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REVIEWS

RESPECT, HEROISM AND DISGRACE

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Honour in African History. By JOHN ILIFFE. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp. xxiv + 404. £45 (ISBN 0-521-83785-5); £16.99, paperback (ISBN 0-521-54685-0).

KEY WORDS: Precolonial, colonial, postcolonial, social values, cultural.

This book sets out to establish 'honour' as an important though hitherto neglected 'theme running through African history at all its recoverable stages' (p. 367). Geographically, the coverage is restricted to sub-Saharan Africa, but chronologically it encompasses, in principle, almost the entire sweep of its history, as is claimed on the back cover of the book, 'from the fourteenth century to the present'. In practice, given the limitations of the available evidence, the treatment of 'honour' in the precolonial period concentrates overwhelmingly on the nineteenth century. The analysis is mainly synthesized from published sources, though supplemented by original archival research by the author, especially for the nineteenth century, in the Church Missionary Society records (mainly with reference to Yorubaland) and court records of the Cape Colony of South Africa. This necessarily leads to some imbalance in treatment, reflecting the unevenness of coverage of the existing literature: in the precolonial period, for example, the Yoruba get a chapter to themselves, while other states of coastal western and West-Central Africa are treated together in a single chapter; while for the most recent developments, the values of 'masculinity' among migrant workers and urban youth gangs are discussed mainly with reference to southern Africa.

'Honour' is defined broadly, as 'a right to respect' (p. 4), to include both 'vertical honour', demanding deference from social subordinates, and 'horizontal' honour, seeking the esteem of peer-groups. Iliffe is concerned both to distinguish different conceptions of 'honour', and to trace transformations in conceptions of honour through time. Inevitably, given the state of the literature, the main focus is on honour as conceived and pursued by elite males, although some attempt is made to explore ideas of honour among subordinate social groups, including slaves, and among women. The book comprises two approximately equal parts. The first, dealing with the precolonial period, is entitled 'Heroes and householders', and deals principally with 'heroic' honour, based on individual military prowess, but also suggests the co-existence of non-military notions of 'respectability', a concept which is less closely defined, but linked to perceptions of virtuous behaviour and social responsibility. It also considers how the tradition of 'heroic' honour interacted with, and was absorbed within, the value systems of Islam, in West Africa, and Christianity, in Ethiopia and late nineteenth-century Buganda. Part 2, dealing with the colonial and postcolonial periods, entitled 'Fragmentation and mutation', traces the undermining of traditions of heroic honour by the colonial conquest and associated social and economic changes, and the reformulation of ideas of 'respectability' though the social doctrines of Christian missions. It also, however, stresses the persisting influence of traditional notions of honour in African societies down to the present, including their relevance to understanding political and individual responses to the current AIDS epidemic.

This is an ambitious project, which honestly acknowledges the limitations of existing knowledge, and ends, in a chapter of 'Concluding questions', with a proposed research agenda for the future. In general terms, it offers a persuasive, or at least plausible, analysis, but in detail some queries suggest themselves. Some difficulty arises from the very broad definition of 'honour' adopted, which seems potentially to include any system of values which involves some element of seeking approval from fellow-members of society, and thereby arguably leaves very little of human activity excluded. Sometimes also, the interpretation of particular instances cited as illustrations of the importance of 'honour' seems open to debate. With reference to the precolonial period, for example, suicide in the face of defeat or failure seems systematically to be understood as motivated by the fear of disgrace. Enslaved Africans who killed themselves when faced with the prospect of transportation through the Middle Passage to America may possibly, sometimes, have done so out of a sense of 'offended honour' (p. 131); but presumably often also out of despair at the experience (or anticipation) of the suffering which it involved. Further, as is well attested, many did so as the only means available of securing return to their African homeland. Likewise, Yoruba chiefs who committed suicide in the face of military defeat or political rejection may have been motivated not only by feelings of disgrace, but also, as explicitly noted in one report cited (p. 76), by the calculation that by so doing they at least saved their households from collective punishment. Further, a person who died as a chief, even by suicide under such circumstances, would be buried as such, and enjoy the continuation of this status after death, whereas a deposed or exiled chief would lose it. Expectations of the afterlife, indeed, seem to be a missing dimension in the analysis (though the role of funerals as an opportunity for conspicuous display of wealth and status, and hence as an expression of 'honour', is noted).

The danger of extending the concept of 'honour' beyond the limits of its heuristic utility also appears in the treatment of the modern era, where there is arguably a tendency to equate all forms of self-aggrandisement with the pursuit of 'honour'. It may seem unproblematic to suggest that Africa's postcolonial rulers were 'influenced by their ideas of what would entitle them to respect' (p. 328); but, for example, was President Siaka Stevens' acquisition of 17 houses (p. 342) really an attempt to win the 'respect' of his fellow-citizens? Likewise, it may be plausible to link corruption in modern Africa to indigenous traditions of reciprocal gift-giving and clientelism, but these seem only tangentially connected to a specifically 'honour culture' (pp. 339–43).

These observations should not be interpreted as criticisms of the book, but rather as reflections stimulated by it. Iliffe himself concludes with the suggestion that, if his book serves to raise questions, 'it will have served its purpose', it has certainly done so for this reader.

University of Stirling ROBIN LAW

EUROPEAN SLAVES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

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Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500–1800. By ROBERT C. DAVIS. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Pp. xxx + 246. No price given (ISBN 0-333-71966-2).

KEY WORDS: Slave trade, slavery, North Africa, Ottoman.

Readers of the *Journal of African History* and others who are used to consulting works about non-Western history will find this book quite odd. With the

proliferation of cross-cultural studies over the past decade or two, few authors undertake to study any theme in a non-European context without even attempting to understand it within its own cultural context. However, Professor Davis has somehow succeeded in writing an entire book that deals with an aspect of Ottoman enslavement without consulting a single Ottoman source, and without showing any understanding of Ottoman society, culture, political institutions or economic structure.

Astonishingly, he has provided us with an account of how enslaved Christians experienced life in Ottoman North Africa which is based exclusively on European sources and European perceptions. The result is, not surprisingly, akin to what books about Middle Eastern and African history looked like around the middle of the twentieth century: external, stereotypical, unconscious of Otherness and sorely uncritical of its own, external sources and their limitations. If Davis's book was about *constructing* Christian enslavement, this could perhaps fly in certain discourses and bodies of knowledge; unfortunately, however, it seeks almost naively to describe *actual historical realities*.

The book consists of three parts, each dealing with one of the major components of the topic: Part I on white slavery describes methods of enslavement of southern Europeans by Muslim corsairs issuing from the North African coastline, mainly from Algiers; Part II on Barbary looks at what was happening to enslaved Christians in North Africa, the jobs they performed, their living conditions and the nature of enslavement; and Part III on Italy concludes with what Professor Davis is actually most competent to address – the impact of capture, kidnapping and ransoming on Italian Mediterranean societies. Although, lamentably, a proper list of sources is not provided, it is fairly clear that the book relies exclusively on contemporary travel accounts, other reports by European observers and stories told by captives; some of these are found in various Italian archives. A few scholarly articles about the Ottoman and Islamic side of things are quite insufficient for painting a more complete picture. Works published by Ottomanists and Islamicists over the past two decades on Ottoman and Middle Eastern slavery and the slave trade are completely ignored.

It is therefore hardly surprising not only that the perspective and methodology are flawed, but that we still come upon linguistic usages that exist only in the sources themselves: Turks instead of Ottomans, Moors instead of either Arabs or Berbers or Ottoman-North Africans and Constantinople instead of Istanbul (the book deals with the post-1453 period) are but the most outstanding examples. Rather than increase authenticity as the author probably had hoped, his use of the language and drift of contemporary sources unmistakably exudes complete detachment from current scholarly interpretation. Thus, to give one example of many, a 1731 account of what Sir William Monson opined about North African administrative and social realities is cited as actually reflecting reality: 'The Inhabitants consist principally of desperate *Rogues* and *Renegades*, who live by Rapine, Theft and Spoil, having renounced God and all Virtue' and so forth (p. xxvii).

Because there is not the slightest attempt here to even address the Other as possibly differentiated, perhaps also human and constrained, maybe having some sort of value-system that is worth talking about, the result is total misunderstanding of basic cross-cultural phenomena such as conversion. Thus, enslaved Europeans – to Davis they were all 'Whites' – embraced Islam only if forced or if tempted for profit (how could anyone otherwise is more than implied). The fact that many did, thereby gaining access to acceptability and power within the Ottoman military-administrative establishment is ignored, and their zeal for their new faith and empire – so typical of converts to any religion or cause – are dismissed.

Another problematic issue is the pervasive notion that enslavement of Europeans by Ottomans was all about Muslims avenging the fall of Spain to the Christians. Yes, it was also for profit, Davis reluctantly admits, but it was really all about religion. This might very well be the picture that emerges from his European, Christian sources, but it can only indicate how Europeans interpreted Muslim motives. In the complete absence of any Ottoman sources in the book, how can this serve as basis for arguing that the overriding impetus behind Ottoman policies in the western Mediterranean was *Jihad*. Precisely because he did not bother to check the discourse on African, Middle Eastern, North African or Islamic history either, Davis's 'challenge' to what might be called the Good Treatment Thesis rings somewhat out of kilter. For quite some time, both Ottoman sources and the relevant scholarship has enabled us to assess the suffering of enslaved Ottoman subjects in much more differentiated and critical terms than apologetic Islamic discourse had put forth in response to abolitionism since the late nineteenth century.

To conclude, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters* is a disappointment to people interested in non-European perspectives on African and Mediterranean history. Its saving grace is that it brings some interesting and neglected information that might be used to write another book with a broader and more comprehensive approach. Professor Davis might also contribute to our understanding if his book provokes scholars in the field to write a corrective work on the topic of Ottoman enslavement of Europeans in North Africa during the early modern period.

Tel-Aviv University EHUD R. TOLEDANO

ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO PRECOLONIAL WAR AND VIOLENCE

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Guerra e violenza in Africa occidentale. Edited by FABIO VITI. Milan: Franco Angeli, 2004. Pp. 302. €25, paperback (ISBN 88-464-5779-X).

KEY WORDS: Western Africa, precolonial, war, violence, kingdoms and states.

Africanists have been slow and somewhat reluctant to take up the question of precolonial African warfare. This collection, primarily anthropological, seeks to remedy this lack with a number of important and well-focused studies. Fabio Viti's introduction lays out the problem well: African wars were not 'primitive wars' waged by small-scale societies, but were largely wars waged by states (though his definition of state, as revealed by a number of the other contributors, includes what might be called 'chiefdoms' in anthropological literature or 'mini-states' in historical accounts). As such, they reflected power and social hierarchy as much as being the natural instincts of 'warrior people'. One further note, brought out clearly by Michel Izard's introductory theoretical meditation, is that anthropologists have not been able to witness or do fieldwork on African warfare, for either there was the colonial peace (or the warfare of the European colonizers) or the warfare of the postcolonial state, neither of which has attracted much systematic attention from anthropologists save in the most recent years.

This collection studies warfare mostly through the lens of oral tradition, and none of the studies systematically employs written eyewitness evidence to study the nature of the declaration, mobilization or prosecution of wars in the precolonial

period. On the other hand, the authors are close analysts of oral tradition, notably Giuseppina Russo. She is the most thorough and, in exemplary fashion, publishes her texts, in Mandinka and Italian translation, in full in the notes and appendix. The authors are not writing military history either, though they are attentive to real wars and several study such wars closely. Their concerns rather are how warfare affects state politics, how it is managed by or subverts authority, how it is justified and symbolized. Viti's own essay on Baule war is the only one that systematically examines weapons and tactics, usually the stuff of military history.

Viti goes on in his essay to relate warfare to the state, not just as a destructive force, but also as one that reproduces the state itself. Russo's study of Kignan, one of the towns in the orbit of Segu and Sikasso, also focuses on the state and the interactions between the democratic elements of the warrior association (*ton*) and the aristocracy. Armando Cutolo is also concerned with the way in which violence affected the establishment of states, though his contribution focuses more on warfare, paying special attention to the Baule state of Anno, which had a reputation as a military state. Some of the essays examine violence outside war. Pierluigi Valsecchi's study focuses on the role of violence among the Akan of Nsema-Appolonia, especially human sacrifice in establishing order and maintaining state authority.

Stefano Boni's work on the Sefwi is the only one that draws attention to the role of violence in colonial settings, showing how the control of violence helped to shape the various roles played by the colonial state and the traditional authorities in twentieth-century situations of conflict and ambiguity.

In a book dedicated to warfare in precolonial West Africa it is surprising to see relatively little attention paid to the slave trade. Cutolo and Russo both address it to some extent, noting its existence and role, but none of the authors addresses the question of the role of long-distance foreign trade in slaves and the supply of munitions as a fundamental part of the study. It is not that they reject such linkages, and to some extent either the issues they address or the geographical situation of the case studies they employ make the issue less salient, but rather that they do not address it as a critical element in their studies.

Nevertheless *Guerra e violenza* is an important contribution to the study of African warfare. The works are carefully constructed, well argued and based on extensive research, especially in the field. The relationship between argument and evidence is clearly spelled out in all the studies, making them worthwhile as historical studies as well as anthropological ones.

Boston University JOHN K. THORNTON

THE QUESTION OF CHANGE IN PRECOLONIAL WEST AFRICA

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Moogo: l'émergence d'un espace étatique oust-africain au XVIe siècle. By MICHEL IZARD. Paris: Editions Karthala, 2003. Pp. 394. No price given (ISBN 2-84586-449-3).

KEY WORDS: Burkina Faso, precolonial, anthropology, kingdoms, oral narratives/sources.

Michel Izard is the *doyen* of Mossi studies. *Moogo* is the product of more than four decades of fieldwork and research. The term *moogo* refers to the

Sahelian-Soudanese political space in which the twenty Mossi (or as Izard prefers, Moose) polities emerged. This book is less historical narrative than reflections on the problems of interpreting precolonial Moose history.

Like so many French ethnographers of the 1960s, Izard was trained first in philosophy, but turned to anthropology during the late 1950s after taking classes with Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roger Bastide and Jacques Soustelle among others. Lévi-Strauss encouraged Izard to go to what was then Upper Volta, where in 1957 Izard began his life-long commitment to the region through a study of the social and cultural implications of irrigation schemes in the Sourou River Valley. Izard was drawn ever more firmly into the world of the Moose, especially of the kingdom of Yatenga, and into interpreting the precolonial history and political anthropology of the Moose kingdoms. Izard spent much of the 1960s in Burkina Faso, where he directed the Centre voltaïque de la recherche scientifique and founded the *Notes et documents voltaïque de la recherche scientifique* in which he actually published a volume of his transcribed and translated oral data. Already in these interviews you can see Izard's fascination with dynastic rule and with interpreting the political symbolism of Moose aristocratic culture. In 1985, he published a short political history (*Le Yatenga : un ancien royaume du Burkina*) and a major political anthropology of Yatenga (*Gens du pouvoir, gens de la terre : les institutions politiques de l'ancien royaume du Yatenga* [*Bassin de la Volta Blanche*] for which he received his doctorat dès lettres et sciences humaines.

