Saharan Africa (which includes the former colonies of French West Africa; French Equatorial Africa and the protectorates of Togo and Cameroon).

The book begins with an overview of the postcolonial context of African filmmaking with the formation of nation states in the late 1950s and early '60s ideologically opposed to imperial colonialism, yet inextricably linked. Armes describes not only the vastness and diversity of the continent, the existence of modern national states alongside different ethnicities, languages and religious practices but also looks at how modern African nations inherited a colonial structure based on autocratic centralism, a Euro centric educational system and the languages of the colonizers.

The French system in West Africa produced *assimilés,* a class of educated Africans who assimilated the colonizer's culture and administration and became the first leaders of independent African states. This system in turn produced what Armes describes as emotional ties between France and its ex-colonies seen for example in French cultural policies concerning filmmaking. Filmmaking was of course a foreign technology adopted after independence carrying with it prestige. While the vast majority of films north and south of the Sahara use local and national languages, including variants of Arabic, in order to receive foreign aid or co-production finance, films have to be originally scripted and dialogued in French. Similarly, the term Francophone African cinema (as opposed to Anglophone or a Lusophone one) is still a dominant yet limited definition. These are some of the contradictions and layers of meanings Armes offers as a backdrop to Africa's rich cinematic history and suggests it has inspired African filmmakers and cultural workers alike to use culture as a means for emancipation and freedom from imperial and autocratic political systems.

Armes places the importance of Islam on the African continent, north and south of the Sahara, in its rightful place, describing not only the long history of Islamisation and trade in Africa but also the Africanisation of Islam, seen for example in its visual culture. Although the

pioneers of African film like the leaders of the newly independent African nations in the 1950s and '60s were politically influenced by socialist sentiments and created filmic critiques of colonialism as well as the practice of Islam in Africa, Armes suggests that "today's filmmakers – caught between their French education and their Islamic heritage – offer an ambiguous, but totally contemporary – African visual culture" (p.10).

In Part 1, Armes describes the origins of cinema in Africa starting with the beginnings of film during the colonial era in the 1890s, pretty much at the same time cinema spread across Europe and the United States. Although these colonial films tended to use Africa just as a scenic backdrop to a purely European drama or perpetuate racial stereotypes to legitimise western cultural, political and financial dominance, Armes describes the varying types of film production in Africa from colonial rule to post-independence, including the Tunisian pioneer filmmaker, Albert Samama Chikly (1872-1934) who was the only one from the Maghreb or West Africa under colonial rule to make feature-length films.

Going on to post-independence filmmaking, Armes looks at the emergence of African filmmakers alongside the dominance of Western films over African screens, while the structural organisation of African film production retained fundamentally a colonial structure. Early film production in post -independence Africa was very much seen as a state production, while Armes suggests a shift occurred in the 1980s and 1990s due to the closure of numerous state production organisations and the development of French aid to finance African film production.

In Part 2 & 3, Armes gives a comprehensive overview of films led by the pioneers of the 1960s such as Ousmane Sembene in Senegal, Ahmed Rachedi and Mohamed Lakhdar Hamina in Algeria and Omar Khlifi from Tunisia, following on into the 1970s with filmmakers such as Mauritanian Med Hondo, the Malian Souleymane Cisse and Senegalese woman director Safi Faye, who used film to highlight the social issues of a postcolonial society and their liberation struggles, developing an African perspective denied after a long period of colonisation. He suggests that in the 1980s and '90s filmmakers shifted to a more personal dimension to represent individual struggles as a result of political and ideological disenchantment. Armes also writes about what he calls experimental narratives and looks at the work of Djibril Diop Mambety from Senegal and Med Hondo (Mauritanian by birth but based in Paris), as well as examples of comedies from Morocco and Ivory Coast to exemplify the alternatives to social realism prevalent in the first generation of African filmmakers. As Nwachukwu Frank Ukadike notes, this "compelling experimentation enables us to appreciate African cinema as innovative and diverse" (p.122), which Armes suggests is a trend that continues with many filmmakers working in the 2000s.

The new generation of African filmmakers represented by the "New Millennium" group includes "forty filmmakers--five of them women--[who] have given us over fifty feature films in the years since the late 1990s"(p. 143). Thirteen of these filmmakers come from Morocco, ten from Tunisia, one from Algeria, and sixteen from sub-Saharan countries.Almost all are film-school trained (mainly in Paris), and, as a whole, they represent one of the most highly educated groups of filmmakers in the world. Most have a production base in Europe where they tend to reside in order to qualify for European production funds. This group has a strong sense of unity and is organized in the Paris-based Guilde Africaine des Réalisateurs et Producteurs. Many of

their works explore exile and diaspora such as Jean-Pierre Bekolo from Cameroon, whom Jonathan Haynes described as "a cagey and attitudinous guerrilla roaming the post-modern globalized mediascape, opening the way for other bold young experimenters who made award-winning films" (p. 154). Armes also acknowledges Nigeria's booming video film sector to contrast it with the financial continuities in the Francophone world. The book concludes in Part 4 with a focus on the most promising New Millennium directors: Mahamat Saleh Haroun (Chad); Dani Kouyate' (Burkina Faso); Raja Amari (Tunisia); Faouzi Bensaidi (Morocco) and Abderrahmane Sissako (Mauritania) giving this new generation of African filmmakers the final say.

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Sara Dorman, Daniel Hammett, and Paul Nugent (eds.). Making Nations, Creating Strangers: States and Citizenship in Africa. Boston: Brill, 2007. 277p.

Making Nations, Creating Strangers is part of the African Social Studies Series. It consists of a collection of more than a dozen papers from those presented at the 'States, Borders and Nations: Negotiating Citizenship in Africa' conference held at the University of Edinburgh in 2004. The papers examine the processes through which nations are made, citizenship is defined, and the political expressions of those constructions. They are grouped into five sections: 1) an introduction on citizenship in Africa by the three editors, 2) two case studies of inclusion, exclusion and conflict in Cote d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 3) three papers on land and belonging, focusing on Cameroon, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, 4) a section on nations building boundaries which explores the politics of language in Cameroon, nationalism in Tanzania, and race in Zimbabwean politics, and 5) an exploration of citizenship, in a paper on South Africa and two others for Africa as a whole. One-third of the essays were contributed by scholars based in Africa, with the remainder from Canadian, British, and American authors.

The contributors note that citizenship laws in Africa have received little scholarly attention and they seek to examine the many possible outcomes across Africa as its people negotiate their colonial histories, patterns of inequality, population pressure, land shortage, and entitlement to resources within the boundaries of individual states. Their approaches, though often not articulated in methodological sections, include interpreting and reflecting upon relevant primary and secondary source materials and interviews with African leaders, United Nations officials, immigrants, and ordinary citizens.

Several themes reoccur throughout the book, including the following: strategies used by states to unite diverse people and promote nationalism; the politics of inclusion/exclusion as well as approaches employed by political leaders to define those who are or are not rightful members of the state; the use of education and the media to frame, and if necessary, remake the past to control the future; social standing, belonging, and using immigrants, from settler-

colonists to more recent arrivals, as scapegoats; the centrality of the ability to access or possess land in determining who 'belongs' in a state; the role of 'guerrillas' and insurgents in gaining supporters and shaping debates over rights and belonging; and, the failure of the end of the Cold War and the 'decade of democratization' (1990s) to end to violent conflict or ensure lasting political stability.

