

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Ronke Iyabowale Ako–Nai, ed. 2013. *Gender and Power Relations in Nigeria*. Lanham: Lexington Books. 350 pp.**

This book adds to the set of books on Nigerian women, some historical (such as Bolanle Awe's *Nigerian Women in Historical Perspective*) and some literary (such as Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi's *African Woman Palava: The Nigerian Novel by Women*). An issue with the book is the extreme variation in the quality of the book's essays: while some, pretending to follow feminist tenets, invoke religious reasons to limit the improvement of women's situation in Nigeria, others define women by emphasizing their supposedly feminine traits ("female persons with female nature or qualities, such as caring for weak creatures, personal attractiveness, and interest in people" [p.159]), or include contradictory statements ("the Matrimonial Causes Act is bereft of any definition or description of ... domestic violence. It is noteworthy to say that the Act did define the term domestic violence" [p. 81]). However, other essays are well-researched with carefully organized ideas that lead the reader to a more profound understanding of a problem and/or situation.

Chapter 1 serves as a general introduction to the topic and an attempt to differentiate between the point of view of Nigerian and African women and general Western feminist theories. Each of the subsequent nineteen chapters, grouped in four sections, focuses on a specific topic related to Nigerian women and their life in relation to power, with variable degrees of success.

The first section, "Women's Rights under the Law" (six chapters), focuses on various problems affecting women in the public sphere: effects on them of the three different legal systems in Nigeria (customary, Islamic, and state); the scarcity of women in elected positions in public roles, the Constitution, domestic violence against women and the framework to improve women's role embodied in the National Gender Policy. The main strength of this section is the wealth of data collected, otherwise difficult to find, and the portrait of women in Nigeria in relation to the law, how it protects but also subjects them to abuse, and how measures have been put in place, though not fully implemented, to improve the realities of women's lives there.

The second, "Sexism and Women's Marginalization" (three chapters, two by same author and mainly with same set of data), focuses on benevolent sexism in urban areas of Nigeria, the general cultural barriers against the advancement of women and how traditional views of masculinity negatively affect women's lives and development. The third, "Politics and Gender Participation" (six chapters), centres on how the exclusion of women from real participation in democracy is harming the nation, how applying women's points of view enriches the concept of "security," and how efforts of "gender mainstreaming" in Nigeria are ongoing. Highlighting the importance of women in peace-building operations and in upholding societal consistency in conflict—ridden areas, such as the Niger Delta region, the book discloses the harmful effects of masculinist ideology but to society as a whole, and emphasizes gender equality as a way to improving everybody's life.

<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/pdfs/v15i1a9.pdf>

The fourth, “Feminism and Social Movement” (four chapters), explains the role of Nigerian women in maintaining social coherence and union in dire economic conditions, and in defending against an oppressive militarized state power that tries to keep citizens subservient. It also emphasizes the role of women in grassroots movements excluded from broader civil society programs, using the Niger Delta area as case study for two chapters: one on the unofficial state of war in the region over the past years, the economic circumstances, and psychosocial consequences borne on women through continuous victimization and the violence meted by the State; and the other on the efforts of women for the environment, seemingly not of any concern to the other interested parties, i.e., oil companies, the Nigerian state, and men. The remaining chapter shows the historical resistance of women against the “unknown soldier” using Mme. Olufinmayo Ransome Kuti as an example of how Nigerian women can help fight against violence from the State with any means at their disposal.

Although each chapter has a list of references, the book also includes a rather rich bibliography at the end, which may be useful to further illuminate the situation of Nigerian women, and an index that closes the volume. In addition to highlighting problems, the book suggests measures for their solution and gives recommendations on improving the situation of women in Nigeria, while providing data on legislation and on the civil service which can certainly be useful in trying to understand the conditions of life for women in Nigeria. One weakness of the book is that in contrast to the beauty of the actual physical object (elegant design and hard-binding), a great part of the text makes extremely difficult reading because of the typographical errors and a lack of grammatical correctness, which would have been avoided with more careful proofreading.

Mar Rodriguez, *Cuttington University*

**Ronald Aminzade. 2013. *Race, Nation, and Citizenship in Postcolonial Africa: The Case of Tanzania*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 425 pp.**

Nationalism is a powerful force in the modern world. It produces the boundaries of contemporary political communities that differentiate citizens from foreigners, animates violent political struggles over claims to sovereignty, and generates identities of belonging that inspire millions (p. 1).

Ronald Aminzade approaches the study of the Tanzanian nation and its dynamic and continuing creation through the lenses of race and the economic development of state and society. Aminzade traces a complicated state- and nation-building trajectory from the dawn of the Tanzanian postcolonial order through the period of state socialism and into recent decades of privatization and relative political opening. Like many authors who explore the formative and transformative power of nationalism, Aminzade tells a story that is complex and compelling, intertwining dialectics of citizenship—with its restrictions and its privileges—and economic growth and power. These conversations concerning the overlapping push and pull of economic power and political belonging unfold from the story of a country emerging from colonial rule and attempting to figure out who its members are as a nation. His methodology

fits the question; intricate historical process tracing underscores the dynamism of the process of nation-building and lends a great deal of insight to the project of nationalism by intensely focusing on a single case, Tanzania.

Tanzanian nationalism, according to Aminzade, is an “important source of cohesion, domestic peace, and political stability on a continent rife with ethnic violence” (p. 357). Although Aminzade’s take on Tanzanian civic nationalism generally argues that its inclusivity decreases the salience of ethnic boundaries, a central theme throughout the book is that the process of nation-building has, perhaps predictably, erected cultural and territorial boundaries that indicate the national and racial contours of internal and external others. There is a tension embedded in the practice of Tanzanian politics that exposes the push and pull between the objectives of shoring up political legitimacy and cultivating lasting economic development, both of which have bearing on the twin processes of inclusion in and marginalization from the national polity.

Aminzade’s narrative is essentially an instrumentalist one. It traces the dynamic process of nation-building by arguing that the parameters of inclusion and exclusion in the national body are tied directly to the process of economic development within the state, as well as within society. This approach highlights the centrality of race as a boundary, focusing on the position of Asian-Tanzanians in a postcolonial political and economic environment. Aminzade also considers the role of foreign aid in the development of both state and nation, further blurring the line between measures needed for economic prosperity and a rhetoric concerned with national self-sufficiency. Who makes up the nation and who is building the state? Although his argument is compelling, I would suggest that the tension ingrained in the nation-building process has components that cannot be tied to strictly instrumentally rational criteria hinging on economic growth and stagnation. Although the author does an impressive job of discussing the actions and motivation of parties, the state, and the individuals that led them throughout history, his work could benefit from asking the question of why ordinary people followed leaders within the party and the state.

Aminzade does do a brilliant job of capturing the complexity of moving parts that collaborate in the project of national identity formation. One innovative and exciting component of Aminzade’s work is the extensive attention given to the interaction between political parties, the state, and the public as they each intersect with discourses of belonging to and exclusion from Tanzanian-ness. This dissection of political entities reveals the divided nature of goals and interests, within the state apparatus, as well as within the ruling party. Particularly by paying attention to the diverse interest of political actors, Aminzade rejects a path dependent frame of reference in favor of highlighting agency at multiple points throughout the course of policy and identity formation, an approach that may suggest that there is reason to be optimistic about the future of democratic, civic nationalism.

Aminzade does an exemplary job of connecting the discourse of nationalism across disciplines. As a sociologist, he engages with historians and political scientists with obvious ease, underlining the need for cross disciplinary approaches to the study of nation-building and its constituent parts.

M. Victoria Gorham, *University of Florida*

**Kwame Anthony Appiah. 2014. *Lines of Descent: W. E. B. Du Bois and the Emergence of Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 227 pp.**

Part of a current resurgence in interest in arguably one of the most important African-American figures of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Kwame Anthony Appiah's most recent study of Du Bois' intellectual engagement traces the multiplicity of historical, political, philosophical, and cultural influences that invariably shaped Du Bois's lifelong "project of reclaiming and redefining 'the race concept'" at home and abroad (p. 6). In *Lines of Descent: W. E. B. Du Bois and the Emergence of Identity*, Appiah examines the intersecting intellectual "matri[ces] from which Du Bois drew and to which he contributed" in a thoughtful attempt to better place Du Bois within a larger critical framework. In this small book of just five chapters, Appiah probes Du Bois' most seminal works and the global ideologies that contributed to his own philosophy of history, constructed and reconstructed from the 1899 sociological study, *The Philadelphia Negro*, to his 1940 *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept* and beyond. By tracing the conceptual influences of William James, Heinrich von Treitschke, Gustav von Schmoller, and more, Appiah is therefore not only able to illustrate key factors in Du Bois' intellectual awakening but also to aid readers of the present day in "learn[ing] something about how to shape our own—no doubt, different—responses" to questions of identity and our roles in the modern world (p. 23).

In the introduction, Appiah emphasizes the necessary intellectual challenge that Du Bois set for himself: "to come to grips with the social reality of race in a way that both resisted scientific racism and responded to the claims of cosmopolitanism" (p. 9). Aware of the present social and cultural prejudices that skewed the histories of African and African-American peoples, Du Bois accordingly sought to interrogate this concept of race, offering "the first detailed scientific statistical sociological study of an American community"—a project not just limited to *The Philadelphia Negro* but also inclusive of his later critical and philosophical works (p. 14). As Appiah suggests, in doing so, Du Bois "had invented a new way of writing about race" and not just in the United States (p. 15).

In chapter two, "Culture and Cosmpolitanism," one of the book's more pertinent chapters, Appiah expands upon his argument, citing a movement towards more global thinking throughout Du Bois' work. First articulated in "Of Our Spiritual Strivings," the opening essay of Du Bois' most renowned work, he offers what Appiah terms, "a cosmopolitan moral idea that, whatever his duties to the Negro, he has obligations to those outside his racial horizon" (p. 63). The studies that Du Bois produced therefore served a dual role in the American cultural conversation: 1) to record a more complete and nuanced history of a people and 2) to educate in hopes of transforming the racist American cultural imagination at large. Through this approach, Du Bois asserted a movement that inevitably re-envisioned black intellectual work, connecting the issues of Jim Crow and the color line, for instance, with a larger network of oppression overseas. Moving away from the tunnel vision of sorts that threatened the black artist and thinker—a dilemma that Du Bois identifies in *Dusk of Dawn* as "group imprisonment within a group," his works thus push for a more complete understanding of the striving and struggling characteristic of the colored condition at home and abroad (p. 67).

In the end, *Lines of Descent* is best placed among the emerging body of criticism that seeks to expand the concept of the black intellectual and probe the ideological milieus created

through his work. Like Stephanie J. Shaw's 2013 critical text, *W. E. B. Du Bois and The Souls of Black Folk*—a comprehensive study of Du Bois' engagement with Hegelian idealism in his most widely read and heavily examined text—*Lines of Descent* offers its readers insight into the process and projects of Du Bois. Contrary to the ideological stagnation that seemed to constrict the black intellectual of Harold Cruse's 1967 work, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, what Du Bois offered was a dynamism and fluidity of thought, willing to adjust and reshape his ideas based upon new discoveries and new stimuli he encountered through active engagement with the surrounding world. Because of "Du Bois's disciplinary schizophrenia," he was able to view the Negro question through multiple vantage points, perhaps the greatest lasting legacy that Du Bois leaves behind (p. 79). In charting that journey of individual and intellectual growth, Appiah's work is thus a valuable contribution to Du Boisian scholarship and an asset to libraries both public and private alike.

