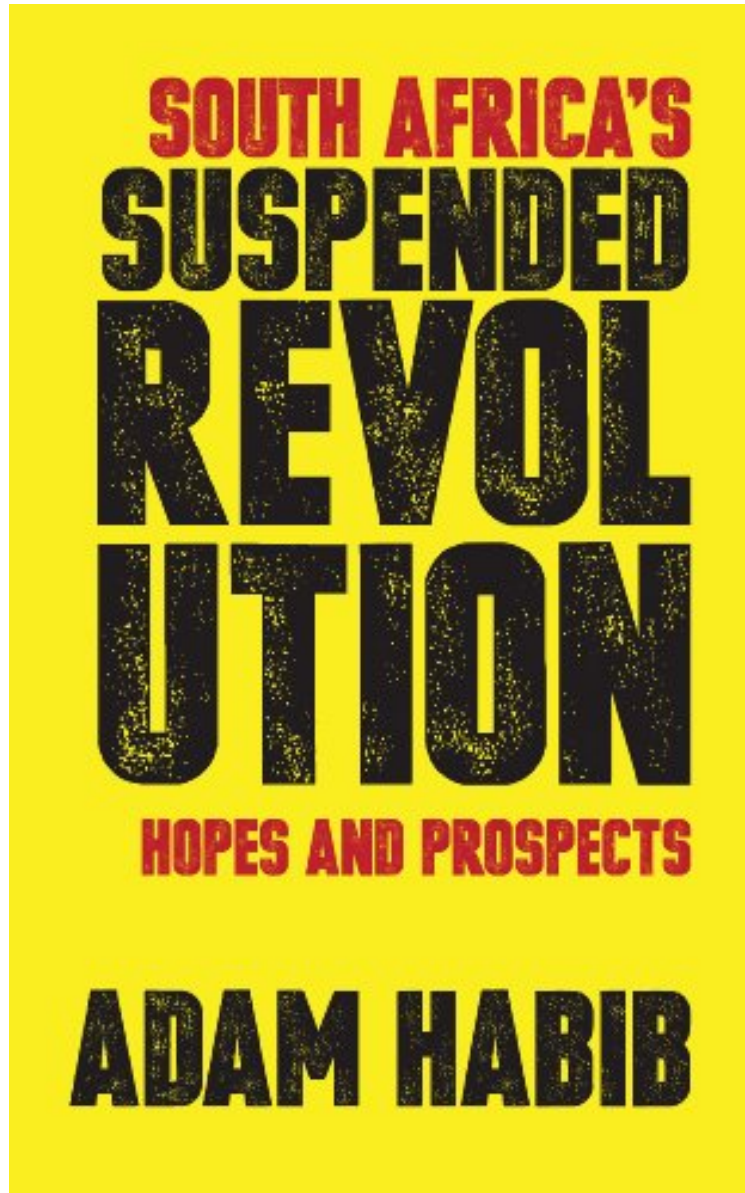


(Ebook free) South Africa's Suspended Revolution: Hopes and Prospects

South Africa's Suspended Revolution: Hopes and Prospects

Adam Habib

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Adam Habib : South Africa's Suspended Revolution: Hopes and Prospects before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised South Africa's Suspended Revolution: Hopes and Prospects:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy duane hysoninformative book2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Gramscian Op-EdsBy not meAdam Habib is a sharp social analyst and one of the leading public intellectuals in South Africa. "South Africa's Suspended Revolution" is his "big picture" meditation on the state

of social and political development in South Africa since 1994. It was written from the conviction (widespread in academia) that the ANC let the country down and has failed to fulfill the promises of the democratic revolution. The book is nicely written and occasionally profound. I enjoyed it. However, I can't give it more than three stars. For one thing, it is too filled with high-concept sociology and too lacking in concrete social and historical detail to be a good guide to the problems of contemporary South Africa. For another, the chapters feel patched together, as if they were originally stand-alone essays. This results in some odd inclusions and bewildering omissions: the (excellent) chapter on foreign policy doesn't fit into the book at all; there is almost no discussion of health (HIV/AIDS) or education (the school system is failing); civil society gets an entire chapter but labor politics is mentioned only in passing, etc. Finally, the book is wildly unfair to the architects of GEAR (such as Thabo Mbeki and Trevor Manuel), who are made to sound like corporate dupes rather than serious officials who had to manage macro-economic disorder in the early years of the democratic transition. In fact, at no point does Habib offer a serious economic analysis of the real economic dilemmas facing South Africa, especially the causes of the unemployment crisis. (His field is sociology, not economics. Alas, an analysis of the balance of class power is not a model of an economy.) The book feels lazy. Habib should write a real one, now that his draft is finished. I'm sure it would be good. Note for American readers: "South Africa's Suspended Revolution" was originally published in South Africa, and would be incomprehensible to anyone not already familiar with the last 25 years of South African history. It is NOT an introduction to the politics and economics of the country. Ohio University Press should have had Habib adapt the text for the U.S. market before it was published here.

Adam Habib is the right person to have undertaken the task that has issued in this book, which he describes as "a culmination of at least two decades of debates, reflections and thoughts about resistance in South Africa, its political and socio-economic evolution, and the conundrums and dilemmas relating to the making of this society." (p. ix) He has managed "to bridge academic and public discourses" (p. x) while speaking truth to power. Habib's book offers a clear narrative, accessible academic analysis and a fair report on the state of the nation. — African Studies Quarterly South Africa's Suspended Revolution tells the story of South Africa's democratic transition and the prospects for the country to develop a truly inclusive political system. Beginning with an account of the transition in the leadership of the African National Congress from Thabo Mbeki to Jacob Zuma, the book then broadens its lens to examine the relationship of South Africa's political elite to its citizens. It also examines the evolution of economic and social policies through the democratic transition, as well as the development of a post-apartheid business community and a foreign policy designed to re-engage South Africa with the world community. Written by one of South Africa's leading scholars and political commentators, the book combines historical and contemporary analysis with strategies for an alternative political agenda. Adam Habib connects the lessons of the South African experience with theories of democratic transition, social change, and conflict resolution. Political leaders, scholars, students, and activists will all find material here to deepen their understanding of the challenges and opportunities of contemporary South Africa.

This is a readable, well-informed and perceptive account of the political economy of contemporary South Africa. Although he is clear-eyed about the inequality and poverty that mar the social terrain and the factionalism, corruption and greed that currently affect elite politics, Habib makes a case for specific forms of political leadership, for an active citizenry, and for the possibility of social pacts as paths towards an alternative political agenda. Colin Bundy, Honorary Fellow, Green Templeton College, University of Oxford