

BOOK REVIEWS

Sharon Alane Abramowitz. 2014. *Searching for Normal in the Wake of the Liberian War*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 268 pp.

In recent decades, scholarship on post-conflict states in Africa has expanded exponentially as scholars voraciously document the recovery efforts of countries despoiled by wars, among them Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and South Sudan, to name only a few. In the case of the West African states of Liberia and Sierra Leone, the recent Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) epidemic that hit both countries with thousands of deaths after it originated and spread from neighboring Guinea in December 2013 has only compounded the challenges of post-conflict recovery. The epidemic, just like the postwar reconstruction effort in Liberia following its thirteen-year civil war, caught the attention of the international community, the World Health Organization (WHO), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and NGOs, both local and international, all of them seeking to restore normalcy in the war-torn country. Paradoxically, the goodwill behind such humanitarian interventions notwithstanding, most of the programs implemented, more often than not, fell short of addressing the specific mental health needs of Liberians who had experienced the brunt of the war.

This backdrop is the point of departure for Sharon Abramowitz's *Searching for Normal in the Wake of the Liberian War*, which zooms in on the early post-conflict reconstruction, from 2003 to 2008, "to examine the relationship between individual and collective trauma and the project of postwar social repair...through the lens of the massive global humanitarian project of trauma healing and psychosocial intervention" (p. 4). As Abramowitz puts it, she aspired "to study mental health and psychosocial intervention in a multiscalar and processual way, using a multisited ethnographic approach" (p. 35). And in so doing, she had to draw on archival research, NGO documentation (or grey literature), interviews, both formal and informal, participant observation, and "a careful process of cross-validating informants' accounts with NGO, local informant, documentary, and international sources" (p. 35). This plethora of sources combining a proactive ethnographic investigation and methodical documentation, together with the author's incisive interpretative repertoire, gives the book a multilayered texture that is intriguing and puts it above standard narratives about the Liberian civil war and its dehumanizing violence.

According to Abramowitz, her book's eight chapters are written to capture "the discordance of the phenomena being studied—violence and its effects—albeit in a different register" (p. 31). In Chapter 1, she lays out her frame of reference centered on trauma and psychosocial rehabilitation within the context of post-conflict reconstruction and a "decentralized project of humanitarian social engineering" (p. 25). This involves initiatives at mass education, radio shows to raise awareness, and communal engagement with issues such as human rights, gender-based violence, and peace building. Chapter 2 then takes the reader through the years between 1994 and 2013 to offer a "history of the present" in which the author addresses international health policy, psychosocial and mental health services coordinated by

<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/pdfs/v15i4a5.pdf>

NGOs, and Liberian national politics. Abramowitz explains that the country's mental health infrastructure crumbled during the civil war. But in the postwar period, Liberia witnessed "an effective 'scaling up,' or nationalization, of basic mental health services" (p. 58). Chapter 3 concerns the author's conception of *normality* and *trauma* (italics used by author) in Liberia, which takes into account how those most affected by the civil war grappled with the "new normal." As the author notes, "Social life in postwar Liberia was in many ways 'normal' and not 'normal' at the same time" (p. 63). This contradiction is the crux of the chapter's discussion. Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7, together, cover postwar Liberia's major sites of mental and psychosocial interventions, which included "individual and group counseling, gender-based violence, and ex-combatant rehabilitation and DDRR (Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, Reintegration)" (p. 31). The final chapter then documents the lived experiences of Liberian psychosocial workers, focusing on what they made of their occupation and its challenges in the postwar period.

Indeed Abramowitz's anthropological research in Liberia reveals extensive fieldwork that put her in touch with government officials, humanitarian leaders, and local NGO employees. Through such interactions, she gained access to patients, program activities, and program documents that enrich the book's narrative and analysis. Interviews with patients, social workers, mental health care providers, and ordinary Liberians count among the monograph's unique features that move it beyond theoretical musings and propositions. The reader gets first-hand accounts from Liberians who experienced the trauma of war and needed psychosocial catharsis to regain their lives. While specialists of violence and its effects on society will find it easier to relate to the book's subject matter for obvious reasons, non-specialists will also be pleasantly surprised by the ease with which they can follow Abramowitz's complex thought process that seldom wavers in its attempt to reenact the chaotic nature of a dysfunctional Liberian society reemerging from its troubled war-torn recent past. Still, the average educated Liberian seeking readable material on her/his country's civil war and its costs will find *Searching for Normal in the Wake of the Liberian War* intellectually perplexing and emotionally disquieting because of Abramowitz's erudition and brutal honesty.

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

Wale Adebani. 2014. *Yoruba Elites and Ethnic Politics in Nigeria: Obafemi Awolowo and Corporate Agency*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 295 pp.

The Yoruba have been well-written on since the 18th century, a development that earned them the description as "a locus classicus of African civilization and philosophical achievement" (p. 34). This is not surprising because the Yoruba people had an early contact with western civilization in Nigeria. This fact was reflected in the volumes of publications on the anthropological and cultural realities of the Yoruba people which Professor 'Wale Adebani utilized effectively to construct his theory of elitism and the impact of same on the atmospherics of political life in Yorubaland. He identified the ideological impact of Chief Obafemi Awolowo on the political consciousness of the Yoruba and viewed the definitive role of his political values as one that shaped and is still shaping Yoruba politics e even after twenty-eight years after the death of this great Yoruba patriarch.

Adebanwi's book focuses on the politics, values, and beliefs of Awolowo, and it is indeed an attempt to explain the political life of the entire people through the prism of its highly revered son—the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo. The author's assumption, I believe, is that the politics of the Yoruba people can be understood through a careful perusal of the different manifestations of Awolowo's leadership values, actions and policies evident in the different epochs of the socio-political affairs and indeed challenges of the Yoruba in the Nigeria's multi-ethnic political landscape.

The book was originally a Cambridge University doctoral thesis re-worked into its current form. The author has also published articles on aspects of Yoruba anthropological realities in leading scholarly journals, which has established him as an authoritative theorist in that field of scholarship. In a two-part book with seven chapters and a rich bibliography, the introductory chapter lucidly clarifies the theoretical and conceptual import of "elite," "agency," and "corporate agency of the elite" in the discourse on Yoruba politics, using Awolowo as the explanatory variable. The author depicts Awolowo as the essence of the past and continuing agency around whom the Yoruba modern life world is configured. He describes Awolowo as the corporate agent, the modern embodiment of the Yoruba progenitor, thereby affirming an earlier historical association of Chief Obafemi Awolowo with Oduduwa, the real progenitor of the Yoruba (pp. 38-40.)

Utilizing the political values and ideas of Awolowo, Adebanwi assesses the politics of the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Republics and the roles of different politicians, religious groups, political associations including Egbe Omo Oduduwa, Afenifere, political parties, and traditional power wielders in Yorubaland in relation to the national politics to determine to what extent the different Yoruba actors in the country's politics demonstrated their "Awoness," "yorubanness," or Omoluwabi-ness. He does so even though he admits that "the burden of Omoluwabi-ness, Awoness, or proper yorubanness would require different things in different contexts, he, however, strongly opined that true Awoists are proper Yoruba" (p. 187). Those Yoruba politicians in opposing political parties who were critical of Chief Awolowo and his political party and ideas were described as improper Yoruba. The explication of the concept of "proper Yoruba" is the main subject of chapter six (pp. 184- 223). This treatise on how (not) to be a proper Yoruba is bound to generate enthusiastic commentaries and rebuttals from different quarters, especially across the scholarly audience and public intellectuals in Yoruba land. Adebanwi's description of former President Obasanjo "as the most evident example of how not to be a proper Yoruba" agrees with the belief of most Awoists. But, such a position is a value-laden assessment that could have resulted from a misjudgment of Obasanjo's political values and actions.

In the same chapter six, Adebanwi tries to equate "omoluwabi-ness" with "Yorubanness," and adjudges Awolowo as a perfect personification of the ethical system that 'omoluwabi' portends. It stands to reason therefore that if there cannot be any one perfect replica of Awolowo than Awolowo himself, as our author would like us to believe, then nobody in the whole of Yorubaland, dead or living, is qualified to be an "omoluwabi" of the Awolowo's brand. That explains why despite our author's seeming preference for the politics of Asiwaju Bola Tinubu in comparison with other political personalities in Yoruba land as portrayed in chapter seven, nobody was categorically endorsed by him as Awolowo's successor.

In the concluding chapter, Adebani posits that the "ethno-nationalist project (Modern Yorubanness) is fluid, despite sometimes being represented as rigid, static and even essentialized" (p. 246). It is this perspective that births the erroneous belief that the degree of Awoness of an individual can be determined in terms of the nature of his relationship with Awolowo-professing groups. Political association is different from political consciousness, and that explains why it is possible for an Awoist to decamp from an Awolowo-professing group to another group while still retaining his Awoist consciousness, orientation and beliefs. "True Awoists" can exit a group of professing Awoists on grounds of personal disagreement, but that action might not result in the extirpation of Awoness from his consciousness. That presupposes the reality of the existence of "true" and "fake" Awoists, which was not broached by the author in his book.

Overall, this book is well written. It contains invaluable resources on Yoruba life and shows evidence of in-depth research which makes the book an authoritative ethnographic and historical piece on the Yoruba, albeit, with particular emphasis on the exemplification of Yoruba values of good character in all ramifications by Chief Obafemi Awolowo. This book is a very useful addition to the literature on politics in ethnically diverse and sharply divided plural societies like Nigeria. It is recommended to social science students, professional ethnographers, and scholars with interest in the politics of developing societies.

John Olushola Magbadelo, *Centre for African & Asian Studies, Garki, Abuja, Nigeria*

Adekeye Adebajo, ed. 2014. *Africa's Peacemakers: Nobel Peace Laureates of African Descent*. London: Zed Books. 330 pp.

Africa's Peacemakers has fourteen contributors including several renowned Africanists, and is dedicated to the memory of Nelson Mandela (1918-2013). The editor and author of two of the book's fifteen chapters has served as the executive director of the Center for Conflict Resolution in Cape Town. The book is divided into six parts: an introduction, followed by two sections on the three African-American Nobel Peace Prize winners, Ralph Bunche, Martin Luther King Jr, and Barak Obama, and it concludes with four sections on the ten African Nobel Peace Laureates: Albert Luthuli, Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, and Frederik Willem de Klerk from South Africa, Anwar Sadat and Mohamed ElBaradei of Egypt, Kenyan Wangari Maathai, Ghanaian Kofi Annan, and Liberians Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee.

Africa's Peacemakers is the first book to offer a comprehensive look at people of African descent who won the Nobel Peace Prize between 1950 and 2011. It highlights interactions among the prize winners, such as Bunche and King marching together for civil rights, Luthuli and Mandela working jointly to end apartheid, and Obama meeting and honoring Tutu. The individual chapters devoted to the Nobel Laureates are largely laudatory, but the introduction includes some concerns with individual recipients including Sirleaf for her "ambiguous role in Liberia's first civil war" (1989-1997), the fact that she was given her award "four days before a presidential election" that she won, and de Klerk having viewed apartheid as morally wrong only in a "qualified way" (pp. 9, 30, and 22).

The authors also raise the issue of the politics behind the Nobel Prize, noting that Gandhi was nominated for the prize five times and shortlisted three times, but never won, due to British

opposition to Gandhi and Britain's close ties with Norway, the country that awards the prize. Of note is that although Gandhi never won the Nobel Peace Prize, he inspired eight of the thirteen Nobel Laureates featured in *African Peacemakers* in their efforts for socio-economic justice, civil rights, and women's rights.

In 1950, Ralph Bunche was the first person of African descent to win the Nobel Peace Prize. He received it for his skillful mediation in arranging a ceasefire between the Israelis and Arabs following the creation of the state of Israel. Egyptian Anwar Sadat also won his Nobel Peace Prize (1978) for his success in making peace with Israel. Albert Luthuli was born in 1898 and was the first of the African peace laureates and the first South African. Luthuli reached his mid-forties before he became active in politics, but then served as the president of the African National Congress from 1951 to 1967. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1961 for his role in the non-violent struggle against apartheid.

It took another forty-three years for the first African female, Wangari Maathai, to win the Nobel Peace Prize for her contributions to sustainable development, democracy and peace. Of the ninety-seven individuals that received the Nobel Peace Prize prior to Maathai in 2004, only twelve were women. Dr. Maathai is noteworthy in that she was not only the first African woman and first Kenyan to receive the prize, but also the first person of any gender or nationality to receive it for contributions to the protection of the natural environment.

Some may wonder, given the book's title, why F.W. de Klerk, a white South African, has a chapter devoted to him. One contributor to the volume, Kenyan historian Ali Mazrui, offers two groups that qualify as people of African descent: "Africans of blood" who identify as African by ancestry and "Africans of the soil," people who by birth or adoption identify as African (p. 46).

African Peacemakers is quite comprehensive and well researched, but lacks a concluding chapter that brings together theoretical or conceptual concerns. As such the book falls short of its objective of drawing lessons from the thirteen Nobel Peace Laureates lives "for peacemaking, civil rights, socio-economic justice, environmental protection, nuclear disarmament and women's rights" (p. 4). Nonetheless, this book should be read by all those interested in Nobel Peace Prize winners of African descent, for its own sake, or to better appreciate the anti-violence struggles against oppression, human rights violations and injustice the eminent people featured in *African Peacemakers* participated in or led.

African Peacemakers is an interdisciplinary work that is appropriate for use in undergraduate seminars on Africa. The writing style also makes it appropriate for general audiences. The book is a welcome contribution to the still rather limited literature on African successes.

Heidi G. Frontani, *Elon University*

Afe Adogame, ed. 2014. *The Public Face of African New Religious Movements in Diaspora: Imagining the Religious 'Other'*. Surrey, UK, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company. 300 pp.

The key word in the title of this collection is diaspora. In the introduction, Afe Adogame notes that while a fair amount of research regarding African New Religious Movements (ANRMs) has been conducted on African soil little has been written about what happens when such groups

are scattered, establishing outposts in other parts of the world. This book is a solid contribution to the modest literature on the topic.

Chapter 1 details the worship of the *orixás* (African deities) in Brazil, while Chapter 2 recounts the celebration in Minnesota of *Irrecha*, a traditional Ethiopian thanksgiving ritual. Chapter 4 examines the precarious status of Black Jews in France and Chapter 9 shines a light on the use of *maraboutage* (divining) by Senegalese boat refugees fleeing to Spain. The remaining nine chapters (3, 5-8, 10-13) address neo-Pentecostal churches—African Independent Churches (AICs)—originating in Africa but working in countries such as Sweden, Brazil, China, Canada, and Britain. Attention is given to the zealous preaching of the so-called “Prosperity Gospel” and the nexus between the sometimes controversial Pentecostal view of spiritual warfare and traditional African understandings of witchcraft. Of special interest is the often negative reaction that such teachings have evoked.

African New Religious Movements in Diaspora is a scholarly but engaging work. Written by well-qualified and degreed contributors, bibliographies at the end of each chapter give evidence of broad study. In many cases, writers go beyond the library, engaging in field research. The result is an effective presentation, taking the reader on a fascinating journey to the locations explored. By meeting a host of characters and hearing their words, the reader acquires a new appreciation for the challenges African immigrants face when practicing their religion. One recurring theme is the perceived threat in more secularized settings (such as Québec) that exuberant African expressions of Christianity may present to the host culture. In a chapter chronicling some painful adjustments of Congolose Pentecostals in Montréal, Géraldine Mossière notes the “strong public calls for secularism” that have emerged in Québec in response to the “cultural practices of minorities” (p., 147). The reader is caught up in the drama of elders keen to maintain African languages and practices (such as the dowry) and younger Congolese who wish instead to assimilate more fully to the culture of their new home. A second theme is the dynamics behind the rapid growth of African Independent Churches (AICs). In a helpful chapter, Laura Premack compares Brazil’s Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus with Nigeria’s Redeemed Christian Church of God. Premack maintains: “Millions of Nigerians believe that Nigeria has a special relationship with God and are invested in the project of ensuring and proving the vitality of the Nigerian nation through making it (appear to be) an international centre of evangelical Christianity” (p. 223). However, the limited evidence the author provides is suggestive rather than conclusive. Further research is needed to establish this provocative thesis.

