Book Reviews

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Boekresensies

Collection of chapters at the cutting edge of genocide studies

Mohamed Adhikari (ed.), Genocide on Settler Frontiers: When Hunter Gatherers and Commercial Stock Farmers Clash

Cape Town, UCT Press, 2014 360 pp ISBN 978-191989-568-0 R402.00

Mohamed Adhikari's collection is at the cutting edge of genocide studies. It represents the efforts of a group of scholars from across the globe to revise an outdated, crude and phenomenologically useless model of genocide as simply an ideological crime, defined only by mass killing. This is an image largely based itself on a crude rendering of the Holocaust. In its place we have a complex reorienting of genocide as a process inextricably linked to colonialism. Or to put it another way, in our increasingly global age it forces us to think about the historic and indeed ongoing links between genocide and globalisation. As such, this is an urgent work that demands our attention.

The volume begins with Adhikari's own introductory survey on "the genocidal impetus behind commercial stock-farmer invasions of hunter gatherer territories" in southern Africa, Australia and beyond. Adhikari makes it clear that commercial stock-farmers had a devastating impact on indigenous peoples from southern Africa to the Queensland frontier. Central to this analysis is the observation that it was not simply access to the land that drove destruction, but the particular uses of the land (and the need for vast swathes of it) on the part of commercial stock-farmers and in particular, that they were driven "primarily by profit" (p 3). In doing so, Adhikari is crucially drawing links between the birth of modernity and the destruction of indigenous peoples. He writes that the "privatisation and commodification of natural resources, especially land, a defining characteristic of capitalist economies, undermined foraging societies fundamentally" (p 9). Scholars such as Damien Short would argue that such a destructive relationship continues to this day.¹

Adhikari also argues that stock farming societies were commonly particularly phobic towards indigenous peoples. These were often isolated societies on the colonial frontiers. They had little need of indigenous labour, just land, and were therefore often particularly threatened by indigenous resistance (or at least imagined

See for example D. Short, Redefining Genocide: Settler Colonialism, Social Death and Ecocide (Zed Books, London, forthcoming in 2016).

that they were). In drawing links between at least the fear of resistance and genocide, Adhikari follows scholars such as Dirk Moses and Tony Barta, who have pointed to the inherent genocidal potential of settler colonialism. Ultimately, both huntergatherer society and the colonial societies that threatened to displace them at times understood that they were literally engaged in an existential struggle for survival. Adhikari does not go as far as to label settler colonialism *necessarily* genocidal but "that in cases where commercial stock farmers invaded the lands of foraging societies it was generally so" (p 29).

Following Adhikari, many of the scholars grouped together here demonstrate settler colonialism was indeed not always immediately genocidal. When settlers required indigenous labour then destruction did not defy the logic of capital. However, over a longer period settler societies did tend towards the destruction of hunter-gatherer societies. Indeed, Ann Curthoys offers an analysis of Western Australia that considers the relationship between labour and genocide and finds that labour was not always the alternative to destruction. After all as Curthoys argues "economic exploitation may itself become a means of effecting genocide" (p 211). It could certainly be a means of breaking apart indigenous communities and cultures and therefore hastening their destruction. I was particularly struck by the quotation from a Western Australia newspaper that begins Curthoys' chapter. In this extract it is claimed precisely that Western Australia would not be as destructive as other Australian colonies, because in WA they needed Aboriginal labour. It is striking therefore how far these narratives can endure and how far the destructive impact of settlement was a matter of public conversation.

In some ways there is a tension within the volume on what actually constitutes genocide. The book is arranged into a series of case studies (not all of which there is room to mention here) that concentrate on South Africa and Australia but also confront North American examples. Some contributors embrace a more wide-ranging idea of genocide that incorporates attritional cultural destruction and some do not. Adhikari himself would appear to be in the latter category. He gives us a neat précis of his work on the South African experience, which argues that the Cape San experienced genocide at Dutch hands, but that British rule was more benign and less destructive. This has always struck me as a problematic analysis because the British appeared to continue a destructive relationship with the Cape San, although with less intensity (however massacres did continue for example in the 1850s). Jared McDonald's essay here appears to confirm that the genocidal destruction of Cape San identity continued after British occupation. Even without lethal violence, therefore, Dutch and British colonisation might both be argued to be aspects of a genocidal process. It seems to me that British settler colonialism, as much as Dutch, could be argued to be a part of what Adhikari describes as the "intentional, even consciously desire, outcome of a sustained eradicatory drive rooted in Cape settler society's vision of itself, its future and the nature of humanity" especially when one considers the litany of examples here (p 59). Of course, this disagreement might in the end come down to the extent to which scholars have not managed to agree upon a definition of the slippery notion of cultural genocide. It is a strength of this volume that it allows discourse over such issues.

While not the focus of *Genocide on Settler Frontiers* per se, for this reader the central issue is the degree to which it might be possible to delineate and define the role of genocide in the construction of the British world – in which the definitional conundrum outlined above is crucial. As Nigel Penn outlines in his comparative essay, British policy was contradictory. The humanitarian impulses of an Empire that set itself against the slave trade appeared to militate against genocide – and it was not just in Tasmania that London wished to avoid racial destruction to protect its image. And yet in both South Africa and Australia, British settler society at the very least assumed (and anticipated) that hunter-gatherer communities would become extinct.

At the same time, both in the Cape and Australia, colonial communities dealt with indigenous resistance with similar ferocity and in ways that appeared to be more straight-forwardly genocidal (if using a definition that insists on mass killing as a defining feature). The commandos that Nigel Penn describes as pursuing the Cape San certainly appear to bear some resemblance to the mounted police forces that pursued indigenous peoples especially on the Queensland frontier in the later nineteenth century. In Penn's words, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that genocide was "structural to settler colonialism". What is more, despite the protestations of London, it appears it was something structural to British settler colonialism at that.

As such, if globalisation and genocide are linked, then the globalisation described here is a very British affair. Lyndall Ryan identifies the role of the globalisation of British wool production in genocide in both Tasmania and what was to become Victoria. As Tony Barta argues in his chapter on the American Plains frontier "everywhere in the world colonised by British settlers, land reserved for the indigenous owners was regarded as no better than an unproductive lair of wild beasts" (p 233). This was the case whether ruled from London or granted self-government. Sidney Harring describes a treaty process with First Nations on the Canadian prairies which had at its core "the removal of First Nations to reserves where they were supposed to adopt an agricultural way of life" and as such in which their cultural survival would be threatened (p 271). While not the same, evidently similar policies were adopted in Australian colonies. Such removals were part of a process of genocide.

Harring describes how such an analysis is vehemently rejected in Canadian public discourse today. And while the idea of genocide has more traction in Australian society, it still remains a marginal thesis that is rejected in the mainstream. This is hardly surprising; there is a gap between scholarly and public discourse around so many topics. However, what is striking for me is the degree to which the idea of genocide is so marginalised among scholars of the British Empire. To suggest that the British had a genocidal impact anywhere is controversial and often rejected outright. To suggest that the British had a generally genocidal impact in the construction of the

Anglo world would be regarded as crack-pot among some imperial historians. And yet, reading Mohamed Adhikari's ground breaking collection it is impossible to escape the reading that indeed, in a variety of ways, the British exported genocide across the globe.

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Micro-history mastery

Nigel Penn, Murderers, Miscreants and Mutineers: Early Colonial Cape Lives

Jacana Media, Auckland Park, 2015 288 pp ISBN 978-1-4314-2211-1 R257.00

Murderers, Miscreants and Mutineers marks the long awaited and much anticipated sequel to Nigel Penn's popular Rogues, Rebels and Runaways, published in 1999. There is an important caveat, however, for those who are familiar with Penn's canon over the past fifteen-odd years: five of the six chapters that appear in the work have been published before as journal articles. Even so, it is pleasing that the story of Johannes Seidenfaden – rogue missionary extraordinaire – has finally seen the light of day in chapter 6, which marks his first published appearance. By bringing this collection together between the same covers, the author has provided a useful means by which to reflect on the state of Cape history and the ways in which the field has evolved since the publication of Rogues, Rebels and Runaways.

As Penn notes in his Introduction to *Murderers, Rogues* was published at a time when he felt it was necessary to defend the use of both narrative, or detailed story-telling, and micro-history in the delivery of academic analyses of the Cape's colonial past. Thanks in large part to his own work since then, this is no longer the case. The value that these techniques can add to our understanding of the complex social fabric that existed at the Cape in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has since become well established. Cape history experienced a new wave of dynamism from the early 1990s onwards, as the field came to embrace the influence of the cultural and literary turn. Before then, themes relating to slavery, Khoesan oppression and dispossession, and the advance of the frontier held sway.

Thereafter, historians began to produce work exploring how identity was performed, managed and contested. In the process, the Cape has emerged as a far more complex social setting than previously understood. The former emphasis on masters and their servants and slaves has shifted to include other categories as well: sailors, soldiers, VOC employees, and knechts, as well as rogue missionaries who did not meet the expectations of their missionary societies, nor those of polite, settler society (members of each category feature in the book). We now know that notions of

honour and status regulated individual behaviour and interpersonal relationships in and across social categories during both the VOC and British colonial periods; though the British "regarded themselves as more humanitarian than their Dutch predecessors" and "inched towards" a more inclusive society, which in principle, at least, aspired to equal protection for all the Cape's inhabitants under the rule of law, as revealed in chapter 5 (p x).

