

during which economic patterns were established that would endure well into the post-war period –and were to have political significance as land hunger and agrarian reform efforts became the catalysts for rural unrest. Chapters follow on the Depression and how this led to the delay of development initiatives. The book also includes a re-examination of the role of various officials whose development and ‘agrarian reform’ efforts stoked rural resistance to colonial and ultimately federal overrule.

There are thematic chapters on the urban experience, the establishment of colonial administration and the relationship between town and country. The second half of the book is devoted to the years after 1945 during which Malawi’s peoples faced one of their greatest political challenges –white settler nationalism and the resulting imposition of the Central African Federation. Opposition to this arguably led to the formation of independent Malawi and a particular brand of politics that, in its focus on the need for unity to achieve national liberation, eventually contributed to the emergence of a one-party state. McCracken touches on the development of party and popular politics, the role of violence in political change, and on the impact of the 1959 State of Emergency on reshaping African resistance to colonial rule. He surveys the trajectory of Malawi’s incipient and then aborted labour movement, and the emergence of different factions within the Malawi Congress Party that would ultimately drive post-colonial politics. He does a commendable job of merging archival sources with a growing body of secondary literature on this period and provides considerable insight into the interplay between British and Malawian actors in bringing about a negotiated independence. The book culminates, quite rightly, not with the raising of the flag on 6 July 1964 but with the denouement following the 1964 cabinet crisis and Chipembere’s failed rebellion of 1965. McCracken argues that one cannot help but draw parallels between the latter and the Chilembwe revolt of some fifty years before, not just because both rebellions failed but also in the light of their legacies. Each led to new alliances and political and economic power groupings that would endure –in the latter case, until challenged again in the early 1990s.

John McCracken has provided a masterful survey of Malawi’s modern past, encompassing political, economic and socio-cultural perspectives. *A History of Malawi* is bound to become the go-to text for students and scholars of colonial Malawi and those interested in the foundations of the post-colonial period. It is sure to have considerable local appeal (one hopes future editions will be more affordable), and must surely become a standard reference for those interested in Malawi’s modern history, politics and economics.

JOEY POWER

Ryerson University

[jpowers@history.ryerson.ca](mailto:jpowers@history.ryerson.ca)

doi:10.1017/S0001972013000326

DANIEL LARGE and LUKE PATEY (eds), *Sudan Looks East: China, India and the politics of Asian alternatives*. Woodbridge: James Currey (pb £16.99 – 978 1 84701 037 7). 2011, 203 pp.

From its very outset, the welter of academic literature on resurgent Africa–Asia relations has had a broadly corrective feel. Scholars rightly attempt to interrogate reductive and tendentious Western representations of vulnerable African nations

and rapacious Chinese neo-colonialism. They disaggregate the opportunities and challenges for Africans that emerge from the competitive interest of a range of Asian suitors. They emphasize the power of African agency in shaping this brave new world. The nuances of this politics of choice – ‘an Africa that can say no’ in the words of Chris Alden – are debated with increasing sophistication in academia and African civil society fora, if not yet in the media outlets on which many of the dominant panoramic studies are based. Nevertheless, one might have detected a certain waning of momentum in much of this literature, given the relative lack of empirical case studies testing the speculations painted at the macro level. In this sense, this excellent volume makes one of the most telling interventions of the last few years.

The book comprises ten detailed and judicious chapters, many of which naturally concern the politics of Sudan’s oil relations with Asian rising powers. But, crucially, the volume also highlights the wider gamut of Chinese, Indian and Malaysian contact with Sudanese citizens, markets and political economy. Perhaps most rewarding is the fashion in which much of the book, particularly the tight introduction, looks to the history of ‘South–South’ relations as a meaningful driver of today’s political practice. This sympathetic and sustained view of the longer historical *durée* better enables readers to engage the tapestry of dynamic relations between various Asian rising powers and Sudanese elites. It also convincingly demonstrates how all such liaisons are powerfully conditioned by the imperatives of Sudan’s political economy. This line of argument is not new, but the skilful way in which historical complexities are laid out in the introduction provides one of the most significant examples of this scholarship to date. It is especially pleasing that several authors have also been able to fire the opening analytical salvo on South Sudan’s Asian frontier, for example in reflecting on changing discourses of historical conviviality between China and the SPLM/A since the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and subsequent independence.