Christopher Allen Varlack, *University of Maryland*

**Andrew Bank and Leslie J. Bank, eds. 2013. *Inside African Anthropology: Monica Wilson and Her Interpreters*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 354pp.**

The second cover page of the book begins with praises from four scholars for the new concept of "Inside African Anthropology." In a world where women have been regarded as inferior, the time came in the history of social anthropology as is seen in *Inside African Anthropology: Monica Wilson and Her Interpreters*, when a new breed of woman anthropologists, with a wealth of experience in field work, training, teaching, supervising students' theses, collaboration, etc. challenged determinedly what is regarded as "the official" history (p.10) of social anthropology. This well-researched book also synthesizes Wilson's and her research assistants' publications through the contribution of nine scholars, most of whom are either historians or anthropologists. It gives insights into anthropology and its relation to history and sociology from South African societies, having a new feature: the contribution of women anthropologists to field research and ethnography with emphasis on Monica Wilson and the role and position of African interpreters in field research. The book captures well the definition of interpreters in the context of social anthropology, bringing together their function and qualities. Thus, the book can be described as an authentic African social anthropology as Wilson "engaged with the discipline 'from the inside'" (p. 3) and "from the tent" (p. 14), and as the explicit expression of intellectual equality with men, something quite possible to achieve. The photograph of Monica Wilson with her interpreters on the cover of the book is a good illustration of this engagement.

Carefully conceived, the book is divided into four parts, for a total of ten chapters. Part 1 deals with Wilson's fieldwork in Pondoland and the Eastern Cape. Part 2 discusses Monica and Godfrey Wilson's fieldwork in Bunyakyusa. Part 3 is about Monica Wilson's life and career at Fort Hare and the University of Cape Town. The last part focuses on her legacy. It is important to mention here that in the first chapter, Wilson's academic success depended largely on her "geographical, ethnic, family and class background" (p. 37). There are repetitions of information in the ten chapters of the book, but they are complimentary as they relate to a common basis, social anthropology. Although disciplines like archaeology, biology, history and anthropology

are in one way or the other related or complementary, Wilson showed her limitations regarding the origin of mankind in spite of the tremendous advances made in those disciplines. So, by observing a monkey for a long time without saying anything, was she not questioning implicitly the old evolutionist theory according to which man came from monkey?

The book provides an in-depth analysis of African societies from an anthropological point of view using sociological approach as “she saw no clear distinction between social anthropology and sociology. They are ‘one and the same subject’” (pp. 231-32). The book captures well the disappointment of the white missionaries and the fact that Africans are Africans in that “Leonard and others saw no contradiction in being Christian and continuing to drink the protective medicine given by the diviner” (p.180) instead of expecting a miracle from God.

The theme of authorship is well emphasized in the book. In fact, the writing of *Langa*, a study of a Cape Town African township, is an illustration of authorship conflict between Wilson and co-author Archie Mafeje that the editors carefully and intellectually dealt with as they described *Langa* as “an example of ‘the co-production of scientific knowledge’ in team research work” (p. 275). But after reading about Mafeje in the book, one may wonder why the editors did not find out whether Mafeje had ever been a mentor. Leslie J. Bank, in chapter 3, seems to be more critical of the works of Wilson than does Andrew Bank and identified her failure in publishing her field notes on dreams which would help to “show how the social and imaginative fabric of the urban and the rural were intertwined in the everyday worlds and interpretative frameworks of urban residents who operated across different cultural fields” (p. 123).

Nevertheless, the book is suitable not only for all who are interested in field research activities in anthropology, sociology and history, but also for undergraduate and graduate students in tertiary institutions, and researchers in psychology, pedagogy, economy, political science, international relations, literature, and law. In short, for this reason, the book could also be said to be a library as it is well and widely searched, providing a rich bibliography. A great interest in the book has already been shown in the sense that published in 2013, it has been reprinted the same year. Even though very good books are written in English, I strongly recommend this volume to be translated in many other languages for a wider readership.

Voudina Ngarsou, *Emi Koussi University and University of Doba*

**Lizelle Bisschoff and Stefanie Van de Peer. 2013. *Art and Trauma in Africa: Representations of Reconciliation in Music, Visual Arts, Literature and Film*. London: Tauris. 325 pp.**

This substantial volume explores artistic representations of violence, trauma and reconciliation in African music, visual arts, literature and film. A fascinating foreword by Jacqueline Maingard contextualizes the focus on truth and reconciliation in Africa, while opening up the questions of the relationship between violence and representation that underpin the volume as a whole. The introduction by the volume’s editors Lizelle Bisschoff and Stefanie Van de Peer highlights the complexity of the relationship between ethics, poetics and politics, and makes clear that they are specifically concerned with the diversity of African representations of conflict and reconciliation in Africa, rather than ‘perpetuating a simplistic image of Africa as a war torn, troubled

continent' (pp.5-6). The result is a volume that is impressive in scope, with contributions on Angola, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa. The quality of individual contributions is equally striking, and considerable care has clearly been taken in the editing of the chapters.

Part One includes Albert Oikelome's chapter on Nigerian hip hop from the Niger Delta as a tool for conflict resolution, Stefanie Alisch and Nadine Siegert's study of the transformative power of *kuduro* dance and music from post-war Angola, and Moulay Driss El Maarouf's thought-provoking study of Moroccan music festivals, which are often state-organised, as a forum in which art can overcome the unspeakable. Part Two turns to consider visual arts, and includes Amy Schwarzott's fascinating chapter on the recycling of weapons from Mozambique's civil war into art, Sarah Longair's chapter "Unlocking the Doors of Number Four Prison: Curating the Violent Past in Contemporary South Africa," which explores the role of museums and heritage sites in post-apartheid South Africa. These are followed by Frank Möller and Rafiki Ubaldo's analysis of Rwandese photography as a counterpoint to the abundance of Western representations of the aftermath of the 1994 genocide.

The chapters in Part Three focus on postcolonial African literature. Tobias Robert Klein's impressively wide-ranging contribution discusses the literary mediation of conflict in post-1990 West African fiction. Robyn Leslie's chapter explores the critique levelled by literature and theatre at the mechanism of reconciliation through the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Chapter 6 then returns to Rwanda with John Masterson's contrapuntal analysis of Philip Gourevitch's *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow we will be Killed with our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (1998) and Marie Béatrice Umutesi's *Surviving the Slaughter* (2000). The final section of the volume, which focuses on film, includes Lizelle Bischoff's insightful chapter on the Burkinabé director Fanta Regina Nacro's 2004 film *La Nuit de la Vérité*, which deals with the difficult process of reconciliation. Stephanie Van de Peer's perceptive analysis of Moroccan documentary, Leila Kilani's *Our Forbidden Places* (2008), engages with the failures of the Moroccan Equity and Reconciliation Commission to come to terms with the nation's Years of Lead from the 1960s-1980s. Chapter 12 examines indigenous film from the Democratic Republic of Congo, which, Chérie Rivers argues, is emerging as a medium of individual and collective healing. Finally, Cara Moyer-Duncan's analysis of representations of truth and reconciliation in South African films Sechaba Morojele's *Ubuntu's Wounds* (2001) and Norman Maake's *Homecoming* (2005) consider the lack of justice, the legacy of inequality, and the impact of psychological trauma that have left many South Africans skeptical about the efficacy of the TRC.

As Bischoff and Van de Peer remark in their introduction, the aim of the volume is to show the role of art and the function of creative expression to bear witness to trauma and become repositories for individual and collective memories. The difficult relationship between ethics, poetics and politics is carefully unpacked by contributors who provide us with valuable insights into a diverse range of art forms from across the African continent that engage with the impact of trauma and reconciliation. The result is a volume that academics in a range of different fields will find informative, but that is accessible to interested general readers and undergraduate students.

Charlotte Baker, *Lancaster University*

**Catherine Boone. 2014. *Property and Political Order in Africa: Land Rights and the Structure of Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 416 pp.**

Catherine Boone's excellent new contribution to the Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics Series deals with the topic of rural land tenure regimes in Sub-Saharan Africa and their effects on power relations, electoral politics, and the scope and scale of civil conflict. The book is directly inspired by the works of Homer-Dixon (1999) and Kahl (2006) who have argued that environmental and demographic stress can lead to various forms of conflict, but that this is dependent on other political and institutional characteristics. This argument is now advanced further by Boone, who demonstrates how variations in land tenure regimes, in a context of rising pressures on land, determine whether conflict remains hidden in individual and household relations, is restrained to the local level, or becomes absorbed by national-level politics where it can lead to more widespread political violence.

The crucial distinction in land tenure regimes is the one between neocustomary and statist regimes (Chapter 2). In neocustomary regimes national governments control land access in rural areas indirectly via local chiefs or leaders who have considerable authority to define property relations in their locality and to determine who has a right to land possession through communal legacy. In statist regimes national governments directly control property relations in rural localities via powerful executive agents on the ground. Statist land policies are particularly visible in resettlement schemes benefiting favoured (ethnic) groups. Tenure regimes are therefore intimately linked with questions of citizenship and rights to entitlement, particularly salient issues in contexts of high in-migration.

An extensive literature overview reveals a universe of cases which have been coded according to land tenure regime, land competition, migration patterns, and the form land conflict undertakes (Chapter 3). Cases are identified at the subnational level as tenure regimes tend to vary within countries. This leads to a typology of five possible situations in a context of rising land pressure. In zones of high in-migration, land competition follows ethnic lines yet is constrained to the local level in neocustomary regimes (I), whereas in statist regimes ethnic demands are expressed in the national political arena (II). In zones of no or low in-migration, land conflicts are restrained within the family (III) or against the local chieftaincy (IV) in neocustomary regimes. In statist regimes they could give rise to expression in national politics, but this last type is mostly seen as hypothetical (V). The typology supports the argumentation throughout the book, which is itself structured around three topics: ethnicity, political scale of conflict, and elections.

The book is supported by several in-depth case studies based on literature studies and field work (Chapters 4-10). In neocustomary regimes, land conflicts are shown to be generally limited. In western Burkina Faso and western Ghana, for example, ethnic insiders are privileged over foreign strangers, whether from different countries or other regions of the country (scenario I). Outsiders rely on informal land borrowing arrangements, which are increasingly reneged upon due to scarcity. Powerless and poorly represented in political institutions, outsiders are restrained to loyalty and exit strategies. In cases where there is active opposition ("voice"), like in northern Cameroon, conflict is contained within localities and the central state does not wish to intervene. In areas with low migration, such as the Kisii region of western Kenya, land conflicts play out in the family and weak status members such as women (widows)



and youth can be excluded from land access in apolitical ways (e.g. by accusations of witchcraft) (scenario III). Most attention goes to high-profile cases which include Côte d'Ivoire (southwest), Kenya (Rift Valley), Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (Kivu), and Zimbabwe, where statist land tenure regimes have promoted political violence on a national scale (scenario II). With perhaps Zimbabwe as an exception, in these cases national political leaders have sponsored and privileged the migration of closely tied ethnic groups to rural communities, which has led to ethnic grievances and opposition to the central state. These grievances are also capitalized upon by opposition forces in the national (electoral) arena (e.g. "Ivoirité" in Côte d'Ivoire), leading to a quick reversal of tenure positions when political patrons are overturned and escalation into zero-sum politics.