A third area touched upon is the role of women. Anne Kubai examines African churches operating in Sweden. The WFGCI is Nigerian in origin and has carefully circumscribed roles for women in worship, not allowing them (for example) to preach to a congregation containing both women and men. On the other hand, the Salem Church, founded by an Ethiopian pastor, is led by her and (presumably) is open to women serving more expansively in leadership. Speaking as one who belongs to a tradition that enfranchises both women and men for lay and ordained ministry, more development of this point than the one paragraph the author allots would have been appreciated. What are the factors that in one instance forbid female preachers yet in another permit it?

While *Africa New Religious Movements in Diaspora* largely succeeds in its objective, it can be scarred by uneven editing. A glaring example appears in the first paragraph, where Afe Adogame speaks of “a tendency that may have probably shaped the public mental picture...” (p. 1). This is apparently a cut-and-paste error, one that better proofreading would have detected. These weaknesses aside, Afe Adogame has provided an intriguing and variegated look at the interaction of African New Religious Movements (ANRMs) with host cultures abroad, underscoring both the positive contributions and tensions that such interaction creates. As a work more anthropological than theological, the collection makes a scholarly and timely contribution to its field.

Gregory Crofford, *Africa Region, Church of the Nazarene*

Richard B. Allen. 2014. *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500-1850*. Athens: Ohio University Press. xviii, 378 pp.

The volume under consideration is a quantitative study of the European slave trade in the Indian Ocean world. Allen outlines and estimates the scale of a phenomenon that, almost fifty years after Philip Curtin’s groundbreaking Atlantic census, remains largely understudied. Chapter 1 examines the state of the scholarship and estimates that “Europeans were directly involved in trading at least 954,000 to 1,275,900 slaves within and beyond the Indian Ocean between 1500 and 1850” (p. 24). In East Africa, which accounted for the bulk of the trade, Europeans were responsible for about half of the total trade, with Arab-Muslim traders responsible for the other half. Chapter 2 considers British slave trading at the hands of the East India Company, “a corporate state willing and able to exercise a comparatively high degree of centralized control” (p. 29). Chapter 3 sheds light on the French slave trade centered in the Mascarene Islands between the early 1600s and early 1800s. The author paints a convincing picture of the islands as the “center of a dynamic slave trading network that stretched not only from one end of the Indian Ocean to the other but also deep into the Atlantic” (p. 67). Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate that, although East Africa and Madagascar were the primary sources for the trade, British and French slavers active in the region stretched their areas of operations deep into the Atlantic both to procure and sell.

Chapter 4 covers the trade in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, from where traders from various European nations shipped between “360,000 to 484,000 Indian and Southeast Asian men, women and children” (p. 136), with shipments to VOC colonies in the Indonesian archipelago attracting the lion’s share. Chapter 5 considers the onset of abolition for the Mascarenes, where clandestine trading continued well into the 1830s due to a variety of conditions: powerful commercial and agricultural interests in the islands, French-British imperial competition standing in the way of an effective implementation of the abolitionist treaties, and lack of naval resources. Chapter 6 examines the East India Company’s commitment to abolition and the concomitant emergence of networks of migrations for indentured servants and convicts across the British Empire.

Allen offers important insights that are likely to inform the debate on the Indian Ocean slave trade for years. He successfully argues several crucial points. First, that despite the “Africa-centric” nature of much scholarship, an appreciation of the multidirectionality (p. 25) of

the slave trade in the region is key to understanding the phenomenon. Second, that European trade in the Indian Ocean was not a sideshow to either European trade in the Atlantic or Arab-Muslim trade in the region and that it was deeply intertwined with the former. Moreover, the volume's annotated tables alone speak to several years of painstaking research on a variety of sources whose data has been duly parsed and cross-referenced, leaving as little as humanly possible to guesswork.

The author, who admits to an Anglo-French "emphasis" (p. xii), mostly focuses on French trade in the Mascarenes and British trade in India, whereas Dutch and Portuguese trade are only cursorily treated in Chapter 1 and hardly mentioned again. In light of this choice, titling the volume the "European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean" seems somewhat misleading. By the same token, the title's chronological delimitations (1500-1850), also do not reflect the focus on the long 18th century. The volume offers scant treatment of the 17th century, whereas the 16th century almost does not feature at all, except in Chapter 1 where the Portuguese and Dutch cases are briefly discussed on the basis of secondary sources. While reading the volume, one has the impression of having in hand a collection of thoroughly researched stand-alone essays rather than a structured monograph, a sensation that dovetails with the author's own admission (p. xii) that much of the content is revised from previously published articles and book chapters. While the effort to bring together in a single volume over a decade's worth of scholarship is to be commended, one would have wished for more integration. This is something that could have been achieved, for example, with a proper overarching conclusion, as opposed to one page of concluding remarks added to the last chapter. Regardless of these minor drawbacks, Allen's is a significant contribution that should find a place in the library of any scholar of the slave trade.

Matteo Salvatore, *Gulf University for Science and Technology, Kuwait*

W. Ascher and N. Mirovitskaya, eds. 2013. *The Economic Roots of Conflict and Cooperation in Africa: Politics, Economics and Inclusive Development*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 276 pp.

Conflict is a perennial problem in Africa. The dire need to assuage conflict should not be undermined. When attempting to alleviate conflict, finding root causes of conflict should be the prerequisite. Whilst most pieces of work illuminate the root causes of conflict from a largely economic, ethnic, and external factor perspective, this well-designed volume, and a must read for development practitioners, brings in a fresh paradigm and perspective with regards to the approach of Africa's internecine conflicts as being based upon development strategies. It demonstrates the close link between the development strategies that a government implements and the escalation or de-escalation of group violence. The volume falls in line with the works of Paul Collier and Amartya Sen, among others, who have explained conflict occurrence in Africa. The volume consists of a Preface and ten chapters chronologically and logically presented. This multi-authored volume presents a concoction of case studies derived from the length and breadth of the African continent. The chapters are bound by a central theme that illustrates the close relationship between development strategies and intergroup violence. Focusing on eleven African countries, the volume explores the development strategies that have been implemented in relation to violence.

The first chapter by William Ascher and Natalia Mirovitskaya provides an introduction emphasizing the need to frame the richness of the linkages between development strategies and conflict. They argue that governments are not neutral entities and so are affiliated with other groups making the likelihood of development-related violence higher. Robert L Tignor and Clement Henry look at North Africa in Chapter 2 and 3 respectively. While Tignor gives an account of Egypt, Henry provides a comparative analysis of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. They both allude to the fact that the Arab Spring revealed the need for development strategies that encompass inclusive growth as exclusion leads to mayhem.

Chapter four by Nzinga Broussard is on Ethiopia. The Agricultural Development-Led Industrialization (ADLI) policy, which was launched by the Ethiopian government, resulted in the urban sector being side-lined and feeling excluded from the economic process leading to violence and protest. Michael Lofchie's review of Tanzania explains how the country, despite its tremendous ethno-linguistic diversity and poor economic performance, has long demonstrated deep-rooted peace. Authoritarian rule in Tanzania enabled the government to eliminate any opposition, thereby promoting a unity despite ethnic differences.

In chapter six, John McCauley gives a comparative analysis of the different development strategies implemented in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. The export-led and export-dependent strategies in Cote d'Ivoire provided significant growth and stability, which was short-lived as evidenced by deeper political divisions and ethnic strife later. In Ghana, however, nationalization promoted national unity and evaded collective violence.

Darren Kew and Chris Kwaja provide an overview of development efforts in Nigeria. The authors find that despite many development strategies, the government has done very little to implement policy reforms. Human development indicators have remained appalling fuelling intense intergroup competition and igniting several conflicts. Amy Poteete gives an account of intergroup relations in Botswana. She points on how intergroup violence has been limited despite significant social divisions. Poteete observes that in Botswana, "losing" groups on some issues often see themselves among the "winning" groups on other issues thereby minimizing the occurrence of conflict (p. 183). Takako Mino documents development strategies in South Africa. Mino notes that policies designed to deal with inequalities have reduced the government's fiscal capacity to devote enough resources to urban-targeted poverty alleviation. The scarcity of employment opportunities has generated intergroup conflict between South Africans and the immigrants seeking economic betterment.

The volume ends with a concluding chapter from Ascher and Mirovitskaya. They note the multiple constructive and destructive pathways connecting economic development to intergroup relations in African context. This brave and wide in scope volume manages to give a rich understanding of how development strategies can be destructive or constructive.

There are however a few weaknesses inherent in this piece of work. Firstly, the book has way too many scholars implying different dynamics, which might prove difficult to comprehend. Secondly, in the introduction the authors criticize Paul Collier's greed and grievance theory as if it is of little significance in explaining conflict occurrence (pp. 4-6). This is despite the appreciation it has been given in several academic disciplines. In the final analysis, other than these few weaknesses, the book is an excellent piece that is different from other books, which explain conflict occurrence in Africa. This book highlights an under-discussed

dimension, which sees the link between development strategies and conflict escalation or de-escalation.

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William Beinhart and Karen Brown. 2013. *African Local Knowledge and Livestock Health Treatment: Diseases and Treatments in South Africa*. New York: James Curry. 304 pp.

At a time of intense global search for answers to numerous health, economic, social, and other varying challenges that continue to evolve or mutate to face humankind, a book on African local knowledge on livestock health and treatment is a progressive development. The word “African” in the context used in the book, however, is not a sampling of the rich knowledge pouches that exist across the continent. African knowledge, as used by Beinhart and Brown, is restricted to that obtainable among Africans resident in South Africa, from where a sample of a little over two hundred interviews were conducted among rural, mainly smallholder, livestock farmers. Though very minimal by way of representing what is the huge body of veterinary knowledge that lies unexplored, and mostly unrecorded among the one billion residents of Africa, *African Local Knowledge and Livestock Treatment* still makes an important contribution.

Beinhart and Brown are clear in their definition of the local as more to do with the existing reality of veterinary medical practice as against that knowledge that is indigenous to the area and is traceable to the “ancestors.” By expanding a definition of local veterinary knowledge to include “plural practices, hybrid understandings of disease and treatment” (p. 18) among rural farmers, the authors empower the term local and acknowledge local innovations that derive from global influences. This is important as what is indigenous to Africa has evolved over the years and much has been lost, hybridized, or retained, or might not have existed at all. One informant in his seventies when asked about any indigenous plant remedies for ticks replied that he never learnt of medicine for ticks from his father. This can be because since the early 20th century, compulsory and universal dipping of livestock against dipping was enforced in that part of the country. Another informant in his nineties replied likewise (p. 65).

The fact that most rural farmers interviewed simultaneously subscribe to indigenous herbs and western medicine in livestock treatment establishes the reality that is the Africa of today. Across sectors and fields, Africans have mostly embraced western knowledge, but they have not completely let go of that which is indigenous to the continent. In essence, for conversations that center on African development to remain relevant it is necessary to recognize an indigenous, hybrid, and modern Africa, with influences that cuts across the west, the east (China, India, etc.), and the south (Brazil, etc). The emphasis for researchers interested in indigenous knowledge in various sectors should be in understanding that which is indigenous to Africa, but within the context of other existing and emerging influences.

Several of the several interviews conducted by the authors indicate that studies on Africa’s indigenous knowledge in a modern era will have to grapple with the fact that such knowledge is fast eroding. While older Africans blame younger Africans for being “no longer interested in inheriting traditional knowledge” (p. 141), younger men complained that “the old were secretive” (p. 143). The small sample of rural farmers in South Africa represents the reality across Africa. The continent’s indigenous knowledge is dying as fast as the older generation,

and the young people are strongly attracted to the lure of city life, the trappings of modernity, and the perceived promises of ultra-capitalism.

The title *African Local Knowledge and Livestock Treatment* raises the expectation of an in-depth exposition about the utilization of locally obtainable herbs in livestock disease treatment. While that was highlighted and given some attention, the core message of the book appears to be more of an overview of the state of veterinary medicine among rural African smallholder farmers in South Africa. Lacking is an in-depth exposition on the use and efficacy of the several mentioned herbs and local practices and how the rest of Africa and the globe can benefit from such knowledge. Perhaps, that might be asking too much of the authors, neither of whom have any evidence of formal training in veterinary medicine, and who may have set out to provide only an overview in the hope that it will spur the needed more in-depth research among scholars.

Chika Ezeanya, *University of Rwanda*

Brigitta Busch, Lucijan Busch, and Karen Press, eds. 2014. *Interviews with Neville Alexander: The Power of Languages against the Language of Power*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press. x, 342 pp.

Neville Alexander was born in Cradock in the Eastern Cape in 1936, of an Afrikaans-speaking father, David James Alexander, and English-speaking mother, Dimbithi Bisho. His paternal grandfather was Scots and his maternal grandmother a freed slave, raised in the London Missionary Station in Bethelsdorp, on the outskirts of Port Elizabeth. In his youth he would also have heard and spoken isiXhosa, and he was at school with German-speaking nuns, from whom he learned the language. He took a B.A. at the University of Cape Town, where he met, among others, the writer and academic A. C. Jordan, with whom he seems to have shared a passion for bilingual, dual-medium education (p. 50), and went on a Humboldt scholarship to the University of Tübingen for his doctorate. At UCT he had found the study of German both “analytical and inspirational” (p. 44), and his disciplinary allegiance remained continental rather than Anglophone (recalling Rick Turner, perhaps). He became active in the resistance to apartheid on various fronts, and soon after his return to South Africa in 1961 he was imprisoned on Robben Island for ten years. When Neville Alexander died in 2012 he had achieved a distinguished career of progressive activism, which combined the political, the academic, and the educational in a very distinctive way. Recalling his resignation, in the face of heavy-handed ANC bureaucratization, from the Pan-South African Language Board, as it shifted from multilingualism to ethnic representativity, Neville Alexander described the move as “the reaction of an activist, of an alternative person who didn’t accept the ruling paradigm” (p. 152). The impression is borne out by this volume as a whole.

Although entitled “interviews,” Neville Alexander’s “language biography” (p. 1), which forms the first part, seems rather to have been generated by a series of conversations, conducted over a number of years, between the subject and two of the editors, Brigitta and Lucijan Busch. In any event, it gives us a lively and sympathetic picture of an observant and enterprising South African citizen, as he was at least after 1994. The second part of the book offers us a selection of Neville Alexander’s academic and policy papers (chapters from books, speeches), which are all

welcome examples of clarity and precision, as lively in their own way as the autobiographical soliloquy with which the book opens.

Neville Alexander seems never to have been a member of or particularly sympathetic towards the ANC: “this trap of neoliberal hegemony...that compromised negotiated settlement...” (p. 119). He writes that “if it hadn’t been for the suppression of 1976, there’s no doubt that the Black Consciousness Movement rather than the ANC, or the PAC even, would have become the major force” (p. 106). His first allegiances were to the Unity Movement and the Teachers’ League, and while a student at Tübingen he published in the Trotskyist (Fourth International) *Labour Review*, and under a pseudonym (he used the name of his uncle), a paper on developing “a revolutionary mood and revolutionary potential in South Africa” (p. 61). Back home, having refused job offers from Germany, Ghana and India he was convinced that “we had to start a guerrilla army” (p. 67). Although he seems to have died believing that “a genuine world revolution [is] centuries away” (p. 174), my impression is that Neville Alexander’s principles and programs were Marxist and Trotskyist. “I became a socialist, a genuine radical socialist” (p. 173). Thus the working class gives us “the people who are going to change the world” (p. 186). In 1979, as today, national liberation requires “nothing else than the abolition of capitalism itself” (p. 199).

Neville Alexander’s “linguistic” activism — “I’ve never approached language from a purely linguistic angle, I’ve never been a linguist in that sense” (p. 172) — was both focused and adventurous. He fostered many positive and progressive initiatives: among them the South African Council for Higher Education, the Language in Education in Africa Project, and the National Language Project. He was concerned for the empowerment of indigenous languages, rather than for their local color or decorative possibilities, for the recognition of Afrikaans as an African language, and he strove for “mother-tongue based bilingual education” (p. 297). Now, as much as ever, Neville Alexander’s voice should be heard: “what is conducive to the humanization of men and women – international culture – is the product of the classes that are committed to liberation. In the modern capitalist world these classes are the working classes” (p. 186). We can be grateful for this excellently produced book.

Tony Voss, *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University*

Bram Buscher. 2013. *Transforming the Frontier: Peace Parks and the Politics of Neoliberal Conservation of Southern Africa*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 312 pp.

