on a very rich and extensive research data, and should be found useful by sociologists, political scientists, and students of religious movements in Black Africa.

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The IMF and World Bank in Africa: Conditionality, Impact and Alternatives - Edited by Kjell J. Havnevik (Uppsala, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1987) 186 pp. SEK 110).

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Not so long ago, it seemed that the debate on the role of the IMF and World Bank in Africa had ended, and the intellectual defenders of these international financial institutions had won. Almost all the countries of Africa (from Senegal to Tanzania) had embarked on IMF/World Bank economic "recovery programmes" of one sort or another. Radical critics of the institutions were often and easily dismissed as paranoid ultra-leftists who simplistically saw neo-colonialism behing every international agency. But today, popular experience and history seem to vindicate the critics.

The well-known policy conditionalities imposed by the IMF and the World Bank (currency devaluations, trade liberalisations, removal of subsidies and cutbacks in social expenditures, labour retrenchments, etc.) have wrought a social and political havoc that has not only confounded the apologists of the IMF and World Bank, but also engendered what seems to be the emergence, on the horizon at least, of a popular anti IMF/World Bank movement from the streets of Lusaka to those of West Berlin. There is even an exciting potential here for a "new" wave of popular anti-imperialist struggles and solidarity reminiscent of the 1960s.

This development has undoubtedly contributed to a renewed intellectual interest in the role of the two institutions in Africa. *The IMF and the World Bank in Africa* is clearly a product of this renewed interest. It contains the papers presented at a conference convened by the Scandinavian Institute of African Studies in Sweden in January 1987 to discuss the role of the IMF and the World Bank in Africa, with specific reference to the following objectives:

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(1) to bring out the content of major positions on the IMF and the World Bank in Africa, their differences and why they differ;

(2) to present various case studies in order to trace the impact of IMF/World Bank analyses and conditionality;

(3) to investigate the impact of IMF/World Bank policies on the perception of development and debt problems among western countries, and in particular the Nordic ones;

(4) suggest and discuss alternative conditionality", (p. 10).

The range of perspectives and positions on the IMF and the World Bank in Africa are reasonably well represented in the book. But they are not explicitly stated, neither is it clear where a few of the authors stand on the issues. The best argued position is that which rejects the IMF/World Bank policies (by John Lexley on Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole; Yusuf Bangura on Nigeria; Cheryl Payer on India; and P.D. Ncube, M. Sakala and M. Ndulo on Zambia). The weakest position is advanced by IMF/World Bank representatives. Louis M. Goreux of the IMF, for example, responds to the criticism that IMF programme worsens the conditions of the poor with the following:

...it is true that the elimination of food subsides had often this effect. But the great majority of the african population live in rural areas. The reduction of subsidies on imported food in urban areas has the effect of improving the terms of trade of the rural population in relation to the urban population, and the rural poor are often poorer than the urban poor. (pp. 86-87).

The World Bank representative, Ravi Gulbati, also replies to criticisms of the policies of import liberalisation and de-industrialisation in Africa as follows:

The Bank is aware that a number of experiments have failed and that many pitfalls exist. The Bank is presently conducting comparative studies in a series of countries in order to gain more insights about the proper sequence and timing of import liberalisation, (p. 89).

The case studies (Nigeria, Zambia, Tanzania, Ivory Coast, South Africa and Mozambique) all show what we already know; that the IMF/World Bank programs are not easy to "sell" and are negative in their impact on the people. But the cases also bring out a very important dimension of the programmes. This is the near total secrecy and outright deception which characterise official dealings with the institutions. No where in Africa has an IMF/World Bank programme been accepted as a result of popular discussions or even serious parliamentary deliberations. The people are conveniently kept out of the way, to be brutally repressed when they resist. Even in Nigeria where there was a semblance of public debate as to whether or not to accept an IMF loan in 1985, Bangura shows how when it was all over and the people had "had their say", believing that they had won, "the government and the pro-IMF group" were able to "have their way" to implement the unpopular programme in 1986. The lack of democratic practices seems to extend even to internal negotiations between African governments and the financial institutions. Samuel M. Wangwe's case study of Tanzania shows how in the protracted negotiations between the IMF and the Tanzanian government, the IMF came to each round of negotiations with the aim of "teaching the Tanzanians a lesson". In the end, through what appeared to be a World Bank/IMF "collaboration", Tanzania gave in.

The fact that IMF/World Bank programmes are undemocratic and are fully implementable only in situations of political repression and human rights abuses is now well established. This, probably more than any other consideration, is likely to be of some concern to the social democracies of the west which often enjoy a certain measure of goodwill and respect among underdeveloped countries. Hence, one gets a distinct impression from this book (and its stated objectives) that a great deal of effort was intended to identify less undemocratic and unpopular alternatives to current IMF/World Bank programmes; alternatives that will pre-empt popular "disturbances". So the search was for alternative conditionalities, not revolutionary alternatives! But Bangura argues in his study of the Nigerian case, the only popular and therefore credible alternative to structural adjustment is structural transformation which the IMF and the World Bank are neither designed for nor interested in helping to bring about.

In the end, the book does not really offer us a debate at all, for the apologists of the IMF and the World Bank provide only lame excuses. Besides, the case of Ghana which is now held as the "most successful African case" received no attention. This is regretable for the Ghana case alone presents us with a good opportunity to fully debate the many issues involved in the implementation of a concerted IMF/World Bank Economic Recovery Programme on a scale unparalleled in Africa. For a real debate, we will have to wait for another book.