

## REVIEWS

### ARCHAEOLOGIES OF AFRICA

*Archaeology Africa*. By MARTIN HALL. London: James Currey; Cape Town: David Philip, 1996. Pp. ix + 277. £14.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-735-3).

Monographs by African archaeologists that purport to be more than site reports are few, while textbooks appropriate for teaching African archaeology are particularly sparse. Thus, Martin Hall's new book is a welcome addition to the literature, despite the absence of a preposition in the title.

*Archaeology Africa*, according to its cover, 'has been written to provide a detailed introduction to archaeology as it is practised in [sic] the African continent'. Thus, it is designed primarily as an introductory textbook for students, presenting the theories and methods of archaeology in a lively manner while giving numerous African examples. The book follows the format of most introductory texts on archaeology, and indeed makes considerable use of Renfrew and Bahn's seminal textbook, as it proceeds through the time-honoured topics of the history and scope of archaeology, fieldwork, dating, and interpretation of the evidence. *Archaeology Africa* does not present a coherent narrative of African prehistory, in the manner of Phillipson's *African Archaeology*, though the diligent reader should certainly know more about the African past after reading this book. However, the book offers more than a standard textbook because Hall provides numerous and sometimes extended examples of archaeological practice in Africa and because emphasis is placed on the socio-political context of African archaeology. Indeed, Hall's concern with the context of archaeology is in many ways both a major strength and a weakness of the book: a strength because it offers a variety of new perspectives and lifts the book out of the mundane category of textbooks; a weakness because a post-modern perspective is not everybody's cup of tea. Moreover, some aspects of traditional archaeological practice are treated rather superficially, presumably to avoid the book becoming too long.

In accord with a post-modern perspective, Hall argues that African archaeology 'has had its own traditions of ... practice for several generations' and that 'there are many possible archaeologies of Africa' (p. 2). This theme is closely tied to Hall's view that our understanding of the African past has been shaped by Western perceptions of the (dark) continent. Thus, the author explores literature and film, as well as academic sources, to demonstrate his contention that 'the study of the past is always a political process' (p. 245). In this regard Great Zimbabwe figures prominently, while the final chapter examines modern perceptions of Africa expressed in reactions to the recent exhibition of African art held at the Royal Academy in London. Therefore, the reader is able to comprehend the relevance of archaeology in modern Africa and that various approaches exist for explaining the past. Indeed, following in the footsteps of Kent Flannery (*The Early Mesoamerican Village*, 1976), Hall invents a series of conversations between Drs. Function, Structure and Post(Modern) about how to investigate and interpret the archaeological record.

Although Hall writes fluently and convincingly about the context of archaeology in Africa and post-modern (post-processual) approaches, first-year university students, who would seem to be the target audience, are likely to find parts of the text very challenging. What, one wonders, will students for whom English is a

second language, make of the discussion of signs and symbols (p. 219)? How will they decipher the literary allusions to the Mad Hatter's tea party or the discussion of various films that have probably never been shown in Africa outside the art houses of South Africa?

Despite an emphasis on the context of archaeological practice, the author is even-handed in his use of examples. Indeed, he has chosen two processual studies to exemplify the application of archaeological theories and methods – the McIntosh's research on Jenné-jeno and Hilary Deacon's excavations at Klasies River Mouth. Also, for perhaps the first time in an Africanist textbook, historical archaeology is given its proper due. Furthermore, a valiant effort is made throughout the book to showcase work from all regions and periods, but examples of later prehistoric and historic research in southern Africa dominate, which is not surprising given Hall's own interests and the preponderance of research in that region.

*Archaeology Africa* is attractively produced in two-column format with numerous illustrations. Much of the text is presented in grey boxes, some of which run to several pages; indeed, the ratio of boxes to main text approaches parity in some chapters, occasionally making the narrative rather disjointed. Quotations are widely used and, in good post-modern fashion, allow other voices besides Hall's to be heard. There is also a useful glossary. I noted only two glaring errors: the confusion of 'Zinjanthropus' with *Homo habilis* (p. 147) and the conversion of several radiocarbon dates to calendar years without the benefit of calibration (p. 223).

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## POT BOUND

*Studien zur Archäologie des zentralafrikanischen Regenwalds: Die Keramik des inneren Zaire-Beckens und ihre Stellung im Kontext der Bantu-Expansion.* By HANS-PETER WOTZKA. Cologne: Heinrich-Barth-Institut, 1995. Pp. 582. DM 196 (ISBN 3-927688-07-X).

This is Volume 6 of the series *Africa Praehistorica: Monographs on African Archaeology and Environment*, begun in 1989 by the Heinrich Barth Institute of Cologne University. The series is dedicated to the Institute's regions of research interest, the deserts of eastern Sahara and Namibia. The volumes are beautifully and expensively produced according to a tradition no longer practiced in Anglophone academia. The present book is no exception. Of crucial interest to non-readers of German, substantial English and French summaries are provided.

Wotzka builds on the pioneering work of his mentor, Manfred Eggert, to extend our empirical knowledge of the later prehistory of the Central African rainforest. Specifically, the material results of four field seasons carried out between 1977 and 1985 along the left bank of the Zaire (Congo) River above its confluence with the Ubangi to the mouth of the Lulongo are reported; the majority of the 190 sites are located along the three major eastern tributaries Ruki, Ikelemba and Lulongo. Sites dated before A.D. 1000 contained only ceramics (a total of 11,173 pottery sherds were obtained, 60 per cent of these from excavated contexts); some later sites yielded very small iron/copper inventories and recent European goods. Detailed summary descriptions of excavations at the 63 sites tested are given and a catalogue of all surface finds is provided. Ceramics are assigned to 34 style groups based on technical characteristics (paste, temper, etc.), vessel, rim and base form, and decorative motifs along with their techniques and structure of application.

This is a typological approach that cannot say very much but can show a lot about a corpus of materials. Of greatest value are the 105 plates on which are delineated several hundred of the sherds; the plates are accompanied by a table specifying each depicted sherd according to its site, stratigraphic/surface context and style group.

Also valuable are the 20 maps which pinpoint the distribution of each of the style groups. Together these will provide a reference point for comparison with materials from other areas for years to come. A partial chronology is provided by 59 radiocarbon dates obtained from 16 of the sites; these are interpreted in relation to each pertinent site and listed chronologically in a separate table. Thus, a large amount of empirical data are presented in detailed and accessible form. The only caveat I would raise about this presentation is that the organization of materials is too rigidly bound to a strict site and/or time frame; thus, interconnections may be perceived by a reader only through flipping back and forth between pages. This is particularly annoying in the plates of otherwise excellent ceramic drawings which are organized by find site; to look at sherds of a certain style group, one has to consult the legend and then find the plate, and so forth, until the appearance of the sherds become blurred in the search. This could have been easily remedied.

Wotzka concludes that, although occupation by ceramic-making peoples began in the region about 400 B.C., only the lower reaches of the Zaïre tributaries were occupied until roughly 2,000 years ago, or somewhat later. Upstream movements are described as a series of migratory waves extending into the European period. He rightly cautions that much work remains to be done but, on the basis of parallels to early pottery in Cameroon and Gabon, tentatively proposes that at least the first of these settlements may be associated with the expansion of northern/western Bantu-speakers, as posited by linguists such as Heine and Bastin. He further proposes that subsequent developments in the region were mainly internal developments from the initially established style.

Much of this may bear some relation to actual history. But, unfortunately, Wotzka relies on a set of outdated concepts developed in American archaeology on a Boasian bounded culture base largely before 1950: Kroeber's 'culture areas' and Bennett's 'co-traditions' later combined by Rouse, Steward's 'direct historical approach' and Willey's 'horizon styles'. These are applied in a completely uncritical manner and without modification, despite a vast literature on both sides of the Atlantic that definitively discredits their value as analytical tools. This leaves Wotzka's conclusions in limbo, and we are left with a competent, if dated, descriptive catalogue. This is not to be wondered at, for, indeed, the current program of the Institut is hampered by just this dogmatic empiricist approach.

This volume is a boon to those who need to know what Central African ceramics look like, and they will find that need amply filled here. But neither they nor anyone else will find anything more.

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ED WILMSEN

## JENNÉ-JENO

*Excavations at Jenné-jeno, Hambarketolo, and Kaniana (Inland Niger Delta, Mali), the 1981 Season.* Edited by SUSAN KEECH MCINTOSH. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. Pp. xxvi + 605. No price given (ISBN 0-520-09785-8).

Within 800 words it is difficult to review a volume which runs to some 605 pages and which represents a considerable piece of scholarship. However, the archaeological research undertaken by S. K. and R. J. McIntosh in the Inland Niger Delta

is now well known thanks to the report on their first season in 1977, and a series of papers which have appeared prior to this volume. Essentially, the new volume is devoted 'to presenting and discussing the results of excavations carried out in 1981 at the settlement mounds of Jenné-jeno, Hambarketolo and Kaniana in the Inland Niger Delta of Mali' (p. 1). This is achieved through ten chapters, some of which are either all or partly written by other contributors. A straightforward format is followed, setting the scene and research objectives, describing the stratigraphy and features, and dealing with the archaeological material recovered (pottery, metals, faunal remains etc.), prior to summarizing and drawing the results together in a concluding chapter, which is in turn followed by weighty appendices and twenty pages of plates. The volume is nicely laid out, no mean achievement considering the editor had to prepare all the camera-ready copy. Typographical errors are few and the illustrations and tables are, almost without exception, clear and informative.

How does it fare? Perhaps one of the areas of most interest is the foreword, which in a lucid fashion offers a personal perspective on the editor's research viewpoints, approaches and problems encountered both during and after the excavations, which makes for quite a 'post-processual' introduction!. Space is devoted to justifying the weight of data included, or 'reportage' in creating a 'living' document, as compared to a 'dead' document, in which insufficient data and detail is included, with an emphasis upon 'interpretative generalities' (p. xx). This is perhaps one criticism of the volume, i.e. that too much data is presented, but this of course depends on the position of the reader. Would the volume have benefited from longer conclusions at the expense of, or in addition to, the data? I believe the answer, to a certain degree, is yes. I would have enjoyed more emphasis on the organization of society (five and a half pages), and certainly on the ideology and belief systems in operation (admittedly difficult to reconstruct), and on underlying objects such as the terracotta statuettes discovered during the course of the excavations – objects which have been the cause, as the editor points out, of so much wanton destruction of the archaeological heritage in the inland Niger delta.

This minor criticism aside, it is difficult to fault the analysis; all avenues of research pertaining to the archaeological materials recovered were pursued and a wealth of detail is provided. Various exciting finds, previously only briefly heard of, are described, two of my personal favourites being a blue glass bead dating from 250 B.C. – A.D. 50, of possible Indian or South-East Asian origin (p. 254), a unique find; and a realistically modelled statuette torso (p. 215), one of only a few available to scholarship from a legitimate context. Also of particular interest are the sections in several of the individual chapters devoted to the discussion, interpretation and conclusions. Two notable examples can be picked out: the chapter by Wim Van Neer on fish remains (chapter 8) and that on the pottery by Susan Keech McIntosh (chapter 3). In the former, the archaeological material is firmly placed in context with regard to often neglected areas of study, such as the possible fishing and fish preparation techniques used. For example, we are told that the species richness of the assemblage is due to the great variety of fishing techniques used, which are described in detail, as is the former nature of the fishing grounds themselves (p. 335). S. K. McIntosh pays attention to the form and possible uses of the pottery recovered, with reference to recent ethno-archaeological research in the region, which is in turn linked to the paleobotanical remains and to relevant finds such as sandstone grinders (p. 160), all of which breathe life into the pottery report.

In conclusion, we have learnt much more about settlement, urbanism and society in the inland Niger delta between the late first millennium B.C. and the early second millennium A.D. The conclusions to the volume (chapter 10), as the editor and author sets out to achieve, act as a mechanism for placing the sites within their

regional context, but also as a convenient summary of much recent archaeological research in the region. It is apparent that this volume, as a site report, will provide the bench mark in West African archaeology for many years to come.

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TIMOTHY INSOLL

## BOVINE BONES

*Kings, Commoners and Cattle at Great Zimbabwe Tradition Sites.* By CAROLYN THORP. (Museum Memoir, NS, no. 1). Harare: National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe, 1995. Pp. x+129. Zim \$54; US \$10, paperback (ISSN 1024-9397).

This book might better have been titled *Cattle, Commoners and Kings*, since it is largely concerned with the analysis of animal bones, mainly cattle, with their implications for herd management strategies and some hints on social status within the society. Eighty per cent of it is taken up with 106 tables detailing the faunal remains and their analysis in terms of numbers of animals and age distribution; this will appeal more to the archaeozoologist and specialist archaeologist than to the historian. The material was originally presented as an MA thesis in 1984 but the basic data and interpretation are still valid, even if the methodology of faunal analysis has developed in the intervening years.

After a brief introduction and description of methodology, chapter 3 sets out the faunal evidence from Huffman's Great Zimbabwe excavations in four areas of 'commoner' occupation and in the Nemanwa enclosure on the outskirts of the site. The bones are listed in detail and analyzed for quantities of animals and amount of meat represented, and age at death as estimated from tooth eruption and relative wear. Species composition is found to comprise almost entirely food animals with an overwhelming importance of cattle, a minor contribution of small stock and an insignificant amount of game. The age distribution of the cattle is compared with that of an assemblage excavated earlier from the Hill Midden below the western enclosure of the Hill Ruins where the 'king' is thought to have lived, and which includes a far higher proportion of immature animals than any of her other samples (c. 70 per cent as against 36 per cent, or less for the others). The king and his entourage thus had preferential access to young and tender beef.

Chapter 4 briefly considers published faunal data from the 'provincial elite' sites of Manekweni, Harleigh Farm and Mutare Altar and finds them consistent with the 'commoner' samples from Great Zimbabwe itself. She then in chapter 5 describes her own excavations in the hill midden at Khami near Bulawayo, the capital of the successor Torwa state, designed to obtain a sample for comparison from another 'royal' context. The description of the pottery from this excavation is extraneous to the theme of the book but constitutes a useful record. In the faunal sample there is still a dominance of cattle, but twice as many species are represented in total and there is a significant presence of small perforated bones and bones of non-edible animals such as small and large carnivores. This element is plausibly explained, with ethnographic support, as representing the activities of *ngangas* (ritual specialists) who must also have lived in the vicinity and shared the royal midden. Only 41 per cent of the cattle were immature, which might be due to the mixed origin or to different herd management practices.

Thorp then considers the question of herd management by comparing her samples with the age composition of modern Shona cattle herds and the expected natural death rate. She finds that the combined Great Zimbabwe and Khami samples, excluding the Hill Midden, are consistent with a 40 per cent slaughter

rate of young males. This would have maintained herd growth but contrasts with modern Shona practice which shows no such age selection. The total of 419 cattle used here is 36 more than the sum of the figures given earlier, and the tacit assumption that the samples truly reflect actual slaughter patterns might have been given some discussion.

The final chapter discusses the significance of these results. The high proportion of young animals in the Great Zimbabwe Hill Midden reflects a high consumption of meat in the royal residence and an atypical preference for veal, perhaps partly representing tribute from the cull of commoner herds, but probably mainly derived from large royal herds kept some distance away from the capital, whose wastage of older animals was consumed elsewhere. This pattern only seems to apply to the capital and not to provincial sites. The presence of older and some younger beasts in the commoner middens suggests that their herds were not too far away and detracts from Garlake's hypothesis that cattle transhumance was a mainstay of the economy of Great Zimbabwe tradition settlements.

This study is a solid contribution to the understanding of the Great Zimbabwe state and tradition and the livestock element of its economy. The production is generally good, apart from a few minor errors of layout in the tables and the fact that the tables run well ahead of the relevant text in chapter 3.

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## HORSEMEN OF AFRICA

*Cavalieri Dell' Africa: Storia, Iconografia, Simbolismo*. Edited by GIGI PEZZOLI. Milan: Centro Studi Archeologia Africana, 1995. Pp. 301. No price given (No ISBN).

This attractively produced volume presents 19 essays by prehistorians, historians, art historians, archaeologists and anthropologists which were prepared for a conference on 'The Horsemen of Africa: History, Iconography, Symbolism' at the Centro Studi Archeologia Africana in Milan in 1994. The book is lavishly illustrated with more than 200 photographs. The essays have been published in the order of their original presentation.

Several essays are concerned with the interpretation of prehistoric rock art. Christian Dupuy explores the periodization of the representation of cattle and horses used as war animals in the art of the Adrar des Iforas (Mali). He suggests that the sudden representation of the horse in association with a lance should be understood as the progressive abandonment of an ancestral pastoralism in favour of a less mobile pastoralism based on warfare. Gabriel Camps provides a fascinating overview of the depiction of Saharan chariots and what is thought about their use. For Camps, the chariots had multiple uses – for war, hunting, racing and simple displacements. Laurence Garenne-Marot surveys the evolution of two different systems of harnessing, which hold keys to understanding some of the history of West Africa. Jean Spruytte examines rock art and ancient texts to conclude that because there is no evidence, written or pictorial, which supports the notion that African warriors outside of Egypt used bows and arrows, it is questionable whether African equitation has its origin in the east. Malika Hachid, in her essay on Palaeo-Berber rock art, suggests that the earliest use of the mounted horse and of the horse-drawn chariot may be in Algeria and that historians may need to rethink their chronology of diffusion.

Two historical essays are broad in scope. Jean Devisse contributes a masterly overview of the state of knowledge about Africa equestry. He exposes the scant evidentiary base on which many historical interpretations rest and challenges social



scientists to bring a multi-disciplinary approach to the research of equestrian issues. Robin Law surveys new research on the horse in West African history since the publication of his volume on *The Horse in West African History* (1980) and assesses how the major points he raised in that book have been supported or modified.

Two essays are focused on specific sub-breeds. Christian Seignobos assesses the historical importance of 'Les poneys du Logone à l'Adamawa, du XVIIème siècle à nos jours'. Edmond Bernus' 'Le cheval bagzan des Touaregs: Pegase ou Bucephale' tells the story of an equine aristocracy which retired from the battlefield with their masters and which today are few in number.

Three essays in art history are particularly wide-ranging. Ezio Bassani offers reflections on the representation of horse and rider from early times into the pre-colonial period. Malcolm D. McLeod argues that the horse in West African sculptural tradition is really a male rider accompanied by a horse, a morally inferior creature, and he draws vital distinctions between societies which represent horses because they are important to them from first-hand contact and those that do not have this contact. Josette Rivallain surveys the Musée de l'Homme's collection. She observes that most of what exists in the museum is associated with state power, but that the horse also existed in other types of societies, and that their study has been somewhat neglected.

Other essays are historical and ethnographic. Germaine Dieterlen examines the representation of the horse in Soninké and Dogon myth. Giovanna Antongini and Tito Spini explore the representation of the horse in Dogon material artifacts, particularly rings with equestrian riders mounted on them. John Picton discusses the history of the horse in Yorubaland, the variety of images used in Yoruba art and the variety of meanings which inhere in these images. Herbert M. Cole analyzes equestrian representations in South-East Nigeria. Bernardo Bernardi's contribution is focused on the representation of horses in Ethiopian art.

Two articles fall outside of the categories established above. Klena Sanogo addresses the difficult question of the export of (in particular) clay objects which have been pillaged from archaeological sites; and Barry Hallen and Carla de Benedetti contribute a post-modern essay on the idea of the traditional as an attribute of African equestrian culture.

This volume is a welcome contribution to the study of the horse in African history. The essays reward the reader with provocative insights and interpretations, and one may hope that the collection will challenge other scholars to take up research in the field. Unfortunately, the volume was published without an ISBN number, ensuring that its diffusion will be highly problematic. Those interested in purchasing this book may direct inquiries to the Centro Studi Archaeologia Africana, C.so Venezia 55, 20121 Milano, Italy.

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## ARABIC LITERATURE OF AFRICA

*Arabic Literature of Africa*. General eds. JOHN O. HUNWICK and R. S. O'FAHEY. (*Handbuch der Orientalistik*, Abt. I: *Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten*. Band 13. ISSN 016-9423): Volume I. *The Writings of Eastern Sudanic Africa to c. 1900*. Compiled by R. S. O'FAHEY. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994. Pp. xv + 434. No price given. (ISBN 90-04-09450-4); Volume II. *The Writings of Central Sudanic Africa*. Compiled by JOHN O. HUNWICK. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995. Pp. xxvi + 732. No price given. (ISBN 90-04-10494-1).

The appearance of Volumes 1 and 2 of *Arabic Literature of Africa* represents the first fruits of a project which has been in the making for the past thirty years, and which is still evolving. It was in the 1960s that John Hunwick, then a lecturer at the University of Ibadan and founding director of the Centre of Arabic Documentation, first conceived of the idea of compiling a biographical and bibliographic guide to the Arabic writings of West Africa. He used to speak of authoring a 'Brockelmann for Islamic West Africa'. Carl Brockelmann's *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, published over fifty years ago, appeared in five volumes including several supplements, but included very few references to the writings of sub-Saharan Africa. It was the absence of such a basic research tool for West Africa that inspired Hunwick's project, which over the years has expanded, both geographically and conceptually, into a multi-volumed work encompassing virtually all of Islamic Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa.

