

amnesty to officers of *l'ancien regime*? Doing so may buy khaki compliance but may also reinforce cultures of impunity. Should militaries promote/reflect the state's democratic agenda by being more socially inclusive (for example, in terms of gender), or by deploying their resources for civilian purposes (construction, education, or medical)? Such actions could undermine military *esprit de corps* and readiness, and insinuate the forces into civilian governance. Future writing should include the views of African officers regarding the compromises involved in civil–military relations, as well as suggestions for greater judicial and legislative influence.

Democratic control of the security forces requires governments to balance differing sets of values and priorities. For that reason, civil–military relations remains a *process* for every country. By raising important questions and offering sensible recommendations, Houngnikpo advances the current civil–military relations literature.

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Religion and Politics in Kenya: essays in honor of a meddlesome priest edited by BEN KNIGHTON

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This is a confused, even confusing, book; but an important one. Edited by Ben Knighton of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, who taught and preached in Kenya at St Andrew's College, Kabare, in the 1990s, the collected essays can be divided into three parts. Knighton's introduction, which provides an excellent assessment of David Gitari's evangelical theology and his role in the wider Anglican Communion in Africa; the contributions from Galia Sabar and Julius Githongo are essentially accounts of the life and work of Gitari, the long-serving bishop, first of Mount Kenya East (1975–90) and then of Kirinyaga (1990–6), who from 1997 to 2002 was the Archbishop of Kenya and head of the Anglican Church. Next, John Lonsdale, emeritus Professor of African History at Cambridge, and Paddy Benson, who worked closely with Gitari, provide characteristically insightful accounts of the history of Christianity (and especially Anglicanism) in Kenya, with some genuflection towards a discussion of church–state relations and to the role of Archbishop Gitari in the 1970s–90s when he spoke out against both the government of Jomo Kenyatta and the increasingly authoritarian rule of Daniel arap Moi. Finally, most of the essays examine particular aspects of the Christian churches' involvement in political issues, including relations with Islam (John Chesworth), the rise of *Muingiki* (a second contribution by the editor), the role of the NCK in the ethnic clashes of 1991–3 and 1997 when it was activist and comparatively successful. This performance contrasts markedly with the NCK's lacklustre performance following the December 2007 general election when, as Klopp argues, its efforts were undermined by ethnic factionalism – a theme which is taken further by Paul Gifford's excellent contribution on the prophetic role of the Kenyan churches.

Most of the essays are interesting but they do not form a coherent whole or, indeed, really complement or add to one another. The reader is left dissatisfied,

wanting to know more about Gitari as a man, a bishop, and a ‘meddlesome priest’ under President arap Moi. Alternatively, one wants to know more about the processes of conversion during colonialism or how the missionary church of the colonial era adapted to independence and the need to confront Kenya’s new African political masters. In many respects John Lonsdale’s essay, based on the 2005 Henry Martyn Lectures at Cambridge, is the most exciting contribution but, try though he does to bring Gitari into the discussion, the archbishop drifts from centre stage in Lonsdale’s account, which is essentially a history of Christianity and colonialism. Moreover, the pyrotechnical display of erudition, contrasts and paradoxes all too frequently overwhelms the argument, which is to be found much more clearly articulated in the original lectures (although the text of only the first two of three remains available online).

The prophetic role of the churches was very important during the long struggle for democratisation, human rights and public discourse in the 1980s and 1990s and is accorded due importance in several essays. A recurrent theme is the contrast between Gitari and his Anglican colleagues, Henry Okullu of Maseno South and Alexander Muge of Eldoret, the Revd Dr Timothy Njoya of the PCEA, and Monsignor Ndingi Mwana a’Nzeki, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Nairobi and primate, all of whom criticised the corruption and autocratic tendencies of the arap Moi regime. Several essayists, notably Jacqueline Klopp and Paul Gifford, point out that the churches, and perhaps the Anglican Church in particular, have been much less critical of the failures of the political elite since Archbishop Gitari retired and President Mwai Kibaki came to power, both in the closing months of 2002.