In no country are immigrants viewed neutrally. Even in Côte d'Ivoire, where immigration has been valorized for promoting economic success as well as viewed as indicative of the moral superiority of Ivoirians who welcome outsiders in the spirit of pan-Africanism, fraternity, and generosity, national identity cards have been used to determine voting and land rights, as well as who may seek the highest political office. In the DR Congo, Hutu and Tutsi 'outsiders' viewed as faring better economically than local inhabitants are subsequently mistreated by political leaders, even though by law some of these former Rwandans qualify for Congolese citizenship. Migrant farm workers in Zimbabwe, like migrants to Côte d'Ivoire, have been labeled as morally suspect or "less virtuous" (p. 116) than indigenous groups. The question of who is Tanzanian has been debated for decades and into the 21st century; at the heart of the query is whether resident South Asian Indians are Tanzanian or if they should give up their economic privilege to qualify.

Although long-term residency has served as a major determinant of potential citizenship in African countries, other factors have been used as markers of belonging. In Cameroon, the Anglophone minorities have been treated as second-class citizens and non-sedentary groups have been labeled as non-autochthonous, because they move over land rather than being ancestrally rooted to it. In South Africa, Nigeria, and elsewhere, people owning private property or living in urban areas have been politically privileged, while rural dwellers have been viewed as second class "'subjects' rather than as citizens able to engage in civil society" (p. 125).

Making Nations, Creating Strangers indicate that the more rigid categorization of people by ethnic background and occupation arose during the colonial period, but that post-independence leaders have used and manipulated these categories for their own benefit. There is a call by the authors, directly or implied, for Africans to broaden their notion of citizenship beyond individuals with claims to ancestral lands within state boundaries to include non-indigenous and non-sedentary people and incorporate them at all political levels in the name of democracy, nation-building, and sustainable development. At the same time, several contributors note that the use of language/ethnicity, long-term residency, and other claims to citizenship in African countries are quite similar to those which have been used on other continents throughout time. Furthermore, some of the contributors also note that constitutional reforms, although needed, may prove insufficient to resolve present-day inequalities if corruption and patronage remain widespread.

Though the essays in *Making Nations, Creating Strangers* are well-written and informative, with several being written by leading experts in the field, the inclusion of an essay on the impact of oil on statehood would have been welcome. Oil states such as Angola, Sudan, and Guinea Bissau receive virtually no mention and the essay on Nigeria does not address how oil plays into citizenship and identity. Furthermore, refugees receive only the briefest mention, yet their large numbers and unique position as "non-citizen others" (p. 255) who have experienced

varying degrees of social integration into their host countries position them as worthy of greater coverage in a volume which delves deeply into bounded states, citizenship and identity. *Making Nations, Creating Strangers* contains two high quality maps, but no photographs, tables or charts. The essays are pertinent to current events in Africa, and could serve as readings for upper-level undergraduate and graduate courses on African politics or international relations. Additionally, the book should be useful for anyone with an interest in African politics and identity as it relates to statehood.

Heidi G. Frontani and Kristine Silvestri
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Preben Kaarsholm (ed). Violence, Political Culture & Development in Africa. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2006. 208p.

This edited book volume consists of 10 chapters: an introductory chapter, a comparative chapter on state collapse in Africa, plus eight case study chapters on countries as far apart and politically diverse as Rwanda, Darfur, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Liberia. The contributing authors to this volume – all attached to universities in the Global North, all of whom attended a workshop at the Hotel Romantik on the Danish island of Bornholm in 2002, sponsored by Roskilde University and the Danish Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies - include scholars trained in and writing within the fields of history, anthropology, development studies, and political science.

The introductory chapter by the editor situates the individual chapters in the context of the 'third wave of democratisation' unfolding in African countries since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. While this wave has seen an increase in competitive legislature elections across the continent, it has also occurred in the context of violent conflict, war, genocide, state failure and collapse, and the disintegration of social orders. This book, as the editor notes, aims at contributing to the scholarly debate regarding the contemporary political situations and the "contradictions of development" (p. 2) in Africa, by which is meant the empirical realities of "possibilities, stalemates and violence conflicts" on the one hand and the different scholarly "understandings of contradictions and capacities for change in African political cultures" on the other (p. 2). In doing so, the contributions in this volume are explicit about the need for historical approaches to contextualise both the empirical political realities in Africa and, self-consciously, the lenses through which these realities have been theorised.

The introductory chapter confronts the second aim of the book: that is, the lenses through which the 'African' realities have been understood. Starting with what is by now a very familiar and established line of argument, this chapter rails against a number of journalists and commentators for writing about Africa in a 'negative way'. Correspondent Ryszard Kapuscinski and writer Robert Kaplan are deservedly singled out for their particularly biased and unflattering writings on and analyses of 'Africa'. Echoing an argument made as far back as 1996 by one of the contributors to this volume, Paul Richards, the introductory chapter criticises the

likes of Kaplan for their Afro-pessimism, moralistic prejudice, generalisations, etc. The chapter proceeds to wonder aloud whether such normative evaluations found in less academic analyses of African individuals and societies - the 'heart of darkness' narrative - do not perhaps also influence scholarly writings on Africa.

Continuing with this line of argument, histories of economic underdevelopment and analytical concepts such as rent-seeking, personal rule, patrimonialism, neo-patrimonialism, clientelism, elite cronyism are exposed as leading to arguments and conclusions that may reinforce the 'heart of darkness' narrative. This is because these perspectives and concepts were developed by scholars inhabiting a different "conceptual universe" than the political actors and political cultures of the countries under discussion. Such a culturalist argument seems too easy to make without seriously considering what is meant by different conceptual universes and how such universes are construed or relate to the material and discursive conditions of industrial capitalism and colonialism, i.e. the conditions under which these concepts and perspectives developed and flourished. The flip side of such a culturalist argument is that it requires the authors of this volume to stress and emphasise (cultural) coherence and similarity between the incredibly divergent countries under discussion (they are all 'African' in some way or another). The editor tries to grapple with this dilemma through a critical discussion and attempted revival of the notion 'political culture', but more intellectual work is needed to sharpen this potential theoretical knife.

In this introduction, too many of the recent writings on Africa are dismissed as somehow belonging to this 'heart of darkness' narrative: the author finds 'echoes of stereotypes' in Mbembe's work and of course Bayart's influential phrase 'politics of the belly' does not sound all that positive either. Too easily, Chabal and Daloz's work are dismissed as "heretic". Rather than seriously engaging with the varying and new ideas these authors had put forth, they are too easily condemned for the assumed possible consequences of their analyses. Consequently, they are all lumped together in a category of the sinners perpetuating negative narratives about 'Africa'. Interestingly, while the editor draws heavily on Paul Richard's earlier work in developing this line of argument, Richard's own contribution to this volume, tucked away as the last chapter, moves beyond his earlier work on Sierra Leone by reviving Durkheim's arguments about the connections between forced labour, fatalism, violence and civil war.

