

BOOK REVIEWS

Omotade Adegbindin. 2014. *Ifá in Yorùbá Thought System*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press. 242 pp.

Omotade Adegbindin's *Ifá in Yorùbá Thought System* presents the philosophical values inherent in the oral texts (myth, legends, poetry, songs, and proverbs) of the Yoruba thought system. He reviews various literatures that are relevant to his work so as to situate the Yoruba as a group of people in their rightful place and to justify what motivates this work.

Ifá in Yorùbá Thought System is divided into nine chapters. Chapter one examines "The Meaning and Essence of Philosophy." The author explores the development of philosophy in ancient thought and how it progressively acquired a narrow meaning in subsequent periods (p. 3). Various works of ancient philosophers such as Aristotle and Heraclitus were discussed along with the various stages that philosophy has passed through. He concludes that philosophy has acquired different meanings and that no universal definition of philosophy is achieved.

Chapter two, "On the Existence of African Philosophy," addresses the Eurocentric orientation of westerners who claimed that Africans have no philosophy and that no philosophical rumination can exist outside the west (p. 25). The author concludes that philosophy is the prerogative of every individual, society, and culture, although African methods (e.g., Ifa divination) may not be the same as western philosophy. "Philosophy as Wisdom: The *Ifá* Example," chapter three, addresses the controversy surrounding the real meaning of Ifa. Adegbindin discusses various meanings attached to Ifa as theological phenomena and human institutions and debunks claims that philosophy signifies technical proficiency that can only be discussed within the western philosophical tradition. He therefore uses Ifa as a complete Yoruba philosophy, ageless and all embracing in scope, to show the ideal of wisdom and its age-long affiliation to the enterprise of philosophy.

Chapter four, "Ontology in *Ifá* Corpus" begins by examining metaphysics so as to have a full understanding of ontology from the perspective of Ifa. Yoruba ontology has two components: cosmology and the concept of man. From the Ifa and Yoruba cosmological point of view, the world came into existence by design and that it was fashioned by God. The mechanistic view that the world came into existence by chance does not make any sense in Yoruba thought. On the concept of man, the Yoruba hold a tripartite conception: *Ara*, which is the physical element, a tangible element that composes of flesh, bones, and blood; *Emi*, the spiritual and immaterial element that is the vital force which gives life to the body; *Ori-Inu*, literally inner head, that is held to be the essence of human personality. He concludes this chapter with the claim that *Ori* has a pervasive force in the human person among the Yoruba. Chapter five, "Epistemology in *Ifá* Corpus," examines the nature and scope of epistemology in the Ifa corpus with the aim of enhancing understanding of epistemology as the theory of knowledge in philosophy. He discusses the Yoruba concept of truth, including its cognitive and the moral dimensions.

Chapter six, "Ethics in Corpus," discusses Yoruba ethical systems as the practical application of some views of the nature of reality to the field of human conduct. Although

<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/pdfs/v16i1a6.pdf>

ethics lacks univocal definition, the author picks Oliver Johnson's definition, which describes ethics as the science of conduct. He also draws a line of demarcation between ethics and morality by arguing that while ethics involve theoretical considerations, morality suggests practical applications. The author states that Ifa is not only a religion but also a potent source of morality for the Yoruba. He concludes with what constitutes the good life from the Ifa's point of view, which is that "an individual to see others as his own kindred."

Chapter seven sheds light on the position of "*Ifá* and the Problem of Gerontocracy in Africa." Africans generally respect elders for their wisdom, knowledge of community affairs, and closeness to the ancestors. However, modernists took exception to this belief on the ground that the real philosophy cannot be left in the hands of the aged alone, as the emphasis on age denies epistemological authority to the young and able. The author explores the Ifa corpus to ascertain the position of Ifa on the idea of gerontocracy among the Yoruba. He therefore concludes on the note that "gerontocracy in Africa evokes the ability to look at issues from various angles and encourages thinkers, both old and young, to express themselves in society."

Chapter eight, "*Ifá* and the Consequences of Literacy," examines how Ifa deals with the problems of written/oral dichotomy that is responsible for the intransigent relationships that exists between traditionalists and universalists. The author reviews the that is of the opinion that "full consciousness of self can never be realized without writing or literacy." Further, although oral people may be also wise yet, the exact cause-effect consequences required by philosophy and scientific thinking are unknown by oral people. The chapter concludes that the coming together of both oral and written civilization will be beneficial to the Yoruba in particular and African in general.

Chapter nine, "*Ifá* and Development Crises in Africa," starts with different scholarly views on the factors that militate against development in Africa. The author makes his position clear when he presents the synergy that exists between a people's culture and development. He affirms that development is a "historical process that is deeply rooted in the cultural values and psychological systems of individual nations and communities." He uses the Yoruba model of how Ifa harmonized the leadership and the people in traditional Yoruba society to address the existing dichotomy between the citizens and the state in the contemporary African societies.

Ifá in Yorùbá Thought System presents a complete revelation of ancient Yoruba wisdom to the contemporary society. Adegbindin analyses various aspects of the Ifa corpus that are relevant to human conduct and those of philosophical relevance to the modern societies. He establishes the fact that, through theories such as Negritude, Pan-Africanism, African communism, and African socialism African intellectuals have shown that African have their indigenous philosophy with its own peculiarities and characteristics. If there is anything to criticize at all, it is in the area of translation from Yoruba to English. For instance, on page 71, line 1 of the *iwori-meji*, "*ifa ka rele o*" was translated as "Ifa come back home," instead of "Ifa let's go home." Also in page 80, line 1 of *Owonran meji*, "*eni ko ti o gbon*," was translated as "the unwise person" instead of "he who refuses to be wise." Aside from these observations, *Ifá in Yorùbá Thought System* is an excellent book that situates the Yoruba thought system in its rightful place. It provides significant information about the ancient wisdom among the

traditional Yoruba people. The book is a welcome addition to the growing literature for philosophy and African studies courses. It is therefore recommended for students of African philosophy and cultural studies.

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Saheed Aderinto. 2015. *When Sex Threatened the State: Illicit Sexuality, Nationalism and Politics in Colonial Nigeria, 1900-1958*. Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press. 241 pp.

The author, writing from an African historian perspective narrates the struggle Nigeria has gone through dealing with the menace of prostitution from the colonial era to the present. The British colonizers saw prostitution as part of African primitiveness that must be dealt with to civilize Africa. The book rather shows that the colonialists had selfish interest in Nigeria. How prostitution entered Lagos is not explained, but since the evil prospered in the developed city of Lagos, the seat of colonial government, it appears that it was a product of British civilization. Did civilization bring prostitution? That was not the case; it rather enhanced the practice in the improved city areas of Lagos. Lagos was developed above other places; this was a plus on one side to the colonialists. But on the other hand, the development of Lagos alone shows their selfishness, for they wanted to make Lagos conducive for themselves.

Nigerians from the onset did not welcome prostitution; hence various interest groups emerged and several laws were formulated to deal with prostitution. But since Nigeria is a multi-ethnic society, faced with multi-ethnic ideological positions on sexuality, the war against prostitution was difficult. One wonders if Nigerian multi-ethnicity is a blessing or a challenge. As presented in the book, Lagos was a melting point because of the development and the existence as a seaport. But did this development benefit Nigerians or did it bring problems?

The colonial effort to clear prostitutes from the streets of Lagos was for the health of foreign seamen. This is seen in their failure to establish a venereal disease hospital for the Lagosians. They equally failed to support the development of locally manufactured herbal drugs to handle the disease. Nigerians left with no alternative looked for how to help themselves. Aderinto states (p. 109) the riddle of contradiction in the production of venereal disease drugs on one hand by the local healers and the production of aphrodisiacs, which increased the patronage of prostitutes on the other hand. This created a vicious circle.

The author mentions the different factors that contributed to the survival of prostitution in Lagos: the racial attitude of the colonialists, the collapse of some African cultural values, and the influence of western civilization. He shows that the African patriarchal system was giving way to a system in the name of "right," which did not work for the African societies. Also, the failure of the anti-prostitution law, and the interpretation of sexual vice from different perspectives, resulting in divergent and contradictory interests (p. 157), all played their part in the survival of prostitution in Lagos. Of interest are the roles played by some African cultures and the police in institutionalizing prostitution. The African culture of bride price helped in commercializing marriage, making prostitution a semi contract marriage. Women saw sex as a commodity that men were willing to pay for. This culture lowered the status of women up till today in some societies.

In all of the attempts by different tribal unions to stamp out prostitution among their groups, no single effort of the Hausa-Fulani group is recorded. Does it mean that they did not understand the dangers of prostitution to nation building? Could a similar attitude be responsible for some of the security challenges facing Nigeria today? The colonial government and the Nigerian police are indicted, because they benefited from the proceeds of prostitution. The former collected fines for prostitutes contravening the laws against prostitution, while the latter collected bribe from suspected prostitutes, setting them free to continue their business. How serious then was the government to stamp out prostitution since in many ways it was a beneficiary of the crime? Thus, the challenge of curbing prostitution in Lagos was multidimensional.

The author reflects the fact that efforts by different interest groups against prostitution targeted the crime from the shoot, while the root was untouched. Thus, he charges parents (p. 175) to help their female children to develop good character. This shows that the major problem in curbing prostitution was the failure of the home to inculcate African cultural values of purity and contentment. This explains the persistence of prostitution long after the end of colonialism because the home had failed. For prostitution to be exterminated, the home should be repositioned to train children to understand the value of decency and contentment. This book is quite timely, as Nigeria is rebuilding its image in the international world.

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Rabah Arezki, Thorvaldur Gylfason, and Amadou Sy (eds.). 2011. *Beyond the Curse: Policies to Harness the power of Natural Resources*. Washington: International Monetary Fund. 275 pp.

For any state with abundant natural resources, it is taken as given that it becomes the key to unlocking economic development and ensuring sustainable economic growth. As it turns out in many cases, especially in developing countries, managing natural resources for the benefit of the citizenry has proven illusory. Endowed with natural resources, some countries have found it problematic to transform and harness their resources for development purposes. The book seeks to illuminate the various impediments and prospects for harnessing natural resources for developmental purposes. It is divided into five parts.

Part 1, with two contributions, provides an analysis of issues regarding the commodity markets and how they are affected by the macroeconomic environment. Using various case studies, Gylfason's contribution illuminates the various policy challenges to natural resource exploitation for development and also proffers policy recommendations. Radetzki's chapter analyzes the historical issues in the centrality of primary commodities in enhancing economic development offering comprehensive examples, concluding that "a heavy concentration on commodity production in a national economy is not detrimental per se. Diversification out of commodity sector that has lost its comparative advantage and superior profitability is certainly warranted" (p. 50).

Part 2 focuses on the role of finance in natural resource exploitation and diversification. Gelb's contribution presents a case for diversification, justifying the need for it and offering factors that need to be considered for its success. Using case studies the author illuminates the

various challenges and prospects for diversification, noting that “some countries with a strong resource base have managed to diversify their economies and exports, but many have not. Although, there is evidence that diversifying economies can expect to do better over the long run, the urgency of the issue will vary across countries” (p. 76). Beck dwelt on financing natural resource exploitation as a way for harnessing development. Using mathematical simulations the evidence points to the fact that “the finance and growth relationship seems as important for resource-based economies as for other economies, so that the underinvestment in the financial sector will have long term negative repercussions for economic growth” (p. 103). The last contributors in this part, Ekele and Sy, analyze issues surrounding Wealth Funds. Using Norway’s Sovereign Health Funds the authors examine the key issues that are involved and factors that need to be taken into consideration for its success. They advise that “countries are better placed to build more robust strategies for managing those resources in manner that supports broad and durable economic development” (p. 115).

The centrality of fiscal policy in natural resource exploitation and management for the purposes of development is the objective of Part 3. Using empirical data, Hadri espoused issues of primary commodity prices and the challenges that exist, recommending to policymakers ways of addressing the challenges. Hamilton and Ley presented a case for sustainable fiscal policy. Using mineral-based economies as a case study the authors highlighted the measures of economic performance and provided factors to be taken into consideration for achieving sustainable fiscal policy for economic development. Arzezki built on fiscal policy for commodity exporting countries illuminating key challenges and policy recommendations. The author is of the view that “further research should investigate the performance of resource rich countries in addressing issues of income distribution” (p. 161).

