

By 1912, voluntary labour was expanding as workers, with greater familiarity of mine work, made their own way to the Reef without the intervention of recruiters. For many, the flexibility of short-term contracts associated with voluntary labour, in contrast with the longer-term contracts of recruited labour, outweighed the attraction of cash advances and other inducements offered by recruiters.

The greater availability of voluntary labour reduced the dependence of the mines on private recruiters and contractors, and by 1910 enabled the state to achieve a statutory limit on wage advances, which recruiters had long resisted because these advances were an essential element in their success.

In 1912 the Chamber initiated a fourth bid for monopsony based on the Native Recruiting Corporation. Monopsony was finally achieved by 1918, thanks to changing conditions in the countryside and on the mines, which favoured the mining industry, notwithstanding a vigorous rearguard action by independent recruiters, recorded in fascinating detail by Jeeves.

The contending forces which ultimately created the migrant labour system were also responsible for the creation of the colour bar attendant to it. Thus the origins and development of the colour bar were complex and cannot be explained simply in terms of the racial prejudice of white labour unions, or the pursuit of profit by mining capital.

This meticulously researched and fascinating book is an important addition to the historiography of mine labour because it brings an institutional complement to the literature emerging on the socio-economic basis of migrancy. It is essential reading not only for mining historians, but also for anyone interested in the complex forces shaping modern South Africa.

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R. MARX (red.). *Klerksdorp: groeiende reus, 1837-1987*. Perskor: Johannesburg, ca. 1987. 140 pp. Geïll. R50,00 (eksklusief). Geen ISBN-nummer.

Volgens die titelblad is hierdie werk 'saamgestel en uitgegee in opdrag van die Stadsraad van Klerksdorp by geleentheid van die 150- en 100-jarige feesviering in 1987 en 1988 ter herdenking van die ontstaan van die dorp in 1837 en die amptelike proklamasie tot dorpsstatus in 1888.'

Die omstredeheid oor 1837 as ontstaansdatum is bekend, terwyl 1888 ook probleme oplewer — dit is nie die datum waarop dorps-

status verwerf is nie maar waarop die delwerye geproklameer is. Hierdie is egter 'n geleentheidspublikasie wat daarop gemik is om — soos die redakteur dit stel — aan die leser 'n breë oorsig oor die verlede en hede te gee en die bestaande leemtes in die literatuur oor die belangrike Wes-Transvaalse dorp uit die weg te ruim. Die publikasie kom dus op 'n geleë tydstep en het 'n breë algemene leserskring as teiken.

In dertien hoofstukke, wat wissel in lengte van twee tot 50 bladsye, word uiteenlopende fasette van die dorp se geskiedenis aangesny, naamlik die algemene geskiedenis, die geskiedenis van onderwys, geologie en goud, die geskiedenis van die mynbedryf, politieke geskiedenis, pioniers, plaaslike bestuur, argitektuur, straatname, kerke, die plaaslike pers, organisasies en die feesviering self. Afgesien van Marx, wie se bydrae verreweg die grootste is, het 'n sestal medewerkers elk ook 'n hoofstuk gelewer.

Die tematiese benadering is vir 'n geskiedenis van dié aard aangewese, maar dit is te betwyfel of die keuse van temas met genoeg oorleg gedoen is. Die indruk word voorts gewek dat medewerkers op grond van hul gespesialiseerde kennis (die redakteur praat van uiteenlopende beroepe) gekies is, eerder as om 'n gebalanseerde beeld van Klerksdorp en sy omgewing te skep. Aan sport en ontspanning of die distrik en buurdorpe word feitlik geen aandag gegee nie. Dieselfde geld die uitwerking van oorloë, spoorweë en mynbou op die ekonomiese, kulturele, demografiese en fisiese ontwikkeling van die dorp. Oor die Groot Trek word gesê dat 'ons Afrikaners' baie trots daarop is maar die Engelse bydrae tot die groei van Klerksdorp word grootliks verswyg. In die hoofstuk oor onderwysgeskiedenis word slegs in 'n tabel na nie-blankes verwys. By die godsdienstige gedeelte figureer dié groep glad nie. Die afdeling oor 'Swartes, Kleurlinge en Indiërs' in die hoofstuk oor plaaslike bestuur beslaan skaars 'n bladsy.

In die navorsing is hoofsaaklik gebruik gemaak van sekondêre bronne en nuusblaai, dog kosbare inligting in byvoorbeeld Jeppe se *Transvaal book almanacs* en die *Offisiële jaarboek* is nie ontgin nie. Die hoofstuk oor politieke geskiedenis is trouens weinig meer as 'n opsomming van 'n bekende sekondêre bron. Bronverwysings (voetnote) word ook net in enkele van Marx se hoofstukke gebruik.

