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REVIEWS

THE ETHNOGRAPHIC PRESENT AND THE PAST

Snakes and Crocodiles : Power and Symbolism in Ancient Zimbabwe. By THOMAS N. HUFFMAN. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1996. Pp. x+228. R98.95, paperback (ISBN 1-86814-254-X).

For almost thirty years Tom Huffman has devoted much of his scholarly attention to the understanding of the area around Great Zimbabwe. Not surprisingly then, this book is one of the most detailed and comprehensive discussion of the Zimbabwe tradition. The focus is solely and exclusively on the symbolic structure of these stone-walled sites and what that structure reveals about the organization of Zimbabwe society. Huffman's ideas on symbolism in the Zimbabwe tradition have, of course, been the subject of considerable debate. This volume is no doubt intended to answer his critics and it certainly includes all sites pertinent to the various debates. To illuminate the subtleties of the text, an unconventional open format has been adopted with illustrations and text intertwined, but the sheer number of plates and drawings (262 figures and 16 colour plates), in the main illustrating architectural facades and plans, interferes with the flow of the argument. Nevertheless, this is a unique and impressive collection of the data accumulated by archaeologists over the last one hundred years.

Huffman's innovative use of ethnography and application of a structuralist approach to settlement layout, interprets Zimbabwe society in terms of a series of age, gender and status-based divisions, reinforced symbolically by decorative motifs, wall designs and site layouts. The main proposition is that centres such as Khami and Great Zimbabwe were controlled by 'sacred leadership': kings secluded themselves from their populations by occupying hilltops and, lower down the political hierarchy, regional chiefs built smaller stone enclosures that incorporated or compressed such features. Much of this interpretation rests on understanding political and religious symbolism in recent Shona-speaking populations. In particular, Venda ethnography has proved a rich source of information.

Despite lengthy justifications in this book, many scholars will continue to find the use of Venda, as opposed to Shona, ethnography opportunistic. A more substantive problem, for both historians and archaeologists, lies in the general theoretical approach. In the introduction, the 'direct historical approach' is adopted whereby a model is created in the ethnographic present and then applied to preceding archaeological situations. Most historians and not a few archaeologists will be perturbed when they discover that this 'ethnographic present' is derived from seventeenth-century Portuguese documents, discussing the Morwa polity in north-eastern Zimbabwe, and then imposed on Rozvi sites in south-western Zimbabwe. This discussion is interlaced with twentieth-century ethnographic data relating to political and ritual activity, including initiation schools. Further problems arise with the attempt to generate this model using a single site, Danangombe. The range of features at Danangombe does not cover the range of features described in the texts, and so the layout of other sites such as Naletale and Khami are freely called upon to bolster the model. Though it would therefore appear that the model is unsound from the outset, it is then successively applied to Great Zimbabwe and to the earlier settlement of Mapungubwe.

One of the great strengths of the structuralist approach is that it allows an analysis of many aspects of society which archaeologists would not normally

address, thus generating a much deeper understanding of the society under study. Huffman's analysis enables scholars to access key components of Zimbabwe polities. However, this success leads to over-confidence in the structuralist method by dealing with issues which archaeologists *can* hope to address. For instance, at the end of the chapter on Great Zimbabwe, a section is devoted to burials. The Chirongwa ruin, a cave with a walled complex, is identified as a royal cemetery because of available historical information and structuralist inconsistences in the layout of the walls. Not a single actual burial was encountered at this site. No archaeologically-encountered bodies are called upon to substantiate these suggested burial practices and, unfortunately, the volume went to press before the burials at Thulamela were made public. These royal burial practices are therefore proposed but hardly proven.

Perhaps part of the problem is the curt style in which the book is written. A much lengthier discourse with which the reader could engage might assist in the acceptance of the thesis. Personally, I suspect that the wealth of scholarship and the many correlations between different sources of evidence indicate that much of what Huffman presents is in fact very sound, but it is not well served by the manner of its presentation.

In the future Huffman and his supporters need to articulate this thesis in a theoretically more acceptable manner, recognizing the inconsistencies and discrepancies of the approach. Critics on the other hand, need to publish alternative reconstructions which may be applied to Zimbabwe-tradition data and which tackle that data in something approaching the same detail, convincingly explaining the symbolic layouts and meanings of settlements. *Snakes and Crocodiles* may not be the finished product but it is a long way ahead of any rivals. To the ordinary reader the challenge is whether to reject Huffman's thorough scholarship on the basis of some fundamental theoretical flaws or to ignore these flaws and consider Zimbabwe society from an enriched perspective.

University of Botswana ANDREW REID

THE DUTCH AND THE SLAVE TRADE

The Dutch Triangle : The Netherlands and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1621–1664. By WILLIE F. PAGE. New York and London: Garland, 1997. Pp. xxxv + 262. $60 (ISBN 0-8153-2881-8).

For a brief period in the 1640s, having driven the Portuguese from the Gold Coast and (temporarily) from Brazil, Angola and São Tomé, the Dutch seemed poised to gain a dominant position in the Atlantic slave trade. As things turned out, after 1650 their share never exceeded 15 per cent. Nevertheless, they continued to compete with the British, French, Portuguese and other nations in this commerce until the early nineteenth century.

Dutch involvement in the slave trade has recently been the subject of one major study and one well-illustrated, more popular book,[1] a number of scholarly articles have analysed detailed aspects, and several source editions have shed further light on this episode. Page's book covers only the early phase, beginning with the foundation of the Dutch West India Company in 1621 (not as important an event as he suggests, since it was not until 1636 that the WIC began seriously to buy slaves) and ending somewhat abruptly with the loss of New Netherland in 1664.

[1] Johannes Menne Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600–1815* (Cambridge, 1990); Bea Brommer (ed.), *Ik ben eigendom van … Slavenhandel en plantegeleven* (Wijk en Aalburg, 1993).

He offers a readable, predominantly narrative (and often anecdotal) account, intended 'as a text for undergraduate students of African and African-American history', but whether students will be able to afford $60 for this kind of book is doubtful.

Chapter One reviews the early history of the Netherlands up to 1621. In Chapter Two the author discusses Portuguese and Dutch activities in West and West Central Africa. (Curiously, the fact that the Portuguese regained control of São Tomé and Angola in 1648 is not even mentioned.) There follow some remarks on the Akan states and Dahomey. Chapter Three covers the Dutch conquest of Brazil, the colonization of Guiana and the establishment of slave colonies on the islands of Bonaire and Curaçao. The last two chapters are devoted to New Netherland and the presence of Africans there.

The author's use of sources is undiscriminating. For example, his account of African history rests largely on two books written primarily for schoolchildren a quarter of a century ago and one highly unreliable book by a non-Africanist.[2] Few of the standard works written since the 1970s are even mentioned: for instance, the highly relevant research of Ernst van den Boogaart[3] is ignored (except in one minor footnote), as are John Thornton's provocative ideas regarding the early Atlantic trade as a whole.[4] The distinction between primary and secondary material is blurred: long passages of both kinds are quoted without any indication of their different nature. At first glance the book appears to contain new statistical information in the form of tables, but virtually all these are copied directly from published works. Indeed, as far as can be discerned from the notes, no more than four unpublished documents are mentioned at all.

More critical, perhaps, is the fact that Page's book represents an extreme case of the common tendency for historians to choose topics for which they lack the necessary language skills. To write about the Netherlands' role in the slave trade without knowing Dutch – even if some documents exist in translation – makes a mockery of historical research. Even a bilingual scholar would have difficulty here: one of the key books, for instance, is in Spanish.[5]

Bewildered by this and other aspects of the book – a penchant for journalese ('plan of genocide', 'tragedy struck', 'a bitterly cold February night') and moralising ('abominable', 'valiant resistance'), too many long-dead Aunt Sallies and an amateurish index, I turned to the imprints page: 'Revision of the author's thesis (Ph.D. – New York University 1975).' Fair enough, but twenty-two years is a long time.

Leipzig University ADAM JONES

KALABARI INCORPORATED

The Mind of African Strategists: A Study of Kalabari Management Practice. By NIMI WARIBOKO. London: Associated University Presses, 1997. Pp. 151. £23.50 (ISBN 0-8386-3706-X).

This study of the Kalabari merchants of the Niger Delta extends the established characterization of the Eastern Delta region as one of 'trading states' to narrate the

[2] John Vogt, *Portuguese Rule on the Gold Coast, 1469–1682* (Athens, 1979).

[3] E. von den Boogaart, 'The trade between Western Africa and the Atlantic world, 1600–1690: Estimates of trends in composition and value', *J. Afr. Hist.* XXXII (1992), 369–85.

[4] John K. Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1680* (Cambridge, 1992).

[5] Ernst van den Boogaart *et al.*, *La expansión holandesa en el Atlántico* (Madrid, 1992).

history of the people of the island of Elem Kalabari in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as literally that of a giant corporation, 'Kalabari Incorporated'. Wariboko would appear to have several purposes in adopting this approach to his subject. First, Kalabari Incorporated indicates the singular importance of economic interest in the settlement of Elem Kalabari: 'what today we call the Kalabari nation was indeed a corporation that matriculated from its task of exploiting opportunities to an economy and a web of social relationships' (p. 27). Wariboko argues that historians, more interested in the political development of the Delta states, have failed to see how migrants to Elem Kalabari were bound less by ethnicity than by common economic interests – to an extent that justifies approaching their history as that of a corporation. Second, by applying business strategy analysis to the Kalabari experience, he sets out to expose the 'corporate-level strategies' of pre-colonial Delta merchants that have been obscured by a more conventional approach, while also demonstrating that analysis of this kind can be fruitfully employed in studies where no corporation technically exists. Third, characterizing the Kalabari merchants as a corporation enables Wariboko to interpret their decline as a failure of corporate strategy.

Wariboko's first and penultimate chapters address, respectively, the rise and decline of Kalabari Incorporated. Factors contributing to the former include the Kalabari's success in 'leveraging' their resources and identifying a market for quality produce, their strategic location, and their investment in customer loyalty by building relationships with European merchants. Decline followed from a failure to adapt to the changing circumstances of the late nineteenth century and insufficient development of managerial hierarchies. Interim chapters discuss aspects of the corporation's structure and practice. The study ends with a summary in note form of the corporation's features, drawing comparison with modern business models, especially with Japanese enterprise, which the author argues offers the closest parallel to that of the Kalabari.

This is a bold and interesting project with the potential to break down interdisciplinary barriers. Nonetheless, Wariboko's approach risks giving an unduly reductionist interpretation of Kalabari society, while the explanation of decline which Wariboko offers, by stressing the failure to develop key managerial structures, would seem to weaken his own interpretative strategy by inevitably calling into question the validity of approaching the Kalabari as a corporation in the first place. Wariboko explains in his preface that this volume is the first of a proposed three-volume study, and he candidly acknowledges that this book is not based on a scholarly examination of cases, but is rather an 'impressionistic analysis, semi-academic and reportorial in language, designed to be a fitting foreword to a future academic study' (p. 12). However, historians will be dismayed by Wariboko's reliance on secondary literature, thus establishing his own understanding of Kalabari society through the filter of the readings of other scholars. Confidence in Wariboko's conclusions is also undermined by some questionable assertions. We are told, for instance, that before the Kalabari 'became an ethnic group, they were first an economic entity' (p. 10), and a few lines further on 'I am not saying that the pre-Kalabaris did not come from a society of people. They definitely came out of a nation' (p. 11).

A study of this kind which adopts an unfamiliar approach to its subject matter can stimulate novel insights and perspectives. Wariboko's volume indeed does prompt a reassessment of the way in which historians normally address their subject. However, while ultimate assessment of this project must await the further volumes promised, it is difficult to accept that Wariboko's approach represents a valuable advance on existing characterizations of the Delta states.

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SOCIAL HISTORY

Gender, Ethnicity and Social Change on the Upper Slave Coast: A History of the Anlo-Ewe. By SANDRA E. GREENE. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann; Oxford: James Currey, 1996. Pp. xiii + 209. £40 (ISBN 0-85255-672-1); £14.95, paperback (ISBN 0-85255-622-5).

