

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Adekeye Adebajo and Abdul Raufu Mustapha (eds).** *Gulliver's Troubles: Nigeria's Foreign Policy after the Cold War*. Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008.

In *Gulliver's Troubles*, the editors, Adekeye Adebajo and Abdul Raufu Mustapha, have succeeded in pulling together outstanding essays and fascinating narratives on Nigeria's post-Cold War foreign policy. Starting with the foreword by Adebayo Adedeji, the contributors are heavyweights in the discipline and/or long-term practitioners that include retired career diplomats, ambassadors, former foreign ministers, and so on. Every student of Nigeria's contemporary affairs should have a copy of *Gulliver's Troubles*.

*Gulliver's Troubles* is a massive book, but then Nigeria, the Gulliver in this narrative, is a massive country with massive potentials and enormous problems. Its sixteen chapters are organized into five sections, with the three core sections (aside from the introduction and conclusion) dealing with the three "contexts" of Nigeria's post-Cold War foreign policy: the domestic, regional, and external (or global) contexts. Readers will find the political cartoons placed at the end of the book both funny and interesting.

Adebajo's strong "Introduction" establishes the book's main arguments and positions, including the application of the old conceptual framework that looks at Nigeria's foreign policy in terms of three (or four) "concentric circles." There are several strong points: a detailed summary of the book, a comment on Nigeria's soft power and the role of the "prolific film industry" (p.28), and a preemptive note on the contribution of the book to scholarship. While the term "post-Cold War" refers to everything since the 1990s, it is not clear, however, why the chapter focuses so much on the civilian regime of President Olusegun Obasanjo and why this was placed in the early part of the chapter. After reading the analysis of the achievements and failures of the Obasanjo administration, one would come away with the erroneous impression that Obasanjo governed the country from 1990, when he was actually in power in 1999-2007. Only passing are references made to the regimes of Babangida, Abacha, Abubakar, and none at all to Shonekan.

Part II examines the background and domestic contexts of Nigeria's foreign policy. It leads off with the contribution by the co-editor, Abdul Raufu Mustapha, which examines the three inter-connected determinants of Nigeria's foreign policy process. "The first...is the arena of formal diplomatic negotiations and agreements and the pursuit of sub-regional hegemonic ambitions. The second...is the way in which its 'fractured' nationhood impinges on the foreign policy process. The third is the impact of Nigeria's global reputation or 'identity' on the foreign policy process" (p.41). These can be restated as the diplomatic apparatus, nationality, and identity. The chapter takes a fairly longitudinal look at these issues, seeking their origins in the colonial, decolonization, and immediate post-independence (especially Civil War) eras. It

<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/pdfs/v11i2-3a8.pdf>

emphasizes that image is everything, which might provide a strong support for the current efforts to 'rebrand' Nigeria.

Ibrahim Gambari's contribution extends the theme of internal determinants of foreign policy. Although the article's subtitle is "the theory and practice of Nigeria's foreign policy," it is an empirical study that addresses the latter (i.e., the practice) more than the former. The Nigerian diplomatic service, called the "unsung player," is the subject of Oladapo Fafowora's piece. Written from a deep inside knowledge supplemented by interviews with retired and serving officers, Fafowora reveals the strengths and weaknesses of the Nigerian foreign service. He addresses the questions of recruitment, training, professional development, and promotion of officers; the conduct of diplomacy and policymaking; and the "periodic purges" (p.90) in the foreign service. A more recent phenomenon is the preponderance of political appointees, rather than career diplomats, in ambassadorial posting—a development that is almost inevitable under the civilian dispensation. W. Alade Fawole's article on the military and militias, and Ike Okonta's on the "tragic Ogoni story of Ken Saro-Wiwa" round up the list of major internal determinants addressed in the book. Other determinants not addressed include the condition of Nigerian universities, leadership and governance issues, and the debilitating effects of a mono-crop economy. Indeed, the impact of petroleum production and export deserves more than a mere mention. While some of these determinants promote direct positive action, most of them are distractions—a whole lot of Lilliputians tying down Nigeria's Gulliver.

The book begins to examine foreign policy per se in Part III, starting with Akinjide Osuntokun's article on Nigeria and its neighbors. He describes Nigeria's relations with countries along the Niger River and the Lake Chad basins; and reviews Nigeria-Benin, Nigeria-Equatorial Guinea, and Nigeria-Cameroon relations. Other articles in Part III are Kate Meagher's on Nigeria's informal trade networks in West Africa, Adebajo's on Nigeria's interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and Chris Landberg's on Nigeria-South Africa relations and their impact on the construction of the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Part IV addresses the external contexts of Nigeria's post-Cold War foreign policy, covering the country's multilateral and bilateral relations outside of Africa. The lead off paper in this section is Martin Uhomoibhi's on Nigeria's role in the United Nations (UN) and the Commonwealth, and relations with the European Union (EU). Uhomoibhi makes it clear very early in the chapter that multilateral diplomacy has been one of Nigeria's major foreign policy tools (p.223). The chapter then reaches the logical conclusion that Nigeria has been perceived as "a significant player in international affairs" (p.251). This may explain in part the recent "election" of Nigeria to a vacant non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council. The rest of the book focuses on a number of important bilateral relations, with Kaye Whiteman on Nigeria-Britain; Gwendolyn Mikell on Nigeria-United States; Jean-Francois Medard on Nigeria-France; and Sharath Srinivasan on Nigeria-China relations.

To conclude this review, we have to return to the title, *Gulliver's Troubles*, borrowed from *Gulliver's Travels*, the Jonathan Swift classic published in 1726. Adebajo explains the title thus: "Nigeria, the most populous country and one of the most powerful states in Africa, is a Gulliver; and the Lilliputians have been Nigeria's leaders, whose petty ambitions and often inhumane greed—like the creatures in Swift's tale—have prevented a country of enormous

potential from fulfilling its leadership aspirations and development potential" (p.2). But we know that Gulliver's troubles, like Gulliver's adventure in the original tale, does not stop here. Where do we place Gulliver's next adventure in Brobdingnag, where he is dwarfed totally and completely? How do we anticipate and explain Nigeria's foreign policy choices in the next decades as the forces of a more mature globalization act as the new Brobdingnag for Gulliver, or Nigeria?

Akanmu G. Adebayo, *Kennesaw State University*

**Kenji Yoshida and John Mack (eds). *Preserving the Cultural Heritage of Africa: Crisis or Renaissance?* Suffolk, UK: James Currey/Unisa Press, 2008.**

Issues on Africa have grown into great areas of research interests, and archaeological studies have not been ignored. In fact, African cultural heritages, with its generally misconceived and checkered history, have emerged as a serious issue both in political and ethical terms. This has led to increased efforts by many ethnic groups in Africa towards creating or re-creating their own cultures by reviewing their cultural legacies. Considering the historical looting of African cultural artefacts by the West, which reached its climax in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and has not stopped, there is need for dissemination of knowledge about African arts. *Preserving the Cultural Heritage of Africa* is a literary and picturesque exhibition of possible answers to the nagging questions concerning the emigration of artistic works from Africa.

The book is a collection of a mix of contributions to a symposium of the same title held in Japan in late 2003 by members of the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan; and several other relevant essays by other interested authors. Overall, the essays encapsulate key issues towards the understanding of African ethnography, history and emerging trends in the preservation of African cultural heritages. The authors' professional experiences provide an in-depth focus on the themes x-rayed, while their interdisciplinary approaches expositively reveal the politics involved in the collection, protection, exhibition, and preservation of African objects, memory-sites and other intangible cultural heritage.

The volume is highly challenging to the average reader. In total, the book has four parts, comprising of fifteen sections with contributions from by different authors. The first part scrutinizes the idea of African heritage by literarily deconstructing "memory" and "history" and afterward constructing how they are experienced in museums and objects –by *weaving* museums as "theatre of memory" (pp. 13-27). The second part discusses issues involved in the preservation of cultural heritage in Africa. It focuses on the deleterious consequence of looting, smuggling, politicalization of antiquities in Africa and the stance of UNESCO in the implementation of its Intangible Heritage Convention. Case studies from Zimbabwe, Mali, Zambia, and other African countries are used to highlight and pave the way for an answer to the question, "crisis, or renaissance?" (p. 76). The third part deals with the process of "Creating Heritage" (p. 107) and elaborates on the effect of national, ethnic, community, and individual identities as reflected in artistic endeavors in Africa. Here, the intricacies and vagaries of how

South Africa is struggling to define its heritage after its apartheid experience are critically surveyed. Also, a Nigerian case study mirrors how an experiment in overcoming gender bias in museum collection of African arts by making Yoruba women wall painters to become better recognized is fraught with too many challenges. In the final part of the book, an essay entitled “Ethnological Museums and the (Un)making of History” (pp. 187-198) contains strongly critical view on recent ethnological exhibitions in the West.

In seeking to clarify the significance of “cultural heritage for African people in post-colonial Africa as well as explore the role of scholars and museum professionals outside Africa in supporting African colleagues in handing down the cultural legacy to future generations” (p. 7), the book adopts a provocatively interesting tone. It exposes not only the naivety of African governments but also the double-standard posture of Western governments in dealing with African archaeological matters. It’s accompanying expository narratives in exhibiting African cultural and historical information to even the most technically unaligned reader of archaeological literatures makes it good for general, but not average readership. It captures an explanation of the various aspects African problems typified in ethnological challenges.

The book unbelievably, chose to take a neutral stand, instead of a definitive one, on the call for the West to return cultural artifacts taken away from Africa. Its assertion that “Whether the heritages of the African continent are in crisis or undergoing a renaissance is largely determined by... the balance between the agency of those individuals who make up our public, and the degree to which heritage is hijacked by the hegemony to perpetuate itself” (p. 76) should “be read as the answer to the question posed in the subtitle of the volume” (p.8), could be viewed as a tone of indecisiveness.

This very scholarly book analyzes the pros and cons in preserving and managing Africa's cultural heritage. The co-editors, Kenji Yoshida and John Mack, and their colleagues have truly done valuable work by revealing the issues and expressing their individual views. That the book did not specify a clear answer to its front-paged question probably shows once more, however, the great difficulty encountered by honest researchers in dealing with African affairs.

Uchendu Eugene Chigbu, *Technische Universität München, Germany.*

**Mwenda Ntarangwi. *East African Hip Hop: Youth Culture and Globalization*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009.**

Hip-hop music has often been associated with global, as well as local cultural and economic landscapes. This is especially true for Mwenda Ntarangwi's book, *East African Hip Hop*. Ntarangwi presents years of investigative and ethnographic research on major hip-hop stars from Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. Many resources were utilized in the development of the book, including various websites, books, radio programs, magazines, concerts, and direct interviews with numerous hip-hop stars. The breadth of resources provides a 'global' understanding of 'local' hip-hop music. Ntarangwi intends to identify the social, political, and economic impact of hip-hop music by East African youth through lyrical analysis and commentary provided by various hip-hop artists.

Ntarangwi's discussion of culture and globalization captures the "historical process of contact and even conquest across geographical, cultural, and political boundaries in which people, ideas, goods, and capital circulate over an expanded terrain and period" (p. 2). In short, Ntarangwi is in agreement with other anthropologists' views on globalization, as "accelerated flows or intensified connections - across national and other boundaries - of commodities, people, symbols, technology, images, information and capital as well as disconnections, exclusions, marginalizations, and disposition" (p. 2). Notably, Africa's connections with colonialism, neocolonialism, and imperialism influence the social parameters of culture and music.

Still, Ntarangwi does not offer a critical definition of hip-hop, especially as it pertains to an East African model. The distinction between hip-hop and rap is rather synonymous, though it is not discussed. It can be posited that hip-hop and rap are the chosen genres of music for youth with little political and societal empowerment and/or little financial resources to purchase expensive acoustic and electric musical instruments. At any rate, Ntarangwi is not concerned with geographical boundaries and genre characteristics. Instead, Ntarangwi's hip-hop or rap styles are indicators of local traditions using global and a collective mode of musical transmission using the human voice.

Youth identity is at the heart of musical expression through hip-hop. The sociopolitical and cultural encounters within Africa and beyond represent a multifactor scenario for hip-hop musicians on the verge of a new globalization. Ntarangwi provides a social, political, and historical development of hip-hop music in East Africa with lyrical examples and first-hand accounts with hip-hop artists. In essence, Ntarangwi discovers that identity is a strong motivator for East African youth. Identity formation also incorporates languages from the East African diaspora, as well as Europe and the United States. Ntarangwi adds conflicting conjecture regarding local vs. global hip-hop music and the types of messages and languages utilized. The musical roles of men and women in East African hip-hop have been influenced by globalization. A majority of East African hip-hop artists are male, though women artists are becoming more commonplace. Ntarangwi notes on hip-hop shows and gendered displays of oppositional identities between men and women and how it essentially supports the theory of local vs. global as a confluence of 'East meets West.'

The influence of hip-hop and politics is enormous. Politicians are targeted for good or bad in songs. East African youth remain a critical voice in political elections, policies, and social issues. Ntarangwi's critique of the local music industry provides insight into the political regulations and exposure of music. In one instance, Ntarangwi describes the act of buying local music cheaply, although illegally. In East Africa, compact discs (CD's) are burned from computer downloads, because commercial CD's are priced out of the range of most listeners' budgets.

Ntarangwi devotes a chapter to music and sexuality in relation to the spread of HIV/AIDS. Perhaps the global as well as the local impact of HIV/AIDS warrants discussion for hip-hop artists and community members. The coverage on social and moral implications of HIV/AIDS is transmitted by hip hop artists in the lyrics, social commentary, and political involvement. If anything, Ntarangwi shows that hip-hop artists are becoming social ambassadors on the issues of HIV/AIDS, religious issues, and sexuality in general.

The final chapter on hip-hop's enduring legacy contains a prospective outlook on East African hip-hop. The role of technology, westernization, and numerous media forms provide tools of mass influence to reach within Africa's borders. Ntarangwi's examination of hip-hop lyrics provides a valid study on the future of hip-hop music. Through a culmination of local cultures and traditions to global views on hip-hop music, Ntarangwi illustrates a dynamic musical flux with much certainty. Overall, the chapters are informative, engaging, and at times, introspective. Unfortunately, too much attention is given to general issues of globalization and youth culture, while East African hip-hop coverage seems to be lacking. For undergraduate and graduate students in ethnomusicology, Ntarangwi's book provides a limited analysis on musicology. Still, the book references a few biographies of hip hop artists mentioned throughout, as well as a glossary, notes, reference lists, and index.

Matthew J. Forss, *Independent Scholar*

**Charles M. Good Jr. *The Steamer Parish. The Rise and Fall of Missionary Medicine on an African Frontier.* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004.**

The intertwining of colonial administration, Christian missionizing, Western education, and medical work in Africa is well known but has rarely been described in such detail as by Charles Good Jr. in his voluminous *The Steamer Parish*. Good, a medical geographer, traces the history of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA), a high Anglican missionary society. These missionaries, like many others inspired by Livingstone, began their activities in the second half of the nineteenth century in a vast and remote area around what is now called Lake Malawi.

The title of the book refers to the steamer ships that the UMCA sent from England. They were dismantled at the seaport on the East African coast and carried in pieces over a distance of about 600 kilometers to Lake Malawi where they were reassembled. The ships not only facilitated communication and medical service between and to the growing number of mission stations but also filled the local population with awe for the missionaries' miraculous technology.

Good has written extensively about medicine in Africa; thus the missionaries' medical work is the focus of his study. He writes with respect and admiration, but not uncritically, about the pioneers who travelled to central Africa for a cause they regarded as ultimately important: saving lives and souls. Good criticises the critics of missionary medicine who fail to see the missionaries in their historical context and judge them by medical and political standards of today. His study is an impressive attempt to describe and understand missionaries within their own time.

He derives his information mainly from Malawi national and British missionary archives and from a missionary magazine. Apart from one interview with three older African men, it is almost exclusively missionaries and other Western sources who are speaking. The voice of the African population and their reaction to the missionary presence is not heard. Good is aware of this bias, but apparently had no other choice.

It is impossible to summarise here 450 pages of detailed description and extensive quotations from missionary sources, but a few points need to be mentioned. Most crucial for the development of the missionaries' medical endeavour was probably the lack of funds and people, which severely frustrated the UMCA's ambitions in the field of medicine. Throughout the 75 years of medical work, there was hardly ever more than one medical doctor available. That single doctor was responsible for a stretch of 600 kilometers, with several hospitals and a growing number of health centers. At the end of his study, Good is still "puzzled" by this dramatic understaffing. The church's strict maintenance of celibacy as a condition for missionary medical doctors may be one of the reasons for the lack of interest among physicians in England for this job.

Critics of missionary medicine are likely to condemn the missionaries for using medicine as a tool to 'win souls.' That critique is, however, a regrettable sign of hodiecentrism. Taking the missionary religious belief as a starting point, one can only acknowledge that they did what they regarded as having the highest priority. Saving African souls, however ethnocentric and bizarre this may sound today, was at that time an impressive proof of humanitarian concern. That is not to say, however, that all missionaries always gave priority to the soul before – or at the expense of – the 'body.' With fascinating quotes, Good shows the ambivalence of several missionaries towards this delicate issue. One nurse wrote; "For the moment we are concerned with Christ's work for people's bodies. It is impossible to think of the Gospel and of Our Lord's life apart from the sick and afflicted" (p. 311). Good's study would have benefited from a chapter on UMCA's theological views on spiritual and bodily care to shed more light on this crucial internal debate.

The most critical point that Good raises in this engaging study concerns the racist attitude that the missionaries exhibited in spite of their self-sacrificing service to the African. The segregation that the missionaries built between themselves and the local people and the condescending words they wrote about them appear indeed an incomprehensible – and reprehensible - contradiction from today's perspective. Nevertheless, a historian needs more imagination. For one moment Good seems to forget what he remembers again a few pages later: that we must recognise "the right of the past not to be colonized by the present" (p. 426).

Finally, it seems too crude to speak of the "fall" of missionary medicine as Good concludes in his final chapter (and announces in the title of his book). It is true that the medical achievements of the UMCA were less than those of other missionary organizations in the region, but eventually they did contribute substantially to the development of health care in the region where they started their work in 1885.

Sjaak van der Geest, *University of Amsterdam*

**Julia C. Strauss and Donal B. Cruise O'Brien (eds). *Stage Politics: Power and Performance in Asia and Africa*. London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007.**

As Henry Giroux points out, “politics is the performative register of moral action;” it prevents justice and compassion from being extinguished among us (Giroux, p.150). Ceremonial rituals and rhetorical performance in politics constitute an integral part of state- society relations today. *Stage Politics: Power and Performance in Asia and Africa* is a pioneering study of the theatrical, symbolic and performative modes of politics in several Asian and African states during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

The thirteen essays in this edited work are arranged thematically and address the following issues:(a) How politicians, nation builders, and community activists make claims and rally popular support through different public performances? (b) What institutional mechanisms the political performers use to engage the emotions of the targeted audiences and mobilize them for actions, and (c) How the politics of performance contributes to the process of state building and affects the state-society relations at large? The editors and authors examine these issues by referring to various case studies of public trials, election campaigns, and street demonstrations in Asia and Africa. They provide important conceptual and methodological insights as they investigate the diverse patterns of political mobilization, the various indigenous traditions of order and governance, and the institutional mechanisms that have shaped the state-making process.

In their introductory chapter, Julia C. Strauss and Donal B. Cruise O'Brien identify the three distinct modes of performative politics: first, ceremonial rituals staged by nation-states; second, theatrical performance by politicians and activists in election campaigns and street protests; and third, individual performance in the form of a speech or an event to engage people's emotions and rally support. They argue that these modes often overlap within a collective movement and require a platform to be created for dramatic performances, be it a public square, a school, or city streets. However, there is a danger that the performers may lose control of the audiences. This conceptualization sets the framework for understanding the changing power relations between the political performers and the intended audiences in all temporal and spatial settings.

O'Brien's chapter on Senegal draws on Benedict Anderson's concept of “an imagined community” and asserts that a state only comes into existence when it is popularly imagined and accepted by different sectors of the society. In Senegal, the secular state, either as the French colonial regime or the post-independent government, worked closely with the powerful Sufi brotherhoods in modernizing the country. As the Senegalese state gained legitimacy by incorporating many Sufi rituals, symbols and institutions, a symbiotic relationship developed between the state and the indigenous religious establishment.

The in-depth case studies of the revolutionary politics in Iraq and China during the 1950s reveal that political transition in new states could be very violent and brutal, especially when the authorities staged public trials against those connected with the former regimes. According to Charles Tripp and Julia C. Strauss, the “People's Court” in post-monarchy Iraq and the political campaigns in Maoist China staged countless public trials to punish the enemies of the state and to propagate a new set of ideologies. In both cases, the revolutionary states carefully

orchestrated the trials in order to eliminate potential opposition and lay the ground for establishing the new government institutions. An example of a “show trial” that went terribly wrong and backfired was the Gandhi’s trial in British India in April 1922. According to Sudipta Kaviraj, Gandhi hijacked this political trial and used it to gather popular support. This was a significant step for Gandhi’s career as he enforced his leadership in the Indian struggle for independence.