The geographical extension of the project eastwards was facilitated by the coming on board of R. S. O'Fahey as co-editor of the series and compiler of three volumes on those regions. As of the time of publication of Volume 2, he and Hunwick propose a further four volumes on Eastern Africa, Western Sudanic Africa, Eastern Sudanic Africa since 1900, and the Western Sahara. Seemingly, however, the project continues to grow. Since the publication of Volume 2, it has been decided to publish a supplement (2A), entitled *The Fulfulde and Hausa Literature of Central Sudanic Africa*. And Volume 3 will include Muslim literatures in Swahili, Somali and Amharic as well as in Arabic. Clearly the series has already outgrown its title; the volumes will constitute a survey of Muslim, not Arabic, literatures.

Perhaps this is why Hunwick and O'Fahey are diffident about their accomplishments thus far, stating in the Foreword to Volume 1 that 'No one is better aware than we are of the inadequate research base behind the present undertaking. However, rather than wait for the situation to improve, we have decided to attempt an overview, not least in the hope that it will encourage other scholars to correct and amplify our endeavours' (p. ix). O'Fahey adopts an even more humble position in his Preface to the same volume: 'In every respect, [this] is an incomplete and unsatisfactory work. Incomplete, because it builds upon so little basic research; unsatisfactory, because it promises more than it can deliver' (p. xi). But one wonders what more could have been accomplished in the thirty years since this project was first conceived, given the resources available?

These volumes are not comprised of a simple listing of known or attributed works by African Muslim writers; they include both biographical notices and bibliographic references organized in a manner designed to lay the groundwork for an intellectual history of Muslim Africa. The editors have adopted an interlocking series of frames of reference. Authors are arranged broadly by geographical area and chronological order, and then subdivided into different 'traditions' or related clusters of writing, which usually form the chapter headings. The resulting organization of materials therefore generally reflects the major historical themes or movements in each region.



The application of these frames of reference, though consistently present, varies depending upon specific historical circumstances. Chronology and the various Sudanic Sufi traditions are the most salient organizing features in Volume 1. There are successive chapters on the Sudanese Nile Valley before 1820, the writings of the Turkiyya, the Sammaniya tradition, the Idrisiyya tradition, and its major derivatives, the Sanussiyya tradition, the Khatmiyya tradition, and a final chapter on the writings of the Mahdiyya. Interspersed among these are chapters dealing with writings which do not fit neatly within this general historical pattern: a chapter on the lesser Sufi orders in the region – the Hindiyya, Qadiriyya, Sa'idiyya, and Tijaniyya – another on the writings of Isma'il al-Wali (founder of the Isma'iliyya order) and his descendants, and another on the writings of the Majadhib, a saintly clan of the Ja'aliyyun who trace their origins back to the seventeenth century. There is also a chapter on popular poetry, usually composed orally in colloquial Arabic and which only relatively recently has begun to be committed to writing. There is also a chapter on chronicles and related materials.

In Volume 2, on Central Sudanic Africa, geography replaces chronology as a primary organizing reference, although affiliation with the Sufi orders remains a significant factor. Of course, the writings of the Fodiyawa constitute a major portion of this volume. After an initial chapter on the Central Sudan before 1800, there are three on the Fodiyawa, one each for Shaikh 'Uthman, his brother 'Abd Allah, and his son Muhammad Bello. There then follows two chapters on Sokoto, one devoted to other Fodiyawa writers and to the Wazirs, the second to other writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There are two chapters on the writers of Kano, one on the Emirs and writers of the Tijaniyya, and the other on writers of Qadiriyya and unaffiliated authors. A chapter is devoted to the writers of Katsina, Zaria, Bauchi and Lokoja, another to Bornu, Wadai and Adamawa. There are two chapters on Ilorin, Nupe, Ibadan, Lagos and other areas of southern Nigeria. This volume also includes a chapter on king-lists, chronicles and other minor historical works, and another on polemical literature for and against Sufism.

This last chapter is worthy of comment because it seems to represent a kind of organizational anomaly arising from the question of where to place (and how to identify?) Abubakar Gumi and other *Izala* writers of contemporary Islamist and anti-Sufi persuasion. It seems unfortunate that these writers should be identified solely as being anti-Sufi, which of course they are; but they also stand *for* something. Furthermore, although they may well be polemicists, not all their works are polemical. This organizational problem arises precisely because these volumes are designed to place authors in their historical context, and the dynamics of history are not readily susceptible to typological description. Similar anomalies exist throughout the series. For Volume 2, one might well read 'Nigeria' instead of Central Sudanic Africa, since very few references indeed are included from other parts of the Central Sudan, and there is an entire chapter on areas of southern Nigeria located outside the Sudanic zone. In Volume 1, O'Fahey has found it appropriate to include the writings of Ahmad Ibn Idris, because of the profound influence of his disciples in the Sudan, although he never lived there himself. Similarly, none of the Sanusiyya authors cited ever lived in the Sudan.

These few examples further demonstrate the difficulty of drawing classificatory boundaries around the Muslim literatures of Africa. O'Fahey's bibliography even includes references to works in Malay which belong to the Idrisiyya tradition! But the anomalies arise from a quest for thoroughness which will reward any researcher who refers to these volumes. Each chapter commences with an overview of the cluster of writings which it contains. Each author is introduced with a biographical sketch, as well as an exhaustive series of bibliographical references, when such information is available. Works are then listed in alphabetical order and dated, often with a brief description of the contents. Qasida listings include first lines for

ease of identification; a considerable amount of correspondence is also included. All known manuscripts and their locations are noted, as well as all translations, abridgements and published versions.

The achievement which these publications represent could not be attained without the extensive collaboration of many scholars in the field, and indeed many of the chapters in these two volumes have been compiled by, or in co-operation with, scholars of specialized expertise: Muhammad Ibrahim Abu Salim, Albrecht Hofheinz, Yahya Muhammad Ibrahim, Bernd Radtke and Knut S. Vikør have contributed to Volume 1, and Razaq Abubakre, Hamidu Bobboyi, Roman Loimeier, Stefan Reichmuth and Muhammad Sani Umar have contributed to Volume 2.

Certainly, these are not definitive surveys; in both the Eastern and Central Sudan there are still large known collections, both private and public, which have not yet been fully catalogued and studied. There are many gaps, and no doubt there will be addenda and corrections to what is presented here. But these two volumes are not only invaluable references for all future research in this field, they also set a very high standard of scholarship for the recording of bibliographical and biographical information which will render future research much more coherent and systematic.

It has taken some thirty years to reach this point. The academic study of the Muslim societies, and of the Islam, of Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa, especially through the medium of Arabic materials, was still in its youth when Hunwick and O'Fahey began their research careers. The publication of *Arabic Literature of Africa* is the result of long years of indefatigable persistence and meticulous scholarship, not only by John Hunwick, who first conceived of the idea, but by all those whom he has encouraged along the way to assist him in this enterprise, not least of course, Sean O'Fahey. Neither Hunwick nor O'Fahey was ever very prone to 'wait for the situation to improve'. They have been too busy improving it themselves, and encouraging the rest of us in the field to do so as well!

L. B.

### HOUSEHOLD OF THE FAITHFUL

*The Church in Africa, 1450–1950.* By ADRIAN HASTINGS. (The Oxford History of the Christian Church). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. Pp. xiv + 706. £25, paperback (ISBN 0-19-826399-6).

If one were to select from among the many headings which punctuate this book those which point most clearly to the author's central concerns, two in particular would demand inclusion: 'the character of the Christian community' and 'church, community and catechist'. In writing of the Church, Adrian Hastings has always in his sights the body of African Christians who made up the Church's membership and constituted its congregations. This is a history of those who made up the household of the faith, not a history of the Church as institution.

Indirectly, of course, it is impossible for readers not to be made aware of the existence of ecclesiastical arrangements, orders and hierarchies, or of the formation and activities of missionary societies; but it is all done with the utmost economy. There are various reasons for this. No historian would today wish to reproduce the statistical and organizational yardsticks of change and 'progress' in the adoption of European models which so delighted nineteenth-century commentators. Hastings himself writes of the 'rather dreary argument' between Bishop Tucker and his

colleagues over a constitution for the Church of Uganda, perhaps betraying at such moments a weariness with issues which he admits 'became at least for theorists increasingly decisive', and which have received their fair share of historians' attention (pp. 472, 293). Above all, however, it reflects Hastings' experience and the conclusion of much recent scholarship besides his own, that 'the Christian advance was a black advance or it was nothing' (p. 437–8).

Hastings's starting points make this abundantly plain. His first three chapters take in turn the Ethiopian church in the fifteenth century, the survivals of Africa's Christian past c. 1500, especially in North Africa, and the Christian penetration of Kongo, Warri and Mutapa into the sixteenth century. Throughout the book there runs the theme of African independence in the transmission and the preservation of the Christian faith. Readers are reminded time and again of Africans' capacity for retaining living memories and the active practices of Christianity, for instance, in South Africa and the Kongo, long before the necessity was forced on many congregations by the absence of missionaries during modern disruptions such as the First World War. 'Independent', 'Zionist' or 'Ethiopian' churches reflected not simply new communal or proto-nationalist stirrings in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but much older traditions. African leaders in early-modern Soyo, and men like Andries Waterboer at the start of the modern period, anticipated those twentieth-century nationalists who combined political leadership with a background in the missions. Concerned to avoid the traditional overstatement of missionary achievements, anxious to emphasize the role of tiny minorities of African Christian, catechists, or occasionally the 'saints', prophets or 'truly charismatic' individuals (Van der Kemp, Harris, Shanahan, Ntsikana) in making 'conversion seem both desirable and possible', Hastings sometimes arrives at striking conclusions. 'All the evidence suggests that, for perhaps mysterious reasons, the Igbos converted themselves' (p. 451).

One consequence of this thematic emphasis seems to be less discussion than might have been anticipated in *The Oxford History of the Christian Church* of how the term 'church' was understood, of how churches were organized, of whether 'the church' was felt to transcend local and temporary gatherings of believers. How did Africans regard, for instance, the cathedral in Zanzibar, so symbolic in the eyes of Europeans for its construction on the site of the former slave market?

It should not be deduced from this that Hastings either has ignored the missionary role in Africa of European Christians or is unsympathetic to it. He explicitly recognizes that 'a history of Christianity in Africa can be but part of the wider religious history upon which it is in many ways dependent' (p. 188). Missionary Christianity – Roman Catholic and Protestant – therefore gets extensive coverage. Like other sections of this book, chapter 7 on 'The Victorian missionary' provides for its subject a brilliant *tour d'horizon*. There are indeed aspects of a 'wider religious history' which might perhaps have merited fuller discussion in connection with the missionary movement. The parallel development of Catholic and Protestant approaches to missionary strategy in Africa evident in the thinking, for instance, of Libermann and Henry Venn, is intriguing, to say the least. The various channels through which American revivalist influences fed into African Christianity, and the impact of Christian developments in the missionary world outside Africa, ought also to be recognized as a part of the story. However, these are in many respects areas still in need of their own detailed examination.

For the absence of discussion on Madagascar, readers must blame the lack of space provided by the Press. The volume also provides by way of conclusion a summary treatment of the 1950s, on the grounds that the author has already written at length on the recent period in his study of African Christianity 1950–75. However, it is less easy to understand why some other subjects are either cursorily treated or largely omitted. Much of the discussion, for instance, focuses on areas

colonized by the British; strangely little space is given over to those acquired by the French. It is unclear why very little attention is given to the Sudan, and almost none to North Africa after 1750. The confrontation between Islam and Christianity, again so much a part of that 'wider religious history', is barely more than touched upon.

At times, of course, these three issues were closely interrelated. Lavigerie's revival of Catholic missionary work in the continent was at first centred in Algiers; a decision to deal lightly with one might necessarily involve the same for all. Moreover, the question itself is acknowledged. Hastings observes how the lack of Christian achievement by 1820 might have led one to expect that Islam would become the religion of black Africa, especially given that it was a 'religion in movement, both externally expansive and internally reformist' (p. 188). However, his summary of Islam's advance or account of the conflicts with Christians in Buganda offers little explanation for the actual outcome, and conveys limited sense of how participants viewed the encounter. Readers are left to ponder Islam's successes and failures in the competition with its rival. Missionary worries about Islam are noted in passing, but in what measure concern influenced strategy, or whether the millennial connotations of Islam's growth so common amongst Europeans were shared by Africa's Christians, are not considered.

Such questions of emphasis or the wish to know more, however, should not obscure the fact that this is a remarkable book. Hastings operates at many different levels. At one moment readers' attention is drawn to 'the substitution of a liturgical week... for an economic one' (p. 459), with its implications for arguments about capitalist time. Elsewhere the significance of 'the tenth bicycle in Angoniland' (p. 423) – technology – for evangelism is explored. Chronological and territorial range, its enormous bibliography, the offer of illuminating detail and sweeping summaries, the combination of insight laced with provocation, make it a real pleasure to read and, with its welcome appearance in paperback, will ensure its place as a source of reference and inspiration for many years.

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ANDREW PORTER

## ATLANTIC ARCHIPELAGO

*Les îles du Cap-Vert : de la 'découverte' à l'indépendance nationale (1460–1975).*

By ELISA SILVA ANDRADE. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996. Pp. 349. FF210 (ISBN 2-7384-3688-9).

Not much is known in this country about the Cape Verde Islands, although the recent success of Cesaria Évora, the country's most famous singer, provoked a flurry of newspaper articles about the 'lost Atlantic Archipelago'. Many of these pieces contained historical and geographical inaccuracies which exposed their authors' ignorance.

The dearth of material on Cape Verde has been a problem, for the student as well as for the general reader. For this reason alone, one must welcome the publication of *Les îles du Cap-Vert*, one of the few single-volume histories of the Archipelago since its occupation by the Portuguese in 1460. The book, which issues from a doctoral dissertation, provides a comprehensive overview of the development of Cape Verdean society since the fifteenth century. The author has based her work on an exhaustive examination of published sources but only a limited reading of the primary and documentary material – much of which, admittedly, is fiendishly difficult to access.

*Les îles du Cap-Vert* is divided into three parts: Origin and formation of Cape

Verdean society; Development and workings of the slave-based economy; and Development of dependent capitalism. Although the book is broadly chronological, its analytical perspective has influenced the approach taken to the history of the three main periods under scrutiny – that is, roughly, before, during and after slave trading. Andrade is indebted to Marxist thinking and her analysis is an attempt to make sense of the evolution of Cape Verde from a materialist standpoint. This is in many ways a fruitful approach as there is no escaping the influence of the Archipelago's economic predicament on the development of its society. Nevertheless, at times the author struggles to make sense of the very peculiar circumstances of the islands in class terms.

Cape Verde, a motley collection of ten islands three hundred miles off the coast of Senegal suffering from severe climatic conditions, has always been a country where life was precarious when not downright impossible. Although suited to some plantation agriculture (sugar), the production of some food (maize and beans) and the export of some products (salt, cotton or natural dyes), the country's ecology was damaged over time by overgrazing, erosion and drought. Without the slave trade, which sustained the Archipelago's economy for over three hundred years, Cape Verde was not capable of supporting its population. Indeed, since the abolition of slavery, it has suffered repeated calamity – drought and large-scale famine – allayed only by voluntary or forced migration.

Callously neglected by the Portuguese during the colonial period, Cape Verde emerged at independence (1975) as an emaciated country, producing a fraction of its food needs and relying heavily on the remittances of its migrant working population for survival. Since then, the major progress has been made in terms of water conservation, re-forestation and agricultural support, so that today the islands are able to resist the worst which drought throws at them. A careful management of existing resources, remittances and foreign aid, as well as a peaceful internal transition to multi-party democracy, have made Cape Verde one of Africa's few 'success stories'.

Andrade gives as good an account of the painful history of the Archipelago as has hitherto been given. She provides a reasoned analysis of existing sources and moulds her material into a plausible explanation of the puzzling facts of this complex society. She does not, however, innovate. The book is underpinned by the argument that Cape Verde has been the victim both of circumstances and or Portuguese abuse. The case is overwhelming and it needed to be rehearsed. Yet, the author's perspective keeps her from investigating some of the other, perhaps less clear-cut aspects, of Cape Verde's history.

For all the economic statistics provided, the book fails to give a sense of what the lives of ordinary Cape Verdeans – slaves or masters – was like. How did people live as families? How were they bound together? What was the role of Church? How did women organize their lives in the absence of their migrant husbands? How did liberated slaves integrate the society of free men and women? How, finally, did this very distinct creole society develop – and what were its main characteristics? The author seems strangely distanced from the realities of the country on which she writes. This lack of a 'history of the people' is all the more surprising since there is a large body of material on the social, cultural, religious and literary aspects of Cape Verdean society over the past centuries. This material shows in quite some detail how Cape Verde evolved as a creole community of diverse origins, developing a common language, religion and a sophisticated oral literature. Despite the obvious social divisions between the light-skinned landowning élite and the destitute dark-skinned landless peasant, there emerged in Cape Verde a distinct society, the characteristics of which the author should, at the very least, have outlined. In this respect, then, the book is not as useful as it could have been for the general reader.

Nevertheless, *Les îles du Cap-Vert* is well-researched and well-written; it is a solid contribution to the historiography of Cape Verde.

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## AFRIKANER POLITICAL HISTORY

*The Afrikaners. An Historical Interpretation.* By G. H. L. LE MAY. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995. Pp. 280. £20 (ISBN 0-631-18204-7).

Afrikaners, like Zulus and Bushmen, have long been objects of fascination for metropolitan audiences. In the liberal British mind the image of Afrikaners has been transformed over the course of this century from noble to ignoble savages as early sympathy with their hardy anti-imperialist struggle yielded to condemnation of their role in the construction of apartheid. Journalistic accounts, such as David Harrison's *White Tribe of Africa* (1981), Graham Leach's *The Afrikaners* (1990) and even Allister Sparks' *The Mind of South Africa* (1990) have done much to confirm popular stereotypes of 'The Afrikaner'. Over the last twenty years or so, this genre of writing has been systematically challenged by academic historians concerned to demonstrate that Afrikaner ethnicity is a rather more complex phenomenon than the image of the stubborn god-fearing patriarch suggests.

This latest attempt to *explain* the Afrikaners is written by a retired Oxford historian whose 1965 monograph on *British Supremacy in South Africa 1899-1907* squarely laid the blame for the South African war on the personage of Milner. The dustcover of *The Afrikaners*, which depicts a weary bearded Boer on commando, mounted on horseback and carrying a rifle (while being led by a black servant on foot) reinforces the caricatured image of Afrikanerdom still so entrenched in the British popular imagination. But, although Le May's account is old-fashioned in several respects, he does not fall into this particular trap. From the outset Le May makes it clear that 'it is as delusive to make neat generalizations about the Afrikaners as it is to make them about any other nationality' (p. 5) and he lays particular emphasis on the rather neglected political tradition of Afrikaner moderates.

Le May's treatment moves from the beginnings of Dutch colonization to the end of apartheid. He writes with an elegant and light touch in a style that is erudite yet unencumbered by too many footnotes. Long-running historical debates are referred to indirectly through shrewd observation rather than detailed examination. And there are many wryly humorous comments. Where else has it been noted that J. B. M. Hertzog was not only named after the celebrated military doctor James Barry (who lived her professional life as a man) but that Hertzog was born in 1866, the year after Barry's true sex was discovered?

Le May's book undoubtedly deserves to be read and enjoyed by the broad non-specialist market to which it is apparently addressed. It is certainly preferable to many other general accounts. However, specialist historians and students are unlikely to be satisfied. Probably the best parts of the book are those dealing with the late-nineteenth-century republics and the period of struggle against British imperialism leading up to the South African war. Here, Le May deploys his deep knowledge with clarity and originality, using both primary and secondary material to good effect. Elsewhere, and particularly in the final sections, the analysis is perfunctory. Although he has read the important works of Moodie, O'Meara and Giliomee, their insights are by no means fully absorbed. And many other recent historical contributions by younger scholars, such as those of Lazar, Posel, Hofmeyr and Brink – to mention just a few – are wholly absent. The social,



economic and gendered interpretations which have so transformed our understanding of Afrikaner history in recent years are, in short, almost entirely ignored.

Arguably, there is still a place for the predominantly political approach taken in this book, though I would dissent from such a view. In this connection it is intriguing to note that, whereas the subtitle of the book on the dustcover and title-page is 'An Historical Interpretation', the book spine bears the words 'A Political History'. In light of the clichéd picture of the Boer on commando mentioned above, as well as the subtitle on the jacket, it seems fairer to judge this book by its spine than its cover.

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SAUL DUBOW

## THE TAMING OF NATURE

*Environment and History: The Taming of Nature in the USA and South Africa.* By WILLIAM BEINART and PETER COATES. London and New York; Routledge, 1995. Pp. ix + 120. £6.99, paperback (ISBN 0-415-11468-3).