Issues of exchange rates and financial stability are central themes for Part 4. Frankel dwelt on the cyclic nature of economic development in relation to fiscal and monetary policy, providing ways of avoiding procyclicality. Using the case of Algeria, Laksaci analyzed issues in relation to external shocks and financial instability, and she managed to adopt sensible management practices. For Algeria, the author noted: “prudent management of official exchange reserves at a sufficient level to cover any external shocks that may occur is part of strategic objective to consolidate financial stability. Economic diversification efforts must still be intensified to sharply reduce the vulnerability inherent in the economy’s dependence on the hydro-carbon sector” (p. 201). The last contribution, by Gregorio and Labbe, dwelt on the Chilean experience in relation to copper price fluctuations, indicating that resilience to fluctuations in the case of Chile is a result of “flexible exchange rate, a rule-based fiscal policy, and a flexible inflation-targeting regime” (p. 229).

Part 5 deals with institutional and governance issues for harnessing natural resources for the purposes of development. Torvik analyzed the politics of economic reform in resource rich countries, highlighting key issues for consideration. Relevant case studies were provided on the issues raised, in essence noting “political institutions shape political incentives...political incentives built into petroleum funds are decisive for their success or failure...transparency and strong macro-economic institutions are necessary but not sufficient conditions for resource abundance to stimulate prosperity” (p. 254). The last contribution, by Fosu and Gyapong, takes

the case studies of Nigeria and Ghana and examines how terms of trade and growth are affected by institutional and governance factors.

The text is not only relevant as an academic analysis but is also quite comprehensive and informative for policymakers.

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Abdul Karim Bangura, ed. 2015. *Assessing Barack Obama's Africa Policy: Suggestions for Him and African Leaders*. Lanham: University Press of America. 362 pp.

This book's seventeen chapters make an assessment of President Barack Obama's African foreign policy. It further provides useful suggestions for him and African political leaders. The first chapter, by Peter A. Dumbuya, considers the dynamics of US relations with Africa. He argues that change in the Obama administration's Africa policy depends not so much on substantive policy differences with Bush administration, for there are continuities in some parts of Africa. In chapter two, Ivor Agyeman-Duah focuses on the topic "race and the great expectations," espousing the view that the first success of Obama's presidency was the confidence that it gave to African-American and other children from minority backgrounds. Additionally, the chapter identified various strategies directed towards ameliorating racial problems and development assistance to Africa. This chapter also emphasized the need for Africa to take its destiny in its own hand even as it enjoys the benefit of US development assistance.

Chapter three, by Jack Mangala, interrogates the symbolic importance, historic significance, and political relevance of Obama's visits to Egypt and Ghana, arguing that the four areas (democracy, development, public health and conflicts) critical to Africa's future and the entire developing world Obama outlined were not backed by any substantive policy announcements or proposals. Chapter four discusses the history and events leading up to the conflict in Libya. Chapter five focused on the war in Somalia, investigating the Obama Administration's approach to Somalia to ascertain the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the strategies implemented and to make sound policy recommendations. The author argued that Somalia stands out as having had the most US-led military operations carried out on its soil in pursuit of eliminating terrorist cells and fighting piracy.

Chapter six addresses the US role in helping the Ugandan government capture Joseph Kony and "decapitate" the leadership of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Chapter seven examines the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire and the Obama Administration policy towards it. The author asserts that US development assistance to Cote d'Ivoire, like the rest of the continent, appears more as a means to strengthen American economic and geopolitical interests in the country. In pursuing its security interests, the Obama Administration must rethink US policy within the framework of an equitable partnership with Africa. Chapter eight provides a general overview of the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA) south-south cooperation and how the Obama Administration has engaged it. The chapter shows that the US will benefit from a global strategy that incorporates a working relationship with each IBSA country on a platform of issues, such as regional security and economic growth, which promote sustainable global integration. Chapter nine examines sanctions against Zimbabwe as a strategy for finding an

effective solution to the political crisis in Zimbabwe without further harming vulnerable citizens. Chapter ten discusses Kenyan politics and points out that the US-Kenyan relations became less cordial when the Obama Administration came to power.

Chapter eleven focuses on Nigeria. The author asserted that Nigeria-US relations have been relatively advantageous to both countries. Their foreign policies have been dictated by national interests, economic and strategic factors. Chapter twelve discusses Liberian politics. The author argued that the Obama Administration's like its predecessors is not primarily interested in promoting development and democracy in Liberia, but rather, it wants to ensure that Liberia has a government that would be subservient to the promotion of US economic, political, and strategic interests. Chapter thirteen examines the Millennium challenge initiative in Senegal. Chapter fourteen examines US foreign aid to Africa. The author contends that African problems need African solutions; but in this world of interdependence and the reality of the West denying some African countries their sovereignty by interfering into domestic affairs that is almost impossible. Chapter fifteen considers US strategy towards gender violence in Africa, while chapter sixteen focuses on African education initiatives. Chapter seventeen examines US pro-gay policy and posits that the Obama Administration must rethink the US policy within the framework of an equitable partnership with Africa.

The book is a masterpiece. It is a relevant book for all African leaders and key stakeholders in US foreign policy. Scholars and students in the United States and all African countries will find this book very useful.

Nathaniel Umukoro, *Delta State University*

Rita Barnard (ed.). 2014. *The Cambridge Companion to Nelson Mandela*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 317 pp.

Barnard's book reveals a great deal about Mandela's life. The volume's essays draw on the resources of many disciplines, including political theory, history, anthropology, jurisprudence, sociology, literature, cinema, and gender studies; and they interrogate and interrupt the linear biographical narrative of "a life-loving man" (p. 1). The editor proudly states that "not a single essay in this book is interesting in debunking its subject, but rather in complimenting, re-contextualizing, and renaming him" (p. 8). The contributors employ the range of methodologies and points of view, which forms this text, the first academic investigation of Mandela. In this carefully edited book, the editor focuses on providing a refreshing and a new Mandela. To do so, she has included twelve chapters, excluding Introduction and Afterward, in three sections. All sections, "The Man, the Movement, and the Nation" (Section I); "Reinterpreting Mandela" (Section II); and "Representing Mandela" (Section III) are of approximately equal length, and comprises four chapters each.

Section I, "The Man, the Movement, and the Nation," provides an overview of Mandela's youth, his political career, the years he spent in imprisonment, and his rise as a national leader. The chapters in this section also interrogate the dramatic years of his political career and personal life: his association with the ANC, and with his second wife. Philip Bonner, in Chapter one, explores the nexus between Mandela and his connection with the political movement, and

discusses the antinomies associated with it, such as how repeatedly he sacrificed his family to the political life; his controversial decision for initiating discussions with the white south African government and to move to armed struggle; and his impetuous eagerness to adopt “an entirely new political philosophy and persona” (p. 30). Bonner believes that on the prison island Mandela underwent his final self-reconstruction and metamorphosis. In chapter 2, David Schalkwyk gives an account of the time Mandela spent during his incarceration. The author probes aspects of Mandela’s character in a thoroughly ethical framework. Deborah Posel (Chapter 3) begins her narrative from his release from prison, and she states how Madiba magic was constructed by the ANC and the National party to transform him “from a figure of dread to a figure of hope” (p. 73). The final chapter in this section begins with a reference to Benedict Anderson’s phrase: “nations are not born, they are made...they are imagined communities” (p. 92). Brenna Munro shows how Mandela’s personal sacrifice of family life served to construct him from a woman’s husband to a father of the nation.

The chapters in Section II offer a re-examination of various aspect of Mandela’s political and legal thought. Zolani Ngwane argues that though “Nelson Mandela is today a tradition himself” (p. 131) yet he was charged of ignoring his tribal Thembu custom during his divorce trial in 1996. The author explores a tension between individual consciousness and commensal obligations in Mandela’s life. Adam Sitze’s paper meditates in the troupe of translation and revisits the figure of the court interpreter. In chapter 7, Jonathan Hyslop discusses the development of Mandela’s political thought and career post-World War II, and argues how Mandela was un-Fanonian and un-Gandhian in his political thinking. Sifiso Mxolisi Ndlovu’s chapter in this section provides an Africanist view of Mandela’s Presidential years.

The last section of this text reflects on the processes and media that have made Mandela a global leader and a national icon. In chapter 9, Daniel Roux opens with an oblique title: “Mandela Writing/ Writing Mandela” (p. 205). On one level, this essay can be seen as a sophisticated reading of Mandela’s autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, and on another level, Roux claims that the autobiography’s overarching narrative conforms to the *bildungsroman*. The author argues that this work has the characteristic features of chiasmus and metaphorical inversion. Chapter 10 draws the attention of the readers to the ways in which Madiba’s life has been showcased for international movie audiences. Litheko Modisane argues that such films (*Mandela 1987* and *Invictus 2009*) end up inventing a Mandela who is unrealistically virtuous and contradicts his emancipatory role. Lize van Robbroeck’s essay forwards Roux’s observation, and states that Mandela’s autobiography is not just a depiction or description, but has a performative dimension. The final chapter, by Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe, articulates Mandela’s exceptionalism and meditates on Mandela and morality.

Overall, this is a good book, and can be used for both scholarly insight and for getting informed about Mandela studies.

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Bonnie K. Campbell (ed.). 2013. *Modes of Governance and Revenue Flows in African Mining*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 253 pp.

Africa's natural resources such as crude oil, gold and other vital minerals have been at the center of global attention for several decades. For many, the continent's rich natural resources should be enough to positively transform many economies, but these economies, especially in mineral-rich countries, continue to face diverse socio-economic challenges despite the huge investments in them. The literature clearly underscores the trend of this argument, especially the debate over the lack of good resource governance in mineral-rich countries. In other words, poor resource governance, as Bonnie Campbell's edited volume has described it, is one of the main causes of limited revenue flows for development and poverty reduction in Africa. *Modes of Governance and Revenue Flows in African Mining* is not only timely, but a valuable addition to the field. The introduction draws on the main arguments from the five inter-related chapters to highlight the underlying objective of the book as the attempt to contribute to the understanding of the consequences of investments in the mining sector, revenue flows, and the way these revenues have been used to further development and poverty reduction strategies (p. 3). The rest of the chapters have been analyzed within the framework of the above objective.

The first chapter by John Jacobs provides an overview of the impacts, debates, and policy issues on revenue flows in the African mining sector. Grounded on specific mining strategies that were introduced by the World Bank in Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., Ghana, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo-DRC) in the 1980s/1990s, Jacobs argues that the mining sector reforms had increases in foreign direct investments (FDI) with high tax revenues, but these revenue flows were not generally beneficial in stimulating growth, development and overall poverty reduction in these countries. In fact, Jacobs' piece raised questions about the viability of these externally-driven policies for the continent's growth and development. For him, as other scholars have argued, a paradigm shift from the existing (foreign investment-led) resource development strategies (p.16) to a strategy of country-led development might be helpful to increasing economic capacity and capital accumulation (pp. 38-39). The chapter also examines some of the mining reforms that were introduced in Ghana, Mali and DRC. Reforms such as the attractive tax policy regimes and private sector-led growth initiatives were discussed. Although these strategies have added significant FDIs to the mining sector, the lasting consequences for these mineral-rich countries can be observed from two perspectives. First, the economies of these countries, as Jacobs posits, have been tied to "a long-term, low revenue and externally-oriented development strategy dependent upon foreign investment" (p. 38). Second, through FDI-led development of the mining sector, the exploitation of Africa's resources becomes integrated into the global capitalist system with focus on profit maximization strategies at the expense of sustainable development (p. 38).

The second chapter by Sael Gagne-Ouellet takes the reader to deeper levels by focusing on regulatory frameworks of mining policy reforms in Mali. Like Jacobs, Gagne-Ouellet reiterates the debates on the regulatory reforms that were introduced in mineral-rich African countries in the 1980s. In the words of Gagne-Ouellet, the main objective of these reforms was to stimulate growth and alleviate poverty through FDI. However, the soundness of these initiatives "is now being questioned and sometimes even criticized" (p. 47). For further analysis of these issues, Gagne-Ouellet employs the regime theory to examine the mining sector in Mali. The author

traces the history of mining activities with focus on gold from the ancient era, through the colonial period, to the post-colonial (1960s-1990s) era and the post-1990s. In fact, one could perhaps describe Gagne-Ouellet's in-depth analysis of Mali's mining trajectory as a one-stop venue for those interested in knowing more about the sector. As revealed in the other chapters, the common theme that emerged in this chapter has been very well captured by Gagne-Ouellet when he noted that the liberal economic-inspired reforms of the Malian economy (private sector-led) did help somehow in reducing the country's deficits, but the "population's living conditions remained precarious" (p. 56).

