

**Send books for review, and book reviews to:**

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## **Guidelines for *New Contree* Book Reviewers**

The *New Contree* Journal publishes reviews of significant books that are relevant to historians. Book reviews are written on invitation from the office of the review editor, but unsolicited reviews may also be considered. *New Contree* has an interdisciplinary outlook and welcomes suggestions of historically significant works written by scholars in other disciplines. The review should be submitted to the review editor within two months of receipt of the book. If this deadline cannot be met, a mutually agreeable alternative date can be negotiated. If it becomes impossible to review the book, it should be returned to the review editor. All reviews will be submitted to the members of the editorial board before acceptance for publication.

### **Content**

The review should summarize what is important in the book, and critique its substance. The reviewer should assess the extent to which the author achieves the stated aim of the book. It is important that the reviewer should engage the material instead of simply reporting the book's contents. For this reason, the reviewer should try to avoid summations of book chapters or the separate contributions in an edited collection. Instead, the reviewer should assess the ways in which chapters and contributions are relevant to the overall context of the book. Reviews should be written in a style that is accessible to a wide and international audience.

## **Format**

The review should generally be between 800 and 1 200 words, and should include as little bibliographic data as possible. When necessary, use page references for quotations in the text of the review and provide complete bibliographic details of the source. The review should begin with a heading that includes all the bibliographic data. The elements of the heading should be arranged in the order presented in the following example:

*The early mission in South Africa/Die vroeë sending in Suid-Afrika, 1799-1819.* By Karel Schoeman. Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2005, 272 pp., map, chronology, bibl., index. ISBN: 1-9198525-42-8.

Do not indent the first line of the first paragraph, but indent the first line of all successive paragraphs. Use double spacing for the entire review. Add your name and institutional affiliation at the end of the review. Accuracy of content, grammar, spelling, and citations rests with the reviewer, and we encourage you to check these before submission. Reviews may be transmitted electronically as a Word file attachment to an email to the review editor. If you have additional questions, please contact the Book Review Editors.

## **Book Reviews**

*South African politics: An introduction*

**(Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 2015, 366 pp., bibl, index.  
ISBN: 978-0-19-905096-3)**

**Nicola de Jager**

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*South African politics: An introduction* is an analytical descriptive and problem solving compilation of perspectives on the contemporary state of South African politics, provided by prominent South African political scientists. As a scholarly contribution this work must be viewed against the contextual

background of the political and economic transformation trends, and their consequences currently visible in the South African political landscape. It is aimed at policy makers, policy implementers as well as learners and thinkers focusing on the holistic dynamics and unfolding of political and economic transformation in developing societies in general. A specific emphasis is, however, placed on contemporary trends and events unfolding in South Africa. The basic assumption in the work is that effective transformative development in any democratic society is dependent on the successful realisation of specific procedural as well as substantive policy objectives as set out in a constitution. Procedural objectives refer to, for example voting rights for all, free and fair elections, the establishment of legitimate vertical and horizontal governmental structures and institutions as well as independent statutory bodies (the division of authority). In other words, there must be a culture of effective democratic regime performance. Substantive objectives run parallel with procedural objectives and relate to actual effective service delivery outcomes such as housing, education, economic empowerment, access to water, electricity, jobs and general infrastructure. It is argued that transformation must be effective on both the procedural and substantive level in order to be successful.

Against this background the book is narrowed down to the South African context. From a holistic perspective, it is argued that South Africa has been fairly effective in achieving reasonable levels of procedural transformation since 1994. South Africa has, however, to a large extent, been ineffective in achieving acceptable levels of substantive transformation. In this regard the central theme in the work revolves around the following question: how far has South Africa progressed in terms of political and socio-economic transformation, and what seems to be the way forward? After twenty two years of democracy this work is therefore a timely reflection on specifically contemporary levels of structural national service delivery (national dimension) and South Africa's status in the global environment (international dimension). As a point of departure and as a contextual background, the work provides a historical overview of the evolution of, and consequential institutionalisation of the apartheid system. In this regard an emphasis is placed on the unjust political, economic and social effects of the legislative arrangements that kept the apartheid system in place in the time frame 1948 to 1994. Together with international pressure, these discriminatory realities are portrayed as the causal factors that led to the demise of apartheid and the eventual negotiated transition process that took place in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Ultimately

this led to the establishment of South Africa as a constitutional state with a social contract. This supports the notion that procedural transformation has in many respects succeeded.

