

Reviews

Africa, empire and globalization: essays in honor of A. G. Hopkins

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This hefty volume is a Festschrift for A. G. Hopkins, whose scholarship has left an enduring mark on the histories of Africa, the British empire, and globalization. It is entirely appropriate that such an intellectually engaged, influential scholar should be honoured with such a compendious and wide-ranging volume. Consisting of thirty-two chapters by thirty-five authors, it runs to well over 600 pages and addresses each of the main themes that have preoccupied Hopkins over the course of his career. But the volume is not simply a celebration of Hopkins' accomplishments: its contributors offer independent and illuminating inquiries into a diverse range of topics.

It would be futile in such a brief review to try to comment on the many essays in this volume individually. Instead, I would like to highlight some of the broader historiographical concerns and questions that they address. Although the volume is divided into three sections corresponding to the subjects indicated in the title – Africa, empire, and globalization – Africa and Africanists dominate the proceedings. More particularly, Hopkins' own original field of specialization – West African economic history – is well represented, with essays by Gareth Austin, Ann McDougall, Yacine Daddi Addoun and Paul Lovejoy, Robin Law, Raymond Dumett, Ayodeji Olukoju, and Joseph Inikori. Other Africanists who have contributed to the volume include Gwyn

Campbell, Ralph Austin, T. C. McCaskie, Ian Phimister, Richard Roberts, Elizabeth Schmidt, Okpoh Ochayi Okpoh Jr, Patrick Manning, and the co-editor Toyin Falola, most of whom examine economic-oriented topics as well. Although Gareth Austin observes that 'economic history has lacked visibility among historians – and economists – over the past two decades and more' (p. 72), the contents of this volume suggest that it remains integral to the concerns of Africanists. Why? None of the contributors directly address that issue, but two contributing factors would appear to be the evidentiary limitations that the continent's past poses for its historians, especially those who work on precolonial topics, and their desire to understand how that past has contributed to Africa's current economic plight. The latter theme in particular informs the essays by Okpoh, Manning, and Falola. Moreover, Hopkins' subsequent journey from African to global concerns – one that Manning and other Africanists have taken – suggests that economic history has supplied a mode of analysis that has proven especially amenable to the needs of the latter.

For Hopkins, imperial history has been the principal bridge on that journey, but it has been an important destination in its own right as well. While his reputation among Africanists rests largely on his first book on West Africa, he is perhaps better known to the broader historical community for the *magnum opus* that he co-authored with Peter Cain on the British empire. This, too, was a work of economic history, but one with an important difference: its interpretation of the economics of British imperialism rested on a role of a social group that Cain and Hopkins famously termed 'gentlemanly capitalists', by which they meant an alliance of aristocratic and financial services families centred in London. This thesis has proven immensely generative, stirring debate and inspiring research of the sort that is exemplified in this volume by the contributions of B. R. Tomlinson, Anthony Webster,

Edward Beasley, Gregory Barton and Brett Bennett, and Inikori. Most of these essays examine particular commercial networks in different parts of the empire – Senegambia and Bengal in the eighteenth century, the Gold Coast and Burma in the early nineteenth century – highlighting the complex relationships that developed between local and imperial interests and, within the latter realm, between manufacturing and financial interests. Yet Cain and Hopkins' work also struck a cord because it connected economic history to social and cultural history, and because it reaffirmed the value of setting British imperial history and British domestic history in the same analytical frame of reference. In both respects, its concerns overlapped in productive ways with the new imperial history. This aspect of their contribution gets little attention in the volume: only Beasley's essay on Chartist critiques of the country's political/economic elite (the gentlemanly capitalists) draws on that aspect of their work.

The third section, on global history, is the most varied in its concerns and contributors. This no doubt derives in part from the fact that Hopkins' work has been less integral to the debates in this field than it has to the other two. Although African-centred topics certainly figure prominently in this section, it also includes essays that range from Peter Cain's analysis of Charles Pearson as a commentator on globalization in the 1890s to William Roger Louis' account of the role of the UN in the creation of Israel in 1947. Readers of this journal will find Patrick Karl O'Brien's 'Global history for global citizenship' particularly interesting. In this thoughtful essay, O'Brien reflects on the 'moral and political imperatives' of writing a global history that is responsive to the realization 'we are living in a new epoch' (pp. 458, 451). One issue that none of the contributors address, though it arises implicitly from the divergent thrusts of the volume's African- and Asian-oriented essays, is the relationship between area studies and global history. For Africanists such as Okpeh, Manning, and Falola, the main theme of globalization has been the progressive impoverishment and marginalization of Africa. Shigeru Akita and other Asianist contributors to the volume tell a very different story, one that stresses the limitations of the West and provides a pre-history to the recent economic renaissance of the East. With Asian economic historians such as Kenneth Pomeranz and Prasanna Parthasarathi currently exerting so much influence on global history through their inquiries into the causes of 'the great divergence', their African counterparts

offer an alternative perspective that deserves comparable attention. Though none of the contributors takes up this challenge, their work alerts us to the need for bringing Africanist and Asianist (and, *inter alia*, Latin Americanist) interpretations of the historical origins and consequences of globalization into dialogue with one another. In this regard, as well as others, the volume does all that its editors could have asked for: it encourages us to think more widely and deeply about the subjects that Hopkins has pursued during his long and productive career.

Trafficking in slavery's wake: law and the experience of women and children in Africa

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Human trafficking is an expanding global problem that afflicts many regions of the world. The International Organization for Migration, for example, has found that the traffic in humans increases steadily each year, with women and children counting among the majority of those who fall victim to it. In light of this ever-changing and growing global problem, *Trafficking in slavery's wake* provides much-needed historical context and conceptualization of the problem of trafficking, with specific attention to its impact on the continent of Africa. What constitutes trafficking? What are the structural limitations of legal regimes and states trying to combat human trafficking? And what are the possibilities and solutions? This edited collection, which contains eleven chapters, an introduction, and an afterword, tackles each of these large questions to varying degrees. The result is a highly readable, richly researched, and interdisciplinary set of chapters, appropriate for college students and policy-makers alike.

The term 'trafficking', as a practice with a history, is deployed differently throughout the book. In the introduction, the editors explain that the volume explores the 'changing modalities of the traffic in women and children' (p. 2), and encompasses a spectrum of practices ranging from legal