

BOOK REVIEWS

Pade Badru and Brigitte Maa Sackey, eds. 2013. *Islam in Africa South of the Sahara*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc. 416 pp.

Despite the fact that since the end of the twentieth century no religion has attracted more attention than Islam, a glaring gap exists in the recent flood of publications on the religion. This is due to the shortage of scholarly work on Islam in Africa. This book aims to fill the gap. Editors Badru and Sackey and their contributors deal with the subject in sixteen chapters, arranged in four sections. Section I addresses the historical origins of Islam in Africa and the basic principles of Islamic theocracy. Section II looks at gender relations within Islam. Section III presents the Sharia Code and the conditions of women in Islam, while Section IV makes an assessment of political Islam and Africa and the African diaspora. In particular, the publication provides unique insights into culture and Islam, the concepts of *jihad*, slavery and *Sharia*, and the status of women in Muslim countries.

The publication rarely contains the misconceptions in much of the existing literature, such as “Islamic terrorism”, which, unfortunately, serve the interests of a minority of extremists (Muslims and non-Muslims) who are influencing global attitudes towards Islam and are trying to divide our world into Muslim and non-Muslim. In general, the authors seem to recognize the fact that most Muslims (and non-Muslims) want to live with and let live their neighbors of different faiths. By implication, this draws our attention to the need to make a distinction between Islam and individual behavior. Therefore, if a Muslim willfully murders an innocent person, he/she must simply be called “a terrorist” or “criminal” rather than any Islamic label, just as we would call a non-Muslim who commits such a crime. Thus, he/she is separated from the religion and the tempers of the world’s billion Muslims who may feel that it is their religion that is being targeted. For global peace the importance of this cannot be overemphasized.

At least two of the chapters (12 and 14), however, contain very out of date information. For example, in Chapter 12, O’Fahey states that the National Islamic Front (now the main opposition party in the Sudan) is the dominant force behind President Bechir and that the Sudan People’s Liberation Army/Sudan People’s Liberation Movement is led by the late John Garang. In Chapter 14 Janson’s analysis, though apt, is based on events only “after ten years of civil war” (p. 332). Understandable, because both chapters are reprints from earlier publications which appeared in 1995 and 2004, respectively. There are also a number of fundamental errors in the Preface and Chapter 2 (both by Badru). In the Preface he erroneously reports that it is the “Arab summer, which started in Mauritania ... (that) has put reform on the agenda of many Islamic utopian states” and that trousers are “strictly forbidden for women in Muslim countries.” In Chapter 2, he argues that: “Some” Islamic scholars believe that the Prophet received his revelations from the Almighty Allah. *All* Muslims believe this. The Prophet married Khadijah, because of “economic” reasons. No, as the Prophet’s behavior toward the honorable widow (not “mistress” as he put it) even when he became the most powerful man in Arabia indicated, the two had a very solid bond of love that was exemplary, especially given their age difference. Furthermore, his attitudes toward material possessions (based on Qur’anic injunctions) clearly portrayed a man for whom wealth was never a motivation for action.

<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/pdfs/v14i4a5.pdf>

Another mistaken argument in the Preface is that African traditional religions have many shared beliefs with the “core doctrinal teaching” of Islam. The opposite is true, as Nyang (Chapter 1) points out. Badru also states that *Hajj* is a celebration of the Prophet’s triumphant re-entry into Makkah. No, it is an ancient spiritual obligation and one of the five pillars of Islam. Finally, he writes that the Prophet decided to spend “most of his time” in a cave perhaps because he wanted to stay away from his daughters after Khadijah’s death. No, he started going to the cave *before* Khadijah’s death (circa 619 CE) and the revelations started when she was still well and wealthy (610 CE). Such retreats are common religious practice even today.

Solomon (Chapter 15), a Muslim, blasts “Islamists” as “fascists”, drawing similarities with Mussolini and Hitler. However, his criticisms are on a minority of Muslims rather than Islam. He highlights the negative aspects of the reign of the Companions and asserts that Islam separates religion from politics. He narrates the historical tolerance of Islam. He reveals a bitter conflict of opinions among South African Muslims.

By being mostly objective or non-judgmental, the contributors to this book send an implicit message to Muslims for tolerance towards others. This is one of the messages of the Qur’an itself. I recommend this book for readers who already have a good knowledge of Islam, but seek a case study of Africa. It is not suitable for those who need an introduction.

Karamo N.M. Sonko, *Heeno International*

Abdul Karim Bangura. 2012. *African Mathematics: From Bones to Computers*. Lanham: University Press of America. 220 pp.

The poor quality of teaching, the low absorption rate of learners, and the general fear of and dislike for mathematics across Africa south of the Sahara is well documented. The root of this challenge has been traced to the pedagogy of mathematics in Africa, which is basically Eurocentric. In *African Mathematics*, Abdul Karim Bangura attempts to utilize historical and contemporary sources to highlight Africa’s contribution to certain branches and sub-branches of mathematics and furthermore to explore the possibilities of research and teaching of mathematics from an African centered platform.

The author explains that some of the earliest mathematics objects in human history have been discovered in Africa. The Lebombo Bone, dated approximately 35,000 BC was discovered in the mountains of South Africa and Swaziland, while the Ishango Bone, dated 9000-6000 BC, was discovered on the border of Uganda and the Republic of Congo. In *African Mathematics*, the reader is reminded that it was mathematical knowledge that aided ancient Egyptians in tracking the flow of the Nile in order to determine appropriate planting seasons. Beyond the much-discussed Egyptian hieroglyphic, the book also addresses little known but equally instructive Egyptian hieratic and demotic numeration schemes. The Maghrebian contribution to mathematics is also covered. Much of the mathematics of that era and clime were for practical purposes, such as inheritance division, the construction and maintenance of irrigation canals, and the composition of medications.

African Mathematics dissects several studies that explore geometrical expressions found in African art. In textiles, wood carving, mural decorations, and story-telling, communities and peoples across Africa south of the Sahara display in-depth knowledge and practical expressions

of geometry. The author also establishes several similarities in Africa's numbering systems, and, perhaps without meaning to, disproves the oft-held belief that the continent is overly complex, diverse, and heterogeneous.

In other mathematical sub-fields such as fractals, combinatorics, bifurcation, tiling, or tessellation the book utilizes numerous scientific evidence to link mathematics to several African activities, games, products, and processes. Under fractals, foremost mathematics researcher Ron Eglash's statement, that in Africa he encountered "some of the most complex fractal systems that exist in religious activities such as the sequence of symbols used in sand divination, a method fortune telling found in Senegal" and the Ifa divination system of the Yoruba of Nigeria is interesting to note.¹ Several African indigenous games are shown to involve Combinatorics. African board games are singled out for emphasis as they are "games of strategy, full of information, logic and intelligence [and therefore] it is imperative to ask questions of intelligence, logic and mathematical reasoning when investigating them" (p. 79). This analytical understanding of African games is worthy of note, especially in the light of its dismissal in certain quarters as a game for idle and unintelligent minds. One implication is that present day African researchers and intellectuals ought to further explore more indigenous African activities for deeper intellectual underpinnings.

The last two chapters of the book focus on the research and teaching of African mathematics. On the teaching of African mathematics across schools and colleges in Africa south of the Sahara, the author focuses on the language of learning. He cites an empirical study conducted in South Africa, where both teachers and students concede that the teaching of mathematics in English is not so that students can learn better, but rather so they could be more fluent in English and get jobs faster. This is despite the admission that students learn mathematics better, and teachers teach better in their home language. Essentially, the language of instruction is an area where African scholars and policy makers need to invest much time and effort to arrive at a progressive and balanced decision.

At a time when emphasis is rightly beginning to shift from how many schools there are in Africa to what African students are learning in classrooms, *African Mathematics* will generate numerous questions for all concerned with curriculum development and management. The major challenge of *African Mathematics* is that it appears to start out as a cross-disciplinary work, but somewhere in the middle it assumes a strong technical inflection, only to slip back into a cross-disciplinary mode towards the ending. But the fact is that the book ought never to have been written just for the very knowledgeable few in that narrow field of study. *African Mathematics* holds the promise of acting as a catalyst for indigenous knowledge-based exploration in all fields of study where African researchers can be found.

Notes

- 1 Eglash, Ron. 1999. *African Fractals: Modern Computing and Indigenous Design*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Chika Ezeanya, *University of Rwanda*

Alice Bellagamba, Sandra E. Greene, and Martin Klein, eds. 2013. *The Bitter Legacy: African Slavery Past and Present*. Princeton: Markus Weiner Publications. 211 pp.

Historians Alice Bellagamba, Sandra E. Greene and Martin Klein's edited volume makes a unique contribution to the study of the African slave trade in its highlighting the voices of men and women of slave ancestry and ownership within the continent of Africa. Their approach is a divergence from the prevailing emphasis on exploring the legacy of the slave trade and slavery in a trans-Atlantic context.

The editors' introduction not only contextualizes the individual contributors' chapters as part of the larger project, but it also offers revelations about the system of African slavery in pre-colonial Africa, post-trans-Atlantic slave trade abolition when as the editors remark, "Slave-raiding and slave-trading within Africa remained not only an important form of economic activity... it accelerated" (p. 94) as well as its legacies in colonial and post-colonial Africa into the contemporary moment. As such they elucidate a history that would most likely be outside the purview of the majority of scholars, most of who focus on the trans-Atlantic trade. There are several themes that run through the chapters. For example, as the editors make clear, the history of the slave trade and slavery is inextricably tied to memories of it. This dialectical relationship can be seen, for example, in Emmanuel Saboro's chapter on songs sung during harvest festivals amongst the Bussa of the terror that a particular slave raider spread in the community and the people's triumph over him, and in Damian Opata's exploration of several Igbo proverbs that "both narrate and memorize slavery" (p. 54). It can also be found in Makhroufi Ousmane Traore's interviews with descendants of slaves and descendants of nobles. As Traore concludes, the sources show the different ways in which the two groups narrate their common past (p. 203). Other reoccurring themes are the tensions that exist between the metaphorical vestiges of slavery and physical manifestations of it. While there are references to slavery in the language of all of these communities that engaged in historical slavery and people still operate within the framework of the concomitant power dynamics, the physical evidence of past master-slave relationships are still being resolved. This can be found for example in Lotte Pelckmans' discussion of manumission documents still being considered necessary by descendants of slaves in Mali as late as 1992, or in the resistance to his questions about slavery G. Ugo Nwokeji faced when he conducted ethnographic research amongst the Aro in the Bight of Biafra.

All of the chapters explore the stigma attached to the descendants of slaves and the different ways that people try to negotiate this history that also shapes their contemporary realities. For example, Eric Komlavi Hahonou's article addresses the various state-sanctioned methods he deployed to overcome the stigma of slavery, as does Pelckmans. Alessandra Brivio's chapter on the Mami Tchamba Shrine in Togo explores how both the descendants of slaves and enslavers work through the history through ritual and ceremony.

Religion features heavily in the majority of the chapters with Islam being both a site of endorsement and a site of resistance to one's status as slave. Alice Bellagamba and Martin Klein state explicitly in their chapter that one of the documents they used in their research "clearly reasserts the role of Islam as a force for liberation" (p. 164), while Pelckmans' chapter demonstrates how intertwined Islam and nobility were. As she states, "Islam and nobility in the Haayre region over time became entangled over time and expressed in honor codes" (p. 67).

Her discussion of manumission elucidates how “moral boundaries based on inequality” (p. 66) are reinforced in the Muslim-supported self-manumission system.

Several authors also address issues of methodology. For example, Hahonou alerts the reader to the redundancies and tangents in the interview that is central to his chapter remarking that he left them in so that the reader could get a feel for what ethnographic material looks like (p. 30). Again, Nwokeji goes into great detail about the challenges he faced when he tried to interview “respondents” about the slave trade. One chapter that seems to defy classification is Zacharie Saha’s retelling of two twentieth century slave narratives from Cameroon. One of the narratives is a gem because it is evidence of not only slavery’s legacy, but its persistence as it tells the story of a man who was enslaved until 1968.