In a society so engrossed with the performance of hierarchy and identity via the media of ceremony, dress, entertainment, housing, and punishment, and so concerned with the proper management of boundaries of belonging, instances of deviance prove revealing. It is for this reason that Penn's attention has been drawn to "outsiders": those individuals who found themselves on the margins of Cape society; non-conformists motivated by rage, passion or both, who placed themselves beyond "conventional behaviour" and in doing so, fell foul of social norms and ran into trouble with the law. The author rightly states that "we learn most about a society's cultural assumptions by a careful examination of moments of rupture" (p xii). Therein lies the value of micro-history and Penn's mastery when it comes to the craft is on ample display in this volume.

The book bears the typical markers of the author's work: exhaustive archival research and sublime story-telling. Each chapter explores characters caught up in moments of deviance – usually of the sexual or violent varieties – and the ways in which their discordant lives unsettled and challenged the strictures of the Cape's social fabric. Those acquainted with Penn's work should purchase this publication for the captivating chapter on Seidenfaden. Everyone else should read it for the enthralling tales of sex and violence it contains and which illuminate the workings of honour and status in regulating (un)belonging in Cape colonial society.

Jared McDonald University of the Free State

Gepaste huldeblyk aan 'n werklik begaafde Afrikaanse skrywer

Hermann Giliomee (samest.), Buhr van die Bokveld: "'n Sprankelende Intelligensie"

Africana Uitgewers, Kaapstad, 2015 176 pp ISB 978-620-66613-8 R180.00

Met *Buhr van die Bokveld* bring Hermann Giliomee hulde aan die werk van Johann Buhr, een van Afrikaans se flinkste joernaliste in die jare net na Afrikaans se verheffing tot ampstaal in 1925. Giliomee doen egter baie meer as net dít, want vir Jan Alleman is 'n naam soos Johann Buhr in die eerste plek dalk nog onbekend. Wat hierdie boek dan inderwaarheid vermag, is om 'n minder bekende, maar ongetwyfeld

werklik begaafde skrywer se werk weer af te stof en erkenning te gee. Verder bied hierdie werk ook 'n insiggewende blik op die Afrikaanse joernalistiek in die eerste paar dekades van die twintigste eeu. Hopelik geniet dit die aandag en waardering onder hedendaagse lesers soos wat Giliomee se bedoeling is, want Buhr se skerp skryfwerk is dit vir seker werd.

Hierdie bloemlesing bestaan uit 'n goed gebalanseerde verskeidenheid van Buhr se toesprake en briewe, artikels en essays, sowel as kortverhale. Op hierdie manier wys Giliomee hoe Buhr soveel meer as slegs 'n joernalis was. Sy skryftalent het verskeie lae wat die leser so deur die loop van die boek wegskil. In die eerste instansie was Johan Buhr 'n skerpsinnige joernalis. Sy artikels vir Die Burger en Huisgenoot spreek van 'n nuuskierige skrywer wat meer as net verslag doen - hy het in die aard en diepte van die storie belang gestel. Sy drie Huisgenoot artikels, "Die Verleidelikheid van 'n Diamant" staan in hierdie verband veral uit. Hierin beskryf Buhr in groot detail hoe die wêreld van onwettige diamanthandel in Namakwaland werk. Hy vertel vermaaklike staaltjies oor gelukkige en ongelukkige diamanthandelaars en verduidelik hoe sekuriteit, of die gebrek daaraan, op 'n myn werk. Hy verduidelik die impak van die ontdekking van diamante en als wat daarop gevolg het op die dorpe in die omgewing. Hy maak die leser wys oor die fynere kunsies van onwettige delwery sowel as hoe die regering van die tyd die onwettige handel probeer stuit het. Einde ten laaste verspeel Buhr nie die kans om die moraliteit van die situasie aan te spreek nie. "Maar ook my storie is uit. Ons is weer waar ons was. Ons verdien weer ons brood in die sweet van ons aanskyn, wat, as jy daaroor nadink, miskien nog die beste manier is om daaraan te kom" (p 89).

Die vermoë om 'n goeie onderhoud te voer is sekerlik 'n eienskap waaroor enige joernalis wat sy sout werd is, moet beskik, en in Buhr se tyd seker al te meer. Die detail waarmee hy die toneelspeler Paul de Groot se lewensverhaal beskryf, getuig daarvan dat Buhr beide die regte vrae moes vra en sy ore fyn moes spits. Die gemak waarmee hy De Groot se reise tussen Europa en die Ooste, Hollywood en Suid-Afrika verduidelik, sal die leser laat dink dat dit Buhr se eie verhaal is. Of dit 'n artikel of 'n toespraak is, 'n brief of 'n kortverhaal, Buhr se humor lê nooit ver onder die oppervlak nie. In sy inleiding noem Giliomee hoe Markus Viljoen, gevierde redakteur van Die Huisgenoot vir Buhr beskryf as 'n gebore humoris wat snaaks kon wees sonder om dit selfs te bedoel. En hoe akkuraat is hierdie beskrywing nie? Selde gaan 'n vertelling verby sonder dat Buhr 'n spot of 'n tong-in-die-kies opmerking soomloos daarin weef. In Desember 1926 het Buhr Generaal Hertzog se treinrit van Kaapstad na Pretoria tot op Kimberley meegemaak en vir Die Burger daaroor verslag gelewer. Met die stop op elke dorp het hy geskryf oor die verrigtinge daar – hoe die geselskap ontvang is, wie almal kom groet het en dies meer. Buhr het die stop op Dassieklip se stasie droog beskryf. "Hier het niks gebeur nie; ook nog nooit tevore nie" (p 41). Buhr se grappige vergelykings sorg ook gereeld vir 'n skelm glimlag. "Soos 'n regte oustudent op 'n reünie met gewone studente, voel hy soos die spook van 'n eerste eggenoot in die slaapkamer van sy vrou en haar twede (sic) man" (p 61). Of, "op sy beste is die poetsbakker soos 'n lelike sangeres: baie beter om iets van te hoor as van te sien" (p 76).

Sommige van Buhr se kortverhale, 'n genre waarvoor hy minder bekend is as vir sy joernalistieke werk, is ook vermaaklik snaaks. Vergelykings soos hierbo genoem kruip in die oopte weg en die humoristiese wendings laat die leser soms hardop lag. In hierdie opsig staan Buhr se werk geensins terug vir meer bekende kortverhaalskrywers soos byvoorbeeld Herman Charles Bosman nie. Net soos Buhr die leser met party van sy verhale laat grinnik, kan hy met sommige ander meer ernstige kwessies aanspreek. "Die drie ryk susters" het byvoorbeeld as tema die stryd tussen aardse besitting versus ware geluk, terwyl "Gekuier oor die Jordaan" van die mens se fassinasie met die dooies spreek.

Van die ander kortverhale wat in hierdie bloemlesing vervat is, is rekonstruksies van historiese verhale of intriges. Hiermee word Buhr se vaardighede en talent as skrywer van letterkunde belig. Dit bring my by seker die belangrikste gewaarwording wat die leser met hierdie boek maak. Johann Buhr was baie meer as slegs 'n skerp joernalis. Hy was 'n *skrywer*. Sy skrywes, of dit 'n brief, artikel, essay of verhaal was, het substansie gehad. Sy werke is met 'n kunstige hand in lae verpak – boeiende styl, skerp humor, fyn detail en 'n nugtere insig.

As joernalis het Buhr homself aktief met die bevordering van die Afrikaanse taal en kultuur bemoei. In sy agtal artikels oor die eerste Afrikaanse beroepstoneel in 1927 maan hy byvoorbeeld die publiek om die geselskap te ondersteun. "Die algemene publiek kan dit doen deur een of tweemaal (sic) per jaar, wanneer die geselskap omkom, vir hulle eie stigting en genoeë die opvoerings by te woon. Is dit te veel gevra?" (p 50) Hy skryf verder dat hierdie toneelgeselskap "inderdaad geweldig baie vir ons [kan] beteken. Hulle het meer geleenthede as enige joernalis, skrywer of skoolmeester vir die verspreiding en bevordering van ons spreektaal en die opwekking van ons eie belangstelling daarin, vir die verbetering van ons volkssmaak en vir die handhawing van die eenvormigheid van ons spreektaal" (p 57). Buhr het nie net self 'n bydrae tot die Afrikaanse taal en kultuur as joernalis en skrywer gemaak nie, maar hy wou ook hê dat sy lesers deel moes word van die projek. Met Buhr van die Bokveld wys Giliomee lesers nie slegs hoe goeie Afrikaanse joernalistiek in sy jong dae gelyk het nie, maar hy bring ook hulde aan 'n skrywer wie, indien hy langer gelewe het, moontlik 'n groter plek in die geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse letterkunde sou beklee.

