

Book Reviews

Boekresensies

New perspective on an old enigma

I. Hodder (ed.), *Religion in the Emergence of Civilization: Çatalhöyük as a Case Study*

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010

360 pp

ISBN 978-0-521-15019-4

£23.99

Research pertaining to the origins and growth of early complex societies is an ongoing project in the social sciences. Sadly, many attempts at addressing this fascinating conundrum constitute mere variations on previous intellectual efforts. This volume edited by Ian Hodder (Stanford, Archaeology) is a welcome, original endeavour. Hodder invited a number of specialists to comment on the results of his excavations at Çatalhöyük, the World Heritage site in Anatolia that has provided extensive evidence for humanity's transition into sedentary life. The volume promotes an unusual brand of social inquiry that cuts across disciplinary boundaries. In addition, Hodder's work is of particular interest to those researchers, like myself, who continue to be inspired by the central tenet of the 'New Archaeology' which states that Archaeology can be either History or nothing.¹

Çatalhöyük has captivated researchers ever since it was excavated half a century ago. At its peak (7th millennium B.C.) this well-preserved Neolithic town probably housed some 3 500 to 8 000 early farmers. Its architecture was puzzling. Hundreds of domestic units were densely packed together. They featured neither windows, nor doors (access was provided through holes in the roofs). The residents slept on top of the graves of their dead relatives. Walls, pillars and benches were decorated with trophies of wild cattle and other game. Sacrificial deposits were hidden in the walls and under the floors. Large, intriguing narrative paintings and clay reliefs added to the dramatic impression made by the installations on the walls. The inhabitants repeatedly covered some of the art work under layers of plaster and whitewash paint, only to uncover and reveal them at other occasions. The houses were levelled after several generations and then carefully rebuilt on exactly the same location. Selected human skulls and whole skeletons were dug up and reburied in the next level. Daily life in the town appeared to have been immersed in religion and was obviously organised and structured along strict conventions. Yet no evidence has been found of a centralising political force. There were no large public buildings, no ceremonial centres, no cemeteries or spaces of specialised production.

In the first chapter, Hodder and Lynn Meskell identify four themes which featured strongly in the symbolism of Çatalhöyük and other sites in the region. The selected themes are religious in nature and are said to have persisted over a long time. They are: phallocentrism; dangerous wild things; piercing and fleshing the body; and the house. The latter three have been identified and discussed in detail by the editor in his

1. This was first suggested by G. Wiley and P. Philips, *Method and Theory in American Archaeology* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1958).

main excavation monograph.² The item “Neolithic phallocentrism” is rather surprising, given the fact that in Hodder’s previous work references to the importance of masculinity are virtually absent.

The concepts of a “house-based society” and “dominant or history houses” feature strongly in the interpretive discussions of this volume, as they did in Hodder’s previous work. The house, he proposed, was central to the material, social and spiritual life of its residents. The heavy investments in the overwhelming symbolism, we are told, evidence the centrality of the house. Combined with the continuous rebuilding of houses, the symbolism also exemplifies the inhabitants’ preoccupation with memory. Indeed, Hodder suggests, the 1 400 year long sequence of the site testifies how the people of Çatalhöyük gradually came to “invent” an historical awareness.

Of the two theological contributions to this book, the essay by LeRon Shults (Agder, Norway) is definitely the more interesting. In fact, the chapter by J. Wentzel van Huyssteen (Princeton) simply rephrases the controversial “shamanic” interpretation of Çatalhöyük, proposed by our very own San rock art authority, David Lewis-Williams. Shults combines Hodder’s “entanglement hypothesis” with a pragmatic theory of religious symbolism. He offers the reader a captivating analysis that combines existentialist and phenomenological notions. The discussion does not really challenge Hodder, but it does provide some interesting “add-on” insights to the latter’s theory, exploring further (and probably defining better) its metaphysical grounding.

Religion is the main focus of yet a third chapter compiled by Whitehouse (Oxford, Anthropology), in which the author applies his “universal typology of forms of ritual and modes of religiosity” (a very extensive historical-ethnographic cross-cultural survey) to the material remains on the site (p 122). In addition, he interprets the archaeological data by means of his concept of “rites of terror”, the central theoretical issue in one of his earlier monographs on Melanesian initiation (p 127). Whitehouse’s typology accommodates and explains the houses and artefacts of Çatalhöyük perfectly well. Perhaps a little too perfectly! On closer scrutiny, material data from the site often are simply juxtaposed to Whitehouse’s key concepts.

Two chapters explore further Hodder’s house-based society. The text presented by Maurice Bloch (London School of Economics, Anthropology) is a real treat, and not just in terms of its literary qualities. Drawing from one of his classic monographs, he presents the outline of a culture theory suited to the analysis of ritual behaviour in house-based societies. The wild cattle installations and the associated remains of feasting and sacrifices on the site, Bloch suggests tentatively, could be explained in terms of the hunters’ efforts to revivify or reanimate the transcendental. Like Whitehouse, Bloch refutes old semiotics in favour of a human agency-based understanding of symbols, rituals and the transcendental.

The chapter by Peter Pels (Leiden, Social and Behavioural Science) and Hodder, in which the authors report on a detailed quantitative analysis of the physical features of the houses, is the odd one out in this volume. The discussion of this numerical data, elaborate and critical as it may be, makes for dense reading and is certainly not meant for a general readership. In another chapter, Pels offers the reader a very informative

2. I. Hodder, *The Leopard’s Tale: Revealing the Mysteries of Çatalhöyük* (Thames and Hudson, London, 2006).

synthesis of all the available evidence of social change in the archaeological record of Çatalhöyük. This captivating narrative of the *longue durée* makes for excellent reading.

The three remaining contributions relate to the tempting but also challenging task of tracing back elements of an ancient cosmology on the site. The project of Carolyn Nakamura (Stanford, Archaeology) involves an analysis of the 250 so-called cluster deposits which were found on the site. The author claims that magical practices at Çatalhöyük focused on the creation and maintenance of “foundational relationships” between humans and animals, social groups and the house, and the present and the past. A number of interesting hypotheses are put forward, all of which, in one way or another, explore and confirm the key analytical concepts and premises put forward by Hodder in *The Leopard's Tale*.

The contribution by Webb Keane (Michigan, Anthropology) constitutes the most authentic essay of the volume. It is well argued, well structured, lucid and above all unpretentious. His objective is to propose a heuristics for the study of prehistoric religion. Keane expresses a particular interest in the cultural activities of hiding and revealing which are so manifestly present at Çatalhöyük. It is suggested that marked and hidden features in the houses (e.g. wild cattle, burials and paintings) exemplify an intention to express human agency and the will and ability to act upon, or transform the world.

Finally, the contribution by Paul K. Wason (Templeton Foundation, Pennsylvania) to define a Neolithic cosmology, I believe, is symptomatic of the general lack of critical engagement with Hodder's arguments, which cripples this volume.

In the concluding chapter, the editor defines the role of religious phenomena in the origins and growth of complex societies in terms of the so-called “entanglement” of its inhabitants. Hodder speculates that the people of this early town created ever growing social, material and spiritual investments, dependencies and networks. This created a new sense of time, place, self and most importantly, of agency. From this social transformation, it is proposed, advanced forms of farming, urbanism and political hierarchy would eventually emerge, as a kind of by-product or unintended effect. Interestingly, Hodder is greatly indebted to the ideological substance of this hypothesis, to the study of eighteenth-century individualism by the historical archaeologist James Deetz.³

The one social issue that is conspicuously absent in the analytical efforts of this otherwise exciting book, is gender relations. In Hodder's understanding of the interaction between the women and men of Çatalhöyük was of a “balanced” nature, period. This is, in my opinion, contradicted by the intensity and overwhelming visual references to hunting in the houses, which could be interpreted as expressions of masculinity or male identity. Towards the final phase of the Neolithic occupation the hunting of wild cattle, together with its symbolic representation in the houses, mysteriously came to an end. Intriguingly, in the same period material references to the realm of women become more obvious. These and similar observations which seem to suggest some form of gender conflict or tension, are clearly ignored by Hodder. Despite this, the book should be a fitting addition to the library of those researchers, including South Africans, who are fascinated with narratives of the *longue durée*, who have a passion for theory and

3. J. Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: An Archaeology of Early American Life* (Anchor, New York, 1996).

methodology; who believe that a meaningful understanding of modern cultural history must include the study of its roots; and who are inspired by complementary data from, and parallel developments within, sister disciplines.

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Careful historical analysis reveals hidden layer

P.S. Landau, *Popular Politics in the History of South Africa, 1400–1948*

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010

300 pp

ISBN 978-0-521-17926-3 (African edition)

R260.00

Popular Politics in the History of South Africa is an ambitious book by any standard. Landau sets out to cover 548 years of South African history in 250 pages of text, and the reader may be forgiven for feeling some initial apprehension at the plausibility of such an undertaking. But such fears are short lived. The book leaves you with a feeling that you have just experienced privileged access to a previously hidden layer of historical analysis. It is grounded in detailed narrative and yet demonstrative of the ways in which the “big picture”, as we know it today, has been carved out over the centuries.

Landau makes two central arguments, both of which are controversial and will surely force a wider rethink of historical and anthropological scholarship in the region. Firstly, the main thesis of the book contends that the people living in pre-colonial South Africa were devoid of “tribal” allegiance. The second assertion, clearly connected to the main argument, is that there was no “religion” on the Highveld to speak of until the missionaries brought it there. I will deal with each in turn.

The idea that tribalism was “invented” is, of course, hardly novel ground for historians of southern Africa. Vail, Ranger, Frederick Cooper and a host of other scholars have grappled with the idea that tribal allegiances were/are the result of relatively recent political forces. Landau defines membership of a tribe as a “primary, inalienable birthright, uniting culture and blood, and providing a total blueprint for behaviour, necessarily diminished by ‘civilisation’” (p 124). This “total blueprint”, he argues, emerged in the Highveld along with encroaching colonial influence in the period after c. 1800. Much of the book is devoted to developing the argument that c. 1400–1800 the overall picture was “one of overlapping movement and the persistence and transmutation of authority building practices – not of separate tribes” (p 246). Here he makes a clear distinction between “political terrain” (the pre-colonial mixing and splitting of groups, or “houses”), and “tribal” identities – concocted by Europeans and eventually internalised by Africans. Echoing Cooper, Landau reminds us that “Europeans *always* thought in terms of tribes ... [which is] ... not the same thing as the people of South Africa doing so” (p 124, his emphasis). The focus on amalgamation as opposed to tribal particularity is evidenced by a sustained analytical focus on and around the settlement of Thaba Nchu (some 300 kilometres north of present-day East London), and the shifting centres of power and fluctuating loyalties brought about by the slow encroachment of colonial rule and missionary activity.

Landau draws on an impressive array of sources to back up his claims. Among them, schoolboy essays from the 1860s and court hearings make for particularly interesting analysis, but perhaps the most convincing and innovative source used throughout the book, at times almost in passing, is Landau's astute use of language. For example, in tracing the origin of the term Tswana, we learn that it most likely came from a variety of words uttered to European travellers with the broad meanings that "we are the same", "blended together" or "similar" – from the reciprocal *-ana* (pp 9–10). From the mundane phrase "yes, we are the same" (*tshwana*), Landau argues, Europeans created the "the Sichuana language", which today we associate with "the Tswana" people. But at the time of early contact, the language was spoken over a vast geographical area spanning north of the Limpopo, by people who practised – by and large – similar ways of life.

Tribalisation, then, happened towards the end of the timeframe covered in the book, and by the end of the 1870s Highveld people were "being tribalised" in a variety of ways and in specific sites: in mission stations and on Boer farms. A fundamentally important catalyst in this process was the profound change in social and cosmological structures wrought through the mass movement of people from peasant existences, agrarian freedom and warring chiefdoms towards rural proletarianisation and external administration (p 247). Tribal allegiances were "born denying the circumstances of their own generation and protesting their imminent demise. They were taken up by Africans suffering territorial conquest and enserfment, because they were what was left over" (p 149).

The second main argument made in the book relates to religion. "There was no separate body of practices", Landau states, "... no accepted set of ideas connected to an afterlife or eternal life ... No religious system or spiritual domain can be postulated before missionaries introduced these ideas themselves" (p 76). Chiefs were said to be god-like figures, with the power to make rain, but the idea of a distant God did not exist. The evidence presented in support of these claims is perhaps less persuasive than for the previous argument, but it is by no means completely unconvincing. Again, Landau turns to an analysis of language, using Ludwig Wittgenstein to elaborate on the meaning of words. The term "it's raining", for example, may be thought to have universal application. Consider however, what it means if it is understood that someone (the chief) has made the rain fall. Rain, in this context, is a vindication of chiefly power and a direct justification of his divinity. Missionaries, Landau argues, were convinced that they possessed divine truths, stable meanings which all non-believers had yet correctly to grasp. "At the moment of decision, of naming his own Christian concepts, the missionary translator moved from translating in order to comprehend, to translating in order to convey new meaning. And then he erased his tracks. Ancestors would eventually be said to have always meant god, just as 'rain' (*pula, go na*) was said to always have meant precipitation" (p 81).

Pioneering anthropologists, such as Isaac Schapera and others in the early to mid 1900s, commented on their surprise that ancestor worship and "traditional religion" seemed to have largely disappeared. Landau postulates that it never actually existed in the first place, but that the set of ideas we know today as "traditional religion" gradually developed in relation to the ways in which missionaries translated – and miss-translated – the ritual practices they encountered and the Christian concepts at the centre of their endeavour to save lost souls. This is an interesting proposition, but one is left with the feeling that more evidence could have been presented in its defence. Nonetheless, in conjunction with the main argument of the book, it works. Traditional religion and

“tribal” allegiances may be taken for granted today, but Landau wants to show us how they came to be in the first place.

This is a timely contribution to wider South Africa politics. In recent years, the South African government has been at pains to identify tribal leaders through the Nhlapo Commission. With the ostensible aims of “correcting historical wrongs”, deposing chiefs and kings who were put in place by previous regimes and replacing them with their rightful incumbents, the Nhlapo Commission has acted to re-tribalise the South African political and social landscapes in profound ways. The dominance of certain groups has been confirmed, and others – such as Shangaan – have been left to deal with the ruling that they have no claim to kingship within South African borders. The commission reignited historical rivalries, but perhaps more than anything demonstrated that chiefly authority has been well and truly trumped by state power. The state decides who will be king, and then pays them royally for the privilege.

In this wider context, Landau’s contribution should serve as a reminder that there is nothing “natural” about the groupings which dominate our common-sensical understandings of South Africa’s people or its past. Academic discussion on the current obsession with re-tribalisation on these shores and beyond – and particularly the ways in which culture and tradition have been commodified – must be rooted in careful historical analyses such as this one, lest we forget that in the end, we all have much more in common than we have been led to believe.

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Nederland en Mosambiek

O.J.O. Ferreira, *Ilba de Moçambique byna Hollands: Portugese Inbesitname, Nederlandse Veroweringspogings en die Opbloei en Verval van Mosambiek-eiland*

Adamastor, Jeffreysbaai en Gordonsbaai, 2010
131 pp
ISBN 978-0-620-45057-7
R110.00

O.J.O. (Cobus) Ferreira is een van Suid-Afrika se toonaangewende kultuurhistorici; trouens, daar kan beweer word dat hy inderdaad *die* mees hoogaangeskrewe kultuurhistorikus is wat Suid-Afrika die afgelope twee dekades of langer opgelewer het. Sedert sy aftrede by die Universiteit van Pretoria gaan hy voort om navorsing te doen en die een belangwekkende publikasie na die ander die lig te laat sien. Wanneer ’n nuwe boek van hom verskyn, verwag ’n mens dus ’n teks van hoogstaande akademiese gehalte, en dit is beslis nou weer die geval met sy 26ste boekpublikasie, naamlik *Ilba de Moçambique byna Hollands: Portugese Inbesitname, Nederlandse Veroweringspogings en die Opbloei en Verval van Mosambiek-eiland*.

Die boek is betreklik klein: slegs 111 bladsye wat teks en illustrasies bevat (altesaam 96 sketse, ander tekeninge, en ou en nuwe foto’s – insluitende ’n hele aantal wat spesiaal vir hierdie boek geneem is). Daar is ook drie toepaslike karate; ’n bylae (wat al Mosambiek-eiland se gesaghebbers van 1506 tot 1898 aandui); ’n bronnelys (pp 117–

123) en 'n handige register (pp 124–131). Die inhoud is keurig versorg en die publikasie is pragtig uitgegee.

Nadat hy oor die jare heen 'n groot verskeidenheid Suid-Afrikaanse kultuurhistoriese temas ontgin het, doen Cobus Ferreira reeds die afgelope ongeveer 20 jaar navorsing oor die verhoudinge tussen suidelike Afrika en Portugal. In *Ilha de Moçambique byna Hollands* verken hy die byna vergete geskiedenis van Mosambiek-eiland.

Hy struktureer sy studie aan die hand van drie hoofstukke, elk met talle onderafdelings. In Hoofstuk I verduidelik hy waarom en op welke wyse die Portugese Mosambiek-eiland beset en gekolonialiseer het. In Hoofstuk II toon hy aan waarom die Nederlanders in Mosambiek-eiland geïnteresseerd geraak het, en hy beskryf hoedat die Nederlanders die eiland by drie geleenthede (1604, 1607 en 1608) sonder sukses geblokkeer en probeer inneem het. Deurlopend plaas hy die gebeure op en in die omgewing van die Ilha de Moçambique in die breër internasionale konteks van die dag. Die wyse waarop Mosambiek-eiland van 'n bedrywige hawe tot 'n Wêrelderfenisterrein ontwikkel het, word in Hoofstuk III aan die orde gestel. Die geskiedenis van die eiland en eilandbewoners (vanaf die sewentiende tot die twintigste eeu) word ontleed, en daar word onder meer gefokus op die rol van slawerny asook die godsdienstige en sosiale lewe van die eilandbewoners. Die eiland se pragtige en interessante geboue word ook te berde gebring, en meesal toegelig met óf kontemporêre óf hedendaagse foto's en/of sketse. Só word dit duidelik waarom die eiland van besondere historiese, kulturele en argitektoniese belang is en dit gevolglik in 1991 deur UNESCO tot 'n Wêrelderfenisterrein verklaar is.