As with political trials, elections provide the perfect platform for dramatized political performances, especially in electoral campaigns, debates, speeches, and public rallies. Unlike show trials, which are tightly controlled and heavily scripted by the state, the outcomes of openly contested elections are always unpredictable. This element of unpredictability makes elections an exciting political theatre. Patrick Claffey’s study of Mathieu Kérékou in Benin shows a charismatic politician who broke away from revolutionary Marxism of the 1970s, converted to Pentecostal Christianity and then reinvented himself as a democrat in the late 1990s. In 2002, he emerged as the only presidential candidate capable of holding the country together and won the election. Vincent Foucher’s analysis of the “Blue Marches” in 2000 Senegalese election is intriguing, as the opposition politicians were keen to present themselves as relatively youthful and mobile against the traditional party militants. The Senegalese politicians recognized the need to mobilize the youth, especially high school and university students and to make politics more appealing to ordinary citizens. The chapter by Dafydd Fell draws attention to the politics of Taiwan’s multi-party electoral campaigns. Because of the fast pace of democratization, Taiwan’s colorful electoral campaigns were played out on streets and in cable TV, thereby contributing to the high levels of political engagement and voter turnout. According to Steve Heder, the elections in contemporary Cambodia were put on as a show for foreigners, and the electoral results were predetermined. This explains why the Cambodians were less engaged and excited about electoral politics than people in Benin, Senegal, and Taiwan. Compared with show trials and elections, massive public protests are the most open-ended and unpredictable form of performative politics. Nicolas Jaoul refers to the Dalit (untouchable) movement in rural Uttar Pradesh in India. The Dalit activists reinvented the local Ambedkar festivals to force the Indian secular state to protect their rights. Agnes Shuk-Mei Ku’s analysis of popular protests in Hong Kong highlights that on July 1, 2003, a loosely organized coalition of prodemocracy activists organized a huge demonstration of over half a million people against the security legislation, and this forced Beijing to delay the legislation. Eva-Lotta Hedman’s chapter on the 1986 election-watch campaigns in the Philippines shows that the process of electoral monitoring was a highly contested political drama because the citizens subscribed to the idea of “free and fair elections” and sought to challenge the Marcos regime. The concluding chapter by Joseph W. Esherick pulls all the issues together and reminds us of two important factors that determine the effectiveness of performative politics in Asia and Africa. The first factor concerns the people’s expectations of real drama and unpredictable outcomes, and the other factor has to do with the stable civilian-military relations. In all the cases under study, the absence of the military intervention guarantees the smooth transitions to democracy.

In short, the strength of this edited volume lies in its clear and sophisticated framework that highlights the complexities of performative politics in modern Asia and Africa. This work

is timely and insightful, and should be useful for anyone interested in comparative politics and state-society relations today.

#### Reference

Henry Giroux, "Vocationalizing higher education: Schooling and the politics of corporate culture." *College Literature*, vol.26, no.3 (Fall 1999), pp.147-161.

Joseph Tse-Hei Lee, *Pace University in New York*

**Emizet François Kisangani and Bobb F. Scott. *Historical Dictionary of the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2010.**

Professor Kisangani has taken on the daunting task of writing an historical dictionary about the third largest country in Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Over six hundred pages long, this work covers all of Congo's history, including now fifty years of independence from Belgian colonial rule. Three sections of particular use for researchers include a twenty-page chronology of the country beginning in 2000 B.C. through 2009, the body of the dictionary that includes over eight hundred entries, and a substantial sixty-page bibliography. Building upon the two previous editions published by F. Scott Bobb in 1988 and 1999, the third edition not only adds the events of a tumultuous decade, but also seeks to revise the previous editions. Kisangani not only manages this difficult task well, but also does so succinctly by adding only twenty-six pages of additional text.

Besides the chronology, dictionary, and bibliography, there are numerous helpful lists, maps, and appendices. The introductory section includes a nine-page list of acronyms and abbreviations, although some entries have not been successfully updated. For example, entries such as SNCZ (*Société Nationale de Chimins de Fer Zaïrois*) and UNAZA (*Université Nationale du Zaïre*) refer to the country under its previous name of Zaire. Other important abbreviations have been left out entirely, such as CNDP (*Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple*), CAA (*Compagnie Africaine d'Aviation*), and COMICO (*Communauté Islamique en République Démocratique du Congo*). Next comes a short guide to name changes, which has been substantially expanded in the third edition and is of paramount importance for any student of Congo/ Zaire/ DRC. The volume includes two important maps, one apparently of natural resources and the other a political map of the recent division into twenty-six provinces. Unfortunately, the map labels have been left off. Following the body of the dictionary are three useful appendices including a table of the evolution of the provinces, the rulers of Congo from 1885-1960, and leaders from 1960 to the present.

The first of the three primary resources in this dictionary is the chronology, which has been substantially revised from the second edition. In addition to including ten more years of events, the author has greatly expanded the entries from 2000 B.C. to the arrival of foreigners in the 1400s, highlighting important facts about African indigenous groups. Kisangani has also introduced the organizational tool of noting months and dates within a year in bold face, which

assists the reader quickly scanning for a certain event and breaks up the previous edition's block descriptions for each year's entry.

The majority of the volume consists of over 550 pages of dictionary entries ranging from an important date in April 1990 to the Zongo River. The author has done an excellent job of including a breadth of entries covering disparate themes such as politics, society, important people, history, locations, religion, culture, and more. Entire books have been written on many of these topics, yet Kisangani provides us with the important facts in a concise fashion. Entries contain bolded phrases referring to other entries and a "See also" clause for the reader seeking further clarification. As a complement, the text concludes with a substantial bibliography encompassing general information, history, politics, economics, society, culture, and the newly added science subsection. In an effort to provide a novel resource, the author has focused on works in English published in the last two decades and referring the interested reader to the previous edition for older and more foreign-language references.

An introduction to the third edition, which is double the length of the previous version, precedes the dictionary portion. The author focuses his discussion on the political and economic history of the Congo since independence, highlighted in sections about the First Republic from 1960-5, Mobutu's Second Republic, and the Third Republic of the Kabilas and the democratic transition. The introduction concludes by stating, "... political renewal and economic recovery appear bleak, and human security is likely to remain a distant dream for years to come," (xcii). This pessimistic appraisal of the situation is also prominently displayed on the book's back cover, which is understandable in the recent climate, but misses an important dynamic. In the early history of Congo, the author made a concerted effort to assert Congolese agency, as can be seen in the chronology section. What is lacking, however, is the continuity of this theme throughout the dictionary portion. For example, no recent visitor to DRC can ignore the huge proliferation of civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active to provide services to citizens and rebuild their society after years of devastating conflict. Even in remote areas, one can see hand-painted wooden plaques nailed to palm trees or mud brick homes announcing a local organization with development aims. However, this recent edition of the dictionary contains no reference to civil society or NGOs. The pessimistic conclusion of the author rightly points out the failures of the larger political system, but he fails to fully document the effort and success Congolese citizens have had in organizing to provide their communities with relief.

Despite minor limitations, the *Historical Dictionary of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Third Edition* is a valuable resource for any student of the DRC. In particular, it is a much-needed tool for undergraduate libraries to house for students just beginning their intellectual interest in this vast central African state. The more advanced scholar will find it invaluable as a quick desk reference for dates, locations, and further reading. Emizet François Kisangani has provided us with a valuable research tool and accomplished an important and successful revision of previous editions.

Ashley Leinweber, *University of Florida*

**Evan Maina Mwangi.** *Africa Writes Back to Self: Metafiction, Gender, Sexuality.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009.

In recent years, as the era of formal European colonialism in Africa has grown more remote and the relative brevity of that era has become more apparent, more and more critics have been privileging literary approaches over political ones in their evaluation of African writing. Starting from the claim that “Since the mid-1980s African novels have become markedly self-reflexive in the way they rewrite one another and draw attention to their own fictionality,” Evan Maina Mwangi’s *Africa Writes Back to Self: Metafiction, Gender, Sexuality* suggests that this turn to the literary among critics reflects a similar turn among African novelists away from the “nationalist and realist impulse that governed earlier writing,” (p. 1). This turn to the literary among critics and away from realism among novelists does not mean, however, that critics and writers are any less “grounded in factual material conditions in specific locations in Africa” (p.2); rather, Mwangi asserts that contemporary African writers use their metafictional devices to scrutinize the social and political reality around them especially the hierarchical structures of gender and sexuality that govern everyday life. Conceiving of his approach in part as a reaction against an outdated “writing back” model of early postcolonial theorizing, and in part as a response to more recent calls by postcolonial critics to focus on local specificity rather than grand abstractions, Mwangi judiciously uses both non-African postcolonial theorists and local intellectuals to make his case that metafiction is not solely a Western phenomenon.

After a wide-ranging opening chapter dealing with writers such as Helon Habila, Moses Isegawa, and David Maillu, Mwangi reverts in chapter 2 to a range of pre-1980 texts. In analyzing works by frequently studied authors (Nadine Gordimer’s *The Lying Days* and Ngugi’s *Petals of Blood*) alongside much less familiar texts (Kibera’s *Voices in the Dark* and Bukenya’s *The People’s Bachelor*), Mwangi effectively reinforces the familiar argument that early nationalist texts’ metafictional critique of European discourse about Africa masked profound gender chauvinism. Although Mwangi is anxious about presenting himself as a “native informant,” some of the strongest and most original readings provide the basis for chapters 3, on national language literatures, and 4, on the orature/literature interface. Mwangi’s local expertise on specifically East African literature and history leads to some tantalizing analysis of a number of recent novels written in Kiswahili as well as invaluable accounts of earlier novels by Kenyan Luo women writers Margaret Ogola and Grace Ogot. While the chapter on orature sets up a striking juxtaposition of Ogola and Ogot against J.M. Coetzee’s *Elizabeth Costello*, subsequent chapters on so-called “palimpsestuous” novels by Karen King-Aribisala, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Gordimer, and Ngugi, and on ekphrasis and gender in Zakes Mda, Bessie Head, and Nuruddin Farah have less coherent argumentative drive, tending to offer rather superficial and selective readings of less clearly connected texts.

The book gets back into its stride in chapter 7, with Mwangi’s discussion of gay themes. Starting with lively analysis of novels by Rebekah Njau, and Abdulrazak Gurnah, Mwangi then moves on to the strongest section of the entire book, readings of the South Africans Phaswane Mpe and K Sello Duiker. The discussion of Duiker’s explicit representations of gay sex is especially thought-provoking, probing the limits of (sexual) liberation in post-apartheid South Africa and posing tough questions as to whether “pornographic reproduction [can be] used as a

textual means of political power against both the Western canon and a parochial and homophobic nationalism" (p. 220).

Haunted by the memory of the all-too-early deaths of Mpe and Duiker, this chapter implicitly proffers perhaps the starkest reminder of the material reality behind the metafictional representations that Mwangi is writing about. Indeed, if I have any criticism of this fine and wide-ranging book it would be that in the face of such overwhelming material circumstances as the AIDS epidemic in southern Africa in particular or the use of rape as a weapon in central Africa, Mwangi's high theoretical pronouncements can sometimes seem not just abstract but profoundly disengaged. Mwangi ends his book with a complicated account of his own critical practice; explaining that he still sees postcolonial theory as offering "the best model of interrogating the limits of nationalism and Western hegemony," Mwangi writes that he has "chosen to remain within it" to "criticize it from within" (p. 261). But that very claim silently raises the old, perennially vexed, perennially vexing metacritical question of the relationship between postcolonial theory and praxis.

Simon Lewis, *College of Charleston*

**Terence Ranger. *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.**

In the late 1990s, the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians, in partnership with the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies began systematically to study the role evangelicals played in the social and political development of countries in the global south (Latin America, Africa, and Asia). A substantial grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts enabled field research in seventeen countries over a three-year period, culminating in a three volume series. This review focuses specifically on the Africa volume edited by Terence Ranger, Oxford University's Emeritus Professor of Race Relations.

For those not familiar with the explosive growth of Christianity across Africa and how churches have engaged with the political dynamics buffeting these nations, the preface, written by the editor of the series, provides a helpful summary. At this point, the book can be read from two approaches, either as a holistic understanding of religion and politics across a continent or as a specific examination of one of the countries highlighted. Structurally, the six main chapters each tackle a different country in sub-Saharan Africa and are written by scholars indigenous to their country of focus; a seventh chapter comprises a response by Paul Gifford; and an introduction and afterward, written by Ranger, brackets these chapters.

The first chapter explores the relationship between evangelicals and Muslims in Northern Nigeria during the contestation of the declaration of Sharia law. Written by Cyril Imo, it is the only one that addresses inter-religious issues. A fifteen year time span is covered next by John Karanja, who describes the different attitudes and actions of evangelicals to the democratization process in Kenya. In 1991, former Zambian President Frederick Chiluba declared Zambia as a "Christian Nation." Isabel Phiri focuses on the political fallout of his actions in the following

decade and how evangelical Christians were split in their support for Chiluba. A rich and dynamic description of the role evangelicals have played in the tumultuous political developments of Zimbabwe is tackled by Isabel Mukonyora. In Mozambique, Teresa Cruz e Silva compares and contrasts the United Methodist Church with Zionist churches in the capitol city of Maputo. Following the end of apartheid in South Africa, Anthony Balcomb examines the role evangelicals have played during the transition to democracy. In the concluding chapter Paul Gifford, having written extensively on the public role of Christianity across Africa, provides seven valuable comments based on his perspective of the evidence presented.

In any edited volume, the remarks by the editor are important ties that hold the work together, and this is no less the case with Ranger, who had the momentous task of weaving the common threads of evangelical Christianity and democracy through six African countries. His introduction begins with defining “evangelical Christianity” as consisting of a focus on four general characteristics: conversion, activism, biblicism, and crucicentrism. He later posits three phases of democratic transition across Africa and then details the roles churches played throughout this process. Comments in his afterword present recent developments in Nigeria, Zambia, Kenya, and Zimbabwe.

The inherent strengths and contributions of the book are numerous. As a collaborative project, the editor and individual contributors met during two workshops to discuss this project and can be credited with giving the volume greater coherence, which is often difficult with multiple authored works. The central question driving these scholars was not necessarily *whether* evangelical Christianity has been political, but instead a descriptive focus on *how* this has occurred. In the process, this collaborative effort challenges an argument made by Gifford in 1988 that evangelical Christianity cannot function as a “school of democracy” and instead reveals a greater propensity for Christians to move from political passivity to greater civic engagement. A multi-disciplinary perspective is also evident, for the contributors come from diverse backgrounds, including sociology, history, religious studies, philosophy, and theology. It appears each author was given artistic license to make a literary scrapbook of the phenomena they witnessed during their field research, thus leading to various perspectives and approaches.

The book does not purport to provide detailed qualitative data with the explicit goal of cross case comparative analysis, so it may be unfair to critique the book in this regard. But, due to the different approaches used in each chapter, it makes systematic comparisons across these six countries problematic. The selected cases are also disproportionately biased toward Southern Africa; therefore, it would have been beneficial to see additional countries included in this study as well as a standardized methodological approach employed. However, the greatest shortcoming is the apparent delay in publication. The six main chapters end in 2001 or 2002. Ranger offers brief updates for only four of the countries, and only goes to around mid-2005. The book was published in hardback October 2006 and the paperback version in April 2008. This three to four year lag is unfortunate, for the material presented already represents an outdated snapshot of the ever changing dynamic of religion and politics in Africa.

Overall though, *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa* brings a varied and rich descriptive portrayal of how these churches and pastors have interacted with the democratization process in their respective countries. The authors highlight the complexity, conflict, and controversies inhabiting current church-state relations and thus supply several

topics for further research. The book will prove insightful for those seeking a better overall understanding of the political aspects of African evangelical Christianity. For those more versed with this relationship, the volume offers additional insight and perspectives that can challenge preconceived notions of how and why evangelicals are politically motivated.

Steve Lichty, *University of Florida*

**Trevor Hugh James Marchand.** *The Masons of Djenné.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009.

The mosque of Djenné – Mali’s cultural asset of national pride and reportedly the largest earthen building in the world—is emblematic of its builders’ magical work with earth. For centuries, skilled masons have shaped the distinctively elegant architecture of Djenné, once an important trading and Islamic studies center during the golden days of trans-Saharan trade. Colonization, then droughts, have altered the livelihood of Djenné’s residents, and weakened the *Barey ton* corporation (masons’ guild). World Heritage status was granted to Djenné in 1988 to protect the deteriorating architectural heritage. The entire historic center, home to 12,000 people at the time, became the object of international conservation projects, as well as a tourist destination.

It was in this context of change that University of London architect and anthropologist Trevor Marchand undertook research for this book. His goal was to understand and assess the training and transmission of knowledge among masons, and argue for the support of such apprentice system. To this end, Marchand himself worked as an apprentice on building sites for traditional Djenné houses during two winters in 2001 and 2002. His research is presented in two parts, punctuated by a narrative thread detailing construction progress, from foundation to rooftop elements to interior decoration.

In the first part, Marchand introduces Djenné’s history and architecture, highlighting its economical and ecological nature. Thermally ideal mud bricks, mortar and plaster are made from local deposits of mineral-rich silts after annual flooding. The mason’s broad scope of work, as designer, architect, builder, contractor, and decorator, contrasts with his limited literacy and equipment. Rituals incorporating Islamic and traditional African knowledge are an integral part of his practice. Marchand’s observations of the builders’ interactions reveal a microcosm of Djenné and Malian society, and echo the work of earlier anthropologists (Marcel Griaule, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown) on Dogon-Bozo alliance and the role of bantering in the maintenance of social order. For additional context, Marchand discusses western architecture’s path towards recognizing the genius of non-western form. Thus came Djenné to the forefront of the West’s hailing of non-western dwelling, thanks to scholars Labelle Prussin, Rogier Bedaux, Pierre Maas, and Geert Mommersteeg. Marchand reports positively on the extensive Malian-Dutch project for the restoration of over 100 houses, credited to have revitalized the *Barey ton* in the last two decades. But he points to problems associated with western protection rules that freeze built heritage. He argues that the tradition most worthy of conservation is the apprentice

system itself, so that Djenné's architecture can adapt to modern life while maintaining its identity, and serve as the city's cultural commodity.

In the second part, Marchand presents portraits of the builders he has met and their struggles for professional and human survival. Some masons became authorities on the authenticity of their city's heritage, while others had to switch trades. Foreign laborers worked hard to pay Qur'anic school fees but with little hope of reaching apprenticeship level, which is reserved to Djenné mason families. Career choices, access to, and prerequisites for the mason trade are described, as well as the holistic apprenticeship methodology—individual-based, using physical mimicking, mutual observations, and mentoring throughout a long master/protégé relationship. Marchand notes the masons' adaptation over time, whether in building materials or work organization, but he lists new threats to Djenné's architectural tradition: the Talo dam 150km upstream from Djenné, the fragility of the economy, the impact of increased schooling on work opportunities, and the rapidly modernizing tastes of inhabitants.

Marchand's prior fieldwork addressed apprenticeship practices among minaret builders in Sana'a, Yemen, and he is currently researching contemporary building-craft knowledge among fine woodworkers in the UK. He aims to produce a comparative analysis of knowledge transfer and advance the theoretical understanding of trade-skill communication, referring to current theories on the dynamics of communication and its relation to thought.

Books on Djenné's architecture abound, but a full immersion as anthropologist-observer on an earthen building site represents a first such initiative, and is a fine example of anthropological work with concrete applications. Marchand's research is concentrated on construction sites with private foreign sponsorship, which are not representative of the work of all of Djenné's 200 masons and 100 apprentices. Nevertheless, his book succeeds in paying tribute to the deeply rooted and remarkable expertise of Djenné's masons, and presenting their trade's complex economic, religious, historical, and cultural aspects. It highlights the importance of local knowledge systems in successful development initiatives in Africa, and their capacity to channel change. Marchand ends his book with the annual communal *crépissage* (recoating) of the Mosque, and a renewed plea for valuing process over object, which is a cause he regularly champions at conservationists' meetings. But he clearly stays away from the delicate area of formulating national strategies. Marchand had advocated against the standardization and objectivity of trade schools in his book about Yemeni builders. For Djenné, he does not suggest concrete proposals other than moving away from western-conservation approaches. Rather, Marchand asserts the universal value of holistic training for builders where "morals, muscles and mind are integrated," thereby empowering the builders as guardians of a city's authenticity. Recent developments in Djenné may go in that direction. A local NGO secured funding for the creation of the *Maison du Patrimoine* (Heritage House), devoted to building experimentation and literacy training for masons. And just recently, the masons' expertise was being called upon to address the November 5, 2009 collapse of the southeast tower of the Djenné mosque, due to heavy rains.

Because of its breadth, this book is a valuable resource to architects, anthropologists, conservationists, development experts, and cultural tourists interested in Mali's architecture and society. The bibliography, notes, and masonry terminology are extensive, including links to Arabic roots. Despite some repetitions, personal details, and the occasionally perceived lack of

content organization, the book engages the reader through its narrative style, the masons' stories, thoughtful architectural and anthropological commentary, and the earthen magic at work.

