

## REVIEWS

### A PIONEER HISTORIAN OF KENYA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703219149

*The Challenges of History and Leadership in Africa: The Essays of Bethwell Allan Ogot*. Edited by TOYIN FALOLA and E. S. ATIENO ODHIAMBO. Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 2002. Pp. lxvi + 682. \$99.95 (ISBN 1-59221-004-X); \$39.95, paperback (ISBN 1-59221-005-8).

KEY WORDS: Kenya, Eastern Africa, precolonial, colonial, postcolonial, historiography, nationalism, religion, universities.

It is a pleasure to peruse again these collected articles and essays by one of Africa's foremost historians and intellectuals, Bethwell Allan Ogot. African history barely existed in the academy when Ogot started teaching at Makerere in 1959, but that was to change rapidly under his tutelage at Makerere, Nairobi, Kenyatta and Maseno universities. An imaginative historian, passionate intellectual, inspiring teacher and consummate administrator, Ogot forged new fields, ideas and institutions for new nations. He pioneered the scholarship, designed the curricula, trained the students, built the departments and universities and created the texts that have defined Kenyan history over more than four decades.

Ogot has led as much by example as by his teaching. His pioneering *History of the Southern Luo* (1967) demonstrated for the first time that oral traditions could be used to write the history of stateless societies. Many of his most noteworthy articles on Luo history are reproduced here, including his classic 'Kingship and statelessness among the Nilotes' (1964), which substantially discredited the racialized 'Hamitic hypothesis' and replaced it with a dynamic historical model of state formation, and his 'British administration in the central Nyanza district of Kenya' (1963), which presaged contemporary studies of the limits of colonial power.

He soon became interested in African religion and worldviews as well. He delineated the Luo worldview in 'The concept of Jok' (1961) and went on to explore African-Christian religious dynamics in 'Reverend Alfayo Odongo Mango' (1971), 'On the making of a sanctuary' (1972) and 'A community of their own' (1976). One of the first historians to take African religious conceptions seriously, he has used his understanding of them to explore the historical consciousness that underpins oral traditions as well as the ways African religion and Christianity have transformed one another.

Never one to avoid controversy, Ogot soon joined the contentious debates concerning Mau Mau, nationalism and decolonization in Kenya. His 'Revolt of the elders' (1972), 'Politics, culture and music in central Kenya' (1977) and 'Mau Mau and the fourth estate' (1992) challenged both political and historical orthodoxy in their sympathetic views of the diverse political strands within Kikuyu society during and after Mau Mau.

With it all, Ogot has been a sharp critic of African historical writing, as seen in his plentiful reviews and historiographic studies, such as 'Historians and East Africa' (1970), 'Three decades of historical studies in East Africa' (1978) and 'The construction of Luo identity and history' (1997). He has also taken frequent stock of the rapidly developing field in his addresses to the Historical Association of Kenya, setting the agenda for the future and anticipating many of the directions Kenyan and East African history have taken. Those reproduced here include his

talks on the dynamics of African systems (1971), historical ecology (1979), history and ideology (1981), cultural development (1995), postcolonialism and post-modernism (1995), African conflicts (1997) and ethnic politics (1998). In encouraging and guiding both Kenyan and foreign students' work, he has been substantially responsible for the rapid development of Kenyan history following independence.

Less recognized abroad, Ogot is also known in Kenya as an impassioned essayist, tackling many of the most contentious political issues of his day. His essays have warned presciently against the lack of moral constraints on presidents in one-party systems (1963), the risks of African exceptionalism (1965, 1971) and the corrosive dangers of ethnic politics (1971, 1998). He has criticized Okot p'Bitek as frivolous and dogmatic (1971), radical populists as absolutist and naive (1981) and Yoweri Museveni as narcissistic (1997), while praising Nkrumah's theoretical reading of Marx (1964). He has also frequently discussed the roles of the university in the development of national unity and consciousness (1973), international cooperation (1976) and development (1995), while attacking the World Bank's neo-liberal approach to education (1998).

What unites Ogot's historical writings and essays is a powerful intellect informed by a deeply humane sensibility and moral integrity. These are best joined, perhaps, in *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya, 1940-1993* (1995), parts of which are reproduced here, a book that carries the ring of both verisimilitude and passion befitting the experience that Ogot has himself lived and studied for the past half century.

It is a pity, then, that this collection of his writings is produced in such a slipshod manner and that greater editorial care was not taken to arrange related pieces in succession to allow one to trace the development of the subtle and complex ideas of one of Africa's leading intellectuals.

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THOMAS SPEAR

## A PIONEER HISTORIAN OF GHANA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703229145

*Ghana in Africa and the World: Essays in Honor of Adu Boahen*. Edited by TOYIN FALOLA. Trenton NJ and Asmara: Africa World Press, 2003. Pp. 800. No price given (ISBN 1-59221-069); paperback (ISBN 1-59221-070-8).

KEY WORDS: Ghana, historiography.

Adu Boahen, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Ghana at Legon, is Ghana's most distinguished historian and one of the founding fathers of the study of African history on the continent. Born in 1932 in what was then the British colony of the Gold Coast, Professor Boahen was educated at one of West Africa's oldest secondary schools, Mfantshipim, established at Cape Coast in 1876. He took his first degree at the new University College, Legon, in 1956, the year before Ghanaian independence. The history that Boahen would have been taught at both of these institutions was, if not necessarily 'pro-colonial', then decidedly Eurocentric. What he and the other members of the pioneering generation of professional historians in Africa's new universities achieved was to lay the groundwork for a fully fledged Africanist history; in other words, to initiate the monumental task of decolonizing the African past. As Toyin Falola points out in the introduction to this *festschrift*, this was nothing short of a revolution. After

completing his Ph.D. at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, Boahen returned to Ghana in 1959 to take up a lectureship at Legon. His thesis was published as *Britain, the Sahara and the Western Sudan, 1788–1861* in 1964, but the main weapons in his revolutionary armoury and perhaps his best-known works remain his ground-breaking textbooks, *Topics in West African History* (1966) and, with J. B. Webster, *West Africa since 1800: The Revolutionary Years* (1967), along with his later *African Perspectives on Colonialism* (1987). His retirement from teaching in 1990 was followed by a history of his old school, Mfantshipim; a co-edited critical edition of Asantehene Agyeman Prempeh's *The History of Ashanti Kings* appeared in 2003; a major study of the Yaa Asantewaa War of 1900–1 is forthcoming. Just a few days before sitting down to write this review a friend reported having bumped into Adu Boahen – after a serious illness – working in the reading room of the National Archives in Accra. Long may he run.

The magnitude of this pioneering career is matched by this collection of essays. Thirty-six chapters written by 38 authors and weighing in at exactly 800 pages, this is a substantial volume indeed. Its title is somewhat misleading in that only half of the essays are concerned either directly or in part with Ghana; the remainder tend to treat a variety of thematic topics relating to the African continent as a whole. Such collections tend to be a mixed bag in terms of intent and quality, and this is particularly the case here due to the sheer number of contributions. They range from short reminiscences through to bold polemical statements and on to detailed reconstructions of discreet historical episodes. The contents are organized into six thematic sections. Part A comprises personal tributes, a number of which emphasize Adu Boahen's roles as a public intellectual and a political activist. Although not directly mentioned here, the former was most famously manifested in his 1987 public lectures entitled 'The Ghanaian sphinx', an electrifying denunciation of the political culture of the PNDC military regime widely recognized within Ghana as a key moment in the road to redemocratization. The latter culminated in his unsuccessful bid for the presidency in the 1992 elections (not 1996, as is stated incorrectly in Chapter 2). As one contributor politely notes, Professor Boahen 'came second': given his famous sense of humour, a comment he will appreciate. Part B, entitled 'Knowledge and historical interpretation', includes forceful pieces on racism and reparations by Boahen's fellow doyen of West African history, J. F. Ade Ajayi, and on the production of historical knowledge for African schools by Paul Zeleza. Part C comprises four essays on Ghanaian history and Part D seven essays on 'Old and new religions'. Part E is devoted to West African economic history and, with contributions from such leading figures as Gareth Austin, Raymond Dumett, Paul Lovejoy, Robin Law and Joseph Inikori together with an informative piece on kola nut production in Ghana by Edmund Abaka, it represents the most substantial section of the book. Part F on 'Modern economies' is less successful, while highlights of Part G, 'Modern politics and conflicts', include Richard Rathbone on the 'conservative nationalist tradition' in Ghanaian politics and Mahmood Mamdani's searching analysis of political violence in postcolonial Africa as seen through the prism of the Rwandan genocide. Finally, Part F comprises three essays under the title 'Regionalism and pan-Africanism', the volume coming to a close with an idiosyncratic reading by Ali Mazrui of Africa's place in the world after the events of 11 September 2001.

It could be said, then, that there is something for everyone here. But tighter editorial control could have made for a more manageable – and a much better – book. A number of contributions are insubstantial and poorly written; others are marred by errors and inconsistencies in analysis. Moreover, some of the more polemical essays generate more heat than light by wrestling with epistemological issues that frankly are out of date given the enormous advances made by African

studies over the second half of the twentieth century. This is a shame, as it tends to deflect attention away from the role of Adu Boahen and his fellow pioneers in laying the foundations for what is becoming a mature and vigorous African historiography by any comparative standards.

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## FROM MYTHICAL TO GEOGRAPHIC HORIZONS

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703239141

*The Shaping of Africa: Cosmographic Discourse and Cartographic Science in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe.* By FRANCESC RELAÑO. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002. Pp. x + 271. £50 (ISBN 0-7546-0239-7).

KEY WORDS: Precolonial, cartography, exploration/travel.

The existence of Africa has been widely acknowledged in southern Europe since Antiquity and the southern shores of the Mediterranean were easily integrated into the classical *ecumene*. Therefore, no independent idea of Africa arose in Classical Antiquity, nor did it appear in the Middle Ages. It was not until the Renaissance that the conception of Africa as a separate continent emerged in Europe. This is the message of Francesc Relano's work. Rather than tracing in detail the development of European cartography or the advance of Portuguese discoveries along the African coast, the author focuses on the relationship between the process of acquiring knowledge of Africa, and the constant interplay of myth and reality within its representation.

The contents are organized into four chronologically proceeding parts. The first part focuses on the classical background of the idea of Africa. The second is dedicated to the geographical culture of the late Middle Ages and the gradually emerging idea of Africa in the context of the expanding European world view. The third describes how the African continent took more defined shape in European minds as a result of the Portuguese discoveries. Finally, the fourth part examines the depiction of the unknown African interior, and the role of the ancient geographical myths concerning the Mountains of the Moon and the great central lake.

An interesting theme throughout the book is the persistent co-existence of two categories of knowledge of Africa, especially in the late Middle Ages. One was the 'intellectual landscape' of the scholars and churchmen, which was based largely on the surviving ancient authors; the other was the 'living landscape' of the merchants, soldiers and pilgrims, which was based on the practice of travel. These two categories seldom coincided, though they were not necessarily regarded as mutually exclusive, as seeing and representation were considered separate things in medieval thought.

The co-existence of myth and reality survived throughout the Renaissance (and much longer, though this aspect is not discussed in the book). While the Portuguese discoveries proved the ancient knowledge of Africa outdated and erroneous, the Renaissance scholars did not abandon their ancient authorities whose works were popularized by the recently invented art of printing. If the coasts of Africa were now integrated within realistic geographical horizons, the interior of the continent remained on the mythical horizons with the monsters and miracles. It is noteworthy that as late as the 1850s, European scholars were still discussing if there really existed tailed men in Africa, though nobody had actually seen such creatures.

Besides the Portuguese discoveries, another crucial turning point in European knowledge of Africa was the appearance of the 'Description of Africa' by Leo Africanus in 1550, which is not mentioned by Relaño, though chronologically Leo should belong to the topic along with Luis del Mármol Carvajal. This is the more surprising, as Leo's work (in the form of the French translation of 1956) is included in the primary sources but there seems to be no reference to it in the footnotes. The importance of Leo's work was that it brought Sudanic Africa within realistic geographical horizons. It also revitalized the ancient and medieval understandings of the geography of the African interior. This concerns for example the belief in a western branch of the Nile which flowed to the Atlantic through Sudanic Africa. Thanks to Leo's authority, the idea of the 'West African Nile' survived unchallenged in the modern geographical literature until the first voyage of Mungo Park to the Niger in 1795–7.

Another subject which is touched perhaps too lightly is the transmission of Arab knowledge of Sudanic Africa to Europe. No Arabic geographical text was translated in the late Middle Ages but there were people, such as Ramon Llull, who were versed in Arabic and there were plenty of Arabic manuscripts available in Spain. Most of the contemporary medieval European knowledge of Sudanic Africa, as documented in the portolan charts, was based on the Italian and Catalan commercial contacts with North Africa. However, there are hints in Llull's *Blanquerna* which suggest that he was familiar with Arabic geographical literature. Similarly, it is reasonable to consider whether the anonymous Spanish friar who wrote *Libro del conocimiento* around 1350 had known the geographical work of al-Idrīsī.

As a whole, the book is well documented and annotated, and the bibliography covers a wide range of essential literature related to the history of the European discovery and 'invention' of Africa. The index is useful, though strangely lacks references to modern authors and scholars. For instance, William Desborough Cooley's opinion of the Mountains of the Moon is discussed in the main text, but his name is unmentioned in the index. Similarly, Mármol is referred to several times in the text but ignored in the index. No explanation for this inconsistency is given.

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## ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SOURCES OF ROYAL POWER IN BUGANDA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703249148

*Political Power in Pre-Colonial Buganda: Economy, Society and Warfare in the Nineteenth Century.* By RICHARD J. REID. Oxford: James Currey; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002. Pp. xiv + 274. No price given (ISBN 0-85255-450-6); £16.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-450-8).

KEY WORDS: Uganda, precolonial, economic, kingdoms, military, slavery.

Situated along the northwestern shores of Lake Victoria and receiving both abundant and reliable rainfall, Buganda was one of the largest and most powerful polities in precolonial East Africa. It has also been one of the most studied, although this work was mainly conducted a generation ago, when precolonial history was more common in African studies generally and political turmoil had not yet hampered almost all historical work in Uganda. The considerable

attention accorded precolonial Buganda, however, has had an overwhelming focus on political, even dynastic, history. This is true even of Christopher Wrigley's recent and otherwise typically original *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty* (Cambridge, 1996). Reid's new book on the material and military bases of political power in nineteenth century Buganda – especially post-1850 – is a welcome, ambitious and innovative break from this norm.

Reid organizes his book in four parts, plus an introduction and brief conclusion. Part One surveys the Ganda economy, with chapters on 'Land and cultivation', 'Herdsmen and huntsmen' and 'Crafts and craftsmen'. While according due importance to plantains as Buganda's most important staple, these three chapters convincingly argue for a precolonial agriculture – and domestic economy – that was far more diverse and complex than the typically singular emphasis on banana cultivation has suggested. Indeed, Reid depicts an overall balance within the kingdom between farming and herding, with the former dominant in higher-rainfall regions nearer the lake and the latter prevalent in the dryer north and west. He also demonstrates the diversity of precolonial Ganda crop production (with sweet potatoes especially prominent) and the significant economic roles played by hunting and fishing, barkcloth and iron production and the kingdom's specialist-based pottery culture.

Part Two then devotes two chapters to examining the human resources of the state. The first focuses on labour and taxation/tribute, including a section (influenced by Wilks's work on Asante) on Buganda's state-sponsored road system. The second investigates the understudied topic of slavery in Buganda, which Reid convincingly portrays as widespread and of increasing economic importance over the second half of the nineteenth century. In these chapters, Reid emphasizes the state's crucial ability to motivate and organize its citizens to contribute to a collective whole, as part of a powerful centralizing ethos. At the same time, actual implementation and maintenance of the taxation, labour and road systems were provincial responsibilities, guided but not controlled in absolute ways by central authority.

Part Three, again two chapters, examines the central importance of trade to the material wealth and power of precolonial Buganda. The first discusses the extensive and long-established domestic and regional trade in items such as barkcloth, salt, fish, unfinished iron, iron tools and weapons, brass and copper wire and ivory. While this trade was subject to various state regulations, 'as in other spheres, metropolitan control hovered in the background but was limited' (p. 141). Reid then turns to the nineteenth-century development of long-distance commerce connected directly with the East African coast. This trade – most importantly, ivory and slaves exchanged for firearms – transformed Buganda's domestic economy, commercial relations with others, and its military objectives and organization, in ways that both augmented and undermined Buganda's wealth and power. And once again, central authority was able to control this trade to a certain extent, but that extent was always limited.

The final part of the book consists of three chapters that discuss the crucial contributions of the military and warfare to precolonial Buganda. The first examines the rise of Ganda military power from the seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, and its subsequent decline. The second looks at developments in organization, tactics and weaponry. Reid fixes much blame for Buganda's decline after 1850 on the army's over-reliance on firearms, as guns obtained by the Ganda were often obsolete and inefficient, training in their use was almost non-existent and they were never successfully integrated with earlier tactics and weaponry. Finally, Reid argues that precolonial Buganda's last attempt at military innovation was to develop as a naval power on Lake Victoria, with two related

goals: to make up for its declining military position on land and to improve both its access and control of long-distance trade.

This is an impressive study. Reid marshalls a wealth of evidence and original argument on material conditions in late nineteenth-century Buganda, and the ways that those conditions shaped the nature and workings of the Ganda state. Even when he is not persuasive – for example, the evidence presented does not seem sufficient to support either his brief depiction of slavery in Buganda before 1850 or his extended case for Buganda's efforts to develop a large-scale, long-distance naval fleet – Reid asks important questions and provides bold answers. His book breaks new ground that advances not only the study of precolonial Buganda, but also of precolonial Ugandan and East African history more generally.

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## MONUMENTAL HISTORY

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703259144

'*Between the Jaws of Hyenas*': *A Diplomatic History of Ethiopia (1879–1896)*. By

RICHARD CAULK. Edited with an introduction by BAHRU ZEWDE. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2002. Pp. viii + 688. €74 (ISBN 3-447-04558-2).

KEY WORDS: Ethiopia, diplomacy, imperialism.

This book is a major contribution to modern Ethiopian history and is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the foreign policy of modern Ethiopia. Its gestation has been remarkably long but historians of modern Ethiopia will be most grateful now that it has finally appeared.

The book is divided into fifteen chapters and adopts a basically chronological approach with only a few exceptions. The first two chapters focus on the key role that trade and commerce played in Menilek II's early foreign policy when he began to try and play the various foreign traders and their governments off against each other. Commerce is a most significant theme throughout. Italy began to play a dominant part in the foreign policy of Ethiopia in the 1880s, covered in chapters 3–5, a position it would hold through the aftermath of the battle of Adwa of 1896. Caulk's masterly insight into the relationship between Menilek and the emperor Yohannes also permeates these chapters. Menilek's ambition to become emperor reached fruition with the death of the emperor at the hands of the Sudanese Mahdists, related in chapter 6. The tortuous negotiations between the Italians and the Ethiopians are dealt within in chapters 7–8, while the increasing role of other powers is woven into chapters 9 and 10. The following two chapters deal with the steady drift towards war from 1893 to 1896 and chapter 13 includes a detailed treatment of the battle of Adwa. Finally, chapters 14 and 15 focus on the peace negotiations and their impact up to the late 1890s.

The book has some very distinct problems. It started as Richard Caulk's Ph.D. thesis (School of Oriental and African Studies, London, 1966) and he continued to work on it diligently until his death in 1993. Professor Bahru Zewde took on the mammoth task of editing the difficult manuscript and preparing it for publication, a truly daunting task. Bahru Zewde has clearly put in a tremendous amount of work and should not really be blamed for the problems that remain, but rather congratulated that this *magnum opus* has finally seen the light of day. There is a surfeit of typos, more than in any book I have ever read, but I myself never found them particularly misleading or a major problem. Sometimes the

text is repetitive and the index is not a strong point. More serious is the lack of any maps. The introduction is marvelous, but the conclusion is a bit of an anticlimax.

The positives far outweigh the negatives. The book is long, but I relished almost every page and was very sorry when the end arrived. I will be regularly consulting it for the rest of my career as an authoritative source. The book's coverage of the period is exhaustive and encyclopedic. Yet the insights and vignettes constantly fascinate and all are based on solid meticulous research. Chapter after chapter provides research that supersedes all previous scholarship.

