

And when benefits have been identified, they accrue not to host communities but to nearby towns that supply services and value-chain enhancements for the investments. Conflicts are on the rise seemingly everywhere, with often violent outcomes. Elite capture has been confirmed (by chiefs in Ghana, politicians in Malawi, wealthier farmers in Tanzania, to name but a few) and new elites among vulnerable populations (e.g., pastoralists) are emerging. And a shockingly large amount of domestic capital via state financing and tax exemptions is required to get many of these deals off the ground, belying the fundamental premise of “foreign investment.”

In short, this volume presents data that should alarm anyone concerned with the future of agrarian livelihoods in Africa. The challenges to large-scale agribusiness ventures are far outnumbering the opportunities and promises that accompanied them. And those whose rights to their land and livelihoods are least respected by both state and society—pastoralists, women, smallholders, and youth—are taking the biggest hit.

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## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Casper Andersen.** *British Engineers and Africa, 1875–1914*. London: Routledge, 2011. Notes. Works Cited. Indexes. xxvii + 229 pp. \$150.00. Cloth. ISBN: 978–1848931183.

Literature in the history of science and technology in Africa has been growing slowly since around the 2000. Most work published since then has concentrated on single infrastructure projects and on showing relations between the colonial period, on one hand, and “Western” science and technology in various African contexts. Little has been done to examine the place of professionals and networks at both ends of the colonial world, in the metropolitan capitals and in the colonies. In this regard, the Danish historian Casper Andersen’s *British Engineers and Africa, 1875–1914* stands out as a significant exception, not just in delineating imperial relations between Africa and Europe but also in the wider global history of imperialism in an age of science and technology.

This book presents an analysis of complex connections forged between British engineers and empire at home and abroad, and between individual engineers and the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) at a historic moment when the engineering profession began to make its mark in Britain’s African colonies. Engineers became important actors in the modernization mission of the empire to the extent that some apologists of imperial conquest imagined replacing the *C* for “Christianity” in the mantra of

“Christianity, Commerce and Civilization” with another C—for Civil engineering. This implies that a specific type of engineering might well have served as moral justification for colonialism through various infrastructure projects, from railways to dams, roads to ports. Exploring rich archival resources, unlike some recent books on empire, Andersen argues that such a lofty claim for civil engineering did not come easily. It had to be generated by extraprofessional actions such as the creation of informal networks with political administrators in London, and especially with the hub of elite consulting engineers in Westminster, so that through the ICE they could lobby for and influence projects in Africa. They had to associate themselves with decision-makers in the colonies for tenders, conceiving projects, and protection. In explaining this evolving relationship, Andersen uses the concept of “bridgeheads” to “recognize the pluralism of British society” and “the co-existence of different” British imperial interests (4). Building the empire meant tapping and dispersing the advanced technology of the later Victorian era.

In lucid language the book sustains a fairly balanced analysis through six connected chapters. It is a model of careful research on developments of science and technology in Africa and one that goes beyond the more predictable approaches of imperialism studies. Without relying on usual sources such as UNESCO’s *General History of Africa* or the Cambridge *History of Africa*, Andersen turns to extensive archives, contemporary periodicals and letters, and technical reports to provide a thick account of the networks through which engineers fashioned the structures and infrastructure of empire. Less familiar than accounts of missionaries and colonial officers, these moral and political narratives of building are essential to deep cultural studies of imperial Africa at the turn of the century.

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## **RELIGION**

**Robert M. Baum. *West Africa’s Women of God: Alinesitoué and the Diola Prophetic Tradition*.** Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016. x + 301 pp. Photographs and Maps. Glossary. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$80.00. Cloth. \$32.00. Paper. ISBN: 978-0-253-01767-3.

Robert M. Baum’s first book, *Shrines of the Slave Trade: Diola Religion and Society in Precolonial Senegal* (Oxford University Press, 1999) challenged conventional scholarly notions regarding change-resistant African societies by tracing precolonial Diola responses to the Atlantic slave trade through innovative religious rituals and the emergence of particular shrines and