In most respects the work reflects the domestic political landscape in South Africa. Post 1994 events, however, prompted a new era in South Africa's international relations. The demise of apartheid and the creation of an all-inclusive democratic dispensation is skillfully linked to South Africa's new legitimate regional and international role, as well as global commitments and responsibilities. It is firstly implied that the country now has a crucial role to play as a representative of the poor South on a global scale (the so-called voice of the poor). Secondly, although not the largest, South Africa remains the most sophisticated economy in Africa and can be regarded as an investment gateway to, and from the rest of Africa. It furthermore plays a key role in the formation, operational structures and functions of BRICS as an evolving global political and economic trade block. This provides the country with a unique opportunity to specifically pursue the African agenda.

Throughout the book the argument that the substantive legacies of apartheid have not yet been eradicated remains central. As practical examples reference is made to the contemporary state of education, general economic development as well as trends in the ownership and use of land. What is of significant value is the descriptive analytical as well as a problem solving dimension of the book. A key concern is the continued prevalence of a dominant political party system which, opposed to a multi-party system, hampers freedom of choice. It is admitted that the dominant party system initially ensured a degree of stability and unity in the political and economic landscape during the immediate post-apartheid years. However, as this dominance was entrenched, patterns of the abuse of state resources in general service delivery inefficiencies, at the expense of the public interest started to emerge. A link is therefore created between inadequate substantive delivery as well as fault lines caused by the dominant political party system. The book concludes by suggesting that closer co-operation between government and civil society is needed in order to improve substantive delivery. Emphasis is placed on the strengths of the South African civil society and the objectives of the National Development Plan. In the final analysis the book provides useful guidelines for policy makers, implementers, learners and thinkers on how to manage and steer substantive transformation objectives.

*Imperiale somer/Suid-Afrika tussen oorlog en Unie, 1902-1910*

**(Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2015, 440 pp., bibl., index.  
ISBN: 978-1-4853-0419-7)**

**Karel Schoeman**

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Karel Schoeman's latest historical offering is a sweeping account of a lesser known period in South African history between the South African war and the formation of Union. The Edwardian period in question has been at times skimmed over in the South African historiographical context, often being used as a background to the larger events that surround it. Through *Imperiale somer* Schoeman creates an endearing human element in the narratives he selects which allows the reader to experience a fascinating period.

The book opens with the end of war and sets the stage for a period popularly characterised as an "endless summer" as the title of the book would suggest. South Africa was however, according to Schoeman, a poor imitation of the Edwardian ideal with black labour being the only impetus which could sustain an illusion of such a gloriously languid season for the British elite. The period in question is vast and complex and because of this fact Schoeman divides the book into chapters that cover major themes in a new and novel way. He effectively creates an atmospheric milieu by telling tales of real individuals as they experienced life in a post war South Africa encountering significant changes in its societal constructs.

New vantage points are taken on well-known figures such as Milner, Selborne, Olive Schreiner and General Smuts. Narratives on their daily lives, at times nearing banality, humanises the iconic figures of the time period. The fate of Boers in this new South Africa is covered in all its forms – including poor whites, struggling farmers and even the banished and downtrodden war heroes. The author sets the scene geographically for the stories by describing major cities as well as smaller towns and the condition they were in at the turn of the century. It is clear that Schoeman is both a historian and an accomplished novelist as he manages to transport the reader to the dusty

and filthy streets of erstwhile Cape Town, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein and Hanover whilst still maintaining the historical thread.

Newcomers to South Africa, in the form of settlers and immigrants, are a captivating theme which is covered across numerous chapters. In *Rekonstruksie* the narrative of Leonard Flemming is artfully used to elucidate on Milner's plan of anglicising the country and the subsequent relocation of British settlers to South African farms. Both rich and poor are given attention and a narrative is included of socialite Hugh Grosvenor who purchased an estate in the country soon after the war. Hereby both sides of British society are given due consideration in a period where society was made up of various levels of wealth and prosperity. The influx of other nationalities is covered in *Jerusalem van die Suide*, where the fates of Lithuanian Jewish immigrants in South Africa to both the cities as well as the countryside are discussed. Their place in societal hierarchy is conveyed through lived experiences and vividly connects the reader to ostracised Ostrich farmers and down and out eating house managers.

