

struggle of the African people has made the boundaries of pass laws permeable, more important, the African urban proletariat in spite of or because of pass laws, with it the distinctive character has emerged to be a major political force in shaping the urban political economy of South Africa.



SADCC: Prospects for Disengagement and Development in Southern Africa, Samir Amin, Derick Chitala and Ibbo Mandaza - The United Nations University, ZED Books Ltd., London and New Jersey, 1987.

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Edited by S. Amin, D. Chitala and I. Mandaza, the book has nine chapters and ten contributors. It is about the performance and prospects of SADCC as a developmental regional cooperation organization, and discusses relevant and topical issues on "disengagement and development in Southern Africa".

Samir Amin in the Preface puts the topic in perspective by discussing the overriding need to "delink" from South Africa (SA) and the 'Global imperialist system', whereas D. Chitala in chapter I, rightly emphasizes the dominance of South Africa in the regional economy as measured by its investment, direct and indirect, and the trade imbalance in its favour. Mapping out the strategy for delinking from SA is important and the author does not address this issue directly. Should the umbilical cord be cut once and for all or should SADCC adopt a more gradual approach to delinking?

If a once-and-for-all approach is adopted, what are the alternatives? Or maybe seeing that there is trade-off between economic and politico-moral benefits, alternatives do not matter. Such questions need answers.

The backbone of any economy is the manufacturing sector and chapter 2, on the manufacturing sector by D. B. Ndlela, is quite relevant. At a higher stage of regional cooperation, we move from the sphere of exchange, that is trade cooperation, to the sphere of production, manufacturing.

This entails regional industrial integration. In this chapter, problems to this end are pointed out, pertaining to the "absence of well formulated strategies and plans for industrialization" within the SADCC region. If 'disengagement' is to be effected, an industrialization strategy for SADCC needs mapping out, or else SADCC might just be an international organizational white elephant with no feet.

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What is lacking in this chapter is reference to the degree of multinational cooperations penetration in SADCC. Their resistance to regional industrial integration has negative effects on 'delinking'.

Regional food security and agricultural Cooperation issues are discussed by C. Mumbergegwi in chapter 3. The topic is interesting as it is important, even though parts of it are rather misleading.

For instance assertions like "the root cause of this growing malaise (food-shortage), is simply the failure of SADCC agriculture to keep pace with population and growth in food demand", slightly misleads readers into thinking that the solution to the food shortage 'malaise' is to reduce population growth and food demand. And yet the solution is to increase and improve regional cooperation in agriculture and restructure intra-national agricultural policies and incentives to improve efficiency and productivity.

Mongula B. S. Ng'andwe C. in chapter 4, point out a deepening energy crisis in SADCC, but evade egocentric-national energy policies in electric power, for instance, where such myopic and costly policies have overthrown sound and pro-regional policies. For instance Zimbabwe built the highly mechanized Hwange Thermal Power Station, which ensures self-sufficiency but is against regional cooperation. This makes Zimbabwean electricity 300% more expensive than previously imported electricity from Zambia. Cabora Basa electricity in Mozambique is even cheaper than Zambian electricity.

In chapter 5, D. H. Kalyala and G. Mudenda discuss world recession and its effects on mining in SADCC. The data used is from a paper by Mr. Paul Jourdan, Institute of Mining Research (IMR), University of Zimbabwe, entitled "The Effects of World Recession and Crisis upon mining in SADCC" September 1984, which was incorporated in the Munslow, B et al paper presented in ROAPE Conference, Keele, September 1984. Both the title and content of this chapter therefore lack any striking originality and the date is outdated.

It is certainly not surprising that tables 5.2, 5.3 and 5.6 have data up to 1983 only and yet the chapter was written in 1987, as these were extracted from a 1984 paper, and needed updating to accurately present the current situation. Phrases like 'unprotected minerals' as regards certain minerals were coined by P. Jourdan, and the authors use them without explaining their meaning to the reader.

The 'development of Local Technological Capacity' is discussed by G. Mudenda in chapter 6, in only two pages with fourteen and half pages devoted to description rather than analysis of the regional technological potential, technological bottlenecks and strategies to overcome them through coordinated regional efforts.

J. Wagano, in chapter 7 rightly shows the need for SADCC to promote trade within the organization, delink from South Africa, and abandon the

deferring ideological and political stances. But it should be pointed out that quite often it is mere inefficiency and bureaucratic systems as opposed to institutions with overlapping jurisdiction, which contribute to factors stifling trade relations within SADCC. For instance the PTA Clearing House which is meant to facilitate trade among the PTA countries several of which are members of SADCC, is underutilized, as the binding constraint is the import restriction strategies through import licensing, which are bureaucratic and inefficient. Besides most SADCC countries want 'hard' currency not 'soft' currency, leading to exports being channelled to developed capitalist countries. Therefore dependence on SA is weakened but strengthened with the capitalist world, defeating the main objective of SADCC.

The importance of financial integration in SADCC and PTA countries to facilitate trade by reducing trade tariffs and establishing a common currency, is treated by C. Ng'andwe in chapter 8.

The last chapter by I. Mandaza does not seem well placed as a concluding one. We would expect it to be at the beginning of the book, as it discusses 'Economic Cooperation and Autonomous Development', a framework within which the concept of SADCC should be discussed. The other chapters would then follow on their respective themes. This chapter is more of an introduction rather than a concluding one.