The book makes the point that, despite the growing visibility of Sudan’s relations with China, with all the accompanying anxieties over Darfur and executive authoritarianism, the actual mechanisms of Sudan’s relations with China (and other Asian partners) are paradoxically relatively neglected. The rallying call here is to delve below elite state-to-state relations and remedy the fact that ‘local perspectives across the country are lost in the flurry of international debate’ (p. 2). It is here that the book falls a little short of its elegant introductory argumentative promise, despite making some substantial leaps. After encyclopaedic and generalist overviews of Sudan’s historical foreign policy and oil industry, the book treats readers to a highly interesting window into the local impacts of oil production on Dinka and Shilluk communities in Southern Sudan after the CPA. This is based on copious local interview material, but greater analytical rigour emerging from the intriguing descriptive material would have been welcome. The author should, however, be commended for bringing such rare research to the public eye.

One should also praise the book for looking beyond China. Like some of the author’s previous work, the chapter on India provides a rich account of how the Indian government negotiated access to Sudanese oil in the context of Chinese competition and domestic political constraint, deliberately eschewing the ‘prism of Sudanese politics’ (p. 88) on this occasion. The following chapter, by contrast, looks into political thought and the trajectories of ‘Islamization’ within Malaysia and Sudan, as opposed to the minutiae of economic relations. The chapter contains suggestive passages on the Islamic commonalities drawing these nations together ideologically and economically. It also reflects on the nature of Malaysia

as an internationally extroverted Islamic model for Sudan and other developing nations. These chapters thus address key concerns of the volume in unpacking the detailed mechanics of Asian economic interaction with Sudan and stressing the importance of the past in conditioning these relations. The key endeavour (to which the authors are attuned, if not engaged, here) is to marry such discussion with a more assiduously fine-grained look at the potency of elite Sudanese agency and its local consequences in Asian encounters. In this sense, the chapter on China, Khartoum and the political economy of dam construction is particularly powerful.

Many of the themes, theoretical underpinnings and some of the content may be familiar to those who have read the editors' existing work. But there also is much genuine originality that speaks to policy makers, activists and academics alike. This is an important and worthy book. The depth of detail in the case studies provides a benchmark for those who recognize the imperative to push the Asia–Africa field firmly into the analytical crucible of specific African context and contemporary historical imagination. It should have a place on every Africanist bookshelf.

GERARD MCCANN  
University of York  
gerard.mccann@york.ac.uk  
doi:10.1017/S0001972013000338

SCOTT STRAUS and LARS WALDORF (eds), *Remaking Rwanda: state building and human rights after mass violence*. Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press (pb \$26.95 – 978 0 29928 264 6). 2011, 320 pp.

This book, edited by Scott Straus and Lars Waldorf, is a tribute to human rights activist Alison Des Forges, whose majestic work on Rwanda has been crucial both for scholars like David Newbury and for human rights activists like Kenneth Roth. It also represents an important overview of Rwanda's socio-economic development and its growing influence in the Great Lakes Region, as well as a discussion of the obfuscation of Rwandan realities by the mainstream narrative of the country.

Subdivided into six parts, the book includes contributions by authors in different fields, thus offering a wide-ranging account of the problems currently occupying the country despite its successful story of development and reconciliation after one of the worst outbursts of violence of the past century. In the aftermath of genocide, Rwanda has deployed several political and social strategies aimed at reconciling Rwandans by fostering development and justice. As the book shows in detail, however, there are serious flaws and alarming discrepancies between the achievements on paper and the reality of peasant Rwandans (roughly 90 per cent of the population), and a dangerous attitude, surfacing throughout the chapters, that prioritizes 'Rwanda' over 'Rwandans'.

The authors analyse several aspects of Rwandans' daily life, particularly governance, justice, rural administration, the role of collective memory, and the regional influence exerted by a strong, hierarchical state. Bert Ingelaere highlights the financial constraints under which simple families and administrative units have to reach a complex series of development goals – top-down control is also extended to land administration. Linked to this, Catharine Newbury explores the *imidugudu* policy, which forced citizens, especially in the countryside, to move