Given the expected lengths of these reviews, I can only briefly point to few of the individual chapters, and my selection was influenced by my disciplinary background and appreciation of rich analyses of the histories and current dynamics of specific local political struggles and such struggle's links to regional and global dynamics. Alexander offers a reworking of some of her earlier collaborative work on Zimbabwe and, drawing on archival sources and life histories, makes some compelling arguments for the ways in which party political discourses and symbols in contemporary Zimbabwe draws on regional contestations, religious routes and shines, memories associated with land and gestures. Demonstrating in rich detail the local and particular ways in which narratives provide legitimacy to rulers, her chapter is a fascinating read given the current political contestations and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe. Avoiding the explanatory line that favours seeing meaning and rationality in violence, she is careful to note that not all violence can be reduced to the struggle for power in a narrow sense; even struggles over identities and culture cannot be reduced to struggles over

political power. Kaarsholm's chapter deals with local politics in Amaoti outside Durban, South Africa, and shows how good historical and social analysis provide us with a map through which to interpret contemporary local political struggles. Through a close analysis of the material and symbolic dimensions of historical and contemporary struggles between IFP/ANC/UDF structures in the 1980s, social class markers, social identities locally formulated by ideas about ethnicity, generational contestations, gender divisions, localist versus cosmopolitanist lifestyles, conservative versus modernist moral orientations, Kaarsholm expertly demonstrates a most important contribution of rich ethnography to political science. That is, showing in this instance, how "the politics of every life are not necessarily bound up symmetrically with the politics of parties and instead act themselves out in contestations between groupings and discourses that differ on the moral issues regulating the relationships between older and younger people and between men and women" (p. 155).

This volume makes an important contribution to the effort of developing comparative views on political events and processes unfolding across several African countries. The historical approach shared by most of the contributors demonstrates well the shortcomings of much journalistic analyses of violent conflicts and state failures. The chapters drawing on field research in particular illustrate the complexities of political cultures and the dynamics of local struggles in a global context, which to some extent undermines the theoretical bases of the sort of comparative work on which the introductory chapter is constructed.

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Michael Ba Banutu-Gomez. Africa: We Owe it to Our Ancestors, Our Children, and Ourselves. Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2005. 214p.

"We owe it to Our Ancestors Our Children and Ourselves" is a one man reflection of what Africa is about pausing evaluative questions for readers to explore. It indicates Africa right from its title page but internalizing much more of the authors own African environs and what transpires therein.

His pride of being Africa is impeccable and in the introductory chapter of the book, the author reminisces over what it was like when he was in Africa and then concludes the chapter by stating his mission to serve as an effective, responsive and creative leader in private and public organizations and government.

A sense of everything African is made known by the author however as his story based on a debate he stirs and reinforces with notable quotes from other authors to substantiate his arguments targeting African professionals, students and leaders into having insight into the continents traditional acumen and opportunity to development.

Issues relating to the significance of African culture such as the significance of African music, the link between the dead and living, child birth, elders, traditional religion, medicine and occupations. As well as health and education management in the African traditional

setting, marriage, family, environmental management, implications of rural – urban migrations on labor and democracy in Africa are deliberated upon.

A depiction of what life was about, mostly in Banutu – Gomez's Gambian experience indicates the oneness in African practice as well as the value of life, marriage, family and health.

The authors description of Africa portrays a continent possessing its own functional values, development models and strategies, yet these are dormant which leads to his critique that necessitates such interventions as thoroughly understanding and respecting each others needs, designing more flexible public institutions by replacing the ineffective European vertical hierarchies of our past with modern horizontal networks that link together African people in a continental alliance, investment in Agriculture, sharing knowledge and skills as well as having African leaders achieve organizational coordination by mutual adjustment. Some harmful customs like forced marriage and female circumcision are noted with caution by the author to be cultural but not moral.

However it is basic to note that the basis of the narrative given in the book holds bias and therefore an objective opinion is more appreciated in terms of the author urging an African management and development model but also identifying opportunities in the Western culture that would enhance the African model. Rather than rubbishing the Western culture wholly as irrelevant. For example he insinuates that we cause conflict and confusion when we move away from our traditional forms of music and music instruments. The author would do justice to indicate what exactly was in the African music that was good and part of the revolution would be to achieve a better music model probably African but with comparison to the western music model. This not only helps strengthen the African models but also makes them applicable to global integration.

The author needs to realize that culture is dynamic and though it is only right that Africans evaluate what they had and value what their tradition culture can produce, it is only fair that they add value to their traditional cultures by integrating positive cultures from else where.

Another point of contention among others in Gomez's deliberations is seen in the message that the elders should still be in custody of society's wisdom. This notion can be disapproved based on the reality that gray hair does not necessarily mean wisdom because wisdom ought to be practical and proper reasoning built on experience and knowledge not simply age. Therefore it is no wonder that a character in Chinua Achebe's traditional placed novel 'Things Fall Apart' Unoka is Okwokwo's father and elderly, but not highly regarded or even sought after, while his son Okwokwo raises high to the position of an elder or bearer of wisdom due to his experience and fulfillment of his society's norms. Besides this in contemporary time's age does not represent virtue, in contemporary Africa some elderly folks have become symbols of vice as well therefore forfeiting the right to be sought out as wise and able guardians in society.

The subject of God as Gomez inducts could not be possibly envisaged as the author implies. That Africans worshiped one God and ancestors were not considered to be gods. The reality of African religion is ingrained in worship of the ancestors – not just recognizing they lived and hold memorials of in their honor but also in believing in the living – dead. Sacrifices are made to the spirits of those long gone and they are adored as gods. The essence of such titles as Nasibati and Nyamuhanga only recognized the creative force of nature to be God the creator and maker of all things.

The book makes a great contribution to literature on Africa providing a shared experience with constructive quotes from other sources to enhance the quality of information the author gives as he states his arguments of what Africa ought to do. However there is a lot of speculative thought than application. To create an African model of development or more functional values there is need not to simply talk about how things were and what ought to be done but how ought it to be done with reverence being given to the past traditions and how best these can be recovered, rejuvenated and appreciated practically.

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Alfred Nhema and Paul Zeleza, (eds). The Roots of African Conflicts: The Causes & Costs. Oxford, UK: James Currey (in association with OSSREA), 2008. 238p.

Portrayal of African wars and woos is central to the text 'The Roots of African Conflicts: The Causes and Costs. Authors indicate the factors that have attracted Africa into continuous conflict cycles mostly intra-state conflicts. Wars are typically related to imperialism, decolonization, ethnicity, religion and political malfunction in the various papers. The external and internal pressures leading to terrorism are identified as national, transnational and global.

In his review of the papers Zeleza notes "African wars can be differentiated in terms of causal factors and dynamics, spatial scale and location, military equipment and engagements deployed, impacts of military and civilian populations, and consequences on politics, the economy, society, the environment, cultural structures and mental states."[1]

This view cuts across the papers as reflected by in what Ali Mazrui extensively writes about the patterns in African wars pointing out religion, ethnicity and racism, which he identifies as aspects of pluralism which is dangerous to society's harmonious co-existence.[2]

Henderson examines the event entailing political malfunction in African states citing the circumstance of state building in Africa as having the challenges of a ' state strengthening dilemma' where in this formation instead of achieving citizens allegiance to the state resistance was developed leading to political repression and thus insurgency.[3]

Ghaffer offers a case study of Sudan, an African state he describes jeopardized by not only religion, ethnicity and language but economic inequity which has escalated into strife caused by distrust between North and South Sudan.[4] Ghaffer centres his argument on the colonial intention of halting the Islamizing of black Africa which in the process opened the door to other forms of disunity and thus conflict.