Charming anecdotes are to be found throughout the book and make for a thoroughly enjoyable read imbued with the *zeitgeist* of an era. The description of weddings in decadent detail reminds us of the garden party feeling surrounding the Edwardian period, but quickly brings us back to the realities of the South African lived experience in the dust drowned cities. One section rich in anecdotes is *Sirkus*, which masterfully interplays historic and human elements. The lives of the Boer war heroes took varying turns after the cessation of hostilities. After the great bravery of Cronje, and even some of a theatrical nature for Ben Viljoen, some Boers left South Africa to pursue other endeavours which even included plans of a Boer colony in Mexico. Amidst these and other stories of entertainers and interesting characters the book however still manages to ground the story in the South African context by relating them to events and circumstances persisting on home soil.

The chapter *Witwatersrand* contrasts the economic progress and prosperity of the city with the groups pushed to the periphery, both economically and spatially. The stories of the poor white burgers in Vrededorp as well as the black "kitchen and garden boys" help to illustrate the disparity. In *Marabastad* and *Die Modelrepubliek*, Schoeman adds to this a clear picture of race relations and living conditions of the marginalised races and post-war poor whites respectively. The argument of race relations is given further impetus in the sections *Menings* and *Kaapkolonie*. Herein the author uses complementary

stories to demonstrate the idea of “Black Peril” and perceived sexual dangers posed by black men as well as the geographic divide in opportunities awarded to non-whites. The superb research done by Charles van Onselen, on characters such as Joseph Silver and Nongoloza, are well placed in *Imperiale somer* as they are certainly indicative of the turbulent time in South African history.

The evolution of Afrikaans from a language bereft of gentility and reserved for conversations regarding agricultural and household related matters to one used in poetry and storybooks is a topic that receives some attention as one would expect. The addition of various literary offerings of the time is a thought-provoking way of showing the progression of the language in a concise manner. Finally, accounts of conditions aboard trains, ships and various other forms of transportation are an ingenious technique of relaying the technological advances of the time and also the actual conditions aboard them. In so doing Schoeman avoids stuffy descriptions and makes the modes of transport come to life from the view of those that made use of them.

As Schoeman acknowledges in his prologue the project was vast and could have been a much lengthier publication had it been given its complete dues. The use of many English quotations does distract from the flow to some extent as the reader is asked to switch between languages regularly. Furthermore, the section entitled *Tydsbeeld, 1902* is effective in immersing the reader in the period from the outset of the book, but might have been better suited as a photographic addition as it could be more striking in visual format. Even though the research undertaken was mostly not archival in nature, Schoeman should however be commended for his eloquent approach to the project and his use of tangible characters – as has come to be expected of him from his previous publications.

*Imperiale somer* is at its core a spirited portrayal of a period. It is almost possible to imagine one experiencing the smells and sights in all of its languorous glory. It has a charm and quaintness to its description which comes across as both genuine and captivating. The photographic section enhances the authenticity of the stories and allows the reader to immerse themselves in the time period all the more.

*Mandela's kinsmen nationalist elites and apartheid's first Bantustan*

**(Johannesburg: Jacana, James Currey, 2014, 201 pp.**

**ISBN: 978-1-84701-089-6)**

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In his book Timothy Gibbs explores the interconnectedness between nationalist ideologies and the political processes that fundamentally shaped and reshaped South Africa's socio-economic and political landscapes.

The reader's attention is immediately captured by the immaculate selection of colours in addition to the vividness of Nelson Rolihlala Mandela's appearance on the cover of the book. At first glance, I was under the impression that it was another monotonous book on the first president of the democratic Republic of South Africa. However, the book offers a more nuanced view on the history of South Africa. The reader is motivated to read the book to discover who the nationalist elites are and the roles they played in Nelson Mandela's political journey. The misconception evident in the book is believing that the focus is entirely on Nelson Mandela – which is not, in fact, the case.

My view is that South Africa's history should not solely focus on the achievements or the praising of elite political icons as the ramifications of such actions lead only to a narrow view of history, denying a podium to many other political figures who played pivotal roles in the liberation struggle of the country. Gibbs' narrative on Transkei's development introduces fresher perspectives by highlighting stories and names of political leaders in the Bantustans whose heroism may have been unacknowledged thus far. This strength can also be considered a weakness and, at times, one longs to learn more about the diverse characters discussed. On the other hand, these figures serve as important leads in future research.

The book's strength lies primarily in the admirable manner in which Gibbs shows the connections between key events such as the June 16 1976 student uprising as well the activities of the Mkhonto we Sizwe. Even more fascinating is his ability to provide outstanding and well researched findings on the

involvement of figures such Govan Mbeki, Chris Hani, and Walter Sisulu in the politics of the Xhosa Bantustan. Furthermore, Gibbs' findings are riveting in showing the interplay between chieftaincy (particularly with regards to Matanzima) and the leadership of the ANC and other political parties. Even more so, Gibbs has tirelessly expanded on the role played by women during the political and social upheavals that characterized apartheid.

