

intention. For the reader who approaches the text with a sense of being respectful of what Romero set out to do, there is much to be gained from this personalised panorama.

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Appealing work for those interested in colonial and labour history

Duncan L. Du Bois, *Sugar and Settlers: A History of the Natal South Coast 1850-1910*

Sun Press, Bloemfontein, 2015

415 pp

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R375.00

This recent publication by Duncan L. Du Bois is an interesting and rich account of the history of Natal's South Coast during colonial times. It is based on Du Bois's PhD thesis entitled "Sugar and Settlers: The Colonisation of the Natal South Coast, 1850–1910", which was accepted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2014. Natal's South Coast during colonial times was known for its cultivation of coffee, cotton and sugar. However, it was the cultivation and production of sugar which promoted the arrival of settlers and the extension of Natal's southern frontier to the Mtamvuna River.

In this interesting publication the author provides a rich narrative of the socio-economic, political and geographical factors that shaped and defined the history of the South Coast. Colonisation along this coast was far from benign. It was jettisoned against multiple factors and events. For example, shortage of labour, lack of infrastructure (roads, railways and bridges), political woes, and the impact of the Anglo-Zulu War were all significant issues. There were tireless efforts by settlers in the Alexandra and Alfred counties to redress some of their pertinent grievances. For example, between 1880 and 1885, no less than 18 petitions were submitted to the government: four concerned the need to establish telegraphic links between the South Coast and Durban and Pietermaritzburg; three requested the establishment of a separate magistracy in the Lower Umzimkulu district of Alfred County; three called for improvement to the harbour works and the granting of fiscal status to the river port; while two appealed for the construction of a bridge over the Mkomanzi; and others dealt with general colonial issues.

The book is divided into three parts. Part One provides a comprehensive account of settlements in the area such as Isipingo, Lower Mkomanzi, Alfred County, and Alexandra County. It also documents the role and contributions of pioneer families such as the Reynolds and Crookes and their influence on the economic and political development of the South Coast region.

Part Two examines settler interaction with the African and Indian communities and how this shaped and defined racial attitudes. Settler concerns towards the African population were largely in the context of land purchases and ownership; labour migration; the scarcity of African labour and issues of crime and security. In examining the Indian settlement along the South Coast, Du Bois highlights anti-Indian hostility in the context of trade, settlement and labour. Anti-Indianism was displayed by both colonial officials and settlers who were keen to retain white control of the retail, wholesale and African trade. Hence trading licences became a contested issue in the region (as indeed it did in other parts of Natal). Settler concern against “itinerant traders known as dukawallahs” led to calls for the restriction of trade (retail, wholesale and hawkers) licences to Indians. These narratives provide some interesting insights into colonial racial attitudes, the competition for trade, land ownership, and labour issues.

Part Three examines the South Coast region between the years 1894 and 1910 in the context of economic growth (including matters such as capital, shipping, roads, railways, property investment, and commercial agriculture); pestilence (particularly locusts and rinderpest); and political instability (notably the Anglo-Boer War and Bhambatha Rebellion). However, what is lacking in this study is a gendered lens on the lives of the settlers along the South Coast. In Part Three, some aspects of settler society are eluded in the context of the role of women (as well as in Part One, where Mrs Georgina Nelson's account provides a glimpse into the role of women in colonial history) but it is very limited both in scope and content. Issues such family life, religion, education, household structures and gender roles could have been explored further to highlight colonial attitudes towards settler women and the challenges they endured in the process of setting up homes along the South Coast. For example, what role did women play in settler society? Did they participate in civil society and if so, at what level? What economic and political opportunities were available for women in colonial society?

Nevertheless, Du Bois must be commended for his extensive use of primary sources such as Government Gazettes, Blue Books, parliamentary sessional papers, magisterial reports, debates of the Legislative Assembly, commission reports, diaries, and newspapers – all of which are amply supplemented by secondary sources. This adds to the rich narrative on the history of the South Coast's economic and social development. Collectively, these sources provide new insights and approaches to the study of colonial history in Natal.

In conclusion, Du Bois makes a valuable contribution to the historiography on colonial Natal, more particularly that of the South Coast region. It is a stimulating and thought-provoking study that seeks to unravel the complexities and challenges of the early settlers and their interaction with Indian immigrants and the indigenous peoples of the region. Themes such as racial hierarchy, class, identity, and labour permeate the book, highlighting the interactions and connections between each of them and how they impacted the history of the South Coast. The work challenges traditional historical perceptions and generalisations of the South Coast region by

unearthing new perspectives and lost narratives of a significant area in colonial Natal. It is based on original research and will certainly prompt historians to re-examine and re-think Natal's colonial history in the context of its socio-economic development. This important study will certainly appeal to students and scholars who are interested in colonial and labour history.

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New avenues for research on Setswana-speaking communities revealed

Andrew Manson and Bernard Mbenga, *Land, Chiefs, Mining: South Africa's North West Province since 1840*

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R350.00

Interest in the historical dynamics of ethnicity and land ownership in South Africa have been on the rise recently. In the introduction to this work, the authors deal with the importance of the history of the Setswana-speaking population of today's North West Province of South Africa. They also provide detail on the location of the province and show that the territory offers a number of unique features, including its important mining industry. The authors have in the past published scholarly work on the Batswana and their history. In this publication, they continue in the same vein by highlighting some of the neglected aspects of Batswana history. The information is drawn from unpublished material and the existing literature compiled by both researchers. It attempts to fill the gaps that exist in our understanding of the history of African people in the region, especially in the twentieth century. Excluding the introduction and the conclusion, the book is divided into seven chapters which are chronologically and thematically linked to one another.

The first chapter investigates the role played by the Tswana leader, Chief Moiloa II of the baHurutshe in the context of the broader history of Batswana in South Africa. Generally speaking, as argued by the authors, the prominent historical Batswana personalities are well-known and respected in South Africa, but little has been written on them. In 1834, Moiloa II and Mokgatlhe settled in a place called Modimong on the Harts River. It was here that they were attached to the Kora, an independent Khoekhoe community under the leadership of David Mossweu. During this period a power struggle over succession ensued between Moiloa II and his uncle. The former collaborated with the London Missionary Society (LMS). The LMS was prepared to receive the baHurutshe in the Madikwe district and sought to convert the Southern Batswana to Christianity, emphasising education and the cultivation of European mores and cultural norms. This challenged the ethical values and belief systems of the baRolong and baThlaping. Towards the end of 1858, Moiloa II requested the LMS missionaries, then with the Bakwena at Diteyane in Botswana, to