Ilha de Moçambique byna Hollands laat die kollig val op 'n minder bekende faset van die geskiedenis van Mosambiek en Suider-Afrika, 'n studieveld wat Ferreira deeglik nagevors het – daarvan getuig die 388 voetnote. Die verhaal wat hy vertel (en hy vertel dit met kenmerkende entoesiasme), is sowel dramaties as aangrypend, en werp nuwe lig op Portugees-Nederlandse verhoudinge en die verloop van die geskiedenis van suidelike Afrika. Indien die Nederlanders die Fortaleza de São Sebastião op die Ilha de Moçambique aan die begin van die sewentiende eeu verower het, sou hulle waarskynlik nie in 1652 'n halfwegstasie aan die Kaap de Goede Hoop tot stand gebring het nie; en dan sou die geskiedenis van wat vandag Suid-Afrika is, waarskynlik ook heeltemal anders verloop het.

Hopelik sal hierdie puik studie deur 'n wye gehoor gelees word. Enigiemand wat in kultuurgeskiedenis, vlootgeskiedenis, militêre geskiedenis en die veelbewoë koloniale geskiedenis van Afrika belangstel, behoort hierdie deeglik nagevorsde studie te raadpleeg – en dit sluit akademië en studente sowel as belangstellende lede van die publiek in. Ideaal gesproke behoort die teks ook in Engels en Portugees vertaal te word om Cobus Ferreira se navorsingsbevindinge nog wyer bekend te stel.

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Engrossing example of the new narrative history

R.S. Levine, *A Living Man from Africa: Jan Tzatoe, Xhosa Chief and Missionary, and the Making of Nineteenth-Century South Africa*

Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2011

291 pp

ISBN 978-0-300-12521-4

US\$30.00

Roger Levine's biography of Jan Tzatoe, Xhosa chief and missionary, is a welcome addition to the growing canon of biographies of African intellectuals emanating from southern African historical studies in recent months.⁴ Written in the mould of the "new narrative history", the literary techniques employed by the author are as intriguing as the life experiences of the protagonist, Tzatoe; such that *A Living Man from Africa* is simultaneously engrossing for the content it conveys and for how it does so. In this work, the story and the style of story-telling are inseparable; together they provide a valuable glimpse into the possibilities of history writing which are more engaging, and perhaps even more entertaining, than traditional history writing methods. For this Levine should be commended.

From the outset, the author is candid about what he hopes to achieve by employing the "new narrative history" style: to tell a compelling story, grounded in historical facts, while asking thought-provoking, though unanswerable, questions which create empathy with the personal life experiences and endeavours of Tzatoe in the reader's mind (p 5). The unusual use of the present tense serves well to evade the "fatalism" of the past tense, especially when writing a biography. By employing the present tense, Tzatoe's life appears to be "unfolding before the reader", subtly debunking the often pervasive hindrance of hindsight and a knowledge of what befell Tzatoe in his later years, affording the reader an opportunity to appreciate in a very real sense the "multiple possibilities" of the moment for Tzatoe in his constantly changing, perpetual present (p 5).⁵ Tzatoe comes across as far more engaged with his own life context as a result, much more so than is often the case in biographies of a similar academic vein, which tend to impart a "downward trajectory" of inevitability onto the lives of their subjects (p. 5). The appeal of this technique is certainly facilitated by a life such as Jan Tzatoe's.

Born in about 1790 on the Eastern Cape frontier to a Xhosa father and a Khoikhoi mother, Tzatoe was both an observer of and a participant in the well-researched colonial encounter which unfolded on this frontier during the first half of the nineteenth century. His mixed ancestry became a defining, symbolic feature of his life, because he went on to fulfil multiple roles in both Xhosa and colonial society: chief and missionary; diplomat and evangelist; intermediary and ambassador. Tzatoe's interstitial status as both a Xhosa Chief of the amaNtinde and a prominent African missionary of the London Missionary Society (LMS), lends itself credibly to challenging sweeping, oversimplified characterisations of individuals within the Eastern Cape colonial setting

4. For example, H. Hughes, *The First President: A Life of John L. Dube, Founding President of the ANC* (Jacana, Johannesburg, 2011); and H. Mokoena, *Magemu Fuzo: The Making of a Xhosa Intellectual* (UKZN Press, Scottsville, 2011).

5. On the techniques of the "new narrative history", see R.S. Levine, "'Savage-Born but New-Created': Jan Tzatoe, Xhosa Chief and Missionary in Britain, 1836-1838", *Kronos: Journal of Cape History*, 33, 2007, pp 112-113.

during the early nineteenth century. Nonetheless, how representative can a life as exceptional as Tzatoe's be? This is not a question which Levine shies away from (p 2) and the challenge which all micro-historians face – that of whether individual life experiences can reveal deeper understandings of the periods, societies, mentalities, etc. in which they occurred – is certainly his as well. And yet, while focusing on the life and times of such an extraordinary Cape character, Levine's biography consistently highlights themes of significance which transcend Tzatoe; themes pertaining to contests of self-identification which, within the colonial context, occurred alongside much broader political, economic and socio-cultural contests. In doing so, the expected biographical emphasis on one life has been sufficiently grounded in the historical milieu of its living and amply tied to pertinent topics such as the invention of the self; the advance of the frontier; and the participation of the colonised in the creation of the colony, amongst others. Tzatoe's life was inimitable in a variety of ways; the opportunities open to him were not open to the vast majority of his Xhosa kinsmen and yet the representative nature of an individual life need not determine its value or its legitimacy as a subject of a historical work, for subjects on the margins of the norm are often the most intriguing. Still, there is the temptation to make much broader arguments and apply them to a much wider group than a biography actually warrants.

On this point, *A Living Man from Africa* can be criticised for reaching too far. Levine acknowledges that Tzatoe's life is "unique in southern African history in both the multiple roles he played and the fact that his life was lived and recorded in the multiple arenas of the eastern Cape, Cape Town, and Great Britain" (p 197). As such, to also argue that his "life and voice provide a new prism through which to view the colonial encounter", appears somewhat contradictory (p 4). Without doubt, Tzatoe's life affords new insights into particular aspects of the colonial encounter, although these were largely dictated by his affiliation with the prominent political figures of the LMS; many of whom, including John Philip and James Read, regarded Tzatoe as their Xhosa protégé and a symbol of the "civilising power of British colonialism and Christianity" (p 4). Few others occupied such a place of prestige among the supporters and agents of the humanitarian evangelical mission in the Cape Colony. When Tzatoe's trip to the British Isles between 1836 and 1838 is taken into account (pp 125–157), the exceptional tone to his life is re-emphasised. Having had the opportunity to speak directly to metropolitan audiences – Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton's Select Committee on Aborigines; a packed Exeter Hall; and well-attended church meetings up and down Britain – Tzatoe both blazed a trail and left a paper trail that was unmatched for an African colonial subject of his time.

Given this, Levine's claims to the plural relevance of themes exemplified in Tzatoe's life to broader Xhosa-colonial encounters seem dubious. For instance, he suggests that "[t]his period featured an unprecedented number of possibilities from which Africans could create, or indeed invent, many possible selves", exposing "the inadequacy of the Manichean dichotomies of resister or assimilator, pagan or Christian, barbaric or civilized ..." (p 3). Tzatoe's exceptional life may lend itself well to an engrossing biography, but it is questionable whether it lends itself to the personification of "the hybrid nature of the new selves" that were "being fashioned in the interstitial and highly contingent space created by the colonial encounter in South Africa" (p 3).

Certainly the 1830s marked the zenith of the imperial influence of the evangelical humanitarians, however as Tzatoe's life testifies, the following decade saw a rapid erosion of their collective clout. The settler vilification of Tzatoe during the War of the Axe of

1846–1847, amid allegations about his decision to join Sandile’s forces in the attack on Fort Peddie, points towards pent up prejudice against intermediaries of his kind (p 177). While settler society at the Cape was yet to entrench its land and labour interests along the eastern Cape frontier, this war served to harden racialised sentiments that were already well developed and actively disseminated in the settler press. By presenting the successes of the missionary agenda as they unfolded during the 1830s, moment by moment, the long-term failures of the evangelical humanitarian lobby are lost sight of. As a result, Tzatoe’s agency in forging a life’s path distinct from the already deep-rooted norm for Africans in the process of being colonised has been exaggerated. Indeed, it is only in the aftermath of the War of the Axe, when Tzatoe loses his home and many of his prized possessions, that his “personal fate” for the first time, legitimately “mirrors that of his country and countrymen” (p 180).

The inherent paradox within the evangelical humanitarian mission: the reality that “African adherents [had] to come to terms with the underlying paternalism and European cultural chauvinism of the missionaries and their liberal supporters” (p 80), is not adequately fleshed out in the early chapters. Levine only deals with this theme in any depth following the War of the Axe. Yet, surely Tzatoe would have already had “ample opportunity to question why he [was] not being treated as an equal in the religious, political and social realm” (p 80), as opposed to only doing so from 1846 onwards. His decision to join the amaNtinde in Sandile’s attack on the colony was no doubt owing to his own pent up disillusionment with the “benefits” of assimilation. Limited opportunities for alternative, more advantageous, outcomes in the Cape colonial milieu were the standard during the early nineteenth century, becoming more limited from the mid-1840s. While the author’s intention is to avoid rescuing his African subject “from posterity”, and to resist affording him “a compelling amount of historical ‘agency’ in the historical setting in which [his] life was lived” (p 3), Levine has actually confirmed that this is easier said than done for the biographer.

Nonetheless, the author should be acknowledged for being open and honest about his own inspiration in writing this biography of Jan Tzatoe. Levine’s hinting at his personal identification with Noël Mostert, author of the monumental *Frontiers*, reveals much about his identification with Tzatoe.⁶ Mostert, as a South African living in exile, “lamented the loss of his motherland” (p x); Levine, born in South Africa and “raised with sunshine soaking into [his] skin”, still recalls in vivid detail his family’s emigration from the country to the United States in 1984 (p ix); Tzatoe, born the son of a Xhosa chief and raised in a missionary household, occupied an interstitial space in the Cape Colony and beyond for most of his life, constantly grappling with the “tension between his association with the Xhosa state and his efforts to maintain a colonial persona” (p 189). All three lives evoke a sense of displacement and the complex processes of self-identification which accompany it.

In his conclusion, Levine relates how in 2003, while in King William’s Town (where Tzatoe died in February 1868), he “felt the spirit of Jan Tzatoe” at Steve Biko’s grave. His final words are: “I linger with a living man from Africa”, alluding to the phrase by which Tzatoe referred to himself in his address in 1837 to the Secession Church in Kelso, Scotland (p 7). This may be unnecessary, or even misplaced, romanticism for an academic work. If so, it is certainly not the only unnecessary feature of the biography. The continual dependence upon metaphorical prose “to tell a good story” becomes

6. N. Mostert, *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa’s Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People* (Pimlico, London, 1993).

cumbersome or peculiar at different intervals. To illustrate the former, Levine's metaphorical description of the intertwined upbringings of Jan Tzatoe and James Read junior reads as follows: "two trees born of the same soil, growing so close at first as to appear as one, but then splitting apart and separately seeking the nourishment of sun, rain, and earth, their branches inscribing different silhouettes against the sky, their roots burrowing in different directions for security and sustenance" (p 21). One of many examples of the latter relates to Chief Ngqika's visit to the Kat River Mission in 1816: "the chief probes the institution as an anteater does an anthill with a quick thrust of the tongue here, a sustained, determined prod there" (p 56). However, if the traditional boundaries of an academic historical study are shifted, just slightly, and Levine's romanticism is appreciated for the flair it provides to a work which tells a most intriguing story; a story grounded in historical facts, with a healthy dose of historical imagination to inspire worthy, though unanswerable questions, and in which he subtly identifies with his subject, then there's much to praise. After all, as Lucien Febvre famously said: "There is no history, there are only historians".⁷

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Deeglike streeksgeskiedenis 'n waardige bydrae

E.L.P. Stals, *Môrewind oor die Karasberge: 'n Kultuurhistoriese Verkenning van die Karasstreek van die Laat Negentiende Eeu*

Protea Boekhuis, Pretoria, 2009

477 pp

ISBN 978-1-86919-181-8

R235.00

Dit is geensins 'n verrassing dat 'n nuwe boek oor die Namibiese geskiedenis uit die pen van professor Ernst Stals verskyn nie. Hy het hom alreeds oor etlike dekades heen as sowat die voorste Suid-Afrikaanse kenner van die koloniale geskiedenis van Namibië bewys. Hy is veral bekend vir sy groots-opgesette studies oor *Die Aanraking tussen Blankes en Ovambo's in Suidwes-Afrika, 1850–1915* (1968); *Kurt Streitwolf: Sy Werk in Suidwes-Afrika, 1899–1914* (1978); en *Duits-Suidwes-Afrika na die Groot Opstande* (1983), terwyl hy ook 'n groot diens aan die historiese gemeenskap bewys het met sy deeglike uitgawe van die belangrike Palgrave-dokumente vir die Van Riebeeck-vereniging (1991). Verder is verskeie nuttige nagraadse verhandelinge en proefskrifte oor verskillende aspekte van die Namibiese geskiedenis ook onder sy bekwame studieleiding voltooi. Wat egter wel verras, is die fokus van hierdie boek, naamlik die suidelike deel van Namibië (die sogenaamde Karasstreek: basies tussen die Oranjerivier aan die suide en Mier, Keetmanshoop, Bethanie en Lüderitz in die noorde) vanaf die laat agttiende tot die vroeë twintigste eeu.⁸

7. In P. Ricoeur, *The Contribution of French Historiography to the Theory of History* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1980), p 9.

8. Stals het alreeds 'n paar jaar gelede begin om die geskiedenis van hierdie streek te ontgin in die werk wat hy saam met die historiese taalkundige, Fritz Ponelis, gedoen het: E.L.P. Stals en F. Ponelis, *Só het Afrikaans na Namibië Gekom: Hollands-Afrikaans vóór die Koloniale Tyd* (Gamsberg Macmillan, Windhoek, 2001). Stals noem dan ook in sy "Voorwoord" dat hierdie vroeëre werk saam met Ponelis as prikkel gedien het tot die onderhawige boek.

Hierdie lywige boek bestaan uit 29 (meestal korterige) hoofstukke gevolg deur twee bylaes. Een van die verblydendste aspekte van die werk is dat Stals deeglik gebruik maak van visuele evidensie en die teks is dan ook ryklik van foto's voorsien. Dié wissel van tydgenootlike foto's van mense, geboue en gebeure wat Stals in die argief opgespoor het, tot eietydse foto's van landskappe en historiese oorblyfsels (bv. kerkegeboue, plaasopstalle, grafte ens.) wat deur die skrywer self geneem is. Helaas bevat die boek nie 'n lys van al die foto's wat in die teks opgeneem is nie, wat hierdie baie nuttige bron van historiese inligting (wat mens byvoorbeeld in onderrig sou kan gebruik) dus ietwat minder bruikbaar maak. Die teks word verder ook ondersteun deur 'n aantal handige tabelle wat inligting bondig saamvat, asook baie interessante uittreksels uit primêre bronne wat in teksblokke geplaas is en wat, saam met die foto's, veel bydra om die leser 'n wyer en meer direkte belewenis van die verlede te verskaf. Die boek bevat ook 'n deeglike naamregister en 'n uitgebreide bronnelys. Protea Boekhuis moet weer eens gelukkig word met 'n goed-versorgde en stewige publikasie.

Stals merk heeltemal tereg op dat Namibië “'n land van inkomelinge is” (p 125). Dit is veral die geval met die suidelike (en sentrale) deel van Namibië, wat dan ook die rede is waarom hierdie geskiedenis so kompleks is, en so relatief min bestudeer word. Die Karasstreek het in die loop van 'n eeu 'n groot verskeidenheid nuwe bewoners gekry met verskillende etniese, kulturele en ekonomiese agtergronde. Basies kan die negentiende-eeuse geskiedenis van hierdie streek opgesom word as 'n telkens veranderende dinamika soos wat nuwe rolspelers intrek en bydra tot die kompleksiteit van die samelewing. Dit het begin met die wending van die negentiende eeu toe die plaaslike Nama-sprekende inwoners in kontak gekom het met die Oorlams (verwesterse Khoikhoi) wat van die Kaapkolonie af Namibië binnegetrek het en met hul kommando-strukture en sug na vee radikaal die plaaslike omstandighede verander het. Die teenwoordigheid in suidelike Namibië van die Oorlams wat 'n vorm van Afrikaans-Hollands gebruik het en gunstig teenoor die Christendom gestaan het, het gelei tot die vestiging van sendelinge wat die Nama en Oorlams bearbei het. Aanvanlik was die sending sporadies en het soms teëstand ondervind, maar vanaf die 1830's het hulle deel van die samelewing uitgemaak en al die verskillende Nama en Oorlamskapteins het sendelinge in hul gebiede gehad wat as middelaars met die buitewêreld opgetree het.

Die koms van die Oorlams met hul kommando-strukture (wat perde, gewere en ammunisie vereis het) en hul afhanklikheid van Westerse gebruiksartikels het weer gelei tot die binnekoms van handelaars wat vanaf die 1840's die Karasstreek op verskeie maniere ekonomies ontgin het. Gevolglik het die Kaapse en ander regerings meer in Namibië begin belangstel. Hierdie posisie het voortgeduur tot die 1880's toe toenemende aantal blanke boere vanuit die suide na die Karasstreek begin trek het – 'n proses wat ongetwyfeld verband hou met die groter belangstelling in Namibië van Brittanje (wat Walvisbaai in 1878 geannekseer het) en Duitsland (wat in 1884 begin het om “beskermingsverdrae” met die plaaslike bevolkings te sluit). Dit het weer gelei tot die toetreding van groot sindikate – soos die Kharaskhoma-maatskappy – wat mineraal- en grondregte bekom het en teen die 1890's belangrike rolspelers in die gebied geword het. Dit is dan ook gedurende hierdie dekade dat die mag van die Duitse koloniale regering só toegeneem het dat hulle basies alle aspekte van die lewens van die Karasstreek se inwoners beheer het, ten spyte van die weerstand van mense soos Hendrik Witbooi en ander groepe (vergelyk hoofstuk 24).

