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Age of Elegance: An Italianate *Sobrado* on the Gold Coast

COURTNAY MICOTS

Abstract: Upon first glance, two-story buildings constructed in brick and stone in coastal Ghana appear to be British colonial homes. However, though their façades were inspired by British styles, these early colonial period residences were actually built for Africans. Russell House, completed in 1898, manifests a deliberately constructed hybrid style of architecture combining local elements—asymmetry, a courtyard plan and two-story compact massing—with the British Italianate style and Afro-Portuguese *sobrado* plan. The motivations for such cultural appropriations are complex and require a deep understanding of the social, political and economic contexts in which the houses were built in Ghana, formerly the Gold Coast. An examination of this new style exemplified in the Russell House will demonstrate how coastal elite architecture reflects status, modernity, and resistance to British colonization.

Introduction

While Londoners were enjoying their fine Italianate homes of the Belle Epoque (1885-1914), elite members of the Gold Coast colony, known today as Ghana, were constructing their own elegant mansions utilizing an Italianate style that not only embraced the modernity and prosperity of the period but also rejected the British administration whose rules constrained them.¹ The ruins of the Russell House, once one of the most elegant of these homes, express this lively and tense period of change in Ghanaian history (Figure 1). Upon close examination, the structure manifests a deliberate hybrid style combining a British Italianate exterior, an Afro-Portuguese *sobrado* plan, and local ideas of space and organization. Russell House exemplifies how coastal elites appropriated and transformed styles and plans to communicate their status and connection to modernity. The lead patron, the Reverend John Oboboam Hammond, a well-respected Methodist minister who directed several building projects for the church, chose for his Anomabo family residence to reject the Methodist colonial vision of promoting loyalty to British rule. Although he embraced British and Methodist ideals of modern education and industry, he identified with the local elite and their right to be directly involved in coastal affairs without regard to British hegemony.

History

Russell House is located on the corner of Market Street and Aggrey Road in the center of Anomabo, a historically significant port city. The land was purchased on December 13, 1895.²

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v16/v16i1a1.pdf>



Figure 1. Russell House, Reverend John Oboboam Hammond, Francis M'danyamiasi Hammond, Mrs. Charlotte Oyemame Acquah, 1897-1898, stone nog and brick, Anomabo, Ghana. 2009 (author's photo).

A sketch of the plot is included with the land indenture (Figure 2). The siblings purchased the property from "William Topp Nelson Yankah of Anamaboe and other the senior members of his family." The land measures sixty-one feet wide and seventy-five and a half feet deep. No home on the property is indicated. Surrounding it are houses owned by Iaan, Ama Moo, Ekua Kotwiawa, Yankah, Ekua Nyami, and Kofi Intsifl. On November 1, 1897, the siblings were granted a building permit or "Town's Ordinance" to "build a house at Anamaboe...on condition that the proposed work is completed within six months." The current structure was built between the indicated date and April 1, 1898.³ Except for the Russell House and part of the Ama Moo family residence, none of the other homes on the plans survive today.

Family history for the Russell House dictates that while the upstairs served as a residence for family members, the lower floor was rented to merchants. This was a common arrangement used on the coast by Europeans and Africans alike. Russell House is named for an early-twentieth-century tenant, the English company H. B. W. Russell & Co., Ltd., whose store occupied the ground floor sometime after early 1915, when a representative wrote to inquire about the space. According to the family, the company agent rented the lower level for the store and used part of the upper floor for his residence. It was during this time that the premises became known around town as the Russell House, for the store name not the property owner. The descendants and current owners however call their ancestral family home *abɔdan*, or stone house.

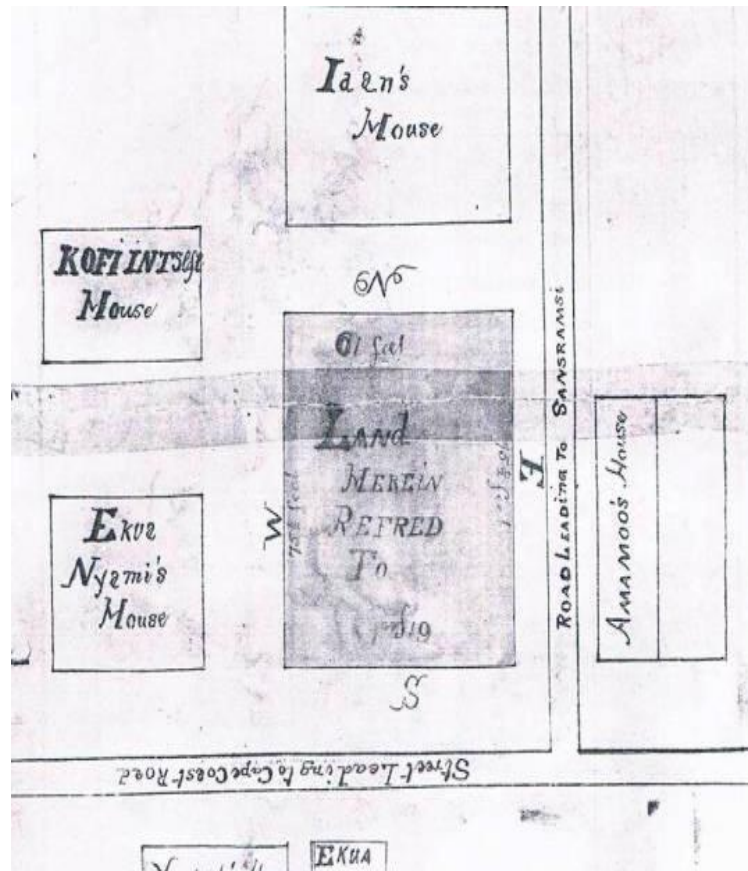


Figure 2. Plot sketch, Land Indenture, Russell House. 2009 (courtesy of Edukuma Hagan).

The land tenure and building permit proves this residence was built for three African siblings—the Rev. Hammond (February 2, 1860 - December 28, 1918); Francis M'danyamiasi Hammond (d. September 3, 1920); and Mrs. Charlotte Oyemame Acquah (1858 – July 31, 1908).⁴ This contradicts the attribution made by architect A. D. C. Hyland that this house was a “late 18th-century British colonial house.”⁵ This is an honest mistake, considering the strong likeness of the façade to homes in Britain.

Rev. Hammond was born in Anomabo and served in the ministry of the Wesleyan Methodist Church for thirty-two years. He was educated at the Wesleyan Schools in Anomabo and became a teacher. He entered the ministry in 1886, and was described as a “Native Assistant Missionary” in a newspaper listing from 1890.⁶ He married Rachel Mary, eldest daughter of Rev. A. W. Parker, in 1888. They had 10 children, four sons and six daughters.⁷ Rev. Hammond was stationed in Anomabo since at least 1889, and then in 1897, he was made Superintendent of the Circuit in Winneba, another coastal port town, for nine years through 1906. He then appeared in Saltpond in 1909 and 1912, and served as the Superintendent of the Cape Coast District, working in Cape Coast from 1913 until his death in 1918.⁸ Upon his death, his obituary read like a who's who of the coastal elite class, for he was clearly popular throughout the central coastal area.⁹ He also had the respect of the *omanhen*, or chief of Anomabo state, Amonoo V.¹⁰

Although many patrons of coastal elite homes were Fante, the dominant Akan-related group in this area of the coast, Africans from other regions merged with them to create a

specific identity as an elite subgroup (Figure 3). Some of the elites had mixed cultural backgrounds. Rev. Hammond and his siblings had a father who was of Ga ethnicity (from Accra), while the mother was Fante. In the colonial period, those members of the elite with the greatest income and political involvement seem to have made conscious choices of appropriation as a form of expressing their separate identity and status, while other patrons probably copied these hybrid homes to achieve the appearance of similar success. The appropriation, or borrowing, of other cultural symbols or ideals is common in local visual arts across the colonial empire and is indicative of both influence and a desire to press their status as equals with members of the hegemony. Often these symbols are transformed in a way that subverts the message of admiring mimicry, as is the case with coastal elite architecture. Since the patrons of the Russell House were deceased at the time this research was conducted, motivations for the architectural choices can only be surmised via the surviving structure, the land indenture and building permit, newspaper articles, and an understanding of the context in which this home was constructed.

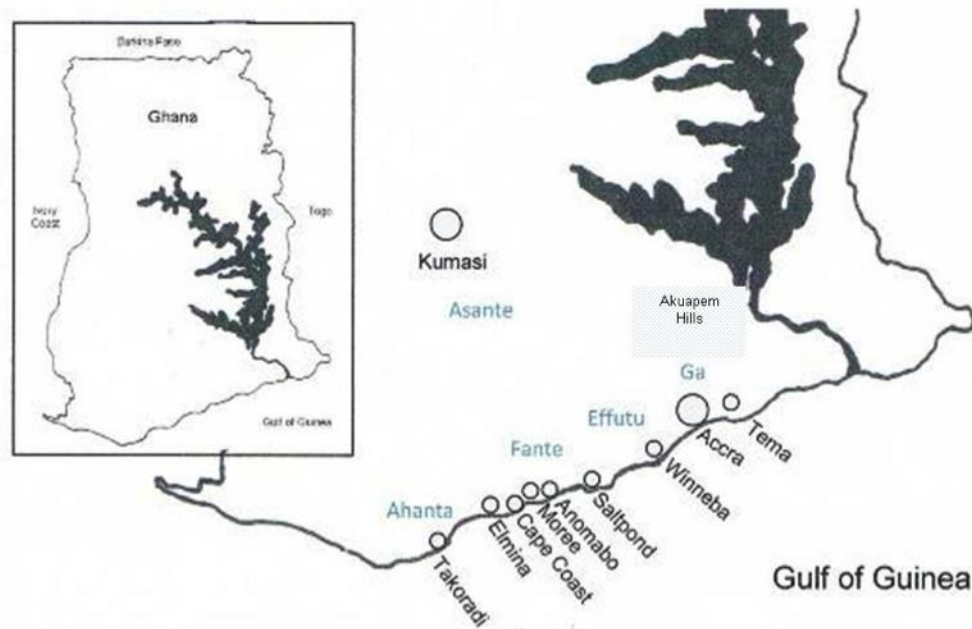


Figure 3. Map of Southern Ghana (author's drawing).

Rev. Hammond was most likely the lead client in selecting the plans and details for the Russell House. In 1902, as Superintendent of the Circuit in Winneba, he received credit in the local newspaper for the Bereku School House: "The building does great credit to Rev. Hammond's architectural ability; it is simple in construction but grand in appearance."¹¹ When he became ill in 1906, a newspaper reporter lamented that "the work in connection with the new Chapel building has not progressed."¹² He was also being considered for the position of District Superintendent of Buildings in Kumasi in 1913.¹³ In a two-column obituary in *The Gold Coast Nation*, Rev. Hammond, who died from "a protracted kidney disease," was celebrated as "a builder of churches...the Winnebah, Saltpond, Anamaboe and Elmina Wesleyan Chapels are lasting memorials of his genius as a born architect, although he was only an amateur."¹⁴ At the

opening and dedication of the Wesleyan Chapel in Saltpond (Figure 4) about seven years after Rev. Hammond's death, it was reported that a song written by Professor Graves-Abayie entitled "The Heavens are Telling" but known as "Hammond" was sung. The news report also credits the late Rev. Hammond with the design of the building, for he "while alive, expressed his genius in brick and mortar."¹⁵ What is not documented or remembered is the level of his involvement in each of these projects. It seems likely that he directed the construction based upon plans sanctioned by the church. The family residence in Anomabo would have allowed Rev. Hammond greater creative input.



Figure 4. Wesleyan Chapel, Rev. John Oboboam Hammond, 1925, brick, Saltpond, Ghana. 2011 (author's photo)

Francis Hammond died about two years after his brother. Although the building permit listed him as a Wesleyan Minister, this was likely a designation meant for John, since in the newspapers he is only mentioned twice and both times without the designation of reverend.¹⁶ Descendants remember that he was an agent for F. and A. Swanzy in Kumasi. He may have sent money to his brother for the construction of the family residence, but his input on the style and plan of the home are unknown. Their sister Charlotte married Reverend R. M. Acquah of Kuntu, near Saltpond, in 1882; they had five sons and four daughters. She was known locally as Teacher Oyemame from "her assiduous Bible instructions, as a Sunday School votary and class

Leader, she exemplified the real life in Christ Jesus.”¹⁷ Her son, Reverend Gaddiel R. Acquaaah, OBE (b. July 25, 1884-d. March 19, 1954), was the first African Chairman of the Methodist Church on the Gold Coast. He was an educationist, poet, hymnist, author, and statesman. Rev. Hammond, translator of numerous hymns, was one of the first to be tasked with translating the Bible into the Fante language. Later Rev. Acquaaah teamed with Jonah Abraham Annobil (1910-c. 1982), also from Anomabo, to complete the translation, first published in 1948. The Methodist Mission in Anomabo schooled both Annobil and Acquaaah.¹⁸ The last family member to reside in the Russell House was the ninth and last child of Charlotte and Rev. Acquaaah, Mrs. Mary Enyaawa Ogoe a.k.a. Aunt Adjoa (April 29, 1901-1981), who was a seamstress by trade and a leader and preacher for the Ebenezer Methodist Church in Anomabo.

Russell House served different commercial purposes over the years. According to one family member, after H. B. W. Russell & Co., Ltd. moved out, the building was rented as a social center for both Africans and Westerners for club meetings, weddings and receptions. Visitors entered through the courtyard entrance, climbed the stairs to the second floor and walked down the hallway. Rooms on their right would have provided seating areas and possibly food and drinks. A long room across the front of the building likely served as the main meeting or reception hall (Figure 5). Family rented the ground floor to the government for use as a post office on December 11, 1941, until it was relocated to Fort William about ten years later. The annual rent was nine pounds, paid in monthly installments.¹⁹

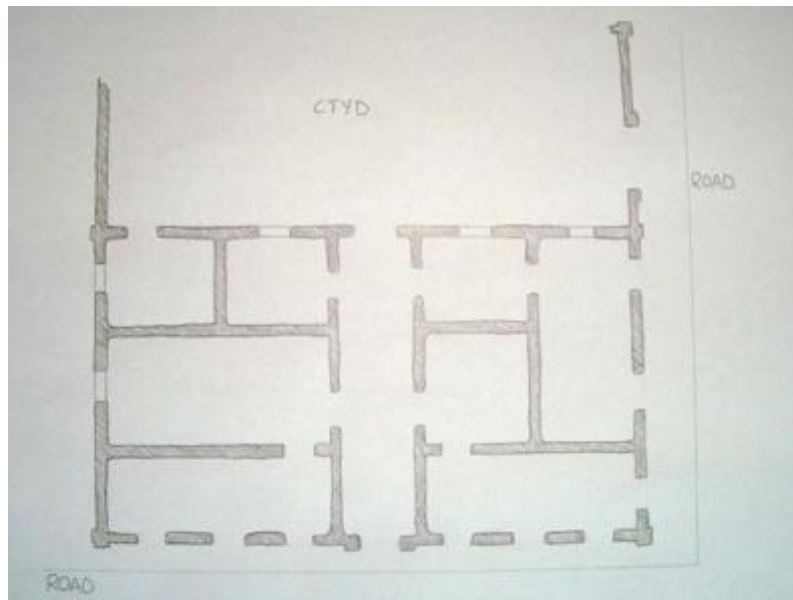


Figure 5. Russell House, ground floor plan. 2009 (author’s drawing).

The lower corner adjacent to both streets functioned as the Obonoma Bar from about 1955 to 1983. In the Fante language, *obonoma* means “rock of the birds” and refers to the deity for whom Anomabo was named.²⁰ While renting the space, the bar had a mural painted on the eastern side of the building (Figure 6). Today, an “Appellation of Anomabo” mural is maintained, not by the family who owns the building, but by a local group of teenage boys called the Machine Stars Football Club, a soccer club (Figure 7). By 1983 the building had become uninhabitable, and the bar closed. In 2011, the soccer club Crossing Squard (a

combination of guard and squad or a misspelling) had painted the southern façade with a large sign located on the left side of the entrance and another smaller sign above the entrance. The sign over the entrance depicts Obonoma along with the text “Welcome Crossing Squard Camp,” while the larger sign, with its red background, features a large logo in black and white with flanking ceremonial swords, common symbols in Akan art for leadership. In the center of the group’s logo is the head of a threatening snake, apparently the group symbol. These power images are consciously or subconsciously attached to a building whose size, cost, and Italianate style in the late-nineteenth century would have conveyed a sense of modernity and power. Thus, while the building is no longer habitable, it continues to serve a function in the visually charged urban space.



Figure 6. Russell House, Obonoma mural. 2009 (author’s photo).

Pattern Books Distribute the Italianate Style

The Italianate style may have been known to Rev. Hammond via direct experience with buildings in Britain, or more likely, pattern books that were distributed across the British Empire during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Italianate, an extension of the Classical style, is identified by brick or stone masonry, a roof with a shallow pitch, classical architectural detail, bracketed eaves, bay and clustered windows, verandahs and a tall square tower. The Italianate style in Britain had its peak popularity when Queen Victoria’s Osborne House was completed in 1851. The style was “codified, developed and promoted in the rush of architectural pattern books from the beginning of the nineteenth century which served an eager market.”²¹ Architect Timothy Fletcher Hubbard, who investigated the spread of the Italianate

style in Australia, noted that these “books provided knowledge in the form of information and advice which empowered their middle class clients.”²²



Figure 7. Russell House, façade with club signage. 2011 (author’s photo).

This style, popular with the rising English middle class, would have been equally suitable for the local rising classes in port cities of the British Empire.²³ In addition to pattern books, Gold Coast elites had texts like Samuel Smiles’ 1859 book *Self-Help*, which “provided a motivational text and a guide for many Gold Coast school children well into the twentieth century, promoting ‘achievement through hard work and through the emulation of great men and women [which] meshed perfectly with conceptions of the self-made individual.’”²⁴ Rev. Hammond may have thought these British styles appropriate to convey his rising status in the community.

Construction Materials and Method

The walls utilize local materials of stone, brick, and shell mortar. Russell House was never plastered or painted on the exterior, except for the murals. Thus, it is possible to see the construction materials and method. Stone, available in most areas along the Ghanaian coast, was not utilized for housing in Anomabo until the late-nineteenth century.²⁵ An addition built onto Castle Brew in Anomabo by the successful merchant George Kuntu Blankson in the late 1860s to early 1870s is the earliest surviving example of a Fante patron commissioning a building of stone nog construction and European style in Anomabo or anywhere on the Ghanaian coast (Figure 8).²⁶ Stone nog construction involves packing small stones, shells, corncobs and other materials with a lime-based mortar into a wood framework to construct

walls in layers. Nog houses have stone or brick facing and very thick walls, usually sixteen to eighteen inches. This technology was transported from Europe to the coast for European



Figure 8. George Kuntu Blankson Addition, South Façade, Castle Brew, c. early 1870s, stone nog, brick, Anomabo, Ghana. 2009 (author's photo).

structures and is also commonly found in the Caribbean and Brazil.²⁷ Blankson's mimicry of European architecture is an obvious symbol of status, for the cost to quarry and build in stone was impressive. He and other Anomabo leaders were involved in the diplomatic missions of the Fante Confederacy (1868-73), formed to resist European incursions on Fante security and autonomy.²⁸ Inspiration for the addition may have included the original Castle Brew, to which Blankson's Addition is attached, and to Franklin House in Accra (Figure 9). Franklin House was a Danish merchant's residence and slave-trading fort built around 1800, overlooking the busy nineteenth-century harbor. Both structures share a similar Palladian design and construction method.²⁹ Danish contractors taught local craftsmen of the Ga ethnic group how to build this and several other Danish buildings in the area utilizing stone nog.³⁰ By 1850, Danish properties on the coast had been transferred to the British, and thus it was a British property at the time Blankson might have drawn inspiration. Both Castle Brew and the Franklin House were commercial/residential mansions that historically served as slave trading forts. Rather than appropriating the European architectural style as a mere homage to European power, Blankson's choice of Palladian architecture made a visual connection between his power and that of the Europeans, proving local right to rule through a show of power, wealth, and modernity. It is not surprising that Blankson, a man involved in the multifaceted social and political situation, deliberately selected European architectural materials, techniques, and a style

that simultaneously would be understood by Fante elites as resistance to growing European authority, yet communicate admiring mimicry to the Europeans.



Figure 9. Franklin House, Danish patron(s), c. 1800, stone nog, brick, Jamestown, Accra, Ghana. 2012 (author's photo).

In order to contextualize Rev. Hammond's possible appropriation of the ground-level arcade from these sources, it is important to understand the significance of Anomabo. For more than five hundred years the coast of Ghana has been the site of cultural contact, between coastal groups, inland traders and Westerners who came to trade for gold and slaves. Hybrid art forms born from such cultural contact are especially visible at urban centers on these routes. Anomabo, a Fante port town founded in the mid-seventeenth century, is strategically located on the terminus of a north-south trade route to Kumasi, the center of the Asante Empire and gold mining, and to important cities along the Niger River in the Western Sudan. Through this trade Anomabo quickly became the largest city on the coast with more than 15,000 inhabitants. Savvy middlemen traders amassed fortunes, and a new class of wealthy merchants prospered.³¹

However, by the time the siblings were constructing their house, Anomabo was struggling as a city to regain its former glory. On June 15, 1807, the Asante invaded and decimated the city of Anomabo. The defeat by the Asante brought an abrupt end to the loosely formed Fante Coalition designed to protect the trade routes. Powerful and wealthy members of coastal society were "ruined." After the defeat, Anomabo reverted to a small town and lost its commercial prominence. Anomabo gradually reclaimed some of its commercial distinction and sociopolitical influence.³² When the British formed the Gold Coast Colony in 1874, the colonial capital was Cape Coast, a port town only fifteen miles west of Anomabo. Three years later Britain moved its colonial capital to Accra, seventy-five miles east of Anomabo, and placed

political authority in the hands of traditional rulers whom they thought they could manipulate.³³ In doing so, they undermined the economic, social, and political status of members of the long-established African elite class, such as Blankson, and separated them from the ruling hierarchy.³⁴ In 1912, the Anomabo port was closed.³⁵ As Gold Coast elites continued to lose power into the twentieth century, they increasingly proclaimed their rights through visual culture. Though structures similar to the Blankson Addition were built after the 1870s, many of the stone nog structures that survive today date between 1900 and 1920 and are located primarily in Anomabo and Cape Coast.³⁶

Therefore, it is possible to surmise that Rev. Hammond was making a visual statement of not only his and his family's prominence in Anomabo, but also of the importance of the coastal elite class, many of whom were born in or had ancestry linking them to the once-celebrated city. His adoption of an arcade similar to the one gracing the Blankson Addition highlights this connection to a once-prosperous member of the Anomabo community. Blankson was also a founding member of the Methodist ministry in Anomabo and served as a preacher.³⁷ Other clues point to the Russell House serving as a visual link to Anomabo's illustrious past.

Prior to the use of stone nog construction, the most popular type of urban house for the African elite class in Anomabo was the two-story compact house formed from rammed earth. Rammed earth construction involves balls of *swish*—clay, straw, and other materials—thrown or rammed into place, a process that erects the building one layer at a time.³⁸ The two-story house is unusual along the Ghanaian coast, found mainly in Anomabo where the homes are reputed to be roughly three hundred years old.³⁹ The two-story house conveys the impact of trade routes and commercial success on Anomabo architecture. While the construction method was used in Anomabo and elsewhere on the coast for one-story courtyard houses, the compact house and two-story construction method were likely brought to Anomabo by masons from Islamic Mande areas in the Western Sudan.⁴⁰ Thus, prior to the colonial period Anomabo's vernacular architecture already demonstrated hybridity through the combination of local and appropriated elements. According to one of the earliest available descriptions from the 1840s, two-story houses served as a status symbol in urban ports, while smaller one-story houses were built on inland farms.⁴¹ Wealthy family members who achieved success were expected to extend the family residence or build anew, thereby visually reflecting the stature of the individual and his family in the community, especially in the urban ports. Rev. Hammond may have chosen the newer technique of stone nog construction, but his selection of a compact two-story house could be a link to previous rammed earth houses of this type.

A subtler link to the older urban houses may be espied in the exterior walls. A thin horizontal layer of small dark gray granite stones divides the wall into horizontal sections (Figure 10). These sections may be a visual reference linking the stone nog construction to that of rammed earth, for both involves the building of walls in layers. Or, the stones may simply be part of the exterior decoration. These stones are also carefully placed throughout the entire façade between the larger stones.



Figure 10. Russell House, wall surface. 2009 (author's photo).