Wouter de Wet Universiteit van die Vrystaat

A nuanced exploration of the Cape Colony's psychiatry system

Sally Swartz, Homeless Wanderers: Movement and Mental Illness in the Cape Colony in the Nineteenth Century

UCT Press, Cape Town, 2015 224 pp ISBN 978-1-77582-082-6 R220.00

Sally Swartz's Homeless Wanderers: Movement and Mental Illness in the Cape Colony in the Nineteenth Century, explores the history of insanity in the Cape Colony and in extension the British Empire between 1890 and 1910. This was a period of massive social change due to the rise of immigration, and as will be shown in this review, policing of the insane was central to sustaining colonial settler identity. Thus, in 1890, the Cape Colony restructured its system of surveillance and confinement of mentally ill patients. This included appointing the first inspector of asylums, changing lunacy legislation and establishing two new asylums (p 4). Swartz ends her analysis in 1910 because after the formation of the Union of South Africa, information from different provincial archives made it difficult to trace the movements of mental patients between the domestic sphere and the government asylum system (p 4). Swartz uses the terms "insane" and "insanity" to refer to those who during the period under study were classified as such by professional doctors and the terms of the law (p 6). She stresses that the story of insanity does not only involve those identified as suffering from mental illnesses but also includes the affected families and the wider community. Swartz therefore wrestles with the question of what it meant to be declared mentally ill, and the implications of insanity on individuals, families, healthcare workers, the police, magistrates and other colonial authorities.

The literature on insanity has produced two major images. On the one hand there is the image that emphasised movement – where an insane person is banished from the community and left to wander. On the other is the trope of stasis – the image of the mental patient in "shackles, straitjackets and padded cells…" (p 1). The central theme in this important work on mental illness in the Cape Colony is the tension between these two tropes: movement and stasis. Swartz demonstrates how this tension has affected the way in which insanity has been conceptualised and written about. On the image of stasis, a central feature of asylum institutions, Swartz suggests that to a certain extent, this is a result of how scholars have read the archive. She maintains that the archive masks the various negotiations and contestations taking place in asylums. Her work is thus in part an exposé of the complex nature of asylum routines; it is also a critique of how the archive is read. The image of movement, on the other hand, enables Swartz to move beyond the state's surveillance system, bringing families and communities into her analysis.

Swartz frames the history of psychiatry in the Cape Colony within the politics of the British Empire. She argues in chapter two that the way mentally ill persons were managed in the colonies was heavily informed by policies shaped in Britain (p

16), while at the same time she demonstrates the agency of local conditions. This opens up ways of examining how the colonial system was an extension of that in the metropole and yet differed in certain respects. Indeed, the makeshift existence of the early Cape settlers and their struggles to construct new colonial identities fed into the different ways insanity was constructed and affected the deployment of laws on those who were considered insane. In addition, the presence of insanity among the colonised communities made the situation more complex. Swartz notes that at times, indigenous ideas on madness were at variance with the Western conceptualisation of insanity. These differences gave rise to certain stereotypes about the colonised, for example, the infantilisation of indigenous adults. Indeed, unlike the situation in the metropole, colonial authorities were faced with two problems: to provide services to the settler communities (with the aim of protecting their so-called 'civilised' standards) and the provision of services to indigenous people suffering from mental illness, making sure that insanity among indigenes was not linked to the rigours of colonialism. Indeed, in settler societies such as the Cape Colony, the psychiatry system was shaped by the colonial venture and by local challenges.

The third chapter focuses on the system used to incarcerate those who were categorised as insane. It examines the entangled processes of confinement and the role of diverse actors in decision making. These include family members, friends, medical doctors and law enforcement agents. Central to the route towards incarceration was the deployment of state power over its subjects (p 50). But Swartz also notes that the process of committal was laden with compromises, negotiations, and contestations. Paying attention to compromises, for example, allows Swartz to the agency of mental patients to the fore and also to examine the diversity of mechanisms and bureaucratic procedures employed by authorities at both the asylum and state levels. The family played an important role in certifying family members as insane.

The fourth chapter thus shifts the angle of analysis from state institutions to the domestic sphere. The examination of the role of the home front in the development of the psychiatry system has been relatively neglected in the historiography (p 89). Discussing the domestic sphere not only exposes the role of family members in the confinement of their relatives, but also allowed Swartz to examine family relations and the histories of illness within families (p 11). Hence, the use of family letters and journals, for example, enabled her to move away from relying exclusively on institutional records, in the process offering a different perspective of how non-state actors dealt with the problem of insanity in the colonies.

Sites of encounters such as at ports were spaces where the colonial state could exercise power in controlling the movements of insane immigrants. Chapter five scrutinises the complications experienced by the insane when crossing territorial boundaries. It also shows the predicament the authorities faced and negotiations between colonial governments on the movement of lunatics across borders (p 118). There is no doubt that anxiety about the economic implication of accepting insane immigrants was central in the use of state apparatus in the surveillance of colonial

boundaries. Swartz also argues that there were social costs that could be incurred by allowing insane immigrants into the colony. In an era when colonial governments in general and the Cape government in particular, was anxious about attracting the so-called "right kind" of immigrants, allowing insane immigrants into the colony would give the impression that the Cape was a dumping ground for undesirables (p 143).

Chapter six examines the experiences of Jewish immigrants. Besides reinforcing the key themes in the book, it also illuminates the ambiguous insider/outsider position of Jewish communities in the Cape Colony. At the same time, it assists Swartz in her analysis of the role of race and class attitudes in the treatment of the insane. In constructing her impressive narrative on mental patients, she consulted sources from repositories in South Africa and the UK. Records from asylum archives, government policy documents and court records, among others, were key to the study. These enabled Swartz to examine the formulation and implementation of policy on psychiatric patients, including the regulation of their movement to protect the colonial identity. As Swartz notes, this was because at times the insane did not respect racial boundaries and flouted social norms – they made both misery and trauma "visible" in any given community (p 7).

Significant as they are, asylum records are problematic. According to Swartz, because records focus on specific asylums, they flatten the evidence on differences between cases of insanity. Hence it is important to move beyond relying exclusively on such documents and to incorporate private documents to provide another angle. This shifts the discourses from exploring the experiences of the insane as a group, and instead exposes their varied experiences.

Homeless Wanderers is a well written and engaging book that is a welcome addition to the historiography of psychiatry in South Africa in particular and the British Empire in general. One of the significant contributions of this work is the way it complicates and gives nuance to the tension in the movement/stasis dynamic that is usually captured in the study of mental patients. Consequently, we learn that insanity is not experienced in one way. Rather it was (in the nineteenth century) and still is experienced in various ways, involving efforts at limiting the movement of patients and at the same time allowing them freedom. Viewing the matter from this perspective opens up avenues of analysing how the management of the insane was a negotiated process in the Cape Colony, and that in the mix of these negotiations were issues related to particular individuals, the family, the community, the colony and the empire.

Another strength of the book lies in the way in which Swartz makes an excellent critique of the evidentiary base scholars use to construct narratives of insanity, in particular the limits of official documents in bringing out the complex nature of mental problems. Swartz calls for the need to move beyond institutions and include the domestic sphere in the analysis. Furthermore, the book opens up ways of examining the nature of psychiatry systems in colonies. As much as policies were borrowed from the metropole, experiences on the ground also informed responses to

the problems of insanity, allowing us to explore the complexity of psychiatry systems elsewhere in the British Empire.

Although it might not have been the intention of the book, an extended analysis of indigenous communities' encounters with the way settler communities handled the issue if insanity, would have enlightened us on Africans' experiences with this social problem in a period of rapid socio-economic and political change. For example, did the introduction of the asylum system transform the role of extended African families in the management of the insane? Furthermore, did some indigenous authorities take advantage of the expansion of the system in the Cape Colony to eject the insane from their communities or even punish "undesirable" members of their communities by sending them to asylums? And how did local healers – sangomas – respond to the new system? These questions are not posed to take detract from this wonderful work, but to probe into the imposition of colonial rule and the way colonial governments managed insanity in indigenous communities. *Homeless Wanderers* is recommended for medical historians and all those interested in the history of the Cape Colony and of the British Empire.

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A worthy rhizome of wildlife conservation's historical possibilities

Harry Wels, Wilderness Landscapes in South Africa: Nick Steele, Private Wildlife Conservancies and Saving Rhinos

Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2015 163 pp ISBN 978-90-04-29075-4 R900.00

Harry Wels' engaging book is a welcome contribution to the growing literature that aims to better understand the development and legacies of wildlife conservation in South Africa. Described not as a biography of Nick Steele, but as seeking to answer the question of "what Nick's contribution to the establishment of private wildlife conservancies in South Africa was" (p 11), Wels draws together analyses of wilderness landscapes, the idea of the rhino, the logic of the camp, militarization and technology in the person and life of Nick Steele in productive ways. In his appendix Wels cites Deleuze and Guattari (1980) and the notion of the rhizome as signalling "the thousand plateaus" of people and influence that produced this book (p 143). In the same spirit, Wels realises his goal of this book serving as a rhizome itself, opening numerous lines of flight to be taken from cuts into the arguments he articulates.