Die voorafgaande verteenwoordig 'n opsomming van 'n geweldig komplekse proses wat Stals soms in groot detail en met afwisselende mate van sukses behandel. Die

eerste kwart van die boek (hoofstukke 1–10) behandel, baie kortstondig, die Nama en die koms van die Oorlams, gevolg deur ’n taamlik gedetailleerde vertelling van die klein aantal vroeë blanke handelaars, prospekteurs en boere. Stals verskaf, verbasend genoeg, geen sistematiese bespreking van die rol van die sendelinge nie, en waardeur dus nie genoegsaam die verband tussen die trek van die Oorlams, die werksaamhede van die sendelinge en die koms van handelaars nie. Die grootste deel van die boek, vanaf hoofstuk 11, behandel die 1880–1890’s in groot detail en dek ’n verskeidenheid van onderwerpe. Dit is duidelik dat Stals meer tuis is met hierdie materiaal, wat op uiters deeglike navorsing in die Duitse regeringsdokumente in die Nasionale Argief te Windhoek berus. Hoofstukke 11–19 beskryf, in die fynste besonderhede, die toenemende intrek van boere vanuit die Kaapkolonie en elders na die Karasstreek, hoe hulle hul plase bekom het, wat hul onderlinge struwelinge was en vertel met smaak die verhare van “swendelaars” soos Willem Spangenberg en Scotty Smith (hoofstukke 12 en 19). Dit word gevolg deur ’n bespreking van die rol van sindikate, die vestiging van die Duitse koloniale mag in die streek, en die onderlinge verhoudinge tussen die sindikate, die regering en die plaaslike bevolking (hoofstukke 20–24). Die laaste hoofstukke is meer tematies en is die enigste deel van die boek wat werklikwaar kultuurhistories van aard is (in elk geval, soos hierdie benadering vroeër aan Afrikaanse universiteite beoefen is). Hier word interessante sake gedek soos hoe driewe en paaie ontwikkel het en bestuur is, hoe die “hoofdorpe” van die Karasstreek (Warmbad, Keetmanshoop, Bethanie en Lüderitzbucht) teen 1900 ontwikkel het, die aard en omvang van boerdery, asook “dinge van die gees” (taal, godsdiens en onderwys). Hiermee verrig Stals voorwaar baanbrekerswerk, en dit is daarom teleurstellend dat veral die laaste hoofstuk nie meer gedetailleerd is nie, des te meer omdat daar nuttige studies bestaan oor die bydrae van sendelinge tot onderwys en godsdiens. Die laaste hoofstuk van die boek bespreek hoe die verskillende groepe – die Nama, blanke boere en Duitse amptenare – mekaar beskou het en bevat etlike interessante uittreksels in hierdie verband uit die bronnemateriaal.

Dit is moeilik om die waarde van hierdie werk te beoordeel. Enige historikus met ondervinding van argivale navorsing kan goed waardeur hoe deeglik en toegewyd Stals se empiriese navorsing in verskeie argiewe was (naas nog ’n groot aantal mondelinge onderhoude en ondersoek ter plaatse). Sy prestasie in hierdie verband is nog meer indrukwekkend as mens in ag neem dat ’n historikus van negentiende-eeuse Namibië met bronnemateriaal in ten minste vier tale moet werk.

Ten spyte van my bewondering vir die skrywer se toewyding, ywer en kundigheid, is ek tog ietwat teleurgesteld met die boek. Daar is ’n mate van onduidelikheid van fokus en die groot hoeveelheid materiaal kon beter georganiseer gewees het (so byvoorbeeld word die rol van Theophilus Hahn in hoofstukke 7 en 20 bespreek, en die verhaal van die Basters by Mier in hoofstukke 9 en 17). Dit is waarskynlik die gevolg van ’n onsekerheid oor wie die eintlike gehoor van die boek behoort te wees. Stals is wel deeglik bewus van die groter kwessies oor kolonisasie wat Namibiese historici van hierdie era debatteer, maar hy beweer dat sy studie “nie ambisieus en pretensieus genoeg” is om daarmee om te gaan nie (pp 137–138). Gegewe die gemoedelike verteltrant, en die groot fokus op genealogiese en biografiese besonderhede van die individue wat aan bod kom, sou mens ’n populêre leserspubliek vermoed. Maar die aanbidding van veral die vroeë hoofstukke skep die aanname dat die leser bekend is met die konteks; en die aanbidding van die komplekse vroeë geskiedenis van die Nama, Oorlams en sendelinge kon beslis duideliker gewees het. Laasgenoemde aspek sluit aan by ’n verdere teleurstelling: ek vind die werk taamlik blank- of Eurosentries, wat juis vir hierdie streek ’n vertrekende beeld skep. Die fokus van die boek val meestal op die blanke handelaars, boere en amptenare

wat in die tweede helfte van die eeu opgedaag het. Die plaaslike bevolking tree net te voorskyn wanneer hulle in kontak kom met hierdie mense. Daarby is dit opvallend hoe relatief min aandag Stals skenk aan die Nama en Oorlams en die rol van die sendelinge – iets soos hoofstuk 3 sou baie gebaat het by 'n nouer omgang met die werk van historici soos Brigitte Lau, Tilman Dederling en Nigel Penn.⁹ Dit is ewe opvallend dat die skrywer – by al sy ywerigheid met regeringsdokumente – nie juis gebruik maak van die sendingargiewe nie; iets wat baie sou kon help om die Karasstreek in al sy ryke verskeidenheid te verken.

Die voorafgaande kritiek is gebore uit 'n, waarskynlik onredelike, teleurstelling dat 'n baie goeie en deeglike stuk werk nie nóg beter is nie. Daar bestaan alreeds goeie studies vir negentiende-eeuse suidelike Namië oor die verowering van die Oorlams, die rol van die sendelinge, verskillende aspekte van die ekonomie en handel, en nou Stals se omvattende bydrae oor die blanke inwoners van die gebied. Maar niemand het nog gepoog om hierdie deelstudies te sintetiseer in 'n omvattende geskiedenis van suidelike Namië wat die volle rykdom en kompleksiteit van hierdie streek waarde doen nie.¹⁰ Mens voel dat iemand van Stals se statuur, met sy intieme kennis van beide die gebied én die groot argief wat daarvoor bestaan, tesame met sy jarelange toewyding aan en kundigheid van die Namibiese geskiedenis, die regte persoon sou wees om so 'n grootse projek te realiseer. En miskien gebeur dit binnekort? Hoe ook al, met hierdie boek het die skrywer 'n deeglike bydrae gelewer tot die geskiedenis van 'n streek wat helaas meestal geïgnoreer word deur Suider-Afrikaanse historici. Dit verteenwoordig 'n waardige bydrae tot die belangwekkende Namibiese *oeuvre* wat Ernst Stals oor baie jare geskep het.

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A useful search tool

A. Wessels, *A Century of Postgraduate Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902) Studies: Masters' and Doctoral Studies Completed at Universities in South Africa, in English-Speaking Countries and on the European Continent, 1908-2008*
Sun Press, Bloemfontein, 2010
205 pp
ISBN 978-1-920383-09-1
R225.00

André Wessels is professor of History at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa. In the past he has published extensively on the Anglo-Boer War including acting as editor for *Lord Roberts and the War in South Africa* (2000) and *Lord Kitchener and the War in South Africa* (2006). Of late, much of his research energy has gone into publications on the history of the South African National Defence Force. With this publication, however, he returns to the Anglo-Boer War to update a source publication

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9. B. Lau, *Central and Southern Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time* (National Archives of Namibia, Windhoek, 1987); T. Dederling, *Hate the Old and Follow the New: Khoekhoe and Missionaries in Early Nineteenth-Century Namibia* (Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 1997); en N. Penn, *The Forgotten Frontier: Colonist and Khoisan on the Cape's Northern Frontier in the 18th Century* (Ohio University Press, Athens, OH, 2005), naas etlike artikels deur hierdie en ander skrywers.
 10. M. Wallace, *A History of Namibia: from the Beginning to 1990* (Jacana, Johannesburg, 2011) is 'n heldhaftige poging om dit te doen vir die hele land se geskiedenis, maar sy bespreek die negentiende-eeuse geskiedenis van hierdie streek in slegs een hoofstuk van omtrent 30 bladsye.

that first saw the light of day in 1987 under the title, *Suid-Afrikaanse Verhandelinge en Proefskrifte oor die Geskiedenis van die Anglo-Boereoorlog: 'n Bronnestudie*.

Much has happened in terms of postgraduate research work on the Anglo-Boer War since then, both in South Africa and in other parts of the world. Wessels has, in this publication, taken cognisance of this and with the help of a large number of individuals as listed (on p 11), he has tracked down postgraduate work done at Masters and Doctoral level, both nationally and internationally.

The result is an impressive compilation of authors; titles of theses/dissertations; names of universities and countries of origin, as well as other biographical details related to the 223 theses/dissertations that deal exclusively with the war. This list is supplemented with the provision of similar details for 337 postgraduate studies which relate, albeit indirectly at times, to the Anglo-Boer War. Furthermore, the book is enhanced by a breakdown in chapter 4 of the 223 theses/dissertations into 23 topics ranging from the causes of the war to literature on the conflict. The purpose of the publication, as spelt out on p 105, is to “assist the interested student, historian, or any other interested person in his/her research” on the Anglo-Boer War and in this it certainly succeeds admirably. At a glance readers and scholars can determine what has been done at postgraduate level on the war and they are able to gain an overview of how the scholarship and historiography on the war has evolved. It provides an extremely useful research tool for postgraduate work on the war and its era.

However, the publication does have its shortcomings. The use of the phrase “proper theses on the Anglo-Boer War” as a designation for theses dealing exclusively with the war strikes a jarring note. Does this imply that there are “improper” postgraduate studies on the topic? The biggest problem, however, lies with the attempts to do a quantitative analysis of postgraduate dissertations and theses by using the titles themselves as the means of analysis. Allocating percentages to certain themes does little more than disclose the bigger picture that was generally speaking already apparent elsewhere in the publication. It would have been more useful to shed light, for example, on why the Anglo-Boer War is as popular a topic among postgraduate students in Canada and New Zealand as it is in Britain; or what proportion of South African students choose to do postgraduate work on the Anglo-Boer War at overseas universities. What trends and tendencies have there been over time in postgraduate work related to the war? Unfortunately these issues were not addressed. Nevertheless, the “raw data” provided in this publication does provide postgraduate students with an indication of where there are still gaps in our knowledge and what questions still require in-depth qualitative analysis.

These shortcomings are, however, dwarfed by the real value of *A Century of Postgraduate Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902) Studies* as outlined above. As such, this publication is a real necessity for the History section of any research library and for all scholars of the Anglo-Boer War.

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Impressive, balanced account of the South African War**B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa: The Anglo-Boer War, 1899–1902***

Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2010

352 pp

ISBN 978-0-624-04809-1

R237.50

The centenary of the South African War of 1899–1902 (still more widely known as the Anglo-Boer War in South Africa) stimulated a spate of publications amongst which Bill Nasson's general overview of that war (1999) was especially useful. Now, a decade later, he has revised and extensively re-written his account to include the recent literature and preoccupations of historians, and he also contributes a new, original title (of which Milner would have approved!) to the unresolved issue of what to call this war. To this new book he also brings a certain present-mindedness, finding "plenty of comparative historical resonance" not only with the American Civil War but also with more recent conflicts in the Falklands, Iraq and Afghanistan. Thomas Pakenham's best-selling account (1979) of this war now seems rather dated, in more ways than its title, although for detailed coverage of the military history it has yet to be surpassed. Nasson's new book carries its impressive scholarship lightly; it is up to date and engagingly written with his characteristic love of irony. It includes a select guide to further reading and an interesting collection of photographs. This is the paperback account to put into the hands of anyone interested in the war.

Nasson has trawled widely and imaginatively in the vast published literature – including newspapers – about this war, in both Afrikaans and English, and includes some fresh unpublished material, especially from participants, which he has unearthed in local and regimental archives in England. Yet this is by no means a British-led account of the war, as so many are; the focus of the book is consistently on the situation in South Africa and a very balanced treatment is given to both sides during the conflict. In tackling crisply and cogently "the historiographical Mt Everest" of the causes of the war, Nasson agrees with most others who have written recently on the subject that whilst Britain certainly provoked the war, it was not simply the result of the machinations of prominent individuals. As Tony Hopkins has nicely put it: "Although Milner helped to stir the pot, he did not supply the ingredients".¹¹ One of these was certainly the transformation of the Transvaal republic into the hub around which the future development of South Africa looked certain to revolve as a result of the dramatic development of the goldmining industry after 1886. The British did not go to war *for* gold but the war was certainly *about* gold's overarching effects. Nasson writes:

Britain's end was not the gold supply as such, but the imposition of its political will over the Transvaal, and affirming British supremacy for the laying down of a loyalist South Africa. It was not pushed by economic determinism but by the decisive need to affirm imperial political supremacy (pp 57–58).

By 1899 this required what today we would call a "regime change" in Kruger's Transvaal republic.

11. P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688–2000*, second edition (Longman, London, 2002), p 326.

A certain weariness with the actual fighting is detectable in some of the recent writing about this war, but Bill Nasson knows his military onions and gives clear and succinct coverage not only to the main military deployments, statistics, engagements, reverses and advances of this war but also to the “scatter of skirmishes” which continued throughout the “hide and seek” warfare which continued after Lord Roberts had “annexed a country without conquering it” in 1900. In an account which has some fresh and incisive things to say about the Boer war effort, the work of Taffy Shearing and Rodney Constantine on the descent into banditry of increasingly isolated and fragmented commando units in the eastern Cape during the later stages of the war, and the open hostility towards them of the Cape Afrikaner farmers on whom they preyed, might have merited some coverage. So too Maritz’s attack on Leliefontein; and the account given of Smuts’s expedition to O’kiep and Reitz’s shocked encounter with the remnants of Botha’s “starving, ragged men” in the eastern Transvaal. Fransjohan Pretorius’s *Life on Commando during the Anglo-Boer War, 1899–1902* (1999) remains the fullest account of its subject. Another invaluable work is Albert Grundlingh’s pioneering study of Boer collaborators (1979) that is now available in English translation (2006) thanks to the excellent Protea Book House, which has done so much to make work in Afrikaans available to a wider readership.

Nasson gives again a very balanced treatment of the role of blacks on both sides during the war though little attention is given to their local conflicts, some of them with each other as revealed by Bernard Mbenga (Kgatla), Manelisi Genge (Swazi) and Brian Willan (Barolong). As Nasson has written elsewhere, out of the war between Britain and the two Boer republics there developed “a desperate, undeclared civil war between rural whites and rural blacks”.¹² Between 1899 and 1902, war went on at many different levels in South Africa and there were battlefields apart from those which have so preoccupied military historians. Many Africans, especially within and on the borders of the republics – such as the Kgatla, Pedi, Venda, Swazi and Zulu – were fighting their own wars, over massive expropriations of land and cattle by Boer farmers within living memory. Many of these local conflicts were not created by the arrival of the British army in South Africa. They were there already, home-grown and internally-generated out of the recent South African past. The outbreak of war created a situation in which some of the conflicts endemic within South Africa flared into open warfare and became part of the Boer-British struggle. This aspect of the war is still neglected in a historiography which has always found it easier to settle for a nationalist narrative of “victimhood” and “shared suffering” at the hands of British imperialists.

Empire loyalty also remains an embarrassing and neglected aspect of this war today as a new exercise in nation-building gets underway in South Africa. Many Cape Afrikaners in the 1890s found no conflict between their Afrikaner identity and their loyalty to the British Crown and repeated attempts to mobilise them into the Afrikaner republican cause during this war largely failed. And, as Nasson himself and others have shown, most of the African population looked to a British victory to improve their lot. Many, like Abraham Esau, lost their lives because of their imperial loyalty. The British Empire being no more, the whole larger imperial context of this war is tending to be increasingly marginalised. This war was a formative event in the history of South Africa and of the Afrikaner people but it does not *only* belong there. As recent publications have demonstrated, it also has its place in the history of Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the British Empire/Commonwealth, the history of European imperialism, the

12. B. Nasson, *Abraham Esau's War: A Black South African War in the Cape, 1899–1902* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991), p 120.

history of warfare and the history of Africa – to name but a few. These larger aspects of the war are not brought out by Nasson who rather chooses to devote the thematic last three chapters of his book to the costs and significance of this war (for Britain and South Africa); to British and Boer ideas about and attitudes towards each other; and to the current preoccupation of historians with “memory” (Liz Stanley calls it “post/memory” to distinguish it from the actual memory of those who experienced the war) and commemoration of this war, again mainly in South Africa.

Albert Grundlingh, Liz Stanley and Helen Dampier have all recently contributed fresh ideas and analyses to this “after-life” of the war and how it has been remembered and commemorated. The focus of Stanley and Dampier has been on its most controversial aspect: the civilian concentration camps established by the British military for Boers and blacks as part of an anti-guerrilla strategy involving a “scorched earth” policy initiated by Roberts but extended and intensified by Kitchener during 1901. During a century of writing about these camps, the focus has been understandably but almost exclusively on the deaths in these camps (three quarters of them were of children under 16 years and measles epidemics were the greatest killer) with the same suspect statistics and carefully selected photographs endlessly recycled. What has been strikingly lacking from historians has been fresh, dispassionate, thorough and empirical investigation into what actually happened in these camps, utilising the wide-ranging evidence about them in British and South African archives. Now, at last, this has been done by Elizabeth van Heyningen, who has not only presented her very revisionist findings in a string of recent articles and a forthcoming book full of new evidence and fresh analysis, but has also established a database which will be of immense assistance to future study of this fraught and much mythologised subject (<http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/mss/bccd/index.php>).