Chapters three (Thomas Akabzaa) and four (Gavin Hilson and Godfried Okoh) are slightly different in content, but both chapters share common ideas on vital mining activities in Ghana. Focusing on the constraints to maximizing net retained earnings from the mining sector, Thomas Akabzaa, for example, argues that institutional and policy capacity constraints are some of the major problems facing Ghana and other African mineral-rich countries (pp. 107-08). The chapter provides a good diagnosis of these problems with viable treatment options in terms of policy solutions for effective domestic resource mobilization. The author's suggestion on simplifying the calculation of retained earnings is a good case in point (pp. 112-32). Chapter four underscores the importance of formalizing artisanal/small-scale (ASM) mining industries in Africa. The chapter wonders why the ASM sector which constitutes an important economic base in many rural mining areas continues to occupy the periphery in development strategies across Africa (p. 139). Drawing on Ghana's case (*galamsey*), the author discusses factors such as policy inertia, health concerns, safety, and environmental issues as some of the reasons why the sector has remained informal or illegal for many decades. Like the fourth chapter, the fifth chapter by Didier de Failly and colleagues looks at the dynamics of artisanal mining in the DRC with focus on revenue flows, governance, and development. The chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the role/interplay of pertinent issues such as armed militias, conflict minerals and the dynamics of foreign influence in shaping mining activities in the Southern Kivu region as compared to other provinces like Katanga (p. 165). As previously revealed, this last chapter also observes that the artisanal sector in the DRC lacks the needed support for positive transformation.

Generally, the book is useful in broadening our understanding of the issues, but there are two drawbacks to be noted. First, as revealed in the volume, both internal (policy inertia/corruption) and external (foreign-driven policy/excessive profit outflows) factors have contributed to the low revenue flows in African mining for development purposes. While these explanations are duly recognized, it is also clear that the book was unable to discuss extensively how the ills of historical legacies such as colonialism and the massive exploitation of Africa's resources have affected and continue to affect the current socio-economic conditions of the continent. Second, the long-term role and position of Africa in the global capitalist system with which the continent has little or no control and how this could be addressed have also not been adequately discussed in the volume. Nonetheless, I find the book is a significant asset to the literature on African mining, revenue flows, and issues of development in Africa.

Felix Kumah-Abiwu, *Kent State University*

Grace Davie. 2015. *Poverty Knowledge in South Africa: A Social History of Human Science, 1855-2005*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 334 pp.

Grace Davie's work is an exquisite endeavor into exploring the dimensions of poverty knowledge, constructing throughout the multifarious interpretations of poverty knowledge for the readers. The book has three parts, which further contains seven informative chapters and generates a healthy and conceptual discourse. Referring to poverty knowledge as a "historical dialect," Davie moves on to add a perspective to the poverty knowledge literature. The book discusses various conceptual constructions of poverty in South Africa. The chronological representation is excellent and the manner which Davie has used to represent the "poverty knowledge discourse" connects with the reader.

South Africa has a complex history that includes European colonization, industrialization, and racial segregation (apartheid) that brings into the purview the unsettled question of poverty and injustice. *Poverty Knowledge in South Africa* traces the social history of South Africa with respect to poverty and brings into the public discourse the basic understanding of poverty and how it can be measured. It also discusses that how even after years of apartheid, poverty remains a huge problem. The author discusses the unconventional ways in which poverty knowledge has moved in regular procession and has expanded over the last century and a half. The author proposes how appropriate measures can be taken by intellectuals and experts to address poverty and racial discrimination.

The historical scenario of poverty takes us back to the time when African prophets pointed to a utopian future without want, the time when poverty knowledge was more inclined to colonial discourse. Europeans assigned stereotypical images to black Africans so as to enjoy disproportionate opportunities while framing various discourses on poverty. Various organizational debates over poverty are also discussed, which helped to lay the groundwork of the poverty question. In South Africa, discourse about poverty is a subject of everyday conversation or it has been established as a "quotidian object." The author points out how poverty was redefined with the intention of making it a scientific object for investigation. The professional university based human scientists developed various research methodologies to get to the bottom of the "poor white problem" and to promote American approaches to social uplift. Experts strove to get close to their subjects, to hear their voices, as they were limited regarding freedom of speech and movement. But experts were also given limited power to redefine the older norms so they were marginalized and could only broaden poverty knowledge to a certain extent. Even a prominent scholar such as W.M. Macmillan, who worked with and against a quotidian understanding of poverty, was scorned and ignored by the country's leaders.

The author criticizes the unconventional ways in which poverty was looked at and how Afrikaner nationalists cast poverty as a white problem to be solved by racial segregation and how the capitalist system was molded for their own purpose. It was during and after the Second World War that new arguments were made for human rights by black intellectuals and liberal reformers asserted that social welfare benefits should be seen as citizens' rights. The reformer group popularized the Poverty Datum Line (PDL) to weaken bit by bit the pillars of white supremacy, and with the help of the PDL it was found that more than half of non-Europeans were living below the ungenerous threshold of "health and decency." But the PDL

could not alter South Africa's poverty ridden landscape for colonial discourses were more preferred that regard African subjects as not entitled members of the nation and were considered as source of cheap and expendable labor. Apart from the PDL, many other poverty indicators were used to criticize the post-apartheid government's failure to deliver on its promise.

The book also ponders over various ways in which people seek to abolish apartheid and the cheap labor system and how the South African government shaped the landscape of the poverty question in second half of twentieth century. In the 1970s, white student activists strengthen the claim of black workers for higher pay by using poverty statistics, and corporations were forced to adopt employment codes promising to pay workers above the poverty line. By the 1980s, methods of review were revised and history was viewed from below. The book as a whole discusses the dynamics of social and historical change of poverty in South Africa with respect to epistemic mobility, change between the qualitative and quantitative observations, and also the insurgence of various activists policies so as to achieve academic excellence and help oppressed people to raise their voice and frame demands and to incite policy makers to make reforms. The objective is an unbiased system where the major issues of poverty call for a re-assessment of governments policy priorities.

Utsav Kumar Singh, *University of Delhi*

Sule E. Egya. 2014. *Nation, Power and Dissidence in Third Generation Nigerian Poetry in English*. Pretoria: Unisa Press. 177 pp.

Using the military era in Nigeria as a historical marker, Sule E. Egya anchors his book in the cultural theories proposed by Raymond Williams, Stephen Greenblatt, Jonathan Dollimore, and Michel Foucault, among others, theorists who see literature from a political, materialist perspective. The author painstakingly introduces the reader to the brave-hearted, activist-poets of the 1980s and 1990s Nigeria, who felt the call of duty to take the fight to the oppressive military dictatorship of that shameful era in Nigerian political history. These poets saw in poetry a weapon of choice to defend and fight for the bullied and brutalized masses.

The book is written with the specialist in mind and not for the general audience. Although I will not recommend it for undergraduates, graduate students of literature will find it useful. The use of language is rather burdensome; the non-specialist will have to look beyond the jargon-laden pages to be able to appreciate its content. Having said this, the advanced student will find in it a trove of useful historical, theoretical, and methodological information on the military era poetry of Nigeria.

Egya deliberately chooses the two authors and two poems he uses to discuss the particular themes he addresses in each chapter. These are poets who spoke boldly to the powers that be without fear for the possible consequences or reprisals. They are engaged authors who saw in poetry not just a reflection of society, but rather an act of struggle, an act of combat, on behalf of the people. They are driven by a desire to speak for the masses against institutionalized violence unleashed by the military despots of their time. Their purpose was not just to confront the violent political elite of the time, but also to dislodge it eventually. They were combatants wielding, not guns, but pen and paper. The pages are littered with quotes from such well-

known writers, poets, and activists as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Biodun Jeyifo, Micere Mugo, Abola Irele, Ken Saro-Wiwa, Molara Ogundipe-Leslie, Niyi Osundare, Pius Adesanmi, Chris Dunton, and others.

With the exception of the introductory and concluding chapters, the book is divided into chapters of about twenty pages each. "The Question of Generation" is carefully analyzed through the lenses of two poems by Afam Akeh and Abubakar Othman in chapter two. Chapter three, "Poetics and Subjectivity: Making Poetry Serve Humanity," by Afam Akeh and Abubakar Othman, examines the conceptualization of poetry as a domain of political struggle. In chapter four, entitled "Dissident Dirge: Elegy against the Oppressor," the author uses another duo of poems by Olu Oguibe and Chiedu Ezeanah to examine how poetry can be brought to the service of humanity. Two poems by Maik Nwosu and Onookome Okomems are used to shatter the myth of power in chapter five. In the sixth chapter, the poetry of two feminists, Toyin Adewale and Unoma Azuah, are deployed as feminine acts against the oppressor, while in chapter seven the focus is on how the poetry of two indigenes of the Niger Delta (Nnimmo Bassey and Ogaga Ifowodo) are employed to fight against the oppressive military regime's systematic destruction of the environment and landscape of the Niger Delta. In the concluding chapter, "Exile and the Trope of Dispersal," the author focuses on the emerging perspectives on post-military era poetry, addressing the twin issues of exile and emigration of the poets of this very difficult era in Nigerian history.

All in all, this is a good addition to the literature of protest and combat in Nigeria, specifically the poetry of anti-military activist-poets during one of the most difficult periods to be so disposed in Nigeria. Egeya's book is in so many ways a song to those fearless poets of the era who decided to put their lives, as well as those of their families, on the line to be the voices of the helpless masses and fight back against the oppressive regime of military powers that be during a very volatile political era in Africa's most populous nation. It is a testament to the resilience of ordinary people in the face of impossible odds.

Timothy T. Ajani, *Fayetteville State University*

Roquinaldo Ferreira. 2012. *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 248 pp.

Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World is an excellent read for researchers and academics around the world who focused on this topic but less so for the casual reader on the evolution of Angola and Brazil due to the overall time it may take the reader to follow the multiple stories lines going on simultaneously. This book review will show that the material builds upon itself throughout the book and does not come to a dramatic climax but an awakening through the piecing together of many individuals life stories and cultural difference that make both countries unique but similar. The readability and amount of details that Ferreira extracted from historical datasets at the micro-level allows one to key in on fundamental connections that experts may gloss over at the macro-level. Ferreira's research seemed to be based on the maxim that history is only a compilation of various personal lives and that without the individuals there would be no history. This review will cover how the author's examination of the basic aspects of life enhanced the overall delivery on these topics between the countries during the

era of the slave trade. An essential aspect that distinguishes this book apart from others on this subject is readability.

The difference in readability in this book is caused by the presentation of the details of the personal lives in a methodical, not chronological, style addressing the similarities that exist at the micro-social level among citizens of Portugal, Angola, and Brazil. Although Ferreira's efforts seemed to capture the heart of some of the common people at the core of the countries trifecta it focused primarily on Angola and Brazil during the late 1600s until the beginning of the 1800s. The details revealed at this level on the vibrant personalities on both the African and American continents seem to come to life over the 248 pages as the reader pieces together the threads that are strategically woven throughout this book. Although the details are miniscule and complex the author provides these facts in easy everyday language. Another aspect that led one to truly appreciate this book is the amount of details that the author has shown though the selection of the each chapter.

The critical reading in this book captures seemingly insignificant aspects of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade period, but unlike other historical books on this matter it does not focus on the governments but on different characters within Angola and Brazil. Ferreira details these individuals through six chapters of precise review of legal documents, ship export records, diplomatic papers, and personal letters, thereby giving readers a 360 degree view into the lives as they were unfolding at that time. This book focuses on general topics of that era in these individuals' daily lives such as slavery, law, society, religion, culture, education, and commerce. The author further reveals that neither time nor distance affected the relationships between family, friends, and lovers in either Brazil or Angola. He goes on to illustrate how the blend of these relationship and topics from the different societies across the Atlantic in both directions over numerous years caused Angola and Brazil to evolve into independent countries. With these aspects in mind the book shows how a large portion of the Brazilian society can identify and relate to their Angolan roots through these shared experiences, which can provide them with possibly greater affinity to each other than any other country that has ties to the continent of Africa. Ferreira explains that this change did not occur overnight, and that it was this internal friction between the civilizations that caused their development.

The "Cross-cultural exchange in the Atlantic World," covers how the blend of these individuals' lives molded both countries through a bi-transformative, not uni-transformative, process across the Atlantic Ocean. The readability and amount of detail extracted from historical archives at the micro-level allows everyone to key in on important connections that experts may gloss over at the macro-level. This book examines how citizens traversed the continents to enlighten themselves in multiple contexts (e.g. mental, spiritual) , over numerous years impacted not only those that they had direct contact with but also those who they had indirect contact and thereby changed the narratives in both Angola and Brazil that in many ways still resonate today.

Raymond Cohen, *Embry Riddle*
Justin Cohen, *Southern Maryland Community College*

Adam Habib. 2013. *South Africa's Suspended Revolution: Hopes and Prospects*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press; Johannesburg: Wits University Press. 319 pp.

Professor 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 Africa has become twenty years into what 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 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, as stated in the title for chapter 2, “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 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, but “the social pacts unraveled, the unions’ political influence was weakened, and poverty and inequality increased” (p. 122). Ashwin Desai’s 2002 judgment that “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 The bloody confrontation between the police and the striking Marikana mineworkers 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 program for democracy as well as inclusive development” (p. x). The political elites must be made “more accountable and responsive to citizens’ concerns,” 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?

