

welcome addition to the burgeoning Boko Haram literature, and a worthwhile entry point for academics, practitioners and general interest readers.

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War and Statehood in South Sudan by MANFRED ÖHM

Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2014. Pp. 235. £61.30 (hbk)

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A product of the author's independent research in southern Sudan during the later years of the second Sudanese civil war and early interim period, Manfred Öhm's book provides a welcome focus on the incipient administrative functions of soon-to-be independent South Sudan: in particular, their wartime relations with international aid organisations and civil society.

While much of this research is well over a decade old, its assessment of key characteristics of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the insurgency-turned-ruling-party currently fighting South Sudan's new internal civil war against its former members, is still relevant. The ethnic politics and autocratic management style described in this volume will be familiar to those studying the SPLM/A at almost any period. Öhm's primary contribution is to illustrate key distinctions between administrative agencies as they interacted with international aid organisations and civilians in SPLA-held southern Sudan during the war. The function and dysfunction of these agencies, even in pacified areas, has rarely been traced with such meticulous detail as the studies in Bahr al-Ghazal and Equatoria provided here. Chapter 4, the highlight of the work, examines the operations of the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (SRRA, the SPLA's primary relief agency and now the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission) and the Civil Authority for New Sudan (CANS, the framework for the subsequent civil administration for South Sudan). The SRRA worked more directly with the SPLA to provide key non-relief functions such as education; CANS oversaw administrative council and the judiciary and enjoyed more local legitimacy, particularly in areas outside the SPLM/A's key Dinka demographic.

Tension between these agencies' functions was never fully resolved during the war. In his comparative study of their local offices in different regions, Öhm examines the tendency for international aid organisations to coordinate with the relief agency rather than the state-building CANS, a gesture of neutrality that mitigated the effectiveness of early, locally based administrative structures in the south. USAID-supported County Development Committees undercut both agencies via uncoordinated support of small business initiatives, slowing the transfer of routine local administration (CANS) from the relief agency long tasked with handling it (SRRA). Sustained criticisms of international aid efforts during the war are not new, but Öhm's ground-level research more clearly explains the relationships of these groups to each other.

Also examined is the enduring role of chieftaincy, both in traditionally hierarchical (the Azande of East Equatoria) and acephalous (Dinka, Nuer) communities during wartime and in peace-making. From the comparative study of

insurgent efforts at civil administration and interaction, or lack of it, with civil society, Öhm's study flows smoothly into a Chapter 5 review of the Wunlit peace process and subsequent turn-of-the-century efforts to pressure warring elites to stop fighting. These conferences helped abate internecine southern conflict, precipitating the landmark 2005 agreement ending the southern war with Khartoum.

While the book as a whole is well-organised, one cannot help but note the quality of these chapters in relation to the more general review of South Sudanese history that bookends them. The development of Migdal's 'state in society' concept is well-reviewed, but the history of early southern nationalism in Chapter 3 and of post-independent Sudan in Chapters 6–7 serve effectively as frames for the more detailed research described between them.

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Losing Your Land: Dispossession in the Great Lakes, edited by AN ANSOMS and THEA HILHORST

Martlesham: James Currey, 2014. Pp. 232. £19.99 (pbk)

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This volume brings together an impressive group of researchers to explore the contestation over land in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. While there has been much recent scholarly interest in understanding conflict and governance in the Great Lakes region of Africa, there has been comparatively less focus on rural dimensions. This book is a very useful corrective, which provides a convincing analysis of how the politics of land affects smallholder farmers in the region.

The introduction by Ansoms and Hilhorst succinctly raises the main themes of the volume. The authors highlight the importance of adopting a historical perspective to understanding contemporary cases of land contestation, while recognising significant local, national and global power shifts in the region. Several subsequent chapters show how development narratives, including narratives about transformation and modernisation, provide a justification for weakening the land rights of smallholders.

Ansoms and Hilhorst also emphasise the role of local elites, which is a theme that resonates strongly throughout the volume. Taken together, the chapters show that despite key differences in institutional and normative frameworks across the region, local elites play a pivotal role in land politics. These elites act as intermediaries between local populations and outside actors, and they tend to instrumentalise opportunities that are brought about by changes in regulatory frameworks, private investment and global dynamics.

Several contributions in the volume challenge views that depict rural dwellers as passive victims of land grabbing, and instead point to multiple manifestations of rural agency, resistance and autonomy of action. The chapters by Peemans on the DRC, by Geenen and Hönke on land grabbing by mining companies in South Kivu, and by Bisoka and Ansoms on land grabbing Burundi make this point particularly forcefully.