Many conservation experts have characterized Southern Africa as the laboratory for global conservation efforts. The southern Africa region is one of the world’s most delicate landscapes, consisting of a mosaic of peoples, plants and animals species; characterized by desert, hyper arid, arid, semi-arid, and sub-humid areas. The delicate nature of the landscape is further complicated by the region’s troubled colonial land policies. Land rights and ownership are arguably southern Africa’s most sensitive political topics. The delicate nature of the southern African landscape, together with its complicated history of land rights and ownership has attracted the attention of expert conservationists and political ecologists around the world. One such expert is Bram Buscher, a land use and sustainable development expert with extensive experience in the region. Buscher has written this fascinating book that explains a fairly new

conservation paradigm—the peace parks concept—to show that transboundary conservation can be a powerful tool in resolving the longstanding conflicts over land rights and ownership. Employing different neoliberal conservation frames such as socio-ecological dynamics, political economic realities, contradictory realities, and reified representation, to name but a few, Buscher examines the different governance structures that influence land management and conservation planning in southern Africa. Buscher begins the book by clearly outlining the merits of the peace park concept and referring to them as “the new telos of conservation” (p.2). Buscher’s strategy is meant to capture the reader’s attention, making sure that the reader ventures deeper into the book. Buscher’s next efforts are to establish, using the Moloti-Drakensburg Transfrontier Project, the different modes of political conducts underpinning the politics of peace parks in the southern African region.

Given the lack of clearly demarcated borders during and after independence, one would expect Buscher to delve deeper into the history of the region’s land crisis, which is rooted in its colonial land policies, to explain the essence of the transboundary park initiatives in the region. Buscher did not do that. Instead, Buscher focuses more on the region’s contemporary land management issues. Although Buscher devotes two chapters in the book (chapters 1 and 2) to colonial and postcolonial issues, the focus is on the role of colonial and postcolonial political economy with regards to neoliberal conservation. Buscher fails to properly inform the reader about the erstwhile colonial and postcolonial administrations’ infamous land policies in the region. Buscher, nevertheless, in five chapters (chapters 3 to 7), brilliantly explores the semantics behind the workings of the region’s ethnographic structures as they relate to neoliberal conservation. Buscher relies on a variety of methodologies and technics to emphasize the ethnographic interventions, including observation, narration, enumeration, reason, and example. Although Buscher only brushes over the land crisis issue, the use of a nexus approach that integrates ethnography and political economy to understand the operational process of peace parks and the politics of neoliberal conservation is what sets this book apart from related works.

Not only is this work a treatise for students of conservation, political ecology and political economy of land management in southern Africa; it is also, because of its practical approach, that is, project focus, a guide to policy makers and land managers around the world. Buscher’s work shades light on a new conservation paradigm—the peace parks concept, in a complicated geopolitical setting—the southern Africa region.

Richard Mbatu, *University of South Florida St. Petersburg*

Todd Cleveland. 2014. *Stones of Contention: A History of Africa's Diamonds*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press. 225 pp.

Prior to reading *Stones of Contention: A History of Africa's Diamonds*, my knowledge of the history and role of Africa’s diamonds was informed primarily by my classmates’ strong position to purchase only “conflict free” diamonds, my limited reading, which almost always associated diamonds with conflict, and by the movie “Blood Diamond.” This book has provided me with the requisite information to be able to depart from my mostly one-sided, conflict-only view of

the history of diamonds in Africa. Granted, my opinions are still as strong as they were vis-à-vis the colonial master's role in setting the stage for conflict in Africa.

The author's presentation of the history of diamonds in Africa was very succinct and well balanced. The book is a modest one hundred and ninety nine pages spanning nine chapters. The chronological format (in terms of history) of the book makes for a very good read. The first chapter serves as the introduction and chapter nine serves as the conclusion. The author makes it clear that his aim is to present information for the purposes of helping readers understand rather than presenting the information in a good-versus-bad-for-Africa manner.

Chapter two presents the history of diamond mining in Africa prior to the late nineteenth century "scramble" for Africa. Essentially, the intrusion into Africa by European explorers prior to 1867, fueled by perceptions of Africa as a precious stones haven, was a bust, the rush for slaves overshadowed the rush for gold and precious metals. It further presents the relationship between European explorers and Africans and shows how in the early years "Africans were able to protect their mineral wealth with little trouble" (p. 38).

Chapter three goes deeper into the history of the discovery of the Eureka diamond in South Africa and the ensuing rush by both foreigners and Africans that inevitably resulted in discord between the parties involved. This discord led to the enactment of laws which unfortunately limited the role of Africans "to migrant laborers and/or extra-legal participants" while creating large organizations which controlled mining in South Africa (p. 49). Chapter four presents the compelling story of the birth, rise, and dominance of the De Beers enterprise. With the rise and dominance of De Beers also came the increased marginalization of black African workers who suffered "corporal abuse, a form of pain and suffering from which white employees were exempted" (p. 75).

In chapter five, Cleveland shifts the focus from South Africa to the entire continent. The Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 divvied up Africa on paper among six colonial masters. The result was the further marginalization of the African mineworker through "schemes that obligated Africans to work in order to earn the wages necessary to satisfy these levies" (p. 99). The rest of the chapter shows the confluence between the politics and economics of mining and the African laborer.

A book such as this would be incomplete without the lived experiences of the African mineworker. In chapter six, Cleveland presents the experiences of black African mineworkers. The inclusion of this piece of history, from the horse's mouth, brings an extra dimension of compassion for their working conditions. Meanwhile chapter 7 discusses how diamonds and other precious mineral resources have been at the center of most conflicts in the African continent since the age of independence from colonial masters. For the most part, rebel leaders and dictators used these diamonds to hold onto power and foster repressive regimes. While chapter 7 focused on conflict in the African continent, particularly Sierra Leone, Angola, and Zimbabwe, chapter 8 focuses on the contrary, peace. It discusses how revenues from diamond mining have been used in Botswana and Namibia to bring about development, prosperity and peace.

This book draws from a wealth of sources to present a poignant and often disheartening story of the history of diamonds in Africa. The inclusion of a study guide section along with discussion questions makes it an appropriate book for students studying African history. As

someone of African origin, this book has enlightened me on this subject. What is lacking in this book is a section on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Nevertheless, I highly recommend the book to anyone interested in a balanced and well-researched history of diamonds in Africa. I also recommend the book to Africanist scholars, teachers, and professors of African history, practitioners in the field of conflict analysis and resolution, and anyone interested in Africa.

Nkaze Chateh Nkengtego, *Nova Southeastern University*

Laura L. Cochrane. 2013. *Weaving through Islam in Senegal*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press. xix, 147 pp.

Bye words like work is worship or work is virtue are known to all, and there have been many writings on work ethic or occupation and the role of religion or faith, unfolding how faith serves as a significant motivator to people while choosing or continuing their professions. Even today many Asian Muslims rear goats and take pride in this job due to the belief that Prophet Mohamad in his childhood had reared goats. Laura Cochrane's extensive ethnography of seventeen months based on her sociological study unfolds the similar notion and explains how faith inspires people's occupation while studying Senegalese society, particularly the Muslim communities known as Thie's and Ndem. In her jargonless and lucid paperback edition she crisply presents a Muslim setup in six brief chapters, highlighting different themes purely in a dissertation format like introducing the societies of Thie's and Ndem along with their social relationships and traditions. Further, she also narrates the belief systems of the two communities and then discusses religious pluralism in terms of Sufism in north and West Africa along with the historical continuities and indigenous faiths, etc. Cochrane also depicts how social history and religious personalities influence peoples' lives in Senegal and her finding can be representative of most of the traditional societies even today who sustain their legacies and art. She explores the weaving world of the communities in chapter three and summarizes shared and religious beliefs in chapter four. Chapter five contains her notes on community history along with weaving lineages, and in the final chapter she talks of weaving work as a focal point of peoples' beliefs and explores its economic realities that the people face while continuing this craft.

Cochrane's universe of the study is central Senegal, where she observes how weavers not just craft cotton but live their lives in the yarn of Sufism towards which they show tremendous reverence. She carefully observes peoples' religious beliefs and practices and how such practices and beliefs influence their daily lives. She talks about other faiths as well; however, Sufism and its influence on peoples' work and practices becomes her central argument, which she continues till end. This work brings out a picture of weavers/artists and their established patterns of behavior and belief. She also correctly brings out that beliefs of such people (artists/weavers) are not exclusively religious beliefs but also based on familial, ethnic, and regional bonds which also motivate them for their weaving profession. Not only this, but people, especially the Ndem community, are committed to the craft out of their spiritual beliefs and they even relate it to charity or treat such efforts as the service to Islam and are firm about the idea that art based

local developmental work is a religious act. They also treat their work as an effective tool to confront poverty (p. 66).

The author has rightly titled the book “Weaving through Islam in Senegal,” as the communities studied demonstrate an inside look into them and displays a staunch connection between belief and art. The book provides a valuable and absorbing window into a region which is less known and less explored as far as such anthropological/sociological themes or areas are concerned. The book may not match Max Weber's classic *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* or Emile Durkheim's masterpiece *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, however, it sociologically demonstrates the significance of a religion (Islam) in peoples' lives and also tells us that there is something archetypal about people's craze for art work that also is a part of their religious belief. The book is useful for social sciences, to humanities, to travelers, to researchers, etc. Apart from anthropology the book is a masterpiece for the students of the sociology of religion and Muslim studies and Sufism experts in particular.

Adfer Rashid Shah, *Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi*

Claire Laurier Decoteau. 2013. *Ancestors and Antiretrovirals: The Biopolitics of HIV/AIDS in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 344 pp.

Claire Laurier Decoteau explores HIV/AIDS through a critical lens that incorporates an analysis of neoliberalism, politics, gender, sexuality, and health in post-apartheid South Africa. She uses the term “postcolonial paradox” throughout the book to describe South Africa's position as competing in a neoliberal world and attempting to address structural inequalities and poverty, while also struggling to create a national identity (p. 7). Through ethnographic fieldwork she connects broad, macro-level theories and world events to the micro-level experiences of citizens living in two South African informal settlements, Sol Plaatjie and Lawley.

Decoteau discusses the daily lives of people living in squatter settlements such as Sol Plaatjie and Lawley and the complex realities they must live with, especially if they are HIV positive. One barrier that citizens face in an increasingly neoliberal South Africa is the privatization of electricity and water. Because many residents living in squatter settlements are unable to afford pre-paid electricity and water, their health deteriorates more rapidly than it would if the government provided these fundamental services.

Decoteau utilizes Michel Foucault's theory of “thanatopolitics” to explain the South African government's abandonment of its citizens. In the context of this book, “thanatopolitics” refers to the presidency of Thabo Mbeki, who allowed 365,000 South Africans to die because of his failure to rollout anti-retrovirals (ARVs) (p. 83). Because Mbeki was occupied by forging an “African Renaissance” in which South Africa would emerge as a competitive neoliberal market, he adopted a mindset of entrepreneurialism in which poor South Africans would either take responsibility or be left behind to die (p. 99). By placing the responsibility of economic participation in the post-apartheid state on the citizens, the government avoided being held accountable for providing basic services such as water, electricity or health care. During his presidency, Mbeki encouraged HIV-positive citizens to use indigenous forms of healing for treatment, in order to oppose what he saw as a racist system of biomedicine and public health, despite his desire to compete in a neoliberal world market.

Decoteau argues, however, that the struggles concerning HIV/AIDS and anti-retrovirals have deeper meaning in the identity formation of South Africa and its citizens (p. 115). In order for South Africans to emerge in the globalized world they have to grapple with the tropes of modernity and traditionalism, both in the context of medical treatment and gender. She explains how the tropes of modernity and traditionalism have been introduced to make biomedicine and traditional healing seem incommensurable, although both South African citizens and indigenous healers alike have been integrating the two treatments to form a hybrid regimen (referred throughout the book as “hybridity”) since apartheid. In the framework of medicine, Decoteau introduces the term “biomedical citizenship” to describe how the West has forced the global South to accept a biomedical hegemony in order to gain social citizenship (p. 137).

Using a gendered lens, Decoteau focuses on the presidency of Jacob Zuma, and his enactment of “traditional” masculinity to re-shape the national identity of South Africa (p. 163). She argues that sexuality and gender performance, much like the struggle over medicine and treatment, is a symbolic battle incited by the “postcolonial paradox” of attempting to compete in the world market while also managing national identity formation.

Throughout her book, Decoteau complicates the topic of HIV/AIDS by examining both the daily lives of residents in South African informal settlements and the global political economy in which they reside. She uses various theories of previous scholars to expand on ethnographic excerpts in order to provide a complete representation of the complexities of HIV/AIDS within systems of structural inequality. The themes of modernity, traditionalism, and hybridity consistently emerge throughout the book to demonstrate how South Africans deal with the “postcolonial paradox” and national identity formation.

The strength of this book is Decoteau’s approach to situating the experiences of South African citizens within the contexts of poverty, informal settlements, gender, and HIV/AIDS within a larger global context. Each chapter features a brief history of the topic at hand in order to provide a better contextual understanding of the complexity of the issue. A weakness of this book is the occasional introduction of theoretical/ideological topics without further background or explanation in the context of what she is discussing. One example of this is on page 170, where she uses the term “crisis of social reproduction” from Mark Hunter, but does not provide an explicit clarification on what this term means. Because of this, the book may be difficult for a layperson to read. However, this book is an important addition to the current literature on HIV/AIDS, poverty, medicine, neoliberalism, and national socio-political structures. Decoteau provides a contextual view of the issues South African citizens face, and allows an opportunity for interdisciplinary discourse on the topic of HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

Natalie Dickson, *University of California, Los Angeles*

Toyin Falola and Jamaine Abidogun, eds. 2014. *Education, Creativity and Economic Empowerment in Africa*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 259 pp.

This volume aspires to examine education, languages, literatures and music as a means of economic and political agency. The editors indicate in their introduction that the book’s key

inquiry is: "How do Education and the Arts promote equity and empowerment across African political economic landscapes?" The contributors approach this by "calling for action" or telling "stories of agency" (p. 2).

The first section, "Education as Empowerment: Enforcing Rights and Building Community," calls for action in claiming that education is key in combating poverty. The authors make this case by stressing the implementation of the fundamental right to education by law and the necessity to enforce it (Adam in Chapter 1), but also by arguing for the potential of adult and community education (Akande and Ogunrin in Chapter 4) as well as for rural education (Simeon-Fayomi and Akande in Chapter 5). Musa and Umukoro as well as Hasaba apply their backgrounds in education and political science in an attempt to both uncover and explain shortcomings of current education programs such as the Education for All by 2015 (Chapter 2) or the problem of gendered poverty in Uganda (Chapter 3).

Section two "Messages of Empowerment in Languages and Literature" introduces three stories of empowerment that demonstrate how current orders and developments are contested. Albuhyeh (Chapter 6) illustrates how minority language speakers challenge imminent language death by innovation. Adam (Chapter 7) highlights the communicating power of a novel by the Nigerian author Ben Okri, in which he addresses corruption and poverty in his country. Tchouaffe's contribution (Chapter 8) describes how Cameroonian musicians and journalists practice resistance against the Biya regime, the "politics of the belly" and the official propaganda. Despite being harassed by state authorities, they have created an autonomous public sphere in the fight for democracy and human rights in Cameroon.

The "call for action" section, "Art Empowerment for the Economy's Sake," argues for the arts' potential to contribute to the development of the economy. Whereas Enamhe (Chapter 9) campaigns for more professionals in arts management as a means of economic empowerment, Owoeye (Chapter 10) describes how Adire textile already contributes to the economy in Nigeria as it creates markets and employment.

The last section, "Music: Economic and Political Empowerment Venues," again calls for action. Oikelome shows in Chapter 11 the timelessness of Fela's lyrics articulation of social and political problems in Nigeria. The last three chapters, especially Akombo in Chapter 12, suggest possible measures to exploit musical potential for economic purposes. Along those lines, Olusujo (Chapter 13) recommends government investments in professional musical training for Youth, and Babalola (Chapter 14) argues for the promotion of Youth musicians.