Moogo, which he calls 'a work of historical anthropology', consists of five chapters (a long introduction and four chapters) whose order and organization reflects Izard's anthropological method and his interpretation of history. In many ways, this book is a self-critical assessment of his dissertation, which appeared in 1970 as 'Introduction à l'histoire des royaumes mossi'. Some of the dynastic lists and charts appear in both books.

The introduction contains two linked sets of reflections: the first on the nature of evidence for precolonial Moose history and the second on the culture of politics in the Moogo. These reflections set the intellectual agenda for the book. In the first substantive chapter the political anthropology of the Moose kingdoms are analyzed through the traditions, but examined synchronically. The second considers the sources of *naam* or power. Both these chapters tend to efface historical change and probe the meanings of power and political practice at the time of the full development of Moose kingdoms. The third substantive chapter deals with issues of chronology, focusing on dynastic rule. This is a challenging chapter in which Izard probes the sequencing of Moose aristocratic generations, but it reflects a concern with history that few historians would now recognize. What is missing from this chapter is a sense of historical processes of change and the implications of transformative historical events on Moose political traditions. The final chapter probes the meanings of the foundation of the Moose kingdoms and political culture.

Izard is convinced that oral traditions provide useful evidence for precolonial history even though he admits that 'oral tradition is a form of discourse about the past which proceeds from a vision of the present' (p. 20). Izard's present, however, was the early twentieth century, when a series of French scholar administrators collected Moose oral traditions. Izard recognizes that this collection reflected a dominant tradition surrounding the power and authority of Moose chiefs that was elaborated during the early colonial period, especially in the years after 1909–10. In Chapter 2 and at the end Izard is concerned with interpreting the symbolism in the dominant traditions. Those traditions recorded before 1909 refer to the founding ancestor of the Moose kingdoms, Wedraogo, from whom all Moose descend, as female. Those traditions recorded after 1909 refer to Wedraogo as male. Because Izard is not concerned with the influence of the colonial period on

the Moose oral tradition, he does not relate these gender transformations to Governor-general William Ponty's 1909 native policy (*la politique de races*), which ushered in a period of invention of tradition to bolster African office holders' claims to power, and to the influence of Charles Delafosse, whose teaching at the École Colonial in Paris and whose *Haut-Sénégal-Niger* (Paris, 1912, 3 vols.) set the framework for an effort to reassert African patriarchy through the authority of male household heads and office holders.

Central to Izard's understanding of the dominant tradition is the period of long-term stability of the Moose political order, which he assumes emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century and shaped the Moose political institutions that persisted through the 'long' nineteenth-century era of 'destabilization'. I wonder, however, if the era of stabilization that most influenced the oral traditions that Izard uses was not that of the period after 1909–10? Izard would argue that out of the destabilization of the 'long' nineteenth century emerged the flowering of the Moose political culture in which the 'state created the state' by 'ordering' its institutions, by 'articulating' its presence and by 'setting' the political stage (p. 371). How, however, do anthropologists and historians interpret the past before this flowering? The very structure of this book, using a static, composite assemblage of Moose oral traditions as the starting point and interrogating 'chronology' as a separate issue, raises important analytical questions about precolonial historical processes and how historians and anthropologists understand the past.

Moogo is a rich, provocative and demanding book. Historians should read it and should let this book stimulate us to work on precolonial topics lest we abandon this field to our anthropology colleagues, who, by the way, now dominate the study of African precolonial history.

Stanford University RICHARD ROBERTS

REASSESSING RWANDAN HISTORY

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Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyiginya Kingdom. By JAN VANSINA. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press; Oxford: James Currey, 2004. Pp. iii+354. $65 (ISBN 0-299-20120-1); $24.95/£15.95, paperback (ISBN 0-2990201240-4).

KEY WORDS: Rwanda, precolonial, kingdoms, ethnicity, violence.

This magisterial work on the precolonial royal history of Rwanda (here in English translation, by the author, of *Le Rwanda ancien: le royaume Nyiginya* [Paris: Karthala, 2001]) is both a capstone book, bringing together a generation of recent scholarship, and a path-breaking one, drawing on sources until now almost entirely neglected. Meticulously detailed, and rich in both insight and data, this tightly written presentation provides a radical reassessment of the history of Rwanda based on a wide range of sources insufficiently utilized in earlier histories. These include the early German sources and the extraordinary collection of oral narratives which Vansina himself collected nearly fifty years ago. Together with the extensive secondary materials available, these sources provide a new – and welcome – understanding of a kingdom often presented as the exemplar of precolonial 'Interlacustrine' Africa.

An introductory chapter discusses the corpus of German sources and reassesses the author's earlier approach to Rwandan oral sources. The subsequent analysis is presented in paired, alternating chapters. Two of these deal with one of his most original points: that the political origins of Rwanda's Nyiginya dynasty date to the mid-seventeenth century, with Ruganzu Ndori's interactions with local leaders and the emergence of a new kingdom; in this interpretation, both process and dating differ dramatically from orthodox presentations. Similarly, the eighteenth century is presented in paired chapters, the first dealing with institutional history – demography, trade, religious factors, clientship, military history – and the second addressing the intricate politics of the royal court; the same pattern is followed for the nineteenth century to 1867. The reign of Rwabugiri, one of Rwanda's most celebrated warrior kings (r. 1867–95), merits its own chapter (ominously entitled 'Nightmares'), and a final chapter explores the implications of this history for understanding later events. There are two appendices, as important for their discussion of method as for their content: one assesses the sources for the pre-Ruganzu periods, the other provides a comprehensive overview of royal chronology.

In the course of careful examination of original (or neglected) sources, Vansina arrives at many arresting conclusions: a new dating for the reign of Ruganzu; a new understanding of the internal alliances from which the central court was forged; a sense of the importance of land and labor in the construction of social identities; due attention to the aristocratic families – including the crucial intervention of powerful women – in the politics of the state; and a new understanding of the politics of Rwabugiri – whose reign (an 'unrelenting tide of terror', p. 164) Vansina shows to have been marked by massive brutality, violence, devastation and destruction. Vansina dispenses definitively with any romantic notion of precolonial harmony; violence as a political tool did not begin with the postcolonial era, nor was it a product of colonial social management alone. But while violence was at the core of the formation of the state, it was not exclusively ethnic; much of it took place within the 'chaotic cupidity' of elite court actors (p. 163). And in structural terms, the historical roots of what Vansina refers to as the 'nefarious doctrine of collective responsibility' is deeply embedded in court politics. Distinct from the assertions of many recent representations, he also demonstrates that ethnicity was not a colonial invention.

With conclusions that will prove provocative, *Antecedents* will undoubtedly result in much reflection, discussion and debate. On many points it challenges the current orthodoxies (based often on the writings of Alexis Kagame, whose works have become foundational to much current historical writing). On other points Vansina's empirically based analysis will challenge many of the assumptions of more recent commentators. Where some accept the colonial origins of ethnicity, Vansina proves them mistaken. Where some presume a non-violent precolonial Rwanda, Vansina's analysis establishes violence of a particular character. Where some assume a homogeneous state, Vansina demonstrates the depth of regional cultural differences. Where some conceive of the unilinear expansion of the state, Vansina shows the diverse and sometimes tentative nature of royal expansion. Where some assume corporate ethnicity or separate origins for distinct ethnic identities, Vansina illustrates the changing construction of such identities and introduces the role of court power as a factor affecting the formation (and transformation) of social identities. And where some privilege discrete ethnic immigration leading to a society divided between 'stranger' and 'autochthon' Vansina shows pervasive mobility independent of ethnicity: power, not migration or culture, was the dominant factor of differentiation. In short, those who seek facile slogans or easy images often do so at the expense of historical evidence; for a

field thirsting to know more of the history of the society, the history of ethnicity, the history of power, the history of violence, this summary – the fruit of many decades of thought – is invaluable.

To be sure, this book is not always easy reading: the data are complex and the presentation is condensed; history here becomes a virtual 'ethnographic encyclopedia'. (And beyond the formal text, a whole analytic universe unfolds in the footnotes.) Furthermore, like the source materials themselves – and as the author suggests in the subtitle – the presentation is focused intensely on the actions of the royal court. Such an approach is fully justified because Nyiginya royal history serves as an indispensable scaffolding for understanding the history of the area – both for neighboring societies and for regions now part of the Rwandan state but which have their own histories, quite distinct from the royal line. Nonetheless, sometimes the intense focus (and a dependence on sources sharing that focus) raises the danger that Vansina's insights can too easily be generalized: the violence of the Nyinginya court was not representative either of other royalties or of the population as a whole; violence was more often initiated by court conflicts rather than by 'unruly' peasants; resistance was more robust (and complex) than meets the eye here; Nyiginya sources (often enhancing the grandeur of the court) are not always reliable on contacts or conflicts with other areas; religious history, commercial history, ecological dimensions, technical knowledge – all these and more were more developed outside royal contacts and were more complex than presented here. In other words, a royal focus is essential in demonstrating the complexity of royal history, but it also simplifies the histories of people outside the immediate royal entourage. Nonetheless, these are dilemmas inherent in writing history; the strengths here far outweigh the minor deficiencies, and relate to extremely important issues in the historiography and in public interest today.

Antecedents thus is not only rewarding reading but important analysis: it will change both perceptions of precolonial Rwanda and the way these sources are handled. Such a work will be essential for historians – indeed for anyone interested in Rwanda. But more than that: this is one of those rare historical monographs that speaks to a larger constituency than historians alone. The book is an excellent example of how social scientists, particularly those fixated on more recent issues, can benefit from careful historical work – and how historians can contribute, by careful analysis, to the work of other fields; it illustrates why 'history' is not a synonym for 'irrelevant'. If part of the task of reconstruction in Rwanda consists of revisiting its history, to extricate it from colonial assumptions and to place it on solid empirical foundations, this book is an indispensable step in that direction.

Smith College DAVID NEWBURY

KNOWLEDGE AND POWER AMONG THE 'SPEAKERS OF PULAAR'

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Islamic and Caste Knowledge Practices among Haalpulaar'en in Senegal: Between Mosque and Termite Mound. By ROY DILLEY. London: International African Library, 2004. Pp. xv + 270. £16.95/$30, paperback (ISBN 0-7486-1990-9).

KEY WORDS: Senegal, Islam, knowledge, power, anthropology.

Roy Dilley has provided a remarkable study in intellectual history. Trained as an anthropologist, a veteran of field work in Senegal for over two decades, he has now

produced the best social, linguistic and intellectual history in English of the critical but still neglected societies of *Haalpulaar*, 'speakers of Pulaar' or Fulfulde. His work takes the form of an extended essay on knowledge and power, set initially within Fuuta Tooro or the 'middle valley' of the Senegal River. Fuuta corresponds, more or less, to ancient Tekrur, an 'Islamic state' of the eleventh century according to the Mediterranean geographers, and to the birth place of the West Atlantic language called Pulaar. It is also the place of origin of Al-Hajj Umar Tall, the pilgrim and *mujahid* who affected many societies of the West African Sahel in the nineteenth century.

But for Dilley, Fuuta is most important as the home of the 'Islamic revolution' which produced the regime called the Almamate in the late eighteenth century. The Almamate did not succeed on the political level, after the assassination of its centralizing Imam Abdul Qadir Kane in the early nineteenth century. It did, however, put in place a new Muslim class, the *toorodbe*, people of Wolof, Mandinka, Fulbe and other origins who crystallized a new identity every bit as dominant and closed as the Deeniyanke Fulbe rulers whom they replaced. The *toorodbe* in turn have had a significant impact on the Islamization of the middle valley and Senegambia in general over the last two centuries.

Dilley uses the images of mosque and termite mound to symbolize the two kinds of knowledge-power that compete within Haalpulaar societies. The mosque represents the 'white' wisdom of Islam and its leaders, the *toorodbe* marabouts, while termite is a metaphor for the practices of the 'men-of-skill' who transmit their heritage through endogamous lineages that have acquired the designation of caste. Their knowledge is 'black' in local parlance, a way of indicating that it is non-Islamic and pre-Islamic. Dilley puts these two forms within an overall framework of 'accommodationist Islam'; here 'white' is superior to 'black' but both sets of practices are intertwined and consulted within a Muslim society. He works more historically or, as he would say, 'genealogically', in the early chapters (2–4 in particular), and more anthropologically or, as he would say, 'archeologically', in the later chapters (5–7 in particular).

As his chronological frame Dilley takes the period beginning with the 'Islamic revolution' that produced the Almamate of Fuuta Tooro. He also spends considerable effort describing the holy war led by Al-Hajj Umar in the mid-nineteenth century, even though its impact was felt primarily to the east, in the Mandinka, Bambara, Soninke and Fulbe zones of today's Mali. His demographic base consists of two social groups of very different claims to distinction. On the one hand, the *toorodbe*, the 'clerics' who engineer the movement of the late eighteenth century and become the new ruling class, on the other the *nyenybe*, the 'casted' artisans who, in distinct endogamous groups, weave, carve, make iron instruments, boats and pottery, and sing praises. The first distinguish themselves by their learning in Islam and commitment to implementing a more pure practice of the faith – at least until they become a ruling class in the nineteenth century. The second make their claims more practically, with their contributions to the material culture of the societies and to the experience and knowledge – even metaphysical – that go along with that. Theirs is a decidedly pre-Islamic and non-Islamic knowledge, but one that can be incorporated with the 'accommodationist' Sufi Islamic framework of Fuuta. Dilley bases his analysis on wide reading, especially of the work of Louis Brenner, Ernest Gellner, Michael Gilsenan, Constant Hames and Jean Schmitz, and extensive fieldwork and apprenticeship, especially with members of the weavers' caste. The knowledge which he has accumulated in the field, and which has appeared in a series of articles beginning in the late 1980s, becomes increasingly apparent as he gets into the later chapters of his work. His analysis of different vocabularies, forms of speaking and writing

and styles of performance goes beyond anything that I have read about Pulaar societies.

Dilley finds that the two sets of communities and kinds of knowledge remain distinct, in public, but overlap considerably in actual practice and in method. As he moves through his chapters on the archaeology of knowledge, the categories of white and black, Islamic and pre-Islamic, written and spoken, become more difficult to distinguish in the methods they apply, the problems they address and the results they obtain. The practitioners remain distinct, however: *toorodbe* or more broadly marabouts, on one side, and 'men-of-skill', on the other. Dilley's richest material on the second group comes from the weavers. There his knowledge of the society and vocabularies allows him to penetrate to many overlapping layers of practice.