All of the authors rely primarily on the voices of the descendants of slaves and some also on those of the enslavers for their arguments. Their methodology is in line with the stated goal of the text: to present a “first-hand account of sources, which gives voice, as far as possible, either to former slaves or to men and women of slave ancestry” (p. 3). As such, each chapter offers a glimpse into very complex negotiations within communities that are haunted by the slave trade, slavery and its legacy.

One of the text’s unique contributions is its giving names and histories to both slavers and enslavers, not just numbers and statistics. In doing so, it adds a human dimension to a vast system that has extended across centuries and geographical boundaries to determine the presents and futures of Africa’s population. Its strength is also linked to a weakness in that the text’s confinement to West Africa leaves out other parts of the continent that were also affected by slavery and are also dealing with its legacy. While it is understandable that the editors could not address the legacy of slavery in every region of Africa, it is problematic that they allow West Africa to stand in for the entire continent as indicated by the book’s title.

The text would be useful in an upper-level undergraduate course as well as to scholars who are interested in learning more about the slave trade, slavery, and its legacy in West Africa.

Toni Pressley-Sanon, *University at Buffalo*

James R. Brennan. 2012. *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 292 pp.

Brennan presents in *Taifa* the tumultuous evolution of consciousness of nation and race in urban coastal Tanzania from 1916 to 1976. The centrality of both nation and race is adumbrated in the immediate discussion of the word *taif*—a Swahili word that connotes race and nation almost inseparably. Through the lens of document-based history Brennan reveals the changing discourse and changing notions of citizenship, race, nation, and entitlement in the rapidly expanding city of Dar es Salaam. The book is a rich and insightful account of how the racial, ethnic, and socio-economic pluralism of Dar es Salaam was an inherent part of the emergence of a racially conscious TANU-led independence-movement.

Urban Tanzania is presented as a deeply unequal and stratified playing field on which numerous actors, institutions, and organizations negotiate urban existence. Brennan historicizes this pluralism as crucial to its development and the development of “*Taifa*,” thus emphasizing

the agency of a diverse set of actors (colonial government, African Association, TANU, Indian Association, a class of African tenants, and a class of Indian rentiers, to name only a few), and the significance of unintended consequences of implemented policies. He provides a thoroughly researched argument for how “the impact of colonial rule did not fully reinvent the language with which people identified one another” (p. 1). For example, it shows the reader the relative power and incapacities of colonial government. It was able to impose legal-racial categories whose implementation has had far-reaching consequences in Tanzanian history, yet it was not able to tackle the currents of unrest among and demands made upon its resources by the residents of Dar es Salaam. It’s emphasis on the unintended and the contingent, a view that relativizes and reveals as inherently relational the power and incapacities of important actors and organizations, makes this book a work of depth and detail.

Each chapter presents a new decade or period of time that describe the continuities and changes to categories and policies, articulated through the literate portion of society. The book is “primarily a work of documentary history, in which institutions and educated men loom large” (p. 15). The literature, poetry, policies, official documents, newspapers, and letters that are the primary source of Brennan’s work carry mainly male voices. The world of the informal and that of women remains in the background. This bias mirrors the bias of public culture and literacy during and immediately after colonialism. Material from a large number of formal interviews and informal conversations with those who were involved in the events described serves to make the account more three-dimensional. Due to the chiefly documentary sourcing, however, certain informal (e.g. black market) and female facets of urban Tanzanian social, economic and political life are inexorably underrepresented.

The text utilizes a range of published and unpublished sources, including key authors like Glassman, Iliffe, and Kopytoff to theoretically fortify and contextualize his argument within a history and social scientific tradition. Building on work by Glassman on identity and racial thought, Brennan describes how racial thought was imposed, used, and navigated by actors during and after colonialism. While increasingly, if not wholly, discredited as an analytical term, the concept of race is here treated as an emic mode of thought not discrete in its own right. While acknowledging the centrality of racial thought to the argument, a more critical engagement with the problematic of using racial categories such as “African” or “Indian” in the narrative itself would have been desirable.

In *Taifa* Brennan sets out to historically contextualize the rise of certain conceptualization of identity, nation and race in urban Tanzania. He achieves this by positioning himself in the difficult space between a recollected urban past, and a surviving public culture much more amenable to retrospective research. The questions Brennan seeks to answer are many and multifaceted. The book accomplishes its task by tying together a complex history into a graspable, yet dense, account that is accessible beyond a purely academic readership in terms of writing style and content. Brennan is particularly successful in that he unravels the particularities of urban Tanzanian history. With *Taifa*, Tanzania is not just another postcolonial African country; it is given a particular flavor. For those interested in the history of East Africa, this is a book full of intriguing insights, providing the reader with a coherent account of identity, nationalism and racial thought in urban Tanzania. After reading this book the reader

will be hungry for further reading. *Taifa* is, as any good academic book should be, replete with the kind of answers that breed a new multitude of questions.

Martin Loeng, *University of Edinburgh*

Anthony Butler. 2012. *The Idea of the ANC*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press. 139 pp.

Butler presents a short history of the African National Congress (ANC), the ruling party in post-apartheid South Africa. This short book is divided into five chapters, including an introduction and a conclusion. The introduction begins with the ANC centennial celebrations that took place in Bloemfontein in 2012. In his reflection of these celebrations, Butler attempts to respond to the questions of (a) how has the ANC survived for one hundred years, and (b) how has the leadership managed to have a stronghold on the people of South Africa even after being banished for over four decades and, according to the author, not meeting the expectations of a liberated and democratic South Africa in terms of economic justice?

Butler's attempts to answer these two questions fall short as the rest of the book reads like a critique of the ANC rather than a book that seeks to unveil how the ANC has survived. For instance, chapter two of the book, "Agency," addresses the roots of the ANC. This chapter provides a backdrop for the ANC's formation in a colonial South Africa. The author portrays colonial South Africa as an innocuous system, free of European violence against African people unless violence is perpetrated by Africans on other Africans as in the case of the Zulu expansion. Similar to many colonial sympathizers, the author reports colonial theft, pillaging and mass dispossessions of land as Afrikaners (people of Dutch descent who colonized South Africa) and the English as "establishing of a presence." It is the "presence," Butler contends, that led to the creation of a group of Christian educated elite which later formed the ANC. The connotations of this chapter and the book is that the ANC, which has branded itself as an Africanist and pro-poor organization, was founded by Africans who were "Christian and educated elite" and thus lacks legitimacy as an Africanist and poor people's movement. What Butler fails to grasp is a simple fact that Africans do not lose or delegitimize their "African-ness" by incorporating western beliefs into their lives. After all, culture is dynamic. He also fails to acknowledge that, as Nelson Mandela posited, one of the most effective leadership strategies is to "lead from the back and let other believe that they are in front," which was effective in branding the ANC as a people's movement.

The author's negative bias toward the ANC is transparent throughout the last three chapters. He provides a truncated history of the ANC in exile as a floundering and weak armed struggle. Butler actually sings praises to the prowess of the apartheid South African Defense Force ability to crush anti-apartheid resistance, and assigns blame to the ANC for continuing with the armed struggle, which, he reckons, "reduced the regime's willingness to contemplate change..." (p. 45). Differently stated, the author extrapolates that the ANC's armed struggle — albeit he contends was weak and disorganized — was to blame for the brutality of the apartheid system post 1976. The reader might wonder: was the ANC's armed struggle really weak? Why was a government as powerful as the apartheid government so determined to defeat a weak armed struggle?

This book is anachronistic in its pro-colonial and pro-apartheid tone. While linguists have repeatedly verified African languages as languages, Butler still asserts that it was the missionaries and anthropologists who convinced Africans that their dialects or communications methods were languages. It is obsolete to pose the question: “The ANC has prevailed, or at least survived; but can it govern?” This is a paternalistic question that was often posed to rationalize white minority rule during apartheid South Africa. The answer is *yes*, the ANC has governed for twenty years and if the leaders of the ANC continue to employ the strategies of its Christian and elite founders, it will continue to govern.

Shirley Mthethwa-Sommers, *Nazareth College*

John P. Cann. 2013. *Brown Waters of Africa: Portuguese Riverine Warfare 1961-1974*. Solihull, UK: Helion & Company. 264 pp.

Throughout history navigable rivers have provided humans with an effective natural infrastructure greatly improving commerce and security for the state. Africa as a continent is a large plateau that arises near the coast with few rivers that are navigable from the ocean. Mountains, cataracts, and enormous swings in precipitation resulting in shifting navigable channels prevent Africa from having such critical rivers as the Rhine, Mississippi, Volga, and Yangtze. Of those rivers in the interior well suited for transportation the “Scramble for Africa” by the European powers resulted in many of them being divided amongst the different modern political entities today. Although significantly less important than for Europe, Asia, or North America the control waterways and the use of specialized and adapted naval forces are critical to the security of states in Africa.

Between the early 1960s and mid-1970s, Portugal used Africa’s “brown waters” (i.e., rivers and coastal channels) to provide security in its “ultramar” (colonial) areas, even as other colonial powers were abandoning their empires. In the process, a barely-first-world state on a shoestring budget developed forces, institutions, structures, and systems capable of effectively suppressing insurgency. John P. Cann’s superb *Brown Waters of Africa: Portuguese Riverine Warfare 1961–1974* describes that process, how it evolved and compares and contrasts it with the French intervention in Indochina and U.S. involvement on the Mekong of South Vietnam. The book—the first extensive English account of the Riverine wars in Africa—is well-sourced, and benefits from resources provided by the Portuguese admiralty.

According to Cann, there are four key missions for riverine forces in support of counterinsurgency operations. The first and primary mission involves preventing the enemy from using waterways by establishing static posts at key points along the rivers and the maritime shoreline to project power and conducting continuous naval patrols from those posts. The second mission calls for the naval elements to provide ground forces with the ability to maneuver successfully against the enemy. It’s a particularly critical mission in delta-type environments where delineation between rivers and coast consists of many islands and inlets. The third mission requires the navy to supply waterborne artillery that gives land forces firepower on remote battlefields where ground cannon are difficult or impossible to deploy. The fourth mission—arguably the most critical in a counterinsurgency—necessitates that the navy

project power throughout river systems and coastal areas to support police and customs services, which are the security forces most connected to the population and thus vital to counterinsurgency operations.

Cann demonstrates that French efforts in the Indochina War—though ultimately ineffective because the French lacked sufficient force to destroy or completely deny the enemy access to the river ways—was a major influence on how the Portuguese fought in the ultramar. Thus, before they even began, the Portuguese military knew that a specialized, small, and relatively inexpensive force backed by land-based aviation could successfully combat insurgents. To increase their chances of success, however, the Portuguese committed far more assets: deployed one “naval unit” (vessel) per 12.3 km of waterway, versus French deployment in Indochina of one naval unit per 108 km. (Cann compares this to the U.S. deployment of one naval unit per 10.5 km of waterway in Vietnam, which prevented any threat to Saigon and meant the United States effectively “owned” the Mekong.)

Despite Portugal’s eventual success in the application of riverine forces in support of efforts to combat the insurgency in its colonies, Cann indicates that the Portuguese stumbled into the decolonization conflicts in Africa unprepared and had to scramble to catch up. The country was more focused on conventional issues, such as large, multi-national exercises and operations in Europe and in support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). There was no formal document establishing either national or naval strategy, and counterinsurgency training in Portuguese military schools was more of a curiosity than a mainstream topic.

By the end of the war, Cann says, the country had performed a near wholesale conversion from the blue water navy supporting Europe to a brown water one. How this transition came about provides many lessons that are still pertinent today, from the importance of Riverine warfare and the criticality of joint operations between the maritime and land forces to the need to establish a permissive environment for the populations that remain vulnerable to insurgent action. As such, its audience goes well beyond those who are interested in African or colonial military history. Indeed, this work is especially relevant for anyone involved in establishing policies for and within modern African states, which are dependent upon control of brown waters because they are generally enormous in size, require lengthy travel between major population centers, and have a general lack of infrastructure.