Sandra Greene's book is probably the most important available study on the history of the Anlo-Ewe, especially in its examination of continuity and change over the pre-colonial and colonial periods. It is a masterful synthesis of gender, ethnicity and social change in Anlo society before 1900. The last two chapters extend Greene's perceptive insights into the twentieth century.

Greene argues that early Ewe residents in land-scarce Anlo, in response to the continuing influx of refugees and immigrants from 1679, reconstituted themselves into clans (*hlowo*) to ensure their control over land. In the process, Anlo-Ewe ethnicity, a construction of 'insiders' versus 'outsiders', was defined. Anlo clans emphasized the geographical origins of their ancestors from Notsie and early settlement. But the process of ethnic (re)definition was ongoing, responding to the changing context of Akwamu rule, the Atlantic slave trade, Christianity, colonialism, an expanding market economy and a growing pan-Ewe consciousness. Each phase in this process altered Anlo ethnicity. Paradoxically, though Anlo women were crucial in the definition of ethnic identity – especially in the context of marriage – they ended up being disempowered in this social transformation.

In patrilineal Anlo society, male elders secured their control over scarce land by rigidly regulating the marriage choices of younger women, as well as by denying young women access to land. Such land could be lost to the patrilineage if women married outside the clan and bequeathed the land to their children. Anlo elders encouraged clan endogamy, and from 1750, matrilateral cross-cousin marriages in particular. But not all women and outsiders passively accepted their marginal roles in Anlo society. Their successful challenges to the ethnic and gender construction of Anlo elders expanded the norms that regulated these relations. Outsiders used the wealth acquired through the Atlantic slave trade, new gods like *Nyigbla*, and the religious orders which they introduced in their bid for social prominence and acceptance (chs. 2 and 3). In this pursuit, they forged strategic alliances with young Anlo women oppressed by the social engineering of their elders. But the status quo remained inviolate, ironically, for successful outsiders admitted as 'insiders' then conformed by adopting the strategies Anlo elders used in social definition. Criteria for inclusion expanded to include service to the Anlo polity and self-acquired wealth. But much remained the same, as many outsiders and Anlo women accepted their assigned positions (ch. 4). By the mid-twentieth century, however, Anlo-Ewe ethnicity had moved from its earlier rigid exclusion to one of flexible incorporation, and the construction of a wider Ewe identity. Colonialism and independence had promoted the re-thinking of Anlo identity. The outcome, paradoxically, further marginalized women, as outsiders in Anlo society now preferred alliances with the Anlo political élite instead of Anlo women. Deprived of inheriting land in the twentieth century, Anlo women responded by forging co-operatives and market organizations with other Ewe women, and they de-emphasized clan affiliation in the way they socialized their children. Ironically both developments highlighted the new emphasis on a wider Ewe identity and the declining relevance of clan affiliation.

This book underscores the importance of women and domesticity in the definition of group or ethnic identity. Greene's penetrating analysis of gender change is situated within the history of political, economic, demographic, social and religious change in Anlo society. The book is extremely well researched, and

has already become a reference work in Anlo. A particular strength is its persuasive reconstruction of early Anlo history based on oral traditions and the few available European sources. During my fieldwork in Anlo in 1996–7, it was cited in an important court case in Anloga. Several literate Anlo chiefs, who perused my copy, immediately requested personal copies; as a consequence, I have purchased this book several times.

There are some minor limitations. The book is very Anloga-centered in its focus, even for the period when the geographical boundaries of Anlo had expanded. The late Togbui James Ocloo IV of Keta, for example, on his perusal of the book, felt that Keta's oral traditions and interpretation of Anlo history had been subordinated to Anloga's. But then there is a long history of antagonism between Keta and Anloga, and between the Bate and Adzovia clans that alternatively elect candidates as paramount chiefs of Anlo. But there is no mention of the coastal erosion that has exercised minds in the Keta district in this century, and its potential impact on fishing, land pressure and gender relations. There are a few errors in dating. Togbui Sri II died in 1956 and not 1959 (p. 151).

But these minor reservations do not detract from the importance of this book. I have found it an extremely useful research tool. And I suspect I will continue to buy Greene's book for other Anlo chiefs who discover this gem.

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CAMEROON STUDIES

African Crossroads : Intersections between History and Anthropology in Cameroon (Cameroon Studies, Vol. 2). Edited by IAN FOWLER and DAVID ZEITLYN. Providence and Oxford: Bergahn Books, 1996. Pp. xxvii+213. £20 (ISBN 1-57181-859-5), £10.95 paperback (ISBN 1-57181-926-6).

In this volume, editors Ian Fowler and David Zeitlyn have brought together Cameroonian and Cameroonist anthropologists and historians to celebrate the contributions of ethnographer-historian Elizabeth Chilver. In her own inter-disciplinary work and in her collaborations with Phyllis Kaberry from the 1940s,[1] Chilver mined missionaries', administrators' and traders' documents long before it was fashionable to do so. Chilver integrated this material with ethnographic evidence to shed light on pre-colonial political hierarchies and religion, and to reconstruct the historical processes by which Africans and Europeans negotiated colonial rule in the Cameroonian Grassfields. She also helped to facilitate a lively dialogue between Cameroonian and Cameroonist scholars and to incorporate the concerns of non-academic Africans into scholarly debates about Cameroon's past (pp. xii–xv).

This volume confronts two 'crossroads': the 'proto-colonial' period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when German and French explorers, traders and administrators and African kings, chiefs and seniors struggled to control dense, specialized networks of exchange and political authority; and the theoretical and methodological intersections of anthropology and history, which Chilver's work exemplified.

[1] See, for instance, 'Paramountcy and protection in the Cameroons: the Bali and the Germans, 1889–1913,' in K. P. Gifford and W. R. Louis (eds), *Britain and Germany in Africa : Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967); 'Thaumaturgy in contemporary traditional religion: the Case of Nso' in mid-century,' *Journal of Religion in Africa*, xx (1990), 226–47; and with Phyllis Kaberry, 'From tribute to tax in a Tikar chiefdom,' *Africa*, xxx (1960), 1–19; 'Chronology of the Bamenda grassfields,'. *J. Afr. Hist.*, xi (1970), 249–57.

In its confrontation with the former crossroad, the volume will appeal primarily to scholars working in Cameroon and contiguous regions. Chilver's diverse concerns about the Grassfield's pre-colonial and colonial history, ethnography and religion thread together most of the essays, though two (Burnham, Austen) address themes related to Chilver's work but focus on regions outside of the Grassfields. Several essays counter older interpretations of the fragmenting political authority, language and culture in the Grasslands during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Instead, contributors embrace the historical cultural, political, economic and social 'diversity' that Chilver and Kaberry characterized, though as Fowler and Zeitlyn also remind the reader, 'Grassfields polities resemble no one as much as either other' (p. xxiv).

These tensions between diversity and broader commonalities are implicit as one reads several of the essays addressing consolidation on different scales. Jean-Pierre Warnier, for instance, highlights the significance of young unmarried men's rebellion from the 1890s throughout the Grassfield kingdoms, when these cadets capitalized on pre-existing tensions to escape their elders' control. Robert O'Neil focuses on a more local cohesion taking place among Moghamo people in the late nineteenth century. A German alliance with the Fon (king) of Bali-Nyonga disrupted these consolidating efforts, facilitating two imperialisms (German and Bali-Nyonga) over the Moghamo. This history has fed continued Moghamo resentment of Bali-Nyonga land appropriations in the twentieth century and has shaped their distinct ethnic identities.[2] In a similar vein, Verkijika G. Fanso and Bongfen Chem-Langhêê trace changing forms of military organization and warfare within the Nso' kingdom after 1825, underscoring the integration of villages with the Nso' state. Most of the papers focus on specific kingdoms and peoples to elucidate processes of political and ethnic consolidation. Only Fowler and Zeitlyn, Warnier, Philip Burnham, and Richard Fardon explicitly confront questions about broader Grassfields, equatorial and West African identities. Other contributors could productively have interrogated this tension, questioning more consistently the specific processes and questions linking their studies to those of the Grassfields, Cameroon and West and equatorial Africa.

The volume's second 'crossroads', that of history and anthropology, should engage general readers of African history. Contributors explore diverse interrelations between historical and anthropological theory, method and evidence, though with varying degrees of success as these concerns remain implicit in most of the essays. Several contributors could have articulated more explicitly how they conceived these interrelations and tackled the challenges of 'doing' history and anthropology. Nevertheless, those who confront this issue do so in illuminating ways. In the volume's most theoretically challenging contribution, Richard Fardon takes apart the interrelationships between categories of personhood, ethnicity and identity in West Africa. Fardon argues that 'traditional' and 'modern' categories of the person, ethnicity and identity appear to be discrete, but are in fact historically connected by 'what seems ''not to fit'' in the two cases.' (p. 18) In his analysis of the historical production of Chamba identity in Bali-Nyonga, Fardon finds that local historians and anthropologists have put history to different uses. European professional anthropologists 'construe what fails to fit as indicative of a preceding situation' whereas 'the local historian has to interpret it as precursive of modernity, and a possible future.' (p. 40) For Fardon, history's place in articulating identity ultimately depends upon who is writing for whom.

Other contributions adopt different approaches to history and anthropology. Burnham and Warnier employ the disciplines' methodological tools and evidence

[2] See also Austen's contribution for the historical connections to contemporary debates over access to land and political power in Douala.

to illuminate alternative interpretations of the past. Burnham draws on linguistic, ethnographic and oral evidence to revise older interpretations of French encroachment into the Sangha basin before formal colonization. He therefore employs ethnography to correct oversimplified documentary historical analysis. Interestingly, Warnier reverses Burnham's process. Recounting how disciplinary blinders led him to disregard particular ethnographic evidence in the early 1970s, Warnier examines explorers' and travellers' accounts and colonial publications to underscore young males' resistance to elder control in the Bamileke kingdom and the Grassfields.

Geary's, Banadzem's and Tardits's chapters bridge history and anthropology not to correct previous interpretations of past change, but to explain it through indigenous categories. Geary's piece on late nineteenth-century Bamum appropriations of German-style military attire mines ethnographic, material, photographic and archival evidence to elucidate past perceptions, motivations and categories of her subjects. Bamum adoption of German-style military dress demonstrated to Bamum enemies their access to wealth and power gained by allying with the Germans; their subsequent abandonment of this attire revealed a desire to distance themselves from the colonial administration.

Fowler and Zeitlyn's preface and introduction make illuminating and laudable efforts to unify these diverse essays. At times, however, their efforts are undercut by the failure of contributors explicitly to address the volume's major concerns. In order to bring greater unity to this volume, the editors could have exercised a bit more editorial discipline over individual contributions. Nevertheless, for specialists working in the broader region, this collection demonstrates how subsequent generations of scholars have built productively on Chilver's contributions. And for general readers willing to dig for diverse ways of working historically and anthropologically, the volume provides absorbing reading.

University of Virginia TAMARA GILES-VERNICK

NINETEENTH-CENTURY TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order. By TIMOTHY KEEGAN. London: Leicester University Press; Claremont: David Philip; Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1996. Pp. x + 368. £15.99, paperback (ISBN 0-7185-0134-9).

Keegan's main project is to reveal how British interventions, and settlers' commercial activities in particular, forged perhaps the most critical transition in South Africa's history. This was the transition from an eighteenth-century colonial order based on patriarchalism and slavery to a mid-nineteenth-century one founded on racism and state-regulation. Extending recent work by Clifton Crais, Noël Mostert, Martin Legassick and Andrew Bank among others, the book is organized around the central irony of this transition: that is, the way in which British authority was able to move relatively smoothly from the liberation of Khoisan and slave labour to the support of settler-dominated racial capitalism. Reflected above all in the legalized subservience of 'free', 'coloured' labour and the colonization of the Xhosa, Keegan demonstrates how the new order was arranged around capitalist ideologies which had been manifest from the very beginnings of the British colonial reform programme.