In summary, *Education, Creativity, and Economic Empowerment in Africa* attempts to engage a broad selection of topics from experts in anthropology, arts, education, ethnomusicology, history, law, linguistics, literature, and political sciences. That is precisely why I would have expected the book to provide a multidisciplinary survey on how African agents modify and deal with the structural conditions they find themselves in on the basis of empirical data from various fields of study. The book contains both topical and regional redundancies; so does every contribution in section one deal with poverty and its consequences and ten of all fourteen chapters focus on Nigeria.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of the contributions formulate big claims and recommendations for improvement, and also provide rich empirical material, but in the end inadequately develops their arguments. The first section is especially disappointing in that

regard: all five contributions emphasize the severe effects of poverty, rather than elaborating on evidence-based outcomes that demonstrate the value of education. The contributors' general claim that education is an effective means in the fight against poverty states an assumption rather than a strong argument. Chapters 12 to 14 ambitiously promote music's potential for economic empowerment, but their claims lack evidence. The value of Oikelome's claim of Fela's lyrics being prophetic is generally questionable. However, the contributions in section two successfully make their cases by applying the data and in-depth descriptions convincingly to the overall argument.

Susann Ludwig, *University of Basel*

Kristen J. Fisher. 2013. *Transitional Justice for Child Soldiers; Accountability and Social Reconstruction in Post–Conflict Contexts*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 240 pp.

In *Transitional Justice for Child Soldiers*, author Kristen J. Fisher brings to the fore a refreshing paradox and debate with regards to the child soldier phenomenon. Whilst most literature on the phenomenon focuses on the general plight of child soldiers as being innocent victims, the author brings in an interesting anti-thesis to the discourse that challenges the non-responsible child narrative. Throughout the book, Fischer argues that child soldiers must not be looked at as innocent victims of war but as capable agents of harm and atrocity who must be found accountable for their actions. This is a necessary prerequisite for a smooth transition and the attainment of positive peace.

The book is built of an introduction, seven chapters, and an overall conclusion. The introduction illuminates the major line of argument, which challenges the non-responsible child narrative given to child soldiers and how this narrative is detrimental to peace. Chapter one is more of a conceptual framework, as terms such as child soldier are conceptualized from various angles including that of international institutions and the general. It also gives an overview of the experiences that child soldiers go through. In chapter two, the author shows how the non-responsible child narrative leads to rejection at the point of reintegration as receiving communities do not at all view child soldiers as innocent victims but want them to be accountable for their crimes. In chapter three the author questions the moral and legal responsibility of child soldiers. The enigma brought out in this chapter is whether it is moral or legal to hold accountable child soldiers due to their age, collective pressure, mental maturity and circumstance of actions committed under duress. The most interesting concept questioned in this chapter is that of *mens rea* (p. 72), (whether child soldiers committed acts with the psychological and conscious will to do so).

The next three chapters were crafted to give major validation to the notion that child soldiers should go through the process of transitional justice. In chapter four, the author buttresses her thoughts in earlier chapters that despite the various sociological forces that portray the prosecuting of child soldiers as being wrong, there are societal benefits for doing so as this post atrocity accountability creates an expressive value to communities that suffered at the hands of these child soldiers. It communicates a retributive- expressive justification to both the perpetrator and the community. In chapter five, the author further upholds the importance of holding child soldiers accountable. Although child soldiers are not the architects of wars, it is

of great value to social reconstruction to ensure that their actions are not ignored and extreme wrong doers are brought to book. In chapter six, the author alludes to the importance of restorative justice as a way of dealing with trauma and truth telling. This chapter employs an interesting debate that challenges the African thinking, which frowns on truth telling and other forms of restorative justice. The African culture upholds the simple notion that wrong doers should just apologize and the community should forget about the past so as to move on.

Chapter seven discusses the practical element of accountability for child soldiers. The chapter argues that the choice of accountability mechanisms should be expressively significant but also take into consideration elements of age, severity of crimes, and the will to commit the crimes. A mixture of hybrid mediation (African and Western styles) and truth telling might be used to hold child soldiers accountable. Chapter eight discusses the plight of girl child soldiers and the major line of argument is that, such children deserve justice, as they are not innocent victims of wars but also major perpetrators of violence. International legal institutions largely view girl child soldiers as helpless victims of war and do not allow them any chance to access post conflict rehabilitation and recovery ideals. The author argues against this completely.

This book is a refreshing piece that provides a boisterous stance against the conventional means of dealing with child soldiers employed by international legal institutions. It opens up the mind to new ideas that encourage fellow academics to challenge African cultures and their benefits to the attainment of positive peace. It in fact calls for the establishment of a hybrid system of post conflict justice that infuses both Western and African thought in the design of accountability mechanisms for child soldiers. It provides readers with new insights into the child soldier phenomenon, challenging the range of literature that portrays the child soldier as an innocent blameless victim. It is a logically framed masterpiece that would be of much benefit to political scientists, peace practitioners, anthropologists and sociologists.

Ramphal Sillah, *Midlands State University, Zimbabwe*

Felix Gerdes. 2013. *Civil War and State Formation: The Political Economy of War and Peace in Liberia*. Frankfurt, Germany: Campus. 291 pp.

Civil War and State Formation contains five chapters, which is consistent with Gerdes's five-chapter dissertation that culminated in this book. Chapter one is the introduction. In chapter two, he addresses war, peace, and young states. He moves into chapter three where he addresses the first Liberian civil war by describing the rise of Charles Taylor. The fall of Taylor becomes the subject of the fourth chapter, which also addresses the birth of Liberia's modern democracy, the rise of the first African female president and her present rule. Finally, chapter five concludes the book and situates the journey of Liberia in the theory of statehood, democracy and bureaucracy.

Gerdes uses the first chapter of the book as the foundation of Liberia's wars in light of economic gain for both warlords and governments. He traces these wars to neo-liberal economics and provides hope for the reader when he describes not just Liberia's failures but her successes in terms of political progress demonstrated in democratic elections. In a circuitous manner, the author is finally able to delineate what the other chapters will cover. In the second chapter, the writer uses sub-topics to delineate specific topics, albeit in a convoluted manner.

He expatiates on domination in terms of Africa's traditions, the influence of colonization, and their combined effect on modern-day Africa with its propensity towards corruption.

The third chapter returns to the history of Liberia as a land for freed slaves; and how the presence of these freed slaves (with their superiority attitudes) antagonized the indigenes already occupying the land. The author shares with readers on how this antagonism led to the seemingly never-ending conflicts. The author then debunks media sensitization of the Liberian-Sierra Leonean conflict, and, basing it on data, positions it in light of society, economics, and bureaucracy. The author finally situates the Liberian crisis within former colonized Africa and the consequent loyalties to particular warring factions, thus explaining how the Liberian war spilled over to Sierra Leone and the not so strong effects on Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, and Ghana, and Libya. Gerdes describes the rise of Taylor based on the principles of domination and statehood discussed in the previous chapter. He further addresses the economic gain not just from diamonds (which received a huge outcry from the international community because it was contingent on conflict in Sierra Leone), but from iron ore, timber, rubber, coffee, cocoa, and even racketeering and looting of national assets. The writer finally describes the transition of Taylor's war lordship to democratic rule. Gerdes traces the informal nature of Taylor's rule into the next chapter where he argues for the pros and cons of Taylor's strategies.

The fourth chapter explains Taylor's fall as a disintegration of leadership as he tried unsuccessfully to appoint ministerial positions in post-conflict Liberia. This is an era characterized by brutalities unleashed on the unfaithful. The disintegration within Taylor's camp allowed new warring factions to overpower Taylor in the second Liberian war. Additionally, the African community ensured disarmament while Taylor sought asylum in Nigeria. The writer posits the history of Liberia in terms of the current leadership and therefore allows the reader to know a little bit of history as well as its connection to present day Liberian politics.

The author concludes the book by summarizing the role of the wars in Liberia's journey to statehood. He situates the story and statehood of Liberia in past and current literature and proposes democracy and bureaucracy as foundational to state building with its connection to accountability, election, and reelection.

Gerdes establishes the fact that his book is the result of his dissertation. Thus, readers will see sub-topics that address specific topics, which invariably tie into the whole subject of statehood. At the beginning of each chapter, the author provides an overview of the whole chapter as it connects with previous chapters. A limitation about the book is that it is not an easy read. Whereas a reader with a sociology background will identify with the author's expressions, a lay reader may find it a bit cumbersome as Gerdes weaves an intricate web into statehood and Weber's concepts of bureaucracy and democracy. Overall, the book provides in-depth literature on Liberia.

Hannah E. Acquaye, *University of Central Florida*

Michael Gould. 2012. *The Struggle for Modern Nigeria: The Biafran War 1967-1970*. London: I.B. Tauris. 258 pp.

The Story of the Nigerian Civil War from 1967-1970 has been revisited time and again from various perspectives. In *The Biafran War*, Gould uses archival information coupled with interviews and personal knowledge of key players in the war to clarify the events that led up to and prolonged the war. The first half of the book, Chapters 1-4, chronologically details events before and during the war. The second part of the book from Chapters 5-7 revisits the same narrative of the war topically, addressing the factors that contributed to the longevity of the war like the two leaders Gowon and Ojukwo's personalities. He also uses the opportunity to dispel popular myths about the war including clarifying the number of casualties and the international influences on the war. The result is a well-crafted historical account of a young Nigeria struggling to define its own future while burdened by colonial legacies.

The book demonstrates the role colonial legacies played in Nigeria's internal conflicts that caused the civil war. Chapter one details how Britain's indirect rule through the Northern region ignited tensions among Nigerians that would later cause the war. After the colonial era, afraid to lose power to other regions, especially people from the East whose higher levels of education had granted them senior positions in the North, Northerners began to attack Easterners who were residing in Northern territory. This attack on Easterners compounded by other issues spurred the Eastern Region or Biafra's choice to secede from the Nigerian Federation.

One of book's major contributions is its analysis of the international influences on the war. In chapter five, as Gould discusses factors that contributed to the longevity of the war he speaks to the role the international community played in the war. Gould provides in-depth explanation of the British government's strategy during the Biafran war. Though, they remained an avid supporter of the Nigerian Federation, the British also courted Biafra at times in an effort to protect their economic interests, mainly in Nigeria's growing oil industry. France and Russia sponsored the Eastern Region's accretion of arms in hopes of furthering their goals for partnership. Still, international media proved to be an equally powerful player in prolonging the war as it skewed mass opinions from one side to the other especially exaggerating the number of war casualties and the showcasing starving Biafran children, which caused a flood of support in the form of humanitarian aid.

In its highlighting various international governments' opportunism as the Nigerians battled, the book borders on depriving Nigerian leaders of agency in determining their nation's future. On one hand, Gould emphasizes Gowon and Ojukwu's personal profiles in chapter six, presenting them as change agents whose actions dictated the trajectory of the war. On the other hand, these leaders' control of Nigeria's future seems to wane in comparison with outside parties' power. Gould shares that shortly after the war began, the British discover that they had greatly underestimated their previous valuations of Nigeria's oil reserves and use the classified information to manipulate war activities. In its account of the role outsiders played in Nigeria's civil war, the book leads readers to question the extent to which Nigerians were in charge of their nation's destiny.

If there were any aspect of the book that could have been improved, it would be that the book lacks a description of regular Nigerians during the war, especially the minority groups

that constitute over forty percent of the Nigerian population. What concessions were these minority groups making and how did that influence the war? Telling this part of the story would have further developed his accounts concerning the reasons war broke out and ended. Furthermore, it would have helped to convince readers that Nigerians played a heavier role than the international community in determining the course of the war.

Overall, Gould presents the Biafran War as one that plays out on different stages both within and outside Nigeria. This book is able to weigh in on the broader topic of how African nations arrived at their current state by presenting the case of Nigeria. Thus the book will be a welcomed addition to any African History or Politics course readings. With this book, Gould combines thorough research with storytelling skills that result in an intimate narrative, which makes readers feel as though they have joined the Biafran War's major players for a deep discussion over tea.

Domale Dube Keys, *University of California Los Angeles*

Adam Habib. 2013. *South Africa's Suspended Revolution: Hopes and Prospects*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press [first published by Wits University Press]. xii, 307 pp.

Adam Habib is the right person to have undertaken the task that has issued in this book, which he describes as "a culmination of at least two decades of debates, reflections and thoughts about resistance in South Africa, its political and socio-economic evolution, and the conundrums and dilemmas relating to the making of this society." (p. ix) He has managed "to bridge academic and public discourse" (p. x) while speaking truth to power. The "Introduction" sketches a sad picture of what South has become twenty years into what Professor Habib calls the country's "suspended revolution." A "high-stakes leadership drama" has led Jacob Zuma to "the presidential throne." (p. 1) While the royal seat sounds wrong for a republic, it suits with polygamy, "reciprocal altruism," a palatial kraal, nepotism, and the peddling of place. Paradoxically the ANC has followed "the Marxist revolutionary tradition that sees the state as merely an agency for capture by the party" (p. 66) and become "a grubby instrument of enrichment that speaks the language of empowerment and democracy, while its leadership and cadres plunder the nation's resources and undermine both the judiciary and the media" (p. 3). While Professor Habib's title looks for "Hopes and Prospects," he is surely right that "through the prism of its leaders...the country's future looks fairly bleak" (p. 3), given the grim picture of "governance, political accountability and service delivery" painted here. While there has been an at least apparent shift to the left there have been few gains for the poor, in fact "the primary victims of apartheid's distributional regime have now become the underclasses of post-apartheid South Africa" (p. 17). Even union workers are no closer to joining the middle class.

It would be too easy to extend this gloomy account, but Professor Habib seeks to explain how South Africa has become what it is. The first two phases of the construction of the post-Apartheid state were achieved by the Interim Constitution of 1993, followed by the Constitution of 1996. Under Thabo Mbeki structural reform placed "the presidency at the heart of governance and public management" (p. 53). One aspect of South Africa's history since then has been an intermittent attempt to forge a sustainable social pact, in which development is balanced with growth. Professor Habib's judgment, however, is that "the social pacts

unraveled, the unions' political influence was weakened, and poverty and inequality increased" (p. 122). Professor Ashwin Desai's 2002 judgment—"It is extremely unlikely that open confrontation with the repressive power of the post-apartheid state can be avoided"—seems to have been borne out.¹ Marikana may not be the last confrontation. There has been at least a failure of will in the need to reconcile state-civil society relations so that post-apartheid South Africa has been "normalized" in the neo-liberal capitalist environment, like other transitional democracies. This has complicated foreign policy, as South Africa is caught between insulating itself against and enlisting itself in globalization.

Professor Habib concludes with a characteristic collocation of chapters. Chapter 7 is "aimed at activists and political leaders, detailing an alternative political agenda and programme for democracy as well as inclusive development" (p. 32). The political elites must be made "more accountable and responsive to the concerns of citizens" (p. 201) by facing "substantive uncertainty" generated by mobilized citizens and extra-institutional activism on the one hand and elite competition on the other. The overall objectives of the constitution need to be upheld especially when individual clauses seem to be in conflict. The conclusion considers the lessons of South Africa "for theories of democratic transition, social change and social justice traditions" (p. 32). Is "a progressive nationalism" possible, or should we be callous about nationalism, as capitalism is, or look beyond it, as Trotskyism does, to the working class as a world-changing force?

Professor Habib's book offers a clear narrative, accessible academic analysis and a fair report on the state of the nation. Although the word "revolution" is in the title, the term, as Steve Lebelo argues in a forceful review, "has no enduring explanatory value throughout the narrative."² One of the few references in the book to the idea comes in a quotation from a South African Communist Party document of 2006: "if it is to have any prospect of addressing the dire legacy of colonial dispossession and apartheid oppression, a national democratic strategy has to be revolutionary, that is to say, it must systematically transform class, racial and gendered power" (p. 205). How close have we come?

Notes

- 1 Desai, Ashwin. 2002. *We are the Poors: Community Struggles in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (New York: Monthly Review Press): 147.
- 2 Lebelo, Steve. 2014. "Review of *South Africa's Suspended Revolution*." *Historical Review* 46:1, 84-88: 84. <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rahr20> (accessed 4 April 2015).

Tony Voss, *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University*

John Higgins 2014. *Academic Freedom in a Democratic South Africa: Essays and Interviews on Higher Education and the Humanities*. London: Bucknell University Press. 272 pp.

Human history has been marked by endless struggles for freedom. Although the 1996 Constitution of South Africa protects academic freedom, the exclusion of the humanities by reform policy makers constitutes a big challenge for humanists and social scientists. Therefore, Higgins' *Academic Freedom in a Democratic South Africa* is a scholarly book, bringing to the

readers' attention the limitations of academic freedom and the humanities under apartheid and the African National Congress (ANC).