Karsten Engelmann, *The Center for Army Analysis & US Africa Command*

Gloria Chuku, ed. 2013. *The Igbo Intellectual Tradition: Creative Conflict in African and African Diasporic Thought*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 342pp.

The editor Gloria Chuku in this collection seeks to unearth the creative conflict that characterizes the emergence of the Igbo intelligentsia from the slave plantations in the Americas to the Christian missions elsewhere in West Africa and from the twentieth century segregated European and American societies to the colonial and post-colonial African/Nigerian society. There is a contradiction that runs in the thoughts of the Igbo intellectuals covered in this book, orchestrated by the strong influence of their Eurocentric formations and their cherished cultural heritage openly despised by the European intelligentsia. The editor argues that they constantly

faced the dilemma of assimilating modern universalistic ideas without themselves becoming totally assimilated to alien models remains evident in the experiences of the Igbo intelligentsia discussed in this book (p. 1). This dilemma corroborates the experience which the African-American Du Bois paints in his *The Souls of Black Folk* where he states: "One ever feels this twoness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (p. 3). The creative conflict which the editor harps on is readily captured in the above and in some cases unfortunately created what Tempels Placid calls the *evolúés* or the *deracines* but which the editor calls *oyibo oji* ("black Europeans"). This conflict led Ngugi wa Thiong'o to call for the decolonization of the African mind and the Martiniquan Aime Césaire to call for re-africanization of the tutored Africans through the veritable integration of modernity and what Janheinz Jahn calls the "valuable past" and Bogumil Jewsiewicki calls the "usable past" of African tradition in the building of a neo-African culture. The topics in this volume stylistically capture this tension.

In her introduction, the editor had pointed to a very significant factor in the development of Igbo intellectuals, which can be described as the "community collective education system." She obviously intended to emphasize the fact that the development of Igbo intellectuals was not pinned down to the arrival of Western formal education. The Igbo had rich social, political, and religious structures that accounted for order, progress, and development before the colonial era. The system had its internal mechanism of training and educating the youth who eventually grew into adults or elders. There might not have existed a formal school system, but the system in existence was more pragmatic thus engaging people from childhood. Perhaps a popular African proverb that corroborates this is "it takes the whole village to raise a child." This effective indigenous system shaped the capable men and women who working as slaves made immense contributions to modernity. In the colonial and post-colonial era, the African and especially the Igbo intelligentsia have ultimately played vital roles as cogs in the machine of the modern world in different sectors and places. This makes the editor to declare that "in spite of the continuous devaluation of the continent's intellectual heritage due to European ethnocentric and racist sentiments... Africa has contributed enormous intellectual products to the collective output of humankind and to the progress of human civilizations (p. 3). It should be recalled that Europeans such as the French anthropologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl in his book *Primitive Mentality* painted the African as pre-logical. Also the German Philosopher Georg Hegel in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History* exclaimed that Africa was a dark continent covered by the mantle of night, lacking in high culture and had made no contribution in world civilization. The topics discussed in this collection were in part to dispute these Eurocentric misrepresentations.

The editor attempts to show through the collection of topics in the book that the Africa presented in the pejorative Western scholarship was largely distorted. Such authors were racist, ethnocentric, and sentimental (p. 3). Africa nay the Igbo had an intellectual tradition prior to slavery and colonialism, the product of which created such thoughts as the Igbo cosmology, cosmogony, medicine, arts and crafts, etc. even though the Igbo tradition of that time may not be described as literate. One can say that the editor also attempts a deconstructionist project in this collection similar to the one carried out by V. Y. Mudimbe in his *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge*. In this work, Mudimbe described the debased

contemporary African episteme as the invention of racist European scholars, which ought to be deconstructed. The editor in this collection seems to do just that. She, however, went beyond Mudimbe in attempting a reconstruction by unearthing evidences of African intellectual tradition as exemplified by the selected Igbo intellectuals.

There are six other broad themes the editor considered in the volume after the traditional Igbo intellectual setting. The first was the slavery and emancipation era. In the first chapter, Chuku discusses the famous Igbo ex-slave Olaudah Equiano who left the coast of Africa to South America on board a slave ship very much pre-literate. At such a tender age he had to struggle with his Igbo culture and the strange norms of his European captors, squeezing through eventually into the alien culture only to be confronted by the dilemma of the two opposed cultures for much of his life. Having developed intellectually, he came to decry not only his condition but that of other Africans as well. His intellectual development was both a product of circumstance and the genius of his native Igbo industry. Like all intellectuals with social functions, Equiano became a crusader against slavery after he bought his freedom. The editor showed that Equiano's case was a reflection of those of other Igbo of the time such as Archibald Monteath, Edward Blyden, James Horton, and John Taylor to name a few.

The second theme was the colonial era where John Oriji and Gloria Chuku addressed the two famous Nigerian nationalists Nnamdi Azikiwe and Mbonu Ojike showing the fervor of Igbo intellectuals during the struggle against colonialism. The third was the missionary contributions where Jude Aguwa used Bishop Anthony Nwedo as a point of discourse to address the intellectual impact of Igbo missionaries who included the likes of Fr. Paul Obodoehine, Rev. Chukwuma Onyeabo, Rev. John Taylor, Cardinal Francis Arinze, etc. In the fourth, Chuku singled out the illustrious Igbo historians Kenneth Dike and Adiele Afigbo to depict milestones in Igbo historiography, representing the accomplishments of others such as V. C. Uchendu and so on. In the fifth, Chuku and Philip Aka discuss the renowned Igbo economist Pius Okigbo and the legal luminary Ben Nwabueze as representatives of other classes of Igbo intellectuals. Also, Raphael Njoku discussed the accomplished Igbo literary icon Chinua Achebe under this intellectual purview. In the sixth, Chuku and Christine Ohale dedicated the last two chapters respectively to Igbo women intellectuals. Here they discussed Flora Nwapa and Helen Chukwuma as representatives of a very large group of Igbo women intellectuals who have played and continues to play immense roles in building their societies. Obviously, there is no gainsaying the fact that the topics addressed in this collection were carefully chosen and as such broadly represented.

I, however, find the fact that a section of Igbo intellectuals, namely the anonymous bridge builders, architects, fabricators and designers of pre-colonial times as well as the inventors such as Godian Ezekwe, Ugah Aguata (a science genius), engineer Roy Umenyi, Ben Nwosu, Emma Osolu, Drs. Sam Oriji and Felix Oragwu (both nuclear physicists), engineer William Achukwu, and Njoku Obi (who made those eye-catching inventions during the Biafran secessionist war) a great omission in the collection. They may not have left many documents but neither did Socrates who stars as the intellectual face of ancient Europe. This does not detract from the quality of the book but rather confirms the editor's assertion that the Igbo have a very rich intellectual tradition accumulated over the years through unwritten and written genres (p. 3). This great collection simply foreshadows a second volume.

On the whole, the sources cited by the contributors are quite expansive thus capturing effectively the focus and goals of the book in general. In reading the volume I see philosophy, anthropology, sociology, art, education, religion, culture and above all history. I think this book should command the attention of everyone interested in African studies irrespective of area.

Jonathan O. Chimakonam, *University of Calabar*

Daniel Conway. 2012. *Masculinities, Militarisation, and the End Conscription Campaign: War Resistance in Apartheid South Africa*. New York: Manchester University Press. 176 pp.

Through the use of archival evidence, trial transcripts, and personal interviews, Conway provides a tight and compelling narrative about the End Conscription Campaign (ECC), the most important white-led movement opposed to apartheid and South Africa's border wars. During the last two decades of apartheid, South Africa had the most onerous requirement for mandatory military service and the stiffest penalties for defectors in the world. Conway shows how the ECC challenged the prevailing gender assumptions created by military conscription, and he emphasizes that romanticized images of the South African soldier as patriotic, brave, and masculine were not static and evolved as political circumstances changed. The ECC's vision of an alternative society free of apartheid merged in interesting ways with other progressive interests such as feminism, underground art, gay rights, and student protest to become a movement that spanned South Africa's white left. Those South Africans who resisted military conscription through conscientious objection or draft dodging were vilified by the military-security establishment as effeminate cowards and self-righteous martyrs, and even as seditious puppets of the Soviet Union. Never a large movement, Conway explains the ECC triggered a vicious reaction by the National Party vastly disproportionate to its size and influence.

The process by which the state manufactured legitimacy for the South African war effort was necessarily all encompassing, intolerant of dissent. Conway is right to note—and this is the greatest contribution of the monograph—that masculinity changed as social and political conditions changed, as emigration soared, the currency collapsed, the propaganda machine failed, and business opposition increased. As the South African war left Namibia and Angola on the border and entered the urban townships, the conflict became local and deeply personal for many white families. Consequently, conscientious objection and opposition to conscription took on different forms and generated new strategies of protest. Banned by the apartheid government in 1988, the ECC was a potent political force restricted to its historically unique circumstances, and it was not to remain a political fixture in South African society. But it is not a forgotten or irrelevant relic either, and perhaps we might question some of the interviewees who felt “left out” of post-apartheid nation building even though they suffered for the end of apartheid, including jail time of up to six years (the highest in the world) for draft dodging. Conway did not develop in detail the link between the ECC and modern South African politics, but it seems the ECC's presence is still visible, not least because Helen Zille, the chairwoman of the ECC from 1986 to 1987, won more than 22 percent of the nationwide vote against Jacob Zuma of the African National Congress in the 2014 presidential elections. Though small, the

ECC represented an outlet for South Africa's white left when it was out of power, and the alliances that it forged still exist.

The focus of Conway's book is on opposition to conscription at the front end, including state prosecution of draft dodgers. The state's violent reaction to desertion or insubordination on the battlefield is outside the scope of the book, but future research into South African court-martials may show results that accord with Conway's findings: to fight is a ritual of masculinity and to defect or desert is cowardly or effeminate. A disability perspective may also show that men who received medical exemptions from service or who were disabled in combat altered or challenged prevailing notions of masculinity in a war-mobilized society. Conway's tone is judicious throughout the text, and he places the ECC in proper perspective; he avoids overstating the ECC's importance as a small organization, but simultaneously avoids trivializing the ECC within the enormous scope and diversity of the anti-apartheid movement. He engages the underlying organizational tensions within the ECC without delving into the palace politics and personal leadership struggles that characterize any broad-based campaign. Foremost among these tensions was the one between the sizable membership of women, sexual minorities, and radical political activists on the one hand and, on the other, the ECC's need to reach "typical" white families by presenting as the face of the campaign white men who were called up for the draft. Conway's book is a highly readable, engaging history of a lost chapter of anti-apartheid activism, and memorializes not only the broad and costly impacts of military conscription on white society but also the deeply personal turmoil faced by individuals who refused to fight for a cause that they perceived was unjust.

Andrew Novak, *George Mason University*

Marisa O. Ensor, ed. 2012. *African Childhoods: Education, Development, Peacebuilding, and the Youngest Continent*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 262 pp.

African children are continuously represented within media as the victims of violence, poverty, hunger, and disease or of unscrupulous terrorist groups that force them into becoming soldiers. Other representations, e.g., of children starving, aim at attracting the mercy of westerners to support Africa's path to development and the budgets of many NGOs involved in the area. While media campaigns seem short-sighted, academics have been trying to understand the challenges of Africa and how to face them. This book, *African Childhoods*, is an example of the crucial role of academics in rehabilitating a misrepresented reality by media. Edited by Marisa O. Ensor, a sociocultural, applied, and legal anthropologist at the University of Tennessee, this book has been the result of two meetings of the American Anthropological Association.

The editor's scope has been to produce an understanding of African childhoods, which counter-balances the Western views of "children as helpless victims" (p. 9). The book's chapters are mostly based on ethnographic research, and they portray a more realistic image of the lives of African children. Authors deal with pan-African issues of childhood together with specific country studies. Contributions by twenty scholars are divided into four main themes: "The Political Economy of Child Survival in Africa", "The Social Context of African Children," "The Human Capital of African Children," and "African Children as Political Actors."