Three bands of rectangular-shaped holes about five or six inches deep puncture all four sides of the surface of the house across the center of the lower level. They also appear above the belt course and at the level of the arches for the second-story windows (Figures 6 and 7).⁴² Masons likely used these holes to support scaffolding. In addition to the scaffolding holes, on the back of the residence, the belt course formed by four rows of bricks is interrupted by more of these types of holes, creating a decorative effect (Figure 11). It is possible that the holes above the belt course once held a structure to support a wooden veranda. The extra holes, which occur in greater number at regular intervals, in the rear belt course were probably used to support the wooden floor joists for the upper story. Similar numerous holes are found in the interior walls.

A mud plaster once covered the interior, and some of this plaster remains (Figure 12). At a later date, a layer of cement plaster was added. Since damaged roofing was never replaced, the rains have penetrated the interior and have destroyed much of the plastering as well as the wall mortar. The walls have huge cracks, and all the wood floors and frames have deteriorated. The structure is beyond repair and will likely collapse within another decade.

According to the Monuments and Relics Ordinance of 1945, these surviving African residences from the colonial period could be considered an ancient or historical "monument."⁴³ The leadership of Anomabo however does not pursue either heritage restoration, like Elmina, or designation as a tourist destination, like Cape Coast. Little effort is made by the *omanhen* and other traditional leaders to draw attention to the pivotal role Anomabo has played in history. The current coastal elite class has attempted to counteract this stance through the Anomabo Union and Environmental Group.⁴⁴ The Ghana Museums and Monuments Board works to restore many forts and castles on the coast with only a few residences on its list, including

Castle Brew. All are European structures; none are African.⁴⁵ Restoration and aid comes mainly from sources outside Ghana.



Figure 11. Russell House, back belt course. 2009 (author's photo).

The Italianate Exterior

The exterior of the Russell House conveys an Italianate style common to London stores of the late-nineteenth century. Across the façade are seven *anse de panier*, or flat, arched openings (Figures 1 and 6). All of the curves of the arches are formed with brick voussoirs. Italianate structures were often built of a uniform size, in local stone, with arcades on the lower floors and symmetrical windows on the upper floors. On commercial buildings, this provided a convenient way to display merchandise, for the prospective customers could stroll along the shaded arcades, out of the heat of the sun.⁴⁶ No evidence of doors or windows are visible on the

Russell House arcade, thus it is difficult to determine how the merchandise was protected during store closure.



Figure 12. Russell House, plaster walls. 2009 (author's photo).

Blankson's Addition serves as the most obvious precedent of the use of an arcade on the ground floor of a Fante structure (Figure 8). Constructed approximately twenty-five years later, The Russell House represents a gentle modern transition in style from Palladian to Italianate, both based in European classical traditions. The structures were also built to function as commercial spaces downstairs and residential upstairs, though the upper story of Blankson's Addition was never completed. While the arcade on the Blankson Addition boasts four wide true arches, the Russell House exhibits seven refined *anse de panier* (basket-handle) arches. Both structures are situated on a raised base with steps leading to the ground floor. A belt course with four rows of bricks encircles the Blankson Addition and the Russell House. Thus the style as well as construction method have striking similarities.

Seven *anse de panier* arched windows on the upper floor façade are aligned with the openings below. Bricks were used to frame the arches, sides, and sills of the windows. These are flush with the wall; the brick against the stone makes a striking decorative effect. Fante bricks were locally made and are identifiable by their orange color and hints of mica glistening in the sun. Since these are baked in the sun and not in a kiln, they tend to be softer and more vulnerable to the elements. Some of the windows on the sides of the buildings have had their arched sections bricked in; they were likely fitted for shutters at a later date (Figure 10 above).

A mixture of brick and stone comprise the two-story pilasters that form the coigns.⁴⁷ Pilasters were also placed on either side of the central opening. However these only extend up to the belt course, framing the entrance (Figure 13). Evidence exists that a door once graced the

center of the upper story; it would have led onto a wooden veranda overlooking one of Anomabo's main streets.

Bifurcated stairs on the back of Russell House grant access to the upper story. Although this stairway has now been replaced with concrete block, the original stairwell would have been made of timber. Many two-story rammed earth houses in Anomabo dating back three centuries situate the stairs on the back of their home. Thus a guest would enter through a courtyard entrance and ascend the staircase to enter a reception hall where they would be entertained. Italianate homes in England placed grand stairwells on the interior. In the Russell House, guests were entertained in the front hall where the south-facing windows and veranda captured the cool sea breezes.

Elite Gold Coast homes had low-pitched roofs and were originally covered with imported iron sheeting. The use of this sheeting made a statement about the patron's connection to modernity in comparison to using thatch. Though the Russell House no longer has its roof, the original roof is visible in Hyland's photograph from the late 1960s or early 1970s.⁴⁸ Roofs were placed on a timber frame supported by short brick pillars. Italianate corbels were not utilized.⁴⁹



Figure 13. Russell House, entrance. 2009 (author's photo).

Russell House can be compared with numerous Italianate buildings in London, however it is not an exact replica of any of these buildings. For example, 36 Deptford Road is one of the few Italianate buildings in London whose shop front has not been modernized (Figure 14). The ground floor store has multiple openings with a wide anse de panier window flanked by two doorways with true arches on each side. Symmetrically placed anse de panier arched windows with fan-shaped bricks are located above on the two brick-faced upper stories. Like Russell

House, classical details in the belt course, coigns and cornice complete the Italianate style of the buildings.



Figure 14. 36 Deptford Road, c. 1860-90, brick, London, England. 2014 (author's photo).

Plan

An enclosed courtyard is situated behind the Russell House (Figure 15). The one-story courtyard house plan is common throughout coastal West Africa.⁵⁰ The sidewalls remain in the Russell House courtyard, but the far wall has collapsed. The courtyard entrance is decorated with a double-columned pilaster with base and cornice. An anse de panier arch in flat relief springs from their capitals, connecting them. This decorative element is quite similar to the anse de panier arch springing from the impost blocks on Fort William's northern wall facing town (Figure 16). It is also similar to the entrances of the Anomabo Methodist Mission (c. 1839-40) and the courtyard of the residence (c. 1890-1900) of Methodist merchant and nationalist Joseph Edward Biney in Cape Coast.

The Russell House plan was borrowed from the Afro-Portuguese *sobrado*, essentially a house with a second-story timber veranda and multiple interior chambers accessible from a central corridor. These Portuguese-style houses were constructed by Europeans in hot climates all over the world, including, as early as the sixteenth century, port cities in Brazil and along the

West African coast.⁵¹ It was not until the late-nineteenth century that these elements were incorporated into local structures for wealthy coastal elite patrons on the Gold Coast. Houses with the sobrado plan were associated with the cosmopolitan culture of European colonists and local elites. Two mason groups on the Gold Coast employed this plan: the Tabom and those trained by European missionaries of the Basel Mission, located in the Akuapem Hills area northeast of Accra. Skilled masons among the Tabom, descendants of the Afro-Brazilians who settled in Accra in the 1830s, maintain they were “the first architects of this region.”⁵² The Tabom “dressed in top hats, finely tailored coats and [were] fluent in Portuguese...They were seen as modern men and women...”⁵³ The Tabom’s modernity may have become associated with the sobrado plan houses they built, making this type of house desirable to the coastal elites. Little evidence of their building activities exists; therefore this theory is speculative.⁵⁴



Figure 15. Russell House, courtyard entrance. 2009 (author’s photo).

Masons trained at the Basel Mission in the Akuapem Hills, north of Accra, are likely responsible for disseminating the sobrado plan along with a wide range of building techniques. Established initially at Christiansborg in 1828, the Basel Mission was furthered by the work of Danish missionary Andreas Riis (1804-1854), who transferred the Mission to the Akuapem Hills in 1835, and established a Training College in Akropong in 1848.⁵⁵ African craftsmen, perhaps including the Tabom, trained to become masons for three years and apprentices received small stipends.⁵⁶ After their apprenticeship the craftsmen migrated to the coastal areas in search of work; some set up their own workshops.⁵⁷ By the 1880s all the major coastal towns had sobrado buildings. Hyland observed that every Fante town contained at least one substantial Christian mission or church with walls of stone, brick or mud with a timber verandah, revealing the work of a mission-trained builder.⁵⁸

Russell House has a central corridor extending south to north (Figure 5). The upstairs plan is identical to that of the lower floor, except that the front room extends the full length of the façade, creating a long indoor veranda, or reception hall, about ten feet in width. Downstairs an

anse de panier arch extends across the corridor (Figure 17). All the interior doorways have anse de panier arches, though some have been modified through the years for rectangular doors.

An arcade of six anse de panier arches once supported the back veranda. Dividing these arches is the bifurcated staircase (Figure 15). Cement plaster has since been applied to the arches, yet the stones are still visible to the close observer. A timber veranda probably once surrounded the entire upper story. Centrally located doors on the front and back of the house once led onto the veranda. By the 1950s, the verandah had burned, deteriorated, or had been intentionally torn down, and the doorway on the façade of the upper story was partially enclosed. Today, the roof only consists of the raised brick supports and a few broken and rotted wooden timbers that once supported the low-pitched roof, commonly used in Basel Mission style structures.



Figure 16. Fort William, North Side, 1760 and 1840s, stone nog (paint added later), Anomabo, Ghana. 2008 (author's photo).

Rather than the typical symmetrical arrangement of rooms on each side of the corridor, the east rooms are oriented to take advantage of the roadside (Figure 5). Further asymmetry is found with the entrance to a northwestern chamber leading directly to the courtyard. Art historian Robert Farris Thompson has compared African combinations of symmetry and asymmetry to early American jazz and coined the phrase “offbeat phrasing” to describe this phenomenon which can be found in Akan drumming, festival parades, textile patterns (*kente*), and architecture.⁵⁹ Art historian Roy Sieber, discussing the placement of pattern of a men's strip-woven textile with asymmetrical elements, stated, “the careful matching of the ends of the cloth dispels the impression of an uncalculated overall design.”⁶⁰ Forms of offbeat phrasing in exterior and/or interior elements were observed in all of the rammed earth and stone nog houses I researched in Anomabo. Thus, Rev. Hammond has deliberately disrupted the calculated measure of Italianate symmetry with local Akan aesthetics. The local elements of a courtyard and asymmetrical plan, combined with the British Italianate style and sobrado plan, are cleverly synthesized to visually communicate a sense of modernity and cosmopolitanism.

Close observation proves that the Russell House, like other African coastal elites homes of this period, does not illustrate mimicry of British architecture.

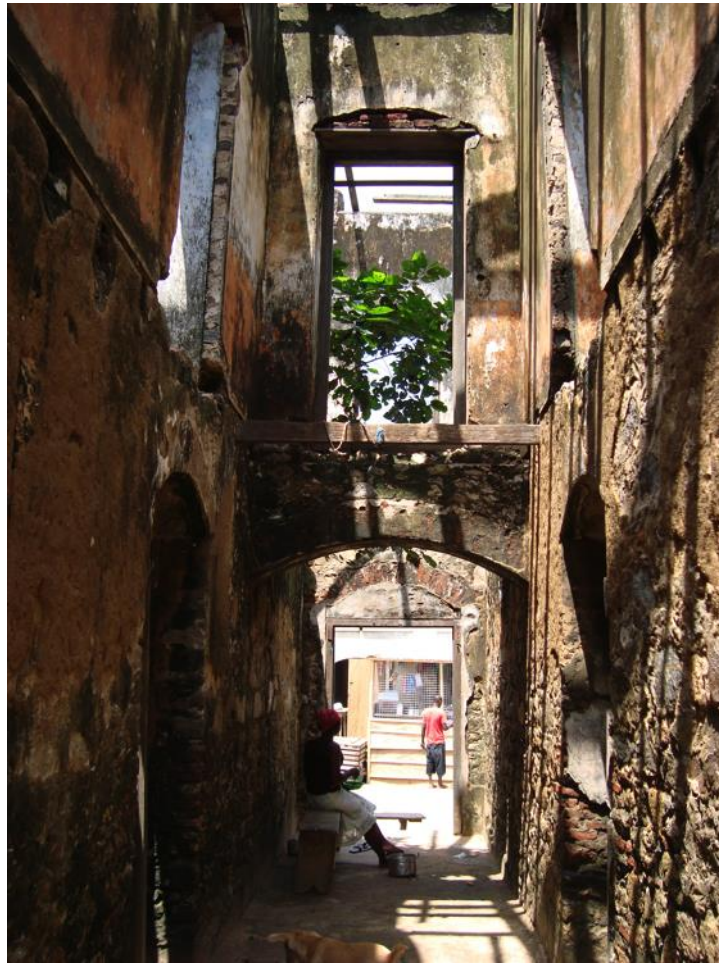


Figure 17. Russell House, corridor. 2009 (author's photo).

The Methodist Vision

Along with Cape Coast and Accra, Anomabo was one of the earliest sites to receive Wesleyan Methodist missionaries. John and Charles Wesley founded Wesleyan Methodism in 1735 as an offshoot of the Church of England. The group promoted a disciplined routine of spiritual devotion through the reading of the Bible. A group of African Christians in Cape Coast took the initiative in 1831 to petition the Bishop of London to send a missionary and a teacher. By the end of the year a Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge was founded by William de Graft in Cape Coast. Early members of the study group included important members of the coastal elite class—Blankson, Henry Brew, Kobina Mensah, John Sam, and John Smith with deGraft as their leader.⁶¹ Englishman Reverend Joseph Dunwell arrived in January 1, 1835, in Cape Coast. Dunwell traveled frequently to Anomabo, and under his supervision Methodist class meetings were quickly established.⁶² However, Dunwell died on June 24, 1835, only six months after his arrival.

The Reverend George Wrigley, who landed in Cape Coast with his wife Harriet on September 15, 1836 replaced Dunwell.⁶³ According to Frank Deaville Walker, editor of the Methodist Missionary Society journals from 1914 to 1945, “under Wrigley's guidance they had begun to build themselves a 'swish' church. But the rains had utterly destroyed the unfinished walls.”⁶⁴ Wrigley, using local builders for the rammed earth construction, is likely responsible for the Palladian plan chosen for the Methodist Mission in Anomabo. Wrigley died in November of 1837, only a year after his arrival. The Reverend Thomas Birch Freeman (1809-1890), known locally as Osofo Kweku Annan, arrived from the West Indies in Cape Coast in 1838.⁶⁵ The Methodist Mission in Anomabo was one of the first structures to be visited by Freeman, and in 1839, he and Henry Barnes supervised its completion (Figure 18).⁶⁶ Sometime in early 1840, fire destroyed part of the mission, and it had to be restored. By April of 1840, this was completed.⁶⁷

Methodism spread quickly along the coast. Religious historian Hilary M. Carey explains that due to “its flexible circuit structure, Methodism proved to be ideally suited to the conditions on the frontier...[Methodists] were conservative politically and saw the empire as a legitimate field for their aspirations to become a world church for the English-speaking peoples.”⁶⁸ By 1842, two schools were built in Cape Coast, and one each in Accra, Anomabo, and Dixcove.⁶⁹ Anomabo provided adjacent villages and towns with evangelists. It also provided skilled craftsmen, such as bricklayers, carpenters and painters, to fellowships in Saltpond, Winneba, and Kommenda, to assist with the building of their places of worship.⁷⁰ Anomabo became the most important Methodist center on the coast.



Figure 18. Methodist Mission, Rev. George Wrigley, Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman, and Henry Barnes, c. 1839-40, rammed earth and timber, Anomabo, Ghana. 2009 (author's photo).



Figure 19. Ebenezer Methodist Church, Revs. James Picot, James Fletcher and John Oboboam Hammond, 1895, stone nog. Renovation 1966-1971, rebuilt main entrance façade, added pilasters and chapel, stone nog, cement and paint. Anomabo, Ghana. 2009 (author's photo).

By the 1860s, the Methodist following in Anomabo had grown to such a degree that in order to accommodate the attendance, Reverend James Picot began to plan for a new chapel in 1870.⁷¹ Reverend James Fletcher laid the foundation stone for Ebenezer Methodist Church in Anomabo on December 10, 1880. The church was built with stone nog construction and completed in 1895 (Figure 19 above). William Daniel Acquaaah, a member of the African coastal elite class who worked in London, was a major patron of the church. At the front entrance is a memorial to his father, the Rev. Gaddiel Robert Acquaaah, son of Charlotte Acquaaah.

While the founding of Methodism in Anomabo can be attributed to preachers Blankson, Martin, Hagan, and Mills, evidence from the Blankson Addition proves that these men did not abandon their Fante patriotic ideals.⁷² Blankson's appropriation of European architectural style, materials, and construction method had served a wider purpose than adoring mimicry. Cultural anthropologists Christian Huck and Stefan Bauernschmidt argue that appropriation is "always about cultural relations in the context of an unequal distribution of power."⁷³ Indeed, Denise Cuthbert stated that, "the history of European colonization of the Americas, Africa, Asia and the Pacific is also a history of wholesale appropriation."⁷⁴ African homes on the Gold Coast evince this history of appropriation as a means to communicate their status, modernity and resistance to the British hegemony.

Russell House fits into this dynamic, for Rev. Hammond designed a building that was more than just a mimic of the British Italianate style. Hybridization is a valuable clue to understanding the potential motivation of a patron. Though he related it to linguistics, Gold Coast elite architecture closely aligns with theorist Mikhail Bakhtin's ideas of hybridity where "two points of view are not mixed, but set against each other dialogically."⁷⁵ Postcolonial historian Robert Young explains that in "organic hybridity the mixture merges," while

“intentional hybridity sets different points of view against each other in a conflictual structure, which retains ‘a certain elemental, organic energy and openendedness.’”⁷⁶ Young continues, “Bahktin’s doubled form of hybridity therefore offers a particularly significant dialectical model for cultural interaction: an organic hybridity, which will tend towards fusion, in conflict with intentional hybridity, which enables a contestatory activity, a politicized setting of cultural differences against each other dialogically.”⁷⁷ Thus, if this definition of dialogic hybridity is applied to African colonial architecture on the Gold Coast, it may offer a greater understanding of patron motivations. By conceptualizing a grand family home through a combination of local and Western styles, a patron may portray status, modernity, and resistance to colonial power by expressing all the conflicting elements of the charged political environment. Like Blankson, Rev. Hammond embraced Methodism and the ideals of modern education and industry purported by the British Empire without giving up his place in the local elite class and believing in their right to be directly involved in coastal affairs, without the need for British interference.

Thus, if “Methodist missionary work was linked directly to the call of British patriotism,” as Carey states, then it misfired on the Ghanaian coast, at least with the elite class, who used Methodism as another piece of accumulated modernism.⁷⁸ Historians Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed note the difference between conversion and adhesion, stressing that adhesion, “understanding of the new as a useful supplement to traditional religion,” was more common than conversion in Africa.⁷⁹ Russell House exhibits adhesion rather than conversion because of the many details that mix British, Afro-Portuguese, and local architectural elements. Thus, in architecture, as in religion, a British exterior or plan might not denote conversion to British patriotism or mimicry. This also explains Rev. Hammond’s popularity with both local nationalist elites and the ruling hierarchy, as evident from his obituary. His beliefs, like his family residence, bridged Fante desires for independence common to both groups despite British divide and rule policy to separate them.

Conclusion

Stately homes constructed by some of the most powerful members of the Gold Coast elite class served as visual markers that conveyed multiple meanings in a dialogic context. The hybrid style of African colonial period residences combines local architectural—two-story compact houses, courtyard plans, and asymmetrical details—with the sobrado and imported Italianate and Queen Anne styles. Cultural appropriation is an on-going process in Fante architecture, from eighteenth century two-story compact rammed earth houses to colonial period Italianate and Queen Anne style stone *nog* residences to Post-independence International Style steel and concrete buildings to contemporary Postmodern homes.⁸⁰ The appropriations evident in these houses demonstrate a widespread desire on the part of Africans to express their status as wealthy cosmopolitan individuals who were educated and economically connected, capable of self-governance.

Through the process of adhesion, local patrons in Anomabo appropriated a cloak of British style that could be viewed by the colonizers as emblems of mimicry, yet they also cultivated a reverse gaze, effectively empowering locals by harnessing British power symbols, expressing dialogic points of view. This “relocation of power was first attempted on the Gold Coast in the Blankson Addition where the European Palladian style was appropriated to transfer power

from the Europeans back to the coastal African elites. This attempt to relocate power was mirrored in the efforts of the Fante Confederacy to which Blankson belonged. Twenty-five years later Rev. Hammond and his siblings commissioned a residence that communicated the same message by harnessing and changing the British Italianate style and an Afro-Portuguese sobrado plan into an intentional hybrid enabling a “contestatory activity” in the visual culture.⁸¹ Russell House serves as an example of this vibrant new style of Coastal Elite architecture.

Notes

- 1 Reynolds 2007, p. 1. Modern Ghana was essentially a British colony from 1874 to 1957, though the Asante kingdom was not fully defeated until 1896. Moreover, the coastal area had all the makings of a colony since the signing of the Bond of 1844 between Great Britain and the Fante Confederation.
- 2 A copy of the land indenture for the Russell House was provided by family member, Edukuma Hagan in 2009. Written in 1895, it lists the siblings as follows, “John Obobuam Hammond of Anamaboe Wesleyan Minister Francis M’danyamiasi Hammond of Anamaboe and Cape Coast Castle Clerk and Cashier and Charlotte Oyeman Acquaah of Anamaboe.” The signature line read “John O. Hammond and others.” The document is reprinted in Micots 2010, pp. 426-29.
- 3 This date is confirmed by mention of the Russell House in an arbitration document for a nearby property, purchased by Kofi Aiko, where his grandson later built the Kobena Mefful family residence. Aiko’s Land Purchase Agreement is transcribed in Micots 2010, pp. 424-25. A copy of this original document was provided to me in 2009 by the *abusuapanyin*, or family head, Kobina George Kingsley Otoo, who received his copy of the original document from the National Archives at Cape Coast. The National Archives no longer has the original document.
- 4 A copy of the building permit for The Russell House was provided by family member, Edukuma Hagan in 2009. This document was created for “Mr. Co. O. Acquaah.” The document is reprinted in Micots 2010, p. 430.
- 5 Hyland 1997, p. 2038.
- 6 The Gold Coast Nation, 23 November-18 January 1918-1919, “The Late Rev. John O. Hammond,” p. 5; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 11-18 January 1919, “Death and Funeral of the Rev. J. O. Hammond,” p. 2; and *The Weekly News* (Sierra Leone), 16 August 1890, “Stations of Wesleyan Ministers,” p. 8.
- 7 *The Gold Coast Leader*, 11-18 January 1919, “Death and Funeral of the Rev. J. O. Hammond,” p. 2.
- 8 *The Weekly News* (Sierra Leone), 7 September 1889, “Stations of Wesleyan Ministers,” p. 6; *The Weekly News* (Sierra Leone), 16 August 1890, “Stations of Wesleyan Ministers,” p. 8; *The Gold Coast Leader*, “Winnebah,” 25 October 1902, p. 2; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 30 June 1906, “Winneba,” p. 5; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 23 May 1908, “A Farewell Meeting with Rev. John O. Hammond,” p. 4; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 30 May 1908, “Editorial Notes,” p. 2; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 19 June 1909, “Saltpond,” pp. 3-4; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 11 May 1912,

- "Saltpond," p. 2; *The Gold Coast Nation*, 27 February 1913, "New Appointments," p. 8; *The Gold Coast Nation*, 20 March 1913, "Preachers for Next Sunday," p. 4; *The Gold Coast Nation*, 30 April 1914, "Unveiling of Rev. Father Parker's Memorial Tablet," p. 3; 15-22 October 1914, "The Gold Coast Aborigines War Fund," p. 2; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 24 July 1915, "General News," p. 2; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 31 July 1915, "Editorial Notes," p. 5; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 27 May 1916, "Letters to the Editor," p. 7; *The Gold Coast Leader*, 27 October 1917, "The Question of the Appointment of Chaplains to Accompany the East African Contingent," p. 5; and *The Gold Coast Leader*, 24 August 1918, "Editorial Notes," p. 3.
- 9 *The Gold Coast Leader*, 11-18 January 1919, "Death and Funeral of the Rev. J. O. Hammond," p. 2.: "...a multitude of people had assembled from Salt Pond, Kuntu, Winnebah, Cape Coast, Elmina, Secondee and other places for the interment, as the suddenness of Mr. Hammond's death had naturally excited much public interest in his burial... The speakers were the Revs. R. M. Acquah and C. W. Armstrong both of whom paid high tribute to Mr. Hammond's work and worth. The service in the Church was then closed by the Rev. F. O. Pinanko, M. A., leading in Prayer. After which Prof. Chas. E. Graves, Principal of the West African College of Music and Commerce played the Dead March in "Saul," and to its solemn strains, the good soldier of Jesus Christ was carried forth to his grave at the Wesleyan cemetery, Anamaboe.
- "The Singing Bands of Cape Coast, Anamaboe and Salt Pond with the Cape Coast Wesleyan Church Surpliced Choir at the base headed the procession. Next to the front of the hearse were the Abura royal members with the State Sword, Gold Canes and Breast Plate. The blood relatives of the deceased followed immediately after the bearer, then the main procession with the Omanhin the Honourable Amonu V of Anamaboe and his retinue at the rear. The service at the graveside was conducted by the Revs. R. M. Acquah, C. E. Barnes, A. A. Sceath, M. A., and C. W. Armstrong. Sisters Francis Hunt and Evelyn Bellamy, and the Rev. S. R. B. Attah-Ahuma, M. A., the Revs. J. W. Taylor, J. Evans Appiah, C. H. Bartels were also present at both services."
- 10 The Anomabo Traditional Area encompasses an area of roughly fifty square miles and includes sixty-four villages and towns, counting the city of Anomabo. The chief, or *omanhen*, of the state of Anomabo resides in Anomabo town.
- 11 *The Gold Coast Leader*, "Winnebah," 25 October 1902, p. 2.
- 12 *The Gold Coast Leader*, 30 June 1906, "Winneba," p. 5.
- 13 *The Gold Coast Nation*, 27 February 1913, "New Appointments," p. 8.
- 14 This obituary also lists the numerous members of the elite class and the Omanhen Amonoo V in attendance. Among those listed is Henry Van Hein, an important Cape Coast merchant and nationalist who served as president of the Aborigines' Rights Protection Society and a founder of the British West African Conference. *The Gold Coast Nation*, 23 November-18 January 1918-1919, "The Late Rev. John O. Hammond," p. 5.
- 15 *Gold Coast Leader*, 5 December 1925, p. 4.
- 16 *The Gold Coast Leader*, 3 August 1918, "General News," p. 2; and *The Gold Coast Nation*, 23 November-18 January 1918-1919, "The Late Rev. John O. Hammond," p. 5.