Catherine Boone delivers a compelling account of rural property relations and the expression of land conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. There is a risk of over determining conflict based on land-tenure regimes, yet this is acknowledged by the author, who nonetheless convincingly argues for their importance. Boone also demonstrates the importance of rural Africa in national conflicts and a need for disaggregated, sub-national analyses. Based on extensive empirical evidence and supported by a strong analytical approach, this work provides an extremely valuable contribution to the conflict literature.

### References

Homer-Dixon, T.F. 1999. *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kahl, C.H. 2006. *States, Scarcity, and Civil Strife in the Developing World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Leila Demarest, *Research Foundation Flanders (FWO), University of Leuven*

**Clifton Crais and Thomas V. McClendon, eds. 2014. *The South Africa Reader: History, Culture, and Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press. 605 pp.**

Clifton Crais and Thomas McClendon have compiled a volume of well-selected texts describing various aspects of South African history, culture and politics. The reader is divided into eight chapters. The topics are more or less chronologically arranged, making it a history reader in which politics and culture play an important role. Instead of focusing on seminal academic texts as is common in the field, this reader includes materials drawn from a variety of sources: texts written by South Africans of all walks of life, speeches, legal texts, songs and prose. The majority of the texts describe personal views and experiences of particular encounters between European and African individuals, and groups in the various geographical, political and social spaces of what became the Union of South Africa in 1910 and the Republic of South Africa in 1961. In each chapter Crais and McClendon give a brief introduction to the theme, the selection of texts and the topics relevance for present-day South Africa. In addition, Crais and McClendon provide individual background information on each source. This in turn enables the reader to easily place each text into its context, and to conduct further reading and research.

The publication of the reader comes at a time when South Africans are celebrating twenty years of democracy. Across the country, South Africans are looking back at the events and developments of the last twenty years. The general feeling is that important achievements, particularly in the political realm, have been made but that many challenges remain. These challenges are predominantly of a socio-economic nature. Frequently, they are attributed to the policies of the apartheid era. From its inauguration, apartheid influenced almost every aspect of life in South Africa. "Apartheid and the Struggle for Freedom" (Chapter 6) and "From Soweto to Liberation" (Chapter 7) give various examples thereof. Even today its effects are still felt and continue to be an important element of the political discourse. Some of the key points of this discourse such as controversies surrounding the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Nelson Mandela's successors Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, AIDS, and continuing poverty are discussed in the final chapter, "Transitions and Reconciliations."

The complex history of South Africa is more than apartheid. It has been shaped by encounters between European and African individuals and groups. Early encounters as described in Chapter 1, "African Worlds, African Voices," show how the first European settlers were often relying on the help of African individuals and groups. Over the course of time, the encounters were growing more violent as European settlers were trying to subject the various African groups. Diverse stories of this are recounted in Chapter 2 "Colonial Settlement, Slavery and Peonage." With the creation of the Union in 1910, more and more policies and laws were put in place to divide South African society. As a result, a privileged "white" and an exploited "black" class emerged. Chapter 6 "United and Divided" depicts how this artificial division influenced the lives of South Africans and planted some of the seeds for the current day challenges.

South Africa's history is also a history of migration. There is internal migration accelerated by the expansion of the Cape Colony, the discovery of gold on the Rand, the population growth and later the Groups Areas Act. However, there is also international migration. This is reflected in the importation of slaves and later of indentured laborers from India and China, then the exodus of political activists into South Africa's various neighboring countries, and shortly after 1994 of whites to the UK, Australia, and New Zealand. Stories emerging from migration flows are recounted throughout the book. Accounts of internal migration are especially prominent in "Frontiers" (Chapter 3) and "All that Glitters" (Chapter 4).

From my perspective, there are only two minor points to criticize about the book. First, in trying to capture the views of the various groups constituting South African society, Crais and McClendon display a tendency to follow the narratives of the dominant groups: the whites, the blacks, the coloreds, and Indians. Accounts of minority groups such as "naturalized" South Africans are excluded. Originally, they immigrated from neighboring countries, but also from as far away places as China. Subsequently, they regarded South Africa as their home and today they are an established part of South African society. Second, the book only deals with the immediate developments after 1994. Often the texts for the post-apartheid era deal with aspects of Apartheid. Apart from flowery political speeches, there are few texts trying to tackle the question of how South Africans can advance the project of constructing a united South Africa. Of course, apartheid continues to be a permanent element of the political discourse in South

Africa. Yet, twenty years after the end of apartheid, it would have been interesting to have some more future-oriented texts.

By giving a short introduction of the topic, the selection of texts and their implication for present-day South Africa at the beginning of the eight chapters as well as each text, Crais and McClendon masterfully provide a comprehensive understanding of the history, culture and politics of South Africa. Many of the selected texts and accounts were written by prominent persons who had a lasting impact in South Africa. However, what makes this book a real gem is the inclusion of less-known authors and the many cross-references. Hidden within the numerous personal accounts, the reader will find references to the larger historical context and transnational connections beyond the thematic focus of a particular text. This makes it a must-read for students interested in South Africa and a useful sourcebook for scholars working on South Africa.

Sarah Hanisch, *University of Vienna*

**Sebastian Elischer. 2014. *Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 336 pp.**

Elischer's text is both one thing and another: it is at once a straightforward taxonomic exercise, and yet, the results of this exercise produce something more profound. At the outset, Elischer highlights the problematic nature of studying and conceptualizing political parties in Africa. First, the study of African politics has tended to be reluctant regarding analysis of African political parties due to the historical tendency to characterize politics on the continent through aspects of personal rule and neopatrimonialism. Secondly, when the study of African politics has considered the role of political parties, it has often treated ethnicity to be the general organizing principle, and has additionally regarded ethnic politics as inimical to the advancement of democracy on the continent. Thirdly, general analyses and typologies of political parties tended to be based on the European experience. As a result, discussion of political parties in Africa were likely to be dismissed as secondary to the politics of personal rule, and if they were considered at all, would furthermore be problematized for their failure to comport with the Western model of party formation.

In taking on this challenge, Elischer explains the intellectual history of party formation and shows that the study of African politics not only ought to consider the dynamics of political parties in the era of post-Cold War democratization, but also that extant typologies of political parties remain insufficient in explaining the variety of political parties in Africa. In correcting for these challenges, Elischer proposes an alternative typology that, in his view, correctly accounts for the variety of parties on the continent. Utilizing an amended version of Diamond and Gunther's (2001) previous party typology that distinguishes parties by their goals, electoral strategy, organization, and social base, Elischer produces a five-fold typology for the African context: 1) mono-ethnic parties, whose interests primarily reside within the promotion of the ethnic group; 2) ethnic-alliance parties, where, despite transcending parochial ethnic interests, generally produce alliances of convenience usually lasting no longer than a single election; 3) (ethnic) catch-all parties, where alliances among ethnic groups being generally more robust than

their ethnic-alliance counterparts effectively transcend ethnic politics; 4) programmatic parties, whose interests concern the promotion of ideas or a particular ideology; and 5) personalistic parties that are built around the promotion and advancement of a particular leader or elite-member of society. The author then assesses the validity of this typology through in-depth investigations of contemporary party formation in Kenya, Namibia, and Ghana, with supplementary comparative case studies in seven additional countries.

While the contribution of an alternative typology of political parties in Africa initially appears a rather straightforward affair, the implications derived from Elischer's case studies provide additional insights to the study of African politics. In brief, in studying the dynamics of parties across Africa, the author finds that contrary to prior assumptions of ethnic politics dominating the political landscape, ethnic parties indeed exist, though are not the dominant party type on the continent. Second, Elischer additionally finds that ethnic parties are not necessarily inimical to democracy, as evidenced by Benin's democratic development within an ethnic party system. Thirdly, over the course of repeated electoral cycles ethnic parties tend to transform into non-ethnic parties, or at least learn to coexist with other non-ethnic parties. Lastly, in attempting to briefly investigate the reasons as to why some countries possess non-ethnic parties while others do, Elischer finds some salience in an "ethnic bandwagoning" hypothesis, where countries with a dominant ethnic group will tend to have the dominant group co-opted and dispersed into competing political parties (as opposed to being balanced against by other, smaller ethnic groups).

In sum, what begins as a rudimentary exercise turns out to be something much more: that in advancing an alternative typology of African political parties, the results produce insights that challenge general understandings of contemporary African politics. To be sure, though such findings require further investigation and will no doubt provoke an academic debate, these findings nevertheless serve to promote the intellectual advancement of understanding contemporary politics in Africa. In so doing, Elischer's text contains utility not only for those interested in studying party development in Africa, but also for a wider audience with general interests in African politics.

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Nicholas Knowlton, *University of Florida*

**Peter Geschiere. 2013. *Witchcraft, Intimacy, and Trust: Africa in Comparison*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. 293 pp.**

*Witchcraft, Intimacy, and Trust: Africa in Comparison* examines the complexity of witchcraft accusations in Africa, specifically in Cameroon, within the context kinship, intimacy, and (dis)trust. It is concerned with the triangulations of witchcraft, intimacy, and trust. Author Peter Geschiere, an African anthropologist at the University of Amsterdam, is very familiar with

witchcraft issues in Africa, especially in Southern Cameroon, where he actually began performing student fieldwork for his Ph.D. in 1971. In the book's six chapters, Geschiere argues that an ethnographical approach—his forty years of fieldwork in Cameroon—has positioned him in deconstructing and articulating the topic of witchcraft in Africa.

The author points out how the meaning of witchcraft has evolved over time as well as how it differs from one country to another, sometimes even within one country. He warns against the “sweeping generalizations about witchcraft omnipresence” (p. 13). He then states: “There is good reason to be prudent with generalizations, especially on a continental scale. Africa and Europe certainly cannot be compared as homogeneous blocks—there are too many internal variations” (p. 133). Geschiere notes that generalizations of witchcraft tendency topics are openly discussed nowadays and often vary. He argues that the media outlets such as newspapers and TV are contributing tremendously to these variations. Of course, social media outlets also contribute to the disparities.

Geschiere notes that anthropologists working in Africa have paid less attention to the relationship between intimacy and “treacherous attacks from the inside” (p. 25) even though there is enough evidence that links witchcraft with intimacy and with implicit aggression from the kin. He says that distances do not prevent witchcraft accusations in African societies, noting that “even the phone calls across huge distances can re-create the intimacy that is both highly valued and feared. Yet there are also increasing signs that kinship relations become strained to a breaking point by new distances and even more by new inequalities” (pp. 62-63). He writes that in Africa as well as in India and in America, witches may likely be kin to each other, unlike in Europe where they are likely to be only neighbors and where the major accusations involve not the kin but outsiders.