In his new book, Nasson summarises the basic facts about the camps before focusing on “the key question ... [which] is not that of how horrendous the camps were, but, rather, of whether they were effective in bringing on Boer surrender” (p 245). In “military terms”, he states, they may have been a mistake, lengthening rather than shortening the war by freeing commandos “from assuming responsibility for their families”, and thereby extending their capacity to resist. “In the longer run, though, there can be little doubt that civilian internment was a considerable contributory factor to the ending of armed resistance” (pp 246–247). Utilising Smuts’s address to his Boer comrades at the Vereeniging peace negotiations, Nasson argues persuasively that the devastating impact of the high Boer civilian mortality in the camps “seemed to be threatening the very reproductive future of the Boer people ... Developing a momentum of its own, demographic awareness became one of the more compelling restraints against continuing the war” (p 247). He also concludes that “African resistance and collaboration with the imperial occupation certainly played its part in pushing the Boers into surrender” (p 249). Nasson admits to finding the details of the Vereeniging peace negotiations “too tedious to document” (p 255) but the terms eventually agreed were, by the standards of the day, very magnanimous.

Whilst acknowledging that part of the significance of this war is that it made possible the post-war reconstruction and unification of South Africa, Nasson gives this short shrift. Milner’s achievement here has tended to be underrated. Not only did his administration lay the foundations of the modern South African state, it also proved far more effective than Kruger’s had been at winning not only the co-operation of the gold-mining industry, but far larger contributions from it to the state’s revenue and

development – a policy continued by Botha and Smuts. In abandoning the British expectation of a war indemnity and instead extracting many millions from Britain for the post-war reconstruction of South Africa, Milner – a self-declared imperialist – emerges as a proconsul more preoccupied with getting the British government to subsidise rather than exploit its new Crown colonies in South Africa.

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Victims of a merciless war

A. Blake, *Boereverraaiers: Teregstellings tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog*

Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2010

351 pp

ISBN 978-0-624-04922-7

R210.00

Over 100 years after the South African War, the subject of the betrayal of the cause by the so-called *bendsoppers* and *joiners* remains an emotional one, as correspondence in the Afrikaans press indicates.¹³ Ultimately several thousand Boers took the oath of neutrality and withdrew from the conflict, while a smaller but not inconsiderable number took up arms against their countrymen. Albert Blake points out that until recently, however, the memoirs of participants gave no names and the archival files were closed until 2000. This extreme sensitivity is by no means unique to South Africa. A veil was drawn over the history of the Vichy government in France for decades, for instance. But in South Africa the determination of Afrikaner nationalism to present Afrikanerdom as monolithic has made it unusually difficult to penetrate nonconformism within their ranks. Even now accusations of *bendsopper* and *joiner* continue to be cast against those Afrikaners, for instance, who joined the ANC in the post-apartheid era. In 2005 the journalist, Max du Preez, suggested that a man like Piet de Wet, brother of General Christian de Wet, who attempted to negotiate between the Boer *bittereinders* and the British, should be rehabilitated but his argument found little favour, even amongst those historians who have pioneered this tendentious topic.¹⁴

Blake's focus is not on the general problem of betrayal but on a handful of men who were executed for their treachery. As he makes clear, although there were some summary executions and the formality of the law was not always enforced completely, there were no lynchings of Boers, although many blacks were put to death with little ceremony. Most of the victims were tried by courts martial; the greatest weakness was the lack of legal representation for the accused. Nor was the death sentence always imposed. Some were flogged; a few were punished and left to return to the British lines. Since imprisonment was unrealistic in a situation of guerrilla war, the decisions were not unreasonable. In general it seems to have been men of standing and influence who were executed rather than men of less importance, unless their treachery had serious consequences, like that Lambert Colyn in the northern Cape. In a number of cases family clans were involved – brothers and in-laws.

Blake does not confront the question of “why” directly, but his case studies cast some light on motivation. Few gained from their apostasy. In the short term members of

13. For example, *Die Burger*, 7 May 2005 and 15 March 2011.

14. *Die Burger*, 7 May 2005.

the “looting corps” recruited from the camps acquired cattle and the freedom to ride out on the veld but they were vilified by their countrymen during and after the war, and many of the families were left penniless. Rarely does their treachery seem to have been worth it unless they were driven by deep conviction. A handful were. The men who formed the peace committees showed remarkable courage in attempting to negotiate surrender and they were, in some senses, surely right. The Boers could not win this war and its continuation would only bring greater suffering. A man like Meyer de Kock was hardly a tool of the British for he paid the ultimate price for his attempt to help his countrymen.

Burghers of British origin were in a particularly invidious position and Blake is not unaware of their difficulties. He is particularly sympathetic to the plight of a man like the Scots-born Robert Boyd who was executed largely because of his loyalty to his friends. He had struggled to maintain a position of neutrality but was arrested and executed mainly because of his relationship with other British-born burghers who were also indicted. He was ultimately a tragic figure, Blake concludes; like so many others he was the victim of a merciless war.

One of the most moving aspects of *Boereverraaier* is the discussion on the effect of the executions on the members of the firing squads. The executions were often singularly hamhanded and, on a number of occasions, the first volleys did not kill the victims. (It is for this reason that the British preferred hanging for judicial murder since this was a not uncommon occurrence.) Under these circumstances men, often young, remembered the event for years. On one occasion a young boy was sent by his mother to witness the killings, that he might understand the meaning of treachery. Blake is particularly interested on the psychological impact of guilt and conflict on the survivors and their families but the silences surrounding the subject make it difficult to determine how people were affected. The political impact is easier to gauge for participation in the war was one criterion for acceptance by the volk. Nevertheless, the notion of betrayal was by no means straightforward, redefined to suit political ends. SAP Afrikaners were often considered not to be true members of the volk, the heirs to the wartime *bendsoppers* and *joiners*, despite the fact that the party was led by an *oudstryder* like Smuts. Accusations continued to be made against such opponents at least up to the Second World War. D.F. Malan’s failure to participate in the South African War, however, was a stain which he overcame with some difficulty.

Boereverraaier makes a useful contribution to the subject. Its greatest value is in the detail for Blake has combed the archives and genealogical sources to put flesh on his subjects. The question of motivation still remains opaque, however, and one would like to know more about the pressures which led to the decision to stand out against the war. How often, one wonders for instance, was betrayal more about local feuds than about loyalty to a vague cause? Blake would gain much from John Boje’s fine thesis on Winburg (to which he makes no reference) which looks more subtly at the process by which many men “slid” into collaboration over time.¹⁵

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15. J.G. Boje, “Winburg’s War: An Appraisal of the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 as it was Experienced by the People of a Free State District”, PhD thesis, University of Pretoria, 2009.

South African history through the prism of friendship

D. Lavin (ed.), *Friendship and Union: The South African Letters of Patrick Duncan and Maud Selborne, 1907–1943*

Van Riebeeck Society for the Publication of Southern African Historical Documents,
Cape Town, 2010

710 pp

ISBN 978-0-9814264-1-9

R180.00 (for non-members)

The post-Union, pre-apartheid era, which spanned the years 1910–1948, is one of the most undervalued and misunderstood phases in South Africa's political history. It is often treated as part of the "inevitable" march towards apartheid – or it is contrasted as a period of relative moderation, under leaders such as Smuts, in comparison to what was to follow. Neither of these perspectives does any justice to the only period in twentieth-century South Africa when no single political party could dominate parliamentary politics, a time when the future was anything but certain.

Few publications convey the *zeitgeist* of this complicated era as effectively as Deborah Lavin's *Friendship and Union: The South African Letters of Patrick Duncan and Maud Selborne, 1907–1943*, published by the Van Riebeeck Society. This aptly titled source publication consists of the correspondence conducted over a period of 36 years between the man who came to South Africa as a member of Milner's Kindergarten and who later became the first South African citizen to be appointed governor-general; and the daughter of a British prime minister and spouse of the high commissioner who presided over the formation of Union in 1910, a woman who shone as a political activist in her own right. Their weekly correspondence dealt with a myriad of topics (one of the most interesting is the Conservative Lady Selborne's campaign for women's suffrage), but at its core was South Africa, as viewed through the prism of a challenging, yet enduring friendship.

Their friendship began in 1905, when Lady Selborne, the wife of Milner's successor, took the young men who made up the Kindergarten, Milner's young Oxford-educated administrators, under her wing. A bond between her and Duncan soon developed, based on shared interests in music, literature, religion and philosophy. The classically educated Duncan had a special love for Plato and, indeed, *The Republic* forms a golden thread throughout their lengthy correspondence. The nature and value of democracy is often discussed, as the institutions of state soon reveal themselves beholden to the immediate, and often petty, interests of party politics. Duncan's descriptions of parliamentary debates reveal the extent to which political alliances, rather than grand visions, shaped legislation. In such a prosaic environment, Duncan resembled Plato's philosopher-king. He was, at best, a reluctant politician, who easily became despondent about the futility of the exercise. In the early years of his political career, Selborne acted as his mentor, advising him on persons and tactics. As the years progressed and his familiarity with the workings of the political machine grew, Duncan showed himself to be a pragmatist who used co-operation rather than ideology to achieve his objectives.

From the very first elections held after Union, one of the key features of South African political life to emerge from Duncan's descriptions was the animosity between the two white communities – English and Afrikaans. It dominated public discourse and kept parliament and cabinet in its grip. Its ability to hamper all attempts at rational

politics became the proverbial thorn in Duncan's flesh and in his political alliances, first with Smuts, and later with Hertzog, he sought to foster political parties that would bridge the divide. However, his correspondence also reveals the clumsy political animals the South African Party of the 1920s and the United Party of the 1930s turned out to be, as they sought to be a catch-all for members ranging from Natal jingoes to Transvaal farmers. Legislation could only be passed after prolonged and painful negotiation – Hertzog's Native Bills were a case in point – and emerged from the process transformed, but not necessarily improved.

For all his pragmatism, Duncan had his own political ideals and concerns. In the first place he sought to maintain South Africa's ties to the British Empire – which would be transformed into the Commonwealth. This priority, tied in with his abhorrence of English-Afrikaans rivalry came into play when, as war broke out in Europe in September 1939, Duncan, as governor-general, refused Hertzog's request for the dissolution of parliament and paved the way for Smuts to become prime minister and lead South Africa into the Second World War. While he was able to justify his decision on constitutional grounds, Duncan knew that granting Hertzog's request and dissolving parliament would have led to a general election fought on South Africa's ties to the Empire and its participation in the war. It would also have played on the festering bitterness between the two communities at a time when Afrikaner nationalism, especially in the aftermath of the Great Trek centenary, was on the rise. As the first South African governor-general, Duncan who by this time had a long political career behind him, understood the dynamics of South African politics as none of his predecessors could have.

Duncan's second political concern was about the position of Africans as a determinant of South Africa's future. It was on this point that his and Selborne's most lively, and often most sharply-worded letters were written. As children of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their racial prejudice goes without saying. Their letters fit neatly into a Social Darwinist framework and their terminology and comments sound archaic and offensive to a modern ear. Yet, while they regarded it as self-evident that Africans were incapable of ruling themselves, their letters bear testimony to the dilemma debated by South African whites throughout the twentieth century: how to be just towards a subject people whom one fears.

Their first letter sets the tone for what would become a dominant theme throughout their exchange. "I confess I always feel my national conscience pricking when I think of how we behave to the natives here. Don't you sometimes have qualms?", Lady Selborne wrote to Duncan (p 8). Duncan, in turn, was sceptical of ideas of segregation as the answer to South Africa's race relations:

Hertzog ... has begun to talk vaguely about segregation ... What he means by it no one knows – possibly himself as little as any one. It is an attractive word, however, the very sound of which seems to relieve the minds of people who are vaguely troubled about the present state of things" (p 136).

And in a later letter Duncan lamented:

The trouble is that our most serious questions here do not admit of treatment by a cut and dry policy. The idea that there is somewhere a 'solution' of the Native problem, as if it were a problem in geometry and that we have to find it, has a strong hold on the public mind (p 351).

Duncan's descriptions of the quest (and failure) to formulate a coherent policy of segregation throughout the 1920s bear such a striking resemblance to the early years of the apartheid policy that it strengthens the need for historians to establish more continuity between segregation and apartheid.¹⁶

By the latter half of the 1930s Duncan, as a member of Hertzog's government, found himself on a tightrope between his sense of justice towards Africans and his desire to maintain the cohesion of a government that represented the ideal of co-operation between the English and the Afrikaners. When a few years later Jan Hofmeyr rocked the boat with his pronouncements on the equality between black and white, Duncan noted in his diary that "from a political leader, and a member of a Cabinet composed as this one is composed, greater economy of principle is expected and indeed is necessary..." (p 643). Selborne, on the other hand, was by this time scathing in her criticism of South Africa's treatment of its African population: "I cannot think you should be satisfied to be the white community that treats its black subjects the worst in the world", she wrote to Duncan (p 578). He, in turn, felt compelled to defend South Africa on the basis of its uniqueness. Nowhere else in the world, he pointed out, was there a settled white population that was outnumbered by a black majority. Yet, he could not foresee that such a situation could be maintained indefinitely (p 580).

Patrick Duncan and Lady Selborne's exchange, which was ended only by Duncan's death in 1943, reveals how debate shaped but did not sway either party's opinions. As the editor notes, Duncan's letters were often of a more descriptive nature; South African political history unfolds itself through his pen. Selborne's letters were generally more analytical and she revealed an uncanny ability to cut through the layers of political rhetoric to the core of the matter under discussion.

Deborah Lavin's introduction and contextualisation of the publication's nine parts are excellent and provide a well-written and concise background to the correspondents' discussions, which makes the text accessible to readers who are not overly familiar with the history of this era. The selections of correspondence are superb, because the conversation between these two spirits flows freely. While the selections are concerned with their political dialogue, well-chosen and often humorous tidbits on life and family also bring their humanity to the fore. Characters around them, such as Leander Jameson and J.B.M. Hertzog, are brought to life and the reader is pulled into the tug and flow of political life, with all its complexities and unpredictability. The latter, especially, defies all notions of the inevitable march of history.

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16. For more details on the incoherence of the early apartheid years, see D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948–1961: Conflict and Compromise* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991); D. Posel, "The Meaning of Apartheid before 1948: Conflicting Interests and Forces within the Afrikaner Nationalist Alliance", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14, 1, October 1987, pp 123–139; L. Koorts, "An Ageing Anachronism: D.F. Malan as Prime Minister, 1948–1954", *Kronos: Southern African Histories*, 36, November 2010, pp 108–135.

Delightful and informative contribution to Luthuli Studies

L. Naidoo, *In the Shadow of Chief Albert Luthuli: Reflections of Goolam*

Suleman Luthuli Museum, Groutville KwaDukuza, 2010

93 pp

ISBN 978-0-621-39747-5

R100.00

That Albert John Mvumbi Luthuli (1898–1967) is increasingly one of the most frequently invoked South African political leaders speaks both to current perceptions of leadership crisis, and to a burgeoning reclamation of the past seen most prominently in memoirs but also in new histories of peoples and places once ignored. The intersection between local and national, and memoir and history can be a fertile one for understanding the past in depth and texture.

“The Chief” was an elected *nkosi*, ANC president and Africa’s inaugural Nobel Peace Prize winner. Despite his hero status, some of the finer detail of his life has remained elusive. In part, this reflects the dark days of his banning but also the obscurity of his Papers, available in one abridged microfilm version with a second, richer one overseas lingering mysteriously just out of reach of historians. Renewed interest in Luthuli is sparking further research. We might even say writers are fighting over his legacy. Recently Scott Couper, in a fine if rather narrowly focused “ecclesiastical biography”, *Albert Luthuli: Bound by Faith* (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 2010), has added greatly to an earlier, shorter treatment (if informed by first-hand contact) by Mary Benson, *Chief Albert Luthuli of South Africa* (Oxford University Press, London, 1963). Peter Alegi has written of his passion for soccer; Raymond Suttner on dress, dagger and cross in his life.¹⁷ Benson and Suttner bring out the significance of his politics, Alegi his leisure-time obsession. Couper’s mission is to give us more detail of what we always knew of Luthuli’s unshakeable religiosity (after all, the ANC has always been a broad church with many clerics among its leaders and a political culture of prayers and hymns). Yet in all these important contributions, something is missing. What of Luthuli’s friends, neighbours and comrades-in-arms on his home turf? This local focus and intimacy is the hallmark of a modest but important publishing debut of the Luthuli Museum.

In 1990, Nelson Mandela came to see his old friend Goolam Suleman in Stanger (in 1998, this region was renamed KwaDukuza, which now includes Groutville and Stanger). Madiba felt a comprehensive biography of Luthuli was needed. Inspired, Suleman sat down with his friend Logan Naidoo, a high school history teacher, and the result is this slim volume that will help the bold historian who eventually writes such a balanced scholarly biography.

In the Shadow of Chief Albert Luthuli is the story of Suleman’s shared experiences with the chief as transcribed and edited by Naidoo, with assistance from Barbara

17. P. Alegi, “Sport, Race, and Liberation: A Preliminary Study of Albert Luthuli’s Sporting Life”, in C. Thomas (ed.), *Sport & Liberation in South Africa: Reflections & Suggestions* (University of Fort Hare Press, Alice, 2006), pp 66–82; R. Suttner, “Periodisation, Cultural Construction and Representation of ANC Masculinities through Dress, Gesture and Indian Nationalist Influence”, *Historia*, 54, 1, May 2009, pp 51–91; and R. Suttner, “‘The Road to Freedom is via the Cross’: Just Means’ in Chief Albert Luthuli’s Life”, *South African Historical Journal*, 62, 4, December 2010, pp 693–715.

