

understandings of ancient monuments and those of archaeologists. Attention to Ottoman-era (or even late medieval) Arab historians might have likewise offered testament to the existence of a richer vision of the landscape, one that predated and inflected that of the modern nation.

Corbett's monograph, while valuable for the light it sheds on a poorly understood topic, is not an easy read. Incomplete editing of the 2009 dissertation from which it is derived has left its traces in the form of mechanical introductions with their contents unnecessarily repeated in subsequent chapters. Some opaque jargon obscures the important points being made. The book's introduction contains disappointingly few references, so it is difficult to identify the author's methodological and historiographical influences. These shortcomings, however, should not detract from the new perspectives that Corbett's analysis contributes to our understanding of a timely and fascinating topic.

———Bonnie Effros, University of Florida

Mike McGovern, *Unmasking the State—Making Guinea Modern*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

doi:10.1017/S0010417516000220

McGovern has a fascinating topic: Sekou Touré's "demystification campaign" that began in 1961 and how it affected the Loma, seen as "the savages" of the newly independent state of Guinea. He also tells the story in a fascinating way. McGovern's original analytical insights of a staggering scope—both because of his long-term historical view and his determination to enter in discussion with almost anyone who has written on the subject—open up unexpected perspectives on this tragic story. An intriguing aspect of this campaign was that Sekou Touré, in a conscious, civilizing offensive, ordered that all fetishes be gathered together, often with a brute show of force. But instead of destroying them he had them exhibited in public, even on a global scale, in order to break through the secrecy from which they drew their force. His use of the world-famous *Ballets Africains* of Fodébo Keita and the equally well-known Bembeya Jazz band in the campaign are just two examples of the concerted action to make public what had to be eradicated. Of course the effects were most ambiguous.

For McGovern, this demystification campaign, with all its ambiguities, is a vantage point for exploring hidden layers in people's confrontations with the state in postcolonial Africa. This makes his analysis relevant for the entire continent and even beyond. But he insists also, and rightly so, on the specific aspects of his story. He does not present a simplistic interpretation of the confrontation in terms of a mad, paranoiac dictator and an alienated group as his victims. Sekou Touré did become increasingly paranoiac, and perhaps mad, but his original ideas about forging a national culture, mobilizing women, and realizing a more egalitarian form of development had promising

implications. McGovern's final conclusion, which apparently quite surprised him, is that it remains to be seen to what extent the Loma became alienated due to the campaign's horrors. In a certain sense it contributed to their becoming citizens of Guinea, as became clear, for instance, in the 1990s when they resolutely refused Liberian warlord Charles Taylor's efforts to export his struggle against the Malinke into Guinea's forest area. (But this is the topic of McGovern's next book.)

It is impossible to do justice here to the extraordinary riches of this book. Especially striking is how McGovern succeeds in highlighting time and again a new, hidden layer in what one would expect to be a self-evident opposition between forest people like the Loma and the Malinke, Guinea's dominant group and the carriers of Sekou Touré's project. The demystification campaign appeared to be a confrontation between modernizing Marxists and "traditional savages." But Sekou Touré's Marxism was beset by its own contradictions: it certainly wanted to be modern (e.g., the obsession with social engineering), but it also wanted to be African and Muslim. And the Loma, too, struggled with contradictions. In many respects, demystification was an "inside job." It offered young people chances to liberate themselves from the grip of their elders, who used the Poro, their secret society, to monopolize women. In this sense, demystification fitted in with a long series of earlier clashes. Likewise, the training of the young to perform the secret dances for *Les Ballets Africains* continued some traits of the "traditional" initiation camps. Moreover (and this is crucial in McGovern's analysis), even though many Malinke elites did everything they could to distance themselves from the "animists" in the forest, with their sacrifices and secret societies, they were beset by the fear that they might have more in common with them than they were willing to admit. Historically, the distinctions between these groups emerged only gradually and they are still relative. McGovern argues that it was precisely the haunting memory of things shared that made the campaign so ferocious.

Against this background, it is clear why ethnogenesis is central to the book's first part. Here McGovern offers a nuanced analysis of how, over time, different forms of identities developed: a "portable" travelling one characteristic of the Malinka versus a "mutable identity," rooted in the soil, among the forest-dwellers. All this is to show that the "oil and water model" that now seems so self-evident to both Malinka and Loma hides more than it explains. The link with demystification is unmistakable, but for me this was clearest in retrospect. The book is structured such that the rich historical overview in chapter two at first seems to digress from the book's central topic. After finishing chapter one, readers may want to take a peek at the interlude to part II ("Bonfire"), since this makes evident the urgency of understanding ethnogenesis as the background to demystification.

The above may bring out this book's impressive scope, but I have not even touched on its theoretical riches. McGovern manages to take the reader from

Meyer Fortes to Latour, and from Mauss to Althusser, adding Renan as a finishing touch, but he makes these fireworks relevant by putting them in direct relation with everyday events. The only note of regret I have is that all of this theoretical richness seems to restrict the space for McGovern's ethnography. His talents as ethnographer stand out clearly, for instance from the vivid way in which he explains the intricacies of Loma rice cultivation by a short story of how he joined two brothers in laying out their fields. His ethnography of how people remembered demystification—their masks exposed, their daughters trained as dancers for the *Ballets Africains* or raped by officials—is tantalizing, but also very, very short.

However, these are choices one has to make, and anthropology all over the world seems to be set inexorably on the road toward ever more theory at the expense of ethnography. Seen in this light, one can only be happy that at least this author has taken such pains to constantly anchor his audacious explorations in what happened in the everyday. This makes *Unmasking the State* a truly seminal book, notably because of the way the author uses a series of unsettling events to open up new perspectives on the postcolonial state, which remains as capricious as ever.

———Peter Geschiere, University of Amsterdam

Richard B. Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850*. Indian Ocean Studies Series. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014.

doi:10.1017/S0010417516000232

Richard Allen's book represents what may be the first attempt to fully grapple with the scale of and connections between diverse imperial slave trading operations in the Indian Ocean during the peak of the European capture and sale of Africans. In breadth and accomplishment, this book reminds me of Philip Curtin's 1969 *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, but the comparison has limits since, to Allen, European slaving operations in the Indian Ocean were unlike those in the Atlantic. More similar is Paul Lovejoy's *Transformations in Slavery*, insofar as Allen documents the shifting economic, political, and social contexts on all sides of the Indian Ocean and in Europe, chapter-by-chapter and empire-by-empire, and he also examines transformations in enslavement practices and modalities.

Allen seems less interested in bequeathing a Curtinesque magnum opus than in pulling together conflicting or overlapping themes and historiographical issues in Indian Ocean studies that he considers can be better ordered. He seeks to draw attention to the Indian Ocean as an important site for European innovation in government-sponsored and private slaving activities. Central to this is his focus on the "internal" Indian trade rather than the external or Atlantic trade of Indian Ocean origin. He shows how local South Asian economic dynamics shaped the trade in powerful ways that often eclipsed European