This explains to some extent why HIV-positive women who are aware of their status sometimes do not give birth at a medical facility, where the care given to them could reveal their HIV status and that of their partners. It accounts for why they may not follow optimal feeding practices to protect the newborn, since failing to breastfeed would raise questions in the household. Men and women play a game to avoid being the first to be diagnosed in a manner that both must recognize. As long as one or the other can feign unawareness, they can maintain silence regarding their status. However, this game makes it impossible for women to insist upon the use of condoms, request their partners to seek ARVs, or protect their co-wives from infection.

A thread that runs through the text is the contradictory status of HIV-positive children in such couples. While women may be eager to have children as a demonstration of health and womanly virtue, HIV-positive men may be less eager to have children. Rhine does not pursue this pattern specifically. But while a healthy child is a sign of fertility and general well-being for both a woman and her partner, an ill child is not. An HIV-positive child may be seen by men as more of a liability than an asset; physical abuse, refusal to recognize the child and divorce of the mother appear to be ways in which men distance themselves from the social, financial and emotional cost of such a child (p. 127, 134).

Because so many of the 'secrets' Rhine explores are open secrets, I found myself at times wondering whether the language of secrecy was entirely apt. Much of Hausa social life is driven, as Rhine notes, by a concern for *kunya* – which can be translated variously as shyness, shame, respect, honour, restraint, discretion or even obedience. The word 'secrecy' implies a kind of furtiveness or stealth that doesn't quite capture the gendered dimensions of *kunya* that constrain the range of respectable options available to women. The intimacy of couples may be less a result of a shared secret than the outcome of shared adherence to an ethos of restraint. Nevertheless, Rhine effectively traces the ethical complexities women face in balancing the expectations of proper womanly comportment with attentiveness to the well-being of others.

The Unseen Things offers a host of fascinating and touching insights into the intimate lives of women living with HIV in Northern Nigeria. Rhine uses women's own words to convey their yearning for mutually supportive relationships, children and respectability. Her graceful theoretical interventions are nuanced without overpowering the ethnographic material. Because of its accessible style, this affordable text should be of interest not only to anthropologists and historians of medicine, but also to health practitioners and students.

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Janet McIntosh, *Unsettled: denial and belonging among white Kenyans*. Oakland CA: University of California Press (hb US$85 – 978 0 520 29049 5; pb US$29.95 – 978 0 520 29051 8). 2016, 312 pp.

The death of Lord Delamere's scion, Tom Cholmondeley, in August 2016 at a Nairobi hospital elicited mixed reactions among most indigenous Kenyans and the media. While some condoled with the family, others reminded the public of his perceived misconduct and mourned his victims instead. Cholmondeley had fatally shot two Kenyans, according to him in defence of himself and his property,

at the Soysambu ranch in Naivasha in 2005 and 2006. These acts, and Cholmondeley's controversial acquittal for the latter killing in 2009, confirmed public opinion that white Kenyans of settler descent had not yet shed their 'Happy Valley' attitudes. Janet McIntosh's *Unsettled: denial and belonging among white Kenyans* is a unique ethnographic account of the conflicted situation of contemporary white Kenyans in light of their contested claims to autochthony, their attendant claim to land, often perceived to fund lavish lifestyles in spite of local land grievances, and their double-edged relations with indigenous Africans amidst concerns over white privilege. Like other equally appreciated works in the same field, such as Nicholas Best's *Happy Valley: the story of the English in Kenya* (2013), *Unsettled* comes at a time when Kenya is grappling with the implementation of its new constitution, in which both the 'land question' and issues of national integration remain salient. The book's focus on the role of land in the context of difficult racial relations makes it a perfect case study that can augment comparative efforts, for example in Zimbabwe.

McIntosh posits that white Kenyans are unsettled over the 'trappings of white privilege' amidst the abject poverty of most ordinary Kenyans. As locals perceive whites as generally wealthy, Kenyans take increasing notice of racial inequalities. McIntosh further states that whites' double consciousness often means that they have 'two minds about their entitlement to belong' (p. 5), especially when confronted with the realities of colonial injustices that cloud the mythical narratives of humanistic 'civilizing missions'. Conscious of her positionality as a white American, McIntosh herself notes how she is equally disturbed but near helpless about the African-American plight. In order to survive psychologically, white Kenyans resort to attitudes of structural oblivion, which include blindness to their own privileged position and the relative disadvantage of non-white Kenyans.