Wahlberg at Luthuli Museum. They have done a fine job of transcribing and editing reminiscences that have much to tell historians. This is not just about Suleman and Luthuli, but also their great friend, E.V. Mahomed, their families and comrades, their lives together and how they outwitted the Special Branch to let ANC leaders such as Luthuli and Mandela continue operating despite bannings. Other rather neglected historical actors such as M.B. Yengwa also spring to life.

Seven short, well-written chapters take the reader breezily through the lives of Suleman and Luthuli with due care for detail but letting the insightful anecdote speak volumes. Chapter 1 sketches the background of Suleman's life, his Muslim family migration from Gujarat and his father's settlement in Stanger where in 1900 he opened a general dealer's shop, later renamed Liberty Stores by Goolam, which would serve local sugar workers – and Luthuli and the ANC. This humble shop is important in the narrative for it becomes for a while the node, the beating heart, of the ANC, not just in Stanger and Natal but nationally (a reminder that the history of merchants, covered to some extent by Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie, Grietjie Verhoef, and Alan Cobley, needs more attention). Goolam was born in 1929, played soccer with local Africans, and became fluent in isiZulu. He grew up with stories of the brutal suppression of the Bhambatha Revolt under a father much respected by local Africans and increasingly aware of poverty and injustice (pp 3–4). Chapters 2 and 3 introduce the chief and his national politics, with the next chapter covering local politics. Chapters 5 and 6 treat his growing international recognition and Nobel Prize, the final two chapters his passing and an epilogue on the new democracy.

The narrative heats up with Mandela's secret visit to Stanger, where they spend the day together. Tipped off about police raids, the team melts into the countryside, Mandela as chauffeur to Goolam, driving the back roads south to resurface in Durban and then go underground again. Along the way, we meet the local Special Branch and see Goolam doing his part to help organise the Congress of the People. There are comments on the Treason Trial and involvement of the CIA with apartheid police in the betrayal of Mandela; but before this, the vigilance and attention to detail of Mahomed and Suleman must have saved Madiba and the chief from many an arrest. In dodging the special branch, their help was crucial. This is underground adventure at its best – and a reminder that historians should build on the wealth of memoirs, the SADET volumes, and the theoretical work of Suttner to write a more detailed history of the underground.

After bannings of the ANC and Luthuli, meetings were stifled so Goolam must now rely on correspondence. The chief turned his hand to shop-keeping, increasing his indebtedness. He also purchased two Swazi farms for exiles, disputed by some but confirmed by other accounts such as this. Treated also is the re-awakening in Stanger of the Natal Indian Congress, which helped keep political activities going and exposed harsh conditions of workers. On the cause of Luthuli's 1967 death, the narrative faithfully follows the family account of suspicious state involvement (p 77), a view strongly challenged by Couper. There is interesting material on how, after the death, Goolam assisted Nokukhanya (who called him "eldest son", p 78) to pay debts and kept in touch; a touching photo shows him pushing her in a wheelchair at the 1989 March for Freedom flanked by an ebullient Winnie Mandela and a Muslim mullah.

We learn of Luthuli's affableness, culinary tastes and friendships. There is background on his political rise, Congress Alliance history, local politics, and relations between Indian and African South Africans. The two families, notes Luthuli's daughter

Jane Ngobese in a preface, were very close; they shared meals and dreams; and geographic proximity. The inaccessibility of the African location in Groutville necessitated Luthuli relocating his headquarters to Stanger, where he frequently took meals or held meetings at Goolam's shop. Through the intimacy of meals and fun together, and despite the pressures of apartheid and astonished neighbours, there developed strong bonds of solidarity (p 16). Here then is a feast of insights into Luthuli the man at the local level, side by side with his religiosity and political dedication.

In all of this Luthuli is to the forefront but so too are Goolam, "E.V." and other foot soldiers, a reminder that without followers, chiefs and presidents have no purpose. We see Luthuli's normally apolitical wife Nokukhanya forced by his banning into politics (p 71), *pace* Gorky's *Mother*. So too the historian might ponder how the complexity of history is played out in the central involvement of Muslim Indian South Africans in the care, protection and everyday functioning of an ANC president with his devout Christianity, alongside his close working relations with atheist African communists such as Moses Kotane, who also appears in the book.

This is good local history. We see evidence of Luthuli's great popularity, his popular touch with locals. Often local history is rather specialised, but the Luthuli Museum has added footnotes, an index, appendices and high quality plates, some previously unpublished, to add to the book's value. There are also touching forewords by Kader Asmal and Jane Ngobese. A future expanded edition might reproduce the full manuscript. It would be nice to have the translation of Yengwa's isiZulu praise poem side by side with the original. At times one wonders if we read the words of Goolam or the editors and the title page could make this clearer, though fuzziness of authorship was typical of a complex anti-apartheid alliance in dangerous times. A few minor typos (South African Federation (not Foundation) of Women) and a few errors (Dr. Xuma and not John Dube was ANC national president in 1945) do not detract from the overall usefulness of a work that recaptures the role of "ordinary" people in the anti-apartheid struggle.

Perhaps we are exhausted by the flood of memoirs. However, the serious study of the lives, and works or *oeuvre* of eminent Africans remains neglected. It may no longer be culturally correct to build a canon, but other cultures have their Shakespeare, Dante, Lincoln and Gandhi Studies. The *oeuvre* of some African political figures, such as Sekou Touré and Nkrumah, are compromised but South Africa has its burgeoning Mandela and Gordimer Studies. Yet enormously significant figures such as A.B. Xuma, Charlotte Maxeke, Pixley Seme (and now John Dube) have attracted a bare minimum of in-depth treatment. It is time for historians to return to biography and textual analysis in all its nuance, for nothing is more cultural, more local, and insightful than the story of human lives and words. We will see more, and critical, Luthuli (and Mandela) Studies.

Other, still neglected, themes of Luthuli Studies – such as the role of culture, nobility, and language, the influence of African comrades, and diverse intellectual currents – await integration with works such as this, with its focus on the personal and local, and with other recent works, to produce a balanced life story as demanded by Mandela. Luthuli was in many ways a typical *keholwa* and ANC leader, yet his was a complex identity obscured if we view it only via an external lens. Future research might pay more attention to his isiZulu notebooks, his correspondence, and extended family. This book, a very useful contribution that adds to our knowledge of Luthuli and his friends, community and family, will help such a process and delight and inform all

interested in South African history and national and KwaZulu-Natal politics and community relations.

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Nederlands-Suid-Afrikaanse betrekkinge onder die soeklig

G.J. Schutte, *Stamverwantschap onder Druk: De Betrekkingen tussen Nederland en Zuid-Afrika, 1940–1947*

Suid-Afrikaanse Instituut, Amsterdam, 2011

322 pp

ISBN 978-90-74112-31-4

€29,50

Gerrit Schutte, emeritus-professor in Geskiedenis aan die Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, is een van die gesaghebbendste en produktiefste Nederlandse historici wat die betrekkinge tussen Nederland en Suid-Afrika betref. Hy het al talle boeke oor hierdie onderwerp geskryf en sy publikasies is feitlik sonder uitsondering positief deur resensente ontvang. Hierdie jongste publikasie van Schutte bou voort op die volgende publikasies van hom: *Nederland en de Afrikaners: Adhesie en Aversie* (1986); *De Roeping ten Aanzien van het Oude Broedervolk: Nederland en Zuid-Afrika, 1960–1990* (1993); en *De Vrije Universiteit en Zuid-Afrika, 1880–2005* (2005).

Uit 'n kronologiese oogpunt gesien, sluit Schutte se jongste boek aan by die volgende publikasies wat Nederlands-Suid-Afrikaanse betrekkinge betref: B.J.H. de Graaff, *De Mythe van de Stamverwantschap: Nederland en de Afrikaners, 1902–1930* (1993); H.O. Terblanche, *Nederland en die Afrikaner: Gesprek oor Apartheid. Die Paginaruil tussen Trouw en Die Burger, 1963–1964* (1998); en S. de Boer, *Van Sharpeville tot Soweto: Nederlands Regeringsbeleid ten Aanzien van Apartheid, 1960–1977* (1999).

Schutte se boek dek die periode vanaf die uitbreek van die Tweede Wêreldoorlog in 1939 tot en met die bewindsaanvaarding van die Nasionale Party in 1948. Stamverwantskap tussen Nederlander en Afrikaner het inderdaad op velerlei vlakke onder kwaai druk verkeer. Die Duitse inval in Nederland op 10 Mei 1940 en die daaropvolgende Duitse besetting het die verhouding tussen die stamlande onder groot druk geplaas. Die feit dat die vriende van Nederland in Suid-Afrika onverskillig teenoor die Duitse besetting en die lot van die Nederlanders gestaan het, was vir die Nederlanders onverklaarbaar. Die verwoesting van Rotterdam, byvoorbeeld, het by vele van die vroeëre vriende van Nederland in Suid-Afrika nóg afkeur, nóg simpatie verwek (p 15).

Die Nederlanders was ook ontsteld omdat die Nasionale Party-dagblad *Die Burger* tydens die oorlog 'n pro-Duitse standpunt gehandhaaf het. Daar was nie 'n enkele woord van verontwaardiging oor die Duitse magspolitiese nie (pp 166–167). Prof. Piet Cillie, die latere redakteur van *Die Burger*, het in 1994 geskryf dat selfs leidende Afrikaners geen behoorlike insig gehad het “in die trauma wat Nederland in en as gevolg van die Tweede Wêreldoorlog moes deurmaak nie: die bombardering van Rotterdam, die Duitse oorrumpeling, die besetting met sy opsluitings, deportasies en teregstellings ...”¹⁸

18. Aangehaal in H.O. Terblanche, *Nederland en die Afrikaner: Gesprek oor Apartheid. Die Paginaruil tussen Trouw en Die Burger, 1963–1964* (Universiteit van Port Elizabeth, Port Elizabeth, 1998), pp 7–8.

Schutte kon met groot vrug ook die volgende artikel geraadpleeg het: J.C. Steyn, "Afrikanerreaksies op die Inval van 10 Mei 1940 in Nederland", (*Ensovoort*, 7, 1, 1995).

Die Afrikaners het ook weinig begrip gehad vir die pro-Engelse en anti-Duitse houding van die Nederlanders. Die Nederlanders het byvoorbeeld groot waardering gehad vir die rol wat genl. J.C. Smuts tydens die oorlog gespeel het. Die na-oorlogse Nederland het hom ook beywer vir 'n aktiewe internasionale rol en 'n Atlantiese benadering, en "stond open voor Angelsaksiese en Amerikaanse kulturele invloeden" (pp 94, 127). Nederland se internasionale posisie en denke het dus vanweë die oorlog verander.

Die hervatting van betrekkinge tussen Nederland en Suid-Afrika ná die oorlog was nie iets wat vanselfsprekend gevolg het nie. Schutte wy dan ook 'n hele hoofstuk aan die hele kwessie van "goed en fout". Heelwat strukture in Suid-Afrika moes eers gesuiwer word van "foute" elemente, dit wil sê van diegene wat tydens die oorlog sterk pro-Duits was. Die Nederlanders moes dus vir hulself uitmaak met welke instansies en persone in Suid-Afrika hulle bereid was om in die toekoms mee saam te werk.

Groot klem word ook geplaas op die "vriende" van Suid-Afrika in Nederland. 'n Hele galery van organisasies word onder die soeklig geplaas. Schutte wy 'n volle hoofstuk aan "De Vrienden". Hier dink 'n mens aan die bekende Nederlands-Zuid-Afrikaanse Vereniging (NZAV), opgerig in 1881; die Studiefonds voor Zuid-Afrikaanse Studenten (1885); die Fonds voor het Hollands Onderwijs in Zuid-Afrika (1890); die Zuid-Afrikaansche Voorschotkas (1901); die Zuid-Afrikaansche Stichting Moederland (ZASM), opgerig in 1909; die Stichting tot Bevordering van de Studie van Taal, Letterkunde, Cultuur en Geschiedenis van Zuid-Afrika (1932); en die Suid-Afrikaanse Instituut (SAI). Feitlik al hierdie verenigings en organisasies se kantooradres was Keizersgracht 141, Amsterdam. Op die buiteblad van dié boek is daar juis 'n pragtige kleurfoto van hierdie besondere herehuis.

Keizersgracht 141 het vroeër bekend gestaan as die Van Riebeeckhuis. Tans staan dit bekend as Zuid-Afrika Huis. Dit is seker die heel bekendste Suid-Afrikaanse baken in Nederland. Schutte se boek is in 'n sekere sin baie relevant juis omdat daar tans sprake is dat die ZASM nie meer kans sien om die groot finansiële verantwoordelikheid vir Keizersgracht 141 te dra nie. Deesdae word 'n lewendige debat hieroor gevoer.

Schutte het heelwat aandag gegee aan die anti-Britse en pro-Duitse houding van die Afrikaner, en spesifiek aan die Ossewa-Brandwag (OB) (pp 88–94 en 205–218). Die OB word getipeer as "raadselagtig". Die Nederlanders kon nie begryp hoedat nasionaalgesinde Afrikaners simpatiek kon staan jeens nasionaal-sosialistiese Duitsland nie: "Waren Nederlanders en Afrikaners elkaar vreemd?" (p 93). Schutte oordeel heel genuanseerd oor die OB. Hy beklemtoon dat die aantal oortuigde Nazi's in die geledere van die OB gering was: "Het is dus onhistorisch een volledig is-gelijk-teken te plaatsen tussen Afrikaner nationalisme en nationaal-socialisme en fascisme" (p 210). Schutte het 'n groot hoeveelheid bronne oor die OB geraadpleeg, maar wat die anti-Britse en pro-Duitse houding van die Afrikaner betref, kon hy ook met vrug H.O.Terblanche se *John Vorster: OB-Generaal en Afrikanervegter* (1983), geraadpleeg het.

Dit was belangrik vir die bestuur van die NZAV om presies te weet wat die naoorlogse situasie in Suid-Afrika was, veral ten opsigte van die hervatting van kulturele betrekkinge tussen die twee stamlande. Om daardie rede is besluit om P.J. van Winter,

hoogleraar in Geskiedenis te Groningen, lid van die Hoofbestuur van die NZAV en redakteur van die maandblad *Zuid-Afrika*, na Suid-Afrika te stuur. Meer as 'n derde van Schutte se boek handel oor die uitsending van Van Winter.

Van Winter het drie maande lank in Suid-Afrika vertoef, van 11 Augustus tot 11 November 1947, ten einde hom te verdiep in die problematiek van Suid-Afrika. Hy het al die groot stede en universiteitsdorpe besoek en 45 voordragte gelewer. Van sy bydraes is destyds gepubliseer in *Die Huisgenoot*, *Die Suiderstem* en *De Nederlandsche Post*. Veertien briewe van en aan Van Winter is as 'n bylaag gepubliseer. Van Winter se waarnemings lewer boeiende leesstof op. Hy het hom veral verdiep in die armblanke-vraagstuk, die rassevraagstuk en die raaiselagtige OB.

Schutte het die geskiedskrywing verryk met hierdie publikasie van hom. Die boek is boeiend geskryf, dog plek-plek word 'n mens oorweldig deur al die feite. Hy het wyd en deeglik navorsing gedoen: in Amsterdam, Den Haag, Groningen, Tilburg, Utrecht, Bloemfontein, Pretoria en Stellenbosch. Sy vakmanskap spreek onder meer uit die 943 voetnote, vele met uitgebreide biografiese besonderhede. Hierdie boek hoort op die boekrak van iedereen wat belangstel in Nederlands-Suid-Afrikaanse betrekkinge. Dit is in alle opsigte 'n waardevolle bydrae. Tog moet ek saamstem met 'n resensie in die *Reformatoriese Dagblad*: "... de prijs is bestel aan de hoge kant".

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Careful investigation of a lost community

N. Stassen, *The Boers in Angola, 1928–1975*

Protea Book House, Pretoria, 2011

656 pp

ISBN 978-1-86919-395-9

R335.00

Since the 1940s, historians have done thorough research on various themes relating to Afrikaner history. One aspect which has however remained unexplored is the history of Afrikaners in Angola during the mid-twentieth century. This book provides a thorough investigation of these so-called Angolan Afrikaners, their circumstances and activities, and the challenges they faced in Angola during the Portuguese administration. During these Afrikaners' residence in Angola they had little time for farming and were faced with a variety of difficulties. These include their problematic relationship with the Portuguese administration, economic hardships and inadequate education. Their resultant poverty led to shocking social and economic regression. After about 2 000 Angolan Afrikaners repatriated to the then South West Africa in 1928, a small Afrikaner community of between 386 and 471 individuals remained behind. Typical of this group was their conservative way of living, their poor practice of mixed farming and their reliance, for the sake of survival, on activities such as hunting and providing transportation.

This hefty tome of Stassen's is based on the doctoral thesis, *Die Afrikaners se Laaste Halfeeu in Angola, 1928–1975*, which he submitted to the University of Pretoria in 2009 and whose Afrikaans publication was reviewed in these pages in November 2010. His work is of importance for two reasons. Firstly, it represents a serious attempt to do

scientific historical research on a topic and period about which little has been written. The author utilises an impressive array of maps, photographs and statistical data for a variety of issues which he addresses. Secondly, Stassen aims to understand through his research why the community of about 500 Afrikaners after 1928 in Angola used to be described as “living fossils” and victims of their own conservatism. The author not only manages to tell a moving story about the fate and circumstances of the Angolan Afrikaners, but he also analyses how it was possible for such a small group to maintain their Afrikaner identity under difficult circumstances. This they managed to do to such an extent that Stassen can describe them as “dirt poor but of noble disposition ... able people, but condemned to the status of poor whites under the Portuguese” (p 217).