The author notes in the Maka area of Cameroon, it is indisputable that *nganga* (witch-hunters) themselves deeply participate in the very *djembe* (witchcraft) they are expected to combat. He observes that *ngnaga* he knew in the 1970s kept a low profile but nevertheless “were regularly in trouble with the government for creating unrest; they could easily be accused of defamation” (p. 83). On the other hand, from the 1980s to the present *ngnaga* aggressively and openly offer their services to families who can afford to pay, even though they still have major doubts. The *ngnaga* are even considered alternatives to judges. According to Geschiere, the increase of the intertwinement between the city and the village also impacted the trust built between the *nganga* and the communities. Hence, the village remains the point of reference as far as witchcraft is concerned.

The author argues that colonialism and modernity have impacted and reinforced witchcraft in Africa. He notes that “[a]fter independence—for most African states around 1960s—a belief in modernization inspired both the new African elites and the expatriate development experts to promote rapid westernization” (p. 162), which led to the degradation and dehumanization of African culture and the people, respectively. He claims that the contemporary “Pentecostals and other currents in popular Christianity continue this with their equation of tradition and an omnipresent devil” (p. 12). Geschiere observes that some media outlets and the emergence of video film production in Ghana and Nigeria have played a part in reinforcing witchcraft in Africa. He argues that the modern mass media contribute to the magnification of witchcraft rather than the weakening of it.

This critical book adroitly deals with witchcraft, intimacy and (un)trust—a crucial, underlining theme that has been overlooked in the study of witchcraft in Africa. Geschiere’s work could serve as a therapeutic measure in dealing with and deconstructing the witchcraft phenomenon in Africa, which has too often ruined families. I would recommend that a shorter, less-scholarly version of this book for the general public be titled *A Handbook on Witchcraft in Africa: Family, Intimacy and Trust*. It could help many people and educate them on the issue of witchcraft in Africa within the context of family and kinship.

Uchenna Onuzulike, *James Madison University*

**Susan Gilson-Miller. 2013. *A History of Modern Morocco*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 306 pp.**

*A Modern History of Morocco*, Susan Gilson-Miller’s latest book, is a most informative, convincingly wrought, well-documented and up-to-date general history of Morocco extant in English. The book covers two centuries of the country’s history, thus offering a new masterfully conceived approach to both the periodization and the thematization of the history of Morocco. The author’s methodology and her investigation of primary and secondary sources in Arabic and other languages make *A Modern History of Morocco* a thoroughly researched *oeuvre* that not only reconstructs a history but also provides a panoply of sources which will be extremely useful to the historians of the Maghreb.

*A Modern History of Morocco* is divided into an introduction and nine “sections” covering the period between 1830 and 2011. Each section deals with a specific theme within a clearly periodized time frame. The first two sections, titled “The Closing Era of Jihad (1830-1860)” and “Facing the Challenges of Reform (1860-1894),” expound the multiple challenges faced by a weakened Morocco in its relationship with an industrialized Europe whose expansionist policies were becoming more aggressive. Furthermore, Morocco’s endeavor to implement reforms and its failure to stave off this increasing European hegemony is cogently argued based on “Arabic chronicles,” which “form the substance of the early chapters of the book” (p. 6). The rest of the chapters, “The Passing of the Old Makhzan (1894-1912),” “France and Spain in Morocco: The Early Years of the Protectorates (1912-1930),” “Framing the Nation (1930-1961),” “The First Age of Hassan II: The Iron First (1961-1975),” “The Second Age of Hassan II: The Velvet Glove (1975-1999),” “Summation: In Search of New Equilibrium,” and finally a “Postscript: The Long Decade of Muhammad VI: (2000-2011),” are divided into sub-themes dealing with specific topics relevant to the theme of the chapter.

Gilson-Miller provides an innovative reading of Moroccan history. Two salient qualities of *A Modern History of Morocco* are its positive reading of the stories of “outlaws” in Moroccan history and its long exposition on state violence in the country. She inscribes the Rogui and al-Raysuni’s stories within a general atmosphere of revolt against the sultans and the makhzan. Thus the widely mischaracterized role of these figures in opposing the hegemony of the political center is unsilenced. Consequently, these outcast elements are refigured as agents of change who “represent a new strain in political life that redefined how opposition to the state could be expressed” (p. 69). Moreover, the book’s discussion of ‘Abd al-Hafiz’s assassination of

Muhammad al-Kattani unveils the brutal struggle between the forces that defended Moroccan autonomy and those who were willing to achieve pragmatic compromises with European imperialistic states to maintain their position in power.

Unsilencing watershed events and inscribing the “years of lead” into the Moroccan history are among the many contributions of Gilson-Miller’s book. From the use of poisonous gas in the Rif to suppress Abdelkarim’s resistance to the Spanish colonization to the disbanding of the *Armée de Libération Nationale* (1956), hidden aspects of Moroccan history are cast in new light. While most of the facts about the tumultuous “years of lead” are widely known, thanks to prison memoirs and other testimonial literature, *A Modern History of Morocco* is probably the first history book to have written these events into the history of the nation. Therefore, the author undertakes the difficult task of canonizing this history, which institutional conditions in Morocco have yet to accommodate. Gilson-Miller underlines her awareness of the constraints, both objective and subjective, that restrict the work of Moroccan historians when investigating a history that directly implicates the monarchy.

The historical narrative presented in *A Modern History of Morocco* “revolves around three principal axes: the monarchy, the state [...] and society” (p. 215). The intertwined nature of these guiding elements forms the backbone of Gilson-Miller’s narrative. The interaction of the state, society and the monarchy, sometimes in cohesion and in opposition at others, allows the author to weave the genesis of Moroccan nationalism, the emergence of opposition(s), the issue of Western Sahara, the Amazigh question, the socio-economic crises, and the role of ‘*ulama* in Moroccan society into a compelling and coherent story. Even though the interpenetration of these triadic elements is underscored, this deftly constructed narrative still illustrates the central role of the monarchy within the *makhzanian* system.

Apart from some controversy that may emanate from the book’s positive take on some political figures, *A Modern History of Morocco* is a most welcome addition to the academic study of the history of Morocco and the Maghreb. Both professors and students will find this magisterial study both useful and informative. Moreover, scholars will find its numerous reinterpretations of Moroccan history worthy of creative emulation in the future.

Brahim El Guabli, *Princeton University*

**Richard Grant. 2015. *Africa: Geographies of Change*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press. 356 pp.**

*Africa: Geographies of Change* offers students a largely realistic and optimistic portrayal of modern Africa in thirteen chapters of approximately twenty-five to thirty pages each. Chapter 1 is an introduction to Africa as an urbanizing world region and millennium development frontier; 2 examines how readers might begin “Reframing and Re-representing Africa” as a continent of bloggers, podcasters and more; 3 delves into African environments from rainforests to savannas, deserts, grasslands, and Mediterranean and montane settings; 4 looks at “The Scramble for Africa and the State of European Geographical Knowledge on the Region” from Mary Kingsley to Timbuktu, Great Zimbabwe and colonial city planning; 5 discusses rural Africa from the failed Green Revolution to new efforts to genetically modify crops, improve

sustainable development and gender issues; 6 explores Africa's mobile phone revolution along with its creativity, informal economies and spaces; 7 addresses migration (colonial-related, circular, forced) along with the role of remittances from athletes, entrepreneurs, and other professionals; 8 identifies challenges that remain in the realm of water; 9 enlightens readers on health from ongoing struggles with HIV/AIDS, Neglected Tropical Diseases and mental health, to the staying power traditional medicines and how technology is transforming healthcare; 10, on "Land and Food," highlights debates over the value of large scale agriculture; 11 gives information on climate change and the likely impacts on locations from the Sahel to Mount Kilimanjaro; 12 takes a look at China and Africa from Chinese investments, entrepreneurs, and migrants in Africa to Africans in China; and 13 addresses African futures and returns to themes of urbanization and sustainable development while also taking on issues such as terrorism and Washington's engagement with the continent.

Each chapter has two to three boxes with special topics on contemporary issues from fair trade, to Mandela's leadership, to the mining of coltan for electronic components, to slum and pro-poor tourism. Several chapters have as many as six thought-provoking topic boxes. All chapters end with a summary section and a relatively detailed bibliography separated into references, many of them web-based, and web sites. Black and white photographs and tables illustrate the topics being addressed in the chapters. Maps are also used effectively to convey relatively standard topics such as colonial boundaries, main climate types, HIV-prevalence, and GDP by country. Students likely will especially welcome the more contemporary-themed maps, such as climate change vulnerability by region and country, human trafficking routes, terrorist corridors, and Chinese sector investments in Africa.

Although the emphasis is on contemporary Africa, there is some coverage of history. A welcome aspect of the book is its intentional inclusion of at least some African perspectives, particularly in Chapter Two in terms of Africans' thoughts on development from within and changes to current forms of development assistance. Additional coverage of key exports from coffee, tea, and tourism to oil and diamonds would have been welcome along with some coverage of Nollywood and Africa's other film studios and their depictions of the continent. In some cases, the rather positive view on the African situation is tempered by the multiple major changes that will be required for improved development, but the lack of a realistic plan for making the changes needed. Mention is made of the Millennium Development Goals being underfunded and how the 2015-2030 Sustainable Development Goals may "fall short," but rather than expressing great distress over these failings, Grant seems to take solace in the improvements to some quantitative tools for measuring tools development, such as the "extended Human Development Index" (p. 330). The changes required for improved healthcare and access to clean water are quite monumental, but the book's final chapter focuses largely on opportunities for partnerships and positive change.

Grant makes additional overly optimistic statements. The chapter on African futures begins "2018 will be a benchmark year for Africa: the contemporary independence era (1951-2018) will have lasted as long as the colonial interlude (1884-1951)." Given that only Libya gained independence in 1951 and that five other states did so in the 1950s, but that the vast majority of the continent only emerged from colonization in 1960 (a year when seventeen countries gained



independence) or several years later (at least another twenty-five states), Grant's benchmark seems overstated.

Overall, Grant's book will be a welcome addition to the reading materials for any course on African geography or development. The range of topics from new businesses to population growth and Africa's global connections are well laid out and should be of interest to students not only in geography and development, but also urban studies and public health. Grant challenges those adopting a position of Afro-pessimism and reveals an Africa that is a diverse, increasingly urban, and complex, as well as a good place for strategic investment.

Heidi Frontani, *Elon University*

**John Hannigan. 2012. *Disasters without Borders: The International Politics of Natural Disasters*. New York: Polity Press. 195 pp.**

*Disasters without Borders* is about natural disasters like hurricanes, tsunami, volcanic eruptions, floods, and earthquakes. Despite the title's reference to the NGO "Doctors without Borders," the book is not about "man-made" disasters like wars, and the medical and famine conditions that wars often cause. Rather the focus is on the international politics of government-led assistance for natural disasters and the development of policies by governments in rich countries to deal with such events whether at home or as part of foreign aid programs.

As the author describes the response to disaster often occurs via UN agencies, and NGOs, but in the context of rhetorical flourishes cultivated for the international media. Such rhetoric is important for international bureaucracies like the UN Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO) whose budgets depend on attracting the attention of rich donor governments whose publics are tuned into CNN and its news cycles. But as Hannigan points out, such disaster assistance is also undertaken in the context of the same governments seeking *realpolitik* advantage in the international system.