Akokpari links African conflict to the colonial experience, failure of the state and external factors. He notes that African states are artificial a design of colonial imagination rather than the actual nationhood. Akokpari cites the contradiction and complexities of managing heterogeneous African states as well as the implications of external impacts on African politics such as the fact that independence for African states was a product of the cold war.[5]

Further examining the trend of conflict in Africa Thandika Mkandawire gives various explanations taken from other authors to illustrate the scenario of rebellion and violence in Africa. He notes the peddling of Afro-pessimism quoting the Economist (May 13, 2000) which stated 'The Hopeless Continent' as a headline. In the cultural view he demonstrates African violence as a hereditary trait, then points out Chris Allen's paradigm of 'spoil politics' in Africa noting the urge for self enrichment hence the urge to grab power with intent to loot. The rational choice explanation Mkandawire gives suggests there is some injustice that rebellion seeks to rectify culminating into violence.

In his final argument he give the common African scenario of elite persons teaming up in the urban areas as factions and then steaming up rebellion mostly in the rural side basing on the failure in the cities. The argument that stimulates the debate further is in the reality that all rebel groups are made up of persons with different motives and so are a challenge in them.

The role of women play in revolutions is focal in Aaronette Whites paper about African women combatants. Her discussion centres on women's contribution and how often they are sidelined by governments they supported into power.

Sandra MacLean identifies Africa's political disheveled environment with the global network in which transnational networks emerge including those dealing in arms. Though MacLean states that not all transboundary formations are exploitative many such formations are constructed as 'networks of plunder'. [6] She brings out an important reality in the creation of NEPAD, on how Africa has continued to be a continent lingering in decision made by the western world.

An interesting state of affairs is brought out by Cephas Lamina on legislative responses and protecting human rights. In his paper, he cite a number of African countries who are party to the international conventions and protocols on terrorism but interpret them in such a manner has led to the violation of human rights such as the right to expression, life, human dignity, association and fair trial.

Fondo Sikod points out the implication of war or violent conflict in Africa mainly as poverty and food insecurity which also perpetuate conflict as a result of frustration brought on by lack of social reciprocity and tolerance for different ideas. The proposition seems to act out the notion a hungry man is an angry one. In that the root cause of the violence is traced back to poverty and food security.

The last paper in the book by Timothy Shaw and Pamela Mbabazi focuses on Uganda bringing out the attributes of a state under reconstruction and yet still in conflict. The North – South divide is noted as well as the advantage western Uganda in particular Mbarara has had in development.

The book covers a wide range of view which holds truth to the African situation in terms of the root causes of conflict. It is evident that internal and external forces have led to the underlying violent conflicts but with a number of motives and thus cause. However key cases for instance the fact that pre-colonial Africa had conflicts rooted in trade and the desire for territorial expansion is left out. The mention of Kingdom and Empire formation by the Asante, Hausa, Nyamwezi, Banyoro and Zulu are not mentioned plus such mercenary activities as those conducted by the Ngoni Ruga Ruga warriors.

Furthermore there is no mention of the actual role of women in empire or nation building in pre-colonial Africa. This mention would enhance the depiction of the role of African women, such as the Amazon's who were famous warriors in Dahomey as well as the female warriors in the Monomotapa Kingdom, in revolutions and war.

Mention of recent incidents on the global scene such as the 2004 Mark Thatcher scandal which involved former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's son engaging helping finance a foiled plot to overthrow the president of oil-rich Equatorial Guinea would add weight to the debate as evidence implicating the western world in Africa's conflict.

Notes

1. Tiyambe Zeleza. Introduction: The Causes and Costs of war in Africa, pg. 3.
2. Ali Mazrui. *Conflict in Africa: An Overview*, pg. 38.
3. Errol Henderson. *When States Implode: Africa's Civil wars 1950 – 92* pg. 54.
4. Abdel Ghaffer Ahme. Multiple Complexities and Prospects for Reconciliation and Unity: Sudan, pg. 75.
5. John Akokpari. *Citizenship, the State and African Conflict: Ivory Coast*, pg. 89 - 91.
6. Sandra MacLean. *Fighting Locally, Connecting Globally*, pg. 171.

Linda Lilian
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Stephanie E. Smallwood. Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007. 273p.

Stephanie Smallwood, a professor of History at the University of Washington, Seattle uniquely and interestingly comes up with a book with a subject of its own kind on the Atlantic slavery. Intellectually, the book catches the attention of the reader with its compelling force and stories of what slave trade was like during the early seventeenth century Africa, the nature of the Sea journeys and its related experiences and how that might have transmitted to the New World. The book shows the wisdom of understanding the collaborations that existed between Africans, Europeans, and the European and American slavers. The volume effectively analyzes the history of American slavery which begins in the West African shores, through the Atlantic Sea to the New World. It comprises of seven chapters. Chapter one tracks the history of Atlantic slavery going back to the Gold Coast of West Africa and basically examines the roles played by Africans and foreigners (Dutch, Portuguese, and English) in the commercialization of slavery.

In chapter two, Professor Smallwood tackles the topic, "Turning African Captives into Atlantic Commodities" whereby this section articulates the nature of African resistance against Europeans who attempted to force them into slavery with limited success. The chapter continues to show the unsuccessful attempts against the Europeans slavers and the treachery of African compromisers of the trade. The methods used in capturing slaves, their sufferings and

death through the Middle Passage in the name of economy come out vividly in this chapter. The Third chapter deals with "the political economy of the slave ship" which provides details of how African slaves became commodities in exchange of European goods rather than the use of Gold. Professor Smallwood brings into content the statistics of those who were enslaved from early 1700 and the kind of ships that were used in shipping them to their destination (71-42). Not only was the issue of shipping slaves a major concern, but also negotiating their prices is masterly argued in this chapter. "The Anomalous Intimacies of the Slave Cargo" is the fourth chapter which critically analyzes the formation of a new community in the cargo that was imposed onto Africans on their way to the unknown destination. With this, came a new challenge that slaves had to deal with as they faced forced migrations from their homeland into the New World. The book argues that even as much as some of the slaves in the Ships were able to communicate in their tribal languages, in many cases most slaves were not able even to find someone to communicate with in their language (118).

The atrocious conditions under which slaves went through in the slave ships cannot even be put into words. Professor Smallwood does an excellent job in bringing into picture essentially those horrible experiences in the Ships showing that the Sea lifestyle was not accustomed by Europeans and Africans at the time forcing them into a learning adjustment process. The European colonization of the New World is presented to have been a source of indent and control of the innocent Africans. The last two chapters deal with the immersion of African slaves into American slaves and their life challenges in the New World. Of course those who survived the Sea arrived in the New World with continued mistreatment as commodities contributing to their increased mortality rate in Diaspora.

It must be argued here that while this magnum opus boldly communicates a new message to the reader, chapter one would have drawn more data on the role played by the Dutch in the trade and also show the nature the historical background of slavery in Africa from the fifteenth to seventeenth century. This however, does not affect the book's well done job. Brightly written and meticulously appealing, the book still stands as a groundbreaking text with detailed substantiation of African experiences, authentications, and verified reactions. Unlike the vast majority of books on the same subject, this volume brilliantly shows a history before, during, and after the Middle Passage in a more persuasive manner.

In summary, Saltwater Slavery stands out to be one of the few well written, researched, and intellectually presented to the readers (Africanists, African, and African American history students) and other interested parties. This volume is a must read text for every class that deals with the history of slavery or African History.

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Alvin O. Thompson. Economic Parasitism: European Rule in West Africa, 1880-1960. Barbados, West Indies: University of West Indies. 2006. 544p.

