

## REVIEWS

### THE MAGHRIB AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

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*North Africa, Islam and the Mediterranean World: From the Almoravids to the Algerian War*. Edited by JULIA CLANCY-SMITH. London: Frank Cass, 2001. Pp. 202. £42.50; \$59.50 (ISBN 0-7146-5170-2); £17.50; \$24.50, paperback (0-7146-8184-9).

KEY WORDS: Northern Africa, general.

This volume brings together nine essays originally presented at a 1998 conference in Tunis under the joint sponsorship of the Centre d'Études Maghrébines à Tunis and the American Institute for Maghrib Studies. Two overarching themes running through the book give coherence to the disparate studies. One is the concept of the Maghrib as a land at the intersection of cultures – Mediterranean, European, African and Middle Eastern – that serves as an economic conduit and cultural mediator among them. The second is an appreciation of the field of World History and its capacity to imagine fresh perspectives on the Maghrib's past.

James Miller and Ronald Messier reveal how archaeological excavations at Sijilmasa, a Moroccan entrepôt of trans-Saharan commerce from the eighth to the fourteenth centuries, have promoted the recentering of traditional historical narratives and the rethinking of received wisdom. In making Sijilmasa the focal point of his study, Miller demonstrates the city's critical role in spreading Islam into the western Sudan and drawing that region into existing political and economic patterns. Messier, who headed the Sijilmasa project, uses its findings to urge a reassessment of Ibn Khaldun's classic paradigm on the role of *'asabiya* (group solidarity) in the rise and fall of empires. He argues that new archaeological evidence, when integrated with a rereading of the standard texts, reveals that the Almoravids, whose history provided Ibn Khaldun with his framework, collapsed not from a shortage of *'asabiya*, but rather from their inability to free themselves from its influences.

Because the Maghrib is often portrayed as an extension of the Arab East, Mohamed El Mansour's discussion of the interplay between these two regions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and his explication of important ways in which the 'peripheral' Maghrib affected the 'core' Middle East constitute a significant contribution. El Mansour's essay further examines the question of representations of the 'Other' within Islam, underscoring the diverse views that Muslims held of each other. A second essay also investigates issues of 'Self' and 'Other'. Amira Bennison's comparative analysis of the Moroccan and Iberian frontiers from the twelfth through the nineteenth centuries includes striking mirror images that highlight crucial recurrent themes in liminal territories in general, while particularly foregrounding the enduring nature of trans-Mediterranean interconnectedness.

Two chapters by Tunisian historians address the foundations and nature of the state that crystallized in the seventeenth century as Ottoman authority in Tunisia waned. Dalenda Larguèche reflects on the *mahalla*, the periodic military expedition to 'show the flag' in rural regions. By marrying the authority of the *bey* to this local tradition, rooted in an Almohad practice, the Husaynid family created a new pattern of political power that evolved into a mechanism for legitimizing the heir apparent, who commanded the *mahalla*. Just as the Husaynids put a stamp

that was singularly Tunisian on the *mahalla*, the city of Tunis experienced a unique form of ethno-religious pluralism that fostered a golden age in the seventh and eighteenth centuries. Abdelhamid Larguèche postulates as a key explanation for this scenario the constant reinvigoration of urban structures through their uncommonly successful integration of Christian renegades.

The 1907 murder of Dr Emile Mauchamp in Marrakesh precipitated France's invasion of Morocco. After describing this incident, Jonathan Katz scrutinizes the *mission civilisatrice* that had brought Mauchamp to the Maghrib. In depicting this concept as an extension of a bourgeois disdain for 'backward' groups, whether in France or abroad, he places it astride a universal socio-cultural frontier. At the opposite end of the colonial era, James Le Sueur evaluates the impact of the Algerian Revolution on French intellectuals. Faced with a painful case of the North African tail wagging the metropolitan dog, they were compelled by events in Algeria to cope with the collapse of their culture's claim to universalism.

The essay that perhaps best encapsulates the themes of the volume is Edmund Burke's fascinating sketch of 'Ali bin 'Uthman al-Hammi, a southern Tunisian whose career took him to Tunis, Malta, Egypt and France before becoming a tribal administrator of the *bey*. As Burke acknowledges, 'Ali's story raises many more questions than it answers. Nevertheless, he, the other contributors to this volume and its editor are to be commended for putting such questions on the table and posing constructive new approaches to examining them.

*University of South Carolina*

KENNETH J. PERKINS

## FATIMID SYNTHESIS

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*The Rise of the Fatimids: The World of the Mediterranean and the Middle East in the Fourth Century of the Hijra, Tenth Century CE.* By MICHAEL BRETT. Leiden: Brill, 2001. Pp. xi + 497. €139; US \$162 (ISBN 90-04-11741-5).

KEY WORDS: Northern Africa, pre-colonial, Islam, kingdoms and states.

Until not that long ago, the Isma'ili Shi'i dynasty of the Fatimids in North Africa and Egypt (909–1171) constituted a somewhat rare specialization among historians. Fortunately this is no longer so, as a number of scholars have devoted much of their careers to this field. These include Michael Brett, who here sums up much of his work of recent decades. While other works of this kind have appeared recently, this one stands apart for several reasons.

The scholarly consensus is that the origins of the Fatimid dynasty are inseparable from those of the Isma'ili sect. Arising in the third/ninth century, this sect would have issued a *da'wa* (call, summons) for obedience to an Imam of the house of 'Ali who then actually emerged in history to conquer Muslim North Africa and to establish himself, with the title of *al-Mahdi* ('the well guided'), in a *dawla*, a dynasty and state, known as the Fatimids. This view of the matter rests firmly upon medieval Arabic sources, both pro- and anti-Fatimid, which, while disagreeing over the legitimacy of the Mahdi's claim, agree on the unity of the *da'wa* and the *dawla*, extending in time (from the sect's obscure beginnings through the Fatimid caliphate) and in space (including not only the Maghrib and Egypt, but also 'islands' or, in Brett's wording, 'concentric circles' in Yemen, eastern Arabia, Iran, Sind and other countries). Brett takes a different view. In brief, he sees ninth-century Isma'ilism as a brew of diverse oppositional trends and groups, part of the 'sectarian milieu' which John Wansbrough described in the 1970s. When the Fatimid dynasty rose to power, and especially when it conquered

Egypt in 969, it retrospectively cast a view of unity over the Isma'ili past, despite the fact that the Isma'ilis, even then, remained divided among themselves. The pro- and anti-Fatimid camps, each for its own reasons, then embraced this 'conspiracy theory' of Fatimid and Isma'il origins.

This is only a part of Brett's argument, but likely to be what arouses the most controversy. However, the book's richness goes far beyond the question of origins. Lacking for space, I point to the comparative and Mediterranean approach indicated in the subtitle. The Fatimids' Byzantine and Spanish Umayyad rivals loom large, with other contestants never far away, including the 'Abbasid caliphate and its successor states, and the Ottonian monarchy in Europe. Brett succeeds in his plan, announced in the Introduction, of moving beyond the dynastic history which still prevails among historians of Islam. African and Islamic historians will appreciate the masterly summaries, based on Brett's earlier work, of such topics as trans-Saharan trade, Berber politics, the scholarly environment of Maliki Qayrawan, the land regime in the Maghrib and Egypt, conversion to Islam, the Isma'ili legal system created by the Qadi al-Nu'man and other things. The book ends with a comparative view of the Fatimid Imam and his counterparts elsewhere in the Mediterranean world. All this comes in a synthesis combining Weberian insight with the distilled wisdom of Ibn Khaldun. Especially since the death of Claude Cahen, Michael Brett is one of the few scholars of medieval Islam who combines such breadth of historical vision together with detailed knowledge of the sources.

Not surprisingly for a book of such complexity, it does not always make for easy reading. While it does not strictly require previous knowledge of Islamic and Fatimid history, it frequently sets things out in such a way as to make such knowledge desirable. However, a solution is available. Recent general treatments of the rise of the Fatimids also include the work of Heinz Halm, *The Empire of the Mahdi: The Rise of the Fatimids* (Leiden, 1996; German original, Munich, 1991), of similar heft and issued by the same publisher, though in a different series. Halm gives comprehensive and eloquent expression to the more familiar view of unity in Isma'ili and Fatimid origins. At the same time, he presents a vivid picture of the Muslim and Mediterranean worlds of the fourth/tenth century, allowing the Arabic sources almost to 'speak for themselves'. As the translator of this work of Halm, I strongly recommend gaining acquaintance with both, beginning with Halm and moving on to Brett. To be sure, this amounts to a lot of reading. But what is at stake is not the history of a marginal religious group in a peripheral area, but rather a centrally important, prolonged chapter in the history of Islam, with profound consequences for what came afterwards. It is also the history of the Mediterranean world as it emerged in the early Middle Ages, newly prosperous and, as ever, creative and interconnected.

*University of Michigan*

MICHAEL BONNER

## NEGOTIATING IDENTITIES IN THE PRE-COLONIAL SAHARA

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*Becoming Walata: A History of Saharan Social Formation and Transformation.*

By TIMOTHY CLEAVELAND. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 2001. Pp. xxiii + 232.

\$67.95 (ISBN 0-325-07027-X).

KEY WORDS: Sahara, Mauritania, pre-colonial, ethnicity, Islam.

*Becoming Walata* is a sophisticated, grounded contribution to our understanding of West African history. Cleaveland combines anthropological and historical

methods in teasing out the dynamism of identity and social belonging in an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Saharan entrepôt.

A social and cultural history, the book argues that Walata shifted from its Mande origins to Berber domination in the fourteenth century, and shifted again in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to Arab cultural ascendancy. These racial and ethnic categories were largely constructed, a part of emigration patterns and larger political and economic processes in Saharan Africa.

The first chapters introduce readers to the geographic, climatic and cultural background of Walata and its place in southwestern Saharan society. After discussing the colonial historiography and segmentary theory, Cleaveland argues that settling nomadic groups remained the most important factor in Walata's development. Alliances between nomads and Walati helped promote an identity based on Islam and place of origin (Takrur) and bolstered by shifting semi-fictional lineage affinities.

Cleaveland focuses on one of these alliances, the Lemhājb, to illustrate these larger trends in Walata's history. The Lemhājb drew its leadership from the scholarly elite of Walata, and this elite used their scholarship to reinforce their social position and extend their social networks to *zawaya* leaders and to elites in other West African towns. By 1800, being Lemhājb became synonymous with being Walati and, in a larger sense, with being Takruri. Over the nineteenth century, new groups challenged Lemhājb control whose alliances reflected the changing nature of Saharan production, marketing and consumption. In the late 1800s, the Lemhājb gradually lost out to other alliances because they lacked connections to newly powerful nomadic groups and religious leaders.

Several additional points, though not major parts of the author's main arguments, shed light on pre-colonial Saharan history. The first is that emigrants from Timbuktu, fleeing the Sa'adian invasion of 1592, led to Walata's cultural blossoming. The slow decline of Timbuktu after the Moroccan invasion has long left historians wondering what became of the town's many scholarly families. Cleaveland shows convincingly that a contingent helped make Walata one of the most important intellectual and market centers in West Africa.

A second point has to do more broadly with the emergence of Takrur. Cleaveland's use of Takruri sources highlights the importance of a region about which we know little, and emphasizes the nature and depth of linkages between Takrur, North Africa and elsewhere in West Africa. These sources, coupled with his use of oral testimony, provide us not only a different perspective of Saharan history but also one that is wonderfully nuanced and expresses the political nature of memory.

Cleaveland spends considerable space questioning the adequacy of segmentary theory to explain complex affinities. One wonders, though, whether segmentary theory has been as monolithic and limiting as the author treats it. In the last decade, at least, historians have used versions of the theory that take into account exactly the kind of semi-fictionalizing and imagining of community that Cleaveland so aptly describes. Like the author, these historians show that network- or alliance-building is partly imagined, and partly based on more enduring ideas about lineage and, more broadly, 'relatedness'.

Cleaveland's approach fits into a recent trend among West African historians in emphasizing how the negotiability of identity affects cultural, political and economic change. A residual risk remains in focusing too narrowly on the 'meanings' of imagined identity, and can degrade into post-modern preoccupation. Not so with *Becoming Walata*. Cleaveland deftly explores what is imaginary (and what is not) by weighing the evidence available to him, explaining what evidence is contradictory or weak and why.

*Becoming Walata* emphasizes the need for further inquiry into the complexities of Saharan social change. What aspects of identity- or alliance-building remained relatively fixed? Cleaveland briefly explores identity based on place, but how did other types of identity – membership in sufi orders, market relationships, or ethnicity – change over this period? How did strategies for getting access to different types of productive resources shift? The author also discusses a bond based on a roughly contiguous set of beliefs about Islam and Islamic law. In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century West Africa, these beliefs shifted in basic ways and helped spawn a series of violent *jihāds*. How did these changes look from the perspective of Takrur, and how did this affect the ways by which people related to one another? These questions are out of the book's scope, but remain intriguing in light of Cleaveland's evidence.

*Becoming Walata* will interest anyone working in Islamic Africa, but also will appeal to those exploring the shifting nature of identity and its role in history. It makes an excellent addition to the study of West African, and specifically Saharan, history.

*SRI International*

DAVID GUTELIUS

## ANTHROPOLOGY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE HISTORY OF BANDA

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*Making History in Banda: Anthropological Visions of Africa's Past.* By ANN BROWER STAHL. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp. xix + 268. £47.50; \$69.95 (ISBN 0-521-80182-6).

KEY WORDS: Ghana, anthropology, archaeology, pre-colonial.

The 'Traditional Area' of Banda, in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana, lies along a range of hills below the southern bend of the Black Volta. It has long been recognized as one of those pluralistic polities so typical of the area. The Kuulo or Dumbo assert their autochthonous status in stories about having arrived from holes in the ground. As the 'landowners' they supplied Banda, until recently, with its land priests. It is universally accepted that the Muslim Ligby were the first incomers. They arrived, probably in the early eighteenth century, from Begho (or Bighu), the declining entrepôt on the edges of the forest country south of Banda, and continue to speak a Mande language. The Nafana (Pantera, Mfantera, etc.), a second and larger wave of immigrants, claim to have originated from Kakala in the present Côte d'Ivoire, and their language belongs to the Senufo group. They introduced into Banda chiefly institutions that closely replicated those of the forest Akan.

Stahl first began archaeological work in the Banda area in 1982, and made an important contribution to an understanding of the so-called 'Kintampo Culture'. In the rainy seasons of 1989, 1990 and 1994 she carried out excavations at the abandoned Nafana settlement of Makala and, in that of 1995, at the site of the premier Kuulo township. In the same period she worked with both oral and documentary sources. Her purpose was 'to construct a vision of life in Banda over the past seven centuries' (p. 42). This 'vision' had to do with first, Banda's involvement in trans-Saharan trade in an early period; second, its progressive integration into the Asanteman in the eighteenth century; third, its incorporation into the colonial Gold Coast in 1894; and finally, after 1957, its survival as a traditional state or area within independent Ghana.

Stahl acknowledges that her approach to Banda was 'Nafana-centric' (p. 78). She lived in the village that has come to function as the Banda capital, and the Banda-hene and his elders kept a close eye on her investigations and indeed findings. In return, so she tells us, for her contributions to the community she was installed as Ns]kua Hema, 'a queen mother' (though surely in that context she should have been made an *osua-hemaa*, not a queen mother but a chief for development!). Be that as it may, Stahl's acceptance of Nafana chiefly patronage undoubtedly resulted in some slanting of the record. One example will have to suffice.

Stahl sifted material from the Kuulo dig in order to answer the question, 'What can we learn of the contours of taste ... when the world of Kuulo villagers was framed by its connections with Begho and the world of the Niger trade?' (p. 141). She essays only a most cautious conclusion. The Kuulo village, she writes, 'was drawn into a world of taste-making beyond its boundaries; trade connections with the Middle Niger accessed a world of objects – copper alloys, cloth, beads – that contributed little or nothing to productive activities, but contributed to the politics of adornment and fueled the imaginative possibilities for practices of distinction' (p. 143). Quite so, but why in this context does Stahl virtually ignore the Banda Ligby, other than merely to note the view that they 'descend from traders who dispersed after Begho was attacked by Asante in 1722' (p. 59). In fact the Ligby, who use the Malian patronymic 'Bamba', claim that the last imam of Begho was Mahmud Bamba; that he resettled at Banda with the agreement of the Kuulo; that he founded a mosque there; and that several of his descendants, among them the early nineteenth-century Shaykh 'Umar b. Sulayman Bamba and his son Muhammad b. 'Umar Bamba, achieved a more than local reputation as writers and teachers. Oddly, there is no mention of any of this, whether by way of acceptance or rejection, in *Making History in Banda*.