In developing such points, *Disasters without Borders* focuses on how governments, international agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, NGOs, and the ever-present international press frame natural disasters, and as importantly, how governments respond. Much of this work takes place in the context of international meetings where standards, policies rules, and international laws about responses are negotiated, and hopes for "mitigation of risk" are debated beyond the cameras of CNN, but nevertheless with an awareness that emotional media attention makes or breaks funding for natural disaster relief. Hannigan's discussion about how the "rhetoric of claims making" develops in the context of national interests, humanitarian need, and international politics is well-developed.

Hannigan emphasizes that disaster response is often "at the whim of [CNN's] electrons" and uses as examples the responses to Hurricane Katrina, the Indian Ocean Tsunami, and Australian floods. He is an effective story-teller, and there are numerous asides in the form of text-boxes, and examples, although these "lessons learned" are at times only loosely tied together. Indeed, one of my favorite disaster examples was the Icelandic volcanic eruptions of 1783 which devastated Iceland, and killed an estimated six million people worldwide over the

following six years as worldwide temperatures plunged. This disaster demonstrated nicely how disasters inevitably cross national boundaries. Still, it would have been nice to know though how this example fits in with the type of international disaster relief regime, which the author dates to the turn of the twentieth century.

But despite the interesting and engaging vignettes of natural disasters sprinkled throughout the book, few are from Africa. In part this is because natural disasters are quickly defined there as “complex disasters” because many African catastrophes of the last decades include both “natural” and “man made” elements, and therefore are beyond the coverage of this book. Thus there is no discussion of the Ethiopian Famine response of 1984-1985 or the tragedy of the Great Lakes genocide and wars since the mid-1990s. Still, could there really be so few disasters from Africa which received international attention/relief? The Lake Nyos disaster in Cameroon of 1986 where carbon dioxide suddenly escaped from a volcano killing thousands comes to mind. The Nyiragongo eruptions near Goma, Congo, of 2002, are even a success story with respect to disaster mitigation; mass evacuations in anticipation of the eruption successfully averted many deaths. Floods and drought in many other places in Africa are also recurring events. As an Africanist, I cannot help but observe that including such events would have enriched the analysis in *Disasters without Borders*.

Still, the point of this book is to add a new twist to the already voluminous literature about sexier human-caused disasters, and it does this. The chapter on how Global Warming is framed as disaster mitigation (rather than perhaps as a complex emergency), makes well Hannigan’s point about how claims-making rhetoric work, and will be of interest to anyone seeking to understand why and how disaster mitigation is difficult. While in some ways I think that this book steps too far away from the “complex emergency” literature, it is nevertheless understandable that the policy-makers in natural disaster mitigation would want their own book.

Tony Waters, *California State University, Chico*

**Zelda La La Grange. 2014. *Good Morning, Mr Mandela*. New York: Allen Lane. 370 pp.**

After working for the “most famous man in the world,” Nelson Mandela’s long serving secretary-turned assistant decided to document and somewhat analyse the life of Mandela through the eyes of the inner circle. Let us start with the thought that La Grange’s work is not a secret diary of a secretary of one of the world’s most renowned political figure. It is a narration of events in the author’s life and reflection of her experiences with Mandela. It is a busy diary of 370 pages where every paragraph and section is presented with timely interventions to suit the situation. Her story is somewhat similar to that of working in a tight bureaucracy with a VIP. Diaries of private secretaries have always been an interesting point of reference for people in general. They offer insightful information and reveal secrets. Moreover, *Good Morning Mr Mandela* is a document on Mandela’s presidential and post-presidential public life written by a white secretary that served him for nineteen years.

La Grange sets out her background by confessing many “wrong doings” as she sees it: voting for the apartheid government; being distant from the mainstream socio-political

situation in the country; and expecting the annihilation of black identity in South Africa are some of her past confessions. Her adolescence two decades ago reflects similar experiences of contemporary young white groups who can be found in cliques in somewhat similar situations of being conservative and lauding white supremacy. Her innocent childhood and young family environment kept her aloof from the South African situation. The apartheid government did not give her enough chance to think and instead inserted their ideals of racialism into the younger generation.

It took some time for a conservative “boer” with French ethnic roots to gain the confidence and pride in working for the “black” head of state. As she opens up herself, she accuses the white community in South Africa of still retaining their white supremacy outlook. Racism was so blatantly rooted in South African life that it took a few years of Mandela’s presence to convince her about racial equality. Mandela, a politician himself, used her “whiteness” for his own needs, be it for a state visit or hosting some international delegates. He empowered the image of multi-racial South Africa by having a white secretary. La Grange explains how this political statement turned into an inter-dependency relationship. This thick book is useful for not only those people who are interested in Mandela’s life but also an internal and not-so-discussed life of famous personalities. Mandela’s international trips and his love for travel after his twenty-seven years in prison give an extraordinary glimpse into his private life. His diplomatic interventions in international affairs, stardom in the US, friendship with Libya’s Muammar Gaddafi and the crown family of the Saudi Arabia are explored meticulously. La Grange had limited access to Mandela’s sensitive life and its related incidents. There must be many undisclosed and classified pieces of information which La Grange is unwilling to disclose. However, if this is the case one would have expected his long-time chief of staff Prof. Jakes Gerwel to write a book about his experiences. Sadly, however Prof. Gerwel recently passed away, but La Grange does slightly hint about Gerwel having penned down his experiences in the presidency.

La Grange however, attempts to reflect on everything and anything that happened to her with Mandela. Caring, protecting, frustrating, honesty, loyalty, and dedication are a few among many repeated clichés in La Grange’s work. For every incident she wants to teach readers how morally and philosophically important it was for her to be with this great man. These lessons sometimes become intolerable for readers who want to know more about Mandela. La Grange wants to reassure herself and the people that she was always available for Madiba (or *Khulu* as she calls him) and her sacrifices were immutable. Her repetition of loyalty only makes one re-think her presence in the narration of Mandela.

For someone who is interested in knowing the private life and gossip of the former president and famous personalities, it is a treat. But for someone who is reading this book expecting to reveal some secrets of national importance, the content remains lacking, as it happened with Gandhi’s private secretary Mahadev Desai who maintained his diary and published it in *Day-to-Day with Gandhi* (1968) to keep us updated about the happenings of Gandhi. Similarly, Hitler’s close confidant Alfred Rosenberg and many other famous personalities maintained the works of their bosses. These works have helped us to see the truth in a different and inclusive way through the written notes of secretaries. Mandela did very little wrong according to La Grange. This is not to say that she should have pointed out mistakes, but

instead should have presented some facts which might be more exciting and interactive. However, La Grange is not a political thinker or an ideologist as were Desai and Rosenberg. Therefore, those expectations remain in vain. This book is an account of her (counter) actions with the prejudices of a young, white Afrikaans woman during the 1990s. She explains how Mandela's life was stardom internationally and "intolerable" domestically. In the later years he was seen as some old man denying attention and acknowledgement. It runs through the top office of former President Thabo Mbeki to the cabinet ministers of the later government. Mandela was accepted and unaccepted at the same time. Although a timely piece of work, one would expect La Grange to write another book compiling her old documents to disclose something that is of national importance apart from ideological differences in the family, ANC party and international delegates. Instead, it drives us through the last years of Mandela. She discusses how in his 80s, Mandela was concerned about his financial limitations to support his extended family for which he thought he had responsibility for after being imprisoned for twenty-seven years.

Biographers and historians might find this work worthy to quote or footnote. Readers will enjoy its simple and communicate style of writing. At times when things are unfamiliar to a non-South African, La Grange attempts to explain the complete situation for the readers to make sense. She is not necessarily a terrific, best-seller type of writer, but she is a good communicator and this makes her book a readable experience. Whatever the case may be, La Grange has invited us to listen, discuss and think about her experiences. Moreover, she is hesitant to finish the whole book until she shares more stories. And you become restless reading as you feel like you are making your way out of a labyrinth of La Grange's experiences. Both at times exciting and somewhat tiring reading, you will mark some pages as adventurous.

Suraj Yengde, *University of the Witwatersrand*

**Laurenti Magesa. 2013. *What is Not Sacred?: African Spirituality*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 256 pp.**

Laurenti Magesa is a Roman Catholic priest and is one of Africa's most noted scholars. He has authored *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* and *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa*. He has also been a visiting Fellow at the Woodstock Theological Center at Georgetown University. *What is Not Sacred?* is a work that attempts to show how different elements of African daily life leads not only to God, but towards a better understanding of how creation, nature, and other elements of African spirituality interplay with many different concepts of Christianity on a daily basis.

Magesa does a fine job of explaining the concept of African Spirituality in the first section of the book. He explains the concepts of *ubuntu* throughout the entire life cycle. The African understanding of spirituality can be seen as human participation in the total, universal existence, the whole of human existential experience in the world (p. 40). One of the more powerful influences on African spirituality is the understanding that you are a reflection of yourself and that good actions are a result of good intentions. Conversely, those with evil intentions pass them on as well. The ability of one to "perform" or become a participant in the

dance of life, is essential to African spirituality. The ability to adapt and use music, dance, art, and other expressive venues as expressions of spiritual life completes a person's journey into becoming one with nature. He concludes with showing how the spirit returns and is made one again with the universe. God can act through ancestors or other spirits because they share in His power. Their understanding of *ubuntu* encourages them to act hospitably towards all because of our powerful connection to each other through all religions, both Christian and African.

The second part of this work examines the contribution that African spirituality has made to the world at large. Magesa uses specific African religious symbols and explains their parallel to a Christian worldview. One of the more interesting sections dealt with the African idea of eating together. The concept of laying aside one's differences and sharing a meal together crossed familial, cultural, and religious boundaries. Magesa argues that this ritual of constant transformation is similar to the Christian Eucharistic Celebration. It should change our perspective and leave us transformed and stronger in both our friendships and relationships (p. 156). The concept of working together while also learning from each other is really helpful. He argues that Africa and its countries have sacrificed *ubuntu* and mutual aid for each other for the perceived advantages of the capitalistic West. The concept of mutual respect and aid for each other disappears while the lust for power and wealth take over. This is detrimental to the society that is bent on helping each other (pp. 155-56). The author laments that during the "Christianization" of Africa, many Christian missionaries attempted to downplay, neglect, and forcibly change the positive features of African religious cultures rather than trying to understand and incorporate their Christian teachings into the African religious society (p. 178). He outlines the way forward while recognizing the positive aspects of the African spiritual world (pp. 193-94).

The book's conclusion provides seven steps that will help harmonize the two religions and aid in their mutual co-existence. They are as follows: 1) no type of spirituality, whether it is in the form of personal piety or a religious system of a community, can endure without firm roots; 2) spirituality for the people of Africa is not a passive "given" it is played out in everyday life, through observance of moral codes, rites and rituals, and patterns of relationships; 3) the cosmos is a "moral" reality in the African worldview (pp. 195-196); 4) relations for the promotion of the force of life must embrace "others" in all of their differences, for all creation and the various ways it is experienced and expressed contain the spark of divine, "spiritual" life; 5) patient dialogue rather than forced conversion, therefore, is the direction indicated by intertwining of both religions and should be both encouraged and nurtured (p. 196); 6) the goal of African spirituality, and African *Christian* spirituality for that matter, is the good life (John 10:10); and 7) African spirituality can inspire Christian theology and pastoral approaches to "unbind the Spirit," that Jesus promised to send after His departure (p. 197).

