

1930s, followed by colonial official efforts to discourage Rwandan autonomy and migration two decades later.

From the 1950s onward, understandings of ethnicity and nationality became more sharply divided in the eastern Congo and Rwanda. Some Rwandan Tutsi fled their homeland for the DRC after the collapse of the Rwandan monarchy, while eastern Congolese politicians relied on their ethnic origins to build support against the supposed threat of Rwandan migrants. Though there could have been more coverage of the growing ethnic divides during the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko from 1965 until 1990, the analysis of Rwandan claims over eastern Congolese territory and Congolese depictions of Rwandans as alien invaders since the 1990s is all too relevant today (297–309).

Mathys's careful archival research and her wealth of interviews allow her to puncture simplistic narratives of allegedly longstanding rivalries between Congolese and Rwandans. Her efforts to highlight alliances across ethnic lines are commendable, especially given the temptation to ascribe the roots of Congolese/Rwandan conflicts as a crude battle of ethnicities. Rather than seeing the colonial state as the most important factor in shaping Congolese/Rwandan relations, *Fractured Pasts* shows the interplay between longer relationships between newcomers across borders, the uneven formation of political boundaries, and economic migration alongside more familiar narratives of political history in the Great Lakes region in central Africa. The sheer depth of evidence makes summarizing the individual chapters difficult, especially in the ways Mathys uses oral history to bring out local dynamics usually glossed over by previous research. Just as Mathys builds on rather than challenges previous historical research here, this study should be required reading for future work on the causes and the uses of historical memory in driving conflicts in the DRC and Rwanda.

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Reddy, Vasu, Narnia Bohler-Muller, Zitha Mokomane, and Crain Soudien, eds. *Quality of Life and Wellbeing: State of the Nation*. Human Sciences Research Council, 2024.

This twentieth edition of the *State of the Nation* is unique because it examines quality of life from a “critical multidisciplinary and multi-theoretical perspective, and on the intersectionality of quality of life with demographics, politics, the state, economics, culture and society at large” (xi). The editors and contributors confront South Africa’s triple burden of poverty, unemployment, and inequity, as they study the importance of people as agents in shaping their health, well-being, and quality of life. The contributors to this edited interdisciplinary study on quality of life and well-being in South Africa present diverse case studies to examine the factors that shape these outcomes. Their goal is to provide the tools that readers need to understand the meaning of quality of life and well-being. They also highlight the major components that researchers need to study and understand the subject, for example, environment, mental and human health, and happiness. In so doing, they also explore ways to measure happiness, the impact of age on quality of life, and the various financial remittances to older people. Challenges in studying and understanding quality of life include COVID-19 vaccine availability, resilience, the use of art, the role of activism, and how quality of life is addressed. All these challenges can only be understood within a context that takes into account gender, human security, peace building, well-being, and the promise of human progress in Africa.

The volume is divided into four parts. In part 1, “The Quality of Life, Politics and the State,” the editors introduce readers to the key conceptual terms used to understand quality of life in chapter 1. These concepts are critical in understanding quality of life, as well as how it affects the people involved. The key question they seek to answer is how quality of life and well-being enable us to understand the poverty–inequality conundrum. In chapter 2, by Narnia Bohler-Muller, Gary Pienaar, Yul Derek Davids, and Gerald Hagg, the authors note that the quality of life remains evasive and difficult to measure. Various studies have been carried on the subject from diverse perspectives, which include psychology and sociology.

Joleen Steyn Kotze studies well-being and happiness inequality in South Africa in chapter 3. Well-being and happiness involve two dimensions: evaluating life satisfaction and assessing effective well-being, which entails how a person feels about a variety of issues. Amartya Sen’s framework for assessing well-being, physical conditions, freedom, and individual preferences is the subject of chapter 4 by Lawrence Hamilton. He argues that well-being’s main concern is to determine people’s needs and freedoms. Irma Eloff examines the

issue of equity in well-being in chapter five. Research and development have improved quality of life. However, in unequal societies, quality of life competes with notions of poverty, as well as the challenges of using the right methods to measure well-being. Eloff's study connects studies of well-being in South Africa to global trends. The author concludes that the system needs to be decolonized. In part 2, "Economics," Justine Burns seeks to answer why behavior matters for the good life in chapter 6, which argues that living the good life is a universal human aspiration. The pursuit of the good life has several components that involve universal and individual choices. Quality of life is constrained by internal factors, such as government policies, which are important for understanding well-being. Burns concludes that the policymakers' challenge is to "design institutions and programs that make it easier for well-intentions, citizens to make good choices" (xx). In chapter 7, Monde Makiwane and Monde Faku study the issues facing older people, as well as remittances from family and friends and social government grants. They use data to demonstrate the impact of sharing intergenerational wealth on older people's well-being. Financial remittances help members of society to live as a community, although they may not live in the same space.

Carolyn Chisadza, Margaret Chitiga-Mabugu, and Kehinde O Omotoso study quality of life in an open economy in chapter 8. The authors use findings from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that show South Africa has made significant changes and improvements in quality of life since 1994. South Africans must deal with quality-of-life issues during globalization, which has increased economic disparities. The authors' goal is to understand South Africans' perception of issues related to international relationships with other countries and their impact on quality of life. Part 3 is about "Society, Culture, Identity and Public Good." In chapter 9 by Kopano Ratete, Carmine Rustin, and Maria Florence, the authors argue that it is important to understand South Africa from its colonial and apartheid history, which ignored its African identity as a country within the continent. Quality of life and well-being must be understood within African psychology, which is used to study Africans and African countries. African psychology calls for decolonizing knowledge and using a specific methodology that addresses all aspects of an African identity. They rely on data from the World Survey on Quality of Life (50 percent men and 50 percent women) to investigate the relationship between friendships and associations and quality of life. The authors conclude

that quality of life must be studied from an African perspective. The importance of vaccines is the subject addressed in chapter 10 by Safura Abdool Karim, Maanda Mudau, Koleka Mlisana, and Quarraisha Abdool Karim. The authors provide an overview of the role of vaccines in improving quality of life. The key question that they seek to answer is how science can transform society and enhance the quality of life and well-being of all citizens. In chapter 11, Benjamin Roberts, Yul Derek Davids, Jare Struwig, Zitha Mokomane, and Valerie Moller study the quality of life and political support in South Africa. They argue that South Africa has experienced levels of decline in democracy and political trust in the past decade. Lack of political trust has resulted in more protests. Lack of political support has affected the well-being of South Africans.

In chapter 12, Steven Lawrence Gordon examines the state of mental health among external immigrants in South Africa by focusing on mental depression. There are few studies that focus on the mental well-being of external migrants in South Africa. Most immigrants do not discuss their mental health because of the stigma associated with the illness and out of fear of deportation. Karin van Marle examines the temporal-spatial dimensions of well-being in chapter 13. According to Marle, it is important to distinguish between habitat and inhabitation. Habitat refers to housing while inhabitation is how individuals make a life for themselves. Nomusa Makhubu's aim in chapter 14 is to investigate the quality of life in the arts. Most art venues are still organized along apartheid racial patterns, where most of the funds bypass community and township art centers. Artists who live in peri-urban areas do not have access to art markets. It is important to review the strategies used to fund art so that they can take into account the well-being of the artists.

"South Africa and Beyond" is the title of part 4. In chapter 15, Sandy Africa investigates human security, gender, and well-being in South Africa. One cannot understand human security and well-being without studying it within the global context and gender dimensions. Africa concludes that a new language that is inclusive must be developed to understand all the factors that contribute to quality of life and well-being. Chapter 16, "Wellbeing and the State in Africa South and Africa in Comparative Perspective," by Funmi Olonisakin, Damilola Adegoke, and Alagaw Ababu Kifle, compares Nigeria with South Africa. They aver that peace and well-being are important in understanding the challenges of human progress in Africa. The study examines the importance

of theoretical relationships between peace and well-being, using data from × and an online survey conducted in Nigeria during COVID-19.

This *State of the Nation* is unique in several ways. First, it is the first one that is dedicated to quality of life and well-being, which is often understudied. Second, it provides fresh approaches to studying quality of life and well-being in South Africa. Third, its eclectic topics demonstrate how difficult it is to measure happiness. Some people may associate happiness with material wealth, while others associate it with stable service delivery, jobs, community, and relationships. For these authors, quality of life is a “generative concept. If people’s aspirations for development are best embodied in that which they value, it is important that policy-makers develop the means to hear and respond to what is being articulated by them” (xxv). This volume contributes to the growing literature on quality of life and well-being. If policymakers act on it, all South Africans will finally experience the freedom to be and to become!

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Auyero, Javier, ed. *Portraits of Persistence: Inequality and Hope in Latin America*. University of Texas Press, 2024.

Portraits of Persistence: Inequality and Hope in Latin America provides readers with twelve unique stories that highlight significant political, economic, and social barriers that many contemporary Latinos face and the way they choose to confront these issues. The book’s origins trace back to discussions among graduate students in 2019 at the University of Texas, where the book’s editor is the Joe R. and Teresa Lorzano Long Professor in Latin American Sociology. Auyero’s twelve collaborators rely on personal interviews (either in person or frequently via Zoom during the COVID-19 pandemic) that portray various forms of inequality present in Latin American societies. Each chapter chronicles one to two individuals by exploring their daily routines and lifestyles to