displayed at world exhibitions. At these events, colonial powers usually exhibited artifacts from African, American, and Asian cultures under their political control alongside, albeit to a different degree, the latest technical advances.

All this shows how *Visualizing Empire* is not merely a volume on a well-selected collection of artifacts. It is not even another book on colonial exhibitions from a fresh postcolonial perspective. The volume is a ground-breaking contribution connecting popular culture with political strategies, focusing on their impacts on different educational periods while providing a solid analytical framework that can be replicated.

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Child Trafficking after Abolition

The Persistence of Slavery: An Economic History of Child Trafficking in Nigeria

By Robin Phylisia Chapdelaine. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2020. Pp. 224. $26.95, paperback (ISBN: 9781625345240).

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Chapdelaine argues in this well-researched book that child trafficking, child slavery, and other forms of coerced labor persisted in Nigeria beyond the nineteenth-century antislavery movement; that there was neither a 'pause . . . in slaving practices from two hundred years ago to today nor an absolute reconfiguration of [these] practices'. While this directly echoes E. A. Afigbo, Chapdelaine's analysis links up to contemporary human trafficking and illegal dealing in children in southeastern Nigeria.[1] Less persuasively, the author also argues that the Women's War of 1929, a series of demonstrations and riots by Igbo and Ibibio women against colonial policies, demonstrated women's protest against increased loss of their children to enslavement. A consideration of studies of the Women's War by Chimah Korieh and David Pratten, and a close reading of the 2012 study coauthored by Marc Matera, Misty L. Bastian, and Susan Kingsley Kent, might have dissuaded Chapdelaine from fielding this second argument — especially Pratten's demonstration of how the colonially orchestrated depreciation of the local manila currency negatively impacted women in the precise provinces where the war occurred.[2]

That critique aside, Chapdelaine's first three chapters successfully build off of extant literature on the privations that were linked to economic and political reorganizations following the era of legitimate commerce and the establishment of colonial rule. These chapters highlight how the colonial demand for the payment of taxes, court fees, and other government fees in newly-introduced pound sterling plunged women into penury. The author argues that these difficulties generated the

[1]E. A. Afigbo, *The Abolition of the Slave Trade in Southeastern Nigeria* (Rochester, NY, 2006), xii.

[2]C. Korieh, *The Land Has Changed: History, Society and Gender in Colonial Eastern Nigeria* (Calgary, 2010); D. Pratten, *The Man-Leopard Murders: History and Society in Colonial Nigeria* (Edinburgh, 2007); M. Matera, M. Bastian, and S. Kingsley Kent, *The Women's War of 1929: Gender and Violence in Colonial Nigeria* (New York, 2012).

conditions for the Women's War, thus revisiting similar themes as Afigbo and others on the warrant chiefs. Colonial political engineering integrated some precolonial elites into a new class of corrupt local officials — warrant and paramount chiefs, court clerks, and interpreters — who used their position within the new colonial arrangements to victimize families. They miscarried justice, accepted bribes, imposed exorbitant fines, and required plaintiffs to appeal cases which they had made them lose. These required litigants to secure funds from the same chiefs and court officials to finance the fees and charges, resulting in parents becoming indebted and often surrendering their children as pawns (collateral).

In subsequent chapters, Chapdelaine directly links colonial modernization efforts to the persistence of child trafficking. Imperial imperatives to develop and extend produce markets and to establish alliances with local leaders who would help with colonial generation of revenue and scarce labor caused the government to prevaricate in how it delineated between corvée labor and conditions of slavery, thereby undercutting its ability to curtail trafficking. She argues that new colonial political and economic arrangements in many ways validated and reinforced precolonial norms and expectations where children's labor and bride price served as both social security and capital investment for parents and husbands. Colonial taxation, court fees and fines, corvée labor, and the displacement of the local manila currency commoditized domestic relations, pegging them to the newly introduced and scarce pound sterling, and thereby articulated them into a subterranean market in pawned children.

Taken to its extreme, Chapdelaine's analysis implies that many Nigerian parents bred children for economic reasons, seeing in childbearing the possibility of becoming rich; parents then operationalized this notion when they pawned, 'married' off, or sold their children. They transformed their children's bodies into currency to meet their financial needs for 'burial expenses, settling a deceased father's debts, the cost to set up a farm, title making, financing public feasts, paying court fees, paying fines for committing adultery, and hiring a medicine man (dibia)' (68–9).