- 17 *The Gold Coast Leader*, 15 August 1908, "The Funeral of Charlotte Oyeamam Acquaaah," p. 2.
- 18 Ephson 1969, pp. 121-122; and Bartels 1965, pp. 209-210. For a list of the hymns Rev. Hammond translated, see *The Gold Coast Nation*, 23 November-18 January 1918-1919, "The Late Rev. John O. Hammond," p. 5.
- 19 Edukuma Hagan. Personal interview, Anomabo, Ghana. June. (transcripts held by author).
- 20 Obonoma is a large rock formation located in the sea in front of Fort William. Oral history states that a hunter first came to the area and noticed the rock was covered with sea birds and named the area Anomabo.
- 21 Hubbard 2003, pp. 56-60.
- 22 Ibid., p. 153.
- 23 Sutcliffe 2006, p. 93.
- 24 Doortmont 2005, p. 489.
- 25 A 1931 Gold Coast Survey Map indicates four stone quarries located just north of the coastal highway in Anomabo. Gold Coast Survey. "Anomabu" Sheets 1 and 3. [Map.] February 13, 1931. Reviewed at the National Archives in Cape Coast, Ghana.
- 26 Samuel Collins Brew, contemporary of Blankson and the great grandson of Richard Brew (patron of the original Castle Brew), may have built a similar structure utilizing brick and stone *nog* around the same period. Collins Brew was a prominent merchant in Anomabo trading mainly in gold and ivory. His family residence was located on Sam Brew's *kukwadu*, or hill, in the Krokessin, or old town, neighborhood. Today, his house is in such a ruinous state that it is difficult to even find traces of the foundations. It is reputed to have been a magnificent and large house that collapsed sometime before 1929. A set of buildings marked in poor condition is depicted on the Gold Coast Survey map of 1931. None of his descendants in Anomabo could remember the façade or the interior plan of this residence, yet the brick debris on site and remnants of an old brick kiln nearby attest to its construction, possibly utilizing the materials, construction method and design elements similar to the Blankson Addition.
- 27 Crain 1994, pp. 61-62.
- 28 "The Late Hon: G. K. Blankson," 1898, pp. 3-4.
- 29 The Palladian style was inspired by Andrea Palladio, who studied the remains of Greek and Roman buildings in northern Italy. He published his findings in the book *I Quattro Libri Dell-architettura*, or *The Four Books of Architecture*, in 1570. The immensely popular book stimulated several Classical movements in architecture since its introduction. The style was utilized for European merchant forts and houses along the Gold Coast from the sixteenth to nineteenth century. Harbison, Potterton and Sheehy 1978, pp. 132. For an image of the Franklin House in the late nineteenth century, see Lokko c. 2010, Fig. 40, p. 78.
- 30 Wellington 2011, p. 251. The Danish area is primarily located in sections of old Osu and Jamestown in Accra. It is possible that elderly Ga builders or their descendents assisted with Blankson's Addition, or other contractors were inspired by the Franklin House.
- 31 Flather 1966 and Priestley 1969.
- 32 Flather 1966, pp. 59-60, 136; Meredith 1812 (reprint, 1967), p. 152; and Shumway 2004, p.

- 142.
- 33 Flather 1966, 144.
- 34 Crowder 1968, pp. 199-200.
- 35 Flather 1966, pp. 59-60, 136.
- 36 I believe the demise of many early structures is due to three factors: the environment — after the salty air has eroded the corrugated steel roofing, strong sun and rains deteriorate the mortar; owners deliberately knock down buildings to make way for more modern construction; and generally more stone nog houses were built in the early-twentieth century because more need was felt by the elites (and those desiring to be viewed as elites) to pronounce their status.
- 37 Bartels 1965, pp. 35, 40.
- 38 The beginnings of rammed earth construction in Ghana have been extensively researched by anthropologist Vincent Kenneth Tarikhu Farrar and archaeologist Kwesi James Anquandah, principally in the Shai Hills and eastern Accra plains. Their findings revealed that this technology may date to the Neolithic period. It may have been independently invented, or it may have been adapted from either the Mande groups to the north (Western Sudan) or groups to the east such as those from the Dahomey-Yoruba-Benin cultural sphere (modern-day Republic of Benin and Nigeria). Farrar 1995, pp. 159-60, 164-65. Most of my colleagues in the field however label this construction method by its material — swish. For a more detailed description of swish and its construction in the nineteenth century, see Cruickshank 1853 (reprint, 1966), vol. 2, pp. 288-89.
- 39 My research is based on data collected in 2009 from Kwa Nyanfueku Akwa, town historian, and the families living in these houses.
- 40 Farrar 1995, pp. 160, 164-65.
- 41 Cruickshank 1853 (reprint, 1966), vol. 2, 287-88, 295-96.
- 42 A belt course is a projecting horizontal molding separating parts of a wall surface in a façade. On the Gold Coast it is used to visually separate the two floors.
- 43 “Monuments and Relics Ordinance,” ADM. 23/1/381, n.p. Ghana National Archives, Cape Coast.
- 44 Grace Kyeremeh led the Environmental Group in the early 2000s. The group was dissolved in 2006 after resistance from the Traditional Council which did not support the group’s efforts. However she was enstooled as Nana Mbroba-Dabo II, Queen Mother of Anomabo, on December 3, 2013, and has plans to encourage tourism and development in Anomabo.
- 45 In regards to Castle Brew, in the 1960s the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board restored the original residence built by Richard Brew c. 1761-1763 and the first addition by Brodie Cruickshank c. 1841-1844, but interestingly not the Blankson Addition.
- 46 Buisseret 1980, p. 26.
- 47 A pilaster is a protruding column attached to a wall. Coigns are rectangles or squares of stone, brick, wood or concrete, placed at the corners of buildings. Both are decorative features.
- 48 Hyland 1997, p. 2038.

- 49 Corbels are a decorative feature atop the windows, walls or chimney to create the shape of a bracket at the top of a building beneath the cornice.
- 50 LaBelle Prussin has linked Sub-Saharan African courtyard houses to North African Roman and Egyptian houses via influence across the trade routes. Farrar has emphasized a more local building tradition. Prussin 1986, pp. 105-08, 159; and idem, 2008; and Farrar 1996.
- 51 Mark 2002, pp. 43-45, 49.
- 52 "Brazil House" n.d.
- 53 Lokko 2010, p. 5.
- 54 Further research is needed to determine the impact the Tabom may have had on the coastal arts of Ghana.
- 55 In fact, Riis was nicknamed "Osiadan" (builder of buildings) for his skill in building houses. Hyland 1974, pp. 180-81; Akyeampong n.d.
- 56 Some of those trained were West Indian immigrants. The craftsmen under the guidance of the mission, built several variations of these homes in the Akuapem Hills area. Hyland 1993, pp. 161-62.
- 57 Smith 1966, p. 60.
- 58 Hyland 1974, pp. 68-69.
- 59 Thompson 1974, p. 13.
- 60 Sieber 1972, p. 190.
- 61 Flather 1966, p. 120; and Southen 1934, p. 20. Essamuah states, "The group was comprised de Graft, then a probationer; five local preachers, Joseph Smith, John Hagan, John Mills, John Martin, and George Blankson; and fifteen exhorters." Essamuah 2010, p. 15. This team is also listed in Bartels 1965, p. 40.
- 62 Flather 1966, p. 121.
- 63 Hutchison n.d., p. 96.
- 64 Walker 1929, pp. 45, 99, 102.
- 65 Freeman 1844, pp. 74-76.
- 66 Henry Barnes (1800-September 23, 1865) apparently directed part of the Anomabo Mission's construction. He was probably of mixed parentage, born to a "Captain Barnes of a trade schooner" in either Anomabo or Cape Coast. He began as a writer in government service and later became a prosperous timber merchant in Anomabo and Cape Coast. Ibid.; Crooks 1923 (reprint 1973), p. 152; Flather 1966, pp. 123-24; Claridge 1964, vol. 1, p. 451; Sampson 1969, p. 104; Kaplow 1971, p. 62; and Bartels 1965, p. 34.
- 67 Freeman 1844, pp. 45, 99, 102.
- 68 Carey 2011, pp. 59-60.
- 69 Swanzy 1956, p. 96.
- 70 Bartels 1965, pp. 42-43.
- 71 Flather 1966, p. 134; and Bartels 1965, pp. 83, 96, 98.
- 72 Bartels 1965, p. 35.
- 73 Huck and Bauernschmidt 2013, p. 19.
- 74 Cuthbert 1998, p. 257.

- 75 Young 1995, p. 21. Young quotes Bakhtin 1981, p. 360.
- 76 Young 1981, pp. 21-22. Young quotes Bakhtin 1981, p. 361.
- 77 Young 1981, p. 22.
- 78 Carey 2011, p. 182.
- 79 Sundkler and Steed 2000, p. 96.
- 80 For the appropriation of the International Style, see Hess 2006, p. 75; and Postmodernism, see Micots 2010, p. 282.
- 81 Young 1981, p. 22.

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Father of the Nation: Ghanaian Nationalism, Internationalism and the Political Iconography of Kwame Nkrumah, 1957 - 2010

HARCOURT FULLER

Abstract: This article addresses the ways in which Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's prime minister and president, sought visually to propagandize the complementary, yet competing demands of nation-building, Pan-Africanism, and internationalism (most notably Cold War politics and Third World non-alignment) from 1957 to 1966. In order to illustrate the complexities inherent in juggling these three main pillars of his presidency, this article examines the iconography and symbolism of the postage stamps, and to a lesser extent, the national currencies produced during the Nkrumah era. It also notes how every regime that has succeeded Nkrumah, from the National Liberation Council that ousted him from power in a military coup in 1966, to the John Atta Mills administration that came to power in 2010, utilized postage stamps and currency to reevaluate and reinterpret the major milestones in post-colonial Ghana's history. These "symbols of nationhood" and the archival documents that were generated as a result of their production provide scholars with another frame of reference to judge Nkrumah's legacy in the first decade after the centenary of his birth, which was marked in 2009.

Introduction

When seeking to position newly-independent Ghana as a non-aligned African nation-state in the midst of the Cold War, Kwame Nkrumah would frequently use the populist refrain, "we face neither East nor West: We face forward" at political rallies and in public speeches, such as that delivered at the Positive Action Conference for Peace and Security in Africa, held in Accra on 2 April 1960.¹ Ghana, however, like other newly independent nation states in Africa, and indeed other countries in the Third World with strong nationalist leaders, could not escape the political, cultural, military, and economic ramifications of the ideological battle between the United States and the Soviet Union in the post-World War II era. This article analyzes the complementary, yet competing demands of nationalism or nation-building, Pan-Africanism, and internationalism during Kwame Nkrumah's nine years in office as Prime Minister and later President of Ghana from March 1957 to February 1966. It also considers how post-Nkrumah administrations have reconstructed and reconsidered his projects and legacy, beginning with the military coup that ousted him from power in 1966, until the yearlong commemoration of his birth centenary in 2009-2010.

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At first glance, it might appear that the history and legacy of the Nkrumah era within and beyond Ghana's borders have already been exhaustively covered in the literature; that would not be an incorrect statement. Previous scholars of Ghana's national and international history and politics under Nkrumah have relied on traditional written sources of information such as those found at the national archives of Britain and Ghana, among other countries, in addition to the myriad of books, academic articles, and writings published in the popular press, as well as first-hand and biographical accounts of the Nkrumah state.²

Methodologically, this article takes a different approach to analyzing and evaluating the history and political legacy of Nkrumah by utilizing visual sources that have either been understudied or outright neglected by other scholars. The article's arguments are validated by archival material and secondary sources related to these visual documents. In previous publications, I argued that Nkrumah's expressions of his nationalist, Pan-Africanist, and internationalist projects, ideologies, and strategies encompassed the propagandistic use of political iconography and idioms, which I have termed "symbols of nationhood," "symbols of nationalism," or "symbolic nationalism."³ This is defined as the political and propagandistic use of symbols including money, postage stamps, monuments, museums, dress, non-verbal maxims (such as the Adinkra symbols used in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire), the national anthem, emblems, and both national and party flags to articulate a particular political philosophy. Yet these symbols of Ghanaian nationhood also had trans-national implications, as they were embellished with iconography emphasizing the politics of the Cold War, the promotion of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the creation of a United States of Africa (Pan-Africanism), and support for international organizations such as the United Nations. An increasing number of scholars from a variety of disciplines have argued for the use of visual, semiotic sources in academic works as legitimate and useful forms of historical evidence.⁴

While the majority of these visual sources were produced during the Nkrumah era, many were issued immediately after he was ousted by the National Liberation Council (NLC), while others were developed by the Limann (People's National Party—PNP), Rawlings (Provisional National Defence Council—NDC, and the National Democratic Congress—NDC), Kufuor (New Patriotic Party—NPP), and Mills (National Democratic Congress) administrations. Nonetheless, very few scholars have examined these rich and revealing visual archives, including those of the Ghana Post Company Limited (GPC), which houses primary archival documents and images relating to the issuance of national postage stamps dating to as early as 1955. The holdings of the GPC Archives demonstrate how the iconography of postage stamps was an essential aspect of Nkrumah's nation building, Pan-Africanist, and Cold War political propaganda machine. While a small number of academics have conducted research in these archives, most may not have been aware of, or had access to the hundreds of documents previously thought lost, which I uncovered in the philatelic vaults of the Ghana Post Company. These finds cover the critical years of Nkrumah's rule.⁵ In addition to stamps and associated archival material, I will also tangentially analyze how the iconography and symbolism of Ghana's national currency reflects upon and problematizes Nkrumah's record and legacy over the last fifty plus years.

Nation-Building

After becoming Prime Minister of Ghana, one of Nkrumah's major, but daunting tasks was to achieve national unity and construct a singular national identity. The years that he spent living and traveling overseas, particularly in the United States and Britain, as well as his studies of modern nations and nationalism gave him a detailed level of understanding about the symbolism and substance involved in nation-building. He found that there were certain basic tenets of nationhood, which modern nation-states had in common, and which they used to iconize their ideals, independence, sovereignty, development, promise, and uniqueness among nations. Nkrumah felt that Ghana would have to emulate these traditions, albeit in an Africanized way. This included constructing a national narrative that centered on having a glorious historical past and rich traditions, as well as having Founding Father(s), national heroes, a currency, postage stamps, a flag, an anthem, a coat of arms, museums, and monuments. While this article is confined to the examination of postage stamps and currency, which were the most frequently used and widely circulated symbols of nationhood, I have analyzed the full breadth of visual sources in greater detail in other publications.⁶

As a priority, the Nkrumah government sought to express Ghana's economic independence and solidify his image as the country's Founding Father, by establishing a national bank and national currencies. After being inaugurated in 1958, the Bank of Ghana immediately issued Ghana's first national currency, the Ghana Pound. A new monetary system and currency name-change were introduced in 1965, with the launch of the Cedi. Both national currencies were used to market Ghana's independence, autonomy, and hoped-for national unity, and to promote the Nkrumah cult of personality, through a variety of nationalist iconography. For example, Nkrumah's head was minted on Ghanaian banknotes and coins (including commemorative coins) throughout his presidency.

To underscore his self-promoting and self-aggrandizing claim that he was Ghana's sole Founding Father, the honorific Latin title *Civitatis Ghanensis Conditor* (Founder of the State of Ghana) encircled the image of Nkrumah's head on Ghana's new national coins. In fact, the honor of being minted on the national coins and paper money was not afforded to any other Ghanaian citizen, including the other members of Ghana's "Big Six" who also fought for independence, at least not while Nkrumah remained in office. The outgoing British colonial officials, and members of the political opposition to Nkrumah's party, most notably Ga and Asante chiefs, rejected Nkrumah's assertions that his actions were compelled by the need to make Ghanaians aware of their new-found national independence, which Nkrumah argued was only achievable through minting the national currency with his image, coupled with other nationalist iconography.⁷

Nkrumah's nation-building projects were also portrayed on the new Ghanaian postage stamps, which are "probably the most common pictorial device in Africa."⁸ The European colonial powers had utilized the iconography of postage stamps to portray native Africans and their environment as the racialized and exotic other, to "brand" their colonies and to legitimize their rule over Africans. As Posnansky argues, "...the earliest [colonial] stamps of Africa depicted European symbols of authority: the ruler's head, the Kaiser's yacht, or the allegorical symbols of freedoms and values that imperial powers failed to provide for their African

subjects.”⁹ Similarly, as Mwangi has shown for colonial East Africa, and Cusack in the case of the Portuguese Empire, European powers utilized the iconography and language on colonial currencies and postage stamps to represent their notions of Africa as exotic, childlike, wild, and ready to be tamed by the monarch whose head overlooked the African terrain over which s/he presided.¹⁰

After independence, African statesmen would, for the most part, emulate the former European colonial rulers by utilizing postage stamps to proclaim and legitimize their own authority and to build national identity. However, while the stamps of the former European powers focused on portraying Africans as the colonized other on the territorial periphery of empire, African nationalists used stamps to normatively depict their societies as the focal point of a new, postcolonial world with an optimistic future. The usefulness of postage stamps (and national money) as a means of spreading the political messages of the state was not lost on Nkrumah. Upon establishing the Ghana Postal Service at independence, the Nkrumah government abandoned the British Crown Agents, which had supplied Gold Coast stamps during colonial times, and turned to a 1957 American start-up company, the Ghana Philatelic Agency (GPA), to market its new national stamps.¹¹ As the GPA’s business expanded beyond Ghana, its name changed to the Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation (IGPC).¹² Although the London-based security printers Harrison and Sons, Ltd. continued to print Ghanaian postage stamps, Ghana also broke ranks with British Commonwealth protocol by having some stamps printed by the E.A. Wright Bank Note Company, located in Philadelphia, not far from Lincoln University, what where Nkrumah had attended. It was the IGPC, moreover, that had the exclusive worldwide rights to distribute Ghanaian stamps, to the astonishment of more experienced philatelic companies and businessmen such as Jacques Minkus who felt entitled to get the contract to market Ghana’s postage stamps.¹³ However, the IGPC was not just a marketer of Ghanaian stamps, but also a kind of public relations firm that was tasked with projecting a good image of Ghana to American government officials and the general public, as we shall see later.

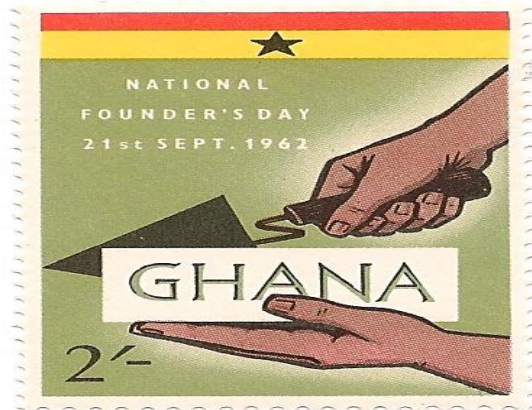
The issuance of Ghanaian stamps came under the direct mandate of the Cabinet, over which he presided. The Cabinet appointed a Stamp Advisory Committee (SAC), itself presided over by the Minister of Communications (seconded by the Director of Posts and Telecommunications), which made recommendations regarding the themes, designs, denominations, and other aspects of the production of permanent and commemorative postage stamps. The SAC drew from a local and worldwide panel of commissioned artists who submitted specific designs as requested. The agency then made recommendations to the Cabinet, which had the final word on which designs to circulate and which to reject.¹⁴ To commemorate the first anniversary of Ghana’s independence, the SAC ordered the printing of the new nation’s very first postage stamp—called the Nkrumah or Independence Commemorative Stamp (figure 1.1). This stamp series carried an image of the map of Africa with the location and name of Ghana highlighted. It also had an image of a soaring palm-nut vulture (*Gypohierax Angolensis*), otherwise known as the vulturine fish eagle, African eagle or “Aggrey’s eagle.”¹⁵ On the stamp, the image of the bird faced the portrait of Prime Minister Nkrumah. As the Ghana Philatelic Agency states, “The four values of the Nkrumah set all have the portrait of Dr. Nkrumah on them. This pictorial expression of Dr. Nkrumahs [sic] power

(having replaced the picture of the Queen) was a simple and effective way of overcoming the language barriers, and thus the stamps brought the news to the whole nation, regardless of language differences."¹⁶ However, this was to the distaste of the Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO), which expected the stamps and money of the new state, which had gained independence as a Dominion in the British Commonwealth (until it became a Republic in 1960), to bear Queen Elizabeth's image.¹⁷ The CRO complained that Nkrumah "has already created one undesirable precedent in the shape of an Independence stamp bearing not the Queen's but the Prime Minister's effigy..."¹⁸

Figures 1.1–1.9 Postage Stamps Illustrating Nkrumah's Nationalism and Nation-Building Projects



1.1 Ghana Independence Commemoration
March 1957



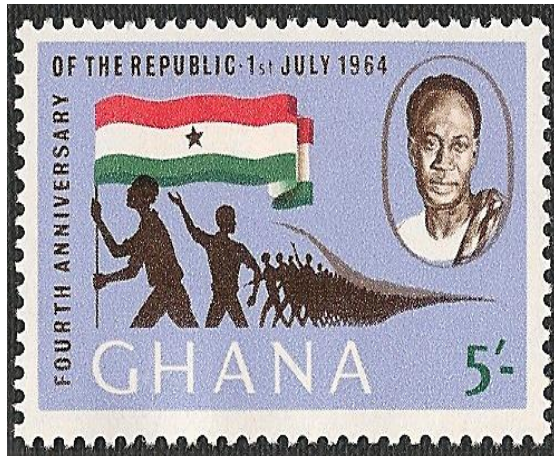
1.2 National Founder's Day 21st Sept. 1962



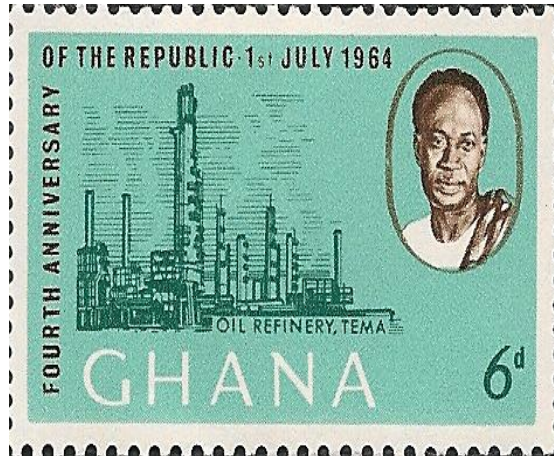
1.3 Nkrumah State Parliament House



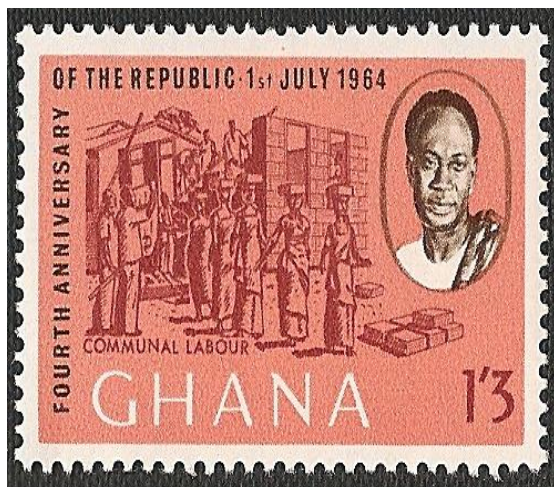
1.4 Inauguration of Ghana Airways July 1958



1.5 Fourth Anniversary of the Republic 1st July 1964



1.6 Oil Refinery, Tema



1.7 Communal Labour



1.8 Harvesting Corn in a State Farm



1.9 Volta River Project

The CRO's protest was also in all likelihood a disapproval of Nkrumah's increasing business links with non-British merchants such as Manfred Lehmann. Like the GPA, however, Nkrumah argued that there was a deliberate political reason for replacing the Queen's image on postage stamps (and currency) with his likeness. In an article in a London newspaper answering critics' disapproval of his actions, Nkrumah wrote:

My Cabinet have decided, with my agreement, to put my head on the coinage, because many of my people cannot read or write. They've got to be shown that they are now really independent. And they can only be shown by signs. When they buy stamps they will see my picture—an African like themselves—and they will say "Aiee...look here is our leader on the stamps, we are truly a free people."¹⁹

This issue would haunt Nkrumah throughout his presidency, and beyond. In addition to the aforementioned stamp, the Cabinet issued other stamps to symbolically consolidate Nkrumah's power and promote his personality cult. This included an annual series commemorating his birthday on 21 September, which was dubbed "National Founder's Day" (figure 1.2). The particular stamp in figure 1.2 had a symbolically direct reference to the idea of nation building. Its iconography shows an African's hands holding a brick inscribed with the name "Ghana," and clutching a trowel, sending the message that it was up to Ghanaians to build their new state—one brick at a time.