Throughout the book Dilley works between the Haalpulaar'en of the middle valley, on the one hand, and Fulbe and non-Fulbe who live in other parts of Senegal and West Africa, on the other. He also works between the period of the Almamate and more recent times. In the last chapter (8) he shifts completely to Senegal and to the present – which is to say, the last thirty years when Wahhabis, Ayatollahs and other 'Islamists' have challenged the constructions of 'accommodationists' throughout the Muslim world. He finds the Islamic practice of Senegal surprisingly resilient and flexible in the face of this challenge, and he takes his story of intertwined practices a step further. The best example of this is the Nyas family of Kaolack, Tijaniyya marabouts of a blacksmithing background who renewed Sufi Islamic practice for hundreds of thousands of Senegalese, Nigerians and others in the twentieth century. His case is strongest with Ibrahima Nyas, the younger son of the founder who came into his own beginning in the 1930s.

Dilley has a good grasp of the history of Fuuta Tooro in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the work of historically minded social scientists such as Jean Schmitz. He does not, however, deal with the fortunes of Fuuta under French colonial rule or independent Senegal, nor chart the Haalpulaar diaspora into other regions, nor address the continuities (or discontinuities) in patterns of reform from the *toorodbe* on to the present. He makes too much of the efforts of the brilliant Tijaniyya leader, Al Hajj Umar, to recruit persons of lower-class origin into his *jihad* in the nineteenth century, in part because he relies heavily on the work of John Ralph Willis and some linguistic and genealogical ambiguities about the status of the Taal family. The Tijaniyya did not provide a fundamental critique of the 'elitist' Qadiriyya that had dominated West African Sufism before the nineteenth century, and Umar was not an egalitarian or reform-minded precursor to Ibrahima Nyas.

It is difficult to place Dilley's analysis of knowledge-power practices in a meaningful historical context. How does a scholar use and combine the interviews, stories, songs, proverbs, vocabularies and narratives that constitute his sources? How much of these sources can we attribute to particular communities and times over the last 200 years? How much has the metaphysical and practical world changed over that time, for whom and for where? But these are questions that we could put to any probing intellectual history. Roy Dilley has pushed hard at the envelope of understanding, and pushed through the ideologies of the reformers to the commonalities of practice with other specialists and specialisms. His work should be read by all of those interested in the patterns of Islamic practice and Islamisation in Africa.

Michigan State University DAVID ROBINSON

OUIDAH AND THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

doi:10.1017/S002185370627172X

Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving 'Port' 1727–1892. By ROBIN LAW. Athens OH: Ohio University Press; Oxford: James Currey, 2004. Pp. xii + 308. £50 (ISBN 0-85255-498-2); £18.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-497-4).

KEY WORDS: Benin, precolonial, slave trade, social.

Robin Law's social history of Ouidah during the period of Dahomian overrule represents a major milestone in the historiography of the so-called Slave Coast. Picking up from where he left off in *The Slave Coast of West Africa, 1550–1750* (Oxford, 1991) and drawing on the remarkable range of articles on the economic, social and political history of the region he has published over the last three decades, Law has fashioned what will surely become the definitive account of West Africa's most important slaving 'port'. 'Port', because the town of Ouidah is not actually located on the coast, but 3 kilometres inland from the navigable lagoon that runs behind the open surf beach looking out on to the Gulf of Guinea. The inverted commas speak volumes about the meticulous, exacting way in which Law has gone about reconstructing Ouidah's role in the slave trade and the impact of Atlantic commerce on the town. For it was down that short, sandy pathway between town and sea – these days designated as the 'route des esclaves' and culminating in a moving memorial arch on the seashore – that between 1650 and 1862 some one million Africans were marched to waiting ships and on to enslavement in the Americas or to death in the Middle Passage. This figure makes Ouidah, after Luanda, the second biggest point of embarkation for slaves in the entire continent and a critical piece in the interlocking jigsaw of trans-regional linkages that made up the transatlantic trade.

Ouidah enters the historical record in 1671, the year that the French West Indies Company opened trade with the Hueda kingdom, whose capital Savi lay 11 kilometres to the north. Known by its own inhabitants as Glehue but given the name of the entire kingdom by Europeans, the town quickly attracted rival trading powers at a time of rising demand in the Americas for African slave labour. In the 1680s the French were joined by the English and the Portuguese and in the 1690s by the Dutch, by which time Ouidah was exporting around 10,000 slaves per annum. The Dutch presence was transient but the French, English and Portuguese all constructed permanent forts, which acted as catalysts for the emergence of distinctive town quarters. As in other precolonial West African coastal towns, the economic, political and cultural interaction between European outposts on the one hand and indigenous institutions on the other was central in shaping the contours of Ouidah's urban history. The most pervasive foreign influence, however, was that of the expansionist Fon kingdom of Dahomey, which in 1727 overran Hueda and established itself as a coastal power. Despite a decline in the volume of slave exports from a peak of 15,000 per annum in the last decades of Hueda rule, Ouidah continued to prosper under Dahomian rule, emerging as the kingdom's second largest urban centre after the capital Abomey and the headquarters of its coastal domains. It remained, in local perceptions, a 'white man's town' – its principal function as a site of European trade encapsulated in the title of the Dahomian administrator, Yovogan, the 'Chief of the white men'. The 'Fon-ization' of Ouidah was followed in the early nineteenth century by a further addition to the town's cultural mix in the shape of the Brazilian community. Made up of a diversity of repatriated ex-slaves and others from the far-flung and racially ambiguous Atlantic lusophone diaspora, the 'Brazilians' would have a profound impact on the character of the town. The leading figure of this group was Francisco Felix de

Souza, the Brazilian slave trader made famous by Bruce Chatwin in his novel *The Viceroy of Ouidah* (subsequently filmed by Werner Herzog as *Cobra Verde*). His influence was such that Law titles his chapter on the initial period of the illegal slave trade from 1815 to 1839 as 'De Souza's Ouidah'. In the 1840s, however, the tightening of British anti-slave trade legislation spelt trouble for that generation of big merchants who had risen to positions of wealth and authority on the profits of the illegal commerce. The middle decades of the nineteenth century formed a key period of economic transition, as declining slave exports overlapped with the rise of a new export trade in palm oil. Despite an attempt to diversify into palm oil, de Souza fell on hard times. Just two days before his death in 1849, the old 'Chacha' – the power-broker whose support in 1818 had been critical to the rise of Gezo to the throne in Abomey – was forced to pawn his own silver coffin to secure his debts to the king. Indeed, the commercial transition marked the start of the decline of Ouidah from its position as the pre-eminent port in the region. A brief revival of the slave trade occurred between 1857 and 1862, but commercial activity in subsequent decades was increasingly focused on French interests at Porto-Novo and Conotou to the east. These in turn paved the way for the rise of French imperial designs on Dahomey, the conquest of the kingdom in 1892 and the imposition of colonial rule over Ouidah.

Within this narrative framework Robin Law has crafted an erudite, detailed account of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ouidah with an analytical focus resting firmly on the town's middleman role in the Atlantic economy. This organizing principle is the work's great strength, but is also its weakness. Few scholars are as conversant with the nuances of the historiography of the slave trade as Law and he argues, entirely convincingly, against the assertion by Eltis and Polanyi that Ouidah – and by extension European trade in West Africa generally – functioned essentially as an enclave with few direct linkages to the local economy. The rise and decline of the slave trade did shape that of Ouidah's economic fortunes, and Law demonstrates this clearly with the careful marshalling of a comprehensive range of sources. But the notion of social history goes beyond – and often runs against the grain of – economic structures, and reading this I sometimes yearned for more of the cut and thrust of local politics and the gritty reality and cultural hybridity of urban life in Ouidah's town quarters. The emphasis on economy is perhaps more due to the nature of the precolonial sources than conscious choice – and Law does refer in places to the limitations and lacunae in his written sources. Given those impediments, however, he has written an important book, one that will hopefully inspire others to explore further the history of this most fascinating West African town and to continue its story into the twentieth century.

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ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE MERINA EMPIRE

doi:10.1017/S0021853706281726

An Economic History of Imperial Madagascar, 1750–1895: The Rise and Fall of an Island Empire. By GWYN CAMPBELL. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp. xvii + 413. £55/$90 (ISBN 0-521-83935-1).

KEY WORDS: Madagascar, precolonial, economic, kingdoms, historiography.

For two decades, Gwyn Campbell has been producing a stream of articles on the economic and social history of what is conventionally known as the Merina empire of Madagascar. They have been based on an enormous knowledge of the sources,

in Malagasy and in four or five European languages, including on occasion Welsh and Norwegian. There can be no doubt that he has very greatly increased the empirical basis for the analysis of Malagasy history during the nineteenth century, and that he has also placed a number of subjects, notably with regard to slavery and forced labour, very centrally on the agenda for the history of the island. Moreover, the source base for the Merina empire is one of the richest for nineteenth-century African kingdoms. This material is brought together here in what is a very valuable compilation, at least with regard to the economic aspects of that history. Certainly those who want to use Malagasy examples for comparative purposes will find much of what they need here, and can be reasonably certain that if they do not find it then the information in question simply does not exist. It is a very valuable, informative and generally well argued, if at times somewhat petulant, book.

There are of course very good reasons for including the political economy of the Merina empire in comparative work. It has long been seen as one of the prime examples of an attempt by an extra-European power to compete with Europeans through the process of 'self-strengthening', that is to say by selectively following the precepts and practices of the Europeans to achieve what, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, would be described as 'development'. This was possible in the first place because the subsistence base of the Merina heartland, with the possibilities for riziculture, was substantially better able to sustain an industrial and commercial population than was generally the case on the African continent, and secondly because the Merina monarchy, with one major hiatus, took on board the economic, social and, for that matter, religious message of the London Missionary Society. It was therefore in the interest of the missionaries to present the activities of the country in the best possible light, as a shining example of how the message of the Gospel could bring change not just to the converts' prospects in the world to come, so it was believed, but also in this one. Campbell can then claim that nationalist historiography now dominant – exactly what he means by that is not clear, since at the relevant moments he cites no Malagasies – has taken over the message of the missionaries, and argued that but for French colonial intervention Madagascar would have been a rich and united nation state. It was also, so these and the older French colonial school would have it, not really part of Africa at all, but an area of Indonesia which had drifted to the other side of the Ocean, a remarkable form of linguistic determinism.

Campbell will have none of this, even though he is probably setting a straw man to argue against. In the first place, he makes it very clear how Madagascar in general, and the Merina empire in particular, formed an integral part of the Western Indian Ocean markets in foodstuffs, labour – both importing and exporting slaves – and also, via mainly Indian financiers, in capital. The problem for the Merina, however, was that, despite their pretensions, they did not control the whole of the island. There were too many alternatives for the state to dominate the overseas relations of the economy as it would have wished.

This was part of the basic problem with which the Merina rulers were faced in their attempts to achieve 'self-strengthening'. It was not as if they did not attempt this; rather it was that they did not succeed. The shift to economic autarky, which Campbell convincingly places rather earlier than is generally done, was of course an attempt not so much to shield Madagascar from economic development, but rather to achieve a lasting increase in the wealth of the island, or at least of its rulers. Much of the basic argument presented in this book has to do with the attempts of successive Merina rulers to impose an economic order on their subjects which would lead to what was then seen as modernisation. They were not the first such rulers to believe that this could be achieved through the imposition of forced labour upon their subjects, nor would they be the last. Equally, they, in common

with others who attempted such a revolution from above, were to discover that the demands which they made were conducive neither to economic efficiency nor to their lasting popularity. For Campbell, probably not without justice, it was the disaffection of the Merina population, as a result of decades of forced labour, which allowed the French, with considerable difficulty, to conquer the island, after they had been allowed to do so as part of the cynical international horse-trading which accompanied the Scramble.

Leiden University ROBERT ROSS

ARCHITECTURE AND LABOUR

doi:10.1017/S0021853706291722

Maisons royales demeures des grands a Madagascar : l'inscription de la réussite sociale dans l'espace urbain de Tananarive au XIXe siècle. By DIDIER NATIVEL. Paris: Karthala, 2005. Pp. 377. €29, paperback (ISBN 2-84586-539-2).

KEY WORDS: Madagascar, precolonial, architecture, kingdoms, economic, social.

In this finely illustrated book, Didier Nativel examines the innovations in urban architecture during the nineteenth century amongst the Merina elite in Antananarivo, Madagascar, and their impact upon both traditional concepts of space and the local economy.

Traditionally, Merina building followed ancestral precepts. Tombs, the abode of the ancestors, were constructed in stone; houses and huts, residences of the living, were constructed and joined in impermanent materials, notably unbaked clay, reeds and grasses. Both were laid out on a north–south axis, with the opening to the west: the north was the domain of the male, near the sacred northeast corner where prayers and other domestic libations to the ancestors were performed, while the south was reserved for females and those of inferior rank. Buildings of the elite *Andriana* caste were distinguished by their superior location (generally on a rise), defences (moats/walls in the case of royalty), size (e.g. of the three central pillars), decoration (oxen horns on cross poles protruding from the roof) and building material (wood in addition to clay and grasses).

With meticulous attention to detail, Nativel provides an excellent analysis of the impact upon traditional concepts of space of architectural innovations – adopted first by the Merina monarchy under Radama I (r. 1810–28) and Ranavalona I (r. 1828–61) and from then until the French conquest of 1895 by the Merina elite in general. The novel concepts, predominantly of Mascarene Creole and European origin, were initially confined largely to style (verandahs; windows and doors), size (double storey) and interior design (introduction of chairs, tables and other furniture, mirrors etc.) and the use of metals (nails and iron bolts and railings). However, the Merina court's conversion to Christianity in 1869 resulted in a general abandonment of traditional constraints regarding the orientation of constructions and use of building materials. Thereafter, the ban on the use of durable materials in inner Antananarivo (close to the palace) was lifted and a building boom occurred in which members of the Merina elite vied to erect residences, the size, solidity and decoration reflecting their status and wealth – graded according to material (for walls: stone, followed by brick; for roofs: tiles followed by thatch). Moreover, observation of the north–south axis was increasingly abandoned.