This work provides great insight into the richness of African religious cultures. It also is a helpful tool for both religious groups to appreciate the benefits of while not ignoring the richness of their own cultures and religious practices. If everything is sacred, then our relationships with God, each other, the environment, and other cultures, will begin to change and our global appreciation will begin to increase as well. One must carefully define terms within other faiths and beliefs. Defining less familiar terms and concepts for one who is

unfamiliar with African terminology was helpful, but more explanation might need to accompany certain concepts of African spirituality that are unfamiliar to the Christian West. In the increased interest of interreligious dialogue, this book provides a good starting point from which to launch further conversations

John Williams, *Trinity Baptist College*

**Chrispen Matsika. *Traditional African Education: Its Significance to Current Educational Practices*. Harare, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press. 206 pp.**

Chrispen Matsika's purpose in *Traditional African Education: Its Significance to Current Educational Practices* is to demonstrate how aspects of traditional African education could be incorporated into the current Western based systems, if education in Africa should achieve its intended outcomes. In the process, he has written an extremely thoughtful book that will certainly be controversial but will greatly broaden the conversation about the nature and purpose of education in Africa in the twenty-first century. Education in any society, Matsika argues, should be rooted in the worldview and philosophical assumptions of that society in order to be successful. While Western education, with its emphasis on rationality and individualism, is based on the Cartesian doctrine "I think, therefore I am," the worldview of most African societies would assert the doctrine, "we are, therefore I am," thus emphasizing African communalism and its adherence to the role and wisdom of the ancestors. An educational system based on that kind of epistemology is likely to be different from a Western based educational system.

Matsika uses his own native Zimbabwe as a case study. This is likely to be the first point of controversy because there are those who will assert that the dynamics of the Shona situation cannot be applied to Africa as a whole. The book starts with a very informative presentation of the history of Zimbabwe from the origins to the present day, documenting the ancient rivalry between the Shona and the Ndebele, the coming of the master manipulator Cecil Rhodes and his imposition of British rule over the territory, followed by the imposition of a two-tiered educational system, one for Europeans and a much diluted version for Africans that failed to take African traditions into account. Education in the entire colonial period, which included the period of Ian Smith's nefarious unilateral declaration of independence, was characterized by the continuing existence of two parallel educational systems, the one for Africans being designed solely to ensure that the African continued in a state of servitude. At best, he was trained to become an effective farm worker or industrial worker and provide a pool of forced labor that the European could tap into if he so desired.

Matsika then goes on to discuss education in the post- independence period under Robert Mugabe. He objectively demonstrates that although the new regime advantageously saw education as being essential to development, abolished the colonial two tier system of education and considerably increased expenditure on education, its policy in this area was doomed to failure because Mugabe's Marxist orientation led him to heighten political (which meant socialist) consciousness in the young. The socialist values it sought to inculcate were just as

divorced from the traditional worldview and philosophic outlook of the people of Zimbabwe as the colonial ideology had been.

Although this book is generally about traditional African education, its most compelling aspect is arguably its discussion of traditional African philosophy and worldview. In his very thorough treatment of the subject Matsika has given one of the most admirable discussions of the traditional African outlook since the publications of Mbiti. He first stoutly rejects the notion, promulgated, not just by uninformed westerners, but also by some African scholars like Wiredu and Hountondji, that there is nothing like African philosophy, and then goes on in a masterful way to illustrate the nature of that philosophy and worldview. This is likely to be the second note of controversy. He shows that African traditional thought is collective and communal, rather than individualistic; that traditional thought, like Plato's, includes notions about the nature of government, the moral justification for violence and revolutions, and the connection between economic conditions and moral standards, something that Adam Smith would applaud; that the African view of the world is holistic, with the physical and the spiritual co-existing in one continuum; that where rationality has been the cornerstone of Western thinking, African thought focuses more on the community of persons. He then goes on to discuss the African view of reality, suggesting that the African belief in symbols stems from the fact that Africans attribute a force or spirit behind every object. Most interesting is his discussion of the concept of "force." Of course, the notion was first promulgated by Tempels in his 1937 *Bantu Philosophy*. Existence is defined by force and means possessing force. The world of spirit is the source of all force and every person, animal, plant, or object has force by virtue of being related to the world of spirit. Inevitably, Matsika relates all this to what he considers the African ontology, or the composition of the universe. Right at the top is God who is the center of all creation and the source, giver, and ultimate controller of all force; next come the spirits and the dead ancestors of the tribe who are the link between humans and God; then come human beings, then come animals, plants and the rest of biological life; and finally the world of objects. The higher up one is in the hierarchy, the more force one has and the more one is able to use that force to manipulate those that are lower.

Matsika then goes on to discuss the nature of traditional education which he sees as incorporating vital aspects of the African worldview. Tremendous emphasis is placed on informal education and the role of oral tradition and the importance of rituals. In his discussion of formal education, he stresses the importance of the formal initiation rites and then, in one of the most memorable sections of the work, that on vocational training, he describes in detail how the N'anga apprenticeship system, the system whereby traditional healers are trained, incorporates vital aspects of the Shona worldview.

The inevitable and controversial question remains: how is the traditional African worldview that Matsika so eloquently describes to be incorporated into a modern formal educational system? He answers the question in chapter 7 where he asserts that the school should be seen as a community, one that everyone belongs to and everyone feels a part of. He also stresses the importance of the classroom which is the place where the students develop new dispositions, values, attitudes and new ways of thinking, and which should be seen as the center for the transmission of cultural heritage. Classroom practice, he asserts, should mirror the teaching and learning practiced at the initiation academies of the past. Listening, watching,

and dialoging should form the core of the activities. The classroom should be seen as a spiritual space where teachers and students feel they are part of the context, and where no one should feel insecure. In every class, whatever the nature of the discipline, values central to African life such as togetherness, responsibility, truthfulness, selflessness, spirituality, respect for elders and authority, and the importance of family can be emphasized. After listing the characteristics of indigenous knowledge and presenting a detailed Traditional African Worldview and Education Course designed to introduce students to the African worldview (although he does not say at what stage this course should be taught), Matsika in his final chapter proceeds to give a list of useful recommendations.

No one will deny that the conversation *Traditional African Education* has started is necessary and that it should be on the reading list of everyone interested in African Studies.

Eustace Palmer, *Georgia College and State University*

**Temitope B. Oriola. 2013. *Criminal Resistance? The Politics of Kidnapping Oil Workers*. Farnham, Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited. 243 pp.**

Organizationally, the text has a total of eight related chapters. However, the aim-findings nexus was established between chapters one and seven. The centerpiece of the two chapters was the question of criminality or otherwise of kidnapping episodes carried out by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (hereafter MEND). In other words, is MEND a criminal social movement organization (SMO) or a repertoire of protest in the Niger Delta (hereafter ND)? Is it motivated by grievances or simply greed? According to Oriola, perceptions of the ND insurgency vary from community to community (p. 183). A community with a benevolent insurgent “general” considers the insurgency as a repertoire of protest to advance their interests, whereas communities without a benevolent insurgent “general” see the insurgency as outright criminality. Contrary to this assertion, inhabitants of the ND whether in communities with a benevolent insurgent commander or communities without a benevolent commander perceive the ND insurgency, especially the kidnap phase as a political protest, agitating for justice in the distribution of oil rents.

Political kidnapping episodes are more of grievance motivated with exceptional cases (Chap. 3). More so, the question of one being benevolent or not depends on the internal make-up of a person. Again, a commander’s benevolence to his community depends on his connections to the government house within a time period in any of the ND states. For example, in oil rich Bayelsa state, a then serving governor had cordial working relations with a number of insurgent commanders that lived in the Creek Haven, the state government house. Such commanders are more likely to be benevolent to their communities vis-à-vis those without such government house connections.

Furthermore, reframing the title of the text to read, “*The Politics of Kidnapping Oil Workers: Criminal Resistance?*” elicits diverse interpretations. Conflict is inevitable where unevenness exists in the distribution of oil rents; whereas to others kidnapping oil workers for whatever cause is criminal. What is disheartening is the name associated with such violent groups in different places. Insurgency in the ND is often seen by the Nigerian state as criminal. But is it



seen as a criminality among the people in the ND? Why the difference? Who does the naming? Oriola's work, a text on Social Movement Organization, is the first of its kind on the ND insurgency with MEND as its focus SMO, unravels this daunting question.

Achieving social change as against elite hegemony is often a ruse unless there is power aggregation of different persons into organized groups. MEND emerged to champion the cause of the impoverished ordinary ND people through the kidnapping of oil workers as a repertoire of protest. Specifically, MEND demanded the convocation of a sovereign national conference, fiscal federalism, and protection of the ND ecosystem; demands, which earn MEND public sympathy in the ND. However, MEND's modus operandi mostly political kidnapping in achieving this goal is often the subject of sharp disagreement which oftentimes amounts to name calling as militants, pirates, insurgents, terrorists, etc.

As a SMO, MEND was/is astute in the use of frames to resonate with allies, the public, the media (Chap. 6), etc., but why did MEND attract so many derogative terms to itself in the process? Whereas SMOs in other resource-rich regions attract much sympathy and even financial support from international organizations, NGOs, the media, etc., MEND instead attracts derogatory names with no known support organization. Clifford Bob posits that "winning NGO support is neither easy nor automatic but instead competitive and uncertain...the development and retention of support are best conceived not as philanthropic gestures but as exchanges based on the relative power of each party to the transaction...the choices of insurgents-how they market themselves matter."<sup>1</sup> Thus, even as MEND's insurgency has proved effective, a myriad of armed groups still exist in the ND that deny MEND the collective identity needed to undertake a "war of maneuver."

Presenting the ND insurgency as a melodrama with untold consequences for the global oil industry (Chap. 2), Oriola categorized the dramatis personae into a "First-Order Cast" (p. 25) and a "Second-Order Cast" (p. 40) as direct beneficiaries of the insurgency who prefer an unending insurgency. Contrary to Oriola's assertion, researchers as members of the 'Second-Order cast' would prefer ending the insurgency in the ND despite perceived 'benefits' in the form of academic publications. Instead, recent academic trends on the ND insurgency have changed to reflect the changing security horizon in the ND to focus on amnesty, post-amnesty, oil industry and climate change related issues.

Oriola's text is a must read for the public. However, a revised edition of the text is urgent, one which must reflect the impact of kidnapping on the oil industry and the Nigerian state, the trend in kidnapping since MEND came into the scene in 2005, what hostage percentage was released or rescued without payment of ransom, those killed or escaped, how much ransom has been paid especially for oil workers, an increase in the interviewee scope to include oil workers, non-oil bearing communities, and erstwhile hostages, a definition of ND that reflects a true Delta, etc. More so, the insurgency in the ND is not a threat to the corporate existence of Nigeria as envisioned in the Kaiama Declaration (1998). Thus, the analysis of MEND as a criminal resistance or a repertoire of protest should further be considered within the context of the Kaiama Declaration, which served as the principal platform for violent protest movements in the ND. Finally, the textual language is complex which undoubtedly limits its reach to all, especially those living in the ND region who principally are farmers and fishermen.

## Notes

- 1 Bob Clifford. 2005. *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgency, Media, and International Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.ii.