This is a fine little book which accomplishes in the space of 120 pages precisely what it sets out to do: to provide the insights which a comparative approach can bring to 'important historical topics and debates' (p. vii). The resulting study of environmental change in nineteenth- and twentieth-century South Africa and the United States is the kind of 'exciting and creative' (p. vii) history for which the series editors state they are aiming in this innovative new series entitled *Historical Connections*.

As the authors point out in their opening paragraphs and reiterate in the conclusions, in the United States and South Africa, despite significant contrasts in size, population, climate and social systems, there has been ample grounds for a comparison of 'ecological and economic cultural change' between the two settler societies which have both experienced such profound alteration in their environments since their founding in the seventeenth century. The authors are respectively experts on the two geographical areas being compared, Beinart a South Africanist and Coates an Americanist. They have managed to speak with a common voice, as it were, blending their specific expertise in a seamless narrative. They have also made the comparisons and the contrasts between their respective geographic specialities compelling and insightful, and they have done so without the repetition so frequently found in this kind of comparative study.

The secret for avoiding redundancy and consequent dullness seems to lie in the combination of a close collaboration between the authors in preparing each chapter, and the outline of the chapters, organized topically, that they have chosen. After an initial introductory chapter on the nature of environmental history (as opposed to an 'environmentalist's history'), the authors set out the nature of the comparison they will be making and their central argument regarding the influence of frontier environments in both North American and South African history. In the next three chapters the principal elements which the authors see as key to the transformation of the environments of the two cases – hunting, forestry and settler agriculture – are examined in turn. This implicitly chronological sequencing of topics, from those which had the earliest if shallowest impact on the land and its inhabitants – including a useful section on the impact of the hunting practices of the pre-conquest human populations – to the development of large-scale and mechanized agriculture in the twentieth century, allows for the discussion of the environmental history of both societies within the same sections, and sometimes the same paragraphs, without repetition and without what might be a confusing sense of jumping from one place to another. Thus the novice to one or another of

the societies being compared is spared both the problem of being awash in detailed accounts of the area which he does not know and the temptation of skimming or skipping them. But what makes these chapters truly gripping is the cogency of the examples drawn from the two regions and their use in illuminating the contrasting experiences of Americans and South Africans.

The final two chapters deal with the growth of environmental consciousness in the twentieth century. Chapter Five examines the emergence of a conservation ethos focusing on the preservation of 'special places', particularly wilderness and the culturally-constructed image of 'nature'. The dominance of the idea of pristine nature preserves and the politically-contentious invention of the 'natural world' embodied in the national parks movements in both countries is an important lesson in the social history of the environment. The emergence in the late twentieth century of modern environmentalism and the 'social justice' wing of the ecological movement is covered in the final chapter. Although these brief treatments may not satisfy experts in the history of environmentalism, they provide an extremely useful introduction to the subject for those studying and teaching these subjects: the principal audience the series editors and authors hope to reach. In this regard the very useful lists of 'References and Further Readings' will also be a boon to students and teachers, both for their convenience and their intelligent selection. Both classic works and recent studies of environmental history and the latest word (as of 1993) in ongoing debates are found in the bibliographies at the end of each of the book's six chapters.

If there is one annoying shortcoming of this book it is the result of the authors' search for balance. First, some inadequately developed arguments result from striving for balance in the presentation of materials drawn from two unevenly developed cases. Despite the preponderance of materials on environmental history generated by the larger community of researchers working on North America over a longer span of time, a balance between the coverage of each area is maintained. This seems to be true even when the reader hungers for a fuller explication of the history of some particular issue, movement or crisis in one case which may not have its counterbalancing aspect in the other. Second, a balance between the strongly opposed rhetoric of environmental activism and more conservative social and intellectual visions of resource utilization development is maintained. The catastrophic tone and deep pessimism of so much environmental writing (as well as its sometimes preachy, even screechy, rhetoric) seems to be balanced by the bland optimism of so much nature writing and the triumphalist vision presented in much of the literature on environmental science and technologies. This even-handed approach by the authors, who seem to adhere to the 'School of the Two Hands' philosophy, is doggedly maintained even where one might have hoped for a more trenchantly critical or prescriptive approach.

Finally, the 'balance' struck in the final section on social inequality and the environment sometimes reduced this reader to near rage. To read in the treatment of poverty and the environment that 'A growing disparity between haves and have-not, to some extent congruent with colour, has been a feature of both South Africa and the United States' is to turn the quest of balanced judgements into a maddening exercise in understatement. Furthermore, such blandness of expression belies the damning evidence of systematic racism in both the United States and South Africa when it comes to the formulation and enforcement of environmental policies. From the forced removals of non-majority peoples from national parks and reserves in order to create 'wilderness' recreation areas for wealthy (white) people to the toxic waste dumps and sewage treatment facilities sited in poor, minority communities, both regimes have engaged in policies which the authors refuse to give the name by which it has come to be known': environmental racism'.

These reservations about tone and balance aside, we can be grateful to the

authors, the series editors and the publisher of this timely, thoughtful and (too?) well-tempered comparison of experiences with environmental change in two divergent societies. In a short and concise account, we have received a broad examination of the environmental histories and struggles of South African and American societies as each grew from agrarian roots to bestride their respective (sub-) continents as modern industrial colossi.

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EDWARD I. STEINHART

## IMPERIAL LABOUR

*Indentured Labour in the Age of Imperialism, 1834–1922.* By DAVID NORTHRUP. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. xi + 186. £30 (ISBN 0-521-48047-7); £10.95, paperback (ISBN 0-521-487519-3).

This excellent short volume on indentured labour in the nineteenth century does all that it should in under 200 pages: modestly acknowledging that it is essentially a synthesis of the original research of specialists, but taking his own position on the debate over how much indenture resembles slavery, the author guides us through the diverse regions sending or receiving contract labour, the conditions of transportation and the serving out of indentures, all the while reflecting maturely on the various disputes these topics have incited among historians. However, the author's admission in the preface that he has a 'predisposition ... to pay particular attention to the motives and actions of the migrants themselves' (p. x) does not live up to its promise. We see very few testimonies of migrants between these covers.

Northrup takes his readers competently through discussions of the diverse ethnic origins of indentured labour and the rationale for use of Asian rather than African labour. His 'Supplies' chapter is sensibly divided into regions and we are given brief summaries of the labour trades in Africa, China, India, the Pacific Islands and Japan. Push factors are well accounted for, but it would have been useful at this point to attempt to correlate demand and supply. Thus the graph which suggests the impact of the 1857 rebellion on Indian overseas migration (p. 66), takes on a different significance once it is pointed out that sugar prices also peaked at around this time, bringing heavy demand for labour from the sugar colonies.

The section on 'Voyages' deals effectively with the morass of statistics and the volume of recent statistical research on shipboard mortality; missing however, are one or two examples of eyewitness accounts and migrants' own testimony about the conditions and treatment on ships, which would have enlivened a rather dry (no pun intended!) chapter. The entire duration of the stay of the indentured labourer overseas, from arrival to repatriation, return or settlement, is disposed of in one chapter called 'Indentures'. Once again, the author disposes expertly of the vast array of conflicting evidence and historians' opposing views of issues such as opportunities or exploitation of women, wages and savings. In such a short discussion some topics are inevitably neglected: penal sanctions and their effects; labour mobility, both geographic and socio-economic; the transition from labourers to settlers, and in some cases landowners; and the extent of contacts with home.

Some further quibbles: in his first chapter, 'Beginnings', the author starts with a recruitment story from 1870. He then backtracks to 1834 and the real commencement of indentured labour in the following chapter: this is confusing. The question of ex-slaves' reactions to the new Asian immigrants in the Caribbean, and particularly in Mauritius, is glossed over as desertion from fields indicating a preference for self-employment. Planters' rationalisation strategies in favour of

cheaper, younger workers and the subsequent marginalization of creoles is not dealt with at all. Throughout the book, the relative importance of need for labour versus demand for cheaper labour, i.e. the question of whether indentured labour was cheaper than local workers, is not really addressed. Among other small errors, Northrup suggests at one point (p. 24) that liberated African migration ended before indentured Indian migration began. Not true: liberated slaves continued to be apprenticed to employers up to the 1860s and probably beyond.

It is always galling to read a book in which the author adopts a position one has held for a decade without referring extensively to one's own work! But in this case I am simply glad that this handy summary and guide is bound to introduce academics previously unfamiliar with the subject to the range and breadth of studies on indentured labour and steer them through the common misconceptions and the hugely uneven quality of the literature to share its common-sense conclusions.

London

MARINA CARTER

### TSHUAPA REGION UNDER COLONIALISM

*Colonialism in the Congo Basin, 1880–1940.* By SAMUEL H. NELSON. (Monographs in International Studies, Africa Series, no. 64). Athens OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1994. Pp. xii + 279. £22.50, paperback (ISBN 0-89680-180-2).

The first sentence, with its reference to the 'dark' rivers of central Africa and the 'remote, inner regions of the Congo basin', sets the tone of this book. Not only are the rivers somber but the story as well. As a survey of colonialism in Congo, the landmarks are well known: a late pre-colonial history influenced by the Atlantic slave and ivory trades; the violence of 'Red Rubber'; concessionary company demands for copal and palm oil, and competition between them and independent European traders, for local labor and products; the impact of the Depression; abortive attempts by the colonial state in the 1930s to establish a 'native peasantry' (*paysannats indigènes*); and the development of plantation agriculture.

Although framed by such familiar reference points, the study holds some interest for two main reasons. First, it deals with a region and people previously little researched, namely those whom colonialists called the 'Mongo' who lived in the rainforest directly south of the great Congo river bend, especially in the Tshuapa region. Furthermore, the narrative and analysis focus not only on colonial policy but the changing social organization of work among the Mongo as they faced powerful new constraints and a few opportunities. Thus, chapter 2 examines the organization of households and the ratio of workers and land which was critical for big men who mobilized surplus labor of kin, clients and slaves. Later chapters look at how such patterns were disrupted by colonial demands for forced labor, food and export commodities. This resulted in men siphoned off to gather rubber or palm nuts and women bearing the heavy burden of reproducing the household and also expected to carry and process palm kernels. New chiefs, recognized by colonial authorities, competed with traditional elders to control labor and, by the 1930s, the demands of plantation agriculture were so severe that young men, preferably armed with a missionary education, moved off to seek their personal fortunes in work camps and towns.

Perhaps most interesting is the discussion of the innovations tried by the 'Mongo' to combat increasing vulnerability in such oppressive conditions. One of the most successful strategies, according to the author, was the adoption and diffusion of age-sets which young men developed out of a previous but looser

tradition of 'pacts' for mutual friendship and assistance. In the face of the twin enemies of rubber agents and social instability, new age-sets provided a means of re-structuring work relations, organizing hospitality as workers moved around and mediating disputes. In the 1930s, they also evolved into associations for loaning money for bridewealth. Such developments also allowed young men to by-pass elders and chiefs. The decline of older authorities was also seen at work-camps and workers' villages on plantations and at new river towns. At such places, the authority figures were the foremen who wielded authority delegated by whites, and those who through their education or access to cash could show off their éliteness and individualism.

Among the sources used in this account are the celebrated but little-used missionary archives of the Sacré-Coeur Congregation at Bamanya (near Mbandaka), and the papers of the career colonial administrator, Maurice De Ryck, located at the University of Wisconsin Library. The author has also used to good effect pungent proverbs from the collections of Gustaf Hulstaert to convey the African voice, as do quotes from informants.

Even if the themes and narrative of this study somewhat echo other accounts of colonialism in the Belgium Congo, this is a powerful story told with its peculiar twists for a previously little-known area. It is furthermore a readable text, and as a survey of sixty years of a particularly disruptive and tragic colonial experience, a book that could well be used in undergraduate courses. One only wishes that a couple more chapters might have been added to bring the past closer to our understanding of present conditions in this part of Zaire.

P. M. M.

## GERMAN EAST AFRICA

*Development for Exploitation: German Colonial Policies in Mainland Tanzania, 1884-1914.* By JUHANI KOPONEN. Helsinki: Finnish Historical Society, 1995 (Studia Historica 49). Pp. 741. DM 88 (ISBN 3-8258-2006-8).

Juhani Koponen has written a massive study of German economic policy in its East African colony from the beginning of conquest to the East Africa campaign of World War I. In 677 pages of text he meticulously, painstakingly (and at times redundantly) argues that German economic policy brought something he identifies as development to the collection of societies they wielded together into one colony. This development, of course, was 'for exploitation', but he suggests that it brought unintended consequences.

Koponen has done a massive amount of research in German language archives: he has then cited, it seems, almost every file he read. For this work, he deserves the gratitude of anglophone students of Tanzanian history. Most such historians of the colonial era have been content to rely on Iliffe, or at best to survey briefly other published sources and the small amount of German material remaining in Dar es Salaam for information about German rule. Very few have attempted even a part of the sweep that Koponen obtains. Koponen's transparency of sources then provides an excellent survey of a massively important, and often massively ignored, period.

Koponen's thesis is summed up in his title. He concentrates on colonial policy as made between Dar es Salaam and Berlin. While he acknowledges that the impact of policy was mediated by the district office and its concern with local conditions, he suggests that policy set in the capitals did generally guide action. He emphasizes that policy was made in the midst of a debate over the appropriate nature of German colonialism. Economic colonizers, favoring a colony based on African

peasant production, vied with advocates of white settlement, both groups with roots in the politics of pre-war Germany. His view of the impact of Maji Maji on policy is striking in that it generally favored economic colonizers, symbolized by Rechenburg's governorship (1906–1912). His picture is nuanced, though, showing both the importance of economic colonizers before Maji Maji and the continuing importance of settlers afterwards. He concludes with a meditation on concepts of development coming down more on the side of classical Marxist views that stress the requirement of transformation over development of underdevelopment arguments.

Koponen's work revisits many of the issues and debates that dominated Tanzanian historiography in the 1960s and 1970s. He is in some ways the last (or maybe just the most recent) of nationalist historians, yet one that internalized the intellectual struggles of the 1970s. To start with, he takes as the appropriate unit of analysis the colony. Koponen's earlier work dealt with the nineteenth century (*People and Production in Late Pre-Colonial Tanzania*), and there he stressed the isolation of African societies, having developed localized environmental and demographic equilibriums, before the nineteenth century. Here, he writes them out of the picture entirely; the locus of change lies in colonial policy. His conclusions of course reflect his sources; he does not use (in large part because they no longer exist) local level records, relying on correspondence between Berlin and Dar es Salaam and files in Berlin. He uses very little of the secondary literature that would provide a locally oriented and diversified balance to his centralizing thesis. The result is that the story is one of German decisions that are more or less implemented and the constraints on German action entirely located in German policy. Even his view of the effects of Maji Maji reads this way.

There is of course a need for synthesis and generalization, and in economic history this is even more pronounced. However, Koponen often works to make the straightforward problematic, as when discussing the influence of the 'private sector' on colonial policy. He starts with the premise that, as an extension of a capitalist, industrial society, government will work as the tool of capital. He then develops the argument that, first, 'capital' was divided between 'big capital' and 'little capital', and that the colonial government then developed a freedom of action because of the conflicts between them. A rather more straightforward analysis would start from the fact that colonialism was always a public venture first, even under a concessionary system, driven by politics as much as an abstract notion such as the needs of capital. Likewise, that German settlers, investors in businesses operating in German East Africa, and trading versus plantation companies would all have very different interests really is not all that surprising.

Koponen's work is a large accomplishment. He has opened a now more accessible body of sources and ably charts the course of official German thinking in a variety of fields. It will serve as a resource for researchers. In its present form, though, his book will be read by few in its entirety. Its theoretical framework adds little over its brief predecessors in the work of Iliffe. Its conclusions are basically sterile. It seems to me that Koponen does little to explain exactly what transformations did occur over the course of the colonial era.

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GREGORY H. MADDOX



## RACE IN CAPE TOWN

*Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town: Group Identity and Social Practice, 1875-1902.* By VIVIAN BICKFORD-SMITH. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. xviii + 281. £40; \$59.95 (ISBN 0-521-47203-2).

Bickford-Smith begins his path-breaking monograph on urban segregation by challenging the conventional idea of Cape Town as a socially integrated place where the tradition of Cape liberalism ensured ethnic tolerance. He paints a picture of Cape Town as a small colonial settlement where the largely English-speaking élite, whose status depended on renting, banking and commerce, was so effectively protected from the racially heterogeneous working class that formal segregation of the kind associated with the mining towns of the interior was not initially necessary. The first substantive chapter is a fairly conventional economic and demographic history that makes clear that social gradations and racial categories were flexible, though the wealthier and paler were more likely to be incorporated into the dominant class. The heart of the book is concerned to explain why, by the 1880s and especially after 1890, the 'white' ruling classes' position was challenged and they began to support segregating urban services and structures along racial and ethnic lines.

In the 1870s the power of the white élite was never seriously questioned. However, in the next decade the large-scale movement of Africans into Cape Town, the introduction of an English-style urban reform movement, the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, and changes in the racial division of labour, especially in Kimberly, undermined the hegemony of the settler/Imperial elite. Bickford-Smith emphasizes the importance of extra-Cape Town events in shifting the negative stereotyping from class (working people) to race (black people). His own text demonstrates clearly how the racialization of Cape Town's working class, which he suggests is the ideological response to broader events in the Cape and across the Empire, did not immediately result in the advancement of segregation in the city. Physical evidence of racial differentiation had to wait until the boom of the 1890s provided sufficient taxation to implement segregated public services. For me, one of the most fascinating and convincing sections of the book relates how the Clean Party linked the colonial notion of a sanitation syndrome, metropolitan ideas of urban degeneration and the new science of social Darwinism, to promote the racial segregation of the urban poor as being in the Imperial interest. Although Bickford-Smith prefers to make light of the material conditions within Cape Town and emphasizes instead the impact of anti-Imperial Afrikaner nationalism and the importance of mineral discoveries, he provides compelling evidence that the key to the segregation of Cape Town lies in the 'reform' of its municipal political agenda.

A major contribution of the book is to underline the fact that 'race' was a social and economic mechanism for dividing the urban population as early as the late nineteenth century. The book is more than a South African case study on the social construction of 'race': *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice* is a major contribution to the literature on colonial cities. But readers interested in the possibility of the emergence of an urban settler rather than colonial identity will be disappointed. Bickford-Smith's explanation for the rise of racial prejudice and the progressive institutionalization of segregation rests on, rather than extends or differentiates, Fredrickson's notion of white supremacy. In Cape Town, 'whiteness' depended on concerted efforts by the dominant social group to Anglicize public structures and values, but appeared not to involve any distinction between the sons and daughters of Empire and Euro-Africans who spoke English.

Using a wonderful array of sources, including poetry, the author skilfully

incorporates the different facets of urban life into a beautifully nuanced, closely argued text in which he describes how access to townships, schools, prisons and trains were all gradually curtailed according to racially signified codes. While I thoroughly enjoyed the prose of *Ethnic Pride* I was frustrated by the lack of any sub-headings. The introduction sets out the conceptual context of the book and the conclusion is really more of a postscript dealing with South Africa of the 1980s and 1990s. The omission of any clear constellation of the argument of the book means that readers, other than those interested in the local history of Cape Town, have to work very hard to extract the significance of this fine research. Nonetheless, for anyone interested in identity politics or urban history, not necessarily just in South Africa, the task of reading the book from cover to cover is richly rewarding, and is highly recommended.

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SUSAN PARNELL

### SCIENCE AND RACE IN SOUTH AFRICA

*Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa.* By SAUL DUBOW. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. xii + 320. £40; \$64.95 (ISBN 0-521-47343-8); £15.95; \$21.95, paperback (ISBN 0-521-47907-X).

At one point after exorcising an evil spirit, Jesus is reported to have said, 'This sort goeth not out without much prayer and fasting'. As one contemplates the labour that went into this particular book, one feels that Saul Dubow would understand. The book represents many hours spent poring over stolidly turgid scientific writing searching for distasteful traces of racial self-importance. Dubow is to be applauded both for his industry and for his ability to tell this story unpretentiously in a clear and supple style. While the book is hardly light reading, the fault lies less with Dubow's writing than with his subject and, perhaps as I shall argue later, with his way of approaching the subject.

As its title implies, this is an exercise in intellectual history, a study of the racial assumptions implicit (and often quite explicit) in the South African history of the academic disciplines of physical anthropology, cultural anthropology, biology and psychology. In the final chapter, with a shift in focus, Dubow discusses the place of this racial science in Christian–National Afrikaner ideology. In regard to the latter, he makes what is perhaps his most important point, which is that overt scientific racism was a relatively minor strand of apartheid theory as such. Indeed, on the level of justification, apartheid is more convincingly seen as an early version (and immanent critique) of what these days is called multiculturalism, however blatantly racist its practices of domination. In the history of South African scientific racism, Afrikaner thinkers and politicians were more likely to question explanations in terms of biological determinism than their Anglophone fellow-countrymen, not least because the entire Afrikaner political and cultural programme relied upon the assumption that Afrikaans-speaking poor whites, despite their apparent 'degeneracy', could be 'rehabilitated'. In the case of intelligence testing, this led to contradictory scientific conclusions so that 'intelligence tests tended to confirm the popular racist notion that Africans were inherently inferior to whites, whereas inferiority in the case of white groups was generally said to be caused by environmental factors' (pp. 243–4). I found the discussion of Christian–Nationalism and apartheid to be the most interesting and convincing part of the book, perhaps because of its closer attention to social and political realities.