The way the book is presented enables the readers to quickly interpret its contents as a fight between the universities and the State, and a competition between the STEM disciplines and the HUMANITIES disciplines. In reality, it is about the marginalization of the humanities, and what caused it is not perceived until one gets to chapter five, where the author argues that "the force of this excluding consensus was strong enough to inhibit arguments and insights generated within two key institutions most associated with the globalisation of higher education policy, the World Bank and the OECD" [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] (p. 170). These institutions are therefore seen as the proponents of scientific disciplines, excluding the humanities. The governments are just agents of these institutions.

The author proves to be a defender of the humanities. In the well researched, enlightening, most important, and formal concluding chapter five, the author has indeed accomplished his intention of "making the case for the humanities" (p. 141) giving evidence of the tremendous contributions of the humanities worldwide. Therefore, this very chapter may make a book on its' own. Higgins argues that "the advanced forms of literacy" (p. 80) cannot be found in science and technology, but in the humanities and social sciences, and they "constitute the very ground of educational possibility, the substance of both efficient and reflexive communication, as well as a significant element in critical and creative thinking" (p. 80). Other strengths of the book include the presentation of historical analyses of concepts such as academic freedom, institutional culture, and neo-liberalism as well as writing. Higgins argues that the humanists help "to train new generation of intellectuals, civil leaders and change agents for building a just democratic society" (p. 142). He carefully corrects spelling errors from other sources. The success of the book also lies in the clear distinction between academic freedom and freedom for everyone, and the prospect for a change for an equal opportunity as can be seen in Higgins' suggestions, and in the resistance of humanists to "policy internationalism" (p. 170) or "the globalization of higher education policy" (p. 170) which has a scientific bias.

However, the unnecessary part two of the book which is about Interviews is the author's weakness as he asked many questions that are answered by such humanists as Terry Eagleton and Edward Said to complete his book, while he is also a humanist who is familiar with critical literacy and holds the Ardenne Chair in Literature. In other words, John Higgins, Terry Eagleton and Edward Said would have co-authored this book. Since the book highlights both the national and international dimensions of academic freedom, the author would have given global solutions not limited to a democratic South Africa. In addition, Higgins did not mention whether the restriction of academic freedom in South Africa also concerns non- government founding institutions of higher education.

Easy to read and interesting, the book is divided into two parts preceded by an introduction. Part one entitled Essays, comprises five chapters: "The Scholar-Warrior versus the children of Mao: Conor Cruise O'Brien in South Africa," "Academic freedom in the New South Africa, ""It's literacy, stupid! Declining the humanities in NRF research policy, institutional culture as keyword," and Making the case for the humanities." Part two, which is about Interviews, includes three chapters: "A grim parody of the humanities' – Terry Eagleton," "Criticism and democracy – Edward W Said," and "Living out our differences' – Jakes

Gerwel." These eight chapters are bound together by critical literacy, which Higgins describes as "the analysis and interpretation of ideas and representations in the necessarily intricate combination of their historical, theoretical and textual dimensions" (p. 103). The picture at the back of the book can be interpreted as the forced submission of academics-humanists to a totalitarian state that prevents humanists from enjoying academic freedom. The book has no bibliography at the end, but each chapter has a rich list of notes and references which may make the book easier to understand, and an index indicating the end of the volume.

Academic Freedom in a Democratic South Africa is highly recommended for anybody who is interested in literature, history, sociology, philosophy, pragmatics, political science, critical discourse analysis, journalism, communication, and for academics in the countries, the Constitutions of which have no provisions for academic freedom.

Voudina Ngarsou, *Emi Koussi University and the University of N'Djamena*

Pernille Ipsen. 2015. *Daughters of the Trade: Atlantic Slavers and Interracial Marriage on the Gold Coast*. Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press. 269 pp.

Denmark boasts a significant historical scholarship on colonial history today, including the history of the slave trade. This scholarship, however, has not yet integrated the close family connections, which for many generations since the 16th century have existed and developed between Danish men and Ghanaian women, and which have made the history of Denmark and that of Ghana intimately and inevitably interrelated. *Daughters of the Trade* addresses this gap by telling the story of interracial marriages of Ga, Osu, and Aka women to Danish soldiers, officers, administrators, and traders between 1700 and 1850 at Christianborg, the Danish slave trading post and the major slave trade center in West Africa in the context of the Atlantic World.

Mixed marriage or *cassare*, as it used to be called, a Portuguese practice, not only connected Europeans to Africans when the Atlantic slave trade was at its zenith, but was part and parcel of the economic, cultural and power dynamics of the Atlantic world, where interests, cultural commodities, practices, and mores, and social status, position and race interplayed. The encounter between local western African culture on the one hand and European culture on the other, which started on mutual terms, where Danish men and African women married, had families, and shared their world without having to convert to the other's culture, was in the course of the Atlantic slave trade transformed into an imbalanced, unequal and power-relation based one, where race was core social marker.

Ipsen's book tells the narratives of Sensitive Brock and Edward Carstensen, Koko Osu and Frantz Boye, and Ashiokai Wondo and Frederick Reindorph. Their stories are part of a larger history of the racialization of social difference that took place in West Africa during the slave trade period. Class and gender, which first characterized the relationships of these first generations of married men and women at Christianborg, soon mellowed and gave place to a new stratification where Africans and Euro-Africans were perceived as different and where social hierarchy was more defined by race than anything else.

Because of their mixed heritage, Euro-Africans gained on all grounds. They had an easier access to the slave trade and many of them made fortunes. At the fort they had all the privileges of the Danish, especially status and position. These marriages developed indeed into important

social and political networks. More significantly, Euro-Africans became grounded in two cultures and were free to move and profit from both. Their hybrid position was robust and allowed them even certain excesses. The Christianborg chaplain, an authoritative figure at the fort could only bow when Euro-Africans did not attend the church, drink excessively or entertain other African women.

This is not to suggest that Ga and Aka women were losers. They also had their share in the whole enterprise. Interracial marriages helped them integrate the economic and social institutions of the Danish and Europeans. They learnt the Danish language and culture and attended the church. Similarly, they had access to all the commodities brought about by Europeans to the Gold Coast, which made their lives by far more comfortable than the rest of African women. Socially, many of these women and especially those who married high-rank officials and rich slave traders, gained into the social hierarchy within their local communities. More significantly, these African women protected themselves, and their relatives and kin from the slave trade, its horrors, and violence at a time when the line between a free African and a slave was really thin.

How fair African women's share of the interracial enterprise was, nevertheless, is profoundly questionable. That share was uneven and the more intense the slave trade became, the further the dynamics of power shifted favorably to the Danish white husbands. The increasing strength of the European colonial system fashioned the individual lives and families of generations of Africans and Europeans to the advantage of the latter, since the spatial organization of the material culture of these families moved into a European direction and the old and popular impressions and stereotypes, which lumped all Africans as one and all African women as inferior and docile, came back in force and determined the ultimate position of these in the interracial marriages. This explains why Danish husbands were reluctant to take their African wives with them back to Copenhagen and why they tried hard to conceal this part of their lives. This also explains their absence from the whole narrative.

This history of a Euro-African cultural encounter is part of the new, more inclusive and comprehensive historiography of colonial Europe and slave trade history

Adel Manai, *Qatar University*

Mwangi S. Kimenyi and John Mukum Mbaku. 2015. *Governing the Nile River Basin: The Search for a New Legal Regime*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. 146 pp.

Recently, at the request of Dr. Fred-Mensah (professor, Department of Political Science, Howard University), I served as an outside reader/external examiner for Benjamin Akwei who defended his doctoral dissertation titled: "Hydrodopolitics, Hydro-hegemony and the Problem of Egypt's Securitization of Eastern Nile Basin" (on April 6, 2015). At his oral defense, some difficult questions about governance and the politics of equitable allocation/utilization of the rich Nile River water resources were raised and discussed in passing. Not until I received and read this *Governing the Nile River Basin*, however, that I became hopeful about any possibility to avert the conflict over Nile water resources that threaten regional stability and socio-economic development in this important part of the world. This is an important book with excellent analysis and outstanding discussions, as it grapples with the critical issue of sustainable African

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/pdfs/v15i4a5.pdf>

socio-economic development in the context of an equitable allocation/utilization of Nile water resources and the effective management of the Nile River Basin in ways that advance the general interests and wellbeing of riparian states and their key stakeholders. The book, as its title suggests, is divided into two. The first deals with the existing governance structure and the problem of the prevailing arrangements that seem “contentious and not tenable” (p. ix). The second focuses on the rigorous discussion and a recommendation for an acceptable (alternative) and viable legal framework that the riparian states can equally behold and use cooperatively in their collective best interest.

The Nile River is the world’s longest river and affects the lives of about 437 million Africans living along its pathways in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Republic of Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. These countries are “relatively underdeveloped and poor” with agriculture as the mainstay and source of employment (pp. 11-12). Escaping poverty requires that people realize full agricultural potential and engage in cross-border trade activities to “enhance specialization based on comparative advantage” supported by a well-coordinated irrigation system (p. 16). Yet people, their governments, political leaders, and the international community continue to experience a fractured history of conflicts, disputes, and lack of cooperation resulting from the failure to have acceptably negotiated and binding agreements by all the riparian states (including Egypt and Sudan).

Kimenyi and Mbaku examine the sensitive issue of governance of the River Basin, and argue that the existing legal agreements are both contentious and untenable. There were bilateral agreements: the 1929 British-Egyptian treaty and the 1959 Egypt-Sudan treaty, and both were called into question by groups in the upstream riparian states. The authors recommend that the states collaborate to “engage in inclusive negotiations,” develop negotiated agreements to increase the level of water resources available to the riparian states for prosperity and peaceful coexistence. They make a significant contribution regarding the future of Nile River which they rightly assert “is a shared resource, a public regional public good whose management requires joint and coordinated efforts among its beneficiaries and those likely to be adversely affected by its exploitation” (p. 74). They advocate dialogue, mutual trust and trans-boundary cooperative management to enable the stakeholders to achieve lasting peaceful coexistence and sustainable socio-economic development via equitable resources and effective management of the Nile water resources.

Kimenyi and Mbaku have written a timely, informative, and thought-provoking book that provides a pragmatic roadmap for the riparian states’ stakeholders to use, and they challenge all the parties to work together to advance the interests and protect the rights of everyone. Developing new and alternative cooperative agreements sets aside the contested “colonial” treaties that gave Egypt hegemonic control, but needed to prevent future conflicts and regional instability. In their last chapter, “A Way Forward,” the authors highlighted the benefits and advantages in having an inclusive (participatory) and consultative process that makes it possible for the parties to build a trusting relationship and trans-boundary cooperative-joint management leading to equitable allocation and efficient use of the Nile River resources. A coordinated management of the Nile water resources would promote regional stability,

sustainable socio-economic development and peaceful coexistence. This book is worth reading by people interested in using effective water management to achieve lasting global peace.

Benjamin Arah, *Bowie State University*

Gĩchingiri Ndĩgĩrĩgĩ, ed. 2014. *Unmasking the African Dictator: Essays on Postcolonial African Literature*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press. 240 pp.

The dictator novel emerged much later in Africa than in Latin America, and has consequently received considerably less critical attention. In addition, African dictator novels have often been read as historical novels, experimental novels, or novels of disillusion. Therefore, the genre of the African dictator novel has not been clearly defined, and the strategies adopted by African writers in their negotiation of the relationship between oppression and aesthetics have been under-explored. The publication of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *Wizard of the Crow* in 2010 stimulated renewed attention to African dictator fiction, and his foreword is therefore a welcome addition to *Unmasking the African Dictator*. As Ngugi acknowledges in his foreword, African dictator fiction combined the tragic, the comic and the absurd as a challenge to the "parrotry that became poetry" to the ears of the dictator (p. vii).

Unmasking the African Dictator is impressively broad in coverage, exploring the postcolonial realities of Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, the Congo, Nigeria, the Central African Republic, Somalia, Kenya, and Uganda. The chapters also examine an impressive range of Anglophone and Francophone African fiction including Nuruddin Farah's *Variations on the Theme of an African Dictatorship*, Henri Lopès's *Le Pleurer-rire*, Gorette Kyomuhendo's *Waiting*, Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*, Ahmadou Kourouma's *En attendant le vote des bêtes sauvages*, Ousmane Sembène's *Le Dernier de l'Empire*, Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow*, Alain Mabanckou's *Broken Glass*, Emmanuel Dongala's *Johnny Chien Méchant*, and *La Vie et demie* by Sony Labou Tansi. However, while the volume makes a welcome addition to this emerging area of research, it does not attempt to define the genre of the African dictator novel, nor does it draw explicit links with the tradition of the Latin American dictator novel. The volume is also a little unbalanced, with an introduction and two chapters by the editor Gĩchingiri Ndĩgĩrĩgĩ, two chapters by Magalí Armillas-Tiseyra, and individual chapters of varying length and substance from the other eight contributors.

The introduction provides a useful overview of critical work on dictatorship and the performance of power, drawing particularly on Achille Mbembe's insightful analysis of the postcolony. The individual chapters then go on, the editor remarks, "to fill out some of the gaps in Mbembe's study" (p. xxi). Four chapters stand out in particular. Ndĩgĩrĩgĩ's reading of Nuruddin Farah's *Variations on the Theme of an African Dictatorship* through Foucault's "panoptic modality of power" offers an insightful analysis of the ways in which Farah reveals the production of regimes of truth by Siyad Barre's dictatorship in Somalia. Magalí Armillas-Tiseyra's chapter "The Unfaithful Chronicler: On Writing about the Dictator in Henri Lopès's *Le Pleurer-rire*" proposes that the dictator novel is a space in which we can begin to think of a literary engagement with politics beyond the exigencies of particular political agendas. Robert Colson's focus on the body of the dictator in Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow* argues that the representation of the Ruler's illness and attempts to diagnose and treat it, offer a satirical

critique of the excesses of his power. Finally, Joseph McLaren's chapter highlights the internal-external dynamic of African political power revealed in John A. Williams's novel *Jacob's Ladder* and Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*.

While some of the introductory information to the chapters is a little repetitive, coherent theoretical links between the chapters and some high quality contributions make this a valuable contribution to the emerging body of critical work on African dictator fiction. The volume will be of particular use to literary specialists, but is also accessible to students and general readers interested in African literature, history, politics and culture.

Charlotte Baker, *Lancaster University*

Noor Nieftagodien. 2015. *The Soweto Uprising*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press. 165 pp.

On June 16, 1976, thousands of young students in Soweto, South Africa, left their classrooms and converged onto the streets, marching against apartheid education and displaying a new spirit of defiance against white minority rule. The students' uprising marked a turning point in South African history by reigniting black protest politics after a period of relative calm. This new book highlights the key role Soweto students played in challenging and ultimately undermining apartheid.

The book is part of the Ohio Short Histories of Africa Series, which has published concise studies of Steve Biko, South African epidemics, and the African National Congress and others on non-South African topics. The author of this volume, Noor Nieftagodien, holds a chair in local history at the University of the Witwatersrand and has published widely on South African urban history. His latest book, divided into five chapters, is a worthwhile contribution to this useful series.

Nieftagodien assumes readers are already familiar with apartheid in South Africa, and so he does not provide extensive background on South Africa's history, racial groups, or the origins of Soweto. Instead, he begins by discussing the 1960s, when apartheid seemed entrenched and resistance crushed. He explains Bantu Education, the deliberately inferior system of black education established by the apartheid government to limit black skills and aspirations. As he moves into the 1970s, Nieftagodien frequently draws upon oral testimony from students who experienced this education system first hand. By placing their accounts at the center of his narrative, he enriches it significantly.

The author sheds considerable light on the rising political consciousness among Soweto youth in the 1970s. Most were too young to have had extensive experience with the ANC or the Pan Africanist Congress, both of which had been banned in 1960. But a decade later, the philosophy of black consciousness began spreading from universities to high schools, particularly those in Soweto, which became "a hub of youth and student dissent" (p. 38). Nieftagodien charts the growing political awareness among students and their organizations and shows how the network of activists had spread despite government repression.

In his third chapter, "To hell with Afrikaans," Nieftagodien explains the growing opposition to the government's plan to make Afrikaans a medium of instruction in Soweto's high schools. The policy was perceived as a direct threat to students' education, because most students were proficient in English, not Afrikaans. "Overall, there was a growing sense that the

apartheid state wanted to destroy the already limited educational opportunities for black youth," Nieftagodien writes (p. 58). When the new language policy was implemented in early 1976, students requested meetings with government officials and began boycotting classes on a fragmented basis. Once it became clear that the government would not back down, opposition to the Afrikaans policy spread and galvanized the disparate student groups in Soweto. Nieftagodien notes that in many cases, it was junior students who organized the early protests, not their more senior counterparts. He goes on to describe how students carefully planned the June 16th protest days in advance. He argues that even though the protest that day surprised many South Africans, it was not a spontaneous outburst of student anger, but a manifestation of grievances that had been simmering for more than a year without redress.