Chapters that especially stand out are those that deal with the Treaty of Wechalé and the battle of Adwa, both monumentally important events in Ethiopian history. These are masterful accounts and are especially important in their use of primary Ethiopian sources. Here Richard Caulk outdid himself. He has used such a broad array of new sources, many unearthed by him or the students he so diligently trained. It is also important to point out that European archives and secondary sources are exhaustively submitted to the same keen scholarly criticism. Richard Caulk, as Bahru Zewde rightly points out, was a 'compulsive narrator' and personalities and Menilek's humour leap from the page. Finally, however, one should emphasize that the greatest strength of this book is its meticulous documentation. No other scholar of Ethiopian history has, or probably ever will approach '*Between the Jaws of Hyenas*' in this regard.

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PETER P. GARRETSON

## CLAN AND STATE

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703269140

*A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa.* By I. M. LEWIS. Fourth edition. Oxford: James Currey; Hargeisa: Btec Books; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002. Pp. xi + 347. \$24.95, paperback (ISBN 08214-1495-X). KEY WORDS: Somalia, precolonial, colonial, postcolonial, kinship, politics, international relations.

During his half-century of detailed and insightful studies of Somali society and history, I. M. Lewis has made such fundamental contributions to the field that his work cannot be ignored, especially by those who have disagreed with some of his findings and approaches. *A Modern History of the Somali* now appears in its fourth edition, the previous ones being 1965 (Weidenfeld and Nicolson), 1980 (Longman) and 1988 (Westview). Only the first was reviewed in this journal: by E. Cerulli, 7 (1966), 530–2.

In the nearly forty-year history of this book, Lewis has remained consistent and nearly unchanging in his understanding of Somali society as a 'pastoral democracy' in the words of his classic 1961 anthropological study. Kinship and clan remain the focal points of his interpretation, an approach he defends aggressively in his new preface and in scattered footnote references (e.g. p. 330 n. 3) in this edition. He criticizes, in particular, 'foreign academics' who were 'taken in' by the previous regime's denial of clan realities, partly because they were 'handicapped by an inadequate understanding of the Somali language'. They employed, says Lewis, the 'eurocentric jargon of "class" and "class conflict"', and in thus denying the 'originality and vitality' of 'Somali social phenomena' were 'engaged in an endeavour akin to racism' (p. viii). To a scholar just trying to understand



the Somali situation these polemics seem overblown and unnecessary. While clan and kinship evidently remain forces to be reckoned with, certainly economic and class factors are also significant.

The first nine chapters and most of the tenth in this edition remain virtually unchanged from the earlier editions, even including the 1965 population estimates of Somalia (p. 1). Also, some terminology and perspectives are out of date. For example, 'Oromo' and 'Galla' are used interchangeably in Chapter 2, despite the almost universal preference for the former.

The terminology and conceptual approach to the material on 'The imperial partition' (Chapter 3) is curiously old-fashioned. The emphasis is necessarily on what the Egyptians, Italians, British and French were trying to do in the Horn, but neither the economic factors nor how the Africans responded are made clear. For example, with regard to the Ethiopian situation, he states that Egypt's 'Abyssinian ventures failed' without mentioning that King Yohannes IV ('John') defeated Egyptian forces in two battles in 1875 and 1876 (p. 42). Again, he states that the treaty of 'Ucciali' (Wichale) of 1889 'in the eyes of Italy established an Italian protectorate over Abyssinia' without mentioning Ethiopia's view of the matter (p. 45).

The rise and fall of the 'Dervish fight for freedom' (Chapter 4) is surveyed competently, though little account is taken of its economic impact. With two exceptions, the footnote references are unchanged from the 1980 edition. Ironically, though the resistance of Sayyid Muhammad 'Abdille Hassan to British, Italian and Ethiopian incursions may have 'left in the Somali national consciousness an ideal of patriotism' (p. 91), the conflict also left the British and Ethiopians with an expanded area of rule over the Somali.

The coverage in Chapters 5–8 of the colonial economy, the vexed problem of Somali frontiers, the 'first stirrings of Somali nationalism' (p. 113), the re-establishment of the colonial boundaries after the liberation of Ethiopia (pp. 129–31), the Italian Trusteeship period and the nine years of independence under a parliamentary system is detailed and competent, though the last phase of the civilian government between 1964 and 1969 is skipped over very quickly, and the discussion of economic development issues is particularly thin (p. 200). The border war with Ethiopia in 1964 is not discussed here and only mentioned in passing later (p. 212). Evidently, these omissions are due to a lack of revision since the 1965 edition.

Chapter 9 outlines clearly the sorry state to which the civilian state had fallen, particularly as seen in the problems of 'corruption and nepotism' (p. 205). The military coup of October 1969 brought General Muhammad Siyad Barre to power where he remained until 1991. The first phase of the new government proclaimed its dedication to Scientific Socialism, the denunciation of 'tribalism', and also developed a cult of the leader 'so alien to the egalitarianism of traditional Somali nomadic culture' (pp. 209–11).

Lewis makes clear that despite the regime's criticism of clan favoritism, 'Somali tribalism is plainly a perversely persistent force' (p. 220). It was a matter of public knowledge that Siyad Barre's support was based on the MOD grouping of 'tribal' allegiances (p. 222), though Lewis does not explicitly explain the meaning of these terms until the next chapter.

The only achievement of the military regime was the decision to create a Somali script based on the Latin alphabet, and also to begin a literacy campaign in the early 1970s (p. 216). Otherwise, serious problems plagued the regime. The economy was dependent on foreign aid and economic development did not occur, a disastrous war was started with Ethiopia, and the regime became increasingly arbitrary in its exercise of power. By 1990, Siyad Barre was

taunted as only the 'Mayor of Mogadishu', and in January 1991 was driven from power.

For more than a decade, Somalia has been consumed by civil war, famine and external intervention. Lewis is vociferous in maintaining his interpretation that these civil wars reflect the underlying divisiveness of the traditional clan system observed by outsiders since the nineteenth century (p. 263). The Somaliland Republic, comprising the area of the former British Somaliland, seems to be the only ray of hope, and 'might actually be for some time the only viable Somali state on offer' (p. 310). Let us hope and pray that the suffering of the Somali people may some day be alleviated.

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JAMES QUIRIN

## TRANSPORT WORKERS' TOWN

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703279147

'*City of Steel and Fire*': *A Social History of Atbara, Sudan's Railway Town, 1906–84*. By AHMAD ALAWAD SIKAINGA. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann; Oxford: James Currey; Cape Town: David Philip, 2002. Pp. xii + 220. £45 (ISBN 0-85255-967-4); £16.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-962-3).

KEY WORDS: Sudan, colonial, postcolonial, labour, transport, urban.

The title of Ahmed Sikainga's book on Atbara evokes an earlier generation of writing on African workers, whose theme was the forging of a new, militant society in the fierce heat of the colonial workplace. It is perhaps then no surprise that '*City of Steel and Fire*' does make rather free use of 'working class', as a noun and adjective, but Sikainga is careful to set his work in the context of a more recent literature which has been less obsessed by the holy grail of proletarianization. He cites the work of Harries, Atkins and others who have stressed the extent to which 'worker' identity actually drew upon established patterns of behaviour and ideas of morality, and acknowledges too the profound importance of the informal economy, and of women, in the making of African urban cultures.

The Sudanese town of Atbara was, as Sikainga shows, a quintessential transport town. Almost entirely the creation of the very effective machine which was the Sudan Government Railways, it remained dominated by the railway, even in the years after the 1960s which saw the steady decline of the railway system – a decline which Sikainga suggests was in part the result of a deliberate government policy to undermine a bastion of worker militancy. For in the Sudan, as in other parts of Africa, it was transport workers who provided the core of the organized labour movement. Railway employment encouraged a sense of discipline and organization, and created a substantial body of workers with common interests spread over a large area and in regular communication with one another; and it armed them with a potent strike weapon. Sikainga offers a clear account of the development of this organization; unsurprisingly, the most dramatic moments of the story come in the late 1940s, with the first effective strikes and the establishment of a recognized union. Sikainga follows the story on after Sudan's independence in 1956, with a discussion of the close links between the railway workers' union and the Communist Party. He ascribes the workers of Atbara a major role in challenges to authoritarian governments in the late 1950s and 1960s, and catalogues the subsequent suppression of the Communists and the decline in the influence of the union under the rule of Nimeiri.

This political narrative really dominates the latter part of the book. Sikainga offers some interesting discussion of the urban culture of colonial Atbara, of struggles over land and the informal economy, and of the development of a particularly rich associational life in which sporting and social clubs played an important part, for men at least. But this is not, regrettably, pursued into the discussion of the period after 1956. And, well contextualized though the discussion of these issues is in the earlier part of the book, there is something tantalizingly incomplete about it, and a shortage of evidence evidently restricts the possibilities of any very detailed discussion. It is very interesting to know there was a Mau Mau football club, apparently drawn from the marginal members of the town populace. But it would be useful to know a little more about the precise structure and longevity of some of the social clubs – of which Sikainga provides some very nice photographs; or to get a clearer idea of the stability of marriages and concubinage relationships, and some sense of how these might have been affected by the cultural expectations of those who came to work in Atbara. This want of detail is apparent elsewhere too: notably, in the discussion over the organization and composition of the railway labour force, particularly in the period after 1924 when the expulsion of Egyptian military labour entailed the rapid recruitment of new, Sudanese, workers. Sikainga usefully highlights the importance of ex-slaves, and also of Dongolawis, but there is nothing about contract length, organization, housing – all the detail which has been the stuff of labour history. How many of the labourers were casuals? How were they recruited? Who were the headman? What happened to those who retired? Sikainga performs an enormous service by placing the history of Sudan's towns in the context of Africanist literature on urban history; but there is surely much more to be said.

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JUSTIN WILLIS

## SUBALTERN VOICES

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703289143

*Pastimes and Politics: Culture, Community and Identity in Post-Abolition Zanzibar, 1890–1945.* By LAURA FAIR. Athens: Ohio University Press; Oxford: James Currey, 2001. Pp. xvi + 370. \$59.95 (ISBN 0-82141-383-X); \$14.95, paperback (ISBN 0-8214-1384-8).

KEY WORDS: Tanzania, colonial, identity, leisure, popular culture.

*Pastimes and Politics* unravels Africa's urban past through investigating non-elite leisure in the colonial period. Laura Fair succeeds in engaging her readers in a densely woven narrative which enlightens both experts of the region and those who merely dip into the historiography of East Africa. Fair's main argument is boldly stated and convincingly supported by evidence. She contends that the decades after legal abolition in 1897 were a period in which residence in Zanzibar town was seized by ex-slaves and their descendants as an opportunity for the assertion of novel cultural and political identities. This found an expression in dress, conflict over urban rent, music and football. Cross-cutting these cultural practices are two themes. First, Fair traces a shift in ethnic self-labeling within the framework of the colonial state. Former slaves initially laid claim to coastal, Muslim Swahili identity, rather than upcountry origins. When Swahili identity, in public perception, became synonymous with slave descent, already by the 1920s a shift towards indigenous Zanzibari ethnic and eventually increasingly 'Arab' identities occurred. Secondly, former slaves and their descendants renegotiated their new

identities around the notion of *uwezo* (economic and social ability), and thus, in part successfully, attempted to forge newly defined client–patron relationships with the Arab elite. This fluidity of identities was dislocated in the Zanzibar revolution of 1964.

The book consists of an introduction, four substantive chapters and a brief conclusion. Chapter two shows how ‘clothing practice shaped and gave form to social bodies’ (p. 64). Fair traces the gendered process in which ex-slaves exercised the right to cover themselves, and then to ‘dress up’ to their newly claimed social and class status. Fair in her description of the invention and adaptation of a particular kind of cloth, *kanga*, from the 1870s – long before abolition, when 50 per cent of Zanzibar’s urban population were manumitted slaves (p. 118) – does not, however, discuss the colors, patterns and sayings, which make this particular cloth so important as a tableau of social commentary. Also, in Zanzibari women’s perception of beauty and fashion, dress is inseparable from other body adornments, namely jewelry (which Fair mentions), henna painting and cosmetics, in particular those potions which amend ‘racial’ features, such as skin colour and eye shape. It is the intersection of assertions of femininity with cultural, class and racial identity which would have enriched this chapter beyond the discussion of dress.

Chapter three examines the rent strike of 1928. It provides an intriguing triangulation of abolition, clientelism and the colonial state. Fair convincingly shows the complexities of an urban elite of Arab male and female patrons and the newly emerging Indian property owners. The rapidly spreading commercialization of urban land between the 1890s and 1920s was checked by tenants’ protests which culminated in the strike. Nevertheless, the colonial state’s quest for legibility of its colonial subjects undercut the newly forged patron–client relationships between the urban poor who lived in the part of town known as Ng’ambo and the Arab elite.

Chapter four discusses *taarab*, a style of music locally invented in the 1870s–1880s, which moved into the public sphere at the turn of the century, and which was popularized after the First World War by the singer Siti binti Saad. Fair carefully researched the lyrics of the songs from that period and beautifully shows how they can be interpreted as a critical social commentary of gender relations and politics. Unfortunately, due to lack of sources, Fair cannot show whether, and if so how, song, other than in style, changed in comparison to the pre-abolition period.

Chapter five shows that by the early 1920s football was a central component of the urban experience, whether in the making of individual, neighbourhood or wider communal identities (p. 228). Fair contends that this team sport became so very popular because it allowed the poor to play – and win – in a contest of masculinities against the elite and even against European men. Thus, one of the enchanting vignettes in the narrative is an account of the golf club caddies forming their own football club, and then playing against their European masters. At the same time, football was seen by the British, during industrialization in Britain itself, as a modernizing tool instilling a regular and ritualized time and space regime, thus contributing to the making of reliable workers and subjects. This chapter is less fully argued than the remainder of the book, as Fair does not explicitly discuss the audience and the intersection of masculinity and youth within the framework of gender and wider colonial power relations.

Three general points of criticism appear to be in place. First, the author’s passion for her subject accounts for much of the book’s fascination. However, Fair hardly ever leaves the narrow confines of Zanzibar’s still relatively meager, if recently growing historiography. There is no systematic engagement with the

theoretical literature on popular culture, corporeality, gender, ethnicity and the colonial state. Nor does the author situate the book in the wider and comparative historiography, not that of the Swahili coast, nor of other African regions or beyond. Thus, Fair leaves it to the reader to discover where she adds a new case study to an ongoing discussion, and where she substantially pushes the boundaries of the field. Also, it is unclear whether Zanzibar, and more generally the Swahili coast, with its centuries old history of urban Muslim culture poses a special case, or whether it seamlessly fits into the historiography of urban Africa. Second, the organization of argument is not stringent. Finally, a methodological discussion of the particular problematic of a subaltern perspective on a colonial city – which is a difficult and expanding field – would have been rewarding.

Despite its shortcomings, this is an important book. Its breadth in examining popular culture and leisure against the background of the rapidly changing post-abolition Zanzibar sets an example for the study of the everyday politics of identity in twentieth-century urban Africa and the Indian Ocean world. This study shows, as the author contends, that abolition was initiated by the British but shaped by the newly freed slaves through gendered strategies. Fair's discussion of the intertwining of two processes – the making of colonial subjects who, at the same time, asserted their newly found post-abolition identities in their pursuit of 'pastimes' – provides much more than 'a taste of daily life' (p. 62). It is in fact a full meal of subaltern voices.

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HEIKE SCHMIDT

### 'INTERCALARY' FIGURES IN EARLIER TWENTIETH-CENTURY NATAL

DOI: 10.1017/S002185370329914X

*Restless Identities: Signatures of Nationalism, Zulu Ethnicity and History in the Lives of Petros Lamula (c. 1881–1948) and Lymon Maling (1889–c. 1936)*. By PAUL LA HAUSSE DE LALOUVIÈRE. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 2000. Pp. xvi + 317. No price given (ISBN 086980-957-1).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, Christianity, ethnicity, identity, intellectual, nationalism, social, biography.

*Restless Identities* is an ambitious attempt to reconstruct the intellectual and social history of Natal and Zululand in the formative interwar period by recounting the lives of two men, Petros Lamula and Lymon Maling (*né* Malinga). Both men were born into the African 'lower bourgeoisie' in Natal (the latter just barely), both were ambitious and political and both moved in the ambit of the founders of the ANC, of Inkatha and of various large Christian churches. Neither, however, falls cleanly into the official lineage of those bodies. As a result, as la Hausse de Lalouvière explains, their institutional traces are marginal and had to be tracked down piecemeal. Lamula and Maling have thus 'disappeared from the story of African nationalism in South Africa'. The book is a 'making visible', one of those terrific efforts that exposes a significant lacuna in historians' comprehension of the past, and then fills it.

Lamula became a churchman and a politician in the world of Zulu tradesmen, saddle-makers, cart-repairers, hymn-printers and society-members. He was connected for many years with the Norwegian Missionary Society at Umpumulo, which ultimately fired him for making political-sounding speeches. Lamula

collaborated in the Zulu National Fund, at the roots of Inkatha (which was repeatedly 'founded', first as early as 1921), and called himself in his correspondence 'the professor of hidden sciences'. Most interestingly, Lamula wrote about how to study the bible, how to understand Zulu society and about both in dialectical tension with each other. One wishes la Hausse de Lalouvière gave us a little more from those writings, translated into English.

Unlike Lamula, Lymon Maling had no heritable aristocratic connections, and, indeed, no land in his family. He came from a Wesleyan mission on the outskirts of Pietermaritzburg. His father was a failed businessman and deputy chief in the part of Zululand ceded by Dinuzulu to white farmers in 1884 called 'New Republic', or in Zulu politics Abaqulusi territory. La Hausse de Lalouvière tells us that 'in the segregationist vocabulary of the late 1920s Maling was a fraud' (p. 211). The Abaqulusi Land Union included many Christian men of Swazi origin like Maling who 'acknowledged' Zulu sovereignty and yet also viewed themselves as Christians. Maling was involved with many aspects of chiefly politics, by self-presentation if not by nomination, and he 'collected cattle' (extorted? the author is very delicate here) as 'tribute' to Solomon ka Dinuzulu, the heir to the 'throne' in Zululand, and made his living that way. Maling eventually married a Zulu princess.

These are fascinating characters and la Hausse de Lalouvière has done a splendid job tracking down their traces in scattered repositories. One guesses he reads and speaks Zulu although he does not say. Interestingly, la Hausse de Lalouvière directly compares Maling and Solomon. According to his perhaps harsh judgement Maling and Solomon were both men whose 'loyalty ultimately appeared to be himself' (p. 224) but 'each struggled to assert claims to individual agency and subjectivity against a political discourse which conspired to reduce them to objects of historical process ... Solomon appeared as traditionalist heir to the imperium of a reworked modernism, Maling aspired to be the modernist heir to the authority derived from reconstructed traditionalism' (p. 214). The effect of such even-handed parallelisms is to remove the grounds for deprecating 'revived Zulu tradition' as phony or reactionary.

Politics went into rapid flux in the 1920s not just in Natal but all over South and southern Africa. Nonheta Nkwenkwe, Christina Nku, Walter Mattita, A. A. S. LeFleur, Enoch Mgijima, Wellington Butelezi and Samuel Moroka were a few other 'intercalary figures' who swam through the divisions of tribalist, chief, cleric, prophet and nationalist. Like most of those people, Lymon Maling said 'crazy' things, having had a vision that 'Bambatha was still alive', accusing a top royal councillor of concealing him and so on. I suggest that Maling was not speaking crazily, but was using a back-translation of the Christian notion of 'everlasting life', which was often given in Nguni languages as 'living that is not cut off' – thus as Maling had it, 'still living'. Maling was recognizing Bambatha's memory as sovereign, and consonant with Zulu nationalism, which he evidently thought the councillor in question was holding hostage. Lamula's and Maling's vocabularies were multi-vocal – 'inkosi enkulu' for example meant 'God' and 'paramount chief'; 'izulu' meant 'heaven,' 'lightning' and 'Zulu subject'. A few notches below Maling's and Lamula's world, common folk in the 1910s and 1920s demanded that a reign of greatness and justice be called down upon them all, whether of God, England, America or the Zulu king.

The amazing thing is not that la Hausse de Lalouvière did not draw my particular conclusions, but that he did such an excellent job on his own terms. By credibly depicting the vagaries of Zulu nationalism and lower-bourgeois African life in Natal he opens up the binaries of 'ethnicity' vs. 'progressivism' (and urban vs. rural) in South Africa. I highly recommend *Restless Identities* not only to

South Africanists interested in Natal, but to anyone interested in a meticulous and compelling work of history.