Many of the political figures discussed in the book attended missionary schools and were of middle class backgrounds, in similar vein to the children born of royalty. In relation to "public schools", Gibbs makes the claim that schools were often underfunded and understaffed. In addition, Gibbs also emphasizes that children of royalty attended different schools from those of the 'lower' class but the only sound note of 'public' schools is made when he reflects on the teachers dissatisfactions in the running of the schools. Thus, the book focuses in greater detail on articulating the experiences of the middle class with lesser consideration of the working classes in the Transkei Bantustans.

In addition, the middle class nationalist elites formed a distinctive class based on a Christian identity. However, inadequate mention is made of African spirituality and cultural influences on the politics of the Bantustans. Gibbs needs to consider stronger connections between chieftaincy, customs and traditions of the Xhosa people and, even more so for the Sotho people of Matatiele. For instance, the Xhosa custom of circumcision which symbolises a transition into manhood is only considered in relation to Mandela's experiences and needs greater political contextualization. Another potentially useful area of discussion is the fundamental roles played by seers/traditional healers within the chieftaincy as this was closely related to chieftaincy.

To reiterate, Gibbs' focus has been largely on finding political connections between Bantustans and political events and organisations outside the Bantustans. Thus, the book demonstrates how countries in parts of southern Africa played significant roles in ensuring the longevity of Umkhonto we Sizwe operations. The focus on operations within other Bantustans has received little mention in relation to ANC operations and the Transkei. This book lays the foundation for highlighting the way in which our understanding of this period would be enhanced by looking at the interactions between Bantustan leaders and the ANC in other Bantustans as well. This is pivotal in understanding the political environments within the Bantustans.

The book is thus very significant in illuminating new paths for historians and academics to explore.

*Slavery and slaving in African history*

**(New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014, xvi + 223 pp., figures, maps, diagrams and illustrations, index. ISBN: 978-0-521-17188-5)**

**Sean Stilwell**

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This volume is the eighth in the series “New approaches to African History”, which Cambridge University Press launched in 2002 with the publication of Frederick Cooper’s much-acclaimed *Africa since 1940: The past of the present*. All the volumes in the series are aimed both at students and “general readers”. Each introduces a particular topic in African history, summarises the state of the literature, outlines key issues in that field and provokes discussion and debate. All the volumes in the series have proved excellent resources for those of us who teach African history.

Sean Stilwell’s new study that assesses the place of slavery in the African past is as impressive as predecessor volumes in delivering its difficult brief of digesting specialist knowledge, engaging in important debates and providing readers with a coherent synopsis of its topic. Although I might express an occasional reservation about some very dense and long paragraphs, I stand in considerable awe at the author’s ability to communicate clearly, without trivialising or over-simplifying the material.

One can be reasonably assured that all students of African history become aware early in their studies of the importance of slavery. Seldom, however, has a more persuasive case been assembled for a consideration of the significance of slavery in the African past. This text ranges over approximately between 10 000 and 12 000 years and takes into account a vast array of historical settings and conditions; in all of them, slavery was a critical element. While not suggesting that slave experience was always the same – indeed, it was often dynamic and it

was certainly very diverse – the author nonetheless does convey that slavery was a centrally important institution in African history.

The text has been organised into six chapters. The first two are perhaps best considered together, as Chapter 1 grapples with how to define slavery, while Chapter 2 seeks to historicise these definitions through placing them chronologically within different periods and places. The author leads the reader very clearly through the “slippery” concepts of slavery and freedom (p. 5ff). Despite the difficulties of defining precisely what slavery entailed across the continent, slaves in Africa were “usually produced through violence, were regarded as kinless outsiders, were often treated as property, and were believed to lack honor” (p. 26). They were the “ultimate form” of human capital and a “special kind of dependent” as “moral and social outsiders”. This last-mentioned concept is particularly well teased out in Chapter 2, where “insiders” in different contexts and societies actively used “outsiders” (or slaves) to promote their own influence, power and status. The author divides African history into four main chronological periods: the period up to the year 500CE that laid the foundations of slavery, that from 500 to 1600 when early militarisation and commercialisation occurred, the years 1600 to 1800 which saw the domination of Atlantic commerce, and the transformative nineteenth century, when high-density slavery was created and consolidated. This illustrates the main argument that slavery was not an “early modern” or nineteenth-century institution driven by forces external to the continent. Rather, it was one grounded in the long African past and embedded in many different early and later struggles, in which slaves as “outsiders” enabled the building and consolidation of states, ruling dynasties, and local households.