Chapters Four and Five continue to press this case by mustering original evidence meticulously marshaled from inquiry testimonies, debt litigation, and child theft and slavery case documents. Chapdelaine correlates child trafficking cases in these documents with the general economic hardship antecedent to the Women's War, effectively highlighting the central place that children occupied in the socio-economies of parents, local communities, and of the colonial state, thereby making a significant advance to the literature on the 1929 Women's War. However, in making child pawning and the loss of children by women into the fulcrum on which the war hung, she overextends her analysis past the available evidence. A nuanced Chapter Five integrates women and children into the trafficking business as direct historical agents rather than only as victims.

Chapdelaine's impressive mining of colonial administrative and anthropological sources comes with the expected hazards. These sources often intruded ethnocentric Victorian cultural norms and expectations into their re/presentations of Africa. While some colonial officials indeed reported that parents were simply selling their children, Afigbo's study shows that other officials equally dissented.[3] Chapdelaine probably too readily accepted their painting many legitimate customary marriage arrangements supported by evidence of 'dowry paid' on 'young women' of nubile age as enslavement (98). However, it is commendable that she attempted to contextualize and cross-check colonial records with oral information, enough as to render some of the more egregious child trafficking stories credible. Nevertheless, given the contemporary climate of moral opprobrium against many 'traditional' African practices, some dreadful assertions by some oral informants on the gray areas of legitimate marriage, bride price, and child pawning arrangements cannot be received at face value. Where the courts could not prove accusations of child trafficking against parents who testified that the money that exchanged their hands was indeed bride price, these might well have been legitimate marriages, notwithstanding that the parents had been indebted to, or were beneficiaries of

[3]Afigbo, *Abolition of the Slave Trade*, 102–3.

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some financial assistance from, the prospective husbands. Indeed, Afigbo explained how the colonial government soon called off the campaign against child trafficking that produced these trafficking records because it produced paltry results.[4] This raises the question of how much contemporary conceptions of propriety and economic rationality color the analysis of the local historical past provided by oral informants to which the author subscribes.

Nonetheless, using the same colonial records that earlier studies on the Women's War relied on, Chapdelaine's book successfully goes beyond them to establish how exploitation of children's bodies has remained significant to capital and wealth generation within Nigeria's socioeconomic arrangements. Left rather weakly remarked, in my view, is the story of the unrelenting efforts of humanitarians and abolitionists, external and internal, throughout the period of study to expose and extirpate these inhumane child trafficking practices. In addition to this oversight, I also have a few minor quibbles. For example, an oral informant's claim that 'some parents pawned children to European officials in lieu of tax payments' should not have been reproduced without corroborating evidence (123). Also, I would have loved to see more definitive evidence of pawned and enslaved children drafted directly into productive agricultural or auxiliary activities. Finally, this excellent study is not without a few typos and a couple of awkward sentences that must be corrected in its next edition.

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A Resonant Intellectual

Edward W. Blyden's Intellectual Transformations: Afropublicanism, Pan-Africanism, Islam, and the Indigenous West African Church

By Harry N. K. Odamtten. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2019. Pp. *xxv* + 272. $49.50, paperback (ISBN: 9781611863208).

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Edward W. Blyden's Intellectual Transformations: Afropublicanism, Pan-Africanism, Islam, and the Indigenous West African Church by Harry N. K. Odamtten presents a revision of Edward Blyden's place in the pantheon of pan-African intellectual contributions to African and African diaspora scholarship. Odamtten steers attention to Blyden's role as a transnational figure, informed by his experiences in various parts of the world. Blyden was born in the Danish West Indies on the Island of St. Thomas to free Black parents in 1832. He moved to Liberia in 1850 and subsequently evolved into 'a voice of conscience and an agent of resistance for people of African descent throughout the world' (xi). Employing the framework of an intellectual biography, which focuses on the thoughts, ideas, and intellectual output of an individual, Odamtten deftly interlaces diverse threads of Blyden's complex personality and intellectual journey into a compelling tapestry, displaying a

[4]*Ibid.* 104–6.