Stahl remarks that the aim of creating a 'robust multidisciplinary understanding of Africa's past', at once historical, archaeological and anthropological, has for the most part failed to materialize (p. 1). Part of the reason is surely apparent in her Chapters 1, 2 and 8. These contain numerous generalities drawn from a slew of cultural anthropologists who employ a jargon that is meaningless to the non-initiate and often does no more than conceal the banality of what is being said. To judge from the lucidity of Stahl's earlier writings, she is victim rather than villain in all this. Summarizing a discussion of the use of archives, for example, Stahl tells us that 'we must interrogate the categories and knowledge claims of archives as they relate to practice and power' (p. 37). Of periodization, we learn that 'this seriation of sources ... is particularly important in our efforts to examine socio-historical processes across the landscape of colonial conjunctures' (p. 38). The reader may pause over two dicta quoted and endorsed by Stahl from the writings of J. and J. L. Comaroff. First, 'a truly historical anthropology is only possible to the extent that it is capable of illuminating the endogenous historicity of social worlds' (p. 7), and second, colonization is the 'reconstruction of the ordinary. Of things at once material, meaningful, mundane' (p. 17). Such pronunciamientos, strewn throughout *Making History in Banda*, are scarcely likely to nurture a multidisciplinary approach. Even more disturbing, however, is the dismissive tone adopted by so many of those – postmodernists, poststructuralists, or whatever – so generously cited by Stahl. The writings of African historians in the late colonial and early post-colonial period are virtually decreed heretical, for they subscribed to 'the assumption of progressive development', and therefore 'continued to write African history in a "Trevor-Roperian" way'. One of their sins was to make efforts 'to demonstrate the rationality of natives' (pp. 9–10). One of their failures was to 'recognize that what passed as radical scholarship in the early independence period was rooted in nineteenth-century European epistemologies' (p. 11). All of

this is not only intellectually arrogant, but exhibits a profoundly ahistorical view of the development of African historiography.

*University of Wales, Lampeter*

IVOR WILKS

## SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SOURCE

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*The English in West Africa: The Local Correspondence of the Royal African Company of England, 1681–1699, Part 2: 1685–1688.* Edited by ROBIN LAW. Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2001. Pp. xviii + 468. £45 (ISBN 0-19-726252-x).

KEY WORDS: Western Africa, Ghana, slave trade, text editions.

The pre-nineteenth-century European commercial presence on the West African coast produced a rather considerable corpus of documents of all sorts and in several languages. Notwithstanding the relative wealth of information for historical research, this material has remained largely unexamined. Robin Law has taken on the immense and painstaking job of editing the Royal African Company's (RAC) letter-books (1681–99). Having edited and published two earlier collections of RAC correspondence, he brings experience and a sharp scholarly eye to the task. The letter-books, which are in the Rawlinson Collection (C 745-7) in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, represent the correspondence between the factors of the trading stations on the Upper and Lower Guinea Coasts and Cape Coast Castle, the headquarters of the RAC's West African trading operations. The volume under review is the second of three, or possibly four, planned volumes and covers the years from 1685 to 1688. The first volume comprises correspondence received at Cape Coast Castle from January 1681 to November 1683. There follows a gap of two years and two months, indicating that the correspondence for this period is lost (or has yet to be located). The next sequence of correspondence begins in January 1685 and ends in 1688. The letters for this period number 998 and form the content of volume two.

The introduction contains a brief overview of the RAC's commercial strategies and a description of the letter-books. There are two maps, a glossary of non-English words and titles, a short but solid bibliography, a concordance indicating the provenance of each letter and four detailed indexes ('places and peoples', 'persons', 'ships' and 'selected topics'). The documents are conveniently arranged under twelve different headings. Nine headings designate the 'outforts' from which letters were sent. Seven of the 'outforts' were on the Gold Coast and the other two were on James Island in the Gambia River and in the port of Whydah on the Slave Coast. The remaining headings designate correspondence from the following: RAC ships, Barbados (where the RAC had resident agents) and foreign companies trading on the West African Coast, namely the Dutch West Indies Company and the Danish West Indies and Guinea Company. The meanings and references of the letters are not always apparent and in some instances the letters, given their grammatical, syntactical and orthographic peculiarities, are quite obscure, hence Law's annotations are indispensable. They facilitate the reader's understanding of the correspondence by providing clarifying explanations, historical context and the necessary identification of persons, places and events. The scholarly apparatus of the volume is excellent.

The correspondence captures in fine detail the daily life of commercial relations of the trading stations and the ports of trade. There is, as one might

expect, substantial information on trade goods and their prices, credit relations ('trust') and a wide of range of other matters relating to the conduct of trade. But in addition, the letters have much to say about the local scene as well including the activities of merchants, brokers and stool-holders, on the one hand, and political and social life, warfare and belief, on the other. Yet, it should be made clear that the letters reveal what is essentially a world of men. Women hardly figure at all in any of the correspondence except in a general sense (e.g., as 'women slaves') and not as active agents (e.g., as traders). Professor Law is to be congratulated for having made this collection of letter-books available to scholars. This reviewer eagerly awaits the publication of the remaining correspondence.

*University of California at Riverside*

RAY A. KEA

## A SLAVE TRADING VOYAGE

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703268481

*The Diligent: A Voyage through the Worlds of the Slave Trade.* By ROBERT HARMS. New York: Basic Books, 2002. Pp. xxxi + 466. £17.99 (ISBN 1-903985-18-8).

KEY WORDS: Slave trade, pre-colonial, Bénin, São Tomé.

The recent trend towards the application of quantitative techniques in the study of the Atlantic slave trade, while it has enormously advanced understanding of the subject, carries the danger of losing a sense of its history in terms of individual experience, and needs to be complemented by a disaggregated perspective. One approach to the reconstruction of an individuated history of the trade is through the biographical narratives of enslaved Africans who were its victims, although such narratives are few in number and sometimes of problematic authenticity. An alternative strategy is to recount the story of a single ship, or voyage, as the Danish slave trade was recently explored by Leif Svalesen, through the case of the ship *Fredensborg*, wrecked off the coast of Norway on its return from the Caribbean in 1745 (*The Slave Ship Fredensborg* [Bloomington, 2000; Danish original, *Slaveskibet Fredensborg*, 1996]). Robert Harms's book recounts a slaving voyage in 1731–2 by the French ship *Le Diligent*, which sailed from Vannes in Brittany to purchase its slaves at Jakin in West Africa (in modern Bénin), then proceeded via the island of São Tomé, to deliver them to Martinique. Its narrative basis is a manuscript journal of Robert Durand, first lieutenant on the ship, which was acquired by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University in 1984. But Harms incorporates copious digressions, on the various 'worlds' which the voyage connected, in France, in West Africa, at São Tomé and Martinique. For this wider context, he draws in the first instance on relevant secondary literature, but he has used this as a starting point and guide to original research of his own, in archives in England, the Netherlands, Portugal and Italy, as well as France and Martinique. His discursive strategy emulates that of Herodotus in its relentless pursuit of such excursions, and occasionally risks losing the narrative thread. For the most part, the connections to the particular story of the *Diligent* are not too remote: thus, we get extended treatment of discussions in France in the early eighteenth century on the morality of slavery (related to proposals to give legal recognition to slavery in France itself, rather than to any questioning of colonial slavery or the Atlantic trade) and on the organization of the African trade (whose opening up to private traders outside the Indies Company in 1725 provided the opportunity for the voyage); of the conquest of the leading slave 'port' of Ouidah by King Agaja of Dahomey, a few years before the voyage,



which disrupted trading conditions there (causing the *Diligent* to trade at Jakin rather than Ouidah, as originally intended); and of the depressed state of the economy of Martinique (due to destruction of cocoa trees in an earthquake in 1727 and official discouragement of the cultivation of coffee, which offered the best alternative crop), which served to reduce the price of slaves and so undermined the profitability of the voyage (which in fact made a loss). But at São Tomé the concept of relevance is severely stretched, when the fact that the *Diligent* touched there, supplemented by a casual reference in Durand's journal to the existence of 'black priests' on the island, is made the occasion for a detailed excursus on the most eminent of these at this time, Manuel de Rosário Pinto, on the thin excuse that Durand might 'perhaps' have caught sight of him (it is not suggested that they met). The end product is a somewhat sprawling book (whose length is also compounded by some repetition, which might have been reduced by more aggressive copy-editing); but one that in general succeeds admirably in its proclaimed objective of 'bringing to life' the diverse 'worlds' which contributed to generating the voyage and determining its outcome. Even Harms's assiduous work, however, leaves some loose ends: in particular, what remains absent is the voice of the 256 enslaved Africans who were the victims of the enterprise (nine of whom died in the Atlantic crossing). As Harms notes, the slaves were 'the *raison d'être* for the *Diligent's* voyage', yet they are 'the least documented of all those who became involved' in it; it proved impossible even to trace the particular estates in Martinique (or perhaps elsewhere) where they ended up.

A further reflection which suggests itself is that Durand's journal seems, from the use which Harms makes of it, to be sufficiently important and interesting to warrant separate publication, in its entire original text. As it is, as presented in this book, it is not always immediately or unambiguously clear what is in the journal, what is supplied from more general background information and what is merely surmised. For the general reader, this perhaps does not matter overmuch, but specialist scholars would benefit from unmediated access to the text.

University of Stirling

ROBIN LAW

## COMBINING THE HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SOUTH AFRICA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703278488

*South Africa's Racial Past: The History and Historiography of Racism, Segregation, and Apartheid.* By PAUL MAYLAM. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001. Pp. vi + 264. £42.50 (ISBN 0-546-1788-2).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, general, apartheid, historiography.

Paul Maylam's text provides a concise historiographically informed account of South Africa's past from the beginnings of European colonization to the end of the apartheid regime. He divides his material into three parts. Parts one and two (on 'pre-industrial times' and 'the industrial era' respectively) provide an interpretative history in which the author focuses on specific issues and questions that have arisen in the work of other authors. For example, he investigates the significance of the importation of pre-existing European racial prejudices by the first Dutch settlers through a discussion of American writings on race (Winthrop Jordan and Gary Nash among others) with consideration of Leonard Guelke's work. Likewise, in his chapter dealing with the impact of diamonds and gold on the development of the color bar, Maylam organizes his text around a discussion of the work of the scholars who have written on the topic. In part three he focuses

exclusively on South African historiography, which he argues falls into four 'loosely labeled' categories: 'primordialist pluralist, liberal pluralist, materialist, and "intermediate"' (p. 225). The names might be somewhat new, though the categories are much the same as those identified by most writers on South African historiography – settler, liberal, radical – except for the last – intermediate – which really does not have any apparent distinguishing feature or content.

Overall, the author adopts a moderate and well-considered approach. He is interested primarily in identifying what is useful about various historiographical approaches and utilizing those findings to begin to construct a historical narrative. In this approach, the text seems to reflect the lecture notes on which it is probably based. It assumes little knowledge of South African history and historiography and for that reason much of it is likely to be useful for an undergraduate or graduate student new to the field but to be of less interest to specialists or to those with some familiarity with the country's history.

But even for the target audience there are a number of problems. First, the mix of history and historiography is awkward. The text is not long enough to do justice to both. For a short history, students would do better to turn to Leonard Thompson or Nigel Worden or Robert Ross; for historiography, to Christopher Saunders or Ken Smith.

Second, as history it is unsatisfying because of the odd absence of any real discussion of Africans as authors and actors in their own right. This is particularly puzzling given that Maylam has also written the quite useful *History of the African People of South Africa*, which, as its title indicates, focuses on the majority population of the country. In the book under review, however, the impression one gets of Africans as historical actors is primarily as victims, and the lack of any discussion of black authors (in a book about segregation and apartheid there is no reference to the works by Sol Plaatje, or Naboth Mokgatle or even Nelson Mandela!) leaves the impression in the reader's mind that they had made no contribution to the development of their own history.

Third, Maylam also leaves out some texts and authors on the white side who, one would assume, ought to be in an introductory text. The prime example here is the lack of any discussion of the *Oxford History*, or of the work of Leonard Thompson (apart from his *Unification of South Africa*), quite the most prolific and enduring exponent of what Maylam calls the liberal pluralist approach. For Maylam to spend a page discussing a book (Aletta Norval's study of Afrikaner representations of themselves) the arguments of which he considers insubstantial, and to leave out any mention of Thompson's biography of Moshoeshoe, results in his readers and students missing out some quite central aspects of South Africa's history and historiography.

University of California, Los Angeles

WILLIAM H. WORGER

## ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE HISTORY OF COLONIZATION

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*Archaeology and the Modern World: Colonial Transcripts in South Africa and the Chesapeake.* By MARTIN HALL. London: Routledge, 2000. Pp. xi + 218. \$85 (ISBN 0-415-22965-0); £15.99; \$25.99, paperback (ISBN 0-415-22966-9).

KEY WORDS : South Africa, archaeology, colonial.

Historical archaeologists are those, typically, who study European colonial expansion around the world, the peoples they subjugated politically during that

expansion and the reverberations between European and indigenous societies in the process. Martin Hall is one of the leading theorists and practitioners of historical archaeology in the world today. In this dual case study, Hall compares and contrasts the South African Cape and the Chesapeake of the eastern US. He draws the two settings together by focusing on the seventeenth-century birth of each colonial culture from the efforts of trading companies, the Dutch East India Company in the case of the Cape, the London Company in the Chesapeake. But he goes far beyond the typical scope of such a study, by reaching up to the politics and paradigms of the present, writing not just of archaeology, but pointedly of archaeology in the context of the modern world.

We focus on the highly ordered physical landscape created in both places during the early centuries of colonization – the various architectural traditions and the material culture favored in the Chesapeake and the Cape. These landscapes speak volumes, Hall contends, about issues such as power and gender relations, colonial fear of their intended subjects and the open and covert violence in colonial–indigenous relations and in colonial society from every angle. In each place, Hall argues, colonists recreated their own identities and localities under deeply uncertain conditions. The resulting European colonial cultures bear striking resemblances to each other in philosophy, if not in the details of appearance, in the context of an increasingly interconnected world. We can understand societies most fully while looking at them in comparison to each other – and perhaps most richly when we can tease out the cultural differences – status, gender, other – among seemingly monolithic groups such as the ‘Dutch’ and the ‘Khoi Khoi’.

Along with the rich analysis of architecture and small objects, Hall introduces personal narratives written by four colonial everymen as centerpieces of the study. Three of these are from the Cape: a German, Pieter Kolbe, who became secretary for the Dutch East India Company; a Dutch minister named François Valentyn, widely traveled in Dutch colonies; and a Prussian tutor, Otto Mentzel. From the Chesapeake we hear from a well-known tobacco plantation owner, William Byrd III. Personal narratives, of course, are artifacts themselves. Rather than privileging them above the conventionally imagined material record, Hall places them as another set of artifacts in dynamic disequilibrium with archaeology and the more conventional top-down histories of each place. It is indeed an artifact of the power relations in each setting that the individual voices we hear in this ambitious book are none other than those of white men. For the ‘voices’ of others – the enslaved, the colonized – we look at the lengths to which colonists went to control them, and to protect themselves from them, and indeed more heavily on the material record brought up from the earth and still visible on the landscape.

Hall also structures the book around the concept that the sorts of power relations evident in these early centuries of the modern era are alive and well in our own lifetimes, and that modern attempts to reconstruct the past are necessarily inextricable from the history we are now living. The burning of southern black churches in the US, the power struggle over Thomas Jefferson’s legacy in the context of revelations of his enslaved mistress Sally Hemings and the creation of modern populist museums are part of his forward-looking archaeological vision.

Hall ends the book with a compelling analysis of the destruction of District Six in Cape Town, a vital and expressly multicultural so-called colored neighborhood, systematically dismantled under apartheid precisely because of the successful way diverse people were living and working side by side. Since the end of apartheid District Six’s former inhabitants have begun to reclaim their neighborhood in its devastated state. They have done this most visibly through the creation of a deeply affecting museum – through the tender reappropriation of

what is left of the material culture taken from the homes. First the destruction, and then the partial resurrection of District Six through street signs, church pews, cooking pots and tableware, personal objects excavated from the rubble of destroyed buildings and family photographs exemplify how past and present engage each other intimately, and how physical markers can be desperately important to power relations.

Hall begins and ends talking about 'things' and 'words'. Words make up transcripts, but the material world extends them and their meanings: the human body in an architectural detail, the layout of a garden, the hunger for matched sets of silverware, modern urban art. Objects from architecture to kitchen tools are not the backdrop to human experience, but shape that experience in a recursive relationship with people in cultures and societies. This intriguing study is a treatise on the deep relevance of both the written and the three-dimensional to understanding the ongoing violence of European impact on the modern world, on the interdependence of those two ultimately not-so-different forms of human expression in this way of seeing. It is thus also a statement about the potency of using historical and archaeological methods together for creating a more honest, and more painful, understanding of our last half millennium.

*University of Virginia*

ADRIA LAVIOLETTE

## MOROCCO'S MODERN HISTORY

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*Morocco since 1830: A History*. By C. R. PENNELL. London: Hurst, 2000. Pp. xxxiv + 442. £47.50 (ISBN 1-85065-273-2); £16.50, paperback (ISBN 1-85065-426-3).

KEY WORDS: Morocco, colonial, post-colonial, general, political.

English-speakers have lacked a history of modern Morocco based upon recent scholarship. The wait is over. Pennell's *Morocco since 1830* provides an up-to-date introduction that can confidently be recommended to a broad readership. It surveys the period from 1830 to the death of Hasan II in 1999. Primarily organized around the political history of Morocco and its encounter with the West, the book also covers the economy and society.

In 1830, as the French were beginning the conquest of Algeria two travelers, one the British consul in Tangier, Edward Drummond-Hay, the other a Mauritanian sufi, Ahmed bin Tuwayr al-Janna, undertook voyages which took them throughout the kingdom of Morocco. Drummond-Hay traveled to Marrakech to present his credentials to the sultan, while bin Tuwayr was on his way to Mecca on the Islamic pilgrimage. Both left travel accounts. Using them, Pennell introduces the reader to the Moroccan monarchy, the role of the makhzan (as the government was known), the urban and rural groups and the role of Islam. The European diplomatic rivalries that would play such an important role in the modern history of Morocco are also presented, especially the British and French.

