

decentralized, nonhierarchical nature of their communities. By itself, the example of the Balanta cannot tell the full tale of the Atlantic slave trade, but Hawthorne shows convincingly that neither can the story be told without them.

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Allen F. Isaacman and Barbara S. Isaacman. *Slavery and Beyond: The Making of Men and Chikunda Ethnic Identities in the Unstable World of South-Central Africa, 1750–1920*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 2004. xii + 370 pp. Maps. Figures. Photographs. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. \$99.95 Cloth. \$29.95 Paper.

In *Slavery and Beyond* the authors move beyond their previous collaborative work in Mozambican history to the wider world of south-central Africa and the historical experiences of the Chikunda, a group that emerged from the slave armies of Portuguese *prazos* (estates) first established in the late sixteenth century. The Chikunda come from more than a dozen ethnic groups, and the meaning of their name—conquerors, or vanquishers—expresses the fear that these military slaves instilled in the local populations of the *prazos*. And yet the Chikunda themselves were extremely vulnerable and struggled to survive in the unstable region of the Zambezi Valley both during and after slavery. By examining the making and unmaking of the Chikunda in this book, the authors reveal “an obscure and impoverished people living in the shadows of history” (1).

Going beyond a focus on the master–slave relationship, the authors look at the lived experiences of slave soldiers and their descendants, thus highlighting the inner realm in which the Chikunda crafted a collective identity while maintaining “an insurgent spirit” (325). They examine the practices, dress, language, rituals, and institutions of the Chikunda in an overlooked setting that includes parts of present-day Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi. Alongside the agency and resiliency of the Chikunda were other ambiguous and contradictory roles, for the Chikunda were “victims and victimizers, slaves and slavers” (323). As the authors strive to clarify the “messy” historical dynamics of the Chikunda, they question the wider meanings of slavery and freedom.

The Portuguese may have created the phenomenon of the Chikunda through enslavement, but the Chikunda made themselves over time by giving social meaning to a sense of “being Chikunda.” The authors contend, however, that it was only after the disintegration of the *prazo* system in the mid-nineteenth century (and de facto emancipation for the Chikunda) that a Chikunda ethnic identity emerged. This took place in the Zumbo hinterland of the interior, far away from the gaze of Europeans. Several factors were integral to the development of an ethnic identity in these Chikun-

da enclaves: a shared language, a sense of a common ancestry and origins in Tete, and the assistance of local chiefs and spirit mediums. With the case of the Chikunda, the authors demonstrate that ethnic boundaries mattered less for identity formation than interior dynamics within Chikunda communities did. They also show how “the history of the Chikunda scrambles the chronology and meaning of colonial rule” by revealing the nuances of a longer encounter with Portuguese colonialism, albeit “in a rather attenuated form” (328). This successful challenge to the notion that African identities were mere colonial “creations” is a welcome addition to a growing body of literature.

The authors detail the male-centered world of the Chikunda in much of the book and describe the culturally exalted activities of men. Labor is central here, since Chikunda identities were linked to men’s work as soldiers, slave raiders, hunters, porters, and canoe men. This dangerous and demanding work required male bonding and specialized knowledge, and the long distances covered in these posts led to participation in the Indian Ocean trade network. Women figure in this analysis of Chikunda identity formation, since Chikunda maleness derived its meaning from a juxtaposition with Chikunda femaleness. Women’s work, for instance, was culturally undervalued and agricultural labor was deemed unsuitable for “real men.” Unfortunately, the ways that the “women of Chikunda” constructed (or rejected) a Chikunda identity are not known. One wishes that this focus on the “making of men” revealed more about the making of Chikunda women as well.

In the end the authors conclude that “being ‘Chikunda’ meant different things to different people at different times” (327). With men in the foreground of *Slavery and Beyond*, the analysis of the gendered ideology used in the “making of men” is a rich explanation of the gendering of ethnicity. Scholars interested in the history of how slaves and their descendants have created and shaped identities will find this book intriguing and necessary reading. The authors have demonstrated the fluid nature of ethnicity and made an important contribution to our understanding of how African identities emerge and fade in complex and fascinating ways.

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Peter Ucko, series ed. *Encounters with Ancient Egypt*. 8 vols. London: UCL Press, 2003. Distributed by Cavendish Publishing, c/o International Specialized Book Services, 5824 NE Hassalo St., Portland, Ore. 97213-3444. \$47.50 each. Paper.

How has ancient Egypt’s rich legacy been perceived by different generations of outsiders, in different places? How has Egypt’s influence evolved in response to changing contexts? Why does Egypt’s past continue to capture