In his preface, Keegan notes that the best of recent 'post-structuralist' research on the colonial Cape involves 'an amalgam of the cultural and the social, the economic and political' (p. vii). However, while the book does deploy some of the

insights into quotidian power relationships which such research has yielded, these insights are confined largely to the institution of slavery. After excusing himself from an explicit consideration of the gender boundaries that are explored in much post-structuralist work, Keegan devotes the bulk of the book to a more functional interpretation of merchant and settler capitalist expansion. Indeed, in casting materialist insights comprehensively back into the pre-industrial period the book extends the achievements of a brand of historical revisionism which predates the influence of post-structuralism.

The book's materialist emphasis is both a strength and a weakness. On the one hand, it allows for a consistent strand of analysis connecting nuanced discussions of local power struggles. Despite the complexity and diversity of the social formations under review, the account thus retains an admirable clarity. On the other hand, the same approach leads to the relative neglect of those mundane psychological and cultural interactions which helped sustain the colonial order. In reality, these more subtle dimensions of identity blended with economic projects to give various social formations both their cohesion and their dynamism.

To take an example involving one of the most critical groups in the whole drama: Keegan suggests that the 1820 British settlers' claims of insecurity were largely fabricated in order to appropriate military expenditure and provoke war with the Xhosa. Although fears were indeed exaggerated by a vociferous clique for these purposes, such an analysis underplays a genuine, widely shared defensiveness in the face of perceived and very real Xhosa and Khoi threats. Made yet more menacing by humanitarian condemnation and the spectre of metropolitan abandonment, it was primarily these threats which persuaded settlers to reinvent their divisive class, religious and ethnic boundaries and form a relatively coherent, and ultimately hegemonic, social group in the eastern Cape. On the frontier at least, capital accumulation and insecurity were two sides of the same coin.

Although Keegan's analytical parameters do not extend much beyond a now orthodox revisionism, what they do encompass is impressive enough. By contextualizing nineteenth-century developments which are usually viewed in isolation, the book generates fresh and incisive interpretations. For instance, the hackneyed topic of the 'Great Trek's' causes is revisited in a synthesis connecting frontier Boers, British settler expansionism and the reach of Cape Town-based mercantile capital. British reforms in South Africa are interpreted convincingly in the light of a sophisticated synopsis of metropolitan developments, and the comparative colonial literature on humanitarian and utilitarian liberalism is used to good effect. This is a consistently impressive and elegantly written book. It provides the much-needed service of bringing South Africa's early and mid-nineteenth century transformation centre-stage and it will probably come to be viewed as a classic.

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ANTHROPOLOGY AND APARTHEID

Creating Order: Culture as Politics in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century South Africa. By BETTINA SCHMIDT. The Hague: CIP-Gegevens Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 1996. Pp. 350. DM 35, paperback (ISBN 90-72639-49-9).

Creating order is essentially a Ph.D. dissertation (a *Proefschrift*) published as a book. There are minimal if any editorial changes in evidence. The book traces the relationships as the author sees them between Afrikaner ethnic mobilization and

thought, British social anthropology, Afrikaner '*volkekundiges*' anthropology, and the racial and ethnic ordering of South Africa.

The author's main argument is stated early on (p. 9). Because of its oddity, and its incidental nature with regard to the scholarly contributions that follow, it is best simply to quote it:

> In contrast to the social anthropologists, the *volkekundiges* as cultural agents were less interested in the theory of pre-modern 'primitive' societies and cultures, but rather how the blacks as 'foreign' *volke* and ethnic groups [sic] could be relegated to defined territories within South Africa, where they would have the right to develop their own national identity. That meant that the *volkekundiges* pleaded for the exclusion of these 'foreign' cultures from the territory of white South Africa not because they perceived them as 'primitive' ethnic groups but because they perceived them as self-contained national ethnic groups to be integrated into a modern, quasi-federalist (con-federal) South Africa … *The Afrikaners had … in mind* [*the idea of*] *equally sovereign cultures and peoples*.'

As a thesis this appears to concede far too much to a handful of speeches by Afrikaner intellectuals conscious of who their university publics were, and in fact the body of the book does nothing to dispel this impression. The ethereal nature of speculations about what scholars had in mind disassociates them from the political economy in which their thought was enmeshed. Thus the book does not convincingly tie intellectual currents to policy. Despite keen attention to the careers of South African anthropologists, the political economy of South Africa is never seriously linked to the authors's analysis.

Schmidt suggests that 'the Afrikaners were more modernly oriented than the English, when it came to solving the Native question' (p. 9). Whatever Schmidt means by 'modern', she does want to argue that Afrikaner anthropology, the *volkekundiges* type, took seriously the equality of peoples embodied by the arguments of pioneer anthropologists like Bronislaw Malinowski: in contrast, she writes, the modern British school remained stuck in the Liberal 'upliftment' mode. The problem is that her analysis undercuts this very argument. She shows through concrete examples that much of British social anthropology was quite in tune with the development of apartheid thinking; and in contrast to her remarks about modernity, she also shows that British scholars like Monica Hunter were, despite limitations, far more progressive than any *volkekundiges*.

The sections on Afrikaner mobilization contributes little that is new. The chapter on missionaries' mobilization of ethnicity in South Africa is a reasonable summary of diverse material that grants too much power to the missionaries. Schmidt does go on to do some useful things, however. She shows insightfully that it was precisely after the destruction and reintegration of pre-colonial African political entities into the white-dominated economy, that South African anthropology developed the 'science of primitive cultures.' Similarly, it was in South Africa (at the University of Cape Town) that Radcliffe Brown was most active, and largely in South Africa that the modern system-theory concept of ethnic groups, the structural-functionalist idea of 'holistic primitive organization', was developed. Ironically a far better case could be made than the one the author attempts. It could be argued that the British school of anthropology had a far greater impact on Afrikaner thinking than has heretofore been recognized (but see Adam Kuper, *Anthropologists and Anthropology : The Modern British School*, London: Routledge, 1983).

Creating Order is one of several recent studies that have affirmed the importance of colonial outposts to central developments in metropolitan European intellectual history. Saul Dubow's *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa* (Cambridge

University Press, 1995) similarly reveals links between mainstream palaeo-anthropology and archaeology and developments in the racial hothouse of South Africa; Schmidt seems not to have had access to it. David Chidester's *Savage Systems* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) convincingly shows how administrative realities in southern Africa helped create the field of comparative religion in European scholarship. Primarily however, Schmidt is concerned with the relationship between academics and pragmatic policy in South Africa (Professors Eiselen and van Warmelo do not seem to have had much influence outside that country). It is really only Werner Eiselen (influenced by Bronislaw Malinowski) who had a direct effect on apartheid policy. Schmidt remarks that Malinowski's suggestions for 'a development of the natives along their own lines' was embraced by *volkundiges* like Eiselen because they were compatible with apartheid's philosophy, the only difference being that Afrikaner ideologues wanted to 'modernize bantu ethnic groups'. Again, this is quite inadequate, and slights the reality of surviving African political entities on the landscape and the state's desire to harvest their labour as cheaply as possible.

Despite the author's pre-emptive remarks defending the discontinuities in the text (p. 10), in fact the book's length and structure harm is accessibility. The summary of South African history which is inserted in the early chapters derives from the requirements of a dissertation and is unnecessary for her case; long excerpts from source material appear much too frequently; and, most regrettably, there are infelicities of grammar, punctuation and flawed translation on almost every page. Schmidt's English is not flawless, and the book was simply not edited.

Yale University PAUL LANDAU

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS IN NORTHEASTERN AFRICA

Fotografia e storia dell'Africa : Atti del Convegno Internazionale Napoli-Roma 9–11 settembre 1992. A cura di ALESSANDRO TRIULZI. Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1995. Pp. 266. No price given. (ISBN X-18-062562-3).

Ethiopia Photographed : Historic Photographs of the Country and its People taken between 1867 and 1935. By RICHARD PANKHURST and DENIS GÉRARD. London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1996. Pp. 168. £55 (ISBN 0-7103-0504-4).

During the last ten or so years early photographic materials and archives have achieved academic legitimacy as a resource for the study of African history – a legitimacy recognized first by the colloquium on photography and the history of Africa held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London in 1988, and subsequently confirmed by the gathering in Naples and Rome in 1992, the collected papers of which form the first of the two volumes under review. This latter meeting was jointly organised by the African and Arabic Studies Department of the Istituto Universitario Orientale of the University of Naples and Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales. It resolved as its objective to focus on current research in the field of Africanist historical photography, discuss methodology and sources, and identify at the same time new readings and directions, starting with the complex problems of conservation, cataloguing and classification of the rich but largely unknown photographic materials available in the countries of provenance of the individual authors.

The finished volume contains 23 papers by as many scholars, mostly from Italy and France, but also from Ethiopia, Switzerland and the USA. The majority of these are concerned with materials relating to the former Italian colonies and areas

of interest in Africa: Ethiopia and the Horn, Libya and Tunisia. The papers are divided under four thematic headings: research themes, methodological questions, photographic collections and conservation problems.

It is by now fully accepted that photographic materials have to be treated with the same sensitivity and caution as other primary historiographic sources. The camera, as such, may not lie, but what is recorded by the camera may be deceptive and just as much an engineered construct as a written document. The one article in the collection not dealing with 'Italian' Africa, Geary's on 'Photographic practice in Africa', ably illustrates the pitfalls in two West African case studies. Sturani's paper on caution in the use of postcards, the propaganda motive of which is at times all too obvious, is particularly instructive in the case of Italian output of the 1930s.

The problems of correctly assessing the late nineteenth- and earlier twentieth-century photographic record of Africa are also relevant to the second book under review, which is entirely devoted to the sizeable Ethiopian archive. This volume, by Pankhurst and Gérard, a companion to *Ethiopia Engraved* (also published by Kegan Paul International, in 1988), contains just over 300 photographs and some early engravings made from original photographs.

The earliest surviving photographs taken in Ethiopia date from the Napier Expedition of 1867/68, sent to obtain the release of the 'Abyssinian captives', although it is perhaps a pity from the historian's point of view that the substantial photographic team that accompanied the expedition had as its objective the recording of the topography for military and strategic purposes only. The photographic record, however, increases dramatically from the later years of the century onwards. This was a period that saw great changes in Ethiopia, the foundation of a new fixed capital at Addis Ababa, the beginnings of the 'modernization' of Ethiopia and the creation of the Ethiopian empire, the rise to power of Haile Selassie and the preparation for the Italian invasion and occupation of 1936, to name but the most prominent 'subjects' of the photographic record.

The book opens with a general and rapid run-through of Ethiopian history and a discussion of the introduction of photography to Ethiopia. There follow six thematic sections of reproductions of original photographs, each with a short explanatory text: historical personalities; historic towns; Addis Ababa; economic, social and cultural life; innovation and modernisation; and preparing to resist the impending invasion. Many of the photographs reproduced here have not been published before, or have only appeared in Ethiopian publications. Both books provide a stimulating discussion and essay of the early photographic record of an area of Africa that in many ways is unique, and which has certainly long attracted the attention of Europeans, the curious traveller, the romantic amateur, the historian and, of course, the photographer alike.

School of Oriental and African Studies DAVID APPLEYARD
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NEW SOURCES ON ITALIAN COLONIALISM

Autobiografie africane : Il colonialismo nelle memorie orali. Di IRMA TADDIA. Milan: Franco Angeli, 1996. Pp. 157. L28.000, paperback (ISBN 88-204-9839-1).

Lettere Tigrine : I documenti etiopici del Fondo Ellero, Volume I. A cura di UOLDELUL CHELATI DIRAR, ALESSANDRO GORI e IRMA TADDIA. Turin: L'Harmattan Italia, 1997. Pp. 207. L29.000 (ISBN 88-86664-49-4).

In both these books, Professor Irma Taddia directs attention to two sources which enable historians to escape from a Eurocentric vision of Italian colonialism

in North-east Africa. In the first, she emphasizes the importance of recording as fully as possible the oral testimonies of those elderly people who still have vivid memories of Italian rule. Inevitably this is an urgent task and one of considerable significance. In the transcripts which are here published in *Autobiografia africane*, she demonstrates something of the complexity of the colonial experience.