Olawari D.J Egbe, *Niger Delta University*

**Adebayo Oyeade, ed. 2014. *The United States' Foreign Policy in Africa in the 21st Century*. Durham: Carolina Academic Press. 202 pp.**

In *The United States' Foreign Policy in Africa in the 21st Century*, Adebayo Oyeade (Tennessee State University) assembles an impressive group of scholars to analyze the historical and contemporary dynamics of US foreign policy in Africa. Moses E. Ochonu provides useful historical context; Victor Eno and Kenneth E. Kalu explore health and development; Adebayo Oyeade, Olayiwola Abegunrin, and Diane Chinoso Orefo examine counterterrorism and security; and John P. Miglietta, Felix Omoh Okokhere, and Faith Okpotor analyze conflict resolution, democratization, and good governance. The book should prove useful to readers interested in US foreign policy, Africa, and the relationship between the two.

The collection of essays reveals that while current US foreign policy is more attentive to Africa than in the past, it still faces some major challenges. The contributors demonstrate convincingly that US foreign policy toward Africa has shifted from periods of disinterest to increased engagement embedded within the Cold War context to more active attention on Africa thus far in the 21st century. While the book delves into a broad array of topics, one central theme is the emergence of international terrorism and its significant impact on US foreign policy in Africa. Referring to the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001, Diane Chinoso Orefo reasons that "since then, international terrorism has displaced nuclear war, the fear of the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and rivalry with other world powers as the principal security issue for the American people and their government" (p. 100). As a result, US policymakers increasingly have focused on terrorist organizations operating in Africa such as Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, and al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

Moses E. Ochonu reminds readers that the current state of tension between African Islamic leaders in northern Nigeria and American policymakers has not always been the case. Ochonu explains how northern Nigerian leaders such as Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Alhaji Ado Sanusi, and Malam J. H. Cindo often expressed interests that converged with those of US policymakers, with both groups eschewing radicalism. Adebayo Oyeade discusses Islamist terrorism in Nigeria, focusing on Boko Haram and their ascendance since 2009. He analyzes the 2011 attacks on the police headquarters in Abuja and the bombing of the UN headquarters located there. Olayiwola Abegunrin explores the United States' activation of Africa Command (AFRICOM) in 2008. This move followed the expansion of the US military presence in Djibouti and resulted in the newest US unified combatant command, which maintains overall responsibility for US military efforts in the Africa region. Diane Chinoso Orefo explores US-African security cooperation in the 21st century, detailing specific examples such as the Trans-

Sahara Security Symposium (TSS), NATO intervention in Libya, the Pan-Sahel Initiative, and the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), among others.

While international terrorism forms a key concept of the book, the work also explores other important topics, such as the intersection of US foreign policy and international health. Beginning in 2003, the United States launched the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in sub-Saharan Africa. US policymakers followed that move by introducing the Global Health Initiative (GHI) in 2009. The volume also examines the relationship between development and trade, highlighted in 2000 by the passage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). All of the contributors utilize a broad array of sources to support their essays. Examples include UN reports, US government documents (e.g., those of the White House, Department of Justice, Agency for International Development, and Congressional Research Service), non-governmental organizations' statements (i.e., Amnesty International), historical and contemporary newspapers, scholarly books, academic journals, and magazines.

A particular strength of the work is its multi-disciplinary approach. The nine contributors and their respective topical chapters vary in discipline and methodology, ranging from history to international relations to political science. *The United States' Foreign Policy in Africa in the 21st Century* is a useful addition to an understanding of the many opportunities and challenges *vis-à-vis* the United States and Africa. Students, scholars, and general readers alike should benefit from its detailed exploration of the relationship between US foreign policy in Africa and the contributors' cogent suggestions for improving upon that important relationship in the future.

William A. Taylor, *Angelo State University*

**Terence Ranger. 2013. *Writing Revolt: An Engagement with African Nationalism, 1957-67*. Woodbridge, UK: James Currey. 206 pp.**

The cover of *Writing Revolt* features a grinning Terence Ranger—sporting a fur hat, and standing slightly in front of his wife, Shelagh—next to a variety of his colleagues from Southern Rhodesia's nationalist movement. They include Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe. The occasion: Ranger's deportation from the colony in February 1963. Above the photograph is the book's title, and the two combined reveal Ranger's major aims for this work: "producing a record of the African awakening which I had witnessed.... And the process which led me to write that first book" (p. xi). "That first book," of course, was Ranger's now-classic 1967 *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia*, which told the story of Ndebele and Shona resistance against the British South Africa Company in 1896-1897.

In some ways, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* feels like a mirage in this book. It flits swiftly in and out of the narrative, ever-present, but often overshadowed by Ranger's methodical account of early nationalist action in Southern Rhodesia in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Ranger's own contribution to multiracial nationalism was initially tied to his position as warden of the three residence halls of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland: here, he began his fight against segregation (in the face of difficult Rhodesian parents, including the "fat, florid and mediocre" parliamentary opposition leader [p. 18]). Ranger would soon extend this struggle to the colony via Citizens Against The Colour Bar. At every stage, Ranger's politics and historical

research were intertwined: as he asked himself in the late 1950s, “[N]ationalist rallies grew in size and fervour, [and] I began to wonder. Where had all this come from? What were the antecedents of African nationalism in Southern Rhodesia?” (p. 37).

Readers of *Writing Revolt* experience the same rollercoaster as its author half a century ago. Ranger’s use of his extensive personal papers written at the time (now archived at Oxford) permits this closeness, but also the daily diaries of his dear friend and colleague—to whom *Writing Revolt* is dedicated in part—John Reed. Reed’s text provides an alternative view of the often-agonizing decisions which Ranger faced in his personal and public lives. Thus we feel the heady excitement of hard-won victories against segregation; but it is tempered by tragedy: the failure to create a coherent nationalist movement in the 1960s; the divisions between ZAPU and ZANU; the travails of tribalism and regionalism; and more personally for Ranger, the death of Sketchley Samkange, and his increasing isolation from politics and friends in Southern Rhodesia after his exile. We are constantly cautioned against neat, teleological understandings of nationalist movements: balancing the desires of moderates like Nkomo, radicals like Robert Chikerema, and trade unionists—all in the face of state pressure—was almost impossible, and the outcome of the struggle unpredictable.

One cannot help but admire Ranger’s enormous energies, despite his modest statements to the contrary. Unlike most academics, secure in the ivory tower, Ranger lived and created history. He juggled the running of a university with the production of a journal (*Dissent*), and undertook serious scholarship while working as a political activist. At all times, his position was insecure: arrest meant deportation. Ranger faced the challenges of maintaining his commitment to multiracial nationalism, while variously pressed by more radical, “African” versions. We admire the courage it took to “be Ranger,” as the author puts it—periodically disliked and criticized by a wide variety of characters ranging from President Hastings Banda of Malawi to the members of various nationalist factions, but nevertheless sticking to his convictions. African history comes to the foreground toward the end of *Writing Revolt*. At University College in Tanzania, the first generation of professional Africanist historians (today’s professor emeriti) built the discipline under Ranger’s leadership (this collective and its approach was soon known as the “Dar es Salaam School”). Freed from the business of direct activism, Ranger threw himself into the publication of a variety of scholarly works, not least “that first book.” The end of *Writing Revolt*, and especially the useful appendix detailing Ranger’s scholarship, is sobering: the appendix is the sort of list one reads and discovers that Ranger published on your “new idea” several decades ago. (One is also reminded that Ranger was doing transnational history almost half a century before it became popular).

Here, then, is a book that will be (of course) vital reading for anyone concerned with the history of nationalism in Zimbabwe or Africa, and indeed the roots of the discipline of African history. But the book should also challenge scholars to avoid quietly writing articles solely for one another, and to have the courage to take if not our activism, then our work, to broader audiences.

Myles Osborne, *University of Colorado Boulder*

**Robin Law, Suzanne Schwarz, and Silke Strickrodt, eds. 2013. *Commercial Agriculture, the Slave Trade, and Slavery in Atlantic Africa*. Woodbridge: James Currey. 272 pp.**

The so-called “legitimate commerce” between African and European polities from the seventeenth through the nineteenth century has often been framed in the context of abolitionism. As the standard narrative goes, abolitionists through their myriad programs and forms of propaganda, particularly those emanating from Britain, articulated a desire to replace the trade in African bodies with a trade in African agricultural produce and products. An attendant historiographical concern relating to the European desire for legitimate commerce with Africans along the Atlantic coast is the ostensible link between the attempts to maneuver commercial activity away from a focus on human chattel to agricultural exchange and how this move influenced imperial projects. *Commercial Agriculture, the Slave Trade, and Slavery in Atlantic Africa* is able to present a coherent narrative, across time and space, which simultaneously questions the validity of the abolitionist paradigm as well as the seemingly direct correlation of legitimate trade to more insidious imperial machinations.

The present volume, compiled from a selection of papers presented at a conference held by the German Historical Institute London in 2010, offers a fresh perspective on the extant historiography of slave trading and European colonialism in Atlantic Africa. What is abundantly clear from the various research projects that produced this volume is that while commercial agriculture (legitimate trade or commerce) constituted a potential alternative to slave trading, the degree to which this is true varied widely and was contingent on various social, economic, political, spatial, and temporal factors. As the editors note in their introduction, wherever commercial agriculture provided an alternative to the trade in human cargoes, there was a multiplicity of social interactions and political desires that produced wide ranging reactions and “protracted and uneven” processes as to the implementation of legitimate commerce. Furthermore, while a “commercial transition” from slave trading to agricultural trade was often a part of the abolitionist agenda, there is ample evidence presented in this volume that in certain areas such developments antedated the rise of abolitionist campaigns in Europe.

The first chapter, written by David Eltis, operates as somewhat of a continuation of the introduction and positions the present volume in historical and historiographic context. Eltis reminds us that African commercial agriculture was well established prior to the nineteenth century (the time period generally associated with the rise of legitimate commercial activity along the West African littoral) and that its emergence was not as fluid as historians have previously posited. Eltis also suggests that the slave trade worked in tandem with some forms of commercial agriculture, specifically palm-oil production, complicating the model of slave trading as beneficial to African elites popularized by Walter Rodney and Joseph Inikori, amongst others. The ten remaining chapters of the book deal with specific case studies, generally revolving around specific commodities and how the friction between legitimate commerce and slave trading influenced Afro-European socio-political interactions.

The variegated history of legitimate commerce and its relation to slave trading in Atlantic Africa is evinced beginning with Gerhard Seibert’s contribution on São Tomé and Príncipe. Seibert is able to demonstrate that São Tomé and Príncipe operated as slave entrepôts and that sugar monoculture, once central to the island economy, was in fact replaced by other foodstuff

production. A declining sugar industry, the result of internecine planter conflict in conjunction with a slave revolt and an emerging Brazilian sugar industry, resulted in the islands becoming not suppliers of human cargo, but food purveyors for journeys from Africa to the Americas. Toby Green's chapter on Upper Guinea demonstrates that for some societies, the commercialization of agriculture had "no direct connection" to the wider Atlantic slave trade. And when a connection did exist, it was generally, like in Seibert's analysis, to provision outbound slave ships.