Nieftagodien draws upon oral and written testimony to reconstruct how the June 16th protest became a riot. Quoting from student participants, he illustrates the initial mood of joyful defiance as students marched, sang freedom songs, and held signs denouncing the Afrikaans language policy. Once police confronted the students and opened fire, a peaceful protest became pandemonium. Amid teargas and gunfire, students realized that they were not just opposing the language policy, but they were engaged in a long-term struggle against apartheid itself. In the days ahead, students attacked government property and vehicles as police escalated their onslaught on the township. Student protests spread to other black schools in the Johannesburg area and beyond and by September, nearly three hundred Sowetans had been killed. This was the most sustained and militant resistance South Africans had seen for decades.

After the Soweto uprising of 1976, the Afrikaans language policy was rescinded, but apartheid, of course, remained. The intensified police repression led increasing numbers of students to flee the country and join exiled liberation movements to support the armed struggle. As the June 1976 rebellion wound down, students and their organizations were more determined than ever to resist apartheid. Nieftagodien argues that the Soweto uprising served as both an inspiration and a template for a second wave of unrest in the 1980s, which eventually led to apartheid's demise. His assessment is both lucid and compelling. It reminds us that the struggle against apartheid did not just revolve around the ANC or famous leaders, but gained strength from young people who worked for change at the grassroots and who fought against great odds.

Steven Gish, *Auburn University at Montgomery*

Ebenezer Obadare and Wendy Willems, eds. 2014. *Civic Agency in Africa: Arts of Resistance in the 21st Century*. Martlesham, Suffolk: James Currey. 236 pp.

Resistance takes many forms; from huge public demonstrations and individual acts of defiance, to anywhere in between. The majority of the literature has been consumed with understanding how the politics of mass demonstrations work, mostly when facilitated by mediating or amalgamating groups of civil society. However, the authors of this thoughtful book seek to understand smaller modes of resistance that may not result in outstanding changes of government or in statehood, but rather on the minor modes of resistance that bring less a grand

change but rather, minute changes in social attitudes that slowly build power amongst the subaltern.

The book's major contribution is in its identification of the diverse forms of resistance (and compliance) across contemporary Africa. Rather than viewing Africa as a site of the perpetually oppressed, this collection moves beyond the typology of victimhood that taints many understandings of resistance. Particularly stimulating is Basile Ndjio's chapter on West African hustler's development of criminal enrichment opportunities. These hustlers are not prey to the typology of victimhood; instead they identify potential victims to steal from. Susan Thomson argues that apparently powerless Rwandans exercise tactical compliance to subversively develop and sustain dignity. Although this everyday resistance is yet to translate into collective political consciousness, tactical compliance and everyday resistance undermines our assumptions of victimhood in Post-Genocide Rwanda.

Contemporary South African democracy is strongly represented over four chapters where scholars examine civil society groups, stand up comedians, and political commentators. The chapters show the diverse forms of resistance that are underway in the nascent democracy. The two chapters examining stand-up comedy are revelatory in their understanding of contemporary South African democracy. Recognizing that stand-up comedians largely relate to middle class and elite audiences the authors of both of these chapters note that comedians can both undermine and contribute to larger debates on democratic politics. Comedians, through their invocation of laughter, can offer catharsis, but can depoliticize, neutralize and dilute political exchange. Comedy can be a necessary tool in making democracy work, but it can also undermine politics either through domesticating political commentary. The chapter on Zapiro's political illustrations underscores the continued struggles of a developing democracy and the role of popular media in criticizing government.

The strengths and weaknesses of this book are one and the same—its breadth of case study material combined with its multidisciplinary approach. Chapters that include examinations into sites of popular culture including stand-up comedy, political analysis, music, and talk radio find themselves (sometimes) at odds with chapters that examine mandated movements of informal marketeers, criminal activities amongst so-called hustlers, and the development of resistance mentalities amongst the apparently powerless in Post-Genocide Rwanda. The chapters on popular culture pose difficulties in their classification as subaltern—popular culture by its nature accesses sites of power through access to media outlets. Side by side with chapters exploring the development of personal resistance strategies by a PTSD sufferer and prisoner in rural Rwanda, and mandated informal market hawker movements in Nairobi, the breadth of topics and methods of analysis made this edited book feel very much like a sampler publication at times. What would have helped very much would have been a concluding chapter by the editors to tie together the diverse strands of argumentation and approaches across this collection to make it more cohesive.

Despite these reservations, this book offers a thoughtful and important contribution to the ways in which we view and approach resistance across Africa. Resistance is not only ascribed to outstanding events. It is nuanced and shaped according to the localities it is espoused in, "in the more grassroots and unstructured acts of disobedience and avoidance" (Chabal, p. xiv). This localized development of resistance interpretations and strategies perhaps helps to account

for the problems of cohesiveness identified in this book. Africa cannot be condensed into a singular understanding; neither can African resistance.

Ciara McCorley, *University of Limerick*

Chukwemerije Okereke and Patricia Agupusi. 2015. *Homegrown Development in Africa: Reality or Illusion?* London and New York: Routledge. 190 pp.

This book's thesis is that truly sustainable African economic growth and development can only be achieved through self-reliant home grown strategies compatible with local conditions and realities, because no African country since independence has ever achieved such development under an externally driven arrangement and that any choice of the latter (short of Homegrown Development) could only result in Africa's perpetual dependency and servitude.

The book's objectives are to identify and assess the extent of the "indigeneity" and effectiveness of programs pursued by African governments following independence; assess/analyze the successes and failures of economic development alternative plans such as Nigeria's Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) during the "new wave" of development; and to determine the extent to which the Home Grown Development (HGD) when compared with the SAP, which were successful, which were not, and why.

The authors drew from post-independence experiments of Ghana, which adopted the "scientific revolution" Kwame Nkrumah; Tanzania's Ujamaa under Julius Nyerere, which emphasized self-sufficiency in agriculture and cooperative society; and Kenya's "Harambee" under Jomo Kenyatta, which focused on self-reliant economic development. The authors acknowledged that three approaches dominated the debate about the appropriate type of sustainable development for Africa. The consensus was a brand of mixed economy rooted in African socio-economic thought, which most referred to as "African Socialism." But, within this broad vision, three different approaches emerged. One was the brand popularized by Kwame Nkrumah that emphasized "modernization" anchored in massive infrastructural development. The second was favored by Kenyan leaders Jomo Kenyatta and Tom Mboya and argued for a synthesis of self-reliant economic development and imported factor inputs such as capacity and equipment from abroad. The third approach was that of Julius Nyerere, who pushed for a pure and self-sufficient agriculture and local cooperative society, all in the name of achieving indigenous, county-led or country-owned growth.

According to the authors, even though this period of African development registered mixed results, it was truly home grown economic development in both design and implementation. However, it was followed by a period of "lost decades" between 1980 and 1999 when all the progress in economic development was reversed. This was the time when Africa followed the road map of Bretton Woods Institutions, which was an externally crafted and imposed development plan and program. Hence these experiments failed to improve Africa's economic development because African leaders and citizens failed to take full ownership of its development agenda or direct its own political social and economic future.

Among the reasons African leaders failed to achieve real and sustainable economic development was because they were not totally committed to the principles of a HGD strategy because they failed to grasp the scope and complexity of the internal and external development

challenges facing them. Further, they were both insincere and self-centered and so could not completely extricate themselves from Western interests and influences for fear of losing political power. Rather, they were operating a dual strategy combining a self-reliant approach with an externally oriented Western prescription by donor and development agencies and driven by ideas shaped by classical modernization theories. Hence, they aligned with the West for personal political expediency and protection against the masses. As they authors argued, “The results of these pressures was that African leaders did not fully break from the externally oriented economic policies that they inherited at independence” (p. 28).

The obstacles to policy ownership, which are capital intensive and are associated or linked to numerous conditions, such as capital flight by multinationals and local companies, limited internal revenue stream, and increasing population and debt burden. Such conditions drive African nations into massive borrowing and a bigger “strangling” debt liability (p. 157). A case in point was Nigeria’s failed SAP under General Ibrahim Babangida, with its set of stipulated or prescribed conditions in return for loans, debt relief, and financial aid to rejuvenate its ailing and declining economies. Hence there was a call for a new economic development paradigm for Africa.

Another segment of the book examined how colonial policies and the post independence policies undermined indigenous self-reliance and HGD. These included the continual importation and distribution of cheap commodities via the colonial transport networks, which undermined local manufacturing goods. Also, colonial policies had led to a loss of self-sufficiency in food production, as land and labor were reallocated for export-oriented production.

Next, the authors identified the essential features of HGD strategies to include economic diversification and sensitivity to local imperatives; broad stakeholder consultation and participation; building local capacity and institutions; and social and human development. They identified four levels of HGD. Placed in a hierarchical order, they are: Imposed Development Strategy (IDS: countries do as external donors and development agencies tell them with little or no say in the design or implementation of the development agenda, as with the SAP in the 1980s); Adopted Development Strategies (AoDS: development agendas are modeled after the strategies of development and donor agencies such as the IMF and the World Bank, leaving countries with limited ownership of policy and little or no coordination of aid strategies; though suggesting a lack of creative, visionary, and dynamic leadership, it equally indicates recipients negotiating from a position of weakness given their limited internal revenue and massive public debt overhang); Adaptive Development Strategy (ADS: recipient countries receive a menu of choices, plans, and conditions from donors, leaving it to them to tailor development programs to their unique local imperatives, which allows them to negotiate, redefine and bargain around loan conditions; although accepting the rules, they nonetheless help define and set them in contrast with IDS and AoDS they are mostly “rule takers”); and Homegrown Development Strategies (HGDS: recipient states are characterized by complete policy autonomy, effective institutions, diversified economy, faithfully incorporated local imperatives, and the presence of advanced social development).

The authors concluded that the “new wave” of development initiatives, such as SAP, failed partly because they focused on macroeconomic growth rather than the basics, lacked genuine

national ownership, and operated mostly under donor prescribed terms. Hence, the entire concept/premise of a national ownership and a policy of homegrown economic development by African leaders remains an illusion.

The authors painted a promising picture or outlook for Africa in the 21st century, based on trends denoting what the authors term an “African Renaissance” (p. 161): about one in three of countries have GDP growth rates above 6 percent; Africa’s collective GDP per capita was at an all time high of \$953 in 2013; Angola, Nigeria, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Ghana are among the fastest growing among countries in the world; Africa is projected as the continent with the fastest growing economies in the decade, surpassing China and India. Nevertheless, the authors cautioned that certain economic indexes show a drag. They include a poverty rate that remains high; a widespread “infrastructural deficit” exacerbated by institutional corruption and patronage; insufficient education and healthcare services; inadequate and irregular electricity generation; external meddling and control; undiversified economies; jobless growth; and inequitably distributed wealth with a concentration at the top. The authors put forth their antidote, including people and countries embracing HGD, good and responsive national leadership, donors providing more and better policy space (flexibility) to give for African leaders better policy in which space to operate; donor nations and institutions to develop less intrusive forms of aid, thereby avoiding the “debt trap”; African leaders committing to fighting institutional corruption; and moving away from “institutional mono cropping” and rapid liberalization

The criticism I have is that the authors place too much blame for African development failures on African leaders, whom they accused of making too limited a commitment to Homegrown development strategies and not extricating themselves from colonial entanglements for fear of losing their grip on power, and on donor agencies for giving more intrusive forms of assistance, rather than on colonial history and its vestiges—neocolonialism—that have shaped and distorted African education, traditions, and development till present. Regardless, this book contributes to a rich body of literature available on the successes and failures of development programs initiated by the World Bank and other donor and international development agencies in Africa. It is also useful in helping to provide an analytical framework to measure the failures and successes of country-focus experiments from diverse parts of Africa in terms of colonial experiences, (Anglophone or Francophone); types of regimes (military or elected); and religion (Muslim or Christian dominated). Furthermore, this book developed an integrated approach of examining African development to include leadership, comparative political analysis and case study perspective.

Home Grown Development in Africa makes for interesting and thought-provoking reading. It has a multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary application in terms of usage to inform policy makers, legislators, planners, and students in a variety of disciplines including African politics, comparative politics, public administration, comparative public administration, and development administration.

Ngozi Caleb Kamalu, *Fayetteville State University*

Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké Okome, ed. 2013. *State Fragility, State Formation, and Human Security in Nigeria*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 259 pp.

Political scientist Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké Okome is a prolific author and professor at Brooklyn College, CUNY. Her wealth of knowledge of African social and governance processes makes her a well-qualified editor of this important book. Her contribution to the text is in chapters one and two, which challenge the widespread notion that African states, Nigeria in particular, are in the shadow of state fragility and may remain there forever. Therefore, as she notes, “African states have experienced structural and functional deterioration, and have consequently failed, but they can also be resuscitated” (p. 3). Okome questions the appropriateness of the term “state fragility” as used by the West as a concept to apprehend state failure from a universal rather than a contextual perspective, which is the strength of her proposition. For example, disgruntled citizens have used various social movements in Nigeria such as the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), and Odua People’s Congress (OPC) to fill the governance gap. Therefore, these groups do not portend state failure but a way of appropriating a self-help approach to bring better governance to the forefront. Okome’s position is seconded in chapter three by Adebayo Oluwakayode Adekson, an assistant professor of international Studies at Michigan State University, who interrogates Western interpretation of the term “civil” or “uncivil” Society. These coinages explain what can be considered as “legitimate” and “illegitimate” forms of social movement and self-help processes, which complement Okome’s argument for contextual approach to understanding state fragility.

Chapters four through six are essentially the book’s empirical findings. In chapter four, Olawale Ismail, a political scientist, engages readers with the transition of a youth social movement from “Area-Boyism” to a more sophisticated “Junctions and Bases” in Lagos. While acknowledging that social movements can sometimes be violent in their approach, he also asserts that they are part of the cog in the wheel of progress Nigeria sought through the angle of self-help. He also admonishes that this will facilitate a critical reflection and understanding of their existence as seen in history (p. 104). In a similar vein, Ben Naanen (a professor of history at university of Port Harcourt) and Kiale Nyiayaana (political science teacher at the university of Port Harcourt) in chapter five address the surge of radical social movements in the Niger Delta. The social movements are the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) and the Movement for Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) that are fighting for the rights of less privileged in the Niger Delta. Their contribution foregrounds the reason for the rise of the social movements against the backdrop of state inattentiveness to the plight of the people in the Niger delta, Nigeria’s oil and gas producing region. Also, Nnaemeka Okereke, a political scientist, in chapter six presents the case of Northern Nigeria, which has experienced a long history of deadly conflicts that resonates with insurgency and extremist religious group known as Boko-Haram.

In chapter seven, Dapo F. Asaju (a professor of theology at Lagos State University) and Harriet Seun Dapo-Asaju (a lawyer/librarian at Lagos State University) bring another dimension to the self-help approach through the lens of the Christian church and its social obligations in society. Their contribution is complemented in chapter eight by religious studies professor (University of Ilorin), Rotimi Williams Omotoye, and Elizabeth DeCampos, a linguist

at the University of Ibadan. The authors reasoned that the Christian church remains a critical component of civil society building in Nigeria. The book was rounded up in chapter nine, where Ayokun Fagbemi, a political scientist, guides readers through “an assessment of conflict transformation and peace-building” capabilities in Nigeria.

Although *State Fragility, State Formation, and Human Security in Nigeria* might not be considered as a rigorous and path-breaking text on Nigeria’s postcolonial condition, it is nevertheless a bold attempt to offer multi-vocal and unique perspectives to the state fragility concept. Starting from conceptual interrogation of the concept in the first three chapters to empirical evidence in chapters four, five, and six and to the rest of the chapters, a vigorous intellectual attempt is made to put context at the heart of understanding the state fragility concept—through a self-help approach—when government retreats, as seen in contemporary Nigeria.

Emeka Smart Oruh, *Brunel University*

Rebecca Richards. 2014. *Understanding Statebuilding: Traditional Governance and the Modern State in Somaliland*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Press. 220 pp.