*University of Maryland*

PAUL S. LANDAU

## THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF CAPE TOWN

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703309144

*Cape Town: The Making of a City: An Illustrated Social History.* Edited by NIGEL WORDEN, ELIZABETH VAN HEYNINGEN and VIVIAN BICKFORD-SMITH. Cape Town: David Philip, 1998. Pp. 283. Rand 250 (ISBN 0-86486-435-3).

*Cape Town in the Twentieth Century: An Illustrated Social History.* Edited by NIGEL WORDEN, ELIZABETH VAN HEYNINGEN and VIVIAN BICKFORD-SMITH. Cape Town: David Philip, 1999. Pp. 255. Rand 225 (ISBN 0-86486-384-5).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, urban, social, colonial, apartheid.

These volumes tell a sweeping story. Founded in the mid-seventeenth century as a Dutch East India Company refreshment station, Cape Town became a port city like so many others borne out of European overseas expansion. It drew northern Europeans of all classes, as well as Africans, Asians and indigenous Khoisans. Slaves, sailors and soldiers lived side-by-side, at once divided by race and status, yet united by the common line that separated them from the dining tables of the Company's merchant elite.

The incorporation of the Cape into the British Empire after 1806 transformed the colony. By the 1860s Cape Town had developed into a 'colonial' city, driven by commerce and remade in the image of a Victorian English merchant class who looked to London for cultural guidance. At the same time Cape Town had become home to a large African population. The interwar years were the city's 'golden age', despite massive poverty and deepening social division.

The second half of the twentieth century was marked by forced removals, as the Nationalist government relentlessly saw through the process of residential segregation started by the English merchant elite. As a consequence Cape Town became starkly polarized along racial lines. Whites continue to live in the leafy suburbs close to the city centre and blacks in the bleak, soulless ghettos of the Cape Flats. The residents of Cape Town played their part in seeing off apartheid. In the 1980s civic associations proliferated and the secondary schools of the Cape Flats bred a 'culture of revolution'. By the end of the twentieth century Cape Town had become a multi-cultural tourist Mecca, where the likes of British celebrities Kate Moss and Richard Branson could jive to Peter Gabriel's song 'Biko'.

With their beautiful photographs and illustrations, it would be easy to mistake these volumes for 'coffee table' books. Undoubtedly they have been aimed at a relatively wide, popular market. But these volumes bring together, in an appealing new way, most of the research carried out on Cape Town over the past two decades. The authors conducted and steered much of this research themselves. Thus, although specialist readers will be familiar with much of the content, there is also a great deal that is new.

The early history is told in novel and captivating terms, stressing its fragility and weakness. The development of a thriving settler colony was by no means inevitable. Cape Town, we are told, was founded almost accidentally. The Dutch had no intention of creating a permanent European settlement. For a while it appeared that the settlement would not survive; in 1654 it nearly starved to death. The granting of freeburgher status to Company servants was a response to crisis, not

the consequence of a decision to found a settler colony. Many of these free-burgers, for their part, were happy to turn their backs on settler status and either returned to Company service or fled the colony altogether and attempted to return to Europe.

A number of issues are addressed here for the first time. These include the spatial and gendered dimensions of colonial settlement, the extent to which Cape Town was from the start dependent on the labour of imported slaves and, perhaps most importantly, its development as a specifically urban environment and its relationship with the rural hinterland. One of the big strengths of this history is the way these themes are all interwoven. The fragility of the settlement was symbolized by the inability of the Company radically to order and transform the physical landscape: in 1663 the earthen fort it built collapsed. The permanent castle was completed only in 1674, and beyond its walls the Company had even less control. This was a settlement of the unfree. Slaves, soldiers and sailors conspired (sometimes in unison) to challenge Company control. And it was the men and women of the settlement, who from the eighteenth century saw themselves as distinct from the surrounding countryside, who defined Cape Town as an urban centre.

In this history, the thread of 'respectability' serves to link nineteenth- and twentieth-century Cape Town. 'Respectability' was central to late nineteenth-century Victorian bourgeois identity. For whites, including those of Dutch origin, 'respectability' meant the sanctity of the (nuclear) family and a leisurely life that came with the employment of (black) servants in the suburban household. For the 'coloured' petite bourgeoisie it meant distance from the slave past, education and temperance. To all, respectability was inseparable from competence in English. Thus, 'respectability' was both class-based and highly gendered. But there is a danger here that 'respectability' explains all. The contested nature of its definition and content is hinted at but never explored. It remains the prerogative of white and black middle classes, and the quest for respectability on the part of the 'coloured' petite bourgeoisie is seen far too much as a reaction to the hegemony of Victorian ideals and the 'internalisation of white middle-class values' (*Cape Town in the Twentieth Century*, p. 43). There is little recognition, for example, of how 'respectability' might have pervaded the identities of prostitutes, domestic servants and organized youth gangs. Nor is there much sense of its changing content. The 'respectability' of the African Political Organization in the early years of the twentieth century was presumably not the same as that of the civic associations which in the 1980s so vigorously sought to promote a vision of non-racialism.

Cape Town was transformed during and after the Second World War, and this history, drawing on the vast collection of oral testimonies collected by the University of Cape Town, tells the story well. For most Cape Town residents the twentieth century is to be divided into the era before and after forced removals. The Group Areas Act of 1950 stands out in a vast battery of apartheid-era legislation. Reaction to apartheid spawned a host of political parties, although the Sharpeville-to-Soweto paradigm does not quite do them justice. The final chapter is a breathtaking account of the rebellion of the 1980s and the end of the apartheid state in the western Cape.

These volumes testify to the strengths of South African social history. But they also remind us how much needs to be done. There are no full-length histories of, for example, eighteenth-century urban slavery, of nineteenth- and twentieth-century domestic servants, of any number of townships and, perhaps most starkly, of the social history of apartheid.

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## THE JEWISH EXPERIENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703319140

*Memories, Realities and Dreams: Aspects of the South African Jewish Experience.*

Edited by MILTON SHAIN and RICHARD MENDELSON. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, n.d. (2002?). Pp. 234. Rand 149.95, paperback (ISBN 1-86842-132-5).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, ethnicity, identity, apartheid.

Contemporary South African history writing about ethnicity and social identity displays a marked tendency to turn the historical gaze inwards: whereas Afrikaner and African nationalisms were for many years staple objects of analysis, coloureds, Indians and Jews are now receiving sustained attention. This tightly edited and well-composed collection by two leading scholars of South African Jewry is a welcome addition to an expanding field of study and suggests possibilities for comparative analysis in respect of other South African minorities. Its immediate genesis lies in a conference designed to reflect on the Jewish experience in the light of South African democratization, but the book is conceptually grounded in broader historiographic traditions centering on memory, migration and identity formation. Dominant and recurring themes include the making of Jewish social identity, the experience of anti-semitism and the history of Jewish political activism in the anti-apartheid struggle.

The opening essay by the novelist Dan Jacobson is a splendidly crafted meditation on the author's childhood and schooling in 1930s to 1940s Kimberley, when pro-Nazi anti-semitism was at its height. Milton Shain covers some of the same ground, though from a different analytical perspective and in a wider context. The title of his interestingly reflective essay 'If it was so good, why was it so bad?' revolves around a paradox: many South African Jews today recall the past and their treatment by the white 'host population' with warm affection, despite the fact that the historical record testifies to the rawness of public and private anti-Jewish feeling in the first half of the twentieth century.

A number of essays address the formation of South African Jewish identity at the start of the century, a rather more complicated process of engineering ethnic belonging than has hitherto been assumed or acknowledged. Richard Mendelsohn investigates Jewish allegiances during the Boer and Great Wars, showing how a socially and culturally heterogeneous immigrant community, with little discernable sense of collective identity, responded in contrasting ways to wartime claims on their loyalties and patriotism. In Joseph Sherman's passionate essay we learn that early communal leaders, eager to promote South African Jews as modern and upwardly mobile elements of the white population, sought to eradicate traces of the community's eastern European peasant and worker background, a process underscored by the leadership's overwhelming commitment to international Zionism. This was expressed in an unswerving campaign to eradicate Yiddish culture and the socialist ideals of the *Bund*. One of the casualties was the loss of a vibrant Yiddish literature.

A densely argued and provocative essay by James Campbell constitutes the link between the editors' interests in the Jewish community's historical formation and the book's concern with more recent events. A 'curious debate', in Campbell's words, has recently surfaced centring on the role of Jews in the anti-apartheid struggle. Whereas the presence of Jews in the white political left is widely acknowledged to have been wholly disproportionate to their numbers, many, if not most, radical Jews – especially those in the Communist Party – resisted identification *as* Jews, a situation abetted by conservative communal leaders who pusillanimously reiterated the need to remain politically neutral and insisted on Jewish loyalty to 'South Africa'. In the post-apartheid era, the situation has reversed as

ANC leaders with Jewish origins have been reclaimed as members of the community, with or without their agreement.

Gideon Shimoni opens his contribution on the conspicuous involvement of Jews in the anti-apartheid movement by reference to the notion of inherited 'Jewish values' (commitment to social perfectability, rationality, justice) only to dismiss this explanation in favour of theories of social marginality and outsider status. Shimoni places considerable emphasis on the influence of the parental home and the trans-generational transmission of radical ideas. By contrast, Campbell puts a rather different spin on immigrant feelings of alienation and the role of the family. In his view a common feature of many Jewish revolutionaries was their profound estrangement from family and kin, a consequence of the disruptive immigrant experience. Glenn Frankel's essay, a reprise of his book, *Rivonia's Children*, which examines the lives of key (and mostly Jewish) white participants in the ANC and Communist Party of the 1950s and after, adds insight and biographical texture to the very different accounts given by Campbell and Shimoni. That all three writers subject many of the same individuals to analysis makes for illuminating reading.

The remaining two essays in this volume fit the collection somewhat less well, though both are worthwhile in themselves. Marcia Leveson's contribution on the treatment of Jewish and black characters by South African Jewish novelists is suggestive but rather too brief and diffuse to be convincing. Conversely, Dennis Davis's concluding essay on Jews and the nature of the Open Society is almost too tightly structured around a set of possible 'responses' to apartheid and receptivity to the larger world. Both writers introduce a note of pessimism about the future of a diminishing and diminished Jewish community. For Leveson the memory of Jewish involvement in the anti-apartheid movement is insufficiently compelling to sustain an ongoing sense of Jewish presence; for Davis, the greatest threat is the abandonment of secular rationality and a defensive retreat into religious orthodoxy and ritual.

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SAUL DUBOW

## BROADER PERSPECTIVES ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703329147

*Writing a Wider War: Rethinking Gender, Race, and Identity in the South African War, 1899–1902.* Edited by GREG CUTHBERTSON, ALBERT GRUNDLINGH and MARY-LYNN SUTTIE. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002. Pp. xix + 345. \$65 (ISBN 0-8214-1462-3); \$26.95, paperback (ISBN 0-8214-1463-1).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, gender, identity, imperialism, military, race.

The product of a 1999 conference at the University of South Africa, this is an eclectic collection full of wide-ranging essays of great interest that try to adopt cutting-edge conceptual approaches in order to enhance our understanding of the wider significance of the war. New research in the areas of commemoration, gender, health, nationalisms, identities, ethics and morality is deployed to produce what the editors term a 'historian's book of the South Africa War' (p. xvii).

Bill Nasson offers a useful account of commemoration, and suggests that, from the perspective of the late 1990s, it is the significance of political memories of the war that looks set to decline. Albert Grundlingh considers selective commemoration in the case of the National Women's Monument in Bloemfontein erected in 1913. Helen Bradford looks at Afrikaner nationalism, gender and colonial warfare,

suggesting that the British use of the techniques of colonial warfare failed to break the resistance of Boer women. Fransjohan Pretorius investigates the manifestations of Afrikaner nationalism on commando. He argues that a new Afrikaner elite with new leaders emerged as a manifestation of nationalism in the guerrilla phase of the war. This new leadership was provided by landowners with links to the new Afrikaner professional elite. Bernard Mbenga considers the role of the Bakgatla of the Pilanesberg district in the Western Transvaal, not least British compensation for war loans. The war experience of Natal's 'loyal' Africans is the subject of John Lambert's essay. The Boer invasion was disastrous for them. In addition, early Boer success led the British to abandon their determination to keep the conflict 'white'. By 1901, the onset of guerrilla warfare had forced the British army to make increasing use of the African population. However, this loyalty was not recognized, leading to widespread alienation. Manelisi Genge argues that the involvement of the emaSwati was a contributory factor to the Boer defeat in Swaziland. He suggests that they did not merely fight a British war; instead, based on old scores, they had their own agendas around land and livestock. Shula Marks assesses British nursing and suggests that their presence increased colonial (largely male) fears that racial boundaries would be more readily transgressed, and contributed greatly to the intensifying demand for segregated nursing services. Elizabeth Van Heyningen examines the relationship between British doctors and Boer women in the concentration camps. To the latter, the doctors were inhumane and unskilful, while the doctors considered the women as representing 'the domestic face of the enemy, the epitome of sluttishness, ignorance, and unmotherliness' (p. 205). Keith Surridge examines the relationship between Kitchener and Milner in the ending of the war. Alan Jeeves assesses J. A. Hobson's view of the war, Richard Mendelsohn looks at Anglo-Jewry and the conflict, David Nash considers secular and moral critiques of the war and Andrew Porter the war and imperial Britain. He suggests that 'failures in the war began both to undermine the view that empire held the key to national greatness and to destroy the ability of empire presented in South African terms to provide a diversion from domestic troubles' (p. 300). Andrew Thompson looks at imperial propaganda, pointing out that the main sources were extra-parliamentary: 'the task of "selling the War" did not fall directly to the government' (p. 307). A first-rate collection that richly deserves attention.

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JEREMY BLACK

## MAGIC AND SUBALTERN NATIONALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703339143

*The Politics of Evil: Magic, State Power, and the Political Imagination in South Africa.* By CLIFTON CRAIS. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. xvi + 297. No price given (ISBN 0-521-81721-8).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, colonial, apartheid, popular culture, resistance, witchcraft.

This book on the Eastern Cape/Transkei starts with a discussion of cross-cultural contact and the rise of the colonial state and its institutions and practices, and proceeds to examine popular culture and resistance, and the way Africans understood and responded to the colonial forces with which they were confronted. The area is one of the most exhaustively explored regions in the entire continent,

and another study giving the long view of its history – from culture contact to apartheid and after – might seem superfluous. The specific focus of the book is ostensibly the ‘politics of evil’, magic and witchcraft, the ways in which African people (‘subalterns’) turned to supernatural knowledge to make sense of and react to the forces of colonial conquest and rule. But it sometimes seems that the themes of evil and magic provide little more than a new gloss on an old story. The book’s scope is very broad, so much so that it seems unmanageably ambitious.

Crais makes his research go a long way. This he does by filling out his primary research, drawn mainly from two periods, with much extraneous material. In some ways the book is a triumph of style over substance. He reveals a mastery of a certain discursive style and of the conceptual literature, but the reader is not sure much of the time that a great deal new is being said. Through large parts of the book, empirical data is used to leaven what is often a series of general discussions of the nature of colonial knowledge and power, resistance and response, pursued at a high level of abstraction. We are provided with surveys of the nature of Nguni society and political culture, the development of the colonial bureaucratic state, millenarian movements and an analysis of apartheid retribalization, topics that have been well ploughed before. Chapters 6 and 7, which provide closely researched historical explorations of conflict in Qumbu and surrounds in the 1950s, and the Pondoland Revolt of 1960, are indeed valuable. Ironically, it is precisely when the book becomes interesting that the central issues of magic and evil hardly make an appearance. Nevertheless, we do find here a rather more historically informed view of the complexities of subaltern politics than elsewhere in the book.

Crais is concerned to distance himself from other scholars in order to emphasize his own originality. He dismisses others who have written on African nationalism as focusing on narrow literate elites, as if his subaltern approach, with its emphasis on the problems of evil and social health and religious experience is something novel (p. 123). Anybody familiar with the evolving historiography would find this caricature – both of the scholarship concerned and of the nature of ‘elite’ politics – inaccurate. Crais greatly exaggerates the discontinuities between elite and subaltern nationalisms, and claims an exaggerated originality in choosing to focus on the latter. Similarly, he puts down those who are interested in missionary influences (the Comaroffs, Landau) with the comment that this approach ‘has done surprisingly little to reinvigorate Southern African studies’ (p. 235). The implication, again quite erroneously, is that those who interest themselves in mission Christianity are unaware of the complexity of the religious and political lives of the mass of Africans. The truth is that Crais is following in the footsteps of others who have pioneered the study of millenarian and prophetic movements, separatist and syncretic churches and indeed rural revolts against apartheid, although the unwary reader might not notice.

The nominal focus on witchcraft as a central element in African political consciousness runs the risk of relegating the mass of South Africa’s people to a pre-modern world, in which magic and superstition rule supreme. It would be wrong to caricature Crais’s approach, but he does tend to see manifestations of ‘modern’ practice and symbolism as being examples of appropriation and mimicry, as if this subaltern nationalism adopted the ideological armoury of modernism only as form rather than substance. What this ‘modernity’ actually entails is left vague, other than that it is rational, secular and bureaucratic. At one point Crais writes that ‘subaltern nationalism perplexed and troubled African political elites who saw the movements they had helped create being transformed by a vision of the world they scarcely understood’ (p. 144). This conception of the modern political leadership as somehow alien and external to African realities is a little condescending.

Here we have the metropolitan scholar presuming to tell the nationalist leaders that he understands these realities better than they. These leaders cannot win. For their politics apparently are cravenly borrowed from the colonizers, liberal, reformist, individualist, derived rather than indigenous, and, therefore, we must presume, inauthentic.

Crais concludes with a bleakly pessimistic (and very one-sided) view of post-apartheid South Africa, which he sees as captive to apartheid-era interests and endemic disorder. The elitist African National Congress, for him, has failed to break the colonial mould, being deeply compromised by it. He seems to envisage a better future emerging from subaltern populism, untainted by the impositions of the modern bureaucratic state. These days the Africans presume to speak for themselves, and they do so in a multitude of voices. They are likely to resent being reduced to vehicles for metropolitan fantasies, whether of the left or the right.

The impression created by this book is that the author cobbled together a lot of diverse material, and then cast about for a theme that might hold the whole together. But despite my reservations, it remains true that Crais is a gifted scholar with a wide-ranging curiosity and voracious reading habits. I look forward to a more persuasive vehicle for his talents.

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TIMOTHY KEEGAN

## CHRISTIANITY AND SECURITY IN OVAMBOLAND

DOI: 10.1017/S002185370334914X

*To Dwell Secure: Generation, Christianity, and Colonialism in Ovamboland.* By MEREDITH MCKITTRICK. Oxford: James Currey; Portsmouth NH: Heinemann; Cape Town: David Philip, 2002. Pp. xvii + 297. £45 (ISBN 0-85255-958-5); paperback, £16.95 (ISBN 0-85255-957-7).

KEY WORDS: Namibia, colonial, Christianity, generational conflict.

McKittrick's book fills a gap in the historiography of northern Namibia and makes a valuable contribution to the social history of christianization. While most studies of north-central Namibia focus on eastern Ovamboland, McKittrick's book, which relies heavily on oral histories (overwhelmingly from Omabalanu and Ongandjera), is anchored in western Ovamboland, an area she rightly refers to as the periphery of the periphery. The handful of colonial officials rarely visited western Ovamboland, although when they did, they sometimes radically interfered in local affairs.

McKittrick's focus on Christian communities rather than on missions and missionaries is refreshing. She shows how the 'junior' generation growing up in an increasingly insecure Ovambo floodplain environment at the turn of the nineteenth to twentieth century embraced *Uukristi* (Christianity) to break free from the demands of their social seniors and to create safer lives, both physically and spiritually. She argues that the violence of raiding and warfare and the powerlessness of 'traditional' political and spiritual leadership and structures in the face of drought and disease paved the way for rapid christianization in Ovamboland. Whereas in 1900 Christians formed a tiny minority, in the 1990s (when McKittrick did her fieldwork) over 90 per cent of the population were Christians. She argues that African Christian pastors and other individuals played a pivotal role in the spreading of *Uukristi*. The account of this process would have been further strengthened had McKittrick provided more details about such actors from her oral sources; interviews are primarily used to highlight the *Uukristi* adherents'

'collective voices'. Similarly, greater attention to the internal differentiations within *Uukristi* would have been informative, as the different missions, for example, had their disagreements and even rivalries.