Nativel's analysis of the impact of such changes upon the economy as a whole is less rigorous. This in turn reflects the inadequacies of the 'Nationalist School' of Malagasy history of which he is part. The 'Nationalist School' was largely founded

by French academics who, while opposed to French colonial/neo-colonial rule in Madagascar, regard as sacred the Republican concept of nationhood. Their historical writings have thus promoted the idea of the emergence of a unified Malagasy nation in the nineteenth century under the Merina crown (referred to as 'le royaume'), its oppression by the French colonial regime and its awkward re-emergence following independence. With very few exceptions, they have focused on the history of the Merina elite whom they assert to have been the originators and defenders of this Malagasy nationhood. They thus ignore an overwhelming mass of archival and oral history evidence pointing to a nineteenth-century Madagascar deeply divided between the Merina empire (an area covering most of central and eastern Madagascar and isolated pockets elsewhere) and the mainly independent western and southern reaches of the island. Similarly, they overlook the economics of this division. Due to the high cost of internal (military adventurism and the failure to subjugate and exploit the resources of the entire island) and external (protectionism and general refusal of foreign investment) policies, the Merina elite suffered a chronic shortage of capital and thus was forced to implement within the empire labour-intensive economic policies based on the widespread exploitation of *fanompoana* (corvée labour).

In this context, Nativel's assertions that the architectural innovations adopted by the Merina elite and the building boom they indulged in both benefited ordinary citizens (stimulating craft training, wage labour and the cash economy) and led to a diversification of the economy (from a narrow agricultural and handicraft basis) is naive. Except for rare instances, as in the imperial capital in areas under surveillance by foreigners, construction labour was forced and unpaid. Moreover, following the creation of a state-church in 1869, Protestant (and in some regions Catholic) missionaries and church personnel were transformed into imperial agents who summoned massive and ongoing *fanompoana* both to construct and maintain church-state chapels and schools, and to perform other state *fanompoana* such as gold mining and military training. These policies increasingly alienated ordinary subjects from the elite, and ultimately provoked the collapse of the Merina regime from within.

In sum, this is a meticulous analysis of the architectural innovations adopted in the nineteenth century by the imperial Merina elite, and of the impact of such innovations upon traditional ancestral concepts of residential orientation and space. However, further assessment of the economic and political impact of these innovations and the late nineteenth-century building boom indulged in by the Merina elite requires an understanding, missing here, of the structure of the precolonial Merina empire and its economy.

McGill University GWYN CAMPBELL

MISSION LIFE AND SOURCES IN THE EASTERN CAPE

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Moravians in the Eastern Cape, 1828–1928: Four Accounts of Moravian Mission Work on the Eastern Cape Frontier. Translated by F. R. BAUDET and edited by TIMOTHY KEEGAN. Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society for the publication of South African Historical Documents, 2004. Pp. xlii+308. Rand 120 within South Africa, 285 outside (ISBN 0-9584522-2-9).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, colonial, apartheid, missions, sources.

This volume contains four accounts of mission life among the Moravians in the Eastern Cape, three of which were originally published, fairly obscurely, in

German in the early twentieth century, while the fourth, the reminiscences of her youth by a missionary daughter, was seemingly written in English and preserved in the family. They have been translated by a man who was himself brought up in the circles of the Moravian mission, and provided with an introduction and (light) editing by Timothy Keegan. They include a general survey of the Eastern Cape missions, written by a man who till his retirement had been the Moravian bishop in the Eastern Cape; a biography of Heinrich Meyer, one of the leading missionaries, written by a missionary – too young ever to have met his subject – who was trapped in Germany by the First World War and who interviewed his subject's widow; and the reports of a dramatic series of events during the 1880–1 war in the Transkei. While the first main station of the mission was at Shiloh, near modern Cathcart, most of the activities described here took place in the highland districts of the Transkei, from Elliott to Matatiele.

These works, as can be expected, are in the first place of interest for the light that they shed on the mentality of the writers themselves, and thus more broadly for what the missionary ideology had become by the early twentieth century (at least for the Moravians): highly disdainful of African culture, and often bordering on a racist vision of Africans themselves. Reading these reports, it is perhaps difficult to understand why anyone would ever want to convert under the influence of such missionaries. Perhaps the material was tailored to fit the conceptions, or the assumed conceptions, of the German audience. Nevertheless, readers will at times want to make use of these documents as sources, not just for mentality but also for cruder historical developments. It is here that, despite the admirable introduction by Keegan on the development of the Moravian mission and the biographies of the authors, the editing leaves a lot to be desired. It would be very good to have had some indication of the various layers of text presented here. How much of it was based on personal reminiscences, of the author or of his or her interviewees (and who, apart from Meyer's widow, were they) and how much on documentary evidence available to the writers either in South Africa or in the Archives of the Mission in Germany? Let me give one example of the sort of problems which can be faced. On p. 155, it is mentioned that Mhlakaza, the prophet of the Cattle Killing, had been baptized and confirmed by the Anglican Bishop Merriman, thus providing independent confirmation of the discovery argued by Jeff Peires some years ago.[1] The likelihood is that this information came from the reminiscences of Mrs. Meyer, who with her husband was at Shiloh at the time. The problem is that, although there is evidence from the 1850s that rumours had reached the Moravian missionaries that Mhlakaza had indeed been Merriman's servant, this was later explicitly denied by the same missionaries.[2] There is of course no more reason to believe the denials than the original claim, certainly in a situation in which all sorts of rumours, and no doubt cover-ups, were being propagated, but this is certainly a matter requiring an investigation of the sources of these reports, and which it would have behoved the Van Riebeeck society to have argued out in detail. And there is a whole range of material for which similar problems no doubt exist.

There is another matter of importance here. These reports all derive from the missionaries, as might be expected. However, the Moravian tradition required that each adherent write his or her spiritual and indeed temporal autobiography, which was continually revised and made public after death. If this tradition was maintained in South Africa, and if the autobiographies have survived, then there is

[1] J. B. Peires, *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856–7* (Johannesburg, 1989).

[2] *Berichten uit de Heidenwereld* (the Dutch Moravian journal), 23 (1856), p. 43; *ibid.* p. 153., letters of 28 Aug. 1856 and 18 Dec. 1856.

space for another volume from the Van Riebeeck society, probably one more fascinating, and more original, than this one.

Leiden University ROBERT ROSS

THE ENDURANCE OF THE DHOW (AND OF SLAVE TRADING)

doi:10.1017/S0021853706311723

Dhows and the Colonial Economy of Zanzibar, 1860–1970. By ERIK GILBERT. Oxford: James Currey; Zanzibar: Gallery Publications; Nairobi: E.A.E.P; Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2004. Pp. xiii + 176. £45 (ISBN 0-85255-486-9); £15.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-485-0).

KEY WORDS: Tanzania, colonial, postcolonial, shipping, trade, slave trade.

Among recent academic leitmotivs are the 'weak colonial state' and the need for an Indian Ocean perspective, and these are splendidly illustrated in this study of East African maritime history. Colonial officials regularly and wrongly predicted the imminent demise of the dhow. In reality, the diverse sailing ships placed in this category remained essential props of an economy, formal and informal, that the European state could constrain but not suppress. Setting aside illicit cargoes such as slaves, dhows undercut steamers in the conveyance of cloves, mangrove poles, cloth, hides, livestock, dried shark, ghee and passengers. Officials tied themselves in legal knots in attempting to define a 'native vessel', recalling equally absurd attempts at racial classification in British East Africa. They encountered particular difficulties with European-built schooners and auxiliary engines. Gilbert sensitively demonstrates the inanity of subsidised government steamers bringing cloves from Pemba to Zanzibar. He also provides fascinating insights into the 'life cycle' of the humble mangrove pole, from its cutting in the Rufiji Delta to its incorporation into Middle Eastern dwellings, with its bark at times reaching Western tanning industries. Perhaps the most embarrassing blow to Whiggish views of technical progress was struck when dhows prevented local famines during the Second World War.

The numerous illustrations and maps are a great boon to the reader, but there remain surprising gaps in both treatment and bibliography, especially concerning the slave trade. Ignoring the debate over whether the sea-borne slave trade to the Arabian peninsula ever truly 'ended', Gilbert fails to understand that the peak of the pearling boom occurred just before the First World War. Far from disappearing in the 1880s, illicit exports of slaves to the Gulf and the Red Sea grew again, with slaves diving for pearls or meeting 'domestic' demand arising from rising incomes. Northern Mozambique and the Comoros, the key to this late surge in slaving, hardly figure in the book, and are not even indexed. Similarly, the author fails to grasp François Renault's crucial point that intense slaving around the Great Lakes was not export-oriented, but served to underpin the ivory trade. As a result, Gilbert greatly exaggerates the extent to which the colonial authorities manipulated the repression of the slave trade to control their subjects.

There are other gaps, often due to a lack of appreciation of non-Africanist writings. Gujarati, Hadhrami and Greek entrepreneurs are not properly introduced, leaving the reader to guess at the significance of diasporas that kept the dhow business flourishing. The Omanis receive greater attention, but they were more important politically and agriculturally than commercially. The large Indian

Ocean market for cloves is poorly presented, and *kretek* in Southeast Asia were typically two parts tobacco and one part cloves, rather than 'all-clove cigarettes'. The passenger traffic resulting from Islamic pilgrimage and education is no more than implied, and the significance of imported livestock, including camels, is not explained.

A more general problem lies in an unsettling hesitation between declaring the final death of dhows in the 1960s, as a result of political independence and the Middle Eastern oil boom, and a realization that these ships continue to operate. The Zanzibar revolution of 1964 is given great explanatory value, but not the Marxist seizure of power in Yemen in 1967. Comparisons with South and Southeast Asia, together with a greater stress on the inherent economic and ecological benefits of wind power, would have helped to overcome this tension. Then the author would perhaps have been more confident that upheavals associated with independence would be no more able than Western colonialism to put an end to the ancient sailing economy of the Indian Ocean.

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BOY SCOUTS IN AFRICAN HISTORY

doi:10.1017/S002185370632172X

Race, Resistance and the Boy Scout Movement in British Colonial Africa. By TIMOTHY H. PARSONS. Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2004. Pp. xviii + 318. $59.95 (ISBN 0-8214-1595-6); $26.95, paperback (ISBN 0-8214-1595-4).

KEY WORDS: Colonial, social, youth, race.

This is a book of social history. It examines the Boy Scout Movement and its predecessors (Boys Brigades) in East, Central and Southern Africa from the late nineteenth century to the late twentieth century. As the title suggests, Parsons is interested in the role of the Boy Scout Movement in colonialism and, to a lesser extent, in postcolonial settings. The book begins in 2001 with a world meeting of scouts in Kenya. During this meeting there was a dispute about the condition of the gravesite of the founder of the Boy Scouts, Lord Robert Baden-Powell. The dispute drew government attention and undertakings were given to restore the gravesite and its five-acre plot to a proper condition. With this story, Parsons draws attention to the prestige of scouting in Kenya and creates a launch pad for his detailed study of the history of the Boys Scouts in British Colonial Africa.

At the outset, Parsons admits a personal interest. He was himself a Boy Scout in Rochester, New York, and his identity was shaped by his experiences in the movement. His own troop had a reputation for independence which 'took it out of step with mainstream American Scouting' (p. xiii). Members had long hair and were loose in their interpretation of the strict dress codes of the movement. The author's experience showed him that the Boy Scouts were not just an institution functioning as an ideological apparatus of the state, even if at times its goals and organizational structure could be used by the state to address problems associated with unruly youth. This point is underscored early in the book by the anomaly that many Kenyan scouts and scout masters took the Mau Mau oath in the 1950s rebellion.

Parsons focuses on the fourth law of scouting to explain why scouting was popular among Africans during colonial times. This law states: 'A Scout is a friend

to all, and a brother to every other Scout, no matter to what country, class or creed, the other may belong' (p. 259). He explains that in the colonial setting, Africans sought to use this law to oppose or dilute colonial segregationist policies. They were most successful where white settler populations were small.

In this well-researched and detailed study, Parsons picks up a number of themes. Scouting tended to be linked to schooling and he provides a confident survey of developments in colonial schooling, including a close examination of the 'adapted' curriculum. He discusses the experience of African scouts, even though he had difficulty in locating such people. The Boy Scout Movement offered a particular reading of masculinity and Parsons is interested to see which of the messages were rejected and which accepted by African scouts. A theme is the struggle for control of the movement. White men provided most of the leadership throughout the colonial period. This was resisted by the establishment of informal scout groups. These groups re-interpreted scouting bringing it into harmony with African traditions in a manner similar to that pursued by the independent African churches. A fourth theme is the way in which governments viewed the Scouting Movement and how the Scouting Movement maneuvered itself in the context of colonialism, apartheid in South Africa and decolonization.

The book is authoritative, with an excellent summary of the relevant historiographical debates, and the coverage impressive. Although East Africa and South Africa receive the most attention, the history of scouting in all the other British colonies is discussed.

Gender is not a major concern of the book, though the Girl Guides are discussed and issues of masculinity crop up from time to time. Social class receives some attention, particularly when economic downturns produced poverty and expanded the numbers of the unemployed and poor. In these circumstances, the colonial and postcolonial states were more likely to support the work of the Scouts. But it is race that has centre stage. And here I come to the questions that occurred to me throughout my reading. Were the Boy Scouts actually important? The question arises because of the very limited scale of African involvement. In South Africa in 1950, only 14,885 Africans (1·99 per cent of those registered for schooling) were Scouts and this was before Bantu Education which massively expanded the African student body. In Nyasaland, the percentage was 0·34 and in Kenya, 0·29 (p. 27). Scouting was limited to older boys, those in secondary school. Before schooling became compulsory for African children in South Africa, only 3 per cent of the 580,000 students made it to secondary school. Parsons concludes that 'very few boys actually had the chance to become Pathfinders (the organization created in South Africa for African Scouts)' (p. 83). Scouting was more strongly supported by some – for example in Natal, the link between scouting and the Zulu kingdom and its martial history ensured that 13,343 were officially enrolled: 45 per cent of all the country's African scouts in 1974 (p. 223). But this only serves to prove the larger point – that very few Africans experienced scouting. It may be that scouting was politically important for symbolic reasons or because it was unusual in its universalist (but gender-exclusive) laws. Nevertheless, in the broader picture the political significance of scouting as a vehicle of resistance against colonialism must be in question.

What seems to be less in question is the role of scouting as vehicle of racial mobilization amongst white settlers. This book does not explore the participation and experience of white scouts. Given the connections that scouting has with military tradition, a study that examines how scouting contributed to constructions of militaristic and other forms of masculinity is needed.

Scouting still exists in Africa. It is not a mass movement and it is less contentious than it was before. In places like Malawi, where President Banda cut government

support as he monopolized youth organization, it may be very weak. But the fact that it survives says something about the appeal of its values and vision. Parsons has helped us to understand these.

University of KwaZulu-Natal ROBERT MORRELL

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS AND PAUL JENKINS

doi:10.1017/S0021853706331726

Getting Pictures Right: Context and Interpretation. Edited by MICHAEL ALBRECHT, VEIT ARLT, BARBARA MÜLLER and JÜRG SCHNEIDER. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 2004. Pp. 192. €29.80, paperback (ISBN 3-89645-247-9).