Dubow, however, is interested in intellectual history rather than the history of beliefs and ideas and their political import. He insists that his book is chiefly

concerned 'with the concept of race rather than the experience of racism' (p. 5). He thus quite explicitly proceeds by 'following the footnotes' (p. 18), looking for references to race (and related notions) in the writings of the scientists themselves. He seeks intellectual linkages within academic disciplines and eschews as beyond his intent the history of popular imagery or what I myself would call the common-sense racial practices of South African everyday life (not to mention South African political practices, although he does imply an impact for scientific racism on South African politics).

Of course, locating his analysis in a particular body of evidence for a specific period is entirely appropriate for Dubow's purposes, but it is difficult to implement simply by examining the arguments themselves. The scientific concept of race also needs to be located in social networks of interaction. There is too little in this book on the politics of the academy, on struggles between, and within, disciplines where the 'concept of race' was an intellectual resource, a strategic tool of substantial import, in academic turf-wars which are merely hinted at here (except in the account of struggles over the origins of Mapungubwe, where the story suddenly springs to life). Interviews with South African scientists about the social location *in science* of racial concepts would have enriched Dubow's narrative and provided precisely the kind of contextualization for which he argues so eloquently in his introduction.

Developments in the history and sociology of science have moved well beyond Dubow's rather narrow understanding of intellectual history. I find myself longing for a genealogy of those racial beliefs and practices which clearly imbued the life-worlds of the South African scientific establishment itself (although not without contestation). No-one is better equipped than Saul Dubow to undertake this task but that is not what this book accomplishes and I find it the poorer for it.

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T. DUNBAR MOODIE

## MALAGASY SOLDIERS

*Le soldat occulté : Les Malgaches de l'Armée Française, 1884-1920.* By CHANTAL VALENSKY. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995. Pp. 445. FF 250, paperback (ISBN 2-7384-2657-3).

This book is a revised and abridged version of Dr Valensky's two-volume doctoral thesis, '*L'image et le rôle du soldat malgache engagé par l'armée française de 1884 à 1920*' (1992). The new title is trendier, but far more difficult to render into English. A play on meaning is obviously involved, of the sort that is found throughout the book and imparts to it a somewhat esoteric quality. At worst there are passages that seem to be subtly coded, inaccessible to those not in the know. The reader may wish to consider, for example, the following: 'La connaissance du soldat malgache est masqué par un filtre permanent, celui d'un discours à portée idéologique sur les valeurs et aptitudes militaires du soldat...' (p. 371); or again, 'Occulté, le soldat malgache est tout autant révélateur' (p. 372).

The recondite nature of Valensky's writing notwithstanding, there is much of interest in this ambitious study of, to quote the author, 'the Malgache soldier of the French army, his military role, his social position, his perception of the colonial encounter' (p. 11). If at the end one is somewhat unsure how far *le soldat occulté* has been unmasked, it may be because the book is in fact devoted more to the soldier as a cog in the military machine, less to him as an individual. The author

is more concerned with how the army was used in colonial situations as an instrument of social change, less with how the soldiers regarded themselves or their role as a force of occupation on their own island. Valensky is very good on the images created by the French, first to justify their expeditions against 'barbarous' opponents, then to find these very same people worthy of the *mission civilisatrice*, and finally to rationalize the use of Malgache *tirailleurs* in the First World War. The author relies totally on official documentation and expresses regrets that no one has recorded the reminiscences of the colonized (p. 708). One shares Valensky's regrets, but wonders why interviews should not have been carried out with veterans who survive at least from 1914–1918.

The introduction provides a discussion of primary sources that will be of much benefit to any scholar interested in the French colonial army. The main substance of the book is contained in four lengthy chapters. Chapter 1 looks first at the state of the Madagascar armies before the colonial conquest, and gives an account of the French wars of conquest of 1883–5 and 1895. There follows an extensive discussion of the nearly twenty years of intermittent revolt that resulted from the French conquest. Chapter 2 explores the theme of military policy *vis-à-vis* ethnic identities. It contains a fascinating glimpse of the French classification of 'warrior races', in the context of recruitment to the new *Régiments Tirailleurs Malgaches*. Fifteen peoples are grouped into three categories. The first, '*les très bons*', included Comoriens and Zanzibaris, and then the Makoa, descendants of African slaves. The best of the second, '*les bons*', were the Sakalava, France's earliest collaborators on the island. At the bottom of the third category, '*les médiocres*,' were the Hova and the Merina, precisely those armies that had so tenaciously opposed the French in the nineteenth century. Valensky makes the interesting observation that this *ethnologie militaire* considered in effect that the blacker the 'race' the better the soldier. She fails, however, to explore why and how the French arrived at this rather bizarre notion.

Chapter 3 looks at how the French created a Malgache army to 'occupy' Madagascar. On the eve of the First World War, the French decided that they had been so successful at creating a true local force of three regular regiments of *Tirailleurs Malgaches* and paramilitary police that the security of the island could be entrusted to them. The soldiers, recruited between 1905–14, and living in military villages far removed from their places of origin, were deemed to be professional, competent and devoted. By 1914, the army stood at about, 7,000 *tirailleurs* and 3,000 paramilitaries.

The war experience is dealt with in Chapter 4. What role was Madagascar to play? Extraordinarily successful recruiting drives in 1915 and 1916 brought 20,000 new volunteers into the ranks. This proved a considerable embarrassment to the colonial administration of Madagascar when it seemed that France was ignoring the willingness, indeed the eagerness, of the Malgache to fight the Germans. Finally in February 1916, a mere 1,143 men out of the 5,403-strong 1st *RTM* were embarked. Disillusionment grew as these men, arriving in France, were mostly assigned to non-combatant duties. It was, finally, the appalling slaughter in the trenches, and especially the German counter-offensive of 1918, that was to give the Malagaches their opportunity to be '*morts pour la patrie*'. Valensky assures us that those who did not have the opportunity of dying for France were very disappointed. Were they not French? Why were they not being used to defend France? We should, perhaps, take this with more than a grain of salt. This is a point at which interviews with veterans might well not support the official line.

This book, I have said, is not easy to read. It has an irritating tendency to jump back and forth, sacrificing chronology even within the sub-sub-sections of each chapter. The author also has a tendency to treat the Madagascar colonial era as virtually unique, seldom referring to the French military experience in other parts

of its vast empire. Despite these criticisms, *Le soldat occulté* is an important contribution to both military and colonial history – if indeed one can separate the two.

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NANCY LAWLER

### THEORIES OF COLONIAL RULE

*Koloniale Herrschaft: Zur Soziologischen Theorie der Staatsentstehung am Beispiel des Schutzgebietes Togo.* By TRUTZ VON TROTHA. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1994. Pp. xvii + 516. DM 178 (ISBN 3-16-146201-7).

Behind the seemingly simple but somewhat grandiose title ‘colonial rule’, is hidden a hugely ambitious theoretical study about the formation of the colonial state; an attempt to provide a ‘sociological theory of state formation’ as promised in the subtitle. The author, a professor of sociology at the University of Siegen, Germany, attempts an analysis of both the genesis and functioning (and malfunctioning) of state power, using as an example the German colony of Togo. ‘Carrying on the “peripheral” theory of imperialism’, he seeks to examine ‘the network of competing protagonists at the level of local power construction’ (p. 11). In the empirical chapters of the book, he establishes his main protagonists: the police, the German district officers, the African interpreters and the ‘chiefs’. Furthermore, the author claims to provide material which is relevant to the ongoing debate about the decline of post-colonial African states.

Trotha’s analysis begins out of the violence, conquest and ‘deprivation of power’ which was characteristic for the beginning of the process of colonization. Both the permanent threat of death and actual experience of it admittedly affected not only the vanquished, but also the conquerers, for the latter lived mostly in isolation and were exposed to numerous diseases and dangers. Herewith a *leitmotif* of the study is introduced: the ambiguity and ambivalence of power, violence and resistance. Colonizers rarely have at their disposal all-conquering forces of superior strength when they invade areas of a foreign culture. In the beginning, they usually conceal their numerical inferiority by pursuing a ‘policy of selective terror’. The practice of massacre, Trotha stresses, is the best means for the colonizer to achieve maximum intimidation with minimum use of resources. This tactic enables the invaders to demonstrate their absolute domination and establish their own monopoly of power.

Up to this point, European colonizers acted no differently from the previous local rulers, they behaved with that illegal arbitrariness which classical political theory attributes to a despot. As Trotha points out, it was only during the next period that the power of the colonizers could be strengthened into colonial domination. For this to be possible, power needed to be set down, to be given a concrete footing and this was provided by establishing ‘district officers’, civil servants who operated at the local level. With the help of such people, the colonial state built itself up from below. Colonial rule is thereby bureaucratic rule, although it admittedly still has the despotic instrument of violent repression at its disposal. Its bureaucratic character ripened during a third period of rule, when the colonial state gained a monopoly over knowledge in addition to the already held power monopoly. Educational institutions, literacy and statistics were introduced and the capabilities of the colonial headquarters were strengthened by technical innovations such as the telegraph.

Thus, according to Trotha, state formation in Africa is only initiated by European colonization. Whilst pre-state conquest is characterized by selective attacks of robbery, the ‘raid’, the colonial state can be recognized by a continuously

raised bureaucratic 'tax'. However, the 'incompleteness' and the ambiguity of the bureaucratic colonial state remain central themes to which the author returns again and again.

This book is stimulating because it is a theoretical and conceptually well-thought out account of the establishment and practice of colonial rule in Togo. However, it is let down by several severe shortcomings. The main problem is Trotha's claim that a general theory of colonial rule can be derived from his case study of German Togo. In view of this claim it is surprising that the author did not employ a comparative perspective. Without this, it is very difficult to find a 'theory of state formation'. The author could have avoided a number of very problematic theoretical statements simply by looking at other German colonies in Africa: a brief survey of the literature about pre-colonial Cameroon or the East African coast, for example, would soon have helped him to correct his view that state formation in Africa started only with colonial rule. Furthermore, Trotha's knowledge of relevant Africanist literature is limited. On several occasions (for example, the paragraphs on land law, pp. 288ff.) he quotes out-of-date literature. A number of his ideas and observations are not as original as the author seems to believe, with his exclusive reference to primary material.

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ANDREAS ECKERT

### MINING IN NAMIBIA, 1885–1914

*Südwestafrika unter deutscher Kolonialherrschaft. Die großen Land- und Minengesellschaften (1885–1914)*. By HORST DRECHSLER. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1996. Pp. 360. DM 96 (ISBN 3-515-06689-6).

It has taken Horst Drechsler thirty years to complete the second volume of *Südwestafrika unter deutscher Kolonialherrschaft*. While the first book dealt with the well-known theme of the German wars against the Herero and Nama, only limited scholarly attention has been paid to the land and mining companies which form the topic of the second volume. No explanation is given for the choice of these very different research areas and their relationship remains undiscussed. This is not alleviated by the blatantly untrue statement that research into the land and mining companies fills 'die letzte große Forschungslücke in der Historiographie von SWA' (p. 12). A call for sound historical research into this severely under-represented area in African historiography would have been more apt. Furthermore, the author does not develop any questions with which to approach the theme of his new book: we are merely told that the book will deal with the history of the land and mining companies (pp. 10, 12).

A number of serious problems probably stem from this methodological defect. The author has failed to realize that 'doing history' is not so much an accumulation of data, but rather more a painful process of selection. He has undoubtedly worked his way through the available sources: the book reveals an intimate knowledge of the archival and published material on the subject. Yet the study suffers under a mass of detail. We are offered minute descriptions of the board meetings of the companies, with detailed accounts of the various people involved. The negotiations between London financiers, the land and mining companies and the German colonial administration are followed step by step. The letters and telegrams sent to and fro, complete with ever-changing financial figures, are quoted extensively. A good interpretation, which could have moulded these now superfluous data into a powerful narrative, is lacking.

But it is possible to be too detailed and too general at the same time. It seems to me a gross simplification to relate Germany's initial colonial policy to the strange



notion that Bismarck was 'kein Kolonialmensch von Hause aus' (p. 8). The same holds for the author's 'explanation' of Paul Frederick's acceptance of a treaty with one of the companies: 'Wie war das möglich? Es war immer wieder die gleiche Geschichte, daß ein Namakapitän, verfügte er nicht gerade über die intellektuelle Kapazität eines Hendrick Witbooi, der geballten Rhetorik mehrerer Europäer nicht Gewachsen war' (p. 184). At times the study touches on interesting alleys, which are then left without further comment. Thus, the author confines himself to a general remark about the relationship between rinderpest and railway (p. 108); the gold diggers' trick to shoot gold into rock is dismissed as 'nichte so wichtig' (p. 36); the issue of labour, crucial to the land and mining companies, is discussed in a few pages (216–17); local concepts about land, which deeply influenced the nature of treaties, are summarized in a static, monolithic manner (see p. 106). These examples show that the author has indeed made a selection, but also on this point refrains from giving the reader any arguments for his choice. The study concentrates on the leaders of the land and mining companies: their characteristics and personalities are spelled out in detail. Economic history has, however, moved past this point and serious work must surely seek to relate structure and agency, capital and labour, morality and trade in a more integrated manner. As becomes evident from the author's dealings with land, labour and treaties, the metropolitan history of the land mining companies is given predominance. The sparse remarks about events, people and ideas in South West Africa in connection with the companies are always only defined as consequences. This focus on the European side of the story leads the author to a conclusion which contradicts his earlier remarks about African loss of land: 'So hat SWA nur in den letzten Jahren der deutschen Kolonialherrschaft etwas von den Landgesellschaften gehabt' (p. 328; also pp. 133, 191). Thirty years, then, have not resulted in a book which improves our understanding of the South West African land and mining companies. 'Habent sua fata libelli' (p. 7), but the lot of books, and the subjects they deal with, can be improved by good authorship and scholarship.

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INGE BRINKMAN

### CLASS IN ETHIOPIAN HISTORY

*The Making of Modern Ethiopia 1896–1974*. By TESHALE TIBEBU. Lawrenceville, NJ: The Red Sea Press, 1995. Pp. xxvii + 246. \$19.95, paperback (ISBN 1-56902-001-9).

Professional historians, institutionalized in departments of history, have never succeeded in controlling the study of the past. This is undoubtedly a good thing, as for the most part they have been poor sources of new ideas. Moreover, Ph.D. training directs research towards the well-crafted monograph, carefully documented and cunningly-defined. The big picture slides slowly to the sidelines, addressed in terms comprehensible only to other historians, in brief introductions and still briefer conclusions. Occasionally, bucking the low status of the enterprise, we make stabs at survey histories, but here the shaping ideas soon lose themselves as we crank up our narratives and position ourselves on the comfortable ground of trends and events. None of the shaping ideas of Ethiopian history have come from professional historians. Class was established by the student generation of the 1960s; ethnicity, in its current form, by the rulers who came to power in 1991.

Teshale Tibebu writes as a sociologist trained in the world systems tradition of Immanuel Wallerstein at SUNY Binghamton. *The Making of Modern Ethiopia* is an ambitious interpretation of modern Ethiopian history, one that is likely to enjoy

considerable currency at a time when fiercer debates rage over the meaning and destiny of that country than at any time in its past. These debates link intellectuals in Addis Ababa and in the diaspora which has developed in the last twenty years, although, given the limitations on resources and the repressive atmosphere in Addis Ababa, diaspora voices predominate. Teshale's study is based on a wide reading of the published literature and informed by the author's personal insights into Ethiopian culture, insights which find their principal expression in an effective use of proverbs. In the context of the current debates, Teshale seeks to refute the 'ethnicist' interpretation of Ethiopian history, arguing for a refined class interpretation. He places himself in the camp of those who maintain that the term 'Amhara' is not primarily an ethnic term, but rather a cultural/political one. Teshale combines this view with a generous understanding of Ethiopian history. We could be more hopeful for the country's future if we could believe that all parties to the debate were as generous in their sympathies and as committed to the canons of scholarship.

Teshale organizes his study around four concepts: *geber* system; *tabot* Christianity; Aksum paradigm; and Ge'ez civilization. While many of the elements are to be found in the writings of others, their integration has a certain originality. Teshale uses the *geber* concept to integrate the worlds of work and ruling through the word's multiple meanings: work, tax or tribute, and banquet. *Tabot* Christianity allows for a nice account of the distinctive features of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Aksumite paradigm is Teshale's rendering of the historical consciousness and sense of mission which characterized his fourth concept, Ge'ez civilization, that combination of institutions which dominated the Ethiopian state down to 1974. Chapter 1 is devoted to establishing these concepts.

Part Two of the book, which consists of Chapters 2–4, takes up 'The Old Order'. Teshale rejects the arguments of those who see the last hundred years as determining for the modern Ethiopian state. He has an informed account of forms of social subordination in Ethiopia which includes slavery and occupational minorities. The section concludes with a discussion of taxation and tribute. Part Three is directed to 'Creeping Modernity' and essentially argues that the state undercut the old socio-political order, which rested on tribute and fostered the formation of a new state-oriented bourgeoisie. The book concludes with an epilogue which argues that ethnicity was less important as a form of oppression in historic Ethiopia than class.

Such broad ranging arguments take many risks and in places are thinner than in others. Problems extend from the trivial (Harold Marcus and Donald Levine are conflated on p. 174 into the monster, Harold Levine) to the more substantive. There is a tendency to push judgments too far: the slave trade 'bled Ethiopia dry' (p. 66); 'utter pauperism' afflicted the Ethiopian peasantry (p. 136); Ethiopia's farmers were 'depeasantized on a massive scale' (p. 138).

Not all of Teshale's concepts are equally well-founded. Chapter 4 on *geber* is central to the book. Much of its discussion is useful. However, too heavy a reliance on accounts by two servants of Haile Sellassie's state, Gebre Wold and Mahteme Sellassie, leads Teshale away from an understanding of the historic Ethiopian nobility as a property-owning class and towards the perception of them as a political-administrative one. One adverse consequence appears in Chapter 5 which seriously post-dates the evolution of class relations in southern Ethiopia from personal subordination to property alienation, locating this transition primarily in the 1940s and 1950s, whereas its seeds were sown as early as the reign of Menilek and its roots firmly established by the 1920s. Associated with this is Teshale's questionable judgment that 'it is quite clear that the peasants and small-town dwellers of Christian Ethiopia have been exploited more than their Muslim and "pagan" counterparts' (p. 99).

In general, there is a problem with proportion. Teshale uses an indirect argument concerning the incidence of prostitution to give some scale to his claim of 'massive depeasantization'. Some 335,000 prostitutes in Ethiopia (1.2 per cent of the country's female population) constitute 'the most concentrated expression of the disintegration of the Central Ethiopian social structure and the magnitude of depeasantization'. A grave subject in its own right, the number hardly supports 'depeasantization', something which, in any case, personal observation would refute.

But carping would not be a suitable note on which to conclude. Teshale's book may be read on many levels, and on most of them with profit.

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DONALD CRUMMEY

## COLONIAL COTTON

*Cotton, Colonialism, and Social History in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Edited by ALLEN ISAACMAN and RICHARD ROBERTS. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann; London: James Currey, 1995. Pp. xi + 314. £14.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-619-5).

Cotton seems to be in. Five of the contributors to this collection have written books or theses on the subject and it is critical to the work of most of the others. The reason is that cotton often brought out the worst in colonial rule and always underlined some of its deepest contradictions. Cotton was widely grown in Africa, but often in areas where soil and climate were not ideal. European industry wanted cotton, largely because it wanted to free itself from reliance on American supplies, but was not willing to pay a high enough price. As a result, all colonial regimes pushed a crop that usually did not give a large enough return to motivate peasant cultivation.

In most of the areas discussed in this collection, there were other crops that offered a higher return on labour. Where peasants had a choice, they grew something else. This is true with peanuts in northern Nigeria (Hogendorn), palm oil in Togo (Maier), rice in the Rufiji and Kilombero valleys (Sunseri and Monson), yams in Côte d'Ivoire. Victoria Bernal argues that the major benefit to peasants of participation in the Gezira scheme was access to irrigated land to grow sorghum. Even where the land was good, the peak periods of labour often conflicted with those needed for food crops. This was particularly true of the most onerous task, weeding, a bottleneck which limited the amount of land that could be profitably planted in both grains and cotton. In West Africa, peasants grew cotton, but the local textile industry paid higher prices than European companies (Hogendorn on Nigeria, Roberts on the French Soudan, Bassett on the Côte d'Ivoire, Maier on Togo) – sometimes two, three or four times as high. Colonial regimes found themselves unwittingly subsidizing local weavers.