McKittrick emphasizes that the spread of Christianity cannot be assessed simply by analyzing the growth of the number of converts. Rather, Christian ideas and practices percolated Ovamboland societies before actual conversion. Migrant labor, the appreciation for new goods and the subsequent monetization of the local economy were also instrumental to spreading *Uukristi*. McKittrick notes that Christians sometimes strayed and even reverted to 'paganism', triggering a revivalist movement that is discussed in chapter 8. In the earlier chapters, however, christianization is sometimes portrayed a bit too teleologically, driven too strongly by the thesis that for the junior generation *Uukristi* was basically an emancipatory movement. The thesis is most convincing when *Uukristi* disciples were a motley collection of marginalized youths. It is less so in the 1940s and 1950s, when the erstwhile rebels have themselves become the establishment. To a new generation of (Christian) youths, *Uukristi* may have seemed as much an ideology of the *status quo* as 'paganism' was to the early *Uukristi* youth. McKittrick in fact concedes as much at times, but nevertheless does not analyze the early 1950s revivalist movement in terms of a new generational struggle that discredits the *Uukristi* elders, although it was led by youths and women, and targeted symbols of (*Uukristi*) seniority, for example, drinking sorghum beer.

McKittrick's argument for the pre-1940s era regarding a 'search for security' is strong (Elizabeth Eldredge makes a similar argument for nineteenth-century Lesotho). Still, *Uukristi* was not the only path to security. In fact, the missions failed as safe havens during the Great Famine of the mid-1910s. Many people sought safety through the patronage of powerful headmen or in a neighboring polity, or even in the Portuguese or German colonies. Significantly, Christianity's most spectacular growth did not occur during or immediately following the turn of the century which was the era of greatest insecurity, but in the 1940s and 1950s, when a measure of (colonial) security was established. Moreover, although Oukwanyama suffered most from insecurity in the mid- to late 1910s, the growth of *Uukristi* there was much slower than in either southern or western Ovamboland. The case of Oukwanyama also complicates McKittrick's analysis that migrant labor and Christianity were mutually reinforcing. Until the 1940s and 1950s, Oukwanyama was by far the greatest supplier of migrant laborers, both in absolute and relative terms, suggesting that the interaction between migrant labor and 'christianization' deserves further investigation. Clearly, McKittrick's social definition of *Uukristi* can serve as a fruitful point of departure for such a project.

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EMMANUEL KREIKE

## AFRICAN MIDDLE-CLASS STRATEGIES IN COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703359146

*The Rise of an African Middle Class: Colonial Zimbabwe, 1898–1965*. By MICHAEL O. WEST. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002. Pp. xv + 324. \$49.95 (ISBN 0-253-34085-3); \$22.95, paperback (ISBN 0-253-21524-2).

KEY WORDS: Zimbabwe, colonial, class, gender, nationalism.

This elegantly written and persuasively argued book traces the rise of Zimbabwe's African middle class, establishing their importance both socially and

politically. Beginning in 1898, with an embrace of the potential inherent in the non-racial franchise, and ending in 1965 when the African elite at last renounced their fortunes in Rhodesian society for nationalism, West expertly charts the aspirations, disappointments and unwavering commitment of the African middle class to the achievement of respectability in colonial society. West's book will surely become the standard reference for African elites in colonial Zimbabwe.

The first part of the book recounts the poignant struggles of elites in search of better housing, quality education, bourgeois domesticity and respect from white Rhodesia. The colonial regime's insistence on lumping all Africans together as one undifferentiated mass frustrated the middle class's quest for social recognition as due equal status with whites. The second part of the book traces how the elite's social world translated into political distance from other Africans. Beginning in the interwar period of what he calls 'proto-nationalism', West follows the political journey of elites through the 'national moment' of World War II, and on to the late 1950s. In each period the middle class eschewed the concerns of both the working and peasant classes, ever eager to sit at the table of power with white Rhodesians, despite their unrelenting prejudice towards blacks of all classes. West argues that, though the elite never shed their superior postures, in the late 1950s they had an epiphany that white Rhodesia would never accept them as full 'partners'. Then, just as quickly as they had rushed to drink tea and spirits at multi-racial parties during Federation days, the black elite hastened to form political parties committed to winning political power. West provides considerable evidence for his assertions, yet one wonders whether the sharp focus on class does not sometimes blur other important, even if situational, factors in politics. He notes, for example, generational and gender factors for the rise of the Youth League, but perhaps overemphasizes the leadership's lower-middle-class roots to explain their political differences with the likes of Nathan Shamuyarira.

Gender is a running, if muted, theme throughout the text. Gender is evident from middle-class male objections to 'joint drinking' as threatening to their relationship with respectable women, to the rather macho pronouncements of the elite in their political organizations, perhaps most obviously in the attitudes of the Youth Leaguers. In emphasizing class, West risks ignoring gender disputes as they weaved in and out of the male elite's consciousness. At the same time, West insists that while women assumed a home-based and politically secondary role, their more subdued voice can be heard in the public pronouncements of male elite members. The challenge is to raise the volume of such faint voices. Women's voices provide background noise here, though West recommends that, following Terence Ranger's study of the Samkange family, a study of elite marriage strategies will better reveal the private but powerful role of women in elite formation. That said, West's document-based study provides a potentially rich complement to studies that probe the archive stored in the memory of Zimbabwean women.

West's concern to establish middle class thought within the broader pan-Africanist context is refreshing. The Zimbabwean elite's familiarity with pan-Africanism was both personal, as in Robert Mugabe's sojourns in Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana, and ideological, as in the embrace of any number of pan-African ideals such as 'racial uplift'. Unfortunately, though true to their exclusionary history, African elites also embraced Nkrumah's 'political kingdom' as the first task in their nationalist campaign, thereby consigning the amelioration of class divisions among blacks to the postcolonial period, where they have festered and grown.

The text's two parts at times makes for some redundancy and structural awkwardness, but this is a slight imperfection in this articulate and learned study. West's sober study of Zimbabwe's ruling class will undoubtedly inform the work

of historians and those interested in a 'sociopolitical introduction to postcolonial Zimbabwe' (p. 8). This landmark book is essential reading for all students of Zimbabwe's past and present.

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ALLISON K. SHUTT

## COLONIAL EDUCATION AND AFRICAN SELF-EMPOWERMENT

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703369142

*Colonial Lessons: Africans' Education in Southern Rhodesia, 1918–1940.* By CAROL SUMMERS. Oxford: James Currey; Portsmouth NH: Heinemann; Cape Town: David Philip, 2002. Pp. xxix + 212. £45; \$64.95 (ISBN 0-85255-953-4); £16.95; \$24.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-952-6).

KEY WORDS: Zimbabwe, colonial, education.

Carol Summers makes it clear that Zimbabweans have a long-standing interest in education. *Colonial Lessons* is framed as a book about changing African understandings of 'useful knowledge and schooling' (p. xiii) between the First and Second World Wars. This period was ever more troubled, punctuated by the world market depression and a series of measures undertaken by the Southern Rhodesian authorities to institutionalize racial segregation. Summers's first book was a detailed look at segregation during much the same period; the present book is in many ways a continuation of her earlier work. Here, she makes good use not only of the archival records in Zimbabwe and the United Kingdom, but also of literature and anthropology.

Schools were 'central to both Europeans' and Africans' attempts to shape the future of Southern Rhodesia' (p. 61). They were also, Summers argues, ultimately about the constitution and construction of African identities. Europeans saw schooling as a way to manage and control the African population. Africans were meant to be productive subjects. But Africans saw schooling as an avenue for 'progress' and 'civilization'. Africans wanted to be productive citizens. Since Christian missions provided most of the schools in the interwar years, there was often a religious dimension to how Europeans and Africans conceptualized and acted upon these contested identities.

Throughout the book Summers shows how literacy and schooling provided unexpected tools for self-empowerment. If the missions and government used education to produce colonial subjects, that same education gave Africans the means with which to challenge the colonial status quo. Summers concludes that the African 'middlemen' (as she refers to them) produced in schools were not wholly effective in reshaping administrative attitudes and policies. Nevertheless, '[e]ducation and schooling, far from being a hegemonic system of control by segregationist authorities, provided space within disordered, underfunded educational institutions for Africans to reshape and challenge government and mission agendas' (p. 201).

They were, indeed, underfunded. The early chapters trace the failures and controversies of schools in Gutu and Umchingwe, showing how funding was a key to African/European disagreements. Lack of money was not always the problem. For state and mission officials, it mattered where it came from and why. Chief Mdala, at Umchingwe, made it clear to government authorities that the young men in his area were ready and willing to pay for education – 5 shillings each. But these men wanted to learn English, not industrial skills, as the director of Native



Development preferred. After protracted disagreements and negotiations, the school at Umchingwe failed. In the eyes of government, the people of Umchingwe had not requested 'appropriate knowledge' (p. 62).

Perhaps the most important contribution of this book to the history of mission education is the discussion of 'material Christianity' in chapter five, which carries the theme of school funding even further. Summers focuses on 'tickets', 'concerts' and 'school fees', primarily in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Tickets were a physical record of a member's financial contributions to the mission, and were so important that failure to keep up with regular contributions might result in denial of church benefits (baptism, communion, etc.). Concerts were an excellent if potentially un-Christian way to solicit impromptu donations from members who had spent the night in revelry. School fees were the material manifestation of hope for a better future. Each of these produced 'a pattern of monetized materialism' (p. 152), a 'moral and religious connection between money and God' (p. 167), and 'display of white power' (p. 168).

Summers presents the material in her book with an admirable acumen. If this reviewer has one substantive criticism, it is that she does not turn her attention to an important aspect of life in interwar Southern Rhodesia: the rise of Zionism and Christian independency. She admits to this in her introduction, but the argument she makes for passing over the Zionists is not convincing. As she puts it, for colonial and mission authorities, 'Zionism was less a part of a conversation than the end of a debate' (p. xxi). Not so, however, for the African prophets in Southern Rhodesia who took significant numbers of disaffected converts away from the school-fee-demanding, ticket-ticking missionaries and their stations. This was an important aspect of African initiative and cannot be separated from the constellation of other religious and social dynamics at play. Overall, however, scholars interested in education, religion and the colonial state will find much in this book.

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MATTHEW ENGELKE

## NUTRITIONAL RESEARCH IN COLONIAL MALAWI

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703379149

*Feeding Families: African Realities and British Ideas of Nutrition and Development in Early Colonial Africa.* By CYNTHIA BRANTLEY. Westwood CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002. Pp. xviii + 248. \$64.95 (ISBN 0-325-07081-4); paperback, no price given (ISBN 0-325-07080-6).

KEY WORDS: Malawi, colonial, nutrition, science.

Cynthia Brantley's book is published just as Malawi staggers back from the brink of a serious famine. While international aid agencies and academics debate the causes and consequences of this latest food shortage, we are reminded that many of the issues addressed by colonial scientists and social scientists have not gone away.

British colonial interest in nutrition took off in the 1930s, spurred by concerns expressed in the League of Nations, but also by the development of nutrition as a new scientific specialism. There was a general acknowledgement that more research was needed on this subject and that this research would have to be interdisciplinary, encompassing the social dimensions of food supply and consumption as well as its physiological and biochemical aspects. This book traces the history of a major interdisciplinary research project which was the product of colonial and professional concerns of this period. This was the Nyasaland Nutrition Survey,

launched in 1938 under the directorship of a nutritional scientist, Benjamin Platt, and incorporating an anthropologist (Margaret Read, known for her work on the Ngoni peoples), a nutritionist and a botanist. Then, as now, interdisciplinary research projects were not without their difficulties. For a combination of personal and professional reasons (difficult if not impossible to disentangle) Platt and Read soon fell out. Read's anthropological and sociological research would be included in the final report of the survey, but as a virtually separate study. As Brantley makes clear, there was no integration of social scientific methodologies or insights into the main body of the research and this failure seriously limited the findings.

The research team focused on three villages in Nkhotakota district, chosen for their contrasting ecological conditions and modes of production. In addition, some data were also collected from peri-urban settlements around the colony's major town and commercial centre, Blantyre. The bulk of Brantley's book consists of a detailed re-analysis of the data produced by the team, together with a recontextualization of the results. In the course of this re-analysis she critiques the methods and assumptions of colonial science and she simultaneously makes the data work to illuminate patterns of social and economic change affecting the nutritional status of the villagers. Brantley argues that, not only did the survey suffer from a lack of integration of social scientific insights, but that Pratt's design also resulted in 'too much material and too many variables'. Despite these problems, the data are revealing of a number of issues: the importance of labour constraints (partly but not wholly associated with labour migration); the nature of inequality; the impact of taxation and Indirect Rule; the impact of cash on the food economy; the centrality of seasonality. In terms of nutritional status the results were inconclusive. The data did not reveal any major diseases associated with nutritional deficiency, but did point to signs of chronic under-nutrition.

Platt never finished the final report of the Nyasaland Nutrition Survey, but a draft was sent to the Colonial Office in 1940. Brantley concludes that few if any lessons were learned from this ambitious initiative – in particular, that the need for a holistic approach to nutritional problems is still often disregarded. The book is a valuable contribution, then, to the growing literature on the history of colonial science and the associated rise of 'development'.

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MEGAN VAUGHAN

## AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN BUSINESS HISTORY

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703389145

*Black Business and Economic Power*. Edited by ALUSINE JALLOH and TOYIN FALOLA. Rochester NY: University of Rochester Press, 2002. Pp. xii + 628. \$67.95; £50 (ISBN 1-58046-114-X).

KEY WORDS: Western Africa, diaspora, business – African, economic, precolonial, colonial, postcolonial.

This collection of 22 essays is a thought-provoking contribution to the economic histories of both African and African American societies. It focuses broadly on business activity in Africa from precolonial times to the present and in the United States from the late nineteenth century to the present. It is organized into three main sections: 'African business and world trade', 'Modernization of African business' and 'African American Business'. The first section deals largely with precolonial West Africa, while the second focuses on the last hundred

years, again with an emphasis on West African countries. The final section comprises a diverse set of essays addressing aspects of African American business history.

A primary objective of *Black Business* is to lay the foundation for a larger economic history of the African diaspora. Another major purpose is to demonstrate the diversity of business histories in African and African American communities. In doing so the collection addresses four overarching themes: the longevity of African business practices, the spread of Western ideas about business to Africans and how Africans localized them, the variability of business management practices and how access to resources has affected entrepreneurial strategies through time.

The editors' organization and presentation of the book is implicitly comparative, although few of the essays, including the introduction, attempt to draw out direct comparisons. The lack of a comparative treatment is unfortunate given the book's stated goals and the potential in the material, both among the African cases and between African and African American cases. Further, there seems to be little critical exploration of what, for the editors, seems to constitute the fundamental commonality between Africans and African Americans: that they are 'Black'. Fortunately, most of the essays themselves dispense with this reduction and provide diverse histories in which other patterns of commonality and contrast emerge.

The precolonial Africa section includes several particularly useful essays. Ralph Austen and Denis Cordell present an overview of the study of Saharan trade between 1500 and 1900, using a wide variety of data to argue that lack of innovations in transportation did not hinder the general growth of trans-Saharan trade. Gareth Austin meanwhile provides a valuable comparative overview of West African business practices and organization in the nineteenth century, as well as an insightful consideration of research trends. The second section on African modernization, weighted in favor of the period since independence, offers some important chapters that provide both new evidence and analysis. Stand-out essays include Alusine Jalloh's on Muslim businessmen in postcolonial West Africa, Janet MacGaffey's on entrepreneurs operating under severe pressures in Central Africa and the roles they play in economic development and Scott Taylor's on the political and societal frameworks for indigenizing property in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Anita Spring's research on a class of 'new' women entrepreneurs that is emerging across modern Africa is promising and uses a novel methodology to consider differences between these businesswomen and other traders.

While many of the essays in the first sections on Africa share a neoclassical economic framework, the analytical locus shifts in the final section on African American businesses, with essays less dependent on a single set of theoretical assumptions about economic change than essays in the first two parts of the book and more aware of social and cultural forces that affect economic activity. Bessie House's chapter on African American entrepreneurial culture contributes to a growing literature on the cultures of business and businesspeople among African American communities. John Ingham's essay on entrepreneurship among African American women between 1880s and the 1930s reveals fascinating connections between economic trends and social history. The three final essays by Maceo Daily, Juliet Walker and Chris Ihedru, however, deserve particular praise for tracing out historical ties between African and African American enterprises.

Ultimately, *Black Business* reflects the strength and promise of economic and business histories as well as the current tensions within these fields. While it may not bridge the differences that continue to separate African and African American economic histories, it is the first major work to offer representative contributions from both camps. As such, it is likely to earn deserved recognition for bringing

these historiographies into closer proximity, an idea long overdue. This is a beginning to what will no doubt be an extremely fruitful dialog.

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DAVID GUTELIUS

## AFRICAN PERCEPTIONS OF RAILROAD WORK

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703399141

*Industrial Labor in the Colonial World: Workers of the Chemin de Fer Dakar-Niger, 1881-1963.* By JAMES A. JONES. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 2002. Pp. xxiii + 154. \$59.95 (ISBN 0-325-07089-X).

KEY WORDS: Senegal, Mali, colonial, labour, transport.

Railroad workers have not been neglected by historians of Africa. Yet, to date, relatively little has been published on the most significant railroad in French West Africa, the Dakar–Niger line. James Jones’s study begins to fill this gap. Covering the period from 1881 to 1963, Jones focuses on the workers – skilled and unskilled, forced and voluntary – who built, ran and maintained the railroad, from the days of wood-burning locomotives to the adoption of diesel. The central theme of the study is ‘the perception of railroad work by African workers and their community’ (p. xi).

The first three chapters, which focus on the construction of the railroad, effectively trace the difficulties the French faced in recruiting labor. Beginning in 1886, after having sought labor as far afield as China and Morocco, the French relied increasingly on locally recruited forced labor. African workers responded, not surprisingly, with high rates of desertion as well as strikes and sabotage. While it is undoubtedly difficult to recover fully the experience of these workers, one wishes Jones had used the available data to attempt a description of railway construction from the perspective of the worker. Jones tells us about high death rates as a result of disease; of low pay and poor food rations; and of the heavy reliance on human labor even where machines might have been effective. This kind of information could have been used – along with, for example, details about housing and about labor organization and discipline – to recreate the daily experience of the construction workers.

In the subsequent three chapters, Jones examines the skilled workers who operated and maintained the railroad from early labor activism, to their emergence as a major political force able to mount the successful strike of 1947–8, to their loss of political clout in the mid-1950s. Jones attributes the decline in significance of the railway workers in West African politics and society to the economic challenge that trucks presented to railroad transport and to the demise of the French West Africa federation which undermined a key element of the railway workers’ power, their ability to unite in a large inter-territorial union in opposition to a single state employer.

Taking a special interest in the Dakar–Niger railroad strike of 1947–8 and recognizing that its success depended on the support of the rest of the population, Jones asks why other Africans supported the strike (p. xxi). An answer to that question requires a detailed analysis of the world the workers came from and local perceptions of railroad work. Jones tells us about the salaries, benefits and housing arrangements of railway workers (pp. 42–4), working conditions that often set them apart from others, many of whom hoped for similar conditions for themselves. Jones notes how the high value placed on railway work was reflected in a popular blessing used in Kayes to welcome a newborn boy: ‘May Allah make him

become the station master' (p. 35). But one wonders how the station master and his fellow workers interacted with the traders and farmers in their communities and how obtaining their relatively privileged positions may have changed their roles as sons, fathers, husbands and neighbors. We learn something about the large sums of money donated to the strike fund by French unions, by newspapers and by merchants. But we get little detail on the more mundane day-to-day support offered by neighbors and extended family members (pp. 60–1). Even if one wishes Jones had offered a more elaborate discussion of the world of the railway workers and their neighbors, this study is nonetheless a welcome contribution to our understanding of this most important railroad.

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MONICA M. VAN BEUSEKOM

## MULTIPLE ANGLES

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703409146

*Nigeria in the Twentieth Century*. Edited by TOYIN FALOLA (Durham NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2002). Pp. 918 + xx + 78 b/w illustrations. Price not given (ISBN 0-89089-129-X).

KEY WORDS: Nigeria, colonial, postcolonial.

The large format pages of this long book contain 64 essays, covering a very broad field, including history, politics, literature, music, development and religion. At first glance, it is a celebration of Nigeria and Nigerian studies. The black and white photo album at the beginning of the volume further contributes to this sense of celebration. However, these photos also point towards some of the problems with this book: apart from the name of the photographer, Olusegun Fayemi, we do not receive any information about the subjects of the photos, or when, or where, the photos were taken. As images, the subjects are recognizably Nigerian or African enough: children engaged in various games, a weaver with a child tied on her back, a busy motorpark, a funeral and so on. But why are these photographs here? And why are they so poorly reproduced, with hardly any contrast left in them?