The six chapters that review the period from 1860 to 1956 are particularly successful. They provide a complex and nuanced reading of the history of nineteenth-century government reform and its divergent local impacts, the Moroccan crisis (1904–12) and the diplomatic battles of the 'Moroccan Question'. As a result of this century-long process, 'The Morocco That Was' was remodeled by its French and Spanish colonial masters (with the collaboration of Moroccan elites).

As the leading historian of Abd al-Krim, Pennell is particularly aware of the rather different dynamics of the Spanish and French protectorates. Drawing upon European and Arabic sources, he does a skillful job of assisting the reader in tracing the transformation of the Moroccan economy under colonialism and the emergence of Moroccan nationalism. He also provides an impressive account of the politics of colonial endgame: how French blunders called into existence a broadly based nationalist movement, and led to the reunification of Morocco under Muhammad V.

The two chapters that chronicle the history of post-independence Morocco to 1999 do a fine job of tracing the development of a complex modern society. But they are problematic to the extent that they tend to look only at the undoubted achievements of King Hasan, and exempt him from criticism. Ever since John Waterbury's *The Commander of the Faithful* (1970), foreign observers have been mesmerized by the political skills of the puppeteer-in-chief. But the costs (mostly unacknowledged here) have been extensive as well: the scandalous neglect of education and health, the mind-boggling corruption, the brutal oppression of the opposition (real or imagined), the savage division between haves and have-nots. While aware of some of the criticism, Pennell (here following the dominant line) has chosen to focus on the achievements of Hasan II and not their costs. As a result, readers will be unprepared for the inevitable social earthquakes to come.

Merrill College, University of California

EDMUND BURKE III

## MIGRATION, EROSION AND FISHING

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703308485

*Between the Sea and the Lagoon: An Eco-social History of the Anlo of Southeastern Ghana c. 1850 to Recent Times.* By EMMANUEL KWAKU AKYEAMPONG. Oxford: James Currey; Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2001. Pp. xii + 244. £45 (ISBN 0-85255-776-0); £16.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-777-9).

KEY WORDS: Ghana, economic, environment, social.

A thin ribbon of land constitutes the heart of Anlo state and society, poised between the pounding surf on the beaches to one side and the glistening expanse of the Keta Lagoon to the other. In places the coastal strip narrows to a few hundred yards – most dramatically at Keta, where the waves eat at the old Danish fort and other abandoned buildings along the town's seafront. Nowhere else in Ghana does the on-going struggle between human settlement and the forces of nature seem so apparent as in the watery landscape of the country's far south-eastern corner. It is the history of this uneasy dialogue between culture and nature that forms the subject of Emmanuel Akyeampong's new book, which sets out to offer a 'social interpretation of environmental process' in the Anlo-Ewe region.

The book opens with an account of Anlo migration traditions – the ideological charters that continue to be reaffirmed at *Hogbetsotso*, the annual festival celebrating the original migration of the Anlo-Ewe peoples from the east and their settlement of the eastern reaches of Ghana's coastal littoral. Akyeampong argues – somewhat contentiously – that the Anlo peoples are relatively recent migrants to what would become known to Europeans as the 'Slave Coast', dating their arrival from Notsie in the interior of neighbouring Togo to as late as the mid-seventeenth century. Whatever the exact chronology of migration, by the late

1670s the Anlo towns were established enough to absorb large numbers of refugees fleeing the Akwamu conquest of Accra and to intervene in the resulting political turmoil in the region. It is also clear that the emergence of Anlo society in its historic form involved a transition from a predominantly agrarian economy to what Akyeampong terms an 'aquatic or maritime tradition'. This process was fuelled by the introduction of new technologies from the Gold Coast, in particular salt-making and sea fishing. By the eighteenth century, Anlo was also being drawn into the expanding Atlantic slave trade, initially as a supplier of provisions but increasingly as an exporter of slaves. Its participation in the slave trade continued well beyond 1850, when the British replaced the Danes as the dominant European presence in the region. The refusal of local merchants to abandon slave exports would have important repercussions for the process by which Anlo was drawn into the Gold Coast Colony, as it laid the foundations of the region's reputation amongst British officials as a problematic frontier zone that thrived on smuggling and other illegal activities.

The treatment of Anlo in the early colonial period is strongly focused on Keta, the region's leading trading town and, from 1916, the Gold Coast's only designated surf port east of the Volta. This represents a valuable contribution to the urban history of Ghana and is especially insightful on the frustrations and ambivalence generated by capitalist 'modernity'. Yet it is really only with Chapter 4, on sea erosion in Keta – a good half-way into the book – that Akyeampong really begins to get to grips with the central issues of environment, ecology and landscape. Thwarted in their attempts to hold back the sea, many inhabitants of Keta and neighbouring towns were turning by the 1930s to migrant fishing. The people of Anloga, meanwhile, directed their energies to intensive shallot cultivation, while others carved a niche in the colonial economy with the illicit distillation of liquor. Despite these survival strategies, the later twentieth century was a period of decline in the local economy. The construction of the Akasombo hydroelectric dam and the deep-water harbour at Tema during the Nkrumah period were held to be symbolic of Ghana's new-found independence, but there was a widespread perception in the Anlo region that both projects were somehow responsible for declining fish stocks and the on-going ravages of sea erosion.

This learned, accessible study contains many original insights into the historical interaction between the Anlo people and their distinctive regional landscape. Much of the book, however, reads as straight-ahead economic history rather than the 'eco-social' approach suggested by its subtitle. Akyeampong addresses the problems he faced in fashioning an overall conceptual framework in the concluding chapter, which makes the belated announcement that the analysis should essentially be seen as materialist and falling within the 'mode of production' school. I have to admit that I found this confusing. There was little in the foregoing chapters to alert the reader to this approach. Indeed, the most effective sections of the book are focused on what might be termed 'moral economy' (or 'moral ecology') rather than any particular 'mode of production'. The slightly jarring conclusion aside, *Between the Sea and the Lagoon* represents a notable contribution to the growing body of work on the environmental history of Africa.

*School of Oriental and African Studies*

JOHN PARKER

SOCIAL HISTORY IN ANTHROPOLOGICAL  
PERSPECTIVE

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*Kongo Political Culture: The Conceptual Challenge of the Particular.* By WYATT MACGAFFEY. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000. Pp. xiii + 274. \$39.95; £26.95 (ISBN 0-253-33698-8).

KEY WORDS: Congo – Democratic Republic of, anthropology, arts, culture, politics.

In Wyatt MacGaffey's latest monograph on Kongo society, we are privileged to share again in the ethnographic and historical projects of a scholar who has worked seriously within that culture since the mid-1960s. Indeed, this text synthesizes several strands of MacGaffey's long-term research: the dynamics of power within Kongo chiefships, deep linguistic scholarship in KiKongo, the relationship between Kongo aesthetics and politics and the continuing centrality of certain percepts of Kongo cosmology over several centuries. Because of the necessary complexity of Professor MacGaffey's representations of Kongo social history, coming out of his own, long engagement with these materials, the monograph can be extremely challenging – particularly for any more casual reader, or for a novice in the sometimes tangled scholarship of Central Africa. This does not mean that the text is unapproachable; quite the contrary, as certain parts of it raise important questions for anyone interested in African history, and the author seeks to answer them in a witty and clear manner. However, it does mean that the monograph was not written with beginners in mind and probably will find its best audience among scholars who have encountered MacGaffey's work before and found it to their taste or among postgraduates who are working through their research on similar topics.

Professor MacGaffey's self-described task is to integrate not only his many, seemingly diverse research interests but to use the tools of equally diverse disciplines – notably anthropology, history, political economy, religious studies and art history – in the process. In this way, he shows his loyalties to lie with a particular style of Africanist scholarship that has had its detractors as well as its admirers over the years. The present reviewer happens to be an admirer, especially when the scholarly practitioner has proved himself the master of the methods of each discipline without becoming an ideologue of any one of them. He leans towards anthropology but is critical of fellow anthropologists who do not attempt to move beyond disciplinary boundaries into a wider understanding of the human world.

Practically, the movement among disciplines takes place in every chapter, although historians may find the chapters on 'Texts and contexts' (2), 'Tradition and trade' (4), 'Lutete's chiefs' (9) and 'Reflections and extensions' (10) of special interest. In each of these, the author compares what African historians already feel they know about Kongo history with what can be discovered from a set of archival, ethnographic materials collected by indigenous Kongo missionaries in the early years of the twentieth century. The missionary-ethnographers and historians gathered information on migrations, the internal slave trade, local conflicts and oral histories relating to rulers and their reigns. Professor MacGaffey discusses, in some detail, how these indigenous ethnographies can add to our understanding of nineteenth-century Kongo history. He calculates, from internal evidence, that the historical memory of the Kongolese ethnographers and their informants cannot extend much before the previous mid-century, and he is loathe to suggest that any of what he offers to us can be readily attached

to what we know of the earliest (that is, seventeenth-century) documentation for some of these groups. Art historians will find much to contemplate in chapters 4 through 7, where the histories of particular *minkisi* (sometimes called power objects by western scholars, although MacGaffey does not like the term), as well as their aesthetic attributes, are discussed at great length. Chapter 5, 'Complexity, astonishment, and power', recapitulates an argument that is already well accepted in the African art world, that *minkisi* were never meant to be static objects of art but were performed and were therefore powerful in their own right within Kongo religious and political contexts. This argument is extended and deepened considerably by the discussion of the *minkisi* known as Nkondi, which were always associated directly with chiefs and the bodies of chiefs. Indeed, MacGaffey argues that we cannot ignore such *minkisi* if we are trying to understand the political economy of Kongo chieftaincies, since the rulers themselves were thought by their people to be *minkisi* – not in any simple metaphorical correlation but in the deepest reality. It should come as no surprise, then, to discover that the histories of various *minkisi* are also tied directly to the histories of the slave trade, political domination as well as to particular chiefs and their reigns.

My main caveat to potential readers of *Kongo Political Culture* is that Professor MacGaffey lards the text with a good deal of linguistic information, all of it relevant, but which can be, at first glance, somewhat daunting to the person who does not speak or read KiKongo. As a boon to those who are studying Kongo culture, he also includes a number of KiKongo texts from the indigenous missionary ethnographers, alongside their English translations, making these texts fully available for future scholars as well as for contemporary KiKongo readers. The author also includes a summary and exegesis of each set of texts before they appear, which is helpful for any reader who wants to know the gist of their contents but is not ready to commit the time to parse the texts themselves. All of this adds to the usefulness of the monograph, offering different attractions to different levels of readership. It is an essential contribution to the scholarship of Central African history, as well as to the anthropology of Kongo-speaking groups.

*Franklin and Marshall College*

MISTY L. BASTIAN

## PERSPECTIVES ON GERMAN COLONIALISM IN NAMIBIA

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*Die Geschichte der ehemaligen Kolonie Deutsch-Südwestafrika (1884–1914): eine Gesamtdarstellung.* By UDO KAULICH. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001. Pp. 639. £50, paperback (ISBN 3-631-36984-0).

KEY WORDS: Namibia, colonial, economic, violence.

The author claims to have written the first comprehensive scientific history of the former German colony of South-West Africa. While the first chapter is an introduction to the pre-colonial history of the area, each of Chapters 2 to 8 focus on a particular issue, namely political administration, fiscal policy, administration of the indigenous peoples, the question of land ownership and acquisition, economic development, infrastructure and the role of the missionaries. The text is accompanied by maps and statistics.



The author used a large amount of predominantly German sources, published and unpublished. Accordingly, the account of the developments in the political and economic sectors is very detailed and comprehensive, with abundant statistics. Sometimes, however, one is tempted to ask whether a list of the directors of the Reichskolonialamt (p. 72, n. 9), or detailed statistics about the number of parcels, letters and postal orders dispatched by the postal authorities during the Herero and Nama wars (p. 479, n. 209) are really necessary. The chapter on the organization of German political administration is particularly useful. It reveals the ambiguities and deficiencies of the various levels of colonial administration: the central power, the district administration, self-administration of white farmers, the juridical system, and, largely ignored in the relevant literature, the armed executive (armed forces, police). In the same meticulous way Kaulich deals with the economic development of the white population in sectors such as farming and mining.

However, the book has several severe shortcomings. First, the chapters frequently give the impression that they have been written independently of each other. This concept, which may be justified in a handbook or an anthology, leads to inadequate analytical treatment of the interdependencies of various historical processes. Thus, while for example the developments in telecommunications (telegraphs, heliograph, wireless radio) are discussed at length, analysis of the function of these technologies within the process of colonial conquest is omitted. Moreover, this modular organization of the book leads to numerous (and tiresome) repetitions of key historical events. For example, the fact that the Herero and Nama uprisings affected the whole colony and hampered its development is repeated over and over again.

Even more problematic, however, is the fact that Kaulich (involuntarily or not) adopted views and formulations of the German colonial officials whose files and records he evaluated, especially regarding the description of the role of the African population. This leads to simplistic, sometimes bizarre historical judgements. The following examples may help to illustrate the point. Though he condemns the German atrocities committed during the Herero and Nama wars, his comments give the impression that the wars and their cruelties were just episodes that had no lasting effect on the peoples involved, and that only temporarily brought to a halt the positive development of the colony. In discussing the corporal punishment of Africans by South-West African whites (p. 132), his use of a report by the former German governor of South-West Africa, Leutwein, as a primary source turns the discussion into a gruesome apologetic account of this practice. He concludes that the interests of 'the natives' were covered by the tribal chief being present while the punishment was being executed and that anyway for 'many natives' corporal punishment was 'in accordance with their customs and way of life'. No attention is paid to the fact that several South-West African peoples did not know a 'chief' system at that time, or that the judicial system of many indigenous peoples relied on reconciliation and not on corporal punishment. On p. 408 he claims that there was no intertribal commerce at all in South-West Africa before the arrival of white merchants, but that the tribes earned their living by hunting and robbing.

Certain words and phrases which are considered unacceptable in modern German discourse on colonialism are frequently used without reflection. These include 'Eingeborene' (natives), 'Eingeborenenstämme' (native tribes) and 'Erschließung' (as used to label the opening up of the country by the Europeans). By 'südwestafrikanische Bevölkerung' (South-West African population) he often means just the white population. Had the author consulted the modern ethnological sources instead of outdated ethnographies, many of these problems could have been avoided.

Though the book is useful as a data source, it misses its goal, namely of being a 'Gesamtdarstellung' (complete description) of the history of the former German colony of South-West Africa.

*Institut für Afrikanistik, University of Cologne*

REINHARD KLEIN-ARENDET

## THE STRUGGLE OVER LABOUR IN GERMAN EAST AFRICA

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*Vilimani: Labor Migration and Rural Change in Early Colonial Tanzania*. By THADDEUS SUNSERI. Oxford: James Currey; Portsmouth NH: Heinemann; Cape Town: David Philip, 2002. Pp. xxxvi + 223. £40; \$64 (ISBN 0-85255-698-5); £16.95; \$24, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-648-9).

KEY WORDS: Tanzania, colonial, economic, agriculture, labor, slavery, environment, gender, resistance.

This analysis of labor in German East Africa is a carefully articulated study of the imperatives and constraints of labor policies, migration and practices between 1885 and 1916. It explores shifting colonial labor demands and policies together with African influences in the context of German metropolitan industrialization and overseas colonization, African rural economies and gendered social relations, settler limitations and demands, and their impact on the environment. Africans affected colonial demands and ultimately subverted them to redirect colonial policy from plantation to smallholder production. Ironically, however, when the administration then sought to implement peasant production, ongoing labor demands continued to undermine the rural economy, forcing women left behind to abandon surplus production of cash crops in order to return to subsistence production of foodstuffs.

Linking labor and rural crises, Sunseri supplants earlier interpretations of German colonialism in Tanzania focused on modernization (Iliffe), underdevelopment (Rodney) and development (Koponen) with an analysis that engages the complex contradictions inherent in colonial exploitation and rule. He also sets a standard for thorough research in newly accessible German colonial and mission archives, contemporary German and Tanzanian newspapers, local court records and oral interviews.

Sunseri starts with the German textile industry and crises caused by its dependence on American cotton, reliance on female labor and threat to the rural social and moral order. All, German industrialists thought, would be eased by the development of secure sources of cheap cotton from plantations in newly acquired colonies, and the German East African administration acceded to their wishes with widespread alienation of land in northeastern Tanzania to German settlers.

Plantations needed labor, which was not easy to come by in sparsely populated Tanzania. Slavery provided the model for plantations, and the first German settlers leased slaves from their coastal owners. Later, they also ransomed slaves, employing master and servant contracts devised in Germany to control and discipline former serfs. They soon exhausted these and other local sources of labor, however, not least because plantations' demand for foodstuffs provided local farmers with a ready market for their own crops. Planters then sought to recruit Nyamwezi and other porters lying over at the coast, but they were only available for short terms between caravans. Finally, they resorted to recruiting contract

labor from the interior, but labor remained short, desertions were common, planters poached each other's labor and the administration resisted settler demands for increased taxation, registration of workers and coercion to drive out rural labor.

The administration then shifted to communal production in the Rufji River valley, where diversified flood-plain agriculture, utilization of wild resources and trade ensured local plenty. Viewing peasant agriculture as wasteful, however, German administrators sought to arrest such 'destructive' practices as burning, hunting and use of forest resources. At the same time, administrators forced Africans to produce cotton on communal fields. As production declined and local patrons lost the ability to muster labor to produce surplus, burn the bush and hunt down wild animals, local areas were ravaged by wild pigs and locusts.