As the interviews were apparently conducted in Italian, most of the testimonies come from those Eritreans and Ethiopians who were in fairly close contact with Italians as soldiers, police, clerks, interpreters, watchmen, cooks and house servants. Many of them were old enough to recall the contrast between the earlier period of colonialism and the changes later brought by Fascist rule, with its measures of racist exclusivity and, of course, the invasion of Ethiopia. Many now regard the colonial interlude as a time of opportunity, and Professor Taddia rightly emphasizes the heterogeneity of the colonial experience. The statements reveal the extent to which those who worked with Italians tended to appropriate new values and wrest an advantage for themselves. Because of their previous colonial experience, some Eritreans became pioneer entrepreneurs in Ethiopia. A few of those who resisted Italian rule are included in this book, but women and clergy are notable for their absence.

Taddia's original recordings, of which those published are but a selection, are deposited at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies in the University of Addis Ababa; but for scholars who wish to consult and use these originals it would have been useful to have an account of the circumstances in which each recording was made, the criteria by which informants were selected, the nature of any preliminary discussion and the extent to which questions and interventions prompted the texts.

Lettere Tigrine is a guide to another rare, yet fortunately more permanent, source for the same period and quest. It presents a systematic catalogue of letters, written mainly in Amharic and collected by Giovanni Ellero, a young official in the Italian administration of Tigre from 1936 to 1941. He died the following year when the ship which was taking him as a prisoner of war was sunk on its way to South Africa. A man of wide scholarly interests, some of his papers have been given to the University of Bologna, and they include this collection of 287 letters written by divers persons over the years 1895 to 1941 to a variety of Italian officials. These letters must have been selected by Ellero because of his interest in the seals attached to them, for among his papers was the draft of a study on the origins and use of seals in Ethiopian culture, a critical edition of which is promised by Uoldelul Chelati Dirar. The catalogue lists each document with its author and destination, its date, a description of the seal and a summary in Italian of its contents. In appendices biographical details of the principal individuals are given, together with a glossary of Ethiopian terms, indexes of place-names and people (but not unfortunately of subjects), and reproductions of 36 of the seals and 27 letters.

As Professor Taddia points out in her introduction to this catalogue, these letters, thus haphazardly preserved together, represent one of the new forms of Ethiopian literature which during this period was beginning to extend far beyond the restricted bounds of court and monastic societies. Besides the linguistic and literary interest of the letters, the summaries here published also offer therefore tantalizingly disjointed glimpses into the concerns of the colonized and of some Ethiopians living near the colonial frontier. Several illustrate the impact of the colonial border as it affected local notables, forced to apply for travel permits as they pursued their daily lives. A few reveal the diplomacy which these men of secondary rank had to conduct with Italian officials or with Menelik. From their varied requests and statements, emerge the problems which local notables had in exerting control over slaves and servants, or the technological and medical services which they hoped to obtain from colonial officials. Many also reflect the changing position, and perhaps loyalties, of local monks and clergy.

Together these two books indicate some of the scholarly labours which are needed before a rounded, balanced assessment of the impact of Italian rule in North-east Africa can be reconstructed. Anyone who is, or hopes to be, involved in this task will welcome these books with enthusiasm and gratitude.

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RICHARD GRAY

COMPARATIVE URBAN HISTORY

Pouvoir colonial, municipalités et espaces urbains : Conakry-Freetown des années 1880 à 1914. 2 vols. Par ODILE GOERG. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997. Pp. 720 + 535. I. FF597,16 (ISBN: 2-7384-5597-2); II. FF280 (ISBN 2-7384-5400-3).

Odile Goerg has made the imaginative choice of Freetown and Conakry as subjects for a comparative study of urban development in the period 1880 to 1914. Situated less than a hundred miles apart, in a region of recognized economic and cultural identity, in these years they became administrative and commercial bases of rival empires, within each of which relations between Europeans and Africans were undergoing great changes. But if the two towns shared a common historical status, there were also great differences between them – not only in the institutional styles and traditions of their colonial rulers but in the nature of the urban communities. Conakry was a colonial implantation of 1880, on a peninsula occupied by small Susu and Baga settlements; seven years later Freetown celebrated its centenary as a multi-ethnic outpost of the British empire.

Odile Goerg shows scholarly sensitivity to such contrasts of colonial culture. Her first volume sets the development of municipal institutions in a long context of political and social change. She understands how Britain's aversion to centralized administration permitted (though never encouraged) the development of a Creole culture whose strength was rarely appreciated. Extensive reading, not only in the political rhetoric of Blyden, Horton and Lewis but in the rougher polemics of the late-Victorian Freetown press, has shown Dr Goerg the historical depth which underlay their ideal of a self-governing African community, and their not totally inconsistent objections to direct taxation. The Freetown Municipality Ordinance of 1893 is shown as a reasoned outcome of prolonged debate.

By contrast, when the French authorities judged it timely to devolve a little local responsibility to the 'notables' of the colonial town they had created at Conakry, the only history they needed to take into account was that of their own colonial practice. The assimilationist model of the *commune de plein exercice* (already going out of favour with governors of Senegal) was clearly inapplicable to a town with few literate Guinean inhabitants. The *commune mixte* established in 1904 was an emanation of the French state; its *administrateur-maire* was an agent of government, named, directed and largely financed by the Lieutenant-Governor. However, a deliberative Municipal Commission did include, at the Governor-General's insistence, one African notable in addition to four French businessmen. In these early years *originaires* from Senegal were more notable than Guineans in colonial life; an enterprising mason, Boubou Sow, proved an effective councillor. But as main intermediaries with the bulk of Conakry's population France relied on nominated *chefs de quartier*, with the primary role of tax-collectors. No hint of eventual self-government here.

Even in Freetown, however, the limited step towards self-government of 1893 was achieved precisely when a new conjuncture in European imperialism was overwhelming Creole aspirations. The powers of the new municipality were

abridged by a series of amending Ordinances, culminating in the loss of responsibility for public health in 1912 (and later, in the abolition of the Council in 1926). Meanwhile the influence of the civic élite was being offset by official recognition of Tribal Headmen. This general theme is familiar; but Goerg's second volume relates it in remarkable detail to specific problems of town-planning and public health. Imperial governments were increasingly invoking European expertise – especially that of medical scientists – to justify extensions, in social depth as well as territorial extent, of colonial control.

The most familiar example is the way the new understanding of malaria was used to justify residential segregation. Goerg recounts the story of Hill Station, with new detail. In Conakry no such site was available, so racial segregation could not be total; but within the limited area of the planned colonial town it seems to have existed to a greater degree than in central Freetown, where the majority of Europeans continued to reside. Segregation was however only one of the new scientific imperatives. Grass, formerly encouraged to control 'miasma', now had to be cut to discourage mosquitos; new standards of sanitation, street cleaning, and building controls were required in old Freetown as well as modern Conakry.

City councillors, conscious of their responsibilities in light of scientific advice, did their best to discharge them, but with very limited financial resources. The results satisfied neither Krio electors nor imperial rulers. Whitehall complained of the Council's reluctance to impose rates to finance a better water-supply; but many Krio felt the main beneficiaries would be the European community, noting how residents of Hill Station were provided with piped water and other luxuries in the colonial budget. So municipal autonomy, which had seemed to advance expectations of African self-government, became a sour focus for mutual recriminations.

Odile Goerg provides a valuable comparison of British and French approaches to problems which arose during this phase of imperial expansion, showing how these may be related to contemporary metropolitan models, as well as to the subtexts of post-modern historiography. Because of the nature, volume, and intrinsic interest of her sources, Freetown takes up more space than Conakry. Her work displays the intellectual discipline characteristic of French doctoral theses, but also their tendency to literary prolixity. Many will find the amount of detail overwhelming (and sometimes repetitive), the intellectual scaffolding a little too elaborately displayed. The appendices include a brief biographical dictionary (especially strong on Sierra Leoneans); 35 pages of supporting documents, including examples of Krio doggerel from the Freetown press; an extensive bibliography; and 29 sketch-maps and town plans. Volume II also includes sixteen contemporary photographs. Each volume is indexed. Few comparative studies in African colonial history have been so thorough, and none from the francophone world has shown such mastery of British sources.

Banchory JOHN D. HARGREAVES

THE BLACK PRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's Alternative Press: Voices of Protest and Resistance, 1880s–1960s. Edited by LES SWITZER. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Pp. xv + 400. £55 (ISBN 0-521-55351-2).

Nearly 20 years ago Les Switzer co-authored *The Black Press in South Africa and Lesotho*, a fascinating bibliographic guide to black newspapers, newsletters and magazines, the product of ingenious research in tracking down basic information

about black South Africans' long engagement with their newspapers. In part, *South Africa's Alternative Press* is the more analytical, discursive follow-up to this pioneering book, aiming to provide an overview of the history of the black South African press, and to identify the key themes, trends and developments.

In part, the book is also the product of a 1991 conference on the history of the resistance press held at the University of the Western Cape, where most of the chapters were first presented. Professor Switzer, the book's editor, wrote five out of twelve chapters and co-authored one other, so his is very much the guiding hand.

The book is divided into two parts, organised chronologically: the period from the 1880s to the 1930s ('An independent protest press') and from the 1940s to the 1960s ('From protest to resistance'). The chapters vary in their form. Some focus on a particular African newspaper: R. Hunt Davies, for example, on the early years of *Ilanga lase Natal* in the first decade of the twentieth century; Uma Mesthrie on *Indian Opinion* during the period 1903–1914; and Mohamed Adhikari on the *APO* newspaper (1903–23). Others take a broader look at wider themes or periods, for example Les Switzer himself on 'The beginnings of African protest at the Cape', 'Moderate and militant voices in the African nationalist press during the 1920s', and then on the '*Bantu World* and the origins of a captive African commercial press'. Switzer's broader thematic and chronological surveys thus provide an anthoritative context for the more focused case studies from the other contributors.

The first part of the book portrays what appeared in retrospect as something of a golden age for African newspapers – the period between a dependence on mission presses and their journals, and the dominance of white-owned newspapers in the 1920s and 1930s, whether these be inspired by political considerations (for example, *Umteteli wa Bantu*, financed by the Chamber of Mines) or more straightforwardly commercial concerns (*Bantu World*, founded by the Argus Press in the early 1930s, hoping to exploit the increasingly significant purchasing power of South Africa's black middle class). In the intervening period there emerged weekly newspapers such as *Imvo Zabantsundu*, *Ilange lase Natal*, *Koranta ea Becoana*, *Abantu-Batho* (the organ of the African National Congress), and a host of others, many of them very short lived. Often financed by traditional sources of African authority, they represented in many ways an alliance of the traditional and the modern. Their editors were motivated by a desire to educate their African audiences, to represent their claims and grievances to the South African authorities, and not least to provide a vehicle for themselves as spokesman and leaders for a wider political and social constituency.

In Part 2, characterised by the move from 'protest to resistance', the focus moves to the newspapers associated with the emergence of the African Youth League in the 1940s, the growing strength of African nationalism, and to a more militant discourse than hitherto. As African political demands moved from petition and reasoned argument to passive resistance, consumer boycott, strikes and the like, so the newspapers that covered these events became more militant in their demands, their tone and their style of journalism. Chapters focus on *Inkundla ya Bantu* (*1938–51*), the black literary journalism of the *Drum* generation of the 1950s, the radical *Guardian* newspaper (1937–52), the journalism of Ruth First (much of which appeared in the *Guardian*) and finally on *Inkululeko*, organ of the Communist Party of South Africa (1939–50).

Overall the book provides an invaluable account of the history of the black press in South Africa, reflecting an impressive range of research and analysis, and suggesting many directions for future analysis. Whilst black newspapers have provided a key source of information for scholars investigating social, political and literary history, the black press as a subject in its own right has scarcely attracted the attention it deserves, the pioneering efforts of scholars like Tim Couzens notwithstanding. Perhaps this is attributable in part to the conceptual difficulties

that newspapers present scholars (the 'white' press in South Africa has fared little better), and to the range of disciplines and approaches that have to claim to contribute to an understanding of their many-faceted reality.

