

describes, is the making of the centre alone. A few decades ago it would have been unimaginable that a member of one of the smallest ethnic and religious groups would be the country's chief executive today. For a country a generation away from a deeply entrenched imperial political culture, this is both a real and a symbolic milestone.

But given the harsh conditions of life and political tyranny, a third rupture is not unimaginable either, if a happy medium is not found by all concerned. Formerly disenfranchised communities have attained a new sense of self-respect and national dignity, and their leaders are no longer the cat's paws of the northern elite. No longer neglected, the lowland zone has evidently become a magnet for investment in commercial agriculture, hydrology and the extraction of minerals. Its leaders have become more self-assertive and it is unlikely that they will surrender the gains they have attained. Although it is possible that these changes will expedite the zone's integration into the nation state, Markakis laments the likely extinction of the precarious pastoralist mode of life without offering an alternative form of development. With an ever growing population, Ethiopia needs to utilize all of its available resources to improve its people's quality of life, and future political compromises may be less painful and more equitable.

Markakis has written a significant, though bloated, book: general readers may find the details overwhelming. There are also numerous inaccuracies and occasional gaffes: contrary to the author's assertions, Christians and Muslims have coexisted admirably well, the peasantry has been internally segmented, and the revolutionary army was eight times larger than its predecessor. Moreover, the author provides no examples of multi-ethnic empires dominated by core elites that have been transformed into democratic, pluralist societies; nor does he suggest how this can be done. But while some readers of this book will be bewildered, others will be delighted and invigorated: all will find it well worth reading.

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WALTER VAN BEEK and ANNETTE SCHMIDT, editors, *African Hosts & their Guests: cultural dynamics of tourism*. Woodbridge: James Currey (hb £50 – 978 1 84701 049 0). 2012, xi + 340 pp.

This book emerged from a conference in 2007 hosted by the African Studies Centre in conjunction with the national Museum of Ethnography in Leiden. The book follows in a tradition begun by Valene Smith that focuses on 'hosts and guests' in tourist destinations; indeed, she offers a foreword briefly explaining the history of this area of study. Simultaneously, the title hints that anthropology plays a part in the theoretical approach of the book, which contains thirty-seven plates, and time spent reading it will be worthwhile for all scholars interested in Africa and tourism. After an introductory chapter, the book, which concentrates on western and southern Africa, is divided into three parts. These are followed by an instructive, but misplaced, afterword comparing African tourism with the Andes trail.

Part I focuses on 'Culture, identity and tourism'. Chapter 2 offers an ethnography of Dogon dance. Chapter 3 contrasts the Tuareg perspective on

the Sahara with the tourist gaze. Tourism has brought confidence and wealth to some Tuareg communities, and it has contributed to changes in traditional roles. At the same time, tourism has produced a new elite that imitates and draws on the posture, dress and attitude of the precolonial nobility. Many African American tourists visit West Africa to search for their roots. Chapter 4 sets out how indigenous Africans view these visitors in terms of their wealth and their lack of knowledge about African history and culture. The gap between reality and the marketing image shown in the example from South Africa in Chapter 5 is extreme: a website offering romantic images of nature and tradition is so radically different from the reality that even the website creators and municipality officials are surprised when a tourist actually turns up.

Part II concentrates on the encounters at the 'Fringe of the parks', with Chapter 6 examining the Okavango Delta, where wildlife and San cultural tourism are growing. The authors highlight the myths perpetuated by the tourism industry, which centre on the area's timelessness and wilderness. The San are staging their culture for tourists and remain marginalized. Myth-making also shapes the lives of the Kalahari San. Their lives were transformed by the loss of land and genocide; now, as part-owners of tourist infrastructure, they earn a living from those who wish to encounter a 'primitive' culture. Chapter 9 focuses on the Maasai, who have a more complex relationship with wildlife than they let on to tourists, trying to project an image as 'guardians of the wildlife'. The notion of 'organized hypocrisy' is introduced to explain aspects of tourism in South Africa, where 'wilderness' is constructed while ordinary people, especially farm-dwellers, suffer as their farmland is sold to become wildlife reserves for tourists.

Part III investigates the 'Intensive contact' sought by those who shun the ordinary tourist experience. Chapter 11 focuses on backpacking, which remains very limited in Africa. While backpacking travellers often despise package tourists, they tend to stick to the 'beaten trail' set out in traveller guides. Volunteer tourists are similarly inclined to distance themselves from mainstream tourists and are investigated as a growing phenomenon in Ghana. Seeking to develop themselves – and others – through their contribution to grass-roots community initiatives, they are perceived as wealthy foreigners by local people. But in an encounter shaped by mutual misunderstandings, greater resources remain on the side of the volunteers. Other foreigners who have contributed to life in Ghana may be recognized as 'Development Chiefs' in an elaborate ceremony. Chapter 13 examines those who participate in chieftaincy as outsiders, often unable to speak the local language and thus remaining in a 'tourist bubble'. While they are generally recognized as benevolent, their goodwill most benefits the local paramount chief who has drawn them to the community.

A more intimate contact between tourists and hosts is the subject of Chapter 14: Malindi in Kenya has become renowned for the sex trade, in which both men and women seek and supply services. The traditional community is publicly outraged. Female tourists seek romance and perhaps sex, experiencing authentic Africa (in their minds), but stereotypes abound. The 'love bubble' is explored further in discussions of Gambia as the site of 'romance tourism', a complex socio-cultural relationship in which Western women meet local 'bumsters' who often style themselves as Rastafarians. The friendship may turn sexual and gifts are expected by the men, who themselves are often seeking a ticket to a richer lifestyle overseas, irrespective of the gap between generations, cultural traditions and expectations.

The editors have been successful in encouraging certain themes among the contributors, notably the concept of the 'bubble'. However, at times it seems that the analogy is stretched to bursting point and is in danger of losing

its validity: a more analytical discussion at the beginning would have helped to bring rigour to this model. In parts, the editing of the English language is weak, and the proliferation of notes should have been limited. Nevertheless, this is a highly informative and very welcome collection examining an under-researched topic.

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