

disruption. Under the now well-known conditions of nineteenth-century drought, disease epidemics and increasing poverty, the western Serengeti's agropastoral communities defined territory more rigidly, protected it militarily and invented pronounced ethnic boundaries. They essentially remapped their territories.

Shetler provides a thorough critique of the subsequent imposition of colonial conservation policy, which, without reference to the region's ecological or social past, redefined the Serengeti as a wilderness, initiating the present era of fortress conservation. Shetler identifies, for example, the limits of the colonial legal power to criminalize local hunting in the Serengeti. Until the 1950s, poaching laws remained unenforceable and men in the western Serengeti continue to hunt, both to provide food and to acquire wealth. Shetler finds in the oral histories a distinct imagery of constriction that characterizes modernity.

By now, students of eastern Africa's history will know the many ironies that surround the history of the region's national parks and game reserves. Shetler argues that, for Serengeti National Park, the process saw the clash of two fundamentally different ways of understanding a landscape's value. Of course, by the middle of the twentieth century, extensive political power buttressed the park-as-pristine-wilderness ideal, which Nyerere's independence government uncritically accepted and perpetuated. Under the implementation of Tanzania's massive relocation project of the late 1960s and 1970s, the government continued to force people away from the park's western boundary. Shetler indicts these exercises in power, which have practically obliterated the historical memory of sacred space within the park.

*Imagining Serengeti* succeeds in creating a collaborative history that highlights the indigenous past. The book's pronounced spatial perspectives and ecological focus demonstrate how meaningful the history of place is to the people whose ancestors claimed, measured and manipulated this region. In the context of those drawn-out historical rhythms, Serengeti National Park's relatively sudden appearance has shaken the established foundations of agropastoralism. People have learned to manage this newest crisis, but while the Mara-Serengeti National Park brings tourist revenues to the state, Shetler convincingly argues that it also impoverishes the people whose history is tied to the 14,500 square kilometers it now encloses.

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## SHORTER NOTICES

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*The Women Writing Africa Project*. Volume III: *Women Writing Africa: The Eastern Region*. Edited by AMANDINA LIHAMBWA, FULATA L. MOYO, M. M. MULOKOZI, NAOMI L. SHITEMI and SAÏDA YAHYA-OTHMAN. New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2007. Pp. xxv + 478. \$29.95, paperback (ISBN 978-155861534-2).

KEY WORDS: Eastern Africa, oral narratives/sources, text editions, women.

*Women Writing Africa: The Eastern Region* is the third volume in a remarkable series of four books designed to restore the lost voices of African women. With a blend of oral and written texts, including poems, songs, speeches, stories, letters, biographies and reminiscences, the collection documents women's reflections and

creativity over a period of nearly 300 years, primarily from the 1850s to 2003. (One brief letter from the Sultan of Kilwa Island dates to 1711.) As in all the books in the series, the texts were collected and screened by a large editorial team of women and several men from each country and region, who met as a group several times to make the final selection. There are 5 general editors, 7 associate editors, 2 contributing editors, a text editor and 27 translators and headnote writers, making the book in every way a collaborative project. Texts were evaluated on the basis of aesthetic qualities as well as their sociohistorical significance. But the selection consciously emphasizes women's struggle for survival and empowerment in male-dominated worlds; indeed the editors are explicit about the feminist intent of the project. The Eastern Africa volume covers Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi, a grouping justified on the basis of their common heritage of English and, for Tanzania and Kenya and, to a lesser extent, Uganda, Kiswahili.

The wide range of women's voices, including texts in many African languages, makes this book a rich and original resource for historians, as do the wide-ranging topics of the selections, which cover every aspect of women's lives, from relationships between women and men to religion, slavery, work, politics, education and the myriad forms of women's individual and collective resistance. A lengthy introduction to the entire book and the detailed and informative headnotes for each document provide the background to put the selections into their historical context. Whether as a deliberate challenge to conventional periodization or not, the book eschews the end of colonial rule as a dividing point and instead splits the mid and late twentieth century into two periods – mid (1936–69) and late (1970–95).

Although the book is historically structured, the editors, all literary scholars, have chosen to arrange texts by the date they were published or collected rather than according to the events they describe. Thus, to give only one of many possible examples, 'Mekatilili, the Mijikenda Warrior', who fought against colonial conquest during the early twentieth century, appears under 2000 when the text was collected. As a historian, I would have welcomed an explicit discussion of this organizational choice. But the range of topics and women's voices, the introduction's nuanced treatment of current issues around education, politics, sexual exploitation and women's writing and its strong statement in support of African feminism make *Women Writing Africa: The Eastern Region* a milestone in scholarly efforts to restore women's voices to the center of African historical understanding.

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*Historical Dictionary of Morocco*. Second edition. By THOMAS PARK and AOMAR BOUM. (Historical Dictionaries of Africa, 95). Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006. Pp. lxxii + 675. \$115 (ISBN 0-8108-5341-8).

KEY WORDS: Morocco, dictionaries.

Virtually 1,200 years separate Idris I, the founder of the Idrisid dynasty, from King Mohamed VI, twenty-third ruler of the Alawi dynasty. Much has happened in the intervening period and the very idea of capturing it all in one volume is a daunting one. The anthropologists Thomas Park and Aomar Boum attempt to do so nonetheless, in the second edition of their *Historical Dictionary of Morocco*, a valiant if ultimately disappointing effort.