However, the 'land question' remains an intractably sensitive issue that even several land commissions have failed to address. McIntosh highlights that many settlers appropriated communally owned lands on the pretext that these were 'empty' or 'virgin' lands that they needed to develop. What she fails to discuss is that land ownership in precolonial Kenya reflected communal relations that Hyden describes in terms of an 'economy of affection' rather than market model entitlement. She also explains that, at independence, some settlers preferred to stay in Kenya, claiming the 'emotional impossibility of leaving' (p. 3). But perhaps McIntosh should also have pointed out that some white settlers decided to stay chiefly to retain their land titles, which were assured by the Bill of Rights in Kenya's independence constitution. The book seems to gloss over local elites' complicity in the land question since independence, even when opportunities arose to address it. Since then, the unsettling concern for white Kenyans has been the fact that 'entitlement to belong and own land increasingly hinges on having deep ancestral roots in local soil' (p. 6).

Amidst all these tensions, McIntosh notes that white Kenyans attempt to cultivate a sense of security by deliberately blending into the native Kenyan cultures so as not to be seen as different in any way from others. Learning indigenous languages such as Gikuyu, but also Kenya's lingua franca Kiswahili, is a habit McIntosh describes as 'linguistic atonement'. A perfect example of the instrumentality of this is her reference to Cholmondeley telling inmates at Kamiti prison that he was learning Gikuyu, the language of one of his victims. But McIntosh should also note the necessity for white Kenyans to learn these languages for general communication as residents in a setting where English is much used by literate locals and in formal contexts, but not in many other circumstances. McIntosh also notes how many white Kenyans engage in local occult practices, sometimes merely to exploit the psychology of locals, but at other times with the unexpected result of

actually believing in the potency of these forces. But the hallmark of the 'cultural turn' in attempting to belong are white intermarriages with non-white locals, which McIntosh reads as a strategy to forge acceptance among the latter and to cement citizenship and therefore land entitlements. This is quite a marked departure from the colonial era, when 'going bush' was severely frowned upon among whites.

In conclusion, McIntosh's *Unsettled* provokes thoughts about the nuances that average indigenous Kenyans – myself included – hardly think of consciously. Noting the sensitive land issue, this book is a medium to the titled whites' secretive feelings and fears over their long-term claims to land in light of growing calls for redistribution and even possible retribution, as indicated by the recent claims of Mau Mau veterans. But, realistically, much is unlikely to change in light of the complicity of the equally landed local elites in the land question. Co-option has served to defeat or delay justice everywhere else, and the Kenyan case may not be different.

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Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia 1300–1700*. Woodbridge: James Currey (hb £45 – 978 1 84701 117 6; pb £19.99 – 978 1 84701 161 9). 2015, 400 pp.

Mohammed Hassen Ali has been one of North America's leading scholars of Oromo studies. Twenty-five years after the publication of *The Oromo of Ethiopia: a history, 1570–1850*, Hassen's latest book – *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia 1300–1700*, reviewed here – brilliantly completes his critical re-reading of the region's medieval history.

From the early royal chronicles of the Christian *Habasha* kingdoms and the Arabic epic about Imam Ahmed's *jihad* (1529–43), to the European travellers and Christian missionaries' accounts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Hassen relies on a rich corpus of written sources. In the first half of his book, he convincingly invalidates the cliché of the brutal apparition of these Oromo 'alien invaders' in medieval Ethiopia from the sixteenth century by proving 'the existence of a long-ignored (economic, political and military) relationship between the Christian Amhara society and the Oromo communities … at least since the fourteenth century' (p. ix). Revealing the active Oromo involvement in Imam Ahmed's *jihad* on the Muslim or Christian side, the author argues convincingly that the Oromo communities were probably not independent political units but part of regional coalitions led either by Christian *Habasha* kingdoms or Muslim city states. Hassen demonstrates that the sixteenth-century Oromo conquests were neither historically lineal nor related to one unequivocal Oromo 'cradle land', but rather a series of local rural uprisings initiated from different locations in the southern Bale region, then expanding to the north through diverse patterns of territorial conquest. The two final chapters point out that the progressive collapse of the pan-Oromo national project from the seventeenth century was also closely related to the frequent choice of local Oromo communities to renegotiate their political autonomy with(in) the Christian *Habasha* kingdoms, rather than strengthening independent and sustainable pan-Oromo confederations.

However, Mohammed Hassen's book also includes a paradoxical gap between its focus on the 'long history of interactions among the Oromo, Christian and