another in modernity. Rich tradition is conveyed through various symbolisms and indigenous motifs such as the abiku that allows the story to meander where classical Western paradigms cannot easily venture. Other elements include an a-historical narrative structure — constant interruption of the chronological sequence, erasure of temporal indices —, continually shifting narrative space due to recurrent esoteric digressions, and the replication of structures of oral discourse. Okri’s mode of interdiscursivity abandons the dualistic format between the real world and that of the ancestors in allowing the story to move back and forth in an arbitrary way. Characters move from narrative planes freely and on their own volition. Thus, Okri liberates his art from a dualistic and dichotomizing perception to situate his writings in what Quayson calls animist realism. This is a breakthrough as the writer demonstrates how the mythopoetic framework can lead to a resolution capable of allowing an interplay between the esoteric mode — essential to African world-view — and standard realism with its grasp on the palpable. This opens up possibilities of grasping the multiple identity interface that modern Nigeria, and by extension modern Africa, has acquired through interactions of historical processes. Not only does this route recognize the filiation and the genealogical link between Western paradigms and Europhone African writings, but it valorizes the capacity of the artist to alter in a significant way the grids of construction and interpretation of creative works.

Quayson shows command knowledge of Yoruba culture and its refraction in modern writings. The book is well-written and is familiar with post-modernist and post-colonialist literary notions without the hermetic jargons. He pushes the limits of ethnic lines far beyond the unimaginable toward the expression of a Nigerian national consciousness. However, his attempts to describe the evolution in terms of growth and crisis of the dynamics of this Nigerian nation-state require further exploration. In addition, the notion “strategic” has been somehow clouded. One may ask: “In what way is this particular interdiscursivity strategic?”

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In this age of postmodernism gender, lineage and ethnicity are keenly interrogated concepts and Jean Davison has admirably contributed to the current debates on these issues. Her book is based on extensive research and observation facilitated by her three-year residence in Malawi. She examines the construction of ethnicity and the interrelatedness of gender, lineage and ethnicity in southern Central Africa. This comprises Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe where both matrilineal and patrilineal ideologies co-exist. As the author had previously been “immersed” in rural East Africa she states that her “… lens was decidedly patrilineal” (p. xi). Her move to Malawi resulted in her encountering matrilineal southern Malawi. Her observations immediately led her to interrogate how matriliney impacts on gender relations of production. This study results in an impressive volume of well-researched material that would be of great interest to the academic, donor agency, development worker
and feminist/woman political activist alike. The details on women's organizations from grassroots to state structures in accessible language are invaluable for political strategizing whereas the meticulous research and extensive bibliography and endnotes are crucial for scholars.

The common assumption that patrilineality has subsumed matrilineal formations is challenged by the author. The extensive case studies ably prove continuing matriliny despite colonial and contemporary development policies which privileged patrilineal gender relations of production. With well-substantiated research the author emphasizes that the process by which androcentric colonialism impacted on the various matrilineal groupings varied. The increase in virolocality as opposed to uxoriality where men move to their wives' villages and men assuming more power over family resources over time varied by and within ethnic groups. The book can be divided into various sections. Throughout the first part in which theoretical examinations of concepts like clan, lineage, ethnicity and gender are discussed there is a 'reflexive' mode through which Davison succeeds in balancing perspectives. She is aware of '(t)he problem with theorizing about African realities is that we run into the barriers of Western theory as authority based on our own cultural experience' (p. 10). It is indeed commendable that she uses works of Gaidzanwa, Okonjo, Mernissi, Amadiume, Ekejiuba, etc. Even though she promotes African writers she is not uncritical of them, as she critiques Okonjo's and Amadiume's gender analyses of the Igbo as lacking in class differentiation (p. 39).

She then takes the reader through 'Excavating the Past' by considering archaeological evidence and highlights the androcentrism and bias of both colonial reports and "evangelical imperialism" (p. 228). The following Chapters (4, 5 & 6) are 'Changing Gender Relations of Production and Power: Nyasaland and Rhodesia,' 'Nation Building, Ethnicity, and the Gendered State: Men Build; Women Work' and 'Rural Development and Shifting Gender Relations.' This section is once again extensively researched and the impact of mining capital, migrant labor, formation of independent states and national and international policies on land reform and male-female relationships are admirable in its detail. There is also adequate substantiation of statistics with figures and tables. The analysis of Tonga songs illustrates the changing gender relations and women's ambivalence towards the prolonged absence of male migrants (p. 129). What I found particularly interesting in Chapter 5 was the gender ratio of elected politicians and the demands placed on women politicians.

The descriptions of various women's groups in Chapter 7, 'Women's Empowerment: From Grassroots Organizations to International Policy Forums' are detailed and comprehensive. However, structural adjustment programs (SAP) is uncritically alluded to: "... (T)he costs of structural adjustment affected some groups more than others ... in particular, the urban poor, marginal small-holder farmers, and female headed households ..." (p. 194). This may be a case of the author's not listening to Southern African women's voices. There have been numerous workshops/conferences on the 'devastating effects of SAP on women.'

What I find puzzling in a book published in 1997 is that it makes use of the WID (Women in development) approach only: 'Part of USAID's mission was to evaluate the extent to which various ... departments within the ministry were amenable to the inclusion of women in their programs and agreed to provide WID training where needed' (p. 206). The debates on the development of WID-WAD (women and development)-GAD (Gender and Development) approaches have been around for nearly a decade. Women's Groups, development