"Economic Parasitism: European Rule in West Africa, 1880-1960" is a rather massive critique of European rule in West Africa. The author disputes the theory of "trusteeship" or the "dual mandate"—the claim of apologists of European rule that colonialism was meant to benefit both Europeans and Africans, and that it actually did so. He insists that "the main reason for the European occupation of Africa was to make money" (p.139). In the quest for money, he adds, colonial powers not only neglected African interests; they seriously threatened them. He concedes that some effort was made to "revamp" the economy of West Africa, but argues that this was meant "to suit the imperatives of the occupying powers, to the detriment of the vast majority of local peoples." He endorses the thesis of Walter Rodney and other scholars that had laboured to prove that Europe "underdeveloped" Africa. He adds however that his objective is "to show in greater breath and depth [than Rodney and others] how colonialism led to the breakdown of economic and related structures in West Africa" (p.xix).

Economic Parasitism is based on a very extensive use of secondary sources—books, chapters and journal articles on different countries of West Africa. On the whole there are 677 entries in the bibliography. The sources cover all regions and countries of West Africa Generally, the sources are more than adequate for the purpose of the author. Between the book's Introduction and conclusion ("Reflections"), there are twelve chapters. Apart from the first two chapters and the last, which cover the early stages and last stages of the colonial era, the others are based strictly on themes—land, labour, monetary and fiscal reform, agriculture, etc. This approach enabled the author to exhaustively analyze each of the colonial policies he treated. But, as the author himself admitted (p.xv), it led to numerous repetitions. The book is written with everyday language and uses commonsense explanations. However, because it is big and largely argumentative, it is so complex that it will find audience only among mature readers—research students and scholars.

In almost every page of "Economic Parasitism," Thompson demonstrates from the words and deeds of European government officials and business interests that the quest for profit was the primary motive of the European powers that colonized Africa. He also demonstrates how they accomplished this and how Africans suffered in the process. Among other things, he discusses forced production of cash crops, mining concessions to European companies that did not pay tax on their profits, repatriation of profit, discriminatory banking policies, oppressive labour policies, low wages and reluctance to develop industry ("industrial retardation"). He also writes briefly about how African resistance helped to moderate some of the policies of the colonial powers.

Before making a general comment on Thompson's effort, it would be well to make a few remarks on a few specific points. He asserts that, basically because it led to the depletion of manpower in Africa, the slave trade retarded industrialization in pre-colonial Africa. This is not convincing: the industrial revolution is yet to take place in places like North Africa which did not export slaves in the 15th-19th century; the revolution started in Europe from where millions migrated or were forced to the Americas during this period. Like many other critics of colonial rule, Thompson sees no merit at all in Hyla Mint's "vent for surplus theory" and reaffirms the

view that the drive to increase cash crops production adversely affected food crops production in colonial Africa. There is need to qualify this widely held view. The view is valid in relation to some colonies e.g. Senegal and the Portuguese colonies. In many others, like Nigeria and Cameroon, there was adequate labour for both cash crops and food crops production. Indeed, partly through the policies of the colonial government, there was a boost in food production. Thompson splits much hair trying to refute Poly Hill's thesis that migrant farmers in the Gold Coast were not capitalists. His reasons were that their holdings were small in size and that much of the land they acquired was not cultivated. Hill's view on the matter, which emphasized the profit making and risk-taking orientation of the farmers, is more convincing.

Now we have to sum up. Given the large size of "Economic Parasitism," its focus on the colonial era, and the large volume of sources used by the author, it is, to a much greater extent than Rodney and others before him, a profound and detailed exposé of the evils of colonial rule. However, Thompson overstates his case. Many colonial policies that he considers progressive, like the abolition of slavery, introduction of new crops, infrastructural development, and immunization, are not credited at all to the goodwill of the colonial rulers. In his view such measures were either inadequate, or were meant to ultimately advance the economic interests of Europe, or they were concessions made to African resistance. This is not a balanced view. While it is true that trusteeship was subordinated to profit by the colonial rulers, much was done in the area of trusteeship, with the result that Africa was modernized during the colonial era. Thompson's verdict on colonial rule would have less harsh and more balanced if he had, as Amilcar Cabral did, viewed colonialism as "a historical necessity." According to Cabral, colonialism brought much-needed modernization to Africa. In the course of doing that, however, inequality and other forms of injustice could not be avoided. Thus the goal of the independence struggle was not to stop the process of modernization but to minimize the injustices associated with modernization. This is a more balanced view of European rule in Africa.

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Kathleen Bickford Berzock. Hesi how BENIN: Royal Arts of a West African Kingdom. The Art Institute of Chicago. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008. 35p.

BENIN: Royal Arts of a West African Kingdom is a 40-page (inside out) catalogue of the Art Institute of Chicago that accompanied the exhibition *Benin- Kings and Rituals: Court Arts from Nigeria-* collection of royal artworks from ancient Benin Kingdom, now Edo State of Nigeria, West Africa. The "Acknowledgments" tells us that the exhibition "was organized by the Museum für Völkerkunde Vienna, Kunsthistoriches Museum, with the participation of the National Commission for Museum and Monuments, Nigeria, and the Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin," [including] "the participation and support of his Majesty Omo n'Oba Ukpolokpolo Erediauwa, the current Oba of Benin." For its glossy, high-definition color,

plastic-texture paper, and most especially the royal status and quality of the collection in the book, the catalogue is a collector's item, more so for the protective jacket of the same design with the actual book. The color choice, which is black, for the front cover provides an appropriate projecting backdrop template for the brown plaque image of Oba Esiqie cast on brass on the front cover. The red color on the back cover matches the photograph of the royal appearance on the back cover, and it should interest the readers that such colors 'ododo' have some significance of royalty in the kingdom.

The content of the book is organized into two parts: The first contains photographs and some historical bits on origin, people and events that seem to define what Benin Kingdom was. In all, there are ten photographs, photographs that document the Obas and Chiefs in their rich royal regalia (figs. 2, 6 and 8), historical photographs of the drawing of old Benin city (fig. 7), Oba Ovonranwen's capture, looking pitiable on the British yacht *Ivy*, 1897 (fig. 10), members of the British military expedition sitting amid hundred of looted artworks in a courtyard of Oba's palace, 1897 (fig. 11) and a group photograph in which Oba Akenzua, his retinue and British colonial officials appeared (fig. 12). This part also features royal cavers/casters at work (figs. 4 and 5) and ancestral alters of Oba Ovonramwen and Oba Eweka II (fig. 9).

In compliment to all the featured photographs is a brief history of the reigns and achievements of few of the Obas of the kingdom. For example, it is noted in the book that "in the ancient past Benin was ruled by the Ogiso, literally 'Rulers of the Sky'… that the first Ogiso was the son of Osanobua, the High God." The book also notes another source of Benin origin which claims that following the failure of Ogiso leadership, "the village chiefs of Benin, … *uzama*, sent a messenger to Ile-Ife asking its divine ruler, Ooni, for a leader to restore order." The messenger, who happened to be a prince from Ile-Ife conceived a child with the daughter of an Edo chief. The child was later crowned Oba Eweka I. While the book notes that the kingdom became a powerhouse during the reign of Oba Ewuare, it also documents "Benin's Golden Age" during the reign of Oba Ozolua the Conqueror and Oba Esigie who "carefully regulated trade with the Portuguese and created a guild of commissioned traders to act as his emissaries." A brief history of the internal conflicts in the kingdom, including the invasion of the kingdom by the British in 1897 which led to the deposition of Oba Ovonramwen and his eventual death in exile is included in this part (pp. 6-7).>

The second part of the catalogue-book highlights 22 objects depicting various motives for their different cultural interpretations. For example, head objects; royal alter head of an Oba and Ife Head linking Benin history to that of ancient city of Ile-Ile (pp.16-17). There are the plaque pieces; those depicting the reverence and mythical being of the Oba (p. 19), plaque depicting authority (p.27), war plaques (pp. 21-22) and a plaque depicting palace interior (p.26). Other pieces include royal alter objects on pages 29-32, objects depicting individuals- a Portuguese (p.20), an Ewue palace official (p.23) and a plaque of three traders from Benin (p.24). Each of the pieces is accompanied with a brief resume which includes size, period or date, present location of the object, motive and interpretation.