The first theme discloses the labor participation of children. In particular, this theme focuses on Ghana, Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Kenya, and it gives a contrasting understanding of child labor, one which is very far from the Western misrepresentation of exploited African children. It is argued that child labor in certain circumstances can benefit the child and the family. The theme also reveals the willingness (or the dream!) of young African children to work for the government. This however, as a young boy from Sierra Leone recalls: “[...] will only be possible with peace in Sierra Leone and I pray that it last forever!”(p. 52).

The second theme includes three chapters on Mozambique, Eritrea, and the whole of Africa. The authors analyze how children relate to the social structure. In detail, Elena Colonna proves that children are an essential help for the family in taking care of relatives in Mozambique. On the other hand, every day, children face the dangers of HIV and AIDS, as well as the terrible treatment of living in a place like Eritrea, “one of the most militarized societies in the world and one of the highest producers of refugees”(p. 109).

The third theme looks at African children as human capital. This theme is potentially the most important due to Africa having the youngest population on earth, which means that in the long run the continent can develop. However, the theme—which deals with interesting analysis of children in school dramas in Ghana, the policy of care and education in Tanzania, and the role of young Qur’anic students in Nigeria—does not give any explication of the mechanisms that are preventing these children from becoming effective producers of wealth for themselves and for Africa.

The fourth and last theme scrutinizes the topic of African children as political actors in South Sudan, Rwanda, Liberia, Senegal, and Uganda. The four chapters maintain that youth frequently form and assert their political ambitions with a powerful approach. This gives hope that in the future such a political ambition could lead those countries, and the whole of Africa, towards a more democratic system.

These chapters have been written mostly by long established academics, albeit contributions by doctoral candidates and other experts have been included. Scholars are representative of different nationalities and careers. They come from Africa and western countries, and all of them have spent a long time researching and studying Africa. This mix of nationalities, languages and experiences addressed the issues of African childhood from different standpoints, suggesting that African children are not helpless victims but rather are active participants in their societies. Therefore, the hope for an outcome is strong, and the future of Africa is in these young generations. Overall, the book is very enriching and realistic. It offers an accurate perspective of the issues relating to African children, but it also has another added value encapsulated in the research method utilized. Ethnographic research, in fact, is widely used by the contributors. Therefore, the book is a useful source of information for scholars, and for international organizations involved in the development of African countries. Nevertheless, it is also significant for who want to know more about ethnographic research and the challenges related to the use of this method in an African setting.

Cristian Talesco, *The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*

William Gallois. 2013. *A History of Violence in the Early Algerian Colony*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 207 pp.

In recent years the Algerian nineteenth century has benefitted from an abundance of new studies, as authors seek to build upon standard accounts of the conquest and its aftermath. Many of these examine the violence inherent in the colonization process, presenting the early imperial experience as coercive and disruptive, engendering physical assault, hegemonic social, political, and economic institutions, or the manipulation of environmental, cultural, and architectural norms and practices. The latest entry into the field is William Gallois's *A History of Violence in the Early Algerian Colony*, a book that provides a long overdue reassessment of the 1830-48 wars of conquest in Algeria, based upon archival material from the Service historique de la défense and a variety of published first-hand accounts, including memoirs, diaries, and letters.

For Gallois, violence was not simply the collateral damage of a colonial military campaign. Rather, the French unleashed a barrage of massacres and destruction that decimated entire tribal communities, inflicting thousands of casualties while sustaining virtually no damage themselves. Its purpose was not to defeat the enemy, but to communicate the necessity of complete submission to French authority. Thus to Gallois, violence in Algeria formed an integral component of the French colonial mind from the very beginning, rather than appearing only under settler rule or during the 1954-62 Algerian War. Of course, this strategy was based upon the assumption that Arabs and Kabyles were savages, unable to comprehend anything but brutality. In this regard, Gallois interestingly notes the influence of a series of works purporting to describe Barbary pirates who combined Islamic zealotry with the torture and murder of Europeans, which informed the views of French soldiers, ministers, and public alike. Although the truth was far less lurid—shipwrecked sailors mostly received food and shelter and not agonizing death or forced conversion—Prime Minister/Minister of War Nicolas Jean-de-Dieu Soult and the High Command ordered that any soldier's death would be avenged against the public at large, leading to the destruction of entire villages. Rumours of jihad, ambushes, and mutilation fed French military frenzy, evolving into a push for total domination.

As Gallois adroitly observes, the more sedate Algerian reality threatened to foil plans to use violent means to implement highly profitable colonial trade, a settler society, and military government. Hence Governor General/military commander Thomas Bugeaud resorted to exaggeration, portraying rebel leader Abd-el-Kader as a dangerous opponent, a fabrication used alongside the threat of Moroccan or British intervention to justify the human and material costs of occupation. This set the stage for a battle between "legalist" proponents of the *mission civilisatrice* who desired a military campaign in keeping with Gallic laws and "civilization," and Bugeaud's concept of total war, which in practice meant official tolerance of rape, murder, and massacres. Any tribe that refused to obey French directives faced the *razzia*, typically seen by historians to involve physical mass murder, but broadened by Gallois via a highly original typology of violence in French Algeria. In addition to mass killings, there were assaults on resources (principally food seizures, which simultaneously starved the conquered while feeding undersupplied French troops), lifeworld/environmental cases (the eradication of tribes through the elimination of their habitat, including the burning of crops), and finally exterminatory forays in which soldiers were permitted to kill at will.

These arguments are very convincing, not least because Gallois mobilizes substantial documentary evidence; material from the military archives supplemented by numerous first-hand accounts. Only the conclusion is somewhat less effective, positing that French actions in Algeria from 1830-48 constituted an act of genocide. It is certainly true that a significant portion of the population disappeared between 1830 and 1872, many succumbing to famine and disease after the conquest. Yet this does not necessarily evoke a parallel with the functionalist historians of Nazi Germany: that genocide need not be planned, but could react to unforeseen events and problems (in this case Arab aggression and the colonization of Algerian land), becoming a gradual evolution rather a premeditated mass murder. If they differ concerning its cause and path, Holocaust scholars (intentionalist, functionalist, and moderate functionalist) agree that an attempt to exterminate Jews did indeed take place. In Algeria, neither the metropolitan government nor the military ever attempted a full-scale annihilation of Arabs and Kabyles, planned or otherwise, a fact acknowledged by Gallois, who distinguishes between the more benevolent fate of tribes that agreed to French rule and those that rejected it. The locals lost their autonomy, their rights, and after the 1873 Warnier Law their land, but not their culture, language, and their lives. Thus by the late nineteenth century, Muslim population growth far outstripped the settlers, leading to widespread fear of revolt, as intellectuals, workers, and gradually the general public rejected second-class citizenship on their own land. This is not to deny evident value of Gallois's study. Whether or not one accepts the idea of an Algerian genocide during the period of the French conquest, the book clearly underlines the often-extreme violence—physical, structural, and symbolic—of the imperial system, and most importantly highlights what others have ignored: the prevalence of atrocities from 1830-1848, sanctioned by the metropolitan authorities and High Command alike. As a result, this work provides a very important contribution to the historiography of colonial Algeria.

Samuel Kalman, *St. Francis Xavier University*

P. Wenzel Geissler and Catherine Molyneux, eds. 2011. *Evidence, Ethos and Experiment: The Anthropology and History of Medical Research in Africa*. New York: Berghahn Books. 498 pp.

This book explores a range of medical research issues within various frameworks and highlights the implications that politics and ethics exert on medical research within a context of unequal power relations. Much of its contents is based on the results of a 2005 medical research conference held in Kilifi, Kenya. The book's eighteen chapters are organized into the themes of engagements, evidence and politics.

"Part I: Engagements," covers a range of medical research issues. Luis Reynolds Whyte investigates the impact of conducting interviews and maintaining records in building positive relationships while conducting medical research. Whyte builds a case that record keeping serves as a means of transmitting information and also building nurturing social relationships between researchers and respondents, arguing that ethnographers and scientists would benefit from an appreciation of the contributions of record keeping. Marylyn Strathern points out that all knowledge systems are products of their social contexts, which in turn influence scientific knowledge.

Melissa Leach and James Fairhead argue that the use of informed consent in clinical trials should recognize the influence of inadequate health care provisions in certain targeted populations. Their Gambian research subjects consented to participate in clinical trials in order to access needed health care and other services. Hansjorg Dilgers' AIDS research in Tanzania demonstrates that national politics and local sensibilities influence medical ethics and the outcomes of fieldwork data. John Manton situates his study within the history of clinical experimentation dealing with new leprosy drugs. He contrasts the impact of missionary with government clinical trials efforts, as well as the initiatives of colonial governments with post-colonial African states. George Ulrich argues that ethical awareness and standards need to be reinforced in research contexts.

"Part II: Evidence," explores the production of evidence in medical research. Steven Feierman reveals that doctors in Tanzania and Ghana generate evidence without the benefit of optimal diagnostic tools, compromising medical practices. Patrick S. Kachur focuses on the impact of evidence-based medicine in the study of anti-malarial combination therapy. When the Tanzanian Ministry of Health, working in conjunction with an American public health organization, introduced anti-malarial combination therapy as a matter of local policy rather than clinical trial, there was no need for informed consent or information about the drug trial. Researchers enhanced the drug delivery system to ascertain the validity of the research, affecting the results of the study. Ann Kelly focuses on the modification of construction of modeled trials of malarial vaccines in central Gambia. Access to much needed vaccines lured the local population into becoming research subjects, who found themselves at a loss when the clinical trials had concluded. At the same time, upon completion of the trials, the local nurses lost their opportunity to continue to develop their technical skills. Babette Muller-Rocstroh discusses the impact of the application of ultrasound technology to unintended purposes.

Stacey A. Langwick shows how medicinal plants have come to play a significant role in medical research. Medicinal institutes are in the process of placing traditional medicinal practices under the supervision of medical doctors. While analyzing the memories of Kenyan government medical scientists, P. Wenzel Geissler discovers a common medical narrative persists across different sector domains, regardless of the scale of operations. Suzette Heald explores the ethics of mandatory and confidential testing of HIV in rural Kenya by soliciting input from communities regarding their perceptions of the most effective strategies to achieve adequate preventive measures.

"Part III: Politics," links together the political and historical perspectives of medical research and public health. Kenneth S. Ombongi points out that the decline of biomedical research studies in post-colonial Kenya compromises the leverage by which the government relates to the community through medical policy. Guillaume Lachenal demonstrates that racism influenced unequal opportunities for Africans and French expatriates within the Pasteur Institute of Cameroon. Lyn Schumaker highlights the racist actions of colonial doctors and sanitary workers who called Africans "reservoirs of infectious diseases" who posed a danger to "civilized" European settlers. Vinh-Kim Nguyen illustrates the evolution of community-based organizations and self-help groups in Africa into established health care support networks that offer clinical trials for vaccines, microbicides, and other needed drugs. These poor communities that had initially been excluded from modernity find themselves reintegrated as experimental

subjects. Luise White closes the book with a discussion of the triumph of global humanitarian actors over the limitations of state sovereignty arguments and local concerns.

Onek C. Adyanga, *Millersville University*

Bonnie L. Hewlett. 2012. *Listen, Here is a Story: Ethnographic Life Narratives from Aka and Ngandu Women of the Congo Basin*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 258 pp.

"Listen, here is a story that I want to tell. This is the life of me, a woman who lives here in Nambale. This is the life of women and how the life for women here has been going for many, many years" (p. 227) – Blondine, an Ngandu woman

When you look in the news for the Central African Republic you encounter stories about rebels, terror, civil war, murder, and bloodshed. But what are the other aspects of life in the region that no news agency covers? A journey to the center of the African rainforest reveals what happens and has been happening for many years to the region's inhabitants. In *Listen, Here is a Story*, Bonnie L. Hewlett deals with the different aspects of women's lives of the Aka foragers and Ngandu farmers in this region of the Central African Republic, specifically, and reveals the social, political, cultural, and ideological dimensions in life of these people, generally. There are few studies exploring the subjective experiences of women in small-scale societies, and this volume is one of them.

This book, which is based on interviews with Aka and Ngandu women, compares different aspects of life of the women across these two forager and farmer societies. Although the lifestyle and cultural practices of these two groups who are living in a similar ecology differs dramatically in some respects, "the two groups are economically and socially interdependent; their lives intertwine in complex alliances of clan membership, lifelong friendship (at times), exchange, and dependency. It is difficult, if not impossible, to speak of one without speaking of the other" (p. 49). Overall, using ethnotheories, Hewlett discusses women's narratives by embedding them in a theoretical framework and argues why these people tend to behave in specific ways.

Each chapter deals with one stage of life of these women and finishes with some field notes from the author's personal journal (i.e., her first-person observations and daily life). To be better acquainted with the current life of these people, the first chapter deals with the socio-economical and historical context of the Central African Republic and the impact of colonialism on the inhabitants. Through childhood narratives of Aka and Ngandu women, the second chapter deals with the process by which children become acquainted with and learn the cultural models and foundational schema of their societies. We learn that by developing culturally specific values, beliefs, and practices, Aka and Ngandu children become Aka and Ngandu adults.

In the next chapter, through beautiful, interesting, and delightful narratives, Aka and Ngandu women explain how they have encountered and experienced their puberty, first menstruation, marriage, and love; that is the transition from Aka and Ngandu adolescence to young adulthood. In addition, the reader learns about the process of mate selection and attraction and first sexual experiences among these people.

Hewlett examines Aka and Ngandu beliefs regarding conception, fetal development and growth, and their practices as mothers during pregnancy, parturition, and child rearing and raising in the fourth chapter. The following chapter deals with gender inequalities and differences concerning divorce, infidelity, custody, household income, polygamy, and marital conflicts among the Aka and Ngandu. Chapter six discusses what the role of Aka and Ngandu as elderly women is and how they contribute to different aspects of these societies such as transferring culture, beliefs, traditional values, knowledge, and so on. We learn about their experience of menopause and stopping having children, what it means to be an old woman, and their social status as elderly individuals. The book's concluding chapter is about the effect of globalization and the forces of change on the lifestyle of these people such as the growth of Christianity, colonization, and education, affecting all aspects of their societies. Having witnessed the changes over time, how Aka and Ngandu women think of today's world is that it is so different from the world of their childhood.

Hewlett's colorful and fascinating descriptions and eloquent writing in addition to the beautiful and detailed narrative of Aka and Ngandu women would not let the reader put the book down. It should also be noted that the potential audiences of this book are general readers who are interested in the anthropology of small-scale societies and more specifically women's lives in the Central Africa rainforests. Especially, *Listen, Here is a Story* would be of interest to biological anthropologists, evolutionary biologists/psychologists, ethnographers, and sociologists.

Farid Pazhoohi, *Independent Researcher, Shiraz, Iran*

Marloes Janson. 2013. *Islam, Youth, and Modernity in the Gambia: The Tablighi Jama'at*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 320 pp.

In *Islam, Youth, and Modernity in the Gambia: The Tablighi Jama'at*, Marloes Janson looks at the emergence within the Gambia of a transnational Islamic missionary movement with origins in mid-nineteenth century India. Throughout the text, Janson draws upon five biographical narratives to explore why Gambian Muslims, in particular women and youth, are drawn to the highly conservative movement—and how a movement attempting to revive traditions from the seventh century describes itself as distinctly modern.

The Tablighi Jama'at consists of individuals who regularly embark in groups (*jama'at*) to engage in teaching or missionary work (*tabligh*) among other Muslims to call them to practice a truer Islam. Their key reform is to purge local Gambian customs from Islamic practice—including lavish celebrations for infant namings or weddings, local clothing styles, and the traditional religious authority of (especially Sufi) male elders. In contrast to other Gambian Muslims, Tablighis adopt new conservative clothing (including black *burqas* for women), pay nominal bride prices, discourage women from working outside of the home, and encourage all (especially youth) to preach regardless of formal Islamic learning. While Tablighis promote what they see as authentic Islamic practice from the seventh century, they also promote practices associated with Western modernity: the nuclear family and monogamy, reliance on technology, individualism, a preference for urban living, a focus on instant enlightenment

(rather than after years of Islamic learning), and the use of English. English, rather than Arabic, is their primary language because it was the language of the original Tablighi missionaries from South Asia—but further, South Asia is seen as the site of the “real” Islam rather than the “diluted” form in Saudi Arabia because “South Asian Muslims contributed much more than the Arabs to the development of Islam” (p. 245).

Janson offers a key contribution to other scholarship on recent Islamic reformist or piety groups, particularly Saba Mahmood’s (2005) and Charles Hirschkind’s (2006), when she criticizes what she calls the portrayal of a “facile trajectory from a-religiosity to piety” (p. 258). Rather than posing a unilinear and teleological path toward ethical perfection, Janson shows in her biographical chapters that religious conversion can also be ambivalent and shifting. While some remain dedicated to Tabligh work, others experience burnout or boredom and revert back to their former lifestyles. Still others, dissatisfied with the lack of scholastic credentials and disregard for traditional Arabic Islamic learning, turn instead to Gambian Salafi groups. Further, even among those who remain dedicated, their spiritual paths are rendered circuitous by setbacks, internal struggles, and temptations.

With her focus on the at times circuitous and ambivalent lived experience of religious practice, Janson also critiques a prevalent anthropological approach that treats Islam as a “discursive tradition”—a tradition of discourses that seek to instruct present believers on correct practice by referencing conceptions of the Islamic past and future.¹ Janson believes this approach “privileges intellectual debate and argumentation over religious practice” (p. 11), which is insufficient for understanding the Tablighis’ anti-intellectualism and their focus on orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy. However, because she interprets “discursive tradition” as a gloss for the sacred texts of Islam, Janson overlooks the ways in which the Tablighi Jama’at is part of a discursive tradition. Not only is their main practice—*tabligh*, teaching or missionizing—an entirely discursive one, but this discourse is instructing present believers on “correct” Islamic practice by referencing a conception of the Islamic past.

While Janson’s focus on religious practice is fruitful, her disregard of this discursive approach precludes lines of questioning that are important for understanding the movement itself. What conception of the Islamic past do Tablighis invoke, and how does it differ from others groups such as neighboring Salafis? How is that conception mediated by the *Faza’il-e-a’mal*, the only text to which Tablighis refer other than the Qur’ān? How do Tablighis justify their blanket disavowal of local custom when local custom (*urf*) is considered a source of law within Islamic law? And why do Tablighis disavow local Gambian customs, yet simultaneously embrace local Pakistani ones?

Further, Janson’s analysis would have been strengthened by increased attention to the political and economic forces at work in the lives of practitioners. Janson makes a strong case for *not* explaining religious movements solely within the framework of political economy, as if religiosity were simply an effect of “hard and deteriorating political-economic conditions” (p. 256). She laudably calls for a focus on the positive, constructive and emotive factors that play a part in belief. Yet her scant reference to neoliberal reforms and increased joblessness is insufficient for understanding the arena in which this movement operates, especially considering that reliance on new technologies and a preference for urban living have become hallmarks of Tablighi practitioners.

Lastly, considering the book's title and Tablighis' self-identification with modernity, the work would have benefited from a more focused interrogation of what precisely Tablighis mean by "the modern." What does it mean that one practitioner described the Qur'ān as a "progressive book" simply because it answers scientific questions (p. 20)? How do Tablighis' consumer desires for Western technology interact with their rejection of the West as a "symbol of immorality" (p. 21)? Janson references Lara Deeb's work (2006) when she discusses the "enchanted modern," constituted by a dual emphasis on material and spiritual progress in direct contrast to Max Weber's theory (1958) of the disenchantment and secularization brought about by modernity. Yet to say that Tablighis' modernity is one in which religion is central is not to conclude analysis, but to open up a space for new questions, specifically: how is Tablighis' conception of religion itself informed by the "modern" conditions and practices to which they ascribe?

Janson's book is a fascinating account of a little studied new Islamic movement and its integration into Gambian society. Its strengths lie in its close attention to the lived spiritual lives of her interlocutors, and the implications of this approach for the analysis of new religious movements. Its value can, perhaps, also be seen in the many questions that it opens up yet leaves unanswered.

Notes:

1 Talal Asad. 1986. "The idea of an anthropology of Islam." *Occasional Papers Series*.

Washington D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University.

Caitlyn Bolton, *Graduate Center of the City University of New York*

Paul E. Lovejoy. 2012. *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 381 pp.

Transformations in Slavery (1979) emerged as "a work of synthesis" (p. xiii), whose major thesis is that both external internal forces combined to transform slavery in Africa. Paul Lovejoy's second edition relied on the Du Bois database rather than the Curtin census, remembering that even continental transformation "always occurs in context, which is inevitably local" (p. xviii) and drawing attention to transformations that made slavery, as a "mode of production", central to African societies, polities and economies.

The "Preface" to this third edition acknowledges that Marxist concepts help to "highlight the complexity of the slavery past" (p. xxiii) and recalls that the initial intention "was to focus research on continental Africa to counter the false impression that Africa's involvement in the slave trade was somehow passive, ahistorical, and only of interest in examining victimization and seemingly progressive under-development" (p. xxi).

Paul Lovejoy's account of the long history of African slavery, and his evaluation of the importance of the Atlantic trade to its development falls into three stages: 1350-1600, 1600-1800, and 1800-1900. By 1900, slavery was integral to "the African political economy," expanding by geographical spread and increasing in social and economic importance to transform the political order. In New World slavery race determined status, whereas "In Africa, the enslavers and the

slave owners were often the same" (p. 23). A central concept is this "*slave mode of production* [which] existed which involved an integrated system of enslavement, slave trade, and the domestic use of slaves" (p. 10). Early European slave traders fell into patterns established by their Muslim forerunners. The intervention of a trade in slaves was already undermining the bonds of kinship societies: "The net effect was the loss of these slaves to Africa and the substitution of imported commodities for humans" (p. 44).

Lovejoy covers the period 1600-1800 under three headings: the export trade, the enslavement of Africans and the organisation of slave marketing. The international trade required adjustments in the methods of enslavement and the development of commercial infrastructure and led to the increased domestic use of slaves. The political element varied from state to state.

Chapter 4 examines how "the articulation of the supply mechanism required the institutionalization of enslavement, which was disruptive..." (p. 66), and Chapter 5 looks at "the consolidation of a commercial infrastructure, which was integrative" (p. 66). Warlords perpetuated rivalries that retarded Africa's development. While enslavement continued to be a function of the state neither merchants nor warriors created a centralized state.

Between 1600 and 1800 four patterns of development drove the slave-supply mechanism: war primarily, and large-scale slave raiding; inter-state wars; the spread of lawlessness; and enslavement as a punishment. By 1800, African slavery was pervasive in and morally destructive to many traditional institutions. Although states attempted to dominate the trade, private merchants broke through government monopolies and established their own marketing arrangements. In effect "the African elite was committed to slavery; this elite owned the most slaves" (p. 107).

In the nineteenth century slavery had become integral to African economies, even after 1850. As the trans-Atlantic trade declined, slaves were not sent abroad but used domestically. "The dynamics of slavery in the nineteenth century involved the interaction between the forces of abolition and the pervasiveness of slavery in Africa" (p. 136). Even frontiers were adjusted to accommodate slavery.

Europe's reluctant commitment to abolition confronted an African political economy rooted in slavery, which took over "legitimate trade," the last stage of a consolidation of a slave mode of production. The vast availability of slaves made their employment in the domestic economy a necessity: the dynamic feature of slavery during the nineteenth century was the more intensive use of slaves in production. "By the end of the nineteenth century, slavery was the basis of political economy in Africa, whereas it no this view). In European settler societies post-abolition servitude survived (in *engagés*, *libertos*, apprentices) into the 1890s, but limited market development prevented the transformation of slavery itself into a productive system. Slaves no longer intended for export, filled the subsistence needs of the domestic sector.