As a result, local African administrators sensed their popular control and legitimacy eroding and sought to reassert their authority by rebelling against the Germans. They were joined by women seeking medicines (*maji*) to arrest forced labor, forest and hunting controls, declining production and loss of environmental control. Together, the two movements comprised the earliest stirrings of what soon became known as Maji Maji. The Germans were quick to respond with a scorched earth policy that led people to flee, employ labor-saving crops and simpler crop mixes, or follow shorter fallows which produced declining returns, with the result that spirit possession cults spread, women dressed as men to challenge male roles and rural society broke down.

Following the failure of plantation and communal production, the Germans seized on peasant production, using what they saw as peasants' crisis-proof reserves of land, labor and foodstuffs to cushion labor shortages and price fluctuations. Yet their assault on peasant production continued unabated as increasing demands for labor to build the railroad drained men from rural areas and forced women to abandon food crops or escape to the margins and resume subsistence production. Ironically, then, German administrators failed to develop cotton as either a plantation or a peasant crop, and rural economies were systematically de-intensified and re-peasantized, a process that continued into the British period.

Sunseri is successful in arguing that German industrial interests dictated colonial policies and that African rural labor needs, practices and availability significantly influenced German attempts to mobilize labor, while he also demonstrates that increasing labor migration led to declining production, deteriorating social relations and rural immiseration. In taking African interests, needs, practices and policies as seriously as he does German ones, Sunseri probes insightfully into the complex contradictions of early colonialism in Tanzania. He is less successful, though, in arguing that Africans 'peasantized' plantation work patterns. While labor shortages certainly caused planters to increase wages, provide better housing and provisions, ameliorate work routines and settle workers' families, resulting social relations and work discipline probably represented less older peasant practices than emerging social relations that were neither peasant nor proletarian.

*University of Wisconsin–Madison*

THOMAS SPEAR

FARMERS' AGENCY IN THE IVOIRIAN  
COTTON REVOLUTION

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703348480

*The Peasant Cotton Revolution in West Africa: Côte d'Ivoire, 1880–1995.* By THOMAS J. BASSETT. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp. xix + 243. £45; \$64.95 (ISBN 0-521-78313-5).

KEY WORDS: Côte d'Ivoire, colonial, post-colonial, agriculture, state.

Thomas J. Bassett, a geographer at the University of Illinois, draws on long acquaintance with Côte d'Ivoire to chronicle the development of cotton-growing there. Geographically, the focus is on the northern cotton zone, particularly Korhogo. His account adds significantly to Richard Roberts's fine work on the colonial cotton industry in the French Soudan. The work also has parallels to cotton and some other crops in various other parts of West Africa, in that a dynamic response to incentives by Ivoirian peasant farmers was more central to the development of the industry than was the conflicted policy of colonial administrators including their disagreements over how much coercion should be used to promote cotton production.

A major finding is that the colonial authorities initially allowed a free market to operate, in which indigenous cotton buyers, Jula merchants in particular, were able for long periods to outbid the colonial merchants. Indeed, they were able to capture much of the local crop which all along the French had intended for export to the French textile industry. This parallel market supplied cotton to the indigenous handicraft weaving industry, which was willing to pay more than the French merchants were willing to offer to purchase cotton for export. In time, the colonial government introduced the use of coercion to the northern cotton region, a practice that lasted until the abolition of forced labor in 1946. French policy thus differed significantly from cotton policy in British West Africa, where coercion was eschewed, though it resembled more closely the forced labor on cotton that was central to Portuguese colonial practice.

Eventually, after the Second World War, the colonial authorities became convinced that only a large increase in the fixed price which export-buyers were offering for farmers' cotton, or a very large increase in cotton output, would rescue their plans to create a giant export industry. As neither the colonial officials nor the exporting firms were much interested in a higher price for seed cotton, policy-makers' attention turned to measures to promote production of high-yield strains (utilizing the Allen variety and DDT for insect control) and to create a buying monopsony along the lines of the marketing boards in the neighboring British West African colonies. The monopsony provided a way to exclude the competitive Jula traders from bidding for the new cotton. (The buying monopsony caused some farmers to avoid the new program altogether. They continued to sell older varieties to the Jula merchants.) In a manner resembling the British West African marketing boards, the gap between the monopsony buying price and the export price furnished substantial revenues for government both before and after the eventual independence of Côte d'Ivoire.

Bassett's treatment includes interesting sections on the eventual decay of the local *corvée* practices of village heads; the long-standing policy debate on whether cotton should be intercropped in many small fields or cultivated collectively in single-crop fields (the latter made surveillance easier but also led to a shift in revenue toward village and canton chiefs and thus lower incentives for farmers); a post-independence trend toward female labor in cotton production as farm families reorganized working practices; intergenerational conflict in the distribution of

producers' revenues; and the role of income distribution in the development of the industry.

A final chapter discusses the changes in the industry from 1985 to 1995, with coverage of the abandonment of fertilizer and pesticide subsidies, effects of adverse terms of trade changes, increasingly onerous labor requirements that accompanied cultivation of more advanced varieties, and the penalty imposed by the increasing overvaluation of the CFA franc, all of which served to drag down output. The eventual devaluation of the franc in the 1990s did not, however, have the expected stimulative effects on producers because, according to Bassett, of political considerations affecting the buying price and the cotton lint subsidies paid to the national textile industry. The rise and increasing strength of small farmer organizations that try to influence buying prices marked this period. At the time of writing it was not clear how closely these associations would adhere to political parties or act independently, or how adequate would be their financing and leadership.

Whatever the outcome of those developments, all the factors discussed in Bassett's conclusion are reminders that farmers were seldom passive recipients of government policy, but active agents whose response to changing conditions showed them once again to be shrewd calculators of their self-interest. That is a valuable message.

Colby College

JAN HOGENDORN

## THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICAN LAW

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703358487

*The Making of South African Legal Culture 1902–1936: Fear, Favour and Prejudice.*

By MARTIN CHANOCK. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp. xv + 571. £60 (ISBN 0-521-79156-1).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, law, apartheid.

The history of law in South Africa is rich, diverse and complex. Writing on South Africa's legal history is not. Until very recently, a good dose of legal history was considered to be an essential component of any law degree. Students learnt first of the Twelve Tables and Justinian. Next in the syllabus was the work of the Glossators and Post Glossators who, in the words of Hahlo and Kahn in their hugely influential book *The South African Legal System and its Background* (1968) 'restored the heritage of Roman law to Europe'. Then came Grotius, Bynkershoek, Van Leeuwen and, of course, Voet. For most the process was a confused absorption of dates, strange names and titles of books written in other languages. Links to current law were usually made by tracing the formal development of concepts in areas such as property, contract and the law of tort.

Initially, work by South African historians like Davenport, Van Onselen, Bundy and Colin Murray, which drew on rich legal sources, passed lawyers by, and legal history teaching remained apolitical and formalistic. But, by the 1970s, as law faculties at South Africa's English universities became more politicized, some academics started to explore the development of our legal culture in its political context. John Dugard's landmark book, *Human Rights and the South African Legal Order* (1978), does not formally claim to be a history book but for many students it provided a first encounter with the history of law in its apartheid setting. It also triggered major studies on the record of the South African judiciary – which was then much lauded

for its independence from the apartheid government. Soon, companion studies of the record of the Appellate Division by Hugh Corder and Christopher Forsyth appeared. More recently, legal historians have sought to add the 'words of peasants and classes' to the history of South African private law.<sup>1</sup>

Slowly, then, issues of power, policy and control have become part of discussions by lawyers of South Africa's legal history. *The Making of South African Legal Culture 1902–1936* is a giant contribution to the process. Breaking with tradition, its focus is not primarily on judges but on the relationship between the work of bureaucrats and judges ('judges and courts, far from being the centre of legal processes, were peripheral, and occasionally an irritant' [p. 24]). Its main concern is not with landmark cases but with the impact of law and, specifically, with the different experiences and perceptions of the rule and role of law that moulded our legal culture in the first third of the twentieth century.

In 16 carefully researched chapters, Chanock explores different ways of thinking about law in South Africa and their influence on its development. Extraordinary tensions between law and order in an undemocratic and racist society are examined through the history of policing, criminology, prisons and the development of criminal law (a short discussion of the process of criminalizing cannabis is particularly interesting in the light of a recent Constitutional Court challenge to that legislation). Chapters on South African common law include a discussion of development of marriage law in a racist state and integrate issues arising under customary law (still commonly not thought to be 'real law' although it regulates the lives of many black South Africans). The account is rich with detail that conveys the complexity and character of the times. Thus we read of a lecture series at the now notorious Pretoria Central Prison in 1910. Four lectures were given: 'The Heavenly Bodies' by Professor Gundry; 'The Formation of the Earth's Crust' by Professor de Villiers; 'Nature Study and the Insect World' by Dr. Gunning; and 'The Mielie' by Mr. Burrtt-Davy (p. 100). Less benignly, we read of the South African statesman, Smuts, justifying lawless action in 1914 by asking Parliament to consider 'the dreadful spectacle of thousands of natives in the compound singing their war song ... What would have happened if that wild collection of savages had broken loose?' (p. 137).

In one way this book is disappointing: it avoids drawing conclusions. Although it is introduced by four rich and nuanced stories to illustrate its themes, Chanock does not explain what these stories mean for his text, why he chose the subjects he did or what his research actually shows about South African legal culture. Rather than offering conclusions, his last chapter speculates about the future of law in post-apartheid South Africa. Nevertheless, the book is undoubtedly a major contribution to writing on South Africa's legal history and will surely prompt further, equally challenging, research.

*University of Cape Town*

CHRISTINA MURRAY

<sup>1</sup> D. Visser, quoting Richard Ireland in *Journal of Legal History*, 7 (1986), 352, in *Essays on the History of Law* (Cape Town, 1989), 1.

COERCION AND EXPLOITATION: LEVER  
IN THE BELGIAN CONGO

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703368483

*Travail forcé pour l'huile de palme de Lord Leverhulme.* By JULES MARCHAL. Borgloon, Belgium: Editions Paula Bellings, 2001. Pp. 395. €31 (ISBN 2-9600123-3-X).

KEY WORDS: Democratic Republic of Congo, colonial, agriculture, European businesses.

In 1911 the government of the Belgian Congo signed an agreement with the British soap company Lever Brothers to develop palm-oil exports. The agreement granted Lever's new subsidiary Huileries du Congo Belge (later Huilever) vast concessions, within which they had the rights to the oil-palms fruits and the labor of the local Africans who often regarded the trees as their own. Although wages gradually rose above the abysmally low initial rate of 25 centimes a day, wages and working conditions in the Lever concessions remained inferior even to the low standards prevailing in the colony.

In two earlier volumes of his *Histoire du Congo 1910-1945*, Jules Marchal examined forced labor in the mines and railroad. This third volume traces the details of Lever's operations to the late 1930s. At the administrative level it is a story of government complicity, connivance and concealment. For thousands of Africans it is a story of coercive contracts, low wages, inadequate food, miserable housing, forced displacement and high mortality. Because of the size of their investments and their importance to the colony's economy, HCB operations were able to evade legal standards and to have labor coerced into their service by direct intervention of the colonial administration long after such practices had been officially outlawed. In the concluding lines of his volume, Marchal evokes the image of a Congo haunted by the ghost of William Lever, not just by King Leopold's ghost.

In some respects the title of the book misleads. Rather than a study of all the HCB concessions, it is very largely limited to the Lusanga area of Kwango (later Kwilu) District. In places and for reasons that are not clearly explained, the study extends its coverage to include asides on the Forminie-Gre mining company and the Compagnie de Kasai. Coverage of the period after 1939 is thin due to the unavailability of sources. In a 'postface' the author argues that the basic conditions in Lusanga did not improve much during the last 15 years of Belgian rule.

Marchal, who served in the colonial service of the Belgian Congo and was a technical consultant to the Congo in the 1960s, bases his study on the Belgian colonial archives. He quotes extensively from archival sources, largely letting the materials speak for themselves, although he sometimes adds an acerbic comment on the veracity or credibility of the official in question. The level of detail can make for tedious reading, though his prose is crisp, forceful and relentlessly critical. Future researchers will welcome the volume's abstracts of official sources, but the volume is far from being a definitive study. Marchal has not used the Lever archives, British consular reports, personal papers or other relevant sources, and he rarely cites modern scholarship on this subject, except for his own previous books.

In the 'postface' Marchal explores why conditions in the Congo remained so deplorable. He contrasts the situation in the Congo with that in the British colony of Nigeria where, with no concession or monopoly, a greater quantity of palm-oil was produced by Africans who had been left the possession of the trees and who also manufactured the palm-oil themselves. Marchal quickly undercuts an explanation based on differences in administrative policies by pointing out that other British colonies used the same forced labor policies as the Belgians. Yet he does

not pursue the implication of his own argument that greater attention should be placed on the fact that Nigerians had been producing palm-oil for export for nearly a century *before* the beginning of the colonial period. In his book Africans exist as victims and occasionally as rebels, but not as leading actors in the larger story. Thus, while this is a valuable addition to a neglected aspect of colonial history, its contribution to African history is more limited.

*Boston College*

DAVID NORTHRUP

## INTER-RACIAL WORKERS' SOLIDARITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

DOI: 10.1017/S002185370337848X

*Workers, War and the Origins of Apartheid: Labour and Politics in South Africa.*

By PETER ALEXANDER. Oxford: James Currey; Athens OH: Ohio University Press; Cape Town: David Philip, 2000. Pp. 124. £39.95 (ISBN 0-85255-765-6); £14.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-765-5).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, apartheid, labour.

Peter Alexander uncovers a widespread inter-racial worker unity in Second World War South Africa. This was based on rapidly expanding manufacturing industry: by 1943, private manufacturing contributed more to national income than farming or mining, whilst fixed capital in all manufacturing rose an estimated 50.3 per cent between 1938/9 and 1944/5. By 1946, manufacturing employed 388,684 people, compared to 499, 461 in mining. The new workers were blacker (35.9 per cent were Africans, Indians or Coloured), more feminized (12.1 per cent in manufacturing) and more urbanized (40 per cent of South Africans by 1945).

These changes underpinned new labour organizing, often led by 'socialists, Communists, Trotskyists and Africanists', largely based amongst industrial workers, and mainly through independent African unions and multi-racial registered unions. By September 1939, there were three main federations: the Joint Committee of African Trade Unions (JCATU) with 15,700 members led by Trotskyists Max Gordon and Daniel Koza, the Co-ordinating Committee of Non-European Trade Unions (CCNETU) with 4,000 members led by former Communist Gana Makabeni and the South African Trades and Labour Council (SATLC) with 73,300 members in affiliates ranging from African unions to left-wing racially mixed ('open') unions, to racist right-wing craft unions.

Faced with a State unwilling to confront labour in wartime, a tight labour market and inflation reaching 40 per cent, workers won significant gains. Some, like JCATU, used wage determinations to secure gains; others struck for cost of living allowances and 'war bonuses'. Strikes rose threefold in 1942, with more strikers and days lost than in any year since 1922. Equally remarkable was inter-racial worker action in SATLC unions: a five-week strike by sweet workers in 1942 – the largest strike in ten years – was jointly won by 625 Whites and 495 Africans; a multi-racial strike at the OK Bazaars secured 'complete capitulation' in a single day; in Durban, Africans and Indians at Dunlop struck for thirteen weeks after employers victimized Indians.

African unionism developed rapidly. JCATU and CCNETU merged in 1941 to form the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU), and organized stoppages amongst coal, railway, dairy, municipal, meat and brick workers. Partly as a result of this militancy – Alexander suggests African workers were more militant than Whites – average wage gaps between African and White in industry



fell from 5.2:1 to 4.0:1 during the war. By 1944 African unions had over 100,000 members, and SATLC 168,432 by 1946, two-thirds in open unions.

As the war turned in favour of the Allies, government and employers hardened. In January 1942, War Measure 9 banned strikes in war industries and essential services; in December 1942, War Measure 145 banned strikes by African workers in general; in August 1944, War Measure 1425 prevented African union meetings on mines; tentative government moves to deracialize industrial relations came to naught.

Yet strike action reached its highest levels in 1943, far higher – Alexander shows – than previously recognized, and township activism also increased. White workers showed ‘greater racial toleration’ and a ‘leftish’ shift, reflected in SATLC resolutions, the growth of the South African Labour Party (SALP) and the municipal successes of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA). The CPSA also became ‘the single most influential force among black workers’ and decisive in CNETU.

The trend continued in 1946, with ‘more strikers ... than ... all previous years, except for 1920, and more “days lost” than in any other year’, but the tide was turning. Smuts repressed the 1946 African miners’ strike, subsequently prosecuting CPSA leaders, whilst employers resisted mass strikes by White miners and builders in 1946–7. Rising African unemployment undercut African unions, membership falling 80 per cent by 1950, reflecting a still mainly migrant and unskilled workforce.

But 1946–7 underlined Smuts’s inability to resolve the (African) ‘labour question’, helped split CNETU, polarized SATLC between left and right and alienated moderate African opinion. Smuts thereby paved the road to the 1948 National Party victory: whilst *organized* White labour largely *opposed* apartheid, Smuts’s labour and housing policies alienated White labour, undercut SALP by association, divided SATLC and undermined the material basis for White–African union cooperation by weakening the latter. Then ‘fatal body blows’ to White labour were dealt after 1948: the CPSA banned, leftists purged from SATLC, and African union registration and open unions disallowed.

Thus, Alexander concludes, controversially, that White labour was *defeated* in 1948 inasmuch as its class organizations were crippled and inter-racial unionism halted.

Overall, there is little to fault in this superb nuanced analysis of White labour, research on which remains mired in hostile liberal accounts, and leftist analyses for which White labour is at best irrelevant. Moving beyond the usual stereotypes – greedy labour aristocrats and lumpen ‘poor Whites’ – Alexander forges a link to White labour’s *own* intellectual traditions, notably Walker and Weinbren, Herd and Sachs.

More could be said about the union structures and practices that made it possible for CNETU’s Port Elizabeth head to earn £129 monthly. Racial identity and loyalty is somewhat underplayed, Alexander’s own strike figures showing only 5.5 per cent of non-White strikers, and 18.1 per cent of White strikers participating in mixed strikes. To be fair, Alexander points to open unionism’s limitations – such as segregation in the Garment Workers Union – but the impact of racial sentiment amongst African, Indian and Coloured workers is only mentioned in passing. Even the inter-racial CPSA had effectively adopted an African nationalist programme. Finally, support for Afrikaner Nationalism need not imply a sharp political break with prior ‘leftish’ White labour sentiments, insofar as Nationalism presented itself as a champion of White working people, opposed to *geldmag* (money-power) and the crimes of (British) imperialism.

*University of the Witwatersrand*

LUCIEN VAN DER WALT

UNITED STATES SUPPORT OF EUROPEAN  
INFLUENCE IN WEST AFRICA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703388486

*The United States and Decolonization in West Africa, 1950–1960.* By EBERE NWAUBANI. Rochester NY: University of Rochester Press, 2001. Pp. xxi + 338. £50.00; \$79 (ISBN 1-58046-076-3).

KEY WORDS: Ghana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea-Conakry, decolonization.

American policy towards Black Africa in the age of decolonization has not generally received the attention it deserves and much of the existing work has concentrated on the crises in the Congo and Angola. Ebere Nwaubani's book focuses on Ghana and Guinea but is not essentially about the role the United States played in influencing decolonization but rather concerns the linkages between American objectives before and after the transfer of power. The argument of the book is that the United States sought to encourage and develop a neo-colonial relationship between the European powers and their former colonies which was, for obvious reasons, far more successful in Ghana than in Guinea.

A brief account of the end of French rule in West Africa, especially Guinea, is provided along with a more detailed account of the transfer of power in British West Africa, particularly Ghana. The point of the latter is to support the argument that Nkrumah, far from being a communist in the 1950s, was eager to cooperate not only with the British but also with the Americans. The ideological aim of the Americans (as defined by Michael Hunt in *Ideology and US Foreign Policy* [New Haven, 1987]), with which Nkrumah went along, was to preserve the *status quo* for the benefit of Western interests after the transfer of power. Consequently, the United States in this period was always seeking to preserve the links, formal or informal, between the European powers and their colonial or neo-colonial dependencies in Africa.

The origins of this policy are deemed to lie in the post-1945 American pre-occupation with assisting European recovery by developing African resources, which was very much in line with the ambitions of the British Foreign Office at least until 1949. Truman's Point IV programme is regarded as an extension of the initial drive to use the idea of the Dual Mandate to give priority to European recovery needs. For the United States Africa was thus to remain tied closely to Europe with no real American attempt to define an independent future for the continent or to act independently there. The explanation for this is subsequently deemed to lie in the reluctance of the United States to provide economic support for an area of the world which had such small strategic significance.

While these explanations may just hold water for the Eisenhower and Truman years, the fact that they cannot be applied to the Kennedy years raises a number of doubts. While the attempt to develop an African policy was delayed until the second half of the decade, the US efforts to overcome the dilemmas of decolonization were not. Considerable thought was given to this by Dulles and others particularly with regard to French North Africa from 1953 to 1955. The Americans desired to win new states to the Western cause without alienating their European partners in NATO. In Black Africa the Americans were torn between the problems of delaying the transfer of power too long, which would run the risk of radicalizing the anti-colonial movements, and the problems of transferring it too soon which would risk the creation of unstable states susceptible to communism, as in the Congo, when 'responsible' leaders might not be in place to receive it.

Somewhat surprisingly, given its geographical location and the author's down playing of the Soviet or Cold War factor, there is an interesting section on the Congo crisis in 1960. The end of the US honeymoon with Nkrumah is located in this crisis following the Ghanaian leader's speech to the UN General Assembly in September 1960, which was allegedly used by Christian Herter as a reason for claiming that Nkrumah had gone over to the Soviet side. By then Ghana's usefulness had been reduced because the country was no longer the sole example of an ordered transfer of power into the Western-dominated neo-colonial world. The importance of winning the battle for the hearts and minds of African leaders, especially in technically independent states, as an essential part of the Cold War struggle, is generally underestimated in this and other contexts. The financing of the Volta River Project may have been inspired by the need to prevent the Soviets stepping in, but the ideological preference for protecting the *status quo* of European dominance of Africa is allegedly what precluded the definition of a more independent US African policy.

This is a clearly argued book with considerable interest and some surprising coverage, given the title, which adds to the debate on Cold War, neo-colonialism and the ending of colonial rule.

*London School of Economics*

JOHN KENT

## DECOLONIZATION POLITICS AND MID-WEST AUTONOMY

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703398482

*Ethnicity and Sub-Nationalism in Nigeria: Movement for a Mid-West State.*

By MICHAEL VICKERS. Oxford: WorldView, 2000. Pp. vii + 410. £49.95 (ISBN 1-872142-43-5); £24.95, paperback (ISBN 1-872142-44-3).

KEY WORDS: Nigeria, decolonization, ethnicity, regional.

This book is Michael Vickers's second major contribution to the study of the post-colonial Nigerian state project. The first study, *Structure and Conflict in Nigeria, 1960–1966*, co-written with Kenneth Post, was published by Heinemann in 1973. The earlier monograph is a path-breaking analysis of Nigeria's failed attempt at liberal democracy between 1960 and 1966. This experiment in constitutional democracy collapsed under the pressure of an inadequate tripartite federal structure that sought to mediate the struggle for state power among Nigeria's ethno-regional political class. In the book under review, Vickers succeeds in presenting a comprehensive analysis of Nigeria's most important ethnic minority movement – the movement for a Mid-West state – during the decolonization process.

The book examines the complicated world of Nigerian politics during the critical transitional phase of decolonization from the late 1940s to the early 1960s. Vickers focuses on the interaction among communal powerbrokers in the Mid-West, colonial imperatives, ethno-regionalism, class formation and constitutional politics. These important themes are analyzed in their appropriate historical and structural context. This was a flawed colonial legacy, the appropriation of traditional political authority, the politicization of ethnicity and the struggle of the political class over the distributive resource of a fragile state.

Through an extensive analysis of the structures and processes on which Mid-West powerbrokers mobilized collective action, Vickers consistently underscores the constitutional, political, social and institutional conditions on which an emergent political elite forged unifying ideologies among disparate communal

groups. The ultimate success of the leaders of the Mid-West Movement was contingent on the regional political class's ability to exploit the internal dynamics among local constituencies and appeal to the regional power struggle among the political class of the dominant ethno-regional groups, the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba in the 1950s and the 1960s. Vickers analyzed the challenge confronting the Mid-West Movement in the context of the exigencies of Nigeria's volatile federal politics. As the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba political class consolidated state power in their regional governments following the attainment of self-government in 1951, Mid-West protagonists assumed more pragmatic strategies in their struggle for autonomy. This is most effectively analyzed in a comprehensive chapter on the historic Willink Commission of 1957. Vickers's analysis of the struggle of Mid-West politicians for autonomy is multi-layered, emphasizing communal, class, spatial and regional dimensions. This case study is not about passive minorities subjected to the whims and caprices of the majority. Rather, minority politicians are consistently agents of their own destiny. They were active innovators who seized political opportunities as they unfolded during this critical historical moment. This pivotal chapter challenges many well-established assumptions about the struggle of minorities for citizenship in Nigeria.

The final chapters of the book present detailed and insightful analysis of the structural imbalance of the Independence Constitution. Going beyond the well-known narratives of the events that led to the collapse of the First Republic, Vickers provides compelling evidence of how the NPC/NCNC federal government succeeded in putting the AG Western Region government on the defensive on the Mid-West issue. These are authoritative chapters on the political implications of the contentious constitutional questions of the decolonization process and the transfer of power. They are sophisticated accounts of the conceptual framework of the regionalization of state power and the struggle of minorities for autonomy.

Vickers's detailed 'micro-politics' approach to minority struggles for power is an innovation in the historiography of African decolonization. His lucid style, judicious use of archives and synthesis of the secondary scholarship has provided a superior analysis of Nigerian politics. In an era dominated by superficial accounts of state collapse and neopatrimonialism, this book is a good reminder that social scientists need to take critical 'contextualization' seriously in the analysis of the post-colonial African state. Nigerian politicians are not merely rapacious political actors. Rather, by critically contextualizing the logic and rationale of their prevailing sociopolitical and economic environment, Vickers's political actors are dynamic and resourceful. In the tradition of his critical earlier book, Vickers has succeeded in writing an important and balanced analysis of Nigeria's volatile nation-state project.

*State University of New York, Stony Brook*

OLUFEMI VAUGHAN

## ORGANIZED LABOUR IN NAMIBIA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703408487

*Labor and Democracy in Namibia, 1971-1996.* By GRETCHEN BAUER. Athens OH: Ohio University Press; Oxford: James Currey, 1998. Pp. x + 220. £40 (ISBN 0-8255-753-1); £14.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-752-3).

KEY WORDS: Namibia, labour, democracy, colonial, post-colonial.

Democracy in Namibia remains fragile, and this clearly written monograph helps to explain why. Bauer analyses the complex history of the growth of an

organized labour movement in that country, from the nominal establishment of a National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) in the year before the General Strike of 1971, to post-independence developments in the 1990s. After a detailed consideration of the 1971 strike and the aftermath, she discusses the initial attempts to organize within Namibia and the union education done among Namibian exiles in Angola. She then traces the emergence of the NUNW as the 'fighting arm of SWAPO' from 1985 and its role in the period to Namibia's independence in 1990. She devotes a chapter for the role of labour in the first years of independence, when the NUNW was the largest union federation. Though her main text runs to no more than 137 pages, the extensive notes reveal the depth of the research on which her book is based.

In accounting for the absence of a vibrant, independent labour movement in Namibia today, Bauer presents three main arguments. The first relates to the nature of the country's economy, with its very small manufacturing sector, the second to the oppressive nature of apartheid rule and to its legacy, and the third to the fact that when unions did emerge in the mid-1980s, they did so with close ties to a nationalist movement concerned above all to win independence. While a major theme of her book is the close relationship that existed from the beginning between the Namibian labour movement and the main liberation organization, the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), she points out that the externally based SWAPO leadership was suspicious of the union activity that took place, both in its camps in Angola and within Namibia itself, seeing it as a potential challenge to SWAPO control of the liberation struggle and its outcome. A number of trade unionists fell victim to SWAPO's security apparatus in the crisis that shook the party in the early 1980s. While the unions that emerged in Namibia had as their main goal to help bring about an independent Namibia under SWAPO rule, the external leaders wanted to rein in popular-based confrontation within Namibia itself, for fear it might threaten control by the political movement. It is not surprising to find that the recently published memoir by Sam Nujoma, president of SWAPO – *Where Others Wavered* (London, 2001) – contains hardly any mention of the activity Bauer discusses.

In *Trade Unions and Democratization in South Africa, 1985–1997* (London, 1999) Glenn Adler and Eddie Webster argue that organized labour in South Africa played a key role in the collapse of apartheid in the late 1980s. In Namibia, by contrast, organized labour played a relatively minor role in the achievement of independence, and had no experience of democratic oppositional politics. Once independence was achieved, the unions were left weak, and were further weakened when a number of key officials were lured into government. This happened in South Africa as well, but Bauer does not explore the many contrasts between Namibia and South Africa in the relationship between labour and democratic consolidation. She fails to acknowledge that Pekka Peltola's *The Lost May Day: Namibian Workers Struggle for Independence* (Helsinki, 1995) addressed some of the same issues as she does. But *Labor and Democracy in Namibia* is likely long to remain the best survey of the growth of unions in Namibia. It is a major contribution to recent Namibian history, much of which remains under-researched. The topic is highly relevant today, for if Namibia had had a strong and independent labour movement since independence, Namibian democracy would not be threatened by ruling party domination.

University of Cape Town

CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS

THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT IN THE  
ANTI-APARTHEID STRUGGLE

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703418483

*The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983–1991.*

By JEREMY SEEKINGS. Oxford: James Currey; Cape Town: David Philip; Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2000. Pp. xiii + 371. £15.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-842-2).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, apartheid, nationalism, politics.

Drawing on material from the South African History Archive, the Mayibuye Archive, trial transcripts and over 100 interviews, this book is necessary reading for anyone concerned with South African politics in the 1980s. Seekings traces the inner dynamics and development of the United Democratic Front (UDF), a high-profile anti-apartheid umbrella organization launched in Cape Town in August 1983. The UDF was the largest organization in the struggle against the apartheid government's attempt to coopt those classified as Coloureds and Indians into its 'new deal' – a Tricameral Parliament that excluded the African majority. The poor turnout of Coloureds and Indians in the August 1984 elections represented a resounding success for the government's opponents.

The UDF's formation at the outset of the government's 'new deal' gave prominence to political struggles in Coloured and Indian areas. When the overwhelmingly African townships of the Witwatersrand erupted in protest in the mid-1980s, the UDF was at the margins of this revolt. Nonetheless, UDF leaders worked hard to build networks in African townships across the country. Its call for 'people's power' in late 1985 and 1986 hit a responsive chord, and its emphasis on nation-building helped it to overcome racial, ethnic and class divisions. Its success was dampened by the June 1986 State of Emergency, and even more so by its banning in 1988, although it soon restyled itself as the Mass Democratic Movement. As popular resistance revived at the end of 1989, the UDF seized the initiative, declaring itself unbanned and resuming public activity. Its hoped-for revival, however, was upstaged by the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC) and other organizations in February 1990. Concerned that continued mass action would hamper the ANC, the UDF reoriented itself to development issues; this in turn alienated activists. The ANC needed experienced cadres, and UDF officials began accepting positions in the ANC. In July 1991 14 former national or regional UDF office-holders were elected to the ANC's national executive committee. With regional branches collapsing, the UDF finally disbanded in August 1991.

Seekings offers many insights into the UDF's shifting relationship with the ANC. Both organizations defined themselves through their support for the Freedom Charter but behind this common orientation were complex tensions. Most UDF leaders were sceptical of insurrectionary or confrontational tactics, both on pragmatic and ethical grounds. Instead, the front's leadership focused on organization-building. This necessarily fuelled tensions with underground ANC members who supported armed struggle. The rapid growth of international funding fanned internal disputes over finances, while the increasing repression of the late 1980s impeded democratic practices and facilitated bureaucratization.

Placing the focus directly on the UDF inevitably means that other organizations are overshadowed. The reader does not get a sense of the trade union movement's tremendous role in the 1980s, and the many small groups that chose not to affiliate to the UDF are eclipsed, defined as 'non-Charterists' and 'anti-Charterists' rather than in terms of their own agendas.

Seekings explains the UDF's fate in terms of the drain of its personnel into the ANC, the shrinking of its agenda as it shifted from defiance to development and reconstruction and, finally, the hostility of large sections of the Charterist movement. 'There was a certain inevitability to the organisational shift from the UDF to the ANC', Seekings writes. 'The organisational shift seems more inevitable still with hindsight' (p. 260). But political outcomes are rarely, if ever, inevitable; this political reorientation is precisely what needs to be explained. In the 1980s, Seekings contends, 'the ANC was hegemonic within opposition politics' (p. 304). But with the ANC banned, he suggests, the UDF provided a flexible means to carry on the Charterist tradition. This is too simple. Anti-apartheid politics in the 1980s was notable for its pluralism, and the trade union movement was arguably the most pivotal force. The ANC became increasingly prominent as the 1980s unfolded; subsequently, the South African Communist Party seemingly replaced the UDF in the tripartite alliance of the ANC and its allies. These developments, followed by the narrowing of the political spectrum in the 1990s, remain complex and unresolved problems.

*University of York*

ALLISON DREW

## CULTURE, DECOLONIZATION AND AFRICAN MODERNITY

DOI: 10.1017/S002185370342848X

*The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa 1945-1994.*

Edited by OKWUI ENWEZOR. Munich: Prestel, 2001. Pp. 496. £45; \$75  
(ISBN 3-7913-2502-7).

KEY WORDS: African modernities, culture, intellectual, nationalism.

Two things are immediately striking about this sumptuously produced volume: its sheer mass (it weighs six pounds and contains hundreds of colour plates) and its odd title. Forty-nine years is short for half a century, let alone a century: and the austere wording gives no hint of the visual riches within. For this is a book designed to accompany an exhibition at the Museum Villa Stuck in Munich about African modernity, as represented in art, textiles, photography, architecture, music, theatre, literature and film.