It is not clear what this book wants to be. The title suggests that it might be an historical overview. However, the essays provide incomplete and uneven coverage. While no history is complete, here there is no clear focus, and the reader is not informed of the rationale for including some aspects, and excluding others.

The book is the result of a conference the editor organized in March 2002. In this light, it might represent a 'state of the field' survey of Nigerian studies at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Some of the papers included, such as Ogundiran's paper on development discourse and Ottenberg's history of the studies of culture and social life in southeastern Nigeria, indeed offer such a focus. However, most papers discuss a limited topic without attempting to situate the case and methodology employed in the broader field of studies. Others are engaged in a political debate about present and future Nigerian politics. Furthermore, the volume ignores some lively areas of study, including urban social relations and chieftaincy, which have recently seen some interesting publications.

According to the editor, 'The main achievement of this volume is the review of various aspects of the country's history during the twentieth century' (p. 4). The collected essays have precious little in common. The editor states that: 'The decision to select the best papers from about a hundred was an enormously tough one' (p. xiii), but I think he should have been tougher and made a much more limited and focused selection. The essays included are not only very diverse

in scope and in the level at which they are pitched, some are of poor quality. To give some idea of the diversity: Chukwu's contribution on women and gender relations is very general and based on existing research, yet offers a useful introduction to the subject with clear definitions of specific terms. Compare this to Olukoju's essay on the colonial monetary system in northern Nigeria, which is based on primary research and is clearly a useful contribution to existing work on Nigerian monetary history, but does not relate to any of the other essays in the book and is not presented in a way accessible to a reader with a general interest in Nigerian history. The contribution on Chief Stephen Osita Osadebe explores interesting links between Nigeria and the diaspora, and begins to ask important questions about how Nigerian migrants negotiate their identities and social positions in the migrant community. Here are clearly the beginnings of a very promising and interesting paper, but this is not developed enough for publication. Very different again is Obi-Ani's chapter on post-Civil War Nigeria. He concludes that: 'It was vendetta, victimization and marginalization that ruled the political landscape' (p. 481). This may be correct, but the evidence he refers to (mainly newspaper articles) does not in itself provide proof, and I would also have liked to see a discussion of the conclusions of other scholars on this same question.

Some of the essays are redundant, in that they do not contribute new material, or new insights. Onwumere's chapter on 'transitions in the political system of Igboland', for example, is based on literature published in the 1960s and 1970s, and uses no primary sources at all. It does not add anything to the insights offered by A. E. Afigbo's *The Warrant Chiefs* (New York 1972). Some of the redundant essays are the work of postgraduate students and they certainly represent competent exercises. However, it remains unclear why they are included in this publication.

The editor's introduction offers an indication of the subject of each essay, but no clear idea of how essays relate to each other, or in what debate they can be situated. I also do not get an idea of what kind of readership the editor had in mind when conceiving the publication. A lack of concern for the readership is also apparent in the layout: the choice for a single column on a wide page slows the reader down. There has been a lack of attention for the technical details of the editing process. The English of some of the contributions contains grammatical errors, and the volume is riddled with typos. I also noted the inconsistent and at times incomplete referencing. The most surprising in this respect is Hamza's chapter, which presents 24 letters from the Lugard Collections at Rhodes House, Oxford, but fails to provide dates and detailed archive references.

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DIMITRI VAN DEN BERSSELAAR

## BORDERS, POWER AND IDENTITY

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703419142

*Smugglers, Secessionists and Loyal Citizens on the Ghana-Togo Frontier*. By PAUL NUGENT. Oxford: James Currey; Athens: Ohio University Press; Legon: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2002. Pp. xiv + 302. £45 (ISBN 0-85255-473-7); £16.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-472-9).

KEY WORDS: Ghana, Togo, colonial, postcolonial, ethnicity, politics, trade.

This book is brilliantly written, solidly researched and replete with challenging insights. It tackles a subject of immense importance to colonial and

postcolonial Africa: how Africans have dealt with their imposed colonial boundaries. Contrary to the expectation that colonial boundaries would be something border peoples would resist and sabotage, Nugent argues convincingly that borders gained salience in the colonial and postcolonial periods because border peoples invested these boundaries with meanings that came to structure local and national identities, as well as economic life. Through detailed case studies of land disputes along and across the Ghana–Togo border, and the phenomenon of smuggling, the border comes alive as a zone of economic opportunity, as a line demarcating social and political life, and as a boundary nurtured and manipulated by local peoples in everyday life. Hence calls by African intellectuals or statesmen, such as that by Wole Soyinka in 1994, for the redrawing of colonial boundaries simplify the rather complex ways through which borders have been constructed. The failure of both Ewe Unification and Togoland Unification underscores this telling point.

The book is divided into three parts with an introduction, seven chapters and a conclusion. The introduction reviews debates on the nature of the colonial legacy, the historiography of African boundary studies and advances four major arguments. First, that European construction of colonial boundaries owed more to indigenous (African) precedents than is usually acknowledged. Second, it was local peoples that inscribed meaning to the paper border Europeans created. Third, ethnic identities did not precede the border; indeed, the border created ethnic identities, though these had to compete with local and territorial identities. Fourth, that far from being peripheral in a socio-political sense, border peoples have been central in shaping national cultures and the contours of the state (p. 5). This argues against the conventional wisdom in Africa boundary studies, but the rest of the book ably substantiates Nugent's position. As Nugent emphasizes, the border should be regarded as a site of power that enables and constrains, making border zones 'sites of ambivalence and ambiguity' (p. 8). The study focuses on the Ghanaian side of the border, particularly on the eastern section of what was southern British Togoland – the Ho, Kpandu, Buem-Krachi Districts. This is an area populated by the Ewe, the Akan and a cluster of peoples known as the 'Central Togo minorities', and linguistically unrelated to the Akan or the Ewe.

Part One (chs. 1–3) discusses the European making of the Ghana–Togo boundary, first between the British and the Germans, and after the First World War the British and the French. British and French Togoland became mandated territories under the League of Nations and later the United Nations. In these delineations, the disposition of metropolitan governments was paramount and natural or geographical features were central to the definition of boundaries. The boundary as defined in 1919 and demarcated in 1927–8 has endured to the present. With different tax regimes in German Togoland and British Gold Coast, colonial governments monitored the movement of peoples and goods across the border as local peoples armed with information about price differentials in both colonies exploited smuggling opportunities. It is instructive that the British colonial government did not seek to criminalize smuggling, aware that border peoples viewed it as a rational response to the border as a zone of opportunity. Rather, through the physical presence of an undermanned Customs Preventive Service and their rituals of authority, and by avoiding wide tariff differentials, the government hoped to remove the incentive for smuggling (ch. 3).

From the 1920s, the cocoa industry from the forested regions of the Gold Coast extended into British Togoland, and the attendant prosperity, especially around Buem, underpinned the rise of the commercial town of Hohoe. A cocoa boom produced an intense market in land and sharecropping arrangements among

British Togoland and between them and migrants from French Togoland and the Gold Coast. Under the Mandate System, sale of land to non-natives required official consent. Cocoa, being a semi-permanent tree crop, changed the nature of usufruct, and the proliferation of land sales led to protracted land disputes and litigation. The rise in the value of land in areas conducive to cocoa cultivation encouraged local communities to deny access to others that had farm-lands astride the international border. Cocoa was promoting synchronization between the international border and traditional communal boundaries. And as disputants brought their land claims before colonial courts in either British or French Togoland, the international boundary gained stability and practical meaning.

Part Two (chs. 4–5) reviews the politics of Ewe and Togoland Unification. The literature on the subject has focused on the role of elites in the elaboration of the ideology of unification. Nugent explores how ordinary people received these ideas. Contrary to the claims of an Ewe identity that predated and resisted partition, Nugent argues that there was little sense of an Ewe identity in 1919, except along the narrow Lomé–Anlo border. He emphasizes that the population of southern Togoland was extremely diverse, and that Ewe nationalism had difficulty attracting the very peoples it was directed at. While the southern Ewe promoted Ewe Unification, the northern Ewe advanced an opposing Togoland Unification. Nugent demonstrates through local case studies, that ‘forging an ethnic consciousness was laborious, discontinuous and above all contested’ (p. 146). In the end, Gold Coast nationalism and the promise of economic development for British Togoland under Kwame Nkrumah proved more appealing and derailed both Ewe and Togoland Unification. In a 1956 UN plebiscite, British Togoland voted to join an independent Ghana. Nkrumah had the tactical support of the British in this endeavor, united, among other things, by their joint desire to see the implementation of the Volta River Project. Ironically, the rival nationalisms of Gold Coast and French Togoland confirmed the old international boundary established by colonial rule.

Part Three (chs. 6–7) examines the political economy of the Ghana–Togo border since independence. Chapter 6 reviews how the domestic politics of Nkrumah, ‘the self-professed prophet of pan-Africanism’ (p. 201), killed any hopes of a Ghana–Togo union, while Chapter 7 discusses the everyday life of politics. Nkrumah’s government effectively stamped out advocacy for a greater Togoland in the Ghanaian section of British Togoland, now renamed the Volta Region. After a brief resurgence in the unification cause in the 1970s, secessionism ceased to be a feature in the politics of the Volta Region. However, this outcome was not just the result of political persecution, but the affirmation of border peoples of their national identities as Ghanaian or Togolese despite an everyday life that transcended the border and the rekindling of smuggling from the 1960s. Independent Ghanaian governments have chosen to criminalize smuggling and have sought without success to eradicate what border communities consider rational economic behavior and subsistence strategy. The implementation of the Economic Recovery Program in Ghana from 1983, however, had by the 1990s reduced the financial incentive to smuggle. The Conclusion restates the major arguments of the book.

This book is a major contribution to Ghanaian historiography and African boundary studies, especially in its detailed study of land ownership and disputes across colonial boundaries. It presents one of the most fascinating discussions of smuggling that I have read, as the Ghana–Togo border pulsates with life.

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EMMANUEL AKYEAMPONG



DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703429149

*Missions for Science: U.S. Technology and Medicine in America's African World.*

By DAVID MCBRIDE. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

Pp. viii + 309. \$40 (ISBN 0-8135-3067-9).

KEY WORDS: Liberia, diaspora, business – American, international relations, medicine, technology.

Atlantic history is beginning to touch twentieth-century Africa. The movement away from regionalism has made possible daring new comparative studies. David McBride's innovative comparison of four areas of the African diaspora – the US Blackbelt from Mississippi to South Carolina, the Panama Canal Zone, Haiti and Liberia – is at the forefront of that enterprise.

McBride's study focuses on 'the contradiction between the benefits of technology for its sponsors and makers in the United States and the detriments experienced in African-Atlantic societies'. Specifically he argues that the transfer of US technology resulted in 'hegemony', which he defines 'as the exercise of domination through local consent, and cultural encroachment' (p. 228). This reviewer would argue that he proves this point well for certain times and places, Haiti and Liberia in the 1960s and 70s, but that his framework is otherwise a bit forced. What is at stake is the extent to which technology was responsible for the suffering of these communities. Certainly, Americans of African origin who lived in the plantation South suffered from oppression both before and after Emancipation, and people of colour in the Panama Canal Zone were subjected to segregation and inferior facilities, but not all of these evils are the direct result of US technology.

Part of the problem lies in his use of evidence. His knowledge of primary sources is superb, reflecting an enormous amount of work. He does not, however, adequately consider the secondary literature relating to the politics of the four cases under consideration. As far as the American South is concerned, for example, the reader does not get an idea of how an increasingly powerful and well-funded US federal government forced reluctant state governments to spend money on their black citizens. Regarding Panama, his narrative scarcely touches on the relationship between the Panamanian state, itself the result of a US-engineered secession from Colombia, and the Canal Zone. Nor does he account for the exploitative relations between elites and poor farmers in Haiti before and after the US occupation between 1915 and 1933.

For readers of this journal, the Liberian case is the most telling. The United States, unlike the British administration in Sierra Leone, never took fiscal responsibility for freed slaves and recaptives who became the Americo-Liberian community. But does this dereliction of colonial duty excuse the Americo-Liberians for their mistreatment of the indigenous peoples? And does it offset the indisputable benefits enjoyed by workers on the Firestone rubber plantations in the 1930s and 40s? By contrast, McBride gives a gripping account of the unsuccessful efforts by William Tubman, president from 1944 until 1971, to modernize the country. Unfortunately, from that point onward the country went downhill. Indeed, given the current state of Liberia and, for that matter, of neighbouring Sierra Leone, one might question whether technology transfer made much long-term difference.

McBride has posed a refreshing set of questions, by questioning the effects of American medicine and technology on these communities of the black diaspora. He has opened the debate on the role of technology transfer on the well-being of its recipients. When he adds other factors to the determinants of community destiny, his analysis will be world-beating.

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BRUCE FETTER

## A POST-NATIONALIST HISTORY

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703439145

*Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present.* By FREDERICK COOPER. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. 216. No price given (ISBN 0-521-77241-9); £14.95, paperback (ISBN 0-521-77600-7).

KEY WORDS: Colonial, postcolonial.

Why start a book on contemporary African history in 1940? The short answer provided by Frederick Cooper in his preface is that the Second World War (really, he tells us, the late 1930s through the 1940s) marked a rupture in African history as important as the moment of formal independence. It was the beginning of the period in which efforts at state-led development became the norm all over the continent, certainly until the 1970s, and in many respects even until today. Since this work is partly intended as a textbook (and appears in a series called *New Approaches to African History*), its unusual chronological perspective may encourage readers, and especially a new generation of students, to think of Africa's history outside the conventional division into periods before, during and after colonialism. Such a rethinking of the fundamental periodization of African history is welcome. His aim, Cooper further tells us, is to provide relevant historical background to studies of politics, development and other aspects of contemporary Africa, while also persuading historians that what has happened since independence is more than just an epilogue to the colonial period.

The book opens with a description of the genocide in Rwanda and the first fully democratic elections in South Africa, both in April 1994. Symbolizing the worst of times and the best of times, these two events came at the end of long sequences that, as Cooper is at pains to point out, could easily have had other outcomes. After an extended introduction comes a series of seven chapters roughly in chronological order, with a short text in the middle entitled 'Interlude: rhythms of change in the post-war world'. The effect is to create a narrative of political and economic change, paying particular attention to such key themes as the development of a salaried workforce and the rise of nationalism, illustrated with examples from across the continent, while also situating the whole within a wider world. The closing chapter revisits Rwanda and South Africa briefly, having demonstrated in the intervening pages that Rwanda's tragedy was not the product of an age-old ethnic division, just as South Africa's history is not a story only of racial conflict. Presumably, Cooper's calculation is that this is what many of his readers will have supposed until reading this book, and his hope is that he has done enough to persuade them that it is all more complicated and less deterministic than they may have previously thought.

To put so much material into a couple of hundred pages is a hard task, but one that Cooper manages well. His writing is clear and based on careful use of data. The argument is refreshing in its insistence that colonies in Africa did not receive independence as the result of an inevitable onward march. Cooper demonstrates well how an emerging generation of African activists in the late 1940s and 1950s rushed to fill the political space made available to them, and increasingly defined it in terms of a demand for immediate independence, whereas this seemed the most likely outcome only late in the day, particularly in francophone Africa. The thread running through the story is not so much the triumph of nationalism as the consequences of development. In that sense, this is an outline of a post-nationalist history of modern Africa. There is little doubt that it will become the standard text on the contemporary history of Africa.

Among the notable successes here is a description of how 'gatekeeper states' emerged in Africa, whereby power is located at the interface between domestic

economies and international circuits. However, some readers may feel that Cooper could have explored more deeply the manner of Africa's insertion in the world, despite his six-page interlude and numerous other passages on the subject. As he rightly says, 'we need to ask what are the implications of the fact that "African" problems are actually Euro-Afro-American co-productions'. Some readers may nonetheless feel that Cooper could have given a more distinctly political flavour to his discussion of international developments, including the creation of the post-1945 world order, the oil-price shocks, Structural Adjustment and the end of the cold war. His discussion of the massive changes of the 1970s, for example, is largely in terms of macro-economics and is supported by batteries of statistics. He tells us little about migration outside Africa, surely a crucial theme of contemporary African history and a key to understanding the continent's insertion in the world. At the other end of a scale of global and local analysis, there is rather little about the effects all of this may have had on individual mentalities. While Cooper notes the existence of an unofficial politics or a politics from below, for example expressed in the form of religious movements, he generally gives little attention to a politics expressed in modes deeply rooted in African histories that predate colonial times.

These are not so much criticisms as suggestions for identifying fields in which the greatest scope may exist for other nuances of interpretation. One of the pitfalls of writing contemporary history is the speed with which the previously obscure can become important, and vice versa. There will be no greater tribute to Cooper's fine book than if it defines a space for some of the new contemporary history-writing that we urgently need.

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STEPHEN ELLIS

## MINERS' STRUGGLES IN COLONIAL NIGERIA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703449141

*'We Were All Slaves': African Miners, Culture and Resistance at the Enugu Government Colliery.* By CAROLYN A. BROWN (Social History of Africa Series). Oxford: James Currey; Portsmouth NH: Heinemann; Cape Town: David Philip, 2003. Pp. xvi + 354. No price given (ISBN 0-325-07007-5/0-255-684-5); paperback (ISBN 0-3225-07006-7/0-85255-634-9).

KEY WORDS: Nigeria, colonial, labour, mining, class, violence.

The Iva Valley coal miners' massacre of 1949 was a dramatic moment in the emergence of a Nigerian nation. Twenty-one Nigerian miners, all state employees, lay dead. Not perhaps the most lethal moment in the history of colonialism in Africa, it provoked riots and violence in many locations in southern Nigeria. The subsequent Fitzgerald Commission report went a fair way towards discrediting British rule in Nigeria and led towards decolonization. It was also the moment where mass protest, workers' conscious resistance against colonial capitalism, seemed to take centre-stage for the first time: the chief targets of urban violence lay in European-owned commercial establishments.

It was this dramatic event which inspired Carolyn Brown to study the lives of Nigerian coal miners during the colonial period on the advice of Walter Rodney. Her Columbia University doctorate on the subject was finished in 1985 after more than a decade of effort including extensive interviews with ex-miners in Nigeria. This book offers the story to a wider audience but it also takes account of a broad range of ideas that have permeated African history throughout the period since Brown began her research.

The history of the Enugu colliery around which the modern city arose covers three distinct stages following Brown's analysis. In the period up to the First World War and, to a lesser extent, through the revolt against the warrant chiefs of Iboland in 1929, workers were recruited through local 'big men'. Pseudo-chiefs and forced labour played a major role. Many workers were more or less emancipated slaves. The chief problem for management was to get workers to stay on the minesfield at vital times of the year. A classically colonial social order emerged with white bosses carried to work on hammocks, all Africans called boys of one sort or another and almost no protective equipment or clothing for black men made available. All physical labour was considered permanently unskilled.

A second stage represented an important adaptation. While recruitment practices remained questionable and what Brown calls a 'culture of predation' continued in new guises, most labour became voluntary. Wages were high enough to support extensive families and maintain other dependants and the mines attracted ambitious, hardworking village men. At the same time workers with extensive knowledge of the mining environment began to emerge. These men, however, continued to work their fields at key times of the year, to participate in the social life of their villages and to relate to management indirectly via intermediaries who could substitute individuals on a roster to suit their requirements.

Finally, moving into the Second World War when unprecedented amounts of coal were mined and far larger numbers of workers needed, a growing contingent came from more distant settlements and were domiciled for long periods with families in Enugu itself or in mines settlements. Commuting from the countryside no longer provided them with a bargaining chip and they turned against the rostering system: they now needed steady work. Here were the classic conditions of proletarianization and this was one reason for intensifying contradictions that would lead to the massacre. In addition to growing pressures to earn more money due to new demands together with inflation, miners were less under the control or influence of recruiters and supervisors than before. They were moreover less and less willing to accept the humiliating colonial rites and customs that offended their manhood.

Early militancy at the mine is largely to be associated with the minority of white-collar men, often from comparatively distant locations in eastern Nigeria or further afield. They stood aloof from the ordinary underground workers who were at first relatively unaffected by their actions. In the 1940s this altered. Isaiah Okwudili Ojiyi, an ex-schoolteacher, emerged as an effective leader. With some education, a commitment to Zikist politics and a rapport with the men, especially the hewers who were the key figures underground, he was the very incarnation of what petty British officialdom most hated.

