

Religion and the Making of Nigeria by OLUFEMI VAUGHAN

Durham: Duke University Press, 2016. Pp. 311. \$94.95 (hbk).

doi:10.1017/S0022278X17000325

Far from sinking into atrophy with the rise of modernisation, as foretold by the secularisation thesis, the deepening influence of religion has remained visible in the modern world, as evidenced by epochal events such as the Islamic revolution in Iran, the rise of liberation theology in Latin America, the fall of Communism, the 9/11 attacks and the aftermath of the Arab Spring. The continued salience of religious political parties and radical religious sects across the world, including the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Hamas in Palestine, Jama'at-i-Islami in Pakistan and Bangladesh, Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad in Africa's Lake Chad Basin region, and, more recently, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, demonstrates that religion today is a product of modernity as well as a response to it. Olufemi Vaughan's *Religion and the Making of Nigeria* is a salutary reminder of this point, revisiting, as it ably does, the longue durée of religious movements and their adaptive centrality to the making of the modern state.

Using the very apt case of Nigeria, a deeply divided country in which state-society intercourse is precariously underpinned by religious reckonings, Vaughan draws on over two centuries of historical analysis to demonstrate how Muslim and Christian structures provided the social and ideological framework on which the Nigerian colonial and post-colonial state was constructed. The analysis extends to how these two formidable world religions shaped, and were shaped by, indigenous social and political conditions. At the outset, Vaughan claims that social science scholarship in Nigeria has hitherto overlooked a 'methodological approach' that interrogates the 'entangled histories' of Muslim and Christian movements as an important conduit for understanding the evolution of the modern Nigerian state (p. 7). For those looking for the gap that *Religion and the Making of Nigeria* fills, this is it.

The book is structured into two major sections consisting of nine chapters that seem at times to overlap and/or overstretch. The introduction provides a detailed discussion of the book's thematic concern, although this sometimes appears belaboured. In Section One, Vaughan deftly compares the impact that the Muslim reformism of the Sokoto Jihad and the evangelisation of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) has had on Nigeria's three major regions: the Hausa-Fulani and Kanuri Muslim North, the traditionally non-Muslim Middle Belt region, and the Yoruba Muslim-Christian South West region. In Section Two, Vaughan shifts his analytic focus to the recurring crisis of *sharia* (Islamic law) in Nigeria, arguing that this underscores two important issues: first, the depth of the structural imbalance between northern Muslim states, on the one hand, and Southern and Middle Belt states, on the other; second, the crystallisation of the ethno-religious and ethno-regional struggles between Muslims and Christians (p. 228).

The book concludes by looking at the religious militancy of Boko Haram in Nigeria and situating its emergence within growing frustration in the implementation of expanded *sharia* (p. 219). However, Vaughan does a rather cursory job of relating Boko Haram's militancy to prevailing religious, political

and socio-economic conditions in the northern region. Indeed, it is somewhat baffling why such an important religious warfare was only treated *en passant* in the conclusion.

Religion and the Making of Nigeria is an excellent resource for scholars interested in the role of the politics and practice of religion in state-making in Nigeria. The book sets the scene for Ebenezer Obadare's forthcoming book *Religion and Politics in Nigeria*, which shows how the jostle for ascendancy between different religious forces in modern Nigeria is fundamental to the remaking of its political landscape.

DANIEL E. AGBIBOA
University of Pennsylvania

State of Rebellion: Violence and Intervention in the Central African Republic by
 LOUISA LOMBARD

London: Zed Books, 2016. Pp. 287. £12 (hbk).

doi:10.1017/S0022278X17000337

In this important book, Louisa Lombard examines the Central African Republic (CAR) and its marginal place in the world through histories of violence and out-sourced politics. With a keen eye for the ways in which ordinary people experience and make sense of their country and those who govern it, *State of Rebellion* discusses the impact of international responses to violent conflicts in the 21st century. Lombard takes issue with conventional and unhelpful understandings of the state in Africa as one that fails to live up to ideal-type and fictive standards. Instead, Lombard commits herself to 'understanding politics in all its diversity'. She invites the reader to see 'CAR for *what it is*, rather than *what it is not* or what we think it *should someday be ...*' (p. 23, emphasis in original).

The book is divided into seven chapters. The first two chapters provide an alternative reading of the role of the state and international relations, building on the nature and structure of the relationships between people who live, govern and intervene in the country. Drawing on work of anthropologists such as Max Gluckman and Paul Richards, Lombard shows how violence constitutes relations in the CAR, and how the relations between national and international elites produce a state that is to a great extent governed in places like Paris, Ndjamena and New York.

Chapters 3 to 5 turn towards the aspects of individual and group agency or the lack of people's ability to influence developments. Chapter 3 discusses the role of mobility as an expression of social, political or economic status – that is, the powers to freely move in and out of spaces such as the national territory, NGO compounds and occult spheres. Mobility is thus a desirable resource that separates national and international elites from ordinary subjects. The fourth and fifth chapter discuss how local armed groups 'conventionalise' (e.g. by choosing an acronym that suggests a political agenda) in order to draw on the mechanisms of international recognitions and its perks such as media appearance and peace talks. Lombard is highly critical of the assumed effectiveness of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR)