expressed concerns about the detrimental dynamics of racial hatred. With respect to race, the African laboratory gave rise to an epistemic instability that threatened the racial foundations of empire. The same ambivalence is detected in her study of anthropological research. This discipline used Africa in order to professionalize and counted some strong believers in colonial supremacy. Anthropology was instrumental in detecting local differences, thus structuring the Africans as objects of study. While it reified ethnic and tribal identities and stabilized assumptions about differing stages of collective organization, it also established Africans' agency, autonomy, and knowledge as scientific facts. Some Europeans came to the conclusion that they had more to learn from Africans than to teach them. These findings gave rise to critical debates among experts, administrators, and social critics in the colonial era, which are still salient today. Chapter Seven ('A Living Laboratory') narrates masterfully the problems of accommodating different epistemic structures, and of reconciling difference within the universals of modern science. Concepts in current use, such as therapeutic pluralism, and the notion of ethnoscience more generally, can be traced back to the laboratories of science under colonialism.

Tilley's book is a highly welcome analysis of the nexus of knowledge and power because it abstains from simplified explanations. Rich in detail, it offers many examples for epistemic interaction, ambivalence, and variety, which seem hard to accommodate in the concept of an authoritative 'colonial science' that purportedly ignored and destroyed local specificities.

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IDENTITY, RELIGION, AND POLITICS IN SOUTH AFRICA'S REMOTE AND RECENT PAST

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Popular Politics in the History of South Africa, 1400–1948. By PAUL S. LANDAU. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. 300+xvi. £55, hardback (ISBN 978-0-521-19603-1).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, identity, missions, political culture, religion.

By tracing forms of political affiliation and conflict from remote to recent times, this fascinating history challenges conventional understandings of what constitutes modern politics. In a roughly chronological account, Paul S. Landau argues that the turbulent colonial encounters of the nineteenth century transformed flexible and inclusive alliances into tribes, even while remnants of older forms of political mobilization continued to manifest themselves in conflicts between chiefs and in millenarian religious movements through the twentieth century. After a broad-ranging history of the people who lived on the southern African highveld, those who became known as the 'Shona' of Zimbabwe and the 'Sotho/Tswana' of South Africa and Botswana, the book moves forward in time and narrows its scope to focus on the Christian mission-influenced communities of the highveld and the Griqua polities, finally settling on the southern highveld Caledon River Valley (or Thaba Nchu) in the twentieth century.

Landau's central target is a version of the South African past that identifies people according to tribe, by which he means affiliations that are thought to unite 'culture and blood' and provide 'a total blueprint for behavior …' (p. 124).

The argument against notions of timeless tribes has been made often enough. But Landau's contribution is to show what existed before (or alongside) tribes, how tribes came into existence, and how older political ideals continued to be expressed both in the tribal idiom and in millenarian African movements conventionally considered to fall under the religious domain.

Prior to tribes, big men incorporated followers, and established prestige places (*ha-rotse* or *rolong*), which Landau traces back to the *Rozvi* kingdoms north of the Limpopo, and ultimately to the Zimbabwe-style stone towns and cattle kraals scattered across this region. Hence, Landau claims, similar-sounding 'Rotse' ethnonyms spread across southern Africa (from Hurutse to Lozi). These 'prestige-place associations', where chiefs established their authority, were criss-crossed by male alliances designated by patrilineal totems, especially that of the Crocodile (Kwena), referred to in similar oral traditions found across the highveld.

Landau insists that tribal categorization such as 'Tswana' were formed during the colonial encounter. At first, such designations meant very little: the precursor to Tswana, 'Bechuana', for example, simply indicated a respect for common male affiliations, 'we-are-similar'. Nineteenth-century missionary efforts, especially by Robert Moffat, to construct a realm of belief upon which their translations of the gospel could rest, laid the basis for the emergence of distinct tribes with their own sets of beliefs. All that remained was for the anthropologist (here, Isaac Schapera), in the context of Indirect Rule, to catalogue these beliefs and further construct a tribal identity. If this appears to give much agency to Europeans in the creation of tribal identities, it is not unintended. Through material and discursive violence, European missionaries, conquistadors, state bureaucrats, scholars, and even photographers provided the material out of which tribes could be made. And, yet, Landau recognizes that within this new idiom of tribe, southern Africans still engaged in politics and remade their identities. In the final two chapters, we have a compelling example of this process, among the people of Thaba Nchu, who mobilized within state-defined notions of exclusive tribes, in contrast to the older political tradition of inclusivity still found among the 'Samuelites', the followers of Chief Samuel Moroka, who had been exiled from Thaba Nchu to the Tati district of Botswana. In this displaced community, Landau finds the story of many South African communities who came into conflict with colonial views of exclusive tribes based on an idiom of blood lineage. Twentieth-century subjectivities and political mobilizations still defied imposed tribal categorizations.