But Ojiyi had fallen out with the hewers at the time of the massacre. They were afraid of a government lock-out. Meanwhile, the government, convinced that the miners could not be brought into a 'rational' system of negotiations whether through trade unionist practice borrowed from Europe (the Whitley Councils) or routinized customary despotism, were frightened that miners would use the dynamite in the mines against management. The quarrel which revolved around back pay and equal pay seemed endless but this means of cutting the Gordian knot proved an absolute disaster for the coal mine management.

Brown has looked at the villages miners came from near Enugu with especial care. She has produced an admirably rich narrative on how they integrated mining into broader economic activities but also into a wider set of social values and deep continuities that linked them to the past. They contrasted interestingly to me with the indigenous people of the Jos Plateau whom I have studied, who chose to farm

commercially precisely in order to avoid wage labour in mining until the 1940s. Brown also stresses that despite this apparently culturally distinct practice, the coal miners strongly identified themselves with a masculine work ethos not incomprehensible when compared to coal miners elsewhere. Following Fred Cooper, Brown carefully considers the contradictory nature of post-Second World War colonialism where reasons of state clashed with daily internalized racist practice, while notions of reform based on European concepts of a square deal clashed with the material imaginary of Igbo villagers. It was the breakdown in efforts to find a less colonial form of social relationships at work that led to the deaths at Iva Valley – ‘the hysterical reaction of British non-commissioned officers’ and policemen (p. 311).

This monograph is itself not lacking in contradiction. Brown does not entirely abandon the classic Marxist class formation/proletarian organization narrative nor the sense of Ojiyi’s ‘modernness’. She confirms the classic Nigerian view that the miners were fighting the most unacceptable face of British colonialism and the colonial hierarchy. It is unclear why and how the pull in other, culturalist directions manifest in other chapters helps us understand the Iva Valley incident much better. But these questions do open the door to a host of others on colonial eastern Nigerian society and makes the reader want to know a lot more. This long-awaited book is a very stimulating contribution to the study of Nigerian history.

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BILL FREUND

## HOW FRENCH INFLUENCE SURVIVED

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703459148

*The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization?* By TONY CHAFER. Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002. Pp. xviii + 264. £42.99; \$68 (ISBN 1-85973-552-5); £14.99; \$22.50, paperback (ISBN 1-85973-557-6).

KEY WORDS: Western Africa, decolonization.

This book is both a tale of decolonization – it is telling many stories – and a systematic and imaginatively conceived historical study. To decode the decolonization process in France’s African empire, Chafer identifies and meticulously analyzes the unique set of relationships that developed between multiple actors in the colonies as well as in the metropole. While the focus of the book could be seen as an effort to explain the processes and events that led to the peaceful decolonization of French West Africa, Chafer has a larger aim which includes illustrating the ways in which these factors shaped the political circumstances of France and French West Africa for decades after decolonization.

In the first sections, Chafer begins by challenging the notion that decolonization in French West Africa was somehow the result of successful strategic planning by France. He rightly emphasizes that France had no intention of giving up its West African colonies. On the contrary he insists that the metropole saw French West Africa as a means of maintaining its prominence as an actor on the world stage. This is especially true he claims during the aftermath of the Second World War when, in contrast with the rest of France’s empire, French West Africa was both stable and a source of raw materials and manpower. He argues that the national leadership of the Fourth Republic wanted to pull French West Africa into a permanent French Union. This was the guise under which French leadership provided education and training to natives – in the hope of developing a skilled labor force and pool of civil servants capable of administering the colony. This was

also the reason why France provided deputies and representation in the National Assembly, and created a common monetary zone controlled by the French Trésor, the Franc zone. However, Chafer claims that instability in France – regime changes and the war situation – did not permit any foresight on the part of the French government concerning French West Africa. He argues that the government was more reactive than proactive.

The book also documents with great precision the tensions and negotiations between multiple actors in the struggle over the composition of reform around the issues: assimilation or autonomy. Chafer brings out beautifully a complex web of actors that shaped French West Africa's path to decolonization and independence. The narrative deals with the different approaches toward colonial reform adopted by the French regimes, the colonial administration on the ground, the *parti colonial* and the educated African elite, *députés*, trade union members, students and civil servants. Whether it was competition among leaders from various parts of French West Africa over the exalted position of Dakar, jockeying between assimilationist and nationalist parties, or the incorporation of communist ideologies into the nationalist movement – Chafer illustrates that there were a multitude of factors that contributed to the peaceful independence that emerged.

Chafer's most valuable contribution is to present the interest of each actor involved in French West Africa's transition to independence and the logic that led to the actions taken by all participants involved, paying great attention to colonial discourses, nationalist claims and administrative processes without losing sight of the international environment. He also paints a nuanced picture of how various regimes came to power in the emerging French West African states. In addition, he offers insights on the origin of one-party rule and about how the personality of leaders became more important than party platform during the struggle for independence in French West Africa.

In the last section, Chafer argues that as a result of the moderate stance embraced by most of the regimes in French West Africa, France was able to maintain strong links with French West African nation-states. He argues that the relationship between French West Africa and France provided a foundation for the maintenance of France's prominence on the world stage. While the French Union did not last, relations between former colonies and the metropole were sustained – allowing France continued access to the markets, raw materials, and thus to retain significant influence. Though such a generalization could be made until the late 1980s, new developments resulting from global trends both in Africa (the increasing role of the World Bank and the IMF), and in France (the redirection of the French economy to Europe, the revision of French policy toward *les pays du précarité*) are indications of important changes and tensions in the relations between France and her former colonies. However, this does not overshadow the clarity of argument and the wealth of detailed information in this balanced and attractive account, which deserves a large audience of lay readers and specialists alike.

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MAMADOU DIOUF

## SHIFTING INTERPRETATIONS

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703469144

*Mau Mau and Nationhood*. Edited by E. S. ATIENO ODHIAMBO and JOHN LONSDALE. Oxford: James Currey, 2003. Pp. xiv + 306. £45 (ISBN 0-85255-478-8); £16.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-484-2).

KEY WORDS: Kenya, independence wars, nationalism, memory, political.

This collection appears, appropriately, fifty years after the Declaration of Emergency in Kenya, but it is neither celebratory nor retrospective in any conventional sense; nor is it just another attempt to 'explain' Mau Mau – though there are plenty of indications in the text that interpretations are substantially shifting ground. Rather, it strikes out in new directions, giving weight to what happened during and after the struggle, to the intense debates which were an essential part of the war not only in the forest but 'behind the wire' in the detention camps and Emergency villages and in the British press and to how Mau Mau has been constructed and given meaning, both on the ground and later in print and memory.

The military aspects of Mau Mau and the actual prosecution of the war in the forest have hitherto received little attention. Contributions by Jackson, Anderson, Elkins and Percox thus break new ground. In a chapter rich in irony that connects Mau Mau to the wider politics of decolonization, Percox shows how Kenya's strategic importance in Britain's final attempts to maintain a global presence, together with continuing concerns over local unrest, made it necessary to translate Kenyatta, officially convicted as the author of Mau Mau, from ignominious exile on the periphery to centre-stage in the final moves towards Independence and then to State House itself, now carefully guarded against his alleged followers by those who had once enforced his political eclipse. Anderson's and Elkins's findings make for very disturbing reading. Told that they were fighting a savage and primitive enemy, British forces, both metropolitan and local, often behaved like savages themselves and were supported or surpassed by colonial officials who had apparently forgotten both their paternalism and their law. Anderson's careful reconstruction of one battle and its judicial aftermath reveals that of 41 fighters captured – many of them unwilling conscripts, under-aged and under-armed – only three escaped conviction. Seventeen were hanged and the rest locked up indefinitely after trials that followed only the barest forms of law. Elkin's description of the reality behind Rehabilitation is chilling, as is her evocation of what Mau Mau as a civil war meant – and continues to mean – for those involved. To the end, colonial Kenya retained elements of the conquest state with which it had begun.

Despite official complacency, disquiet about the 'methods of barbarism' employed in the 1950s as in the 1900s seeped into metropolitan debate. In a novel and important chapter, Lewis looks at British tabloid reactions to the Emergency. She finds that between starlets and football pools there was room for serious political comment and is surely right to complain that historians of the public mind of decolonization have wrongly ignored the low politics of tabloid journalism. Notwithstanding the racist stereotypes and the splashy gung-ho style, tabloid coverage was far from unconditionally imperialist. Its patriotism was now more sombre and reflective, and tinged by class. While neither paper was especially sympathetic to African aspirations, the left-leaning *Daily Mirror* was quick to focus on the larger issues of colonial governance and purpose raised by their brutal repression and came to the conclusion that the moral as well as material costs of opposing the tide of nationalism were simply too high. Ultimately, the conservative *Daily Mail* reached a similar conclusion, though it saw the transition to Independence more as a vindication of Britain's imperial aims than a necessary retreat.

If counter-insurgency demoralized imperialists, it was partly because much of the moral high ground lay on the other side of the line. Mau Mau's warriors claimed the right to full adulthood in a world that denied them such responsibility. Lonsdale's masterly summary of his previous work on the political and moral ideas of the forest fighters gains further resonance when

read with the chapters by Pugliese and Peterson. Pugliese's account of Kikuyu pamphleteering reveals that ideas of discipline and self-mastery lay close to the heart of most Kikuyu projects of renewal, as did a conviction that only through modern knowledge could colonialism be beaten. Peterson explains what this meant in terms of education. The anxious rituals of bureaucracy in the forest – and the splits between literate and non-literate modes of power – make fuller sense when seen as echoes of a larger struggle to master the word and to use the forms of colonial rule to build an alternative self-rule.

Mau Mau is quintessentially 'a past that will not pass away'. Forgetting, let alone consensus, is neither a desirable nor a likely option. In his chapter on memory, Clough points out that even closure is never easy – indeed for many it may be unattainable. Constructions of Mau Mau have played a vital role in arguments about the modern Kenyan state. Changing relations between state and people have triggered recurrent 'crises of memory' as both defenders and critics of state power have sought to use Mau Mau as a parable of the 'Kenya we want'. Ogotu shows how the dialectic between past memory and present consciousness has played out in the novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, leading ultimately to what Ogotu sees as a delegitimizing of the postcolonial state. But Mau Mau is not Kenya's only past. In a thoughtful piece, Ogot challenges Mau Mau's apparent monopoly of national heroism and calls for other, more inclusive, narratives. In a way quite different from Kenyatta's famous call for unity and an expedient forgetfulness, he argues that many did fight for freedom, and in many different ways.

Mau Mau has always posed huge challenges, partly because of its idiosyncrasy and complexity – an anti-colonial struggle fought mainly within the confines of one ethnicity and a 'nationalist movement' whose role in creating a nation has always been contested – and partly because of its commanding, but as yet unresolved, place in Kenyan history. One cannot escape or ignore it, but too concentrated a focus can lead both to a blurring and foreshortening of Kenya's modern history and to the posing of questions which may be either unanswerable or wrong. Widening the debate brings the struggle into better focus, giving it intelligibility and comparative importance and making it clear why Mau Mau remains a live and emotive issue in Kenya – 'a lightning conductor of disagreement rather than a focus of compromise'.

Kikuyu pamphleteers spoke from within their own community, but they imagined a wider audience, if not yet a nation. Freed from foreign domination, Kenya's peoples would be at liberty to choose a commonwealth in which ethnic particularism would be transcended by order and a common purpose. But the struggle for freedom was perhaps too violently divisive and too ambiguous in its contested outcomes to provide a basis for the order they sought. At the heart of this collection is the vexed relationship between Mau Mau and nationhood. Moving beyond the particular, the editors point out that Mau Mau has much in common with other struggles for independence in the awkward but fundamental questions it poses about the enterprise of nation-building. Placed against such a universal background, the individual chapters gain an additional coherence and sharpness. It is at this point that one realizes that writing about Mau Mau has reached a new maturity.

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RICHARD WALLER



## THE POLITICS OF WAR VETERANS

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703479140

*Guerrilla Veterans in Post-War Zimbabwe: Symbolic and Violent Politics, 1980–1987*. By NORMA KRIGER. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Pp. xi + 293. £45 (ISBN 0-521-81823-0).

KEY WORDS: Zimbabwe, postcolonial, political, violence.

Norma Kriger is a political scientist who believes in history, and still more remarkably believes in politics. No historian of Africa can forbear to cheer her on as she tackles generalizing and evaluating theory in the introduction to her new book. As she explains, when she first began to research on the politics of war veterans in post-independence Zimbabwe she could find no comparative literature. By the time she came to write her final version, however, a huge and lavishly funded literature on ‘peace-making’ had sprung up. Wonderfully named ‘war termination scholars’ spent their time defining when a war had ceased to be a war, classifying what kind of war it had been in the first place, and evaluating on completely external criteria the success of peace settlements and demobilization.

Some of the example she gives of their propositions have a surreal quality. There is Roy Licklider, for instance, for whom a civil war terminates when there is ‘either an end to multiple sovereignty or fewer than 1,000 battle deaths in each of five consecutive years’ (p. 7). For Kriger, generalizing rules like this and indeed the whole business of normative evaluation gets in the way of the hard realities of process and power. Assessments of the success of reintegration and demobilization, she writes, ‘necessarily ignore politics, power and history in ways which further undermine the soundness of evaluations’ (p. 20).

Many historians will still be cheering her on when she mounts a robust defence of ‘the case study, once a respected “scientific” technique in political science [but] now in disrepute in [the] mainstream. Holding theory to be the most highly valued enterprise, the discipline’s gatekeepers allege that case studies cannot contribute to theory building’ (p. 31). As Kriger shows, though, it can certainly contribute to theory destruction!

Kriger takes the case of postwar Zimbabwe. Her date limits are 1980 to 1987, though it takes her up to page 132 before she gets beyond 1980–81. This is really a book about the early 1980s, with an extension to the Unity Agreement between Mugabe’s ZANU/PF and Nkomo’s ZAPU in December 1987. She argues that almost all evaluations of the ‘success’ of war termination in Zimbabwe have taken it for granted that the issue was one between a settler minority and a black nationalist majority. She insists instead on the importance of the bitter hostilities between the two nationalist parties, ZANU and ZAPU and their guerrilla armies, ZANLA and ZIPRA. She insists at the same time on the tensions between guerrillas and their own political leaders. Her theme is ‘how the guerrillas and the ruling party collaborated and were at odds with each other ... as well as what their shared and independent goals were’ (p. 64). This focus allows her to provide a dense account of guerrilla politics abundantly illustrated with vivid interview material. At the end of her conclusion she admirably sums up:

There remains little interest in guerrilla veterans’ politics outside the restrictive frameworks of the peace-building literature. The study of guerrilla veterans would seem to offer fresh terrain to explore not just veterans’ politics, but also the politics of war symbolism, the politics of memory, the politics of post-war justice, welfare politics, military politics, and new understandings of who is a veteran. (p. 190)

So far, so excellent. But the problem with publishing a book about war veterans in Zimbabwe in 2003 is that everyone will want to know what it tells us about the role of 'veterans' in the so-called third Zimbabwean revolution of the last three years. Kriger ends her book proper in December 1987. With the end of any threat from ZAPU and ZIPRA, she writes, the Mugabe government no longer felt obliged to rely upon ZANLA veterans. It could cease to treat ex-guerrillas specially. The question was, she says, whether this withdrawal could be sustained. Today it seems that we all know the answer to this question. It looks as though Mugabe is more dependent on the ex-combatants now than he has ever been.

Kriger seeks to deal with this in an Epilogue whose title 'The past in the present' embodies its argument. Her targets are those short-sighted commentators for whom the veterans have 'suddenly' burst upon the scene. Her whole book shows what nonsense this is. In the Epilogue she sets out to demonstrate the similarities and continuities between the early 1980s and the early 2000s. ZANU politicians needed the guerrillas to win the 1980 election – Mugabe needs the veterans to win elections now. Both then and now rural electorates have been intimidated. But then and now it has been crucial to maintain control of the army. Mugabe is even more dependent on the rhetoric of anti-colonial revolution today than he was in 1980. And today as then the veterans have their own agendas and their own suspicions of the politicians.

This is all true but the differences between the two situations are more important than Kriger allows. What we really need is a narrative which connects rather than compares the two periods. Luise White, for instance, has recently suggested that 'revolutionary patriotic history' as it is enunciated today is differently constituted from the nationalist history of 1980, and implies a different balance between guerrillas and politicians.<sup>1</sup>

What struck me most, at the end of a book which makes so much of the tensions between ZANLA and ZIPRA guerrillas, rising to a murderous height in the Matabeleland repression after 1982, was that Kriger nowhere remarks on one of the most extraordinary changes since December 1987. The revived Veterans Associations has managed to combine ex-ZIPRA, ex-ZANLA and ex-dissidents. Much of its most radical recent leadership has come from men of the ZIPRA tradition. In Matabeleland today when a Sindebele-speaking MDC activist or primary school teacher is assaulted, raped or abducted it is not by members of an alien 5 brigade but by Sindebele-speaking war veterans, whose own lives were in so much danger in the 1980s. This is indeed an ambiguous 'success' of the violence-terminating Unity Agreement!

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TERENCE RANGER

## WOMEN'S FIGHTS IN MOZAMBIQUE

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703489147

*Pounders of Grain: A History of Women, Work, and Politics in Mozambique.* By

KATHLEEN E. SHELDON. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 2002. \$66.95 (ISBN 0-325-07091-1); \$24.95, paperback (ISBN 0-325-07101-2).

KEY WORDS: Mozambique, decolonization, labour, nationalism, politics, women.

<sup>1</sup> Luise White, *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).

This is an excellent book. Spanning more than 150 years, it is a comprehensive history, which begins with women experiencing the early colonial period, progresses to an examination of women's involvement in the national liberation movement and captures the challenges they have faced with Structural Adjustment in the 1990s. Much of the extensive research that Sheldon conducted relates to the post-independence period, but she took a big-picture view of women's social, political, ideological and economic history during earlier times. One of the strengths of this book is its clear explanation of relevant economic phases of colonial settlement, while keeping the main focus on Mozambican women's history. Considering the extensiveness of Portuguese written primary sources the book is carefully researched.

By comparing the experiences of women in northern matrilineal societies – the Yao, Makua and Makonde – and in the Tsonga southern patrilineal societies, Sheldon makes substantial contributions to African historiography by showing how women gained access to power and authority. Despite considerable differences between these societies, Sheldon shows that in them marriage played a key role in opening avenues for women's access to wealth, and in the creation of powerful female elites. Sheldon succeeds in elucidating why women's overall social positioning in the colonial period does not necessarily equal exploitation.

While portraying women in the 1890s and 1960s, Sheldon analyses the Portuguese colonial state's control of agricultural labor, which was directly related to changes in women's working opportunities and living conditions. The system of forced labor, *chibalo*, which brought the practice of large plantations of cotton, rice, sugar, etc., increased women's responsibility for food and agricultural production for sale and for feeding the family. The new labor division based on waged work strongly influenced women's choices for marriage and self-maintenance. Women made substantial contributions to family income, but in the southern rural areas, they started questioning practices such as polygyny. Sheldon shows figures from 1961, which clearly reveal that female wages in agriculture were considerably lower than those of men: on average women earned half as much as men.

In religion and education, Sheldon addresses very well the role of Portuguese missions in colonial politics. Until 1975 women's illiteracy rate did not fall below 93 per cent. However, colonial education enhanced women's social position. By demonstrating that a small yet representative number of women who benefited from colonial mission schooling became successful professionals, Sheldon has challenged conventional views about colonialism in African historiography. Sheldon therefore shows all sides of women's history in colonial context. She also emphasizes the construction of gendered identities in this period, rather than simply pointing to racist ideologies or sex discrimination, which characterized Portuguese colonial education.

While presenting examples of women's participation in the Mozambican struggle for independence from Portugal, Sheldon stresses that it was not as glorious as the political discourses often claim. Women were essential to the success of military struggle under FRELIMO, but Sheldon does not ignore the problems which this involvement faced. By elucidating the 'madrinhas de Guerra' and highlighting several specific female names that became well known with FRELIMO, Sheldon brings up anonymous Mozambican female heroes and helps to reshape our notion of women's participation in such military movements.

The increased employment of waged female labor under the socialist government has transformed Mozambican society, and family and women's life in particular. In both urban and rural areas female employment became a vehicle for claiming rights, emancipation, childcare facilities, improvement of working conditions and equal job opportunities. Sheldon's detailed account of women's

working conditions in the Belita garment factory in Beira and the cashew factories helps us understand why the introduction of reforms in these sectors in the early 1980s transcended the agenda of female associations like Organization of Mozambican Women; this was a matter of restructuring government policies.

