

Contributors

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EDDIE WEBSTER, professor of sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand, pays tribute to **DAVID WEBSTER**, colleague at the same University, who was assassinated on 1 May 1989.

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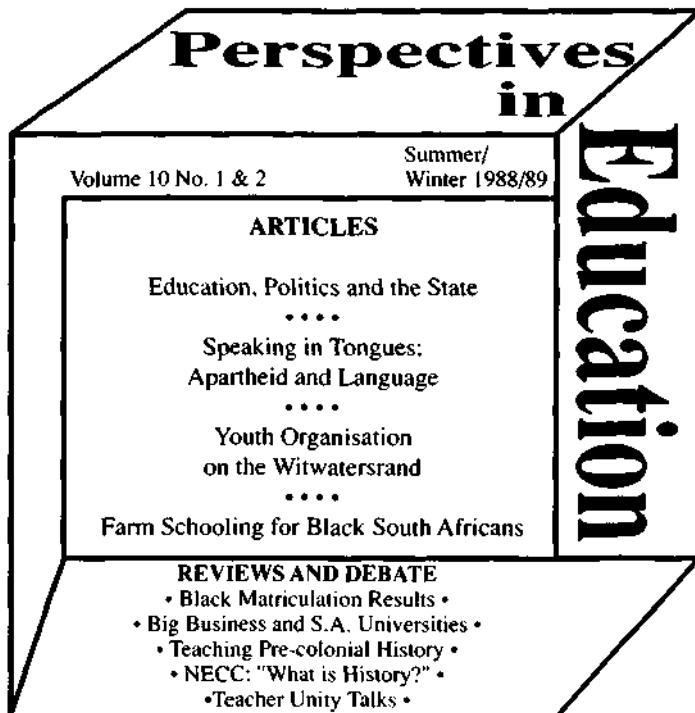
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This summer I visited the universities and capital cities of six African countries from Addis Ababa to Gabon. I was struck, of course, by the almost complete absence of the publication of academic books by African scholars. Even in Nairobi, at the centre of unparalleled expansion of secondary and university education, publishers are scarce only in the school- and book-market and the flow of substantial historical monographs which once made possible an internal Kenyan historiography, independent of and indifferent to the Euro-African

academic world, has dried up. It is no pleasure for universities to establish their own presses — the University Press in Dar es Salaam has a back log of over 140 accepted manuscripts. Moreover, when academic books are published in one African country, they are impossible to obtain in the bookshops of its neighbours. Only at Gabon, with Bouwman's internationally medial currency, do the bookshops offer material published in Nairobi and Harare alongside that published in Bourges and South Africa.

But despite all this, the obstacle was not, in fact, insuperable. Determined academics can and do publish, sometimes forming their own companies to do so. The radical historians Faculty of Law in Dar es Salaam maintains a flow of publications, new journals spring up, even if not all of them survive. Pumped West, an academic can only admire these examples of perseverance, the urgency to communicate. Yet we get all too few chances to admire. Books published in Africa are seldom advertised or reviewed in Euro-American journals and few

Western libraries subscribe to African journals.

This review studies views in three directions to some of the material published in Southern Africa over the last two years. It does so, admittedly, mainly in relation to the most flourishing of African academic publishing, history. Zimbabwe, where a large English-speaking academic, educational development, and the competition between established and new publishers have combined to stimulate a relatively large flow of books.

One of the impulse towards publication in Southern Africa is to set the record of struggle straight, to name the heroes. I found this in Zambia, where nearly 30 years after the events which are common to claim honour for strong heroes of the independence struggle. I was shown an unpublished manuscript which posed the question 'Who were the first "warrior-dancers"? and allocated the honour to the people of Chonema village. Ngweni Tambo's *The Likiep Baron Kaling*, published by Apple Books, describes his book as 'just the beginning of the work in compiling the full list of freedom fighters... I promise to unravel more facts and names and add them to the book as they become available'. In his foreword Hyacinth Dingake says Bands gives this history a contemporary significance.

I am delighted to record that UNIP, the Party which Ngweni Tambo recently helped to build to what it is today, won independence on 24 October 1964 and is still in control. The \$4 million dollar question, however, remains: 'Is the Party after dedicated and devoted supporters or mere numbers? Put it simply or say: Is a fair quack or quantity, conviction or convenience? Whatever happens, the Party will do well to keep a lot of its members.

As ironic note to the foreword records that in the October 1983 General Election both Banda and Tambo lost their seats. This leaves a tantalising ambiguity hovering over the book. Is it an attempt to remind the young of the revolutionary legitimacy of those who ran the party and the state? Or is it the lament of a defeated Old Guard, replaced by such rogues and rascals?

No such ambiguity hovers over the book written in the bookshop at Jan Smuts airport in South Africa, where I was compelled to spend some hours while waiting for a connection to Bourges. The bookshop is exclusively devoted to accounts of the Rhodesian war of the 1970s. There one can buy in paperback histories of the heroic deeds of the Velde Scouts of the SAS, and more expensively accounts of the heroism of the white population of Lindeburg under bombardment, or picture books illustrating how in detail was laid waste. There are also an unimpressive number of South African. This history is not

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