

significance, the groves in Ethiopia are very different from Senegal's palaver trees, but the chapter by Tsehai Berhane-Selassie builds on the analysis offered by Ross. In Ethiopia, ritual use of sacred groves marked claims to resources and social status, but interventions by the revolutionary government undercut two types of grove specialists; artisan castes were displaced from groves during resettlements and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church lost authority and resources. Social power, rituals and groves have been redefined during these struggles.

Wood cutting also changes power dynamics. Alma Gottlieb explains that Beng of Côte d'Ivoire have historically accrued spiritual wealth from the groves, but, more recently, loggers have accrued economic wealth. Both sorts of wealth create power. According to the chapter by Ute Siebert, political and economic changes bring changes to the norms that protect groves. Young men in several villages in Northern Benin sought and received greater rights to cut lumber in groves associated with spirits. The spirits accepted compensation for increased logging; one grove even moved to an alternative location.

Gérard Chouin draws on theory of landscape and memory to search out the historic moments that led to the creation of groves in Ghana. Because the groves are historical creations, they are reinvented and even destroyed. In some cases, people built houses for spirits displaced by tree cutting. Chouin reaches a conclusion similar to others in the book: 'Sacred groves are created for social purposes and are typically used by local elites within the context of specific historical trajectories' (p. 193). Nadia Rabesahala Horning states the power equation bluntly: that the objects actually protected in sacred forests are 'local leaders' socio-economic interests' (p. 117).

We have come a long way from sacred groves as conserved glades of biodiversity. The contributors have led us past single urban trees of non-threatened species, through interchangeable and shrinking stands of forest, to walls marking a spot where trees used to stand. All chapters reinforce the message that the existence of politically and spiritually significant trees reflects social power and does not necessarily promote ecosystem protection.

It is interesting and understandable that the final two essays by forestry and development practitioners offer the strongest arguments that local and state regulations can protect ecosystems, if they are joined with economic incentives. The co-editors Celia Nyamweru and Sheridan also make a case for 'cautious optimism' in their look forward (p. 27), but their hope is less that ecosystems will be safe than that policy makers could devise a better model, one based on dynamic understandings of society, ecology and resources.

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## MISSIONS AND COLONIAL RULE

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*Missions, States and European Expansion in Africa*. Edited by CHIMA J. KORIEH and RAPHAEL CHIJIJOKE NJOKU. New York and London: Routledge, 2007. Pp. xi + 302. No price given (ISBN 0-415-95559-9).

KEY WORDS: Accommodation to colonialism, Christianity, missions.

This volume is the outcome of a panel at the 48th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, held in Washington DC in 2005. It aims to re-examine the

collaborations between missions and imperial authority and to 'highlight several aspects of the critical role played by missionaries in the establishment and consolidation of colonial rule in Africa' (p. 2). The book consists of an introduction and ten chapters in which detailed case studies are presented. It also includes an index. Maps (which would have been useful to illustrate the case studies) are missing. The authors represent different disciplines such as history, the study of religion and anthropology.

Most of the contributions are based on original research and offer new and sometimes fascinating insights. Roger B. Beck analyses the role of missionaries (of the London Missionary Society) as commercial intermediaries and government emissaries on the north-eastern frontier of the early nineteenth-century Cape Colony. He focuses especially on the organization of frontier fairs and the response of the Griqua, who, he concludes, 'were anxious to develop commercial relations with the colony but not at the expense of their independence' (p. 33). Yolanda Covington-Ward studies the shifting nature of the uses and meanings of Kongo embodied practices in the context of the many sociocultural transformations that defined the colonial period, drawing particular attention to the practices of trembling and dancing in the prophetic movements and the various reactions by mainline missionaries and colonial administrators. Ogbu Kalu revisits the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh 1910 and its approach to education, which was 'directed more towards a formation that promotes social maintenance instead of promoting a liberating agenda that reveals the divinity of the human spirit' (p. 125). Waibinte Wariboko looks into the endeavours to establish a West Indian Church in the Upper Guinea Coast. In his opinion, these South-South interactions were not successful, since the 'indiscrete reporting about Africa in the Caribbean' led to a 'rejection of blackness as part of Jamaica's national heritage' (p. 185). The other contribution by Wariboko focuses on church-state relations in southern Nigeria, an area which is also studied by Jude C. Aguwa and Chima J. Korieh. Raphael Chijioke Njoku re-examines the church-state struggle in Kabaka's Uganda and questions 'whether the so-called Christian martyrs were truly martyrs or sinners' (p. 66). Michael McInneshin researches the overlapping colonization by two European powers, a German state and English missionaries, in the north-eastern corner of German East Africa (currently the Tanga district in Tanzania) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. McInneshin observes that, in spite of some conflicts (which are reflected in the statement of a UMCA bishop that he would rather be a Turk than a German), there were also commonalities: the Europeans fit 'their descriptions of the land into a worldview that necessitated colonial intervention of one sort or another' (p. 202). Gideon Mailer focuses on the encounters between American and British evangelical Christian missionaries and the indigenous communities of southern Sudan in the last hundred years and argues that the missionary expulsions which followed the student strikes in 1962 were counterproductive with regards to the assertion of Northern hegemony in the south (p. 229).