Kathleen Louw, *University of California Los Angeles*

**Henrik Vigh.** *Navigating Terrains of War: Youth and Soldiering in Guinea-Bissau*. NY: Berghahn Books, 2006.

*Navigating Terrains of War: Youth and Soldiering in Guinea-Bissau*, while theoretically confounded, adds depth of knowledge to the anthropological understanding of the relationship between agency and structure, specifically focusing on the ongoing negotiation with, and within shifting "social terrains." Author Henrik Vigh interviews 32 of the approximately 1,000 *Aguentas* (literally "helpers or supporters"). These "superfluous young men" mobilized by President João Bernardo 'Nino' Vieira's *Forças di Governo* (Government Forces) as an "irregular militia" were primarily recruited as "cannon fodder" on the losing side of the armed conflict in Guinea-Bissau between 1998 and 2000 (pp. 48-56).

Vigh begins by describing his interlocutors as making up a "community of experience" who share spheres of reference (p. 19). During his sixteen months of fieldwork in the capital city of Bissau, Vigh lived through one of these outbreaks of fighting in November 2000. This experience granted him access "behind the thick, shiny surfaces of politicized discourse and analyze everyday political praxis instead" (p. 22).

*Navigating Terrains of War* contributes to the understanding of a unique moment in Guinea-Bissau's history, a moment embroiled in tension, conflict, uncertainty, and change. Vigh hopes his work adds, "to the nuancing of perspectives on youth in war" (p. 240). This book explores patrimonial networks and livelihood strategies as well as generational tension, all valuable anthropological themes in need of further ethnographic exposition. As one of the only books truly dedicated to understanding the nature of the 1998 coup d'état in Guinea-Bissau led by the former Chief of Staff Ansumané Mané, it is the most important contribution on the topic to date.

Vigh is consumed by the idea of "social becoming" whereby his subjects must navigate their way through "murky socio-political circumstances" (p. 129). The author organizes his ten chapters into five parts. The ethnography begins with Mbuli's story, an *Aguenta* in search of opportunity due to the general economic decline found throughout Guinea-Bissau. Mbuli's empathy toward his enemies foreshadows similar tales revisited throughout the book. The war, which was instigated over arms sales to the MFDC Diola secessionist rebels in the Casamance, quickly escalated into a regionalist conflict with troops from throughout the region. France backed the government while Portugal supported the opposing *Junta Militar* (populist Military Council). Engagement on the ground level ebbed and flowed with real time socio-political developments. Given the context, Vigh eventually modifies his original preconceptions about the ideologies of warfare and begins to understand the Bissauan conflict as a *Guerra di Hermonia*

(Brotherly War), in which the indigenous factions rebel in search of “a better position and space of possibility within society” (p. 70).

The second part of the book focuses on the processual nature of becoming *Aguenta*. The reader learns that *Aguentas* were primarily urban ethnic Papel youth disenfranchised by an utter lack of upward mobility. Foreign troops escalated the conflict while Bissau-Guineans often shared meals during ceasefires, regardless of their side.

In the third part of the book, Vigh explains how many youth in Bissau felt themselves to be betwixt and between childhood and adulthood. What resulted was a “social moratorium of youth” resulting in “smouldering [*sic.*] inter-generational tension” (p. 97) related to intensifying economic hardships and generationally asymmetrical control over access to resources. Youth became wards of their respective “economies of affection,” which only furthered the generational divide. Meanwhile, the impotent state became nothing more than “a rusty grid, cross-cut and intertwined by patrimonial networks” (p. 111). What resulted were attempts by the youth to take full advantage of their social terrain through cleverness, what Vigh refers to as *dubriagem* (social navigation).

The fourth part of the book outlines the shifting environment of Bissau. By following a particular *collegason*, or youth club, Vigh demonstrates how “the jagged-edged destruction becomes blunted by routinization” (p. 150). Structural uncertainties kept the youth of Bissau in a state of hyper-vigilance always in search of opportunity or the potential for opportunity.

The author concludes by describing the *Aguentas* as stigmatized and marginalized for defending an unpopular government and committing wartime atrocities. At the same time, they were excused from their actions because of their reclassification as youth who could not be held accountable for their actions. The lesson the readership takes away from this disclosure, however, is that the *Aguentas* were not child soldiers, they were failed actors in a theater of war intent on maneuvering their way into “emergent possibilities in order to direct their lives in an advantageous direction” (p. 8).

Vigh’s principal concern is theoretical to the point where much of the cultural description is omitted, hidden, or used superficially to introduce explanatory arguments. In fact, the book’s bibliography reads like a veritable who’s who of grand social theorists while classic works on warfare and Guinea-Bissau seem to be missing.

Rich detail and thick descriptions are wanting, not for the lack of fieldwork. This is unfortunate given the historical and cultural relevance and uniqueness of the topic. The book remains primarily a published dissertation with unnecessary repetition and footnotes. For me, this book often skirts that genre of Afro-pessimism in which the marginalized youth of Africa sit around and reflect on their unlucky global position. For example, Vigh notes that his informants were “in effect making a situation of exploitation one to be longed for” (p. 137). My own experiences in Guinea-Bissau’s countryside several years later were much different. Youth were given their own social space including economic outlets reserved entirely for them. Without a deeper description of the informants’ everyday lives, the reader is left unable to evaluate Vigh’s explanatory claims for his or herself. As a new approach to the debate on structure and agency, however, this is a must read for anthropologists. As the only book available focused on both the *Aguenta* militia and civil war in Guinea-Bissau, this work should find its way onto the shelves of historians, West Africanists, and those interested in conflict

studies and policy issues. I have already found myself recommending this book to a number of my colleagues.

Brandon D. Lundy, *Kennesaw State University*

**Thomas Benjamin. *The Atlantic World: Europeans, Africans, Indians and Their Shared History, 1400-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.**

This is a massive yet highly enjoyable and comprehensive study of the concept of the “Atlantic world,” a world which generated a history of its own with a long and complex process of historical interplay of change and continuity.

*The Atlantic World* spans four centuries with significant historical periods and transitions between 1400 and 1900; tells the story of the different peoples, societies, and cultures that used the Atlantic and addresses the relationships, connections, and exchanges, which crisscrossed the Atlantic Ocean. Over this period, the Atlantic became a potential source of contacts, communications, networks, alliances and multiple ties between Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans. In the end, it transformed their societies and gave birth to new peoples, cultures, economic and social structures, and global relations.

Three main themes that structure these Atlantic histories are; First, the belief that Europeans were those who pioneered the Atlantic crossing beyond their home borders. Second, that the development of Atlantic trade, colonies, economies, and empires was the outcome of a process of interactions, exchanges and engagements between Europeans, Africans, and Indians to which all of them contributed. The third theme contends that the Atlantic system vanished after having operated with a great deal of zest and dynamism for five centuries.

On the basis of a wealth of primary sources ranging from travel accounts, letters, diaries, journals, and autobiographies to pamphlets, collective documents, and encyclopedias; from Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch sources to English and French ones, from sources covering the pre-Columbian period to those dealing with the modern one, Benjamin wrote a learned, profound, yet an accessible history of the Atlantic world, even to the lay history reader, and a useful textbook to the historian and student of history.

With the advent and growth of the Atlantic world, Benjamin maintains that just about everything everywhere has become interconnected, intertwined, and interactive. Europeans, Africans, and American Indians made then unmade the Atlantic world. This is not to suggest that the author, even though his ultimate objective was to highlight mutuality, reciprocity, and communality, underestimated or ignored those bleak, gloomy and depressing aspects, episodes and phases of the Atlantic history. Indeed, six chapters covered those somber parts of the Atlantic world whose titles *Conquests, Realms, Incursions, Uprooted, Bondage, and Rivals* tell it all. There is a dark side to the history of the Atlantic world to which this work does justice.

According to a compelling argument that goes back to Roman times, Native American Indians could never constitute a civil society. This claim legitimized a course of expansion, which later on shifted into a great colonial scheme involving many European powers. Apart

from the expansionist impulse, Atlantic exploration also had solid economic incentives and the desire to acquire land, products and trade as well. Spain, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, and England respectively made a bridge to conquer the Americas and Africa of the Atlantic during the period being covered. The long feared ocean was soon transformed into a scene of rivalry, piracy, wars, and competition between European individuals, institutions, and even states seeking power, wealth, and glory. These predators, Benjamin, reminds us, did not differ too much from similar motives, practices, and schemes which American Indians and Africans used to have before the inception of the so-called modern era. Again, Benjamin stresses the similarities between pre-Columbian indigenous societies and the Western European ones. The fifteenth century Mexicas and Incas in the Americas, the eleventh- to -fifteenth century African empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai are testimonies that these peoples and societies did not only share some common fundamental traits, histories and civilizations, but equally patterns of governance and an expansionist impetus. In 1500, in fact, Latin Christendom was a minor civilization to these American Indian and African empires, but also to Ming China, Mughal India, and the immense Islamic World. There were indeed antecedents, which Western Europeans emulated. Europe's economic growth and territorial expansion from the fifteenth century onwards should be partly regarded as part of a longer historical trend.

The former and declining, the new and expanding empires and civilizations collided after the fifteenth century. In so doing, they became connected in conflict, collaboration, commerce, competition, colonization, and contagion. This collision led to the establishment of new realms that were extensions of European culture. These extensions, however, were altered, since they were sustained by African and Indian trade and labor, and influenced by their customs and culture. Europe traded, Christianized, 'civilized', 'Europeanized,' refined, developed, colonized, enslaved, victimized, brutalized, terrorized, plundered, and impoverished Indian America and Africa. Similarly, Indians and Africans welcomed, cooperated, married into, resisted, fought, labored, taught, and learnt from Europeans and built communities of theirs despite all odds. The critical aspects of the Atlantic world were blends of interdependence and ill-treatment, partnership, and exploitation.

After having been a barrier to East-West, South-North, Orient-Occident encounters and entanglements until the late fifteenth century, the Atlantic ocean matured into a compulsory passage and a conduit to cooperation and partnership, not without experiencing the inevitable and almost reconcilable evils of revolutions on the one hand and colonialism and slavery on the other, long before a freer and more egalitarian world was established for Europeans, not for American Indians and Africans, without whom this world of equality and independence would not have seen the day.

The Atlantic world saw the rise of the West and the establishment of its economic enterprise and wealth, technological innovations, military strength, and political power. These were achieved thanks to the spirit of adventure, work, and experience, but mainly through exploitation and colonialism. This, however, should not be interpreted solely in terms of the superiority of the West, a now exhausted claim. The Atlantic world, after all, brought peoples, societies, and cultures closer than ever before and has certainly underlined the universality of man.

Adel Manai , *Universite Tunis El-Manar*

**Kjetil Tronvoll. *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia: the Making of Enemies and Allies in the Horn of Africa*. Rochester, NY: James Currey, 2009.**

While Kjetil Tronvoll's (along with Tekeste Negash) previous work, *Brothers at War* (James Currey, 2000), guided me in having a brief overview of the Eritrean-Ethiopia 1998-2000 War, it was certainly Tronvoll's new encompassing study of the inner identity politics of Ethiopia and particularly the sketch of the socio-political trajectory of the regional Tigrayan State that put the historical details right. As far as the book is concerned, I can only marvel at this meticulous handling of sources and the richness of information on the evolution of the formation and conceptualization of identities in Ethiopia. The following war history and identities are described with rare clarity and the book explores the understanding of war and impact of warfare on historical trajectories of enemy images.

The Ethiopian-Eritrean War had a dramatic impact on both rural and urban livelihoods in Eritrea and the regional state of Tigray in northern Ethiopia, the most affected region in the country. Within this complex and contradictory setting, the book aims to answer some questions of research, which it does this quite successfully. In addition, the author questions on the effect of the war on the formation of identities. Despite the common notion of the war impelling and mobilizing a nationalist discourse, Tronvoll supports the view that the Ethiopian-Eritrean War had an opposite fragmenting effect of creating more divisions and distinctions along ethnic, political, and regional lines.

The book's seven chapters of the book, the study challenged and partly modify the assumption that war homogenizes and strengthens a collective national identity in diverse societies such as Ethiopia. The essential chapter four, which is the first empirical chapter of the book addressing the war, it concentrates on presenting discourses on Tigrayan identity and how self-ascribed Tigrayaness is constituted. In chapter six, Tronvoll moves up the scale and focuses on national discourses on identity while highlighting competing national discourses of nationalism.

Based on his own fieldwork conducted in the years of the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front's (TPLF), 1991-1993, and an extensive set of interviews from several actors involved during and after the war, Tronvoll employs analytical tools provided by anthropology's classic concept of boundaries, which manage to capture and explain the complex and contradictory process of identity formation taking place during the war. In order to explain the identity shifts more thoroughly a particular focus is on how the Ethiopian state redesigned its politics of identity to fit and manipulate the new political landscape created by the war. Furthermore, the deconstructionist approach supported by many authors to the idea of a "Greater Ethiopia", which argues that the Ethiopian state, culture, and history is nothing but a mirror image of Amharan domination. Thus, Ethiopia is not a naturally given historical entity but an ordinary African state created through colonialism. Nevertheless, the author puts himself within the camp of scholars such as Christopher Clapham (1969) and John Markakis (1974) who balance the opposing views, considering both the deep historical trajectories of the Ethiopian state on the one hand and its Amharization and oppressive characteristics on the other.

Objections, however, can be raised to the approach supported by the author. With regard to the ethnographic representation of Ethiopia (p. 24), the author fails to make a detail historical reference to the emergence in pre-colonial time of the separate socio-political identities on the two sides of the borderland, albeit within a political dialectic which from the 14<sup>th</sup> century had frequently renegotiated power relations within the Ethiopian empire. In line with his previous work *Brothers at War*, Tronvoll recognizes the importance of the role played by the reinforcement of Eritrean identity in bringing about the Ethiopian-Eritrean War. This theme raises the question of the development of nationalism and how deeply rooted it actually is among the population. And, this is the crux of the debate revolving around Donald Levine's theses regarding Greater Ethiopia, according to which the history of pre-colonial Eritrea is viewed as being part of a continuum, an albeit confused one, of historical events shared with Ethiopia.

To sum up, the book's great strength is its methodology, where, despite the almost exclusive use of English language publications, the author uses news wires, reports, and texts from the Ethiopian language. Nevertheless, the inclusion of pictures and maps would have been quite helpful for a fuller understanding of the players, actors, and communities in the borderlands of the Ethiopia.

Finally, notwithstanding these minor reservations, Tronvoll's expertise and knowledge of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa shines through in *War and the Politics of Identity*, Tronvoll has offered a carefully crafted, nuanced, and intellectually stimulating contribution to the history of ethnicity in Ethiopia and Horn of Africa. As a scholar and an anthropologist, Tronvoll demonstrates that it is possible for outsiders with dedication and hard work to garner truly commanding knowledge of foreign peoples and lands.

Ioannis Mantzikos, *University of Peloponnese, Greece*

**William Storey, *Guns Race and Power in Colonial South Africa*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008.**

In *Guns, Race and Power in Colonial South Africa*, William Storey provides a detailed study of a technology that has had a profound impact on the course of history, guns. Guns are formidable tools that had very practical uses for taking control of material resources. Beginning with the arrival of Europeans into South Africa and elsewhere on the continent, they were used extensively to enhance people's ability to dominate the fauna of the region as they hunted for meat, ivory, and other animal products. They were also used to alter relations of power and domination, both within and between societies in the increasingly violent context of colonial South Africa. Of equal importance, as Storey so incisively conveys, ownership and the use of guns also shaped a myriad of human relations covering everything from conceptions of manhood and entitlements over power to constructions of race. This book provides an insightful and rigorously researched analysis of the role that guns played during select periods and places in South African colonial history until end of the nineteenth century.

Storey approaches the proliferation of guns and their use in South Africa from the perspective of the imperial gaze. The narrative emphasizes, for example, a revised (following Lamar and Thompson's *The Frontier in History*) but not wholly altered frontier thesis in examining the ways in which guns, an understanding of them, and of their use progressed in the country. Such an emphasis limits the perspective since it supports only the dominant view of the power of guns and does not allow for the possibility of some on both sides of the 'frontier' eschewing the embrace of guns or seeking to evade the intense violence they wrought. Following another major field of imperial history, military history, Storey covers many of the major fields of conflict between colonial forces and Africans. For those un-initiated in military or technology history, *Guns, Race and Power* does an excellent job of detailing the mechanical and practical applications of a range of weapons. Over the course of the book, Storey shows how innovations in gun type, firing and loading mechanisms as well as ammunition and cartridges all paralleled the overall arc of South African history, and especially developments in the sectors of capitalist-industrialization.

The book opens with an overview of guns in colonial African history and the role that they played as a form of transformative technology. Storey situates his study firmly within the realm of new approaches to science and technology studies. These, he notes, range from 'hard' or more deterministic approaches that impart agency to technology, to the 'soft' determinist ones that see human actions and choices as driving the use of technology. Storey, however, has preferred to apply the newer and more sophisticated approaches to the question that have come from the interdisciplinary field of Science and Technology Studies (STS). As he explains, this approach examines not just a given technology and its impact, but also the ways in which "technology, politics and society are mutually constituted or 'coproduced'" (p.12). He also pays deference to major works in South African history that engage with social constructions and their relation to material objects such as van Onselen's *The Seed is Mine* and the Comaroff's *Of Revelation and Revolution*. These studies, Storey argues, provide a new platform for understanding guns and culture in South Africa in ways that previous studies of guns in Africa did not. In this way, *Guns, Race and Power* provides a welcome new interdisciplinary look at the connection between imperial materialism and the colonial project in South Africa.

The book is divided into ten chapters with a final concluding chapter. The chapters follow the contours and fault lines of the colonial project as it progressed through the imperial teleology, rather than from a multi-regional perspective. The chapters provide an almost encyclopedic range of facts and figures in various well-rendered tables and graphs. It opens with an examination of guns at the Cape and then moves in chronological order through the settler-African conflicts in the Eastern Cape (chapter 3), and hunting and war along the 'Northern Frontier' (chapter 4). Chapters 5 and 6 are perhaps the two most interesting chapters in the book. In Chapter 5, Storey considers what he sees as a parallel relationship between the changing nature of labor relations in industrializing South Africa, and the introduction of new types of guns. Here an interesting feature of Storey's overall argument, that guns and their use transformed people and power relations, bounded by race and class, is the point that the both the use and acquisition of guns required new and less sophisticated skill-sets. As he notes, during the 1860s and 1870s, increasingly easy to use and widely available popular breechloader guns required fewer skills than had older weapons. This change is seen to parallel the same sort

of proletarianization—one that presumably tended toward the ‘lumpen’ end of the spectrum-- that reduced Africans to the largely unskilled migrant workforce serving the demands of industrial mining capital. Still, what is left out of the picture in this discussion is what more sophisticated skills—the capacity, for example, to cope with the dizzying array of other new economic, political and social demands and opportunities- that Africans cultivated both in urban and rural areas during this period. Chapter 6 provides an illuminating reassessment of the Langalibalele Affair made so (in)famous by Norman Etherington (“Why Langalibalele Ran Away” *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, I (1978): 1-24). Here, the focus on guns helps to awaken a new understanding of African claims to some degree of equal treatment and engagement with the colonial project. Chapters 7 and 8 return to more theoretical considerations of the relationship between technology and imperialism. In chapter 7, a consideration of the drive for a uniform policy on guns and Africans in a confederated South Africa begs the questions of whether the imperial strategists wanted Africans to have at least some guns, so as to appear sufficiently menacing and violent to justify full ‘pacification.’ Curiously left out of this chapter is a more detailed discussion of the Zulu and Pedi cases. Similarly omitted from the otherwise most impressive bibliography is Carolyn Hamilton’s *Mfecane Aftermath* which provides an important analysis of both the origins and perceptions of violence in the interior during the nineteenth century. The remaining chapters detail the case of the Sotho and Basutoland and make the important point that, as with other features of the South African political economy, Africans were decidedly undermined in competing with whites by a growing ‘arms gap’ in the arms race.

Overall, *Guns Race and Power* is an important contribution to our understanding of the unfolding frontier in South African history. It accounts for and explains how technology was a critical area of contestations over access to and use of power in the colonial context. In particular it shows how guns not only became a defining feature of power relations among Africans and settlers, but also connected the region to the wider currents of imperial power. Of necessity, the evidence and views of Africans is often indirect and, it would seem, somewhat speculative. While many of the effects of the spreading gun culture associated with the major thrusts of white settlerdom into the interior are accounted for, there is much less discussion of the use and meaning of guns within African societies. It is, therefore, difficult to get a clear picture from the book of exactly what Africans thought about guns and how they may have transformed their world. How, for example, did Africans see the rise of game hunting and the concomitant destructive impact on fauna? Did they debate the value of guns and the violence they wrought as in other societies? Did they see them as an essential feature of the colonial world they were often compelled to enter into? Still, the impeccable research and cross-referencing, clear and cogent writing, and cohesive argument, make *Guns, Race and Power* an excellent contribution to African and South African colonial history.