There were three additional, interconnected strands of symbolic nationalism and nation building portrayed on Nkrumah-era postage stamps, namely, political, socio-cultural, and economic nationalism. Stamps espousing political nationalism included the marking of major political milestones and ideological themes, such as the "First Anniversary of Independence 6 March 1958" series. In addition to portraying the national flag, the four stamps in this series depicted themes of modernization such as the state-owned "Ambassador Hotel," and political themes including the "State Opening of Parliament 1957" (which was attended by the Duchess of Kent who represented Queen Elizabeth), the "National Monument," and the "Coat of Arms," and a stamp titled "Nkrumah Statue Parliament House" (figure 1.3) depicting the Prime Minister's statue facing the luminous rising sun. In the latter stamp, the statue's raised right hand symbolized Nkrumah's commanding of the birth of a new nation-state (like the rising sun), Ghana being imagined as the loadstar of African liberation. "Republic Day," which was first celebrated on 1 July 1960 when Ghana became a republic, was also an important political achievement that was commemorated on postage stamps. The Standing Development Committee of the SAC went so far as to state that "great prominence is now given to the Republic celebrations than to Independence celebrations."²⁰

These stamps also featured socio-cultural themes, included sporting events such as African soccer tournaments and the Olympics, which demonstrated the prowess of the Ghanaian athlete through images of victorious and competitive athletes. Healthcare advances and quality of life issues such as the "World United Against Malaria" (December 1962), "Freedom From Hunger Campaign" (March 1963), and "Red Cross Centenary 1863 – 1963" were also featured on stamps.

Finally, the illustration of economic themes on stamps, particularly those promoting modernization and industrialization, were also an important aspect of Nkrumah's nation-building projects. According to Child, "Postal themes stressing industrialization and modernization can also carry a message of the economic pride a country has in its status as an emerging developed country."²¹ Such stamps included the sixtieth anniversary of Ghana Railway (1903-1963), showing an image of an old and a modern locomotive. The "Inauguration of Ghana Airways July 1958" series had four designs, which symbolized the new nation's entry into the modern world of aeronautics: (1) The Ghana Eagle symbolically encircling the world; (2) a Britannia aircraft; (3) a Boeing Stratocruiser aircraft and an albatross in flight (figure 1.4); and (4) the West African Vulturine Fish Eagle and a jet aircraft in flight.²² Mining of commodities such as gold and diamonds were also promoted, as was agricultural production, including growing and harvesting of cocoa, logging, fishing, and commercial flora and fauna.

By 1964, Ghana had become a one-party state under the Convention People's Party (CPP). Postage stamps issued during and after that year reflected this political change, such as the "Fourth Anniversary of the Republic 1st July 1964" series. These stamps featured several graphical themes articulating more socialist ideals and promoting state-led economic development projects and industries. Figure 1.5, for example, is reminiscent of some East Bloc postage stamps, which typically have an image of the party leader and president overlooking the masses who are being shown the way forward by a (CPP) flag-bearer. The other stamps in this series, all bearing Nkrumah's image, included "Oil Refinery Tema," "Communal Labour," and "Harvesting Corn in a State Farm" (figures 1.6, 1.7 and 1.8). The importance of the Volta River Hydroelectric Project (figure 1.9) to both Nkrumah's nation-building efforts and the Cold War is discussed more fully below. Finally, the "Ghana New Currency 19th July 1965" series advertised the changeover from the British sterling to the American-style decimal currency system, while representing a further distancing of Ghana from the remnants of the colonial state.

Pan-Africanism

In addition to his nationalist projects, Nkrumah was also a staunch anti-colonialist and Pan-Africanist who tried but failed to establish and potentially lead a United States of Africa. The visual record, especially postage stamps with Pan-Africanist themes, illustrates his efforts at promoting a common African socio-political, economic and cultural entity. In April 1958, Nkrumah convened the Conference of Independent African States in Accra (otherwise known as the Accra Conference), which eight participating states attended by—Ghana, Liberia, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt (representing the United Arab Republic or UAR), the Sudan, and Ethiopia, as well as members of various liberation movements on the continent. These independent nations discussed their common problems and challenges, including issues of national sovereignty, national identity, the need for knowledge and information sharing, working within the framework of the United Nations to advocate for decolonization, and other Pan-Africanist goals.

A commemorative series of stamps was issued for the event, one of which had a map of Africa showing the locations of the eight participating countries and a scroll wrapped around

the continent, bearing the legend “Conference of Independent African States” (figure 2.1). The two other stamps in this series featured an image of a burning Torch of Freedom set in front of the continent. The stamps noticeably excluded the Union of South Africa and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (or Central African Federation). This is not surprising since Nkrumah and his allies opposed these countries over their racist and undemocratic policies against black Africans and other disenfranchised groups, their suppression of regional African liberation movements, and their opposition to Ghana’s entry into the Commonwealth.

Following on the heels of the Accra Conference, Ghana and Guinea formed an alliance in November 1958, and, with the addition of Mali in April 1961, a three-nation union was born. The Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union, also known as the Union of African States, would be short-lived, lasting only to 1962. The Accra Conference also established 15 April as “Africa Freedom Day” (later known as African Liberation Day) to mark the progress of the various liberation movements and as a day to express anti-colonialist and Pan-Africanist sentiments and actions. Africa Freedom Day was commemorated each year on Ghanaian postage stamps, “in view of the part being played by Ghana in Africa’s fight for freedom.”²³ The 15 April 1961 Africa Freedom Day stamp illustrated in figure 2.2 depicted the flags of nine independent African territories encircling the African continent.

In January 1961, another Pan-Africanist gathering, the Casablanca Conference, convened in the Moroccan capital as an emergency meeting to address the Congo Crisis. Attending were the countries that would become known as the Casablanca Group—Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, the UAR, and the Algerian Provisional Government (the FLN).²⁴ The Nkrumah government authorized commemorative postage stamps to mark the anniversary of this conference and to promote peace in Africa, as the symbolism of figure 2.3 shows with the olive-branch-carrying white dove. Most of the Casablanca Group countries were Lumumbist, non-aligned, and socialist. They also had a vested interest in the Congo Crisis, having contingents in the United Nations peacekeeping force that Patrice Lumumba had requested to mediate the conflict. Upon Lumumba’s assassination, Nkrumah showed his support for the memory of his comrade in the struggle by authorizing the issuance of the “1st Anniversary of the Death of Patrice Lumumba Premier of the Congo” stamp series issued on 12 February 1962 (figure 2.4). The recommendation to issue this commemorative stamp was made by the government of Morocco and the delegates to the African Economic Meeting, held in Conakry in May 1961.²⁵ As figure 2.5 shows, Nkrumah and other Third World leaders celebrated the United Nations as a platform for African and world liberty, peace, prosperity, and human rights, although the international organization was perceived as being complicit in the death of Lumumba.

Two years later, the Casablanca Conference was followed by another gathering in the Ethiopian capital. One outcome was the African Unity Charter, adopted on 25 May 1963, which was commemorated by postal issues such as the “First Anniversary of the Signing of the African Unity Charter” stamp series (figure 2.6). One stamp in this series carried the French phrase “Unite Africaine,” symbolizing Nkrumah’s interest in uniting Africa across linguistic lines. The African Unity Charter established the Organization of African Unity or OAU, also commemorated on numerous postage stamp issues such as in figure 2.7.

Nkrumah also promoted African arts, culture and the sciences as a means of encouraging Pan-African unity and progress. In Ghana, he appropriated the glorious Asante past (as a vast

expanding trading and warrior kingdom in Western Africa) through museum exhibits and monetary and postal iconography. He also identified with other great African civilizations as a means of anchoring the regime to a great continental heritage and rich traditions and cultures. An example of this is the 1963 UNESCO “Save the Monuments of Nubia” stamp series, with images of Rameses II at Abu Simbel (figure 2.8), Queen Nefertari, and the Sphinx at Seba. Ghana and other African countries issued these stamps to bring awareness to the destruction of these monuments caused by construction of the Aswan Dam in Egypt. The Ghanaian stamps in this series featured the name of the country as well as the flag, adjacent to the Nubian monuments, perhaps to equate the glories of Ancient Nubian with (Ancient) Ghana. Ironically, the Aswan Dam, which threatened the Nubia monuments, was built by Egyptian premier Gamal Abdel Nasser, who was both Nkrumah’s political ally and rival on issues including the Pan-African and Non-Aligned Movements. It was therefore ironic that the government of

Figures 2.1–2.12 Ghanaian Postage Stamps Illustrating Kwame Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanist Politics



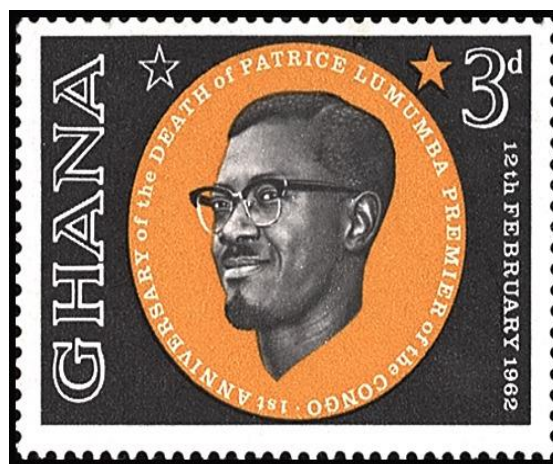
2.1 Conference of Independent African States
Accra 1958



2.2 Africa Freedom Day



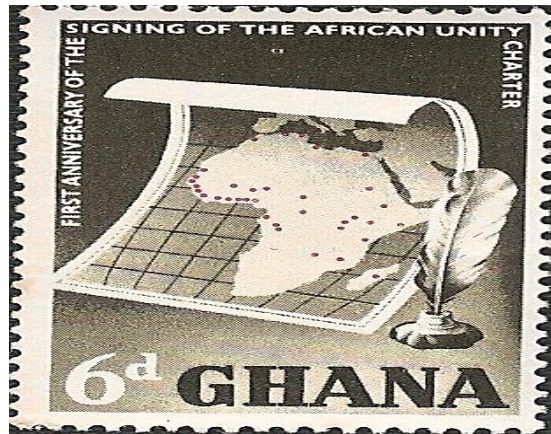
2.3 1st Anniversary Casablanca Conference
Jan 4, 1962



2.4 1st Anniversary of the Death of Patrice Lumumba
premier of the Congo February 1962



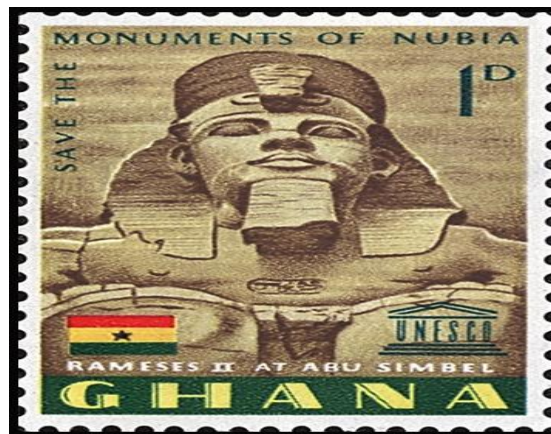
2.5 United Nations Human Rights Day
December 1960



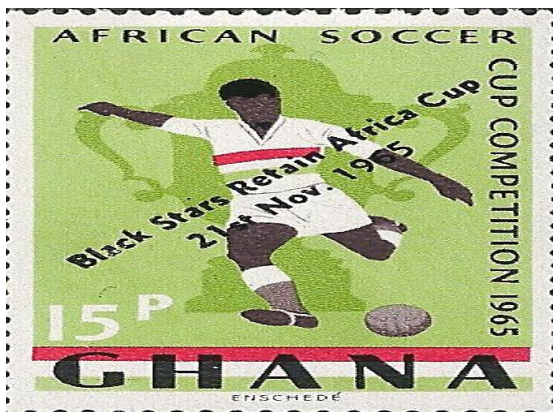
2.6 First Anniversary of the Signing of the African
Unity Charter '64 10th



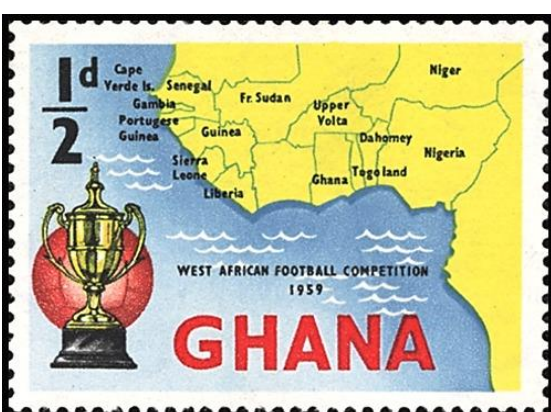
2.7 OAU Summit Conference Accra 1965



2.8 Save the Monuments of Nubia 1963



2.9 African Soccer Cup Competition 1965



2.10 West African Football Competition 1959



2.11 G. Washington Carver 1964



2.12 Inauguration of the Black Star Line 1957

Ghana issued stamps advocating the protection of these threatened sites, which were endangered not by “neo-colonialists,” but by a fellow leader of an African country.

Other stamps with Pan-Africanist themes commemorated continental sporting events such as the victory of the national soccer team (the Black Stars) in the “African Soccer Cup Competition 1965” (figure 2.9). Regional integration through sports was promoted with issues such as the “West African Football Competition October 1959” series (figure 2.10), played for the Kwame Nkrumah Gold Cup. Countries that participated in this competition represented Lusophone (Cape Verde and Portuguese Guinea), Francophone (Senegal, Guinea, French Sudan, Upper Volta, Dahomey, Niger, and Togoland), and Anglophone nations (Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, and Nigeria).

The courting of African-Americans, Caribbeans, and other blacks in the Diaspora was also an important aspect of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanist dreams. To this end, he had invited many prominent and highly educated blacks to join his government to serve in formal and informal capacities, including Arthur Lewis, Ras Makonnen, George Padmore, and W.E.B. Du Bois, among others. Nkrumah also celebrated the achievements of blacks in the Diaspora as an inspiration to Ghanaians and all Africans. Thus, Ghana issued a UNESCO Week (1964) stamp series featuring two scientists, one with Albert Einstein and another featuring the African American scientist George Washington Carver with an image of a peanut (groundnut) plant from which he developed numerous products (figure 2.11).

In 1958, a series of stamps was issued commemorating the inauguration of the Black Star Shipping Line, a joint venture between the governments of Ghana and Israel.²⁶ The stamps depicted the history of navigation, showing a Viking ship and a medieval galleon, in addition to a modern cargo vessel (figure 2.12). Nkrumah borrowed the name of Ghana’s national shipping company from the Jamaican-born Pan-Africanist Marcus Garvey, who had incorporated the short-lived Black Star Line in Delaware in 1919. In line with his Back-to-Africa agenda, Garvey had founded the company to facilitate the transportation of goods and peoples of African descent between the Americas, Africa, and other worldwide markets and destinations.²⁷ Like Garvey, Nkrumah most likely intended to use the Black Star Line to facilitate the movement of

African peoples and commodities across the continent and throughout the worldwide Diaspora and beyond.

Internationalism: The Cold War and the Non-Aligned Movement

The third major hallmark of the Nkrumah era was his focus on internationalism as it related to international events, inter-governmental organizations, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Cold War. Stamps commemorating United Nations Day (figure 3.1), the United Nations Trusteeship Council (figure 3.2), and United Nations Human Rights Day, as well as Ghana's participation in global sporting events such as the Commonwealth and Olympic Games (figure 3.3) also served to legitimize Ghana's status as an emerging but influential part of the Third World bloc. The UN was of particular importance to Nkrumah's Pan-Africanist internationalism; the symbolism of figure 3.1 implies that the black and white worlds, or the Third World and the West, could achieve equality and live in friendship through the mediation of the United Nations. As Nkrumah stated in the National Assembly on 4 September 1958:

Ghana regards the faithful adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter as an integral part of her foreign policy and we shall continue to co-operate fully in the activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. It is a matter of crucial importance to us and to our sister African nations that the United Nations Organization should become an effective instrument for the preservation of world peace.²⁸

Moreover, Ghana and other countries in the Non-Aligned Movement issued a "Conference of Non-Aligned Countries" series of stamps to commemorate the event held in Belgrade in September 1961, advocating for world peace and non-nuclear proliferation. The symbolism of the Belgrade Conference stamps included a world map over which hovered an unbroken chain and an olive branch, an olive branch at a podium (figure 3.4), as well as a white dove carrying an olive branch (figure 3.5). In June 1962, the "World Without the Bomb" conference was held in Ghana. Stamps commemorating this "Accra Assembly" had similar symbols promoting non-alignment and world peace, including a stamp designed by the Israeli artist Maxim Shamir, which featured a graphic of an exploded atomic bomb in the shape of a skull (figures 3.6). The issuance of these stamps was in protest of the development of nuclear power in Africa, especially as a weapon of war for the colonial powers.

In 1959, along with an alliance of Western pacifists, Ghana embarked on a campaign to stop France from detonating its first nuclear bomb in the Sahara region of Algeria (its then North African colony) the following year. When this alliance failed to stop France from nuclear testing beginning in February 1960, Nkrumah recalled his ambassador to France. As France detonated its third atomic bomb in the Sahara in 1960, Egypt, Morocco, and Nigeria joined Ghana in expressing African outrage over these actions. In 1962, in further support of the non-nuclear proliferation movement, Nkrumah financed and hosted "the World Without the Bomb" disarmament assembly in Accra.²⁹ Ghana issued a similarly themed postage stamp to commemorate the event. Nationalists, Pan-Africanists, and their non-aligned allies in the West saw these tests on African soil as an affront to African sovereignty and neutrality. Notwithstanding the failure to stop French testing in Africa, Nkrumah promised to "support

wholeheartedly the efforts of the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations to make Africa a Nuclear Free Zone."³⁰ However, the Ghanaian premier and his supporters were utterly unable to stop the forward march of the nuclear age in Africa or elsewhere.

Symbols of nationhood, particularly postage stamps, can also be used as historical evidence to ascertain Cold War alliances, especially during the wave of decolonization in Africa.

According to Posnansky:

Unlike the colonial [postage stamp] issues, all the African countries began to proclaim their heroes from their own and the rest of Africa's past and from the struggle against colonialism...They also demonstrated their political allegiances, with Marx and Lenin on Guinean stamps and Kennedy and American figures on those from anglophone [sic] and Americanophile countries. The stamps of North Africa proclaimed pan-Arab unity and solidarity with the Palestinian cause.³¹

Many of Ghana's stamp and currency designs and themes followed along the lines of Soviet and other socialist models of using graphic elements to promote the state ideology and the centrality of its party and national leader. However, the Cabinet's Stamp Advisory Committee exclusively depicted British and American leaders and not Soviet ones on Ghana's postage stamps, promoting the nation's international relations with the West. For example, Ghana's Commonwealth ties and foreign policy were emphasized by stamps that commemorated the royal visits of Prince Philip in November 1959, as well as Queen Elizabeth in November 1961 (figure 3.7).

Initially, Americans found much promise in the Nkrumah administration. To underscore the importance that the United States placed on an emergent, independent Africa in the context of the Cold War, President Eisenhower dispatched Vice President and Mrs. Richard Nixon to attend the Ghana Independence Day celebrations on 6 March 1957. "This ushered in the very warm and friendly relations existing between the two countries."³² Eisenhower then invited Nkrumah to the White House in July 1958, which was hailed as "the most important milestone in American-Ghanaian relations."³³ After meeting with President Eisenhower, Nkrumah accepted an invitation by Prime Minister Diefenbaker to visit Canada. As figure 3.8 shows, this important state visit between Nkrumah and the heads of the two North American giants was commemorated on the Nkrumah stamps, which were overprinted with the legend "PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT, U.S.A. AND CANADA." Nkrumah also visited the Kennedy White House on 8 March 1961, making him the first foreign head of state to visit the United States after JFK became president.³⁴ This underscores the importance that the Kennedy Administration attached to wooing African leaders into the capitalist camp.

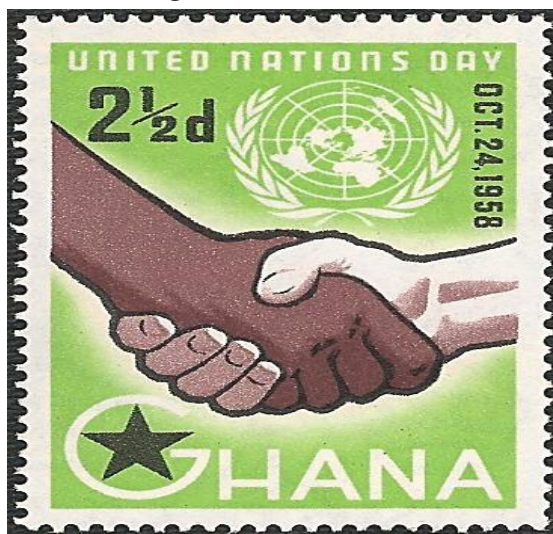
Of course, Nkrumah's visit to Washington was as much about economics as it was politics. His government badly needed enormous sums of money to finance the Volta River hydroelectric project. Despite the seemingly amicable diplomatic dealings between Ghana and the United States, Robert Kennedy (RFK) was extremely apprehensive about supporting the Nkrumah regime. The President's brother was concerned with Nkrumah's increasing hold on power and his suppression of his political adversaries. RFK unsuccessfully urged JFK not to fund the Volta Project.³⁵ Nonetheless, President Kennedy's quest to keep newly-independent

African countries in the Western camp, and thus out of Soviet hands, outweighed these other concerns.