Rebecca Richards’ book attempts to break relatively new ground in academic literature about the statebuilding process. Focusing on the de facto state of Somaliland, rather than Somalia, conventionally described as a failed state, Richards looks to uncover positive narratives of creation in the midst of an area long marked by destruction. The book begins with an overview of previous literature on the nature of defining a state and the act of state creation, focusing largely on the interplay between internal and external demands for control over the state-building process.

Somaliland, unlike other areas of recent conflict and state construction like Iraq and Eastern Europe, has largely been a self-contained project, much to the chagrin of international donors and aid workers. This has led to a uniquely hybrid political system for Somaliland, with a blending of traditional clan-based conflict resolution and electoral democracy. The traditional Somali dispute resolution system, or *guurti*, involves convening a meeting of a council of elder clan leaders who attempt constructive dialogue on matters ranging from grazing disputes to retributive murder cases and everything in between. In the Somaliland political system, the *guurti* has been enshrined as an official arbiter of the law, with a House of Elders as the upper body of the Somaliland parliament.

Understanding Somaliland travels through a historical overview of the Somali people from before the colonial era, with appropriate time given to the differences in development between Italian-governed Somalia and British-governed Somaliland, which would fundamentally impact the running of the post-colonial, ostensibly united Somalia. Richards uncovers that differences in administrative style meant that the Italian-backed government in Mogadishu had much better infrastructure than the British-administered government in Hargeisa, as well as a preexisting centralized governance structure lacking in the loosely controlled British protectorate that would eventually become Somaliland. Such a disparity in resources meant that after the British and Italians relinquished control, most of the political power in the newly combined state rested in the south, which was not looked upon favorably by the residents of the

north, long accustomed to being left to their own devices. In this way, resentment slowly built up between the artificially combined territories, which would only grow worse moving forward.

In particular, the *guurti* was seen as the antithesis of the personalistic dictatorship of Mohammed Said Barre, a warlord who gained power in Somalia following a coup in 1969 and who would rule until his ouster in 1991. To Barre, the *guurti* represented clannism, a unifying factor for Somalis based on common ancestry that he saw as divisive and destructive. His turn at the nationalistic project of creating a Somali state involved dismantling the clan system at every turn in attempts to bring allegiance closer to Somalia as an entity. However, for many Somalis, especially those in Somaliland, the clan system was the thread running through their entire society keeping it together, and nowhere was this more manifest than the concept of the *guurti*, which Richards makes clear was the main engine of governance in Somaliland. Following Barre's fall, the collapse of the government, and the descent into warlord-dominated anarchy, the main objective of Somaliland has been to continue doing what it has always done, in the same way it has always done it. Practically, this has meant combining hybrid theories of democratic governance with traditional political models, which has meant implementing the *guurti* on a national scale.

Despite Western skepticism, the project has been relatively successful, with remarkable levels of social cohesion, political participation, and stability. However, Richards makes pains to correctly point out that the Somaliland model is not a model at all. It is a uniquely tailored approach to one situation that works because of the particular history of the people in that one situation, and thus she cautions scholars of statebuilding from putting too much stock in Somaliland's success. Her main point rests in the lessons statebuilding scholars can learn with regards to internal and external dynamics of recognition and legitimacy. Despite Somaliland's successes at the empirical processes of states, it receives no external recognition as a state from other countries, due to the Western stake in the ongoing project of their neighbors to the south. Such a contrast could have been explored more by Richards, who mentions Somalia only as a means for telling history, not as a comparison point in governance structure. More could be said about the role of the clan in post-Barre Mogadishu, as the narrative feels a bit incomplete. However, this text remains valuable for theoretical and regional specialists alike, showing a side the region often unseen and bridging the gap in literature between the traditional and the modern, much like what is happening on the ground in Somaliland.

Berent LaBrecque, *Boston College*

Kimberly Wedeven Segall. 2013. *Performing Democracy in Iraq and South Africa: Gender, Media, and Resistance*. New York: Syracuse University Press. 290 pp.

Kimberly Wedeven Segall's *Performing Democracy in Iraq and South Africa* is an informative and scholarly text. The book has eight chapters: chapter one focuses on "Radio Songs, Kurdish Stories, Videos;" chapter two is on "Televised War, Poetry, and Shiite Women;" chapter three deals with "Sectarian Media, Nine Women, and Stage;" chapter four is about "Baghdad Blogs and Gender Sites;" and chapter five concentrates on "Media and Iran's Forgotten Spring." In addition, Chapter six centers on "Guerrilla Fighters, Televised Testimonies;" chapter seven

touches on “9/11 media;” and chapter eight focuses on “Bewitched Democracies.” There is also a “Conclusion.”

Kimberly Segall is professor of English at Seattle Pacific University. Her expertise and knowledge of language and political process as well as how the media, art, and popular culture (see the book’s blurb) can be used to engender change including contesting the public sphere is well known. In the book, she brings to bear some of the salencies of engaging the goings on in the polity via the media and art for human renaissance and freedom, which are continually imprisoned by leaders’ excesses globally, particularly in Iraq and South Africa. The book offers a revolutionary opinion on how groups use cultural norms to tear down disconcerting and numbing reminiscences of human violation and (psychological) violence in order to create a new political identity via the media, including other forms of art.

The thematic preoccupation of this book is basically premised on the concept of “Cultural and Forgotten Spring” with impacts on political science, culture, gender, ethics, democracy, and new media (the Internet and social networking applications) in the Middle East and South Africa. Thus, the book “summarises the most important findings of two decades of research and live experiences within and outside ... politics and culture in areas of Forgotten Spring” (p. xxiv).

Consequently, *Performing Democracy in Iraq and South Africa* attends to alternate sites of creativity—emotional forums—that simultaneously record violence and imagine community after atrocious and oppressive modes of governance has been meted to the people of South Africa (apartheid) and Iraq (oil war). It can be said that while for most books, writing and discourses on similar themes harp on reconstructing or recreating a new world after violence, conflict, and war, this book rather takes a new approach to this distillation. It does so by carefully and logically synthesizing various numbing mindscapes that can limit human striving towards freedom as well as offering a window of escape through the instrumentality of art and media enterprise. In addition, the book is an addendum to Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) and similar works that point a finger to human destruction but also offer a roadmap to escape dehumanizing praxis.

Although, *Performing Democracy in Iraq and South Africa* is a well-researched and somewhat innovative scholarly effort, it is beleaguered with some issues. One of such encumbrances is that it is short on practical steps to ensure that humankind finds solace via contemplating renaissance via the media and art. It is rather long on theory and abstractions. Though this book is encumbered by this remark, it is nevertheless a bold attempt to recreate the mindscapes of the South African and Iraqi worlds that were under the jackboot of tyranny and repressive governance.

Chigozie Agatha Ugwoji, *University of Huddersfield*

James Stejskal. 2014. *The Horns of the Beast: The Swakop River Campaign and World War I in South-West Africa, 1914-15*. Solihull, UK: Helion & Company, Ltd. 140 pp.

The First World War’s Centenary has ignited a welcomed reexamination of the 20th century’s greatest political calamity from many angles, including the war for Germany’s African possessions. While the campaign to wrest German East Africa from General Paul von Lettow-

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/pdfs/v15i4a5.pdf>

Vorbeck's Schutztruppe has received substantial scholarly analysis, the South African-led operations against German Southwest Africa (GSWA) have attracted far less attention. In his study of the Swakop River Campaign, retired soldier and diplomat James Stejskal applies a practitioner's eye to archival and archaeological evidence to reexamine this obscure expedition.

Stejskal's account traces the campaign from the British decision in early August 1914 to neutralize GSWA's usefulness to Berlin, through the South Africans' invasion in September of that year, and to the subsequent surrender of the German defenders in the summer of 1915.

For the British, the German foothold in present-day Namibia was always problematic. Even if the colony's garrison was small, its useful ports and powerful wireless stations could support German naval raiders operating against vital British sealanes. For the Union of South Africa government, the German presence was no less worrisome. German forces might infiltrate the long and sparsely settled Cape Province frontier to support Boers unreconciled to the British accommodation or possibly to incite rebellion amongst the sizeable indigenous population. Stejskal points out the South Africans also had their own imperialist visions. And so when London asked the Union government to seize the German colony in August 1914, the South Africans cooperated as much for their own expansive aims as they did for the defense of the Dominion. Awarded administration of the former German colony by the League of Nations after the war, the legacy of this largely forgotten campaign reverberated through the Cold War and independence period, with traces still evident today in Namibian society.

The book's presentation is clear and the organization thoughtful. Stejskal largely employs traditional tactical appreciation methods, though this work is far from dry, thanks to a welcome literary style and vivid descriptions of operations. His short chapter on intelligence preparations for this campaign is the best available in a secondary work. Orders of battle, a useful chronology and casualty lists round out the book's favorable features. A deeper discussion of the geopolitical importance of Germany's colonies and the threat they posed to the British Empire, especially regarding long-range radio communications capabilities, would have made the book's objective shine more brightly. Nonetheless, this element does not detract from an otherwise superb tactical study. Moreover, although this volume will appeal mostly to the military student and practitioner, its contemporary pictures of historic battle sites and rarely seen archival photographs have much to offer the material culturalist.

Stejskal's biggest contribution to our understanding the campaign may be his topographic maps with original tactical overlays, prepared by the author after conducting numerous archaeological field trips in conjunction with the Namib Desert Archaeological Survey. Not only do they help the reader visualize the engagements, they will also serve as important guides for future battlefield preservation.

In the historiography of the Great War, it is unfortunate the word "sideshow" ever became a metaphor for the campaigns fought on the imperial fringe. Apart from trivializing the hardships and sacrifices endured by the participants of all color and nativity, the term carries with it a conceit coined in the afterglow of the Allies' 1918 victory in Europe. James Stejskal's analysis of the Allied campaign in German Southwest Africa reminds us that in those early and uncertain months of the war, victory was where one found it.

Colonel P. Michael Phillips, *U.S. Army War College*

G. Bruce Strang, Editor. 2013. *Collision of Empires: Italy's Invasion of Ethiopia and its International Impact*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company. 385 pp.

Collision of Empires is an anthology of the political situation surrounding the Italo-Ethiopian crisis of the 1930s written by scholars who researched in eight different languages. Edited by G. Bruce Strang, it represents a compilation of research and ideas that describes the international community of the period. It also discusses how that community failed both Ethiopia and Italy during the crisis, resulting not only in conflict, but also the loss of Italy as a deterrent to Germany.

At the conclusion of World War I, the international community formed the League of Nations with the principal mission of preventing wars through collective security and disarmament and by settling international disputes through negotiation and arbitration. It lacked its own armed forces and depended on the Great Powers to enforce its resolutions and sanctions, and supply its soldiers. According to Strang, when Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935, the League of Nations still did not have experience in handling significant crises. He calls this time the League of Nations' greatest opportunity, as well as its greatest failure, to act as a "diffuser" of conflict.

In the 1930s, the only independent entities in Africa were Liberia (under American pseudo-protectorate status) and Ethiopia. The rest of the continent was divided among European powers, particularly the United Kingdom and France, two major guarantors of the League of Nations. According to Strang's in-depth discussion the League's support for Ethiopia against Italy was crippled not only by European colonial interests but also by a desire to support Italy as a bulwark against Germany and a concern that the "cost" of real confrontation with Italy over Ethiopia was too high.

Early chapters of *Collision of Empires* delve into the way Social Darwinism affected international relations during the period. Time and again, nations such as the United Kingdom were unable to comprehend that Ethiopia—an empire that existed from Biblical times—could possibly be an equal to a European nation, even one such as Italy, which had only become a political entity in 1861 and had lost a war against the Ethiopians in 1898.

Chapter 5, written by Martin Thomas, is an important one as it discusses the European security dilemmas that drove French policy during the Ethiopian crisis—many at the time considered France culpable for the conflict—and the African and colonial dimensions of the Ethiopian Crisis. Later chapters provide insight into how the League of Nations managed to score a strategic loss by failing to stop the conflict, while at the same time, playing into Germany's hands in allowing Italy to be removed as a "guaranteeing nation" for more serious conflicts in the future, such as World War II.

Chapter 10, "An Alliance of 'Coloured' Peoples: Ethiopia and Japan," provides timely exploration of racism in the world of the 1930s and how it affected foreign relations leading up to and during World War II. J. Calvitt Clarke III writes that Japan viewed Ethiopia as a potential market and a site for colonization. That the Italians also desired Ethiopia caused significant resentment amongst the Japanese who accused the Italians of waving the "Yellow Peril" flag. Clarke claims the racial angst reached a boiling point in August of 1935 when Mussolini called up new divisions to send to East Africa, rousing colored peoples against Italy and whites and threatening racial war.

The strength of *Collision of Empires* is that it is not limited to standard topics related to the major European powers of the time that were involved in the Italian-Ethiopian conflict of the 1930. Rather it provides analysis on broader international relations issues. As such, it is best suited for students of political science and international relations.

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

Ndongo S. Sylla. 2014. *The Fair Trade Scandal: Marketing Poverty to Benefit the Rich*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press. 179 pp.

In *The Fair Trade Scandal*, Ndongo S. Sylla persuasively argues that Fair Trade perpetuates the free trade system to which it claims to present an alternative, thereby helping the rich marketing Fair Trade rather than the poor. Chapter 1 discusses the inequalities in the global trade system in order to lay a foundation for the later exploration of Fair Trade. Though it is short, Sylla provides an effective overview of inequalities in both the results and processes of trade. International trade has resulted in primary resources specialization in developing countries, in turn leading to slow growth, low returns, high volatility, poor transmission of final prices to the producers, and high environmental costs. The biased processes involve developed countries promoting a liberalization they eschewed during their own development; they then hypocritically enforce this through tariff escalation (to dis-incentivize the processing of primary products) and through subsidies, tariff barriers, and non-tariff barriers to protect domestic industries. For those unfamiliar with trade, the chapter is a concise and sobering primer on a number of important topics like value chains, unequal exchange, tariffs, and subsidies. Chapter 2 contains a brief history of Fair Trade going back to solidarity trade in the post-World War II era. It also provides an introduction to major contemporary actors in Fair Trade. Unfortunately, the chapter suffers from its brevity, with the numerous acronyms and actors introduced in a short time becoming confusing by the end; it would have benefitted from an organizational chart or table.

Chapter 3 discusses controversies surrounding Fair Trade. Sylla first establishes a historical context by discussing British abolitionism and varying interpretations of Adam Smith's views on free trade. Then, he presents three differing camps with unique critiques of Fair Trade, specifically proponents of neoliberalism, alterglobalism, and degrowth. The book takes a particularly harsh tone towards neoliberalism. For example, while noting that neoliberals rightly demand more thoroughness and transparency of Fair Trade proponents, Sylla goes on to write, "whatever the facts around Fair Trade, neoliberal critics have no intention of departing from free trade dogma. They delivered a verdict even before trying Fair Trade" (p. 72). Ultimately, Sylla notes all three camps approach "the issue of Fair Trade essentially from the point of view of rich countries," prompting the extensive discussion of the ineffectiveness of Fair Trade for poverty alleviation in Chapter 4 (p. 84). That chapter explores numerous tensions and problems, among them the tradeoff between market efficiency and sustainable pricing, the difficulties in calculating a fair cost, the perpetuation of North-South power asymmetries, and methodological weaknesses in the assessment of Fair Trade's impact on communities.

Ultimately, he concludes, “Fair Trade protects producers and their families against extreme poverty rather than lifting them out of poverty” (p. 119).

Sylla is most effective in Chapter 5 when he uses empirical evidence to demonstrate that, contrary to the rhetoric of Fair Trade, the financial gains from Fair Trade are small and unevenly distributed, disproportionately benefitting the Global North and countries that are already relatively wealthy and not dependent on commodities (e.g., India, South Africa, and Mexico). He suggests “the alleged success of [Fair Trade] lies more with the efficiency of the rhetoric of its protagonists than with a thorough demonstration of the benefits generated thus far” (p. 121). Indeed, it is this chapter that most clearly explores the book’s sub-title “Marketing Poverty to Benefit the Rich.”