The energy of abolition, eventually achieved because the modern industrial system and a slave-based social formation were incompatible, was distinct from the impulse to freedom. Colonialism sometimes compromised with indigenous slavery. One argument was that conversion to Christianity should precede the abolition of slavery, since unbelief was a form of enslavement. Abolition initially at least meant "a transition from slavery to other forms of servility and oppression: in general, freedom was not an option" (p. 254).

Essential to the slave mode of production was the need for continued enslavement and slave trading to sustain the social order and the economic base of the state. In the nineteenth century slavery was harnessed to capitalism and Africa internalised slavery, evolved from indigenous institutions, as a mode of production. Except for the relatively small plantation sector controlled by European immigrants slave owners were also Africans.

As with all good history *Transformations in Slavery* makes us see the present in the new light it casts on the past. This clear narrative is charged with philosophical sophistication and enlivened by well-placed anecdote.

Tony Voss, *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University*

Carol P. Marsh-Lockett and Elizabeth J. West, eds. 2013. *Literary Expressions of African Spirituality*. New York: Lexington Books. 239 pp.

The academy values literature for its intersectional potential, and this volume features literature's intersection with African spirituality in a long view of African identity that is based on heritage as well as modern displacement or migration. The volume equalizes African-American and Caribbean practices of spirituality with continental African models based on shared histories of resistance against the West's imposed religions, whether through enslavement or colonialism. The volume explores "African spirituality for its Africa-Americas trans-Atlantic literary manifestations" in the context of a Mende proverb that guides the community to understand that "to cry over your dead, you must go back to your mother tongue" (p. 3). Twelve essays in three groupings—"Imagining African Faith Systems in the Postmodern World," "Integrations of the African and the Western in New World Black Atlantic Writing," and "African Deities and Divinations as Forces in New World Black Works"—collectively address the collection's topic in a format suitable for comparative African world literature graduate and advanced undergraduate studies in religion and culture.

The text's distinction is its use of literature to feature layers of African spiritual behavior whether historical, philosophical, or speculated. Views range from assessments of W. E. B. Du Bois' "post-sociological" (p. 64) period and attempts to reconcile the field of sociology with African American spiritual strivings (Manigault-Bryant in Chapter 4), to Ishamel Reed's emphasis in *Japanese By Spring* that the inherent adaptability of Yoruba makes it the ideal Diaspora religious belief system (Dickson-Carr in Chapter 10), to reading unintentional markers of spirituality in contemporary African American film (Bess-Montgomery in Chapter 11), to considering cinematic and literary representations of androgynous Haitian Voodoo deities to suggest a spiritual space for same sex desire (Chapter 6 by Strongman). The first contributors' essay on African writing and religion, both indigenous and colonial (Chapter 2 by Hawley), gives a thorough historical-literary overview that does not fail, like so many summaries do, to significantly reference Islam. Melvin B. Rahming's essay on cosmological aspects of Garfield Linton's *Vodoomation: A Book of Foretelling* is properly placed at the beginning of the collection (Chapter 2) because it is one of the more traditionally-structured literary criticism essays that introduces "critical theory of spirit" and "spirit-centered methodology" as terms the reader will likely use as effective tools to apply to the volume's eleven other essays.

The study envelopes readers into comparative literary analysis with its collective documentation of literatures written in or translated from English and French, representing three major regions through setting or author nationality: The United States (Ishmael Reed, Toni Morrison), Guadeloupe (Maryse Condé), Nigeria (Amos Tutuola, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka), Haiti (Jacques Roumain, Rene Depestre, Edwidge Danticat), South Africa (Zakes Mda), and Barbados (Condé and Morrison characters). The authors manage an impressive collective of spiritual-literary history with literature reviews and bibliographies that cover a thorough cross-section from related disciplines. The novel is the most consistent genre contributors analyze in the essays, followed by film, and the short story. The selections are regionally balanced, and editors admit its deliberate confinement to African, Caribbean, and African American worldviews with a hint of a future volume that would address the spiritual phenomenon in Afro-European, South American, and Canadian writing.

The volume is landmark because it summons our thinking toward myriad possibilities for framing the global African cultural pursuit of things spiritual through a multidimensional layering of comparative epistemology, philosophy, and religious practice that expand literary and artistic genres' interdisciplinary effect. The collection features applications of not only spirituality but also cosmology, healing, transformation, restoration, and a much-needed interventional that reiterates the value of ritual and ceremony in the collective syncretism of African-based resilience and adaptation that responded to the effects of psychological and physical trauma and grief that beset African communities through enslavement, colonialism, and beyond. Represented well by Kameelah L. Martin's essay on affirming the conjure woman as a prototype with early twentieth-century stability and post-1981 innovation, the volume's contribution to literary historiography is valuable. The collection will stimulate debate and discussion on antithetical topics of atheism and pessimism that are also woven into contemporary African world points of view. Well-read readers will notice that the volume does not feature studies on poetry and drama as traditional genres of orality and performance that are also rich in aspects of spirituality, communal ritual, cleansing, memory, music-dance-song in ecstatic practice, and communion with the ancestral cycle, but including these genres would have likely complicated a collection that has expertly managed a broad and multi-layered topic.

Christel N. Temple, *University of Pittsburgh*

Robert I. Rotberg. 2013. *Africa Emerges: Consummate Challenges, Abundant Opportunities*. Cambridge: Polity Press. 269 pp.

Today, the African continent is again full of hope. After the euphoric decade of the sixties, which brought freedom to many of the formerly colonized territories, then the miserable 1980s and '90s that followed, with all their hardships and struggles African people had to overcome, the continent is "ready at last to play an increasingly important role in the affairs of the world" (p. 1). As a 2010 report by the McKinsey Global Institute referred to Africa's growth acceleration and economic expansion, the "lions are on the move" — a description also echoed in Harvard Professor Robert I. Rotberg in the title of his introductory piece: "A Continent on the Move." Focusing on sub-Saharan Africa, he states that "almost for the first time in more than 60 years,

[Africa] has a golden interlude in which it and its people can take advantage of abundant new opportunities" (p. 2). However, he also warns us about the numerous serious challenges ahead. In *Africa Emerges*, one of the leading U.S. scholars of African statehood and development takes the reader on a journey through different periods, regions, topics, and dilemmas that matter for today's African realities and tomorrow's African futures. He does this by providing fresh data, first-hand stories, and country-specific details shown in their complexity and analyzed in a fine scholarly manner.

Robert Rotberg clearly sets his goal to offer a book, which is "intended to be an intensely analytical, dispassionate, examination of the African condition," and therefore "meant to set out the obstacles ahead clearly so that sub-Saharan Africans can overcome them" (p. 4). This is certainly accomplished with great care, coupled with a clean-cut identification of needs and call for actions, as in the case of effective government. According to Rotberg, "the door to the new prosperous, healthy, strong Africa that everyone wants will be opened by keys of enhanced governance." African leaders themselves "need to forge those keys and to make Africa work in the way it now can and should" (p. 188). Almost each of the eleven chapters concludes with such a punch line, which is no simple repetition of the often-heard rhetoric but rather the evident conclusion of a structured line of argument supported by facts and expertly analyzed processes.

Africa Emerges begins with a chapter, which looks closely at the challenges and opportunities Africa faces, on the major "essentials of modern developed life to be obtained if Africa is to prosper and grow" (p. 15). We can read detailed statistics and tendencies from governance to education, to infrastructure and economic growth, the latter ones very much connected to China's heavy involvement all across the continent. As a new major economic force in Africa, China channels about 75 percent of all its investment "into infrastructure construction activities" (p. 155) and thus undoubtedly has been erasing "the much-lamented infrastructural deficits." Rotberg's arguments keep returning to how China drives growth (also the title of Chapter 9) in Africa, and he is able to provide the reader with a genuine insight into the complexity of interactions among the myriad of articles, scientific papers, and books published on the topic over the last two decades. At a moment when there is a timely need in the scientific community to better understand the local interactions between Chinese and Africans, Rotberg draws our attention to how little Chinese firms "invest socially in their locales," and concludes that China "for the most part is in Africa but is not yet a part of Africa" (p. 163). In the context of present-day academic discourse on Sino-African relations this chapter alone is a "must read."

Throughout this scholarly journey we learn about the demographic dividend (Chapter 2), touching upon growing urbanization and migration within countries, the "massive unsettling effect of the preponderance of young people" (p. 29), as well as the interrelated questions of tropical climatic features and productivity, together with significant geographic realities and desired policy considerations (Chapter 3). As a centerpiece of all priorities for African governments, the education landscape is exposed in Chapter 4. We can surely agree with the author that "the future of Africa depends on advances in educational opportunity, [in particular] on ensuring that more and more of Africa's young – especially girls – are well educated" (p. 55). After sophisticatedly presented analyses of armed conflicts and their lasting

consequences, state failures and Africa's emerging middle class, which "wants to free itself from conflict" so that it can stay on the "path of prosperity" (p. 90) in Chapter 5, Rotberg laces emphasis on the imperatives of accountability, strengthening governance, and creating responsible leadership (Chapters 6, 10, and 11). Providing case studies and sound country-specific examples for all issues is both an asset and strength of the volume.

It was obviously intentional from the author and the publisher that no chart, graph, or table is included in the book, which is a pity, especially when we read about flows of numbers, percentages, and other numerical data. Some graphic illustration may have helped the reader get the messages even more vividly. Apart from this nuance, *Africa Emerges: Consummate Challenges, Abundant Opportunities* is a well structured, highly enjoyable read for fellow researchers, policy-makers, and university students. It is a useful guide for anyone working in the field to be able to comprehend the big picture with all its interweaving political, economic, and social threads while at the same time to compare micro realities. It is a highly valuable "personal attempt to come to terms with Africa's future" (p. 4) by one of the most knowledgeable thinkers of African politics.

István Tarrósy, *University of Pécs, Hungary*

Lahra Smith. 2013. *Making Citizens in Africa: Ethnicity, Gender, and National Identity in Ethiopia*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 252 pp.

In this book, Lahra Smith looks into the political and social consequences of extended citizenship in Ethiopia by developing the concept of meaningful citizenship and using a gendered lens. To this end, she managed to provide a well-articulated and empirically supported study of contemporary Ethiopian politics. The book follows a unique approach and makes two important contributions to the study of citizenship. First, it goes beyond the realm of formal or institutional analysis of politics and focuses on the practical significance of citizenship to individuals and communities in their day-to-day life experiences. Second, it discusses the issues of women's rights, unequal citizenship, and ethnicity by taking women as a distinct category of citizens, which hitherto have been overly neglected in other studies.

The author starts by providing a succinct summary of democratization and citizenship creation in Africa by asserting that citizenship forges an important link between ethnic identity and democracy in multi-ethnic states like Ethiopia. It then proceeds to analyze the historical context of the creation and expansion of modern Ethiopian citizenship, using historiographical perspective in explaining how the northern institutions, mainly land tenure and cultural imperatives expanded into the south, west and east during the first half of nineteenth century. In this regard, the author gave much attention to Emperor Haile Selassie's administration and his project of intensifying national unity, which she argued failed to create nationally integrated citizenship and sowed the seeds of contested citizenship in contemporary Ethiopia. This part of the book heavily relies on sources that tend to describe Ethiopian citizenship related to the Amhara hegemony with conquests and cultural domination without mentioning other historical accounts that show the role of other ethnic groups in the nation building process and the centuries of interaction of people and cultures.