Aran MacKinnon, *University of West Georgia*

**Irene Assiba D'Almeida (ed.). *A Rain of Words. A Bilingual Anthology of Women's Poetry in Francophone Africa*. Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2009.**

**Kathy Perkins (ed.). *African Women Playwrights*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009.**

In this combined book review we discuss *A Rain of Words*, edited by Irène Assiba d'Almeida, an anthology of Francophone African poems, translated into English by Janis A. Mayes, and *African Women Playwrights*, a selection of excerpts of plays written by African women writers, edited and introduced by Kathy Perkins. Both publications are of the utmost importance as they include poems (*A Rain of Words* compiles the work of 47 African women poets) and theatre plays (*African Women Playwrights*) written by female African authors who have thus far been under-represented when it comes to publication of their texts.

In her introduction to *A Rain of Words*, Assiba d'Almeida points out the abundance, variety, and geographical reach of poetic activity among women in Francophone Africa. To ensure that this diversity reaches Anglophone readers, she has collaborated with translator Mayes. By putting a series of published and unpublished female poets in the spotlight, she hopes to establish the existence of Francophone African women as writers of poets. On the other hand, Kathy Perkins makes similar remarks in her introduction to *African Women Playwrights*. She contends that while "African female writers have seen a small increase in the number of published novels and poems [...] dramatic works, however, still lag behind" (p. 5). Nevertheless, "selecting material for the volume proved difficult" as "there was too much to choose from," (p. 6).

Both anthologies seem to suffer from the lack of precise selection criteria. Assiba d'Almeida wanted to be the "town crier" (p. xxiv) through her highly personal selection. Examples of militant poetry, the poems, presented side by side with their English translation, sing, cry over, exalt, or curse all "the great themes of human emotion," such as love, friendship, happiness, pain, solitude, and death. In *African Women Playwrights*, the editor wanted to highlight the fact that theatre in Africa is "as diverse as the people who inhabit the continent" (p. 6) and has therefore included such topics as cultural differences, HIV/AIDS, female circumcision, land rights, women's rights to higher education, racial/colour identity, and the prostitution of indigent young girls.

In *A Rain of Words* the authors are presented in alphabetical order. For each author, a short biography precedes a selection of poems. While bibliographical information about the poems is given at the end of the volume, it would have been more practical and useful to present this information either next to the title of the poem or immediately above or underneath it. More well-known poets such as Tanella Boni and Véronique Tadjó (Côte d'Ivoire), Werewere Liking (Cameroon), Irène Assiba d'Almeida (Benin/USA), or Monique Ilboudo (Burkina Faso) feature side by side to lesser-known authors such as Aminata Athié (Mauritania), Oumou Dembélé (Mali), or Mallai Lélèl (Niger). The translations are of high quality. Mayes uses her own translation technique which she coined TransAtlantic (or sAlt) translation: it functions "like a delayed memory of the past, or, in musical terms, a reverberation of sound and memory emanating from two (or more) speakers with a slight delay of one with respect to the other,

creating an echo-like sound" (p. xxxiv).

In her foreword to *African Women Playwrights*, Amandina Lihamba applauds the publication of the volume: "We celebrate women's creative output as inspired by the cultural milieu of Africa with its socioeconomic restlessness, energies, and the synergy of its people's hopes and aspirations" (p. ix). In this beautifully edited volume, a picture, a quote from the playwright, a one-page biographical note and excerpts from interviews made by Kathy Perkins accompany passages from or full theatre plays written by African Francophone (Nathalie Etoke; her work appears in an English translation prepared by the author herself) and Anglophone authors such as Ama Ata Aidoo, Violet Barungi, Tsitsi Dangarembga, and Sindiwe Magona.

A detailed and quite comprehensive reference list can be found at the end of *A Rain of Words* (pp. 279-286): primary poetry texts precede anthologies and critical works on poetry. *African Women Playwrights* also concludes with a bibliography which proposed a section on selected readings, followed by a section on selected published and unpublished plays by African women (pp. 360-64).

A few minor spelling and/or grammar mistakes can be identified (e.g. the plural -s missing at the end of *griotte* on p. xxvi of *A Rain of Words*), but they never make legibility an issue.

The publication of the present anthologies is highly appreciated. It fills a gap with regard to African female poets and playwrights. Both compilations offer primary texts, which will be used by researchers, academics, and readers in general to further their knowledge. It is further hoped that copies of both volumes will find their way to African libraries and universities, which is probably where they are needed the most.

Karen Ferreira-Meyers, *University of Swaziland*

**Thomas A. Hale. *Griots and griottes*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007.**

Thomas A. Hale's clearly written, informative work is a comprehensive historical and contemporary account of the griot phenomenon, which originated in West Africa. In a scholarly way, it integrates the methods of oral and written history, comparative literature, folkloristics, and performance studies to create a fascinating portrait of griots. These oral historians, musicians, and poets have such complex roles that it is difficult to confine oneself to a succinct, concise definition of these specialists.

Hale's first chapter, "A Job Description for Griots" (pp. 18-58), explains how much more there is to griot practice than simply genealogy and music. Griots in Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Niger, Senegal and The Gambia variously serve as genealogist, historian, royal advisor and spokesperson, diplomat, mediator, interpreter and translator, musician and composer, teacher, exhorter, warrior, witness, praise singer and key participant at the important village ceremonies such as namings, marriages, installations, and funerals.

In chapter two, entitled "The Origins of Griots" (pp. 59-113), the author sets out to trace and explain some of their thirteenth-century roots in the Malian empire and its founder, Sundiata Keita. The basic tale of griot origins involves blood sacrifice and is used to explain taboos associated with griots and why their caste is distinct from that of other West African

villagers. As Islam came to the region and griot social status became memorialized in epic narratives, their unique social situation was witnessed and reported by outsiders, first Arab and later European.

In chapters three, "The Verbal Art of Griots" (pp. 114-45), and four, "Music Across the Griot World" (pp. 146-71), the author proceeds to explain griots, their culture and how it is they practice their verbal art through praise-singing for example, and to discuss the instruments and techniques used to support these narratives in a highly accessible and informative manner.

Chapter five, "The Making of a Griot" (pp. 172-92), and chapter six, "Would You Want Your Daughter to Marry One" (pp. 193-216), gives the author the opportunity to further examine the traditional social place of the griot, especially in the face of the ever-growing influence of modernity and change. In chapter five, issues of training (early, formal and state-sponsored training), apprenticeship, lineage and knowledge transfer are discussed and exemplified through the description of the lives of three griots, namely Adama Dramé, Al Haji Papa Bunka Susso, and Djimo Kouyaté. Status, power and identity issues within a given society are analyzed in depth in chapter six.

The remaining four chapters, "Griottes: Unrecognized Female Voices" (pp. 217-43), "From the Courtyards of the Nobility to a Global Audience" (pp. 244-87), "The Value of Words" (pp. 288-310), and "New Millennium Griots" (pp. 311-35), describe important new scholarship research trends into the world of women practitioners and performers. While novice researchers in oral literature may have the false view that griots are mainly men, the chapter on female voices sets this straight. Hale clearly spells out the objectives of the inclusion of chapter seven: "to explain why we know so little about griottes, to report on work now being done by the small group of scholars interested in them, to give examples of the verbal art of these women, and to suggest some avenues of research" (p. 217). Hale's conclusion that; "our picture of griots and griottes will remain incomplete until further research is carried out," (p. 241) points to several important themes: women griots share the knowledge base of their male counterparts but convey this in a different form (songs), a sense of community is upheld through work with non-professional women singers, and democratization, new means of communication and opportunities to travel have changed the world of the female griots. Chapter eight brings the griots and their traditions into the twenty-first century. While Alex Haley and his *Roots* may have generated a wave of interest in African griots, it also caused enormous controversy after its publication in 1976. This eighth chapter focuses on pre-*Roots* texts and genealogies, then recounts the link between Haley's fictional reconstruction and the hype that surrounded it before looking at present-day live, musical, print, and electronic (television, radio, and satellite communication) performances. Chapter 9 looks into remuneration of griots from a historical point of view (from early accounts of rewards to today's remuneration for griots' services), from a gender perspective (remuneration of men versus payment of women), from the viewpoint of the sources of rewards (tuition, income from the hospitality industry, from tours and visits, from ceremonies and special events, from the media and from live and recorded performances). The chapter on the modern side of this age-old profession, "New Millennium Griots," underscores its multifunctional character. This last chapter of the book opens up the discussion and offers a multitude of possible research questions to the reader throughout the chapter, but more particularly on pages 324 to 334.

Hale's encyclopaedic introduction to and overview of this ubiquitous and important West African figure is a definite and valuable addition to the literature on both African societies and the African Diaspora as it reveals griots to be much more complex and multifaceted social agents than previously understood. Having had contacts with griots from 1964 to the present day, Hale presents some of his fieldwork as well as the results of his research in archives and libraries in Europe and North America. Along with interviews of over a hundred of these traditional storytellers, Hale summarizes accounts by travellers, explorers, and colonial administrators to create a vibrant picture of the extraordinary activities carried out by griots and griottes. The appendices include lists of names and phone numbers of griots in the United States, lists of films, videos, and sound recordings featuring griots, selected English translations of epics by griots, audio recordings by griots, African music books that include sections on griots, ethno-specific terms for griots (e.g. *guelwel* in Wolof, *jeli* in Mande, *jeséré* in Songhay, *marok'a* in Hausa, etc.), a section on the theories of the origin of the word *griot*, and a selected bibliography. As correctly observed by Barbara Hoffman in her book review of Marloes Janson, *The Best Hand is the Hand That Always Gives: Griottes and their Profession in Eastern Gambia*,<sup>1</sup> and the use of the word *griottes* in English may lead to confusion. The term "griot" has been borrowed into English from French and has attained a remarkably wide adoption in the English lexicon; however, it is typically pronounced differently from the word in French. So, "griot" is commonly pronounced by English speakers (however erroneously) as [griot] with a hard "t". "Griotte", on the other hand, has not been adopted into the general lexicon of English, and for good linguistic reasons (such as phonotactics and morphosyntactics). So the most "natural" monolexemic feminization of the word "griot" (if one were needed) might be "griotess", it may even be more appropriate to use the following terms: Griot = jali of either sex; Griot man = male jali and Griot woman = female jali.

The current paperback version (from the original hardback edition of 1997) has numerous black and white photos and maps which greatly assist the reader in his/her discovery of the world of the griots. While some information has been updated, other data would surely benefit from inclusion of more recent, i.e. post-1997, research findings. This professionally edited and well-written study benefits from the two strategies the author used to prepare it: references to sources are indicated in the text itself rather than in notes at the bottom of the page, the end of the chapter, or the end of the book, and information that is too detailed for inclusion in the narrative is provided in one of the seven appendices. It is, in its entirety, of benefit to a variety of researchers from fields as diverse as history, music, anthropology and sociology, linguistics and literature.

Karen Ferreira-Meyers , *University of Swaziland*

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<sup>1</sup> Journal of Language and Popular Culture in Africa 3, No. 2 (2003)

**Edith Bruder.** *The Black Jews of Africa: History, Religion, Identity.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008.

**Richard Hull.** *Jews and Judaism in African History.* Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Press, 2009.

*Hath writing ere such  
A double book review*

*Ever had such impact on  
An Africanist Jew?*

Were it not for the books offered for this review, I would not be spending this Hanukkah in Abuja, Nigeria. Yet so compelling are the historical and contemporary accounts of Jews in Africa, and of African Jews, in these volumes by Edith Bruder and Richard Hull that I could not resist (admittedly in a “use it or lose it” university research grant environment) skipping out on final exam week to arrive in time for the first candle lighting in one of the two (yes, two) synagogues of *Jubos* (my term for ethnic Igbo Jews) in Nigeria’s Federal Capital Territory.

I originally had intended to begin this review by relaying my early Hebrew School discovery of “Falashas,” and the consternation it gave my Ashkenazi mother when I announced (before Bar Mitzvah age, no less) that I would marry an Ethiopian Jewish girl. But enough about me: it is Hull and Bruder who are true experts on the subjects, and need to be given just due.

Despite the similarly-sounding titles and themes, these are very different books. Hull, an American at New York University, is a veteran historian who brings several decades’ worth of research, publication, and teaching experience to the (writing) table. Bruder, a Francophone research associate at the School of Oriental and African Studies, turned her 2006 SOAS doctoral dissertation into *The Black Jews of Africa*. Both books strongly bear the hallmarks of their authors’ backgrounds, and their associated virtues.

For university undergraduates – presumably a target audience for *Jews and Judaism in African History* – Hull’s book is the more accessible of the two books. Hull writes in short, clear sentences, with nary a footnote. (His comprehensive referencing is in MLA style – perhaps as a model for students to adopt in their papers?) His approach – as befits a classical historian – is basically chronological.

Launching his account from classical antiquity (Elephantine, Ptolemaic, and Alexandrian Egypt), Hull takes us up until the seventeenth century in North Africa, relating how Jews fared under successive Muslim regimes (Fatimid, Mamluk, Almoravid, Ottoman, etc.). He then deviates slightly from his dateline, bringing us back to the fifteenth century and the beginnings of the Atlantic Slave Trade. Hull deals with the potentially provocative topic of Jews’ involvement in African slavery in a non-polemical, “just the facts” manner. Jewish participation in the construction of South Africa is the next theme, followed by Jewish immigration to eastern, central, and southern Africa. In his concluding chapter, Hull returns to the north to

assess how Jews of the Maghreb and Egypt have fared from the seventeenth century until after the establishment of Israel. There is no concluding chapter as such, something which this reviewer missed. The half dozen maps, and as many illustrations, greatly enhance the reader's ability to follow spatially and visually the Jewish thread in Africa.

In contrast with Hull's non-interpretative historiography, Edith Bruder's work is infused with theoretical perspectives that invoke sociology, theology, psychology, and anthropology at a level more appropriate for graduate students and beyond. It is helpful, for instance, to be already familiar with Mircea Eliade, Michel Foucault, Rollo May, and Edward Said. This more eclectic approach lends itself to a structure that is at least as thematic as it is historical. In Part I, Bruder grapples with the mythic dimension of African Jewry: Lost Tribes of Israel, King Solomon and Queen of Sheba, etc. Part II explores colonial (most prejudicial) framing of Jewish and African peoples and religion and the relationship between them. The concluding section describes various Black African ethnicities and communities who, either through descent or conviction, stake their claim to Judaism. A nicely rounded Epilogue synthesizes the whole with respect to the otherwise paradoxical finding of "Judaism as a source of black identity."

Perhaps the most important difference between the works relates to their respective ethnic foci. Whereas Hull emphasizes Sephardi and Ashkenazi migration throughout what used to be caricatured as the "Dark Continent," Bruder's interest lies more with sub-Saharan peoples with an abiding identification with Israelite origins, Judaism, or both. For some groups, such as the Ethiopians, the identification is longstanding and descent-based; for others, such as the Abayudaya of Uganda, it is relatively recent, and entirely faith-based; and for yet others, such as the Igbos of Nigeria, the Hebraic faith and descent are being (re)discovered. The Jewish credentials of Hull's subjects are rarely in doubt; but even Bruder feels bound to place cautionary quotation marks around some of them, as indicated in her section heading "Africa, Judaism, and African 'Jews'." For sure, Hull does provide a comprehensive section on Ethiopian Jewish history; his treatment of the Lemba, in southern Africa, is cursory. (Professor Tudor Parfitt, Bruder's doctoral supervisor, has written extensively about the Lemba, and the attention they receive in her book is not surprising.)

Or perhaps the difference in emphasis is less one of ethnicity than historicity: whereas Hull is intent on providing a comprehensive historical account of the Jewish presence on the African continent, Bruder is more concerned with explaining contemporary dynamics in the formation of Jewish identity in Africa. "Why is it," she asks, "that this particular period of African history should witness the rise of Judaizing movements?" (p. 187) If Hull provides the foundation for appreciating the longstanding presence and contradictory roles of Jews in African society, Bruder gives us the springboard for assessing the revitalization of, and attraction to, Judaism in Africa today.

Both books constitute important additions to the growing literature on the historical and contemporary interstices between Africana and Judaica, be it in Israel, Africa, or in their respective diasporas. Neither author sufficiently addresses the question of *why* s/he has been drawn to this particular comparative venture, although intimations of interest in shared status as minority groups at the global level seem to undergird both works. Speaking to different audiences, with different thematic emphases and heuristic aims, Bruder and Hall nevertheless

converge in successfully binding between their respective covers two peoples whose destinies have overlapped in ways that neither Hebraicists nor Africanists have generally appreciated.

To return to my mother, and matrimony: in the end, I did not wind up marrying a woman from Africa, Ethiopian or otherwise. But my West Indian bride does have some African ancestry – as well as a certificate of Jewishness – and became as close to my mother as a daughter-in-law can possibly be. Evolution in Mother's tribalistic feelings mirrors somewhat the expanded notion of Jewishness within North American and Western European Jewry. These fine books by Edith Bruder and Richard Hull are reflections of, and important contributions to, this heightened consciousness.

For their follow-up research, perhaps Bruder or Hull might wish to consider investigating Jews of the African diaspora, including the perception of their romances with other Jewish diasporics. If so, they may begin by interviewing Mom: telephone number upon request.

William F.S. Miles, *Northeastern University*

**Maathai, Wangari. *The Challenge for Africa*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 2009.**

*The Challenge for Africa* offers a simple mantra: African solutions for African problems. Although she skillfully asserts that the continent's troubles are not just rooted in Africa only, early on, she challenges Africans not to "blindly" follow the "prescriptions of others, [but]... to think and act for themselves and learn from their mistakes"--it is this challenge that permeates the book. Maathai takes the reader on a journey across the African continent, beginning on a steep slope outside of Yaoundé, through her native Kenya, to the Congo Basin rainforest. Along this journey, the reader meets a wide variety of Africans--farmers, leaders, women's groups, and even a state rugby team. It is through this personalization of the African continent that Maathai presents her argument and leads us to her conclusion that while Africa's problems are very much solvable, it is only through the leadership and accountability of Africans that this will lead to fruition.

*The Challenge for Africa* consists of five sections:. The first provides the contextual background of the challenges facing Africa today as viewed through its cultural and historical lenses. Next offered is the economic, political, and international contexts of the challenges. The third section looks at leadership and good governance throughout African society;. The fourth evaluates the connection between ethnic identity and the African nation-state. The final section brings to the forefront Maathai's position that it is the African environment that is key to solving its developmental challenges. Her final chapter is a personal communiqué of the challenges facing the African individual and family, both at home and abroad. Within these sections, the topics range from unfair domestic and international trade practices, cultural dilemmas, and the national calamities caused between identity with a nation-state and one's tribal "micro-nation," and problems produced by land ownership issues in Africa.

Maathai is a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; former Kenyan MP; former Assistant Minister for Environment, Natural Resources and Wildlife; and founder of the Green Belt Movement.

Although the green-centric perspective of her examination of Africa's problems is evident, she does so with a sincerity and empathy that is rare in partisan literature. Her credibility is beyond reproach and she takes a no nonsense attitude with her readers as she knowingly offers her prescriptions for Africa's woes--notwithstanding her initial forewarning that Africans should think and act for themselves. For example, in Chapter 7, "Moving the Social Machine," Maathai describes the dire circumstances of Kenyan macadamia nut farmers within her constituency. With the farmers caught in a Catch-22 situation—trying to grow (and protect) a crop whose market value drove neighbors to steal the nuts and eventually the trees themselves, directly off the farmers' property—Maathai fervidly declares the whole situation a "form of corruption." As a mother would reprimand her children, she faults Africans themselves for "exposing their own greed and selfishness," which she then acknowledges is the cause of their own problems. Contrary to the prevalent argument that Africa's problems are rooted in the legacies of colonialism, Maathai puts forward that after four decades since independence, it is the African leaders that are to be held accountable for the inadequacies found in African states. And while military options appear to be the "fix of choice" for many African leaders, she rebukes this notion. In fact, as simple as the suggestion may sound, she proposes that an open exchange of ideas and opinions between those leaders and their constituents, as well as the equitable sharing of power and resources, will produce the peace that all Africans have desired since leaving the clutches of their colonial overseers. She goes on to offer a view that again runs contrary to conventional wisdom. Maathai proposes that the still-intact colonial state borders are not necessarily the impetus of Africa's problems. She suggests that the de-emphasis on local, tribal "micro-nation" languages is a greater hindrance to African education and development.

As passionate and exact as the author is, the reader will come away from the book slightly askew as to whether Maathai has realistically presented a cure for Africa's woes. Without a doubt her personal examples are poignant and compelling, but due to the wide range of issues presented (governance, aid/dependency, leadership, social/cultural issues, national identity, land ownership, the environment, and development), at times the book overwhelms the reader with recommendations and solutions. Nevertheless, in her view, one African "natural resource [that] often goes underappreciated" are Africans themselves. This perceptive and heartfelt book is an expression of Maathai's desire to see the African family and all its culture and traditions flourish on the international stage; as it did so many years ago.

Eric M. Moody, *U.S. Air Force Academy*

**David Maxwell.** *African Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecostalism and the Rise of a Zimbabwean Transnational Religious Movement.* Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2006.

