and livestock movements. With maximum force and indiscriminate violence, this policy was in line with the colonial mode of counterinsurgency: that is, rounding up civilians seen as the (re)sources of insurgents, as everyone could become 'a potential security threat' (p. 100).

In spite of Whittaker's careful hand, some errors slipped into the book. The Wagalla massacre occurred in 1984, not in 1994 (p. 139, note 61); that Moyale was subdivided in December 1962 between Mandhera and Marsabit districts is correct, but that the district was subdivided between Marsabit and Wajir districts was noted wrongly in the footnote (p. 79 and p. 79, note 61); it was not Ahmed but Abdi Samatar who wrote the paper 'Destruction of state and society in Somalia: beyond the tribal convention' (p. 70); and, last but not least, one of the principal leaders of the *Shifta* is called both Deghow Sambul (p. 29, 37) and Maalim Sambul (p. 43, 133), two different yet similar names that still create confusion among readers.

Nevertheless, Whittaker has researched a timely topic at a time when the Kenyan government is struggling with another insurgency, Al-Shabaab, in the Muslim-populated areas of the former NFD and the Coast Province. The study will also be pertinent to global issues of conflict and counterinsurgency, and comparative scholars and students specializing in those areas will find parallels to similar struggles elsewhere.

Mohamed Haji Ingiriis
University of Oxford
ingiriis@yahoo.com;
mohamed.hajiabdullahi@spc.ox.ac.uk
doi:10.1017/S0001972017000249

Benjamin Gardner, *Selling the Serengeti: the cultural politics of safari tourism*. Athens GA: University of Georgia Press (hb US$79.95 – 978 0 8203 4507 9; pb US$25.95 – 978 0 8203 4508 6). 2016, xxviii + 208 pp.

Conservation and capitalism are two strange bedfellows. The conservationist community and critical scholarship are both divided on the merits of market-based approaches as a way to protect the environment, albeit for different reasons. Yet, despite widespread uneasiness, the neoliberalization of conservation marches on, producing intriguing scholarship that engages the role of the state and non-state agents in neoliberal conservation and ecotourism. *Selling the Serengeti* by Benjamin Gardner is a timely contribution to these debates. It challenges us to rethink two key aspects when ecotourism meets local communities: what is the role of the state in neoliberal conservation? And how do rural communities respond to the challenges and opportunities in struggles over land and resource control offered by processes of neoliberalization?

The book presents a unique account of local politics around three characteristic tourism investments that have evolved with the onset of neoliberalization in Tanzania's conservation sector from the 1980s onwards. For years, these investors have been engaged with Loliondo villages east of the world-famous Serengeti National Park, an area populated by Maasai pastoralists. Gardner has spent nearly two decades studying this area and has provided a rich account of the cultural politics of tourism in Loliondo in all its facets and contradictions.

The author paints a complex picture of neoliberal conservation where the rural Maasai communities in Northern Tanzania are not simply victims but actively engage in and appropriate processes of neoliberalization in the context of

community-based foreign ecotourism investments. The Maasai choose to appropriate rather than simply reject neoliberalization against the background of their historical struggles vis-à-vis the colonial and postcolonial state for political and cultural self-determination, and for the continuation of their livestock-based livelihoods.

The author asks three main questions throughout the book, two of which are telling as to the framing of the issue at hand: 'What happens when the state … pursues policies and practices that threaten the very existence of Maasai people?' And 'how do Maasai use their iconic status to challenge global patterns of accumulation and dispossession?' Arguably, these lead the inquiry in a particular direction. Here, the portrayal of neoliberalization as a site of social and political struggle loses some of its analytical edge by maintaining a clear state–society dichotomy. In such a state-centrist reading, ecotourism investors play a somewhat supporting role to explain the major plot of two main actors pitted against each other: the monolithic state versus the rural communities.

In Chapter 2, Gardner challenges the essentialized timeless landscape of Loliondo as a 'pure' Maasai community. Rather than being the 'last place with pure pastoralism', Loliondo is a product of a political struggle to maintain a regional economy capable of supporting pastoralism against anti-pastoralist development policies. In this light, liberalization is seen to present new opportunities to Maasai villages to capture tourism revenues and promote their claims to land rights and pastoralist livelihoods, but liberalization also comes with the risk of dispossession in the name of conservation. Gardner's main and captivating argument is that, in this context of new opportunities and risks, Loliondo Maasai leaders reimagined the village as a property-holding, authentic community, appropriating the neoliberal discourse of privatized property rights and decentralized natural resource governance.