There is, in fact, more to this book than simply what Steele's contribution to conservation was, and it articulates key questions that have social, political, and historical relevance for the present moment in South Africa. The central argument is

that the landscape of nature conservation, and Steele's vision of that landscape, is founded on Western, white, masculine notions of who and what should be conserved and for whom. These landscapes, are exclusionary, militarised, fenced spaces that mark political, social, and racial divides. Wels employs his access to Nick Steele's archives and diaries to illuminate the politics of wildlife conservation in Natal and Zululand through the second half of the twentieth century that saw the growth of the conservancy concept and the ultimate rise of private game farming in South Africa. He also acknowledge the difficulty of balancing personal relationships (his friendship with Nola Steele, Nick's wife) with a critical theoretical approach, and the potential biographical undertones that proceed from attempting "empathetic imagination" of such a balance (citing Anne Whiston Spirn [1998], p 10). While at times this difficulty surfaces, such as with his treatment of race and race relations, and occasionally Wels buries the lead in terms of the central arguments of each chapter, overall the book succeeds in drawing out a critical analysis of the relationship between larger institutional accumulations of knowledge and technology (such as colonial aesthetics, apartheid governance, IFP politics, and the Natal Parks Board) and the actions of individuals such as Steele, Ian Player, and Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

The opening two chapters trace the conceptual and theoretical lens of this book in their framing of wilderness landscapes and the idea of the rhino. Wels utilises the extensive literature of how assumptions about wilderness landscapes – as romantically imagined uninhabited spaces of a white masculine imperial gaze – have come to shape the visions of conservation, and in particular how they can be found articulated in the person of Steele through a reading of his diaries. Most important to Wels' argument, these landscapes are in fact "camps", not wilderness, and operate under a "logic of the camp" that is marked by its militarised control of inclusion/exclusion, order/disorder, and conservator/poacher (p 28). This practice of exclusion, through the boundaries of the fence, and the security and insider/outsider/intruder dynamics both extended from, and helped to legitimate, conservation efforts.

One of the most effective ways to build support for such a militarised patrolling of wilderness landscapes was found in the "the idea of the rhino" (chapter 2), where Wels expands his argument on the particular romantic aesthetics of wilderness landscape and links them with Operation Rhino, a rhino relocation programme organised by Ian Player in the 1960s and in which Steele was instrumental as Player's second in command. The rhino, and Operation Rhino, are not explored as particularities of the conservation movement, but the "idea of the rhino" is used to examine processes of wilderness landscape production through conservation and the logic of the camp. The rhino became the placeholder for all conservation efforts and the justification for the "war" to secure wilderness spaces. What is particularly compelling in this argument is the analysis of the confluence of technology, security, and politics. In its relocation efforts, Operation Rhino utilised practices of darting, tracking, moving by ship/truck, and re-introduction. To enable this there had to be a particular militarised training and skill set for those who worked on the operation. These "soldiers of conservation" worked on the "frontline"

of conservation that Wels argues was less about the animals and more about keeping the wilderness clear of intrusive people (p 47), read as non-white.

These connections are taken up further in chapter 4 on the conservancy concept, tracing the Farm Patrol Plan, and how the cooperative strategies of training and policing were effectively ritualising a patrolling of the landscape, within the logic of the camp (access control, insider/outsider, tourist/poacher), that extended a white masculine imagined wilderness landscape into the privatisation and value added commodification of wildlife and land. The argument here hits precisely on the deferral of racial politics onto the wilderness landscape that the logics of apartheid enabled through the extension of an accumulated understanding of what the wilderness landscape should be – an accumulated imperial gaze of "wild" space that is in actuality a (forcefully, violently) depopulated space controlled to produce and exploit a particular aesthetic experience. This was not just about training black Africans to patrol borders and fences for poachers and anti-apartheid forces (read as "communist" by Steele), but also about training white farmers in the value of their wildlife and land - and by extension the value and place of black African life and body in this landscape. Such training, Wels notes, is considered "normal" from the perspective of conservationists and farm owners, those inside the "camp" (p 130). This assumption of normality is pointed to, but not pursued as a conceptual lens for this project.

Of particular note is the discussion of the false notion of nature conservation as a "politically neutral common good". It is explained that game rangers, whether knowingly or not, were working to both conserve/preserve game as well as to guard against the poacher/communist. This effectively maintained white rule in South Africa under the guise of a militarised conservation effort. Thus conservation is argued to be highly political and supportive of white rule, not the "politically neutral" practice it has claimed to be (p 67). The relevance of this argument for present conservation politics in South Africa cannot be overlooked.

The transfer of Nick Steele in 1974 out of the Zululand reserves (after 18 years there) to the Natal Midlands, marks for Wels and for the life of Steele, a key moment in the future of conservation (chapter 3). Steele's transfer was a political move by the Natal Parks Board in an attempt to isolate Steele and other conservationists who wanted a more "primeval", human-free conservation, as opposed to the "recreationists" who wanted a more commercial use of reserve land for tourism. Steele felt isolated in a Natal landscape that was "God's paradise", a paradise that was spoiled and looked nothing like his beloved Zululand reserves, such as Umfolozi. Thus, Steele set about re-creating those spaces in Natal (p 88), and this practice of creating conservancies provides Wels the opening for discussing race through Steele's diaries.

Wels allows Steele to "speak for himself" regarding race when Steele claims at various points to be non-racial, multi-racial, and a "white Zulu" (p 89). Here Wels is correct to lay out the ambiguity in Steele's writings. However, a discussion of what is

meant by non-racial and multiracial, and the theoretical and conceptual engagement with race as a whole, is relegated to a footnote where Wels states the conceptual discussion of essentialised "Zuluness" and racism has been "thoroughly discussed" and is outside the scope of his project (note 26 on page 85). While an extended engagement with race and racial formations is not central to this project, footnoting a more in-depth discussion defers the politics of making an argument about race to the ambivalence of Steele's own claims to non-racialism and "politically neutral" wilderness landscapes. The engagement with race seems hesitant, despite the archival and secondary material providing the opening.

Yet this critique indicates simultaneously an important contribution of the book, returning to how this piece works to struggle with balancing the writing of a history that focuses on a white male figure in conservation (a concern over reverting to histories of the great white men of Africa) with more conceptual/theoretical insights into what this means for the actual writing of conservation history. There is no doubt that Wels' conclusion of Nick Steele's substantial impact on wildlife conservation in South Africa is validated in this book. Though perhaps the more salient question is: "What can the story of Nick Steele, and Wels' analysis of Steele, tell us about the production of history itself?" Thinking of this book as a rhizome, clearly the answer is: a great deal. Wels presents a cogent argument for the connections between wildlife conservation, white masculine colonial landscape imaginaries, the military and security, anti-apartheid and Cold War politics in South Africa. He revives debates of the second half of the twentieth century around the role of conservation in physically and conceptually shaping the future of wildlife preservation for the "new South Africa" that is still in a state of becoming and where Operation Rhino has become a major philanthropic campaign.

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'n Leë plek in die Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis word gevul

Francois Smith, Kamphoer

Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 2014 262pp ISBN 978-0-624-06551-7 R226.00

"Daar was 'n leë plek in die geskiedenis" – só verklaar die skrywer van *Kamphoer*, Francois Smith, tydens 'n Kwêla-onderhoud teenoor Theresa Benade (14 September 2014). *Kamphoer* vertel die storie van Susan Nell, 'n meisie wat op 1 Januarie 1902, tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog, wreedaardig deur twee Britse soldate en 'n "joiner" in die Winburg-konsentrasiekamp verkrag is. Susan word vir dood agtergelaat, maar 'n Sotho-kruiedokter vind haar waar sy van die kamp se lykswa afgeval het – die wa wat dooies elke oggend bymekaarmaak om te begrawe. In 'n grot tussen die

Winburgkoppies behandel die kruiedokter en 'n Sotho-vrou haar om te herstel van haar fisiese en geestelike wonde. Hulle help haar ook om te vlug, eers tot in Bloemfontein en dan na die Kaap. Hier word sy onder die vlerk van Marie Koopmans-De Wet geneem. Dit is ook Marie Koopmans-De Wet wat haar later help om na Nederland te gaan. Hier bekwaam Susan haar in die psigiatrie. Wanneer sy veel later in haar lewe as verpleegster soldate van die Tweede Wêreldoorlog (bomskokpasiënte) in 'n Britse hospitaal te Devon behandel, kom sy van aangesig tot aangesig met een van haar verkragters. Alhoewel sy haarself deur die jare probeer oortuig het dat sy ten volle herstel het, besef sy tydens hierdie ontmoeting dat sy nog nie van die geestelike wonde van die wandaad herstel het nie.

Wanneer die leser reeds op die titelblad ingelig word dat die teks op "'n ware verhaal" gebaseer is, ontstaan verskeie vrae rondom die mate waartoe die werklikheid/realiteit, oftewel feite, in die daaropvolgende vertelling teenwoordig is. Dit is waarskynlik dan ook hier waar die geskiedkundige- en die letterkundige leser van mekaar geskei word. Geskiedenis soek die feite, realiteit en die waarheid, terwyl, wanneer letterkunde ter sprake is, daar altyd plek is vir die spel van die verbeelding. Juis dít kan die lees van 'n teks soos hierdie vir die geskiedkundige problematies maak, want waar in die vertelling is die skeiding tussen die werklikheid en die verbeelding?

Kamphoer (Smith se debuut) is 'n opdragwerk deur Tafelberguitgewers en wel na aanleiding van die boek *The Boer Whore*, geskryf deur Nico Moolman (2012). Na deeglike navorsing gee Moolman self sy werk uit. Alhoewel Moolman se werk ook as 'n roman beskryf word, wil dit tog voorkom of dit die feitlike weergawe (ook oorvertel) van Susan Nell se verhaal is. Hierin word die feite rondom die tragiese gebeurtenis, dus die geskiedenis van die slagoffer, Susan Nell, bekend gemaak. Die "waarheid" word bekragtig deur foto's van grafte en dies meer, soos onder andere geneem deur 'n fotograafvriend, ene Perry, saam met wie Susan volgens oorlewering per trein na Kaapstad gereis het. Dit is ook Perry wat haar vergesel wanneer sy jare later, in die 1950's, Winburg weer besoek.