The language policy adopted by the EPRDF-led government presented as a vital instrument of expanding citizenship in the country since 1991. Accordingly, Smith argues that the policy indicates the government's commitment to self-determination for all nationalities and persistently cited the choice of parents towards their children's medium of instruction as evidence of the emancipatory nature of the policy. However, given their significant size, the case of those who prefer the use of Amharic (the Gurage and the Wolaitta) was not given enough attention. Doing so, perhaps one could argue, would have painted a different picture showing the pragmatic nature of language rather the one solely hinges on identity. Interestingly, Smith seems to subtly propound the pragmatism of language in her discussion of the possibility of using English as a national language but failed to extend the same reasoning to Amharic. This coupled with the fact that language and ethnicity has been overly manipulated by the ruling elite to restrict citizenship rights and impinge on individual liberties of freedom of movement and access to resources, can limit the merit of Smith's argument.

In dealing with ethnic identity and claims of citizenship, Smith discusses the Silte referendum showcasing how some groups are contesting the terms of their inclusion into the contemporary Ethiopian citizenship. Interestingly, this is also suggested by the author as indicating the potential for institutional and legal procedures to resolving ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia. However, the Silte referendum should be understood as a rare instance, since mostly defining the identities of many communities have become a practical challenge and often led to the eruption of conflicts in many regional states as evidenced by several studies. In this regard, the section on Oromo nationalism does a better job of illustrating the complexity of identity politics and citizenship in contemporary Ethiopia.

In the closing section, the possible conflicts between gender and ethnic rights are outlined and Smith furnishes some interesting examples as to why this is not always the case. In fact, she asserts that ethnic communities are better suited than formally stated constitutional provisions in protecting the rights of women.

Apart from one factual error, i.e. the military rank of Mengistu repeatedly mentioned as general while being a colonel, the book is well-written and organized with an interesting reference to the case of an Anywaa woman, which reminds readers to focus on the main issue. The author was also explicit about the possible effects of her identity and involvement in the research process as well as annexing the instruments used in obtaining information are all commendable. In sum, this book can be useful and informative to students and researchers who have interest on the issue of citizenship in Africa in general and in Ethiopia in particular.

Zerihun Berhane Weldegebriel, *University of Trento, Italy*

Randy J. Sparks. 2014. *Where the Negroes Are Masters: An African Port in the Era of the Slave Trade*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 328 pp.

The ability of coastal African Atlantic communities to control the terms of the slave trade is a very well-documented theme within the historiography of the Atlantic slave trade. Randy Sparks' new monograph on the coastal port of Annamaboe on the Ghanaian coast thus follows in a long line of research in African and Atlantic history. Even with regards to the Fante

confederacy that served as middlemen in the slave and gold trades between Europeans and interior states on the Gold Coast, there already is substantial scholarship that has developed over the course of over half a century. One then might reasonably ask why a major academic press would then put out a monograph that focuses solely on one single Fante town in the eighteenth century. The response is quite simple: this is an elegant and well-organized study that draws on multiple European and African sources in its effort to reconstruct the daily operations of slave trading and some of its prominent European and African participants.

Several of the chapters are particularly exemplary in highlighting the multiple methods by which coastal Fante leaders successfully negotiated with Europeans to maintain their own independence and commercial interests. John Corrantee, the head trader and political leader of Annamaboe from the 1740s to the 1760s, is the subject of chapter 2. Even by the standards of other crafty coastal African leaders of the period, Corrantee was a remarkable figure. He managed to play off rival English and French commercial interests against each other through a variety of strategic maneuvers. For example, Corrantee sent one son to the court of Louis XV and the other to London. When the son bound for England was enslaved and shipped off to Barbados, Corrantee managed to have him released and even feted as a price in the English capital. Sparks uses Dutch, English, and French sources to analyze Corrantee's careful diplomatic negotiations. It becomes quite clear that Corrantee's access to slaves coming from the expanding Asante kingdom gave him leverage over his European partners, but so did his recognition of how dependent the English fort was on his support in food and supplies.

The following chapter considers Richard Brew, an Irish slave trader who became the most influential European trader in Annamaboe from the 1750s until his death in 1776. Brew acted as a semi-independent entrepreneur, as he sometimes relied on the support of English trading companies and at other times openly rejected their demands. Brew managed to master the complicated political tactics of the Fante coast, and successfully used prisoners from Asante as bargaining chips for trade agreements. Although Brew did lose out in some of his scrapes with Annamaboe merchants at times, he had much greater problems with his creditors and business partners in England. One of the valuable aspects of Sparks' analysis of Brew is to show the importance of gossip and proper performances of masculinity in the commercial underpinnings of the slave trade.

Sparks moves away from this biographical approach in later chapters to explore the daily dealings of slave sales, the broader connections between Annamaboe and the Americas, and the cultural and social cross-pollination for European and African influences. One area that would have benefited Sparks' explorations in this area would be to more seriously consider the role of spirituality, as other historians such as James Sweet and John Thornton among others have done much more effectively. Sparks does well in delineating the varied roles of different players in day to day sales, such as gold-takers that could set the price of exchange for slaves. This study describes vividly the ties between Rhode Island rum traders with the Annamaboe market, which offers a human face to the triangular trade model. One of the biggest values of this study would be for teachers seeking to offer specific details to catch their students' attention while teaching different aspects of the slave trade. Sparks writes in a very accessible way without losing sight of the broader historiography on Atlantic slavery, and this study hopefully will reach an audience outside of academia. Its length makes it suitable for advanced

undergraduate courses. One minor flaw with the study is the references to oral traditions, since the author does little to explicitly state how this research was done. While specialists should expect no major new revelations here, this book is an excellent example of the growing genre of African Atlantic monographs centered on specific coastal communities.

Jeremy Rich, *Marywood University*

E. Ike Udogu. 2014. *Examining Human Rights Issues and the Democracy Project in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Theoretical Critique and Prospects for Progress in the Millennium*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books. 219 pp.

The book is well-crafted, easy to read, and a testament to the author's mastery of academic writing. The author shows off his authorial gamut early in the book where he begins with a discussion of the treaty of Westphalia. After leaving his reader to wonder why a book on African politics should start with European history, the author tactfully proves his digression to be a worthy one with an analogy between the pre-Westphalian Holy Roman Empire and European colonial power where decolonization is depicted as Africa's fresh start, an unmooring from its centralized colonial past. Udogu, overall, does a remarkable job in briefly summarizing the political history of Africa and not just of the states picked for close scrutiny. The book is commendable as an introductory reading to students of African politics.

In depicting the general political trajectory of Africa from colonialism to independence and beyond, the first chapter tries to capture the essence of why the African state had an uphill battle in democratization. Especially interesting is the comparison of liberation leaders, many of who would morph into tyrants, with colonial masters at the personal level. Not only did these leaders, according to Udogu, inherit an institutional structure that was designed for exploitation, but they also had a state of mind and especially an education that led them to behave as if their fellow citizens needed to be told what is to be done by an enlightened and Europeanized self (pp. 5-6). Chapters two to seven discuss the political history of six African nations: South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Liberia, and Nigeria. Special emphasis is given to the 2010 U.S. Department of State human rights report on these countries, although it is unclear why reports of other years or other reports of human rights and democracy are left out. One cannot but pause to applaud the author for doing an impressive job at capturing the political histories of these nations so concisely. The final chapter ends with a free-style discourse covering different themes relating to human rights and democracy in Africa with a brief discussion of development.

The title of the book raises a reasonable expectation that it will provide a theoretical critique of a prevailing paradigm and might even suggest fresh approaches through which we can view African democracy, human rights, and development. The title also suggests that, after analyzing past and present trends, the book will delve into the "prospects for progress" and, possibly, into what needs to be done to ensure such progress. Although the book delivers on most of its stated undertakings it falls short of delivering on expectations created by its title.

In the first chapter one begins to see that the author misses opportunities to engage with theoretical issues or provide theoretical critiques despite dealing with matters of theoretical

significance. Such opportunity is not taken up anywhere else, and there is, one might dare say, a lack of theoretical acuity that continues throughout the book. For example, despite recognizing that the Westphalian nation-state model was an imposition upon Africa and alien to its socioeconomic structures (p. 3) nowhere does one find a discussion about whether there can be other models that might do well in placating the inter and intra state tension and conflict that have resulted from the imposition. The same holds true for the lack of discussion on whether there is or ought to be an “African” take on Western sociocultural and political constructs such as human rights, democracy, or development. In short, nothing in the two presumably “theoretical” chapters or the empirical discussion in between them contributes towards the theory or theoretical critique of democracy, human rights, and development as manifested in Africa.

In a connected note, the book also misses the opportunity to provide theoretical critiques of positions regarding the connection between democracy, human rights and development. Because the book takes an uncritically laudatory treatment of this connection, it misses out on theoretical debates that are of the essence. One does not catch sight of the debates, theoretical or otherwise, emanating out of the interactions between neoliberal globalization, international labor, state sponsored Pan-Africanism, global civil society, their respective contributions to African politics, and the attendant theoretical discourse. It is because of this lack of theoretical depth that the author is, for instance, able to throw in development, human rights, and democracy in one book, devote a chapter to Ethiopia, and not wrestle with Ethiopia’s “theory” of “Revolutionary Democracy” or voices calling for the reinvention of Africa’s developmental state. Finally, the lack of theoretical rigor is seen in how the empirical section of the book painstakingly discusses the violations of rights connected to FGM, LGBT rights, underage employment, domestic violence, spousal abuse, harmful traditional practices, etc. Since these are not rights typically associated with democratization, a point assumed in the UN documents quoted in the eighth chapter (pp.175-85), one wonders why these rights find extensive treatment in this book. If there are reasons that the author assumes these rights are connected with democratization they are not disclosed in the book.

While the book is interesting on all other accounts, a reader who is looking for theoretical discourse or an exposition of future prospects will thus be frustrated. The problem, one should note, lies in the mislabeling of the book and not in its content. Worries about the title dissipate once one begins looking at the book as a discourse on political history rather than a theoretical exposé. In addition to being a good read in political history, the book successfully introduces the reader to common themes and problems confronting the modern African state.

Abadir Ibrahim, *St. Thomas University*

James Walvin. 2013. *Crossings: Africa, the Americas and the Atlantic Slave Trade*. London: Reaktion Books. 256 pp.

Foregrounding the notion that “the story of slavery in the Americas is [predominantly] the story of Africans and their descendants coping with and resisting the enslavement that trapped them,” in *Crossings: Africa, the Americas and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, James Walvin examines

across ten chapters the unsettling experiences of the African slave (p. 10). Here he focuses particularly on those encounters along the Middle Passage, from the spread of disease in overcrowded cargo holds, to the use of thumbscrews and iron masks, to the atmosphere of overwhelming dejection and distress among desperate slaves who starved themselves or leapt to their deaths in fear of their unknown fates. Interwoven into this narrative, however, is also an examination of the integral role that Britain played in the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. Once the fiercest transporter of slaves in the eighteenth century, by the nineteenth Britain had become “the pre-eminent force for abolition,” using its political strength to bring an end to this crippling and controversial trade (p. 10).

In the introduction, Walvin purposefully emphasizes the transatlantic slave trade in comparison to other forms of slavery such as the enslavement of Native Americans by the Spanish in the sixteenth century. For Walvin, what makes the transatlantic slave trade so unique (and particularly worthy of study) is the introduction of color as its most distinguishing feature: “To be black was to be a slave” — a factor that inevitably set in place the black/white racial hierarchy that would persist in the United States for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (p. 12). Thus, Walvin also highlights the implications of slavery in this text: how the millions of transplanted Africans were transformed by life in the Americas but also how the Americas were transformed themselves. For instance, in chapter ten of *Crossings*, Walvin posits that a direct consequence of slavery and its abolition was rampant poverty among black society at large. This essentially created not only a racial divide in the United States but also a pervasive economic gap that the Reconstruction era alone could not correct.

