

are very violent, as the case studies reflect (p. 178), but we do not know what the effect is of that violence. One could imagine that high levels of violence or a long-lasting stalemate would have an effect on the available resources, fighters' morale, and the rebels' vision for what is possible to achieve during the war, which could all have an impact on relationships between different factions. What kind of mechanisms keep rebels together during these periods of stalemates, and what would threaten their cohesive effects?

While the book triggers some additional questions, its main argument is carefully set up and well supported. Noteworthy is how systematically each case study addresses alternative arguments, setting high standards for a careful evaluation of the theory and its implications.

Overall, the book makes an important contribution to conflict and security studies, refocusing the discussion on the dynamics of civil war. It will be invaluable to scholars and students interested in how rebel groups evolve over time, and how politics unfolds in the Horn of Africa.

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Douglas H. Johnson, *South Sudan: a new history for a new nation*. Athens OH: Ohio University Press (pb US\$14.95 – 978 0 8214 2242 7). 2016, 224 pp.

With *South Sudan: a new history for a new nation*, Douglas Johnson confirms his position as among the world's leading South Sudan scholars. As part of Ohio University Press's 'Short Histories of Africa' series, Johnson notes at the outset 'the basic contradiction here of attempting to fit a *longue durée* history into a Short History series' (p. 18). In his own words, the book is 'no more than an introduction ... offered to stimulate conversation, debate, and further research about South Sudan's past' (p. 28). Johnson succeeds in his task.

The book can be broken down into three sections: introductory foregrounding on the peoples, landscapes and cultures of South Sudan; overviews of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonial periods; and the natures and consequences of the two twentieth-century civil wars. One of Johnson's major aims is to delegitimize the assertion that Southern Sudan's history began with Turco-Egyptian period colonialism and that much of its history was spent in relative isolation. He begins this corrective agenda by discussing the ancient peoples of Southern Sudan and the fact that they, far from borrowing Egyptian models, were 'active participants' in exchanges and interactions that travelled up and down the Nile (p. 30). He cites the accounts of Edwards, Fuller and Ehret as recent work suggesting that the Nubian kingdoms of Kerma, Napata and Meroe were examples of Sudanic states rather than mere replications of the Egyptian Pharaonic model. Chapter 2 provides basic foregrounding on Nilo-Saharan populations, and for his overview on Sudanic civilization, Johnson relies on canonical figures in Sudanese anthropology such as Edward Evans-Pritchard, Geoffrey Lienhardt, Wendy James, and his own work. Chapter 3 begins by noting that indigenous accounts must be analysed in order for South Sudan's internal histories to be constructed and notes that recurring themes can be found in Southern material cultures. Johnson provides brief but important information on states and kingdoms, including the Shilluk and Anuak (among others), and states that accounts that are often framed as mythic are used to explain societal origins and processes of integration, differentiation and movement.

The following chapters detail South Sudan's experience with successive colonialisms. Chapter 4 describes the Turco-Egyptian regime (1821–85) and the impact of the nineteenth-century slave trade. In a history marked by Southern contacts with external, predatory states, Johnson writes that 'patterns established in the nineteenth century continued well into the twentieth' (p. 59). He highlights the significance of the *zariba* network in drawing the South into an international economy and the importance of displacement in the late nineteenth century. This history provides important context for those readers who may associate the South Sudanese diaspora with the twentieth-century civil wars as opposed to a longer genealogy of dislocation. In what is perhaps the book's defining contribution, Chapter 5 delves into displacement and builds on Johnson's earlier work on military slavery. He explains that the nineteenth century was no exception to the general reality that war and slavery are the biggest factors in population dispersal. In noting the eastern migration of the Nuer, Nuer intermixing with Dinka and Anuak, and prophet Ngundeng's attempts to forge a philosophy of social harmony with the mixed population, Johnson's chapter is an important reminder that the notion of a timeless, primordial Dinka–Nuer conflict is untrue (despite media representations in the current context of ethnic conflict that might suggest the contrary). Chapter 6 outlines three stages of Anglo-Egyptian colonialism (1898–1956): achieving submission, establishing indirect rule, and quickening development.

The final section concerns the civil war years that dominated the second half of the twentieth century and South Sudan's independence years. Chapter 7 details competing Egyptian and Sudanese nationalisms and the emergence of Southern political consciousness, and outlines the years bookended by the 1955 Torit Mutiny and the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement that ended the First Civil War. Chapter 8 provides a parallel look into the First and Second Civil Wars. Chapter 9 describes the swings of Southern political thought between federalism and self-determination from the 1940s through the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The closing chapter examines internal and external factors that encourage stability and instability in the new nation, independent since July 2011.

While Johnson's study is not an exhaustive analysis of South Sudan's history, some aspects warrant further elucidation: these include, for example, the religious aspects of the civil wars, US–Sudan relations during the 1990s (the context behind American efforts to end the Second Civil War), and the socio-political impact of the Lost Boys. Nevertheless, Johnson's book is a comprehensive baptism for those interested in learning more about the country.

At a moment when so much attention is being paid to South Sudan (given its young nationhood, the recent famine, and the ongoing civil conflict), Johnson's text is a valuable resource for policymakers, NGOs and students of Sudanese and African history. It complements Hilde Johnson's *South Sudan: the untold story from independence to civil war* (2016), which delves deeply into the years when she led the United Nations' Mission in South Sudan (July 2011 to July 2014) but glosses over the colonial and postcolonial years leading up to independence that Johnson covers. Kuyok Abol Kuyok's biographical dictionary *South Sudan: the notable firsts* (2015) also complements Johnson's book by providing a rigorous account of figures briefly mentioned by Johnson, including Oliver Albino, John Garang and Joseph Lagu.

Johnson's *South Sudan* is a welcome and timely addition to South Sudanese historiography.

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