However, Okwui Enwezor's introduction and some of the other scholarly contributions to the volume explain why this title was chosen. The twentieth century was the century of Western modernity; but in Africa, they argue, modernity was delayed for half a century, since it could only come with decolonization. The focus is on the intellectual and artistic energies that were generated in the course of liberation struggles, and the need to think through the implications and consequences of radical African thought, in order to constitute more fully a specifically African form of modernity. This is a modernity, some of the contributors suggest, which is still an unrealized project even as Africa passes into post-modernity. Arguing that we have not yet understood the effects of the process of decolonization on the emergence of 'new narratives and subjectivities, identities and nationalities, contemporary and historical forms' (p. 10), Enwezor proposes a methodology embodied in the materials presented in the exhibition, which could be seen as constituting a kind of contemporary 'critical biography' of African modernity. The pictures, then, are the evidence and the argument. They bear witness to inextinguishable vitality, individuality and creativity. There are some unforgettable images, and every reader will dwell on different ones. I think of

Seydou Keita's enigmatic, yet eloquent, studio portraits of the 1950s; Jane Alexander's disturbing sculptures of beast-headed men sitting in a row on a bench; Erhabor Ogieva Emokpae's stunningly simple and symmetrical 'Struggle between life and death'. There are pictures of buildings, monuments, sculptures, town plans, record sleeves, theatrical performances, book jackets and film stills. There are also more than 100 fascinating archival news photographs, showing meetings, strikes, demonstrations and the first wave of nationalist leaders in their smiling prime, in an era when British governors wore plumed hats and the youth wore suits to dance the twist.

Enwezor and his co-contributors to the exhibition and the volume are surely right to maintain that politics cannot be separated from artistic representations; and that the construction of urban space, images printed on cloth, portraits made in photographers' studios and trends in popular music are vital components in a 'biography' of the African continent, shedding light on popular transformations of consciousness and the nature of social memory. It is a strength of this project that it does not separate emergent popular forms from the better-known and now canonical writings of African intellectuals of nationalist, pan-Africanist and Negritudinist orientation. Indeed, we are vigorously encouraged to focus on the unity of African intellectual and artistic assertions in the era of decolonization. The last quarter of the volume is an anthology of key speeches and writings by Nkrumah, Senghor, Cabral, Nasser, Nyerere, Mandela, Césaire and others, as if to lay down before us the evidence that pan-Africanism, pan-Arabism, African socialism and Negritude are vital presences in any understanding of recent African cultural history – just as cultural forms should be understood as vital presences in any history of political thought in Africa. It could be argued that the emphasis on unity and continuity between elite and popular ideologies, and between countries with different colonial and pre-colonial histories, is utopian; but it has also encouraged the contributors to make useful attempts at continent-wide comparison, synthesis and overview, often including North Africa. It gestures towards a vast project, a comprehensive history of African artistic and intellectual modernity across the continent.

The volume contains introductory essays by V. Y. Mudimbe and Mahmood Mamdani as well as Enwezor, and fifteen short, diverse and sometimes thought-provoking scholarly essays on specific art forms. In the field of visual art, there are pieces by Chika Okeke on the history of modern African art across the continent; Marilyn Martin specifically on South Africa; Ulli Beier on the euphoric proliferation of all kinds of popular and modern art in Nigeria during the period of decolonization. On textiles, there is an informative piece by John Picton, and on photography, Lauri Firstenberg's discussion of the role of photography in the formation and revelation of African identity and 'African subjective practices' (p. 175). Three pieces on architecture and urban space, by Rory Bester, Gwendolyn Wright and Nnamdi Elleh, show in different ways how colonial planning and local agency interacted. Music is covered by Wolfgang Bender, and theatre by John Conteh Morgan and Maishe Maponya. There is also an interview with Chinua Achebe and a paean to Negritude literature by Chinweizu. Finally, there are pieces on African cinema by Mark Nash and Manthia Diawara.

Not surprisingly, given its polemical slant and its commitment to investigating what is seen as a common struggle, the volume pays relatively little attention to the compliant, ambiguous or evasive aspects of the texts and images. Subversion and defiance are sought and found. Colonialism, correspondingly, tends to be represented monolithically, as a generalized and totalizing external ideology, constituted upon the illusion of a post-Enlightenment Universal Subject, against which a plurality of specific African subjectivities define themselves. This seems



to pay scant attention to one of the central themes of twentieth-century European art and critical theory, the fragmentation and unmooring of personal identities.

Not all the contributors make a clear distinction between modernism (the twentieth-century aesthetic movement) and modernity (the condition of society). Those who do – Chika Okeke on modern art and Mark Nash on cinema, for example – have interesting things to say about the relationship between the two. This relationship is an relatively neglected area of inquiry, and one on which the current ubiquitous, absorbing but often irritatingly diffuse investigation of ‘modernities’ in Africa could profitably focus.

*University of Birmingham*

KARIN BARBER

## AFRICAN INTELLECTUALS, UNIVERSITIES AND NATIONALISM

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703438486

*Nationalism and African Intellectuals.* By TOYIN FALOLA. University of Rochester Press: Rochester NY, 2001. Pp. xx + 372. \$75; £50 (ISBN 1-58046-085-2).

KEY WORDS: Intellectual, nationalism, historiography.

This is an expanded version of three lectures that Toyin Falola gave at Smith College, Massachusetts, in spring 1999. As with all expanded lectures, it suffers from unevenness of extrapolation, or even over-elaboration. Chapter 1 introduces the volume by ‘providing the context for assessing the African intellectual tradition’ from the nineteenth century to the end of the Second World War. Scholars familiar with the Pan-African traditions in scholarship will find little that is new in this overview. Although Falola contends that African intellectuals ‘have constructed or accepted not only the ideas of the nation-state, but also those of ethnicity and even the larger project of a continental identity for Africa’ (p. 15). Falola does not problematize these issues beyond merely asserting that: ‘Change, continuity with the past, and adaptations to new circumstances have all been part of the challenges that intellectuals have confronted as they make sense of modernity and reflect on what they perceive as their alienation in a world increasingly dominated by European values’ (p. 15). There is nothing new here. Beyond stating the now absurd notion that ‘To be excessively pro-tradition is to despise modernization’ (p. 16), the idea that generations of Africans have been uniformly alienated over the past two centuries verges on the ludicrous. Put simply African scholars of my generation, born after the Second World War, have prided ourselves on our mastery of the West, and on our ability to contest it on our own terms. The author hardly needs the reminder that we have not been cultivating the same intellectual terrain as did Jomo Kenyatta in the 1930s or Leopold Senghor in the 1940s. To label my era as ‘Aiyé Oyinbo’ – ‘The era of the white man, of change’ (p. 48) is to miss the dialectic of African political independence, which has informed the discourses of my generation. There is a difference between the concerns of this generation and those that went before us.

In Part Two Falola focuses on nationalism and Pan-Africanism rushing the reader through a hodge-podge of ideas from nationalism – leadership and vision – to the question of reparations. One hardly sees the point in this rapid rehash of the known terrain.

The substantive contribution of this volume lies in Part Three, where Falola speaks to ‘The Rise and Decline of the African Academy’ with a focus on African universities and the problem of modernization, which Falola surprisingly

subsumes as 'envisioning African countries as moving in the direction of strong nation-states, with liberal politics and market-oriented economies' (p. 197). In this simplistic rendition reminiscent of World Bank/IMF-speak of the past two decades, the author thereby eschews the wider quests for intellectual autonomy that have engaged an important constituency in African scholarship since the 1970s. However, there is not much to disagree with in this chapter, since it basically covers the subject of the expansion era of the African universities from 1953 and their subsequent decline since the 1980s.

The really masterful contribution of this volume lies in chapter 6, 'African glories: nationalist historiography'. In this section (pp. 223–60), Falola walks us through the details of the rise of the Ibadan School of History from the time of Kenneth Dike in the 1950s, through to its internal critique by a younger generation typified by Obaro Ikime in the 1970s. The author is less familiar with the nuances behind the Dar es Salaam School of History which he treats perfunctorily via the lenses of Temu and Swai.

The final chapter is a padded survey of various ideas ranging from the place of Africans in the western Academy to which many of us have fled since the 1980s, to the authorial voices of Ali Mazrui, George Ayittey and Nawal El Saadawi. This chapter could have benefited from longer gestation.

This volume will find a ready place alongside the more nuanced studies concerned with Nationalism, Pan-Africanism and the African Diaspora.

*Rice University*

E. S. ATIENO ODHIAMBO

## FARM WORKERS IN POST-COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703448482

*Working on the Margins: Black Workers, White Farmers in Postcolonial Zimbabwe.*

By BLAIR RUTHERFORD. Harare: Weaver Press; London: Zed Press, 2001. Pp. xiv + 268. £45; \$69.95 (ISBN 1-84277-001-4); £15.95; \$25, paperback (ISBN 0-7974-2241-2).

KEY WORDS: Zimbabwe, post-colonial, agriculture, labour, politics, white settlement.

Since the 1970s, when Duncan Clarke carried out his work on the political economy of plantation labour in Zimbabwe, there has been little extended treatment of farm workers in the country. They remained largely on the margins, not only of the country's politics, but also of academic discourse. From this position of subordination and near 'invisibility' the numerous problems facing this section of the labour force rarely entered the public sphere, and when they did so, were usually made manifest through the interpretive framework of agencies speaking 'for them'.

It is this silence and marginalization that is the subject of Blair Rutherford's ethnographic study of farm labour in the Hurungwe district of Mashonaland West. Rutherford's central thesis is that farm workers have been placed into a liminal status for two major reasons. First, the influence of a colonial and, to a large extent, post-colonial discourse on Zimbabwean rural development that places farm workers 'betwixt and between' the two major categories used in the discourse, namely white-dominated commercial farms and the small-holder farms in the Communal Lands occupied by the majority of the population. Moreover, in a context in which the commercial farm/communal land binary translates into

a modern/traditional dualism, farm workers have not fitted into either category with the ease demanded by such a development discourse. This problem of their positioning was also associated with their perceived 'foreignness', given that many of the early workers in this sector emanated from Malawi and Mozambique. Second, drawing on Foucault, Rutherford ascribes their marginality to the development of what he terms 'domestic government', through which farm workers were placed into a system of administration that was largely beyond the scope of the state. In this system, apart from concerns about labour supply and occasional interest in productivity issues, commercial farm workers 'were viewed less as a government responsibility and more as a domestic responsibility of European farmers themselves' (p. 14).

The political effects of this discourse and form of government have contributed further to the problems of these workers. During the liberation struggle, farm workers were often associated with their white workers – given the paternalism of the domestic government regime, and the view that farm workers were foreign to the national struggle. Many thus suffered from the violence of the liberation forces. During the post-colonial period the new state, through its party cadres, sought to challenge the domestic government regime, by introducing more progressive aspects of labour relations reform on to the farms. However, this enforcement was also accompanied by coercive measures of party mobilization and control in areas into which the new state sought to extend its political reach. However, as the politics of reconciliation in Zimbabwe translated into a peaceful co-existence with dominant production structures, the Zanu PF government withdrew from its interventions on commercial farms from the mid-1980s, leaving the domestic government regime largely intact.

Rutherford tracks these changes with great skill and sensitivity, extending his critique of domestic government into a micro study of compound lives, with a particularly compelling analysis of the role of women. Through his examination of workings of the farm compound, Rutherford also provides a fascinating study of the politics of race at a micro level. This is particularly important, because in a country where the public discourse has been dominated by racial categorization, there has been little academic attention to the construction of race, particularly in the post-colonial period. Additionally, Rutherford provides very useful insights into the relations between farm workers and the communal lands, showing in particular the ways in which such workers have been entering the process of 'becoming a peasant', thus necessarily complicating the picture of land tenure and land markets in this 'traditional' sector.

As Zimbabwe has moved into a period of deepening crisis since the late 1990s, the emergence of a vibrant opposition politics has provided both opportunities and renewed threats to farm workers. The opposition, led by the trade union movement, made important advances in the mobilization of farm workers and commercial farmers during 1990–2000. The response of the Mugabe regime, through the farm occupations of 2000 and beyond, was to demonize not only the white farmers, but also the farm workers, as being extensions of white politics. The workings of domestic government were once again used to proscribe the spaces in which farm workers could speak for themselves. This situation was exacerbated by white farmers who purported to speak for black workers through the general language of human rights. One of the most tragic results of the 'land reform' programme currently underway in Zimbabwe has been the displacement of thousands of farm workers, who have once again been largely marginalized and located as 'foreigners'.

Rutherford's book is an excellent analysis of the complex political relations that have been faced by farm workers. It is a theoretically sophisticated and nuanced

study of the problem, which stands almost alone in this area of study. The book is essential reading for an understanding of the politics of land in Zimbabwe.

*University of Zimbabwe*

BRIAN RAFTOPOULOS

## LOCAL VALUES AND FOREST DYNAMICS

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703458489

*Contesting Forestry in West Africa*. Edited by REGINALD CLINE-COLE and CLARE MADGE. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2000. Pp. xi + 324. £42.50 (ISBN 0-7546-1253-8).

KEY WORDS: Western Africa, environment.

During the last decades much concern has been voiced about the loss of tropical forests and related environmental degradation. Recently several scientific studies have challenged the often neo-Malthusian perspectives on which these concerns are based. The books of Tiffen *et al.* on *More People, Less Erosion* (1994) and of Fairhead and Leach on *Misreading the African Landscape* (1996) have been very influential in stimulating discussion on the relation between natural resource dynamics and socio-economic trends. A major question is whether local societies in tropical regions should be considered as agents of deforestation or as creators of dynamic forested landscapes. *Contesting Forestry in West Africa* is a new addition to this discussion. Its main premise is that multiple realities exist regarding the use, management and dynamics of forest. Forestry should be considered as 'a set of negotiated ideologies and practices which need to be situated both historically and geographically' (p. 38). Moreover, 'forestry laws and policies are contested, circumvented, selectively applied, interpreted and reinterpreted in their making and application' (p. 56). Consequently, 'patterns of construction, contestation, meaning or interpretation concerning the forest environment in any given society are grounded in historical processes' (p. 120). These ideas are put forward in the introduction by the editors on 'Constructing, contesting and situating forestry in West Africa' and elaborated in 13 chapters divided over four sections on historical contestations, cultural negotiations, institutional negotiations and environmental inter(e)actions respectively.

The main premise of the book is expounded in two major themes. In the first, the multiple meanings attributed to forests within local societies are stressed. Several chapters provide valuable information on the socio-cultural and productive roles of forests and trees for local communities. In two chapters by McCaskie and Madge detailed descriptions are given of how forest is embedded in the cultural identity of the Asante in Ghana and the Jola in south Senegal respectively. The specific local uses of forest resources in the woody savannas of Bénin are described by Schreckenberg. These chapters include various examples of how local values regarding forest have affected indigenous management practices for forested landscapes. Also Bassett and Boutrais's chapter on the interaction between cattle and trees in the savanna areas of Cameroon and Ivory Coast, and Thomas's chapter on environmental change in riparian forest in Nigeria, include insightful description on the nature and effects of indigenous management practices. Such practices are dynamic in response to the regular contestation and renegotiation of forest values, which result from changing religious and cultural identities, growing economic aspirations, changing social and demographic conditions as well as changing ecological conditions.

In the second theme much attention is given to the different perspectives of local communities and official forestry policies regarding the nature and value of forest. Eight chapters analyse official forest policies in different West African countries and the environment–people perspectives on which these are based. McEwan describes how forest was represented in colonial literature. Cline-Cole, Fairhead and Leach, and Amanor describe for various countries how forest is officially defined, and how this effects the viewpoints on forest use and dynamics. They demonstrate how forestry and environmental policies are embedded in political, economic and institutional interests, which are often not directly related to the livelihood strategies of local communities. Schroeder, Ite, Alexander and Ribot present the results of different official forestry development projects, i.e. a conservation-with-development project in a National Park in Nigeria, the community forestry programmes in Gambia and Senegal and the cultivation of Eucalyptus plantations on Nigeria's Jos Plateau. A common consideration is that the policy perspectives on which the projects are based are not well adjusted to the local realities. In some cases the development interventions are contested or ignored by the local people, in other cases they are negotiated and locally adjusted.

This book can be read in two ways. First, it can be enjoyed for its detailed and insightful descriptions of the multiple realities of forest, including the multiple reconstructions of the dynamics of forest, reflecting basic perceptions of the nature and social value of forests. The book demonstrates that local forest conditions and trends can only be understood in their location-specific context of dynamic socio-cultural, economic and ecological conditions. Moreover, forest conditions should not be considered in isolation, but within an overall landscape. Several examples provide good illustrations that the question of whether a forest landscape should be considered as degraded or (semi)domesticated and resource enriched is often not as straightforward as suggested in the prevailing official policies. Not only ecological conditions, but also the economic and cultural role of forest resources for local communities, should be considered. In view of these multiple realities, a reinterpretation of forestry policies are called for. Such new policies should be based on an approach of location-specific negotiation between the various interested parties.

Second, the book can be read as a polemic on wrongly focused professional forestry development and conservation policies and the lack of policy attention to location-specific forest values and environmental processes. This polemical approach of the book is demonstrated by its title and is reinforced by often-repeated statements on the discrepancy between location specificity and policy generalization of forest conditions. The book would have gained from a more analytical elaboration of this conclusion through a more systematic comparative contextualization of the various studies. Relatively little attention is given to the specific ecological and socio-economic context of the case-studies. It is sometimes not clear whether the observed location-specific phenomena are considered to represent more general trends. In several articles also little attention is given to how demographic changes, newly advancing land-use technologies and newly emerging economic forces impact on the local phenomena described. The book is also limited in its geographic coverage. The chapters mostly deal with former British colonies and little attention is given to the differences in forestry policies between the former British and French colonies.

The book offers a very interesting overview of the multiple realities of forestry in West Africa. However, the argument might have been placed in a less polemical and more analytical context by focusing on 'negotiating and constructing' rather than 'contesting' forestry.