One critical issue is women's response to Structural Adjustment, which came with the Program of Economic Rehabilitation in 1987. The high levels of poverty and the extremely negative impact of years of civil war between RENAMO and FRELIMO helped to increase prostitution in urban areas, and to decrease women's opportunities for employment. In the 1990s, in urban areas, many women found the petty market or self-employment as street vendors the way to improve family income.

The remarkable achievement of the book as a whole is to show Mozambican women as fighters and strugglers for survival, for access to land and education and as major generators of family income.

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BENIGNA ZIMBA

## NATIONALISM AND PRIVATIZATION UNDER FRELIMO

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703499143

*Transforming Mozambique: The Politics of Privatization, 1975–2000.* By ANNE PITCHER. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. xxiii + 293. £45 (ISBN 0-521-82011-1).

KEY WORDS: Mozambique, postcolonial, economic, political.

This is an important book which all those interested in modern Mozambique will want to read. It provides a detailed examination of two key phases in the modern history of the country, the nationalizations that followed the establishment of the FRELIMO government in 1975 and the privatization process which, the author argues, began in a small way as early as 1983 but gathered momentum in the early 1990s and earned for Mozambique the accolade from the World Bank of being the most successful of all Africa's privatizations.

The book is based on extensive first-hand research, including interviews, carried out in the late 1990s and provides a detailed commentary on one of the longest-running arguments over development in modern Africa. Interpretations of what happened in Mozambique after independence became very polarized early on between those strongly sympathetic to FRELIMO who saw in its socialist modernization programme a model for African self-development which was brutally sabotaged by South Africa and those who saw FRELIMO's misguided policies as primarily responsible for the economic breakdown and institutional collapse which occurred in the 1980s. This polarization has continued into the era of liberal economic reform and privatization which is seen by many critics as little more than a process of 'recolonization'.

Anne Pitcher rightly avoids all the extreme positions in this argument and focuses attention on what actually went on behind the smokescreen of government and opposition rhetoric. As a result her work provides an interesting modification to many entrenched positions. First, she shows that a considerable private sector survived the nationalizations of the 1970s – including some major colonial companies like Madal. This was largely because FRELIMO had no consistent

nationalization plan and did not have the skills or resources to run a fully nationalized economy. These private companies became important when the policy of privatization got underway as they were seen as 'national' capital and were well placed to buy up state assets in preference to foreign capital.

Second, she emphasizes throughout the continuities between the colonial and the postcolonial period. FRELIMO inherited the eighth most industrialized economy in Africa (p. 30) and replicated the bureaucratic centralism and planning mechanisms of the Portuguese, taking over key policies like villagization which had been at the heart of late colonial developments. The similarities went even further as FRELIMO resorted to colonial methods to force cotton and cashew production, leasing sectors to cotton companies and appointing *capatazes* to mobilize a labour force (p. 122). Under the Portuguese the modern sector of the economy had largely developed in the extreme south and this continued under FRELIMO, 80 per cent of new investment occurring in the Maputo area (p. 148).

Third, she shows that the privatization policies of the 1990s were far from representing the collapse of FRELIMO ideals and the capitulation to foreign capital. Throughout the FRELIMO state has closely controlled the process, has favoured the emergence of national capital and has retained key government holdings in most economic sectors (pp. 134–5). What happened in the 1990s substantiates neither the World Bank claim of a unique success for liberal economics nor the dire warnings of its critics that Mozambique was experiencing a loss of sovereignty (p. 177).

She contrasts the skill with which FRELIMO has managed the dismantling of a socialist economy and state with the collapse of similar systems in eastern Europe. FRELIMO is indeed a remarkable organization. Although in the early days it tried to combine Marxism, nationalism and modernization with, on the whole, disastrous results, it has evolved a remarkable flexibility which has enabled it to survive war and revolution and to avoid the worst excesses of dictatorship and the plundering of the state's resources as experienced, for example, in Angola.

Anne Pitcher is very concerned with the theory of the modern state and with various models of transition and development. Social scientists will be able to place her work exactly in a paradigm of political argumentation – but she does this by locating Mozambique not in an context of Africa development but in what might be termed a global context where the experience of Eastern Europe is more significant than, for example, that of Angola. Indeed, in the index Eastern Europe warrants 24 page references but Angola only 3. Her study studiously avoids all the arguments about the criminalization of the state, patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism. Indeed there are only passing references to issues such as corruption, ethnic favouritism, rent seeking, the informal economy and diversion of state funds. The fact that these are mentioned shows she is aware of them as issues but she does not subject them to the same analysis as the process of privatization. The reader will not find in this book any detailed discussion of how the FRELIMO power structures work and where Mozambique stands in a paradigm of African patrimonial politics. Indeed, she seems keen to argue that a capitalist class (or possibly many different capitalist classes) are emerging and that these groups 'accumulate capital without being connected to prominent politicians' (p. 164).

This is a fascinating book which tells a largely new story but, as with so many other books about modern Mozambique, its silences are almost as interesting and eloquent as what it actually says.

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MALYN NEWITT

## YOUTH, HISTORY AND SOCIAL CRITICISM

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703509148

*The Sacrificed Generation: Youth, History, and the Colonized Mind in Madagascar.*

By LESLEY A. SHARP. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002. Pp.

xvii + 377. £45 (ISBN 0-520-22950-9); £19.95, paperback (ISBN 0-520-22951-7).

KEY WORDS: Madagascar, precolonial, colonial, postcolonial, anthropology, children, generational conflict.

Though Lesley Sharp writes about the schooling of children at a lycée in a small northern Malagasy town during the 1980s and 1990s, she aims at larger quarry: first to revise our notion of youth, and second to reveal how history works in the present. She hopes to undermine the ‘horribly myopic’ (p. 14) approach to youth that dominates the social sciences and attributes incompetence and deficiency to the young. Instead, she envisions children as autonomous actors who express serious political views. In her survey, she finds that Franz Fanon’s views of the colonial mind have ‘provided a framework for self-analysis’ for Malagasy youth and allowed them to ‘generate their own critiques of injustice’. Thus, she ‘foreground[s] children as social critics and political activists’ (p. 13) who form a ‘sacrificed generation’ because they endured the vast changes brought on by scarcity and by governmental experiments in schooling. ‘[S]acrifice – as a national gesture, action, or policy – dominates current understandings of education’ (p. 77).

History enters here, for students and their families connect their quest for schooling with ancient forms of sacrificial labour that brought living kin closer to their ancestors. Sharp’s version of history, however, rejects the adumbrated form of history known as ‘memory’, constructed, as it were, entirely by present concerns. Instead she imparts to history a reality that reaches beyond the present in very much the same way that academic historians do. To do this she must surmount what she sees as anthropology’s widespread reliance on ‘shallow ethnographic databases’ (p. 15) that reify adolescence and ignore the actions of youth in successive generations. She hopes that will remedy the child’s historical invisibility by recasting children as capable of ‘generating coherent critiques of injustice, formulating radical change, or making social history’ (p. 15). In her view, ethnographers have produced a ‘disturbing telescoping of knowledge’ that parallels the teachings of Malagasy elders, a central source of historical knowledge for the young. Together, they hide the radical past and obscure the possibility of political action in the present.

Her treatment of the idea of sacrifice as a renewal of past practices elegantly displays the dual nature of history both as a past reality and a current construct. As she widens her chronological focus, however, to include the decline of local royalty in the wake of France’s late nineteenth-century conquest of Northern Madagascar, the finer lines of historical reality give way to a potted narrative compiled from a very small selection of secondary sources. In fairness, making sense of that complex chain of events and perceptions is a tall order given the relative paucity of historical work on that area. Perhaps Sharp’s brevity can be construed as a judicious choice to limit the scope of an already sizeable ethnography. Nevertheless, her hasty passage through the late nineteenth century does little to explain why the ‘sacrificed generation’ has embraced the present reinvention of royalty and sees in the young king, Tsiaraso Rachidy IV, a rejection of both colonial and current authority. When moving to more recent periods, Sharp hits her stride. Her exposition of corvée labour under the French derives from sources in the Archives d’outre-mer in Aix-en-Provence, and she uses them skilfully to shape

ethnographic analysis rather than adding mere background colour. While some of her excursions into history are less successful than others, *The Sacrificed Generation* merits the attention of historians looking for a common ground between disciplines.

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GERALD M. BERG

## MINDING THE GAP

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703519144

*Re-Imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century.* By JOHAN POTTIER. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Pp. xvii + 251. £47.50; \$55 (ISBN 0-521-81366-2); £17.95; \$24, paperback (ISBN 0-521-52873-9).

KEY WORDS: Rwanda, Congo – Democratic Republic of, postcolonial, media, international relations, violence.

The gap between popular knowledge and academic understanding has always been marked in western perceptions of Africa. The Rwandan genocide was no exception; in its aftermath, however, with the arrival of many observers new to the region, the combination of empirical ignorance, emotional engagement and shame made this gap especially notable. Indeed, in the events to follow, that gap became lethal.

Through concise analysis and sustained critique, *Re-Imagining Rwanda* exposes this gap – its creation, its manipulation and its costs – in a manner that is painfully clear. Pottier is interested in how the genocide and its aftermath was constructed among journalists, government agencies and NGOs; the book is based on the premise that ‘rebuilding Rwanda cannot be done by the uninformed who believe in simple explanations’ (p. 4). The focus is on ‘the ... power of clustered narratives that simplify reality to make the post-genocide government of Rwanda and its practices ... legitimate in the eyes of the world’ (p. 47). Exploring the colossal costs of such a gap, Pottier adopts Mudimbe’s search for ‘a new economy between power and knowledge’ (p. 5).

His core query is how ‘the search for understanding has dealt with the problem of context’ (p. 4), and he sets out carefully to re-examine the contexts which shaped the events of Central Africa over the 1990s. He concludes that ‘the fusion of information and disinformation creates confusion, and such confusion is often a deliberate policy’. And he illustrates in great detail how government observers, journalists, aid agencies and academics, all caught up in the emotional maelstrom of the time, misunderstood, misrepresented and misdiagnosed the social processes of post-genocide Rwanda, often relying on essentialist categories and moralistic approaches, and ignorant of (if not with abhorrence toward) the vast corpus of detailed research which has been carried out in Rwanda since the 1960s. Such misinterpretations, fuelled by ‘the Rwandan government’s insistence that outsiders should have no opinions of their own’ (p. 207), have contributed directly to the subsequent wars in the Congo, which continue today at such enormous cost to the people there. Once again, while there are no simple solutions, the poor reporting, poor analysis and poor understanding that come with ‘re-imagining’ a society – with little effort to acquaint oneself with the record on the ground – form an important part of that equation.

Pottier constantly examines local circumstances to make his points. His presentation is simultaneously broad and precise. Following a summary of Rwandan

historiography and the events leading to the genocide, he provides well-informed analyses of both south Kivu and north Kivu (with their different histories), of events in both Congo and Rwanda following the genocide, of western reporting on refugees and of local land issues. This is not a comprehensive history of the area, but by drawing fully on that history, he illuminates the context within which 'l'histoire événementielle' unfolded – a context notably lacking in most reporting. For Rwanda, for example, he provides a succinct account of the lethal combination of external and internal processes which led to genocide: an economy destroyed by the collapse of global coffee commodity prices, an imposed Structural Adjustment program, a superficial democratization (also imposed), an invasion from the north, the trauma of events in neighboring countries (especially Burundi) and the power of selected memories from Rwandans' own past, adroitly and cynically exploited by politicians for their own gain. Malevolence there was aplenty, but it was the context which allowed that characteristic to become national policy.

However, as Pottier amply demonstrates, manipulating mental imagery did not end with the genocide; as Paul Kagame, the president of Rwanda, noted: 'We knew how the media works' (p. 90); 'We used communication and information warfare better than anyone' (p. 53). Indeed, many reporters working for prestigious western news outlets became 'instant experts' whose authority exceeded their knowledge. Crippled by a 'blind faith in the absolute objectivity of the RPF' (the Rwandese Patriotic Front, which held power in post-genocide Rwanda) (p. 63), they often became but 'scribes' for the regime in power. Western government officials sometimes acted similarly, falling into a pattern of 'clientelism' – representing their host government rather than serving as independent observers. However, not all outsiders fell into the trap, and some of Pottier's most telling analysis derives from comparative assessments. He notes how Belgian, Dutch and French reporting often differed significantly from that in the UK and US press, showing greater subtlety, honesty and detailed understanding – and a greater sense of the complexity of the issues and diversity of the actors. Pottier also shows how reporting varied over time, as some reporters, caught up in the events of the moment, simply ignored their own earlier insights to conform to the political trends of the day. For example, for some reporters, skepticism of Kabila turned to celebration; for some, Rwanda's direct involvement in the 1996–7 campaign became peripheralized, despite the enormous death tolls and massive abuses – and despite full awareness of the crucial role of Rwandan troops and commanders in these processes. In post-genocide Rwanda (and post-Mobutu Congo) it became 'politically incorrect' to state the obvious. Yet such misrepresentation made it difficult to understand or explain the subsequent events in Congo, as Kabila, in time, sought to distance himself from the very forces – the Rwandan army – that had put him in power. In short, faithful reporting of observed events often became sublimated to larger moral issues. Pottier devotes an entire chapter to explaining the 'surreal diplomacy' – an exercise in political manipulation – by which the Kigali government assured itself of support from the UK and US (among other international actors) for its campaigns in the Congo.

The book is not always easy to read. It is organized analytically, and therefore there is some repetition. It may be more meaningful to those with some familiarity with the region – references to Rwabugiri, Bugesera, the ADFL, Bwisha and Kibeho are frequent. But these are minor issues; indeed, that he asks our careful attention to such detail is part of the lesson of the history he addresses. In short, this is an important and courageous book, and well informed. Pottier's fine-grained analysis of a complex and emotionally charged topic – an analysis that cuts across the morality tales of hero-and-villain, of saints-and-sinners – will anger some, for passions remain high on these issues, and often fixated exclusively on the 1994



genocide, despite a decade of dramatic events in the region. Nonetheless this analysis is essential reading for people interested in the area and in the role of the press in general; it requires us to focus on the material at hand, in all its density, tragedy and historicity. As Pottier notes (p. 129): ‘Grasping Rwanda’s history is not a luxury; it is essential if the international community is to retain an informed presence in the Great Lakes’. To that end, *Re-Imagining Rwanda* is indeed an excellent place to start.

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DAVID NEWBURY

## HISTORICIZING SACRIFICIAL AND INITIATORY SYSTEMS IN ETHIOPIA

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703529140

*Initiating Change in Highland Ethiopia: Causes and Consequences of Cultural Transformation.* By DENA FREEMAN. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. x + 180. £40; \$55 (ISBN 0-521-81854-0).

KEY WORDS: Ethiopia, anthropology, culture, religion, ritual, social.

Anthropological field research in southern Ethiopia had largely been disrupted during the DERG military government and was resumed to a notable extent by the mid-1990s. Dena Freeman spent 21 months in the Dorze-speaking areas of the Gamo highlands between 1995 and 1997. She carried out a thorough study on the community of Doko, investigating the dynamics of culture change in the socio-religious sphere, particularly in the sacrificial and in the initiatory system of the Doko people. A study of this type necessarily implies a diachronic perspective demanding a combination of anthropological and historical methods, i.e. the analysis of the present conditions has to be complemented by a systematic documentation of literary sources and oral traditions. In a kind of process model different periods were defined during which processes of change were accomplished: the era before the conquest by the Ethiopian empire at the end of the nineteenth century, the emergence of the local prophet Essa Woga at the beginning of the twentieth century, the early missionary impact in the 1930s, the turbulence preceding the fall of the monarchy, the Marxist and anti-traditionalist repressions of the DERG regime in the late 1970s and the 1980s, and finally the introduction of a federal structure by the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Movement (EPRDM) government whose effects cannot yet be conclusively evaluated.

In her introductory chapter on theorizing change Freeman argues convincingly that the existing approaches derived from the functionalist, structuralist, transactionalist, Marxist and cultural transmission traditions, if taken individually, are unable to provide satisfactory results. She thus advocates an ‘integrated theory of cultural change’ which necessarily tends to be eclectic and tries to combine features of different anthropological positions.

To understand the ritual sphere and ceremonial activities of a given society it is indispensable to provide solid data on its socio-economic and material patterns. Although the chapter on production and reproduction in Doko is relatively short (19 pages), it is comprehensive and informative. The sacrificial system as a basic element of spiritual life appears to have been exposed very much to changes caused by political pressure (e.g. by the DERG regime) as well as by Protestant missionaries. Formerly it led to a hierarchical arrangement of people within clans and communities, but in recent times it is gradually losing its symbolic and factual

importance in the life of Doko people. Contrary to the diminishing role of sacrifices and their performers in the maintenance of social order and fertility, the so-called initiatory system has obviously preserved and to some extent even revitalized its position. The productive surplus from agriculture, weaving and trade is largely invested in status positions such as *halak'a*, *hudhugha* and *dana*. The initiates have to be rich and to spend much of their capital on conspicuous feasts by which honourable and mighty positions in the egalitarian societies of the Gamo highlands can be acquired. This phenomenon is a typical element of a 'meritorious complex', widespread in southern Ethiopia, which enables people (predominantly males) to gain ranks and prestige either by the killing of human adversaries and dangerous animals or by 'feasts of merit'. Dena Freeman presents a detailed description of the rites and ceremonial activities involved in the initiation of dignitaries achieving the above-mentioned titles, but she misses the chance of a systematic comparison of her own data with those of Helmut Straube who wrote the first comprehensive analysis of the *halak'a* system following fieldwork in the 1950s. Since her study focuses on change in institutions and ritual practices such a comparison could have provided relevant insights. The bibliography is voluminous but inflated, in that only a minor part of it is explicitly referred to in the text.

*University of Göttingen*

ULRICH BRAUKÄMPER

### SHORTER NOTICES

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703539147

*Archaeology and History in Ìlàrè District (Central Yorubaland, Nigeria), 1200–1900 A.D.* By AKINWUMI O. OGUNDIRAN. (Cambridge Monographs in African Archaeology 55, BAR International Series 1090). Oxford: Archaeopress, 2002. Pp. viii + 163. £30 (ISBN 1-84171-468-2).

KEY WORDS: Nigeria, precolonial, archaeology.

The Ìlàrè district in Nigeria is situated north of Ife, near the northern edge of the rainforest zone. In this location, it might be expected to have served as a frontier of the Ife state. Ogundiran investigates this expectation and finds a more complicated story.

He begins with a survey of oral history in the study area, emphasizing settlement patterns and the rise and fall of local polities. These accounts inform a model of settlement cycling that can be tested archaeologically. Site survey and test excavations at Iloyi, Baba Ìlàrè Grove, Okun, Iloja and Oguntedo (survey only) follow. These sites create a sequence of occupations from the thirteenth through later nineteenth centuries. Using ceramic assemblages, potsherd pavements and other archaeological finds, and placing them in the context of previous work in Nigeria, Ogundiran makes a case that the Ilare district belonged to an Ife cultural sphere early in the period and then was drawn into an Oyo cultural sphere, all the while going through its own series of political formations and upheavals. The analysis makes the most of limited data and points out directions for future research.

Ogundiran's work is a valuable addition to an historical archaeology of Nigeria that is accumulating enough data to begin to synthesize the political and cultural history of Yorubaland. He observes that critical tools, notably a comparative framework for ceramic descriptions that would allow creation of local sequences and regional patterning, have yet to be developed. But his work in Ìlàrè district is a step in the right direction, methodologically sound, systematically presented, and productive of useful conclusions. With this volume, the Cambridge Monographs

in African Archaeology continue to make substantive contributions to our understanding of this large and dynamic continent.

*Murray State University*

KIT W. WESLER

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703549143

*East Africa*. Edited by MALYN NEWITT. (Portuguese Encounters with the World in the Age of the Discoveries [General Editor: John Villiers]). Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002. Pp. xxx + 192. £42.50 (ISBN 0-7546-0181-1).

KEY WORDS: Eastern Africa, precolonial, trade.

Malyn Newitt here presents a valuable selection of original documents in translation on the Portuguese in East Africa. Following a brief General Editor's foreword that places the volume in the context of the larger series, Newitt provides a critical yet sympathetic overview of Portuguese activities in East Africa during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries without neglecting the place of Africans and other Indian Ocean peoples in these encounters. Newitt's selection of documents is judicious, striking a balance between those that focus on the Portuguese and those that emphasize Portuguese descriptions of the African peoples they encountered. He includes excerpts of particular interest to Africanists that have either not been previously available in English translation or were omitted from earlier translations. Most of the translations fall under the rubric of 'based on' a source, which indicates that Newitt has adapted and built upon the original translation. One is by C. R. Boxer, the remainder are by Newitt. In at least one of these cases (Document 10j, p. 151 n. 53) he provides a new translation of an unsatisfactory rendering that was reprinted in a widely used collection of documents on the East African coast. Newitt introduces each document with a short text that locates the author, the event or topic described therein and the general context of the larger theme of the volume. One of the most useful features of this collection is the care with which the editor identifies the provenance of each document. Equally valuable is his indication of secondary sources that discuss each document in greater detail than is possible in this collection. Footnotes are kept to a minimum, being restricted primarily to identify people and places.