To the extent that the book serves as a guideline on an art exhibition, the catalogue provides illuminating information and commentary on these beautifully displayed master pieces of African cultural milieu. The brief history of ancient Benin Kingdom and how the cultural objects depict the semiotics of that culture and time are particularly noticeable.

Another major important information the catalogue documents is how these masterpieces got ruptured from their original home and got scattered all over Europe and United States of America, residing now in both private and public museums, becoming objects of booming tourism in these regions of the world. The plunder of these objects, the book notes, was the aftermath of British invasion of 1897, leading to the looting and carting away of these cultural artifacts by the invading British army. In this regard, one would have expected the curator to inform the reading public efforts being made to return these objects to their place of origin, given the controversy this has generated overtime. In any case, whatever omission that may have been committed, the compact, well-packaged book remains an invaluable source of information for art lovers, historians, tourists and general interest readers.

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Patrick Harries. Butterflies and Barbarians: Swiss Missionaries and Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007. 279p.

This study is a very strong example of historical research on missionary ethnography in colonial Africa. It brings together a number of important subjects in colonial African history: the impact of writing on African intellectuals and languages, the role of metropolitan European concerns in shaping narratives about Africa, the links between scientific research and colonialism, and the interplay between Africans and Europeans in constructing knowledge in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The author warns his readers that his main concern will be the ways Swiss missionary Henri-Alexandre Junod (1863-1934) created a wide body of anthropological, ecological, and linguistic knowledge about Tsonga-speaking people. In contrast to much of the literature that deals with European constructions of Africans, however, this book clearly shows how Africans in Mozambique and South Africa participated in the construction of botanical, ethnographic, and zoological knowledge.

The intellectual and religious climate of mid-nineteenth century Switzerland greatly shaped Junod's views on anthropology, Africans, and science. Sharp class, religious, and regional differences divided Swiss intellectuals. While some claimed that scientific advances had fatally undermined Christian faith, others contended that the study of nature furnished evidence of God's active role on earth. Romantic ideas regarding the majesty and antiquity of the Alps furnished Swiss people with a common understanding of landscapes and national identity. Swiss writers contended that the Alps were a place where ancient beliefs and remnants of the past survived untouched by modernity. Junod and other Swiss missionaries applied these ideas to African landscapes and peoples. Furthermore, missionary work was a way for Swiss people to take pride in their nation. Pastors and scientists could present themselves as redeemers of Africans and serve the needs of progress without engaging in colonial expansion.

Intellectual and religious diversity characterized Swiss people at home, but Swiss missionaries presented themselves as the emissaries of a unified Christian modernity in

southern Africa. They were faced with a plethora of languages and varied African understandings of Christianity. Furthermore, missionaries were beset with personality conflicts, debates over languages and doctrine, and the unstable economic and political climate of the Transvaal and Southern Mozambique between 1880 and 1910. At first, Junod was horrified by many indigenous cultural practices once he arrived in Southern Africa. However, his training in the natural sciences and his conception of the prehistoric nature of the Alps led him to different conclusions over time. Junod turned to analogies with Europe, maps, and the collecting of botanical and zoological knowledge as a means mastering African landscapes.

Junod believed that they had discovered the rules of Tsonga language and Tsonga society in much the same way he believed he had uncovered botanical and zoological categories. By formulating rules of grammar and vocabulary lists, Junod hoped to domesticate the Tsonga language and to instil European modes of thought into Tsonga culture. African readers did not treat books and literacy in ways that missionaries expected. Book possession became a means of constructing alliances of Christians, and photographs of Tsonga converts often featured books. African readers combined orality with literacy in ways that disturbed Junod at times, such as treating written messages as a form of power.

Missionaries were equally disturbed by the social changes that came with Portuguese occupation and the rise of migrant labor on Tsonga people. Junod presented Tsonga society as static and orderly in his renowned monograph published in 1913, *Life of a South African Tribe*. For him, Tsonga society was based on a coherent foundation of social practices, language, and knowledge of plants and animals. He drew insights from contemporary anthropological writers like Emile Durkheim, even though French ethnographers criticized Junod for not adopting comparative approaches and making explicit moral judgements. He rejected arguments that Tsonga people somehow had a "pre-modern" mentality that differed significantly from Europeans.

However, Junod contended Africans should be shielded from the harmful effects of industrialization and European influences. As a result, he downplayed discussing the effects of migrant labor and the rising power of the Portuguese colonial state. By the time British anthropologists seriously considered Junod's research in the 1920s, his findings did not correspond with communities deeply changed by migrant labor, mandatory cotton cultivation, and forced labor. While South African anthropologists critiqued Junod for his missionary views and lack of formal training, they too argued that African cultures based on tribes that had been stable before colonial rule but now were in danger of being destroyed by modernity. Such ideas later would help shape the intellectual framework of the apartheid regime.

Butterflies and Barbarians deserves a wide audience. Students in advanced undergraduate and graduate courses on African history, imperialism, and missionaries would find many insights here on the politics of knowledge in a colonial setting. The book carefully treats the agency of Africans in the formation of literate Christian communities, even as it focuses on European understandings of African societies. Specialists would do well to use this study as a model for examining the social and political context of ethnographic research. All in all, this is an impressive work.

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A. E. Afigbo. The Abolition of the Slave Trade in Southeastern Nigeria, 1885-1950. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006. 210p.

This book is about the history of the British campaign against the internal slave trade in colonial Nigeria. It focuses on the Bight of Biafra and its hinterland, a region long buffeted by slavery and slave trading. In five chapters, Afigbo skillfully demonstrates how the export trade in palm oil, missionary expansion, and British ideas of civilization, undermined slavery and the internal slave trade in the region.

Afigbo shows that the abolition of the internal slave trade in southeastern Nigeria took three distinct stages. The first phase, often characterized with a language of philanthropy, humanitarianism, and evangelicalism, concerns the period 1830-1885. This phase (the subject of chapter one) was dominated by the British navy, which policed the West African Atlantic coastline, seizing ships that carried human cargo bound for the Americas. This initial campaign was largely on the sea with limited action to enforce the ban on the mainland. The coastal phase of the campaign (c1885-1900) instituted a tighter control of coastal towns and cities. During this period, the British government and its agents had started to advance British economic and political interests in the African interior. For example, in 1849, Britain appointed a resident agent as consul to oversee and protect British interest in the Bights of Benin and Biafra. This British establishment overtime grew from strength to strength. Even though the British agents were stationed mainly in coastal towns, it enabled Britain to gradually consolidate its imperial authority in the Biafran frontier. The final phases of the campaign described what happened during the colonial period proper (i.e. 1900-1950). This period witnessed the British advance into the heart of the Biafran hinterland. This coincided with the declaration of a Protectorate Government, a by-product of the use of military force or conquest. The entire region was apportioned into divisions and districts, each with its own headquarters, courts, military post and colonial staff (47).