If cotton was not going to give peasants a return on their labour they were not going to grow it and had to be coerced. Therefore, where taxes and the distribution were not sufficient, we see devices like the commandant's fields, compulsory cultivation, agricultural monitors measuring fields, overseers with whips, the beating and jailing of peasants – and sometimes inadequate nutrition, hunger, and disease that resulted from inadequate food harvests. Europeans often assumed that the explanation of low productivity was African laziness, and yet it was often the colonial administrators that failed to do their job properly. Very few of these projects were prepared with proper research. Often people were forced to grow cotton on inappropriate soil. Invariably, Europeans did not understand the work calendar or traditional methods of cultivation. For example, peasants all over

Africa preferred inter-cropping because it reduced labour time. Colonial officials opposed it because they feared hybridization.

Many of the authors have done research colonial administrators did not do, for example on the agricultural calendar. Monson on the Kilombero valley and Mandala on the lower Tchiri do a particularly effective analysis of the way work is organized over time. They also underline what heavy labour cotton was and how it was impossible in many areas for peasants to meet cotton quotas and feed themselves. And even with coercion, cotton production never reached the targets set for it. The price that the colonial regime paid for its ill-conceived efforts was the hostility of peasants to cotton and to colonial rule. The Maji-Maji revolt was caused by coercive cotton policies, but peasants were more likely to try sabotage, disobedience to instructions or a surly reluctance to perform assigned tasks.

Almost all of these studies are excellent. Almost all are based on recent field research. Unlike many sets of conference papers, they pick on common themes. Almost all whet the appetite for the more detailed work some of these authors have produced or are now producing. There are a number of questions that need to be more fully explored. Roberts is the only author to discuss the organization of the handicraft cotton industry. Certainly, the survival of this industry in the face of cheap industrial cottons and the hostility of colonial administrations is an important story. Monson has an analysis of the role of rice in Kilombero valley culture which raises familiar questions about the relation between culture and economics. Maier suggests that there is not a necessary conflict between cotton and other crops. Where the cotton ripens after the end of the rains, it can be left in the fields while grain crops are harvested.

All in all, an excellent collection, which tells us a lot about cotton, but even more about African peasants and about colonial rule.

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MARTIN A. KLEIN

### MOZAMBICAN COTTON GROWERS

*Cotton is the Mother of Poverty: Peasants, Work and Rural Struggle in Colonial Mozambique, 1938-1961.* By ALLEN ISAACMAN. London: James Currey; Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 1996. Pp. xii + 272. £14.95, paperback (ISBN 0-435-08978-1).

This latest volume in the Social History of Africa series edited by Allen Isaacman and Jean Hay not surprisingly follows the high standard which the editors have set for other contributors. It is admirably researched, highly readable and essential for any library of African affairs.

Between 1978 and 1988 the author gathered 160 interviews with former cotton growers while at the same time working in the archives of the colonial government and the Cotton Board in Maputo. As social history this book, is therefore, admirably based on both documentation and the extensive gathering of oral material. However, the 1980s were a period when social conflict within Mozambique was rapidly rising and there were major difficulties in carrying out research. In the introduction, the author candidly admits the problems faced by a white foreigner asking highly sensitive questions about crop growing, official abuse and the techniques for evading government regulations. He readily acknowledges the reluctance of some of his informants to give certain types of information and the ways in which memory and oral tradition were being reconstructed to fit the needs and relationships of a present increasingly dominated by the bloody conflict between the FRELIMO government and RENAMO. The introduction also stresses certain of the conclusions which had clearly been used as a hypotheses

throughout the research. The study is located firmly within a picture of the peasant household economy and the politics of peasant production and gender relations, and it is this rather than cotton production itself which gives the book its depth and contemporary relevance.

The book concentrates on the cotton production campaigns organized by the Portuguese colonial authorities between 1938 and 1961, but it is primarily concerned with how these campaigns were organized on the ground and how they affected the economy of the peasantry and their social relations. This is not a study of the macro-economic aspects of cotton production or the colonial economy, nor does it look in depth at metropolitan cotton politics. This aspect of cotton production has been admirably described in Anne Pitcher's recent book, misleadingly entitled *Politics in the Portuguese Empire* (Oxford, 1993), and the author generously acknowledges her work and that of Vail and White in their pioneering study of Mozambican social and economic history, *Capitalism and Colonialism in Mozambique* (London, 1980), a study which, like Isaacman's, made very effective use of oral material.

Isaacman's book builds on a number of studies which he has already published on the social history of cotton and is a mature and measured analysis which is far from being a crude anti-colonial polemic. Although he has copious material to illustrate the cruelties and oppression of the colonial cotton growing system, this is not the principal theme. He moves onto other ground with his analysis of the evolution of the peasant economy. Cotton growing in Mozambique was not primarily done on plantations but by forcing peasants in villages to grow cotton as part of their household economies. This decisively confirmed what had always been a trend in the development of Mozambique – plantation and settler agriculture remaining limited to a few areas like the lower Zambesi, the Manica highlands and the Limpopo valley while throughout the vast rest of the country peasants retained possession of their land and with it a high degree of independence in their everyday lives. As he writes, 'it is one of the central premises of this study that Mozambican cotton growers were able to retain a degree of autonomy from the colonial state and from the cotton concessionary companies' (p. 8).

This study also emphasizes the dynamics of the peasant response: 'cotton growers were not passive recipients of a colonial mandate. Nor were they helpless victims of capital accumulation or state oppression' (p. 9). The book shows the endless subterfuges with which the peasants determined to grow as much or as little cotton as they believed to be in their self-interest – boiling seed to create an impression of barren soil, artificially weighting bales before the weigh-in, sneaking away to cultivate gardens when they were supposed to be cultivating cotton, and numerous other devices. These were countered by the brutality of the cotton concession companies which in their turn tried to cheat the peasants and abuse them in every way they could, a cruelty which was really a symptom of the relative powerlessness of officialdom. Not only does this low-level social conflict undeniably recreate the flavour of colonial history but it has a timeless quality – the relentless battle of peasant farmers against the feudal tiers of those who try to exploit their labour (cotton concession companies, plantation owners, and officials of the Cotton Board in Mozambique, but abbots, feudal seigneurs and royal tax gatherers at an earlier period of European history).

This book is also a notable contribution to gender studies, and the changing role of women in peasant society is one of its major themes. Not only did the main burden of cotton production fall to women in those societies where men were absent performing migrant labour, but the experience of trying to meet the cotton quotas stimulated social change as women adopted forms of co-operative labour and assumed new roles in the family and local society.

This excellent book is deeply rooted in a lifetime's study of Mozambique. It is

a work I would highly recommend to anyone wanting not only to learn about the realities of colonial rule but to hear the voice of the people who experienced it.

*University of Exeter*

MALYN NEWITT

### A HISTORY OF COCOA DISEASES

*Cocoa Diseases and Politics in Ghana, 1909–1966*. By FRANCIS DANQUAH. New York: Peter Lang, 1995. Pp. xiii + 186. £25 (ISBN 0-8204-2190-1).

The main focus of this study, which grew out of a doctoral dissertation for the Iowa State University's 'Agricultural History and Rural Studies Program', is on describing official efforts to 'contain cocoa plant diseases in [Ghana's] forest belt since the early twentieth century' (p. 2). Combating these threats to the country's most important export crop Danquah sees as belonging to 'two well-defined historical phases: the era of restrained involvement, which straddled the period from 1910 to 1943, and the period of aggressive interventionism' from 1944 to 1966 (p. 29). More than half of the work deals with the first phase, when the colonial government's Agricultural Department struggled to understand the unique disease environment of cocoa farming and the Sisyphean struggle to keep cocoa diseases at bay. Limited scientific knowledge and the government's basically *laissez faire* approach to the cocoa industry meant that cocoa diseases proliferated in the Colony's cocoa-growing areas. However, rather than identifying 'all the sundry weaknesses in the Agricultural Department', Danquah takes a more dispassionate approach to understanding a 'peculiar historical problem' (p. 69). In general he sees this work as carving a niche in African historical studies for the study of 'the problem of plant pests and diseases' (p. 153). Particularly for the colonial period, he brings together a wide range of official sources and scientific works that are less than familiar to the historian.

However, given the centrality of cocoa to Ghana's economy during this period, Danquah cannot escape dealing with the political and social implications that have been a crucial component of this story. Here the result is more mixed. Many aspects of this history have been told elsewhere and in much richer detail than Danquah offers (see, for example, the writings of P. Hill, D. Austin, B. Beckman, R. Howard and G. Mikell). His claim to be the first to link rural protest movements against the colonial government's attempts in the 1940s and 1950s to control the outbreak of swollen-shoot disease with nationalist politics is hardly sustainable. His heavy reliance on secondary sources (mostly Dennis Austin) to tell this story is the most glaring evidence against this claim. His simplistic and undifferentiated categorization of 'the major interest groups in this economic and political configuration' is also *passé* (pp. 87–8). Neither the 'urban politicians', the 'rural farmers', nor the 'traditional chiefs' were homogeneous groups, as a wide range of recent studies have sought to show. Of most serious consequence to this study is Danquah's obliviousness to the stratification that was developing within the country's cocoa farmers. There has been a considerable amount of recent work done on this subject that Danquah is obviously not familiar with (by G. Austin, J. Allman and B. Grier). It was not only the CPP's over-commitment to 'the biggest plant disease control campaigns undertaken anywhere in the world', but also its unwillingness to acknowledge and tolerate class and regional interests that contributed to the failure of 'aggressive intervention' to transform the country's cocoa industry from the 'indigenous' to the 'scientific sphere' (p. 113). Rather like the officials of that period, Danquah relies far too much on the official line to describe a period with highly complex political, economic and social developments. Even though some fieldwork seems to have been undertaken in Ghana, newspapers,



archival sources and oral history are conspicuously absent for a period that is both well documented, and highly contested, in Ghana's recent past.

*Cocoa Diseases and Politics in Ghana, 1909–1966*'s main contribution is to our knowledge of official attempts to control cocoa diseases in Ghana in the twentieth century. Here the most useful contribution is to our appreciation of the environmental challenge that farming scientifically in the rainforest represents. At a time when the uniqueness and importance of the rainforest environment has become better understood it is important to realize that monocultural agriculture was foreign to this environment. Undoubtedly there will be those who will use this example of what has so far been a failure to introduce 'scientific farming' as an indication of the need for new approaches to farming in an area that has only recently been subjected to scientific investigation. In general, however, those more interested in the developmental issues that this challenge has raised, rather than with history or politics, will be left disappointed by the cautiousness and limited scope of Danquah's analysis of a period with a wealth of lessons to offer countries in Africa that are also struggling to make the transition to some form of 'scientific' farming.

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ROGER GOCKING

#### ORIGINS OF 'AFRICAN PARAMOUNTCY'

*Struggle for Kenya: The Loss and Reassertion of Imperial Initiative, 1912–1923.* By ROBERT M. MAXON. New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1993. Pp. 351. £39.95 (ISBN 0-8386-3486-9).

This book closely analyzes the British Colonial Office's role in developing and executing imperial policy for Kenya during the period 1912–1923. In essence, the author's argument is that the Colonial Office in 1912 wielded control over the British East Africa Protectorate (which became Kenya in 1920), but during the First World War it lost the initiative to European settlers, who increasingly gained overriding influence on policy making. The colonial state tailored policy to suit the European minority, and when General Edward Northey became governor after the First World War, he evolved policies which indubitably made Kenya a 'white man's country'. The colonial state thus strove to achieve paramountcy of settler interests in this period, and the Colonial Office acquiesced in, and bolstered, this policy until it proved counter-productive.

Scholars in the past have explained the African paramountcy declaration, embodied in the Devonshire White Paper of 1923, in terms of the significant contribution made by such humanitarian and pro-African personalities as J. H. Oldham, John Arthur and Frederick Lugard. While recognizing that these humanitarian elements made a significant contribution in the events which culminated in the Devonshire declaration, Robert Maxon argues that economic factors were the more important consideration for the imperial government's change of policy from a pro-European settler emphasis to a pro-African one. Once that decision was taken by London, General Northey was recalled in 1922 and replaced by governor Robert Coryndon, a former governor of Uganda. Coryndon had demonstrated in Uganda that a pro-agrarian policy could be economically viable. Maxon further contends that the Devonshire White Paper was the product of lengthy discussions which the Colonial Office conducted with the India Office and with the business community, and that once the decision to emphasize paramountcy of African interests was made, missionaries such as Oldham tried to win over to their position those (such as Andrews and Shastri) who supported a pro-Indian policy in Kenya.

As it turned out, the Colonial Office was able finally to reassert its influence in Kenya in 1923. During the period 1912 to 1922, European settlers seized the initiative and wielded considerable influence over the affairs of the protectorate, especially during the war. Immediately after the war, the Soldier Settlement Scheme sought to augment the European settler population, and General Northey generally promoted the paramountcy of European interests in the protectorate. The much-hated *kipande* (Registration Certificate) symbolized onerous and coercive labor laws which increasingly provoked African protest, and the Harry Thuku incident of 1922, in which several Africans were killed in Nairobi, intensified African opposition to Northey's pro-settler policy.

The colonial state, despite increasing agrarian support to the settlers, also came to a realization that settler agrarian economy was bankrupting the young colony. The Colonial Office, which had all along sought to control the affairs of the colony, now seized the initiative, first to prevent the escalation of African protest and, second, to resolve the European–Indian rivalry for power in Kenya. The Devonshire declaration provided a ready solution for the shift of colonial policy in Kenya to African paramountcy.

Robert Maxon's book painstakingly analyzes the motivations of a variety of personalities both in the Colonial Office and the India Office, and also critically appraises the past scholarship which accorded humanitarians, missionaries and Secretaries of State for the Colonies a greater role for the promulgation of the African paramountcy declaration than they deserved. Central to his analysis is a close reading of the Colonial Office archival sources and also Kenyan archival sources, which support the position that economic factors were more important than humanitarian issues. In addition, he shows that the business community was an important component in bringing about a change of British policy in Kenya which favored African agrarian production and a reassertion of colonial control. This reassertion of imperial rule all but assured that Kenya would not become another Southern Rhodesia, or, the worst fear, another South Africa. All in all, Robert Maxon has written a significant book.

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JIDLAPH G. KAMOCHÉ

## UGANDA OVERVIEW

*Uganda: Tarnished Pearl of Africa.* By THOMAS P. OFCANSKY. Boulder, CO and Oxford: Westview Press, 1996. Pp. xvii + 202. £43.95 (ISBN 0-8133-1059-8)

This is for the most part a very competent survey of Uganda's geography, history, society and economy, a serviceable background study for Westerners having dealings with the country. What makes it significant is the status of the author, who is 'Senior Analyst on East Africa for the Department of Defense'. We may reasonably infer that with characteristic American openness we are given the gist of the briefings he has been supplying to his employers.

They do not make cheerful reading. Uganda, it seems, is doomed both to lose most of its people from Aids and to experience ruinously rapid population growth. At any rate it will remain 'desperately poor', and therefore dependent. To maintain access to western subventions it will have to meet the West's requirements in terms of democracy, market economy and 'a non-confrontational foreign policy', and will also have to be 'reasonably supportive of Western initiatives in the regional and international arenas'. The author recognises President Museveni's achievements but is clearly by no means entirely happy with him, and concludes

with a lecture on the need to prepare for 'a smooth transition to a new regime'. The book was published before his popular endorsement in May 1996.

The chapters on earlier history are of only secondary interest. The pre-colonial period ('from the Early Stone Age to about the mid-nineteenth century') is allotted three pages, and it would perhaps be idle to complain that they are based on rather old-fashioned sources and so contain over-confident statements such as that 'Kimera... Buganda's first strong king' ruled (without so much as a *circa*) 'from 1447 to 1474'. This is the end-product of the long misuse of Roland Oliver's useful working hypothesis that the average length of a royal generation was probably about 27 years. More serious is Ofcansky's use of the retrospective fallacy. He dismisses the view that Uganda's woes are the product of its colonial past on the grounds that 'the ethnic divisions' and other ills existed before the arrival of Europeans. But before the colonial period Uganda did not exist. The ancestors of its modern peoples interacted with their neighbours both within and without the modern boundaries. What the colonial power did was to incorporate an arbitrary section of Africa's continuum into a kind of state, creating barriers where there had been none. Until the last minute it did nothing to encourage a Ugandan nationhood, and it then decamped almost overnight, leaving behind a new political structure that only the most optimistic could have believed to be stable.

None of this, of course, exonerates Ugandans from guilt for the crimes and failures of the independence era. However, the role of foreign intrigue in that period must not be discounted either. The chapter on 'Independence and Foreign Policy' is much the most valuable in the book. It contains no actual revelations, but does confirm that the politics of the 1960s were complicated by Israel's attempt to use Uganda as the base for a second front against the Arabs; that the British government 'welcomed' Amin's coup; and that, although it had been very unhappy with Obote I, it supported Obote II until the day of his downfall. We also learn that the NRA had Libyan backing. Indeed his continuing relationship with Libya, among other signs of an independent foreign policy, is probably the real charge against Museveni.

The reviewer must admit to a certain pique in that the work of his academic generation is mostly ignored; the bibliography does not contain the names of Fallers, Richards, Southall, Gutkind, Southwold or La Fontaine. It is little comfort that his own *Crops and Wealth in Uganda* is entered twice, since on its first appearance it is debited to Walter Elkan.

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CHRISTOPHER WRIGLEY

## NYAMAKALAW OF MANDE

*Status and Identity in West Africa: Nyamakalaw of Mande*. Edited by DAVID C. CONRAD and BARBARA E. FRANK. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995. Pp. 204. No price given, paperback (ISBN 0-253-20929-3).

The *nyamakalaw* of West Africa (endogamous occupational groups) have been of great interest to scholars of sudanic West Africa for quite some time as evidenced by the numerous publications on the historical origins, the social status and the role that particular *nyamakalaw* groups, whether blacksmiths, bards or leather workers, have played in the religious, economic and political cultures of the areas in which they live. The essays in this volume examine more thoroughly and systematically than before questions about the social status of the *nyamakalaw* as a whole and their ethnic identity as seen by themselves and others. The editors and

contributors critique the notion that specific *nyamakalaw* groups have particular identities that have been uniform and fixed historically throughout the region. They also emphasize the extent to which *nyamakalaw* and non-*nyamakalaw* manipulate the identities of this population for their own advantage. This has led to significant changes in the occupational identity of particular *nyamakalaw* and to the adoption of *nyamakala* identity by members of societies that traditionally never had such communities.

The volume is divided into three parts. The first section, which contains two essays by Barbara G. Hoffman and Patrick McNaughton and a third by Charles Bird, Martha A. Kendall and Kalilou Tera, examines the origins and meanings of particular words associated with the *nyamakalaw* as a whole, or with particular *nyamakalaw* groups such as the blacksmiths or the bards. Bird, Kendall and Tera, for example, emphasize the difficulty in giving any particular meaning to the term *nyamakalaw* because all the etymologies of the word are so influenced by the social position of those who offer definitions of the term. Hoffman, on the other hand, focuses on the way griot language mediates power relations between 'nobles' and 'djeli' (griots, bards) while McNaughton offers an alternative analysis of the meaning of the term 'jugu', a word most often associated with blacksmiths and translated into English as 'bad', 'mean' or 'nasty'. Part II consists of essays by Tal Tamari, David C. Conrad and Barbara E. Frank, all of whom use a variety of historical methodologies to address the question of *nyamakalaw* origins and identity. Tamari argues that linguistic evidence is essential to any effort to determine which groups within sudanic West Africa developed caste institutions independently and which others borrowed this institution from their neighbours. Conrad and Frank use equally productively oral traditions about the Mande *funiw*, Islamic bards, and the Soninke *garankew* (leather workers) respectively, to illuminate the historical origins and ethnicity of these groups while they also challenge the notion that such identities were ethnically and historically unchanging. In part III, Robert Launay, Adrian la Violette and Cheick Mahamadou Cherif Keita emphasize the extent to which individual members and groups within the *nyamakalaw* have shaped their own identities and social status.

This book is welcome for a number of reasons. It brings together into a single volume studies on all *nyamakalaw* and analyzes their social identity and history using some of the major theoretical perspectives and methodologies current in the fields of social anthropology and history. Particularly welcome are the studies on the *funiw* and women pottery specialists, two *nyamakala* groups relatively unknown to non-Mande scholars. In addition, the various essays work well together. Evidence discussed in one essay often supports the analysis presented in another. Nevertheless the volume is not what it could be.

The editors in their introduction focus almost exclusively on the historical and contemporary literature about the *nyamakalaw*. Their decision to highlight this material rather than the major theoretical issues and questions associated with the larger themes of the book – agency, identity and ethnicity – has meant that questions of interest to non-Mande scholars are not addressed. For example, in a number of articles, especially those by Launay, Frank and Hoffman, the contributors make it clear that the ethnicity of particular *nyamakalaw* groups is difficult to define. These observations are extremely useful for illustrating the fact that ethnic identities are not static. But when Conrad and Frank discuss this fact in their introduction, they conclude that the term ethnicity itself is problematic. This may very well be the case, but this is a point that has been made in numerous other studies. Therefore it is disappointing that they feel the need to restate what has been noted elsewhere in the recent literature on ethnicity in Africa. By giving so little attention to the theoretical literature on ethnicity, agency and identity, the editors limit the extent to which this book adds to this particular area of enquiry.