David Maxwell's multifaceted study of the Pentecostal sect Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) complements a growing academic literature on the origins and spread of the global Pentecostal movement. Despite its self-professed mission to return to the original roots of Christianity, Pentecostalism is a quintessentially modern faith heavily dependent on mass media, migration, modern bureaucracy, and networks of conferences, Bible institutes,

missionary activities, and student outreach, bolstered by funding from the American-based Born-Again movement. Maxwell's book proceeds chronologically, following Pentecostalism's American origins in the early twentieth century through the transplantation of the movement to apartheid South Africa and then to Southern Rhodesia. This approach allows comparison of the development of Pentecostalism among the three countries during periods of rapid urbanization and capitalist development. The comparative methodology allows Maxwell to account for differences in socioeconomic and racial environment and political relations with the state. The Southern Rhodesian movement, for instance, was dominated by black African elite rather than by white missionaries to a far greater extent than the South African movement, and consequently developed a more hostile relationship with the Southern Rhodesian government.

At times, the book is as detailed as to the Pentecostal belief structure and moral code that the study nearly becomes a work of theology. Here again, Maxwell's comparative methodology is helpful: he draws sharp boundaries among Pentecostal sects and between Pentecostalism and other Born-Again and Evangelical faiths—boundaries that are extremely important to adherents themselves. The Pentecostal worldview is composed of boundaries. Defining characteristics include personal salvation through a born-again conversion experience; a belief in miraculous signs and the infallibility of the Bible; and a belief in adventism, or the imminent return of Christ. The baptismal experience is the clearest of boundaries, separating one's old life from the new. Pentecostals also possess the "Gifts of the Spirit": divine healing, glossolalia (speaking in tongues), exorcism, and prophecy. The Zimbabwean strand of Pentecostalism is unique in its aggressive proselytism and its radical intolerance toward aspects of local culture, including ancestor veneration, superstition, and traditional religious practices.

In addition, the book is a work of sociology, depicting the rise of a religious sect that exhibits the same racial, ethnic, and clan tensions of the surrounding society. The movement arose in a "cauldron of poverty, social upheaval, and political unrest" (p. 66). In South Africa, the United States, and later Rhodesia, the Pentecostal movement became racially segregated as it matured, although it tended to grow fastest among women, youth, the politically disempowered, and other groups seeking social mobility without regard to race. As in South Africa, the movement's spread in Rhodesia was closely tied to the restricted freedom of movement between rural and urban areas and migrant labor communities. ZAOGA is often perceived to be culturally Shona, and even outside Zimbabwe worship is punctuated with Shona language and reference to Harare, the "Zimbabwean Jerusalem" (p. 177). ZAOGA has gone global as the Zimbabwean diaspora has grown. Conservative Pentecostalism allied itself with capitalist development in Southern Africa, preaching a lifestyle that encouraged self-reliance, marriage, and the nuclear family and discouraged drinking alcohol, excessive leisure activities, costly traditional rituals, and extended family networks. Just as the rise of Pentecostalism was rapid precisely because it complemented early capitalist growth, so too is the sect's current spread complementary with conditions in a deteriorating Zimbabwe. Many of the faith's religious tenets work as survival strategies in an economically ravaged environment. The closely-knit social and professional networks encourage remittances, devotion among migrants and expatriates, and a ready source of business contacts and clients.

Finally, Maxwell's book is a work of political science. While Maxwell does not directly say so, the charismatic, authoritarian nature of ZAOGA and its leader Ezekiel Guti begin to mirror

political characteristics of Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. Just as both Guti and Mugabe take on almost Christ-like qualities among their devout disciples, so too do the boundaries between faith and state begin to blur. Both have crises of transparency and accountability; both constrain free expression; and both have a very conservative sexual and family ethos that condemns deviation. Pentecostalism, like a revolutionary, neo-Marxist polity, is more iconoclastic than rule abiding, not content with the status quo, and somewhat unstable. In both Pentecostalism and the Zimbabwean state, charisma has waned over time in favor of a more predictable, structured bureaucracy. This comparison is ironic. Pentecostals have often been aloof from government, whether Rhodesian or Zimbabwean, and have endured hostility or indifference from the state for most of the movement's history. While they emphasized black autonomy, they also emphasized respect for authority, and thus were only partial allies of the nationalist movement. In the modern era, as Mugabe's legitimacy as ruler has unraveled, Pentecostals have become a source of strong political opposition to the ZANU-PF government. Economic devastation threatens their social mobility; violent political confrontation threatens their security.

At times, Maxwell's study nearly lapses into palace politics. The history of such a multifaceted religious sect, especially one in which charismatic leadership is so formative, inevitably lends itself to schism, petty doctrinal disputes, personal rivalries, turf wars, and internal patronage politics. Not all of these changes of power or attempted coups are relevant for ordinary believers, however, and the book tends to slow down at times where Maxwell chronicles the rapid introduction or departure of characters. Their presence in such a complete historical work is probably necessary, and Maxwell stresses the important role leadership plays in the sect. Later chapters more explicitly relate the leadership cult to the lives of ordinary believers. One of the best features of Maxwell's book is his awareness of the study's limitations. The importance of ZAOGA's rise must not be exaggerated, he writes in his conclusion (p. 220). Political "noise" should not be confused with influence, and Catholic, Anglican, and Methodist religious hierarchies have more political clout because they have vast mission infrastructures and direct access to government ministers. In his study of the "Guti cult" within ZAOGA, Maxwell notes "the danger in devoting too much attention to ZAOGA's leader," as the purpose of the study was to deconstruct the church's official narratives and highlight the agency of others in the movement's formation. "Nevertheless, by the mid-1990s Guti and the movement appeared synonymous" (p. 138). He is able to concede Guti's importance while critiquing the hagiography around the leader. He avoids other potential pitfalls as well. His description of Pentecostalism as "adaptive" rather than "escapist" helps to recognize the agency of the movement's members in uncertain times (p. 223). Followers are not withdrawing from the world; they actively seek to change it.

The book is an important contribution to the growing literature on Pentecostalism, which often underemphasizes the importance of developing world strains. ZAOGA has essentially sent "reverse missionaries" to the developed world, and now boasts congregations in the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, and elsewhere, challenging the North-South missionary paradigm. The book also helps to place evangelical and Born-Again faiths in the study of African Christianity, which has often focused solely on the old colonial-era missionary denominations. The book complements another recent work by Matthew Engelke,

*A Problem of Presence: Beyond Scripture in an African Church* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), which describes the development of a charismatic Christian independent movement, the Friday Masowe Apostolics. But Engelke is studying a specifically Zimbabwean sect; Maxwell's analysis is more complex as he has the advantage of comparison across national and generational lines that help to identify without overstating the unique contribution of ZAOGA. The book is strongly sourced and combines archival research spanning three continents, official ZAOGA publications, over a hundred oral interviews, and a nearly exhaustive list of academic sources on religion in Africa.

Andrew Novak, *U.S. Department of Labor*

**Mary- Alice Waters and Martin Koppel. *Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa: Reports from Equatorial Guinea*. New York: Pathfinder Press, 2009.**

Excluding an Introduction and a "Reporter's notebook," this book is a collection of six reports by the above authors and a speech by a diplomat (the Cuban ambassador to Equatorial Guinea). The authors are editors of two left-wing magazines, *New International* (Waters) and *Militant* (Koppel). Waters is also the founder of Pathfinder, a left-wing publishing company; Koppel is the Spanish language editor of the company. Both are supporters of the Cuban revolution. The reports are based on the authors' findings in two trips to Equatorial Guinea in 2005 and 2008 and were originally published in *Militant*.

As Mary-Alice Waters wrote in the Introduction, this book is "a spotlight [on] the transformation of the instruments of production and the new class relations emerging today in Equatorial Guinea." The book focuses on the period from the mid-1990s, when oil and gas were discovered in commercial quantity in the continental shelf bordering the two main parts of the country—the continental region (Mbini) and the island of Bioko. But it begins with a brief historical background. This country, they report, was a Spanish colony, and Spain's main activity in the colony was plantation farming. Spain did not bother to develop the country socially and in physical terms. The country became independent in 1968 but was misruled under its first president (Macias Nguema). In 1979, it was rescued by its current leadership, which is headed by Obiang Nguema. Until oil and gas were discovered, it was one of Africa's least developed countries—a country of peasant farmers, illiterate, without modern infrastructure, without industry, and without skilled workers. There are about five ethnic groups in the country. One, the Fang, is predominant. Ethnicity is a politically salient factor in the country's affairs.

Since the discovery of oil, the authors continue, much has changed in the country. Foreign, mainly United States, oil companies were licensed to produce the oil. The wealth from oil is being used to develop massively infrastructure and establish educational and health facilities. It has also attracted large numbers of foreign experts, workers, and business people. Rather grudgingly, the authors acknowledge that the changes wrought by oil have raised the standard of living of the general population and given them hope of a prosperous future. They further

report, however, that activities in the oil industry have widened class differences and established new forms of domination. Concerning class differences, the authors often draw attention to contrasts between the neighborhoods and standards of living of staff of foreign oil and construction companies, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, those of the majority of the citizens of the country, as well as artisans and traders from other countries. They blame such differences on capitalism. But they express the hope that, as the activities of capitalist companies increase the number of the world's proletariat, Equatorial Guinea's workers will help to bring about a global socialist revolution.

Aside from the activities of oil companies, the authors report extensively on the activities of Cuban health workers in Equatorial Guinea. Under an agreement with Cuba, about 160 Cuban health workers serve in Equatorial Guinea's hospitals and train its doctors in the country's newly established university as well as in Cuba. The Cubans are paid just a living wage. The authors report that, unlike the oil workers, the Cubans live amidst those they work for, and are not distinguished from them on the basis of wealth. Cuba, they stress, is not in this country to exploit the country, but to help its people develop their capacity to be self-reliant.

We conclude by stating that this is not an academic study. It belongs to the category of books that would be classified as journalism. It is needful to add, though, that it is good journalism. It provides reliable basic information about contemporary Equatorial Guinea, information that would be of much value to any reader who is not familiar with the country. However, many readers that are not left-inclined would find many of the comments of the authors—comments that downplay the contributions of capitalist firms and exaggerate those of socialist Cuba—rather disquieting.

Okechukwu Edward Okeke, *Abia State University, Nigeria.*

**Fred Morton, Jeff Ramsay, and Part Themba Mgadla. *Historical Dictionary of Botswana*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. 2008.**

The revised and greatly expanded fourth edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Botswana* is a near encyclopedic desktop reference volume. Nearly 50 percent larger than the third, 1996, edition, each part of the fourth edition (a fourteen page chronology, twenty-two page introductory survey of historical and contemporary political and institutional evolution, three hundred and forty-three page dictionary, ninety page bibliography and three new appendices portraying election outcomes, population figures and indigenous languages) has been reworked and expanded. The three hundred pages of entries in the dictionary itself, including ninety pages of new and revised entries, not only allows for a quick reference on key people and their impact on historical and contemporary political and economic change but also a reference on the history of and change in key economic, social, and political dimensions of society such as "education" and the "economy." A carefully researched and well-organized ninety-page bibliography is a comprehensive list for the general reader and a place of first resort for specialists in a wide range of disciplines.

Each of the authors is an established and well-known historian of Botswana having published important work on specialized eras and topics in the history of Botswana. Collectively, Fred Morton, Jeff Ramsay, and Part Themba Mgadla bring to the dictionary a background of extraordinary breadth and depth. In their acknowledgements, the authors recognize the contributions of Andrew Murray and Barry Morton, also historians, to previous editions of the Dictionary. This collection of expertise accounts for the comprehensive coverage and quality of the dictionary as well as the usefulness of its bibliography.

The fourth edition of the Historical Dictionary of Botswana is a valuable reference tool that should be part of any library, personal or institutional, that includes a section on Southern Africa in general and Botswana in particular.

Jack Parson, *The College of Charleston*

**Brigid Sackey. *New Directions in Gender and Religion: The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 2006.**

The flourishing growth of Charismatic and Pentecostal churches in sub-Saharan Africa has engendered an extensive literature by academic scholars in Africa, Europe, and North America. Just as decolonization in the 1960s inspired researchers to examine African Independent Churches instead of focusing their attention on mission-based denominations, the wide range of work on African Charismatic and Pentecostal Christianity has tended to ignore older churches established by Africans in the colonial period. Furthermore, the new literature on recent developments in African Christianity has often assumed that North American and European models of gender have been accepted by many African churches. Brigid Sackey, a researcher who has studied churches established by Africans since the late 1970s, has written a thought-provoking study that includes both older African churches (that she refers to as Spiritual) and new churches that resemble Charismatic and Pentecostal churches elsewhere in Africa (labeled as Charismatic by the author).

Sackey places African Spiritual and Charismatic churches in a Ghanaian religious and social context. She uses her three decades of fieldwork and her knowledge of the literature on gender and spirituality in Ghana and Africa to support and frame her presentation. Indigenous religious traditions clearly outside of Christianity have long offered women opportunities to act as leaders as healers and priestesses. Many deities in different parts of Ghana are not clearly associated with a particular gender. Many Akan-speaking communities in southern Ghana furnish married women rights to their own property and respect relative equality between husbands and wives in daily household decisions. While the author does not romanticize pre-colonial Ghanaian society, it is clear that long-standing understandings of gender help explain how many women have taken roles of formal and informal leadership within their religious communities. As early as 1914, Grace Tani formed the Church of the Twelve Apostles after having worked with the famous Liberian preacher William Wade Harris. Tani, a former priestess of the river deity Nano Tano, inherited both Harris' mission to destroy evil

supernatural forces and his accoutrements of a white robe, a calabash, and a bamboo cross. Female preachers and healers run many Church of the Twelve Apostles congregations, where they hold healing ceremonies for infertile women that combine ethno-botanical knowledge and Tani's teachings. Tani's important work as a trailblazer in African Spiritual churches has been neglected by researchers, in part because literate men in her church eventually gained formal control over the movement. Tani's lack of Western education proved to be a serious challenge.

In the Pentecostal churches originally established by African and European missionaries in the early twentieth century, women were expected not to take a formal leadership position. However, Sackey convincingly notes how women did both coordinate the daily activities Pentecostal communities and eventually formed their own church organizations by the 1950s and 1960s. One of the strongest chapters in the book gives a selection of short life histories of female church leaders in the late twentieth century from a wide range of denominations. Most of the women shared a dramatic encounter with the divine, even as their experiences were differentiated by class, levels of education, family influences, and theological viewpoints. Interestingly, models of patriarchy supported by North American and European Charismatic and Pentecostal churches have often been reshaped to fit ideals of mutually supportive nuclear families in which married clergy share most aspects of church leadership with one another.

This book offers two separate chapters on women, African Independent Churches, and healing. Again, the author's decision to cover both older Spiritual and newer Charismatic churches allows one to contrast and compare the varied understandings of spiritual illnesses and healing ceremonies. By discussing the financial costs and motivations of individuals seeking healing, Sackey offers insights on how and why Ghanaians select different churches, indigenous healers, and Western medical facilities. One wishes at times that Sackey engaged the broader literature on health and healing in Africa more often, since she remains linked to empiricist approaches and does not seek to make arguments aimed at a wide audience. Also, she could have referenced the rich body of work on Ghanaian societies by historians and anthropologists to contextualize her findings. On the other hand, this book is extremely easy to follow—something that cannot be said of many recent works on healing and Christianity.

This book would be very effective for undergraduates in courses on contemporary religion, African studies, and anthropology. Sackey eschews academic jargon, in marked contrast to many studies that explore African Independent Churches in contemporary Africa. While some might contend the author diluted her analysis as a result, the organization and clear prose of this book lends itself far better to the classroom than works that drew heavily from dense analytical approaches such as Ruth Marshall. Paul Gifford's extensive literature on Christianity in Ghana does not offer much on gender, so this work would compliment his work well if they were assigned together in a class. The author does not assume the reader has any prior knowledge of African Christianity, although instructors would probably need to provide some general background on Ghana's history and religious culture to effectively use this book. It is most unfortunate that there is only a hard-cover edition available at present, since Sackey's study deserves a large audience and is well suited for college students. Overall, this is a solid study.

Jeremy Rich, *Middle Tennessee State University*

**Timothy Longman. *Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.**

Many specialists on Central Africa have long anticipated Timothy Longman's study of how and why Christian institutions helped prepare the way for the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Few other researchers have his background. In 1992 and 1993, he conducted research on the relationship between various churches and the Rwandan state in the midst of the ongoing civil war between the Rwandan Patriotic Front and the supporters of longtime strongman Juvenal Habyarimana. He left the country less than a year before the genocide, and then returned in 1995 and 1996. Thanks to these experiences, Longman has an unparalleled knowledge of Christianity in Rwanda. *Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda* was worth the wait.

The question of how churches participated in the Rwandan genocide has been asked repeatedly, especially since the vast majority of Rwandans belong to a Catholic or Protestant church. Longman deftly dismantles those who claim individuals bear entirely responsibility for the killings, rather than churches, or those who argue churches were too divided internally on ethnic and political lines to challenge the ethos and actions of advocates of mass murder. His arguments engage with the broad global literature on Christianity and genocide. Many observers have delineated how Catholic missionaries in the colonial era shaped ethnic identity by promoting the idea that Hutu and Tutsi people constituted two separate racial groups, and that they thus hold some responsibility for genocidal attacks on Tutsi communities in 1973 and 1994. While Longman certainly acknowledges the close connection between conceptions of ethnicity and missionaries, his study centers itself on the relationship between colonial and post-colonial political authorities and church institutions.

From the initial nominal occupation of the Rwandan kingdom by German officers at the turn of the twentieth century onward, Christian clergy have formed close relationships with African and European political leaders and actively participated in shaping ethnic political movements. Longman is careful to note that not all missionaries or African Christians always supported the goal of consolidating state authority over the poor farmers that make up the majority of the country's population. Churches were and remain arenas of social conflict, especially since these institutions have acted as sources of patronage and solidarity that bring together wealthy and impoverished Rwandans. Catholic and many Protestant leaders, however, continued to seek out state patronage throughout the twentieth century, despite changing attitudes towards ethnicity and changes in governments. For example, the new generation of younger European Catholic missionaries in the 1950s and 1960s might have considered Hutu people as an exploited underclass instead of a mass of inferior primitives in need of Tutsi tutelage. Although they inverted older ethnic stereotypes, these missionaries still engaged in promoting sharp divisions between Hutu and Tutsi people and promoted Rwandan intellectuals and political leaders who shared their opinions.

This book's innovative approach really comes into its own in its review of church institution's actions in the post-colonial era. Many Catholic and Protestant leaders accommodated themselves to the growth of authoritarian governments in the 1960s, culminating in the seizure of power by Juvenal Habyarimana in 1973. Church and state

institutions competed with one another in their reach and their influence, which made some officials distrust their spiritual counterparts. The growth of Hutu political movements also put the largely Tutsi clergy in Catholic and Protestant churches at a major disadvantage, since they wished to distance themselves from the aspirations of some Tutsi exiles to regain power and the legacy of ethnic discrimination of the colonial period. Church leaders thus did not provide much clear criticism of violence aimed at supposed enemies of various political factions, whether inspired by ethnic tensions or other issues. Habyarimana's determination to make churches and the private sector dependent on his single-party regime generally succeeded in the 1970s and early 1980s. Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian, and Seventh-Day Adventist leaders repeatedly showed their support for the state, even as some critics of the dictatorship could be found in each church. Interestingly given their importance in post-colonial Africa as a rule, Pentecostal churches receive little attention, in part because of their small size in Rwanda prior to the genocide. Since Longman notes how Pentecostal churches remained distant from the state, it would have been interesting to learn more on how they managed to keep relatively independent.

The rise of democratic politics and the sinking fortunes of the Habyarimana regime beginning in the late 1980s left churches in disarray. While Catholic bishops wrote a series of pastoral letters that vaguely critiqued human rights abuses and corruptions in the early 1990s, they did little to specifically address the mobilization of violence by Habyarimana's loose coalition of supporters against Tutsi people and anyone suspected of political disloyalty. Longman denotes how fear of a loss of state patronage made an impact in two different Presbyterian parishes in the early 1990s. In one parish, leaders of church institutions endorsed close ties to the state and later actively promoted attacks on Tutsi people. In the other parish, church members and institutions remained relatively autonomous from Habyarimana's government and proved to be an obstacle to mass killings rather than an important participant in the murder of thousands of people. These case studies expose varied links between Christian development programs and schools, the state, and ethnic violence in an extremely effective way. They offer a rich vein of evidence for the author's theses on the genocide, and they expose how ordinary people often viewed church institutions as dispensers of patronage.

This book should be mandatory reading for anyone seeking to understand the Rwandan genocide, as well as the interaction between Christian churches and governments in Africa. It is written in a very accessible and well-organized way. It would work extremely well in graduate courses on African history, religion, and politics. It would also work in upper-division undergraduate classes. However, instructors teaching undergraduates should be warned that using individual chapters might be more effective than assigning the entire book, since it is so long. One can only hope future studies of the relationship between Christian churches and the state in Africa will equal this book's brilliance.

