

Adam and Uys, for instance, are critical of Mozambique for signing the Nkomati Accords with Pretoria and suggest that South Africa business is stronger than ever in its influence over the government and its support of the union movement. Time and a very small amount of it, has subsequently shown the Mozambiquan move to have been the wisest possible, under the circumstances, for FRELIMO's survival, particularly in respect to influencing Western sympathies against the MNR and for increased aid. South African business joined the government in 1987 in breaking the back of the largest miners' strike in the country's history, and discouraged the likes of prominent corporate reformer, Tony Bloom, who decided recently to leave the country entirely.

A few of Kitchen's contributors even indulge in guessing at the lifespan of white rule. Ken Owen ("A fundamental shift in South African politics?") goes so far as to claim that "very few *informed* people [emphasis added] are still prepared to envisage 20-or 25 year scenarios. . ." While conceding that "possible revolution [in] five years" is unlikely prudent commentators in recent years have generally realized the futility of such predictions.

This varied collection provides valuable insight into the fallibility of both "informed" people and laymen alike in plotting the course of a highly volatile setting. Nonetheless, it remains an informative, thought-provoking history and analysis of South Africa's tumultuous recent past.

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Return to the Homeland: Travels in Nigeria - No Snakes, No Monkeys, No Apes by Ola Washington. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, 1988. pp.ix + 295 + 23.

This book is the record of the journal kept by the author who participated in a Seminar on Nigeria" for Community College instructors, organized by the University of Southern California and led by Professor Vasicht Malhotra of that institution. The participants travelled to Nigeria where they were lectured on various aspects of Nigerian culture and development by Nigerian university professors. They were based at the country's oldest university, the University of Ibadan. The local coordinator of their program was J.F. Ade Ajayi, an eminent Nigerian historian. The seminar trip lasted from Monday, June 23, 1982 when the group arrived in the country and ended Saturday, July 31 when it left to return to the United States. The promotions for the trip, the actual invitation and preparation for it, and the events that

took place during the seminar constitute the author's diary and contents of this book.

Return to the Homeland: Travels in Nigeria - No Snakes, No Monkeys, No Apes is virtually three titles rolled into one, each dealing with the basic thematic impression and judgments of the author on this seminar trip. In the first place, going on the trip was a psychic compensation and realization of a dream to travel to Africa which the author always thought would be possible someday in her life even though she was not sure under what circumstances. Having taken it upon herself to defend Africa from her detractors, including members of her own family, Ola Washington fervently hoped she would one day visit the continent for first-hand knowledge of the land of her ancestors. The opportunity to go to Yorubaland in Nigeria was a double blessing for her because it took her to the part of the continent she considered her very roots where her own name Ola was common. This satisfaction in the interaction she had with her Nigerian Yoruba hosts including the Governor of Oyo State, the state of which Ibadan is the capital, justified her choice of the first part of the book's title, "Return to the Homeland."

The second part of the title, "Travels in Nigeria," is also appropriate as the contents of this journal show. The "professors from U.S.C.", as the study group was commonly called by their hosts did not just have seminars in Ibadan for the duration of their stay, they also visited other towns in the country including Ife, Lagos, Benin, Nsukka, Makudi, Jos, Kano and other places. The experience exposed the teachers to the diversity of Nigeria's ethnic groups and their culture, and its geography, and offered them the opportunity to meet with a cross-section of the Nigerian peoples as well as fellow-travelers, many of them their own countrymen and women.

The third part of the title, "No Snakes, No Monkeys, No Apes" borders on journalistic exaggeration. Of course there are snakes, monkeys and apes of different kinds in Nigeria but the reader of the book will discover the rationale for the author's inclusion of this sub-title. The impression the majority of Americans have of Africa is one of a vast jungle full of wild animals which the visitor can observe almost every inch of the terrain. American and European visitors to Africa prefer to go to East Africa where the game parks amply satisfy their exotic curiosity about wild animals. Ola Washington did not see those wild animals during her trip and that naturally made a great impression on her. She, therefore, puts in this sub-title to counter the romantic feeling that there are wild animals everywhere in Africa. The study group, though naturally disappointed that Nigeria wasn't one vast zoo, could not fail to rethink their fairy-tale concept of Africa.