Adam Habib provides a clear narrative, an 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” (quoted. p. 205). How close have we come?

Notes

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

Tony Voss, *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University*

Ernest Harsch. 2014. *Thomas Sankara: An African Revolutionary*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 163 pp.

Although he stood out as one of the major political actors of post-independence Africa, late Burkina Faso president Thomas Sankara seemed to have been forgotten by historians and pundits of African postcolonial studies. As a matter of fact, very few books have been dedicated to the life and most importantly the legacy of one of the most unique and brainstorming figures of Africa. That gap was just recently filled by Ernest Harsch’s short but powerful essay, *Thomas Sankara: An African Revolutionary*.

Harsch summarizes the life and legacy of Thomas Sankara in nine chapters, ranging from his forging as a rebel to some outstanding features of his approach to government and development. From the outset, it is worth noting that this short account of Sankara’s life places him in the pantheon of political leaders who clearly took a stance against the domination and plundering of their countries or continent. To this effect, Thomas Sankara stands out as one of the sound figures of resistance at a time when the scheduled asphyxia of Africa and the Third World was even more subtle and vicious. Harsch’s account of Sankara’s tribulations and feats informs the reader about the many significant contributions of the revolutionary leader to the true independence and freedom of Africa. In Harsch’s word, “the most important tasks facing the revolutionaries were therefore to fight against external domination, construct a unified nation, build up the economy’s productive capacities, and address the population’s most pressing social problems, such as widespread illiteracy, hunger and disease” (p. 36). Sankara indeed met many of these objectives, as clearly evidenced by the success of the Vaccination Commando operation (a child immunization campaign), the radical shift from the dependency

on foreign countries and international organizations to the development of Burkina by its own citizens, the achievement of food self-sufficiency, and not least important as it was the very first example on the African continent, the integration of women in politics. Harsch also remarkably points out the ways in which beyond his own country, Sankara's concern was the liberation of all African countries that had remained under the yoke of injustice and racism, like Apartheid South Africa. In many ways, Harsch's short account teaches us that Sankara is the incarnation of African resistance against the contemporary and obscure forms of domination of financial imperialisms. Sankara is best remembered for his memorable speech at the Organization of African Unity in Addis Ababa about African debt which helped establish him as the "African Che Guevara," which itself says a lot about his stances against western imperialism and for prosperity. While the Sankara-led revolution in Burkina Faso was problematic at some points, his strong and memorable will to unchain Africa, redefine its place in the Industrial Revolution, and turn it into a continent that would be able to decide on its own future is a significant moment in the post-colonial history of Third World resistance. Unfortunately, Sankara's remarkable resistance to *magister dixit* seems to have been shut down on the African continent, which has been largely under the leadership of puppets of the West since decolonization.

At a time when Burkina Faso begins exhumation of Sankara's grave almost thirty years after his assassination, and when his best friend and alleged killer Blaise Compaore has been ousted by a popular revolution, there is no question that Harsch's contribution to the history of Africa is timely and of paramount importance. The ninth and final chapter of the book, "Is it Possible to Forget You?" raises the underlying question of remembrance and oblivion. To that effect, we should ask ourselves if African leaders and citizens will be able to make their own Thomas Sankara's stance and legacy for African resistance that are summarized in a 1984 speech: "Our revolution in Burkina Faso draws on the totality of man's experiences since the first breath of humanity. We wish to be the heirs of all the revolutions of the world, of all the liberation struggles of the peoples of the Third World. We draw the lessons of the American Revolution. The French Revolution taught us the rights of man. The great October revolution brought victory to the proletariat and made possible the realization of the Paris Commune's dreams of justice."¹ Ultimately, *Thomas Sankara: An African Revolutionary* is a must read for anybody interested in or working on the politics of the governed, as Sankara embodied and fought for the causes that continue, almost three decades later, to resonate among the world's oppressed.

Notes

- 1 Thomas Sankara. 2007. *We Are Heirs of the World's Revolutions Speeches from the Burkina Faso Revolution 1983–87*. (Atlanta: Pathfinder Press): 118.

Hervé Tchumkan, *Southern Methodist University*

Shireen Hassim. 2014. *The ANC Women's League*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press. 159 pp.

Hassim's book is not only about the history of the ANC Women's League (ANCWL) but the process of articulation of gender equality as a determining factor of South African society and politics as well. Both interviews and archival work helped the author give a narrative introduction about the ANCWL from its very first steps until the present day. The book is structured into ten chapters, which follow a chronological order. Beside the author's viewpoint, the attitude famous of political leaders, organization members, and scientists towards women's emancipation draw our attention in the introduction both in narrative and analytic ways.

The introductory chapter and the chapter, "Beginnings," talk about the formation of the ANCWL along with addressing the relationship between South African women and the country's political life in the first half of the 20th century. The fact that women only got the right to become full members of the ANC more than thirty years after its establishment shows the party's patriarchal attitude. "The women members of the ANC comprised the wives of men who were members of the movements" (p. 23), writes Hassim. 'The idea of a non-racial national women's movement' (pp. 31-38) is about the increased activism and mobilization of women in the ANCWL. Due to the banning of the ANC in 1960, "women in the ANC were organised within the Women's Section" (WS) (p. 39). As Hassim notes, the WS was rather the movement of social workers. The formation of other women's movements and female participation in Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), or the armed wing of the ANC, were challenging factors during the exile period.

In the chapter on "Feminism in the ANC" Hassim addresses the fact that during the 1970s and 1980s South African women raised their voices at international UN Women Conferences, but the WS rather paid attention to women's social welfare than the empowerment of female political representation. Despite the increasing number of female politicians in the ANC during the 1980s, gender equality and the relationship between national liberation and women's liberation were still controversial issues for the country's "male-dominated" (p. 71) political sphere. Later, Hassim notes that, partly due to its authenticity, feminism had become part of an "open political, and not merely academic discourse" (p. 94) by the early 1990s. As the unbanning happened in 1990 the WS was renamed the ANCWL. It is also emphasized in the chapter called "The Homecoming" that apart from the euphoria of the democratization process, the league met plenty of new challenges yet to be resolved. For example, the real cue and the relationship with the ANC of the WL were not clearly defined. Furthermore, as male ANC members showed a conservative and traditional attitude towards women, finding a potential leader was also not without difficulties. After Gertrude Shope, Winnie Mandela became the newly elected president. She turned out to be quite controversial, not only because of her trial but "many feminists were concerned that the league would simply become another 'wives' club like other leagues in Africa" (p. 111).

The chapter "Handmaidens of the Party" introduces the result of the ANCWL's biggest success, the constitutional implementation of the 30 percent gender quota regulation. As Hassim writes, a "significant optimism" (p. 121) was characteristic concerning the future achievements in gender equality issues. But she also points out that the league was still weak and its policy direction was not well organized. Another hardship for the ANCWL was the fact

that new women's organizations were based on different interests and social backgrounds. Despite the institutional advancement, the question if rural women would get the same possibility to practice their civil and political rights still remains open – she adds.

The chapter “Feminists versus the League” refers to the recent controversy among ANC and feminist leaders concerning gender equality and the subject of homosexuality. Hassim addresses that the political opposition between Mbeki and Zuma and his rape trial issues both had a harmful effect on the work of the ANCWL and the country's achievements in stopping gender-based violence. She mentions achievements such as the establishment of Gender Equality Bill in 2012 as the “Alice in Wonderland Politics” of the league (p. 147).

Concluding her remarks, Hassim states “As a vehicle for gender equality, the ANCWL has been far from a trusty ship” (p. 149). She also proposes that the league “is not the home of the South African feminism” (p. 149). Besides the pessimistic and skeptical thoughts, she highlights that fortunately plenty of other organizations handle gender equality as a major priority issue in the country. This book is undoubtedly a useful and interesting piece for scholars who research women's issues and gender equality in the sub-Saharan African context. It can even be a remarkable reading experience for those who are interested in feminist histories.

Judit Bagi, *University of Pécs, Hungary*

Benjamin N. Lawrance. 2014. *Amistad's Orphans: An Atlantic Story of Children, Slavery and Smuggling*. New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press. 358 pp.

The subtitle of *Amistad's Orphans* makes clear that this is not a conventional telling of the story of the slave schooner *Amistad*, whose inmates captured the ship in 1839, attempting to return to their homes in West Africa, but succeeded in doing so only after a two-year battle in the American legal system. In this meticulously researched study, drawn from sources housed in the United States, Cuba, Sierra Leone, and Great Britain, historian Benjamin Lawrance challenges the narrative of triumphant abolitionism that has grown up around the *Amistad*, as well as the complementary, emergent focus on its rebels' achievement of freedom, by focusing upon a group of children—four inmates of the *Amistad*, the ship's enslaved cabin boy, and a young former slave who became one of the rebels' interpreters. Their history calls into question the universality of both approaches, and Lawrance employs it to tell an *Amistad* story which emphasizes that slavery was transformed, not abolished, in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world, and that the shifting, often ambiguous legal and social situations through which formerly enslaved people moved are not always recognizable as “freedom.”

This book is less a group biography than an analysis of how childhood itself affected enslavement, emancipation, and life after slavery, and where there are gaps in the records left by the orphans Lawrance draws from this broader historical context. He begins with the workings of the Atlantic slave trade, emphasizing that children were increasingly targeted during the early and mid-nineteenth century. A key element in his argument is that child slavery was inherently unlike the enslavement of adults. Chapter 1 explores the chilling synergy which led slavers to respond to the abolition of the legal Atlantic trade by seeking out children, not only because their small size made them easier to transport but because the emotional conditions of childhood made them easier to control. Chapters 2 and 3 begin the

journey in the children's West African homeland, where the recognition and exchange of rights-in-persons was central to social and economic structures and where children's low position in family and community hierarchies made them particularly vulnerable to the economic needs of others and, ultimately, to enslavement. Lawrance further argues that children's malleable identities, not yet attached to a lineage, clan, or state, decreased their ability to resist psychologically and compounded their physical and socioeconomic disadvantages.

The second half of the book, chapters 4, 5 and 6, effectively uses this perspective to challenge what he terms the "adult-centric slavery and freedom binary" (p. 180) common to narratives of emancipation, showing that the same factors that made children vulnerable to enslavement continued to shape their lives after it had torn them from their homes. As minors they remained under some form of adult control regardless of legal status, leading him to speak of "liberation" rather than "freedom" in describing their post-emancipation experiences. Their trajectories upon returning to Africa also upset received notions of freedom and homecoming. Lawrance notes that many recaptive children who were put ashore at Freetown, Sierra Leone, found themselves in exploitative "apprenticeships" or even re-enslaved. While the *Amistad* children escaped this fate, they, like other returnees whose enslavement had removed them from their birthplaces, had missed key rituals of transition into adulthood, limiting their ability to participate in their home societies. They were further marked by their interactions with missionaries and other American patrons, whose teachings rendered them unfit to live according to local convention and left them dependent upon missions in Africa. As Lawrance sums up their predicament, social alienation made them "quite literally, orphans of history" (p. 21), freed from chattel slavery but marooned in a never-never land from which they could not fully return. In his hands their tale becomes a bitter parody of the abolitionist narrative of freedom.

By focusing on such children Lawrance extends acknowledgement of the persistence of slavery from an African historiographical context to an Anglophone-Atlantic one and problematizes the achievements of abolitionism, although I would suggest that acknowledgement and exploration of its ambiguity would be preferable to the call to "dispense with the misidentification of the epoch" (p. 271) with which he concludes. The study blurs other lines as well, implicitly suggesting that ideas of slavery and autonomy, freedom and emancipation might be reassessed more broadly. This is a thorough, thought-provoking, and important book, strongly recommended for those interested in the history of Africa in the Atlantic world, the history of slavery, the history of childhood, and world history.

Sara C. Jorgensen, *University of Tennessee at Chattanooga*

Henning Melber. 2015. *Understanding Namibia: The Trials of Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press. 256 pp.

Inside the halls of Namibia's newly-constructed National Museum in downtown Windhoek, various photographs, artifacts, and heavily stylized patriotic artwork tell the story of the birth of a nation after a thirty-year political and military campaign. Despite the pageantry, visitors come away feeling that something is missing. That emptiness is the story of Namibia's post-independence era. In *Understanding Namibia*, Henning Melber takes on the challenge of

chronicling Namibia's recent past, linking the country's economic and political course with the performance of the country's ruling political party, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). Melber contends that SWAPO's performance has fallen short of SWAPO's pre-independence promises for life after independence. He classifies the country as having been only partially transformed from colonial rule. Through a thorough analysis of the party's performance handling economic, social, and political issues, the book examines how Namibia has progressed over the last two and a half decades.