Jeremy Rich, *Middle Tennessee State University*

**Diana Wylie. *Art and Revolution: The Life and Death of Thami Mnyele South African Artist.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008.**

Art and Revolution expresses the life history of Thami Mnyele in written and picturesque form and offers a window into the lives lived by exiled South African freedom fighters, their daily struggles, and the choices they had to make to achieve freedom. Mnyele's story shows how the causes and consequences of political commitment vary and presents an interesting perspective toward understanding social movements through private lives. By using a variety of sources: diaries, letters, military files, newsletters, photographs, magazine articles, and oral interviews, Wylie explores Mnyele's childhood years, his artistic works, and how he evolved into a military and social combatant.

Mnyele grew up in a world conditioned by apartheid's racial categorization, violence, and deprivation, but this part of his life was also a time when resistance and protest were gathering storm across the country. One such resistance was to Bantu education. Though Mnyele did not become enmeshed in everyday violence perpetuated by apartheid, he developed a sense of pride and supported the struggle of Africans. During this time, Mnyele was armed only with a dream of becoming an artist until a photo journalist introduced him to a writer, Wally, who would become a good friend. With Wally's help, Mnyele developed a talent to express his emotional life through painting in a time when Black artists were excluded from public view.

In 1972 Mnyele's work was exhibited at Gallery 101 in Johannesburg. The apartheid government had not bothered to ban painters, but works by black artists were absent from galleries and museums (p. 41). Exhibition at Gallery 101 enhanced Mnyele's popularity and he began to gain some recognition as an artist. Unmistakably, Mnyele took to Black Consciousness as a way of building confidence. "We tell people to stop moaning and wake up and start doing something for their valuable black lives" (p. 50). As a youth, Mnyele grew up painting, writing, and acting as well as taking part in useful discussions or what he calls the "feelings of purpose and practical fulfillment," (p.52). As Mnyele matured, he moved away from idealized and illustrative style to experimenting with more abstract figures. Mnyele's new style captured the pervasive mood of heightened hope and fear. In 1979, this anxiety inspired his self-imposed exile to Botswana.

The new arts community in Gaborone functioned as his conduit for information and also served a place where South African exiles expressed their outrage through songs, poetry, drama, and dance. Mnyele joined the African National Congress (ANC) soon after his arrival in Botswana, and through his art he was better able to articulate the relationship between his craft and his ideology. At the same time, Mnyele joined an artist organization (Medu) on the premise that black South Africans needed strong, even heroic, images in order to imagine another possible reality. Graphic arts are one of the ways to reach those who cannot read and write. Medu artists painted posters, produced newsletters, and educated readers about radical ideas on race and African liberation. After military and political instruction from Angola, Mnyele became instrumental in the struggle to recruit and train new comrades, whilst the style and content of his art began to depict militancy typical of grassroots movements. This popular

insurrection met with increasing military operations and infiltrations into the ranks of opposition by the South African government, which resulted in Mnye's death in 1985.

Wylie's appraisal of Mnye's life not only exposes the tensions within the opposition to the apartheid regime such as disagreements between the ANC and Pan-African National Congress (PAC) but also embodies two paradoxes: he was a "gentleman" endorsing war and he championed the community despite the violence he experienced within it (p.167).

A major contribution of this timely book is the author's ability to weave the written words with visual images to capture Mnye's life. Nonetheless, the book lacks a deep analysis of Mnye's paintings. Each painting can be a window through which the reader - especially those who do not have artistic training - can visualize not only the social and political history of South Africa but Mnye's personal economic and financial struggles. For instance, what types of paints, canvases, and brushes did Mnye use? What do these tell us about Mnye's patrons or the relationship between the blacks and whites? More importantly, how did Mnye's paintings contribute to his death at the hands of the South African army? I also think that if the author let the paintings speak, they can permit the reader a more visual understanding of apartheid's brutal past—to see the life lived by Mnye and those of anti-apartheid activists and South Africans who lived in exile.

In spite of these comments, Diana Wylie's book is beautifully written and rich in content. *Art and Revolution* is an important book that chronicles the history of anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and makes a valuable contribution to the historiography of biographies using iconography.

Bala S.K. Saho, *Michigan State University*

**Lisa Ann Richey. *Population Politics and Development: From the Policies to the Clinics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.**

Over the past fifty years, as more countries undergo a demographic transition, family planning policies have changed drastically. Lisa Ann Richey's book, *Population Politics and Development: From the Policies to the Clinics* is an in-depth look at how population policies and family planning have evolved in Tanzania. Lisa Ann Richey has a PhD in political science and is Associate Professor of Development Studies at Roskilde University in Denmark. Although Richey has published several articles on reproductive health policy, this is her first book. Based on research in Tanzania, *Population Politics and Development* is organized into seven chapters, with four "intermezzos" or short narratives between some of the chapters, which progress from the history and policies surrounding family planning to her own research on family planning practices in Tanzania. The book's goals are twofold. First, it aims to illustrate that reproductive health decisions are not necessarily founded in individual choice but rather as part of a greater complex global economy. The second goal is to examine global population discourse through the lens of Tanzania, illustrating that the top-down approach of family planning policies often fail to capture the needs of a community and polarizes the "modern" and the "traditional."

The first four chapters analyze the evolution of population policy in Africa and highlight the role of international politics and donors while tracing the development of Tanzania's National Population Policy. Richey analyzes key government documents, interviews, and participant observation at policy meetings during her time in Tanzania to present this history and development. The first chapter introduces global population discourse and provides a brief synopsis of the chapters. In the second chapter, Richey begins with the introduction of family planning services in Tanzania in 1959 and outlines the policy development through the creation of a National Population Policy in 1992. In the third chapter, Richey focuses on the role of a local NGO, UMATI, in implementation of the National Population Policy to illustrate gaps between policy and implementation at local levels. Her analysis of key documents to formulate the policy theory is effective, but the intermittent addition of her observations from meetings tends to make the argument seem more personal. The fourth chapter shows women's reproductive needs are lost when translating global population policy to a donor-funded intervention, especially when allowing men to shape the project towards their own needs.

The last three chapters present Richey's research findings on perceptions of "modern" and "traditional" contraceptive methods and how Tanzanian women and their partners respond to family planning messages. For these sections, she collected data through questionnaires and interviews during original research studies in the Morogoro, Kilimanjaro, and Ruvuma Regions of Tanzania. The fifth and sixth chapters focus on whether women utilize "traditional" or "modern" contraceptive methods, how these methods are not necessarily dichotomous, and how women and men respond to the family planning messages they are receiving. Richey conducted one three-region study in Tanzania where she interviewed samples of women who were not currently utilizing a family planning method. She followed the study with one in which she interviewed 250 randomly selected married households to analyze fertility decision making between married couples in the Kilimanjaro Region. The conclusion further explores the local meanings of reproduction in Tanzania to show that a homogenous solution to family planning cannot always be applied to a local setting. Family planning is context specific as reproductive health in Tanzania is largely associated with the ability to bear healthy children, and not necessarily, to prevent pregnancy.

The strengths lie in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters where Richey presents her own research. The work is captivating, as there is a lot to be gained from the author's use of primary sources and women's experiences described in their own words. Richey shows that despite what the global community assumes, traditional and modern contraceptive methods are much more intertwined with women oscillating between the two. She also illustrates that in Tanzania, for both women and men, reproductive health is strongly associated with the ability to bear healthy children. Reproductive methods are utilized for child spacing, which is not necessarily a component of the global family planning message. Richey's Tanzania example shows that family planning is not merely the use of pills or injections; instead, it is a decision for a woman, her partner, the family, and the greater community. The Tanzanian communities have adapted the family planning message to their own culture and needs.

Although, the last three chapters present powerful research and dialogues, there are a few limitations. The first few chapters employ a conceptual or theoretical framework that is slightly overwhelming. These chapters are heavily laden with language associated with policy and

development, which might appeal to policy students or researchers in those fields. The “intermezzos” present anecdotal evidence, which gives the work depth in capturing the cultural specifics of family planning in Tanzania; some readers, however, might find these stories distracting from the flow of the main argument. In addition, although Richey does a great job of outlining her argument through the book, at times, points are redundant and overemphasized. Nevertheless, this does allow for continuous awareness of the argument at hand.

Overall, Richey’s book is an important contribution to the literature on global economics of reproductive health. The book accomplishes her goal of showing how the global population discourse employs itself at the local level. The greater significance is less likely to be in the book’s theoretical conclusions and more so in the original research regarding family planning practices in the local Tanzanian communities. Population Politics and Development can appeal to both those who are unfamiliar with global family planning policies and specialists in the field. Due to the focus on development, those involved in policy, government, public health, and gender and women’s studies might find this book of particular interest. Richey presents a great overview of the complexities of global population policies and provides population policy specialists with a case study that captures the nuances of family planning in Tanzania.

Goleen Samari, *University of California*

**Sylviane A. Diouf. *Dreams of Africa: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.**

Sylviane A. Diouf’s account of the remarkable lives of the last known group of slaves brought to North America adds greatly to our understanding of slavery and its African origins. Smuggled into Mobile, Alabama in 1860, they later founded Africatown, a community organized around African social and cultural traditions. It was the first town established, and ruled, by blacks and black landowners in the United States. While *Dreams of Africa* advances scholarship of the post-1808 illegal slave trade,<sup>2</sup> its main intention is to detail the story of the deportees from their African lives to their capture and passage, and to the creation of Africatown. Diouf frames the account from the perspective of the *Clotilda* shipmates (who she elsewhere refers to as “deportees” or “Africans”), and the result is a rich, provocative, and fresh excavation of the matrix of African traditions in American society.

The work exhibits an ethnographic passion that reflects the research found in Zora Neale Hurston’s manuscripts on Africatown,<sup>3</sup> on which Diouf relies and corrects. The author draws

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<sup>2</sup> Diouf reviews the debates surrounding the quantity of African slaves illegally brought to North America after 1808 in an appendix. The mid-century slave trade was driven in part by demand from plantation owners in Cuba. For further discussion, see Karen Fisher Younger, “Liberia and the Last Slave Ships,” *Civil War History* 54, No. 4 (2008), pp. 424-42; and Joseph C. Miller, “Introduction: Atlantic Ambiguities of British and American Abolition,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Series, 66, No. 4 (2009), pp. 677-704.

<sup>3</sup> Hurston, an Alabama native and student of Franz Boas, first wrote about Africatown in a 1927 article based on Emma Langdon Roche’s 1914 book *Historic Sketches of the Old South*. Hurston returned to conduct research in Africatown in 1928. The last draft of her manuscript, titled *Barracoon*, was completed in 1931. See Genevieve

on her background in African Diaspora scholarship,<sup>4</sup> and employs a variety of original sources, including interviews, publications of the era, and archival records.

Initial chapters address the context of West African community, the mid-century slave trade, and the capture and passage of the deportees. Their origins and lives--primarily Yoruba, Muslim and non-Muslim, farmers and fishermen, mostly town people, equally divided between men, women, boys, and girls--is densely evoked. Plantation and mill-owners Timothy and James Meaher--brothers and Yankee transplants who commissioned the *Clotilda* and instigated the smuggling venture<sup>5</sup>--expected their actions to go unpunished, as in 1858 when the slaver *Wanderer* openly landed 170 slaves in Georgia.<sup>6</sup> The Meahers retained ownership of the largest number of *Clotilda* Africans, while at least seventy others were sold to work in fields and on steamboats.

Chapters on slavery and freedom highlight differences between the Africans and American-born slaves. Diouf argues that social and cultural practices set them apart, and reinforced unity among the shipmates. After the Civil War the shipmates in the Mobile area reunited, leaving former owners to "go back to their own family." (p. 127) Too poor to return to Africa, the men instead found wage labor in Mobile, the women turned to produce farming--"a third life" after Africa and slavery (p. 131).

The shipmates came to formalize their community following tradition, the one nobleman among them became leader, and two older men were appointed judges. In 1870 and 1872, they purchased several remote acres near Mobile with funds pooled by the community. The deeds recorded the names of husbands and wives separately, indicating that African women "were equal partners in the purchase" (p. 154). Following Yoruba tradition of unclaimed land, parcels were apportioned to each family, and house building respected cooperative custom. Deliberately separate from surrounding society, and cut off from elders or any immigration from Africa, Africatown became "an act of self-segregating," an exercise in "self-affirmation that reflected its founders' attachment to their cultures and modes of living" (p. 157).

The maturing Africatown remained separate, though in 1868 after the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment several Africatown residents became citizens, and many became Baptists. Diouf suggests that this was partially a result of segregation and the depopulation of Mobile proper by the black community, but also credits passive and active accommodations to

Sexton, "The Last Witness: Testimony and Desire in Zora Neale Hurston's "Barracoon", *Discourse*, 25, Nos. 1 & 2, (2003), pp. 189-210. <http://muse.jhu.edu.flagship.luc.edu/journals/discourse/v025/25.1sexton.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Diouf is also the author of *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas*, (New York: New York University Press, 1998); and is the editor of *Fighting the Slave Trade: West African Strategies*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> The Meaher family archives were not made available: "The Meaher family, still rich and powerful, has interests in banking, law, and real estate," while "[t]he family has been quite discreet about the brothers' story." Diouf, 237. Meaher State Park, in the Mobile Bay wetlands, includes 1,327 acres of land donated by the family. It is adjacent to Spanish Fort, which fell to union forces on April 8, 1865, one day before Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

<sup>6</sup> Younger, "Liberia and the Last Slave Ships," p. 432. A sympathetic Southern judiciary refused to convict those backing the *Wanderer* venture. The ship was mentioned in an 1860 report to Congress from President James Buchanan regarding U.S. efforts to halt the illegal slave trade. Prior to the publication of *Dreams of Africa*, the *Wanderer* was considered the last known slaver brought to North America.

societal pressures. A church was followed by an elementary school and, as Jim Crow gathered steam, a high school. The town leader died in 1902, and by 1912 only nine shipmates remained alive. By the 1920s, the original organizing structure had withered. The last remaining *Clotilda* African died in 1935.

The book is an excellent source for advanced undergraduates and beyond, as Diouf is adept at locating Africatown's development in relation to the dissolution of Reconstruction and the re-segregation of the South. Lack of evidence makes it difficult for her to distinguish between differing African traditions that may have been part of the shipmates' identities. Diouf instead points to a more general notion of African "culture" that proves frustrating in its lack of specificity but is nevertheless effective in distinguishing Africatown ways of life from African American and White postbellum society.

Another unanswered problem is the deportees' strong desire to retain and re-impose tradition. The reader is left to assume that the lack of interconnection with slave society preserved portions of their pre-capture identities. But Diouf does not consider why other options were not followed, such as integrating more closely with African American communities. Indeed, if the *Clotilda* shipmates successfully maintained their own subculture, Diouf's study raises the question of how to comprehend other nineteenth century African Diaspora communities.

Eric A. Schuster, *Harry S. Truman Chicago City College*

**Salah M. Hassan and Carina E. Ray (eds). *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009.**

In 2009, with the generous support of the Netherlands' Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, Cornell University Press published Salah M. Hassan and Carina E. Ray's comprehensive anthology entitled *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader*. The 528-page volume includes a visual essay by photographer Issam A. Abdel Hafiez, a well-crafted introduction by Hassan and Ray, five thematic sections by twenty scholars and activists, and appendices with a timeline and significant primary documents and secondary sources. What is particularly notable about this compendium is that the entries are presented by Sudanese and other continental African scholars who attended the Darfur conference in Addis Ababa in February 2008 (which was hosted by President Andreas Eshete of Addis Ababa University and Director of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies Elizabeth Wolde Giorgis). As much as has been written about the Darfur conflict, the *Reader* critiques what has already been discussed in many national and international circles and provides a commentary on the myths, controversies, and legacies.

The audience for this volume can vary widely, because as a whole or in part, graduates or undergraduates in multiple disciplines (history, sociology, environmental studies, economics, and political science) can use it as a text. Moreover, the *Reader* ought to be a staple for anyone, be it activist, policy maker, or scholar interested in this conflict(s) that has received so much attention. A careful reading by the public at large will sharpen the focus on the deeper, more protracted problems and will hopefully discourage Darfur reportage from sensationalizing

often misappropriated targets, such as Arab versus African identities and Christian versus Muslim dogma, and also misunderstood issues, such as ethnic versus so-called “tribal” histories, and war crimes versus genocide distinctions. Although individual articles could be mentioned for special recognition of key historical and political significance, substantive evidentiary reporting, and powerful social criticism, the more important point is that this volume encompasses a range of viewpoints. Although, all conclude that Darfur is indicative of a larger crisis of governance, that the inequities around the center and margin nexus have historical precedents, and that more equitable policies sanctioned by the state must be found. Among the diverse opinions, significance also lays in the overall recognition of the ongoing power of Sudanese civil society.

Of particular interest to an audience wanting to know more about the geographical and historical background of Sudan and Darfur are the details that sections one and two of the text provide about the origin and evolution of the Darfur conflict (s) and its representations. The essays are written by highly capable writers: Khalid, El-Battahani, Yongo-Bure, El-Tom, Ali-Dinar, de Waal, Mamdani and Hassan. Importantly, to impress upon readers the variety in analyses, Carina E. Ray investigates over 1500 articles between 2004 and 2007 published in the English-language African press and points out the differences in reporting “within and between Africa” and Europe and the US. In the following sections, three through five, that address violence based on gender orientation, legal prosecutorial crimes, and civil society’s power, the Darfur conflict takes on a larger scale than what can be documented and interpreted by historical, geopolitical, and military perspectives. These latter sections enlarge the scope of Darfur into more social, environmental, and economic aspects of the conflict and describe the cost for residents, who have been maimed: by sexual violence, by legal misrepresentation, by ethnic polarization, and by construction of false labels. Amidst the scholarly attention to theoretical arguments and political and historical issues, the activism by El Tom, Sharif Harir, Manzoul Assal and Eltigani Seisi M Ateem (p. 156), the brief migration biography of Cecilia Joseph Wani (pp. 207-08), and the rape report of a Disa woman refugee (234) testify to the tenacity of individuals for whom more humane resolutions in Darfur must be possible.

Perhaps it is an affinity for African artists, who have so long remained unnamed or that the “pornography of violence” or “miserablism” is so easily accessed, that my criticism of the photographs by Sudanese photographer Issam A. Abdel Hafiez must be voiced. Not to detract from his “commitment to bringing a human face to the conflict by showing Darfurians in the full complexity of their lives” (p. 25), it is noteworthy to consider the significance of his visual images if he had named individuals in his photographs. For as all the *Reader’s* authors who are respected scholars and activists are identified by name, the individuals behind the emotion-laden faces in the photographs, if named, could establish a better sense of scale, local life, and personal connection. The photographs do tell their own story, a story that divides the text up into its five sections, but also unifies what the audience reads and sees. The photo essays also provide a visualization of boundaries that divide individuals and demand of viewers that their gaze upon their neighbor(s) receive more honest, caring attention and action.

To conclude, several other criticisms deserve mentioning. First, only two maps in the text are to be found: one on page two and the other on page 74, which lacks quality. Second, the page numbers are difficult to find, as they are placed on the inside of each page and are printed

in very small type. Beyond these minor issues, this critical *Reader* is a necessary addition to any library that purports to have an international audience and any sizeable collection of significant international documents. Finally, it is important to mention that the appendices in part two include a chronology of key events, position papers, parts of *The Black Book*, resolutions by the Security Council and United Nations, and the Warrant of Arrest against Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir. A glossary, comprehensive and also selective bibliography, notes on the contributors, and an index round out this volume.

Sonja R. Darlington , *Beloit College*

**Allula Pankhurst and Francois Piguet (eds). *Moving People in Ethiopia: Development, Displacement, and the State*. Rochester, NY: James Currey, 2009.**

Among one of the first texts to focus on “all the major types of population displacement and resettlement” for an entire country, as Michael Cernea rightly points out in the preface, *Moving People in Ethiopia* is a seminal research effort on this topic worldwide. By scrutinizing Ethiopia’s history in which over 1.2 million people have been displaced in the last 30-35 years in two major state population transfers, the eighteen authors present theoretical arguments, empirical findings, and historical evidence that development-induced displacements require more critical attention to policy considerations and the rights of displacees. Rather than compartmentalize their research by engaging in the divide amidst conflict, disaster and development studies, the unitary approach used to analyze forced displacements allows the case of Ethiopia to be seen as a resource for identifying different forms of displacement--their similarities, differences, gray zones, and morphs. Furthermore, by acknowledging the increasingly significant social impact of displacements, the authors in this volume join the growing international debate on the unacceptable practice of impoverishing people and creating new poverty while striving for development. A major aim of this text is to examine the complex factors contributing to impoverishment risks and to make governments accountable for their role in displacements, which require reform in organizing, financing, and executing resettlement processes. Audiences from policy makers, university graduate and undergraduate students, to interested parties at the regional, national, and international level will find this volume mandatory reading, due to its breadth of issues on forced displacement, in-depth examples of different types of resettlement projects, and theoretical and practical suggestions for future displacement and resettlement attempts for the sake of so-called “development.”