Signs of some tensions are evident in *South Africa's Alternative Press*. The book is part of a US-based history of mass communications series, and Switzer is concerned in his introduction to set the book in the context of communications and cultural studies theory, although such perspectives do not appear to be shared by most of the contributors. The systematic content analysis (carried out on six of the newspapers covered in the book, and summarized in an appendix as well as being reflected in the relevant chapters) is informed by these concerns, providing what Switzer claims is 'one of the first attempts in communications research to offer a set of quantitative and non-quantitative methods analysing texts produced by marginalized communities over time'.

Others better versed in these disciplines than the present reviewer will be in a stronger position to judge the accuracy of this claim. But for those with an interest in the black press in South Africa and its broader role and significance, this book is to be very warmly welcomed. The photographs are an added bonus, conveying a vivid sense of the visual reality of both the newspapers themselves and the people involved in their production.

Shudy Camps BRIAN WILLAN

MAVERICK MISSIONARY

'*Africa for the African': The Life of Joseph Booth*. By HARRY LANGWORTHY. (Kachere Monograph, no. 2) Blantyre: Christian Literature Association in Malawi, 1996. Pp. 520. £47.95 (ISBN 99908-16-03-4)

The career of Joseph Booth (1851–1932), promoter of the African Christian Union and author of *Africa for the African* (1897), independent fundamentalist missionary, and radical critic of colonial rule, will be well known to those many already familiar with *Independent African*, George Shepperson's and Thomas Price's classic study of John Chilembwe and the Nyasaland Rising of 1915. Harry Langworthy, author of this monograph finished shortly before his death in April 1996, was Booth's great grandson and latterly professor of history at Cleveland State University. As he explains in his introduction, his study combined personal motivation – 'to find out who my great-grandfather was' – with professional challenge, in the form of the widely scattered and tantalisingly incomplete archival sources on which it is based. While Langworthy pays tribute to Shepperson's encouragement and help, and is 'indebted to him for a basic understanding of Booth', the object of his own research has been to probe the roots of Booth's individuality, to investigate above all the further sources of this thinking and motives.

The outcome is certainly a labour of love, a work built on the painstaking accumulation of very considerable personal and other detail, and written in a discursive narrative which allows the author to reflect as he goes on gaps in the record. Thus readers are provided with general observations on corrections to the first edition of *Africa for the African* and the mistakes surviving into the second, as well as information on the financial difficulties and dental collapse of Booth's last months. Little goes unrecorded or unnoticed, although it seems likely that Booth would have given his parents' place of burial as Uttoxeter (rather than Ulloxeter) Road cemetery in Derby (p. 18). Scholars already well-versed in the history of

Malawi and southern Africa will undoubtedly find this a valuable quarry, although it is frequently very difficult to associate specific references with a particular archive, and one must hope that other copies of the book will contain pp. 89–96 concerning Booth's visit with John Chilembwe to the United States in 1897. Of particular interest are those chapters – roughly half the book – covering the years 1898–1902 and 1910–12, for which the extensive records of the Seventh Day Baptists were especially valuable.

For students of missionary activity, there is much of interest in Booth's career. There are notable departures from familiar patterns. It was at the late age of 40 that he felt called to missionary work. His millennial beliefs, involving the completion of Africa's evangelization in his lifetime, seem to have been drawn originally not from the common Keswick sources, but the north Midlands region (encompassing Manchester, Leeds and Derby) with its varied culture of non-conformist eschatology. His fundamentalist confidence in the viability of 'faith missions' had little apparent connection with any critique of traditional missionary methods, although his conflicts with the Scots in Nyasaland might well have confirmed his sense of direction. His interest in industrial missions went not with the creation of a Christian work-force and settled church congregations, but with the conversion and direct financing of African evangelists to undertake a task which Britain was evidently no longer able to support humanly or financially. He gave a decided twist to the long-standing association of British and North American missionary enterprise: resurrecting the old humanitarian and anti-slavery cry to the 'peoples of Europe and America … to make restitution for the wrongs of the past', he linked missionary work to atonement 'for appropriation by force of the African's land in the present' (p. 79). Playing down the significance of the metropolitan missionary societies, he appealed instead to the mass of African-Americans, albeit unsuccessfully, thus aligning himself with contemporary movements in the United States.

It was no wonder that this restless, original, maverick figure was so often *persona non grata* with other missionaries, colonial officials, and even those who at first often supported him. His ardent sabbatarianism, views on education and offers of high wages undermined more conventional missionary practices. Some Africans at least recalled his speaking 'against his own countrymen, the Missionaries, the Traders, Planters and the Government' and urging Africans 'to rise up and save your country' (pp. 174–5). He was banned or deported by colonial authorities who felt they could 'have no tampering with natives on the subject of government or armed forces or taxes' (p. 125). Langworthy is not only informative on figures such as Elliot Kamwana, Alexander Makwinja, and the Watchtower movement. He explores an enormous range of those in Britain, Africa and America touched by Booth's 'optimism, almost to the point of self-delusion … that he was called to save Africa and that this could be rapidly achieved by some scheme – almost a divine formula – whether industrial missions, African-American immigration, the millennial dawn, the seventh day, independency or by 1919, pacifism' (p. 477). How substantial Booth's impact was, however, remains wide open to debate.

King's College, London ANDREW PORTER

BIOGRAPHY OF A POLITICAL ACTIVIST

The Ghost of Equality: The Public Lives of D. D. T. Jabavu of South Africa, 1885–1959. By CATHERINE HIGGS. Athens: Ohio University Press; Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, Cape Town: Mayibuye Books, 1997. Pp. xiii+276. £37.95 (ISBN 0-8214-1169-1); £15.95, paperback (ISBN 0-8214-1171-3).

In this first scholarly biography of an important, if secondary, figure in African politics in twentieth-century South Africa, Higgs wishes to show that Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu 'accomplished a great deal' in a varied public career. His faith was important: he was a lay preacher in the Methodist church. He published widely in English and Xhosa. When he became the first African member of staff at the South African Native College (Fort Hare) in 1918, it was 'little more than a glorified high school'. He did much to turn it into what had become by the time he left it in 1944, the pre-eminent institution for higher learning for black South Africans. Like Sol T. Plaatje, Jabavu made influential visits to Britain and the United States. He sought to promote African freehold farming, and founded the South African Native Farmers' Congress. But it is on his political career that Higgs goes into greatest detail, especially his role as president of the All African Convention from 1935 to 1948. By 1949, he had come to recognize that his political approach was out of step with that of younger, more radical Africans, and he retired from active political life. His last years were sad ones: his only son died and apartheid closed in.

Jan Smuts wrote of D. D. T. Jabavu as South Africa's most important African leader of the inter-war years. One of Jabavu's political rivals, I. B. Tabata of the Non-European Unity Movement, condemned him as a 'grotesque mediocrity', and an Uncle Tom. Thanks to Higgs's well-written and well-structured biography we have, for the first time, a well-documented study on which to base an assessment of where, between those two views, the truth lies. This was clearly not an easy book to write: few private papers survive and Higgs sees Jabavu's life, though full, as ultimately a failure. The result is a much slighter biography than Brian Willan's magisterial study of Plaatje, for Higgs gives us only 159 pages of text, the rest being notes and bibliography. She chose deliberately to focus upon the public roles Jabavu played and not explore the private sides of his life. Why she did not use the available sources, limited though they are, to probe other dimensions of Jabavu's life, such as the effect his 'rocky' first marriage had on his public career, is not really clear.

Jabavu's political career was as unsuccessful as that of his father, John Tengo Jabavu. Higgs suggests that in 1936 D. D. T. Jabavu may even have accepted, in private, the idea of a separate rôle for Cape African voters. Having failed to prevent the removal of the Cape African franchise, Jabavu failed again in his efforts to merge the AAC and the Non-European Unity Movement, let alone those bodies with the African National Congress in a broad opposition alliance. Higgs's main theme, reflected in the title of her book, is that Jabavu was handicapped by the way he clung to a commitment to the promises of the Cape liberal tradition, of equal rights enjoyed by all 'civilised men' irrespective of race, at a time when Africans were being increasingly stripped of their remaining rights. Though late in life he developed a certain disillusionment with white liberals and British justice, Jabavu never wholly renounced what Higgs sees as an unrealistic dream.

In explaining this commitment, Higgs is right to stress the legacy of J. T. Jabavu, even though D.D.T. did not agree with his father on everything. Like his father, the younger Jabavu was deeply conservative, and remained outside ANC politics. Booker T. Washington and Tuskeegee, which Jabavu visited in 1913,

were another major influence. In places Higgs is perhaps too quick to use hindsight to condemn his moderation because it achieved nothing. How tragic that his attempts at mediation and bridge-building did achieve so little, and especially that those in power did not respond to his accommodationism. Jabavu might well have made a success of high government office. In places, Higgs might have included more on the wider context of African politics in these decades, but she has advanced our knowledge of D. D. T. Jabavu enormously, and her polished biography is likely to remain for a long time the fullest study of its subject.

University of Cape Town CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS

AFRICA'S BANANA EXPORTS

Tropical Africa's Emergence as a Banana Supplier in the Inter-War Period. By JOHN H. HOUTKAMP. (African Studies Centre, Leiden, Research Series, no. 8). Aldershot: Avebury Publishers, 1996. Pp. xi + 144. £22.50, paperback (ISBN 1-85972-578-3).

Until now, studies of the banana export trade, a significant global enterprise by 1914, have focused on the traditional sources of supply in the Caribbean, the Canary Islands and Latin America, and on the two leading companies, the United Fruit Company of Boston, and Elders and Fyffes of London. Given the neglect of the rising non-traditional suppliers, John Houtkamp's study of the impressive growth of tropical Africa's banana exports, the result of the banana projects of the colonial powers in the inter-war years (mainly in the 1930s), fills a gap in the literature.

The book opens with a global survey and theoretical framework, and has four other chapters on the German enterprise in (British) Southern Cameroons; the French banana projects in Guinea, Ivory Coast and (French) Cameroons; the Italian project in Somalia; and the lesser schemes in the Belgian Congo, the Gold Coast, Mozambique, French Congo and Eritrea. The summary and conclusions of the study are concisely presented in chapter 6. Given the author's preoccupation with banana marketing channels, the book has no material on banana production (labour, technology of production, land tenure, etc.).

This book is richly documented with almost 40 tables, eleven maps, several photographs and illustrative figures, and seven appendices, one of which chronicles major developments between 1882 and 1939. The success of the colonial banana projects is attributed to a combination of vertical integration; introduction of specialized (that is, refrigerated) ocean transport; Fyffes' propaganda which created greater demand for bananas in Europe; the protectionist policies of the colonial powers; and the support of the European mother countries. However, these factors were not common to all the projects; the Germans in British Southern Cameroons, unlike the French and Italians, did not enjoy fiscal protection by a colonial power. Hence, theirs was not a 'colonial' project in the sense of the others.

Houtkamp skilfully interprets his data within the framework of marketing channel analysis. Following Stern and El-Ansary, he identifies various forms of vertical integration, so crucial to the success of the banana projects. These were the 'corporate vertical marketing system' of the Germans; the 'administered vertical marketing system' of the Italians; and the 'contractual vertical marketing system' of the French. The Germans and the French achieved the highest and lowest levels of co-ordination respectively.

This impressive and beautifully produced monograph has, however, been marred by typographical errors, and the attribution of incorrect dates for some of the published references, while other texts cited, such as McCammon, 1970 (p. 10)

and Ciferri, 1938 (p. 80), do not appear in the bibliography. The phrases: '... it proved possible to find foreign shipowner' (p. 32) and '... these growers felt that they were on an equal footing with' (p. 61) can only make sense in the negative given the contexts in which they appear. And the distinction drawn between steam- and motorships (p. 10) is not clear.

On the whole, this study deserves recognition as a major contribution to the literature on African agricultural exports and maritime transport. Its major strength lies in the sheer breadth of data drawn from secondary material published in four European languages, and in the application of an illuminating analytical concept. One hopes that Houtkamp succeeds in bringing the story up to the present in another volume which, hopefully, will draw parallels with similar exports.

