

'Difficult' set-pieces like Somali piracy are not within this collection, but hustlers and certain local reinventions of capitalism thankfully are. The boundaries between civic action and outlaw behaviour and outlaw organisation are things to be more problematised, hopefully in a successor collection.

The theoretical shadows of the Comaroffs and James Scott infuse this book, and speak most tellingly of an historical and socio-cultural context for all analysis of Africa. Insofar as Scott has always spoken about rebellion and resistance, including the dangers of resistance, the most moving chapter in the book belongs to Susan Thomson's account of peasant resistance in a post-genocide Rwanda, all too often reduced to a binary of Hutu and Tutsi. Thomson speaks of the many other complexities of life and conditions that cannot be escaped – but are still resisted.

What is moving also, although not designed to be so, is the Foreword by the late Patrick Chabal. It may well be one of Patrick's last works. He warns us that resistance may be nefarious as well as beneficial. This is a sobering thought to be carried into the explorations that make up a technologically limited but otherwise exhilarating book.

STEPHEN CHAN

School of Oriental & African Studies

The Horn of Africa (Global Political Hot Spots) by KIDANE MENGISTEAB

Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014. Pp. 272. £15.99 (hbk)

doi:10.1017/S0022278X14000536

This comprehensive, thematic review of the Horn of Africa is part of a series on 'Hot Spots in Global Politics' and there is no doubt that the Horn is just such a case. Mengisteab's contribution is to place the causes and consequences of conflict in the Horn into perspective and to provide some reasonable explanations for why the eight countries of this part of Africa have been home to so much war and violence. With the exception of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it is the only book in the series focused on Africa, and strikingly, the only one to tackle the question of violence in more than one or two countries. This is warranted, since extricating the sources of conflict for any one of the countries of the Horn without a regional discussion would be quite impossible and Mengisteab's work is well-placed to consider the topic as a regional one.

The central claim is that the primary failure is that of domestic and regional governance, but that these are exacerbated by other factors, such as historical legacies, global politics and hastening environmental degradation. Mengisteab considers each in turn, first reviewing the types and intensity of conflicts in the sub-region, as well as the impacts of these on social, economic and political life. Certainly, the legacy of empires and colonial states and the role of external actors as exacerbating conflict in the region, while well-understood, are crucial and convincing. Similarly, the role of poor resource management, as Mengisteab calls it, together with accelerating climate change and globalisation of climate-related resource demands (water, land for cultivation, mineral resources), are indisputably critical. More interesting is Mengisteab's discussion of state and regional governance. First, he argues that domestic governance has failed, and he seems to attribute this to weak accountability systems, parallel and

incompatible governance structures such as ‘traditional’ legal systems operating alongside formal legal systems, and finally, poor quality of leadership. But it does seem that the primary blame is placed on leadership. While it is hard to argue with a critique of the short-sighted, personalistic leadership one finds in the Horn of Africa, it also is a frustrating conclusion to be left with. How are the citizens of the Horn sub-region to solve this problem – with more revolutions and wars? We have and do see enough of these. How are good leaders cultivated and demanded by a citizenry that is, as Mengisteab points out, often under-educated and over-worked, when not facing drought, famine and flight from war? Though the reader might not expect an entirely prescriptive text, the conclusion hardly leaves the reader with a sense of how his ‘contextualized democratization’ and regional integration is to be produced. The scathing critique of IGAD is well-deserved and timely.

The book is highly readable. In a few instances, the thematic consideration makes the specific country cases difficult to fully internalise, as the text jumps across countries and back-and-forth in time as a way to consider themes of state governance, history, external interference and resource factors. It does seem that the book is meant for students and those new to the sub-region, and as such, it is quite effective and compelling. It would make a solid addition to the study of comparative conflict and on the Horn of Africa in particular. The author contends that external support has allowed illegitimate regimes to avoid seeking domestic support and in fact, as a Horn specialist, I wanted much more on this topic. But if a good book leaves you provoked and intrigued, then this book has accomplished that and more.

LAHRA SMITH
Georgetown University

Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991 by LIDWIEN KAPTEIJNS. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. Pp. 320. US\$69.95 (hbk)

doi:10.1017/S0022278X14000548

In this book, Lidwien Kapteijns explores how in 1990–91 an armed movement aimed at overthrowing the dictatorship of Siyad Barre morphed into a brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing that plunged Somalia into decades of war and state collapse. Though Kapteijns concludes that the shift in tactics by the United Somali Congress (USC) was driven by political leaders manipulating chauvinistic clan narratives for their own parochial purposes, the body of evidence she marshals also points to a disturbing susceptibility of Somali society circa 1990 not only to embrace clannish hate narratives but to act on them with shocking violence. Kapteijns’ conclusions line up with findings from many other zones of ethnic violence – namely, that ethnic/clan cleavages and hatreds were not primordial, but were hardened by years of divide and rule tactics, and then set aflame by power-seeking political and militia figures whose indifference to the terrible human costs of their tactics makes the utter lack of accountability for their actions even harder to accept.

Kapteijns’ book is at once important, controversial, unusual and flawed. It is important because it addresses a pivotal moment in the Somali crisis, the period