KEY WORDS: Photographs, archives, Cameroon, Ghana.

Most of the nine articles in this beautifully illustrated volume were presented in 2003 at a symposium to mark the retirement of Paul Jenkins as archivist of the Basel Mission. Many Africanist historians will, for a variety of reasons, share Patrick Harries's view of Jenkins as an 'archivist from heaven'. On this occasion it was decided to concentrate upon one field in which Jenkins has made a particularly important contribution to scholarship: the historical interpretation of old photographs, particularly with relation to the non-European world, culminating in the website www.bmpix.org. In addition to Jenkins himself, the organizers – four of his former students – were able to bring together many of the leading scholars in this growing field.

Only three articles – Richard Fardon's on the photographic record of a Lela ceremony held in Cameroon in 1908, Christraud Geary's on photographic practice in Cameroon in the twentieth century and Erin Haney's on Ghanaian portraiture – are explicitly devoted to Africa. Fardon's article represents a virtuoso piece of detective work: going beyond the whodunit question (difficult enough in itself) 'Who took the pictures of this event that survived the Second World War?', for which he relies upon internal evidence, he proceeds to pose a deeper, almost postmodern question: 'What circumstances made the surviving record possible?' Thus he enables us to view both the photographs and the primary texts on Lela as the result of a 'collaboration' between the ethnographer Ankermann, the Basel missionaries and the local African elite, who were clearly 'playing to the camera'. Geary, whose work on photographs of Bamum in the early colonial period first made the Basel Mission's photograph archive famous in the 1980s, turns here to African photographers in the Bamum capital Foumban since the 1950s, and discusses the careers and repertoires of two local photographers. Among other things she demonstrates how portrait photography, originally a monopoly of the Bamum elite, has been 'democratized', and by looking at changing poses, clothing and accoutrements she indicates the extent to which sitters have always exercised a certain degree of control over their own portraits. Haney explores the use of photographs in the living rooms of today's family homes in Accra and the extent to which photographs function as 'repositories of historical information', but also the manifold ways in which photographs are lost or destroyed.

Africanists can also learn a great deal on methodology from the three articles on other continents. Thoralf Klein, discussing missionary photographs of Chinese Christians, convincingly criticizes simplistic notions concerning a 'dichotomy of narrative' in missionary photography. Marisol Palma deals (in German) with photographs of Patagonian Indians taken by Martin Gusinde between 1918 and

1924 (i.e. before he went to Africa), showing how the photographs had their own 'social biography' (moving from Patagonia to Europe, then within Europe and the USA, then back to Patagonia and finally to the Anthropos-Institut in Germany, where they were reorganized in the 1980s); she describes how the photographs were related to Gusinde's biography, his motives and his increasingly professional methods. Barbara Fey Näf juxtaposes portraits from the Basel Mission archive relating to Southeast India, now available online, with those published in an early reference work, *The People of India* (1868–75), indicating how in some cases the latter can provide the supplementary documentation that the archive itself originally lacked.

In addition we are offered three good theoretical contributions. Elizabeth Edwards, the leading authority in the field of ethnographic photography, discusses the 'materiality' of photographs – something which current digitalization projects tend to obscure – and urges us to 'think relationally' about them. Anton Holzer, writing in German, demonstrates how art historians and the 'classical logic' of museums have combined to rob photographs – like other museum objects – of their historical 'path' or, as Edwards would put it, their social biography. And Paul Jenkins, drawing his examples from Nazi Germany as well as from Cameroon and Ghana, provides us with some disquieting examples of how just 'looking at a photograph intently' (a technique which, in the past, he has often recommended) can lead us to serious misinterpretations which supplementary sources can serve to correct – or at least get us to re-examine. One wonders why this contribution was not used as an epilogue and placed at the end of the book.

The book is a fitting tribute to Jenkins's pioneering achievement. At the same time it opens up a myriad of perspectives for future research, not least in African history.

University of Leipzig ADAM JONES

INTELLECTUAL LIBERATION

doi:10.1017/S0021853706341722

The Dark Webs: Perspectives on Colonialism. Edited by TOYIN FALOLA. Durham NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2005. Pp. ix+486. $45, paperback (ISBN 0-89089-582-1).

KEY WORDS: Colonial, decolonization, intellectual, nationalism.

Toyin Falola has created a most remarkable and illuminating volume. This is intellectual history of colonialism in Africa at its very best. It is informative, powerful, prophetic and perhaps most strikingly of all, lyric. It is *African* voices, rhythms, word-beats and expression that resonate. And while the focus is on *The Dark Webs* of colonialism and the full spectrum of damage it managed to inflict, by the end of the book these webs have been dispersed, to be replaced by a life-enhancing, all-embracing 'Web of Remembrance' (p. 281).

Pius Adesanmi's chapter 'Colonialism, *écriture engagée*, and Africa's new intellectuals' perhaps best captures the restored and ascendant African spirit which infuses this volume. Referring to *Light Must Break* by the renowned Nigerian poet, Remi Raji, Adesanmi, draws forth the key element at the very core of the poem. This is the Yoruba 'verbal/ancestral concept of *Ase*, the process through which supernatural forces (ancestors/spirits) can be summoned to breathe life force, vitality and benevolent actuation into words through human mediation' (pp. 281–2).

But in the bright glow of this envisaged 'renewed dawn' there are clouds. They are not ignored. True liberation means actuation for numerous separate, distinct and intensely proud 'nation-cultures'. Nearly all have their own languages; yet for official and many other purposes, the alien languages of former colonizers remain mostly in place. What about the possibility of indigenous official languages, with a mushrooming of new 'nation-cultures'? After considering the customary alternatives – from 'purist indigenous', to 'pragmatic colonial' – Ehiedu Iweriebor, in a thoughtful exploration of 'The language question', suggests that future directions will likely derive from, and be shaped by 'African historical practice and tradition [of] acceptance' of multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic cultures (p. 47). On time scales, there is silence.

While the sweep of all contributors is broad in historical and philosophical perspective, nevertheless the emphasis is on the depth and breadth of the colonial impact, and on the range of remedies revealed. In the book's first section, '"Brute blood in the air": context and change', the contributors brilliantly probe the minds and actions of both colonizers and colonized. The cunning and brute impositions of the colonizers are juxtaposed with the flexibility, and indeed astonishing persistence and durability, of indigenous behaviours, attitudes and symbols, if not always institutions.

These features are conveyed perhaps most tellingly in Anthony Agbali's 'The Igala response to colonial destabilization'. He provides both a chronicle of comprehensive colonial disablement and destruction, and yet a revelation of the parameters of 'hidden' elements of Igbala culture which ensured survival of many traditions which now are re-surfacing (pp. 126–31).

In the book's second section. '"A sudden blow": texts and creativity', the contributors explore and elucidate the vital role of language in effecting conscious and sub-conscious subordination of the colonized. Executed with impressive forensic skill, the extent of 'coloniality' (p. 258) is exposed and probed in chapters dealing with colonial and postcolonial works of such celebrated African writers as Valentin-Yves Mudimbe (by Edgard Sankara), Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (Olayemi Akinwumi), the scholastic critic and commentator, Micere Mugo (Olayinka Agbetuyi); as well as white (South) Africans Nadine Gordimer and J. M. Coetzee (Page Laws).

In the final section '"The broken wall": scholars and their reflections', Falola's contributors pay just homage to those African intellectual giants who have contributed greatly to the 'decolonization of the African mind'. Separate chapters are given to K. O. Dike (by Apollos Nwauwa), celebrated pioneer of an *African* African history; to his colleagues Adu Boahen (K. O. Akurang-Parry) and J. F. Ade Ajayi (Kirsten Walles); as well as to assessing the enormous achievements of B. A. Ogot (Ann Genova), and C. A. Diop (Ann Cooper). Attention too is given to the contributions of the white South African reformer, Olive Schreiner, and renowned freedom fighter in the anti-apartheid struggle, Ruth First (Barbara Harlow). The final chapter assesses the contribution of Robert Mugabe (O. B. Osadolor), 'one of the outstanding names in the struggle against colonialism in Africa' (p. 458).

Altogether, Falola has produced a brilliant and timely volume which will contribute greatly to a much-improved understanding of Africa's encounter with colonialism, viewed from the inside-out. Arguably more important, it will serve to point the new generation of students of Africa – and most importantly *African* students – in the directions from which restoration and change must come.

East Grinstead, Sussex, UK MICHAEL VICKERS

LES 'ÉVOLUÉS' ET LA CHANGE DANS L'AFRIQUE OCCIDENTALE FRANÇAISE

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Colonial Ambivalence, Cultural Authenticity, and the Limitations of Mimicry in French-Ruled West Africa, 1914–1956. By JAMES E. GENOVA. New York: Peter Lang, 2004. Pp. xi + 300. Swiss Francs 114 (ISBN 0-8204-6941-6).

KEY WORDS: West Africa, political, cultural, colonial, accommodation to colonialism, decolonization.

Le livre de James Genova est une solide contribution à l'histoire de l'empire colonial français. Il met l'accent sur le caractère déterminant de la connection entre les différentes régions d'un empire colonial qui partage en particulier, une bureaucratie impériale, une administration civile et une idéologie coloniale qui met l'accent sa 'vocation civilisatrice'. La région étudiée ici est l'Afrique Occidentale Française et la perspective adoptée est celle de l'histoire impériale, un territoire de la recherche historique en expansion dans le monde anglo-saxon mais qui demeure, par contre, très controversé dans le champ historique français. Une controverse accentuée par l'extraordinaire pregnance des questions relatives à l'immigration et aux identités nationales et citoyennes des anciens sujets coloniaux établis en métropole. L'histoire impériale exige un regard et une analyse qui circonscrivent un espace historique unique, l'empire, réduisant considérablement le contraste et/ou la différence entre la métropole – le centre – et les périphéries – les colonies – en s'évertuant à penser le mouvement des hommes, des marchandises et des idées comme une circulation de ressources variables mais partagées à l'intérieur d'un espace unique.

Colonial Ambivalence s'inscrit dans cette nouvelle orientation. Il intervient dans le débat sur l'impact de l'aventure coloniale sur la métropole française et sur les tours et détours prises par les entreprises de détotalisation, d'insertion et/ou de reconfiguration des propositions coloniales par les sujets de la région occidentale de l'empire colonial français en Afrique. Il est en dialogue avec les travaux de Alice Conklin qui analyse l'empire français en termes de républicanisme, en s'intéressant au dessin que l'idéologie républicaine imprime à la politique coloniale et de Gary Wilder qui étudie les relations structurelles entre les systèmes politiques coloniaux et républicains qui forment l'architecture de ce qu'il appelle 'l'État-nation impérial Français'. La contribution de Génova à cette conversation est louable à plus d'un titre. Son livre porte sur la communauté des colons et des sujets coloniaux. Il propose d'une part, une analyse très fine de la mise en place de l'administration coloniale en Afrique de l'Ouest et d'autre part, il suit à la trace et avec une minutie incomparable l'émergence d'une culture politique et d'un espace public en France et en Afrique de l'Ouest, entre la Première Guerre Mondiale et la loi-cadre de 1956. Cette dernière formule législative, non seulement instaure une certaine autonomie et ouvre un champ à la participation des colonisés à la vie publique, elle propose aussi une révision des ressources idéologiques qui accompagnent son déploiement. Elle substitue à la politique d'assimilation, celle d'association qui énonce l'irréductibilité, au sein de l'empire, des cultures en présence. En affirmant que l'empire n'était constitué que d'unités hétérogènes, la nouvelle doctrine qui insiste sur la nécessité de développer les sociétés colonisées à partir des institutions indigènes imprime une inflexion scientifique à l'administration coloniale et renvoie les 'évolués' indigènes qui se lancent à l'assaut de l'administration et des chefs traditionnels à leurs traditions. Ce double engagement, qui se combine avec la nouvelle vocation scientifique de l'administration coloniale, produit différentes constructions de la culture africaine, de son rôle dans la gouvernance coloniale

et dans l'attribution de positions légitimes de pouvoir et d'autorité aux acteurs en présence.

Il est difficile de suivre Genova sur le parallèle qu'il établit entre les politiques et pratiques du passé impérial et les crises post-impériales en métropole, en particulier l'immigration et la question des rapports entre la citoyenneté française et les origines communautaires, ethniques ou religieuses. Par contre le l'étude des 'évolués', de leur généalogie, de leur déploiement dans le champ professionnel, social et intellectuel pour identifier et rendre compte de leur imaginaire, en particulier politique et idéologique, de la formation de leur identité et subjectivité et de la production des formules d'accrochage ou de décrochage vis-à-vis des élites, coloniale et traditionnelle, est bien menée et convaincante. L'impact de leur intervention aussi bien dans les politiques que la construction des connaissances coloniales comme 'objets', informateurs, dissidents et/ou collaborateurs relativement aux les luttes pour la citoyenneté et l'exercice citoyen est bien analysé.

La perspective adoptée permet à Genova de lire les révisions administratives et les réformes politiques autant comme le produit des crises provoquées par les mouvements de contestations de l'après-guerre que comme le résultat de l'intervention d'une administration coloniale soucieuse de prendre en considération les cultures africaines et d'user d'instruments d'une science en développement, l'ethnologie pour adminstrer les sociétés africaines, contre la logique de gouvernement revendiquée par les 'évolués'. C'est, selon Genova, de cette double pression et des circonstances instables de la fusion et de la confrontation des élites (en particulier les élites et les chefs traditionnels) que découlent la marche vers l'indépendance et la balkanisation de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. En centrant son analyse sur les 'évolués', *Colonial Ambivalence* précise très clairement le conflit ouvert par l'opposition entre les nouvelles formules administratives et les revendications des 'évolués'. En cause sont leur satut, leur légitimité à représenter les Africains, leur rôle d'interlocuteurs privilégiés des autorités coloniales et la signification de 'l'être et du paraître africain'. De manière plus décisive, il s'agit de comprendre au cours de cette période la crise relative à la représentation des sociétés africaines et les rapports entre une légitimité d'origine intellectuelle et politique (celle des 'évolués') et une légitimité fondée sur la tradition et la science dans un cadre particulier où la doctine de l'association tente de disjoindre la nationalité d'avec la citoyenneté et la nation d'avec la république.

Genova a réalisé un travail admirable d'analyse des pratiques discursives. Malheureusement il n'offre pas autant relativement aux données empiriques sur le groupe en cause, sa structuration, sa démographie et ses relations avec son milieu d'origine qui n'est pas forcément urbain. Certains des 'évolués' sont, en effet, des fils de chefs de chefs, ce qui introduit une autre dimension dans leur ambivalence.