University of Lagos AYODEJI OLUKOJU

URBAN HISTORY IN COLONIAL TANZANIA

Dar es Salaam, Tanga und Tabora: Stadtentwicklung in Tansania unter deutscher Kolonialherrschaft (1885–1914). By JÜRGEN BECHER. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1997. Pp. 194. DM 64 (ISBN 3-515-06735-3).

Originally a thesis presented at the Humboldt University in Berlin, this study of the emergence and growth of the three largest towns of mainland Tanzania is based on the records of the former Reichskolonialamt in Potsdam and those of the colonial government of German East Africa in Dar es Salaam, as well as on the headquarters archives of the Berlin III and Leipzig missionary societies.

As the title suggests, it is concerned primarily with the history of German colonial towns and only incidentally with the process of urbanization in East Africa. Dar es Salaam was, after all, a purely colonial creation designed to take advantage of a superb natural harbour for steam-driven shipping based in Europe. Starting as an administrative and military headquarters, its economic significance developed only as the central railway crept westwards to Lake Tanganyika, gradually superseding the porterage route which formerly linked the interior markets with the dhow traffic from Bagamoyo to Zanzibar. Tanga indeed had a modest precolonial history as a minor seaport in the coastal trade, but it was of small significance beside Pangani until the Germans developed the harbour and began to build the northern railway leading to Korogwe and Kilimanjaro. Of Becher's three towns, only Tabora had developed a genuinely urban character in pre-colonial times. There, a resident community of coastal traders had been present since the 1840s and had attracted into its orbit an African population of some 15,000, drawn from every part of the Great Lakes region. These so-called 'Manyema' slaves and adherents of the coastal traders worked in their masters' store-houses and on their plantations and were the carriers and armed guards of their trading caravans. The Manyema understood the Swahili lingua franca of the coast and most were to some extent assimilated to Islam. Others, likewise purchased as slaves, were adherents of the large White Fathers mission, which had been established in the vicinity since 1879.

Tabora, one would suppose, must have offered just the kind of recruitment opportunities that an embryo colonial administration would have looked for to staff its district offices and its police and defence forces with detribalized personnel who could be moved around from place to place as required. And there are indications that this indeed was so. But, seen within Becher's rather narrow definition of a German colonial town, Tabora was nothing more than an administrative and military outpost until the approach of the railway during the last few years of

German rule, and he has less to say about it than about either of his first two choices.

Becher has retrieved from his colonial sources some excellent data concerning the growth of the immigrant communities in his chosen towns, with details of their occupations, housing and land-holdings, which are admirably presented in charts and tables. These show, for example, the population of Dar es Salaam rising from a pre-colonial village of some 3,000 to 4,000 Chomvi fishermen and farmers to a total of around 22,500 in 1913, made up of some 19,000 Africans, 2,600 Indians, 970 Europeans and 400 Swahili Arabs. The ethnic breakdown of the Africans in 1913 is problematic, but an estimated one-third Chomvi, one-third Zaramo from the near hinterland and one-third from the more distant interior seems convincing. The imposition of a house and hut tax in 1898 seems to have been effective in pushing the Zaramo either to produce additional cash crops or else to seek employment in the town.

The migrants from further afield were in origin mostly caravan porters who had presumably converted to employment in railway construction or else in the docks, which by 1906 were dealing with the cargoes of 232 ships a year. An astonishing feature in all three towns was, however, the continuing call for porters. In 1905, 6,925 caravans still left Tabora for the coast with a total of 16,500 carriers. A further 625 caravans and 13,000 carriers went north from Tabora to Mwanza, from where the Lake Victoria steamers carried the loads to the British railhead at Kisumu. And 650 caravans with 12,500 porters went westwards to the port on Lake Tanganyka at Ujiji. All this is striking evidence of the numbers of Africans who already in early colonial times were accustomed to travelling far from their home districts and to associating themselves with the speech and customs of a wider world.

From the point of view of historians of Africa it would perhaps have been more interesting if Becher had chosen to study, not the three towns that were the largest in 1913, but rather examples of the three levels of urban development promoted by the Germans – at the colonial capital and at their provincial and district head-quarters. Certainly, to a traveller in the hinterland of Tanzania in more modern times, the most conspicuous monuments of German colonial architecture were the whitewashed fortress-bomas built to house the German officials, each one surrounded by a little town that had grown up around it and representing the beginnings of urban life in otherwise totally rural areas. A wider question that should be asked is whether any kind of urban history can usefully be separated from that of the surrounding countryside that supplies its food, uses its services and buys in its markets.

Frilsham, Berkshire ROLAND OLIVER

COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL LAND LAW

Land Law and Land Ownership in Africa: Case Studies from Colonial and Contemporary Cameroon and Tanzania. Edited by ROBERT DEBUSMANN and STEFAN ARNOLD. (Bayreuth African Studies, no. 41). Bayreuth: Eckhardt Breitinger, 1996. Pp. xvii + 254. DM 39.90, paperback (ISBN 3-927510-40-8).

Land Law and Land Ownership in Africa is a collection of eight essays, all concerned with the content and impact of colonial and post-colonial land law. The essays focus on Tanzania and Cameroon, and therefore provide an opportunity to examine the initial impact and legacy of three colonial powers: Germany, Great Britain and France.

Four contributors to this volume adopt a formal legal perspective, examining the

content of land policies. Harald Sippel details the legal mechanisms German administrators used to claim land in East Africa prior to World War I; Roland Richter catalogues British legal provisions regulating access to land in Tanganyika; Fauz Twaib examines the legal ordinances and the precedent setting court cases regulating customary and statutory rights of occupancy in colonial and post colonial Tanzania; and Chris Jones lists Zanzibar's land legislation from the colonial period to the present.

A fifth contributor, Cyprian Fisiy, also looks at Cameroon's land legislation from German colonization to the present. However, he is less concerned with the legislation's content than with its associated discourse. Fisiy draws upon post-modernist theory to analyze the way in which colonial and post-colonial politicians have spoken about customary tenure. He argues that politicians' language devalues and distorts customary tenure. As a result, the official discourse creates a 'weak system of legal pluralism' (p. 228) in which custom is defined in opposition to, and as a pale reflection of 'superior' western law. Regardless of the theory adopted, however, the five authors offer a similar assessment of the impact of each nation's land policy. Many indigenous farmers were disinherited, and those who continue to hold land became vulnerable to claims of powerful politicians, or to élites with ties to the state.

The five legalistic articles are important, because they provide valuable empirical information, offering a catalogue of the ordinances, court cases and policy proposals adopted by the Tanzanian and Cameroonian governments. But, for all of their empirical content, the articles cast little light on how and why customary tenure has changed. Most seriously, the authors do not ask how indigenous actors responded to state policy. Sippel notes that indigenous actors often did not object to colonial legislation in East Africa, but that on occasion, legislation was met with violent resistance. And Fisiy argues that the state discourse regarding customary tenure has not been hegemonic. Indigenous actors continue to offer their own counter-discourse challenging state claims. Beyond these tantalizing assertions, however, the authors offer no systematic analysis of when and how individuals resist state law, nor, importantly, to what effect.

These theoretical lacunae become evident when one considers the remaining contributions to the volume, all of which examine indigenous responses to specific land policies. Andreas Eckert asks why the Duala in urban Douala, Cameroon, embraced the European land registration programmes, while other groups ignored those programmes. He concludes that the Duala's mission education gave them some familiarity with European laws, and that the missionaries' defence of Duala claims gave them needed support in challenging the colonial regime.

Where Eckert examines indigenous actors' acceptances of European laws, Stefan Arnold and Eckart Rohde examine indigenous actors' evasion and manipulation of European policies. Arnold traces one lineage's response to the commercialization of land in Tanzania. His fascinating study demonstrates that indigenous actors were able to adapt custom to the demands of the market economy, resisting land fragmentation. Rohde examines the Bamiléké response to a French resettlement scheme in Cameroon. He demonstrates that the scheme, designed to reduce population pressures in the region, failed because the French tied the scheme too closely to the Bamiléké *fons*, or chiefs, who then manipulated the programmes to further their own political ends. Significantly, both Arnold's and Rohde's contributions suggest that customary tenure, *per se* does not block the emergence of a market for land. Markets failed to emerge because of power asymmetries within the lineage that allowed some family members to hoard land (Arnold), or because of political rivalries within Bamiléké kingdoms.

As these summaries suggest, while the articles in this volume offer interesting empirical information, important theoretical questions remain. Specifically, future

researchers could benefit from thinking more systematically about what motivates colonial actors, and what mechanisms state actors adopted to *implement* (rather than simply announce) their land claims. Such theoretical development would facilitate a more explicit comparison of British, French and German land policy. Likewise, future researchers could benefit from theorizing about the relationship between state and society to determine when state policy is effective and when it is ineffective. The articles in this volume raise these important questions, but much work must be done before they can be satisfactorily answered.

Indiana University KATHRYN FIRMIN-SELLERS

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Les USA et la France face à la Guinée Equatoriale à la fin du XIXe et du XXe siècle : La continuité de l'histoire. By MAX LINIGER-GOUMAZ. Genève: Les Éditions du Temps, 1997. Pp. 95. No price given; *Etats-Unis, France et Guinée Equatoriale : Les 'amitiés' douteuses, Trois synopsis historiques – Quatre bibliographies (trilingue)*. By MAX LINIGER-GOUMAZ. Genève: Les Éditions du Temps, 1997. Pp. 288. No price given.

Max Liniger-Goumaz has been writing articles and publishing books and bibliographies on the former Spanish colony of Equatorial Guinea for more than twenty-five years. His efforts are to be commended because, with the exception of his work, this tiny equatorial state – population 370,000, consisting physically of the Atlantic islands of Fernando Po and Annobon as well as a chunk of forest between Gabon and Cameroon – has rarely been the focus of scholarly studies. The publication of the two books under review appears to have been stimulated by Liniger-Goumaz's outrage at the fraudulent presidential elections orchestrated by President Obiang Nguema in February 1996 and by the cynical attitudes subsequently displayed by French and American diplomats and petroleum interests. This, too, is to be commended, since Equatorial Guinea's tragic post-colonial experience is now fully caught up in the web of the '*paris*noia' that has come to mark Franco-American rivalry in Africa, and it is important that this seamy business see the light of day. And yet, despite these good intentions and the wealth of information contained in these two books, Liniger-Goumaz ultimately does his readers a disservice.

Les USA et la France face à la Guinée Equatoriale promises to explore the parallels between the marginalization of Spanish interests in equatorial Africa at the end of the nineteenth century and now again at the end of the twentieth. In both episodes, the Americans and the French push the weaker Spain to the sidelines. An interesting premise, but Liniger-Goumaz's analysis is a rambling 42-page pastiche of contemporary journalistic accounts and nineteenth-century diplomatic history. The comparison is not effectively developed, there is too much repetition and the reference style is confusing. The text is followed by 19 pages of bibliographic citations concerning the present situation, then seven pages of endnotes corresponding to citations in the text, and finally a 26-page bibliography of nineteenth-century sources. The latter is not user-friendly, as archival materials are thrown together with books and journal articles, and the whole is ordered by a rather idiosyncratic alphabetical classification.

The same weaknesses are found in *Etats-unis*, *France et Guinée Equatoriale : Les 'amitiés' douteuses* but with a further twist: this volume is 'trilingual'; that is, the introductory remarks are in French, the historical synopsis of Obiang Nguema's dictatorship is in English, that of Equatorial Guinea's relations with the United States is in Spanish, that of relations with France is in French, and closing remarks

on democracy in Africa are in Spanish. These 93 pages of text are again marred by considerable repetition and a real lack of coherency; the trilingual format can only be described as quirky. What follows is nearly 200 pages of bibliographic citations divided into four sections: relations with the United States (53 pages); relations with France (115 pages); journal articles from January 1996 to March 1997 documenting the Nguema dictatorship's manipulation of the presidential elections and the role of American oil interests (14 pages); and a general bibliography on Equatorial Guinea's petroleum industry (10 pages). Two annexes – an anti-dictatorship poem and an extract from a UN Human Rights document – close the volume. The bibliographies are not reliable research instruments as they contain numerous errors; these range from mispellings, to the same work cited in more than one location, to inaccurate page number references. This is unfortunate as Liniger-Goumaz has gathered an abundance of useful information. But he desperately needs an editor ... or, as he himself intimates, a doctoral student capable of synthesizing this material into a coherent thesis.

