

## BOOK REVIEWS

**South Africa: The Dynamics and Prospects of Transformation (1900–1994)** Edited by *Sipho Buthelezi*. Harare, Sapes Trust, 1994, 134 pp., ISBN 1-77905-033-X, Z\$80.

After reading Ibbo Mandaza's appetising Foreword, one looks forward to a sumptuous main course. At the end of the book, many readers are likely to be disappointed and yearning for a livelier, more rigorous and coherent analytical account of 'the dynamics and prospects of transformation in South Africa'. In fact, there is very little on the prospects of transformation in this volume. But the book has some redeeming chapters. The last bastion of White political hegemony in Africa, and arguably the continent's most powerful state, South Africa, 'naturally' commands considerable interest even beyond academic circles. The task that Buthelezi sets for himself and his five colleagues from diverse disciplinary backgrounds is to engage in a developmental analysis of the liberation struggle in South Africa.

In Buthelezi's introductory chapter, the editor seeks to provide a conceptual framework for the book, one that is anchored in a historical materialist paradigm. His thesis is that 'the national and class dimensions of the national liberation struggle are inseparable' (p. 9) and contends that imperialism is 'the fundamental contradiction with the revolutionary working people of South Africa' (p. 10). However, if this approach was designed to provide a conceptual orientation for the rest of the book, it did not have the desired effect. For the most part, the other contributors do not employ or even share these concepts and theoretical perspectives. As a consequence, the volume lacks a central organising concept and a coherent, unifying theoretical approach.

Contrary to Buthelezi's position, Devan Pillay tells us that the tripartite alliance comprising the ANC, COSATU and the SACP was a 'multi-class alliance' (p. 23) riven apart by ideological, racial, strategic, tactical, class and gender conflicts. In turn, Molefe Mafole highlights the racially exclusivist character of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and its slogan, 'Africa for the Africans', and not 'Africa for the Workers'. The five essays by Pillay, Molefe Mafole, Phil Mtimkuli, Mokgethi Motlhabi and Desiree Lewis all focus on a particular political organisation or movement within the South African struggle. A recurring theme — which serves as some kind of unifying thread — is one of tension, schisms, shifts and turns all simultaneously or episodically manifesting themselves along several faultlines and polarisations defined principally in terms of race, class, generation, ideology and gender.

In an incisive account of the Fanonist-like Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), Motlhabi outlines and analyses the BCM's philosophy

of struggle, its strengths and limitations and is all the time cognisant of the bewildering complexity and permutations of the South African 'question'. This chapter gives the reader a good insight into the dynamics of the struggle, the range of actors involved, their diverse agendas and differing conceptualisations of the nature of the liberation struggle and the modalities of achieving it. I liked this chapter.

Another good chapter is the last one by Lewis. Using an approach embedded in gender analysis rather than radical political economy, she notes the 'complex intertwining of race, class and gender' (p. 112) in the South African liberation struggle. Her treatment of the interface between gender struggles and liberatory politics is refreshingly penetrating. She systematically discusses the place of gender struggles in the context of the larger, more pressing and encompassing struggle for *national* liberation and concludes that the dominant stream within this national struggle was 'emphatically phallogocentric' i.e., male-centred (p. 117). Lewis persuasively argues that in South Africa, unlike in the Western world, the struggle against patriarchal structures and sexism was just one amongst other power struggles. Lewis does a commendable job in explicating the problematic and ambiguous relationship of the women's movement in the National Liberation Struggle.

The book can be faulted on a number of grounds. It fails to recognise, let alone probe, the salience of the ethnic factor in the liberation dynamics of South Africa. Ethnicity was already a deeply troublesome variable well before the book was on the drawing board. One suspects that in line with the revolutionary intellectual discourse at the time (though already losing its glitter), ethnicity was summarily dismissed as 'false consciousness' that would happily wither away through the healing powers of time.

One is also tempted to ask loudly: 'Where is Mandela in this book?' The lack of any sustained treatment of this towering figure with an obvious messianic aura and who was central in the democratisation process in South Africa is surely going to astound many a reader. The timing of the book is also regrettable. Many momentous and tumultuous events have intervened between the writing and reading of the book such that it is already outdated. There is very little on the dynamics that culminated in the 'miracle' transition to the 1994 election and the dethronement of apartheid as a ruling ideology. Similarly, the book is grossly deficient on the 'prospects' of transformation in South Africa. The reader will also miss a summarising chapter that synthesises the various themes and ideas in the book. I am also baffled by the reference on the back cover to 'South Africa's attainment of independence in 1994 . . .' when what happened in that country was its democratisation.

Lastly, the editor could surely have done a more meticulous job in picking the numerous editorial and typographical errors and in insisting

on a consistent referencing style rather than allowing the free for all that is evident in the volume. Notwithstanding these criticisms, the book has something to offer to political scientists and historians, and it does suggest promising areas of investigation. That may well be the book's principal strength.

*University of Zimbabwe*

E. MASUNUNGURE

**Peace and Security in Southern Africa** Edited by *ibbo Mandaza*. Harare, Sapes Trust, 1996, xxiii, 183 pp., ISBN 1-77905-048-8.

We have in this edited volume a collection of five essays that furnish an important contribution to the study of peace and security in Southern Africa. This is an outcome of three years' research under the auspices of the International Relations Division of the Southern African Regional Institute for Policy Studies (SARIPS), the Research and Publications arm of Sapes Trust. This study with an 'Introduction' by *ibbo Mandaza*, sought to examine, and interact with, the current discourse on peace and security in Southern Africa.

The Southern African region, for many decades, has been a theatre of wars and conflicts. The people of the region had to wage wars associated with the liberation of the region from colonialism, settler and apartheid systems of domination and racism. Naturally these wars and conflicts led to an increase in the flow and circulation of arms in the region. These wars and conflicts have now come to an end over the past three years, and the region as a whole is now under democratically elected governments.

It is for this reason that the study under review has adopted an all-encompassing definition of peace and security, reflecting a qualitative development of the discourse, from that which conventionally viewed these concepts as captured in the purely militaristic, to that which considers them in the context of fundamental social relations, at the global, inter-state and intra-state levels. *Peace and Security in Southern Africa* covers five chapters, each with a different task but linked together and designed to build upon each other. The 'Introduction' by *ibbo Mandaza* provides an overview, as well as contending analytic approaches to issues of peace and security at global and regional levels.

The five chapters in the book are illuminating and valuable. Horace Campbell's chapter, 'From regional military destabilisation to military cooperation and peace in Southern Africa', in particular, does a commendable job in reminding readers of UNESCO's definition of peace:

There can be no genuine peace when the most elementary human rights are violated or while situations of injustice continue to exist; Conversely