Ghana also issued stamps commemorating various American presidents such as Abraham Lincoln (figures 3.9 and 3.10), John F. Kennedy (figure 3.11) after his assassination, and human rights activists such as Eleanor Roosevelt (figure 3.12). Nkrumah had attended Lincoln University and obviously admired the man after whom the university was named. Furthermore, the two had several things in common; both were born to poor parents in rural settings, and were elected to office at critical times in their countries' history. The theme for the 150th birthday anniversary of Lincoln stamp in figure 3.9, which shows a boyish-looking Nkrumah standing in admiration at the feet of Lincoln's iconic memorial, was suggested by the government of Ghana, designed by British stamp designer Michael Goaman, and was taken at the Lincoln Monument during Nkrumah's 1958 visit to Washington.³⁶ According to David Scott, author and expert on European stamp designs:

Michael [Goaman] was also an astute observer of political change and its impact on the cultural environment. His many designs for the newly independent countries of Africa, produced in the late 1950s and early 60s, attest to this skill. In an outstanding design of 1959, based on a photograph reproduced in *Life* magazine the previous year, the head and shoulders of the newly elected Ghanaian president, Kwame Nkrumah, are silhouetted against a statue of Abraham Lincoln. A special Goaman touch is the way the name "Ghana" is imposed on the African president's torso, communicating in purely graphic terms the stamp's implicit message that the great American democratic tradition of Lincoln is carried forward in Africa by a native president.³⁷

Figures 3.1–3.12 Nkrumah-Era and Ghanaian Postage Stamps Relating to the Cold War and the Non-Aligned Movement



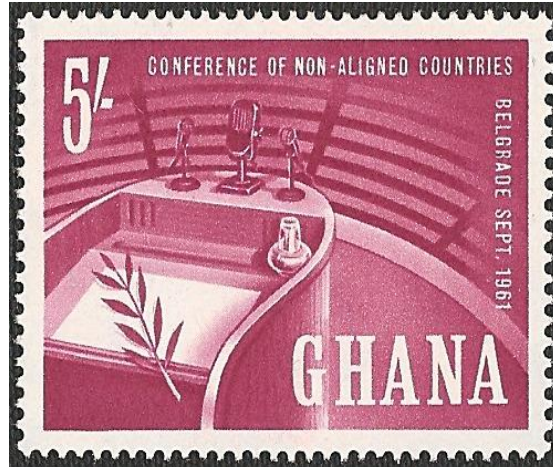
3.1 United Nations Day 1958



3.2 United Nations Trusteeship Council 1959

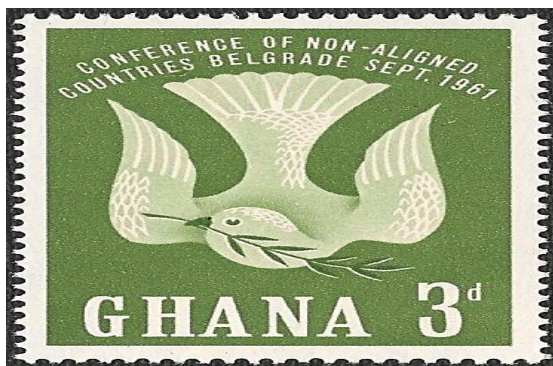


3.3 Olympic Games 1960

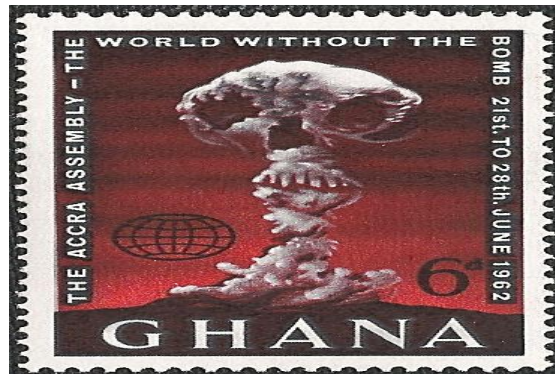


3.4 Conference of Non-Aligned Countries Belgrade

Sept. 1961



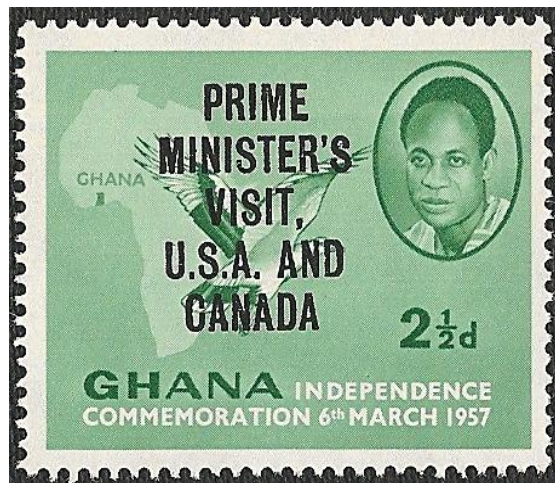
3.5 Conference of Non-Aligned Countries Belgrade



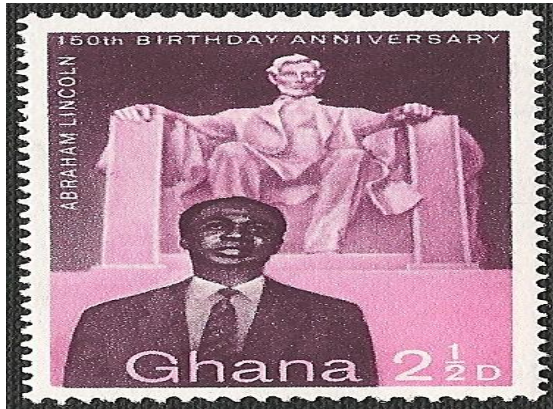
3.6 World Without the Bomb 1962 Sept. 1961



3.7 Visit of Queen Elizabeth November 1961



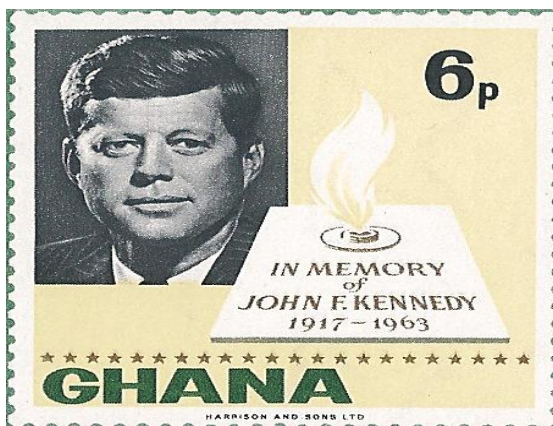
3.8 Prime Minister's Visit to U.S.A. and Canada
Overprint '58



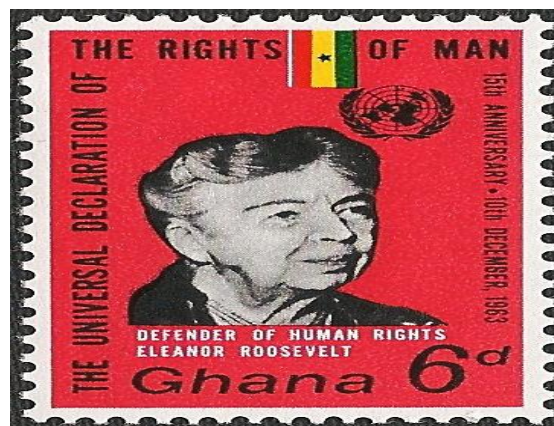
3.9 Abraham Lincoln 150th Birthday Anniversary '59



3.10 Abraham Lincoln Memorial '65



3.11 In Memory of John F. Kennedy 1917-1963



3.12 The Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man
15th Anniversary December 1963

Ghana on 17 May 1965 issued a series of postage stamps commemorating the death centenary of Abraham Lincoln. One such stamp (figure 3.10) featured the words of Abraham Lincoln, "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in." These two stamps (figures 3.9 and 3.10) suggest that Nkrumah saw himself as the modern day successor of Lincoln in the African context, "to finish the work" of national liberation that Lincoln pioneered. For just as how Lincoln is credited with freeing the slaves on the American sub-continent, Nkrumah saw himself as the man tasked with freeing the African continent from (neo)colonialism and economic bondage, although other African leaders from rival political blocs saw this self-appointment as problematic.

In addition to marketing Ghanaian philatelic products overseas, the Ghana Philatelic Agency also utilized the nation's postage stamps as a public relations tool to promote Ghana's (and Nkrumah's) good name in the United States. The GPA promoted the notion that Nkrumah was Ghana's, and by extension, Africa's political savior. In their first newsletter, which was circulated among philatelists in the United States and other countries, the GPA wrote:

This nations (sic) independence was gained chiefly thru the tireless efforts of its Prime Minister, the brilliant, American educated Hon. Dr. K. Nkrumah...He has won the overwhelming admiration of all people for his exceptional

achievements...Ghana today is a real democratic republic, united under the leadership of Dr. Nkrumah.³⁸

The GPA also tried to make Ghanaian nationalism and Pan-Africanism popular in official American government circles, both at the state and federal levels. For instance, a set of the Ghana Independence Day commemorative stamps was given to New York Governor William Averell Harriman, who signed the Ghana Independence Day Declaration. "March 6th, 1958 was declared GHANA INDEPENDENCE DAY for the State of New York by the Governor in honor of the new countries' [sic] achievements within one year of its independence."³⁹ The Agency also promoted Pan-Africanism at the highest levels of the American government. This was the case, for example, with the 1958 issue of the Conference of Independent African States postage stamps (figure 2.1). "When the African Conference stamps were issued this year, Vice Pres. Nixon was happy to express his interest in Ghana's affairs by accepting a presentation of specially mounted stamps, presented by Mrs. Manfred R. Lehmann of the Ghana Philatelic Agency."⁴⁰ The GPA went further in advocating, through its literature and direct contacts within the Eisenhower administration, local and state officials, and the influential and well-off American philatelists, that the United States should embrace Nkrumah's Pan-Africanist programs, which they felt could benefit Washington in the long run:

Now we have a chance to back an African nation which is really friendly to us, and has all the earmarks of a staunch bulwark of democracy, and help it into the driver's seat as far as the leadership of African affairs is concerned. By supporting the African Conference, we help shift the attention of the world to Ghana as the mouthpiece of Africa. And our interest will encourage friendship and loyalty between the United States and Ghana and its African neighbors.⁴¹

Furthermore, the GPA cited the military bases that the United States already maintained in some of the countries participating in the Accra Conference, including Morocco, Libya, and Ethiopia, Washington's historical ties with Liberia, and its political support for Tunisia and Sudan as further reasons to support Pan-Africanism.⁴²

Nkrumah thought that one of the critical aspects of independence was the attainment of a vibrant economic system that would generate wealth for the wellbeing of the nation, without relying too heavily on outside aid. In the chapter titled "Building a New Nation" in *I Speak of Freedom*, Nkrumah declared that "with the achievement of Independence...I began to concentrate on the long-term objectives; economic freedom for Ghana, and African emancipation and Unity."⁴³ Nkrumah pursued a socialist policy that was characterized by government control of the means of generating money, through rapid industrialization, the indigenization of industry, and small-scale businesses. As Nkrumah stated in *Africa Must Unite*:

In the industrial sphere, our aim has been to encourage the establishment of plants where we have a natural advantage in local resources and labour or where we can produce essential commodities required for development or for domestic consumption. During 1961, over 60 new factories were opened. Among them was [sic] a distillery, a coconut oil factory, a brewery, a milk-processing plant, and a lorry and bicycle assembly plant.⁴⁴

He sought to balance his domestic monetary policies, however, under the banner of nationalism with the need for direct foreign investments. Despite being a staunch nationalist and Pan-Africanist, Nkrumah pretended not to be indifferent to the fact that, in order to build the nation, Ghana needed outside financial assistance, often from many of the same companies that were a part of the British colonial establishment. He outlined that Ghana's foreign policy "...was based on economic and cultural co-operation with all countries..."⁴⁵ He concluded:

In regard to investment from abroad, it would be ungenerous if we did not acknowledge the great value to Ghana of the investments already made here by foreign companies and individuals. It is the intention of my Government, and the wish of the country, to do all we can to encourage such investments, to protect the interests of those who have already invested, and to attract new investors.⁴⁶

The embrace of modernity and the promotion and exhibition of science and technology for economic development were also key ingredients in Nkrumah's nation-building plans. To this end, the CPP government received aid for his modernization and industrial development schemes from both the East and West blocs. The British supplied the aircraft for the new Ghana Airways after independence. In the 1960s, Nkrumah embarked on an ambitious plan to rapidly industrialize Ghana, even going ahead with Soviet-backed plans to build a nuclear reactor as part of Ghana's energy mix, which never actually materialized.⁴⁷

The centerpiece of Ghana's industrialization projects was the ambitious and symbolic Akosombo/Volta River hydroelectric plant, which was originally commissioned and financed by the British and completed by American engineers and financiers.⁴⁸ Nkrumah wanted to use the Volta River dam to launch the African industrial revolution within one generation, for he and his senior advisors believed that they needed to have "power" to develop Ghana's infrastructure. Through its postal promotions, the GPA also did its part to tout Ghana as a great candidate to receive American economic assistance through the American financing of the Volta River Dam:

The stage is set for real progress in our position in Africa. This government may soon also extend financial help towards the improvement of economic and social conditions there. Such help is not only idealistic but can pay back handsome dividends – take the case of the huge Volta River Project in Ghana, which, if we help realize it, will give the Free World an almost unlimited source of aluminum and its by-products.⁴⁹

The Volta Project, like much of Nkrumah's other nation-building projects, followed a combination of the Soviet and Chinese models of state-led industrialization, and modernization through a vanguard party (the CPP), five-year plans, rapid industrialization and labor-intensive agriculture. An example of this ideological triangle is the image of the Volta River Project designed in the letters of "GHANA." The CPP/State party flag is quite visible on the side of the graphic (figure 1.9), and is an example of the importance that the Nkrumah administration gave to state-led industrialization.⁵⁰ Initially undertaken with British financial support, the project was shelved by the British in the wake of the 1956 loss of the Suez Canal and Whitehall's dwindling coffers for financing such huge international development projects. The Eisenhower

Administration began backing the project in 1958, getting Kaiser Aluminum to agree to financing the dam and bauxite smelter. The Kennedy Administration lent further millions of dollars to the Volta River scheme.⁵¹ At the opening ceremony of the completed Volta River Hydroelectric Dam on 22 January 1966, Nkrumah expressed his gratitude to both Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy as leaders who took the opportunity to make a purposeful and meaningful contribution to a developing country.⁵²

Notwithstanding, Nkrumah's left-leaning tendencies, flirtations with communism, and his commitment to world peace during the Cold War inspired a U.S.-backed coup that removed him from power on 24 February 1966. As June Milne, Nkrumah's former research/editorial assistant and literary executrix writes, it was with Washington's (mixed) blessings that Nkrumah went to Hanoi to pursue his peace plan, only three weeks before the coup was staged. She further asserts that the Americans had pre-planned the coup with local collaborators, but only if they could get Nkrumah to leave the country.⁵³ John Stockwell agrees with Milne in attributing CIA complicity in Nkrumah's removal from power.⁵⁴ Nkrumah's links with the left, however, did not end with his ouster from power but on the contrary grew stronger. After the coup, four left-leaning leaders in Africa (Gamal Abdel Nasser, Modibo Keita, Sékou Touré, and Julius Nyerere) each offered to host Nkrumah. He accepted the invitation of staunch socialist and Pan-Africanist Sékou Touré of neighboring Guinea-Conakry and was made co-president until his death in 1972. The pivotal issue that severed whatever ties that had existed between Nkrumah and the United States can arguably be attributed to his publication of *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* in 1965. In it, he accused the United States of collaborating with the former European colonial powers to exploit Africa economically, contributing to the continent's underdevelopment. An outraged US government officially protested Nkrumah's accusations and cut off funding to his regime. Moreover, the American press duly vilified Nkrumah.⁵⁵

The Renaissance of Nkrumah in Ghana Since the Coup

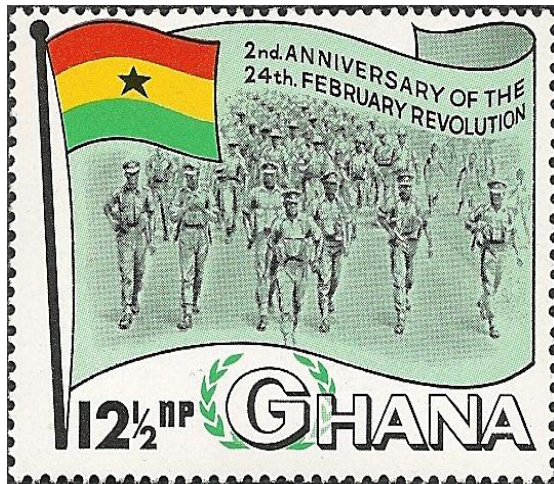
Since his death in exile in 1972, Nkrumah's historical legacy has gone through a process of reconstruction, re-evaluation, and re-interpretation, both within and outside of Ghana. Post-Nkrumah postage stamps, currencies and monuments also show how Nkrumah's legacy has been judged in Ghana. For example, the military coup leaders used stamps as propaganda to discredit Nkrumah's legacy and advance their own. The NLC not only removed Nkrumah from power, but also his image from the national stamps and currency. Figures 4.1–4.3, for example, are stamps issued by the NLC to celebrate their "24th February Revolution," to cast their coup in a populist light, and to imply that they had broken the chains of Nkrumah's tyranny and restored the nation to its glory (notice that the original colors of the Ghanaian flag, which Nkrumah had changed, were restored). In addition, Nkrumah's statues built by his regime in the major cities of Ghana were occasionally bombed and finally pulled down by the NLC during the coup. The Acheampong regime (1972-1978) was friendlier toward Nkrumah's memory than other post-1966 coup leaders, and made many symbolic gestures to redeem Nkrumah's legacy. For example, Acheampong allowed for Nkrumah's body to be brought back from Guinea-Conakry and reinterred in Ghana. In 1975, the Nkrumah statue at Parliament House that was demolished during the coup was recovered from a police barracks and placed

at the National Museum. On 3 March 1977, the National Museum unveiled the statue to the Ghanaian public.⁵⁶

Other post-coup governments also sought to symbolically capitalize on the increasing nostalgia with which Ghanaians and other Africans viewed Nkrumah and the other cohorts of first-generation African independence leaders since the dust had settled on that period of the continent's history. For example, in 1980, the Hilla Limann administration (1979-1981) released the "Past Great Sons of Ghana" series of stamps featuring Nkrumah (figure 4.4).⁵⁷ In 1988, the Rawlings regime (1979 and 1981-2001) released stamps commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the OAU, with one stamp acknowledging co-founders Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia and Kwame Nkrumah as a "Proponent of African Unity & Liberation" (figure 4.5). In 1991, the Rawlings government also released a commemorative stamp series, dubbed the "Tenth Non-Aligned Ministerial Conference Accra," which depicted the five iconic leaders of Non Aligned Movement (Nasser, Nehru, Sukarno, and Tito), including Nkrumah (figure 4.6). A commemorative stamp was issued by Ghana for the birth centenary of Nehru in 1990, with a photograph showing the latter welcoming Nkrumah on a state visit (figure 4.7). For the fortieth anniversary of Ghana's independence in 1997, a commemorative postage stamp was issued showing the iconic photograph of Nkrumah and his deputies declaring independence at the Old Polo Grounds (figure 4.8).

In the 1990s, the Rawlings regime also removed Nkrumah's body from where it had been buried in his birthplace of Nkroful and re-interred it at the purpose-built mausoleum in Accra, called the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park. The statue of Nkrumah at the mausoleum, entitled "The Tree Cut Short," was designed with Nkrumah assuming his signature "forward ever, backward never" pose. It is also surrounded by *abeng*-blowers kneeling in a pool of water (which symbolizes rejuvenation and purification), hailing Nkrumah as a political chief.⁵⁸ Nkrumah's symbolic resurrection and reinstatement as the "Founder of the Nation" at his mausoleum has become a major tourist attraction for visitors to Ghana, especially those from the African Diaspora who largely have a positive view of Nkrumah as a leader who, in addition to trying to unite the continent, also sought to unite peoples of African ancestry worldwide. The most recent Ghanaian postage stamp to memorialize Kwame Nkrumah was issued in March and July 2010, when Ghana Post and the Volta River Authority (VRA) launched a commemorative stamp series for the centenary celebration of the birth of Nkrumah (figures 4.9–4.11). These stamps were released to remind Ghanaians, especially the youth, of the visionary that was Nkrumah and to demonstrate that many of the projects and ideas that he started still benefit Ghana and Africa today.⁵⁹ Figure 4.11, for example, is the center label for the commemorative Nkrumah Birth Centenary stamp sheet features the legend, "Dr. Kwame Nkrumah-The Prime Mover of Power Generation in Ghana," referring to the former President's literal and figurative harnessing of power in the country. Furthermore, as it wound down its vast Eurasian empire, the Soviet Union also honored Kwame Nkrumah with a commemorative postage stamp in 1989, with the legend "Activist in the African national liberation movement" (figure 4.12).⁶⁰

Figures 4.1–4.12 Post-Coup Stamps Featuring or Related to Kwame Nkrumah



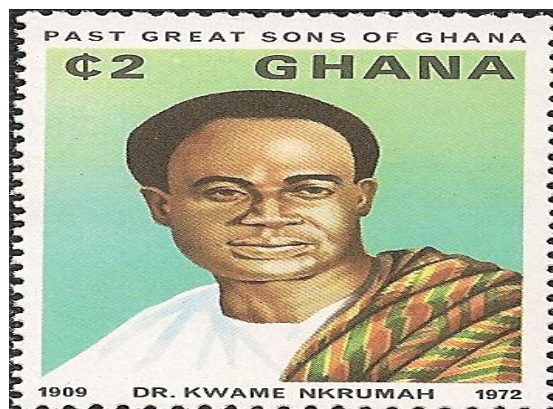
4.1 2nd Anniversary of the 24th February Revolution



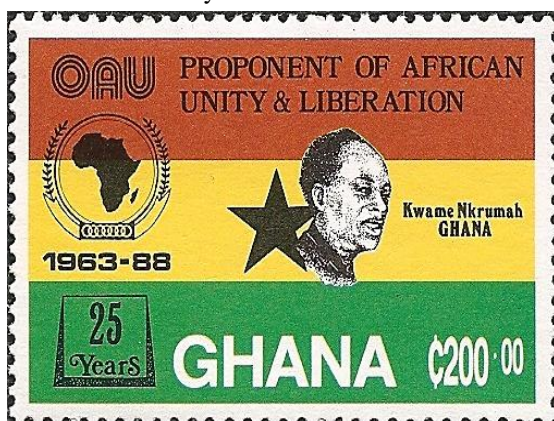
4.2 2nd Anniversary of the 24th February Revolution



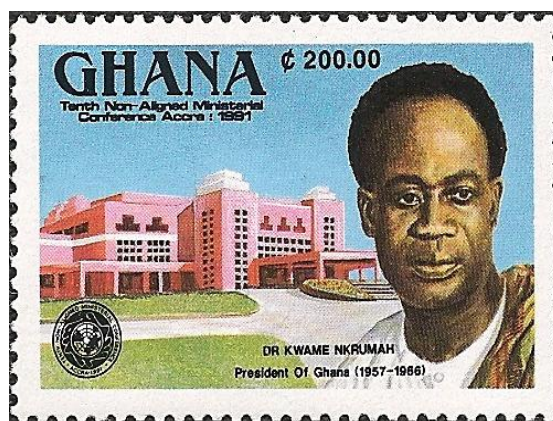
4.3 Ghana's Revolution of 24th February 1966
1st Anniversary 1967



4.4 Past Great Sons of Ghana 1980



4.5 Proponent of African Unity & Liberation 1988



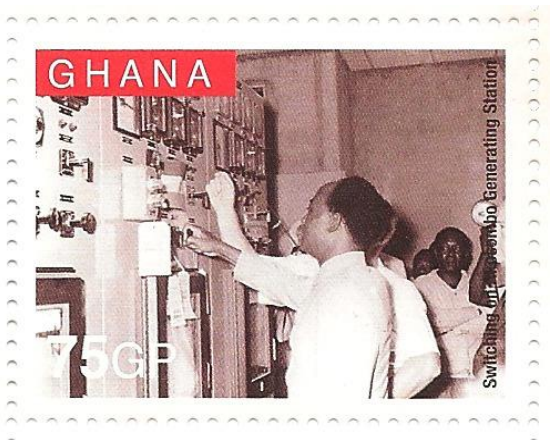
4.6 Tenth Non-Aligned Ministerial Conference
Accra' 91



4.7 Birth Centenary of Nehru, Nehru Welcomes Nkrumah 1990



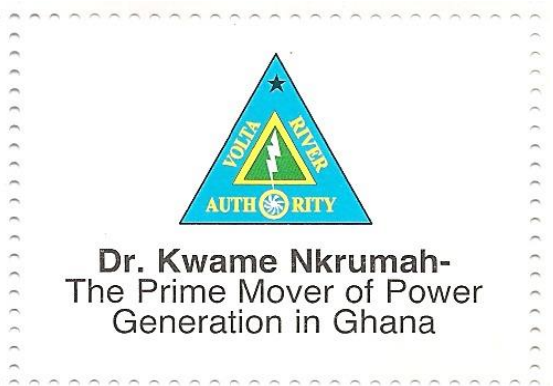
4.8 40th Independence Anniversary Ghana 1957-1997