Florida International University CHRISTOPHER GRAY

THE IMPACT AND LEGACIES OF WAR IN ZIMBABWE

Society in Zimbabwe's Liberation War. Edited by NGWABI BHEBE and TERENCE RANGER. Oxford: James Currey, 1996. Pp. vi + 250. £35 (ISBN 0-85255-660-8).

This is the second of two volumes on the war in Zimbabwe, edited by Ngwabi Bhebe and Terence Ranger and based on papers presented at a conference in Zimbabwe in 1991. Bhebe and Ranger provide a useful introductory overview, summarizing the contributions, setting them in the context of broader debates about the war and offering syntheses or explanations of opposing perspectives.

Nonetheless, the book is for the initiated. The essays, all valuable and using previously unused archival and oral sources, are organized into three sections. Opening the first section on religion and war, Ranger and Ncube argue that 'nationalism in Matabeleland was less secular and African religion more available than has often been suggested.' (p. 44) During the war, the local strength of cultural nationalism, and in particular its links to the Mwali shrines, drove ZIPRA guerrillas to respect the shrines and condemn Christian missions. Similarly, David Maxwell makes a case for the importance of the strength of local African beliefs in his study of the Elim Mission in Manicaland and the influence of African Christian communities on relations between the guerrillas and Christian missions. Janice McClaughlin found that the Rhodesian security forces' brutal response to local people for aiding guerrillas prompted the Catholic missionaries at Avila Mission in Manicaland, and more generally the Catholic Church, to formulate a common policy of support for the guerrillas despite their Marxism.

The next section on ideology, education and the war begins with Anthony Chennells' analysis of white Rhodesian war novels which highlights white racism and ignorance about African nationalism and the war. Both Paul Nare and Fay Chung offer personal accounts of ZAPU's and ZANU's respective efforts to introduce education to the refugee camps in 1977 in conditions of insecurity and resource scarcity. In the final section, Bhebe's account of the legacies of the war for the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the dominant church in south-western Zimbabwe, focuses on healing of post-war ethnic tensions within the church hierarchy through a new church constitution. In contrast, Richard Werbner describes the preoccupations of a Kalanga family in Matabeleland with healing and remembering the violence of the 'nationalist' war of liberation and the subsequent 'quasi-nationalist' war in which the new nation-state politicized ethnicity in its

quest for political dominance and moral renewal. Jocelyn Alexander focuses on the war's legacy for rural society's relationship to the post-independence state, arguing that the central state has been able to impose its agrarian development policies because war-time mobilization never produced lasting rural organizations capable of challenging the central state, and because the independence constitution protected the existing authoritarian and modernizing bureaucracy and protected private property thus limiting scope for redistribution and the fulfillment of war-time promises.

These micro-level studies enrich the historiography of the war in Zimbabwe. However, the editors' laudable effort to reconcile different findings are often at the expense of suppressing inherently conflicting perspectives. For example, Ranger/Ncube and Maxwell argue that the guerrillas became captives of the strongest religious sentiments in local communities, be they of African religion or Christianity. This argument minimizes the importance of guerrilla mentalities and hence of the significance of periodizing shifts in guerrilla ideology, to which Janice McClaughlin attaches importance and which the editors also support. Similarly, Bhebe's study provides an example of guerrilla preferences subordinating dominant local party preferences – though he does not present it as such – which is in conflict with the notion of local majority views shaping guerrilla practices. He suggests that aggressive ZANLA politicization in Mberengwa-Gwanda-Beitbridge communal areas eroded ZAPU influence, forcing it 'to operate quietly' during the war (p. 153). However, he does not see this as a case of ZANLA imposing its preferences. Instead, he writes: 'Political divisions ... remained minimal' (p. 152) and ethnic identities only surfaced after the war (p. 153). Similarly, Bhebe describes the rural Christian missions as being politically divided among ZANU, ZAPU and Muzorewa's party prior to the war but agreeing to support ZANLA during the war.

The focus on synthesizing also downplays the depth of disagreements about the importance of ethnicity during and after the war. Masipula Sithole is recorded as having emphasized during the conference how both parties and armies used ethnic appeals during the war. Werbner and Bhebe appear to disagree, both arguing unpersuasively that ethnicity only became politicized after the liberation war. Bhebe's account supports the case that ZANLA's coercion may have made open ethnic and party politics impossible rather than that such politics did not exist during the war. Werbner's argument that ethnicity was politicized after independence in the new nation-state depends on too stark a distinction between war nationalism, where both guerrilla parties sought unity, and post-war quasi-nationalism, where the ruling party ZANU sought to eradicate its opponent ZAPU/ZIPRA and its Ndebele ethnic support base (p. 198). Others have noted that already in 1979 ZANU's President had declared that 'ZANU has become the Zimbabwean people and the Zimbabwean people have become ZANU', strongly suggesting that the roots of Werbner's quasi-nationalism were in the nationalist period rather than in the nation-state. The impressive number and quality of these local level studies, many part of larger works, add to existing conflicting and consensual claims about the war and its aftermath, making a review of a now sizeable literature timely.

Baltimore NORMA KRIGER

MUSIC AND MALE LABOUR MIGRATION

Nightsong : Performance, Power, and Practice in South Africa. By VEIT ERLMANN with an introduction by JOSEPH SHABALALA. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. Pp. xxv + 446. £59.95; $75 (ISBN 0-226-21720-5); £19.95; $24.95, paperback (ISBN 0-226-21721-3); video £39.95; $49.95.

If you heard *The Lion King* soundtrack, were a fan of folksingers Pete Seeger and *The Weavers* or Miriam Makeba, you are probably familiar with the cornerstone melody of the song and dance genre discussed in Erlmann's *Nightsong*. Recorded in the late 1930s in South Africa, 'Mbube' or 'Wimoweh', as it was later popularized by *The Weavers* and others, was one of the first songs in the musical style known at different moments in its history as *mbube* (the lion), *ibombing*, *cothoza mfana* (tip-toe-guy), *ngoma ebusuku* (songs/dances of the night) and *isicathamiya* (the stealthy walk of a cat). This is also the musical style championed by Joseph Shabalala and *Ladysmith Black Mambazo* in the contested collaboration with Paul Simon on the *Graceland* album (1986). It is a song and dance genre created and performed by largely Zulu-speaking male migrant workers in South Africa from the late nineteenth century.

Erlmann's earlier work, *African Stars* (Chicago, 1991), provided two seminal chapters that outlined historical accounts of early *ngoma ebusuku*. This book extends that work into a more self-conscious interpretative analysis of *isicathamiya*. As a written text, *Nightsong* positions itself in the intellectual alliance between history and performance ethnography. In its use of multiple texts and a more collaborative definition of authorship, this work reflects the experimental moment in ethnographic writing as it is shaped by Veit Erlmann's meticulous research and powerful intellectual muscle. The book consists of eleven chapters and a preface written by Erlmann, an introduction written by Joseph Shabalala and an extensive historical record of these songs in a discography prepared by both Erlmann and Rob Allingham, the archivist at Gallo Records (South Africa). Erlmann's chapters are grouped into three major themes: texts, spaces and self. A central theme interwoven into these chapters is the idea of home, the unhomely, and even homelessness, as it is defined by the long history of male labour migration in South Africa.

In the early 1980s, Erlmann introduced me to *isicathamiya*. In the early 1990s, I filled his earlier position as ethnomusicologist at Natal University, affording me an opportunity to view transformations in *isicathamiya* through the rapidly changing historical period (1993–6), subsequent to Erlmann's tenure in South Africa. From this perspective, I have three observations about tensions I perceive in the *Nightsong* text. Each is tied to larger questions raised about 'writing culture' in the late twentieth century, to the frequently uncertain paradigms of Southern African studies in the historical and political moment of early 1990s South Africa and to the ways in which *isicathamiya* is situating its discourse and rhetoric in the 'new' South Africa.

First, Erlmann makes a bold gesture in creating a polyphonic text that includes the highly poetic voice of the most famous exponent of *isicathamiya*, Joseph Shabalala. Shabalala has a style and position like no other in articulating one view of the history of *isicathamiya*, and that is perhaps the point. He occupies a complex place in the genre, because, on the one hand as Erlmann points out, he is no longer allowed to participate in its core practice: all-night competitions. Shabalala is too good. On the other hand, when he is in South Africa, Shabalala conducts numerous workshops for aspiring *isicathamiya* groups, many of whom dream of following in his famous footsteps. But, Shabalala and his group spend most of the year, not living in migrant hostels, the space that is believed to have shaped the

genre. They are traveling the world, singing. There is, therefore, a disjuncture in the authority of Shabalala's voice in the text and his position in contemporary *isicathamiya* that might have been problematized by Erlmann.

Second, Erlmann's attention to gender resonates with other work on southern African performance in the early 1990s (for example, Ballantine's *Marabi Nights* and Coplan's *In the Time of Cannibals*). These are important first steps in the exploration of 'women's performance' in southern Africa. They have, however, left me asking how each of these texts might be [re]interpreted from a more focused gendered position: masculinity in this case? While southern African studies have long discussed the feminization of the countryside – that is, the literal loss of men to the cities – reading *Nightsong* I wondered about the feminization, the castration, of male migrant workers in urban hostels. How, for example, does one explain the transformation of the manhood symbolized in 'bullness' and articulated in male *ngoma* dance by dust flying as men stamp the ground (discussed by Erlmann), and the *isicathamiya* ideal of gentle stepping by men who 'swank': the warrior turned tip-toe guy?

Third, I look forward to Erlmann (or one of several insider ethnomusicologists) writing about new ideas of nation as they are currently articulated in post-apartheid South Africa. In 1995, I heard several versions of *Nkosi sikelel'iAfrica*, now the official South African anthem, imaginatively transformed into *isicathamiya* style. Joseph Shabalala is also not the only man telling his own version of *isicathamiya* history. One group in Durban commodified this 'history' into a 45-minute performance package, sold to community groups and concert organizers. Erlmann's discussion of the history of the commodification of *isicathamiya* by the state-controlled mass media can now be extended to focus on individual initiatives in the fledgling democracy.

My own observations aside, *Nightsong* is without doubt one of the most important works that seeks to interweave the historical and performative in 1990s ethnographic writing.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill CAROL MULLER

SHORTER NOTICES

Traditional Metalworking in Kenya. By JEAN BROWN. Oxford: Oxbow Books. 1995. Pp. xii + 192. (Oxbow Monographs in Archaeology, no. 44). £25, paperback (ISBN 0-946897-99-9).

This book is the published version of a thesis originally submitted to the University of Edinburgh in 1980. The delay in its publication in no way detracts from the value of this work and it will be a valuable addition to the library of all archaeometallurgists, and any historian or ethnographer of African indigenous technology.

Jean Brown takes an 'old-fashioned ethnographical approach' to recording the technological processes, rituals and social meaning of indigenous iron production and fabrication in Kenya. As the author points out, 'in a few years this study will itself become ethno-history', and it largely has. It would be impossible now to achieve such comprehensive coverage for any comparable area of Africa because much of the social fabric associated with traditional crafts like iron smithing has disintegrated. The greatest value of this book lies in the record of rapidly waning or extinct practices. It has few references to work published in the 1980s or later, and does not pretend to be a summary of the most recent research in the field.

Throughout, the work is comparative, recording detailed variations in technique and meaning for metalworking across all the major tribal groups in Kenya. The

first chapter deals with the smith's workshop, describing and illustrating the layout and various tools in use. The extensive taboos and various restrictions surrounding the smithy and the exercise of metalworking are described in detail. The second chapter covers smelting and fabrication techniques, describing in detail iron smelting by the Embu, the Mbeere, the Marachi and the Pokot. This forms a very valuable addition to the record of indigenous African iron smelting, a tradition that has expired in our century after 2,000 years of practice. The second half of this chapter is concerned with forging, including the casting and fabrication of non-ferrous ornaments.

