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A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa. Patrick Chabal (with David Birmingham, Joshua Forrest, Malyn Newitt, Gerhard Seibert, and Elisa Silva Andrade). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002. 339 pp.

Patrick Chabal's new edited volume, *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa*, seeks to provide an extensive review of postcolonial Portuguese-speaking Africa. In many respects, this new book compliments Chabal's earlier edited work entitled *The Postcolonial Literature of Lusophone Africa*. However, I would argue that Chabal's latest book is far more ambitious than the latter, in that it seeks to outline and synthesize the political and socio-economic history of postcolonial Lusophone Africa into one single text.

In order to bring a sense of organization to such a large text *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa* is divided into two parts. The first part written by Chabal himself is entitled "Lusophone Africa in Historical and Comparative Perspective." The second part, which consists of five country studies by each of the contributing authors, takes on a different tone than Chabal's lengthy opening section. This difference in tone is due in part to the varied areas of specialization of each of the co-authors. The country surveys include Angola by David Birmingham, Mozambique by Malyn Newitt, Guinea-Bissau by Joshua Forrest, Cape Verde by Elisa Silva Andrade, and São Tomé and Príncipe by Gerhard Seibert. Although each of the country surveys can be read separately, the book can best be appreciated if read together.

Chabal in part one seeks to furnish a comprehensive history of Lusophone Africa by pulling together common themes from the shared experience of Portuguese colonialism, apart from language. He does in fact pull together various commonalities: the protracted wars of liberation, the perverse colonial legacy of the Portuguese, and the Marxist orientation of the five postcolonial governments. Despite identifying similarities, Chabal throughout his section consistently draws distinctions between the shared experiences. For example, the degree to which the PAIGC, MPLA, FRELIMO, and the MLSTP adhered to Marxism was noticeably different (52). Chabal even drives home the idea that "[a] single-minded focus on Lusophone Africa could easily detract attention from the fact that the five countries' postcolonial trajectory has been intimately bound up with regional and international factors." (73) He uses as examples Guinea-Bissau's close relation to West African French-speaking territories and Angola's position in central African politics.

Nonetheless, Chabal is interested in the comparative African perspective. For him, postcolonial Lusophone Africa is not significantly distinct from that of the rest of the continent. Hence, the themes selected for each chapter are all relevant to the postcolonial African state: the end of empire, the construction of the nation-state, and the limits of nationhood. In other words, Chabal is trying to create an interpretative interchange between students of Lusophone, Anglophone, and Francophone Africa.

Throughout, Chabal successfully poses challenging questions. For example, how did the wars of liberation contribute to the developing nationalism of the day? And how is it that Mozambique has managed to resolve a conflict, which appeared worse than that in Angola, which has become intractable? He also can be commended for his ability to incorporate both the internal and external forces of African postcoloniality into his analysis.

Although Chabal's section could have stood on its own, it is followed by five country reports, which are uneven and rarely pick up on issues raised in the first part of the book. The second section should have supported Chabal's analysis; instead, each of the co-authors write about topics that they are familiar with, seldom drawing connections with earlier chapters, a problem typical of multi-authored works.

Although Birmingham's chapter on Angola is insightful and lucid, it is severely lacking in documentation. To illustrate, while commenting on the circumstances of clientalism in Angola, Birmingham notes that dos Santos readily gave 'Christmas bonuses' of \$25,000, the equivalent to 10 years' salary for ordinary government employees to his favored civil servants etc., but never gives the source for this statement (178). The reader is then left questioning the reliability of such an astounding figure.

The chapters on Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau are informative and better documented than Birmingham's essay. However, at times Newitt is contradictory. For instance, he argues that Mozambique inherited a favorable and diversified economy (188), yet later states that increases in foreign debt led to human disaster (206). Nonetheless, Newitt does a fine job illustrating the paradigm located in Mozambiquan history, "disaster and chaos followed by international relief and tentative recovery." (235).

Although not as analytical as the three afore-mentioned essays, Andrade's chapter on Cape Verde and Seibert's chapter on São Tomé and Príncipe are welcomed contributions. First, the two island states are included in the text; both countries are often neglected and relegating to the dustbins of historical inquiry. Second, Seibert's essay best correlates with Chabal's opening section in its direction and analysis, while Andrade's essay was thought provoking and thoroughly researched. Unlike the other authors who often used only English references, Andrade used sources not readily available to the Anglophone reader, sources more than likely only available in Cape Verde, which in turn is a valuable contribution to the text.

Although this book is not for specialists, it would be useful for undergraduate survey courses on Africa in general, postcolonialism, and the history of the Lusophone world. It is readable, comprehensive, and at times candid. The incorporation of a glossary is helpful to the reader. The bibliography, compiled by Caroline Shaw, references texts applicable for the study of Lusophone Africa, but is by no means extensive and is difficult to navigate. Nonetheless, Chabal must be given credit for assembling such a text, for he is one of only a handful of scholars who continue to give voice to Lusophone Africa.

In short, it is never a scholars purpose to exhaust the subject, only to suggest that it is there. Chabal and his co-authors have done just that.

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