4.9 Nkrumah Birth Centenary Stamp



4.10 Nkrumah Birth Centenary Stamp



4.11 Center Label for the Nkrumah Birth Centenary Sheet



4.12 Nkrumah commemorative postage stamp issued Stamp by the USSR in 1989

The iconography of Ghanaian money also reflects how Kwame Nkrumah has been remembered since the coup. As previously mentioned, Nkrumah's image was minted on all cedi banknotes during his presidency, such as in figure 5.1. The year after staging the coup, the NLC removed Nkrumah's image from the cedi currency and changed the name to the New

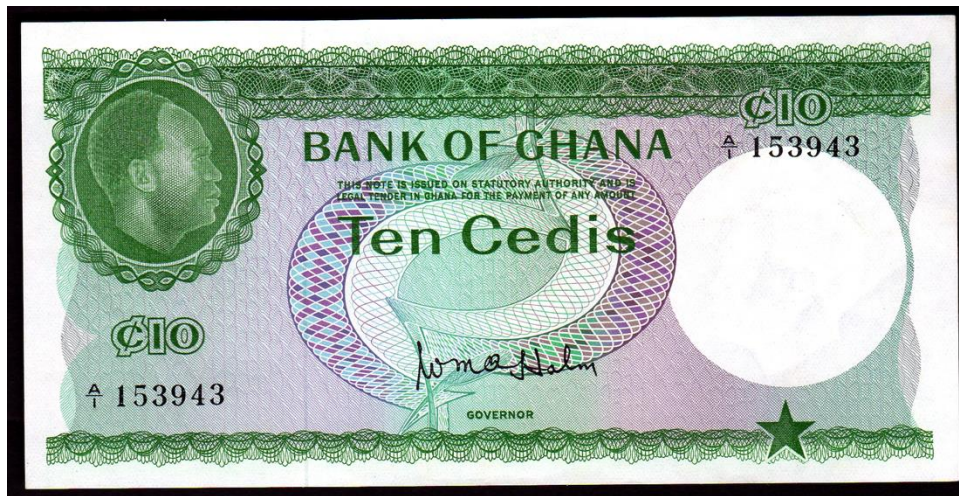
Cedi to signal the new political order. Furthermore, Nkrumah's image disappeared from the national currency for a period of thirty-five years. During this period, the iconography of the national currency has been characterized by "neutral" images such as national projects (the Akosombo Dam, cocoa farming, timber extraction, etc.), and cultural images portraying the daily lives of ordinary Ghanaians. A variety of factors explain the iconographic absence of the Osagyefo from the Cedi during this period, including the succession of military coups and counter-coups between the 1960s and 1970s, the hostility of several of the post-Nkrumah regimes toward him, and the economic instability and uncertainties of Ghana up to the millennium.⁶¹

In 2002, the Kufuor administration issued a new set of banknotes, and Nkrumah reappeared on the front of what was then Ghana's second highest currency denomination, the GH¢10,000 cedi note, the theme of which was "Nationhood" (figure 5.2). However, this time he did not appear as the sole Founding Father of the nation; five other members of "The Big Six" who led Ghana to independence from Great Britain flanked his image.⁶² The Kufuor government had constructed this composite picture of the Big Six, which was taken from individual photographs of each of the men in single file.⁶³ This image became a standard vignette on paper money and other symbols of nationhood. It was used to rewrite the historical narrative of Ghana to make it less-Nkrumah centric, while still honoring Nkrumah as the central figure in the independence movement at the same time.

In July 2007 the Ghanaian currency was "re-denominated" and a new series of notes, the New Ghana Cedi, issued.⁶⁴ The iconography of the New Ghana Cedi "combines artistry with wide-ranging tributes to the founders and features of Ghana's modern nationhood."⁶⁵ On all the notes, except for the two Cedi bill, the obverse side features the standard vignette of The Big Six and the Independence Arch (figure 5.3), while the reverse sides of the banknotes "depict symbolic landmarks of Ghana's progress."⁶⁶ The inclusion of Kwame Nkrumah's icon on the 2002 and 2007 issues of Ghanaian banknotes may indicate that history and time have reconciled the perceptions about Nkrumah's legacy in Ghana as it relates to nation-building, Pan-Africanism, and internationalism. It may also have represented an attempt by the former Kufuor government at national reconciliation to heal the political wounds of history as the nation approached the fifty-year mark; Kufuor was Member of Parliament and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in Kofi A. Busia's Progress Party government (which lasted from 1969-1972), which was put in power by the NLC military regime that ousted Nkrumah, and later Spokesman on Foreign Affairs and Deputy Opposition Leader of the Popular Front Party (PFP) Parliamentary Group during the short-lived administration of Dr. Hilla Limann (1979-1981). He was also leader of the NDC, which is an ideological offshoot of the United Gold Coast Convention, started in the late 1940s by Dr. J.B. Danquah, Nkrumah's chief political archrival.⁶⁷ This revisionist rewriting or re-minting of history, rather, as reflected in the iconography of the new currencies, takes into consideration the other history-makers and contributors to the independence cause and subsequent nation-building processes.

The latest banknote to be added to the New Ghana Cedi series is a GH¢2 note, which was put into circulation by the Bank of Ghana in May 2010 "to celebrate the year-long anniversary of Ghana's visionary leader."⁶⁸ Inscribed with the words "6th March 2010" and "Centenary of the Birth of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah," the bill features an imposing portrait of Nkrumah dressed in

Figures 5.1 – 5.4 Ghanaian Cedi Banknotes Featuring Nkrumah's Image, 1965–Present



5.1 GHC 10 Cedis Banknote, 1965 Issue



5.2 New GHC 10,000 Cedis Banknote 2002 Issue



5.3 Redenominated GHC 1 Cedi Banknote 2007 Issue



5.4 Redenominated GHC 2 Cedis Banknote 2010 Issue

traditional garb, in addition to an image of his mausoleum statue (figure 5.4). The then new Governor of the Bank of Ghana K.B. Amissah-Arthur (2009 - 2012), asserted that henceforth Ghana's currency will be used to honor the nation's national heroes who made a positive impact on the lives of Ghanaians.⁶⁹ The commemorative banknote demonstrates not only that Nkrumah is still relevant to contemporary Ghanaian society but also that his very name and image continues to be a lightening rod for both admirers and critics of his legacy.

One columnist, Thomas Dickens, who was unhappy about what he perceived to be the trivial nature of the John Atta Mills administration's (2009-2012) release of the Nkrumah banknote, wrote:

At best the new cedi note to become legal tender to commemorate the centenary anniversary of the late Dr Kwame Nkrumah can be magnanimously described as the loss of focus of the current Administration and a perfect example of political bigotry. This statement is not meant to take anything away from Dr Nkrumah's contribution to the political history of Ghana...but printing a new two-cedi note in honour of a former president is the least of Ghana's problems at this moment...overlooking them and giving Ghanaians another cedi note is tantamount to belittling the promises-laden manifesto upon which the NDC rode to power.⁷⁰

Dickens further accused President Mills of wanting to show that he was aligned with the political ideologies of Nkrumah, and further argued that "Dr Nkrumah is already on the Ghanaian bank notes with the other members of the 'Big Six... Instead, the government's efforts should be channelled into solving the never-ending economic hardship, poverty, bad roads, lack of social services/amenities and creating jobs with the aim of making the 'A Better Ghana' schema a reality." He ended his column by stating, "I would like to remind Professor Mills and his henchmen that Ghana has had a lot of great sons and daughters who, though not politicians, have done so much for Ghana and deserve to be honoured." He suggested that such a great son of Ghana who should be the central vignette on the new currency, instead of Nkrumah, is Tetteh Quarshie, who is credited with bringing the first cocoa seeds to Ghana from Fernando Po

in 1879.⁷¹ Dickens must not have carefully examined the New Cedi banknotes, for if he had, he would have noticed that they are embedded with historical designs and security features, including a watermark of Tetteh Quashie and a cocoa pod.⁷² Moreover, it appears that the commemorative wording relating to the Nkrumah centennial will be removed from future issues of the GH¢2 banknote.⁷³

Conclusion

Despite his rhetoric about Ghana's international neutrality and brotherliness, Kwame Nkrumah faced several dilemmas and contentions in building the new Ghanaian nation-state in the post-colonial era, at the high of the Cold War, which compounded his pronouncements about nonalignment. Although Nkrumah was a socialist, he adored both "the empire of liberty" (the United States) and was also enamored with its archrival, "the empire of justice" (the Soviet Union), as Westad has dubbed the two Cold War superpowers.⁷⁴ Juxtaposed to the competing demands of gaining ideological inspiration and economic assistance from both East and West, being an integral part of the Non-Aligned Movement, advancing the cause for African unity/Pan-Africanism, and at the same time building a new nation-state, proved to be a difficult balancing act, even for Kwame Nkrumah.

While Nkrumah rhetorically insisted that his government "looked" neither left nor right, or East or West, he in practice "looked" in every direction. His political ideals and economic and social policies, while leaning more toward African socialism, cannot be defined as simply leftist. This is evident from the examination of the symbols of nationhood that Nkrumah developed to promote his ideology and programs. For example, as Wilburn argues, "Nkrumah's philately was far more capitalistic than socialistic in origin and semiotics."⁷⁵ In actuality, Nkrumah was influenced heavily by Western capitalism, Eastern socialism, and Pan-Africanism emanating from intellectuals in the Soviet Union, United States, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Europe, Asia and Africa. His government received ideological inspiration, money, and technical assistance from the Soviets, Americans, British, and Israelis and their allies alike, although his relationship with all of these parties underwent the ebbs and flows that came with the changing domestic and global political, economic and social developments impacting these states.

Thus, while Nkrumah professed to be nonaligned, as did many other leaders of newly independent African and other "Third World" nation-states, and while he has been described variously as a Leninist Czar, an African Socialist, and a self-branded Marxist-Leninist and a non-denominational Christian, he was in essence a political pragmatist. And he was such, not because he was necessarily a political opportunist, but rather, as an African who had lived in the West for over a decade, travelled to and had extensive dealings with the East as a politician, he was essentially a product of all three worlds.

Through philatelic and numismatic mediums, as well as other symbols of nationhood, Nkrumah advertised the birth of the new Ghanaian nation-state as the forerunner to the decolonization of the continent at large; promoted himself as both the father of the Ghanaian nation and the hoped-for United States of Africa; publicized his most prestigious nationalist economic programs such as the Volta River Hydroelectric Dam, Ghana Airways, the Tema oil refinery, cocoa farming, fishing, logging, and communal labor on state farms. Postal iconography commemorated Pan-African historical, political, and socio-cultural developments.

These included the creation and commemoration of Pan-African organizations, conferences, treaties, and commercial endeavors such as the Conference of Independent African States, OAU conferences, the signing of the African Unity Charter, the Casablanca conferences, and the Black Star Line Shipping Company. Other stamps with a Pan-African theme included Africa Freedom Day, the Save the Monuments of Nubia campaign, African football (soccer) competitions, the anniversary of the death of Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, and the African American inventor George Washington Carver.

International issues, developments, organizations, personalities, and cultural events addressed on Nkrumah-era postage stamps included Nkrumah's visits to the United States and Canada, United Nations Day, United Nations Human Rights Day, the United Nations Trusteeship Council, the Conference of Non-Aligned Countries in Belgrade, and global nuclear non-proliferation. Stamps were also issued to commemorate various anniversaries related to American presidents (and first ladies) and British royalty, including J.F.K., Abraham Lincoln, Eleanor Roosevelt (on a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man stamp), and Queen Elizabeth. Also commemorated were the Olympic Games because of their cultural, political, and economic importance. After Nkrumah was ousted from power, Ghanaian military regimes formed as a result of coups and counter-coups, interspersed by brief periods of non-military leadership from mid-1960s to the late 1980s continued to use currency and postage stamps as mediums for broadcasting political messages to the nation. These included stamps commemorating the military coup staged by the National Liberation Council and the National Redemption Council/Supreme Military Council, as well as the short-lived restoration of democratic rule under the Progress Party.

Evidently, the nationalistic, Pan-African, and international political messages depicted on Ghanaian postage stamps and currency and in museum exhibits and other symbols of nationhood significantly declined over the ensuing decades after Nkrumah's death, but more noticeably from the 1990s onwards. Since then, the iconography of postage stamps in particular, issued by successive Ghanaian governments have featured designs which appeal more to philatelists in North American and Europe who regularly purchase and collect African postage stamps. As Wilburn laments, "Semiotics of revolutionary fervor and Afrocentric imagery initiated in the Nkrumah era are now less frequently issued and have been largely replaced by Western images of popular culture. Where is Nkrumah's philosophy of Consciencism today?"⁷⁶

While this revolutionary zeal has indeed disappeared from the visual tools of political propaganda that the Ghanaian nation-state has at its disposal, Nkrumah's place in the political and socio-cultural history of post-independence Africa is still very present. Since his death, Nkrumah's image has been printed on Soviet postage stamps and on Guinean (Conakry) postage stamps and currency, and immortalized in monuments in Mali and Ethiopia; his golden statue stands today in front of the modern African Union building in Addis Ababa as a testament to the important role that he played in African and global history and politics. Though the narrative of Ghanaian nationhood is now broadened to include other members of "the Big Six" who led Ghana to independence, contemporary Ghanaian statues, currency, and postage stamps bearing Nkrumah's image are still issued. These mediums illustrate his domestic economic development initiatives such as the Volta River project (which still supply electricity to Ghana and some of its neighbors), support for the African liberation movements

and African unity, and depict his relationship with other international leaders in the Non-Aligned or Third World Movements such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Chairman Mao, confirming his uncontested status as the continent's premier Pan-Africanist, international statesman, and father of the Ghanaian nation-state.

Notes

- 1 See Allman 2008, p. 83.
- 2 Over the last few decades, for example, several biographies and other works have been written about Nkrumah, including those by Nkrumah's "Literary Executrix" June Milne 2006, and scholars such as Davidson 1973, Birmingham 1998, Arhin 1993, Assensoh 1978 and 1989, and Biney 2011.
- 3 See Fuller 2008, 2010 and 2014.
- 4 See, for example, Billig 1995, Burke 2001, Cerulo 1993, Child 2005, Cusack 2005b, Gilbert and Helleiner 1999, Helleiner 1998, Kevane, 2008, Posnansky 2004, Posnansky, et al. 2004, Scott 1995, Smith 2001, and Unwin and Hewitt 2001.
- 5 Adedze's articles (2004 and 2008) include references to these records as well as interviews with Ghanaian stamp designers and philatelic administrators. On the other hand, Wilburn (2012, p. 41, note 13) laments that "Unfortunately, pre-1970 contracts and records of [the Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation] IGPC (GPA) [which will be discussed later in this article] have been lost or destroyed," although such documents exist in the GPC Archives. The records of the GPC span the mid-1950s to the end of the 1960s, with a smattering of other documents generated in subsequent decades. The majority of the documents relate to the activities of the Postage Stamps Committee. The archives contain hundreds of pages of records such as those of private companies that issued stamps for Ghana, including Harrison and Sons, Ltd., De La Rue Plc, and the IGPC. The archival holdings also include cabinet memos, artists' sketches of stamps and notes about stamp designs, newspaper articles, and letters from local and international stakeholders (including UNESCO) about the production of stamps. The custodian of these documents (as of the publication of this article) is Mr. Peter Tagoe, formerly of the Philatelic Section of the headquarters of the Ghana Post Office in Accra. Other important archival holdings exist but have been more elusive to find or access. For example, the records of British stamp designer Michael Goaman reside at the Goaman Archives in Edinburgh in the United Kingdom with a private collector. Goaman joined the Ghana stamp designers' panel in June 1958 and supplied stamp designs for the country up to the early 1960s. The Ghana Post Archives also contain some records relating to the commercial and philatelic activities of Dr. Manfred Lehmann, the American businessman and founder of the IGPC in Ghana. Accessing and analyzing these significant archival holdings would provide an opportunity for other researchers to incorporate them in their publications, which would provide us with a more nuanced view of the significance of postage stamps to nationalism in Ghana and other African countries.
- 6 See, for example, Fuller 2010, and Fuller 2014.

- 7 See Fuller 2008 and 2014 (chapter 4) for a more extensive discussion of the contentions of coinage in Nkrumah's Ghana.
- 8 Posnansky, Adedze and Levin 2004, p. 52.
- 9 Posnansky 2004, p. 53.
- 10 Mwangi 2003; Cusack 2005b.
- 11 The IGPC was founded by Dr. Manfred Lehmann, the president of the international firm Lehmann Trading Corporation, who had a variety of enterprises in newly independent African and Caribbean nation-states. He also had tremendous political and business connections in the United States, Israel, and other powerful countries, and had formed early business ties with Ghana, having established, in 1953, the Ghana American Corporation and personally knew key ministers in Nkrumah's government. He attended Nkrumah's inauguration as Prime Minister in March 1957 and was subsequently invited with his wife for social visits to the Presidential Palace and the Parliament. However, the relationship between Nkrumah and Lehmann soured from the late 1950s to the early 1960s over the former's support of the Palestinian side in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and disagreements between Ghana and Israel over the Congo Crisis. See "Biography" and "Foreign Encounters" on www.manfredlehmann.com/index.html (accessed August 24, 2014); Wilburn 2012, pp. 24-26; Adedze 2008, pp. 7-14; Levey 2003.
- 12 The IGPC went on to issue national stamps for other African states as they became independent and established national postal authorities. It also mopped up many of the new nation-states that emerged out of the collapsed communist Soviet Union in the 1990s, assisting them to set up postal programs and issue stamps. Today, the company issues stamps for over thirty African countries and is now the world's largest philatelic company. See <http://www.igpc.net/about.html> (accessed 13 May 2007).
- 13 Adedze 2008, pp. 8-10.
- 14 Ghana Philatelic Agency no. 2, 1958, p. 2.
- 15 Although it is most commonly referred to as a vulture, there is some disagreement among ornithologists as to whether the bird is a vulture, an eagle or a combination of the two. The bird is also called "Aggrey's Eagle" in honor of a proverb recited and popularised by Dr. James Emman Kwegyir Aggrey - one of the Gold Coast's most acclaimed educators of the early twentieth century. The eagle was a recognized traditional icon that carried symbolic and proverbial meaning to Aggrey, who, in the spirit of African independence, had written, "My people of Africa, we were created in the image of God, but men have made us think that we are chickens, and we still think we are, but we are eagles. Stretch forth your wings and fly! Don't be content with the food of chickens. See <http://www.utexas.edu/conferences/africa/ads/21.html> (accessed November 30, 2007).
- 16 Ghana Philatelic Agency no. 2, 1958, p. 7. Although the GPA referred to the Prime Minister as "Dr. Nkrumah," he never finished his degree at the London School of Economics (LSE), notwithstanding the LSE Press and Information Office's statement that Kwame Nkrumah received a PhD from the institution in 1946. It is more likely that the LSE awarded Nkrumah an honorary doctorate after he became Prime Minister of Ghana in 1957. See

- <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/pressAndInformationOffice/aboutLSE/worldLeaders.htm> (accessed December 5, 2007).
- 17 Fuller 2008, p. 530.
 - 18 British National Archives (henceforth NA): DO 35/6194, correspondence from J. Chadwick to Mr. Whitehead, 27/02/57.
 - 19 Nkrumah 1957, p. 12.
 - 20 Ghana Post Archives (henceforth GPA) SDC Memorandum #2365, p. 2.
 - 21 Child 2005, p. 123.
 - 22 British Library Philatelic Collections (henceforth BLPC) July 1958.
 - 23 Ghana Post Archive S4/51 First Anniversary of the Death of Premier Patrice Lumumba, SDC Memorandum #2365: p. 2.
 - 24 The main rival to the Casablanca bloc was the Monrovia Group, which constituted other African countries that were more aligned with the West and took a stance in opposition to Nkrumah's on African politics and the question of African unity. Formed in May 1961 in the Liberian capital, the original membership of the Monrovia group included countries such as Liberia, Nigeria, Togo, and Guinea-Conakry. The group was led by the charismatic Nigerian Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Liberian President William Tubman. Zealously cherishing their newfound nationhood, these countries were more conservative and gradualist in their approach to solving the problems that came with African independence. While they agreed in principle with the need for African unity, they favored the creation of regional economic, socio-cultural and political alliances than an all-encompassing United States of Africa. They also courted Direct Foreign Investment from the United States and the former European colonial powers into their economies. See Akinsanya 1976, pp. 511-29; Gocking 2005, pp. 127-30.
 - 25 GPA S4/51 First Anniversary of the Death of Premier Patrice Lumumba 12th February 1962. Standing Development Committee Memorandum #2365 by the Ministry of Construction and Communications, "Commemorative Issues of Ghana Postage Stamps: 1962," n.d. (but probably mid-late 1961): p. 2.
 - 26 GPA no. 2, 1958, p. 8.
 - 27 See Bandele 2008, and Martin 1976.
 - 28 As quoted in the British Library Archives, SB11, Prog. 3639/2, "Special Issue of Ghana Stamps Commemorating United Nations Day," 24 October 1958: p. 2.
 - 29 Allman 2008; Wittner 1997, pp. 265-71; Wittner 2007.
 - 30 Agyei 2007.
 - 31 Posnansky 2004, p. 54.
 - 32 GPA no. 2, 1958, p. 6.
 - 33 Ibid., p. 6.
 - 34 <http://perso.orange.fr/les.insatisfaits/the.osagyefo.html> (accessed 24 June 2007).
 - 35 Schlesinger, Jr. 2002, pp. 560-61.
 - 36 British Library Archives, "Special Issue of Ghana Postage Stamps Commemorating the 150th Birthday Anniversary of Abraham Lincoln," 1959.

- 37 David Scott, "Michael Goaman: A Graphic Designer Who Created Classic Postage Stamps With His Wife for 30 Years," Obituary, *The Guardian*, 15 June 2009, www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/jun/16/obituary-michael-goaman.
- 38 GPA no. 3, 1958, p. 2.
- 39 Ibid., p. 7.
- 40 GPA no. 2, 1958, p. 6.
- 41 GPA no. 3, 1958, p. 5.
- 42 Ibid., 1958, p. 5.
- 43 Nkrumah, 1973b, p. 111.
- 44 Nkrumah 1970, pp. 110-11.
- 45 Nkrumah 1973, p. 116.
- 46 Ibid., pp. 111-12.
- 47 See Fuller 2010, chap. 3.
- 48 The literature on the Volta River Project is extensive. See, for example, Barnes 1966, Hart 1980, Moxon 1969, and Tsikata 2004, 2005, and 2006. Documentary footage and analyses of the politics and economics of the Volta Dam has also been presented in television programs produced by Ali Mazrui and Adam Curtis. Mazrui, who referred to Nkrumah as a "Leninist Czar" in a 1966 article bearing that title, included video footage of the opening of the Volta River Dam in "Tools of Exploitation," Program 4 of his 1986 *Africa: A Triple Heritage* TV series (otherwise called *The Africans*). See also Adam Curtis's vivid 2009 "Black Power" episode from the Pandora's Box documentary series.
- 49 GPA no. 3, 1958, pp. 5-6.
- 50 As the Nkrumah state became more authoritarian, he increasingly branded the nation in his and his party's image. For example, the red, gold, and green colors of the national flag were changed to the CPP banner colors of red, white, and green in 1964, when Ghana became a single-party state. See Fuller 2008.
- 51 For more on the politics, diplomacy, and economics of the project, see Barnes 1966, Gocking 2005, pp. 118-20, Hart 1980, Killick 1967, p. 393, Moxon 1969, and Tsikata 2004, 2005, and 2006.
- 52 Moxon 1969, pp. 232-33.
- 53 Milne 2006b, p. 8.
- 54 See Stockwell 1978, pp. 160, 201.
- 55 See "A Waste" 1965; Associated Press, 23 November 1965a; Associated Press. 23 November 1965b; Finney 1965; Garrison 1965; Gwertzman 1965; Louchheim 1965; and Sterne 1965.
- 56 Fuller 2008, p. 538.
- 57 The other Ghanaians honored in this series include Dr. J.B. Danquah, John Mensah Sarbah, Dr. J.E.K. Aggrey, and G.E. (Paa) Grant.
- 58 *Abeng* is an animal horn used as a musical instrument.
- 59 Ghana News Agency 2010.
- 60 Translation provided by Odd Arne Westad, 20 April 2011. Other Third World leaders have been commemorated on Soviet stamps in the past. This includes Patrice Lumumba in 1961,

- Nelson Mandela in 1988, and Jawaharlal Nehru in 1989.
- 61 Fuller 2008.
 - 62 Bank of Ghana. 2002. "Issue of 10000 & 20000 Cedis Banknotes." Accra: p. 2.
 - 63 Ayensu 2007, p. 224.
 - 64 Acquah 2007, Ayensu 2007, pp. 224-25, and Kufuor 2007.
 - 65 Ayensu 2007, p. 224.
 - 66 Ibid., p. 225.
 - 67 See Biney 2011, p. 188.
 - 68 Mac-Jordan 2010.
 - 69 Banknote News 2010. Amissah-Arthur became vice president of Ghana in August of 2012.
 - 70 Dickens 2010.
 - 71 Ibid.
 - 72 Acquah 2007, pp. 3-6; Ayensu 2007, pp. 224-27.
 - 73 Banknote News 2010.
 - 74 Westad 2005. These two ideals were unified and forever etched into the granite structure of the Independence Monument in Accra with the words, "Freedom and Justice."
 - 75 Wilburn 2012, p. 36.
 - 76 Ibid., p. 39.