Despite the paucity of sources on the working of the internal slave trade and/ or its abolition, this study has made a significant addition in the overall historiography by eloquently showing how the abolition of the trade was inextricably linked to southeastern Nigeria's colonial history and the processes that undermined its existence. While Afigbo's analysis does not diminish the efforts made by Great Britain in eroding the internal slave trade, at the same time, it discusses the crucial role played by the African middlemen in the overall process. The presence of the British on the coast limited the scope the coastal merchants and rulers had to continue to engage in the slave trade "since the European supercargoes would not take kindly to such an activity" (17). Consequently, these coastal merchants diverted their interest away from trading in slaves to trading in "legitimate" goods. The British also mobilized them "as part of its motley army of legitimate traders, free traders and abolitionists" in the hinterland (40). In the end, these merchants not only abandoned slave dealing as their main line business but

became anti-slave police. They entered the Biafran hinterland, creating awareness among the interior peoples how unviable slave dealing was. In this way, Afigbo argues that they helped to pave the way for the gradual decline of the trade. Subsequently, the political arm of Britain's *civilizing* mission began following behind these coastal traders to implant the British presence further and further into the interior. Afigbo argues that without the African middlemen, the abolition of the internal slave trade by the colonial government would have been slow, if not tedious (p. 28). The role performed by these middlemen yielded positive results in that the people "responded in an impressive manner to the lure of the new trade" in natural products such as palm oil and elephant tusks (p. 21).

The missionaries, especially the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Presbyterians, also played an instrumental role in depressing the internal slave trade. In fact, Afigbo argues that their activities in the Biafra were by nature anti-slave trade. The missionaries "preached, knowingly or unknowingly, by word and by deed, the doctrine of legitimate commerce" (23). They also preached their doctrine of the equality of all men, a message which supposedly undermined the nefarious trade. This preaching posed a fundamental challenge to the "old" culture of the inhabitants of Biafra, and by extension, slavery and slave trading (22). It not only turned Biafran culture and society upside down but helped "drive more people into other lines of business, especially trading and agricultural production." The pitfall of Afigbo's analysis, however, is that he does not give us enough information on the groups that were carrying out much of the slave trading. To what extent were they an organized group? In many ways, he seems to assumes the readers' familiarity with the Aro and as well as the region's history.

Colonial brutality and/ or the oppression of colonial subjects have received a fairly amount of attention in the past decades. Many scholars have used instances of such brutality to criticize European colonialism in Africa. Yet, while such instances of colonial violence and brutality occurred and were inhumane, Afigbo shows that the British actions also had a profound impact in transforming Biafran society and modes of economic interaction to replace slavery. The British adopted harsh punishments which "taught all . . . that the new masters were not to be toyed with." It produced shock and fear and made people realize that participating in the illegal trade could bring them into conflict with the British (p. 53). Afigbo's work also suggests that the colonial policy of conscription had vital implications in weakening internal slave trading in the Biafran frontier. After the British passed the Roads and Creeks Proclamation in 1903, a huge burden of work was imposed on the adult male population, the class of people usually involved in slave raiding and kidnapping. Adult males took to hiding instead of wandering around. The proclamation required an adult male work for the colonial government for six days in each quarter. Moreover, Afigbo views conscription as a "kind of social leveler." He implies that the twentieth century conscription policy of the British, unlike earlier forms of conscriptions, did not discriminate between free and un-free. It did not also spare the freeborn from brutal treatment to which workers were subjected to. By subjecting all workers to similar brutal treatment, the colonial government indirectly undermined the social prestige of acquiring and owning slaves, even if it did not undermine the economic value of slaves (50).

Finally, most of the literature on the slave trade in Africa focuses on the external slave trades (i.e. the trans-Saharan slave trade, the Indian-Ocean trade and most importantly, the Atlantic slave trade). In short, the internal slave trade in Western Africa in general and the Bight

of Biafra in particular "has been neglected by many scholars" (117). Thus, although the author should have shed more light on the slave markets in the Niger Delta and Upper Cross River as well as the "consumers" of slaves (whose demand helped sustain the trade for decades, if not a century), the end product is no doubt a major contribution to the historiography of slavery, slave trading and its abolition in Africa.

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Fyle C. Magbaily. Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006. 288p.

A lot of important events take place everyday and almost certainly, yesterday's events become today's source of history. Therefore, to reflect history's dynamic and volatile characteristics, a historical dictionary should be flexible enough to keep up with the rapid changes that history presents us with. But what exactly is a historical dictionary meant to accomplish? Well, in the broadest view, it should serve as a point of reference for a country or region's history. However, contemporary historical dictionaries are becoming more thematic and inclusive of diverse foci such as religion, culture, and language. Whatever the definition scope, comprehensiveness and cross-referencing of entries are prime to such works. A survey of historical dictionaries pertaining to Africa reflects a few in numbers and large time gaps between editions. This is particularly true for historical dictionaries on Sierra Leone. To date there have been only two, with the second arriving 29 years after the first. Nevertheless, the second historical dictionary on Sierra Leone effectively redeems the lost time.

The value of *Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone* by C. Magbaily Fyle is evident in its coverage of persons, academic institutions, ethnic groups, political parties, and important events. The book is well structured with the inclusion of a chronological sequence of events. A sizable and informative introduction offers brief insights into the land and its affairs, including the recent war. The core of the volume is an extensive dictionary supplemented by a subject-based bibliography at the end. This wide-reaching historical review is expected of an author who is known for his writings on Africa in general and Sierra Leone in particular. With eight books and a score of articles, this latest of C. Magbaily Fyle's books is filled with dictionary entries that are concise yet informative. The usefulness of this volume stretches far beyond a point of reference for historians and history scholars. For anyone interested in learning about Sierra Leone, the book is a good starting point for a brief overview into a large array of topics including many important figures and events that have shaped the country. This is important as the country goes through postwar reconstruction and continues to receive increased international attention and research interest.

The greatest point of value for *Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone* comes from the subject-based bibliography at the end of the book. C. Magbaily Fyle has followed in the path of the predecessor volume to list an ample bibliography of literature mostly since the 1970s, in subject-

based categories. The author also makes up for both published and unpublished sources excluded from the book's bibliographic listing by pointing readers to alternative sources of information. In continued praise of its value, the book contains references to important works such as Cyril Patrick Foray's *Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone*, Christopher Fyfe's *A History of Sierra Leone* and Akintola Wyse's *The Krio of Sierra Leone*. Certainly, this is far from the complete list of key references. Furthermore, the author has omitted unpublished sources which may compromise the integrity of a good volume. Much of the information contained within the book (e.g. *Islam in Sierra Leone*), is beyond the scope of a history class in primary schools in Sierra Leone. For this reason, the book provides a valuable background to a number of contemporary issues and events that can be pursued by young Sierra Leoneans. The same can be stated about the numerous historical figures found within the book, but missing in history lessons in Sierra Leonean primary schools. Clearly written and well organized, the presentation is also a plus for this volume.