Stassen’s analysis of the lives and circumstances of the Afrikaners in Angola is divided into five sections. The first focuses on the relationship between these people and natural factors such as climate, vegetation, animal life etc. Stassen’s utilisation of other disciplines such as geology, climatology and archaeology is an attempt to use knowledge of *longue durée* changes to understand better the circumstances and history of the Angolan Afrikaners. These natural factors played an important role, not only in the history of Angola, but also in that of the Angolan Afrikaners.

The second section (chapters 2–4) deals with Angolan developments up to 1975, including the population make-up and economic activities. This section represents a social history in which the total history of various groups in Angola is covered since the earliest years of the country. Because the history of Angola is not particularly well-known among South African readers, this section serves an important function, helping the reader to come to a better understanding of the Angolan Afrikaners in the context of the country where they had settled. The analysis of the various population groups, ranging from the indigenous peoples to the Afrikaners, Germans and various protestant missionaries, reveals the rich variety of people living in Angola during this period.

Section 3 (chapters 5–13) first investigates in detail the history of the so-called Thirstland trekkers (*Dorsland Trekkers*) during the period 1874–1928. The Thirstland refers to the central part of the Kalahari through which these Angolan Afrikaners trekked. This is a gripping story in which Stassen introduces the reader to the various groups of trekkers in the period 1874 to 1880; their settlement in Angola from 1881 to 1890; and the smaller groups which left the old Transvaal for Angola between 1891 and 1928. The author also investigates the reasons why these people decided to trek. Chapter 6 examines why some of these Afrikaners chose to leave Angola in the 30 years from 1928 to 1958, while others opted to remain. The chapter that follows analyses the economic circumstances and activities of the Angolan Afrikaners during this period. This part effectively utilises photographic evidence in order to help the reader better understand the desperate circumstances of the Angolan Afrikaners. Their level of abject poverty by 1935 was succinctly summarised by Rev M.M. Grobler: “With a few exceptions, all the Afrikaners find themselves in the greatest poverty. Many have hardly any clothing or food. They themselves say they become ‘kafferised’ there, a harsh word, but perhaps the best to describe their condition” (p 192).

Chapters 8 and 9 focus on the material and spiritual culture of the Angolan Afrikaners. Materially, these people suffered hugely, while in terms of their spiritual culture they could indeed be described as living fossils and victims of their own conservatism. Stassen’s analysis of the state of education among this group reveals that education was very patchy leading to high levels of illiteracy. Chapter 11 deals with the

general state of religion among the Angolan Afrikaners during this period. While they were generally quite religious, they gradually lost their religious convictions because of their geographic isolation and the worsening levels of literacy. Many left the Dutch Reformed churches (the *Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk* and the *Nederduits Hervormde Kerk*) to which they had originally belonged, joining other denominations.

The last chapters of section three cover the Angolan Afrikaners' interactions with other communities in Angola as well as their social circumstances during the period 1928–1958. Generally they got along well with other groups in Angola, such as the indigenous African groups, the Portuguese colonists and the so-called *mak volk* (“tame people”) who were descendants of the first African workers (of Zulu, Tswana and Ndebele origin) from the Transvaal who arrived with the Angolan Afrikaners in 1881. Although the Angolan Afrikaners interacted well with these groups, they considered themselves a separate ethnic group and managed to maintain their own distinct identity. Sometimes there were conflicts with the Portuguese colonists over issues of culture, religion and nationality, even though they were of the same race and economic class. Concerning social circumstances, Stassen investigate issues such as moral values, divorce, illegitimate children, miscegenation and mixed marriages. He comes to the conclusion that the Angolan Afrikaners generally upheld high moral values and felt that it was shameful for couples to divorce. More surprising is that this community was unconcerned about miscegenation. It was this aspect of their behaviour that upset Afrikaners from South Africa who visited them. Mixed marriages were also by no means unusual among the Angolan Afrikaners.

The final section of the book deals with various aspects of repatriation after 1958. Stassen discusses the origin of the idea; the reasons why the Afrikaners left Angola in 1958; the various opinions on repatriation; the availability of farms in South West Africa; and the actual repatriation of Angolan Afrikaners. He also pays attention to the question of why some Afrikaners decided to return to Angola, and others who moved back to South Africa again after they had repatriated. It is clear from this discussion that the “winds of change” which blew over Africa during the 1960s greatly influenced the decision of many of these Afrikaners to return to South Africa. The majority did not wish to be caught up in the African freedom struggle which followed in the period 1961 to 1975. Stassen also discusses those Afrikaners who returned to Angola and stayed there during 1958–1975, as well as their flight from that country in 1975.

Nicol Stassen's bulky *The Boers in Angola, 1928–1975* successfully manages to record through careful scientific research, the experiences of Afrikaners in Angola during this period. It illustrates the extremely difficult social and economic position in which these Afrikaners found themselves for an extended period of almost half a century in Angola; their repatriation; their return to Angola; and their flight from the country when the freedom struggle ensued. It paints a picture of much suffering, isolation and marginalisation. The fact that the history of these Angolan Afrikaners will soon disappear from popular memory makes this book even more important since it represents a fine attempt to immortalise the history of the Angolan Afrikaners in book form.

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Meritorious account of war now dated**W.S. van der Waals, *Portugal's War in Angola, 1961–1974***

Protea Book House, Pretoria, 2011

320 pp

ISBN 978-1-86919-351-5

R225.00

This is the second edition of a book first published in 1993,¹⁹ based on a doctoral dissertation entitled, “Angola, 1961–1974: ’n Studie in Rewolusionêre Oorlog” that the author submitted at the University of the Orange Free State, as it then was, four years previously. That study was written in part to suggest lessons for South Africa, and in this second edition Van der Waals still argues that Portugal had been up against “revolutionary warfare” in Angola, that the insurgency had been dealt with militarily, so that it became “little more than a nuisance value” (p 159), but that Portugal had lost “control over the process of decolonisation” (back cover), with disastrous results. Angola became “a strategic Soviet base”, liberation struggles elsewhere were given “new impetus”, and South Africa “fell directly in the revolutionary firing line” (p 280). An appendix discusses the theory of “revolutionary warfare”, and suggests ways to counter it (pp 291ff). All this seems strangely dated in 2011, but this book is essentially a reprint of the first edition: the book has been reset and some of the photographs in the first edition are no longer included – in particular those of bare-breasted “tribal” women – but most of the original photographs are reproduced here and the text remains the same, “except for minor historical changes to the preface” (p xv).

The book under review, then, has not been updated to take account of any of the literature in the intervening almost two decades, or of new perspectives on what happened in Angola before and after the coup in Lisbon in April 1974, when this study effectively ends. The Alvor agreement that followed in January 1975 is merely mentioned and an Epilogue takes the story very briefly to 1992, when Angola is said to have been “set to get its first freely elected and representative government” (p 281). We are not told that Savimbi did not accept the result of the election held in that year and went back to war, and that it was only with his death in 2002 that the war came to an end.

Willem van der Waals served for 33 years in the South African Defence Force (SADF) as paratrooper, unit commander, intelligence analyst, and strategic planner. As the Portuguese withdrew from Angola in 1975, he was one of the SADF’s liaison officers to Jonas Savimbi’s UNITA.²⁰ In the early 1980s he was South African Defence attache in Paraguay. None of his career after 1974 is discussed in this book, however. What is mentioned is that he was vice-consul at the South African Consulate-General in Angola from 1970 for almost four years. This posting made him well placed to write a book on Portugal’s war in Angola, and as a former SADF officer he was able to draw upon sources that were not declassified. This new edition, like the first, provides no detailed references to these sources, merely saying that they are to be found in the author’s thesis held in the SADF Archives in Pretoria (p 300).

19. W. van der Waals, *Portugal's War in Angola, 1961–1974* (Ashanti Publishing, Rivonia, 1993).

20. He helped arrange for land rovers and anti-tank missiles to be delivered to Savimbi, and briefly secured Lobito harbour and the Benguela railway line to Zambia. See P. Wolvaardt et al. (compilers), *From Verwoerd to Mandela: South African Diplomats Remember*, 1 (Crink, no place, 2010), pp 34, 36.

We now have major studies of the long Angolan civil war; of the role of the Cubans in Angola; and of South Africa's military involvement in Angola from 1975 to 1988; as well as relevant memoirs by some participants in these events. The book under review is only concerned with the war that Portugal fought in Angola from 1961 to 1974. It provides a relatively well-written and well-ordered politico-military account of the origins of the conflict, of the outbreak of the war in 1961 and then of the ways in which the Portuguese dealt with northern Angola, reducing it to what the author calls a "human desert" (p 97), of the relatively low-intensity war from 1962 to 1966, of the MPLA's campaign in eastern Angola from 1967 and of how the Portuguese again were able to counter this in the years that followed. Only when he comes to the background to the coup in Portugal in 1974 does Van der Waals spend any space relating what was happening in Angola to the wars that Portugal was also fighting elsewhere in Africa. He then suggests that it was what happened in Guinea-Bissau that was mainly responsible for the Portuguese withdrawing from their African possessions. He adds: "An attempt to sacrifice Guinea in order to concentrate on the defence of Angola and Mozambique would have led to an insurmountable legitimacy crisis" (p 281).

South African readers will probably be most interested in what Van der Waals has to say about the close military co-operation that developed between Portugal and South Africa in response to the rise of guerrilla forces among nationalists in Angola, Namibia and what is now Zimbabwe. Two decades before Cuito Cuanavale became so well-known in South Africa because of the way in which the Cubans defended it against the SADF, South Africa and Portugal had set up a joint air command post there, and from 1968 Menongue was the centre of South African-Portuguese military cooperation in southeastern Angola (pp 228–229). The South African government provided a large loan to Portugal to help it fight the war in Angola the month before the coup in Lisbon. But Van der Waals does not discuss this co-operation in any depth. Anyone wishing to pursue either the nature of Portugal's war in Angola or the role of South Africa in that war will have to turn to the material that has become available since this book was written. The best overall context in English is provided by the British scholar David Birmingham, who, unlike Van der Waals, has a deep understanding of Angolan nationalism.²¹ On Portugal's relations with South Africa there is now the unpublished University of Johannesburg thesis by Paulo Correia, which draws upon South African and Portuguese records in Pretoria and Lisbon that Van der Waals did not use.²² For all the merits of the book first published in 1993, then, it is a great pity that this "second edition" was not even provided with a new introduction that might have referred to this new work and pointed to the ways in which Van der Waals' account is now dated.

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21. D. Birmingham, *Empire in Africa: Angola and its Neighbours* (Ohio University Press, Athens, OH, 2006). Compare also J.P. Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa: The Portuguese Way of War, 1961–1974* (Greenwood Press, Westport, Conn, 1997); and L.M. Alves de Fraga, *A Força Aérea na Guerra em África: Angola, Guiné, Moçambique, 1961–1974* (Prefácio, Lisbon, 2004). Van der Waals does not cite D. Birmingham, *Frontline Nationalism in Angola and Mozambique* (James Currey, London, 1992), or A. Humbaraci and N. Muchnik, *Portugal's African Wars: Angola, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique* (Third Press, New York, 1974).
22. P. Correia, "Political Relations between Portugal and South Africa from the End of the Second World War to 1974", DLitt et Phil thesis, University of Johannesburg, 2007. See also P. Correia and G. Verhoef, "Portugal and South Africa: Close Allies or Unwilling Partners in Southern Africa during the Cold War?", *Scientia Militaria*, 37, 1, 2009, pp 50–72.

Laaste woord oor dié oorlog nog nie gespreek

J. Geldenhuys, *Dié wat Gewen het: Feite en Fabels van die Bosoerlog*

Litera Publikasies, Pretoria, 2007

339 pp

ISBN 978-1-1920188-30-6

R236.00

Op 26 Augustus 2011 was dit 45 jaar sedert die sogenaamde “Grensoorlog” of “Bosoerlog” in die noorde van die destydse Suidwes-Afrika (SWA, sedert 1990 amptelik bekend as Namibië) uitgebreek het – ’n stryd waarna, volgens hierdie resensent, eerder as die Namibiese Vryheidsoorlog (1966–1989) verwys moet word. Derduisende lede van die destydse Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag (SAW) – meestal nasionale dienspligtiges – het een of ander tyd aan “die grens” diens gedoen, en meer as 700 het in aktiewe diens gesterf. Die Suid-Afrikaanse veiligheidsmagte wou aanvanklik bloot keer dat die guerrillas van die South West Africa People’s Organisation (SWAPO) nie SWA infiltreer nie, maar in 1975 het die SAW by die burgeroorlog, wat in Angola uitgebreek het toe dié Portugese kolonie onafhanklik geword het, betrokke geraak. Hulle het derhalwe vir meer as ’n dekade lank in die suide van Angola bly opereer.

Die oorlog in SWA/Namibië en in Angola het die lewens van miljoene mense geraak – ook aan die “tuisfront” in Suid-Afrika. Die dramatiese politieke omwenteling in Oos-Europa en in die Unie van Sosialistiese Sowjet-Republieke (USSR) aan die einde van die 1980’s/begin 1990’s, die daarmee gepaardgaande beëindiging van die Koue Oorlog, en die ewe dramatiese politieke veranderinge in die Republiek van Suid-Afrika (RSA), veral in die jare 1990 tot 1994, het die einde van die Namibiese Vryheidsoorlog en die onafhanklikheidswording (“dekolonisasie”) van SWA/Namibië in 1990 oorskadu. Af en toe het ’n publikasie oor dié oorlog wel verskyn, byvoorbeeld Willem Steenkamp se *South Africa’s Border War* (1989) en F.J. du T. Spies se *Operasie Savannah: Angola 1975–1976* (1989). Interessant genoeg is daar egter die afgelope sowat tien jaar ’n vloed van publikasies oor die Namibiese Vryheidsoorlog, die stryd in Angola en verwante temas (insluitende die stelsel van nasionale diensplig). Dié boeke wissel van Magnus Malan se *My Lewe saam met die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag* (2006); Louis Bothma se *Die Buffel Struikel: ’n Storie van 32 Bataljon en sy Mense* (2006); en Dick Lord se *Fledgling to Eagle: The South African Air Force during the Border War* (2008) tot Granger Korff se *19 with a Bullet: A South African Paratrooper in Angola* (2009); Gary Green se *Stand at Ease: A Reluctant Conscript’s Tale of Military Madness and Mayhem* (2009); en David Williams se *Op die Grens 1965–1990* (2008). En dan is daar Jannie Geldenhuys (beroepsoldaat van formaat; hoof van die Suid-Afrikaanse Leër, 1980–1985; en hoof van die SAW, 1985–1990) se *Dié wat Gewen het: Feite en Fabels van die Bosoerlog*.

Dat Geldenhuys se boek gewild moet wees, spreek uit die feit dat, nadat die werk se eerste uitgawe, eerste druk in 2007 verskyn het, dit reeds twee keer herdruk is (2008 en 2009). Die boek is ook in Engels beskikbaar as *At the Front: A General’s Account of South Africa’s Border War* (2009). Maar “eerste uitgawe” is ietwat misleidend, want die grootste deel van die publikasie is ’n heruitgawe van Geldenhuys se *Dié wat Wen: ’n Generaal se Storie uit ’n Era van Oorlog en Vrede*, wat in 1993 deur J.L. van Schaik gepubliseer is. Die 1993-publikasie se eerste 21 hoofstukke is weer net so gepubliseer en al die foto’s (met die uitsondering van twee), asook al die kaarte van die ware eerste uitgawe, is net so in die nuwe uitgawe gereproduseer. Wat nuut is in Litera Publikasies se nuwe weergawe, is ’n baie kort hoofstuk 22 wat aan die einde van die teks bygevoeg is (“Dis hoe dit Was”,

pp 259–263); ’n nuwe voorwoord; ’n alfabetiese indeks van operasies (p 334); ’n gekeurde indeks van persoonsname” (pp 336–337); ’n chronologiese indeks van belangrike gebeure van die Koue Oorlog in Suidwestelike Afrika vanaf 1975 tot 1990 wat genoem word (pp 327–333); en ’n handige (hoewel onvolledige) lys van 611 persone wat in die jare 1962 tot 1994 in diens van die SAW gesterf het (pp 264–326).

Dié wat Gewen het maak uiteraard deel uit van die land se “grensliteratuur”, maar is tegelyk ook outobiografies van aard. Geldenhuys (gebore 1935) gee in hoofstukke 2 tot 10 ’n oorsig van sy lewe en werk as beroepsoldaat, tot en met 1980: sy skooldae, opleiding as soldaat, diens in SWA (1970–1974), werk by Leerhoofkwartier (1975–1977), en weereens diens in SWA (1977–1980) in ’n tyd toe die stryd teen SWAPO in felheid toegeneem het en die oorlog ook na die suide van Angola uitgebrei het.

Op 1 November 1980 het Geldenhuys vir genl. Constand Viljoen as hoof van die Suid-Afrikaanse Leer opgevolg (kyk hoofstukke 11, 12 en 13), en presies vyf jaar later het hy Viljoen ook as hoof van die SAW opgevolg (kyk hoofstuk 14 en verder). Hoewel Geldenhuys dit duidelik stel dat hy homself weghou van partypolitiek (anders as sy voorganger, Constand Viljoen, wat die leier van die Vryheidsfront geword het), moes hy (Geldenhuys) uiteraard, veral as hoof van die SAW, met sy politieke meesters konsulteer en saamwerk. Verder moes hy – weereens in sy hoedanigheid as Weermaghoof – die SAW tot swart woongebiede binne die RSA laat toetree ten einde onluste te probeer bekamp. As hoof van die SAW moes hy ook aan samesprekings in Londen, Kaïro, New York, op die eiland Sal (in die Kaap-Verdiese Eilande), in Genève en elders deelneem ten einde ’n onderhandelde oplossing vir die gewapende stryd in Namibië en Angola te probeer verkry – iets wat uiteindelik wel bewerkstellig is, en tot die onafhanklikheid van Namibië op 21 Maart 1990 gelei het.