Chapter 3 deals with a theme which is certainly often neglected, if not completely overlooked, by non-specialists: slavery in kinship-orientated societies and decentralised communities. The material presented here suggests quite clearly that the absence of state structures did not mean people existed within timeless and disorganised, albeit generally inclusive, units. Slavery existed in a “low-density” form, operating both politically and economically, to bolster and to advance both the status and the wealth enjoyed by certain lineages. This chapter is an important corrective to many who understand slavery to be something solely tied to state formation and the history of the more recent African past, and particularly that of the period between the 1500s and the 1800s.

The place and the role of slaves within African states will be more familiar to many historians and students of Africa than the ground covered in Chapter 3, so the challenge here is different from the previous chapter. The core argument, that slavery was central to the success and viability of states and the institutions within them, is well advanced. This chapter moves forward briskly, and shows a fine ability to meld the general line of analysis with useful case studies and examples from different contexts in western, central and southern Africa.

Slavery and economics is the main focus of Chapter 5. While the chapter does not downplay the importance of external forces – the trans-Atlantic, the Indian Ocean and the Sahara trade in slaves – it is primarily interested in exploring internal dynamics and influences. It shows the shift over time of the use of slaves by mainly elites within African states to the use of slaves by non-elites, and argues that African households more broadly came to depend on slave labour for the production of goods. This complex and uneven process is outlined in what is the longest chapter of the book. By the end of the nineteenth century, millions of Africans were in bondage on the African continent itself, almost certainly some one-third of the population in some regions. Agricultural production was heavily dependent on the use and labour of slaves, sometimes in very significant numbers, but the success of economic pursuits such as weaving and mining was also reliant on slavery. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the evidence presented demonstrates that some Africans “had created dynamic and profoundly exploitative economies based on slave labor” (p. 175), a conclusion which will not delight those who argue that slavery was essentially an immoral system imposed by Europeans and other outsiders for their own economic enrichment at the expense of Africans.

If slavery was so successfully embedded in Africa, in the ongoing success of many states and in the advancement of African economies, why did it end? This forms the subject of the final chapter of the book, Chapter 6. Essentially, the author traces the process of the impact of colonialism in Africa, and the “double game” played by colonialists of technically abolishing slavery while at the same time ensuring that the supply of labour that was so necessary for the colonial project to succeed was seldom compromised. This often meant, of course, that coercive labour practices were employed. The move to wage labour was frequently a difficult and uneven process, and neither did it necessarily imply “freedom”, itself another “slippery” concept. Slaves themselves were not passive bystanders in this process either, and often were able

to shape their lives and futures in important ways. While slavery as a system was certainly substantially eliminated by the middle of the twentieth century, its legacy remained strong, and free waged labour did not of itself imply an absence of exploitation. These arguments are cogently expanded upon in this important final chapter.

Stilwell is particularly adept at handling both the broad narrative and the particular case study or region. A good example of this is his handling of slavery in southern Africa in the context of the economic use of slaves (pp. 124, 154-157; see also pp. 185-187). He provides an extremely useful and compressed discussion of slavery in the Dutch-dominated Cape, both on the “arable farms” (correcting an earlier allusion to “plantations” in the Cape [p. 111]) as well as in urban Cape Town. There are also some very valid remarks about the continuation of coercive and dependent relationships in all parts of southern Africa after the formal ending of Cape slavery in the 1830s (pp. 185-186, 213) – a theme which is more widely developed in the final chapter on the ending of slavery in Africa. Hardly surprisingly, given the critical significance of slavery in Africa over many centuries, the “end” of slavery was neither definitive nor absolute, and its consequences have lingered well into the second half of the twentieth century.

My only real quibble with this study is the absence of a select bibliography. The footnote references are indeed very useful in pointing the reader to key sources on particular debates and slavery in different contexts, but a consolidated list of references would surely have added value, particularly in guiding novices towards the major sources. The provision of such a list would have enhanced rather than diminished “the more general appeal of this book” (p. xi).

*Slavery and slaving in African history* is an extremely stimulating text, and deserves wide readership and circulation.