Despite positive external perceptions of the country's stability, Namibian society has yet to realize the benefits of independence, achieving little meaningful change for the vast majority of her citizens. Today, Namibia has an increasing amount of economic disparity, a near-dearth of political opposition, and issues with respect for human rights. Melber attributes these issues with Namibian society largely to the influence of SWAPO's narrative "gospel" of liberation. Since its origin in 1960, SWAPO has worked to be seen as synonymous with the country in the eyes of both domestic and international audiences. One popular mantra is "SWAPO is the nation, and the nation is SWAPO." Through these themes, the organization seeks to depict itself as the sole body responsible for the liberation of Namibia from South African settler colonialism in 1990. This mindset depicts Namibia's liberation as the end of history, justifying SWAPO's assumption into power as the fitting conclusion of a struggle against colonialism's evils. Conversely, this narrative also marks any measure of disagreement as heretical, further assisting the party in cementing its position, by preventing the development of any domestic political opposition. At the end of Melber's monograph, readers come to feel that SWAPO is still resting on its liberation credentials and has yet to legitimate itself through transforming Namibian society.

Comparative political scientists, in particular those studying political transitions, will find this book useful for its description of the political trajectory of a liberation movement in the period following the end of colonialism. While Roger Southall's recent *Liberation Movements in Power: Party & State in Southern Africa* compares the post-colonial performance of former liberation movements, Melber expands this axis of research, rigorously digging into the Namibian case. Similarly, *Understanding Namibia* extends research on how insurgents transform into political parties, by providing empirical data on a case of the phenomenon. Melber skillfully supports his assertions with a heretofore-unseen breadth of sources. Scholars of Namibia will find the footnotes and bibliography useful, as he taps into rich veins of research from local scholars, while also leveraging his own first-hand research and experience. The book does have some minor editing flaws, and astute readers can detect a tone of disappointment with the way Namibia's experiment with independence has borne out. As a SWAPO activist who spent fourteen years in exile, the author is personally involved in the Namibian experience. Readers familiar with the Namibian case won't be bothered by this tone, but should be aware of its minor impact on the analysis.

This book comes at a fitting time. Namibia reaches a number of critical milestones in 2015: the 100th anniversary of Namibia's precursor, German Southwest Africa, being placed into a League of Nations protective mandate; the 25th anniversary of independence from South Africa; and the bestowal of the Mo Ibrahim prize to Namibia's president. These events lead to a need to reflect on the path Namibia has followed and the one the country will take in the future.

Looking ahead, SWAPO faces serious political challenges. The old guard, who oversaw Namibian liberation, will soon pass away. This will leave a leadership vacuum that the party will be hard-pressed to fill, because the party has not groomed junior leaders for succession. If political opposition can challenge SWAPO with an alternative plan for government performance, there is hope that Namibia will complete its transition to a functioning democracy. To better see the future of the country through the lens of its recent journey, *Understanding Namibia* should be viewed as a welcome addition to an Africanist's shelf helping to paint the full picture of the country's history.

Sean McClure, *Foreign Area Officer, US Army*

Abdul Raufu Mustapha (ed.). 2014. *Sects and Social Disorder: Muslim Identities and Conflicts in Northern Nigeria*. Suffolk: James Currey. 234 pp.

The emergence of Muslim groups could be seen as a common phenomenon in the history of Islam. Sects and movements like the Tijjaniyya and Qadiriyya emerged in northern Nigeria prior to the Jihad of Sheikh Usmanu Danfodiyo to the present. Hence there is a need to study contemporary groups in northern Nigeria with a view to reassess their activities. This book is divided into seven chapters, and all the contributors used ethnographic research. In chapter one, Abdul Raufu Mustapha studied the ideologies, activities, and interpretations of groups like Sufis, Izala, and Salafiyya in Nigeria who he considered "as the most religious people worldwide." He, therefore, centers his chapter on contemporary sects in northern Nigeria, with a view of re-assessing the ideologies and interpretations of these groups although the author failed to give a detailed explanation of the controversial phrase he coined "northern Nigerian Islam."

In his attempt to provide analysis of the genesis and development of reformist groups in northern Nigeria, Murray Last, in chapter two, observed that the jihad of Shaikh Usman Danfodiyo was carried out in three phases. Phase one saw the creation of *Ah-Lus-Sunnah* (1794 – 1804), while the second phase discussed the *Ah-Lus-Sunnah* going to war (1804-1806), and the final phase saw *Ah-Lus-Sunnah* as a caliphate. Last asserted that members of the Sheikh's movement were either runaway slaves or farmers' sons running away from their family *gandu* (fields and family weaving looms), but he did not provide proof for that assertion. The actions of Shaikh Abdullahi Bin Fodiyo in resorting to teaching and authorship in poetry and Sufism was seen by Last as a rebellion against Danfodiyo's campaign in the Hausa nation. According to him, the rapid increase in the number of Muslims and their immediate need for mosques to accommodate them in their acts of worship is seen as a political maneuver to divide and rule by "lineage or dynasty." He further asserted that these Mosques were established to serve as weaponry for the Muslims.

Mustapha and Muhktar U. Bunza attempted to analyse some contemporary sects and groups in northern Nigeria in chapter three, where quite a number of groups were studied. But their analysis could not provide detailed information on the difference between Izala and Salafiyya in areas of agreement and dis-agreement. To them, "Izala developed ritual practices, and insisted on saying the prayers at the earliest opportunity" as asserted by the Sufis. They also changed the timing for *Rak'ataal Fajr*, and the phrase '*assalatu khairun minan nauwm*' (salat is

better than sleep), from the first *adhan* to the second on one hand. On the other hand, 'Yan *Hakika* is one of the contemporary groups within the Tijjaniyya in Nigeria as discussed by Mustapha. But *Hakika* in its technical meaning refers to "an absolute presence where there is no ascription, conceit, sanity, how, when and frescoing, all ascriptions were nothingness." The *Hakika* in concept goes beyond "the occasional display of pictures of Mary and Jesus at their functions or total staying away from five daily prayers" (p. 79). Rather, the concept emphasizes and conveys 'union' with Allah, the Most High.

Hannah Hoechner, in chapter four, discussed the *Almajiri* school phenomenon and their co-relation with other conventional Qur'anic schools in Kano. Her detailed study of the *Almajiri* school system in Kano and a way forward through policies and legislation could help in strengthening the relationship of *Almajiri* and employers in many areas. In their study of the activities of "marginal Muslims" in Kano and their relationship with the larger Umma, Yahaya Hashim and Judith-Ann Walker in chapter five analyzed the activities of Muslim minority activities in terms of curbing religious conflicts in Kano, and also their unrelenting effort in metamorphosing from bridge builders to para-military. Their challenges were also discussed.

In his attempt to understand and subsequently analyze *Boko Haram*, Mustapha in chapter six studied the political *Boko Haram* with a view to outline their ideologies. However, a historical background of the group as well as their activities in from 2010 and beyond was also highlighted in detail. But a comprehensive study on the ideologies of the group could be found in the book written by *Boko Haram* founder Muhammad Yusuf (1970-2009) titled *Hadhihi Aqidatuna Wa Manhaji Da'awatina (This is Our Creed and The Method of Our Advocacy; c. 2007)*. The book, written in Arabic, has 194 pages with twelve main chapters and a conclusion. The main arguments of Muhammad Yusuf for founding *Boko Haram* as a protest against secular education were stated clearly in the book.

In the concluding chapter, Mustapha sees the emergence of radical groups in Islam as a result of poor governance and some doctrinal misinterpretations in Nigeria. He, however, believes that such misinterpretations and misrepresentations were politically motivated by NEPU or NPC during the first republic due to their relationship with groups such as Qadiriyya and Tijjaniyya groups. A counter-doctrinal approach, as suggested by the editor, could help in reducing the tendency of radicalization of religion.

Yusuf Abdullahi Yusuf, *University of Jos*

Patience Mutopo. 2014. *Women, Mobility and Rural Livelihoods in Zimbabwe: Experience of Fast Track Land Reform*. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV. 257 pp.

Patience Mutopo uses frequentative multi-sited ethnography at Merrivale farm-Tavaka village to explicate how the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) offered new chances for the development of women. The book challenges the existing scholarly beliefs and opinions about rural land use, livelihoods, and development done by women. The author uses a case study of Mwenezi District in Masvingo Province unbecoming for rain-fed crop growing, to communicate the unknown, compound and inventive strategies and tactics employed by women to access land that they exploited broadly to shape their livelihoods that were based on transitory mobility. It emerges that contrary to western beliefs, which assert that personal rights are a

panacea for women in Africa to obtain land, it was instead the need based negotiations which prevail in patriarchal systems and survive on contracts that empowered women to access land. The reader is informed that access to land during the FTLRP was also a pathway to natural resources that include water, firewood, and mopani worms, some of which were traded in South Africa, thereby signaling the benefits of the FTLRP. Women's achievements during the FTLRP were necessitated by collective action and conflict resolution skills that were engaged as they negotiated access to land, produced food crops and established trading space in South Africa. Overall, women emerge as actors in rural development, economic transformation, and social reproduction in Tavaka village.

The book contains eight chapters. The first chapter presents the author's research plan and discusses the link between the conceptual framework and social anthropology. In the second chapter, it is apparent that the research was built upon qualitative research methodology. Furthermore, the chapter furnishes the background to sampling, explains data collection methods and the significance of using ethnography, and outlines the challenges encountered during the course of the research. Chapter three provides the geo-physical location and characteristics of the study area across the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods. More so, it examines the local agricultural, social, political, climatic, and governance issues that influenced the establishment of the FTLRP farms plus people's livelihood preferences. In chapter four, the reader learns about the history of Merrivale farm: its establishment, mobility patterns since 1957, farming activities set up, and black-white relations that shaped current and historical land uses.

The fifth chapter explains the development of Merrivale farm since 2000 with reference to the FTLRP in Mwenezi District. It focuses on: how the Merrivale farm was designated for resettlement, the key players in the FTLRP, women's roles in the farm occupation, allocation of plots, labor issues, activities carried out, crops grown, and output and organization of household units as they relate to the role of women. Chapter six reveals the strategies and tactics that were deployed by women to ensure access to land in Tavaka village. It argues that women negotiated and bargained with patriarchy to ensure access and use of land and natural resources. Moreover, it presents the gendered approach in the hand irrigated gardens and the participation of nongovernmental organizations in empowering women farmers at Merrivale farm. Chapter seven gives firsthand accounts of the journeys taken by women into South Africa to sell agricultural produce, mopane worms, and commodities made from clay and reeds. In fact, the chapter provides the connection between land use and markets carried out by women who partly relied on their combined action and capabilities to resolve differences to accomplish their objectives. The last chapter gives conclusions and recommendations which can be employed to ameliorate women's access to land and livelihoods in the circumstances of the ever transforming rural milieu in Zimbabwe.

Let us congratulate Mutopo for her bravery in researching the emotive subject of the land issue in a highly polarized Zimbabwean environment. However, the wonderful work is watered down by glaring errors including but not limited to giving the acronym CIO as Criminal Investigation Officers/office (pp. xvi and 88) instead of Central Intelligence Organization; translating *nyamukuta* (p. 35) as village health worker instead of "village mid-wife"; treating *nhimbe* and *humwe* (pp. xvi-xvii) as different activities yet these are just different

Shona terms which refer to one activity; and *Mudhumeni* (p. 35) is translated as “the village head” yet it refers to an agricultural extension officer. Given these errors, the book should have been better edited. The positive role of the FTLRP in influencing women’s journeys to trade in South Africa is overemphasized without acknowledging the role played by the general economic meltdown and socio-political challenges that affected the whole country.

Mediel Hove, *Durban University of Technology/University of Zimbabwe*

Cosmos Uchenna Nwokefor. (ed.). 2015. *Information Communication Technology (ICT) Integration to Educational Curricula: A New Direction for Africa*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc. 272 pp.

Cosmos Uchenna Nwokefor’s *Information Communication Technology (ICT) Integration to Educational Curricula* examines the role that information communication technologies (ICTs) could play in altering the academic curricula in African educational institutions, if appropriately integrated and efficiently utilized. This fifteen-chapter volume also demonstrates how the integration of ICTs impact future instructional materials and content delivery at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of African education. Issues ranging from the use of the World Wide Web and social media to the utilization of smart classroom are well documented and discussed to emphasize the centrality of ICTs in the metamorphosis of Africa’s educational curricula.