Eintlik was Susan Nell se spore in Suid-Afrika uitgewis – soos Smith dit self stel. Per toeval kom Moolman tydens 'n sakebesoek aan Bangkok in aanraking met die dogter van Susan Nell, wat dan die verhaal van haar Afrikanerma aan hom vertel. En weereens per toeval, terug in Suid-Afrika, sien Moolman die graf van Alice Draper terwyl hy saam met sy familie die geskiedenis van die Luwes-familie tydens 'n besoek aan die Winburg-begraafplaas probeer nagaan. Moolman herken die naam Alice Draper as dié van Susan Nell se konsentrasiekampvriendin van wie haar dogter hom vertel het. Daar en dan het sy navorsing oor Susan Nell momentum gekry.

Gesien in die lig van die trauma waardeur 'n slagoffer van verkragting gaan; die dra van skuldgevoelens en veral die stilswye van so 'n daad, moes dit tog gebeur het dat Moolman se geskiedkundige werk daardie leë plek waarna Smith verwys, moes vul. Tafelberguitgewers sien egter die behoefte raak om hierdie storie in Afrikaans te laat vertel, maar dan as 'n roman. Smith en sy roman word vir verskeie

pryse benoem en word as wenner van die ATKV-prys (2015) aangewys. Die teks word verskeie kere herdruk en ook vertaal en in ander lande uitgegee. Waaraan die sukses van hierdie verhaal as prosawerk toegeskryf kan word, is egter 'n studie wat tuishoort by die bestudering van die Afrikaanse kanon deur letterkundiges. Vanuit 'n geskiedkundige oogpunt word met *Kamphoer* se sukses – veral op grond van die wye groep lesers wat die teks gelees het – bewys dat die leser se dors na die waarheid, die werklikheid of die geskiedenis, 'n natuurlike dryfveer in die leesproses is. Alhoewel daar onder letterkundiges vrae oor die literêre waarde van die teks mag ontstaan, veral na aanleiding van die toekenning van pryse, word dit duidelik dat die soeke na die waarheid dikwels juis dít is wat die nuuskierigheid van lesers prikkel. Veral tydens mediaverskynings maak Smith dit self bekend dat hy met die basiese feite, soos aan hom bekend gemaak, gewerk het. As skrywer van 'n roman word dit vir hom egter 'n uitdaging om hom in die skoene van Susan Nell te plaas, om deur die gebruik van sy verbeelding te probeer uitvind wat kon gebeur het as sy haar verkragter(s) jare later sou ontmoet. Sou sy sodanige geleentheid gebruik om wraak te neem?

Dat *Kamphoer* by uitstek daarin slaag om 'n stukkie Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis te ontbloot of om 'n leë plek in die geskiedenis te vul, is nie te betwyfel nie. Geskiedkundige lesers moet egter gewaarsku word dat die waarheid êrens in hierdie verhaal ophou en 'n verbeeldingswêreld 'n aanvang neem. Verbeelding is en bly 'n onmisbare deel van die letterkunde – een van daardie elemente wat die leser aan die lees hou. Gelukkig vir die geskiedkundige leser word die storie agter die storie, die feite, na voltooiing van die vertelling agter in die boek bekend gemaak – iets wat vir die geskiedkundige leser waarskynlik eerder as voorwoord tot die teks moes wees.

Vertellings van stories uit die Anglo-Boereoorlog, soos dié wat die afgelope dekades sterk na vore getree het, is duidelik nog nie holrug gery nie. Na aanleiding van die leserreaksie op *Kamphoer* blyk hierdie gebeure vandag steeds relevant te wees. Die waarskynlikheid is groot dat stories soos hierdie – gebeure waaroor daar in die verlede nie gepraat is nie – wag om vertel te word. Daar is waarskynlik steeds plekke in die Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis wat net soos die graf van Susan Nell langs dié van haar vriendin in die Winburg se konsentrasiekamp, vandag leeg is.

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A valuable addition to the history of rural resistance in South Africa

Thembela Kepe and Lungisile Ntsebeza (eds), Rural Resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo Revolts after Fifty Years

UCT Press, Cape Town, 2012 282 pp ISBN 978-1-91989-534-5 R315.00

The history of the Mpondoland Revolt has been a subject for debate for some time in the rural resistance history of South Africa. It is therefore fitting that the editors and contributors of this book decided that while many academics and others, interested in the issues of rural resistance history and its direct results were revisiting their consequences, they completed their research by re-evaluating the Mpondoland Revolt, tracing the 50-year period from when it occurred. The Mpondoland Revolt refers to the action taken by the iKongo to reject the tribal and self-government of the Transkei, initiated by the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951. During a protest held in the district of Bizana, community members in the crowd called upon Saul Mabude, a tribal authority to explain the contents and implications of the Act. His failure to do so angered these members to the extent that they ultimately destroyed his house in protest. This sparked what later became known as the Mpondoland Revolt.

The book addresses a number of topical issues which appear to have been neglected by scholars in writings about rural resistance in South Africa. It is divided into three parts, namely Part One, which discusses the revolts; Part Two, dealing with the influence of the revolts; and Part Three, which explores their meaning and significance. These three parts comprise 13 chapters written by prominent scholars who are experts in various disciplines such as history, sociology, anthropology, politics and geography. The contributors address a range of broad topics relating to the revolt.

Part One deals with the historiography of the Mpondoland Revolt, an analysis of the revolt, and its contextualisation in the rural resistance history of South Africa. This part of the book situates the revolt in the broader context of the popular struggles against colonialism and apartheid. In his chapter, Ntsebeza succeeds in situating the causes of the revolt as resulting from the dissatisfaction with the introduction of rehabilitation schemes and the passing of the Bantu Authorities Act by the apartheid regime. In his chapter, Pieterse begins with the premise that the revolt had an impact on the politicisation of members of the ANC in the Eastern Cape region and successfully examines different sources in justification of this assertion. Drew then provides an analysis of the writings by Govan Mbeki on the revolt. According to Drew, Mbeki had close contact with the leaders of the uprising, making his writing one of the few authoritative sources on the revolt. In his chapter, Beinart argues that there is very little evidence in the literature about the individual experiences and political trajectories of the leaders of the revolt. His conclusions are based on interviews conducted with Leonard Mdingi and Anderson Ganyile. These

interviewees linked the general dissatisfaction of the 1960s with the outbreak of the revolt. He also dedicates a few pages to the lack of consultation on issues pertaining to the Bantu Authorities Act as a contributory factor. In the final chapter of Part One, Hendricks and Peires unpack the reasons why this revolt was a hotbed of resistance against the Bantu Authorities and the so-called Betterment Scheme. Interestingly, they also advance arguments on the divisions in the chieftaincy of the Mpondo people. Here, the contributors highlight the divide between Western and Eastern Mpondoland.

Part Two tackles the direct and indirect influence of the revolt and comprises only two chapters. These chapters attempt to answer questions on the impact of politics and the organisational abilities of Mpondo migrant workers in the urban areas. They dispel the myth that urban politics have a direct influence on political organisation in rural areas. Using the Mpodoland revolt as a case in point, the contributors show how the rural influence in fact enhanced the organisational capacity of trade unionists and activists in urban areas who played a role in this kind of struggle. Moodie and Phundulu's chapter traces Phundulu's role as a Mpondo migrant worker who later became one of the founding leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers. According to him, the revolt had an immense influence on his politicisation in his childhood years. The second chapter, authored by Sitas explores the consequences of the revolt. The immediate aftermath of the unrest, he argues, spelt hunger and rapid proletarianisation. He tracks the journey of the migrant workers who came from Mpondoland and subsequently resided in the Durban hostels where they lived in abject poverty. Of particular interest in this chapter is how Sitas links the Mpondo Revolt with the industrial focus of what happened in KwaZulu-Natal in later years.

Part Three of the book focuses on the meanings and significance of the revolt. In chapter 9, Wylie narrates the shocking incidents of what happened on 6 June 1960. On this fateful day, the police helicopters dropped teargas on a gathering on Ngquza Hill. This was followed by open fire on the crowd and 11 people were killed. In this chapter Wylie succeeds in highlighting the role of the magistrate courts and the district surgeon in the worsening of the name-blaming turmoil in the aftermath of the shooting. The findings of the Van Heerden Commission, outlined in the report that followed, are also interrogated in an attempt to determine the root causes of the shooting. As mentioned in this chapter, the shooting erased the trust that once characterised the paternalistic form of colonial government in the Transkei. Müller's chapter provides a recollection of what transpired at Ngquza's Hill. Unlike other chapters, this one devotes much attention to the understanding of the Pondoland landscape and its relationship to the recall and representation of the revolts. Visual interpretations explaining the Ngquza Hill site during the shooting are inserted in the chapter.

In chapter 11, Steinberg addresses the different meanings of the Mpondoland Revolt in the eyes of the ordinary Mpondo people today. His visit to the area of Lusikisiki gave him a broader understanding of the area. In Lusikisiki he spent some

time with one of the families, talking about their impressions of what had happened. Kepe, in chapter 12, deals with post-apartheid rural land reform in the context of the Mpondoland Revolt, the results of which formed part of his research conducted in the Eastern Cape for a PhD thesis. His study reveals how differently villagers responded to the implementation (or non-implementation) of the land reform programme. The quest for land rights in the subsequent years after the revolt drew strength mainly from the Mpondoland Revolt. The observation in this chapter is that land reform, as one of the key post-apartheid policies in South Africa, has been slow in terms of meaningful implementation in many rural areas, including Mpondoland. Then follows a chapter by De Wet, in which he discusses the contemporary nature of rural resistance as imposed on Eastern Pondoland. Interestingly, he argues that fifty years after the last of the Mpondoland revolts, the ordinary people of Mbizana continue to exercise their collective agency to defend their right to shape their own lives. In the chapter different developmental projects, such as mining, are discussed despite incisive criticisms of such initiatives.

