to solve Africa's problems – are so enthusiastic about collaborating with so-called international development partners. Reflecting on Agyeman's theses in this book, one ought to be mightily sceptical about the efficacy of the newly proposed economic bail-out for Africa, including debt relief and the highly indebted poor country (HIPC) status clamorously sought by African leaders. Donor activities and their impact since the Cold War vindicate his deep doubts about reliance on donor assistance. He is thus right in emphasizing the need for caution and making a clarion call for undiluted Pan-Africanism as still the single most important solution to Africa's development ills.

For those seeking lessons from history to inform policies and actions to ameliorate Africa's dire conditions, Agyeman's book is highly recommended because, as the wise adage goes, those who ignore history are condemned to repeat it.

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MARGARET HARDIMAN, *Konkonuru: life in a West African village – the impact of socio-economic change on rural communities*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press (pb £14.95 – 9964 3 0291 6). 2003, 244 pp. (Distributed by African Books Collective, Oxford)

This volume explores the nature of the rural economy in West Africa, using one community in the Akwapim Hills of Ghana, Konkonuru, to illustrate some broader issues. Between 1992 and 1999, the percentage of Ghana's population classified as poor reduced from 52 to 40 per cent. Poverty is still pervasive, however, and this average masks regional and occupational disparities. Poverty in Ghana is largely a rural phenomenon: rural people are three times as likely to be poor as urban people. This rural nature of poverty suggests that it is concentrated in the informal economy, which may be taken to include agriculture. Among occupational groups, non-export food-crop farmers and the non-farm self-employed are still most at risk. Hence understanding the rural economy in Ghana from a poverty reduction perspective is of crucial relevance today, and *Konkonuru* goes some way to furthering this understanding. The book is largely based on fieldwork from 1970, undertaken while Hardiman was a lecturer at the University of Ghana, but has been updated by further research in 1990 and by the author's regular communication with colleagues and friends. It provides an interesting account of socio-economic change in this one community over the period. However, since *Konkonuru* is not up to date with current developments in rural Ghana, the education and skills training system or the economy more widely, it is more useful for the historical perspective it provides of Ghana's rural economy. Nonetheless, some of the issues discussed – land rights and agricultural systems, the poor quality of rural infrastructure, migration in search of employment, and the expected employment outcomes of education – are still relevant in 2006.

Hardiman discusses the issue of the lack of rights over land and commercial assets, which remains a key constraint on the development of the rural economy. The need for enforceable property rights is crucial since many in the rural economy find it hard to utilize their assets, which largely remain dead capital. She also notes the importance of using appropriate technology to modernize agriculture as a means to increase productivity. *Konkonuru* notes that a 'striking' feature of rural areas is the poor quality of infrastructure. Employment and livelihood activities in the rural economy in Ghana are constrained by the poor

infrastructural environment. Low access to piped water and sewage systems, mains electricity, hospitals/clinics, markets, extension and financial services, and education and training facilities all contribute to the creation of a disabling enterprise environment in rural Ghana, and hence serve as a constraint on rural poverty reduction. Hardiman discusses the migrant citizens of Konkonuru who leave in search of employment opportunities in urban areas, with many sending remittances back to the village. She notes that the lack of formal employment opportunities in urban areas resulted in some migrants returning to the village to farm. She also records the scepticism surrounding the supposed automatic relationship between education and economic growth, as well as the disillusionment people experience over the expected benefits of education, since those with it frequently failed to secure wage employment. The appendices provide an insight into the research methodology adopted by Hardiman in her rural study.

Konkonuru would be of interest to undergraduate students studying rural Ghana, or rural sub-Saharan Africa more widely, as it provides a useful historical overview of rural social systems and structures.

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ALAN BARNARD (ed.), *Hunter-Gatherers in History, Archaeology and Anthropology*. Oxford: Berg (pb £16.99 – 1 85973 825 7; hb £50.00 – 1 85973 820 6). 2004, 278 pp.

Alan Barnard is the editor of what he bills as the first work to examine in depth the idea of the 'hunter-gatherer' in history. The book is a collection of papers from the Ninth International Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies (CHAGS 9) held at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, in September 2003. Most of the papers come from a session in which anthropologists, archaeologists and researchers from other disciplines grappled with aspects of the term 'hunter-gatherer'.

The four chapters in Part 1 examine processes, developments and perspectives regarding concepts and ideas relating to the study of hunter-gatherers over the past 300 years. Mark Pluciennik suggests that, given the variability and historicity implicit in that we call 'hunter-gatherer', it is necessary to describe and explain the many differences and distinctions in the ways of life of societies that have been classified in this way. Alan Barnard argues that the concept of hunting-and-gathering society was essentially a late eighteenth-century 'invention' predicated on the notions of human social evolution and the idea of society as based on economic relations. Lester Hiatt seeks to integrate Edward Westermarck's ideas about the origins of morality with the ethics, norms and values of Gidjingarli Australian aboriginals in the light of evolutionary biology. Aram Yengoyan reasons that the study of culture has tended to obliterate cultural differences between various hunter-gatherer societies and that it is these very cultural specificities that are crucial to understanding the inherent conservatism of culture and its relation to economic and political change.

Each of the chapters in Part 2 focuses on non-Anglophone anthropological research traditions. Peter Schweizer draws our attention to a 'forgotten chapter in the history of hunter-gatherer studies' – the work of ethnologists (equivalent to the English term 'anthropologist') between 1880 and 1930 who wrote in