*Wageningen University, The Netherlands*

K. F. WIERSUM

## BELIEFS ABOUT SATAN IN EWE CHRISTIANITY

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703468485

*Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana.* By BIRGIT MEYER. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999. Pp. xxvi + 265. £16.95, paperback (ISBN 0-7486-1303-X).

KEY WORDS: Ghana, Christianity, African modernities.

In contrast to much of the earlier literature on Christianity in Africa, which focused on African concepts of God, we are now being treated to an array of texts on Satan. The book under consideration here is written by the foremost analyst of these religious developments to date. Birgit Meyer originally began her research in eastern Ghana in the late 1980s on grassroots understandings of Christianity among the Peki Ewe. However, she soon realized that a more interesting perspective was the way perceptions of, and preoccupations with, the Devil united the various churches – former mission churches, African independent and Pentecostal churches – in the region.

Meyer makes a cogent case for extending our studies of religion in Africa to take better account of the complex interactions of religions at the local level, and the formative role of these early local appropriations of Christianity. She is particularly interested in the relationships between the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), a mission church with nineteenth-century German pietist roots, and two independent offshoots, Agbelengor – the Lord's Pentecostal Church, and the EPC 'of Ghana', and in particular their shared discourses on demons and attitudes toward 'traditional' religion. In her introduction, Meyer underscores the dual focus of her approach: the historical encounter between missionaries and Africans, and the popular praxis of demonology as illuminating pointer to the changing social and economic circumstances of Ghanaian Christians. In contrast to Robin Horton's much touted theory of conversion, Meyer argues that contact with these forces of modernity may actually stimulate rather than diminish beliefs in local spirits, particularly demons.

The book begins with an overview of Peki history, followed by a description of the worldview of the nineteenth-century German Pietist missionaries on home ground before examining how this message was translated and vernacularized in Ewe language and religion. In contrast to more enlightened Protestants, the Pietists' (as well as Pentecostalist) belief in the Devil provided a bridge to popular religion without dismissing it as superstition. Naturally this was an exercise in power relations and Meyer shows how this process involved the subordination and diabolization of Ewe religious beliefs and practices. Subsequent chapters discuss how Ewe converts responded to such depictions. Some had already started turning away from the mission churches toward the newer, independent churches, which took ideas about the Devil and evil spirits more seriously.

Fissiparous tendencies only began to appear in Peki in the 1960s and Meyer details in chapter 5 the differences between the schisms and the mother church, the EPC and the attendant theological and cultural critiques. She argues that what separates the three churches is not concepts but ritual praxis regarding evil powers. In the penultimate chapter on doctrines and rituals, Meyer points to the mediatory function of the Pentecostal churches in providing imaginary space for dealing with evil, 'ancestral' forces, as well as elaborate rituals of separation intended to foster a stronger sense of individualism.

These tensions between Christian ideals of nuclear family and individual and the demands of extended families frequently manifest themselves in spirit possession. In the excellent final chapter on human-spirit relations Meyer brings her

anthropological skills to the fore in her discussions of the various theories of spirit possession and their applicability to her case material. The satanic Other has to be chased away from its hold over a person's spirit and replaced by the divine Other, the Holy Spirit. This is a complex process, frequently involving women, which moves through cycles of expression and transformation, possession and exorcism. There is also possession by what Meyer calls the 'newer spirits', among which are the Mami Water (or Wata) spirits. These perceptibly 'foreign' spirits are seen as expressing forbidden desires for wealth and sex, which mediate between local conditions of life and global possibilities, as perceived through the real world or the cinema. In the latter regard see Meyer's groundbreaking work on popular culture.<sup>1</sup>

In her conclusion, Meyer reviews the answers she has provided to her earlier question, about why (Pentecostal) Christianity cannot displace these beliefs about the Devil among the Ewe. It is primarily because people themselves have to live with contradictions and ambiguities, and the Pentecostals both recognize and treat these tensions. This leads Meyer justly to critique unilinear understandings of 'conversion' or 'progress'. It is but one example of the numerous ways in which the author has thoughtfully problematized a number of interesting issues in this book, and provided a viable bridge between disciplinary understandings of religious ideas and praxis in contemporary Africa.

*University of Tennessee, Knoxville*

ROSALIND I. J. HACKETT

## 'WICKEDNESS' AND GENDER IN THE LONG TWENTIETH CENTURY

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703478481

*'Wicked' Women and the Reconfiguration of Gender in Africa*. Edited by DOROTHY L. HODGSON and SHERYL A. MCCURDY. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann; Oxford: James Currey; Cape Town: David Philip, 2001. Pp. xvi + 325. \$69.50; £40 (ISBN 0-85255-695-0); \$29; £16.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-645-4).

KEY WORDS: Gender, women, colonial, post-colonial.

This welcome collection of essays uses the idea of 'wickedness' as an analytical category to expose processes of political, economic and social construction and change. The focus is not on 'wicked behaviour' (whatever that might be) but on *ascriptions* of 'wickedness', and specifically claims about 'wicked' behaviour by women. Some of the essays are about colonial ascriptions of 'wickedness', others are about indigenous ascriptions and some, notably Jane Parpart's essay on the Zambian Copperbelt and Misty Bastian's on Igbo women's dances, demonstrate how the same behaviour can be seen as 'wicked' by both white and African authorities, but for very different reasons. Norms from both indigenous culture and from European notions of modernity could be used selectively to define 'badness' and 'respectability', and in this sense the ascription of 'wickedness' represented a new, syncretic 'reconfiguration of gender' (Parpart, Musisi).

The essays have different time-depths, but overall the book covers the 'long' twentieth century. Ascriptions of female wickedness simultaneously reflect male strategies for controlling women and widespread anxiety about social transformation. Andrea Cornwell notes how discussions of female wickedness may be projected back on to women of a previous generation, while still providing a way

<sup>1</sup> Birgit Meyer, 'Pentecostalism, prosperity and popular cinema in Ghana', *Culture and Religion*, 3, 1 (May 2002), 67–87.

of chewing over anxieties about the present. Collectively, the essays illustrate that women were more likely to be described as 'wicked' in situations where women's lot was actually getting harder. Women who resisted the additional demands made on them, and women who gained additional power and responsibility alongside their new burdens, were both likely to be seen as 'wicked', the former for resisting established power relationships, and the latter for transcending them. Sometimes accusations of 'wickedness' arose not because women's behaviour had changed, but because, as in the case of Ghanaian market women, the interests of those around them had changed (Clark).

These are social and economic matters, but 'wickedness' has a moral, and often a sexual, connotation. The tendency to equate 'wickedness' with sexual behaviour reflects both African and European systems of controlling women. African patriarchy displayed concerns about marriage, and therefore by implication the restriction of women's sexuality to marriage. European administrators reflected a late Victorian obsession with morality as a sexual issue, linking moral and physical degeneration. Colonial powers regarded women as 'wicked' when they appeared to be reducing or controlling their fertility (associated with VD, which was in turn associated with prostitution). However, as Sheryl McCurdy observes, ascribing 'wickedness' to women also provided an excuse for the failure of colonial policies and indirect rule.

Wickedness seems, in many of these essays, to be a synonym for 'independence'. Nakanyike Musisi's description of nineteenth-century Baganda suggests a society so restrictive that *any* independent female agency would be described as 'wickedness'. Cornwall notes that in south-eastern Nigeria, the 'wicked' woman is, in this sense, 'everywoman' (p. 81). Nonetheless, most essays concentrate on some aspect of sexual autonomy – marital independence, being unmarried, prostitution. Contributions reflect uneasiness about unmarried professionals (Okeke), about women who have been married but are now independent (Cornwell, Cooper) and about women who control resources (Schroeder, Clark). Marital independence is the predominant theme. Many of the essays reflect women wanting to evade either specific marriages, or marriage in general. Some reflect a change in ideas about the marriage relationship itself, with women wanting to move from arranged/lineage marriages to love/individual marriages. David Coplan's interesting essay demonstrates how migrant Basotho women were not *seeking* marital independence, but responding to marital breakdown. Marital independence is framed in the moral discourse of 'wickedness', but, as Jean Allman points out, marital (and sexual) independence is usually a function of economic self-sufficiency rather than loose morals (p. 138).

'Wickedness' is often part of a binary set of stereotypes. Defining 'badness' is part of defining 'respectability' (Parpart, Musisi). Female 'wickedness' has its counterpart in male inadequacy. Indeed, some of these essays are as much, or more, about ascriptions of inadequacy in men than of wickedness in women. Husbands are targeted for their failure to support their wives, being described as 'useless' (Cornwall) or 'lazy' (Allman), or for their 'wickedness' in finding ways to get their hands on their wives' incomes (Schroeder). In Byfield's essay, women's readiness to use white jurisdiction to attempt to get divorces was paralleled by men's use of white jurisdiction to get maximum refund of bridewealth. If 'wickedness' meant a greater openness to divorce, then men appeared as wicked as women.

As with the attacks on 'working mothers' in the right wing press of Europe and the US, these essays illustrate that women do not need to be victims or heroines to be attacked as 'wicked'. They just need to be getting on with their lives within a new 'configuration of gender'. Equally, however, they illustrate that calling women 'wicked' may be the last resort of a fading patriarchy. Margot Lovett's male elders



in Tanzania seem to be bemoaning their loss of power in the past, rather than fighting an ongoing gender battle in the present. As women adapt to new social formations, which place even greater burdens on them as independent providers, the new patriarchies have less to gain by calling these over-worked women 'wicked'.

There is very little discussion of 'real' wickedness in these essays. Coplan makes a distinction between the subversion of patriarchy and a genuine lack of moral standards, and notes that most of his 'wicked' women are guilty only of the former. Parpart suggests that embracing aspects of 'badness' could even be a useful temporary strategy for 'respectable' women. Surprisingly, Gracia Clark's essay on Ghanaian market women is the only one that links ideas of 'wickedness' to ideas of witchcraft, suggesting that the attribution of 'wickedness' is more benign than it might at first appear. Maybe being 'wicked' is not so bad after all.

*University of the West of England, Bristol*

DIANA JEATER

## PASTORALISTS AND POVERTY

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703488488

*The Poor Are Not Us: Poverty and Pastoralism.* Edited by DAVID M. ANDERSON and VIGDIS BROCH-DUE. Oxford: James Currey; Nairobi: E.A.E.P.; Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 1999. Pp. xi + 276. £40 (ISBN 0-85255-266-1); £14.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-265-3).

KEY WORDS: Eastern Africa, pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial, animal husbandry, poverty.

Is poverty a state-of-affairs or a state-of-mind? Virtually all of rural Africa may seem impoverished to cosmopolitans, who would be surprised to hear that many livestock keepers consider themselves rich in the currency that counts. For international agencies charged with the task, it has always been difficult to assess degrees of economic well-being and poverty among communities largely supported on their own subsistence, occupying their own land, and living in homes they have themselves fashioned, since cash 'in-comes' per se are relatively inconsequential to their livelihoods. Looking at pastoral poverty in historical perspective, Waller examines Illife's claim that pre-colonial Africa experienced 'epidemic' or 'conjunctural' poverty caused by crisis (drought, stock loss, famine) but not 'endemic' or 'structural' poverty, notwithstanding 'chronic want'. In principle, endemic poverty was avoided by redistribution through family 'safety nets'. Poor pastoralists, by definition stockless, would soon either be ex-pastoralists or dead were it not for a changing political environment.

Today, herds are still limited by ecology and the unpredictability of rainfall, but their human owners are also sustained by markets for stock, wages and relief. In strictly pastoral terms, a growing human population will inevitably be poorer. But the pastoral equation now includes towns and trading centers, economic diversification, international relief, government assistance, development projects, the spread of agriculture, commercialization of livestock, tourism, and missions, churches and schools. This volume explores the implications for herding communities of profound social, political and economic changes, not just in livestock holdings and production but in strategies of accessing non-pastoral resources and accommodating a global world, urban realities, an international community and a state, with all its drawbacks and promises.

Quite different vantage points on pastoral poverty are presented in the case studies from Eastern Africa that comprise the volume. But since findings for one

arena are often more generally valid, this insightful edition reviews most of the significant factors concerning the slide of pastoralists down the continuum from prosperity to impoverishment.

For the trend towards sedentarization, a central question for development policy is whether settlement or migration to small towns are symptoms of or remedies for poverty, desperate strategies for staving off the most dire outcomes of stock loss, or positive steps to achieve stability in settled life and the amenities of 'development'? For the Rendille, Fratkin and collaborators report that nomads with access to high-protein foods experience better health than communities clustered around sites of relief or involved in settled agro-pastoralism, whose diets are narrowed to grains. Talle describes how Maasai herders who frequent Namanga town on the Kenyan–Tanzanian border seeking casual labor are culturally viewed with contempt and associated with the 'smell' of poverty by true town dwellers, while they themselves associate the town and 'modernity' with corruption and pauperization. Turkana describe towns as 'poverty in the making'.

Commoditization of pastoralism also has had ambiguous outcomes, livestock markets being used by the poor to survive, and only by the wealthier for accumulation. Zaal and Dietz, comparing West Pokot and Kajiado Maasai, found that liberalized markets, offering better prices, made many in Kajiado District more prosperous, advancing development of semi-commercialized ranches, but less so for poorer West Pokot, for whom the market was but a coping strategy.

Pastoralists are generally diversifying their activities. For Turkana, Broch-Due describes farming, fishing and town life as 'paths to the pastoral periphery', as many become 'forgotten people', their destitution isolating them from a world of exchange, social ties and cultural value focused on livestock. Talle describes how poor Maasai men find employment as night watchmen, casual laborers or herders for others; poor Maasai women in petty trade, beer brewing or prostitution. Fratkin's paper describes the unfortunate path followed in northern Kenya from drought to stock loss to settlement around sites of famine relief.

Success in pursuing either specialized husbandry or diversification may depend on previous conditions of prosperity or poverty and background skills brought to those activities. Closely associated in northern Tanzania, the Iraqw described by Rekdal and Blystad have quietly prospered through expanding cultivation, while the more pastoral Datooga have experienced 'marginalization, impoverishment and disintegration'. According to Potkanski, reliance on cultivation has increased as a poverty response among Ngorongoro Maasai, but clan-based networks are more durable among those committed to animal production, who avoid social differentiation that lessens mutual assistance.

Metaphors do not poverty make, but through cultural discourse practices are valorized, options legitimated and statuses lent prestige or disparagement. The association of low-prestige hunting, fishing, town life, as 'selfish' and degraded activities, with the 'stigma of poverty' affirms pastoral values in public discourse, but in the face of modernity the values are inverted in town discourse, with pastoralists often seen as a regional underclass. For the Hubeer agro-pastoral Somalis, described by the late Bernhard Helander, a 'fabric of ideas' helps define the association between low-prestige clans and poverty. A 'topography of poverty' is described in a series of 'simulacra', representations of pollution and hierarchy constituting those realities in the absence – in Baudrillard's sense – of any actual object defining poverty.

Along with sedentarization, commercialization and diversification, 'development' looms large in relating pastoralists to agents representing government, civil society and the international community. The rhetoric of development advocated that pastoralists become anything but themselves. Little dealt with here is blame

laid on the doorstep of pastoralism for rangeland degradation and desertification, which supported the misguided development mandate radically to alter the conditions of pastoral production, not least by settling herders and privatizing their land. Examining development programs pursued in Tanzanian Maasailand, Hodgson described how the USAID-supported Masai Livestock and Range Management Project interventions were resented by Maasai, whose perceived needs were ignored in favor of a western American ranching model. The program intensified economic insecurity of households, and by targeting men disenfranchised women, ignoring their rights over livestock and undermining local initiatives and autonomy. Anderson describes three stages in largely fruitless pastoral development efforts, from rehabilitation and resettlement to restocking.

Today, development efforts are less ambitious, focusing less on fixing a system many feel was never broken and more on alleviating poverty partly created by interventions that empowered international experts, extension officers, ministry officials, NGO workers and elites, while disempowering the 'targets' of their 'assistance'. Through excellent case studies, the volume paints a sad but convincing canvas of pastoral poverty, but also establishes an argument, often only implicitly developed, for giving support to the productive enterprise of raising livestock in rangelands best suited for that purpose – precisely the terms on which pastoral communities are prepared by tradition, knowledge and commitment to encounter modernity. Structural poverty today can best be reduced by strengthening the animal economy and securing herders' rights over resources, as well as selectively pursuing settlement, commercialization and diversification. Such shifts in policy also require reconfiguring the metaphorical state-of-mind, long propagated through misguided interventions by international and national agencies, that has too long associated pastoralists with poverty rather than their wealth of land, livestock and adaptability.

*McGill University*

JOHN GALATY

## SHORTER NOTICES

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703498484

*African Civilizations: An Archaeological Perspective*. Second edition. By GRAHAM CONNAH. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp. xv + 340. \$65 (ISBN 0-521-59309-3); \$23, paperback (ISBN 0-521-59690-4).

KEY WORDS: Archaeology, state, economic.

The second edition of Graham Connah's *African Civilizations* provides a welcome update to an important book on the African past, one that serves simultaneously as an invaluable student text and as a reference point for researchers interested in the development of state-level societies in sub-Saharan Africa. Publication of a sophisticated and synthetic treatment of state formation and urbanism over most of a continent in less than 300 pages of text is a testament to the experience and skill of the author, and also an indication of how much archaeological research remains to be done on the continent.