In die “Agtergrond” van die oorspronklike *Dié wat Wen*, het Geldenhuys verklaar dat hy rondom 1985 ’n wilsbesluit geneem het om nooit hierdie tipe boek te skryf nie. Gevolglik het hy geen dokumente bewaar of dagboek gehou nie. Hy dui egter nie aan waarom hy aanvanklik só ’n besluit geneem het nie, of waarom hy toe van plan verander het en wel vanaf Desember 1990 tot Januarie 1992 sy outobiografiese “oorlogsherinneringe” op skrif gestel het nie. In die “Voorwoord” van *Dié wat Gewen het*, bevestig Geldenhuys dat hy geen navorsing gedoen het of ’n geskiedenis wou skryf nie:

Die storie gaan oor die lewe. Dit is ’n storie oor mense, oor vyande en vriende: mense wat die pad gebaan het en mense wat die pad geloop het; oor groot mense wat klein is en oor klein menses wat groot is.

Hy maak dus op sy geheue staat wanneer hy oor die Bosoorlog en ander gebeure skryf. Hy skryf in ’n populêre trant en gee bloot sy eie belewenisse en standpunte weer.

Die eindproduk is ongelukkig onbevredigend, wat die kritiese leser en die student van militêre geskiedenis teleurgesteld en selfs geïrriteerd laat. ’n Mens verwag nou eenmaal véél meer van iemand wat jare lank intiem met die stryd in Namibië en Angola gemoeid was, en wat boonop hoof van die Suid-Afrikaanse Leer en daarna hoof van die SAW was. Die boek bied wel in ’n mate perspektief op die omstrede verhoudinge tussen die politici en die militêre magte, die onderhandelinge wat gevoer is, die propagandastryd tydens die oorlog, en werp lig op Geldenhuys se bestuurstyl en sy benadering as ’n ware “soldier’s soldier”.

Die gekose aanbiedingswyse raak egter nòg kant, nòg wal. Die boek is deurspek met staaltjies; iets wat die verloop van die “verhaal” versteur en meestal niks minder as irriterend is nie. Die boek moes veel beter gestruktureer gewees het, en as Geldenhuys dan nie ’n geskiedenis van die Namibiese Vryheidsoorlog kon of wou skryf nie, kon hy ten minste aan die leser ’n beter aanduiding van die gees en atmosfeer van dié stryd gegee het, soos beleef vanuit die kantoor van die Leër- en later Weermaghoof. Uiteraard beskik hy oor inligting wat hy om sekerheidsredes nie bekend kan maak nie, maar wat betref die verloop van die Namibiese Vryheidsoorlog soek ’n mens verniet in dié boek na waarlik nuwe insigte.

Dit is baie jammer dat generaal Geldenhuys, meer as ’n dekade nadat hy sy “oorlogsherinneringe” die eerste keer gepubliseer het, nie die teks grondig hersien en, waar nodig, aangepas en/of uitgebrei het nie. Wanneer openbare figure besluit om hul herinneringe te boek te stel, sal dit hulle loon om, indien nodig, ’n vaardige persoon te kry om hulle behulpsaam te wees met die opteken van hul herinneringe. Soos hierbo uitgewys, gaan die “nuwe” boek dus mank aan dieselfde gebreke waaraan die oorspronklike weergawe gely het. Die laaste woord oor die omstrede Namibiese Vryheidsoorlog en verbandhoudende konflikte in Suider-Afrika, is dus beslis nog nie gesprek nie. Dít moet nog behoorlik akademies, en dus ook histories-wetenskaplik en krygskundig nagevors en beskryf word, soos ook die rol wat Geldenhuys en ander militêre leiersfigure gespeel het. Baie werk lê nog en wag vir professionele historici in hierdie verband.

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Beer drinking as a microcosm for South African history

A. Kelk Mager, *Beer, Sociability, and Masculinity in South Africa*

UCT Press, Cape Town, 2010

232 pages

ISBN 978-1-91989-542-0

R235.00

Beer, Sociability, and Masculinity in South Africa by Anne Kelk Mager focuses on the history of beer drinking in South Africa by African and white South Africans from the mid-twentieth century to the present. The introduction gives a detailed historical overview of the drinking of alcohol in South Africa – an activity that has been inextricably associated with the social, cultural, economic and political history of the region. Colonial perceptions of the role of alcohol with regards to individual populations were ambivalent at best – on the one hand control over alcohol distribution generated significant revenue for the colonial state yet there existed the strong belief that Africans were particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of alcohol consumption which presented problems for social control.

The foundation of alcohol consumption among African drinkers in the twentieth century was the so-called Durban system, developed in the early twentieth century, which was later adopted nationally by the apartheid state. The Durban system was a municipal monopoly over beer drinking and the revenues derived from these municipal beer halls

was used to administer Africans in the urban areas – Africans were thus paying for their segregation.

Mager however moves beyond this oft-discussed aspect of the history of beer drinking in South Africa, focusing instead on the making of masculinity and the way in which sport and liquor were linked. Related to this is the social aspect of alcohol consumption, evident in the shebeens for instance. The 1961 lifting of the prohibition of liquor allowed for the increasing consumption of “clear beer”. From the colonial era “clear beer” or malt beer was associated with “civilisation” and distinguished from sorghum or “kaffir beer”. As such the consumption of “clear beer” symbolised the adoption of a more urbane identity and was linked to black aspirations. Underpinning the history of beer drinking in South Africa from the mid-twentieth century was the role of South African Breweries (SAB). This company linked itself with, and helped to define, the masculine culture of beer drinking through its advertising and support of sporting events, particularly black soccer tournaments and rugby matches drawing on tropes of white settler masculinity.

The first chapter, “Illicit Drinking, Prohibition, and Sociability in Apartheid’s Townships”, focuses on the illegal trade in liquor in the urban areas of South Africa, evident from the 1920s. This illegal trade increased dramatically in the middle of the twentieth century, coinciding with the formation of South Africa Breweries which had a virtual monopoly in the existing beer market and a keen desire to gain access to the black market. These factors were to have a dramatic impact on the culture of black consumers of alcohol.

Mager recreates the world of the shebeens in the first half of the century. Under the control of the almost mythological figure of the shebeen queen – the epitome of the financially independent woman who nevertheless employed young women in order to attract male customers – shebeens formed the locale for social drinking. This however only applied to the more “respectable” establishment. In others, men simply drank to experience the mind-numbing effects of intoxication. The romanticised sociable version of shebeen culture was however still a strong one with the combination of music, dance and alcohol.

In 1961 with the formation of the Republic of South Africa and its subsequent withdrawal from the Commonwealth, South Africa became increasingly isolated. The market for alcohol was now confined to the local level. Within this context, the prohibition on black drinkers was lifted and they were now able to legally purchase liquor from municipal liquor traders in the townships. The year 1961 also marked the events of Sharpeville and the increased state repression that followed. Within the tense climate, the lifting of prohibition was portrayed as an example of state magnanimity, the state’s desire to capitalise on the lucrative black market for alcohol notwithstanding. State revenue derived from liquor taxation contributed to the development of the Bantustan system, an extension of the Durban system under apartheid.

The lifting of prohibition and the availability of legal sources of liquor did little to affect the trade of shebeens. There was however a tremendous increase in the consumption of “clear beer” bringing with it increased levels of intoxication and all the associated social ills. Traditional brewing declined as ready liquor supplies were available for purchase from the municipal bottle stores. This contributed to the increased number of drinking establishments headed by men, with shebeens no longer the sole preserve of

the shebeen queen. SAB was able to capitalise on this period of change and growth, illegally supplying black shebeens and white liquor traders. Here, Mager is able to skilfully interweave the political, social and economic aspects of beer drinking in the townships of South Africa.

The emphasis, however, is on the economic sphere in “If you Want to Run with the Big Dogs: Beer Wars, Competition, and Monopoly”. The decades of the 1960s and 1970s saw the National Party government treading a fine line between appeasing Afrikaner interests while supporting those of big business. Afrikaner nationalists opposed English domination over the beer industry, epitomised by the London-based SAB. The decade of the 1950s had seen SAB’s expansion towards a beer monopoly which had enjoyed no small support amongst National Party members, with South Africans forming the majority of the company’s shareholders. The 1970s however, saw the attempt to challenge the dominance of SAB in the form of Louis Luyt Breweries which went on to form a conglomerate with Anton Rupert’s Oude Meester brewery. Luyt and Rupert portrayed themselves as representing Afrikaner defiance of the English monopoly of SAB but internal conflict led to Luyt buying out Rupert and going on to form Intercontinental Breweries (ICB). ICB found it an uphill battle competing with the market dominance of SAB and was eventually incorporated into SAB, giving the latter a virtual monopoly over the beer industry. SAB extended this through the process of vertical integration, controlling and owning the outlets that were selling its products.

The third chapter, “Beer Advertising: Making Markets and Imagining Sociability in a Divided Society”, focuses on SAB’s brand advertising from the 1960s, culminating in the diasporic creation of nationalism and masculinity in the 1990s. From the outset in the 1960s, beer drinking was portrayed as a masculine enterprise drawing upon the tropes of sport, heritage and the golden glow of nostalgia in its creation of a mythic past. The social spaces included rugby and braais, silencing the reality of the segregation of these spaces, not just in terms of race but of gender as well. The spaces for women drinkers were those that were dependent on and under the control of men. Calvinist morality prevailed as women were showed imbibing in the social spaces of “the swimming pool and the patio” (p 51). Just as SAB’s advertising drew upon these stereotypical notions of settler masculinity, a similar ideology underpinned the interaction between drinking and black masculinity. In the shebeens beer was made available in quart bottles emphasising the social nature of drinking and drawing upon the stereotypical image of “the gourd passed around in the rural homestead” (p 52).

Yet SAB was able to stay abreast of change and, in some ways, prescient in its ability to detect. From the mid-1970s, a small fraction of the purchase price of Lion Lager was donated towards the purchase of schoolbooks in the townships, sending sales soaring. A decade later the myth of Charles Glass was used to incorporate English, Afrikaner and black beer drinkers within a male social world. Women, however, remained excluded – Lisa Glass, the actual brewer of beer, was relegated to a supporting role. As the decade drew to a close, Ohlsson’s Lager conceded changing black identities, emphasising a new generation of drinkers and black aspirations, “a black university student, a black musician, and a white youth” (p 57). Its success was however limited. In the post-1994 period of democracy, sport became a unifying factor along with its association with beer drinking. SAB advertisements took on a cast of inclusive nationalism. Mager argues however that although the character of advertising of SAB reflected changing times, it retained its core elements of nostalgia and masculinity.

The golden haze of nostalgia evident in SAB advertising campaigns did not adequately conceal the adverse effects of increased drinking which forms the subject of the subsequent chapter, “Tomorrow will Also be a Hard Day: Antisocial Drinking Cultures and Alcoholic Excess”. Mager demonstrates that from the colonial era until the twentieth century, notions of alcoholism were imbued with the dominant racial and political ideologies. The perception of black drinkers as being predisposed to drinking to excess and hence largely immune from alcoholism meant that little state resources were allocated to their rehabilitation from alcoholism. Two contradictory views of black alcoholism prevailed – the first was that it was a product of social conditions. The apartheid state however espoused the alternative view – black alcoholism was a product of their “deviant” tendencies and hence criminalised. The homelands reflected the adverse effects of increased drinking: here drinking lost its social character, the numbers of female drinkers expanded and alcoholism became more prevalent amongst the educated elites. In the urban areas, the growth of informal settlements and poverty contributed to an increase in alcoholism and with it, domestic violence against women and children. Little help was available for black alcoholics and associations such as SANCA and AA were limited in their ability to deal with growing black alcoholism.

The increase in drinking did not go unchallenged, particularly with the progressively more vigorous political activism of the 1970s, the subject of “Remaking the Old Order: Beer, Power, and Politics”. Generational conflict was evident as young black students, influenced by black consciousness, pointed out the negative effects of drinking alcohol and attacked shebeens. Older men were angered by their presumption and attempt to interfere. Shebeens too attempted to don the guise of respectability, forming associations in order to petition for liquor licences which the state, unwilling and reluctant, eventually granted. SAB too was not immune from the turmoil, facing waves of union action in the 1980s. In the sporting arena, the implementation of the sports boycott meant that SAB – with its emphasis on sport as being so integral to masculine identity – sponsored rebel tours to South Africa which ultimately ignominiously collapsed. They did however, continue their association with sport, sponsoring black soccer and emphasising the association with rugby, beer drinking and white masculinity, particularly amongst the students of UCT and Stellenbosch University with their strong rugby culture.

The period after 1994 forms the subject of the remaining chapters. Heritage became an increasingly important aspect of making and re-making South African identity and SAB positioned itself in a particular manner in this regard, distancing itself from its association with the Durban system. A visitors’ centre was built in Johannesburg and a national monument was created in Cape Town. Both emphasised the European tradition of beer drinking and brewing of which SAB was very much part. As Mager points out, the heritage of SAB evident here was “white, male, and entrepreneurial” (p 118). Shebeen tours offered an alternative heritage but here too heritage was packaged in a way that stressed the romanticised vision of social drinking in the twentieth century. These tours were successful in areas where there was little competition, allowing shebeen owners to prevent a “static” vision of beer drinking in South Africa.

“Global Competition, World Class Manufacturing, and National Economic Restructuring” addresses SAB’s position in the global marketplace where, in terms of labour relations, the onus has been on skills development, thus emphasising the aspirations of the individual whilst undermining collective action. In terms of black

economic empowerment, SAB had little success in raising blacks to senior positions but were more successful in the encouragement of small business entrepreneurs.

Mager concludes with SAB's increasing prominence in the global sphere, culminating in its purchase of the American Miller Brewing Company, which opened up new international markets for the conglomerate. While the newly formed SABMiller was not awarded sponsorship of the FIFA World Cup in South Africa in 2010, they nevertheless supported the South African national team, a pattern that can be traced throughout their long history.

Anne Kelk Mager's *Beer, Sociability, and Masculinity in South Africa* successfully addresses the complex economic, social and political aspects of beer drinking in South Africa, moving beyond the early decades of the twentieth century – on which exhaustive work has been done – to give a coherent demonstration of the way in which the social activity of drinking beer is a microcosm for the history of South Africa in the twentieth century. Her work marks a fascinating contribution to the study of masculinity and culture in South Africa in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries while creating an opening for a more in-depth analysis of the ways in which masculine identities intersected with or were shaped by cultural and leisure activities.

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Story of idealism and courage

L. Carneson, *Red in the Rainbow: The Life and Times of Fred and Sarah Carneson*

Zebra Press, Cape Town, 2010
315 pp
ISBN 978-1-77022-085-0
R220.00

Fred and Sarah Carneson were prominent anti-apartheid activists from the late 1940s until the collapse of the apartheid state in 1990. They were also dedicated communists and fervently believed that international communism would unite the human race and build an equal, just and peaceful society for everyone. They were prepared to sacrifice themselves for this cause. As a result they did not hesitate to confront the might of the apartheid state. The title of the book reflects their political affiliation. Nelson Mandela referred to the new South Africa as the “rainbow nation” and for Lynn Carneson, her parents and fellow communists became the “red” in this rainbow, the colour symbolising communism.

Sarah Carneson (née Rubin) was born in Johannesburg in 1916, the child of Jewish parents who had fled tsarist Russia to escape anti-Semitism. Her parents were committed Marxist trade unionists and were founding members of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA). At a young age Sarah joined the CPSA. Fred was born in 1920 as the son of a railway worker in Cape Town and grew up in a large impoverished family. His decision to become a communist was, in contrast to Sarah, not an instinctive one because his father hated Stalin. Fred's conversion to communism began when he had to leave school at the age of fourteen to contribute to the family income. However, he never stopped learning. Through his insatiable reading he was introduced to Marxism

and joined the CPSA by the late 1930s. With the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, Fred immediately joined the army to fight fascism and saw combat duty in North Africa and Italy. Fred and Sarah, who had met in 1938, were married in 1943.

After demobilisation in 1945, Fred became the general secretary of the CPSA in the Western Cape. A year later he was a member of the party's Central Committee. He was also the manager, fund-raiser and occasional editor of the party's mouthpiece, the *Guardian*. The CPSA was a vehement critic of the Smuts government's segregationist policies, but had the protection of the rule of law. With the National Party (NP) in power after 1948, communists were at the mercy of the apartheid state in terms of the draconian Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 which declared the CPSA an illegal organisation. This meant that although Fred was elected with a large majority by the blacks of the Western Cape in terms of the Native Representatives Act of 1936 as their representative in the Cape Provincial Council in 1949, he was stripped of his seat in 1952. In 1953, Fred and Sarah were banned, prohibiting them from being members of a long list of organisations. The banning was extended in 1954, preventing them from being part of a gathering of more than two people while they were confined to a small part of Cape Town. The Carnesons' freedom was restricted without any recourse to the legal process. In 1956 Fred eventually had his day in court when as one of the accused in the Treason Trial, he was acquitted.

Sarah experienced prison when she was incarcerated in Roeland Street Prison without trial during the state of emergency between April and the end of August 1960 after the massacre at Sharpeville. Lynn Carneson, their daughter, is seemingly unaware that the Carneson family home, named Mount Pleasant, situated in Oranjezicht, Cape Town, was until 1941 the home of F.S. Malan, a leading Cape liberal who was imprisoned for a year in 1901 during the South African War. Comparing Malan's description of his time in Roeland Street Prison with Sarah's experience, one is struck by the fact that conditions and treatment of prisoners between 1901 and 1960 remained virtually unchanged.

By going into hiding, Fred escaped imprisonment during the state of emergency. He was fortunate to avoid the police sweep because Mount Pleasant was under permanent observation by the security police and was frequently raided to look for incriminating evidence – or simply to intimidate the family. On one occasion snipers, probably the security police, fired shots into the house at night. Lynn Carneson's descriptions of the effect of the police raids on her and her two much younger siblings, as well as the bullying and the ostracism they had to endure at the hands of fellow pupils and teachers because they were the children of communists and anti-apartheid activists, makes for harrowing reading. According to Lynn the horror, the fear and the grief of these years caused wounds that are deeply embedded in her soul.