*Moving People in Ethiopia* is separated into six parts. Editors Alula Pankhurst and Francois Piguet provide an overview and contextualization of the history and geography of Ethiopian pastoralists, resettlers, and displacees, and a conclusion suggesting tentatively that migration for the sake of development, while guarding people’s rights and protecting the environment, can be accomplished. In Part II David Thurton and Chris De Wet investigate the theoretical and international perspectives that support a unitary study of forced displacement and reasons why resettlement projects falter.

Thurton addresses serious concerns regarding refugees and forced resettlers, the latter constituting a group who are forced to move for the sake of a nation's interest in development and social control, as in the cases of Tanzania, Ethiopia, and South Africa. Among the objectives of restoring income-generation by resettlers and promoting asylum in foreign countries, Thurton argues that prevention, containment and repatriation ought not overshadow, as it has since the 1980s, the focus on the reconstruction of refugee livelihoods in asylum and the improvement of the human condition. De Wet builds upon the theoretical frame by arguing that resettlement goes awry because an Inadequate Inputs approach taken by the World Bank, in its initiatives and policies, is too optimistic and does not account adequately for complications. De Wet's Inherent Complexity approach asks a series of provoking questions: what are the main characteristics of involuntary resettlement, why are resettlement projects problematic institutional projects, what aspects of the resettlement process are not amenable to rational planning and procedures, and what are the ethical consequences of resettlement strategies.

Following the theoretical framework ensues a well-organized and well-crafted exploration of the practice of development-induced displacements in Part III. Kassahun Kebede begins the case studies with an analysis of Gilgel Gibe Hydro-electric Dam, an Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (ERPFD) government project, which was initially conceived in the Imperial Period. The Gilgel Gibe project is an example of fifty years of various resettlement activities resulting in many economic and social problems, as identified by Cernea's Impoverished Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) framework. The next chapter by Getachew Kassa and Ayalew Gebre addresses the obvious need for policies that consider resource tenure for pastoralists. Their discussion of the Karrayu and the Metehara Sugar Estate and the Afar and the Amibara irrigation agriculture and settler farm schemes illustrate the results when unlawful seizure of land occurs. Melesse Getu examines the issues faced by the Tsamako who, situated in the Rift Valley in the most southern end of Ethiopia in a semi-arid lowland for more than 350 years, are displaced by development and investment policies that favor large scale agribusiness, such as the Birale Agricultural Development Private Limited Company owned by the current government. His examination of the off-farm effects documents the corrosive aspects: small-scale irrigated and flood-retreat cultivation is disbanded; honey production declines due to pesticides; local communities become powerless to limit access to their land and to outsiders felling their trees; more people exploit marginal lands; and violence increases in the Wayto Valley, due to competition for depleting resources. Urban development and the displacement of rural communities near Addis Ababa are the topics of Feleke Tadele's chapter. His fieldwork was conducted at Yeka Taffo Peasant Association, where a private national company cleared the land and removed 172 households from their property, which in turn created unemployment, food insecurity, homelessness, and lack of sustainable livelihoods.

Part IV is organized around state-organized resettlement projects. In chapters by Gebre Yntiso and Wold-Selassie Abbute the focus is on the failures of the Pawe resettlement in the Beles Valley in the Metekel, because of inadequate planning and unpreparedness of the hosts in the region and not taking into account the social disintegration occurs. Pankhurst concludes this resettlement discussion by drawing comparisons between the 2003 and 2007 resettlements and by providing an alternative model for future resettlements, which promotes healthier

linkages for migratory groups between the highlands and lowlands, while also addressing the need for attention to environmental issues and to a joint approach that keeps both the host and settler priorities at the forefront. Finally, Part V is another set of case studies. Lewis Aptekar and Bhailu Abebe consider Eritrean refugees of Ethiopian origin who were traumatized by their displacement and were able to adjust with the help of mental health professionals and the support of their spiritual traditions. Kassahun Berhanu investigates the refugees who returned from the Sudan to the Tigray lowlands. Behailu Abebe elaborates the issues of the internal displaces from Eritrean/Ethiopian war at the border of Zalanbesa by following the stories of individuals in the area. Yisak Tafere describes the gender challenges in Addis Ababa cooperatives from the perspective of young men and women who became adult civilians. In all, the practices described by the specifics in the numerous case studies provided in this text reveal how difficult the illusive goal of resettlement becomes in forced displacements.

Sonja R. Darlington, *Beloit College*

**Jamie Monson. *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.**

Jamie Monson's latest book entitled, *Africa's Freedom Railway*, offers an exciting and thoroughly researched historical view into the origins of modern-day Chinese foreign policy in Africa. Since the People's Republic of China first began its aid projects on the continent, critics have been quick to raise the alarm. During the Cold War, the condemnation was based on the West's fear of China promoting communism under the auspices of foreign aid. Today the censure relates to China's disregard for human rights as it scrambles to acquire access to Africa's resources. After the end of the Cold War and the failure of communism to improve African livelihoods, however, the ideological criticism is outdated or inept at best. In light of this, a growing number of scholars and writers praise China's aid efforts on the continent, including Jamie Monson.

Monson, the former president of the Tanzanian Studies Association, documents the history of the Chinese financed trans-African railway, the Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA), which runs from Dar es Salaam to Kapiri Mposhi. The thesis of the book, as the subtitle states, is to shed light on how this railway has benefitted Tanzanians. Additionally, the author "takes on the challenge of writing about contemporary East Africa in historical perspective," (p. 11). *Africa's Freedom Railway* consists of seven chapters, starting with an overview and three subsequent chapters subsumed within part one. The second part contains the last three chapters, including the conclusion, which is followed by the appendix.

Monson's study draws on a wealth of sources, both oral and written. The author conducted numerous interviews with TAZARA employees and construction workers, both Chinese and Tanzanian alike. She also relies on speeches given by African and Chinese national leaders and government officials to document the varying official opinions and visions of the railway. Monson makes great use of newspaper and magazine articles to help capture and portray Western criticisms and fears of Chinese aid intervention. Interestingly, Monson makes productive use of photographs and paintings to reveal how different national governments

perceived the potential of TAZARA and uses them to illustrate how the railway failed to live up to its supporters' grand vision.

Chapters two through four examine the purpose of TAZARA, its planning and construction, and life along the railway. In chapter two, Monson discusses the origins of the African leaders' aspiration to build the train, which explores the Sino-African goal to achieve economic independence from the former colonial regimes and from Rhodesia, South Africa, and the Portuguese colonies. Monson highlights the themes of nationalism, self-reliance, Pan-Africanism, and development espoused by Sino-African leaders, which made Western critics anxious about the prospects of China's role and ambitions in Africa. One of the most interesting aspects of the book is the omni-present theme of how the construction, use, and operations of the TAZARA line mirrored that of colonial administrations, despite TAZARA being an anti-colonial project. More specifically, African leaders asserted that the train would bring development based on the exportation of raw materials, an idea previously promoted by colonial administrations.

Chapter three delves into the construction of the railway and examines the theme of envisioned "solidarity" between Chinese and African workers plus how the Tanzanians were supposed to learn valuable skills as well as "the theme of hard work" (p. 37) from the Chinese. The book accurately describes the segregation of Chinese and Africans in their work and social environment. In fact, there was not much of an effort made to increase interactions between the Chinese and Africans from either government. The author mentions this lack of integration, but does not examine why these divisions might exist outside of barriers formed by language and culture, as well as why they still persist today in many Chinese development projects in Africa.<sup>7</sup> With respect to the Chinese "hard work" ethic the Africans were supposed to adopt, the colonial vs. subject theme is reintroduced by revealing the paternalistic and condescending nature of the project, something Monson fails to engage critically.

Chapter four explores how resettlement alongside the railway was both forced and voluntary; regardless, TAZARA became a part of the community and livelihoods of rural settlers. Monson reveals how the train was transformed into a national symbol due, in large measure, to the Tanzanian dependence on and protection of it. The author's research implies that Tanzanians viewed TAZARA as their own because it was not just another railway inherited from the colonial administrations but something built by and for Africans. What makes this sense of ownership important, as Monson points out, is that when TAZARA's operational capacity was being diminished, Tanzanians demanded that their train serve their respective community's needs.

Part two of the book examines how the passenger service or "Ordinary Train" as Monson labels it, has changed the lives and landscape of Tanzania. In chapter five, the author offers a compelling explanation of how the train transported goods and people between rural villages and therefore stimulated the development of rural Tanzania by opening new markets and

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<sup>1</sup> See Serge Michel, Michel Beuret, and Paolo Woods. *China Safari: On the Trail of Beijing's Expansion in Africa*. New York: Nation Books, 2009.

forcing the resettlement of Tanzanians to the scarcely populated west. She points out that these relocations echo a similar colonial strategy, which advocated people living in villages for the purpose of development and a supply of labor. Chapter six examines how the anticipated vision of rural development and industrialization never materialized. Monson explains how the grand industrialization plans and visions of rural economic growth never came to pass. Nonetheless, the overwhelming sentiments of villagers today are that the train has been a blessing. She makes an important point of highlighting the contradictory nature of the train's existence with development, in that although the train brought economic opportunities to the TAZARA corridor, it also brought forced resettlement, the deterioration of local customs and traditions, and overdependence on the train. So when the "freedom railway" came into town to supposedly liberate the people of Tanzania and Zambia from their nations' economic dependence on Rhodesia and South Africa, it actually brought along resettlement plans similar to those implemented by these exclusionary regimes. The book concludes with a chapter summarizing the main themes of the book including development and ideology, and hypothesizing the relationship China hopes to solidify with Africa.

*Africa's Freedom Railway* is an insightful and well-informed book that bares testament to the experience of those Tanzanians and Chinese who worked on TAZARA railway as well as those whose lives have benefitted from its presence. By documenting the experience of those people affected by TAZARA, Monson effectively illustrates how the railway benefitted the majority of Tanzanians. Similarly, the book's wealth of sources enables Monson to write about contemporary Tanzania in a historical context, as TAZARA has shaped the present.

Undoubtedly, what gives the book the most credibility is the abundance of Monson's extensive interviews and research in both Tanzania and China. However, for the Pan-African project that TAZARA is, the inclusion of a more prominent Zambian perspective would be valuable. Monson overlooks the paternalistic nature with which Africans were treated by the Chinese and the segregation between the two groups. Considering that their respective leaders were espousing ideas of solidarity, it is difficult to negate the teacher vs. subject relationship that the project perpetuated then and which continues today. Monson sells her research short by highlighting these issues but failing to critique or question them.

Monson's book should be of great value to any student or scholar interested in learning more about China's foreign policy in Africa. Those interested in a case study of a large infrastructure project in Africa might also find this work enlightening. Monson's *Africa's Freedom Railway* serves as a great reminder that China's foreign policy in Africa is not and does not strictly revolve around the discussion of extracting resources and supporting disreputable regimes, but can also be one of mutual benefit and friendship.

Nicholas T. Smith, *University of California*

**Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi and Tuzyline Jita Allan (eds).** *Twelve Best Books by African Women: Critical Readings*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2009.

The early generation of African literary discourse was dominated by male authors and their critique of the colonial and postcolonial state. Few devoted attention to issues surrounding gender. In response, a new voice emerged as female writers began to express their own concerns within the larger discourse. In *Twelve Best Books By African Women: Critical Readings*, twelve female African literary scholars provide critiques of the twelve best literary works by African women writers. The selection of these twelve books come from a larger list compiled for "Africa's Best 100 Books of the Twentieth Century," following the Zimbabwe International Book Festival. This book has two main goals that are clearly stated and accomplished. The editors, Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi and Tuzyline Jita Allan, aim to increase interest in literature by African women writers (p.12). In addition, the book seeks to increase the scholarship devoted to building a greater understanding of African women literature.

The editors state that "[t]his fine literature forms the core of the female literary canon which includes other books by these same women writers and many others that did not make the '100 best' list" (p. 5). The twelve best literary works include the following: Ama Ata Aidoo's *Anowa*; Assia Djebar's *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade*; Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero*; Nadine Gordimer's *Burger's Daughter*; Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood*; Yvonne Vera's *Butterfly Burning*; Bessie Head's *A Question of Power*; Aminata Sow Fall's *The Beggar's Strike*; Mariama Ba's *So Long A Letter*; Tsitsi Dangaremba's *Nervous Conditions*; Sindiwe Magona's *Living, Loving, and Lying Awake at Night*; and Ken Bugul's *Riwan ou le chemin de sable*.

*Twelve Best Books* presents well crafted analyses of the twelve literary works that challenge the reader to look more closely at particular themes in them. The book is divided into three sections: reconfiguration, resistance, and regeneration. This review will highlight essays from each section that draw on some prevalent themes in African literature and more specifically the literary work of African women, such as tradition versus modernity, domination, and definitions of womanhood.

"Reconfiguration: Rewriting the Script" speaks to the "early, internal migrations, fueled by wars and economic deprivations, across borders, which have remained porous (p. 3)." In "Modernity, Gender, and Agency in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Anowa*," Nana Wilson-Tagoe finds fault with the traditional definition of modernity typically used in analyses of the play. She suggests that scholars should instead view the culture clash and the way it "ultimately shaped the character of modernity for both Africa and Europe" (p. 18). Tagoe-Wilson also provides a reading of the play that explored the ways in which an analysis of the relationship between the husband and wife in the play also represents tensions in "the larger community" (p. 19). She examines gender as a prism into other aspects of society relations, for example, the political and social. Throughout, her analysis takes further the scholarship on Ata-Aidoo's work by other African literature scholars.

Waves of Resistance: The Casualties of Difference discusses literary works that depict women's struggle against colonialism and its aftermath. Amira Nowaira explores the voice of the marginalized woman in "Nawaal el Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero* Within the Context of

Arab Feminist Discourse.” Nowaira posits El Saadawi’s novel in relation to the work of early feminist writing that focused on the plight of upper-middle class women (p. 60). *Woman at Point Zero* brings to the forefront the voice of women on the periphery of Arab feminist discourse. In addition, El Saadawi tells the story of a prostitute, a topic rarely addressed since Arab feminists saw acknowledging such topics as undermining their agenda, “an emphasis on negative aspects was probably deemed inappropriate and unhelpful to their cause” (p. 61). Her novel thus challenges the already established notions and ideas put in place and held up by earlier women writers in Egypt.

Regeneration: Labor Pains and Tentative Steps Toward Independence represents women’s efforts to move forward despite the challenges of the past. Mugambi’s *Reading Masculinities in a Feminist Text*, asks two main critical questions in her analysis of Tsitsi Dangaremba’s *Nervous Conditions*; how is masculinity performed?; and how is masculinity constructed? Mugambi acknowledges that there is a range of masculinities presented in the novel, offering a diverse set of understandings of masculinity within a particular space and time. To Mugambi, the text offers more than the typical “male/female dichotomy that contributes to gender polarization” (p. 202). Mugambi argues that both masculinity and femininity are constructed in relation to each other. *The essay* contributes not only to literary studies but also addresses a common critique of women and gender studies, where the focus is most often on women but rarely is masculinity examined. Here, Mugambi offers a fresh perspective in reading the characters of *Nervous Conditions*.

The well selected categories offer an even deeper understanding of the twelve books, but at the same time one wonders if the books could have even been placed in other sections. Many literary enthusiasts of African literature may gripe about the selection of books. This is a limitation the book’s editors acknowledge in the introduction. *Twelve Best Books by African Women* accomplishes its goal in successfully contributing to the body of scholarship. In addition, it remains true to its second goal of creating interest in the books listed that may be unfamiliar to some readers. It is also enhanced by the editors’ candor about the process associated with the book’s creation. Ogunyemi describes the selection of the books along with the selection of African women scholars who were responsible for completing critical readings of the texts.

*This* is an important work for those interested in gender studies and literature, specifically those who wish to learn more about African women’s representation of themselves and their realities. As a student of African literature, each essay was extremely thought-provoking and provided additional insight into the books I had previously read. The book also piqued my interest in books that I have not had the opportunity to read. *Twelve Best Books By African Women: Critical Readings* is a celebration of African women writers whose “...revisionary history and storytelling demonstrate that women have always actively participated as citizens, daughters, sisters, wives, other mothers, and mothers in the reproduction and evolution of the self, family, community, and nation” (p.4).

Shanique S. Streete, *University of California*

**Chris Coulter.** *Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers: Women's Lives through War and Peace in Sierra Leone.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009.

The story of Aminata embodies the experiences of many young women who survived living among the RUF rebels during Sierra Leone's civil war (1991-2002). As a bush wife, she had been abducted from her village as a teenager, forced to perform domestic duties, repeatedly raped, impregnated, and then left to navigate tenuous post-conflict social relations when she returned home. Relying largely on interviews conducted with women like Aminata, Chris Coulter shows how women were both object and agent, even simultaneously. This book makes a significant, qualitative contribution to our understanding of how women's experiences in conflict are often expressed in relation to their social environment and their gendered choices.

Forging a new path in scholarship generally dominated by political scientists, Coulter first offers succinct background on the historical and political factors leading to the outbreak of the civil war. She juxtaposes this background with ethnography of gender relations before the violence began (Chapter 2). She posits that women's exploitation during the war, particularly the sexual violence, highlights dynamics that already existed in peacetime. This is why she views war as a social construction that creates its own social orders; she refutes the claim that war is outside the social world. Sierra Leonean society is decidedly hierarchical, with women generally subordinate to men and dependent on their status as wives and sisters. At the same time, however, diversity is at the core of social relations there. This combination of hierarchy and changing diversity produced a highly fragile social order in Sierra Leone that manifested itself during the fighting.

Chapters 3 and 4 offer a powerful depiction of the lives of women and girls serving in the RUF. Although some said they had joined voluntarily, the majority of girls reported to have been abducted and been offered to rebels as bush wives. The degree of abuse girls suffered depended on the rank of the fighter they had been given to—the lower his rank, the worse their fate. "Bush wife" may be considered a euphemism for sex slave, as the girls often had no choice as to when or who they would "sex." The gendered division of labor in the rebel camps reflected that of peacetime Sierra Leone, with females performing the cooking, cleaning, portering, and childcare duties necessary to support the rebels. However, some women's responsibilities extended beyond the domestic sphere. Some were trained to use firearms and fought on the front lines to the same degree as their male counterparts. Overall, respondents in Coulter's interviews expressed that their time with rebels was wrought with perpetual fear, regardless of their role in the group.

According to Coulter, while the wartime experiences of RUF women and girls were characterized by fear, their post-conflict lives were of shame. This shame of having been a part of atrocities was one of several reasons that females were largely absent from rehabilitation programs. Many women were reluctant to publicly identify themselves as former rebels to access rehabilitation benefits due to the social stigma attached to such an identity (as well as fear of being legally charged with crimes). Such identification would have required the women to recount their traumas, which to them meant reproducing the hurt and shame derived from their actions. This public identity as "rebel" was incompatible with Sierra Leonean expectations

of feminine behavior, thus making these women less than women do in the eyes of their communities.

The final chapters of the book narrate the difficulties ex-RUF women faced in securing an income and becoming a part of families post-conflict. Many of these women and girls returned from war with “rebel babies” and no education. Coulter provides an illuminating description of the numerous educational and vocational training programs implemented for these women, programs that were limited in scope and created almost haphazardly. This section provides lessons to all humanitarian workers who aim to create post-conflict education programs. It seems that although these programs did not substantively help most women support themselves, the training often had a psychosocial function in that they acted as a form of trauma healing. Women reported feeling an increased sense of confidence and validation from their families because of their new skills. Surprisingly, the “Girlfriend Business,” which was various forms of prostitution, did not entail the shame one might expect, since families of ex-RUF women were simply grateful for the income. Perhaps the most poignant part of the book, Coulter sensitively portrays the ways in which these women struggle for acceptance by their families and seek husbands. In a society in which unmarried women “don’t exist,” the task of rebuilding their lives post-conflicts rests on their families’ approval of their bush husbands or their good fortune in finding a man who will not view them as “damaged goods.” Their acceptance by husbands, families, and communities was problematized by perceptions of their masculinity and the danger they posed to community members.

There is a fine balance between depicting victimization and robbing women of their agency. The author maintains this equilibrium, achieving her task of comprehensively describing the distinctive experiences of Sierra Leonean women who survived life with rebels. Coulter is the first analyst of the civil war able to identify fully the false binaries (war/peace, masculine/feminine, victim/agent, etc.) that have characterized so much of the scholarship on African civil wars. This is not a recommended read for those who are well-versed on the topic of non-traditional combatants, however, because it does not provide many new details of the war that cannot be found in policy reports. Neither does it create an analytical framework through which to study other conflicts. Ultimately, its greatest contribution is that it is a cohesive study covering all aspects of female service in the RUF from an anthropological perspective, giving voice to the very actors best suited to narrate their experiences.

Laine Strutton, *New York University*

**Steven Nelson. *From Cameroon to Paris: Mousgoum Architecture In and Out of Africa*. Chicago, Illinois: Chicago University Press, 2007.**

This book is based on fieldwork in Cameroon and Japan. Nelson uses an interdisciplinary approach combining written and oral sources. Drawing on archival research in Africa, the USA and Europe, Nelson explores how Teleuk (domed house, beehive shaped structure) has been understood by various groups—contemporary tourists, Cameroon’s government, and, most importantly, today’s Mousgoum people of northern Cameroon and Chad. He engages in

Internationally-minded and sophisticated arguments, skillfully arranged, and brilliantly explained. Nelson's willingness to interrogate notions of civilized and uncivilized is refreshing. Such interrogation is significant in helping readers understand dynamics of power and inequality.