Volumes of this nature are timely because within the past decade ICTs have become an essential part of the fabric of society especially in the developed world. However, with the exception of South Africa the rest of the African continent has consistently lagged behind in the ICT revolution. Thus, Nwokefor’s book is very welcome, as an ICT driven social and economic development in Africa is urgently needed. Indeed, Nwokefor’s chapter “The Role of ICT in Changing Academic Curricula: A Review of the Educational System and Integration Approach in Schools in Africa” is a broad survey of various African governments from Tunisia through Ghana to Kenya that have seen the need for improved ICT and have set up frameworks guiding the establishment and continued integration of ICT to the country’s educational system. These nations acknowledge that ICTs are rapidly disseminating globally and any nation that is not equipped with appropriate technologies and the skills to utilize these technologies will permanently lag behind in global development. Furthermore, African nations recognized that the infusion of ICTs in their educational structures could aid in elevating the level of educational outcome as well as facilitate a paradigm shift from traditional learning strategies of rote learning and regurgitation of information to a collaborative and student centered delivery method.

Yet, African countries are confronted with enormous constraints that are still impeding adequate and effective implementation of ICTs, and many of the contributors to the volume stress these inhibitions. It includes capital to acquire input and output sources that are prerequisite for ICTs, electricity to power ICTs, adequate telecommunication facilities, consistency in educational policies irrespective of which government is in power, trained ICT educators, and the development of students’ skills with knowledge of the technologies rather than the introduction and focus of ICT as an examinable subject. The encouraging element is

that none of these constraints are insurmountable. Felix Njeh's chapter on "Cloud Computing As An Enabler For Global Competitiveness" offers one solution through the adoption of a service oriented alternative to ICT provisioning and deployment through cloud computing. Cost has been identified as the major hindrance to the integration of ICT in African education. This can be leveraged through the adoption of cloud computing with its potential to yield lower cost and improve efficiency and availability. In order to rise to the other challenges impeding ICT integration in Africa, good governance, an enabling environment, provision of consistent, adequate and uninterrupted power supply, demand accountability in funding dispersal and trained human resources are vital.

Today there is a consensus that the integration and utilization of ICT can enhance the quality of the educational process, although there is a serious lack of ICT research in Africa in the areas of educational integration. Indeed, if Africa is to be a serious global contender then it must close the digital divide. It can no longer be excluded from a networked society and economy driven by technological innovations. Cosmos Uchenna Nwokefor's book adds to the few studies on the integration of ICT into African educational curricula by scholars outside South Africa and it is to be commended. Though, the methodologies through which teachers actually implement the integration of ICTs and how ICTs affected students' learning in African countries could be better clarified.

Cyrelene Amoah-Boampong *University of Ghana*

Isidore Okpewho. 2014. *Blood on the Tides: The Ozidi Saga and Oral Epic Narratology*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press. 279 pp.

It comes as no surprise that Isidore Okpewho's latest endeavor is a critical study of the narratology of the epic of Ozidi. Okpewho bases his study on the version of the Ozidi performed by Okabou Ojobolo and recorded in book form (*The Ozidi Saga*) by his fellow countryman, John Pepper Clark-Bekederemo. Ozidi, the epic hero of the story, is a boy born into the unenviable circumstance of having to avenge his father's death at the hands of coup plotters. However, with the fortifications of his witch grandmother Oreame, Ozidi succeeds in killing all, and more.

In the first of the book's seven chapters, Okpewho contextualizes the story. He investigates the history of the Ijo people among whom the story is set, and describes the culture, the geography, and the ecology of their home. Ijo ontology, for instance, reveals the centrality of the septuple order of the elements in the story: the performance of the Ozidi story is done in seven days and seven nights; Ozidi is born after a seven-day hurricane; Ozidi's sword had seven prongs; Oreame conjures seven pots for boiling Ozidi's charms in; etc. (I wonder whether the book's seven chapters pay tribute to this order!). Notably, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is replete with the same order: Okonkwo defeated Amalinze who had been unbeaten for *seven* years; the founder of their town engaged a spirit of the wild for *seven days and seven nights*; *seven* drums are used in wrestling contests; Okonkwo's *seven-year* exile, etc. (emphasis mine).

As he is interested in the narratology of the story, in the second chapter Okpewho attempts a comparative assessment of other performances recorded besides Okabou's. The assessment is continued in chapter three, with a deviation, though, to focus on the narrator's input, the

narrative strategies that engender a successful performance. In chapter four, Okpewho turns to the audience to analyze how it influences the artist's performance. Chapter five, "Performance and Plot," argues that despite insurmountable challenges, the artist was able to successfully control the plot—the organic unit of the story. In these latter two chapters, Okpewho argues that, as an artist, Okabou was successful due, in large part, to the context in which he performed. He performed in Ibadan (a non-Ijo territory) where he is freed from the (quasi-religious) ritualistic rigmarole otherwise observed, to a majority Ijo audience. Chapter six lucidly explains that music and songs are pertinent to the narrative performance: they are thematically relevant, enhance the plot, and provide interludes when the performance and/or the artist so require.

The last chapter makes an easy and interesting read. The chapter "examine[s] how the [story] may be read against its enabling political context and ... interrogate[s] the relevance of such a text to the nations continuing struggle for a meaningful mode of existence" (p. 42). Thereby, he explores *The Ozidi Saga* side by side with contemporary literature that recounts and/or bemoans the plunder of the Niger Delta, and observes that the 'traditional' story is no less potent in commenting and influencing debate on the contemporaneous societal issues. The implied conclusion is that the literature draws inspiration from the epic of Ozidi. The title "Blood on the Tides" is in reference to the numerous killings that Ozidi carries out, and in extension, the number of people that have died in the Delta as a direct result of the extraction of oil. Okpewho illustrates that despite the story's magic realism and seemingly senseless killing, it underpins the community's ethos on justice. The last segment in the chapter "Ozidi, Gender, and Power" is disappointingly brief, but there is a consolation in the fact that the argument has already been suggested: that women wield the ultimate power. The segment may be read alongside Joseph Mbele's "Women in the African Epic."¹

One of the book's successes is that readers do not have to worry about never having read Clark-Bekederemo's text. Apparently aware of this likelihood, Okpewho generously explains the story of Ozidi, at times almost seeming redundant. The core success, though, is that it argues for the artistry or oral literary performances, and ultimately demonstrates that the epic of Ozidi, in effect the genre at large, transcends art, and makes a commentary on and offers an insight into the socio-politics of a people. The book obviates the diversity and depth of African oral literature, and thus partly continues to contest the assumptions by early Western scholars.

Notes:

- 1 Joseph Mbele. 2006. "Women in the African Epic." *Research in African Literatures* 37.2: 61-67.

Joshua Ondieki, *Kenyatta University*

Myles Osborne. 2015. *Ethnicity and Empire in Kenya: Loyalty and Martial Race among the Kamba, c. 1800 to Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 276 pp.

Myles Osborne's *Ethnicity and Empire in Kenya* is a stimulating new history of the process of ethnic identity formation among the Kamba people of eastern Kenya from 1800 to the present. Working in the shadows of scholars like John Lonsdale, Terrance Ranger, and Eric Hobsbawm, Osborne seeks to extrapolate the dialectic between British inventions of Kamba identity and

Kamba agency in forging their own identity. For Osborne, Kamba identity pivots on negotiations between the Kamba and the British over the concepts of martiality and loyalty. On one level, under the umbrella of martiality and loyalty, Kamba tribal identity was a creation of the British. On another level, however, Osborne looks at the ways in which the Kamba absorbed these social categories and converted them into esteemed civic values that became part of the moral sinew of Kamba identity. Prior to the colonial period, the Kamba did not have a cohesive identity as a corporate tribe beyond the local clan or village. However, there was a Kamba value system, attached to honor, which was intrinsically linked with martial pursuits for men like hunting and trading. A Kamba man became a “big man” when he developed these very martial values that would later set the Kamba apart for the British.

Famine and pestilence in the late 19th century ravaged east Africa and pushed the Kamba into service for the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC), the “red strangers” of Chapter Two. Young men acquired work as police and soldiers, which also served to reinforce the image of the Kamba as a martial race for the British. The early colonial chiefs appointed by the IBEAC were often marginal figures in the traditional social structure. Cattle subsequently became more important as a social value among the Kamba as these men sought to increase their honor through cattle acquisition.

During these chaotic times women were forced to migrate to other areas of Kenya, like Kikuyu land, to find food. This made the traditional boundaries of tribe more amorphous as they became Kikuyu. However, Osborne establishes this movement as the platform for which Kamba women would later seek to define their civic honor in terms of their commitment to maintaining social cohesiveness by way of children and extended family.

Displaying their own agency after the period of famine subsided, the Kamba chose to remain as soldiers and policemen for the British which further established their reputation as a martial tribe. During WWI many Kamba males joined the army. In Chapter Three Osborne notes how service in the war was a pivotal point in the evolution of “Kambaness.” Participation in the colonial military outfits like the Kings African Rifles (KAR) now became another marker of honor for Kamba males and hence an androcentric cultural determinant of what meant to be Kamba. During the 1940s and onward “Kambaness” became tied more centrally to service in the military. Young men joined the military for opportunities to acquire cattle wealth. After completing their service, they constructed ideas of ethnicity tied to their loyalty, or *iwi* in their own language, to the British.

Notions of obedience to the British were tied to service in the military which effectively excluded women. At the same time, Kamba elders attempted to promote ideas of tribe that, unlike the pre-colonial times, restricted the mobility of women. Kamba women, for their part, flocked to new religious organizations, headed to urban areas and challenged the patriarchal vision of elders that attempted to restrict them by promoting the power of women to reinforce ties to the extended family.

Following World War II, the importance of loyalty and martiality still held sway. The British actively apportioned development funds to the Kamba as payment for loyalty. During the anti-colonial Mau Mau war the British sought to strengthen ties with the Kamba through the creation of tribal associations, like the Akamba Association, while the Kamba manipulated their image as loyal soldiers to their advantage. Kamba women were encouraged to join

development organizations like *Maendeleo ya Wanawake* (Progress for Women), which strengthened their civic virtue. Although the Kamba had proven loyal to the British under colonial rule, the new independence government under Jomo Kenyatta feared the martial proclivities of the Kamba and systematically denuded their numbers in the military. As a result, by the present time, “martiality” and “loyalty” no longer meaningfully characterize Kamba identity.

Ethnicity and Empire is an excellent new history of the Kamba people that moves away from looking at ethnicity as a “thing.” However, the strength of the book is also a weakness as the author, at times, seems to uncritically accept the legitimacy and meaning of terms such as “martial” and “loyalty” when applied to the Kamba. Despite this, it will prove to be an engaging book for students of Kenyan history and ethnicity in Africa in general.

Opolot Okia, *Wright State University*

Timothy Raeymaekers. 2014. *Violent Capitalism and Hybrid Identity in the Eastern Congo: Power to the Margins*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 191 pp.

In *Violent Capitalism and Hybrid Identity in the Eastern Congo*, Timothy Raeymaekers provides a compelling and nuanced account of the dynamic border region shared by the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, which has not been ruled effectively by any de jure sovereign state authority in decades. Raeymaekers follows the tumultuous history of indigenous economic accumulation, armed rebellion, de facto authority, and the radical reconfiguration of social norms through the lens of the agents who know, appropriate, and, indeed, thrive within this context of permanent “crisis.” Through this meticulously well-researched study, Raeymaekers shows that in order to understand political transformations and the institutionalization of political power and governance beyond state authority it is necessary to understand the liminal spaces of state and society where political imaginaries are being actively reformulated. In making this argument, he provides several novel contributions to the wider literature on the economies, institutions, and forms of governance within conflict environments, challenging dominant frames of analysis of both actors and political orders.

First, Raeymaekers contributes to a growing body of scholarly work that challenges earlier ideas of conflict as constitutive of failure, chaos, or social collapse. While a prevalent perspective throughout analyses of African conflicts, this was a particularly dominant view in the case of the conflicts in the eastern Congo. Though now less common in serious commentary, this perspective remains far from obsolete, particularly within popular coverage and reporting of conflict dynamics. This common, if no longer dominant, “conflict as chaos” narrative, tends to lose sight of actors, both individuals and groups, as they are overwhelmed by the purportedly anarchic structures of violence that render them into passive beings. By contrast, Raeymaekers pushes beyond these naïve narratives, providing nuance to our understanding of the political economy conflict dynamics through a historiography of the key actors—Nande traders in North Kivu—that restores Congolese agency to the study of the conflict and political order in this border region. Through this analysis he enables us to see individuals as ambiguous actors, both benefitting from, yet remaining vulnerable to conflict dynamics, appropriating and transforming the conditions that make their lives so uncertain in the first place.