The book's value is enhanced by the inclusion of visual diagrams. There is a select, albeit very comprehensive list of sources after each chapter, which attests to the thorough research that has been done over a period of years. Kepe and Ntsebeza have succeeded in assembling a team of academics to contribute to the topical issues pertaining to the Mpondoland revolts after fifty years. It is recommended that those interested in the history of rural resistance in South Africa should read this fascinating and thought-provoking book.

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An important publication on a contested social label

Richard van der Ross, In Our Own Skins: A Political History of the Coloured People

Jonathan Ball Publishers, Cape Town, 2015 216 pp ISBN 978-1-86842-667-6 R170.00

It goes without saying that the label "Coloured" is clouded in controversy. While some embrace it, others loathe it, and under the best of circumstances, it remains good advice to avoid the term altogether. While one is perhaps at liberty in 2016 to completely ignore this description of people of diverse backgrounds, it is impossible for a serious scholar of South African history to deny the political implications of the tag. Many South Africans were classified and administered under the apartheid government as Coloured persons. In this sense, Richard van der Ross delivers an important message about his book in its opening pages when he writtes: "This book

deals with the people of South Africa. It concerns all the people of South Africa, although it deals more specifically with the Coloured people" (p 6).

While the classification of people into racial groups will always stir controversy, it is in particular the coloured construct that remains one of the most contested. According to Van der Ross, Coloureds are "a group of around five million people and they are a distinct anthropological – racial, if you like – group" (p 22). The author then proceeds to incorporate research by M.C. Botha, defining Coloured people as a group which developed after the colonisation of South African land in 1652 by Dutch officials. To his credit, Van der Ross foresaw criticism being levelled at his book. In the foreword to the publication, he predicts that critics of the work would argue that it "should not have been written at all, because there are no Coloured people" (p 9). To this, he warns, he has no answer.

On face value, *In Our Own Skins* might be perceived by some to entrench old stereotypes, but this does not happen in the book. Throughout its narrative, the work sticks firmly to what its title suggests. A rich picture emerges from its pages, a picture of a diverse group of people, administered as Coloured, deprived of the franchise, and the long history behind regaining the vote again. A great deal of this history might be known to those with a well-established and enduring interest in South African history. For example, the stories of Dr Abdul Abdurahman, long-time leader of the African People's Organisation (APO), is well documented in South African historiography, but also forms an important theme in this publication.

In Our Own Skins does not employ comprehensive research into primary sources such as archival materials. The text is supported by a series of endnotes, with most of the research material being published books and some reports. The value of this work lies in the collection of the information into a single volume, as well as the insights and interpretation provided by the author. An important aspect of In Our Own Skins is a focus on the role of publication, in particular newspaper publication, in shaping Coloured identity. A whole chapter is dedicated to the reprinting of extracts from the newspaper The APO between the years 1909 and 1923. These provide valuable insights, as they align with the title of the book, focusing on the political developments and discourses of the time. The decades of South African apartheid policies naturally form an important focus of the work. Again, much of the history is well documented elsewhere in South African historiography. The Theron Commission (its recommendations ignored at the time), the role of the Labour Party, the tricameral parliament and the United Democratic Front are some of the themes covered. The history of the apartheid era is perhaps best summarised in the concluding remarks, where the author notes that "there was always an alternative to the government's perspective on the colour question" (p 198).

On the subject of the political history of the Coloured people of South Africa, substantially more can still be documented. Geographically, *In Our Own Skins* can be said to have a very strong focus on what is today known as the Western Cape Province. According to Van der Ross, "... there is also a strong provincialism, which we

apply when we distinguish between a Capey, a Bolander, a Namaqualander, a Kimberleyite, a Transvaler, a Natalian or someone from the Eastern Cape" (p 8). However, in the political sense, the umbrella term Coloured, applied to people of diverse backgrounds who lived in the country during the apartheid era. In 2015, for example, the Free State Provincial Archives made an appraisal of what came to be known as a collection bearing the name Administration of Coloured Affairs. Oral history research conducted by the staff of the archive clarified the prominent role that people of Indian origin played in the Coloured community of the area. The research also revealed the rich histories of defiance in these communities to their oppression, which, if left undocumented, would leave South African historiography poorer.

The year 2016 marks 50 years since the declaration on 11 February 1966 of District Six in Cape Town as a "white" area by the government under Hendrik Verwoerd. In time, District Six became symbolic of the many injustices of forced removals elsewhere in South Africa such as those carried out in Sophiatown and Botshabelo. The Population Registration and Group Areas Acts, the cornerstones of the apartheid regime, dictated the lives of many South Africans for decades to come, and their influence still lingers in the South African present. While the coloured construct will continue to be as contested as the complex legacy left in its trail, this political history, as Van der Ross notes, is of concern to all South Africans. *In Our Own Skins* is particularly important for this reason.

Barend van der Merwe Cape Town

An overlooked, repressive tactic of apartheid revealed

Saleem Badat, *The Forgotten People: Political Banishment under Apartheid* Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2012 384pp ISBN 978-1-4314-0479-7 R250.00

African and more specifically South African history is riddled with a heinous past; there are many struggle stories and notable figures that have been pushed into the shadows of silence. Lending voice to these injustices ensures a sense of reconciliation with the past and present, allowing future generations to move forward. Saleem Badat's *The Forgotten People: Political Banishment under Apartheid*, does just that by contributing to the historiography of repressive methods employed during the apartheid era, adding the neglected dimension of banishment as a repressive tactic to the list of atrocities. His book not only focuses on a largely overlooked form of repression, but also brings to light those who until now have been missing from our recorded history, by affixing "peasants and migrants as actors and shapers alongside the black proletariat [and] the heroes of the African nationalist struggle" (p xxiii).

The apartheid state employed a variety of tactics against its opponents, including imprisonment, banning, detention, assassination and banishment. Banishments occurred between 1949 and 1982 (the period studied in this book) under the Native Administration Act of 1927 and its 1956 amendments. With a few exceptions banishment principally affected men in rural areas. The minister of Native Affairs could charge a person suspected or accused of threatening the "peace and good order" to vacate their residence and be forcibly moved to an isolated part of the country (p 14). This method was favoured in the removal of rural political leaders, believing that disruption in the networks of political mobilisation would encourage rural communities to collaborate with the state.

Those who were banished rarely received an opportunity to face their accused or to receive information on their charge. They were merely relocated to faraway areas and plunged into isolation away from their friends, family, culture, language and source of income for an indeterminate period of time. Badat succeeds in relaying that the notion of banishment was not a fate to be thought lightly of, as he illuminates the experiences of those who suffered this form of "social death". The term refers to someone "who could not belong because he was a product of a hostile, alien culture ... an intruder ... a stranger in a strange land". On the other hand, social death signified "an insider who had fallen, one who ceased to belong and had been expelled from normal participation in community ..." (p 219).

Inspired by an encounter with Helen Joseph during the early 1970s, Badat's work looks at the reasons why people were banished, their lives in banishment and the efforts of the Human Rights Welfare Committee, established 1959 by Joseph, Lilian Ngoyi, Amina Cachalia and others who advocated for the basic rights of the banished. In the first chapter of the book, Badat demonstrates the long history of banishment by tracing historical events from the banishment of African leaders by colonial authorities; the exile of Lenin and Trotsky in the late 19th century; to more recent uses of banishment in Israel, Greece and Russia. In his conclusion to this chapter Badat makes the insightful statement that "... the weapon of banishment was not created by the Afrikaner nationalist who came to power on an apartheid platform in 1948. The law that permitted banishment had its roots in the colonial period in Natal, presided over by the British, and was consolidated and enshrined in 1927 during the period of Union" (p 279).

Outlining banishment in a comparative analysis, Badat is able to distance banishment as a repressive product constructed solely through apartheid's rule. His argument is that throughout the ages banishment has been defined on a theoretical basis associating it with "power and authority", "authoritarian regimes" and as "a means of political and social control" (p 8). An in-depth historical analysis on the relation between power, authority and repression could provide better understanding of the policies implemented by the apartheid state. However, this chapter merely sets the stage, serving as contextualisation to prepare the reader for that which will follow.

The main focus of this absorbing book comes to the foreground in various case studies, based on empirical data and secondary literature, of the people who were banished and the struggles they endured. Between 1948 and 1982 as many as 160 people were banished, and Badat chooses particular cases as the focal point throughout the book. This makes the study feel somewhat monochromatic and narrow in focus in some instances. However, this statement might perhaps be unfair because the book has a specific scope, namely the neglect of the banished and the use of banishment as a repressive tool in South Africa's apartheid history.