The ten chapters thus analyse different levels of interactions. The theoretical approaches vary. While Wariboko and Njoku tend to regard African Christians and missionaries as 'functional whites' who cooperated with the colonizers to promote 'Whiteness' above 'Blackness', Korieh's analytical framework is the dialogue between two cultures 'attempting to understand, contend with and accommodate each other ... within a context in which African cultures were confronted by an externally imposed/dominant/hegemonic culture, but one in which such hegemonic impositions were often influenced by African initiatives' (p. 165). Although some different theories and approaches are listed in the introduction, a more thorough historiographical discussion of the studies in mission and

colonialism would have been helpful. Nevertheless the book is to be recommended for bringing together a number of rich case studies.

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## LIVERPOOL'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE SLAVE TRADE

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*Liverpool and the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. Edited by DAVID RICHARDSON, SUZANNE SCHWARZ and ANTHONY TIBBLES. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press/National Museums Liverpool/Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 2007. Pp. xii + 315. £50 (ISBN 978-1-84631-066-9).

KEY WORDS: Shipping, slave trade.

This timely book comprises ten essays originally presented at the International Conference on Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery, held at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in 2005. The inspiration for the conference was the influential, yet flawed, book *Liverpool, the African Slave Trade, and Abolition*, edited by Roger Anstey and Paul Hair in 1976. The essays presented in this new volume cover a variety of topics related to Liverpool's involvement in the slave trade, some of which provide comprehensive new information. All essays benefit greatly from the important statistical research presented by David Eltis *et al.* in *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database on CD-Rom* (New York, 1999).

Although most of the articles will be of general interest to the student of African history, two are particularly relevant. Lovejoy and Richardson's 'African agency and the Liverpool slave trade', highlights the importance of sophisticated systems of credit provision that enabled European and African merchants to engage in effective trading partnerships. The authors also go into some detail explaining how credit systems varied at different locations on the West African coast. This essay provides additional weight to the case presented in journal articles that Lovejoy and Richardson have previously published on this subject, utilizing some important statistics gleaned from the data base mentioned above. These statistics highlight Liverpool's important role in pioneering trade in previously neglected West African markets, which contributed to the town's dominance of the British slave trade during the late eighteenth century.

Trevor Burnard's 'The Atlantic slave trade and African ethnicities in seventeenth-century Jamaica', also profits greatly from *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* in accounting for the various origins of enslaved Africans transported to Jamaica during the period in question. Although the essay has no relevance in relation to the title of the book, as current research shows that Liverpool merchants did not embark upon their first slaving voyage until 1695, this article does have much wider importance, demonstrating the danger in generalizing about the survival of distinct African cultural practices throughout the Americas. Burnard challenges the current orthodoxies of Gwendolyn Midlo Hall and others, who state that ethnically homogenous Africans tended to be clustered together on the same plantations by landowners, thereby allowing collective cultural practices to remain intact. Burnard is far more sympathetic to what he considers to be the currently out-of-favour interpretations of Mintz and Price, which state that the trauma of slavery made it very difficult for cultural practices to be transmitted from Africa to the Americas. Although not going as far as seeing enslavement as a form of