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor MAMADOU DIOUF

MEMOIRS OF A MALIAN INTELLECTUAL

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Almamy : l'âge d'homme d'un lettré malien. By ALMAMY MALIKI YATTARA and BERNARD SALVAING. Brinon-sur-Sauldre : Éditions Grandvaux, 2003. Pp. 446. €23 (ISBN 2-909550-37-0).

KEY WORDS: Mali, intellectual, Islam, colonial, postcolonial.

Readers of *Almamy : une jeunesse sur les rives du fleuve Niger* will welcome the publication of the second and posthumous volume of Almamy Maliki Yattara's

autobiography, produced like the first with the collaboration of Bernard Salvaing. *L'âge d'homme* of this *lettré malien* was a rich one indeed. In this tome, Almamy Yattara regales the reader with tales of his years as a teacher in Qur'anic schools in the 1950s; his marriages and divorces; his encounters with *djinns* and thieves; his adventures as a hunter in the inland delta of the Niger and as a traveler in West Africa and France; his experiences as a guide, translator and collaborator working with Malian, American and French researchers attached to Mali's Institut des Sciences Humaines; his own interpretations of a variety of historical questions, notably around the *dîna* of Hamdallaye; and his reflections on the state of morality and Islamic observance in the Mali of the 1990s. The product of a series of recorded conversations between Yattara and Salvaing that began in 1984 and ended in 1996, two years before Yattara's death, the book is split into four parts and nineteen chapters. Salvaing's extensive notes buttress the text, which is further supplemented by a postface, a glossary, a bibliography, two useful maps, several photographs and valuable testimonies by a handful of prominent researchers, including Youssouf Tata Cissé, Bintou Sanankoua, Christiane Seydou, David Robinson and Louis Brenner. Yattara in turn offers warm portraits of Robinson, Brenner, Seydou and William Brown. In sum, there is much to be gleaned from this work.

Unlike my senior colleagues, I never had the pleasure of encountering Almamy Yattara. It is clear from his memoir that he was a traditionalist of the finest sort, frank and open on matters of principle and practice, intolerant of hypocrisy and discreet on division, conflict and the failings of his elders. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Almamy Yattara skirts some divisive issues or that he does not answer some of the questions left lingering in the first volume – questions Louis Brenner pointed to when he reviewed that book in this journal (43 [2002], 522–4). Notably, what was the basis of the falling-out that took place between Yattara and Amadou Hampaté Bâ, his former patron and mentor? Hampaté Bâ ranks among the most influential intellectuals of twentieth-century Africa; he also wrote a multi-volume memoir to which Yattara's has inevitably been compared. Yattara is rather mum on his separation from Hampaté Bâ, but in one touching vignette, he describes his feeling of desolation after an elderly Hampaté Bâ rejected his company during a visit to Abidjan, remarking 'and yet … I was [once] like his son' (pp. 296–7). More broadly, Yattara sheds little light on the communitarian conflicts between Muslims that marked the 1950s. Nonetheless, such justifiable discretion does not prevent Yattara from offering rich insight into his careers as an Islamic teacher, student, jurist and esoteric specialist.

There are other topics Yattara hardly broaches, and those absences too may be instructive. He says very little about the coming of independence or the successive postcolonial regimes; such political history is almost entirely absent, and indeed the state itself scarcely appears in Yattara's narrative (despite the fact that he was for a time a government employee). On the other hand, there are lessons Yattara clearly wishes to impart, and future researchers may well profit from an attentive reading of his experiences working with the foreign scholars mentioned above, as well as with Jean-Marie Gibbal.

Bernard Salvaing is to be commended for seeing this rich project through to completion and for making available such rare and precious self-reflections as those of Almamy Yattara. His postface is invaluable, and it illuminates some of the issues mentioned above. Yet one small note of dissatisfaction bears mentioning. Salvaing put into italics 'French words and expressions that are used in a sense different from that of the French commonly spoken in Europe' (p. 10). The practice struck this reader as pedantic (see, e.g., repeated instances on pp. 28–40). After all, the book's charm lies at least partly in Yattara's oral expression rendered

into print, and the framing device of the book is his experiences as a '*lettré malien*' – *lettré* in Arabic, that is. To my mind, it would have been preferable to do without such zealous policing of grammar and syntax where the usage is readily comprehensible. Hampaté Bâ was an unparalleled writer of a limpid French prose; Yattara expressed himself with vigorous and dynamic speech. Better to let the difference stand. Like its predecessor, *Almamy* is a generous gift, gratefully received.

Columbia University GREGORY MANN

IN DEFENCE OF BRITISH COLONIALISM AND COUNTER-INSURGENCY

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Kenya, the Kikuyu and Mau Mau. By DAVID LOVATT SMITH. East Sussex: Mawenzi Books, 2005. Pp. 359. No price given, paperback (ISBN 0-9544713-2-6).

KEY WORDS: Kenya, colonial, independence wars, human rights, sources.

The historical reconstruction of the Mau Mau war has long been a matter of political importance for Kenyans. But with the recent publication of several books about the end of the Emergency, Mau Mau's historiography is playing on an even wider stage. Caroline Elkins's *Britain's Gulag* compares the colonial state's 'rehabilitation' program with the Stalinist gulag and the Nazi concentration camps, while David Anderson's *Histories of the Hanged* documents the perversion of British justice during the prosecution of Mau Mau suspects.[1] David Lovatt Smith's book is a reply to Elkins, Anderson and other critics of liberal imperialism. He reassures his readers about the goodness of Britain's civilizing project, and laments that 'it has become increasingly fashionable to look upon Britain's role [in Africa] with shame and ignominy' (p. 11). Scholars will find much to disagree with in Smith's historical account. But as source material, Smith's book offers rich insights into the intellectual history of Britain's anti-insurgency operation.

The first two chapters of the book are titled 'Order out of chaos' and 'Civilization better than barbarism'. They describe how the 'indigenous inhabitants of [East Africa] had been living in a state of turmoil and misery since time immemorial' (p. 47). Britain, though, sent its missionaries and explorers to open up the continent and end the slave trade. These early emissaries of colonialism, writes Smith, were 'harbingers of changes who were to lead the tribespeople out of timeless turmoil into the potentially enriching western world of the twentieth century' (p. 72). Some Kikuyu people, though, would not follow colonists' lead. Caught between the traditional world and the modern world of the West, young men were ripe for manipulation by Mau Mau's recruiters. Smith argues that Mau Mau was not a sensible political organization: instead, its partisans were 'unstable, emotionally disturbed and extremely violent men' (p. 248). It had to be stopped,

[1] C. Elkins, *Britain's Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (London, 2005); D. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (London, 2005). Both were reviewed by B. A. Ogot, 'Britain's Gulag', *Journal of African History*, 46 (2005) 493–505.

lest Kenya become 'another Rwanda or a Congo, a Sierra Leone or a Uganda with one tribe or ethnic group attempting to annihilate another' (p. 250). The detention camps in which tens of thousands of Kikuyu were held were therefore 'detoxification clinics for those on their way back from the effects of the oath' (p. 231). Forced labor (called, euphemistically, the 'dilution technique') was a discipline necessary to set 'these degraded sub-humans' on the path toward civility (p. 255). And the hundreds of executions sanctioned by British courts were, for Smith, 'the price paid and the lesson hopefully learnt by those who seek to impose their ideas through the gun' (p. 133).

Kenya's scholars have for the past forty years challenged the racist certitudes and paternalistic condescension on which Smith's historical account is based. Here I want only to suggest that Smith's liberal history works as a political strategy. By representing British imperialism as a positive, developmental force and Mau Mau as 'a wasteful, cruel and entirely unproductive episode' (p. 292), officials naturalized the colonial vision of progress and created allies. Smith must have rehearsed this teleology many times. During the Emergency he helped to organize the 'pseudo-gangs', comprised of white officers in blackface and ex-Mau Mau partisans, which went into the forest to search out Mau Mau units. Smith describes how guerillas, once captured, would be subjected to long lectures about the benefits of British colonialism and the destruction that Mau Mau had visited upon Kikuyu people. Some Mau Mau partisans would 'turn' within an hour, leading British forces back into the forest in pursuit of their former compatriots (Chapter 9). Mau Mau's organizers similarly created partisans through history-writing. They documented their deeds in diaries (a few of which are reproduced in Smith's book), and lectured partisans about Oliver Cromwell, who once conducted a long war against British monarchy.[2] In a photograph sent as a threat to a British army unit (and reproduced in Smith's book), Dedan Kimathi is pictured with pencil in hand, while his brother writes in a record book (p. 155). Even during the war, the legitimacy of Mau Mau's struggle was argued out on the field of history-writing.

There is material in Smith's book about the racial politics of counter-insurgency, too. Pseudo-gangsters had to make careful choices about fashion: they wore threadbare clothing, blackened their faces, and magnified their body odor in order adequately to play the part of Mau Mau. White officers kept at the back of pseudo-gangs, hiding their soot-smeared faces while their Kikuyu colleagues convinced Mau Mau guerillas to lead them to their forest hideaways. After the war's conclusion, British officers employed pseudo-gangsters as garden boys or guards in their homes (p. 217). When the history of domesticity during the forest war is written, Smith's book will be a valuable resource.

It is as an archivist and an observer that Smith makes a novel contribution to the study of Mau Mau. He reproduces memoirs from several government officers and Kenya settlers in the book's appendices. He also reproduces several letters sent by forest guerillas to politicians and settlers during the 1950s. One hopes that he might soon open his private archive even more freely, and make available the interrogation reports and other documentation that he has saved.

Selwyn College, University of Cambridge DEREK R. PETERSON

[2] J. Lonsdale, 'Ornamental constitutionalism in Kenya: Kenyatta and the two queens', forthcoming in the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*.

WEST NILE AND UGANDA

doi:10.1017/S0021853706381728

Inside West Nile: Violence, History and Representation on an African Frontier. By MARK LEOPOLD. Oxford: James Currey; Santa Fe: School of the American Research Press; Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2005. Pp. x+180. No price given (ISBN 0-85255-941-0); no price given, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-940-2).

KEY WORDS: Uganda, colonial, postcolonial, anthropology, politics, violence.

Uganda's twentieth-century history has produced a marked division between a (relatively) prosperous south and an economically disadvantaged and marginalized north. From the 1980s, profound differences in basic security have widened the gulf, as various conflicts have produced massive disruption and displacement throughout northern Uganda, while the south has been largely peaceful, stable and secure.

The West Nile region, on Uganda's northwestern frontier, has shared this general fate. Indeed, as convincingly demonstrated by anthropologist Mark Leopold, violence and marginality engendered by outsiders (Europeans and other Africans) have dominated West Nile reality since the 1850s, in ways and to a degree that have separated it from both southern Uganda and even other parts of the north. West Nile's reality, moreover, has been 'intricately bound up with the discourse of marginality and violence attached to the area by [those] outsiders whose power to influence the world … was much greater that that of local people'. For Leopold, therefore, understanding West Nile is inseparable from understanding the 'interrelationships between discourse and reality, and between past and present' (p. 13).

Sporadic, mostly low-intensity conflicts in the region kept Leopold in Arua, West Nile's largest town, for nearly all fifteen months of his field experience (during 1996–8). This forced him to abandon both traditional ethnographic research and his original plan to investigate post-conflict social reconstruction. Instead, based on fieldwork in Arua town and archival research, Leopold has produced a work of 'historical anthropology', imbued with a serious commitment to reconstructing and interpreting the West Nile past as well as its present. For reasons that to this reviewer are neither persuasive nor clear, however (see pp. 7–9, 163), he has organized his narrative in reverse chronological order.

Leopold begins by placing his theoretical and thematic arguments, and research experience, within the context of the difficult conditions then confronting the people of West Nile, a region 'in flux, caught up in international political and economic forces beyond its control, deeply alienated from the rest of Uganda and mired in poverty and insecurity, but struggling to assert itself and improve its situation' (p. 16). He next describes Arua town (founded 1914), a cosmopolitan center for administration and trade linked in myriad ways both to the surrounding countryside and far beyond, and consisting of four overlapping 'worlds' or 'spheres': nearby peasant farmers who enter into town life; the market (formal and informal, legal and illegal); representatives of the state; and the international and local assistance regime, whose pervasive presence impacts every aspect of the local economy and society.

Leopold's treatment of the postcolonial period focuses on the person and image of Idi Amin, and the long shadow that these cast on the region of his birth. Apart from Arua's small airport, Amin's regime brought virtually no development to West Nile (although there was large-scale army recruitment). But his overthrow prompted widespread retaliation against West Nile's population, collectively blamed for their 'son's' brutality and maladministration (a sentiment lingering

still). Rebel resistance and massive displacement ensued, followed by an eventual refugee return to a region whose underdeveloped infrastructure had been largely destroyed.

Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the colonial period and its perception by both locals and Europeans. Establishing effective colonial rule over the mainly decentralized, segmentary societies of West Nile took considerable time and sometimes-violent coercion, including suppression of an early 'rebellion' that contributed to West Nile's violent image and marginality. Subsequently, West Nile was governed as a 'closed area' for most of the colonial period – with descendants of Sudanese slave traders and administrators playing major roles as soldiers and administrators. Infrastructural investments were minimal, cash-crop production was discouraged and the area served mainly as a labor reserve for the south and a source of manpower for the colonial security apparatus.

The sixty-plus years preceding West Nile's incorporation into Uganda witnessed a series of overlapping, highly disruptive interventions by powerful outsiders – Sudanese slave traders, administrators and soldiers; European ivory traders and hunters; Belgian colonial rule; and finally Sudan Condominium authority. Displacing responsibility for the violence and marginality caused by their activities to local peoples, these outsiders set the stage for a reality and image of West Nile that has persisted ever since.

In his last substantive chapter, Leopold argues effectively that the violence of West Nile's last 150 years cannot be traced back to pre-contact culture, society or history, although this discussion dwells more on the difficulties of recovering and reconstructing this past than in actually doing so. The book ends by recounting how a group of contemporary West Nile intellectuals and elders have produced and utilized a version of West Nile history to challenge the region's image and marginality and promote peace, reconciliation and new relationships with the state.

This is a thoughtful, insightful, clearly and engagingly written, and deeply analytical and compelling book. It deserves to be widely read.

University of South Carolina RONALD R. ATKINSON

POLITICS AND ECONOMICS OF THE DECOLONIZATION ERA IN NIGERIA

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Economic Reforms and Modernization in Nigeria, 1945–1965. By TOYIN FALOLA. Kent OH: Kent State University Press, 2004. Pp. xiv + 272. $49 (ISBN 0-87338-801-1).

KEY WORDS: Nigeria, colonial, decolonization, postcolonial, economic.