Colleen Kriger also utilizes the Upper Guinea coast for her analysis of indigo production. She effectively shows how the Royal African Company of England was willing to facilitate legitimate commercial enterprises around indigo planting and export in addition to slave trading ventures. In examining Dutch and English plantation projects along the Gold Coast, Robin Law concludes that the logic of labor productivity in the Americas (being apparently superior than in African locales) precluded any feasible project of supplementing the slave trade with agricultural production for European or American markets. Per Hernæs' work on the Gold Coast reveals the failed Danish colonial projects and how increasing peasant production (principally in palm oil) overtook the abolitionist impulse in developing an export-oriented colonial agriculture.

Many other contributions in this work serve the interest of presenting a more nuanced discussion of slavery and the (rather uneven) rise of so-called legitimate commerce. Christopher Leslie Brown's piece on the origin of the political rhetoric around legitimate trade in opposition to slaving, Roquinaldo Ferreira's chapter on how agricultural enterprise formed a bulwark for increased slave trading and slavery within Angola, Kehinde Olabimtan's work on Christian missionaries and their failed attempt to instill an agricultural work-ethic geared for export, and Bronwen Everill's chapter on the fractious exchanges among Europeans regarding the implementation of legitimate trade in Sierra Leone and Liberia all help demonstrate that there is not a single linear narrative where this topic is concerned. This volume is important for Africanists, students of the slave trade and the African diaspora, those interested in the history of abolitionism (and how its legacy colors contemporary portrayals of the past), and individuals interested in early-modern as well as modern Afro-European commodity exchange that go beyond slaving.

Gordon R. Barnes Jr., *The Graduate Center, City University of New York*

**Vivian Seton, Konrad Tuchscherer, and Arthur Abraham, eds. 2013. *The Autobiography of an African Princess: Fatima Massaquoi*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 274 pp.**

Autobiographies, biographies, and memoirs from some of Africa's leading writers and public figures have continued enriching a literary tradition that has a long history on the continent dating centuries back. From Olaudah Equiano, the eighteenth-century ex-slave/anti-slavery campaigner, to Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first black president, Chinua Achebe, Nigeria's pioneer novelist, and Wole Soyinka, Africa's first laureate, we have seen the literary production of extraordinary life stories from childhood through adulthood that exemplify timelessness in their distinctiveness, richness, and diversity. While *The Autobiography of an African Princess* may not have come from the pen of one of Africa's well-known literati, Fatima Massaquoi's lived

experiences in Africa, Europe, and America, which she documented between 1939 and 1946, share the richness, distinctiveness, and diversity we have come to expect from our more celebrated authors. Edited by Vivian Seton, Fatima's daughter, in collaboration with two accomplished historians of Africa, Konrad Tuchscherer (a specialist in the history of written traditions in Africa) and Arthur Abraham (a specialist in the history of Sierra Leone), this posthumous publication of Fatima's autobiography comes almost seventy years after she completed the initial draft. It recounts her colorful lived experiences including her close encounters with racism, sexism, and unequal power relations in the male-dominated public spaces she traversed in Africa, Europe, and North America.

Born around 1904 in southern Sierra Leone, the daughter of Momo IV (Momolu Massaquoi), ruler of the Gallinas people (also Vai of both Sierra Leone and Liberia), Fatima lived her life across the Atlantic world before she returned to Liberia in 1946, where she passed away in Monrovia, in 1978. Her extraordinary life story is enriched by the expertise of Tuchscherer and Abraham, whose knowledge of the histories, cultures, and languages of the indigenous peoples of Sierra Leone and Liberia gives the autobiography a rich historical and ethno-linguistic texture that set it apart as an "[auto]biography as history."<sup>1</sup>

For the sake of accessibility and readability, Fatima's complex and eventful narrative is divided into three parts with each representing a crucial phase of her life. A common thread running through her story is Fatima's ability to live a fulfilled life that recognized both her triumphs and disappointments. The first part of her story comprises Chapters 1 to 9 that look at 1904 to 1922, the period of her infancy in southern Sierra Leone and her early childhood and teenage years in Liberia. In the second part, Chapters 10 to 15, which concentrate on the years 1922 to 1936, she recounts her experiences as a young African woman living in Hamburg at a time her father Momolu Massaquoi was Liberia's consul general to Germany. With Germany under Nazi influence and "Aryan" supremacist beliefs rife in the country, Fatima, as an African woman, had to come to terms with the harsh realities of both racism and sexism. Sensing that this might result in an ugly situation that would be difficult to handle, her father's friends helped Fatima migrate to the United States in 1936. There she pursued higher education at Fisk University in Tennessee, where she came face to face with Jim Crowism and racial segregation that the US south epitomized at the time. The third part of Fatima's narrative, Chapters 16 to 19, is about her life in the United States from 1936 to 1946, until she decided to depart for Liberia.

The strengths of this autobiography could be gauged at two or more different levels. First, its down-to-heart and honest account of even the most disturbing personal experiences, such as Fatima's childhood physical abuse suffered at the hands of her stepmother, makes it a compelling reading. The injury left Fatima with fractured bones in her hands that caused her a nagging pain while growing up. Although she forgave her stepmother for her indiscretion, Fatima remained extremely self-conscious about her hands and scars well into adulthood. Second, the larger canvas of Sierra Leonean and Liberian cultural and ethno-linguistic history against which Fatima's story is told is rich in content and well orchestrated across the book's 274 pages. This is due to the intervention of two knowledgeable historians, whose imprints are easy to detect in the meticulous presentation of oral traditions (songs, folklore, proverbs, and so on), the explication of the Vai script, and interpretative repertoire that give the book a unique quality. Additionally, people who knew Fatima very well complement her first-hand account.

As “the primary Massaquoi family conservator,” her daughter Vivian’s role in publishing this autobiography is a posthumous fulfillment of her mother’s lifelong wish “to see her story brought to the world” (xxi). Likewise, Fatima’s nephew, Hans J. Massaquoi, a journalist and former editor of *Ebony* magazine, whose contribution includes an anecdotal “Foreword” for his aunt’s autobiography, brings the book in dialogue with his own publication titled *Destined to Witness: Growing Up Black in Nazi Germany*.<sup>2</sup> Indeed *The Autobiography of an Africa Princess* takes us on an extraordinary trans-Atlantic journey from Gendema in Sierra Leone, to Monrovia in Liberia, Hamburg in Germany, Geneva in Switzerland, Tennessee in the United States, and back to Monrovia. During that journey, local histories, cultures, languages, and values crossed part with the darker side of human nature that found expression in racial bigotry—Nazism and Jim Crowism—sexism, and ethnocentrism.

### Notes

- 1 For more on the dialectical relationship between biography and history, see Lois W. Banner. 2009. “Biography as History.” *The American Historical Review* 114.3 (June): 579-586.
- 2 Hans J. Massaquoi. 2001, *Destined to Witness: Growing Up Black in Nazi Germany*. New York: William Morrow Paperbacks.

Tamba E. M’bayo, *West Virginia University*

**Chantal Zabus. 2013. *Out in Africa: Same-Sex Desire in Sub-Saharan Literatures and Cultures*. Suffolk, UK: James Currey. 298 pp.**

A wonderful and exhaustively extensive work, Chantal Zabus’s *Out in Africa: Same-Sex Desire in Sub-Saharan Literatures and Cultures* presents exciting theoretical and literary critiques of a vast swath of European and African literatures. Zabus considers works ranging from Henry Morgan Stanton’s *My Kalulu* and Pierre Loti’s *Le roman d’un spahi* to Sierra Leonean Yulisa Maddy’s underappreciated novel *No Past, No Present, No Future* to more recent works by K. Sello Duiker and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie to South African male writers Mark Behr and Stephen Gray. Geographically and temporally expansive, Zabus’s *Out in Africa* promotes a diachronic history of literary representations of same-sex sexualities and the socio-political possibilities within these narratives.

Zabus succinctly summarizes *Out in Africa*’s overarching manifesto in the chapter “Trans Africa”: “I have, over six chapters, identified those texts by a handful of colonial writers and some thirty African postcolonial writers that present homosexuality-as-an-identity, however nebulous, rather than an occasional or ritualized practice as was the case in the early ethnographic imagination” (p. 251). The notion of “homosexuality-as-an-identity” guides Zabus’s encyclopedic work as she exposes how literatures allow room for explorations of sexualities that are at times in conflict with prevailing socio-cultural and political norms. Indeed, Zabus notes that the novel as a genre “has been signaled out for its capacity for dialogic amplification and its polyphonic aesthetics, which can comfortably host the homoerotic dimension of African societies” (pp. 4-5).



*Out in Africa* adds to the growing compendium of works dedicated to the discussion of African same-sex sexualities. Drawing upon prominent queer theorists such as J. Jack Halberstam, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and David Halperin, Zabus's methodological approach unambiguously supports pairing Western queer theories with African socio-cultural constructs of identity. The Introduction, "To Make Things Perfectly Queer," harkens to Alexander Doty's *Making Things Perfectly Queer*, thereby signaling her works' relationship with queer theory. Zabus does not, however, remain unperturbed about potentially enacting cultural imperialism by overlaying Western identity constructs onto African bodies as evidenced by the first chapter's central concerns about European writers, explorers, and academics naming and identifying African bodies and sexualities. Self-aware and highly conscious of such culturally and intellectually colonizing possibilities, Zabus centrally positions African literary and cultural works while queer theory resides visibly in the background. This dual focus on place and gender becomes part of the work's structure as Zabus organizes chapters by gender as well as region as evidenced through chapter titles and sub-titles. For example, the chapter "The Stuff of Desire: Boarding School Girls, Plain Lesbians & Teenage Dykes" features works from Nigeria, Kenya, and Uganda, as well as multiple incarnations of lesbian sexualities ranging various genres, such as the gothic to boarding school narratives.

The first chapter, "Anthropological Wormholes," frames Zabus's arguments regarding Western anthropological and ethnographic development and deployment of African sexualities. The influence Western literary representations had and continue to have upon African bodies and sexualities is the central focus of the chapter "The Text that Dare not Speak its Name: Male Colonial Intimacies." Zabus argues that Western novelists, as much as they rendered Africans as secondary characters, "postulate a form, however inchoate, of African same-sex desire" (p. 74). Yet the common question still lurks: do these Western novels reinforce the notion that homosexuality in all its various guises is a European import? Whereas chapters dedicated to imaginary representations of male and female same-sex sexualities by African authors explore this question, Zabus's most unique treatment occurs in the chapter "Male & Female Mythologies," wherein she argues that a number of African novelists establish an African lore surrounding same-sex sexuality by connecting characters to Egyptian and Hausan mythologies. "This annexation of myths," writes Zabus, "reveals a certain level of insecurity in dealing with male and female same-sex desire, as if these writers wished to demonstrate their culture is ancestrally hospitable to gender variance, while it points to larger issues such as the African range of sexualities and the link between homosexuality and spirituality" (p. 217). Whether such myth-making indeed exposes "a certain level of insecurity" is up for debate, as Zabus occasionally wavers between critique and celebration of these narrative frameworks as she questions the potential ramifications of such narratives in regards to socio-cultural acceptance of non-heterosexual sexualities and sexual identities.

Chantal Zabus's *Out in Africa* may greatly benefit scholars interested in contemporary African literatures and global queer identities. *Out in Africa* confirms Zabus's intellectual depth, vast range of literary and theoretical knowledge, and her commitment to exploring the dynamic literary of sexualities within Africa.

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