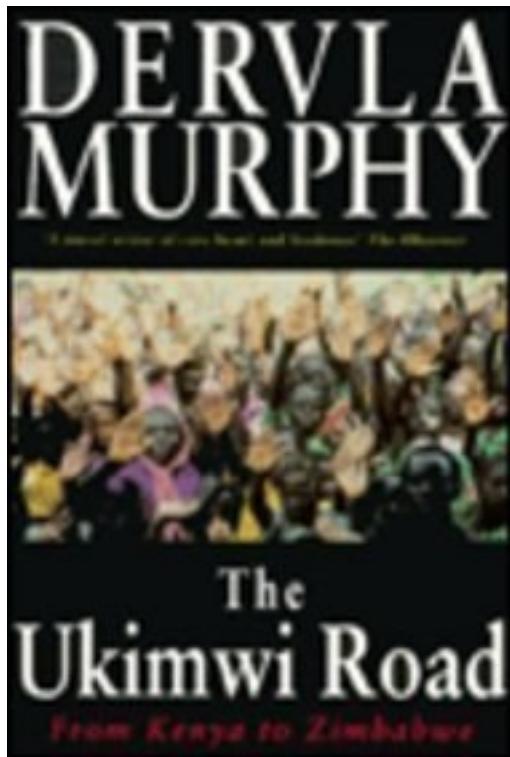


The Ukimwi Road



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Dervla Murphy often recalled these words while pedalling or pushing her bicycle over some of the roughest roads in sub-Saharan Africa. Yet the beauty of the contrasting landscapes along her 3,000-mile route from Kenya through Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia to Zimbabwe more than compensated for the hazardous and the unexpected.;Dervla had been naively looking forward to a few carefree months of fresh air and exercise free from the stress of the last few years. Soon, however, she realized that for travellers who wish to remain carefree, Africa is the wrong continent. Inevitably she was caught up in the harrowing problems of the peoples amongst whom she

travelled: on the one hand the devastating effects of AIDS, drought and economic collapse and on the other the scepticism of the Africans about Western 'development projects' and 'aid schemes' which promise so much but deliver so little except to the administrators.;By day Dervla enjoyed the space and solitude of rural Africa; even the toughest terrain did not deter her although on one occasion it nearly claimed her. In the evenings she usually stayed in villages, sometimes sleeping on the floor. She found the locals talkative and welcoming and many shared her fondness for beer. Hours of illuminating conversation ended most days and often AIDS (in Swahili 'ukimwi') was discussed by both men and women. By now the disease is of epidemic proportions in Africa and she discovered a wide range of reactions to this new mysterious threat and its effects on family life.;What also emerged, as Dervla travelled on, was the extent to which the barriers to progress in Africa were being underpinned by corruption and incompetence both White and Black. In consequence she sensed a new wind of change. As it is clear that no African country can sustain 'development' along European lines some communities are reverting to traditional ways of organizing village society and discovering that this can lead to greater stability. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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