

experiment in public education came to mirror the emergence of a colonial elite. Their new and conditioned sensibilities, in due course, shaped the initial development of modern African Art and Literature. Chinua Achebe, one of these important beneficiaries of an Umuhian education, gave some thought, in a general way, to this subject in his own book, *The Education of a British Protected Child*. Terri Ochiagha's book provides a multi-perspectival historical look at this hallowed site.

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## WHITES AT WAR

*World War I in Africa: The Forgotten Conflict among the European Powers.*

By Anne Samson.

London: I. B. Tauris, 2013. Pp. x + 306. £59.50, hardback (ISBN 9781890761190).

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**Key Words:** Military, politics, violence, war.

Africa's role in the First World War has become the focus of renewed interest of late. This surge in scholarly and public focus is linked to the war's centenary, to the commemorative impulses it generates, and to new questions being asked about how and why the war was fought around the world. Anne Samson's *World War I in Africa*, an expansion of her doctoral thesis (also published by I. B. Tauris in 2006), contributes to this growing field by offering a clearly-written narrative that foregrounds individual actors as shapers of the war's operations and outcomes. Samson is especially interested in the roles played by individuals in planning and executing the relatively well-known East African campaign, although she also devotes a chapter to the lesser-known campaign in Southwest Africa. Throughout, Samson draws the reader's attention to the interplay between politicians and military leaders at different levels. She convincingly demonstrates that in order to understand why Southwest and East Africa became embroiled in the war at all, we must also understand how individuals in London, Pretoria, Berlin, and elsewhere came to view war in Africa as essential to their wider efforts in the Great War.

The book's title misleads somewhat, inasmuch as it suggests wider coverage of the war on the African continent. The campaigns fought in the German colonies of Togo and Cameroon receive very little coverage. But Samson's emphasis on the East and Southwest African campaigns serves her larger purpose of concentrating on the key South African and German leaders involved: General Jan Christian Smuts and General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck. Although others such as General Jaap Van Deventer and Lord Kitchener also feature in the narrative, it is clear that Samson's main interest is in showing the decisive and active roles Smuts and Lettow-Vorbeck played in determining the course and outcome of the war. The text succinctly encapsulates allied interests as well, illustrating how Belgium, Portugal, and France sought to benefit from the war in East Africa through their alliances with Great Britain, and how South Africa hoped to

gain regional influence over Southwest Africa by assuming the lead role in evicting Germany from colonial authority there.

The book offers a short introduction with tables that provide a visual overview of the composition of forces; the war's main actors and the roles they played throughout the war; and, the war's main events. The body of the book is organized into 11 chronological and thematic chapters, including one that examines how individuals represented their governments' policy objectives at the Paris peace conference in 1919. A short conclusion notes areas for further research and reasserts the importance of understanding how individuals shaped the war's outcomes. The book's extensive index is broken into sections, making it quite useful as a reference tool. Samson keeps the book's scholarly apparatus to a minimum, making it quite readable.

*World War I in Africa* is a political and military history of the war and its aftermath, written from the perspective of white leaders and decision-makers. Its narrative power is enabled by this limited scope, in which Samson reveals much of interest about how these larger-than-life figures shaped the war's conduct and outcomes. As such, however, the reader only catches fleeting glimpses of those thousands of African soldiers and laborers (referred to frequently in the book as 'natives' and 'tribes') who made the East Africa campaign possible. Chapter Seven focuses on 'Personal, Personnel and Material', but the focus remains largely on the white officers and soldiers who participated in the East African campaign. Samson's careful attention to the looming figures of men like Smuts and Lettow-Vorbeck leaves the reader with minimal understanding of how the Great War in Africa affected the Africans who fought the war, or who carried out the armies' logistical needs. Samson's conclusion gestures in this direction, but the book ultimately leaves this area of inquiry for others to undertake. Samson's book gives the reader a clear sense of the political, diplomatic, and military personalities who, through their hardheaded dedication to imperial objectives, caused economic, social, and demographic catastrophe in certain areas of eastern Africa. But a reader looking for deeper knowledge about the First World War in Africa, as a conflict that engaged hundreds of thousands of Africans in the work of sustaining and expanding empire, will need to look elsewhere.

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## HISTORIAN AS APOLOGIST

*French Colonial Soldiers in German Captivity during World War II.*

By Raffael Scheck.

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L'historien Raffael Scheck a su utiliser ses compétences et les moyens octroyés lui permettant de consulter à la fois les archives américaines, allemandes et françaises. C'est un atout