This book provides a generalist road map to Nigeria's current economic and political turbulence. Essentially, the author, in very simple language, describes the various dynamics that impacted on both the strategy of the colonial administration and the attitudes of the various Nigerian nationalist leaders especially with respect to their pursuit of African economic development and modernisation. The book also describes, in some detail, the various economic and development programmes pursued by the various governments in both pre- and post-independence Nigeria (1945 to 1965) and their eventual impact on both the national economy and individual incomes and living standards. In terms of material, the content of this book

is by no means new. As the author honestly admits, the main strand of the book, which essentially focuses on the country's so-called march towards 'modernization' (using the author's language), in the dying days of colonialism, has already been the subject of a pioneering discourse by the same author.[1] Despite this, the author tries successfully, in the current book, to use the existing knowledge in a new way. In my view, the outstanding difference between this book and the author's earlier one covering roughly the same time period is his adventure into the political discourse of the period in order properly to situate the economic developments of the time.

A few assertions contained in the general discourse on political history (Chapter 2) may, however, not withstand strict scrutiny. An example is the claim that 'Awolowo knew politics required money. Unlike many of his peers and successors, he built his extensive financial empire through his business and investments rather than stealing from the public treasury' (p. 45; similarly, pp. 54–5). Unfortunately, the author provides little evidence for his view. An independent objective documentation of the real source of the Awolowo financial empire has, as far as I am aware, never been undertaken. If anything, it has at least been admitted that there is a possibility that Awolowo joined politics partly to advance his personal economic interest.[2]

Such shortcomings are generally common with interdisciplinary research, which, however, frequently provides new insights into complex problems and situations. It is in this context that I believe that the book is original. Despite its few shortcomings, the incursion of the author into the political terrain has no doubt enhanced our understanding of the economic developments in Nigeria during the period. Another strong point of the book is the fact that it is impressively rich in statistics. The 44 tables contained in the book cover virtually all aspects of Nigeria's economic development until after independence. I personally found these very useful and believe that other students of Nigeria's economic history will agree with me.

The postscript on post-1965 is also very interesting, essentially describing the impact of oil on Nigerian development. This is, in my opinion, a good addition given the fact that no discourse on Nigerian development can be complete without oil. Although the author describes how growing oil revenue led to struggle by various interest groups for its control to the detriment of other productive sectors, especially agriculture, he has little discussion of the impact of oil revenue on the revenue-sharing positions of the regions in the Nigerian federation. This is important especially given the fact that the author carefully analysed the underlying basis of the various strategies, with respect to regional cooperation, adopted by the leaders of the three regions in their bid for political power. Such an analysis would also have helped readers 'transcend the narrowness imposed by a strict economic analysis' (p. xii).

In conclusion, this is a welcome addition to the growing exposition of Nigeria's pre- and post-independence economic and political history.

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[1] T. Falola, *Development Planning and Decolonization in Nigeria* (Gainesville, 1996).

[2] See, e.g., O. Akinyeye, 'A decade of consolidation: the journalist, businessman, politician and lawyer, 1934–1960', in O. Oyelaran, T. Falola, M. Okoye and A. Thompson (eds.), *Obafemi Awolowo: The End of an Era* (Ile Ife, 1988), 85.

ETHNO-ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON A POSTCOLONIAL CASE

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An Ethnoarchaeological Analysis of Human Functional Dynamics in the Volta Basin of Ghana: Before and After the Akosombo Dam. By E. KOFI AGORSAH. Lewiston NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003. Pp. xxvi+407. $139.95 (ISBN 0-7734-6677-0).

KEY WORDS: Ghana, archaeology, postcolonial.

In the 1960s the massive Akosombo Dam, built on the lower Volta River in Ghana, created the world's largest human-made lake. In anticipation of the flooding, communities were relocated and an enormous amount of research was undertaken to assess the potential and then the actual impact. Kofi Agorsah's stated purpose is to use ethnology, archaeology and oral and written histories to look at how people who were relocated during the flood managed to adapt to their new cultural and natural environments and to provide suggestions as to how future relocation programs in other contexts could be managed more sensitively. Agorsah emphasizes the importance of social relations in community development and argues that government and corporate expediency tends to ignore this factor when developing new communities. Houses, roads and facilities are often placed such that the structural and symbolic integrity of the community are compromised.

Much of the book is devoted to a comparison of Old and New Wiae, the former an ancient settlement of the Nchumuru people and the latter the place to which they relocated after their town was abandoned. The Nchumuru are organized socially around a system of related families who tend to live in the same sections of the villages and express their solidarity through open-ended compounds that enable free observation and movement of related members. Higher and lower degrees of connectedness are indicated by the placement of communal facilities and shrines. By comparing the ruins of Old Wiae to the modern village of New Wiae, Agorsah demonstrates that despite some structural impositions, people adjusted and ultimately maintained critical elements of the community though often in the new forms.

Agorsah provides many insights along the way that are useful to the archaeologist, ethnographer and planner. His excellent work on the life and death of mud-walled structures is invaluable, and his keen eye for the subtleties in compound construction and the placement of material goods are essential reading for anyone who has had the impression that all Africa's ubiquitous mud and thatch compounds are basically the same. Most importantly, Agorsah succeeds in giving a concrete example of the ways in which social values are manifest in the material world. As Merrick Posnansky points out in his foreword to the book, this work is very much enhanced by the fact that Agorsah has spent more than twenty years on this project and is Ghanaian, giving him an enormous empathy and insight into human relationships in the villages. His descriptions of social life, material culture and the relationship between the living, the ancestors and the land (chapters 2–6) are masterfully done, carrying a weight of understanding that is rarely achieved in ethnoarchaeological writing.

Despite this book's positive attributes, its many shortcomings make it difficult to recommend. Of its some 400 references only twenty (six of these by the author) have been written since 1987. Agorsah's approach with its emphasis on social factors, identity, the dynamic relationship between the past and the present and a concern for the lives of the people being studied, is very much in step with contemporary anthropological perspectives, yet his lack of attention to what other people are writing about these topics often makes him appear uninformed. Agorsah

struggles to write about ethnicity, identity and landscapes and he harangues us about the way ethnoarchaeology should be practiced seemingly unaware that the voluminous literature produced on these topics in the past twenty years could have contextualized this study and enabled it to be a significant contribution.

Detracting even further from the book is its absolutely appalling production, which is evident even on the book's cover where the title is made illegible by a busy background. Although Agorsah acknowledges people at the Edwin Mellen Press for their editorial assistance, his thanks are very much misplaced. Apart from Chapters 2–6, which appear to have been edited, the book is extremely disorganized and badly written with spelling and grammatical errors, factual inaccuracies and inconsistencies on virtually every page. In Chapters 7–10, theory, method and data are discussed seemingly at random with topics reappearing in different chapters, often using the same phrases and sentences. The central argument is often complicated by superfluous information such that the purpose and direction of the study periodically become unclear. The index is no help in tracing the disconnected thoughts because it is almost completely wrong. Streamlining the text would make it more coherent and would probably enable the author to recognize the true potential of this work rather than ending with the bland observation that social phenomena leave material traces.

This book is a missed opportunity because poor scholarship and incompetent editing have undermined an illuminating piece of research. While the author bears the responsibility for remaining current and coherent, shame on the Edwin Mellen Press for allowing this book to see publication in its present form.

University of South Carolina JOANNA CASEY

WOMEN AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN RECENT AFRICAN HISTORY

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Femmes d'Afrique dans une société en mutation. Edited by PHILIPPE DENIS and CAROLINE SAPPIA. Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium: Bruylant-Academia, 2004. Pp. 212. €20, paperback (ISBN 2-87209-744-9).

KEY WORDS: Colonial, postcolonial, women, anthropology.

The ten articles incorporated in this collection were drawn from a symposium on women and social change in contemporary Africa held at the Catholic University of Louvain in March 2003. Focused mainly on education, religion and women's status, the studies draw on research set in the Democratic Republic of Congo (three), South Africa (two), Cameroun, Guinée and Kenya. An additional two papers, the first and last, address the question of feminism in contemporary Africa. Two are presented in English and the remainder in French; useful summaries in the other language are included at the volume's end. Nevertheless, there is a Francophone predominance, with nine of the eleven contributors (one article is co-authored) attached to Francophone institutions, mainly in Belgium.

The most outstanding paper is the concluding one by Danielle de Lame, which sets out a feminist framework and then elegantly places each of the other articles within it, occasionally pushing a point made by a fellow contributor to an insightful new level. For example, Gertrude Tshilombo Bombo opens the book with the question, 'Existe-t-il un féminisme africain?' and then surveys terms coined by

African women to avoid the use of the word feminism. De Lame's response effectively sidesteps the criticism that feminism is a western import in Africa. Since it is generally now agreed that gender is culturally constructed, the meaning of both being a woman and of feminism of necessity must be related to cultural context. Thus feminism by definition is a generic term, and feminisms must always be plural and related to local circumstances. Furthermore, she observes, in Africa feminisms must find a sense of their pertinence in situations where legal guarantees of women's rights are already in place.

Among the better contributions are two articles set in the colonial period. Odile Georg writes against the common assumption that colonial migrants to urban areas were typically male, with women arriving later and supporting themselves through marginal or illegal economic activities in the informal sector. She looks at Sierra Leonean Christian Krios in Conakry between the 1880s and the 1930s. Actively recruited by the French colonial authorities as 'civilized blacks', these Anglophone migrants adhered to Victorian ideals of the family. The women among them found work as marketers and laundry women, domestics, seamstresses, teachers and artisans. Some even opened boarding houses and restaurants. Catherine Jacques and Valérie Piette offer an intriguing account of the complex impact of Belgian and international feminist movements on the Belgian Congo. They follow feminist efforts to have women named to colonial posts in Congo, at the same time that women's groups in Congo promoted training for Congolese women only in western standards of hygiene and work habits. The contradictions of different standards for women – Belgian citizen or Congolese subject – became intolerable after the Second World War. Ironically, for example, regulations requiring women to resign from the colonial service upon marriage proved impossible to change for Belgian women until someone realized that Congolese women trained as teachers and nurses would also be lost to development efforts in a situation of severe personnel shortages. The dilemma provided a brief moment of solidarity between white and black women.

Philippe Denis's thoughtful meditation on interviews with three leaders of Christian women's associations in KwaZulu-Natal raises issues both about women's analysis of their own oppression and methodologies of field research among women. Finding that women were fully aware of their relationship to male power, yet unwilling to act to challenge men, Denis's South African interviewers observed that all three interviewees sited the problem of male dominance in Zulu culture. De Lame later observes in her article that, whether consciously or not, perhaps Denis's women joined church associations as a route to modernization and liberation.

Finally, Stella Nyanchama Okemwa provides a well-researched study of the importance of motherhood in Gusii culture through an analysis of the meanings of anklets worn by wives. Unfortunately, she begins with a critique of social anthropology, and specifically of Lévi-Straussian thought, that requires her to ignore enormous bodies of literature in order to argue anthropology's inability to see women outside male stereotypes. Again, De Lame provides an eloquent response that situates her discipline historically and suggests that anthropology has developed new currents worthy of note, particularly in Anglophone circles.

The editors introduce the collection by noting that though it is far from a comprehensive look at the history of women in Africa, 'plus modestement, il espère ajouter une pierre à une édifice en construction' (p. 15). They are too modest. This book is well worth a read.

Emory University EDNA G. BAY

POSTCOLONIAL HISTORY AND THE *LONGUE DURÉE*

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Africa since Independence: A Comparative History. By PAUL NUGENT. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. Pp. 620. Price not given (ISBN 0-333-68272-6); £17.99, paperback (ISBN 0-333-68273-4).

KEY WORDS: Postcolonial, politics, development, social, teaching texts.

With this book Paul Nugent seeks to promote a better understanding of a continent that 'has been subjected to the greatest distortion and wilful misunderstandings with respect to its past' (p. 1). His approach is to expose the different perspectives that have been advanced for explaining the experiences of Africa in the past fifty years as well as the 'facts' to enable the reader to decide which position best explains African realities.

Nugent distances himself from post-modernist history writing that has been taboo in much of Africa except South Africa. He discerns an order to Africa's chequered history; such an 'order' is apparent particularly from the perspective of the *longue durée*. To understand Africa's post-independence record, colonial and precolonial antecedents need to be taken into consideration because there was no clean break between the different epochs. Political ideologies and practices have survived through the centuries. Thus, Nugent wholeheartedly supports François Bayart's view that Africa's post-independence international relations 'needs to be viewed in terms of a much longer history of ''extraversion'' dating back some hundreds of years' (p. 3).

The *longue durée* perspective is evident in Nugent's reading of the various subjects tackled in the book. Thus, whether concerned with the changing face of traditional chiefs, military intervention in politics, democratization, ideologies of development, civil wars or the national question in postcolonial Africa, the author masterfully weaves in salient colonial and precolonial factors. He shies away from historical determinism and indeed shows that both the colonial inheritance and the choices African leaders have had to make in a not too favourable global political economy have profoundly impacted on development on the continent.

Another good point about the book is Nugent's ability to discern general trends while revealing the variety of historical experiences in each country. He argues that the tendency to regard Africa as a place, an undifferentiated whole, is partly responsible for the litany of failed developmental plans and projects. This comes out clearly in Nugent's discussion of the experiences of the countries that were cajoled into or resorted to adopting structural adjustment programmes. The story is not one of failures alone but of partial successes also. This book thus puts some shine on the gloomy countenance of Africanist historiography. One paragraph, which graphically illustrates Nugent's advice to all who seek to understand and assist Africa is to be found in the section on the lethal HIV/AIDS: 'The lesson is that, unlike the condoms, one size does not fit all and the success of national campaigns is likely to depend on the varied historical and cultural legacies which prevail in different countries' (p. 366).

It is the success in narrating these complex varied historical and cultural inheritances, as well as the subtle forms of foreign intervention that have influenced events in Africa since independence, that makes this book a valued resource for students and the general reader. Although Nugent expected readers to consult different sections of the book, few will resist the urge to read it from cover to cover. This is because of the flowing prose laced with irresistible titles and sub-titles that have become the trademark of the author.

Hopefully the author would in the second edition of the book fish out all the irritable typographical errors that often convey a painfully different meaning from what he must have intended. A case in point is the statement: 'Finally, set against whatever social gains were recorded is the salutary [*sic*] fact that per capita income in Ghana in 1994 was significantly lower than it had been in 1980' (pp. 341–2). Also, inconsistently with the others, Chapters 2, 3 and 10 lack a conclusion.