As a follow up to its predecessor, *Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone* introduces an improved amount of new entries missing in the previous volume. The Bo Government School, the Lebanese, and >Kande Bure, a 1970s political figure who became cabinet minister, all make new entries in this volume. However, still missing as in the previous volume is I. B. Taylor-Kamara, the first northern Lawyer, and Paul Dunbar, a prominent SLPP politician. There are also subtle issues which take away from the great work put into this volume. The lack of consistency in presenting entries in alphabetical order (e.g. Fula Mansa, Marlay Bokari, and Kande), is only compounded by a missing book index. The lack of separate entries for such items as the Bundo female secret society presents cross-referencing problems. Errors such as the discrepancy in Max Bailor's birth date of 1929 and his tenure as chief electoral commissioner from 1888 to 1991, only steals away from the integrity of the work. Highly political and cultural in context, the volume fails to cover major religious institutions such as the St. George's Cathedral in the heart of Freetown, Masonic Lodges, broadcasting and communications, the Internet, censorship, blogging, Libraries, and other contemporary relevancies, all of which are significant enough to be considered for entry.

By unknown criteria, some educational institutions make the entries and others do not. Coverage of education within this volume is deficient without an entry for the Rio Pongas Mission or the Reverend Thomas Davy, an influential colonial educationist. Missing from the volume is a number of colonial figures who are integral to Sierra Leone's history. Particularly frustrating for anyone searching for factual information, are the levels of subjectivity to be found within this volume. This is not surprising because oral tradition plays an important role in nearly all facets of Sierra Leonean life. It is therefore supposed that the rhetoric on spirits in secret societies is nothing more than the author's traditional beliefs seeping into the work. Even more significant are claims that Creoles resented the Lebanese due to their dominance in trade, or that the latter threatened to "make the Creoles eat grass." It is for this reason that *Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone* can not be substituted for a standard history book and such claims can only be attributed to subjectivity or erroneous consensus that has been passed down throughout history.

The shortcomings of *Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone* show how difficult a task it is to compile such a volume. Scope, cost, format, the rapid changes in events, and even subjectivity,

can all make an immense difference. Some of these variables seem to have played a role in the quality of this literary output. Nonetheless, *Historical Dictionary of Sierra Leone* stands as one of only two historical dictionaries relating to Sierra Leone. C. Magbaily Fyle has yet again accomplished a mammoth task of educating us about Sierra Leone. Case in point, the volume is not an option for a history book on Sierra Leone. Rather, it is a great source for anyone looking for a general overview of the country, but particularly those who know what they are looking for.

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George O. Ndege. Culture and Customs of Mozambique. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007. 128p.

Culture and Customs of Mozambique is Professors George O. Ndege's contribution to the book series 'Culture and Customs of Africa', which comprises to date twenty-two case studies. By introducing the reader into the respective cultural setting and its characterizing customs, it is the series' stated objective to spark intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding in an ever shrinking, globalizing world. Whereas it is deliberately chosen by the contributing authors to define in each case the term 'culture', 'custom' is overarchingly understood "not as static or as a museum artifact but as a dynamic phenomenon" (p. viii). Each book of the series aims to capture the elements and essence of the analogous culture and customs, by "dwelling on such important aspects as religion, worldview, literature, media, art, housing, architecture, cuisine, traditional dress, gender, marriage, family, lifestyles, social customs, music and dance" (Series Foreword). In doing so, each volume follows a uniform format.

Divided in eight chapters and spanning 128 pages, the book "proceeds on the premise that tradition and culture are dynamic and dialectic, internal and external processes that shape the worldview of people at a given point in time" (preface). In this sense it "highlights the rich Mozambican cultural diversity by examining the interplay of many and varied factors" (preface). The author's intention to "facilitate dialogue between the past and emerging present in Mozambique" and to enhance the readers understanding of "the continuous process of change that has defined and continues to shape contemporary Mozambican society" (p. x) is, at least for the second part of the statement, an achieved objective. However, in doing so, the volume shows great light and shadow of quality.

After a brief historic 'chronology' of Mozambique, an initial 'introduction' provides the reader with essential information on history, geography, economy and politics. The historic facts are as such sound and mostly complete, yet with a few exceptions deemed necessary to cite. The chronology, although accurate in facts and dates, does not specifically *name* the Mozambican civil war from 1976-1992. In the subsequent depiction of the war between the then sole political party FRELIMO and the Anti-Frelimo resistance group RENAMO, it is neither stated that this has been historically identified as a classical *proxy war* on the African continent.

Ultimately, it is completely unmentioned that the RENAMO rebel group received covert financial backup from some private right-wing organizations in the US, while their support from South Africa's apartheid and South Rhodesia's regime is explicitly stated.

Thereupon, the book then proceeds with the various aspects of culture and customs as stated above, of which the highlights can be found in Chapters 2, 6 and 7, where gender roles, marriage, family, social customs and lifestyles of Mozambique's sixteen ethnic groups and their respective religious affiliations, namely Christianity, Islam and traditional religions, are well presented, reviewed and examined. Indeed, it is the book's true highlight how Ndege keenly portrays an ever evolving multiethnic and multicultural society, in which heterogeneity is embarked upon, and that is kept together by the commonly valued custom of 'respect for the other', a value traditionally nourished from generation to generation, and cultivated even in modern and contemporary Mozambique.

Yet, surprisingly disappointing are the chapters which deal with Mozambique's literature, art, architecture and cuisine. Whereas relevant examples are coherently mentioned and described, excerpts, corresponding pictures or anecdotes are entirely missing. This turns these passages into a tenacious read, which feels like a missed opportunity to establish an emotional link between what is presented and the recipient. Pictures are provided, although, they are not directly linked to the chapter depictions.

The glossary at the end presents in turn another pleasing aspect of the book. The reader is equipped with vital expressions and accommodating explanations used in Mozambique, interesting for general and academic readers alike.

Regarding the volume's handiwork it has to be stated howbeit, that despite the work's valid place in the English literature about lusophone Mozambique, it is not an innovative research project in itself. For the most part, analysis is minimal to nonexistent, rather focusing on description and review. The lack of examination might serve as an explanation for the absence of a conclusion. It is exclusively based on secondary research, a literature review of English works and facts about Mozambique. Lusophone references are completely missing in the Bibliography, which is at approximately three pages, also rather slim. The work often consults African handbooks, guides, encyclopedias and the CIA World Factbook as cardinal sources, which might explain the resulting *prose* writing style of the book. This, and the necessity to follow a strict format within an overall limited scope (128 pages), although outside the author's sphere of influence, creates a rather superficial examination in staccato step, comprised in a bullet-point scheme. At some points the reader certainly wishes for more in-depth analysis, for instance when the important role of drama and poetry in Mozambique's liberation struggle is mentioned, rather than the intersection to a further sub point.

This creates the aforementioned distance between the text and the reader, which is neither eased by the entire absence of primary research, e.g. interviews with selected members of society, nor by the omission of relevant information about the author. This leaves the reader in the unknown whether Professor Ndege has ever been in Mozambique, in lack of primary research their only focal point to trust that the information provided is correctly and relevantly chosen. Only temporarily does one feel attached to the delineated occurrences, for instance when the author supremely outlines the traditional customs of initiation, marriage, death, and social change across the ethnic divide. In sum however, a more narrative writing style, with

anecdotal evidence, interviews, excerpts, related pictures, etc. would presumably have proven to be the preferable approach in *capturing* the culture and customs of Mozambique, and to spark intercultural understanding, empathy and dialogue, the series' and author's primary objective.

Yet despite these drawbacks the information gathered proved to be well selected. With the exception of the few mentioned content weaknesses, no other major inconsistencies occur; on the contrary, the compilation is largely complete and coherent. People with a vested interest in African history will feel drawn to this work as readers with a limited knowledge of the case. As an introductory and reference text and this is what it should be perceived and valued as, it is utterly informative, and it awakens interest to intensify the reading about Mozambique's rich cultures and customs.

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