Accordingly, while he argues that “the time seems ripe for a more agency-oriented view on economic activity” (p. 13), it is clear that one of his central contributions to the study of the conflict in the eastern Congo is also in providing a more nuanced understanding of the environment within which these actors navigate conflict dynamics and economic uncertainty. Indeed, he moves beyond economic, rationalist explanations of violence and political change, which characterizes violence as being motivated by greed or as creating opportunities for looting. Instead, he unmasks a more complex dialectic: conflict is not a collapse of social order, but rather an enabler of uncertainty, which shapes everyday decision making, institutions of economic accumulation, and political orders of governance. This “underlying condition of uncertainty” (p. 16) is central to understanding the economy in war (rather than more commonly studied economies of war) and the central actors who, as the brokers of a hybrid order, serve as the “managers of uncertainty” (p. 25), transforming local political institutions and mediating between poles of market and state power. With a fine grained analysis of the environment within which the actors operate, he details how Nande traders perceive and react to contexts of uncertainty and, in doing so, how they reshape state-society relations and provide alternative forms of de facto sovereign authority.

Second, Raeymaekers contributes to a growing body of literature (including recent works by Janet Roitman, Kristof Titeca, Kate Meagher, and Koen Vlassenroot) that challenges legalistic, exceptionalist ideas of sovereign authority, moving instead towards a recognition of the fluid and hybrid nature of identity, authority and sovereignty – that is, the effective regulation of daily life. This frame allows for a more nuanced interpretation of the relationship between states and markets in the state’s marginal spaces, wherein neat boundaries cannot be drawn. Instead, our perspective is opened to a context in which the various actors engaged in the contraband economy of the context he describes acted, and continue to act, both complicitly in concert and violently in competition with each other. Similar dynamics have been recounted elsewhere, including by Janet Roitman in the border region between Cameroon and Niger, as well as by various interpreters of the “sobel” phenomenon during the Sierra Leonean war. This perspective moves beyond the simple notion of informality developing as a reaction to the state, or as an indicator of citizen disengagement from the state, and instead recognizes the complex political dynamics of economic accumulation and cross-border exchange in Central Africa. In so doing, it delineates the highly ambiguous relationship between state and non-state realms within the transborder economy.

While enabling us to understand the political economy and conflict dynamics of the eastern Congo more clearly, this understanding of fluid identities is more broadly useful to conflict studies in as much as it facilitates analyses of incentive structures that move beyond views of purely economic motives and of conflict as simply anarchic, chaotic, or primordial. Raeymaekers advances the conversation from a focus of economies of war, to economies in war, from a preoccupation with “the reasons why people are dying” to a serious inquiry about “their modes of life” (p. 6). In other words, rather than trying to enumerate how African polities should look, Raeymaekers contributes to a growing body of literature that attempts to describe “real governance” and the real ways that individuals perceive and appropriate crisis and shape their own lives. By refocusing Congolese agency, providing a nuanced understanding of the structural context of uncertainty, and giving due attention to the complexity of hybrid order

and liminal spaces, Raeymaekers provides a valuable contribution to our understanding of economic and political governance in the eastern Congo. At the same time, he offers an important guide as to how to study complex political economic relations and orders in contexts of conflict and crisis.

Vanessa van den Boogaard, *University of Toronto*

Rachel Beatty Riedl. 2014. *Authoritarian Origins of Democratic Party Systems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 265 pp.

The academic literature has paid little attention to political parties in Africa's nascent democracies. Instead, parties on the continent are typically characterized as weak ethnic or personalistic machines, lacking the formal ideological features that define their counterparts in the Western world. *Authoritarian Origins of Democratic Party Systems* is a welcome challenge, arguing that political parties in African democracies are important vehicles for voicing popular concerns.¹ Deftly blending quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the work explores variations in party systems in Africa, linking them to authoritarian antecedents. The work exemplifies the comparative historical analysis approach and should serve as an important foundational work for any scholar researching political parties in Africa (and globally).

The author is primarily concerned with explaining party system institutionalization (PSI) in African democracies. PSI broadly refers to the "degree to which parties in the system are recognizable and stable" (p. 36). Drawing upon Scott Manwaring and Timothy R. Scully's *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (1995), the book defines PSI based on four components: (1) regularity in party competition; (2) stable roots in society; (3) legitimacy of the electoral process; and (4) solid party organization. Using three of these four components, Riedl constructs an index of PSI for the twenty-three countries in Africa. The fourth component, solid party organization, is left unoperationalized due to data limitations. This seems problematic given that all four components are jointly necessary and sufficient for the concept.

The work hypothesizes that variation in PSI across African democracies can be explained by systems of power accumulation during the precursor authoritarian regime. Where authoritarians incorporated local elites into their patronage networks, they could count on local support during the transition to multiparty rule. As a result, authoritarian parties were strong enough to manage the transition process relatively unchallenged by the opposition. Seeking to maintain their hegemony, incumbents established high barriers to entry for new political parties. This resulted in highly regularized competition among a few stable, well-known political parties (or high PSI). In contrast, where authoritarian leaders attempted to bypass local elites and establish new state structures at the local level, they could not rely upon local elite support at the moment of transition. Thus the opposition was able to limit the scope of the authoritarian agenda. If a strong opposition coalition formed, they often limited the extent to which new players could enter the competition, so as to ensure their victory in the founding elections and to maintain the benefits of incumbency. After successfully removing the incumbent from power, however, opposition coalitions tended to fragment into medium/low PSI. Finally, where the incumbent lacked local support and the opposition was highly

fragmented, the transition was generally open, leading to low barriers to entry for parties. As a result, the party system remained fluid and unstable (low PSI).

The book tests this theory using a combination of cross-national quantitative analysis and structured case comparisons. The basic insights from the regression analysis are fully explored by the rich use of paired case studies. Comparing the low PSI in Zambia and Benin to the high PSI in Senegal and Ghana, Riedl weaves together hundreds of elite interviews, Afrobarometer surveys, and historical narratives to test the authoritarian origins of party systems against rival hypotheses such as electoral system, colonial legacy, social cleavages, development, and economic performance. The bulk of the book uses these case studies to explore authoritarian power accumulation, modes of democratic transition, and the enduring impact these have on party systems under democracy in Africa.

The conceptualization of democracy used throughout the book, however, may be too loosely defined to accurately capture the universe of democratic cases Riedl hopes to measure. The book uses a Freedom House score of four or lower on civil liberties and political rights as the sole criteria for democracy, but does not provide any justification for employing this particular measure. Furthermore, based on these criteria, several cases (Comoros, Liberia, and Seychelles) appear to be missing without explanation. Because a score of three to four on the Freedom House scale falls within the ambiguous "Partly Free" classification, this threshold may capture competitive regimes more generally (including hybrids) rather than democracies per se. While this does expand the scope of the argument somewhat, it should not diminish the importance of the work. Competitive regimes are an important step on the road to democracy in Africa and elsewhere. Meanwhile, it also might have been helpful to limit the scope of the quantitative analysis to those cases that experienced authoritarian rule. Because the theory asserts that antecedent authoritarian regimes have long-run effects on PSI, democratic cases without post-independence authoritarian experiences like Botswana and Namibia seem irrelevant.

Authoritarian Origins of Democratic Party Systems in Africa provides a refreshing take on the present state of political parties and, more generally, institutionalization and democratization in Africa. It exemplifies mixed-methods research at a time period when methodological pragmatism is becoming the norm in comparative politics. At the same time, it refuses to accept the current norm that political parties in Africa should be accepted as weak entities erected for ethnic and personalistic goals. Instead, Riedl's work demonstrates that party system institutionalization varies across the continent, and that similar to the rest of the world authoritarian legacies can have important implications during the democratic period.

Notes:

- 1 Some other recent works also challenge this norm, such as: Sebastian Elischer. 2013. *Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Amanda B. Edgell, *University of Florida*

Susana Salgado. 2014. *The Internet and Democracy Building in Lusophone African Countries*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company. 185 pp.

Susana Salgado's *Internet and Democracy Building in Lusophone African Countries* is a good read, but the title is a misnomer. The focus is not just on the Internet but on the influence of all media, both conventional and online, and their impact on the potential for enhanced democracy in Mozambique, Angola, Sao Tome e Principe, and Cape Verde. Of Guinea-Bissau, the author notes that "the unstable political and social situation [there]...did not allow the inclusion of this country in the study." (p. ix)

The book is divided into three parts: (1) "Media, Democracy and Development," which is mostly a literature review; (2) "Lusophone African Countries: Similar Past, Different Present, What Future?" –explores the colonial legacy, history, and the role of media and politics in these four countries; and (3) "The Use of the Internet in the Lusophone African Countries and its Influence in Democratization." A final chapter on Conclusions follows these three parts.

As noted, the first section is mostly devoted to literature review on media and democracy, but without a thorough discussion of the theory base, a notable omission. Yet, in the concluding chapter, Salgado writes (p. 166):

The importance of the Internet to the political success of ideas, proposals, political parties, candidates, and even to elected governments has increased immensely in places all over the world in recent years...the new online media can function both as a democratizing force and as a tool used in authoritarian strategies to control and manipulate public opinion...When we think about the potential of the Internet and how it can help democracy and democratization, a key notion is precisely its decentralization. The Internet is decentralized in its nature and that is why it allows the circulation of so many different ideas. Not only does it contribute to democratizing access to information, but this information becomes more plural. In theory, everyone can now become an information channel. Citizens are no longer only consumers; they can also be producers and disseminators of information. This decentralization...is therefore key in the discussion on whether the Internet is or can be a democratizing force, especially in places where the mainstream media are subject to more control by the government.

This is a concise and compelling statement of the theory base, and it should have been included in the introduction rather than the conclusion.

The author notes that Internet penetration in all of these countries is limited, with Cape Verde boasting the largest percentage of Internet users at 32 percent, and Mozambique in last place at 4.3 percent. (p. 32). She also cites Freedom House rankings, which list Cape Verde and Sao Tome e Principe as "free," Mozambique as "partly free," and Angola as "not free." (pp. 47-48)

Since the freedom rankings can also be quantified, one can conduct a simple correlation analysis which reveals an almost 67 percent correlation between Internet penetration and the freedom rankings. However, Salgado eschews this approach in favor of a much deeper qualitative analysis of the influence of the conventional and electronic media on these countries' democratic development. She delves deeply into "Politics and Media in Angola" in Chapter 5

(pp. 52-70), in Mozambique in Chapter 6 (pp. 71-82), in Sao Tome and Principe in Chapter 7 (pp. 83-92), and in Cape Verde in Chapter 8 (pp. 93- 107). Each of these chapters is rich in its recounting of the history, influence, and level of freedom of the media in these countries.

The specific role of the Internet is mostly confined to the final three chapters. "Online News Media" are covered in Chapter 10 (pp. 121-130), "The Use of Blogs and Social Network Websites" in Chapter 11 (pp. 131-140), and "Political Parties' Websites" in Chapter 12 (p. 141-154).

The author's conclusions about the impact of the Internet on democratization are cautious but realistic (p. 165):

The democratic impact of the Internet is far more limited and its effects are far less perceptible than anticipated by some optimistic views a few years ago. However, it has to be acknowledged that the Internet has some characteristics (reach, interactivity, ease of producing and conveying information, possibility of connecting distant people more easily and continuously) that can actually contribute to pushing democratization further. But it does not, in itself, produce dramatic changes overnight.

Although richly detailed, the book could be improved by including some quantitative analysis. A useful addition would be tables showing media and democracy measures for these countries, as well as comparison to averages for Sub-Saharan Africa and other regions of the world.

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Bereket Habte Selassie. 2014. *Emperor Haile Selassie*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 147 pp.

Modern Ethiopian history as well as Ethiopian historiography have over the last decades become increasingly polemic, and at times tiring. Central to the discussions is the nature of the Ethiopian state, underpinned by a pseudo-religious narrative, and the dimension of narrow political control by a particular ethno-cultural elite vs. the aspirations and rights of Ethiopia's broad range of ethnic and religious groups. Emperor Haile Selassie, arguably the most important Ethiopian of the 20th century, epitomizes in many ways this ongoing discourse—the ways he represented the continuation of ancient Ethiopia and by the wayS he laid the foundations for forces that increasingly challenged the dominating historical legacy.

Bereket Habte Selassie's book on the life and rule of Haile Selassie is part of Ohio University Press' *Short Histories of Africa* and consists of twelve short chapters (plus conclusion). The book starts with a brief account of the emperor's early life and his rise to power, paying due attention to Ras Tafari's maneuvering within the royal court and the controversy of Lij Iassu. It continues with the emperor's rule after 1930, discussing his exile during the Italian period, and emphasizes the many reforms initiated in the post-war period. The latter part is devoted to the gradual erosion of the emperor's power in the midst of emerging opposing forces and the end of Imperial Rule in 1974.