The book makes a compelling argument, and its credibility is bolstered by the author’s experience working for a prominent Fair Trade labeling organization. At just 154 pages for the body of the text, it is incredibly concise. The book’s effectiveness is reduced, however, by a frequent lack of specificity and examples. For example, the author’s claims like “In the case of West Africa, I personally witnessed cases of failure” would be more impactful if they were elaborated on in full sections, even chapters. It is possible the author wants to avoid the carefully selected, non-generalizable, and sometimes anecdotal evidence of Fair Trade proponents. It is also plausible he is limited in the information he can share about his previous employment. Regardless, readers would benefit from pairing this book with a more detailed ethnographic account, such as Paige West’s *From Modern Production to Imagined Primitive: The Social World of Coffee from Papua New Guinea* (2012), for a fuller picture. Overall, Sylla provides a concise and approachable primer on and critique of Fair Trade.

Brad Crofford, *University of Oklahoma*

Cassandra Rachel Veney, ed. 2014. *U.S.-Africa Relations: From Clinton to Obama*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, and London: Lexington Books. 200 pp.

Discussions on U.S.-Africa relations receive a lot of attention in the literature; see for example, Robert Waters’ *Historical Dictionary of United States-Africa Relations*, Adebayo Oyebadé’s *The United States’ Foreign Policy in Africa in the 21st Century*, and Donald Rothchild and Edmond Keller’s *Africa-US Relations: Strategic Encounters*. Thus, whenever one comes across a new book on U.S.-Africa relations, one must ask: “what is its value-addition?” In this case, one needs to ask, “does Veney add value to the literature?”

While U.S.-Africa relations have a long history as sufficiently instanced by Morocco becoming the first country to recognise United States in 1777 and the 1798-1808 period that saw approximately 200,000 African slaves brought to the United States, they assumed greater importance during the cold war, post-cold war period, and post-11 September 2001 attacks. At the same time, the US is facing stiff competition from China, India, and other members of the BRICS family such as Brazil and South Africa as well as Japan in what Pádraig Carmody calls the “The New Scramble for Africa” (also the title of Carmody’s 2011 book). All these factors, particularly ‘the new scramble for Africa’, mean that U.S.-Africa relations have to be re-defined least the US loses ground to emerging super competitors such as China (NB; during the 2000 presidential campaign, George Bush stated that China was a “strategic competitor,” not a

“strategic partner”). Following the tradition of books on U.S.-Africa relations, Veney’s book explores U.S.-African political, economic, diplomatic and cultural relations. It uses various lenses: cold war, neo-liberal economic policies, the U.S. war on terrorism and the expansion of Africa’s trading relations with Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, to refract the issue. The book argues that political, economic, diplomatic and cultural relations “... provide an opportunity and challenge for the United States to craft new economic and diplomatic initiatives toward Africa” (p. 1).

The book examines U.S.-Africa relations by focusing on U.S. relations with Africa’s regional powers such as Nigeria, South Africa and Ethiopia. Relatedly, it discusses conflicts in the Great Lakes region and the Arab Spring in North Africa, particularly, Egypt. In addition, it discusses topical issues such as the siting of the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) and the role of African American celebrities and Africans in the Diaspora in forging U.S.-Africa relations. The book tries to answer the overarching question; what drives U.S. engagement with Africa? It states that the promotion of democracy is the universal ideal that underpins engagement by both the U.S. government and U.S. non-governmental organizations. Related to democracy promotion is the emphasis on good governance (NB; see Obama’s address to the Ghanaian parliament on 11 June 2009 when he said “Africa doesn’t need strongmen, it needs strong institutions”). The U.S. is said to be wedded to the “trade-for-development” ideal; therefore, it has established legislations such as African Growth and Opportunity Act. Thus, it is argued that improved trade will bring about development and fight development challenges such as poverty. The siting of AFRICOM is said to be another controversial issue. Overall, African governments are not persuaded that there are non-security benefits from the AFRICOM instrument, hence, their refusal to house it in Africa. To this end, the U.S. is yet to successfully sell AFRICOM to African governments. Regarding the Arab Spring, the U.S. engagement is said to be confusing as instanced by its variegated reactions to uprisings in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya. Particularly, the way it handled the crisis in Egypt belies its commitment to the upholding of the ideal of democracy. Regarding U.S. relations with Africa’s regional powers; being Nigeria, South Africa, and Ethiopia, it is stated that this does not depart from the norm because its engagement is calculated to promote its interests. Regarding the troubled Great Lakes Region, the U.S. is said not to have provided leadership because it has not resolved security issues there. Lastly, diasporans and African American celebrities are said to play an important role in highlighting and responding to African problems.

To conclude, the book has many strengths: short length, rich content, easy read, and the authors are subject specialists. In addition, although it transverses a familiar terrain, it adds new dimensions such as the role of diasporans and African American celebrities in shaping U.S.-Africa relations. Despite these positives, the book leaves the reader hanging; it does have not a conclusion. This is serious omission, for various issues need to be brought together here.

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Joseph L. Venosa. *Paths towards the Nation: Islam, Community, and Early Nationalist Mobilization in Eritrea, 1941-1961*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014.

In the wake of the media's stifling reports of proliferating reactions of Islamic fundamentalist groups from Boko Haram to al-Shabab to Houthi and ISIS, *Paths toward the Nation* presents another facet of Islam for genuine national cause. Joseph L. Venosa radiantly discusses the collective and binding force of Islamic communities in solidifying the Eritrean national cause. The seven-chapter book starts with the deferred dreams of the current state and delves into the historical context that culminated in today's Eritrea. The book is an important addition to one of the least studied and marginalized areas of Africa. Repeatedly forgotten from the bigger colonial map as it was colonized by Italy, Eritrea is inhabited by around six million people divided into a population that is roughly half Christian and half Muslim. The past history and the recent political developments have not motivated independent scholars to explore the area. As the country is surrounded either by predominantly Muslim or principally Christian countries, Eritrea presents a myriad case of peaceful religious co-existence. Eritrea was first colonized and demarcated by Italy towards the end of the 19th century, then administered by British Military Administration for ten years (1941-1951). It was later federated with Ethiopia (1952-1962) until Ethiopia slowly started abolishing the federation. The Eritrean independence movement that was gaining momentum throughout the federation and before waged an armed struggle that lasted for thirty years (1961-1991). Therefore *Paths toward the Nation* can be considered as a pioneering work that solidifies the scant scholarship that has been being published independently.

Based on primary sources, mainly the newspapers being published by the leading actors in local languages, combined with other sources of the British documents and selected interviews, the book covers two formative decades (1941-1961) of Eritrean nationalism. As the book discusses, the six predominately Muslim Eritrean ethnic-groups do not share the same language and universal cultural values. However, they solidified their respective cases and articulated it using Islam as umbrella that stood against colonial subjugation. As one leading scholar of the region, Jonathan Miran, describes, the "kaleidoscopic historical configuration" (cited on p. 25) helped the different ethnic groups to coagulate their foundation. In doing so, they used Islam and the unifying language of the Qur'an, Arabic, to articulate their cause. Although Islam was in frequent contact with peoples who lived in what is now Eritrea from the 8th century onward, it was mainly during the 13th century the predominant Tigre ethnic group embraced Islam (p. 26).

As *Paths toward the Nation* broadly discusses, Islam was the driving force of two intertwined struggles among the Tigre of Eritrea. As the Tigre were serfs of the Shumagule, their first struggle was against their masters. This struggle was led by some of the Italian educated intelligentsia like Ibrahim Sultan. The successful liberation of the Tigre was later proliferated against Ethiopian domination. Slowly, as it was also endorsed by the highest religious authority, it became inclusive of other ethnic-groups like the Saho. Ibrahim al-Mukhtar who was a graduate of al-Azhar University of Cairo and the first mufti from Saho ethnic-group, also influenced such developments by helping make such localized movements into national case among the Muslims of the country. The continuous pressure by Ethiopia and Eritrea's Unionist Party helped the movement crystalize its struggle. Fortunately, the Muslim League movement

was also supported by another growing movement of the predominantly Christian Independent Bloc.

The publication of the Arabic newspaper, *Sawt al-rabita*, was another strident factor that amalgamated the movement as national cause (p. 65). The newspaper served in articulating the views as broad national cause that was shared by movements elsewhere in places such as Pakistan and Somalia. Overtime, the movement that was mainly confined in particular Muslim-majority cities such as Keren and its vicinities spread across the country.

As the movement gained momentum, internal political struggles, lack of means, and changing positions of some of the key figures -combined with discontinuity of the newspaper- negatively affected the movement. Ultimately, the assassination of Muslim League leader Abdelkadir Kebire while preparing to go to the UN General Assembly re-ignited the movement. It was also combined with beginning of another newspaper, *Wahda Iritriya*.

Paths toward the Nation is a momentous work and milestone of this underexplored area of Eritrean history. Few additional things would have added in making the book suppler. In addition to the excellent archival works explored, Alemseged Tesfai's extensive first-hand sources of the same historical epoch would have added flavor. Although it is understandable that book's theme is the role of Islam, a lighter sparkle of their Christian coalitions would have freed it from sounding the struggle was carried singlehandedly by the Muslims. Last but not least, although Ibrahim Sultan is an iconic figure of the struggle from its inception, some other prominent figures like Abdelkadir Kebire were overlooked in general. Kebire's role is evident from the wider outcry after his death.

Abraham T. Zere, *Ohio University*

John M. Weatherby. 2012. *The Sor or Tepes of Karamoja (Uganda): Aspects of their History and Culture*. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca. 216 pp.

Weatherby's *The Sor or Tepes of Karamoja*, published nearly four decades after it was written, provides a fascinating account of a fast-changing culture. The fieldwork for the book, which was facilitated by close relationships with an elderly consultant from Mount Kadam and a young consultant from Mount Moroto, took place from 1964 until 1972. In the forty years between the writing and publication of the text, external pressures on the Sor have mounted. Much of the oral history related by Weatherby has been forgotten. Many of the cultural practices described by Weatherby have fallen out of use. As such, *The Sor or Tepes of Karamoja* represents a valuable snapshot of a moment in Sor history that is otherwise unrecoverable.

The book includes an introduction, six chapters, and a series of appendices. The introduction situates the study within a broader research agenda and describes both the obstacles faced in the study and the methods employed to overcome these obstacles. Chapter one provides an overview of the Sor, including descriptions of their physical and cultural environment. Chapter two reconstructs interactions between the Sor and the surrounding plains communities beginning in the early eighteenth century. Chapter three surveys the culture of the Sor, devoting particular attention to homestead organization, the rhythm of the agricultural year, the spirit cult, and rainmaking. Chapter four is a more in-depth account of the rainmaking practices of the Sor, detailing separate rituals associated with raindrums and the raintree.

Chapter five tracks movements of Sor clans from the late 18th century through the 19th century, focusing on the fallout of the Ngwolema famine of the 1780s. Chapter six describes the Sor spirit cult, which is taken to be an important factor in the maintenance of Sor identity in the face of external pressure. Appendices include clan charts with historical notes, genealogies of twenty-one families, and transcripts of several interviews, many of which are recorded in both English and Sor.

The closest relatives of the Sor are the Nyangea, Teuso (Ik), and Nkuliak, each of which Weatherby takes to have split off from a single ethnic group, proto-Nkuliak. The Sor live on three mountains (Kadam, Moroto, and Napak) in northeastern Uganda. The more prestigious Pokot and Karimojong occupy the surrounding plains, and the Sor have assimilated to these cultures to varying degrees. Additionally, Weatherby argues that both oral history and several cultural practices, including the rainmaking institutions, indicate now-ceased contact with Paranilotic (Western Nilotic) groups such as the Labwor, who share similar institutions. Contact between the Sor and the other descendants of proto-Nkuliak is limited.

Weatherby's cultural notes focus on two institutions: rainmaking and the spirit cult. Structural differences between the two institutions lead Weatherby to posit different origins for them. Whereas the spirit cult is centralized, with unified initiations for Sor from all three mountains, the rainmaking institutions are fragmented, featuring five or six drums scattered around Mount Moroto and Mount Kadam. Weatherby argues that this structural difference reflects a difference in origin between the two institutions: rainmaking practices are taken to have an external source (the Labwor), while the spirit cult is taken to have been an internal development. Weatherby speculates that the spirit cult may date to the time of a unified proto-Kuliak on the basis of preliminary reports of a similar institution among the Nkuliak and Teuso (Ik). These reports have not been investigated further in the four decades since Weatherby's research.

At times, the book reads more like a collection of papers than like a coherent whole. Admittedly, the study is not intended to serve as a comprehensive ethnography; however, no principle is invoked to account for which topics are covered and which are omitted. For example, chapters two and five deal with clan migrations, while chapters three, five, and six deal with cultural topics, but no motivation for keeping the migration chapters separate is given, and the lack of transitional material makes for a choppy reading experience. Extensive transcripts of interviews in the underdocumented Sor language may offer valuable resources for linguists; however, the Weatherby's transcriptions neglect to indicate a number of significant contrasts. For example, the contrast between implosive and plain voiced stops is neutralized, ATR contrasts are neutralized, and tone and stress are omitted. Additionally, no morpheme-level or word-level glossing is present. Nevertheless, *The Sor or Tepes of Karamoja* is a valuable resource for historians, anthropologists, and linguists alike, offering fresh data and analyses regarding the cultural history of the Sor—in many cases, data, and analyses that fieldwork today could not hope to uncover.

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Leo Zeilig. 2013. *Revolt and Protest: Student Politics and Activism in Sub-Saharan Africa*. London: I.B. Tauris. 336 pp.

Interviews with leaders of student political movements in Zimbabwe and Senegal form the basis of Zeilig's argument that structural adjustment programs led to the disintegration of African universities as functioning institutions and disempowered African university students, both as individuals and as a political block. *Revolt and Protest* traces specific universities as they change from institutions producing the inheritors of the political kingdom to institutions producing opportunities for financial diversion and a disillusioned class of unemployed but educated young people.

The argument is, to some extent, familiar. Teaching as an adjunct at the University of Nairobi, I often witnessed structural adjustment programs (SAPs) used to explain all sorts of things. It was interesting though, how these financial regulations introduced decades earlier were still to blame for the university not being able to provide anything from salaries paid on time to working bathrooms (an issue which Zeilig also raises). It was also interesting that even when SAPs blocked hiring processes at times, they seemed to not be a problem when politically connected applicants wanted to join the department. As much as SAPs may have created massive destabilization when they were introduced, by now African universities have had decades to restructure and adapt, and, as Zeilig admits, many have. One common adaptation has been to create parallel programs, in which the highest performing students continue to receive loans or scholarships, while students with lower marks pay tuition. Through these types of systems, and due to the high demand for university education in many African countries, many universities are making lots of money, and could invest in their staff, facilities, student support and research, but find other uses for their revenue. Zeilig would do well to complement what he is told in his interviews with a look at university audit reports.

Other parts of Zeilig's argument are more novel. From the works of early African intellectuals and metropole observers, he identifies differences between the generation of intellectuals and political leaders emerging during the transitions to independence, and the generation that followed. For the earlier generation, intellectuals and politicians temporarily formed a relatively cohesive political class; in the second, political leaders took a very different stance towards intellectuals, and students could no longer reasonably aspire to joining either group. Nevertheless, he cautions against a simplistic division between the two generations, and the "political vanguard" and "economist" (p. 191) labels respectively assigned to them.

To be fair, Zeilig also looks at how students, and African middle classes in general, were affected by neoliberal forces of globalization and their intersection with the democratic movements in the 1990s. He gives an impressive array of examples from around the continent of student attempts to demand reform, and government attempts to cripple or coopt student organizations, or in severe cases in Zimbabwe, student life in all forms. He charts frequency of student protests, which reach a crescendo in the early nineties, and then subsided and become more sporadic, with notable exceptions in North Africa. He also examines the various trajectories that student protests have taken since, such as those that have been distracted by "donor syndrome," those that have strayed towards "newer desperate activism" (p. 149), and those that are shaped by religious structures within their universities.

This book should not be interpreted as merely a historical explanation of the diminishing job prospects for African graduates however. Recently, *Revolt and Protest* by young people across the continent has taken on new forms. Zeilig explains how African universities bring together young people on the premise that through dedicated study they can earn a place and a voice in their society, but then slowly, through repeated frustration, and too often exposure to violence, take away that dream. If they manage to graduate, they still struggle to find opportunity to apply the education in which they have invested so much effort, perseverance, and family finances. Frequently, they do not even find a way to attain basic trappings of adulthood, much less entry into intelligentsia. Zeilig's extensive first-hand experience within Senegalese and Zimbabwean universities offers a nuanced perspective of how African educated youth decide when and how to respond to the violence, physical and structural, directed at them.

Note:

The views expressed in this review are entirely those of the reviewer.

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