Chapter 4 zooms into the Tanzanian hunting industry and the prominent case of OBC, an Arab hunting company with a lot of money and political influence. Eventually, state and local police tried to evict residents and their livestock from parts of their village lands. This event is quintessential to the author's interpretation of Maasai sentiments about the state as the actual perpetrator in pursuit of control of communal lands following previous waves of dispossession. In this perspective, OBC is just the 'latest pawn' used by the state. The author presents an arena populated by different actors that can roughly be divided into state representatives at the local and regional level, local communities, and tourism investors. In this context, neoliberalism and neoliberal conservation are conceptualized as a state project of continuous dispossession and reassertion of control over communal lands. This state project makes the private sector complicit where it is useful. While I concur with much of this analysis, I would have liked a more nuanced reading of what makes state officials at local and central level engage with rural communities in patronizing and disenfranchising ways.

In Chapter 5 we learn about investors' attempts to handle a land conflict by dividing Maasai communities along ethnic lines, exploiting internal ethnic differences to grant a particular group authority to rule over the others. We see how the investors are employing the rhetoric of a timeless Africa to essentialize local people and citizens into ethnic subjects, denying Maasai their political agency as people in pursuit of their livelihoods.

The last chapter engages the critique of market-based conservation in human geography. Gardner argues that neoliberalization can result in the dispossession of local people from their lands, but it may equally lead to an appropriation of land control by people through a process of commodification of land and resources. This dialectic is inherently unstable and evades generalization,

demanding from us a critical engagement with the concepts and the empirical data at hand.

To conclude, this is an intriguing contribution to a body of literature that has been preoccupied with the tension between conservation and capitalism, and pushes us to rethink the notion of neoliberal conservation and ecotourism. Gardner reminds us not to forget that conservation and capitalism are unthinkable without the state.

Jevgeniy Bluwstein
University of Copenhagen
jevgeniy@ifro.ku.dk
doi:10.1017/S0001972017000250

Jane Plastow and Yvette Hutchison (editors), with Christine Matzke (guest editor), *African Theatre 14: contemporary women*. Martlesham, Suffolk: James Currey (pb £19.99 – 978 1 84701 131 2). 2015, 144 pp.

Volume editors Jane Plastow and Yvette Hutchison, along with guest editor Christine Matzke, are to be applauded for facilitating a long overdue twenty-first-century update on African theatre and performance that focuses on women. The collection consists of an invigorating and provocative array of essays and interviews, a play script and book reviews from across the African continent. The editors have selected work from young and established practitioners, introducing the reader to a diversity of concerns and voices heretofore neglected by scholarship. It is a slim volume but a vital step in recognizing the influences of contemporary women theatre artists. Each contribution offers a front-line view of a regional personality, their context, work, methods and life. The articles lay bare the passion, commitment and generosity of spirit that is reshaping African theatre and performance.

One wonders why it took so long for such a collection and why African theatre scholarship has been so focused on a small number of male African theatre artists. Like the continent itself, the nature of African theatre is evolving, and education and access to the wider currents shaping the world have empowered the participation of women. Many of the authors – and, indeed, the subjects – of the chapters in this book are putting themselves at risk professionally if not personally to express, explore and experiment with the form and content of theatre. Issues range from gender roles and inequality to issues of political and national import.

Egyptian artist Dalia Basiouny gives a candid personal account of her life and the vagaries of making theatre over the past twenty-eight years in a nation with so many dangerous and crossing political currents. Her maturation as an artist is inextricably intertwined with her work, her nation, revolution, and the social and cultural evolution of women. The documentation of her work as both theatre maker and foreign-trained scholar offers keen and knowing insights into being both a theatre participant and an observer.

The article 'Performativities as activism' articulates the brutality of gender-based violence against women. Authors Sara Matchett and Nicola Cloete link local, national and international contexts, outlining how female performance activism in South Africa reflects and is part of multinational campaigns, such as One Billion Rising and Bring Back Our Girls, that call for active strategies to end violence against women throughout the world. The article details the context and performance of *Walk: South Africa*, a work created in reaction to the violence and rape cultures of India and South Africa. Inspired by Indian