Bereket Habte Selassie's book is a concise and well-written account of the period of Emperor Haile Selassie and of 20th century Ethiopian political history more broadly, yet brings little new to the table. Given the author's history as the former attorney general of Ethiopia and associate justice of the Ethiopian Supreme Court one would have expected a more personal

account of the *ancien regime*. Except for a few anecdotes, it remains rather impersonal. Moreover, Bereket's discussion and views of the emperor is symptomatic for people of his generation: it is highly ambivalent to the Emperor and his legacy, and as a result it fails to address some of the core aspect of his rule. Bereket Habte Selassie briefly discusses the Solomonic myth, which veracity he leaves hanging, underscores Ethiopia's Christian legacy, and reduces Islam to a challenge and ethnic plurality to being part of the country's complexity. He generously describes the emperor as a clever ruler, praising his personal skills, intellectual capacity, and bright vision. The emperor is for him the progressive modernizer, who was fighting the opposing reactionary feudal forces, and who relentlessly remained devoted to bringing Ethiopia out of a perceived state of backwardness. The emperor's demise is largely presented as "unfortunate" and explained by his inability to keep up with the pace of the modernizing forces he had set in motion. The time is now ripe for more critical studies of Emperor Haile Selassie; studies that cease to view him as aloof from an autocratic political culture, and which recognizes the deep contradiction between the myth of the Imperial Government and the myth of modernization. Emperor Haile Selassie's failure to solve this contradiction was arguably caused by the fact that he was so deeply rooted in the former — making him unable grasp the ramifications of the latter.

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Kristin Fjelde Tjelle. 2014. *Missionary Masculinity, 1870-1930: The Norwegian Missionaries in South-East Africa*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan. 325 pp.

Theologian and historian Kristin Fjelde Tjelle makes a significant contribution to what is still a relatively new approach to the history of the foreign mission movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Taking as her subject the southern African work of the Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS), an evangelical Lutheran body with close ties to the Church of Norway, Tjelle applies critical perspectives to its male missionaries' understandings of their roles as men, exploring masculinity as discourse and as process. The NMS mission was centered in Zululand, which was an independent kingdom until 1879 and then a British colony, with a satellite presence in the neighboring colony of Natal. Employing an episodic structure atop a solid theoretical foundation, Tjelle analyzes how masculinity evolved within this institution; how the missionaries and their supporters understood specifically Christian forms of masculinity; and how, viewed from this perspective, the men's interactions with one another, with their Zulu proselytes and converts, and with Natal's settler society served to shape the development of the mission.

In what she describes as an "initial contribution" (p. 8) to scholarship on the subject, Tjelle situates the NMS missionaries within a framework of masculinity understood in terms both of hierarchy and of oppositions. She uses the sociologist Raewyn Connell's concept of a dominant "hegemonic masculinity" within any patriarchal social system, noting that such forms could become aspirational ideals for men and boys. She also draws upon several historians of masculinity: Claes Ekenstam, who positions understandings of masculinity or manliness in opposition to constructions of "unmanliness" as well as to womanliness; and Georg Mosse, whose idea of countertypes — forms of masculinity defined in opposition to one another — was

refined by David Tjeder. Tjelle argues that, taken together, these elements defined parameters for male missionary behavior: “One countertype was the ‘heathen’ polygamist Zulu man, and another the secular, immoral white settler. In addition, within the community of missionaries, ideas of unmanliness—of inappropriate missionary masculinity—were prevalent. Finally, ideas of demasculinization (i.e., stooping to unmanliness) could affect the individual missionary himself.” (p. 13)

Although it employs a roughly chronological approach, the book does not present a conventional historical narrative as it unpacks these issues. Instead, Tjelle considers them anecdotally and in terms of the light each sheds on theoretical questions of missionary masculinity. Part 1, “The Construction of Norwegian Lutheran Missionary Masculinity,” is the heart of the study. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 trace how the missionaries’ Norwegian Lutheran beliefs and connections influenced their understanding of appropriately manly ideology and behavior, as they sought to balance “‘self-making’ and ‘self-denying’” (p. 63) notions of masculinity in the context of their Christian faith and their understanding, itself evolving, of what it meant to be a modern, Christian, Norwegian man. Chapter 5 reassesses the often-adversarial relationship between the NMS men and Zulu men from the perspective of masculine countertypes, and Chapter 6 considers the interactions between missionary masculinity and missionary femininity within the NMS. Part 2, “Missionary Masculinity between Professionalism and Privacy” (chapters 7-9), then uses the three-generation history of a missionary family to consider these issues in situ, examining the evolution of missionary attitudes towards their calling, their families, and their engagement with Natal’s settler society.

Due to its structure, this book will be most useful to Africanist readers with a prior understanding of southern African history and/or the history of missions during the period under study. In particular, Tjelle provides keen analysis of the relationship between missionary understandings of appropriate masculine behavior and their pattern of engagement with Christian and traditionalist Zulu men, interpreting the mission’s unwillingness to acknowledge Zulu Christian men as equals and colleagues as a symptom of their understanding of Zulu masculinity as a countertype to their own ideals. The study also contributes to the growing scholarship on the connection between mission households and mission positions within host societies, assessing the NMS men in light of Tjelle’s contention that “it is in fact impossible to distinguish between their private and professional lives as missionaries” (p. 215), and, by situating the missionary men and their children within the dual current of Norwegian nationalism and settler society, adds to understanding of settler Natal. For this readership, *Missionary Masculinity’s* theoretical groundings and transnational perspective will offer significant insights into important historical questions and suggest multiple avenues for further research.

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Gary Wilder. 2015. *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press. 384 pp.

In *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World*, Gary Wilder embarks on the ambitious journey of studying the various possible frameworks of self-determination of the

colonized people in the political and philosophical lives of Aimé Césaire and Léopold Sédar Senghor. At our present juncture of history when nation-states are at various stages of unravelling, neo-liberal economic interests have created unprecedented level of global inequity, and migrants are flocking to the shores of Europe risking death and deportation, it has become more than ever imperative to reconsider territorialist frameworks as default forms toward self-determination. Imperial states existed within the empire, profited from it but abandoned “their overseas population” on the eve of decolonization. Legacies of that abandonment and the economic asymmetry were predicted by Césaire and Senghor in the early years of decolonization when they were trying to conceptualize new political forms to address the structural iniquities and imagining new aesthetic forms to represent these political realities. Wilder’s book maps the conception of different frameworks within which self-determination could be meaningfully pursued, as well as their relevance in the historiography of the decolonization.

The book also serves two purposes: first, an endeavor in decolonizing intellectual history to better understand the invention of “cosmopolitanism at the level of political form” by linking “political universality and cultural multiplicity.” Second, it is a story about an alternate vision of the world where Césaire and Senghor imagined “new types of transcontinental political association” in forms of decentralized democratic federation to “overcome colonization without falling into new types of colonial autarchy” (p. 2). The volume is split into nine chapters. Wilder sets the frame of the book by discussing how and why many French African and Antillean legislators and intellectuals experimented with the possibilities of different forms of decolonization. Wilder dwells on Césaire’s articulation of the potential of economic emancipation, via temporal legacies of Marx’s human emancipation, within the framework of departmentalization with the French Union and a departure from “master-slave relations” towards a more fraternal relationship. Wilder delves into the version of federalism that was espoused by Césaire as a medium of decolonization and his hopes for possibilities of transcontinental politics. When, around December 1945, Césaire asked for social reforms, development to counteract the “oligarchy of huge planters still sympathetic to slavery,” he also underlined that legal equality is not useful without socioeconomic initiatives. Césaire recognized the discredited subversive tradition that was present within revolutionary republicanism including the “metropolitan proletariat and the Antillean peasantry, whose 1848 insurrection ensured abolition”. Wilder talks in detail about the stakes, demands and the possibilities Césaire saw in the project of departmentalization and then chronicles the progressive disillusionment with the absence of application of social laws and extension of social services.

In Chapter 3, entitled “Situating Senghor: African Hospitality and Human Solidarity,” Gilder focuses on the relationship of Senghor and Césaire-- Césaire saw a political project in the poetry of Senghor and they both situated Negritude as the site of embodying blackness that could also transcend opposition between “abstract universalism and concrete particularism.” Another interesting point of debate concerns the relationship between Fanon and Senghor, whose projects are similar in that they link colonial emancipation to human emancipation, despite the fact that “One [Fanon] treated authentic national consciousness and a sovereign state as necessary for a new internationalism.” The last four chapters of the book are more

complex as they examine and position Senghor's political project within a network of interdependence between France and its colonies that opened possibilities for revision of the colonial relationship and extension of citizenship to inhabitants of the Empire; and Senghor's complicated relationship with Senegalese democracy. Gilder then chronicles how legislative proposals of the Fourth Republic made the "union a new charter of colonization" and how justifications for the federation fell apart. Though widely criticized, Senghor deracialized the very concept of [Republican] filiation and this book sheds light into his multivalent poetics. Wilder makes an important contribution to understanding Senghor's non-nationalist thoughts about decolonization, federalism, departmentalization and Césaire's dreams of new forms of autonomy that would transcend existing forms, and celebrate cultural métissage and synthesis of the universal and the particular.

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Tukufu Zuberi. 2015. *African Independence: How Africa Shapes the World*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield. 195 pp.

Tukufu Zuberi's book is an attempt to cover Africa's history since the classic period of decolonization (mid-1940s to mid-1960s) up to 2015. In doing so, he adopts two main approaches: the postcolonial approach and the transnational approach. For the former, he seeks to challenge some Eurocentric narratives that consider European colonization of Africa as a civilizing mission on the part of the Europeans; and also that one can show that there is a legacy of colonial practices in postcolonial Africa. The transnational approach has helped the author to write the story about postcolonial Africa without regard to the limits or the bounds of the nation-state. In this he links historical events and processes that have shaped the continent such as the Second World War, the Cold War, the end of colonialism, and globalization to other global movements. He describes these four pillars as the watershed events and processes that changed the shape of African and World History (p. 10).

In adopting these approaches the author raises the argument that one can see Africa's participation in these global trends; and also that some of these trends have been influenced by African peoples. The first chapter, which does not necessarily provide a new line of thought, analyzes the impact of the Second World War on accelerating and radicalizing the African nationalist movement through the demands of immediate independence championed by repatriated troops (pp. 25-26). There was also the role of the Pan-Africanist Movement, which held its first five meetings outside Africa since 1919, where peoples of African origin planned the best ways of overthrowing European colonial rule (pp. 41-43). The author overlooks the fact that African decolonization was not just achieved because of the role of nationalism alone. It has been argued by scholars such as Frank Heinlein, *British Government Policy and Decolonisation 1945-1963: Scrutinising the Official Mind* (2002), that one also needs to consider changes in colonial policy towards Africa in the post-World War Two era. These changes compelled the colonizers to hand over power to moderate African nationals so long as they maintained economic ties with the former colonial power, aimed at both cutting costs and also for fear of communist infiltration in the colonies at the height of the Cold War.

Another important theme is raised in chapter three, which places the role of Africa in the Cold War. There is an oversight by Zuberi when he posits that the Cold War began after the Second World War (pp. 91-92), when in actual fact authorities in this field such as Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (2007), have argued that the origins of the Cold War should be traced to as far back as 1917 following the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. However, the author succeeds in locating some of Africa's postcolonial state instabilities, such as the sad tale of the Congo, as Cold War case studies (pp. 98-100).

The last chapter focuses on the post-Cold War era. Zuberi argues that while there was hope for the continent following the end of apartheid in South Africa, and the emergence of Nelson Mandela as symbol of liberation, the optimism has not trickled down to the local man on the ground. One can still trace cases of increased poverty, ethnic tensions, and the spread of disease epidemics. Ethnic conflicts such as those of Rwanda, Burundi, and Kenya have contributed to the loss of both property and lives (p. 125). On disease epidemics, the author glosses over the impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic, which he merely tackles in one paragraph (p. 156). There has also been continued intrusion into African affairs by international bodies such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Bretton Woods Institutions, which the author argues have not been good for Africa (pp. 126 and 146).

The main strength of this book lies in the author's ability to conduct oral interviews with leading African political figures, mostly from his *African Independence* documentary series. This has helped to enrich the data collected in document form. However, the downside to his oral data collection and usage has been the adoption of an "elitist approach," whereby all the people interviewed for this work were current or former prominent politicians, including presidents, prime ministers, members of parliament, and other top government officials. What is missing in this approach are the "voices" of ordinary Africans who also participated and influenced the continent's history. Furthermore, the author has not discussed the theme of globalization despite highlighting it in the book's introduction.

These shortfalls aside, I would recommend this book to the general reader interested in the history of postcolonial Africa, especially those interested in international relations and the challenges faced by the African postcolonial state.

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