The smith's products are illustrated copiously in the next chapter which deals with the social significance of these products and with the mechanisms of exchange and trade for metal goods and services. The fourth chapter discusses the heredity, training and death of smiths, the status of smiths, and the social role of smiths' curses and their role as oath administrators.

The final summary chapter attempts to relate contemporary iron working traditions to archaeological settlement and language groups. This final synthesis and the extensive end notes to each chapter are a rich mine from which archaeometallurgists and historians will extract useful and provocative information for decades to come.

The illustrations are clear and generous, and the overall production is good despite a few editing slips and a final footnote on page 168 which cruelly overstates the case for the contentious pre-heating hypothesis: 'These [furnaces] were dug in Buhaya ... by Schmidt ... who concluded that the makers had developed a pre-heating technology nearly two million years before present.'!

University of Cape Town DUNCAN MILLER

Islam and Trade in Sierra Leone. Edited by ALUSINE JALLOH and DAVID E. SKINNER. Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 1997. Pp. xxii + 215. $59.95 (ISBN 0-86543-544-8); $18.95, paperback (ISBN 0-86543-545-6).

Islam has tended to be marginalized in the historiography of Sierra Leone. This collection of contributions to a conference organised at Howard University by Alusine Jalloh of the University of Texas at Arlington in 1994 should help to redress the balance. Two of the contributors, David Skinner and Allen Howard, are American historians, long concerned with Sierra Leone. The other four belong to the growing diaspora of Sierra Leone scholars now established in the United States.

Skinner contributes brief surveys of the spread of Islam in the Sierra Leone area up to mid-nineteenth century, and of how Islamic influence and organization have been transformed in the twentieth century – particularly, in recent decades, by access to funding from the Arab countries. Howard, with a wealth of impressive detail, considers in an Islamic context a theme on which he has long been an authority: the development of inland trade. Jalloh has two studies of the Fula trading community in Freetown – a brief biography of Momodu Allie, a Fula entrepreneur, who amassed a large fortune through control of the import and sale of meat, particularly as an army and naval contractor during the Second World War, and another on how Fula entrepreneurs invested the capital they had acquired in the diamond trade (one of them had his own diamond marketing office in Brussels) in the motor transport business. Sylvia Ojukutu-Macauley tackles a hitherto (as she says) 'invisible' subject – the position of women in northern Sierra Leone. She finds that the growing influence of Islam, combined with the former colonial government's lack of interest in female education, have together 'significantly restricted the advancement of women'. C. Magbaily Fyle, illustrating the

influence of Islam on popular culture, gives a fascinating account of how, to the dismay of pious Muslims, the Freetown masquerade tradition took over the celebration of the post-Ramadan *id-ul-fitr*, with an uproarious lantern parade. Finally Abdul Karim Bangura examines whether Arab aid to Sierra Leone from 1976–82 facilitated economic growth in terms of per capita GNP and finds it was only marginal. Perhaps these lively contributions, on such a variety of themes, may inspire some historian to undertake a comprehensive history of Islam in Sierra Leone.

London CHRISTOPHER FYFE

Reisen in Ostafrika ausgeführt in den Jahren 1837–1855. By JOHANN LUDWIG KRAPF. Edited by Werner Raupp. Münster and Hamburg: LIT, 1994. Pp. xiv + 1064. DM 88.80 (ISBN 3-8528-2081-5).

Historians of East Africa are quite familiar with the accounts of the German missionary Johann Ludwig Krapf (1810–81) of his travels in Ethiopia, and especially in what are now Kenya and the northern parts of Tanzania between 1837 and 1855. The Church Missionary Society had sent the Swabian curate, Krapf, first to what was formerly known as Abyssinia. Later, after adventurous travels, Krapf set up a mission station near Mombasa together with another German, Johannes Rebman. He translated the Bible into Swahili and made extensive trips into the interior that led him among other things to the Usambara mountains. All in all, Krapf's missionary enterprises had very little immediate success. However, as a linguist, geographer and explorer he already enjoyed a good reputation in his lifetime.

The volume at hand is a reprint of the first edition of Krapf's book, which was published in 1858 at his own expense. The 1964 German reprint as well as most abridged versions in English have been out of print for years. Thus LIT publishers, without doubt the most active German publishing house in African studies, should be congratulated on having made this important source available again. However, their laudable initiative suffers from a number of shortcomings. The brief introduction by Werner Raupp is somewhat superficial and only provides data about Krapf's life and work that is already well-known. Unfortunately, Raupp makes no effort to discuss the potentials and limits of these travel accounts as a source for historical, anthropological and missiological research. Moreover the reader learns almost nothing about the reception and possible effects of Krapf's work.

As to more technical aspects, an index would have been very helpful. Even worse: at least in the review copy, the quality of the print is very bad. As if it is not difficult enough to handle the old German script!

Humboldt University, Berlin ANDREAS ECKERT

Juan Maria Schuver's Travels in North East Africa, 1880–1883. Edited by WENDY JAMES, GERD BAUMANN and DOUGLAS H. JOHNSON. (The Hakluyt Society, 2nd ser., no. 184.) London, 1996. Pp. cvii + 392. No price given (ISBN 0-904180-45-X).

This is the first edition in English of Juan Maria von Schuver's travel accounts, reports and letters from his Sudan travels. Born in 1851 in Amsterdam, he embarked upon a career of journalism which he combined with travelling and exploration. His account of the Blue Nile was published in German while he was

in the Sudan, but his untimely death in 1883 left several unfinished accounts of his travels that he also intended to publish.

The present edition brings together a wide variety of material, some previously published and some published here for the first time, such as the original manuscripts discovered in Amsterdam in 1985. Books One and Two in the volume contain a 'newly integrated version of Schuver's 1881–2 travel accounts of the Sudan-Ethiopian border region', while the third book is based upon 'selections from his letters sent back while attempting the 1883 journey to the White Nile basin' (p. xvi). Schuver's travels in Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia occurred at a time of profound upheavals. After a period of national protests against foreign intervention, the British invaded Egypt in 1882. At the same time the Sudanese, under the leadership of Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi, were rising against the Turco-Egyptians. Schuver's first-hand observations of contemporary political and socio-economic conditions make his account extremely valuable for our understanding of the period. His first journey brought him up the Blue Nile to Ethiopia where he collected detailed ethnographic material. However, his explorations in the border area were made impossible because of the increasing tension there, and because he was suspected by each party in the conflict of co-operating with the other. The Mahdists suspected he was a spy and Ernst Marno, governor of Famaka at the time, officially accused him of assisting the Mahdists. On his way back to Khartoum towards the end of 1882, he noted that the Mahdist 'insurrection' had reduced parts of Karkoj 'to cinders', and expressed some worry about the continuation of his explorations the following year (p. 223). However, when the Mahdi gained control over Al-Ubayyid in 1883, Schuver was sitting in Khartoum planning a new expedition up the White Nile. After sending manuscripts, letters and some journalistic reports about the political situation in the Sudan to Europe, he set off for the south on a steamer in July 1883. By this time the White Nile was far from safe for anyone. Mahdist forces were not far away from the river banks and the uprisings of the Nuer and the Dinka, inspired by the Mahdist revolt no doubt, made sailing beyond Meshra el-Rek very risky. At Meshra el-Rek he made the fateful mistake of leaving the steamer, and thereby government protection, and set off on his own with a small group. Within a short time he met his death in the Dinka country.

Schuver did not make remarkable new discoveries; the value of his accounts resides in his ethnographic, political and economic observations and descriptions of persons he encountered. The editors of this work deserve much credit for their meticulous search for all available material, for translating and piecing together the material into a coherent story, and for writing an illuminating introduction.

University of Bergen ANDERS BJÖRKELO

Histoire d'une famine : Rwanda, 1927–1930. Crise alimentaire entre tradition et modernité. Par ANNE CORNET. (Enquêtes et documents d'histoire Africaine, 13.) Louvain-la-Neuve: Centre d'Histoire de l'Afrique, 1996. Pp. ii + 156. Belg. francs 750, paperback (ISSN 0772-6112).

This volume is produced as part of the annual series 'Enquêtes et Documents d'Histoire Africaine', edited by J-L. Vellut. The series includes both analyses and documentation, mostly on Central Africa. *Histoire d'une Famine* admirably fulfills both these functions, and like many other volumes in this series, it provides an invaluable resource. By assiduously collecting both published and archival materials – often very difficult of access – and presenting them in a clear and readable text, the author demonstrates both the devastating effect of the famine on

the people of this area, and the usefulness of documentary evidence in illuminating important issues in Rwandan history.

Histoire d'une famine focuses on a disastrous famine in eastern Rwanda in 1928–9, in which perhaps half the population of the area either fled or died outright. The famine was most severe in a region that had only been mandated to Belgium after World War I, and in fact, was an area contested by Britain. It was also an area peripheral to the kingdom of Rwanda, where neither the representatives of the royal court nor the colonial presence were firmly established. To complicate matters, the victims of famine who sought to flee the region fled mostly to the east, to the territories under British administration, something that disquieted Belgian administrators.

Consequently, in addition to being a human tragedy (evoked here through moving testimony from mission accounts), the famine was also a challenge to Belgian colonial personnel, as the subtitle suggests. The colonial documentation, which forms the substance of this study, demonstrates this vividly. Constantly the tone as well as the content of the documents illustrate the rationalist principles of Belgian rule, privileging command over dialogue, administrative logic over peasant experience, and universal principles over local knowledge. The system was premised on the command of facts, the more precise the better; hence it was an administration obsessed with statistics. Cornet explores many of the statistics relating to the famine; in so doing she clearly elucidates the administrative mind-set in dealing with them.

This study is a valuable work, not least because in addition to documentary materials on the African experience of famine, it gives an intimate view of the European understanding of the process at work and traces out the administrative responses. By carefully sifting through a wide range of archival accounts (including mission accounts), the author has performed a very valuable service.

University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill DAVID NEWBURY

Imperialism, Academe and Nationalism: Britain and University Education for Africans, 1860–1960. By APOLLOS O. NWAUWA. London and Portland Oregon: Frank Cass, 1996/7. Pp. xix + 245. £39.50; $49.50 (ISBN 0-7146-4668-7).

This is a study of the demand for university education in West and East Africa, the frustration of such demands by both the Advisory Committee on Education of the Colonial Office and the colonial administrators, and the change of policy which led to the establishment in 1948 of university colleges at Ibadan, Legon and Makerere in special relationship with London. The story has been told often, usually in single chapters of longer works, whereas it is explored here in six separate chapters. It has thus been possible to add new material and some fresh insights. This is most notable in chapter six where the author examines the campaign mounted locally to defeat the minority report of the Elliot Commission – which recommended initially only one university college at Ibadan to serve the whole of West Africa, and was preferred by the Colonial Office – in favour of the majority report which recommended separate university colleges at Ibadan and Achimota/Legon, and the reform and modernization of the Fourah Bay College for Sierra Leone. The focus is on West Africa, and Uganda has been brought in largely for comparison. The main contrast is that the demand for higher education in West Africa went back to 1860 because of missionary activities and the expansion particularly of secondary education and teacher training institutions, while such demand hardly existed in East Africa. Yet it was in Uganda that colonial administrators, even in the inter-war years, began to favour the development of higher education while colonial officials in West Africa continued to drag their feet

and resist until the Colonial Office took the initiative in the Asquith and Elliot commissions during the War.

This book grew out of the author's Ph.D. thesis at Dalhousie University, Halifax. This may be why he continues to insist that it 'is a study of the impact of British imperial politics and policies on the foundation of colonial universities' (p. xi). From that perspective – of a carefully planned and executed policy of decolonization – there is very little the author can add to Ashby and Maxwell's well-known works. The author is more interesting when he is able to exploit local material in West Africa to see the demand for higher education as an aspect of nationalism and the search for development, to which policies of decolonization were trying to respond. But the author did not make the transition from that perspective of Imperial to African history. The ten-page epilogue on the limitations of the University Colleges does not address this problem of perspective, and does not justify extending the terminal date in the title from 1948 to 1960.

University of Ibadan J. F. ADE. AJAYI