Of *Crossings*' ten short chapters, perhaps the most insightful are the final two chapters of the book, respectively titled, “The Durable Institution: Slavery after Abolition” and “Then and Now: Slavery and the Modern World.” Here Walvin tackles one of his most significant questions insufficiently answered in previous histories of slavery: How could such a practice endure across four long centuries despite the mounting aversion among leaders of the Western world? In these chapters, Walvin thus focuses on the expansion of slavery throughout the Americas (directly tied to the sugar and cotton industries) even after the abolition of the slave trade in 1808. Therefore, what Walvin emphasizes in this text is that the end of the transatlantic slave trade is just a part of a larger history of slavery. After all, internal slave trades developed within the American South and Brazil, which he catalogues adeptly, “accompanied by all the personal distress of family break-up and upheaval” (p. 210).

In the end, *Crossings* has placed itself among the world's most significant contributions to date to recording the history and horrors of the Atlantic slave trade. Offering its readers a deeper and considerably more comprehensive glimpse into the trade and its far-reaching impact on the African captives forced to inhabit its overcrowded and disease-ridden ships, the book reveals both “the stinking claustrophobia of the slaves' conditions” (p. 61) and the crashing of ravaged African bodies “against each other in fettered filth along the bare boards of the deck” (p. 91) in an account as visual and unrestrained as the equally influential 1997 historical drama *Amistad*. While his argument is lost at times among the numerous historical threads that Walvin chooses to examine, *Crossings* is still a valuable contribution to twenty-first century scholarship on such an expansive topic as the transatlantic slave trade, backed by Walvin's forty years of scholarship in the field. This work not only examines the multiplicity of

social and economic factors that invariably shaped the trade itself, but it also works to decentralize the data he finds necessary but “oddly sterile” and recover the era’s victims from “under a pile of statistics” (p. 93). In doing so, what Walvin offers is a more balanced historical narrative that he claims is the historian’s most difficult task to create while at the same time shedding new light on a subject revisited time and again, in this case in a manner both interesting and revealing for students and scholars alike.

Christopher Allen Varlack, *Morgan State University*

Kaye Whiteman. 2014. *Lagos: A Cultural History*. Northampton, MA: Interlink Books. 271 pp.

Fifteen years ago, John Reader wrote his seminal *Africa: The Biography of a Continent* (1999) to widespread acclaim from Africanists and curious non-specialists alike. His journalistic ability for synthesis and clarity made the long-denied history of the “Dark Continent” equally accessible and compelling, and challenged long held notions of an Africa void of worthwhile histories. This year Kaye Whiteman has succeeded in accomplishing a similar feat with the publication of *Lagos: A Cultural History*. Whiteman has brought forth to a wider audience the history of a specific city within the region that Reader introduced to many, and in Reader-worthy fashion has undercut one-sided narratives of Lagos as a place of suffering and bewildering chaos. In his “quest for the soul of the city” (p. xix), Whiteman has shown Lagos’s “profound sense of autonomy” (p. 243) along with its “emotional warmth” (p. xix), and, above all else, that “it is a city of people” (p. xix). Both scholars in need of general information and the general public will likely find what they are looking for behind the tastefully designed black cover bearing a tripartite image of Lagos’s famous “go-slow” markets.

Whiteman first visited Lagos forty years ago and has been a frequent sojourner since, including a spell in 2000-2001 when he first entertained the idea of writing a book. A journalist by trade, he edited the London based *West Africa* magazine for a number of years and has been a frequent contributor to the robust Nigerian press as well. His deep web of friendships within the country is apparent, as he seems to have discussed every episode in the book personally with an authority on the matter. Similarly, the breadth of secondary sources he utilizes is nearly encyclopedic, ranging from obscure historical monographs on Victorian era Nigerian newspapers to what seems to be almost every noteworthy novel set in the city. Although he provides a several page bibliography of sources and further reading at the end of the book, one only wishes he had gone to lengths to be as meticulous as Reader—who published forty pages of references and extensive footnotes in *Africa*—in documenting his sources throughout the book.

The book is broken up between eleven chapters, beginning with a broad overview of “The Story of Lagos” that highlights the major events that will be referenced throughout the rest of the book. The next two chapters cover the ecology of the city, starting with its topography and continuing to its changing architectural and infrastructural aesthetics. These spatial histories provide a useful survey of the physical expansion of the city from a Yoruba trading outpost in the early nineteenth century to the sprawling megacity it is today, and Whiteman is wise to

have included them, even in a book with culture in its subtitle. From this material backdrop, Whiteman takes the reader on a journey through a “city of the imagination,” vividly and informatively illustrating the literary, musical, cinematic, and visual artistic conceptions of the city with stops in the seedy joints on Bar Beach, the legendary floating city Makoko, the Fela-blasting Highlife clubs, the booming film studios of Nollywood, and the fictional scenes from the likes of Wole Soyinka, Helon Habila, and Chris Abani. Through his obvious love for Lagos and its people, Whiteman exposes a city of brilliant culture beneath its international reputation as “a hell-hole of crazy slums, endless traffic jams, con-men and chaos” (p. xvii).

Two additional chapters of particular note are chapter six, “Stories to Remember,” and chapter eight, “Prominent Personalities of Lagos.” These detailed accounts of specific events and people that have become part of Lagos’s lore (such as the assassination of General Murtala Muhammad and the remarkable history of Madam Efunroye Tinubu) read more like short stories than dry historical notes, yet are part of what makes the book an excellent quick reference source. The vignettes are enhanced by the fact that Whiteman personally knew several of the people and was a firsthand witness to many of the events.

In the fitting final chapter, “The Future City?” Whiteman muses about Lagos’s place in the world and the outlook for its development. Here he returns to the architecture and infrastructure that the book began with, rightfully tying the future of what he has compellingly shown to be a city of the imagination to its physical capacity to at least minimally host its creative residents. Whiteman also includes an interesting discussion from urban theory on what distinguishes megacities—extremely populous areas—from “world” or “global” cities—loci of “unique knowledge complexes” (pp. 251-52)—and speaks to the transition that Lagos is undergoing from the former to the latter under the astute leadership of governor Babatunde Fashola. For years Whiteman has written obituaries of notable Africans for *The Guardian*, but it is the world’s good fortune that for his first book he chose to write the opposite. He has announced of the arrival of a new world city.

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Bahru Zewde. 2014. *The Quest for Socialist Utopia: The Ethiopian Student Movement c. 1960-1974*. Melton, Suffolk, UK: James Currey. 299 pp.

This book digs into the core of the intellectual and political developments in Ethiopia, one of the largest, oldest, and most reputed states in Africa. The author, Bahru Zewde, is a respected Ethiopian professor of history who has lived close to what he narrates for more than forty years. In an impeccable scholarly exposition one senses an emotional drive to analyze the passing of historical events that can explain the constitutional order of Ethiopia that became a reality in 1994. How did Ethiopia, as the only state in Africa to do so, become a federal republic based on ethnically defined states? The answer is buried in the development of the Ethiopian student movement that made a decisive and fateful intervention in the political direction of the country, from the process that overthrew the government of Emperor Haile Sellassie to the formation of the two regimes that followed, in 1974 and in 1991. The book sees this within the context of both

an international perspective of student movements as well as encompassing the thinking of earlier pioneers of change in Ethiopia.

Many studies have been dedicated to the Ethiopian student movement. They are all dealt with and the author uses as his sources everything that is related to his object of study: Ethiopian newspapers, university reports, and police and intelligence material as well as the wide range of student publications and pamphlets at home and abroad and, in addition, oral narratives.

The crucial circumstances from which the historical drama emerges were the Emperor's dedication to the development of education and the opening up of college and university education, starting in 1952. The idea of academic freedom and the initial encouragement on the part of the university leadership to let the students develop channels of expression and unionism proved to be exceedingly complex to handle. After all, the regime of Haile Selassie, however much an instrument for change in its early years, was a traditional autocratic political system in which initiatives had to come from the imperial "elect of God" and not from the ranks below. Expressions, either in prose or poetry, which tried to analyze critically the realities of Ethiopian society as well as the staging of demonstrations of protest, contributed to escalating confrontations with the regime. Leaders and writers were imprisoned and expelled, solidarity boycotts often led to the closure of the university, mass arrests of students could happen and indeed, a student leader was murdered, other students were killed and large numbers fled. How students developed from loyal to disloyal opponents of Haile Selassie is shown, as well as the movement's ability to come up with causes encapsulated in effective slogans: "Land to the Tiller," on the consequences of the unfortunate system of landownership, recurred for ten years on top of the reservoir of grievances as to the failures of the regime. The ensuing military dictatorship proclaimed very radical land reforms in 1975, and the forces that overthrew Mengistu Haile Mariam's dictatorship in 1991 dealt with the "Question of Nationalities," a topic that burst like a bombshell into the open in the student paper *Struggle* in November 1969. The challenge to the policy of unity of all the different ethnic groups by stamping it as assimilation into one hegemonic group, the Amhara, was unbearable to Haile Selassie's polity. Bahru Zewde dwells a lot on the development of a relentless, uncompromising and revolutionary Marxist-Leninist ideology within the most active circles of the movement.

The story changes from the home scene in Ethiopia to the various stages in North America and Europe where Ethiopian students had found their way to a large number of countries. They formed unions wherever they were and published a large number of journals. They travelled to meet in annual congresses, they made resolutions and constitutions, debated and voted. They practiced the habits of democracy. Several congresses were held in West Berlin. In 1974, two hundred delegates came from fourteen countries to the fourteenth congress. Bahru Zewde's book rightly places the driving force of the movement in the happenings in Ethiopia. What happened at home as well as student activists fleeing the repression fed the movement abroad. Ethiopian students abroad produce numerous, lengthy, highly theoretical articles. Obsessively occupied with the developments and prospects in Ethiopia, the great weakness of student writings, particularly abroad, was that they lacked empirical data on the realities in Ethiopia. Abstract Marxist theory aided the students in their interpretation of Ethiopian reality, yet their theoretical sophistication often had little to do with Ethiopia. The students abroad also aided

the credos that developed at home as to what should be Ethiopia's road to the future. The formation of the two Ethiopian political parties, Ma'ison and EPRP, both of them based on Marxist ideology, took place in student circles abroad in the years 1968-72.

Bahru Zewde finds that the debate on the question of nationalities took a surprising turn in 1969. The seventeenth congress of ESUNA, the student union in North America, had debated the issue of ethnicity in Ethiopia a few months before the article in *Struggle*, prescribing regional autonomy as a solution to what was perceived to be the problem of "regionalism". Earlier resolutions of the national union at home had been preoccupied with the problem of "sectarianism" and "tribalism" and worried about the unity of Ethiopia. Then a small group of students came up with a radically different approach. The blame is put on an extensive "tract" by an unknown author in 1970, "The National Question (Regionalism) in Ethiopia." Here, the principle of "self-determination up to and including secession" was advanced for the first time, a principle that found its way into the Constitution of 1994.

To safeguard Ethiopian unity and discourage secession, the right to secession had to be given. This has been a tremendously controversial issue, and one senses Zewde's concern about the wisdom of this as well as his regrets over the prevalence of leftist ideology in the student movement. The radical core injected the movement with dogmatism. They forwarded the "right" answers to complex questions. The movement, fighting for democracy, became divisive, repressive, and intolerant. Its writings, bearing a stamp of urgency, were highly polemic, full of labelling, accusations, and counteraccusations. Even so, the present reviewer finds Zewde's following statement hard to swallow: "The 'verbal violence' that it initiated was to translate itself into the physical violence that killed a generation" (p. 206). He has in mind the "red terror," the military dictatorship's dreadful killings in 1977-78 of several thousand young people. Until the party EPRP started to kill members of the Ma'ison for their willingness to aid the military government, the Ethiopian student movement was a peaceful movement. The military had proven themselves to be relentless killers almost as soon as they took over the reins of power in 1974, and a sharp focus of blame must be put on Haile Sellassie's government for not supporting the freedom of expression that the students demanded and which might have forwarded a tradition of pluralism and pragmatism in approaching the development of Ethiopia. These remarks are in no way meant to diminish my opening sentences about Bahru Zewde's book: It is indeed an impressive and comprehensive piece of scholarly work.

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