The book sets out to relate the experiences and life stories of a forgotten people and any attempt to add material would have diminished the impact the book strives to make. The more detailed individual stories are presented in such a way that they convey a vivid illustration of the daily lives of the banished through sound research and the addition of a number of emotional photographs taken by Ernest Cole. The individual stories speak of hardships, poverty, illness, loneliness and people living aimlessly. The full import of "social death" becomes all too evident, as Badat effortlessly describes the various tales of the banished. He tells of physical, emotional and psychological strain as the individuals were forced to live isolated lives for many years. The book also sketches moments of courage and resilience, displaying the defiant sprit of those involved in resistance: "to view those banished to alien, often remote and desolate locations not only as victims, which they were, but also as indomitable, courageous, tenacious and resilient people capable of enduring considerable hardship and overcoming adversity" (p 219).

With the individual stories of the banished, the author indicates the impact of government policies and the response from rural communities. For the most part, rural uprisings and reprisals have been marginalised in the historiography, whereas urban uprisings, large organisations and mostly male characters have received the most attention. Badat not only brings the forgotten repressive tactic of banishment to light, but irradiates perspective on rural uprisings and identifies the involvement of women by placing them in their respective roles within struggle activities. Attention is also drawn to the compassion and influence of the Human Rights Welfare Committee and especially Helen Joseph. Badat pays homage to those who advocated for basic rights and fought for the recognition of the banished.

The Forgotten People epitomises the role history can play in restoring worth and dignity to those who where marginalised and oppressed, many of whom have not received due recognition. The author succeeds in his aims; he provides focus on the rural struggles in South Africa and provides context to an overlooked, repressive tactic. However, there are flaws in the study and some chapters feel repetitive. This could have been avoided by careful editing.

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Fresh insights into the life and death of a struggle icon

Hugh Macmillan, Chris Hani: A Jacana Pocket Biography

Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2014 160 pp ISBN 978-14314-089-1-7 R134.00

Hugh Macmillan begins this pocket biography of the life of Thembisile Martin Hani, better known as Chris Hani, with his subject's death. For those familiar with the history of South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy in the early 1990s, this choice is not surprising. Hani's assassination on 10 April 1993 outside his home in Boksburg was one of the most significant events of the period and as Macmillan notes, had the potential to derail the negotiation process and trigger a bloody civil war. Mandela's public address on primetime television that evening – in which he called for calm – emphasised Hani's remarkable ability to unify the nation in troubled times. His death also marked a major turning point in the negotiation process. Mandela, along with other key negotiators, such as Cyril Ramaphosa and Joe Slovo, urged the government to act with greater urgency and pushed for the date of the first democratic elections to be finalised in the aftermath of Hani's murder.

One of the highlights of Macmillan's biography is his account of Hani's earlier life, including his childhood years, which is less well known. Hani was introduced to politics from a young age, due largely to the influence of his father and uncle who were members of the Communist Party of South Africa. He was further influenced by his teachers at Lovedale School, who were opposed to the apartheid state's introduction of Bantu Education in the early 1950s. His years at Lovedale, an institution also attended by the likes of Steve Biko and Thabo Mbeki, were highly formative and his political activism led to his joining the ANC Youth League at the tender age of 15 years. Hani then went to Fort Hare University, where he studied English and Latin. He graduated in 1961, the same year in which the ANC decided to initiate the armed struggle.

Macmillan then proceeds with an examination of Hani's involvement in the armed struggle, in particular his activities as a member of the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Hani's military training in the Soviet Union, his exile in Lesotho, his rise through the ranks of MK, and the prominent role he played in organising guerrilla operations in South Africa, all feature in the following chapters. However, Macmillan is primarily concerned with trying to understand how Hani was able to overcome the disadvantages of his humble origins in the Transkei to become one of the most important and charismatic figures in South Africa's struggle history. Making wide use of archival sources, interviews and his own personal knowledge of the ANC in exile in Lusaka, Zambia, Macmillan explores the ideas and influences that shaped Hani and the leadership qualities and characteristics that resulted in his achievement of hero status towards the latter years of his life.

Macmillan concludes the book with an eloquent discussion of Hani's vision for a new South Africa, one that was free, non-racial and governed by the black majority. Hani advocated a strong civil society, with viable trade unions and religious organisations. Macmillan notes that Hani appreciated the unusual position he was in, as the leader of the South African Communist Party, which was growing in strength and influence at a time when communist organisations in other parts of the world were in turmoil and a serious state of decline. Generally, this is a sympathetic biography, which adds fresh insights into the life and death of a struggle icon. However, as with other historical and biographical works on Hani, the reader is left with several lingering questions: what if Hani had not been assassinated? What influence would he have had on post-apartheid politics? Indeed, Hani's memory is often invoked by disgruntled elements in the Tripartite Alliance when bemoaning the current state of politics in South Africa.

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A particularly timely contribution to South Africa's intellectual history

Steven Friedman (in collaboration with Judith Hudson), Race, Class and Power: Harold Wolpe and the Radical Critique of Apartheid

UKZN Press, Scottsville, 2015 376 pp ISBN 978-18691-428-6-5 R355.00

This intellectual biography of one of South Africa's leading white, anti-apartheid academic radicals, arrives during a feverish phase of the country's post-apartheid life. A new generation of black student radicals are staking a claim to the "radical" mantle in protests currently rocking the country's university campuses. If the work by the subject of Steven Friedman's book, Harold Wolpe and other Marxist theorists were *de rigeur* for white student radicals in the 1970s, Franz Fanon and Steve Biko and talk of "decolonisation" roll off the lips of post-apartheid student activists. What then does Friedman's biography have to offer in the contemporary moment where the now somewhat older white academic left is derided as "irrelevant" and as presenting obstacles to radical change?

The extent of Wolpe's influence in the broad anti-apartheid political universe and the precise character of his relationship to the African National Congress (ANC) and South African Communist Party (SACP) are central themes in the book. These questions are part of a larger meditation upon the relationship of intellectuals (let us not forget that Friedman is one of our more prominent public intellectuals) to social movements running through the book. Friedman argues that Wolpe's influence is most clearly visible among a generation of white leftists for whom his 1972 piece "Capitalism and Cheap Labour-power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid"

proved foundational to formulating the class based critique of apartheid and of the limits of liberal historiography. In this regard Wolpe made an invaluable contribution to the "revisionist" theorisation of the interactive relationship between capitalism and apartheid.

Friedman does an admirable job guiding readers through the Byzantine debates which Wolpe's account of the relationship between capitalism and apartheid provoked amongst a range of social scientists. Liberals, Poulantzian fractionalists and social historians collectively demonstrated that Wolpe had overstated the isomorphism in the relationship between apartheid and capitalism. Similarly labyrinthine discussions surrounded Wolpe's intervention regarding the SACP's theory of "Colonialism of a Special Type" (CST) and his disagreements with "workerists" on the relationship of worker power to national liberation. At issue in many of these debates were questions about the direction of anti-apartheid strategy and the character of post-apartheid politics and society. Friedman shows that while Wolpe perceptively recognised strategic possibilities in late apartheid reforms, he nonetheless conspicuously failed to foresee the negotiated end to apartheid because of his investment in a "polarisation paradigm" central to the exile anti-apartheid imagination (chapter 9).

On the question of wider influence, Friedman confirms the negligible purchase Wolpe enjoyed amongst "grassroots" activists in the anti-apartheid movement, and his uneven influence at the higher reaches of the ANC and SACP. Friedman's exploration of the complexity of Wolpe's relationship to these two organisations is arguably the most intellectually arresting aspect of the book. This aspect speaks directly to Friedman's interest in the relationship between intellectuals and social movements. Wolpe's 1985 statement, "The Liberation Struggle and Research", laid out a position placing intellectuals at the service of the anti-apartheid movement, while simultaneously accepting subordination to that movement. This was an awkward posture for any intellectual to adopt. Wolpe's reluctance to challenge the SACP's position publicly on CST led him to engage occasionally in unbecoming intellectual gymnastics, but this also owed something to Wolpe's insistence on keeping both race and class in play analytically, a balancing act which recent critiques of white anti-apartheid leftists have suggested often led to the privileging of class at the expense of race.²

Wolpe's reticence to publicly contradict anti-apartheid party lines, together with his apparently "unquestioning public loyalty to the former Soviet Union" calls to mind controversies about Eric Hobsbawm's relationship to the British Communist Party, which he notoriously refused to leave, despite the departure of a large number of Leftists (including fellow historian E.P. Thompson) following the Soviet invasion of

^{2.} N. Ally and S. "Ally, 'Critical Intellectualism: The Role of Black Consciousness in Reconfiguring the Race-Class Problematic in South Africa", in A. Mngxitama, A. Alexander and N.C. Gibson (eds), *Biko Lives! Contesting the Legacies of Steve Biko* (Palgrave, London, 2008).

Hungary in 1956 (p 36).³ Friedman dedicates significant space to the question of Wolpe's independence from the SACP and ANC, but surprisingly little to the more acute question of his continued loyalty to the Soviet Union. In exile in the United Kingdom, Wolpe could not possibly have been insulated from growing Leftist disillusionment with the Soviet Union and Communist Party abuses, but Friedman disappointingly does not explore this area nor the extent of Wolpe's possible knowledge of alleged abuses in ANC exile camps.⁴

The absence of discussion on these topics somewhat weakens Friedman's goal, clearest at the conclusion of the book, to use Wolpe to fashion a tool-kit for theorisation of the post-apartheid predicament, a tool-kit which must – in the author's words – "transcend" Marxism, and be untainted by the sclerotic Marxist-Leninism of the post-apartheid SACP. Friedman believes, for good reason, that Wolpe's gift to the South African social sciences was his insistence on the critique of "private power" (p 170). While the historical and contemporary importance of gender is emphasised in discussion of Belinda Bozzoli's critique of Wolpe, the overall invisibility of gender from Friedman's attempt at constructing a Wolperian roadmap for post-apartheid critique is a rather conspicuous absence (pp 194–199).