This edition retains the general format of the first, published 15 years ago. The core is a series of eight chapters covering political and social developments in different regions: the Nile Valley, the Ethiopian Highlands, the West African forest and savanna zones, the East African coast, the Zimbabwe Plateau and the Upemba Depression and Great Lakes region. These are bracketed by introductory and concluding chapters that provide an historical and theoretical context

for the discussion of state formation processes in these different regions. The text has been substantially updated to reflect new data accumulated since the appearance of the first edition; in particular, much of the penultimate chapter covering Central Africa is quite new. The second edition retains an emphasis upon the sophistication of African political systems and the indigenous nature of African cultural developments, welcome features that are, unfortunately, greeted with as much surprise by undergraduate students today as was the case in the late 1980s.

Each chapter is written in a standardized format, with successive discussions of environmental context, sources of information, economy, technology, population pressures, social and ideological systems and external trade in the area under study. This standardization allows students easily to compare cultural processes in different areas at different times, a characteristic that should be more common in such texts. The choice of topics addressed in each chapter, and the relative weight given to each, indicate the author's identification of factors driving state formation and urbanism in sub-Saharan Africa. Elite control over productive land, raw materials and both local and long-distance trading networks, in a context of increasing population size, are held to have been particularly important across the continent. This approach results in a perhaps somewhat homogenized view of cultural processes, with relatively little account taken of local histories and variable trajectories toward political complexity, or of the continuing, essential and often recursive relations between states and stateless societies. Using the classical anthropological terminology, this is a book about tribes becoming chiefdoms becoming states. At the same time, the aims of the text and the state of our knowledge of African history probably make this broad approach necessary, and the author draws out a set of significant parallels in the different areas under study.

*African Civilizations* remains an excellent book in its second edition, and stands as required reading for any student or academic interested in African history or archaeology.

Bowdoin College

SCOTT MACEACHERN

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*Africa and the West: A Documentary History from the Slave Trade to Independence*. Edited by WILLIAM H. WORGER, NANCY L. CLARK and EDWARD A. ALPERS. Phoenix AZ: Oryx Press, 2001. Pp. ix + 428. \$85 (ISBN 1-57356-245-5). KEY WORDS: General, pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial, slave trade.

The inspiration for this reader is the editors' desire to tell the story of Africa and the West from primary sources. The book is organized into four thematic parts, namely 'Africa in the era of the slave trade', 'From abolition to conquest', 'Colonialism and its critics' and 'The contradictions of post-colonial independence'. The excerpts reflect the range of primary documentation now available to scholars interested in the consequences of Western Europe's dealings with Africa south of the Sahara.

In Part 1, the reader can peruse a five-page selection from Charles Beazley and Edgar Prestage's 1896-7 translation of De Azurara's *Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea*, get a first-hand view of the logs and reports from slave ships such as the *Arthur* and the *Hannibal* and join enslaved Africans as they reflect on their enslavement (Venture Smith and Ouladah Equiano). The editors do not neglect to include slavery in Africa, and excerpts from eyewitness accounts

of slavery in South Africa take their place alongside Mungo Park's description of taking slaves from the interior of Africa to the coast. The reader can also follow along as the famous nineteenth-century East African slave trader and state builder Tippu Tip explains how he became a trader in ivory and slaves. The section also includes excerpts from British and American Acts outlawing slavery and African reactions.

In Part 2 the focus shifts to the new relationship that emerged between Africans and Europeans during the nineteenth century. The excerpts here reflect the major issues that have come to dominate the themes of nineteenth-century African history – the efforts to end the slave trade, the emergence of 'legitimate' trade, missionary activities, imperialism, the Scramble for Africa and African resistance. Although most readers would be familiar with many of the documents that are included from West African sources, the several excerpts on southern and eastern Africa show how complex were the developments in Africa during this period. The reader gets quite a different perspective on the forces that shaped nineteenth-century Africa while reflecting on how Rhodes as a young student at Oxford envisioned his 'Rhodes Scholarship', and reading the stirring sentiments that black nationalist Edward W. Blyden expressed in his inaugural address as president of Liberia College on 5 January 1881.

Part 3 highlights the contradictions of colonialism. Again here, the editors follow familiar themes: the nature of the colonial state, taxation and forced labor, the rise of African labor unions, urbanization, the appearance of nationalist movements and the struggle for independence. Especially useful in this section are the many excerpts that focus on African women giving their perspectives on colonialism and nationalism.

The final part brings us to the problems of the post-colonial state through the 1990s. Scholars of modern Africa should find the excerpts here particularly useful. Although some of the selections are easily available through the internet (excerpt no. 4 on the African National Congress), others are not. An example of the latter is the excerpt from Barbara Okele's *A Revolution Betrayed* on the 1966 coup in Ghana, which was published in Enugu. Its inclusion brings another African perspective. Also helpful are the several items from African fiction.

*Africa and the West* is a useful tool that many researchers will readily consult. At the price of \$85, however, its market is limited to the few university and public libraries with available budgets.

Howard University

LINDA HEYWOOD

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703518485

*Deutsches Kolonialrecht in Ostafrika, 1885–1891*. By KLAUS RICHTER. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001. Pp. 122. €25.10 (ISBN 3-631-37578-6).

KEY WORDS: Tanzania, colonial, imperialism, law.

Klaus Richter's study of the history of constitutional law in German East Africa covers 1885 to 1891. The book has three parts. Part I summarizes the political process which led to the assumption of colonial rule in 1891. Part II discusses the legal framework in which this happened. The book closes with a two-page summary. It also contains an appendix, enclosing the more important legal instruments and decrees discussed in the second part of the book.

The book is largely based on the reading of tertiary sources. The author also examined verbatim reports of parliamentary debates in the German *Reichstag* held at the time. He did not make use of archival material.

The study falls short of the current state of the literature. It reproduces uncritically colonial stereotypes and thinking. Thus, on p. 14 for instance, we are told that Carl Peters 'obtained' 140,000 square kilometres in East Africa. The choice of secondary and tertiary sources can only be called eclectic. Neglecting the well-known British and American literature on early colonial German East Africa, such as John Iliffe's or Jonathan Glassman's works, even the accounts by German authors such as Fritz Ferdinand Müller's seminal study *Deutschland-Zanzibar-Ostafrika: Geschichte einer deutschen Kolonialeroberung, 1884-1890* (Berlin, 1959) or Jutta Bückendorf's more recent book '*Schwarz-Weiß-Rot über Ostafrika!*': *Deutsche Kolonialpläne und afrikanische Realität* (Münster, 1997) seem to have escaped the author's attention. Moreover, the various articles by the leading German authority on judicial aspects of German colonial rule in East Africa, Harald Sippel (University of Bayreuth), are hardly mentioned, let alone discussed. Finally, and perhaps most irritatingly, the book does not offer any fresh insight into the politics of the assumption of German colonial rule in East Africa, nor are the finer judicial points surrounding that process – like the intricate relationship between the different colonial law-making bodies in Imperial Germany (*Reichsregierung*, *Bundesrat* and *Reichstag*) – adequately examined. One wonders why such a respectable publisher as Peter Lang has not sought more informed advice on the publication of this volume.

*Centre for Modern Oriental Studies, Berlin*

JAN-GEORG DEUTSCH

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703528481

*Forget Colonialism? Sacrifice and the Art of Memory in Madagascar.* By JENNIFER COLE. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. Pp. xvii + 361. No price given (ISBN 0-520-22845-6); paperback (ISBN 0-520-22846-4).

KEY WORDS: Madagascar, memory, anthropology, rebellion, colonial, post-colonial.

This thoughtful, sharply observed and well-written book tells us how the people of a village on Madagascar's east coast organize their collective memories. By discussing what they choose to recall it also raises questions about those matters they prefer not to remember collectively, such as the traumatic insurrection of 1947, when the return of French colonial rule after the confusion of the war years sparked an uprising particularly in this area of the island. Jennifer Cole tells us that when she first arrived in the village of Ambodiharina she was puzzled by the lack of any obvious memory of the colonial period at all. Only during a political crisis in 1992–3, caused this time by multi-party elections, did her informants begin to speak about what had happened to them 45 years earlier. The villagers still had sharp individual memories of matters that had been excluded from their formal mechanisms of collective recall, mediated most notably by cattle sacrifice.

Based on fieldwork, colonial archives and a rich theoretical literature on memory, the early chapters describe the village setting and social structure, and describe the mechanisms for memorializing the past, before the later chapters concentrate on asking what happened to the people of Ambodiharina in 1947 and why they came to be so silent about it. Many of Cole's observations about how people absorb certain innovations into their 'official' or collective memory are not specific to the colonial period. Indeed, the title of her book is rather misleading in the sense that the book is not so much about how people remember or forget colonialism as about how they make sense of the passage of time in general. It would

have been interesting to extend the inquiry, for example, to what the people of Ambodiharina now say about Madagascar's first post-independence government – that of Philibert Tsiranana, about whom there is not a word. Have they filtered him from their collective memory? If so, why, and what do they privately recall about his time? It appears that Cole's inquiry is oriented in this way by her wish to contribute to a wider debate on post-coloniality.

For a historian, this finely wrought study of how a group of people assimilate the past into a social memory is itself a contribution to historiography, to be bracketed perhaps with the literature on oral tradition. Also of great interest is the light that Jennifer Cole sheds on the still obscure history of 1947. Although she does not inquire deeply into the origins of the insurrection, she does show that it came about largely because of the experience of a state withdrawing from the lives of villagers and then returning in circumstances that led to considerable confusion about where national power lay. It was the uncanny reproduction of these circumstances in 1992–3 that caused villagers once more to talk about 1947, fearing that the same was about to happen again. Perhaps 1947 is not the only armed conflict that has been caused not so much by specific political or economic grievances as by confusion caused by an apparent lack of authority, and the wild rumours that are generated in such circumstances.

Here, then, is a book with the virtues of ethnography based on fieldwork but that cannot be accused of placing the village world in a timeless, local, vacuum. On the contrary, it is a commentary on how the people of a rather traditional village look back on the changes wrought by people and events from outside their daily control.

*Afrika-studiecentrum, Leiden*

STEPHEN ELLIS

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*Protestant Churches and the Formation of Political Consciousness in Southern Mozambique (1930–1974)*. By TERESA CRUZ E SILVA. Introduction by DAVID HEDGES. Basel: P. Schlettwein Publishing, 2001. Pp. xvii + 210. CHF 48; €32 (ISBN 3-908193-09-5).

KEY WORDS: Mozambique, colonial, decolonization, missions, nationalism.

This beautifully designed book is an unrevised Ph.D. dissertation defended in 1996 at the University of Bradford (UK). The author is a professor at the University Eduardo Mondlane in Mozambique. The book is a history of the Swiss Mission under Portuguese colonial rule and a discussion of the role the church has played in educating a nationalist elite and shaping the latter's political consciousness. The Swiss Mission is a most important institution in the history of Mozambique. It educated many nationalists who came to power at independence, some of whom are still in power today.

The author has done extensive archival and oral research. Through the material gathered primarily in church archives, she builds the context of Portuguese and Catholic opposition to Protestantism and gives a history of the Swiss Mission up to independence. She focuses specifically on the development of the Mission's school facilities and the gradual Africanization of the church leadership. On the basis of some 55 interviews, Teresa Cruz e Silva goes on to discuss and evaluate the role the mission has played in the formation of a political consciousness among Africans, not least the national hero Eduardo Mondlane. The material and main argument of the book are laid out in nine chapters. One is a methodological

introduction; chapters two and three build a context for different periods; chapters four and five discuss the role the church has had in educating Africans; and chapters six to eight 'read consciousness' from a series of social biographies.

Teresa Cruz e Silva's book will no doubt become a classic in the historiography of Mozambique. It deals with a most important subject and it is well researched. Unfortunately this does not prevent it from having various shortcomings. The main one is the nationalist paradigm within which the author remains. A certain teleology is present and there is much reading back into the past. Most notably the author only discusses the biographies of Africans who became nationalists. She also only compares the Swiss Mission to another pro-nationalist Protestant church, thereafter making claims which are overdrawn. The book would have benefited from some rewriting from its thesis form, the introductory chapter being rather tedious for example. All in all, however, the book is solid, well-written and deserves a wide readership whether for the sake of understanding Mozambique or for comparative purposes.

*Universität Basel (Switzerland)  
and State University of New York at Binghamton*

ERIC MORIER-GENOUD

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703548484

*Media and Resistance Politics: The Alternative Press in Namibia, 1960–1990.*

(Basel Namibia Studies Series 6). By WILLIAM HEUVA. Basel: P. Schlettwein Publishing, 2001. Pp. xvi + 166. CHF 48 (ISBN 3-908193-10-9).

KEY WORDS: Namibia, nationalism, press.

The emerging alternative press which is the subject of this book included the early nationalist press, such as *South West News*, the community, labor, student and church press which emerged during the 1980s, and the progressive-independent press, primarily *The Namibian*, founded in 1985. The book is divided into four parts. Part One focuses on the historical context for the emergence of an alternative press in Namibia, and its aims and objectives. Part Two elaborates upon the institutional character of the alternative press: the ownership, control and structure of alternative newspapers, the practice and strategies of journalists writing for the alternative newspapers and the target audience and news sources. Part Three looks at advertisements and funding sources for the alternative papers and their circulation and distribution patterns. Finally, Part Four examines the discourse and ideology of the papers as manifest in letters, advice and opinion columns, poems, sports, foreign and entertainment news and personality profiles.

The findings will not surprise most readers. The book argues that 'the alternative press emerged to cover and address issues and aspirations of colonised Namibians, due to their marginalisation in the mainstream colonial press' (p. 143). Moreover, the book argues, alternative newspapers, owned and operated by people 'outside the South African colonial hegemony', did not merely cover the news, they also intervened in it on behalf of their target audience through a kind of 'subjective and advocacy journalism' (p. 143). Indeed, the book focuses heavily on the role of those journalists or media activists at the forefront of the struggle for independence inside Namibia. In Heuva's words, 'the media activists sought to mobilise, organise, and politicise the masses so as to develop a critical self-consciousness, which enabled them to challenge the dominant discourse, and to proceed in their pursuit of political autonomy' (p. 144). The alternative press, according to Heuva, helped to forge ideological and political unity among the



people, and served ultimately as ‘proof of people’s resistance to colonial domination’ (p. 145). By and large, however, the alternative press was hampered in its efforts by a series of constraints, including a lack of funds, equipment and the skilled personnel to operate the newspapers.

*Media and Resistance Politics* touches upon a little investigated aspect of the nationalist struggle inside Namibia, and therefore provides a welcome contribution to Namibian historiography. It relies upon a rich set of sources, including secondary sources, many original editions of the alternative newspapers and interviews with nearly two dozen media activists and journalists from the period (including the author’s own recollections of events – he was a practicing journalist at the time). Moreover, the publication of the book is especially timely as a reminder of where the media in Namibia have come from. This at a time when some of the press, for example *The Namibian*, come under occasional attack for allegedly critical reporting – from some of those very people the alternative press once fought to put into power.

*University of Delaware*

GRETCHEN BAUER

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703558480

*Historical Dictionary of Zimbabwe*. Third edition. Edited by STEVEN C. RUPERT and R. KENT RASMUSSEN. Lanham MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001. Pp. xxxv + 451. \$89.50 (ISBN 0-8108-3471-5).

KEY WORDS: Zimbabwe, general.

This volume attempts to be a dictionary, an encyclopaedia, a bibliography, a who’s who and a gazetteer. It succeeds best at the last, usefully identifying the significance of geographical features and settlements. As a who’s who, it includes many missionaries and Rhodesian-era adventurers and politicians. Nationalist-era politicians do not do badly either. Particularly egregious, though, is the absence of Guy Clutton-Brock, missionary, and to date, the only white man buried at the national Heroes’ Acre. Terence Ranger, the historian, does get a look in. More recent politicians are absent, with the significant exception of Morgan Tsvangirai. None of Tsvangirai’s colleagues and opponents appear – where are Dongo, Dumbutshena, and Makamure? Nor do any of the more interesting ZANU(PF) MPs and ministers – Nzarabanyi, Zvogbo, Makoni or Moyo. A valiant attempt has been made to include contemporary artists and writers – Hove, Dangarembga, Mungoshi and Chinodya – but their presence makes the absence of Vera, Nyathi and Mhlanga all the more obvious. As a dictionary, it will no doubt be of use to those who know little about southern Africa, explaining the significance of ‘mealie’ and ‘dongas’. The more encyclopaedic entries do a good job of spanning eras, bringing the reader right up to 2000, but this may not be the place for relatively long discursions on ‘agriculture’ or ‘education’.

The bibliography, a substantial 74 pages, is particularly disappointing, with sections full of dated references. Some of these are worth keeping, others should have been abandoned in the second edition, much less the third. The section on ‘Military and Police’ has twenty entries, nearly all from the 1970s. One publication appears from 1923, and three from the early 1980s. Yet at least one doctoral thesis has been completed on the Zimbabwe National Army in the 1990s, and many shorter publications exist. Unless one is studying the Rhodesian Forces or counter-insurgency techniques, this bibliography is unlikely to be of use. Similarly, ‘Independent Christian Churches’ appear to have fallen off the research

agenda since the 1970s, if one were to believe the eight entries dating from 1919 to 1979. 'Travel and Modern Description' runs from 1934 to 1978, with one publication from 1994, but no mention of Doris Lessing's *African Laughter* (1992). While these are particularly glaring omissions, they do reflect the overall trend: a few references from the early 1990s, one thesis from 1997, while the bulk of references come from the 1970s, or earlier. Zimbabwean scholars seem particularly excluded. This book might have been a potential treasure-trove of information, much valued by researchers of all descriptions. With some judicious pruning, leaving room for new growth, it would be much improved.

*University of Asmara*

SARA RICH DORMAN