It remains, nevertheless, an important case study on the *nyamakalaw*, a group that figures prominently in the literature on social stratification in Africa.

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SANDRA E. GREENE

### THE COLONIAL RECORD

*The Upper Nile Province Handbook: A Report on Peoples and Government in the Southern Sudan, 1931.* Compiled by C. A. WILLIS and edited by D. H. JOHNSON. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Pp. xx + 476. £50 (ISBN 0-19-726146-9).

In 1931, C. A. Willis, the retiring Governor of the Upper Nile Province of the Sudan, compiled a voluminous report which doubled as a justification of the policies he had pursued since his appointment in 1926 and as handing-over notes to his successor. It also included his recommendations on future administrative policy. Detailed reports compiled for each district by the District Commissioners comprise much of the text. The Handbook was intended for publication in succession to previous Intelligence Department handbooks for the Sudan, but it is only now that it appears in print, ably edited by Douglas Johnson, together with Governor Struve's handing-over notes to Willis (1926) and the latter's report (1928) on the possible effects of the Sudd irrigation project.

Willis, an unpopular and opinionated man with a penchant for collecting and producing 'a vast amount of inchoate detail' who had left the Directorate of Intelligence at Khartoum under the cloud of the 1924 Mutiny, had much to justify. He had found the funds for a much improved communications system in the province and had presided over the imposition of a structure of native administration, the actual creation of which owed more to his District Commissioners; but he had also pursued policies which provoked a serious uprising among the Nuer and led ultimately to the imposition of the Nuer Settlement, a masterpiece of ethnographic policing which involved the forcible separation of an illusory Nuer Tweedledum from an equally fictitious Dinka Tweedledee. Willis's report can be more broadly situated within the contexts of British indirect rule and the development of a 'Southern Policy' in the Sudan, the effects of which, as Johnson points out, still remain.

While some of the detail of the Handbook – the numbers and condition of the various government barges and buildings or the inventory of lunatics at Kodok, for example – will appeal only to very dedicated Sudan experts, the text as a whole has a much wider colonial significance. It replicates, on a grand scale, many of the features of the (unpublished) District Books and handing-over notes of other colonial territories. Reading the Handbook reminds one of just how much British administration depended on the collection, collation and even the manufacture of information about the peoples over which it ruled. Empire everywhere was an exercise in archiving and taxonomy. This, of course, had profound implications on the ground. The district reports gathered here present the world of the Upper Nile as it appeared to administrators in 1930, complete with potted ethnographies and equally potted histories of each 'tribe'. That world was in large part a colonial creation and represented a vision of potential order. Willis believed, as did administrators in other 'native' areas, that memories of 'traditional' society had been obliterated, in this case by Mahdist rule. It was the duty of the administration to rebuild it – inventing where necessary – and to find leaders who combined authority within their own communities with a properly subordinate posture towards the British. Invention turned to coercion when emic and etic views of power and authority inevitably collided. As Johnson, in an introduction which

brings out the inherent contradiction of native administration, explains, local authorities had first to be suppressed before they could be co-opted. Nuer prophets experienced this from the air. It was not until bombing had failed that Evans Pritchard was left on the bank of the Bahr-al-Ghazal to investigate Nuer from within. Willis disapproved, and this Handbook is, in part, his rebuttal of professional anthropology and a defence of the wisdom of the 'man on the spot'. As such, it deserves study.

The colonial construction of custom is an historical commonplace from Nyasaland to Nigeria, but the Southern Sudan was an area where it could be carried on unhampered by the confusions of mission education, urbanization and the like, and often by violent means. The photographs included in the volume are instructive in this latter respect. The key documents which contain the ethnography of administrators and on which historians rely for their analyses are too rarely available outside the archives. We all owe a debt to Johnson and the British Academy for making the handbook available, not merely as a source but also as a memorial to a world whose contradictions remain even while its substance is fast being overlaid or destroyed by forces more ruthless than amateur ethnographers and ex-military administrators.

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RICHARD WALLER

### MEDICAL PROFESSIONALISATION

*Physicians, Colonial Racism, and Diaspora in West Africa.* By ADELL PATTON, JR.  
Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996. Pp. xx + 343. No price given  
(ISBN 0-8130-1432-8).

This book describes the experiences of African doctors under colonial and post-colonial rule in West Africa. Patton suggests that African doctors enjoyed unusual opportunities for training and employment under 'informal' colonialism before the 1890s. European doctors and colonial officials presented ever stronger obstacles to African doctors' professional advancement thereafter. In the post-colonial era African doctors enjoyed greater mobility, but the profession was fraught with conflict between those trained in the West and in Eastern-bloc countries. Patton uses biographical accounts of African doctors to illustrate the ways in which they contributed to colonial and post-colonial health-care while prevented from achieving sufficient professional status and autonomy. In doing so, his work straddles two genres, one which celebrates doctors' contributions to society as gallant and altruistic scientific pioneers, the other a literature on professionalization, which draws on a critique of professional élitism, occupational closure and the inflated claims of biomedical science. Partly because of current crises within African health systems (pp. 38–9) and the close connection between western professional training and élite social and political status, the study of professionalization during and after colonialism is rapidly becoming a major focus of interest for historians of medicine in Africa.

The features of professionalization in the developing world differ from the classic sociological typology. In 1973, Terence Johnson argued that the colonial state performed a dual role as its professionals' most powerful patron and client, thus restricting professional autonomy to define their own entry requirements, conditions of service, knowledge base and professional culture. African doctors were excluded from colonial Medical Services because the colonial state could impose its own requirements for 'good club men' and competent administrators onto the profession, ignoring professionally defined criteria. In following Johnson's broad schema Patton emphasizes the creation of a racially divided profession,



which left a lasting post-colonial legacy of intra-professional conflict (p. 21). Because racial divisions within the profession hampered African professionalization, Patton suggests that African doctors's level of professionalization should be gauged largely by their autonomy from European-dominated professional bodies (p. 212). This assumes, questionably in my opinion, that 'secondary professionalization' does not offer professional autonomy because it allows metropolitan professional bodies to control a colonial profession.

African medical professionals suffered much racial discrimination. One of the most interesting features of colonial racism was the strong focus on European fears about black doctors attending white women (pp. 157, 205), an issue which deserves further investigation. Another interesting issue is the influence of the often openly racist medical science before 1930 on western-educated African doctors. Dr John F. Easmon advocated racial segregation in the Gold Coast to counter the threat of malaria for Europeans in 1893, failing, as Patton says (p. xiii), to consider the poor conditions under which others lived in the town. Was this simply a political move in the search for promotion, as Patton suggests (p. 21), or was Easmon simply following his medical training? While the emphasis on racism is a welcome contribution to the debate, its explanatory power is not unlimited and professionalization theory should not perhaps be abandoned altogether when it could be used to explain other features of the African situation, such as the existence of qualification requirements for registration (p. xi).

In my opinion, although Patton might disagree (see p. 251), his book should prompt a timely revision of Johnson's thesis. Johnson himself acknowledged that his evidence was selective, to make the point that different socio-political environments might produce different patterns of professionalization. Few professions are fully autonomous, even in the 'developed' world, and from recent work on pre-industrial professionalization in Europe they are now recognized to be historically constructed entities. Patton's work helps us to see how both African and British doctors (the latter more successfully) attempted to manipulate government patronage in the West African colonies. While established in the European context, their professional status was nonetheless recognized by the colonial state. They may also have enjoyed significant public support from an African public sympathetic to western science (p. 252) and receptive to state endorsement of practitioner quality (p. 145). Colonial doctors, including Africans, says Patton, had access to a considerable private practice and more professional associations than previously thought. Stella Quah's work on Singapore (1989) has suggested that private practice was an important tool in doctors' quest for greater independence from state control. Documenting quite widespread medical professional organization before 1950, Patton's study questions Last's contention that African biomedical doctors' focus on combating racial discrimination pushed them into the arms of other professionals, such as lawyers, rather than into medical professional organizations. Patton's book is thus an important contribution to the debate on African professionalization and in spite of the numerous typographical and editing errors, deserves our critical attention.

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HARRIET DEACON

### A LIFE AT EPULU

*The King of the World in the Land of the Pygmies.* By JOAN MARK. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995. Pp. xvi + 276. £28.50 (ISBN 0-8032-3182-2).

This is useful reading for academics: it is about a man who made his reputation out of thin air. Patrick Putnam was the pampered son of an old Boston family who

first went out to Africa on a Harvard anthropological expedition to study pygmies in the then Belgian Congo in 1927. Unable to focus on research and plagued accidents, he settled down with an African wife, and then another, and another, and took a Belgian commission as an *Agent Sanitaire*. He was eventually fired because the demands of his three African wives kept him from travelling to do census work. He had a skill for local languages and, little by little, a reputation for deep knowledge about pygmies that was supported more by time spent near the Ituri Forest than anything else. In 1932 he and his American first wife built Epulu, the world's first theme park, in a frontier area on the edge of the Ituri Forest that had pygmies, okapis, and a rustic hotel and clinic. 'Our pygmy show cannot be duplicated anywhere else', wrote Putnam. By 1934 Epulu was a stop on the travel itineraries of the rich and famous.

Two American wives later, Putnam made his way back to Africa in the early days of the Second World War. The increased Allied demand for rubber after the Japanese conquest of South East Asia and his father's remarriage to the woman who was to stop regular payments to her stepson gave Putnam a job. He began to work for the colonial administration supervising rubber collection and experimenting with local plants as ways to coagulate it. His success was impressive and he began to write press releases hoping to ease colonial officials' anxieties about renewed demands for local rubber. For a man whose one published article stressed the historical factors that made pygmies forest dwellers, his writings on rubber reveal a cruel innocence: Africans' time spent collecting rubber was so much fun, wrote Putnam, that 'grandfather, who has managed to hobble out to the rubber camp so as not to miss his share of antelope steak, tells of the huge quantities of rubber *he* used to make when *he* was a young man'.

Putnam was ill-suited for the demands of post-war Africa. With his third American wife and his African wife of twenty years, he tried to revive the rundown Epulu, but the Belgian authorities demanded that he earn his keep by having a leper camp nearby, which did not attract tourists. Sick with emphysema, Putnam had to be carried everywhere, bitterly aware that he could not afford to live anywhere else. His American wife retreated from his rages by living in the pygmy camp in the forest and after his death in 1953 managed to keep Epulu going with Putnam's mix of local knowledge and sulking isolation. Nevertheless, she worked closely with Colin Turnbull and collected some of the texts on which he wrote.

Mark attributes Putnam's success with the local people to the fact that he was a white man who did not recruit labor, preach or administer. He simply diagnosed illness and dispensed medicines, giving each African a cigarette for each clinic visit. The pygmies who stayed close to Epulu called him by the name for iodine. There is no record of the other nicknames his other practices – including tying an unfaithful African wife to a tree twelve hours a day for a month – earned him.

So why did people think that Putnam had deep local knowledge and could write the definitive study of pygmies? The answer seems to be his parents. Putnam's academic credentials were forged while visiting New England and the academic friends of his parents who asked him questions and took notes. Nothing Putnam did in Africa gave him the authority he had in New England, but it is the frivolous authority he had in Africa that makes for interesting reading, and problematizes generalizations about the respectability of colonial power.

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LUISE WHITE

## THE END OF EMPIRES

*The Decolonization of Africa.* By DAVID BIRMINGHAM. London: University College London Press, 1995. Pp. viii + 109. £5.95, paperback (ISBN 1-85728-540-9)

Birmingham's concise treatment of this complex topic is intended for university students as part of a series designed to introduce historical topics and, in this volume, to 'use Africa as a case study for training British students in the skills of the historian' (p. viii). As an introductory text to a complex historical process, his work is exceptionally useful and should be adopted in African history and African studies courses. As a training tool in the skills of the historian, however, the work's abbreviated form may make it less compelling.

Birmingham's career as a historian and personal experience in Africa make him a scholar qualified to provide an extended essay on the rapid events of African decolonization. Although he makes no claim that this essay is definitive or comprehensive, he does manage to cover an impressive amount of material that fits nicely within the larger issues of European empires, the Cold War and the transformation of the world economy following the Second World War. His narrative is organized into five succinct main chapters divided thematically and geographically, including a useful chapter on northern Africa. Major historical themes are introduced throughout, including the European power's rationales for decolonization; the changing role of African resources in the world economy, particularly oil; the meddling of the United States and the Soviet Union in the politics of decolonization; a comparative look at how the former colonial powers continue to exert their influence in their former colonies; and the ways in which colonialism presented African leaders with a state that was as thoroughly undemocratic as it was well-suited for graft and corruption.

Birmingham is at his best when describing the process of decolonization and the limits confronting African nationalist leaders in the former British colonies. This is particularly true of his treatment of Nkrumah's frustrations with international capital over the Akosombo Dam project and with pan-Africanist politics after independence; the failure of Kenyatta's government to meet the demands of land-hungry ex-combatants from the Land and Freedom Army; and the continued failures of post-independence Nigeria given the legacy of British colonial divide-and-rule strategies, oil wealth, the Biafra war, and political leaders trained in Britain's Royal Military Academy who 'profitably kept power in the hands of officers' (p. 36).

A few minor criticisms of the work are undoubtedly attributable to Birmingham's need for abbreviation. Such brevity, at times, has the unfortunate result of treating African nationalist leaders to one or two sentences, which may lead to misunderstanding among students. For example, Léopold Senghor's career is reduced to a one-sentence characterization as a Franco-ophile African leader who 'retained his country seat in Normandy, wrote about *négritude*, the pride of being black, and was elected to the Académie Française' (p. 33). This sort of abruptness may have been necessary given the form of the book, but it is not perhaps a historian's skill to be passed on to undergraduates. Social and labor historians will also perhaps feel that too little attention is given to the contributions of working men and women organized within larger social movements that demanded economic advancement and social justice and made great sacrifices in the push for independence. In addition, the absence of references and suggested readings that are carefully integrated with the text, while most likely an editorial decision to keep the series as concise as possible, does little to advance the skills of undergraduates in the historian's craft.

There is, however, much more about this work that is worthy of students'

attention and emulation and that suggest it as a good choice for course adoption. The narrative is lively and never loses touch with the complexity of decolonization as a historical process – a process that is never reduced to a single cause, to individual leaders or to the myth of the nation-state marching inexorably toward progress and freedom. Birmingham has written a very useful introductory text that will help today's students understand the seriousness of Africa's problems within the context of colonialism, independence and the continued external and internal exploitation of Africa's human and material resources.

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TIMOTHY SCARNECCHIA

## ON THE ROAD TO MECCA

*Permanent Pilgrims: The Role of Pilgrimage in the Lives of West African Muslims in Sudan.* By C. BAWA YAMBA. London: Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute, 1995. Pp. ix + 237. £39.50 (ISBN 0-7486-0592-4).

The *Permanent Pilgrims* heralded in this book's title are contemporary Hausa-speaking West Africans *en route* to Mecca by land through Sudan. Once in Sudan they find themselves suspended in a permanent state of pilgrimage: caught in debt relations that prevent them from completing their trip, they are bound by the logic of their pilgrim identity to remain cheap, unassimilated farm labor for the Gezira scheme.

Bawa Yamba's study illuminates a number of interesting themes. First, it captures the experience of pilgrimage for one segment of West African Muslims. Second, it demonstrates how migrants' understanding of pilgrimage contributes to their marginalization within Sudanese society. Finally, it sheds light on the organization of labor on that 'Mother-of-all-Development-Projects', the Gezira scheme.

At a moment when travel has become a hot topic, Islamic pilgrimage would seem to invite a consideration of recent cultural theory. Yamba does not draw upon such work. More regrettable perhaps is his neglect of recent work in historical anthropology and cultural history; instead he relies steadfastly upon classics of anthropological theory largely predating 1975. As a result, his analytical chapters have a static quality: the pilgrim community is reified and treated as a homogeneous group (despite much evidence in the more ethnographic sections to the contrary), while the author urges that the pilgrims' 'emic' understandings of pilgrimage must be respected. Community identity emerges then as unproblematic rather than as the outcome of ongoing struggles for meaning. Much of Yamba's energies are devoted to resolving intellectually his evident discomfort with the pilgrims' fatalism towards their lives and their resignation to a seemingly permanent state of pilgrimage.

Where Yamba breaks free of claustrophobic debates with dated work into the fresh air of his remarkable fieldwork this book comes to life. Although he takes as his central question how to reconcile the pilgrims' sense of purposive action (embodied in the belief in the powers of spiritual advisors or *fakis*) with their notion of predestination (encapsulated in the 'concept' of *Insha'Allah* or 'God's will'), his material invites other analytical trajectories. Yamba's work flourishes precisely where he details those matters of political economy and social differentiation he so resolutely eschews in his analysis. One is captivated by glimpses of differentiation between urban West Africans and rural, young and old, early migrants and later ones, pilgrims and 'Arabs': the sections of the book (principally Chapters 3–4) devoted to these issues are wonderful. Rather than

dwell upon such ruptures and contending discourses, Yamba raises them, vividly, only to drop them in pursuit of what are for me less compelling questions. Anyone drawn into his depiction of the divisions and complexities of the pilgrim community must be forgiven for remaining unmoved by the ensuing analysis, built on the presumption of a single overarching metaphysics. Rather than discuss Weber I wish he had investigated the critiques of the young West African male 'dissenters' who reject the ideology of pilgrimage.

In general, the book would have benefited from attention to the context out of which these migrants emerged. The uninitiated reader might suppose that most West African pilgrims go to Mecca via the overland route. In fact, the choice of this route in an age of package air tours to Mecca is a striking statement that can only be deciphered through an attention to what Islam and pilgrimage mean more generally back 'home'. Yamba might have explored, for example, how Hausa women's tradition of local pilgrimage (or *ziyara*) relates to the Haj; how extra-economic relations affect debt in Hausaland more broadly; how money (as opposed to physical labor) signifies in the post-oil era and the history of Hausa urban-rural dynamics.

Nevertheless his study provides an extraordinary and fascinating glimpse into the lived experience of pilgrimage. Yamba shatters Turner's notion of pilgrimage as 'anti-structure' while bringing to life his suggestion that pilgrimage can become a 'paradigm for life'. For migrants caught in a state of permanent pilgrimage, the yearning to achieve Mecca becomes an end in itself and the sanctity of the performance of the Haj imbues entire lives and communities with worth and meaning. This is a vision of the Haj with which future studies of pilgrimage will have to content. Yamba's own research is very much of the moment, even if his theoretical inspiration is not.

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BARBARA M. COOPER

## RELIGIOUS HISTORY

*Religion and Politics in East Africa: The Period Since Independence*. Edited by HOLGER BERNT HANSEN and MICHAEL TWADDLE. Athens, OH: Ohio UP; Nairobi: EAEP; Kampala: Fountain Publishers; London: James Currey, 1995. Pp. ix + 278. £35 (ISBN 0-8214-1086-5); £12.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-384-6).

It is now something of a truism that the relationship between politics and religion is central to the history of most African countries in the period since independence. The two principal institutional successors to the colonial order were the nexus of state and political party on one side and the churches on the other. The Muslim community may, despite significant differences, be included within the latter. At the time of independence, the secular sixties, the mainline churches with a rather limited African leadership and a reputation for collusion with the colonial order were, for the most part, both excluded from the power game and glad to be so. In the next thirty years, however, the disintegration of public order and the disappearance of extra-governmental voices of weight and the steady enhancement of religious authority in terms of adherents, the number and education of the clergy and a (less than universal) reputation for probity, have forced forward church leadership, at times into open confrontation with government.

These processes are complex, varied and far from easy to evaluate convincingly. The present book focuses on Uganda and Kenya, with one excellent chapter by O'Fahey on the issue of sharia in Sudan and an occasional reference to Tanzania. Few of the articles it contains are quite first-rate in themselves, but they nearly all

have useful material to contribute and their topics helpfully overlap. Uganda and Kenya have a great deal in common but, not only have their political histories been hugely different since independence, the shape of their two religious identities is remarkably different, even though they are alike in having large Christian majorities, small Muslim minorities, a Catholic church considerably bigger than any other and a CMS Anglican influence which did much to shape the basic church–state relationship.

What, upon the religious side, have set the two countries apart are the multiplicity of churches in Kenya against the predominant Catholic/Anglican duality of Uganda, the almost grass-roots politicisation of the latter with the long-standing DP/UPC confrontation grounded upon the mythology of nineteenth-century civil war, but also the way the churches relate differently to each part of each country. This is particularly true for Uganda. Any serious analysis of the way its religion and politics interweave needs to get far beyond a comparison beyond Buganda and the rest, or Bantu and non-Bantu, or north and south. Every district has its own religio–political complexion, indeed at times more than one: eastern Buganda is significantly different from western Buganda, eastern Ankole from western Ankole. It is the strength of this book that something of this diversity comes across convincingly with Kevin Ward's excellent survey, focusing principally on the church of Uganda, Ronald Kassimir's study of Catholicism in Toro, John Waliggo's presentation of the views of Bishop Kiwanuka or Heike Behrend's account of Alice Auma and her Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF) in the traumatised Acholi of the mid-1980s after Obote's final fall.