Landau's ambitious revisions will attract criticism. While his efforts to reject tribal affiliations that align blood and culture are laudable, Landau provides few alternative identifiers for subjective collective identities, especially on a regional scale, prior to the nineteenth century. So as not to confuse linguistic groups with tribal affiliations, Landau prefers environment labels to the linguistic ones that have become conventional for early African history. Thus, the 'highveld' people upon which the book concentrates, versus the proto-Nguni-speakers, referred to as the people of the 'grassland'. But these environmental distinctions not only meant little to those described, they ignore mobility, and can become confusing. For example, those who lived on the highveld adapted to grasslands, hence the cattle-dung and stone-building tradition, in contrast to the proto-Nguni-speakers, Landau's 'grassland' peoples who generally had a better supply of wood. Perhaps it is beyond historical reconstruction to describe subjective identities in more detail for the remote past; and yet, unfortunately, there is a denudation of historical language when people become known by environmental terms that reveal only vaguely where they lived, while ignoring how they lived and who they believed they were.

In his effort to remove 'belief' from 'tribe', Landau tends to claim that beliefs, however dynamic, did not exist at all. For example, making much of the missionary use of the term ancestor for the Christian God, Landau argues that 'religion' was created by the missionaries. 'No religious system or spiritual domain can be postulated before missionaries introduced those ideas themselves' (p. 76). This position is extreme and unnecessary for much of the rest of the argument. Even if, along with Landau, we agree that there was no separation of politics from religion, and, disagreeing with many African theologians, accept that there was neither single God nor creator spirit, not even a stable religion with dogma and doctrines, Landau's claim that there was no religious system or spiritual domain runs so counter to evidence from surrounding peoples that it would represent a revolution in consciousness in this region. For Landau, the people of the highveld were 'commonsensical', (p. 94) 'pragmatic', (p. 88) 'realists', (p. 241) for whom death was 'an impermeable barrier' (p. 100). They were organized in Houses headed by big men, with a pragmatic politics that aimed at building alliances to gain followers, accumulate cattle, and to protect land. European missionaries, by contrast, were steeped in superstition, with beliefs in other-worldly spirits that they managed to impose on this pragmatic consciousness by ethnocentric translations.

Quibbles aside, this trail-blazing work of research and magnificent erudition should animate discussion about identity, religion, and politics in South Africa's remote and recent pasts. Landau's history of a southern African political culture that is hybrid, inclusive, transnational, and perhaps even secular is an essential corrective to colonial thinking about tribal traditions and religious beliefs divorced from political mobilizations.

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AFRICA'S CHANGING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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The Curse of Berlin: Africa After the Cold War. By ADEKEYE ADEBAJO. London: Hurst & Company, 2010. Pp. xxxiii+414. £50, hardback (ISBN 879-1-84904-095-2); £16.95, paperback (ISBN 978-1-84904-096-9).

KEY WORDS: International Relations, Pan-Africanism.

The 'Curse of Berlin' problematizes Africa's changing international relations in the two decades since the end of the Cold War. It is written by Adekeye Adebajo who has been executive director of the Cape Town-based Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) since 2003 and previously served as director of the Africa programme of the International Peace Academy in New York (now the International Peace Institute). The book opens with a lengthy preface by the Kenyan-born scholar Ali A. Mazrui (b. 1933), one of the grand figures in the study of Africa's international relations (currently at SUNY Binghamton's Institute of Global Cultural Studies), to whom the volume is also dedicated. In his own opening chapter, Adebajo elaborates on the legacy of the Berlin Conference of 1884–5 for Africa, and on the 'Berlin curse of fragmentation' of the African people introduced in Mazrui's preface.

Thereafter the book is organised in three parts. In the first part, Adebajo looks at Africa's 'quest for security', with chapters on Africa's new peace and security