The discussion of Christian–Muslim relations is inadequate, concentrating too much on the career of Shaikh Khalid Balala at the expense of other Muslim leaders. The impact of Saudi financial support, coupled with the collapse of the secular state’s educational system, which has led to a remarkable growth of local Islamic community schools in traditionally non-Muslim parts of Kenya, is barely mentioned. Kenya has dramatically changed over the thirty-five years since OPEC increased the price of petroleum. The mosque and its school are as visible now in Eldoret and Nyeri as in Mombasa and Wajir. The African instituted churches, which are only briefly mentioned, also deserve much more discussion, given their importance in Kikuyuland where most of Archbishop Gitari’s career was centred. None of the essays, moreover, really get to grips with the rise of Pentecostalism – arguably one of the key issues in the religious history of Kenya and Africa in the last thirty years – although Knighton, Lonsdale and Gifford make passing references, emphasising its political quietism. By contrast, the *Muingiki* movement is dealt with in some depth. Given its political and social importance, the turn to Kikuyu traditionalism, as exemplified by *Muingiki*, is clearly an important subject, but here Knighton’s interesting essay seems an appendage, which doesn’t really fit with the rest of the book or in a discussion of Gitari’s career or theology.

The key problem is that the book lacks a theme and, having raised expectations in all these areas, fails to satisfy even though many of the essays contain important nuggets. Strangely, one is left feeling that the whole is less than the parts, rather as if the courses of a meal were each individually quite attractive and wholesome but left the diner, at the end, feeling disappointed. This feeling is exacerbated by the

poor quality of the proofreading; many of the essays are marred by typographical errors with words juxtaposed or even whole sentences or a paragraph missing. Such elisions make it difficult, in places, to follow the reasoning of some authors. Nevertheless, this is an important book: one of the few really serious attempts to grapple with the complexities of religion – and especially the inter-connection of religion and politics – in both colonial and post-colonial Kenya. Inevitably, it raises more questions than it answers.

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Africa's Informal Workers: collective agency, alliances and transnational organising in urban Africa edited by ILDA LINDELL

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Opened by an excellent editorial introduction, this collection gathers together ten case studies that explore current features of African informal economy, its dynamics and, most importantly, its political dimension. The book is divided into three parts, which mirror its major concerns. The first aims at presenting and analysing the complex political landscape within which organisations in the informal economy are today embedded. The contributions to this first part of the book, by Brown & Lyons, Meagher, and Prag, not only powerfully illustrate the great heterogeneity of informal economic activities in different parts of Africa, but also unveil the corresponding diversity of associations representing 'informals' in different economic and social domains. With diverse origins and histories, these associations struggle to gain political voice in national and international contexts dominated by increasing liberalisation and informalisation.

The second part assesses the potential for forming alliances and organising across the formal–informal 'divide'. Collectively, the essays forming this part, by Andrae & Beckman, Jimu, Lier, and Boampong, highlight the common struggles but also, interestingly, the tensions that have emerged between the focus of trade union politics and the aims and needs of informal economy organisations. While all the authors agree on the need to assess the viability of different kinds of alliance to fight the increasing vulnerability of workers in an informalising world, the cases presented in the volume differ considerably in their assessment of these 'new' organising experiences, effectively highlighting once more the distinctive features of each local and national case.

Finally, the third part of the book, with contributions by Scheld, Nchito & Hansen, and Mitullah, explores the growing breadth of collective organisation in the informal economy, and specifically focuses on the internationalisation of some organising experiences. In its own way each of these essays shows how informal livelihoods are deeply embedded in processes that trespass and transgress national boundaries, and which provide new opportunities for effective international and global activism.

Africa's Informal Workers contributes to the existing literature in two ways. First, detailed accounts on the functioning of the informal economy often tend to privilege Asia or Latin America as areas of enquiry. In this respect, this book and its rich empirical accounts fill a very important gap. Second, many accounts of