As a journal, Return to the Homeland is a catalogue of daily routines personal to the author and general for the study group. Such a diary of events can make very boring reading with such repeating details

as waking up in the morning, performing the toilet rituals, going to breakfast, attending seminars, having lunch, taking siesta, freshening up, going for interview sessions, having dinner, socializing and retiring to bed. The next day the same routines would start all over again. However, there are highlights such as interesting lectures, special dinner and meeting with highly placed officers of state. Ola's meeting with Governor Bola Ige of Oyo State changed her life. This meeting brought her closer to the realities of reincarnation, an idea she had not seriously entertained before this meeting.

The effervescence of the author's personality permeates her observations and makes the job of reading the journal pleasurable. She has such a keen sense of observation that she could not help noticing a care-free lizard, keeping its routine during a church service or a grasshopper perching on her bag in a Vice-Chancellor's office! Typical of a personal journal but more so of the author's openness, the reader is let in to the details of her domestic and social involvements. She relates with unusual candor her experience in smelly public toilets during a stopover in Liberia and the heavy flow of her monthlies. It is impossible to miss her intense religious culture: her daily morning and night prayers and singing whenever the need arose. She is also very much obsessed with standing out in the crowd to be noticed especially in the African clothes she sews for herself at the least opportunity.

In spite of the author's candor in relating her experiences in Nigeria, one is somehow disappointed by her use of fictional identities for the participants of the seminar group except perhaps the professor who led the team and herself. She gives as her reason her need to protect the identity of these participants. But why would their identity be protected while that of their Nigerian hosts is revealed? The seminar was already a fact of history at the time of her going to press, so why fictionalize it?

Perhaps the most disturbing inadequacy of Return to the Homeland is its careless organizational structure and slipshod proofreading. The table of contents reveals that the journal is organized according to content titles while in actual fact the page that agrees with the content is simply given a date heading. For example, while "Arriving at the University of Ibadan" appears as the caption on page 10, this page in the book is merely captioned "Wednesday, June 23." There should be a consistency in the book's organization so that the table of contents is consistent with how the book is arranged. Also the book in its table of contents shows a "Part I" and "Part II" whereas the inside pages show "Preface" and "Return to the Homeland." Serious proofreading also needs to be undertaken to correct the mistakes of capitalizing certain words such as "Ethnic groups" (Preface), spellings such as "busses" (p.13) and pagination which is not done according to Standard practice. A revision of the book should pay attention to these

editorial details and also see to the elimination of unnecessary personal details repeated in many places such as the author's identity confused as that of a Nigerian Igbo or Yoruba woman, the people that resemble her brothers, and so on. The reader will enjoy the highlights but not their frequent repetitions.

Return to the Homeland makes an entertaining and informative reading which the American public will find very rewarding. It reveals a new angle of the African experience for the American and stresses the need for sensitivity to the uniqueness of the peoples and their cultures. Not only that, it is enriched by interviews on different aspects of the Nigerian lifestyle such as marriage and family orientation. The book reveals the adventures of a true ambassador, an author who wants to build cultural bridges between Africa (Nigeria in this instance) and the United States. Of great significance to the African-American is the author's advise to him/her to abandon the air of superiority in dealing with Nigerians (Africans) and to appreciate the cultural differences that exist between them. As she puts it,

Black Americans must be trained to perceive the relationship between Africans and themselves. (p.168)

This "relationship", I daresay, is a two-way street. It calls for mutual respect for and sensitivity to one another's cultural uniqueness. In this regard the book will be useful to the African-American who plans to travel to Africa for the first time, or to any other American for that matter. After all, Ola Washington, in spite of her enthusiasm for Africa, could not help missing the comforts and conveniences of America during her visit to Nigeria. The important thing is that her impression showed that she went to Nigeria having a positive attitude and that she came back loving the country that hosted her more so than the one that sent her there.

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