Fred, despite being hounded by the security police, courageously continued to resist apartheid. He was eventually arrested, detained without trial and brutally tortured. In May 1966 he was sentenced to five years and nine months imprisonment for being a member of the banned Communist Party; for participating in the activities of the party; and for encouraging students to join an illegal organisation. He was, however, acquitted on the more serious charge of sabotage. Released in 1972, he joined Sarah and the children in London after they had left South Africa as exiles in the late 1960s. Here Fred, until the collapse of the apartheid state, played a leading role in the British Anti-Apartheid Movement. Back in Cape Town – they returned from exile in May 1991 – the

Carnesons were active in the Communist Party, but apart from their immediate family and former comrades their role in the anti-apartheid struggle was forgotten. Fred, knowing that he was terminally ill, asked Lynn to write his and Sarah's life story because he felt it should not be forgotten. He died on 8 September 2000.

The main weakness of most filial biographies is the inhibition of children dealing with parental flaws. *Red in the Rainbow* is, however, a warts-and-all biography because although Lynn Carneson clearly admired and loved her parents, she is not blind to their shortcomings. She writes candidly about Fred's heavy drinking, womanising, volcanic temper and her parents' volatile, but ultimately happy marriage. It is, however, odd that she makes no real attempt to explain why her idealistic parents were so blind to the tyranny of the Soviet Union. In 1939, Sarah followed the Moscow line in opposing South Africa's involvement in the Second World War against Nazi Germany, because it was a capitalist and an imperialistic war. This was at a time when the Soviet Union, allied to Nazi Germany, invaded and occupied eastern Poland, attacked Finland and annexed the Baltic republics. Not even Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin's crimes, or the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 and the execution of Imre Nagy in 1958, could shake the Carnesons' faith in communism and the Soviet Union. Their unquestioning loyalty was rewarded in 1974, six years after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the crushing of the Prague Spring, when they visited the Soviet Union as VIP guests of the government. The description of their stay at an opulent health spa, treated with caviar and champagne (did the Carnesons ever read George Orwell's *Animal Farm*?), makes for uncomfortable reading. It seemingly never entered their minds that while they were enjoying their champagne and caviar, dissidents in the Soviet Union and in its satellites were being harassed, tortured and imprisoned by the communist version of apartheid's security police. The Carnesons remained loyal supporters of the Soviet Union until its collapse in 1991, an event which left them saddened.

Lynn Carneson's failure to contextualise Fred and Sarah adequately is another weakness of the book. It is, for example, puzzling that she makes no attempt to explain what the system of white Native Representation entailed. The book is furthermore marred by an unfortunate error, namely that Dr Colin Steyn as the Minister of Justice, banned Fred in 1953. It is difficult to see how she made this glaring mistake because Steyn was certainly not in the government – he was a member of the United Party. In fact he spoke out, and voted against, the Suppression of Communism Act in parliament!

And yet, despite these flaws, *Red in the Rainbow* is an important contribution to the literature on the liberation struggle because it provides a window into the lives of a remarkable and heroic couple that sacrificed themselves for the ideal of a free and non-racial South Africa. The book furthermore sheds light on the complexity and ambiguity of life in the apartheid state. As an awaiting trial prisoner in Pollsmoor Prison, Fred had a very humane chief warder who did his utmost to provide some comforts for him. The warder's wife even provided him with portions from her Sunday meals. Then there is the integrity of Judge Corbett, who in convicting Fred expressed his respect for the sincerity of his political beliefs and in a hostile atmosphere, acquitted him on the charge of sabotage, restoring an anguished Lynn's faith in humanity.

With *Red in the Rainbow* Lynn fulfilled her father's wishes because her compelling biography will ensure that Fred and Sarah Carneson's heroic role in the struggle against apartheid will not be forgotten.

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Claiming a space in the historical narrative

A. Diesel (ed.), *Reclaiming the L-Word: Sappho's Daughters out in Africa*

Modjaji Books, Athlone, 2011

226 pp

ISBN 978-1-920397-28-9

R170.95

In *Reclaiming the L-Word: Sappho's Daughters out in Africa*, Alwyn Diesel offers an edited collection of essays that seeks to shed light on the variegated texture of lesbians' lived experiences in contemporary South African society. From the start of her introductory chapter, Diesel is explicit about the motivation that led her to commission these essays. She is concerned about the erasure of lesbians from mainstream historical narratives. She correctly notes that even after the increasing focus on excavating women's histories that accompanied the second wave of feminism, lesbians' stories remain vulnerable to elision in the work of feminist historians. Diesel expresses her discomfort with the marginalisation of lesbians' narratives without an attitude of blaming either historians in general or feminist historians in particular. On the contrary, she recognises the extent to which lesbians themselves have resorted to self-imposed censorship in their accounts of their own stories. If readers are looking for a finger of blame running through these essays, it invariably points to the patriarchal organisation of social structures and systems. Heteronormative assumptions, expectations and pressures flow from these patriarchal social configurations. These essays are for the most part not academic in the conventional sense and they do not contain extensive theoretical explanations. Yet, while many of the essays merely hint at the complex ways in which heteronormativity maps onto patriarchy, the perceptive and attentive reader will be able to trace how the confluence of these ideological structures shapes the experiences of the lesbians whose life narratives are recounted in this text.

Diesel's collection constitutes a valuable addition to work that South African scholars have done on researching so-called alternative sexualities. This research has been published in texts ranging from Mark Gevisser and Edwin Cameron's groundbreaking collection, *Defiant Desire: Gay and Lesbian Lives in South Africa* (1994), to Melissa Steyn and Mikki van Zyl's more recent, *The Price and the Prize: Shaping Sexualities in South Africa* (2009).²³ This latter work has gone some way to addressing an important shortcoming in much of the earlier research on homosexuality, namely the tendency to focus on the experiences of gay men while neglecting those of lesbians. Although Gevisser and Cameron's collection does contain some chapters that deal primarily with lesbians' experiences, the focus is undeniably on the narratives of gay men. Gay men's experiences are also presented in Robin Malan and Ashraf Johaardien's collection *Yes, I Am! Writing by South African Gay Men* (2010).²⁴ In her exclusive focus on lesbians' life stories, Diesel's collection is comparable to Ruth Morgan and Saskia Wieringa's *Tommy Boys, Lesbian Men*

23. M. Gevisser and E. Cameron (eds), *Defiant Desire: Gay and Lesbian Lives in South Africa* (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1994); M. Steyn and M. van Zyl (eds), *The Prize and the Price: Shaping Sexualities in South Africa* (HSRC Press, Cape Town, 2009).

24. R. Malan and A. Johaardien (eds), *Yes, I Am! Writing by South African Gay Men* (Junkets, Cape Town, 2010).

and *Ancestral Wives: Female Sex Practices in Africa* (2005).²⁵ Diesel includes a useful list of additional readings at the end of the text. I would add two texts to this list, namely Paul Germond and Steve de Gruchy's edited collection, *Aliens in the Household of God: Homosexuality and Christian Faith in South Africa* (1997); and *The Country we Want to Live in: Hate Crimes and Homophobia in the Lives of Black Lesbian South Africans*, by Nonhlanhla Mkhize, Jane Bennett, Vasu Reddy and Relebohile Moletsane.²⁶ These additions notwithstanding, the brevity of the list illustrates the relative paucity of same-sex research in a South African context. Texts, such as that of Diesel, which insist that lesbians' stories deserve to be told, published and disseminated, thus make a valuable contribution to existing documentation of lesbian lives and histories. GALA (the non-governmental organisation Gay and Lesbian Archives) articulates the importance of such projects in their slogan: "Without queer history, there is no queer pride". In her foreword, Dr Devarakshanam Govinden similarly points to the pernicious effects of ignoring one's history by quoting a poem from Lebogang Mashile's collection *In a Ribbon of Rhythm*: "Tell your story / Until your past stops tearing your present apart" (p ix). Such documentation is no simple task and it is certainly not for the fainthearted. In her acknowledgments, Diesel thanks her contributors for their bravery and, as the essays which discuss the issue of "corrective rape" so chillingly demonstrate, speaking out can in fact be a question of life or death.

The first essay, "Pulled out of the Closet and into my Family's Embrace", by Heidi van Rooyen, introduces the reader to a number of concerns that crop up in many of the following narratives, albeit in different guises and with different inflections. As the essay title suggests, she explores the importance of family in a lesbian's experience of coming out, whether that family constitutes a valuable support structure or a damaging locus of blame and resentment. As with most of the other authors' stories, Van Rooyen was surprised to find that her family's reaction fell overwhelmingly in the former category. Another point of similarity between this essay and many others in the collection can be found in Van Rooyen's sensitivity to the ways in which sexual orientation intersects with other aspects of identity, including race, class and religious identification. She perceptively illustrates the nuanced negotiations that many lesbians engage in to claim their lesbian identity without neglecting other, equally valuable and important aspects of their identities. In the second essay, the photographer and gender activist Zanele Muholi offers a moving tribute to her late mother in "I have Truly Lost a Woman I Loved". Muholi, who is no stranger to controversy, was the subject of considerable media coverage last year when the news broke that the then Minister of Arts and Culture, Lulu Xingwana, walked out of an exhibition of Muholi's photographs because she found the images of lesbians immoral.²⁷ As in the case of Van Rooyen, Muholi's essay recounts her memories of family members who have been accepting and supportive. In this narrative about a mother who was a domestic worker for 42 years with the white Harding family, the reader can never forget that experiences and identities are shaped by the manner in which gender, sexual orientation, race and class intersect.

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25. R. Morgan and S. Wieringa (eds), *Tommy Boys, Lesbian Men and Ancestral Wives: Female Sex Practices in Africa* (Jacana, Johannesburg, 2005).
26. P. Germond and S. de Gruchy (eds), *Aliens in the Household of God: Homosexuality and Christian Faith in South Africa* (David Philip, Cape Town, 1997); N. Mkhize, J. Bennett, V. Reddy and R. Moletsane, *The Country We want to Live in: Hate Crimes and Homophobia in the Lives of Black Lesbian South Africans* (HSRC Press, Cape Town, 2010).
27. For a discussion of the incident, as well as Xingwana's response, see L. van Wyk, "Xingwana: Homophobic Claims 'Baseless, Insulting'", *Mail and Guardian online*, <http://mg.co.za/article/2010-03-05-xingwana-homophobic-claims-baseless-insulting> (accessed 28 September 2011).

Although many of the essays focus on encouraging examples of acceptance, others contain quite startling accounts of homophobia and ignorance that remind the reader just how far South Africa still needs to go to make the Bill of Rights a substantive reality in the lives of gay people. For example, in Addie Linley's essay "A Life In-between" she recalls how her father insisted that there were no gay men in the South African armed forces during either the Desert War in North Africa or the Second World War (p 102). In Keba Sebetoane's "Who are you to Tell me Who I am?", the author relays how the man who raped her prefaced the assault by telling her: "Tonight I'm going to change you, and from now on you're my girlfriend" (p 92). Her description of her subsequent treatment at the hands of the police, medical and legal professions, leaves the reader with a profound sense of despondency. The reality of sexual violence against lesbians is further emphasised by the fact that many of these women still feel compelled to write their stories under pseudonyms. In the final essay called "Thinking through Lesbian Rape", Muholi calls for a "reciprocal dialogue" between readers and herself as the author of this essay because, she says, "mostly I just need to talk things through and be heard" (p 189). This need to have one's experiences and histories validated becomes a leitmotif throughout the collection and Diesel's text makes a valuable contribution by providing a space where lesbians' stories, in all their rich complexity, are the focal point.

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The politics of emotion, knowledge and identity

J.D. Jansen, *Knowledge in the Blood: Confronting Race and the Apartheid Past*
UCT Press, Cape Town, 2009

337 pp
ISBN 978-1-91989-520-8
R255.00

"Afrikaner, *quo vadis?*" The former prime minister of the Union of South Africa, D.F. Malan, asked this question during the inauguration of the Voortrekker Monument on 16 December 1949. "Where are you going?" This question was seen by the prolific historian, F.A. van Jaarsveld, as central to the understanding of Afrikaner identity, for the answer is shaped by the *choices* made during times of crisis. The consequences of these choices shape how people react to a crisis and this *reaction* inevitably becomes part and parcel of identity. If we follow this line of thinking, and agree with Hermann Giliomee that apartheid was a radical survival plan, a choice born in a time of crisis, then Afrikaner identity is inescapably linked to apartheid. Consequently, in a world which has proclaimed apartheid to be a crime against humanity, the question raised by Malan remains crucial to many who still call themselves "Afrikaners".

I deliberately refer to the *quo vadis* question in the inherited sacred history ("heilsgeskiedenis") of the Afrikaner, because it highlights the essence of Jonathan Jansen's book, *Knowledge in the Blood: Confronting Race and the Apartheid Past*. As a black South African educator, who lived under the realities of apartheid, Jansen emphatically places the experience of educational transformation in post-apartheid South Africa in sociopolitical and historical context. He particularly addresses the way in which white Afrikaner university students react to the challenge post-apartheid South Africa poses to their inherited racialised identity. The legacy of apartheid is a bitter pill to swallow, especially for those most associated with the term. Jansen sees how transformation

unwittingly contributes to the no-man's-land of identity in which so many Afrikaner students find themselves. The result is both a daring and bold account of “the struggle for change and what it does to people”, referring especially to “how white Afrikaner students experience this change and what it means for them in terms of remembering an inherited past and acting on an uncertain future” (p 19).

Jansen's book is essentially about identity and the nature of knowledge. On the whole the book can be seen as a must-read for teachers and lecturers who are confronted with the challenges of the post-apartheid classroom as well as the realities of institutional transformation. The book is also autobiographical in nature because Jansen locates himself in the midst of events described in the book. He is no stranger in the contemporary political and educational landscape of South Africa. Jansen's inspiration for *Knowledge in the Blood* came mostly from his time as Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria (2000–2007). It is, however, the actions he took in relation to the “Reitz four” as vice-chancellor of the University of the Free State which made him a household name in South Africa. Jansen is a provocative and charismatic opinion-setter and his book is not only accessible to colleagues in institutions of higher education, but written in such a way as to embrace the realities of a wider audience.

Knowledge in the Blood is a well-written piece of work and a very stimulating read. Jansen draws on a variety of resources, including the depth of his personal experience as an educator. With candor he relates the historical course of apartheid and the impact of it on young white Afrikaner students. The account of his experiences as the first black Dean of an all-white Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria provides thought-provoking insights into the dynamics of how people are affected by the legacy of apartheid. Moreover, he also assesses the impact of this on the shaping of “new” institutional cultures in universities. I was especially surprised by how I could relate my own experiences in Potchefstroom with the ultra-conservative setting he describes at the University of Pretoria.

Through addressing important questions in his narrative, Jansen makes the book essential reading for educators in the post-apartheid educational setting. One of the most dominant is the question of how to bring transformation to institutions of higher learning (changing students, staff, institutional cultures, racial and gender representativeness) without ostracising existing incumbents or playing one group off against the other. How do we mend the broken lines? He devotes considerable energy in providing possible solutions.

Jansen boldly explains that we cannot just assume that the introduction of logical and rational knowledge into the university curriculum will transform and change the minds of the staff and students in divided communities. This is because a curriculum is not just a text inscribed in the course syllabus for a particular qualification, “but an understanding of knowledge encoded in the dominant beliefs, values and behaviors deeply embedded in all aspects of institutional life” (p 172). He consequently acknowledges the need for engaging emotionally with students in order to address the complex problem of “knowledge in the blood”. This he quite eloquently describes as knowledge embedded in the complex spiritual, emotional, psychological, and political lives of a community; knowledge which comes from the heart as much as from the head; knowledge that is habitual and routinised; knowledge that is emphatic and does not tolerate ambiguity, built on the dead certainty given by its authority through a political and teleological order that authorised such knowledge as singular, sanctified, sure (p 171).

Therefore it is important to engage and interrupt white Afrikaner students' received knowledge, for they too are victims of apartheid. The post-conflict pedagogy Jansen proposes not only requires the setting of disruptive knowledge in a critical dialogue between black and white students, but it also emphasises the role of teachers in confronting students with "their own logics of race and identity; and to engage the new knowledge presented (the Apartheid Museum, for example) through reexamination of the old knowledge given (the Voortrekker Monument, as the counterpoint example)" (p 266). It would also mean juxtaposing common humanity with racialised identities *in and outside the classroom* through emotional engagement with students who sometimes experience an extreme sense of anxiety and uncertainty in a rapidly changing South Africa.

Addressing identity is a daring enterprise. Like most books dealing with a certain cultural group, *Knowledge in the Blood* does not sufficiently problematise Afrikaner identity and consequently lends itself towards oversimplification. Despite the major tendencies of social thought Jansen distinguishes in Afrikaner circles, and his own aversion towards essentialism, the book sometimes makes gross generalisations about Afrikaners which lead to essentialist statements where Jansen transgresses his own rule. One gets the idea that he sometimes sees Afrikaners as a wholly homogeneous community with clearly defined boundaries. What about Afrikaners who actively participated in the struggle against apartheid? Afrikaners who voted for the Progressive Party? The consequences of this simplification can lead to the perpetuation of a twisted "inherited identity" deriving from Jansen's description of the "inherited knowledge" passed onto the first generation of post-apartheid Afrikaner students. Thus, the acknowledgement of the importance of personal experiences and individual agency are both strength and weakness in the book.

Despite the above mentioned critical comments, *Knowledge in the Blood* attests to the beautiful possibilities standing before South African educators today, to not only change our students, but to also be changed by them. The possibility of change is inherent in the "blood" and, similar to the healing effects of a real blood transfusion, the transfusion of new knowledge can overcome the authority of received knowledge. Thus, the book is also a testament to the notion that identity is not as fixed as Van Jaarsveld would have had it. This notion changes the whole concept of the *quo vadis* question in that the transformation of racialised identities in South Africa may well produce hope instead of a crisis if it is built on the kind of leadership and understanding revealed by academics like Jonathan Jansen.

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