Dit wil voorkom of afronding aan die werk oorhaastig gedoen is om die publikasie met die feesvierings te laat saamval. Daar is inkonsekwentheid in die skryfwyse van geldstelsels (soms ponde, dan weer die randwaarde

daarvan) en verwysings na die Sandrivier-konvensie as die geleentheid waarby Transvaalse onafhanklikheid 'verkry' is op een plek, en 'erken' is op 'n ander. Die hoofstuk oor organisasies (waarmee diensorganisasies bedoel word) lees eerder soos 'n prospektus. Die skrywers verwys soms ook in die modieuse teenswoordige verlededryf wat 'n strik kan word. Ewe hinderlik is die oormatige gebruik van taalgoggas soos 'huidiglik' en die foutiewe 'huidige' (p. 56) waar 'hede' bedoel word. Die redakteur se verweer dat die publikasie nie die werk is van 'geoeffende of professionele skrywers' nie en dat taal-, styl- en ander kritici nie te opletend moet wees nie, slaag nie daarin om sulke tekortkominge te versag nie.

Oor die algemeen is die werk goed geïllustreer dog baie foto's is nie keurig vir publikasie voorberei of van insiggewende byskrifte voorsien nie. Illustrasies word ook nie in die inhoudsopgawe aangedui nie. Nog 'n leemte is die gebrek aan 'n register. Nieteenstaande die negatiewe aspekte moet die werk as 'n lofwaardige poging van amateurhistorici gesien word. Dit maak nie aanspraak op akademiese statuut nie en is 'n leesbare maar tussentydse plaasvervanger vir 'n meer oorwoë poging.

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J.B. PEIRES. *The dead will arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856-7*. Ravan Press: Johannesburg, 1989. 348 pp. R26,00 (exclusive). ISBN 0 86975 381 9.

If one was to reflect upon recent South African historiography one would undoubtedly find that the overwhelming focus of scholarship has been on 20th century social history. In the 1970s there were a number of historians undertaking research into the pre-capitalist societies of southern Africa. However, in the 1980s this field of study ceased to grow; if anything, it contracted. The field has been left in the hands

of a few historians like Julian Cobbing, Carolyn Hamilton, Patrick Harries, John Wright and the author of this book, Jeff Peires.

This must be one of the few books on South African history with a pre-1900 focus to have been written in recent years. That makes it a refreshing book. But it is refreshing for many other reasons. Indeed it is a fine book. It is not only good history, written with insight and empathy; it is also a good story, containing a narrative that is often gripping, a range of colourful characters, and a rich array of anecdotes.

At the best of times it would be difficult to comprehend why a whole community should decide to destroy or forego its main sources of subsistence. Inevitably explanations of such a bizarre event as the cattle-killing will tend to rest on conspiracy theories. And this has been the case — until the publication of this book. As Peires shows, the leading colonial actors of the time and the subsequent colonial historiography have explained the cattle-killing as a plot organized by leading Xhosa chiefs, in league with the Basotho king, Moshoeshe, to foment a war against the Cape Colony. Conversely, generations of Xhosa have grown up in the firm belief that the event was a vile trick played by Sir George Grey to deceive the Xhosa into destroying themselves. Peires demonstrates convincingly how both explanations carry no weight at all.

Most of the first half of the book is taken up with providing a vivid account of the main actors and events. Adopting a largely narrative mode, Peires allows the tragedy to unfold. A vicious logic drove the 'believers' (the supporters of the cattle-killing) on a relentless course of self-destruction. Nongqawuse's prophecy required all cattle to be killed. This would enable both the ancestors and new healthy cattle to rise up. The killing would be a purification process, so that the new order would not be contaminated by the past. Many times the believers expected, with high hopes, the dawning of the day of resurrection. Many times they were disappointed. Disappointment drove some believers to waver and lose faith. But many others blamed the non-fulfilment of the prophecy on the unbelievers who had not killed their cattle, or on believers who had 'hedged their bets' by keeping some cattle alive. Thus each time an expected day passed without fulfilment of the prophecy, more and more cattle were killed. The ultimate consequence was mass starvation. Between January and December 1857 the population of British Kaffraria dropped from 105 000 to 37 500 as a result of death and migration.

Peires's great achievement is to make this event comprehensible. This he does in two important analytical sections (pp. 122-138 and 165-181) and in chapter 10. His interpretation is based upon a careful contextualization of the cattle-killing. He sets the event against a background of debilitating frontier warfare, land deprivation, and the devastating lung sickness epidemic. Given the crumbling material base of Xhosa society it was hardly surprising that a prophecy promising regeneration should have received such wide adherence. Elements in the Xhosa belief system and certain Christian doc-