In his effort to remove 'belief' from 'tribe', Landau tends to claim that beliefs, however dynamic, did not exist at all. For example, making much of the missionary use of the term ancestor for the Christian God, Landau argues that 'religion' was created by the missionaries. 'No religious system or spiritual domain can be postulated before missionaries introduced those ideas themselves' (p. 76). This position is extreme and unnecessary for much of the rest of the argument. Even if, along with Landau, we agree that there was no separation of politics from religion, and, disagreeing with many African theologians, accept that there was neither single God nor creator spirit, not even a stable religion with dogma and doctrines, Landau's claim that there was no religious system or spiritual domain runs so counter to evidence from surrounding peoples that it would represent a revolution in consciousness in this region. For Landau, the people of the highveld were 'commonsensical', (p. 94) 'pragmatic', (p. 88) 'realists', (p. 241) for whom death was 'an impermeable barrier' (p. 100). They were organized in Houses headed by big men, with a pragmatic politics that aimed at building alliances to gain followers, accumulate cattle, and to protect land. European missionaries, by contrast, were steeped in superstition, with beliefs in other-worldly spirits that they managed to impose on this pragmatic consciousness by ethnocentric translations.

Quibbles aside, this trail-blazing work of research and magnificent erudition should animate discussion about identity, religion, and politics in South Africa's remote and recent pasts. Landau's history of a southern African political culture that is hybrid, inclusive, transnational, and perhaps even secular is an essential corrective to colonial thinking about tribal traditions and religious beliefs divorced from political mobilizations.

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AFRICA'S CHANGING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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The Curse of Berlin: Africa After the Cold War. By ADEKEYE ADEBAJO. London: Hurst & Company, 2010. Pp. xxxiii+414. £50, hardback (ISBN 879-1-84904-095-2); £16.95, paperback (ISBN 978-1-84904-096-9).

KEY WORDS: International Relations, Pan-Africanism.

The 'Curse of Berlin' problematizes Africa's changing international relations in the two decades since the end of the Cold War. It is written by Adekeye Adebajo who has been executive director of the Cape Town-based Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) since 2003 and previously served as director of the Africa programme of the International Peace Academy in New York (now the International Peace Institute). The book opens with a lengthy preface by the Kenyan-born scholar Ali A. Mazrui (b. 1933), one of the grand figures in the study of Africa's international relations (currently at SUNY Binghamton's Institute of Global Cultural Studies), to whom the volume is also dedicated. In his own opening chapter, Adebajo elaborates on the legacy of the Berlin Conference of 1884–5 for Africa, and on the 'Berlin curse of fragmentation' of the African people introduced in Mazrui's preface.

Thereafter the book is organised in three parts. In the first part, Adebajo looks at Africa's 'quest for security', with chapters on Africa's new peace and security

architecture, Africa and the United Nations as well as the role of the two African UN Secretary-Generals between 1992 and 2006 – Boutros-Boutros Ghali (Egypt) and Kofi Annan (Ghana). In the second part, Adebajo examines in five chapters the 'quest for hegemony' on the African continent, questioning the respective roles of Nigeria and South Africa, but also those of the United States, France, and China. And in the third part, he analyses the 'quest for unity', highlighting in another five chapters the critical role of individuals and countries. One chapter discusses the question of reconciliation by focusing on the imperialist Cecil J. Rhodes and South Africa's first African president, Nelson Mandela, who were joined in the Mandela Rhodes Foundation (founded in 2002). Another chapter moots the question of the extent to which Mandela's successor, Thabo Mbeki, who served as president from 1999 to 2008, can be compared to Ghana's founding president (1957–66) Kwame Nkrumah. The chapter explores the relationship between Pan-Africanism and the ideology of African Renaissance. In another chapter under the rubric of the 'quest for unity', the African Union (AU) and her development are discussed. The volume then returns to personalities to explore 'Obamania' and the role the first US President of Afro-American origin, Barack Obama, might play for Africa. And finally the legacy of India's Mohandas Mahatma Ghandi and the policy of non-alignment is analysed with regard to the African continent.

Eight of the chapters have been published before – basically between 2007 and 2009 – and were revised for this publication (this mainly refers to Parts One and Two of the volume), six chapters are original pieces (the introduction and most of Part Three). The updates are based on references to Adebajo's own writings and a limited number of media articles. Given this composition, the book shows surprising coherence: Part One focuses on the challenges involved in the creation of viable regional conflict resolution mechanisms, Part Two revolves around issues of regional leadership and external intervention, and Part Three highlights individual leadership and alliances with the American diaspora, comparative integration lessons for the African Union from the European Union as well as the past and present potential of Afro-Asian coalitions.

Throughout the volume, the author occupies a distinctly Pan-African perspective and insists upon African agency. This culminates in the call for a reversal of the 'Curse of Berlin' through the establishment of feasible federations and regional trade blocs as well as a politically negotiated redrawing of boundaries and right-sizing of existing African states. Although referencing largely secondary literature, the books displays insights based on Adebajo's intimate knowledge of many of the described dynamics and relevant personalities, for instance Boutros-Boutros Ghali and Thabo Mbeki. This is due to Adebajo's dual role as academic on the one hand, and practitioner on the other. As head of the CCR, an institution which is heavily involved in the training on and mediation of African conflicts, Adebajo draws on a wealth of personal experience. This also explains why in some chapters, Adebajo presents consultancy-style policy recommendations. While all this makes for extremely interesting reading, one is slightly perplexed when stumbling over reductionism such as the idea that many 'Western media' 'slavishly reflect … their government's views' (p. 80). Here, Adebajo somehow is wandering from the path of postcolonial critique of Eurocentrism. Yet ultimately, and in comparison to a number of books on Africa's place in the changing global order, Adebajo offers a wealth of invigorating thoughts and substantial analysis, though clearly not devoid of political interests.

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