The Kenyan chapters of David Throup and G. P. Benson analyzing the development of church–state conflict there, the career of Bishop Muge and the Nyayo ideology of President Moi, together with Donal Cruise O'Brien's masterly assessment of the Muslim predicament, are no less valuable. While regional diversity matters here too, Throup and Benson's focus on the personal role of a number of leading churchmen – three Anglican bishops, Muge, Okullu and Gitari together with the Presbyterian Timothy Njoya – like Waliggo's account of Kiwanuka and Ward's panorama of Anglican archbishops from Sabiiti and Luwum to Wani and Okoth, as well as other more prophetic figures such as Festo Kivengere (not to speak of Alice Auma), provide a no less necessary insistence on the role of the individual. Any history of church influence upon the political needs to combine this with analysis of the control exercised by the balance of loyalties at a quite local level.

What this book suggests is just how much politico–religious history there has been between 1960 and 1990 and how little attempt has been made hitherto to put together a coherent account of it in even one country – something which must necessarily precede wider evaluation. Where Christian–Muslim interactions are also important, as they have been in fact or at least potentially throughout East Africa (but in a very different way for Uganda from Kenya or again, and still more, for Tanzania with its far larger and more confident Muslim population) this is again something calling for the writing of a large-scale but locally grounded account which treats the post-1960 period as a distinct context for religious history. May the publication of *Religion and Politics in East Africa*, added to Paul Gifford's recently edited volume on *The Christian Churches and the Democratisation of Africa*, stimulate the writing of some major one-country monographs on the religious history of the post-1960 era.

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ADRIAN HASTINGS



## HISTORIES OF A WAR

*Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War*. Edited by NGWABI BHEBHE and TERENCE RANGER. London: James Currey, 1995. Pp. xii + 211. £35 (ISBN 0-85255-659-4); £12.95, paperback (ISBN 0-852551-609-8).

Once upon a time, it was all very easy. If you wanted to know the history of Zimbabwe's Liberation War, the Second Chimurenga, you read David Martin and Phyllis Johnson's *The Struggle for Zimbabwe* (Harare, 1981), a comprehensive and official history in a fairly straightforward narrative style. But then in September 1990, there was a day-conference on the war at the University of Zimbabwe, followed by a major international conference in July the following year. And, of course, it emerged that the more you know, the more it turns out that there is to be known. It was clear that the history of the Second Chimurenga had barely begun. This book, the first of two volumes of papers from the conference, is as much a statement of how much research is waiting to be done, as an account of the work to date by July 1991.

The fact that the conference took place at all was a reflection of changing political climate in Zimbabwe. Discussion of the war during the first decade of independence was overshadowed by unfinished business – both the unfinished war in the south-west, and the unresolved bitterness between the two main nationalist parties, ZANU (PF) and ZAPU. By 1991, the post-1980 civil war in the south-west was ended, and the political parties had come to an understanding. Suggestions that mistakes may have been made during the armed struggle, atrocities committed, or internal conflicts allowed to fester could now be raised, without an automatic accusation of partisanship or, worse, hostility towards the newly independent state.

The range of issues covered in the volume are justified, and helpfully contrasted, in the introductory chapter. The volume was named 'Soldiers' rather than 'Armies' in order to emphasize the point made by one contributor, Teresa Barnes, that the history of war is the history of those who fought it, as much or more than it is the history of the political leaders who directed it. There are contributions from participants as well as from academics, most notably from Dumiso Dabengwa and Josiah Tungamirai. The contributions consider military tactics, ideological frameworks, recruitment strategies, and the splits and unity accords between the various nationalist armies (ZANLA, ZIPRA and ZIPA). Henrick Ellert, who served in the Rhodesian Intelligence during the war, covers the range of intelligence operations of the Rhodesian authorities. The final three chapters focus on experiences after the war, and provide some context for the formation of the War Veterans Association: Barnes interviews four male ex-combatants; Norma Kriger considers the pitfalls for the government of using 'heroes' of the struggle as a symbol of national unity; and Jeremy Brickhill describes the work and the aspirations of the Mafela Trust, which was set up to identify and mark the graves of fallen (and in practice, specifically ZIPRA) soldiers.

The introduction notes how there is an imbalance in the kind of material we have from the nationalist and Rhodesian accounts of the war. There is little from the Rhodesian side about recruitment, tactics or civilian experiences. There has been little, before this volume, on the fighting experiences of the nationalist soldiers. Moreover, as Katri Yap's recent research demonstrates, the ways in which the wars are now recalled are aspects of a contemporary political discourse, and are not, in any straightforward sense, accounts of 'what happened'. These volumes provide signposts for researchers to begin to ask new questions about the events of the wars.

The most controversial chapter in the volume is the first of two from Jeremy

Brickhill, who himself served with ZIPRA. He claims that ZIPRA had reached a turning point in its strategy by the time of the Lancaster House talks. The army was poised to shift from guerilla tactics towards conventional warfare, based on artillery, tanks and air support. This strategy was designed to protect the liberated areas, but also to win an outright military victory – a task which guerilla armies, by their nature, cannot achieve. If Brickhill is correct, then ZIPRA is not simply an also-ran force which did little to win the war, but a very interesting historical phenomenon. At the hand-over of power in 1980, ZANLA troops in the assembly camps were reported dancing and chanting nationalist slogans, while the ZIPRA troops were drilling. Moreover, the ZIPRA pilots were very bitter at not being included in the new national Air Force. Stark contrasts between ZANLA and ZIPRA may be overstated, but Brickhill has thrown out a challenge for other researchers to follow up.

The big absence from the book is the role of women soldiers. The significance of this absence is highlighted by the controversy over the feature film *Flame*, produced in 1995 by a Zimbabwean company, which portrays the war and post-war experiences of two women combatants. The male-dominated War Veterans' Association (to whom, as Kriger explains, the government has been forced to give a political voice) attempted to get the film banned. The bitter row demonstrated that there are still aspects of the war which, if Zimbabweans try to discuss them, produce accusations of hostility towards the state. This collection is valuable because it poses a challenge to such attitudes, and because it has opened the door to the huge amount of research which must follow.

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DIANA JEATER

## BARAZA POLITICS

*The Culture of Politics in Modern Kenya.* By ANGELIQUE HAUGERUD. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. xvi + 266. £35 (ISBN 0-521-47059-5).

Angelique Haugerud has written an innovative and important study of Kenyan politics combining anthropology, history and political economy to produce a suggestive and often original account of the relationship between state and society, high and deep politics, political culture and institutions, and the accumulation of wealth and poverty. She does so by focusing on two key phenomena: the public meetings known as *baraza*, and the patron–client linkages that run through Kenyan society from bottom to top. The analysis moves, unconventionally, from the present to the past, the 1990s to the 1890s and back to the present; and from the centre to the periphery, from Nairobi to the deepest rural locations of Embu district.

The first half of the book deals with the role of the *baraza* in Kenyan political culture and practice. Quasi-compulsory public meetings held at district and at its sub-division and location levels, *baraza* began in the colonial period as fora where officials address the public. In more recent times, *baraza* are addressed by politicians and civil servants and constitute the most frequent public meeting of élites and masses, of the state and its citizens. In a detailed and nuanced analysis, Haugerud reveals the *baraza* as a highly charged, richly symbolic expression of social relations and political culture intended as a display of élite solidarity and mass consensus in support of both the regime and the social status-quo. The high-flown rhetoric and florid oratory of the speeches (in three languages: English, Swahili and the local vernacular) is expected to be matched by demonstrative expressions of support from the audience. The program of the *baraza* also communicates clues about wider political issues: who is invited to speak and for

how long suggests the relative stature and power of politicians and officials, local and national; while the topics they discuss and positions taken implicitly define the boundaries of legitimate public discourse and also exclude and attempt to delegitimize oppositional groups and perspectives. Most important, the *baraza* constantly repeat an implicit moral contract between the state and the masses: acceptance of the state's authoritarian paternalism and acquiescence in limits on political expression in return for material improvements in the conditions of life; 'development' instead of politics (pp. 71–6). There is, as a result, also a fundamental ambiguity in the *baraza* as it constantly articulates promises that the regime may not be capable of meeting. The public ritual then both boosts the regime and reveals its weakness, becoming a potential symbolic battleground in which audiences break their silence and talk back through vocal dissent and mockery.

For Haugerud, the *baraza* is the terrain of struggle in which the public political culture of Kenya is repeatedly fought over. She explores this empirically at two crucial moments of modern Kenyan politics. First, the political turmoil of the early 1990s (ch. 2). Economic decline fuelled a rising level of conflict between patrons and clients, would-be elite patrons, and ethnic communities, as well as within families between genders and generations. Rising opposition to the regime led to the breaking of earlier silences and the public expression of covert sentiments in an oppositional popular culture of music and theatre, and also in *baraza*, which became crucial arenas of rhetorical clashes and fora for challenging the government. In contrast, moving back in time, the second moment explores the Moi regime's use of *baraza* in 1979, soon after he succeeded Kenyatta as president of Kenya (ch. 3). The regime more successfully employed the *baraza* held all over the country to legitimize the succession and shape relations of power and hegemony around patronage, paternalism and promises of development.

The second half of the book deals with the differentiation of wealth and poverty in rural Kenya. Chapter 4 presents a historical survey, based largely on secondary sources, of this process in central Kenya over the past century, while chapter 5 presents a detailed analysis of the distribution of wealth, based on the author's own fieldwork since 1978 in Embu district, not far from Nairobi, inhabited by the Embu and Mbeere, small ethnic communities closely related to the neighboring Kikuyu. The focus in these chapters is on the pervasive patron–client relationships of Kenyan society, reaching from the political magnates at the centre of the state to the rural periphery, which blur the distinctions between town and country, kin and clientele; reinforce local and ethnic identities; and blunt the expression of wider affiliations and conflicts of class. Haugerud draws several important conclusions from the evidence. First, that although patron–client relations were widely found in pre-colonial societies, both colonial and post-colonial regimes have focused the relations on the state and the increasing range of material benefits it could supply. Second, supporting again the 'straddling' thesis, access to patronage, state resources and non-farm investments are the principal sources of accumulation among wealthy families rather than commercial agriculture. Third, the rural rich buttress their position by investing in a local clientele. Fourth, the instability of families and uncertainties of accumulation, the remarkable instability and flux of daily life, make access to patronage essential, and conflicts over the obligations of the wealthy suffuse the local moral economy.

This is enormously stimulating. It can be said, however, that the two parts of the book betray their separate origins and do not fit together theoretically or empirically as tightly as one would like. *Baraza* are important and do play a role in the politics of patronage by articulating the moral contract between state and masses, and by displaying the relative power and resources of particular individuals in the patronage networks. They are ultimately, however, political theatre and the

book has little to say about the parts of the state and para-statal apparatus (marketing boards, finance and development agencies, co-ops, schools and so on) in which access to state resources for rural and urban families actually take place. Moreover, a regime that continues to appoint district-level officials from other parts of Kenya to limit their involvement in local politics (p. 97) is struggling to maintain central control and limit the complete appropriation and privatization of state resources; which suggests important internal contradictions in the state that need further analysis. Finally, the external, international dimension, which Haugerud rightly sees as an important source of Kenya's economic and political crisis, is sketched only in the most rudimentary way, and one would like to know more about the specific impact of globalization and capitalist re-structuring. These points aside, however, this is a book that should stimulate discussion and further research in Kenya and elsewhere; and, in a less expensive format, would be of considerable use in teaching some of the day-to-day realities of African politics and how these reveal, as C. Wright Mills put it, the connections between the problems of the individual and the great issues of social structure.

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BRUCE BERMAN

### ANGLO-SAXON CONSPIRACY?

*The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide.* By GERARD PRUNIER. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995. Pp. xiii + 389. £35 (ISBN 1-85065-243-0).

'Anglo-Saxon' readers should be doubly grateful to Gerard Prunier for this important contribution to our understanding of the 'Rwanda crisis'. Few observers are as well qualified to do justice to the complexity of his subject. A long-time student of Uganda politics and currently Senior Researcher at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris, Prunier is also, and pre-eminently, an 'insider' with a wide range of valuable personal contacts with the French Socialist establishment and the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF). Furthermore, as he himself admits, by writing his account in English, or a reasonably close approximation thereof, he has bravely accepted the risk of being branded as a traitor to the cause of Francophonie, an accusation voiced by 'an interestingly wide cross-section of academics, army officers and politicians' (p. 104, n. 21).

The case for the prosecution is made all the more damning by his blistering criticisms of French policies in Rwanda. In his dual capacity as a member of the International Secretariat of the French Socialist Party and consultant to the Ministry of Defence during the 'Operation Turquoise', Prunier gained a first-hand experience of the internal politics of the French intervention in north-western Rwanda in June 1993. Despite its ostensibly humanitarian aims, the decision to send troops to protect civilians carried critical political implications in that it was immediately seen by the RPF as a thinly-veiled, last minute attempt by President Mitterrand to bolster the position of the moribund Rwanda regime. Though highly critical of the individual performance of certain key French officials, Prunier's bitterest commentaries are directed at what he called the 'Fashoda syndrome', the tendency for the movers and shakers of France's Africa policy to see the RPF invasion of October 1990 as an Anglo-Saxon threat to French interests in the continent. French fears of 'perfidious Albion' are driven home to the reader with a bluntness that few Anglo-Saxons would dare to emulate: 'Everybody in France knows that "les Anglais" are among the worst enemies the French ever had: they burnt Jeanne d'Arc alive, they stole Canada and India from us in 1763, they exiled Napoleon to a ridiculous little rock in the South Atlantic, and they sank our battle fleet at Mers-el-Kebir in 1940. And to top it all, their

women are ugly and their food is terrible' (p. 104). The argument is persuasive if somewhat heavy-handed; nonetheless, one wonders whether France would have withheld its military assistance to Rwanda if the threats to her client state had assumed a different cultural connotation. (If the case of Chad is any index, the answer is probably not.)

Prunier is at his best when discussing the politics and strategy of the RPF. His excellent grasp of the issues and choices confronting its leadership before and after the October 1990 invasion is a commentary on his close personal ties with some of the principal personalities associated with the RPF. Few analysts have presented a more convincing picture of its evolving relationships with the Museveni regime, of its internal organization and military strategy, and of the changes over time in its composition. And yet, one cannot avoid the feeling that his very cosy relationship with some PRF elements, along with the far greater magnitude of the horrors perpetrated by the *interhamwe*, have led him to grossly underestimate the human rights violations committed by the Tutsi invaders. There is indeed an important relationship between such abuses – resulting in the presence in Kigali of thousands of homeless, unemployed, aggrieved Hutu youth, many of whom had been pushed out of their rural homelands in the north-east in the wake of RPF attacks – and the ease with which the Habyalimana regime was able to recruit potential killers. The reverse is equally true. Nothing could have done more to attract supporters to the RPF than the massive human rights violations committed against innocent Tutsi civilians by Hutu activists. Involvement by victimization worked both ways.

Although the author makes a commendable effort to put his story in proper historical perspective, his handling of second-hand sources is often uncritical, and his conclusions open to question. To describe the spirit possession cult of Kubandwa as 'ecstatic and a bit crazy' (p. 34) is bound to raise the hackles of not a few anthropologists; to argue that the *buhake* is a 'noxious synthetic product' (p. 30) of Belgian overrule does not improve our understanding of the evolving dynamics of the relationships between clients and patrons; Belgian readers will be surprised to learn that from 1931 on 'Belgian cabinets often contained strongly anti-clerical socialist ministers' (p. 32); exactly what is meant by the 'Gebeka project' (p. 88) is anybody's guess; to see in the influence of 'eminent Belgian anthropologists and solemn Rwandese clerics... the major cause of the violence Rwanda has experienced at recurrent intervals since 1959' (p. 37) requires the strongest qualifications. Among other 'major causes of violence' is the resurgence and politicization of ethno-regional fault-lines, not only between north and south, Nduga and Kiga, but, among northerners between Bashiru and Bagoye (a critical element behind the so-called Lizinde affair). Neglect of the ethno-regional axis of reference leaves out of the picture a major clue to an understanding of the dialectics of violence in colonial and post-colonial times.

There is every indication that the manuscript would have benefited immensely from a thorough cleaning up of the text by a competent copy editor. Nonetheless, the merits of the book clearly outweigh its many obvious flaws. It is the only serious, in-depth discussion of the Rwanda crisis available in the English language. If for no other reason, the 'Anglo-Saxon' reader trying to understand the complex factors and circumstances behind the horrors of the Rwanda apocalypse will find Prunier's book essential reading.

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RENE LEMARCHAND

PERFORMANCE IN THE PRESENTATION  
OF THE PAST

*Power, Marginality and African Oral Literature*. Edited by GRAHAM FURNISS and LIZ GUNNER. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. xiv + 285. £35; \$59.95 (ISBN 0-521-48061-2).

This book derives from a conference held in London at the School of Oriental and African Studies in January 1991. It met as news of the Gulf War broke. Participants watched the drama on the hotel television sets with sober intensity. This context heightened my appreciation of ways in which power – and marginality – are not only *represented* in oral literatures but also *created* by the art of the singers and tellers. The contributors reveal how differently performance genres across sub-saharan Africa may address political issues. There are careful scrutinies of content and explanations of how ‘the forms with which [the performers] work are themselves invested with power; that is to say, the words, the texts, have the ability to provoke, to move, to direct, to prevent, to overturn and to recast social reality’ (p. 3).

The volume is grouped thematically. First is the appropriation of expressive forms by the state. Penina Mluma describes the active creation of cultural nationalism in Tanzania, from songs to mobilize support for TANU in the 1950s to ‘the *Ujamaa* phase’, noting that this has often meant ‘official art’ in praise of those in power; critical artists have been marginalized and dismissed as local, not of the nation. In contrast, Kofi Agovi traces a long history of *avudwene*, satirical songs in Nzema, in which still ‘a perfect liberty is allowed’, as noted in 1704 by Bosman (p. 48). ‘The *ezomenle* originates the poems, the *kokoduma* rearrange and set them to music and the *awuakama* perform them’ (p. 49). The *ezomenle* watch events and plan their comments through the year, adapting previous songs. Agovi only briefly indicates what is their sense of history and its appropriate representation but he shows by detailed analysis how their ‘discourses on governance’ are constructed and conveyed.

The second section identifies ways in which ‘oral forms articulate and represent to the performance and the audience particular visions of power relations in society’ (p. 4). Nzema satire does this too, but from an acceptance of the local order; representations of kings in Igbo oral narratives, on the other hand, are apparent fantasies which support Igbo expectations of democracy. Yet, as Chukwuma Azuonye points out, the Igbo assertion that they have no kings is not strictly true, and he argues that the tales also show ‘mythic filtering’ at work, discussing the very different kinds of authority figures who have over time been called *éze* (‘king’). Formal analyses of father–son relations by Veronika Görög-Karady and of ‘images of the powerful’ by Sabine Steinbrich also demonstrate the value of structuralist folklore methods when they are applied with a thorough understanding of particular societies and cultures. Domestic and familial relations are not only the ground of competition and inequality; they provide metaphors for power and its regulation, in tales which reproduce a shaping ideology – how to behave and what to avoid.

The operation of a performance so as actively to affect power relations, domestic or public, is the focus of the third section which includes Graham Furniss’s very rich and historically focused discussion of ‘the power of words and the relations between Hausa genres’. The fourth section considers the gendering effects of oral genres, through content or performance, for instance in Shona praise and popular lyrics, and contradictions in gender, status and power, as in contemporary productions of Zulu praise poetry and the rise of female singers in Malian music. The final section is on strategies of communication. Kwesi Yankah’s excellent



study of the political uses of indirection shows, for instance, just how differently royal linguists in Ghana can operate, while Paulo Farias shows that ‘when we talk about “praise” and “kingship” we are referring to dynamic conceptions of being, and to the manipulation of its ebbs and flows’ (p. 227).

As these limited examples indicate, there is much here to interest historians. Politics is by definition dynamic, but oral material has often been studied as a static repertoire of potential information. This volume – which discusses written genres as well – importantly focuses on the politics of actual performances, and the contestable meanings for audiences and performers, given who they are, when and where and to whom they perform. Contributors also suggest how diverse are the artistic forms through which power, and indeed marginality, may be claimed. They show ways of grasping the specifics of a political culture, and many methodological routes to interpretation. Stimulating!

*The Queen's University of Belfast*

ELIZABETH TONKIN

### THE PATTERN OF AFRICAN ART

*African Masterworks in the Detroit Institute of Arts*. Essays by MICHAEL KAN and ROY SIEBER, text by DAVID W. PENNEY, MARY NOOTER ROBERTS, and HELEN M. SHANNON. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995. Pp. xi + 180. 100 color photographs, 26 b/w. £27.25, paperback (ISBN 1-56098-602-6).

