Review
Reviewed Work(s): Beyond Apartheid: Human Resources in a New South Africa by Commonwealth Expert Group
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lukewarm in their support for multiparty systems, only Post expresses a preference for an “internally democratic single socialist party” (47). Within Africa, then, the continuing vigour of the struggle for democracy is producing a vigorous debate amongst scholarly observers. With some reservations I would welcome this book as a contribution to that debate.

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After the overwhelming “yes” vote in the recent South African referendum, this report is extremely relevant. Before the vote, it was not clear that we were “beyond apartheid”; now we can be much more confident that we soon will be. This report may help to ensure that the new South Africa will resemble the one for which South Africans and members of the international community have been struggling.

The Commonwealth Expert Group wrote this report following a recommendation of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa. It succeeds in three ways. First, it provides background on the South African context. Second, it documents the human resource requirements that will be necessary for South Africa to become a democratic, non-racial society. Third, it focuses on the support that will be required from the international community to make this happen.

The section on the African context discusses the following: demographic and economic factors; the existing provision of education and training; the transition period; the post-apartheid period; the regional context; and the mobilization of international resources. The group persuasively argues that the goals of human resource development must be to contribute to: [1] the process of political change; [2] the education and training of black men and women for positions that will be crucial to the creation of a new society; and [3] the immediate transformation of educational institutions and organizations committed to the building of a non-racial post-apartheid South Africa.

Finally, the group makes convincing recommendations for the transition and post-apartheid period. Additional funds of $120 million must be allocated to meet the priority needs of the transition period and lay the foundations for post-apartheid human resource development.

The report suffers from two problems. First, in determining which South African groups to consult, the group might have refined its selection process. It never clearly articulates its selection criteria. Among the groups it consulted were academic institutions, church organizations, professional bodies, trade unions, business groups and “other” organizations. Noticeably lacking is representation from both grassroots groups and from the thousands of South Africans who have been exiled or jailed over the past two decades. Input from such people would have been useful in identifying priorities in human resource development as the political process moves forward to a new united, non-racial, non-sexist South Africa based on one person, one vote. Second, the representation of South African views is somewhat limited in this report. Only two of the eight experts were South African.
Despite these problems, the report is useful in identifying the enormous human, social and economic needs in the aftermath of apartheid.

Anne Mitchell

Canada-South African Cooperation


Long ignored in Anglophone literature, the history of the Bambara (Bamana) kingdom of Segu is beginning to attract a great deal of attention, both scholarly and non-scholarly. The publication of Richard Roberts’s *Warriors, Merchants and Slaves* and, more recently, the popularity of Maryse Conde’s historical novel, *Segu*, attest to this new interest. Until the publication of *A State of Intrigue*, however, no English translation of the Bambara epic, one of the richest oral texts on the continent, existed.

This comparative neglect has contrasted with both the attention given to the Malinke legend of Sunjata, well known among Anglophone readers since Djibril Tamsir Niane’s *Sunjata: An Epic of Old Mali* and the work of John W. Johnson, and the interest of francophone scholars (Lylian Kesteloot, Gerard Dumestre, Youssouf Tata Cisse) in collecting systematically the various versions of the Segu epic over the last two decades. The publication of *A State of Intrigue* is thus especially welcome.

In introducing readers to the Segu epic, David Conrad has chosen to publish a version by the bard, Tayiru Banbera. The choice is appropriate in several respects. First, Banbera is one of the most well-known bards of Mali today. (Gerard Dumestre and Lylian Kesteloot have collected shorter episodes of the Bambara epic from him.) Banbera’s expressive style uses uncommon words and long digressions, which vividly set the scene for episodes of the epic. The Bambara epic is a cycle or a series of connected stories like the Arthurian legend, rather than one single story like the *Song of Roland*. Because the cycle is so long, it is never told in full by a single bard. However, due perhaps to Banbera’s volubility, *A State of Intrigue* incorporates more episodes of the epic than versions by other bards, thus giving non-specialists a good idea of what the full cycle is about.

While less fluid than Dumestre’s French translation, Conrad’s English rendition is easy to read and retains more of the flavour of the original Bambara. A short introduction precedes the text, comprising a brief description of traditional Bambara society and religion, a presentation of the bard and his style, an account of the historical events referred to in the epic, a discussion of the problems posed by translation, and a presentation by Rosemary T. Bock of the music played by the bard as background to the narrative. The book concludes with an especially useful set of reference matters: a list of the oral informants most often cited in annotations, three excellent maps, a chronological table of Bambara kings, a glossary, and a thorough bibliography. But the book’s greatest interest lies in its annotations, written with the kind of minutiae Conrad provided us in his earlier (in my opinion unjustly unrecognized) work.

Because *A State of Intrigue* comes years after the versions published by francophone scholars, it is now possible to compare various versions of the epic. In his annotations, Conrad compares Banbera’s version to the different versions (some of them by Banbera himself) collected by Kesteloot and Dumestre, as well as to the earlier ones