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At Issue: The “Muslims in Ethiopia Complex” and Muslim Identity: The Trilogy of Discourse, Policy, and Identity

MUKERREM MIFTAH

Abstract: The “Muslims in Ethiopia complex” envelops three interrelated fundamental dimensions in the relation between Muslims and Ethiopia. The first is viewing it as a discourse among academics in “Ethiopian Studies.” Utilizing the broader rubric of “Hi/storying,” the present article argues that, except for a few lately emerging counteractive discourses, it has largely remained unabated. The second view is that of it as the policy and praxis of many of the ruling elites in Ethiopian history. The article argues that although the expressions of this policy and practice have been changing over time, there are still instances of its continuation as policy to this day. Third, and related closely to the above dimensions, is the view of this complex as the actual marginalized lived experiences and the associated self-perception of Muslims. However, as the unintended outcome of this policy, the article argues for the progressively developing “Ethiopian Muslims” consciousness and identity. It concludes by tracing and examining past and present expressions of the “Ethiopian Muslims” identity.

Introduction

Understanding the relationship between Ethiopia and Islam has for decades been of little interest to social scientists. The problem even gets worse for the issue of Muslim identity in Ethiopia. A closer scrutiny of pertinent literatures shows wide gaps in research engagements that aim to bridge the affinities of Islam, Muslims, and Ethiopia. Notwithstanding evidence of the past and present showing mutual convergences, many of the past and contemporary social scientific discourses favor divergences and incompatibilities. Consequently, the focus to a larger extent tilted towards the notion of incompatibility and divergence between Islam and Ethiopia. As I will argue, this in turn has led to a dualism in Ethiopian history, culture, and society, a dualism that assumes a Christian Ethiopia and Islam as foreign. The externalization of Islam and thus Muslims, as I will demonstrate, is part and parcel of what I call the “Muslims in Ethiopia complex” (hereafter referred to as the complex). It has three fundamental and relevant dimensions: one is the view of it as a discourse among academics in the field; the second is as a policy and praxis of the Abyssinian kingdom and/or the Ethiopian state; and the third is that of the overall condition of Muslims and the resulting “Muslims in Ethiopia” self-perception.¹ It

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should be noted that these dimensions are not mutually exclusive; rather, they are closely related.

The present article, thus, argues that except for a few recent studies, the overwhelming majority of academic engagements still explicitly portrays dualism in Ethiopian history, culture and society and thus largely remains under the shadow of the complex. Second, although there are certain changes in the ways the ruling elites view and treat Islam and Muslims in Ethiopia, especially in the existing Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) government (1991 to present), there are various instances and growing evidences that suggest the perpetuation of this complex. In other words, except for some reform efforts in the 1990s, the EPRDF regime is still failing to address some of the historically evolving questions of Muslims in the country. Thirdly, despite the failure of the ruling state elites and the social sciences to respond to the changing circumstances of Muslims, Muslim self-perception and identity has been shifting from one of Muslims in Ethiopia to more of being Ethiopian Muslims. As I will briefly discuss below, the complex has partly played a role in the emergence and development of this shift in the question of Muslim identity within Ethiopia.

The purpose of this contribution is basically twofold. In the first place, it closely engages past researches to see how Islam and Muslims are studied and represented. This paves the way for critically examining some of the widely held knowledge and discourses, on the one hand, and exploring, if any, continuity of change in this regard, on the other. Second, by complementing the already produced knowledge with current evidence and developments, it aims to shade some light on the shift in identity construction of Muslims from being Muslims in Ethiopia to becoming more one of Ethiopian Muslims. Accordingly, the first part of this article questions the dualism in academic discourses. The second part briefly explores the ways in which various ruling elites approached issues of Islam and Muslims in the country. The third part closely examines the relationship between the complex as a policy, specifically focusing on the EPRDF regime and its implications for the Muslim identity in Ethiopia.

The Muslims in Ethiopia Complex: Engaging the Actors

The Muslims in Ethiopia complex is a state of imagination, portrayal, and execution of the task of disentangling Islam and Muslims from Abyssinia and/or Ethiopia and the resulting intended sociocultural, economic, and political consequences. However, it has also produced unanticipated and antithetical outcomes. It has been the creative imagination, underrepresentation, and obsession of many academics in their discourses and narratives in what has been called "Ethiopian Studies." For centuries, it has been recycled and executed in various forms and content by many of the kings and state elites in Abyssinia and/or Ethiopia in their physical and ideological combat with Islam and its adherents.

Above all, the complex has had deeper repercussions for Islam and Muslims in the country. These repercussions include at least one intended and other unintended consequences. Among the observable direct outcomes of the Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian state policies and practices directed against Muslims has been peripheralization.² In other words, Muslims have been made to suffer from marginalization, discrimination, oppression, and underrepresentation, especially in the country's economic and political institutions.³ This in turn had its own other outcomes. Among other things is the development of an inferiority complex among Muslims. In the words

of Østebø, "Through a largely derogatory categorization of the Muslims by the Christian other, the former has developed a distinct self-definition seeing themselves as inferior to the latter."⁴ Put simply, the complex reflects, on the one hand, the actual socio-economic and political conditions of Muslims, and on the other the associated low self-perception, strangeness, and feeling of alienation.

In spite of this, the complex had set in motion a trajectory that has more far-reaching consequences than those direct intentional interventions and their consequences. While the state elites and kings have been pursuing the policy of peripheralization of Muslims in the country, portions of the Muslim population, especially Muslim soldiers and their sultanates, religious, and intellectual leaders, by mobilizing and building local resistance, have struggled and fought back to defend their cultural, religious, and human rights and identities. This unintended repercussion of the Muslims in Ethiopia project of the subsequent ruling elites later developed into questions of identity, of Islam, and of Muslims' role and status in Abyssinia and/Ethiopia. The following sections will attempt specifically to shed some light on this and the above two dimensions of the complex: as discourse among academics; the complex and the ruling elites; and finally, the issue of Muslim identity.

The Muslims in Ethiopia Complex as a Discourse

Discourses play significant role in shaping our worldviews and understanding in multiple ways. For Foucault, discourses operate in four fundamental ways.⁵ The first is when they create a world. They do so primarily by bringing together a wide array of associations and by organizing our interaction with the world around us that create meaningful understandings. The second is when they produce knowledge and the "truth." In this context, for instance, "certain discourses in certain contexts have the power to convince people to accept statements as true."⁶ The third is whenever a discourse exists there is an equally important issue in human social existence, power. In other words, discourses and power are highly inseparable to an extent that any discourse assumes power. The fourth is when they uncover not only what it is being communicated, but also, and most importantly, who is communicating.

Of the above four important ways in which discourses operate, the first three are especially important in framing how the Muslims in Ethiopia complex is discursively constructed, reproduced, and sustained over a long period of time in Ethiopia. Many of the academics, from within and abroad, who have studied and written about Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian history, culture, and society have produced their own version of history, culture and society with certain identifiable features. One is the creation of a new world for the country. They have created a country and society, in essence, a different version of Abyssinia and/or Ethiopia that has lost much of its touch with its existing and observable realities on the ground. They have created, in their discourses and narratives, an over essentialized, homogenous and "thousands years old" intact culture and society that has disentangled, partly or completely, aspects of an equally important body of history, culture and society. The second and closely related with the first is the creation of knowledge and the "truth." One is the creation of dualism in Ethiopian history, culture, and society. It assumes the local, Christian Abyssinia and/or Ethiopia and the alien, foreign Islam and Muslims. This and related other discursive formations, however,

underpin omissions and commissions, false dichotomies, double standards, and generally what has recently been called “hi/storying.”⁷

Lastly, the complex also reflects the intrinsic discourse-power relations. In this regard, questions worth asking include who says what, for whom, why, and under what circumstance. As I will note below, the production of knowledge especially in the areas of Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian history, culture, and society has been largely monopolized by academic elites with certain common features. Generally speaking, they focus on the northern section of the present day Ethiopia, specifically the Amhara and Tigray people, Christianity as a religion, and the simultaneous and inseparable peripheralization of other relevant cultures and peoples. In addition, these academics have been largely partisans and many of them were either followers or sympathizers of the Orthodox Church.⁸ Owing to this and related biases, scholarly engagements in the Ethiopian studies, especially studies focusing on Islam, Christianity and Ethiopia have been largely entangled with “inherent biases and unfounded assumptions.”⁹

In short, the Muslims in Ethiopia complex as discourse has largely remained unabated except for barely sufficient writings and publications in the twenty-first century. The following section examines the this discourse under the broader rubric of “Hi/storying” as an exemplary discourse among academics and ends with a brief remark on its continuity and/or rupture at this particular point in time.

“Hi/storying” as an Exemplary Discourse

One key aspect of the Muslims in Ethiopia complex among Ethiopian Studies academics is “Hi/storying.” As a discourse, it entails the “simultaneousness and inseparability of the processes of “telling” the “hi/story” and making it.”¹⁰ These two processes, namely, “telling” and “making,” broadly encompasses mechanisms, intended or unintended, of double standards, omissions and commissions, “un-Ethiopianizing” narratives, false dichotomies, unfounded claims and speculations, and other elements. Let’s closely examine some of these mechanisms of “telling” and “making” of Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian history, culture, and society and see how they feed into the dualist and incompatibility model.

For one thing, much of the social science research in general and Ethiopian historiography in particular that claim to address the relation between Islam and Ethiopia generally exhibit “un-Ethiopianizing” academic discourse. This has been grounded in the idea that Islam and Ethiopia have a “compatibility problem.” It primarily views Islam “ as an external political force, rather than being one of the essential elements of Ethiopian culture . . . [And] *firm and persistent reluctance* to conceive of, let alone recognize, a history of Islam in Ethiopia” (emphasis added).¹¹ In other words, Islam and/or Muslims represented an alien or foreign entity with different culture, history and identity while Abyssinia and/or Ethiopia represented a society or culture subsuming Christianity, peculiar history of civilization, and composed of two major ethnic groups, the Amhara and Tigray. By this discursive formation, the “Ethiopian Studies” was running the risk of un-Ethiopianizing an equally important body of history, culture and society.¹² It is this academic discourse that I have called above the dualism in Ethiopian history, culture, and society. The “persistent reluctance” of the un-Ethiopianizing discourse was not, however, without a consequence. For instance, there is ample evidence that suggests a general

tendency among these scholars not to even recognize Islamic studies under the broader scheme of Ethiopian studies.¹³

Closer to the above discourse under hi/storying is the proliferation of ungrounded claims and speculations in "Ethiopian Studies." One good example in this regard would be the claim that Islam represents a hostile external religion that paved its way into the Christian other, Abyssinia and/or Ethiopia.¹⁴ This view primarily presupposes the recurrent frictions sustained overtime between the Muslims and Christians in the country, especially in the years between the tenth and twentieth century. For Hagai Erlich, however, the hostility of Islam and thus Muslims against "Christian Ethiopia" is closely wrapped up with the very ontology of Islam. I will briefly comment on two of his accounts for the very genesis of the Islam vs. Christian Ethiopia divide.

The first dubious account revolves around a Hadith where "A lean-legged from among the Ethiopians [*dhu al-suwayqatayn*] will [eventually] destroy the Ka'aba."¹⁵ From this hadith, Erlich concludes that the "image of the Ethiopians as the ultimate enemies of Islam was consequently preserved."¹⁶ The key question then, however, is "Is that actually the case?" The claim is erroneous for two important reasons. For one thing, the Hadith does not mention or even imply, in any way, of Ethiopians in the future destruction of Ka'aba. It just only, and does so explicitly, mention "a lean-legged" from among the Ethiopians, singular not plural, an individual not society. In fact, an extended version of the same Hadith reported in another tradition states: "A man from Ethiopia with two lean legs will destroy the Ka'bah, take away its treasures and remove its covers. As if I were looking at him, he is a bald man with crooked arms and legs who is attacking the Ka'bah with his iron shovel and pickaxe."¹⁷ Obviously, the essence and only message of the aforementioned Hadith is that there will be a "burglar" who is an Ethiopian by origin. Second, and more importantly, no mention of this person's religion, Islam or Christianity, is to be found in this Hadith. In other words, the Hadith does not assume a Christian Ethiopian going after the Ka'aba of Islam.

Erlich's second piece of evidence for the foreign Islam vs. Christian Ethiopia divide is from the Qur'an. Similar to the above Hadith, the chapter Erlich picked up from the Qur'an also addresses the issue of tearing down the Ka'aba. Presumably, Erlich understood the weight of an argument that can be linked to the Qur'an, which is generally believed to be stronger than prophetic traditions like Hadith. However, his reading of the Surah or chapter of the Qur'an is as misleading as his reading of the aforementioned Hadith. The chapter is called "Surah of the Elephants." He interprets, I would rather argue transforms, the Surah of the Elephants as an encounter wherein "The Ka'aba . . . was miraculously saved from the Ethiopians as Allah "sent against them birds in flocks (abablis)...who hurled clay stones upon them."¹⁸ The problem with this assertion, time and again, is its simplistic projection and transfer of the line of argument. In other words, just exactly like the above Hadith, Erlich projects and squeezes "Ethiopia" out of the "owners of the Elephant." Put simply, when the Qur'an mentions the owners of the Elephant who came to destroy Ka'aba, Erlich categorically imagines Ethiopian society. Secondly, it must be clear by now that it is not that the Ka'aba was "saved from Ethiopians;" rather, it was saved from the "owners of the Elephant" who were intending to destroy it.

Apart from the above inadequacies, it should be noted that in either of the above cases, the quoted Hadith and the Surah from the Qur'an do not necessarily assume "Ethiopia," and if it

should, it must be Abyssinia. For as long as our latest understanding goes, Ethiopia as a country and society is the brainchild of Menelik II (1889-1913) in the early twentieth century.¹⁹ Abyssinia, however, was based present day northern Ethiopia and had some loose control over parts of Menelik II's Ethiopia in prior periods. One of the probable causes for imagining earlier encounters between Christian Abyssinians and Muslims in terms of Ethiopia and Islam is an attempt to give a shaky genealogical foundation for the incompatibility model within which Erlich's thought operates. Moreover, as briefly noted in later sections, Muslim-Christian relations have different dynamics and shape before and after the advent of Menelik II's "Christian Ethiopia" project.

In short, Erlich's reading of the Ethiopia-Islam relationship is based largely on the narration that claims to unveil the convergence of, and creates a picture of, Islam and Muslims in some innovative ways "seeking its [Ethiopia] destruction and replacement."²⁰ As one representative figure of this view, in almost all of his Ethiopia and Islam related publications, Erlich implicitly endorsed and "transplanted" the thesis of "Clash of Civilizations" to the Ethiopian case. Similar to the twentieth century "Clash of Civilizations" of Samuel Huntington, Erlich joins him in his belief in an inevitable clash of cultures, mutually exclusive as per his highly essentialized and dualist view of the cultures, both in history and ideology. The cause of this "clash" for Erlich, however, is the incompatibility between "Christian Ethiopia" and foreign Islam.²¹

The second mechanism, through which the hi/storying discourse operates, is the production of "knowledge" and "truth" through double standards and false dichotomies. For instance, similar set of actions taken by two opposite forces, especially those involving Muslims and Christians in Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian history have been approached and interpreted in radically different ways. In the aftermath of these encounters, many academics emphasize the victory of Christians at the expense of the invading Muslims or, conversely, foreign, Islamic conquest of the native Christian population of Ethiopia.²² For the presumed native Christian state and population, a new set of standards or conceptual constructs like "patriots," "heroes," "peaceful," and "tolerant" were created to justify various actions taken against the "colonizing, intolerant, destructive, and brutal Muslim" foreigners.²³ This binary opposition thus served the incompatibility model that only sees natural tendencies of divergences between Muslims and Christians in Ethiopia.²⁴

A typical and good example in this regard would be the war fought between the 1520s and 1540s. As a leader on the Muslim side, Imam Ahmed Ibn Ibrahim El Ghazi (in Amharic, known as "Ahmed Gran," meaning "the left-handed") fought and managed to defeat the Christian side in the widely known battle of Shembera Kure in 1529. Later, however, he suffered defeat. El Ghazi has attracted much attention in later historical discourses and among many recent and contemporary historians and historiographers. This attention was characterized by parallel, but opposite reactions from scholars in the field. The great majority decided to label El Ghazi as "a danger," "a surrogate," "a trauma" and "invasion syndrome" for Ethiopia, "a precursor to fundamentalism," and "destructive" to Ethiopia.²⁵ Ironically, notwithstanding these and other instances of hi/storying, many Muslims in Ethiopia and Somalia, in and out of Ethiopia, embraced him as a national hero.²⁶

Closely related to the above is that there has always been a general tendency among Ethiopian Studies academics in to eulogize and affirm many of the actions of Christian

Ethiopians while downplaying the supposedly "non-Ethiopian" other's effort and voice. Bahru Zewde, for instance, believed that the city of Harar was "occupied" by Egypt, but he immediately twisted it into "expansion" for Menelik II when expanding his Ethiopian empire.²⁷ Like Zewde, Erlich reduced Menelik II's conquest and annexation of "the Somali-inhabited Ogaden desert and vast areas inhabited by other local peoples" to "occupied" while a similar set of actions taken by Imam Ahmed were blatantly disparaged as "destruction" and representing an epitome of "Islamic extremism" and "fundamentalism."²⁸ For many of the country's non-Amhara, Muslim and other, however, Menelik II's aggressive "state formation" in the late nineteenth century has been seen as "the "scramble for Africa" on the colonizers side."²⁹ While demonizing Imam Ahmed's actions, Erlich rather euphemistically neutralizes and reduces the "Crusader-ness" of Yohannes IV (1872-1889) to something patriotic because he acted "in the spirit of the Ahmed Gragh syndrome."³⁰ To Hagai Erlich, in virtually all of his Ethiopia and Islam related publications, the brutality and aggressiveness of many of the kings in Ethiopian history, especially starting from Abraha's encounter with pre-Islamic Arabs in the sixth century through Yohannes IV and then to Menelik II, does not have any place in his hi/storing.

By the same token, many of the actions of Islamic sultanates and dynasties, from the ninth century Makhzumi dynasty, to the powerful sixteenth century Adal sultanate, and up to the nineteenth century Muslim sultanates in Abyssinia, were categorically reduced to "revolts" or at times "invaders," for they fought the Christianizing force from the north, that is "Christian Ethiopia."³¹ Contrary to the view that sees violence and hostility in Islam, its expansion along the four corners of the country had favorable outcomes for some of the population within and around Abyssinia. The fast paced spread of Islam in the south, for instance, contrary to the conventional view that sees a threat and destabilizing effect in Islam, had served the people to tackle forced religious conversions and persecution directed at them by the "expanding" Christian force from the north. In fact, Islam was received enthusiastically among this section of the society for it had rendered "a new ideological force of resistance against the territorial expansion of the Christian kingdom from the north."³² Islam not only gave an ideological impetus for the south but also to others in the country. It was also the *raison d'être* for the then Oromo resistance in Ethiopia. During those brutal years, "Islam became a sort of rallying point even a resistance ideology of Muslims against Abyssinian oppression . . . in effect, the Oromo needed a strong ideology against the well-established state and the hegemony of Christian rulers."³³

In any case, filled with unfounded assumptions, speculations and biases, both the latent and manifest arguments of these pursuits under what has been called "Ethiopian Studies" paved the way for dualism in Ethiopian history, culture, and society. This was a dualism based principally on an incompatibility model that has long been downplaying the convergence and unity model that, to the contrary, equally recognizes the differences of all the actors involved. Put it simply, the Islam and/or Muslims dimension of Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian history, culture, and society has been portrayed as a serious cause of sociocultural and ideological concern that threatens the "Ethiopian equilibrium."

The Muslims in Ethiopia Complex as a Discourse: Continuity or Rupture?

The Muslims in Ethiopia complex as an academic discourse has largely remained unabated to this day except for some lately emerging studies in the area of identity studies, especially along ethnic politics and identities, other historical, and other anthropological and historiographical works. Of the many ethnic groups in the present day Ethiopia, the Oromo are undoubtedly one of the most widely studied, and this has brought with it a visible paradigm shift in understanding the past and present of Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian history, culture, and society. As it has been called, “Oromo Studies” has questioned the very ontology of the regime of knowledge which has historically been ethnocentric and, as I argued above, un-Ethiopianizing.³⁴

As for the nature of scholarship on Islam and Muslims, the quantity and quality of knowledge production, however, has been scanty and not encouraging. There have been few studies with major effects in relation to the already established Ethiopian Studies. To my knowledge, the only primary research that had been carried out concerning the different facets of Islam and Muslims in Ethiopia and that has gotten wider circulation in the world academic community are two PhD dissertations. One is the study by the late Hussein Ahmed, “father” of Islamic and Muslims studies in Ethiopia and Professor of History at Addis Ababa University, who undertook a primary in-depth investigation into nineteenth century Islam in Wallo.³⁵ The second work is that of Terje Østebø, Associate Professor of Religion at the University of Florida, on Salafism among Oromo Muslims.³⁶ These and related other recently published historiographical research and reviews made some significant contributions by deconstructing and reconstructing again Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian history, culture, and society. I will now discuss two key observations of the change underscored and implied in these engagements.

First, these engagements, especially Ahmed’s studies of Islam and Muslims in Ethiopia, have questioned the very ontology of Ethiopian Studies. Using the case of Wallo and a closer exploration of the origin, expansion, and currents of Islam and Muslims in the region, he has challenged the incompatibility model that assumes dualism in Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian history, culture and society. For him, the un-Ethiopianizing discourse considers Islam and Muslims as an outside antithesis, when in fact they are the product of internal synthesis. In his words, Muslim culture in Ethiopia is “one of the essential elements of Ethiopian culture . . .”³⁷

Second, Terje Østebø’s studies, especially of Bale in the Oromo region, unequivocally established whether or not Islam and/or Muslims have been violent and destructive. He produces ample empirical evidence that questioned the misreading of various activities commonly attributed to Islam and Muslims by taking examples from the largest Ethiopian ethnic group of Muslims, the Oromo. He argued that Muslim religious reform and revival efforts have been, for many years, taken to mean the very genesis of radicalism and extremism that would threaten the “Ethiopian Equilibrium.” This is thus fundamentally different from the general portrayal and representation of Islam and Ethiopian Muslims. Unfortunately, however, this general view, on the one hand, fed into the papproach toward Muslims among academics already alluded to, and, on the other, the *raison d’être* and *modus operandi* of Muslims in Ethiopia complex as a policy and actions of the various ruling elites towards Islam and Muslims in the country for many years.

The Muslims in Ethiopia Complex as Policy and Praxis

Next to the Muslims in Ethiopia complex as a discourse among Ethiopian Studies academics is how it functioned as policy and praxis of many of the ruling elites throughout Abyssinian and/or Ethiopian history. It was used and applied by many of the kings and state elites in their hand-to-hand and ideological combat against Islam and Muslims.

The advent and expansion of Islam among Abyssinians in the years between the seventh and twelfth centuries had posed some fundamental challenges, especially to the ruling Abyssinian elites. These challenges were primarily political and religious by nature. As Islam intensified, converting people in Abyssinian region, its territorial penetration and socio-political organizational structures, for instance, the development of Islamic sultanates and kingdoms, were also increasingly becoming more visible. This was the moment about which Edward Gibbon wrote of Abyssinia as being "Encompassed on all sides by the enemies of their religion."³⁸ Contrary to Gibbon, Trimingham held that the enmity between Muslims and Christian Abyssinians was not religious in nature but about political predominance.³⁹ I will not comment on the relative weigh of these arguments beyond noting that the interplay of the two can adequately explain not only the initial genesis of "incompatibility" but also its mature expressions in the later periods.