In four well researched and richly illustrated chapters, Nelson sets a clear agenda and adheres to it, thus accomplishing his stated goals brilliantly. Using Teleuk as a three-dimensional symbol of Mousgoum culture, Nelson convincingly demonstrates how (teleuk) a building's meaning has the capacity to change over time and in different places. In doing so he moves effortlessly in and out of Africa to showcase a changing Mousgoum culture, and to explore how both African and Western peoples use the built environment to advance their needs and desires. Indeed, as Nelson points out, "this book teases out the intricate links between built environment and other forms of communications," saying much in this process about "the relationship of architecture to different groups of people," (p. 9).

The book is organized into four chapters. Chapter one, "Performing Architecture" explores "historic Mousgoum architecture" and the role of the teleuk in the larger family homestead, combining form and functionality. It serves as a foundation for understanding the great changes during the twentieth century in meaning. Chapter two, "Parabolic Paradoxes," focuses on Mousgoum teleuk encounters with European travelers (Barth, Macleod, Gide, Allegret), and how for a brief moment such encounters forced these travelers, some of them experts like Barth with "extensive travel experience and understanding of architecture as being one of the paramount tools for defining cultural advancement" to question notions of "the primitive" and "the civilized". To quote Gide on Mousgoum teleuk, "A beauty so perfect, so accomplished, that it is almost natural," (p. 82).

Chapter three, "A Pineapple in Paris," investigates the appropriation of the Mousgoum teleuk for the French Equatorial Africa Pavilion at the 1931 International Colonial Exposition in Paris, France. It demonstrates through architecture the meeting of the primitive and the modern, showing how architecture as representation of the civilizing mission became an integral part of the construction of France's imperial identity.

Chapter four, "Present Tense" takes the reader back to Cameroon, where contemporary Mousgoum teleukakay and wall murals are central. We hear Mousgoum voices and get glimpses of struggles as this examination and analysis demonstrate the ways in which wall murals, objects and structures address the importance of Mousgoum agency, women's creativity and ingenuity. Indigenous values, Western perception and tourism, and religious conversion come together to create synthetic narratives that have been projected on to the teleuk by Mousgoum people, Westerners, and Cameroonian government officials alike. The past as articulated by the Mousgoum becomes a set of codified texts and imagery read as ancestral symbol and contemporary identity (p. 148). "The teleuk is a vehicule for connecting past and present; as such, it is imbued by the Mousgoum with the qualities--progeniture, protection, etc.--that were the same as those historically connected to the family homestead," (p.174).

An added strength of Nelson's book lies in the treatment of the underlying theme of gender as a category of analysis that runs through the book. Specifically in the loaded sub section titled "Telling Herstories? -- Gender" Nelson incorporates an insightful analysis of the changing role

of women, thus bringing to the forefront of the discourse, the age-old struggle between genders. For example, among the Mousgoum people, “men articulate values in three dimensions; women articulate them in two,” (p.178). Gender roles are clear in Mousgoum country, and have always been clear: men largely, have built homes while women have covered (with mud, etc.) and decorated them non-representationally. The coming of exterior mural painting brought with it a nuanced change in Mousgoum women’s roles as artists. On painting the outsides of homes, many artists see this new change as “a process of evolution in house decoration,” obviously part of women’s duties. As Nelson puts it, “understanding this change in artistic practice as a complex process that weaves together the threads of the past and the present as well as an individual and the community, I would like to turn to the mural of Mme. Daniel Mainiazanga, exploring what such a change means with respect to gender relations and the primacy of the seemingly all-pervasive male voice among the Mousgoum,” (p. 178). Such exterior mural paintings beg an examination of the changes in the role of the artist within existing social constructions. I could not be happier, and I know my fellow feminists and womanists will be also!

This book will appeal to scholars and students of African Art and Architectural History. By emphasizing the impact of African architecture and clearly showing Western interactions with Africa over time, the potential audience becomes global. Nelson considers--and conquers one of the key moments of African architecture: Mousgoum Teleuk in Northern Cameroon. This is a welcome addition to the growing literature on African architecture, and I highly recommend it. An intellectual *tour de force* journey through colonial and contemporary architectural landscape, *From Cameroon to Paris* should have a major impact on how we explore meaning making through African architecture and art. It is most valuable for its insightful arguments and wide-ranging citations. It is also a fascinating and engaging book with interesting images capable of captivating a general public interested in Western interactions with Africa as well as a non-specialized audience.

Bridget A. Teboh, *University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth*

**Frank M. Chipasula (ed.). *Bending the Bow: an anthology of African love poetry*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009.**

It would seem scholarly interest in love as depicted in African imaginative projections has lately begun to witness sudden resurgence. Indeed, the idea that love is a frivolous affair needing little scholarly attention is perhaps beginning to wane. Frank Chipasula’s latest edited volume of love poems, *Bending the Bow: An Anthology of African Poetry*, comes after Ama’s Ata Aidoo’s edited volume of short stories on love, *African Love Stories* (2006). As Chipasula argues in his illuminating and poignant, if polemical introduction, preoccupation with “overtly political themes and texts” has often led to the diminution of interest in or the lack of acknowledgment of the corpus of Africa’s rich love poetry (p. 1). His edited collection therefore, fulfills a number of objectives, not the least among them being to revalue love poetry and revive interest in it, or

as he puts it “reclaiming and reinstating into African literary discourse a poetic genre that is indigenous to Africa,”(p.1).

This text is a comprehensive anthology bringing together in one volume about 180 love poems, encompassing various aspects of love and composed in different cultural surroundings in different places in Africa over the last three thousand years. The anthology demonstrates both evidence of extensive and patient research, especially from secondary sources. The collected verses exhibit tremendous variety and diversity in form and thematic emphases, and range from poems by anonymous Egyptians to love songs from different African communities, to contemporary and modern love poems. In love poems and songs by anonymous and known composers, both male and female personae express their love sentiments, extolling love, lamenting, beseeching, cursing, fantasizing, despairing, hoping, avowing, disavowing. Unlike Aidoo’s *African Love Stories*, which is exclusively the product of female writers, Chipasula’s text is nearly equally balanced between male and female contributors. Therefore, although the vastness of the continent would make any attempt at coming up with a truly representative anthology futile, Chipasula succeeds in at least making the tacit point that the creation of love poems is neither the exclusive gift of men nor women as both genders fully partake of it. The same would not be said of Aidoo’s collection of love stories that regrettably leaves out men writers.

Nonetheless, it bears stating that Chipasula is less bothered by the question of gender representation than the elision of love in considerations of Africanness. In his introduction (a highly significant aspect of the text which demands commentary), he takes particular exception to both Africanist and Western scholars who characterize Africa and its people as incapable of love. Identifying the connection between poetic expression of love and the sense of humanity, Chipasula argues that anonymous Egyptian composers inaugurated love poetry, as we know it today, thereby affirming their humanity. Yet, he laments, that point has gone largely unacknowledged by those who regard Africans as too backward to understand, express, or enjoy love. With the diverse geographical and historical dimensions and diversity of the poems he has collected, Chipasula intends to counter efforts to deny Africa and Africans both love and love poetry. Moreover, his optimism in the power of love poems to transform Africa’s turbulent political reality is quite telling. He writes:

“Historically, African oral poets as mediators in conflicts have sung their strife-torn societies... Legendary Somali poets mediated in clan conflicts, cooling flaming hearts with their songs, no matter how irreconcilable the differences appeared to be between warring clans. Are contemporary African poets singing love enough to perform similar peace keeping role?” (pp. 9-10)

Clearly, Chipasula articulates an idealized and romanticized African past where love poetry reigned supreme and dictated terms of existence. This is what prompts him to challenge modern African poets to take on the same task as the Somali poets of old. But if truth be told, this audacious optimism is too unrealistic, overrating the efficacy of the poets of generations gone by in peace making and remaining blind to the fact that in Africa today when the poet sings nobody listens, particularly the political leaders responsible for conflict, unless the poetry is in their praise. For instance, when Abdilatif Abdalla wrote in Jomo Kenyatta’s regime in Kenya he was imprisoned, and so was Jack Mapanje in Kamuzu Banda’s Malawi. For other

poets such as Christopher Okigbo and Ken Saro-Wiwa in Nigeria death was the ultimate price for their poetry and activism.

There is however, yet a different price that the poems in Chipasula's collection pay but about which he says little or nothing. The bulk of the poems save for a few including, David Rubadiri, Gabriel Okara, Lupenga Mphande, and Chipasula's own, were originally composed in languages other than English. These languages range from Arabic to French, from Kipsigi to Kiswahili, from Lang'o to Acholi. The poems have no doubt reached us through translation with its concomitant limitations and challenges. While it is reasonable to acknowledge within the politics and poetics of translation what is gained by translation, we should never lose sight of what is lost as well. Inevitably, these poems have lost some of the authentic nuances, connotations, and musicality of their original languages and cultural contexts. Perhaps, more research and endnotes would have shed light on some of the aspects lost in the translations. How do you, for example, explain the absence of rhyme and meter in the English translations of Muyaka bin Haji or Juma Bhalo's Kiswahili verses or the lack of ideophones from the English renditions of certain songs from any number of African communities?

Yet, evidently, *Bending the Bow* is quite a unique and enthralling cocktail of trans-historical love poems from across Africa. It goes a long way in not only affirming African humanity as expressed in love poems but also proving the heterogeneity of African love and love poetry. This is indeed a welcome addition to the corpus of African literatures in translation capable of quenching as it does our rekindled interest in love.

Ken Walibora Waliaula, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

**Richard Reid. *War in Pre-Colonial Eastern Africa: The Patterns and Meanings of State-Level Conflict in the Nineteenth Century*. Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2007.**

*War in Pre-Colonial Eastern Africa* combines careful archival research, with a comparative assessment of pre-colonial nineteenth century war in Ethiopia, Uganda, and Tanzania. Reid develops well archival material found in the UK, Kampala, and Rome to tell a story of conflict, diplomacy, economy, and culture in the decades when literate Europeans were present, but colonizing powers had yet to assert political control. Reid's analysis is engaging and interesting, although it does assume that the reader has some prior knowledge of nineteenth century east African history. For such readers, familiar figures like Mirambo of Tanzania, Tewodros of Ethiopia, and the Kabaka of Uganda are cast in a new light. This is done by providing a fresh comparative assessment in the context of the broader social, political, and economic issues of the region.

Beyond the new formulation of regional history, though, Reid's book is valuable for how the issues of war and violence are developed, and as such should be of interest to a readership, which goes beyond Africanists. As a historian Reid starts from a particularistic viewpoint of each of the three societies studied. He tells the story of the large armies developed in Ethiopia, the establishment of trade monopolies by the Kabaka in Uganda, and the more diffuse state-building and conquest undertaken by Mirambo in Tanzania. But, because Reid does go one

step further and asks what the contrasting cases mean about the nature of defense, state-building, urbanization, diplomacy, peacemaking, violence, banditry, and military science, the book is of broader utility. His analysis is particularly fascinating, as he compares what he calls the “culture of fear” that dominated Tanzania in the late nineteenth century, and the role that the more stratified Ethiopian system provided for both conducting war, and enforcing peace. Thus, despite the fact that Reid is reliant on the written sources of Europeans, he develops a story rooted in Africa, and not only in Europe.

If there is a weak point in this book, it is in its over-reliance on archival data collected by literate Europeans. Alas, this is a problem shared with most other historians of Africa. And until there is more development of Arabic, Amharic, Tigrayan, and Swahili manuscripts; development of oral data; and the slow analysis of archaeological materials; such biases are likely to remain. But until this happens, *War in Pre-Colonial Eastern Africa* is likely to remain among the best studies available for understanding the nature of eastern Africa’s politics on the cusp of European intrusions.

The strongest point of *War in Pre-Colonial Eastern Africa* is that Reid’s comparisons allow him to make conclusions about African warfare that reflect Africa. He does this in a fashion which I think can inform understanding of more general studies of warfare on any continent. I have long thought that African cases need to be developed which will inform understandings of social change in all parts of the world—the works of great comparativists like Karl Polanyi, Max Weber, William McNeill, Daniel Chirot, Steven LeBlanc, and others, are too often weakened through the absence of African material. This book can, I hope, be put to good use by scholars studying the nature of horticultural societies, incipient kingdoms, the evolution of the state, the nature of violence, and other subjects which have long attracted them. Indeed, Reid himself implies that his study could be a basis for introducing a more *longue duree* approach to African history, *a la* Fernand Braudel. I think Reid is right and believe that this book will be a rich source of data for scholars integrating an African perspective into the broader corpus of social history.

Tony Waters, *California State University, Chico*

**Lewis R. Gordon. *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008.**

Lewis R. Gordon’s *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy* faces the daunting task of giving an introduction to the whole of Africana thought. By “Africana thought,” he means the philosophical writings of Africans and those part of the African Diaspora, although the bulk of the text is devoted to thought of the African Diaspora. The book begins by giving a background of African thought and some of the reasons why it is not as established as European thought (conquest) and reasons why it is not always properly recognized as African, as in the case of the half Berber St. Augustine (appropriation of thinkers by conquerors). For Gordon, the idea of an Africana philosophy does not really take shape though until the establishment of the slave

trade. It is with this that “the clearly modern moment of Africana philosophy begins . . . with the conquest of the Americas and with the Atlantic slave trade” (p.28). Next, Gordon discusses the three pillars of Africana philosophy: the works of Anna Julia Cooper, W.E.B. Du Bois and Franz Fanon. He then discusses Africana movements in the US and Britain, Afro-Caribbean philosophy, and African philosophy.

Gordon gives us a narrative through which to understand Africana thought. I suspect, though, that his narrative will not be uncontroversial. One of its key features is that Africana philosophy begins to take shape with the rise of the slave trade. Perhaps this is true, but Gordon does not say enough to support it. As I see it, part of this book’s contribution to the literature is to supply us with a narrative to help us understand all these different thinkers and movements that supposedly fall under the heading of “Africana philosophy.” If the narrative is to be a contribution to the field, then surely such a central idea of the narrative--that the birth of Africana thought arose with the birth of the African Diaspora--needs a full defense.

One of the strengths of the work is that it covers much ground. There are many thinkers and ideas mentioned and described in this book. However, sometimes-crucial ideas are in need of a fuller explanation. At times, crucial concepts go unexplained and the reader is merely pointed to other works. Here is just one example.

Collins argued that the proper method for black feminist thought was engagement with postmodern thought and standpoint epistemology, (p. 103).

The phrase “standpoint epistemology” is not explained. The reader is simply directed to the work of Collins. This term actually occurs a few times in the book and the reader is never given a good sense of it. Such practice makes the ideas in the book difficult to grasp for someone who is not already familiar with them. In addition, it is not just terms that could use more explanation. Gordon could provide more exposition to help his readers understand arguments and ideas in the book as well. For example, Gordon writes,

“African thought always presupposes other kinds of thought, whereas European thought often denies the existence of those beyond its own,” (p. 31).

This thesis, as interesting as it sounds, is never fully explained. And it should have been. For what does it mean to say that one form of thought presupposes another? What are some reasons for thinking that European thought denies the existence of systems of thought that are not its own? These heady ideas are far from clear to those who have not yet mastered them. Like my comments about terminology, this point suggests that this book is at times difficult for the beginner to understand. At times, it goes into too much detail too briefly to be worthwhile to anyone but those most familiar with this material. Here is another example.

“The main criticisms of Africana existential phenomenology are from several angles. For critics who cannot see phenomenology as anything other than a European enterprise, the charge of Eurocentrism is unleashed. For those who reject the idea of non-discursive dimensions of reality, a reassertion of discursive, even textual, idealism would be their retort,” (p. 149).

What is a non-discursive dimension of reality? What is discursive idealism? The author does not give us much help in understanding these concepts.

Perhaps it would have been more effective to focus on major themes in Africana thought and let those themes drive the narrative. Of course, Gordon mentions reoccurring themes: DuBois's notion of double consciousness, for example, is a theme often mentioned. However, had the book been organized around the major themes of Africana thought, the ideas might have come across more efficiently. As it stands, this book would not serve a beginner well. It is more suitable for a graduate course or an upper level undergraduate course in Africana philosophy. There is plenty of material in the book to foster discussion, plenty of ideas to be fleshed out and argued over. The book assumes a certain familiarity with critical theory, though, that is worth keeping in mind as well.

The book ends with a useful guide to further reading. The denseness of the text and the general assumption that the reader is familiar with a great body of critical theory and thereby in no need of an explanation of what phrases like "non-discursive reality" mean makes this book not so much an introduction to Africana thought but a certain articulation of it, an articulation from a certain theory-driven framework. The project of providing an introduction to Africana thought is most certainly a worthwhile one. While working through this book would help students to get a better grasp on Africana thought, there is probably a better introduction to Africana thought yet to be written.

Casey Woodling, *University of Florida*

**Katherine Homewood. *Ecology of African Pastoralist Societies*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2008.**

There are a number of books written over the years that discuss the links between ecology and pastoralism in East Africa. What makes Katherine Homewood's volume on the ecology of African pastoralist communities stand out is the breadth and depth of information and how it is synthesized in such a succinct manner. In less than 300 pages, Homewood manages to pack in a wealth of knowledge about the origins and spread of African pastoralism, the relationship between pastoral livelihoods, ecology, and biology, and recent changes in the trajectories of pastoral communities in Africa.

Homewood is a well-known human ecologist and pastoral scholar. She draws on the depth of this knowledge to create an easy to read and comprehensive book on African pastoral systems that multiple audiences can enjoy it. The breadth of the research that Homewood conducted to compile this book is clear from the 35-page bibliography included at the end of the book. The synthesis of this range of information is one of the main strengths of the book. Homewood draws from numerous case studies, as well as multiple empirical data sources to paint a comprehensive picture of the diversity and complexity associated with African pastoral systems.

The book consists of nine chapters. The introductory chapter sets up the academic context

for the volume, and includes an important discussion of the history of pastoralist studies. It frames the discussion of African pastoralism by comparing the ways that ecosystem dynamics, land tenure, and diversification theory have been used to understand and predict patterns of change among pastoral communities. The second chapter utilizes a range of archeological, historical, and ethnographic data to provide an overview of the emergence and spread of pastoralism across the African continent. This is a particularly useful chapter for students and scholars because it brings together a diverse set of empirical resources to succinctly describe the migration of African pastoralists without marginalizing the sociopolitical and historic factors that have shaped modern distributions of African pastoral communities across the landscape. Chapter 3 begins the ecological, economic, and demographic component of the book. Chapter 3 discusses the ecology of African pastoralism, including the 'equilibrium' vs. 'non-equilibrium' debate that has been central to discussions of pastoral economies since the 1960s. She then goes on to discuss the ways that different communities use mobility as well as social and political systems to adapt and respond to their biophysical environments. Chapter 4 builds on this foundation and provides examples of the main pastoral systems in different parts of Africa. It uses case studies to explore the relationship between the features of the biophysical environment to and strategies of resource exploitation used by pastoral communities in different regions. By doing this, the author sets up the background to later chapters that examine unique aspects of pastoral livelihoods and synthesize the material on household economy (Chapter 5), herd biology (Chapter 6), pastoral food systems (Chapter 7), and demography (Chapter 8). The concluding chapter of her book draws on the information provided in previous chapters and combines it with discussions of globalization, development and the impact of aid. The final chapter summarizes what is known about the current processes of change that are impacting pastoral societies in Africa including, commercialization of livestock and livestock products, diversification of economic activities, land privatization, and sedentarization. Homewood highlights the role of the state in exacerbating issues of resource security through exertion of authority over land tenure and the conversion of key resources from pastoral holdings to agricultural management. The book concludes with a discussion of the role that the adaptability of pastoral economies (as identified in earlier chapters), will have on the trajectories of pastoral communities in Africa.

What is refreshing about this book in relation to previous volumes is that Homewood moves away from the pastoral typecasting that occurs in many overviews of African pastoral systems. Instead, the author shows that while there are themes that crosscut many pastoral communities, there is no "one" pastoral example. Instead, African pastoral communities are dynamic, responsive, and historically contingent, a point that is made especially clear in the range of empirical examples and case studies from East, West, and Southern Africa.

Finally, the attention to detail and breadth of knowledge on African pastoralist systems that is covered in Homewood's book make it relevant to a range of audiences. On one level, the book can be used as an overview of the current literature on pastoralism in Africa and provides a clearly written, balanced, and comprehensive synthesis that is excellent for both undergraduate and graduate courses as well as for advanced scholars. On another level, the book is detailed, yet appealing enough for a general audience that is simply interested in understanding the broader context of pastoralism in Africa. In either case, this is an engaging work that is carefully

organized and well thought out. It makes a clear contribution to our understanding of pastoralism in the African context.

Alyson G. Young, *University of Florida*