*Dirk Mudge: All the way to an independent Namibia*

**(Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2015 (1<sup>st</sup> edition), 511 pp. ISBN: 978-1-4853-0456-2 (printed book), 978-1-4853-0457-9 (e-book), 978-1-4853-0458-6 (ePub)**

**Dirk Mudge**

Laurence Shee  
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This eponymously titled autobiography, subtitled *All the way to an independent Namibia*, presents a defence for the doughty octogenarian's historical and political legacy.

As a young farmer with a wry sense of humour, Mudge's world was a tough one of drought, foot-and-mouth, and with the threat of financial ruin never far away. Nevertheless the farmers' optimism reminded Mudge of the Langenhoven proverb: "Dat jy jou swaarkry met lekkerkry moet klaarkry". (That you must put an end to hardship by enjoying yourself.) A wry sense of humour was necessary for survival. His extraordinary capacity for work and his future role in multiracial politics may have been, in part, influenced by his father's advice: "... you must work alongside your employees instead of just supervising them".

Gradually Mudge made the transition from farmer to politician. On many occasions he presents himself as the peacemaker and enlightened voice of reason in the hurly-burly world of South West African National Party politics. It is fascinating to follow the conversion of Mudge – more evolutionary than Damascene – from ardent National Party acolyte to advocate of multiracialism.

Between 1974 and 1977, Mudge became increasingly frustrated with most of his colleagues' and the National Party's unwillingness to go beyond 'cosmetic changes' in South West Africa towards full independence. He believed he had greater intimacy with working with blacks and coloureds than his colleagues had: "My white colleagues had never had these experiences; it seemed they were under the impression that at a meeting you could sell any clever plan to the black leaders". In a significant speech at Kamanjab on 5 November 1976 he foretold his break with the South African National Party by de-

claring that he did not need the Immorality Act or the Mixed Marriages Act to protect his identity.

As happens with visionaries, Mudge would incur the wrath of critics – damned if you do advocate change, damned if you don't. Not least, ostracism came from some erstwhile colleagues in the South African and the South West African National Parties. At the congress of the embryonic Republican Party in October 1977, Mudge knew of the task and obstacles ahead: "For starters, the majority of the white inhabitants disagreed with us on the most fundamental principles and objectives. Then there was SWAPO, which was not interested in a democratic solution. There was also a critical, and in some instances even a hostile, international community". As the SWAPO armed struggle escalated, Mudge discovered he was on their hit list, and the murder of his two colleagues, Clemens Kapuuo and Toivo Shiyagaya were constant reminders of the risk he took drawing together an anti-SWAPO coalition of disparate ethnic groups.

It is worth noting two contrasting views expressed in a couple of postings that followed a review by Werner Menges (*Namibian* 2015-05-29 online archives) on the release of Mudge's Afrikaans edition which preceded the English version under review here.

The first respondent recommended that Mudge be dragged before the ICC on the grounds that he "... was, still is and will forever remain the symbol of apartheid and brutality against Namibians. He was part and parcel of the apartheid regime". The angry scribe continued: "Patriotic Namibians are not interested in his book!! He can take it to h.... with him!!!" Juxtaposed with this flurry of exclamation marks appeared an alternative viewpoint: "Let's admit it – Dirk Mudge did a lot for scrapping of apartheid – even facing the anger and wrath of PW Botha and his South African government". He "... and his DTA made a huge contribution in stabilizing racial relations - something that is today still practicing successfully in Namibia and which contributes to the peace and stability we are experiencing".

This is not a light read as Mudge, lest something be omitted for posterity, goes into the minutiae of political meetings. Fortunately, humour occasionally breaks through as with the case where preposterous apartheid laws led to a quandary regarding separate toilet amenities for Turnhalle delegates. Again humour helps deal with some of the organisational nightmares Mudge experienced trying to bring different groups together in the Turnhalle Conference

on 1 Sept 1975. It was initially agreed that each of the eleven ethnic groups would bring four members to the Turnhalle talks, but on the day, the Herero complement exceeded 70; the Caprivians produced a brace of chiefs – Mamili and Moraliswani, each with a separate entourage and neither of whom accepted the other’s leadership – and so on for the other delegations. There are quaint anecdotes of the Turnhalle delegates’ exploratory trips to Europe and the USA – of the kind: raw Africa meets sophisticated Europe.

Mudge apports the last quarter of this tome to the writing of the Namibian constitution which he describes as “the highlight of my political career” and his role in it as “a great honour and privilege”.

Piet Croucamp captures the essence of Mudge in the preface to this book: “His aversion for the primitive political temperament of his own ‘tribe’ is reflected upon with reason and the integrity of his ‘longing for justice for all Namibians’ distinguishes him from his peers”.