This book is a conventional connoisseurs' catalogue of a notable collection of African art developed at Detroit since 1890 through gifts and acquisitions with donors' funds. It includes a standard introductory essay about African art in general (Sieber) and an essay about the formation of this collection in which claims for beauty and high prices vie for attention (Kan), followed by the presentation of 88 works of art arranged in the conventional way in seven sections from West to Southeast Africa. A flawless color photograph of each object is accompanied by a caption, a comment, data about immediate provenance and references to earlier discussions of the object. The caption includes the ethnic group of origin, dimensions and acquisition data. Most comments deal in time-honored fashion with style, use and function. General references to the type of object discussed are embedded in its text. The vagueness of information about the ultimate African provenance of many of the objects, however, will no doubt raise the hackles of historians.

The collection itself is an important one and contains excellent specimens of most sculptural genres. Playing the collector's game one can doubt the status of some items (e.g. no. 59 and perhaps no. 39) and one must reject the attribution of the sixteenth/seventeenth century(?) ivory case (no. 56) to the Kongo, because neither the surface designs nor the figures come even close to early Kongo works. One can discuss the validity of attributing an object to an ethnic group only on the grounds of style (no. 15, probably correct). Certainly one must reject cases where such an attribution then becomes part of a wider argument, as in the famous case of so-called Owo ivory (no. 31). This object resembles known seventeenth-century objects from West Africa. This group also resembles, but more vaguely, recent objects from Owo. Is that sufficient to assert that this object was made in Owo in the seventeenth century?

As the collection was mostly built up through private collectors and because the catalogue is so conventional this book reflects their outlook. Nearly all the objects shown are sculptures (84 out of 88 – the four others are textiles) and most are wood sculptures (69 out of 88 objects). The comments are a hotchpotch of aesthetic

appreciation, appeal to snobbery (all those kings and royal consorts), a hint of the exotic and a dash of speculation. Historical context is nearly totally absent, which may well be a good thing. For where history occurs, in the introductory paragraphs to each section, we are told fables such as that Ghana mustered 200,000 warriors and collapsed precisely in 1076 (p. 38), that much of Central Africa was settled gradually 'after A.D. 1000 by Bantu agriculturalists' (p. 138) or that the Swahili are 'of Arab, African, and Indian descent' (p. 156) to mention but a few of such egregious errors.

This book is obviously produced for visitors of the museum, although art historians will be grateful to have it available as a work of reference. All the more the pity that it is studded with as many stereotypes as there are nails in the famous Kongo *nkisi*, and that no attempt was made to rise beyond the hackneyed level of description, to write texts and comments that engage and challenge the ordinary visitor rather than perpetuate the patten of connoisseurs.

*Madison, Wisconsin*

JAN VANSINA

### SHORTER NOTICES

*Dictionary of Portuguese-African Civilization, Vol. 1: From Discovery to Independence.* By BENJAMIN NÚÑEZ. London: Hans Zell, 1995. Pp. xxi + 532. \$110 (ISBN 1-873836-10-4).

This is the first of two projected volumes, covering a miscellany of terms and concepts. The second volume will feature personalities, apparently with some emphasis on kings, African as well as European. Mr. Núñez appears to be an assiduous compiler, more guided by the librarians and archivists he thanks than by scholars, none of whom turn up in his 'Acknowledgements'. Also lurking in the background is a tendency to celebrate 'the long Portuguese involvement in the exploration, settlement, and development of the African continent' (p. xi), in the entirely outdated tradition of Luso-Tropicalism.

Readers of this journal will encounter a few curiosities among the perhaps 3,000 short (30- to 200-word) entries, taken directly, faithfully, from 250 or so sources, most of them in English, many of them older, and none of them really current. But few readers will find much of scholarly utility. Mr Núñez (the Portuguese name would presumably be Nunes) is well meaning, in a Luso-Tropical sort of way, but very poorly informed about African history. A single example: two successive entries on 'Bantu migration[s] into Angola' and '...Mozambique' (pp. 56-7) inform us of the stereotypical 'migration', in one case starting 'around the year 1,000' (no doubt A.D.) and in the other 'at about the time of the birth of Christ'. For Angola (to take advantage of my personal expertise), one searches the bibliography in vain for the names Amaral, Thornton, Heintze or Dias. René Pélissier's massive military history turns up for Angola but not for Mozambique or Guiné. Users of this dictionary should be prepared, as the compiler warns them, for unconventional forms of listing, but he doesn't warn of the unexpected emphases derived from selected, naïve readings, typos and misspellings (often in the Portuguese), and odd choices of entry (e.g. *pepino*, standard Portuguese for 'cucumber'). On the other hand, how many of us knew that '*agua branca* (Pg.)' is 'the name given by Portuguese sailors c. 1500 to milky sea waters populated by millions of protozoans... that glow at night' (p. 15)?

I would recommend this compilation only for specialists, who know better.

*University of Virginia*

J. C. MILLER

*The African Diaspora*. Edited by ALUSINE JALLOH and STEPHEN E. MAIZLISH. Arlington: Texas A&M University Press, 1996. Pp. xi+152. No price given (ISBN 0-89096-731-8).

This volume contains a series of lectures delivered at the University of Texas at Arlington in 1995. Some follow the customary usage of the title and refer to the African communities outside Africa. Joseph E. Harris, long interested in this theme, starts with a brief global survey of African migration, voluntary and involuntary, over the centuries, ending with the 'mobilized diasporas' which have concerned themselves with African affairs. Three contributions examine American diasporas. Colin E. Palmer notes how the 'watersheds' of black American history, the emergence of creolization in the early eighteenth century, and its crystalization in the early nineteenth, bear no relation to the 'watersheds' of white American history. Douglas B. Chambers, in a study of historical creolization in eighteenth-century Virginia, indicates how African values and relationships persisted, so that 'the historical Afro-Virginian world that the slaves made was based on a heritage as much African as American'. Dale T. Graden illustrates how in Brazil, after the abolition of the slave trade, the authorities in Bahia, partly by repressive action against their African diaspora, suppressed agitation for the abolition of slavery.

With the contribution by Alusine Jalloh, the joint-editor, the focus shifts from the overseas diasporas to a diaspora within Africa – the Fula trading diaspora in Sierra Leone. He shows how they established themselves in Freetown, importing cattle, and in the associated butchery business, using their kinship and Islamic relationships to build up an exclusive 'moral community' of trust. His study, recalling Abner Cohen's pioneer (1969) work on the Hausa trading community in Ibadan, might prompt historians to study other trading diasporas within Africa.

The most important contribution to the volume, however, has nothing to do with diasporas. Joseph Inikori is dissatisfied with the debate of recent years over the nature of African slavery, particularly with Paul Lovejoy's conclusion that slavery was 'probably more developed in Africa than anywhere else in the world at any period of history'. In his admirably contentious way he refutes this judgment by comparing slavery in Africa with slavery in mediaeval England and in Russia. He concludes that if one uses the same standards to evaluate what constitutes slavery and what constitutes serfdom, a large proportion of the so-called slaves in Africa should count as serfs. Thus he gives the debate a new dimension. We can now look forward to a rejoinder from the Lovejoy camp – unless perhaps it is felt that Inikori has the last word.

London

CHRISTOPHER FYFE

*Palmerston and Africa. The Rio Nunez Affair – Competition, Diplomacy and Justice.*

By RODERICK BRAITHWAITE. London and New York: British Academic Press, 1996. Pp. xx+350, 8 plates. £39.50 (ISBN 1-86084-109-1).

This is a remarkable example of meticulous scholarship by a dedicated *amateur*. In the early 1990s Roderick Braithwaite, a City businessman, discovered a box of neglected family papers, relating to an international incident briefly mentioned by some historians of the upper Guinea coast. In February 1849 Joseph Braithwaite, brother to the author's great-great-grandfather, an experienced West African trader linked in partnership with George Martin to the commission house of Forster & Smith, established a factory near Boké, in the river Nunez. Next month French and Belgian naval officers, supporting the Landuma chief Tongo against his brother Mayore, attacked Boké, bombarded the British factory, and acquiesced

in its looting. From the obscure details of this minor affair Roderick Braithwaite has derived important insights into a transitional phase of international relations in Africa. On the basis of original research in British, French and Belgian archives and of wide and systematic reading he explores the implications of the incident for the history of West African commerce, of relations among Guinean peoples, of British political and constitutional history, of international relations and international law. There is a hero: Lord Palmerston (who in an appendix is reverently compared to Winston Churchill). Braithwaite eulogizes his concern that justice should be done to British citizens abroad, his humane faith in the civilizing potential of free trade, his remarkable capacity to relate minute detail to broad principles of international law. Palmerston sought justice for these two traders with the same tenacity as for Don Pacifico; had he not been dismissed in 1851 Braithwaite thinks he would have succeeded.

Braithwaite's thesis is so multi-layered, and his documentation so full, that in parts it makes difficult reading; over-copious notes may mask the precise source of new evidence. His enthusiasm for his subject produces some excessive stylistic flourishes, dramatic metaphors, rhetorical questions. The book has more importance for historians of the international context than of Africa itself; Braithwaite has not had the opportunity or resources to explore relationships between Landouma, Nalu and Fulbe in great depth. But he confirms the view of R. J. Gavin's still unpublished thesis about Palmerston's concerned interest in African development. In addition, Africanists will find interesting illustration of the new commercial relationships being sponsored by houses like Forster & Smith, of the influence exercised by Eurafrican brokers like John Nelson Bicaise, of persistent anglophobia in the French navy; they will learn much that is new of Leopold I's premature and abortive colonial initiatives. And in the process they can enjoy a fascinating family history.

*Banchory*

JOHN D. HARGREAVES

*From Mau Mau to Harambee: Memoirs and Memoranda of Colonial Kenya, Tom Askwith.* Edited by JOANNA LEWIS. African Studies Centre, University of Cambridge: Cambridge, 1995. Pp. viii + 221. £8.95 (ISBN 0-902993-30-5).

This study presents reminiscences and official documentation of Tom Askwith's 25-year career as a colonial administrator in Kenya. Askwith served as a District Officer, Municipal Native Affairs Officer and Commissioner for Community Development between 1936 and 1961. The book focuses mainly on Askwith's experiences in the last two positions. Specific details are given to his role in supervising the Mau Mau rehabilitation program, his spearheading community development programs, and his memos to colonial officials in Nairobi, warning them of the need for constructive policies to address social issues just before Mau Mau.

In her introduction, Lewis urges the reader not to subsume Askwith under the rubric of the bad colonial official who deprecated Africans. She argues that Askwith held strong liberal convictions, 'a particular blend of paternalism, progressive outlook and a politics of inclusion', which was uncharacteristic of contemporary habits of thought. Because of these beliefs Askwith oversaw the success and expansion of the Community Development Program, a project which encouraged Africans to undertake communal self-help projects at the grassroots level to elevate their standard of living. Askwith was a co-founder of the United Kenya Club, an inter-racial club where educated Africans met and socialized with Europeans and Asians. Lewis claims that it was Askwith who delivered what little

humane treatment was offered to Mau Mau suspects during rehabilitation, and it was partly because of his sympathies towards these Kenyans that he was asked to resign his post as the head of the Mau Mau rehabilitation program.

No doubt all these achievements put Askwith ahead of his colleagues in a racist Kenya where settlers as well as colonial officials abused the human rights of Africans. However, Lewis' introduction makes Askwith appear more forward-thinking than the memoirs suggest. This is particularly glaring when Lewis puts Askwith in the category of those 'individuals committed to the struggle for racial justice across the continent of Africa'. Such glorification is uncalled for. While it is important that we recognize the individual agency of colonial officials, we must also be careful to identify the limitations of such agency. It is clear that Askwith had great sympathies towards the Kenyans he came into contact with, but we must not overly applaud such attitudes. It is still hard not to see Askwith as part of the exploitative colonial establishment. Nonetheless, the student of colonial Kenya will find Askwith's memoirs useful in understanding the contradictory mentalities of colonial officials, and in elucidating how colonial bureaucracy impeded those wishing to implement radical changes in Africa.

*Williams College, Massachusetts*

KENDA MUTONGI

*Limits of Anarchy: Intervention and State Formation in Chad.* By SAM C. NOLUTSHUNGU. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1996. Pp. xiii + 348. \$39.50 (ISBN 0-8139-1628-3).

It is a pleasure to review this brilliant book on Chad by Sam Nolutshungu. His study offers first of all an account of Chad's history since independence, which in itself fills an important gap in the English-language historiography. However, the author goes much farther. He also tackles, more comparatively, the important issue of state creation and disintegration, analysing Chad as a 'harbinger of troubles to come' on a continent now menaced by marginality and failure. He also puts special emphasis on the issue of civil strife and international politics, of international processes of mediation, peacekeeping and armed intervention, this again within a comparative frame.

Nolutshungu provides a very good overview of the events since the early 1960s, but his study is not meant to be really innovative. Although the author undertook fieldwork in the 1980s, this does not reveal new facts previously unknown to specialists. He did not really become immersed in Chadian affairs, which is sometimes a handicap (one can find a few minor errors throughout his book); but this had advantages: today, the few specialists studying Chadian politics have been on the job for over twenty years, in the process becoming themselves embroiled in the struggles they have studied. Nolutshungu, on the contrary, has managed to keep a healthy distance from all factions.

It is especially in its comparative aspects and in the field of foreign intervention that Nolutshungu provides important new insights. He very ably develops his thesis that military intervention in many-sided conflicts such as Chad's internal war fails to produce stability or to advance the project of state creation. In a fragmented political community it is apt to exacerbate, and even become overwhelmed by, the divisions that prevent the consolidation of political authority; this all the more so when intervention by one foreign power provokes competing intervention that sustain rival claimants to power. He also highlights the entanglement of state sovereignty and foreign intervention showing how each sets limits to the other. Nolutshungu's comparative approach enables him to make pertinent remarks on ethnicity, patrimonialism, and democratization in a context of armed factionalism.

All in all, this book definitely represents an advance in Chadian studies. It is, moreover, well written and abstains from unnecessary scientific jargon, making it accessible to a wider public.

*African Studies Centre, Leiden*

ROBERT BUIJTENHUIJS

*São Tomé and Príncipe*. By CAROLINE S. SHAW (World Bibliographical Series, Vol. 172). Oxford, Santa Barbara and Denver: Clio Press, 1994. Pp. xxvi + 183. £40 (ISBN 1-85109-181-5).

São Tomé e Príncipe is the second smallest country in Africa and one of the least well studied in the continent because of its Portuguese colonial past, so Caroline Shaw's bibliography is warmly to be welcomed. Despite their tiny size, these two highly fertile volcanic islands twice became the leading world producer of a tropical crop: sugar in the sixteenth century and cocoa in the early twentieth century. African slaves provided the labour for both these spurts of production, in the second instance leading to a successful international economic boycott in 1909. Linguists and literary specialists have long been attracted by the islands' Portuguese Creole language and culture, manifested most notably in the mediaeval romance of Charlemagne of Tchiloli theatrical performances. São Tomé e Príncipe hit the headlines again in a modest way in 1991 by becoming one of the first Marxist African states to democratize and turn to the West. As the main purpose of this bibliographical series is to make countries as accessible as possible to speakers of English, the bibliography inevitably tends to reflect the topics which have brought the country to the attention of the wider world. For the historian, the inclusion of a number of items under thematic headings is a little confusing, but cross-referencing helps to resolve this problem. Within these constraints, Caroline Shaw has made a commendable effort to put together a balanced compilation of annotated items. This will hopefully stimulate further research on this delightful country, which deserves to be better known by Africanists.

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W. G. CLARENCE-SMITH

*Togo*. Par SAMUEL DECALO (World Bibliographical Series, Vol. 178). Oxford, Santa Barbara and Denver: Clio Press, 1995. Pp. xxviii + 195. £34 (ISBN 1-85109-160-2).

M. Decalo n'est pas un inconnu pour les chercheurs qui s'intéressent au Togo. Il a en effet publié, il y a une dizaine d'années, une biographie des hommes politiques togolais (qui en est à sa troisième édition revue), ouvrage fort utile pour les chercheurs. Il vient d'inscrire dans la même ligne d'intérêt un nouvel ouvrage, le 178ème volume d'une série consacrée à la bibliographie de tous les pays du monde.

Une remarque s'impose d'emblée dès la lecture des premières pages: il s'agit d'un ouvrage essentiellement destiné au monde anglo-saxon (USA, Canada, Grande Bretagne notamment), tant par sa présentation que par son contenu. L'introduction reflète un point de vue que partagent bon nombre de lecteurs du continent américain en ce qui concerne l'évolution du Togo au cours des dernières décennies. La même préoccupation se lit dans la présentation des ouvrages: les thèses, tous niveaux confondus (thèse d'université, de 3ème cycle, nouveau régime ou d'Etat), sont qualifiées de Ph.D. Le choix des ouvrages présentés, sans doute en raison des sources disponibles et accessibles à l'auteur, obéit au même principe: donner à l'utilisateur, américain ou britannique, l'essentiel des informations



disponibles compte tenu de ses préoccupations majeures dans les divers domaines retenus (une trentaine). Un atout cependant: en dehors des thèses citées, les 565 références retenues sont annotées, ce qui permet au lecteur de se fixer avant de rechercher le document en cause.

On a affaire à un guide très pratique pour les lecteurs du monde anglophone (chercheurs, universitaires, hommes d'affaires, hommes politiques); mais les connaisseurs devront recourir à d'autres sources pour une revue plus détaillée des publications concernant le Togo.

*Université du Bénin, Lomé-Togo*

N. L. GAYIBOR

*Eritrea*. Edited by RANDALL FEGLEY. (World Bibliographical Series, Volume 181.) Oxford, Santa Barbara and Denver: Clio Press, 1995. Pp. lix-130. £45 (ISBN 1-85109-245-5).

This volume, compiled by Randall Fegley of the Pennsylvania State University, is divided into two sections: the first is an introduction to the geography, modern history, peoples, religion and contemporary politics of Eritrea. The second section consists of a selected bibliography (341 items) divided according to different subjects, such as geography, explorers, travel guides, prehistory and archeology, history, ethnic groups, religion, languages, social conditions, politics and human rights. The object is to present to the English reader a selection of documents, including some important works in Italian and other European languages, that are fundamental to an understanding of the country. A large part of the volume lists works related to Ethiopia, given the impossibility of separating the historical data of both countries, and pertains to the civilization of the entire area from a historical perspective. Of particular interest is the section related to colonialism: it must be said that it is a hard task to publish a comprehensive bibliography of Italian colonialism, and the compiler has listed only the major works of the best-known Italian scholars. A series of cross-references are included in each section and many problem areas are thus covered in the volume. Fegley attempts to outline a social history of the country, and the bibliography includes titles on education, politics, mass media, agriculture, finance and economic development, which are all valid contributions to the study of recent developments in Eritrea. The last section, on bibliographies, lists only eight items, and omits important works by Cerulli, Conti Rossini and Zanutto, just to mention the more important works relating to the colonial period. While Cerulli is not mentioned at all, Conti Rossini and Fumagalli, Pollera and other Italian scholars are at least mentioned in the introduction. An index of names and titles concludes the work, representing a useful research tool, not only for scholars, but for anyone interested in Eritrea.

*Bologna University*

IRMA TADDIA

*Elsbeth Huxley: A Bibliography*. By ROBERT CROSS and MICHAEL PERKIN, with Foreword by ELSPETH HUXLEY. Winchester and New Castle, Delaware: St Paul's Bibliographies and Oak Knoll Press, 1996. Pp. xix + 187. £40. (No ISBN).

In her Foreword Mrs Huxley describes Mr Cross as an 'eager truffle-hound rooting in the woods for tubers' and with reason; he has made an amazing haul. Listed here are forty-eight books and pamphlets written by Huxley, from *White Man's Country: Lord Delamere and the Making of Kenya* (1935), to *Peter Scott: Painter and Naturalist* (1993); twenty-one more edited by her or with her contributions; and no less than 762 articles in newspapers and periodicals, from a fourteen-year-old's account of a riding accident in Kenya in 1921 to a description

of a recent return to Kenya in 1995. The BBC archives have yielded up over 300 radio and television appearances, nearly one quarter of which were broadcast during the Second World War to inform the schools and armed forces on the Empire and the war, women and the war, American history and so, upliftingly, on. What an achievement to chronicle and a fine chronicle it is, too. The annotations are for the assistance of collectors and literary rather than social historians, taken up as they are with such detail as numbers of editions (and revisions, in one instance to avoid a libel suit by Dr J. B. Danquah to do with the 'Kibi murder case' recently unravelled by Richard Rathbone), print runs, royalties to make an academic green, translations, and where the books were reviewed. It was a mistake to omit reference to tables of contents for Mrs Huxley's histories, travels and reports; without chapter headings new students will not always grasp the relevance of some of her titles.

Of historians of Africa, specialists on Kenya will naturally find most to chase up here. The books are well known, but there was a lot of pamphleteering which would also repay study. The list of press and periodical articles is perhaps the best scholarly resource, principally for Mrs Huxley's sympathetically critical engagement with colonial policy and the white settlers' future in East Africa. The editors are to be congratulated on a most meticulous work of reference, rooted out of Rhodes House, the Royal Commonwealth Society collection at Cambridge, the publisher Chatto and Windus's papers at Reading, the McMillan Library in Nairobi, Mrs Huxley's own bookshelves and elsewhere. And after a day's work with Mrs Huxley one could always go to bed with one of her detective stories.

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JOHN LONSDALE