The level of editing and production is excellent throughout. I found only one significant error, the omission of a volume number (it is 3) for Document 10c (p. 130). In Document 11b (p. 160) Newitt provides a note on the Portuguese term *Buques* that he identifies with the Merina without realizing that it probably derives from Kiswahili *Buki*, the name for Madagascar (see Charles Sacleux, *Dictionnaire Swahili-Français* [Paris, Institut d'Ethnologie, 1939], 117, for the possibly Malagasy etymology of *Buki*). Although historians of East Africa will want to consult the original sources for themselves, Newitt's excellent collection more than meets the aspirations of the series of which it is a part and will be a valuable resource for those who do not read Portuguese.

*University of California, Los Angeles*

EDWARD A. ALPERS

DOI: 10.1017/S002185370355914X

*Bibliography of Imperial, Colonial, and Commonwealth History since 1600*. Edited by ANDREW PORTER. London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Historical Society, 2002. Pp. xx + 1060. £85 (ISBN 0-19-924991-1).

KEY WORDS: Bibliography, imperialism, colonial.

The compilers of this enormous work justify their labor by pointing out that ‘the proliferation of research has set in motion a perpetual avalanche of books and articles, the latter often in newly-established journals, and including many items of all kinds in languages other than English’ (p. xi). How right they are! And how, perhaps paradoxically, ominous for scholarship. At any rate, compilations like this ease the research burden once historians recover from the shock of lifting it. In some cases it might even result in persuading them to be as thorough and wide-ranging as possible.

The *Bibliography* has been drawn from an electronic database (*The Royal Historical Society Bibliography on CD-ROM*) published in 1998 and includes slightly fewer than 24,000 of the 40,000 items in that database. The editors ponder the need to produce this spinoff and conclude – rightly, I think – that there is still a place for printed reference materials, even though certain features such as searchability are compromised. Although they do not address the viability issue directly, we now can point to the doomed Domesday Book in electronic format as a dire, very dire, example of the dangers of the proverbial single basket.

Materials are organized into 14 broad categories, each in turn further subdivided into from 3 to 12 more specific topics. These latter are then arranged geographically into a further 32 categories. As befits the record of the former British empire, the entire world is covered. All this helps to overcome the sheer magnitude of finding materials, and increases the odds for efficient serendipity – not much of an option when searching electronically. There is also some cross-referencing. There are author, subject and personal name indexes, all large and very thorough. A problem is that many of the entries in the subject index have as many as several hundred citations against them, although undoubtedly the costs of further refinement would have been incommensurate to the benefits. Some savings could have been made if journal titles had been abbreviated and if the issue number of journal volumes – of very limited value – had been omitted. Further savings to consumers might result if a paperback edition were to be published.

While all of us can appreciate the up-to-dateness and searchability of electronic bibliographic databases, it remains a pleasure – sometimes mitigated by awe – to confront a bibliography such as this. It reminds us how insignificant we all are; not quite like poor little planet earth in the universe, but no longer capable of single-handedly changing the course of our corner of the historiographical world. The editor closes his introduction with the observation that ‘to the making of bibliographies there can be no end’ (p. xx). The verb form is encouraging.

*University of Wisconsin–Madison*

DAVID HENIGE

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703569146

*Societies after Slavery: A Select Annotated Bibliography of Printed Sources on Cuba, Brazil, British Colonial Africa, South Africa, and the British West Indies.*

Edited by REBECCA J. SCOTT, THOMAS C. HOLT, FREDERICK COOPER and AIMS MCGUINNESS. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002. Pp. xvi + 411. £54.95 (ISBN 0-8229-4184-8).

KEY WORDS: Bibliography, colonial, South Africa, slavery abolition.

This valuable bibliography distinguishes historiographical essays and indexes, primary sources both official and unofficial from the post-emancipation period up to 1930 and more recent secondary works reflecting newer questions and longer perspectives. For the British West Indies and British Colonial Africa, a special section is devoted to British Parliamentary Papers, while for Cuba and Brazil,

attention is drawn to censuses. The general and section introductions, while illuminating, are necessarily brief. Any library acquiring this tool should also hold Scott, Holt and Cooper, *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies* (2000). Nevertheless, the intelligent annotations are what give special weight to the work, intended for graduate students with access to research libraries. Mentors will still need to assist in crafting the kind of comparative projects the editors hope to foster. African historians will want to add parallel literature on the French and Belgian (as well as the Portuguese and German) empires, pending the arrival of the promised volume by francophone colleagues.

Introducing the section on South Africa, Cooper offers a stimulating proposition, that 'in some ways, the slave plantations of the Cape Colony, at least in the western Cape, resembled the West Indies more than Africa, and the abolition of slavery in 1834 and the end of apprenticeship in 1838 followed a schedule set out in relation to the West Indies' (p. 205). To be sure, the western Cape, like Jamaica, for example, had been a slave-importing society over some hundred and fifty years and a race-class stratification persisted in the twentieth century. But those venturing into comparison will surely want to take up the existence and role of indentured workers in South Africa, including the importation of Indian indentured workers into Natal, as they reach for an understanding of bonded and 'free' labor. The implications of indentured labor by Chinese as well as the better-known South Asians in the British West Indies is well reflected in Holt's selection, where they so directly substituted as plantation workers for the African-descended freedmen and women.

The editors led teams of compilers many of whom were at one time or another associated with them at the University of Michigan as graduate students. It is an impressive collective effort, fully alive to the unending ramifications of the subject. Some sections include last-minute entries for secondary works published in 2001, while other sections, such as that on South Africa, seem to have been closed much earlier. All, however, reflect the mass of information available in research libraries and the vigor of continuing historical inquiry. This compendium makes it clear that in respect to emancipation, Africa has become comparable to the Caribbean, Cuba and Brazil. So aided, advanced students can indeed probe and refine treatments of the uneven consequences of injustice and promises of freedom.

*Columbia University*

MARCIA WRIGHT

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703579142

*Il sultanato di Zanzibar nel XIX secolo: traffici commerciale, relazioni internazionali.* By BEATRICE NICOLINI. Torino: L'Harmattan Italia, 2002. Pp. 162. English abstract. €18.30.

KEY WORDS: Tanzania, precolonial, trade, culture, diplomacy.

This slim volume by an historian in the political sciences faculty at Milan's Catholic University of the Sacred Heart deals successively with the Indian Ocean as a cultural corridor; the Swahili; Anglo-French rivalry over access to Zanzibar in the first decade of the nineteenth century; Zanzibar: 'one of the most important emporia in all of Africa'; and the Moresby Treaty of 1822. The blurb cites research by Dr Nicolini in Britain, Baluchistan, Zanzibar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates – and the book's content reflects thorough work in all those places. French archives were also used.

I found the first chapter the most rewarding, largely because of its portrait of Oman's alliance with elements in the Baluchi country behind Makran, providing the sultanate with military muscle to build its Indian Ocean thalassocracy. The approach is rich and informative – but perhaps limited: I do not believe the word 'Somali' is in the book. Fortunately for non-readers of Italian, the same information is in her presentation at a 2002 UCLA colloquium ([www.international.ucla.edu/jscasc/programs/IOW](http://www.international.ucla.edu/jscasc/programs/IOW)). Succeeding chapters develop the ensuing diplomacy of the Indian Ocean in ways that sometimes take into account this central vision – but not always.

*Il sultanato di Zanzibar nel XIX secolo* has received a grant from the Society for Arabian Studies of the British Academy for eventual publication in English. Readers of this journal should welcome the English version.

Luther College, Decorah, Iowa

RICHARD SIGWALT

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703589149

*Twilight on the Zambezi: Late Colonialism in Central Africa*. By EUGENIA W. HERBERT. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002. Pp. xxvi + 196. No price given (ISBN 0-312-29431-X).

KEY WORDS: Zambia, colonial administration, decolonization.

Eugenia Herbert, an emerita professor at Mount Holyoke College, is perhaps best known to historians of Africa for her work on the precolonial history of copper. It was presumably her related interest in Africa iron-working which led to her meeting Murray Armor, who in 1958–60 had been an energetic district commissioner at Kalabo, on the northern edge of the upper Zambezi flood plain, in western Zambia: in 1959 he published a brief account of the local iron industry. Armor's stories, and those of other Europeans in retirement, encouraged Herbert to make Kalabo the focus for a study of the last years of colonial rule. As we would expect from the author, the result is neatly crafted and attractively written. It is scarcely a major piece of original research, but it is securely grounded in an impressive command of the relevant literature, and the author visited the area herself in 1999.

The meat of the book lies in the first half, which concerns Kalabo district. Drawing on interviews and the reports and private papers of local officials, Herbert offers 'a last glimpse of the particularities of colonialism'. She is at pains to show both Europeans and Africans as individuals, but she is well aware of the constraints within which they worked. One was ecological decline: the increasing damage done by seasonal flooding. The Witswatersrand Native Labour Association still had a local recruiting agent, and men still went away to South African mines while the extensive drainage system for the flood plain had fallen into disrepair for want of labour. Besides, Kalabo was part of the Lozi kingdom, which claimed a privileged relationship with Britain; the capital, Lealui, was still a strong magnet for political ambition. In 1958, indeed, the secretary for native affairs, measuring African reaction to the contentious Central African Federation, regarded Kalabo as 'perhaps the least politically conscious district in Northern Rhodesia'. This creates problems for Herbert in the second half of the book, in which she outlines the broader political context of colonial rule in Kalabo. We are given an expert, if unsurprising, account of Federation and its demise, but Kalabo almost disappears from view. All the same, this is an engaging and accessible introduction both to Zambia before independence and to the process of decolonization in British Africa. There are a few slips: e.g., the 'common roll' *included* (not 'consisted of')

11 Africans in 1953; the British South Africa Company did pay taxes before 1949 – in Britain. The maps could be better, and the photographs are badly printed.

London

A. D. ROBERTS

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703599145

*My Enemy: My Friend*. By DAVID LOVATT SMITH. UK: privately published, 2003 (obtainable from [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)). Pp. 416. £12.95 + postage and packing (ISBN 0-9544713-0-X).

KEY WORDS: Kenya, independence wars, nationalism.

This is a novel of the 'Mau Mau' Emergency in Kenya, written by a participant. It would make a good companion volume for any undergraduate class 'doing Mau Mau', perhaps as a twin for an Ngugi novel. The author played an active role in the Emergency. He fought the insurgents as a conscript in the Kenya Regiment, the white territorial army. He went on to win their trust as a police intelligence officer. He tells the story, grippingly, through the eyes of two men, enemies who became friends. Thiong'o wa Kimani is a Kikuyu lorry driver who joins in the slaughter of his settler employer's family and then escapes to the forests. George is a white policeman who sees the possibility of 'turning' Mau Mau captives into fighters for inter-racial trust and political peace.

*My Enemy: My Friend* takes us at first-hand to the heart of the controversies surrounding Mau Mau. One first meets the partisans as bestial killers. Lovatt Smith knows how to sustain both suspense and, at the moment of crisis, sheer horror. Those who argue, to the contrary, that brutal British retribution rather than African barbarism provoked a Mau Mau war of resistance will also have their views confirmed. Lovatt Smith portrays fear in Kikuyu huts every bit as tangible as that in settler living rooms. The villain of the piece is racial paranoia, engendered by mutual ignorance, not any cabalistic conspiracy by Jomo Kenyatta. But what is particularly remarkable is the author's imaginative ability to paint a human picture of Mau Mau lives in the forest, more fugitives than either bandits or nationalists, under often squalidly oppressive leadership. His captives all those years ago must have been very frank with their Special Branch interrogator, perhaps grateful to be spared the less tender mercies of their fellow-African 'loyalists'. It is almost as if they had read their Karari Njama memoirs, *Mau Mau from Within*. In the end the fates of Thiong'o and George intertwine; each has to trust the other with his life – also a memory that many Kenyans, black and white of a certain age, will recognize. This is an action story, full of courage and shame. It is also first-rate history, partial, of course, but acutely observed.

Trinity College, University of Cambridge

JOHN LONSDALE

DOI: 10.1017/S002185370360914X

*Inside Independent Nigeria: Diaries of Wolfgang Stolper, 1960–1962*. Edited by CLIVE S. GRAY. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003. Pp. xxix + 321. £35 (ISBN 0-7546-0995-2).

KEY WORDS: Nigeria, postcolonial, economic.

Wolfgang Stolper worked in Nigeria for two months in 1960 and then from February 1961 to June 1962 as head of an economic planning unit located in

the ministry of economic development and sponsored by the Ford Foundation. The object was to write for the newly independent country a development plan, at that time a requirement for securing American and other international aid. Stolper kept a diary that he sent in instalments to his wife and that is now published shorn of about one quarter of the original. Short postscripts written by Stolper before his death in 2002 have been added.

In July 1960 Stolper wrote: 'I have the most enviable assignment a man can have: developing an integrated plan for the most important African economy with the biggest and most hopeful future for any African nation'. Two years later the assignment must have appeared less enviable.

Stolper's views on the plan for 1962–8 that emerged were expressed in several journal articles written during his time in Nigeria and later in his book *Planning without Facts* (Harvard University Press, 1966). Briefly, he argued that planned public expenditures must fit within a macro-economic frame, that the more economically profitable should always be preferred to the less and that 'social' or unproductive expenditures must be governed by what could be afforded.

The diary records the struggle to get these relatively simple ideas accepted in face of insufficient factual information, bureaucratic incomprehension, ministerial irresponsibility, the federal constitution, cost-raising corruption, the pressures of equipment salesmen (Germans and Israelis in particular) and the shortcomings of his colleagues. A particular obstacle was presented by Narayan Prasad, who had been provided by the World Bank as economic advisor to the federal prime minister and who chaired the joint planning committee to which Stolper had to report. While Stolper sought a realistic plan (he thought the plan as finally adopted to be still too big), Prasad would have preferred deliberate excess as a plea or bargaining tool with donor agencies. Inflation and exchange control, which Stolper thought it imperative to avoid, were regarded by Prasad as salutary, a lesson on what not to do that newly independent governments should learn. Several other actors in the affairs at the time, some of them still alive, are dealt with roughly, but there is unstinted praise for several of the senior Nigerian civil servants.

The diary was probably intended as an *aide-memoire* for Stolper's own purposes. Much of it relates meetings attended, the necessary socializing at lunches and cocktail parties and dinners, journeys undertaken, the writing of memoranda, the rewriting of subordinates' work, the drafting and redrafting of plan documents. Since the documentation itself is absent, the reader necessarily loses much of the plot. It seems unlikely that the diary was originally intended for publication, although in 1998 Stolper asked Clive Gray to edit it for that purpose. Gray also contributes an introduction and a 'cast of characters' that would have benefited from more research.

University of Birmingham

DOUGLAS RIMMER

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703619146

*Les secrets du Manding: les récits du sanctuaire Kamabolon de Kangaba (Mali)*. By JAN JANSEN (with others). Leiden: CNWS Publications, Leiden University, 2002. Pp. 163 including transcriptions and translations of three oral narrations by Lansine Diabate of Kela. £18, paperback (ISBN 90-5789-077-1).

KEY WORDS: Mali, oral narratives/sources.

In the Manden, the communication of traditional and neo-traditional oral accounts involves practices that modern scholarship has classified as 'secrecy'. In Maninka and related languages, words such as *gundo* and (in certain contexts) *dalilu*, usually translated as 'secret', are used with reference to those practices.



'Secrecy' postulates a reserve of traditional knowledge sited beyond the horizon of commonly acknowledged narratives. This virtual site grants *a priori* authority to tradition's growth-points. When oral neo-accounts emerge and recontextualisations of old accounts take place, these changes will be traced to that reserve knowledge. They will be presented not as newly minted additions to the canon, but as something that has been there from old yet only now is being brought to general attention (pp. 32, 39).<sup>1</sup> They may be kept for long probationary periods as supplements added or not, according to the occasion, to the margins of older discourses (see the Islam-inspired materials in Texts I and II, and their discussion on pp. 32–3, 37–8, 42, 44, 52, 58–9). But the way is open for negotiations of their position between margin and mainstream. Text III in the book contains a clearly recent narrative of this type (pp. 150–1). It attributes a trans-Atlantic expedition to the fourteenth-century Mali emperor Kankun Musa and describes him as the ancestor of 'the black Americans'. Jan Jansen and Pekka Masonen deftly investigate the production of this tale (pp. 38–41, cf. p. 17).

However, Jansen is also concerned with 'secrecy' in relation to the transmission of long-established mainstream narratives (see also the papers by him, and others, in *Mande Studies*, 2 [2000]). To discuss this he draws on his own fieldwork in Mali since 1988 (he was at Kangaba for the 1997 Kamabolon ceremony), on studies (by Germaine Dieterlen, Solange de Ganay, Claude Meillassoux and Seydou Camara) of earlier performances of the ceremony, and on other research. His theoretical approach is informed by insights developed by Beryl L. Bellman's work on Poro ritual (1984) and inspired by the sociologies of Georg Simmel and Erving Goffman.

He aims at putting 'secrets' (*gundow*) back into the semantic fields in which the word operates in the Manden (p. 25), and at scrutinizing the rhetorical and performative skills that mark information as 'secret' precisely in the process of revealing it. This, however, remains a project for the future. In the present work, the emphasis is on 'secrecy' as a device for the managed sharing (rather than withholding) of information (p. 19), and on the sociological contexts in which information that is in fact widely shared is treated as 'secret' – i.e. as utterable only by certain categories of speakers under certain conditions (pp. 10, 12–13, 17–19, 47–8, 53).

The book includes a critical analysis of the ethnography of the Manden (and the Sudan in general) constructed by Marcel Griaule and his 'school' (Dieterlen, De Ganay and Youssouf Tata Cissé).

*University of Birmingham*

P. F. DE MORAES FARIAS

DOI: 10.1017/S0021853703629142

*The Kavango Peoples in the Past: Local Historiographies from Northern Namibia.*

Edited by AXEL FLEISCH and WILHELM J. G. MÖHLIG. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 2002. Pp. 344. €39.80 (ISBN 3-89645-353-X).

KEY WORDS: Namibia, local histories, historiography, oral narratives/sources, precolonial, colonial, postcolonial.

Although not indicated on the cover, in the introduction Axel Fleisch and Wilhelm J. G. Möhlig make it clear that they are the editors of this book. They

<sup>1</sup> On this see also the section 'Secrecy and the rethinking of tradition' (pp. 30–1) in P. F. de Moraes Farias, 'The oral traditionist as critic and intellectual producer', in T. Falola (ed.), *African Historiography* (Burnt Mill, Harlow: Longman, 1993), 14–38.

selected seven texts that deal with the history of the Kavango region in Northern Namibia. These texts are of different kinds: writings by members of the Kavango elite, transcriptions of earlier interviews or transcriptions from recent interviews during fieldwork carried out by the editors. Some have been published before, others only become accessible through this book.

There is much negative to say about the edition. It is unclear, for example, what criteria were used in selecting the texts. While the limited reference to Mbunza history is noted, nothing is said about the absence of texts dealing with Mbukushu history. The interpretation and the notes to the texts relate to history in a static manner and hardly discuss change as a factor that may have influenced the texts. Thus it is stated that in 1965 'the majority of the people were still living a basically traditional life' (p. 65). At times the editors use a vocabulary that borders on the colonial. Just one example is the classification of Nyambi-Nyambi as a 'pagan deity' (p. 141). Recent debates on ethnicity have not been taken into account and all too little is said about the relationship between oral and written texts.

Despite these flaws, this is an important collection. First, because in terms of Kavango history-writing it partly fills an enormous gap. Second, because these specific texts were until now inaccessible or could only be consulted in a few places. Furthermore, the transcriptions and translations are apt and the linguistic interpretation is sound. In their introductions, the editors explain the context of the narrations. The book provides a wealth of historical information on the Kavango region. It is interesting to note what aspects are stressed by the narrators: royal genealogies, migrations, warfare, succession conflicts and usurpation. The collection can be most helpful for an interpretation of local elite perspectives on the past.

*University of Ghent*

INGE BRINKMAN