

together an eclectic collection of articles without connecting threads to stitch them together, the editors have violated a basic rule of collective works.

Half of the contributions are potted versions of work already done by stalwart Ethiopianists. Inoffensive for the most part, occasionally they lapse into opinionated statements, such as one editor's assurance that Ethiopia's "revolutionary and federal democracy has become a model which is quite unique" (3). In his summary of the Meles Zenawi era that closes the book, the same editor gratuitously blames the hapless opposition for lacking "long term political maturity" in challenging the regime (430). Another contributor describes in some detail the tortured history of elections under the EPRDF, and concludes that the move to an effective multiparty democracy is some years away, "if only because of the weaknesses of the opposition" (330). One is left to wonder what accounts for a crippled opposition.

The book also includes work by younger scholars based on recent research offering fresh data and perspectives, provided one can unearth them from the thick layer of conceptualization and pseudoscientific jargon they are buried under, following current social science fashion. Among other topics, this covers the reaction of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church to the challenges of modernity represented by the phenomenal spread of Pentecostalism, the veiled posture of Islam in Ethiopia (a faith that represents some 34% of its population), as well as the revival of Rastafarianism.

Such shortcomings notwithstanding, *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia* does provide useful guidance to anyone with a recently acquired interest in the fortunes of that country.

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Chris Vaughan. *Darfur: Colonial Violence, Sultanic Legacies & Local Politics, 1916–1956*. Woodbridge, Suffolk, U.K.: James Currey, 2015. xiv + 231 pp. Map. Glossary. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$80.00. Cloth. ISBN: 978-1-84701-111-4.

This study contributes significantly to scholarship about the colonial state, using evidence derived from the historical experience of colonial Darfur (1916–56). The author wisely refrains from reifying any a priori concept of "the state," which, he proposes, should rather be understood in the ever-contingent shifting context of historical process and political struggle. He places special emphasis on the role of "chiefs," by which he means those, both black and white, who served along the interface between the colonial rulers and the ruled, where they implemented a "negotiated authoritarianism" (19). The author's introductory discussion of geography and ethnicity is a small masterpiece of synthesis that should hold scriptural authority over the perhaps well-intentioned but often ill-informed discussion of contemporary Darfur.

Chapter 1 assesses the significance of precolonial legacies. The author argues that “the coherence of the state itself under the Sultans should . . . be questioned rather than assumed” (35). A fundamental dynamic of social history lay in the intrinsic tension between the chiefs and the king, as mediated by the subjects; in some cases the abuses of rapacious or excessively violent chiefs might be suppressed by the forces of the king, while in others the excesses of royal agents might be blunted or averted by chiefs who defended their communities. Successful survival in this political setting encouraged the construction of complicated and infinitely mutable networks of political relationship, often supported by intermarriage and ethnic transition, which embraced all levels of authority. Discernible also was a long-term trend toward the growth of more centralized modes of control. This was visible first in the creation of the late sultanic superior governors entitled *maqdam*, who were often slaves, but was then enhanced by the intrusion of conquering nineteenth-century aliens such as al-Zubayr Rahma Mansur, the Turco-Egyptians, and the forces of the Sudanese Mahdi. Finally, the restored sultanate of ‘Ali Dinar (1898–1916) drew upon and consolidated the centralizing gains of his predecessors. Thus at the reconquest, the new European colonial power of the twentieth century could avail itself of a historical process that was advantageous to itself.

Chapter 2 examines the Anglo-Egyptian conquest and consolidation of power over the years 1916 to 1921. A central theme, overlooked by existing literature, was the creation and arming by British authorities of tribal militias of “friendlies,” who were then allowed to loot, rape, and pillage in a manner comparable to the *janjawid* of contemporary discourse. The state-sponsored violence that was thus unleashed provoked a major rebellion in the Nyala uprising of 1921.

Chapter 3 explores colonial political culture in the predominantly Fur-speaking, sedentary districts west of Jabal Marra from 1917 to 1945. Of central importance was the concept of “Indirect Rule,” known in the Sudan as “Native Administration,” by which white officials undertook to govern via indigenous leaders observing traditional usages. Conspicuous here was the unchecked rapacity of lower-level leaders, often entitled *shartay*. British administrators failed in their attempt to create a higher level of authority called an emirate capable of curbing the abuses of subordinates; rather, the emir’s agents themselves joined in the regime of “endemic extortion” (104).

Chapter 4 turns to the experience of pastoral communities from 1917 to 1937. The British greatly increased the powers of chiefs through the institution of native courts wielding significant powers. However, the ubiquity of factional rivalries over the chiefly office itself limited the systematic misuse of power by anyone—and made the tenure of a chief tenuous and often short. Chapter 5 explores the futility of the idea, popular among some administrators and some chiefs, that each “tribe” should have its own tribal territory where it lived exclusively. Chapter 6 reveals a widening and modest modernization of chiefly political perspectives in the later years of colonial rule (1937–56).

A final virtue of this study lies in the wise comparative discussion in its concluding section of the broader literature about the roles of chiefs in the colonial state.

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Todd Cleveland. *Diamonds in the Rough: Corporate Paternalism and African Professionalism on the Mines of Colonial Angola, 1917–1975*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2015. xvi + 289. Maps. Photographs. Illustrations. Acknowledgments. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$32.95. Paper. ISBN: 978-0-8214-2134-5.

“Diamonds in the Rough” is a brave choice of title for an academic book, given the large number of volumes that appear when this title is Googled! Nonetheless, it is an apt one, and Todd Cleveland did well to draw upon it in his analysis of diamond mining in Angola from 1917 to 1975, and the company, Diamang (Companhia de Diamantes de Angola, Diamond Company of Angola), that controlled it. This is a book that “builds on and extends the rich literature on mining experiences in central and southern Africa” (9) by presenting what is the first history of diamond mining in colonial Angola. As Cleveland demonstrates at many points, the social, political, and economic realities of Angola make it very different from other places where mining was undertaken in the region, and as such this is a rich addition to the existing literature.

The narrative of the book spirals. Each chapter traces one theme across the decades from 1917 to 1975, exploring what changed across time and what remained constant. Drawing on a wide range of sources, Cleveland notes that between these years, “approximately one million African men, women and children . . . toiled at Diamang” (3), and here he tells some of their story. Life at Diamang was mostly calm, and the central question he explores is “Why, in light of the demanding labor regime in Lunda [diamond region], did African mine workers not adopt a more militant posture?” (3). The answer Cleveland offers is that working at Diamang was one of the few ways in which colonial taxes could be paid, and that the quality of life for workers there was relatively good. He argues that Diamang was “pragmatic, paternalistic, and profit-driven,” and that in turn the local labor force became “professionalized” (4)—all processes that receive his analytic attention.

By exploring the political economy of Lunda from 1870 (chapter 2), Cleveland shows how Diamang assumed the role of a “state within a state”—relatively autonomous but building on and contributing financially to the Portuguese colonial apparatus. Diamang relied on colonial practices such as *shibalo* (forced labor) to provide workers for the mines in the early years,