

background to Adwa, and indeed the conduct of the battle itself. There is some interesting detail recorded here – and worth mining for that at least – if you can stomach the peculiarly Ethiopian combination of hubris and melancholia that pervades much of the book.

The best and most interesting chapter is Maimire Mennasemay, ‘Ethiopian history and critical theory: the case of Adwa’, especially in its description of Ethiopian history as a document both of barbarism and of civilisation. This is the only chapter that really addresses the multiple dimensions of the moment of Adwa for Ethiopian history. Indeed Maimire’s criticism of the ‘drum and trumpet’ indigenous tradition of Ethiopian chronicle and hagiography does a great disservice to that tradition, but equally serves as an eloquent criticism of his fellow contributors.

Above all this is a political diatribe against the current Ethiopian regime, and in this it has some inherent worth as a ‘historical’ document of another moment in Ethiopian history. As a collection, it ranks with many other polemical discourses published over the past decade, purporting to reflect on the history of Ethiopian state and society; it is of passing interest.

CEDRIC BARNES

School of Oriental and African Studies, London

Major Powers and Peacekeeping: perspectives, priorities and the challenges of military intervention edited by RACHEL E. UTLEY

Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006. Pp. 192. £50.00.

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For much of the post-1945 period, the presence of the terms ‘major powers’ and ‘peacekeeping’ in the same sentence would have been an oxymoron. Throughout the cold war years, peacekeeping was the province of the ‘middle powers’. A regular corps of contributors – Canada, India, Ireland and Sweden prominent among them – would be called on by United Nations secretaries-general whenever peacekeeping troops were required. In an international system fundamentally divided between two ideological poles, the political baggage carried into regional conflicts by the big powers was simply too bulky. Their operational involvement in peacekeeping would be more likely to exacerbate than ameliorate local crises. The end of the Cold War utterly changed this situation, though for reasons that were positive only up to a point. Yes, the end of global bipolarity removed the most obvious barrier to big power peacekeeping, in that this no longer carried the virus of cold war infection. But as the vaunted new world order mutated into a new disorder, it also became clear that the end of the Cold War had generated new conflicts as well as resolving old ones. There was now a surge of demand for peacekeeping which the traditional middle powers were unable (and increasingly unwilling) to meet. In the 1990s, this transformed environment brought together on one side a critical requirement for more and stronger peacekeepers, and on the other a collection of military planners in the big powers anxious to find a post-cold-war *raison d’être* for their forces.

This collection sets out to explore this critically important change in the rules of the peacekeeping game. It succeeds only in part, however. Its main difficulty is that the essays in one of its two sections – on ‘Peacekeeping in Practice’ – barely

touch on the subject of the book. Where these case studies (of Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the role of the media) engage with peacekeeping, they do so without any special reference to the major powers, and where they deal with the big powers, this is usually in contexts other than peacekeeping properly defined. This is pity, because there is a lot to be said about – and learned from – the very mixed record of major power engagement in peacekeeping in those parts of the world. The chapter on Africa by David J. Francis, for example, fails to explore in any detail America's disastrous entanglement with Somalia, or France's highly suspect intervention in Rwanda in the last stage of the genocide in 1994. In a study of the major powers and peacekeeping these, surely, are the areas which demand attention above the much more detailed accounts offered here of ECOWAS and SADC ventures. Conversely, Ali M. Ansari's chapter on the Middle East has some important things to say about cultural dissonance and military intervention by big powers, particularly in Iraq. It does not, though, explore the historic role of these powers in peacekeeping as such, especially on Israel's borders.

The section of the book on 'Major Power Perspectives' is generally stronger and more relevant to the business in hand. Rachel Utley's own chapter on France and Germany, and Gary D. Rawnsley's on China and Japan, provide useful overviews of the national politics of peacekeeping at the upper levels of the international hierarchy. Isabelle Falcon offers a particularly insightful reading of post-Soviet Russia's complex attitude to military multilateralism. The chapter by Edward M. Spiers on the United States, though informative on the 1990s period, seems unhelpfully to include the so-called 'war on terror' and the invasion and occupation of Iraq under the general heading of peacekeeping.

In total, this is a book with some strong contributions but which, ultimately, doesn't quite do 'what it says on the tin'.

NORRIE MACQUEEN
University of Dundee

US Foreign Policy and the Horn of Africa by PETER WOODWARD

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Peter Woodward has written an excellent book that will be of great interest to Horn of Africa scholars, and specialists on US foreign policy towards Africa and the Middle East. The book focuses on the evolution of US foreign policy towards the Horn (with a special focus on the case studies of Somalia and Sudan), one of the strategic battlegrounds of the Cold War that the Bush administration now characterises as one of the 'second fronts' in the global war on terrorism. Although Woodward focuses on the Horn, this region is but one of three that comprise part of an Islamic littoral that has witnessed the emergence of several US counter-terrorism programmes, including the Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI) in North Africa, the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA – which Woodward discusses in this book), and the East African Counter-Terrorism Initiative (EACTI).

The themes of the book – the historical Cold War context of US foreign policy, emerging trends in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks of