

Bien loin de n'être qu'une histoire 'locale' qui s'opposerait à une histoire du royaume chrétien, elle est tout autre chose. Au contraire, elle montre 'que le monde est au village' et qu'à partir de cet espace situé, la lecture de la situation historique est certainement plus complexe que ce que les textes produits dans l'entourage du pouvoir royal ont eu tendance à présenter. L'étude de Wion est et restera un jalon et une démonstration puissante de la manière dont on peut réécrire l'histoire de ce XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle du royaume chrétien éthiopien.

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## ANTECEDENTS OF THE GOLD RUSH

*Tracing Golden Past: Historical Narratives about Shaybun and Shawabna in the Nuba Mountains, Sudan.*

By Enrico Ille.

Leipzig: Verlag Ille&Riemer, 2011. Pp. ix+265. €24.95,

paperback (ISBN 978-3-936308-73-0).

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**Key Words:** Sudan, South Sudan, identity, mining, oral narratives.

Enrico Ille has written a book of interest to readers with a fascination for Nuba history as well as those with a more contemporary concern for a region that suffered a civil war and today finds itself caught between Sudan and South Sudan. The book discusses the Shaybun mountain region, famous for its gold during the nineteenth century. Today's gold rush in Sudan is foreshadowed in this earlier era. The history of the famous gold mine in Shaybun was documented by German engineers and by Arab and European traders who extracted as much of the profitable product as they could.

The complexity of the contemporary moment emerges in the author's discussions of the Shawabna who populate the region, who were always considered to be neither Nuba nor Arab. For European travelers in the nineteenth century they were anonymous miners and traders in gold and slaves. For the British in the twentieth century, they embodied the fearsome decadence resulting from the mixing of Arab and African populations. And for the contemporary Sudanese, they are a reminder that the question, 'Arab or African?', is not applicable to the Shawabna alone, but is of relevance to all Sudanese, the answer to which will decide the future of the two states, many nations, and even more communities.

These two main themes emerge through discussions in which the author takes us into the nineteenth-century travel literature on the area, twentieth-century colonial writings, and texts by long resident missionaries in the area. These sources give us a sense for the various historical views on the region, and a glimpse into the debates about how to classify the different groups. These debates have continued to inform contemporary discussion among international, national, and local scholars, as well as political debates and organizing activities among local populations. Finally, the author offers ethnographic discussions on how the Shawabna people themselves have debated such issues among themselves.

The book is a useful addition to the existing literature on the Nuba Mountains. Scholars will particularly value references to Arabic-language contributions by local scholars. Readers looking for more general perspectives will find useful discussions of the different forms of narrative among the Shawabna of Shaybun.

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## THE POLITICS OF INGESTION

*Resurrecting Cannibals: The Catholic Church, Witch-Hunts, and the Production of Pagans in Western Uganda.*

By Heike Behrend.

New York: James Currey, 2011. Pp. vii+215. \$80, hardback (ISBN 978-1847010391).

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**Key Words:** Uganda, Christianity, political culture, religion, witchcraft.

This fascinating book situates the moral panics of recent witch-hunts aimed at so-called cannibals in western Uganda in the context of a *longue durée* in which royalty, missionaries, and local Christians have contested the moralities of consuming the human body. Behrend's text centers on the efforts of the Uganda Martyrs Guild (UMG), a lay Catholic movement, to identify and expel satanic spirits possessing cannibals, who are said to pervert normative practices of feeding and growth by bewitching relatives and neighbors only to resurrect and kill them once more in order to feast on their flesh. Recent crises involving AIDS, the kidnapping of children by rebel armies, and unaccountable police and courts have contributed to a popular sense that the world is out of control, and that familiar appearances disguise a reality of local and global cannibal networks. Under these circumstances, the UMG has launched 'crusades' against so-called pagans who own occult objects that make them open to possession by cannibalistic spirits. Yet for all the ostracism and accusation that the UMG fosters, its crusades also limit mob violence by organizing mass exorcisms of evil spirits from supposed cannibals. Thus the key problem raised in this book involves how violence is both provoked and contained within a political imaginary based on ingestion.

While the principal ethnographic material and the accompanying DVD (made in collaboration with Armin Linke) center on the crusades of the Uganda Martyrs Guild, the organization of the text reflects what Behrend terms the 'dreadful symmetry' whereby colonizers and the colonized have attributed cannibalism to one another. Thus, the opening chapters focus on the ambiguous boundaries between exploitation and nurturance within conceptions of royalty in the precolonial kingdom of Tooro. Behrend takes a comparative perspective on the socially constitutive nature of exchanges of food and bodily substance in western Uganda, engaging particularly with the literature on the Eucharist. In Tooro, the health of the king's body was seen as crucial to the fertility of the land, and a king's successor would imbibe fluids from the dead body of his predecessor in order to