Although Nugent's intention was not to persuade, the basis of some of his assertions is unexplained. It is not clear why he describes the wars of independence in the former Portuguese colonies as the 'second liberation', often used interchangeably with 'second independence', generally referring to the democratization movements of the 1980s and 1990s. Elsewhere, Nugent argues that 'contrary to the brain drain thesis, there has actually been a reskilling process which had been immensely beneficial to African countries where a modicum of stability has prevailed' (pp. 488–9). He leaves this assertion hanging without any reference; whereas the more familiar scene is one of highly skilled personnel leaving in droves with no immediate plans of returning. Finally, Nugent seems to fall into the trap of overemphasizing the role of patronage politics in different African countries. This is evident in his assertion that alongside changing international contexts, democratization benefited from the fact that depleting the resource base necessary for oiling the wheels of patronage politics weakened despotic regimes. This position underestimates the determination of pro-democracy forces in some countries. It does not explain cases, such as Nigeria, where democratization proceeded despite the undiminished fiscal capacity of regimes to buy over critical political elites.

All told, the author should be commended for fulfilling the promise of the title. The book says something about the experiences of every country in sub-Saharan Africa. Big Sudan is not given more attention than small Swaziland. This will certainly be a relief to all readers who have been disappointed by books that advertise Africa but only offer stories about Liberia and Sierra Leone.

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SHORTER NOTICES

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The History of Egypt. By GLENN E. PERRY. Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2004. Pp. xxiii + 184. £25.99 (ISBN 0-313-32264-3).
KEY WORDS: Egypt, teaching texts.

This book is one of a series of Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations intended as introductory texts for 'students and interested laypeople'. The opening chapter on contemporary Egypt surveys the country's geography, economy, government and so on. Subsequent chapters treat historical periods in chronological order with an emphasis on the twentieth century, which accounts for over half the total text. The chapters are preceded and followed by an historical timeline and a short biographical section, glossary, bibliographic essay and index.

Overall this is a disappointing book. Perry's narrative takes no account of challenges raised to Egypt's traditional, nationalist historiography in the past 25 years, nor indeed of the seminal works of Anthony Smith, Benedict Anderson and others on modern nationalism and its relationship to the construction of

national histories. Hence, for example, readers are repeatedly reminded that Egyptians were subject to foreign rule from the late pre-Christian era until the 1950s (e.g., p. 145). They would be better served by being told that this nationalist perspective is an artifact of the twentieth century, that it illustrates the emergence of an ethno-nationalist trend and that it was emphasized by the Nasser regime to build up its legitimacy. An opportunity to show history and identity as process was missed.

Perry's history of Egypt is almost exclusively political history. There is little consistent discussion of economic and demographic trends, and virtually no attention is paid to culture (the existence of a film industry is mentioned once). Probably more has been written about Egyptian women and the Egyptian women's rights movement than for any other Arab country, but readers of this book will find few references to either (and no index reference to 'women'). That is consistent with an overall lack of attention to social and cultural history.

Perry has every right to express his dislike for President Sadat's and Mubarak's policies of alliance with the United States and acceptance of Israel. As a thesis, however, the idea that hardly anything at all has gone right in post-Nasser Egypt obscures the significance of important developments that deserve discussion in their own right, such as migrant labor or Muslim–Christian relations, and not merely as 'evidence' of how 'bad' things are.

University of Illinois, Champaign KENNETH M. CUNO

doi:10.1017/S0021853706441724

Poverty, Health and Reproduction in Early Colonial Uganda. By JAN KUHANEN. Joensuu, Finland: University of Joensuu Publications, 2005. Pp. 433. No price given (ISBN 952-458-630-4).

KEY WORDS: Uganda, colonial, health, poverty, reproduction.

Jan Kuhanen's thesis rebuts conventional images of Uganda as blessed by reliable rain, good soil, plentiful land, sustainable food crops and thus an enviable economic basis on which people built rich and powerful kingdoms and survived well despite colonial and postcolonial political disaster. Instead, he describes Uganda – including Buganda, Bunyoro, Busoga and to some degree Toro and Ankole – as a land buffeted in the late nineteenth century by devastating wars, followed by waves of famine and disease that extended through the period of early colonial rule to the point that even colonial officials and wealthy chiefs noted the problems and began to deploy both administrative and scientific resources to attempt to understand and manage what they saw as demographic catastrophe.

This study starts slowly, with elaborate contextualizing frameworks rooted in secondary sources that discuss the literature on 'poverty, hunger and health', followed by a general history of 'Uganda' (mostly Buganda). The contextualization is potentially useful, but largely expansive and descriptive, bringing together materials on such hotly debated concerns as taxation, cotton, land policy, labor and migration without much discussion of what the debates and tradeoffs were, either within the colonial administration, or among historians. For depictions of early colonial policy on land, labor and taxation, either Holly Hanson's *Landed Obligation* (2003) or Michael Twaddle's *Kakungulu and the Creation of Uganda, 1868–1928* (1993) would be more illuminating. In an effort to incorporate the big picture, though, Kuhanen's overview sections point Uganda researchers in interesting directions, toward a discussion of the Nyangire uprising in Bunyoro

(p. 198), for example, or toward a perception of Buganda – especially the Masaka heartland – as famine prone (p. 224).

In the last several chapters on disease, demography, poverty and colonial policy, the study follows a trajectory familiar to historians of medicine in Uganda, portraying panics over trypanosomiasis, sexually transmitted disease and other maladies from plague to kwashiorkor. Pulling together discussions of various diseases, though, and delineating them within a context of impoverishment and mission and administrative fiscal constraints, Kuhanen is able to suggest that the Protectorate administration used medicine as a way of avoiding social responses to epidemiological and economic crises. Social responses would have redistributed resources away from its allies – chiefs and new elites – and into the hands of a broader public hurt by changes that meant 'a chief's power was no longer directly dependent on the survival or prosperity of his tenants'(p. 356). Instead, he notes, even investigations into nutrition became occasions for epidemiology and clinical intervention rather than a chance to address the intersecting results of loss of cattle, high taxation and labor burdens, food shortages exacerbated by cotton cultivation and debilitating chronic diseases from hookworm and malaria to tropical ulcers that were exacerbated by undernutrition. This portrait of the state of Uganda by the 1920s differs sharply from later images enshrined in work by investigators from the East African Institute of Social Research who saw Uganda as a wealthy protectorate with prosperous cotton cultivators and plentiful social mobility even for immigrant Banyarwanda. More attention to primary sources and specific discussions of clashing interpretations would be helpful.

This is not a work of explicit argument over science or politics, or one that innovates with new primary materials. But in collecting descriptions and constructing narrative, Kuhanen's work offers a starting point for future researchers in hints of under-researched events and elaborate and useful bibliographic references to the secondary literature.

University of Richmond CAROL SUMMERS

doi:10.1017/S0021853706451720

Revolution in Zanzibar: An American's Cold War Tale. By DON PETTERSON. Boulder: Westview Press, 2002. Pp. xvii+286. $16, paperback (ISBN 0-8133-4268-6).

KEY WORDS: Tanzania, postcolonial, politics, international relations, revolutions.

The volume is a personal narrative of the initial two years of the Zanzibar Revolution written by a seasoned American diplomat almost four decades after the event of 12 January 1964. Petterson was then serving as No. 2 at the American consulate in Zanzibar when he and thousands of others on the island were caught up in a complex eruption of physical and political violence. The narrative is based on his personal reflections, letters, documents, oral accounts, despatches and, of course, hindsight (but he makes no mention of having kept a diary). Although the book was written to correct and clarify earlier accounts of the American position in Zanzibar (particularly in Anthony Clayton's *The Zanzibar Revolution and its Aftermath*), Petterson provides excellent insights into the day-to-day events of the Revolution, the personalities of the main actors and the power struggle that ensued among them, and, above all, the American perception of the unfolding events, both 'on the ground' in Zanzibar and abroad, particularly in Washington and London.

The reaction of Western powers to what might today be termed regime change on the island was one of shock. That it was sudden, unexpected and barely a month after Prince Philip and other Western dignitaries had participated in the independence ceremonies deepened incomprehension, especially as accounts of the early days were confused and patchy. Zanzibar was perceived by Britain and the USA to be sliding slowly into the Communist camp. Petterson traces the genesis of this perception which, at times, was based on no firmer ground than the casual sight of a soldier wearing combat clothes and speaking Spanish (thus evoking a Cuban connection). But Cold War attitudes of the time made mountains out of molehills: the West then delayed its recognition of the Karume government, thereby allowing Communist countries, most notably East Germany, to grasp the opportunity of gaining a foothold on the island. The delay is attributed to Duncan Sandys, Britain's Commonwealth and Colonial Secretary, who dallied for weeks on the issue of recognition and instead – for inexplicable reasons – asked Kenyatta to intervene and pull Karume back from Communist clutches. Kenyatta would not oblige, and as the USA waited for Sandys to take the lead (East Africa being Britain's area of influence) relations soured between the American consulate and the Zanzibar government. Petterson describes in meticulous detail his dealings with Karume and others on the strained relations generated by this issue which finally led to the expulsion of his superior, Frank Carlucci, an equally able diplomat who later in his career became the US Secretary of Defence.

Petterson's book provides many insights into incidents which have since fed into the construction of Zanzibari history. The most momentous was undoubtedly the creation of Tanzania itself, born of a Union enacted on 26 April 1964, whose primary aim then was apparently to strengthen Karume's position against those leaning towards Communism, mainly Babu and his followers. The Union has survived both men, and indeed also Julius Nyerere, its main architect, generating its own events and issues in the process. Perhaps these too might be brought to life decades later by other tales.

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Telling Our Own Story : Local Histories from South Mara, Tanzania. Edited by JAN BENDER SHETLER. Leiden: Brill, 2003. Pp. xiii + 331. €26 (ISBN 90-04-12625-2).
KEY WORDS: Tanzania, oral narratives/sources.

This is the fourth volume of the African Sources for African History series, published in the Netherlands. This series is a momentous undertaking, which deserves full recognition and praise, including the volume at hand. The book consists of a collection of 'ethnic group' histories, written or told by local amateur historians and enthusiasts from the Mara region of northeastern Tanzania. These histories were collected by Jan Bender Shetler during the fieldwork for her doctoral dissertation; some were given to her by the authors, while others emerged from interviews, which she conducted herself in 1995 and 1996.

The book is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 (108 pages) comprises an account of the 'The history of the Ikuzu and Sizaki'. These texts were written by P. M. Mturi and S. Sasora in 1995. The following chapter consists of four, much shorter, 'Histories of the Ishenyi, Ikoma and Tatoga peoples'. These were

'produced' between 1984 and 1996: one actually representing a rough translation of a videotaped conversation. Chapter 3 introduces the reader to 'Three histories of the Ngoreme'. These were written at various mostly unknown times (one text is dated 1987) and were given to the author in 1995. The final chapter (pp. 245–85) is entitled 'Oral and shorter written texts of key traditions: Ikuzu, Nata, Ikoma, Ishenyi, Ngoreme and Tatoga'. It contains about thirty odd texts from a variety of sources, including 'notes' by a British district administrator (dated 1947), excerpts from a University of Dar es Salaam MA thesis (dated 1975) and interviews conducted by Shetler in 1995 and 1996.

The texts in Chapters 1–3 are reproduced both in Kiswahili and English, while the last chapter only includes an English version of the text in question.

The themes touched upon in these 'histories' are familiar to those who have collected local histories. They are tales of migrations and myths of origin, interspersed with stories of conflicts with neighbours and accounts of cherished customs. More often than not a precise dating is impossible, as Shetler points out in the introduction to the volume.

The book is of particular interest to historians of Tanzania and of the Lakes Region, and for that readership it certainly serves a good purpose. But does the scope of the volume go beyond these limits? This is debatable, since the book cannot be called a *critical* edition without more information about the production of these texts. For instance one would like to know who actually authored them, for what purpose they were written, whether they were edited and when and how they became part of the public domain. Some details regarding these issues are buried in the endnotes, but they are frequently incomplete. Thus, the academic historian gains too little information to form an opinion as to whether these texts can be read as historical sources. It would be useful to know how far the Christian education of the informants, or Christian ideas generally, provided a model for some of the narratives or texts. Finally, the introduction to the volume fails to engage with the literature on local histories. In 2002, for instance, Brill brought out an edited volume by A. Harneit-Sievers entitled *A Place in the World: New Local Historiographies from Africa and South Asia*. The introduction to that book provides an exceedingly useful survey of the literature, and one can only wish that Shetler had addressed this debate.

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Guerilla Government: Political Changes in the Southern Sudan during the 1990s. By OYSTEIN ROLANDSEN. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2005. Pp. 201. €20;£15.95, paperback (ISBN 91-7106-537-7).

KEY WORDS: Sudan, postcolonial, civil wars, governance.

The difficulties which Oystein Rolandsen faced in researching this useful and concise book are themselves symptomatic of a basic problem of government in southern Sudan (and elsewhere in Africa). There is a chronic lack of documentary evidence of important decisions and discussions; even more strikingly, there is a remarkable uncertainty, including among the actors themselves, about the structures and institutions of government. Rolandsen records that at one point discussions on governance in southern Sudan were held up by uncertainty over the number of 'Independent Area Commands' operating under the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). The answer could be found only by

consulting the Chairman of the SPLM/A, John Garang. One wonders if Garang himself really knew.

Partly as a result of this lack of evidence, this book is not really a study of the practice of guerrilla government. As Rolandsen candidly admits, it is actually very difficult to know how administration has worked at a local level in the parts of the south which have been under SPLM/A control. What he offers instead is a thoughtful and critical reevaluation of the 1994 National Convention at Chukudum, an event which some have seen as a key moment in the SPLM/A's journey from a rough, sometimes violently extractive, military control towards a new representative and inclusive governance. Rolandsen argues that the Convention itself was the result of the straitened circumstances of the SPLM/A at the time – following a major internal split, and the loss of the Ethiopian support which had given John Garang himself a crucial power of patronage which ensured his position. The National Convention was a bid for a wider legitimacy amongst the southern Sudanese population, and – perhaps more importantly – a new credibility with the humanitarian agencies whose resources had become so important.

Rolandsen suggests that the Convention was not quite as transformative as some have argued. The agenda, and the debates themselves, were heavily influenced (if not entirely controlled) by Garang's supporters, and there was limited progress on the resolutions for institutional reform which were adopted. But Rolandsen is not entirely dismissive of the Convention. Even if its major effect was to change the rhetoric of the SPLM/A, he suggests that the new rhetoric actually did make some difference, and that the public commitment to reducing military dominance, and to popular participation, have offered space for local and civilian involvement and set some curb on the powers of the 'commanders'. For those involved in discussions over the local structures of new Government of Southern Sudan, this book will be of great importance. It will also be of interest for all those with a wider interest in the complex politics of engagement between military movements and that amorphous and mysterious entity the 'international community'.

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