The lengthy theoretical exegesis makes for heavy going in places; at three hundred plus pages, a spot of judicious editing would have been welcome. None of this detracts from the fact that this book is an excellent and particularly timely contribution to South Africa's intellectual history. Wolpe grappled impressively (and sometimes inelegantly) with the inextricable relationship of race and class in South Africa. This illuminating book is highly recommended to the readers of this journal, as well as for the student activists currently following in the footsteps of the leftist radicals of the 1970s.

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For a particularly critical view of Hobsbawm's relationship to the British Communist Party see T. Judt, "The Last Romantic", New York Review of Books, 20 November 2003.

^{4.} S. Ellis, The External Mission: The ANC in Exile (Hurst, London, 2012).

^{5.} B. Bozzoli, "Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 9, 2 (April 1983), pp 139–171.

A hagiographic autobiography requiring a healthy dose of scepticism

Mompati Sebogodi Merafhe, The General: In the Service of My Country

Diamond Educational Books, Gaborone, 2015 204 pp ISBN 978-99912-490-2-5 BWP350.00

In this brief autobiography of Botswana's late and former vice president, Mompati Sebogodi Merafhe, the author chronicles his life story which began in Serowe in 1936. Like most Batswana at the time, his parents were peasants and he looked after the family livestock before attending primary school in Serowe. Merafhe claims that he was a brilliant student with an admirable flair for the English language which other pupils were encouraged to emulate. However, owing to family commitments, his academic potential could not be fully realised and he ended his schooling at a lowly standard 6 level. Thereafter, he joined the colonial police force in 1960 in Gaborone. Merafhe's first posting was in the intelligence unit called the Special Branch. He says its prying and intrusive nature put him off so much that he asked to be transferred elsewhere and he was then shifted to the paramilitary Police Mobile Unit (PMU) in late 1960. Soon he also left the PMU and was transferred to Lobatse Police Station.

Merafhe claims that he was so impressive in his police work that he was promoted from the rank of constable to sergeant skipping that of corporal. He was later transferred from Lobatse to Gaborone in 1965 to work as an instructor at the police college. In the book he also discusses the uncomfortable race relations in the police service at the time. In 1965 he enrolled for a Bachelor of Laws degree programme with the University of South Africa (UNISA) through distance learning, but could not complete the course owing to the pressure of his police work. He provides no explanation about how he was able to register for a Law degree with just a standard 6 education. After leaving the police college he became a prosecutor, which job he enjoyed immensely because he was able to mesmerise judges and magistrates with his mastery of the English language. He writes that while he enjoyed his prosecution work he sometimes felt sorry for those who were jailed because of his spirited arguments.

When the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) was formed in 1977, Merafhe was appointed its first commander by President Seretse Khama. This was at the time of cross-border military attacks on Botswana by Ian Smith's white minority regime in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) allegedly in pursuit of liberation struggle fighters. Merafhe helped design the BDF emblem. Here one feels that he ought to have elaborated on what inspired the features in the emblem because the national symbols that appear in the coat of arms and in the logo of the University of Botswana have recently elicited interest in historical scholarship.

Merafhe credits Seretse Khama with laying the foundation for sound economic development in Botswana, which was accelerated during the presidency of his

successor, Quett Masire (1980–1998). He argues that the credit for what the international community called the African miracle in Botswana "belonged as much to Masire as it did to Seretse Khama" (p 91).

Merafhe left the BDF in 1989 to become a specially elected member of parliament under the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) ticket. He was appointed a cabinet minister in the powerful presidential affairs and public administration portfolio which also included the BDF. During his tenure in this ministry (1989-1994) the army did the country proud with its competent, professional and impressive conduct in peace-keeping missions in Somalia and Mozambique. Thereafter, his performance as minister for foreign affairs for 14 years (1994-2008) was quite outstanding. Even the iconic Nelson Mandela, president of South Africa from 1994 to 1999 was so impressed by Merafhe that he recommended him for the position of chairman of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG). While previous chairpersons served for a period of two years and some had their terms extended for a further two years, Merafhe served for six consecutive years (1998–2004), a "record that stands to date", as he proudly puts it (p 138). He goes on to tell us that the British prime minister, Tony Blair, strongly recommended his continued chairmanship of the CMAG despite differences of opinion between these two men. However, Merafhe does not divulge any details on the nature of his differences with Blair.

As foreign affairs minister Merafhe dealt with many controversial international issues such as the repatriation to Botswana of the remains of El Negro, that were previously on display in a Spanish museum; the execution of a white woman, Marietta Bosch; and the relocation by government of the Basarwa community from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. Merafhe declares:

I became deputy [police] commissioner, the penultimate pinnacle, within ten years after joining the force. And I did not rise through all the ranks as at some stage I leapfrogged some of them. For instance, I skipped the superintendent rank and vaulted straight to assistant commissioner in October 1970. In a space of only seven months in 1971, I was promoted twice – from assistant superintendent to assistant commissioner in February and from assistant commissioner to deputy commissioner in September (p 45).

Perhaps, he should have noted that this was by no means unusual in Botswana at that time. For instance, many young graduates became very senior government officials such as permanent secretaries owing to the paucity of experienced local personnel and government's localisation drive.

Early in his political career Merafhe became a leading figure in the BDP's fierce and longstanding faction fighting. He led one faction while Daniel Kwelagobe led a rival group. However, Merafhe dismisses former BDP president, Quett Masire's assertion that he and Kwelagobe were responsible for starting factionalism in the party. He cites a vague statement attributed to the late President, Seretse Khama in 1977 accusing unnamed elements in the party for "wasting precious time engaging in

mudslinging, plotting and counter-plotting, while the many problems which face the country are left unsolved" (p 85). However, Merafhe does not explain the dynamics and gravity of factionalism in the BDP between 1977 and 1989, when he joined politics, to make his claim believable. During the 1994 general election, he represented the BDP in Mahalapye against Billy Makuku of the opposition Botswana National Front (BNF). Merafhe attributes his easy victory to his "intellectual polish" against what he alleges was Makuku's "crass" campaign, in which he described Merafhe as a carpetbagger from Serowe. This is exaggerated because Mahalapye was a resolute BDP heartland in 1994 and anybody would have won it on the BDP ticket.

On the country's long struggling opposition, which has never been in power, Merafhe says: "Granted, I would have loved the opposition to draw level with the ruling party to lend real legitimacy to the spirit of plural politics. To me, a vibrant opposition is essential in a genuine democracy. It not only acts as a check on the excesses of government but it keeps it on the double all the time. Going by their showing in all the elections to date, the opposition parties had a lot of homework to do to graduate from the backbench to the frontbench. It was a tall order really, because clearly they "faced a perpetual uphill struggle to endear themselves to the electorate" (p 92). This statement completely ignores the severe marginalisation of the opposition by the well-resourced incumbent party. Merafhe's former cabinet colleague, David Magang, candidly acknowledges this in his 2008 memoirs, The Magic of Perseverance, while Ray Molomo, also a former cabinet colleague of Merafhe, hints at this in his Democratic Deficit in the Parliament of Botswana (2012). A recent campaign for reform in the now declining BDP shows signs of the realisation by party activists that if the party lost power and was subjected to the same marginalisation it had inflicted upon the opposition for decades, it too would be doomed.

Merafhe's assessment of the country's economic development is still wedded in the now trite ruling party propaganda which took its cue from the work of certain scholars who describe Botswana as the "African Miracle". He writes:

Critics have scoffed that economic diversification has stalled, that we are virtually stuck in gear one. The facts on the ground tell a different story. At the turn of the century, the mining sector accounted for 75 per cent of Botswana's foreign exchange earnings, 60 per cent of government revenue, and 33 per cent of GDP. As I write, mining's contribution to GDP is a mere 20 per cent. If the country were the 'mono-cultural economy' it is sneeringly characterised as, we would not have weathered the 2007–2011 global economic crisis as resiliently as we did (p 181).

This is in stark contrast to the views in former BDP cabinet minister David Magang's extensively researched and strongly argued book *Delusions of Grandeur* (2015). Magang questions the use of GDP figures and argues that while statistics on the country's economic development may look impressive, the government has not created jobs to reduce unemployment and widespread economic inequality. As far as he is concerned, the African miracle is an "African mirage" to the citizens of Botswana.

As vice-president (2008–2012) Merafhe was also head of the house (parliament) which has been described by critics as merely a "rubber-stamp" and "doormat" of the executive. Two former speakers of parliament, namely Ray Molomo in his *Democratic Deficit in the Parliament of Botswana* (2012) and Margaret Nasha in her *Madam Speaker, Sir* (2014), document the predicament of parliament, but Merafhe ignores their concerns. Owing to failing health, he retired in 2012 after 52 consecutive years in the service of Botswana, and died in early 2015. Generally, the memoir is filled with rather too much self-praise; it is haughty in numerous respects, and several of the country's historical issues that are raised could perhaps have been handled better. Hopefully, Merafhe's future biographers will rectify these flaws.

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