By the end of thirteenth and at the beginning of fourteenth century, approximately seven Islamic sultanates had been founded: Ifat, Dawro, Arbabani, Hadya, Sharkah, Bali, and Dara.⁴⁰ In those years, according to Trimingham, "the actual area of these Muslims kingdoms was much larger than that of the Christian kingdom."⁴¹ In the middle of this massive socio-political transformation, the Solomonic Dynasty came to power. The Solomonic Dynasty, which differed fundamentally in its domestic policies from the preceding Zagwe dynasty, started implementing a policy of "repression, conquest and expansion."⁴² This policy was the *modus operandi*, especially for such Christian Abyssinian kings as Amda Sion (1314-44), Negus Dawit I (1382-1411), and Zar'a Yaqob (1434-68). The pursuit of this policy was, on the one hand, the result of suspicion and fear of the expanding force of Muslims, and on the other the socio-political challenge that this caused.

The outcome of this policy was a source of constant bloodshed on both sides. The other consequence of this intervention was the change in the status of many of the region's Islamic sultanates. After King Amda Sion paralyzed the strongest Islamic sultanate, Ifat, the independence of all other sultanates ended and later on reduced to tributary entities under the larger political control of the Christian ruling elites. From this time up until the nineteenth century, the condition of Muslims deteriorated. Apart from losing their independence, these sultanates experienced alienation in terms of religious freedom and economic conditions. For instance, Mazaga, which was part of Tigray, had been banned from building a mosque. The Portuguese priest Fancisco Alvarez observed this situation when he was engaged in his missionary and political activities. He noted that:

In this country there are villages of Moors, separated from the Christians; they say that they pay much tribute to the lords of the country in gold and silk stuffs. They do not serve in the general services like the Christians; they have not got mosques, because they do not allow them to build or possess them.⁴³

He also observed the same complaint among other Muslims, especially in the North, writing: "While we were in this country the Moors, inhabitants of this town, were complaining, saying that the Prester John had by force levied upon them a thousand ouquias of gold . . ." ⁴⁴

The accumulation of such political, economic, and religious alienation and exploitation paved the way for the sixteenth century massive conquest of the Christian kingdom by the Islamic sultanate of Adel under the leadership of El Gazi. The 1529 "victory" over the Christians was primarily achieved by the coordination of the already resentful sultanates and Muslims living in the different parts of the country. ⁴⁵ Shihab ad-Din wrote that the success of El Gazi's conquest largely depended on the willing participation of Muslims who had the chance to reverse the exploitative control of Christian rulers over them. Among these groups were the people of Mazaga, who not only welcomed El Gazi's victory, but also, once the Muslims lost the war in 1542, sought the protection of the Ottoman Empire from the newly victorious Christian regime. ⁴⁶ Put simply, contrary to the popular view of Muslims besieging the Christian kingdom in the years between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Abyssinian Christian kingdom rather:

. . . militarily subjugated their neighboring Muslim sultanates, most prominently Ifat and Adal, and politically divided the sultanates' ruling families to keep them weak. These tactics, designed to wrest control of trade from the sultanates, were resoundingly successful until Muslims unified around military/religious leaders, primary among them being Imam Gran, who in 1531 conquered the Ethiopian Empire. ⁴⁷

It should be noted that the nature of ruling elites' policy in the fifteenth and sixteenth century Abyssinia shifted fundamentally from the previous "expansion, repression and conquest" to what I would call purifying Abyssinia of Islam and its Muslims. This was the period in which an "African crusade" was waged against Abyssinian Muslims. In fact, the ruling elites, especially King Lebna Dengle (1508-1540), believed that:

The Franks from the end of the earth would come by sea and would join with the Abyssinians, and would destroy Jiddah and Tor and Mekkah; and that so many people would cross over and would pull down Mekkah, and without moving would hand the stones from one to another and would throw them into the Red Sea, and Mekkah would remain a razed plain, and that also they would take the great city of Cairo, and upon that there would be great differences as to whose it should be, and the Franks would remain in the great city. ⁴⁸

Following the recurrent wars of the sixteenth century, the country and its people had incurred a massive loss of human life and material resources.

The complex, however, reached its mature expression in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Yohannes IV and Menelik II came to power consecutively. During the terms of these two kings, excluding Amda Sion's earlier legacies, Muslims suffered more significantly than ever before. Under Yohannes IV, Muslim Abyssinians were given the choice of accepting Christianity or face persecution. The resistance of the people of Wollo under Sheikh Talha and their subsequent massive persecution and forceful conversion to Christianity was the rule rather than the exception. ⁴⁹ Similarly, Menelik II's vision for a united and greater Christian

Ethiopia resulted in the religious as well as military campaigns that led to the creation of modern Ethiopia. Pausewang concisely summarized the brutal experiences under Menelik II's campaigns thus:

[the people] have not forgotten the historical experience of being conquered by Emperor Menilek, during the second half of 19th century. They have not overcome the trauma of Menilek using modern firearms imported from Europe, to crush their resistance. For them, Ethiopia participated in the “scramble for Africa” on the colonisers side, being the only African power to succeed in participating in the partition of Africa into colonial spheres of interest. They still suffer from the deep trauma of being treated as second class human beings. They experienced being economically exploited, culturally suppressed, and relegated to a kind of sub-human status, by the administration and the nobility from the North.⁵⁰

A slightly positive change in policy toward Islam and Muslims was observed during the EPRDF regime in the early 1990s. This change in policy, which I would call adaptive rather than transformative, was the result of multiple, but necessary factors, of which I will address two. First is the late consciousness of the ruling state elites that Ethiopia as a country will no longer continue to be viewed through primordial lens, for its people with multiple socio-cultural, religious, historical, and politico-economic experiences have their own stake in it. However, although the EPRDF regime recognized this in the new constitution, its practical implementation has been backfiring in many respects. An important case in point is the Muslim movements in Ethiopia, which I address below. Second is the emergence of various interest groups in the country: one is the identity question of Ethiopia's ethnic groups (for instance, the Oromo); the second, and the very subject of this article, is the historically evolving identity question of Muslims underpinning economic, political, cultural, and religious rights and entitlements.

The Muslims in Ethiopia Complex and Muslim Identity

After it had come to power, the EPRDF regime introduced its own version of Ethiopia wherein “Muslim Ethiopians” appeared to replace the Muslims in Ethiopia complex. The opening of this public space had facilitated the way for the revival and expression of cultural and religious identities among Muslims. Most importantly, and unexpectedly, this period paved the way for Muslims to recollect the collective consciousness of their shared historical experiences in the country. There are two foundations for this development: first, the collective pattern of a similar experience of socio-cultural, economic and political oppression, exploitation, and misrepresentation; and second, the role of religious revival and reform activities that generally helped shape the development of Muslim identity as “Muslim Ethiopians.” It should be noted that Muslims in Ethiopia, as alluded to in the introduction, has been the actual socioeconomic and political condition of Muslims and the associated low self-perception and alienation under earlier policy.

In the first case, the constant struggle of Muslims under the policy of the various ruling elites in the past helped nurture a sense of community. During those periods, many “historical records, both oral and documentary, testify more to the interactions and commonalities than to

the distinct and separate identities of the Muslim communities of Ethiopia.”⁵¹ This is more analogous to what Karl Marx thought of as “class in itself” in which case the working class “constituted in itself by virtue of the similar situation of workers, their common alienation from the means of production within capitalism. By virtue of their shared situation, workers have similar interests (i.e. things that are in their interest).”⁵² In this regard, Muslim Ethiopianness could be seen then as the unintended outcome of such policy. One practical example in this regard would be the case study undertaken among the Wollo Muslims who have been residing in the northern section of Ethiopia.

Rukya Hassan detected and has shown a process of definition and redefinition of Wollo Muslim identity. She found that people who consider themselves Muslims and at the same time Amhara adopted various strategies through which they demarcated what they considered was Islamic and what was not. The Wollo, a Muslim population living within the broader Christian Amhara region, developed a modified linguistic system, which she termed the “Amharic Speaking Muslim Community of Wollo (ASMCW).”⁵³ This modification is accomplished by shifting from Amhara-Amharic, which is Christian in the analysis, to Amharic-Islamic. This, in essence, is a dialectical shift of identity marked by religion through which “we” is discursively constructed and defined against “them.”

A more matured expression of this identity has been the product of post 1990s Muslim revival and reform activities. Owing to the EPRDF regime’s policy, the post 1990s period saw the proliferation of religious institutions, intellectual movements, the production of religious materials, massive and intensive communications, and related other mechanisms of revival and reform activities. Some of the well-known organizations and associations such as the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council (EIASC), the Ethiopian Muslim Youth Association, and the Ethiopian Muslim Unity Association were established, among others.⁵⁴ The production of Islamic newspapers and magazines like *Bilal* played a significant role in mobilizing urban Muslims along a growing and increasingly recognized dialectical process of definition and redefinition of themselves; their role in Ethiopia; and in cementing the social bond among the socio-culturally different Muslim urbanites.⁵⁵ Between 2000 and 2010, a number of other locally distributed and popular weekly newspapers such as *Salafia*, *Hikma*, and, most notably, *Yemuslimoch Guday* played a significant role for the new generation of Ethiopian Muslims. Before the EPRDF government banned it, *Yemuslimoch Guday* arguably influenced the development of collective consciousness among the urban dwellers and educated circles in Ethiopia.⁵⁶ The most recurrent themes of this weekly newspaper were the global and local dynamics of Islam, Islamic and Muslim history, Islam and Ethiopia, and other closely related issues.

The progressively maturing collective consciousness along the lines of Muslim Ethiopians has been gaining momentum in the subsequent periods with the introduction and intensification of social and other communication media. The introduction of a television channel for Muslim Ethiopians is one good example. The launch of this TV channel, TV Africa, presented Ethiopian Muslims with Islamic programs often accompanied by historical and cultural content. With around-the-clock Islamic programming, the channel uses more than one local language to get its messages across to Ethiopian Muslims. In addition to Amharic, programs have been produced in other widely spoken languages, including Oromo-Oromiffa,

Somali-Somaligna, Afar-Afarigna, and Tigray-Tigrigna. In general terms, this TV channel based in Sudan, provided Ethiopian Muslims with alternative narrations of "what it means to be a Muslim and Ethiopian."

Similarly, social media has also been playing a significant role that cannot be underestimated. The intensification of interaction facilitated by Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and various websites, with content ranging in focus from purely religious and political to historical, have been playing their part in this development of collective consciousness among the Muslim community in Ethiopia. It is interesting to note here the role that is being played by *Dimtsachin Yisema* ("Let Our Voice Be Heard") in the current fallout between the EPRDF regime and Muslims.⁵⁷ It is a key platform for the mass mobilization of Muslims in Ethiopia and the Muslim Ethiopian diaspora against some of the repressive moves of the EPRDF regime. *Dimtsachin Yisema* does this and promotes other related activities principally through using Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

The message of these Muslim reform and revival activities, as viewed by the EPRDF regime, was not necessarily one of the peaceful development of Muslim Ethiopianness. Rather, the government alleged that it was one violence, extremism, and intolerance.⁵⁸ The regime did not view it as a Muslim Ethiopianness that constantly negotiates, dialectically engages, and responds to the question of what it means to be a Muslim and Ethiopian? The EPRDF regime's reluctant shift in policy towards "Muslim Ethiopians" became something different—in the words of Østebø, "from containment to the production of a governmental Islam."⁵⁹

The details of the EPRDF's moves towards the "production and containment" of Islam appear in Østebø's well-substantiated account.⁶⁰ It is pertinent to add, however, that the supposed earlier EPRDF optimism toward Islam and Muslims was not genuinely transformative but more of an adoptive deceit. EPRDF's recent introduction of "Governmental Islam," otherwise known as the Ahbash sect, partly explains the government's initial intent to regulate or even arrest the growing consciousness, reformist, and revivalist activities of Muslims, which thus captures the adoptive nature of its policy. In other words, the change in EPRDF policy towards Islam was not transformative and thus was not qualitatively different from the previous Muslims in Ethiopia complex policies of earlier Christian rulers. However, as the saying "bending the twig too far will lash back with destructive ferocity" goes, the policy has aroused nationwide protests that have been characterized as "peaceful," "calm," and "disciplined."⁶¹ In addition, through time, these protests have developed into a powerful movement with "[a] more sophisticated campaign strategy and ensured the peaceful progress."⁶²

Like the previous complex policies, however, it has created a platform whereby the Muslims proactively exploited the friction for strengthening the collectivity among the various Muslim communities in Ethiopia. Some of the slogans in the post 2010 mass Muslim demonstrations in Ethiopia can be taken to support this. Among the slogans, for instance, "*mengest bemuslimoch guday talqa aygba*" (government shall not interfere in the affairs of Muslims); "*muslimoch ande nen aneleyayem*" (we Muslims are united and will not be divided); "*Yemuslimoch mebt yikeber*" (Muslim rights be respected); and others communicate important messages.⁶³ The "production of Islam" induced fear, anger, and response among Muslims, as can be deduced from the above slogans, as they perceived an existential threat with the intent to

dismantle the collective integrity of Muslim Ethiopians. In general terms, this reflects, on the one hand, an identity boundary for the collective “*muslimoch*” (we Muslims) and, on the other, that this identity boundary has aspects that cannot be negotiated with others including the government.

A closer examination of the existing fallout between Ethiopian Muslims and the EPRDF regime lead to two important implications. The first one is that the pragmatic trajectory of Muslim consciousness of themselves, the country, and the ruling EPRDF regime. The protests which have been carried out since 2011 not only show the shift in Muslim consciousness but also their perception of and role in Ethiopia. We see, especially in the demonstrations and Muslim produced local intellectual materials, a transformation of consciousness from the feeling of strangeness and thus “Muslims in Ethiopia” to more of a proactive citizenry or, what I called, Ethiopian Muslims.⁶⁴ As active citizens also, they have been posing a meticulously articulated demand for rights and freedom other. This demand, for instance for religious freedom, is therefore an important expression of citizens who felt and acted as locals and natives, not as strangers in the Christian Ethiopia or Muslims in Ethiopia sense.

The second implication is closely related to EPRDF’s policy of the “containment and production of Islam.” While the Muslims self-perception went through some significant changes, with the unintended lending hand of, but not limited to, EPRDF’s initial appeasing policy, the government is lagging behind on the same trajectory of change. In other words, once the regime begun implementing the “improved” policy of production and containment, it had to deal with the constant protests and demonstrations all across the country, often times, with harsh measures of incarcerations, bans, and so forth. In short, the EPRDF government’s reluctance and insistence on not peacefully responding to and addressing some of the demands of Muslims in the country has not been changing for quiet sometime, and this would remain the principal bone of contention for the probable future. As of recently, the government has been taking more severe measures, especially against the “Muslims representatives,” and as such, the future may appear to yield gloomy outcomes for both parties.⁶⁵

Conclusion

This article has examined three interrelated facets of the Muslims in Ethiopia complex. The first dimension involves the view of the Muslims in Ethiopia complex as a discourse among Ethiopian Studies. In this connection, the article applied the concept of Hi/storying as an exemplary discourse and concluded that, except for few emerging research studies, the complex as a discourse remains unchallenged. Thus there is an urgent need for more primary research. Through the generation of primary data from the understudied side, that of Islam and Muslims in Abyssinia and/or Ethiopia, the discourses on Islam and Muslims could assume greater balance.

The complex’s second aspect included the view of it as a policy and practice of many of the ruling elites, which reached its peak during the times of King Amda Sion, Yohannes IV and Menelik II. The advent and expansion of Islam in and around Abyssinia had caused these ruling elites to adopt peripheralization and the policy of “cleansing” Abyssinia of Islam and Muslims. This aggressive move, especially the recurrent attacks, restrained religious freedom, led to the economic exploitation of Muslims, and partially produced the development of a sense of

inferiority and alienation. Yet, it also paved the way for the strengthening of collectivity and elevated Muslim self-perception in the later periods. The Muslim reversal of Christian control in the sixteenth century testified to the expression of collectivity among Muslims. This, accordingly, constituted the third dimension of the Muslims in Ethiopia complex, that is, their actual inferior and "unwanted" condition. However, an unintended consequence of the Muslims in Ethiopia complex policy facilitated the development of Muslim identity as Ethiopian Muslims. Similarly, although the existing EPRDF regime appeared to open its door for "Muslim Ethiopians" since 1990s, it more recently shifted the policy towards "containment" which had its own implications for Muslim revival and reform activities. Despite the government's repressive actions, Muslim identity has been shifting, due to past and present circumstances, more toward becoming Ethiopian Muslims.

As it now stands, the shift of Muslim identity from being outsiders to being stakeholders has not been accompanied by a greater degree of flexibility and action on the government's part. Even though the government appears to be taking a stand against its own Muslim population on some contemporary issues, the growing Muslim consciousness has sent an implicit message that Muslim citizens in Ethiopia will no longer see and live in a Muslims in Ethiopia world unless the government recognizes and begins to take actions in favor of Ethiopian Muslims.

Notes

An initial draft of this paper, entitled "The State and Society in Muslim World," was presented at the International ILEM conference, August 23-29, 2014, at 29 Mayis University, Istanbul. I would like to thank Semir Yusuf for his comments on the initial draft.

- 1 Here Abyssinia refers to the northern part of present day Ethiopia whose people primarily speak Ge'ez, Tigrina, and Amharic. Ethiopia, on the other hand, is the "whole region . . . the modern state . . . founded by Menelik II" and subsequently ruled by Hailesillasie, the Dergue, and presently, the EPRDF regime (Trimingham 1952, p. v).
- 2 A process involving the perpetuation of inequalities, exclusion, and marginalization; see Bernt and Colini 2013.
- 3 Patrick and Østebø 2013.
- 4 Østebø 2007, p. 3.
- 5 Foucault 1972.
- 6 Whisnant 2012, p. 6.
- 7 See Yusuf 2009.
- 8 See Bruce 1813; Budge 1928; Sergew 1967; Trimingham 1952; Toggai 2008.
- 9 Østebø 2007, p. 1.
- 10 Yusuf 2009, p. 381.
- 11 Ahmed 1998, p. xvi.
- 12 By the sixteenth century one third of the total population was estimated to be Muslim (Trimingham 1952, p. 101). Despite conflicting estimations, more than a third of the current population is also Muslim.

- 13 Kassay 2009, p. 11.
- 14 Proponents of this view primarily included Trimingham 1952; Abir 1978; Ephrem 2008; and Erlich (1994, 2009, 2010, 2013).
- 15 Erlich 2009, p. 458. Hadith is a tradition, especially sayings of Muhammad, prophet of Islam. Ka'ba is one of the holiest places of the religion of Islam and it is located in Mecca, Saudi Arabia where Muslims annually visit in millions.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Bukhari, 1994, Vol. II, p.385., no.1595-1596.
- 18 Erlich 2009, p. 458.
- 19 Trimingham 1952.
- 20 Erlich 1994, p. 22.
- 21 This is a recurrent theme recycled in all of his publications. In fact, I would argue this constitutes his principal thesis for Ethiopia-Islam relations. See Erlich's introductions in his publications (1994, 2006, 2009, 2010, and 2013).
- 22 Sergew 1967; Erlich 1994; Bahru 2001; and Ephrem 2008.
- 23 Yusuf 2009, p. 382.
- 24 This had a devastating consequence. The knowledge production under the incompatibility model interacts with government's actions, and as a result, this will pose significant danger ". . . that it will have a legitimizing effect instead of an explanatory power" (Ramos 2013, p. 16).
- 25 Bahru 2001; Milkias 2011, p. 192; Erlich 2013, p. 9; Ephrem 2008; Trimingham 1952.
- 26 See, for instance, the comments of Prof. Lapiso and a Harari resident from Ethiopia in the documentary titled "IMAM AHMED: Ethiopian Military Genius & A Hero." It can be viewed <http://www.ethiotube.net/video/17000/IMAM-AHMED-Ethiopian-Military-Genius-A-Hero> and also in the *New World Encyclopedia* http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Ahmad_ibn_Ibrihim_al-Ghazi.
- 27 Bahru 2001, p.20, 63
- 28 Erlich 2010, p. 6.
- 29 Pausewang 2009, p. 4.
- 30 Erlich 2010, p. 4.
- 31 Erlich 1994, pp. 26-28.
- 32 Seifuddin 1997, p. 129.
- 33 Gnamo 2002, p.108.
- 34 See, for instance, the nature and content of the *Journal of Oromo Studies*, <http://www.oromostudies.org/publications/osa-journal>
- 35 Ahmed 1985 dissertation and subsequent 2001 book.
- 36 Østebø 2009a.
- 37 Ahmed 1998, p. xvi.
- 38 Gibbon 1776-1787, vol. iv, Chap. 47, Pt. 5. It should be noted that the presence of Muslims in Abyssinia was not limited to "all sides," but also within the Abyssinian cultural and geographic boundaries. There are many evidences that showed not only Muslims lived, for

instance, in Abyssinia, but also, and most importantly, had a sultanate. The Mazaga Islamic kingdom in Tigray, the inner core of Abyssinia is a good example (Alvarez 1881, p. 95).

Muslims in Wollo and Shoa are another good examples in later periods.

- 39 Trimingham 1952, p.65
- 40 Al-Umari cited in Trimingham 1952, pp. 72-73. See also Ulrich 1977. The seven named sultanates is the number that it is commonly utilized. Other scholars list greater or lesser numbers. Shihab ad-Din (2003) and Alvarez (1881) include Mazaga, referred to in the following paragraph, as another sultanate/kingdom in their fifteenth century travel accounts.
- 41 Trimingham 1952, p. 68.
- 42 Ibid., p. 76.
- 43 Alvarez 1881, p. 95.
- 44 Ibid., p. 104.
- 45 Owens 2008.
- 46 Orhonlu 1996, p. 47.
- 47 Owens 2008, p. v.
- 48 Alvarez 1881, p. 255.
- 49 Hussein 1998.
- 50 Pausewang 2009, p. 552.
- 51 Hussien 2010, p. 111.
- 52 Marx in Jenkins 2008, p. 110.
- 53 Rukya 2008, p. 3.
- 54 Hussien 1994.
- 55 See Carmichael 1996; Hussien 1998.
- 56 “Yemuslimoch Guday” means Muslim Affairs.
- 57 For a detailed discussion of the “fallout,” please see Østebø 2013.
- 58 Østebø 2012 challenges the “extremism” and “violence” rhetoric of the government.
- 59 See Østebø 2013 for a detailed discussion.
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Østebø 2014, p. 172.
- 62 Jawar 2013, p. 4.
- 63 Personal communication with an acclaimed Muslim activist (requested anonymity), July 15, 2015.
- 64 See, for instance, Jebel 2012, which is one of the widely circulated books before and during Muslim protests in Ethiopia, Ahmedin Jabal, 2012. Jabal is a researcher, activist. and member of ‘Muslims’ Representatives’ now in detention, Ethiopia. Also see Kamil 2015.
- 65 <http://addisstandard.com/an-ethiopian-court-jailed-muslim-leaders-activists-to-lengthy-terms/> Accessed in Monday, August 10, 2015.

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REVIEW ESSAY

Teaching about Africa: Homocentricity, Afrocentricity, and the Classroom

KENNETH WILBURN

Molefi Kete Asante. 2015. *The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. 399 pp.

Robert O. Collins and James M. Burns. 2014. *A History of Sub-Saharan Africa*. 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press. 405 pp.

Maria Grosz-Ngaté, John H. Hanson, and Patrick O'Meara, eds. 2014. *Africa*. 4th ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 362 pp.

Africa is humanity's birthplace, where astonishing genetic and fossil data continue to accumulate and convince skeptics that *homo sapiens* is African. Broadly speaking, all present-day humans are descendants of some twenty thousand Africans about ten thousand generations ago. The homocentric fact that we are all Global Africans has profound implications. This provocative knowledge has the potential to convince rational humans to accept each other as extended family. Can Mother Africa reach out from our deep collective past to gently infuse our emerging minds with soothing tunes of familial empathy? To paraphrase Stephen Foster, "Oh Sankofa, oh don't you cry for us, for we come from Mother Africa with drums between our knees."

African studies and world civilization courses are educational venues where such revolutionary ideas can be discussed. These courses give instructors opportunities to inform students that the past is meaningful, that history has a purpose, and that concepts of nationality, sub-culture, ideology, religion, ethnicity, and materialism can be understood within a Global African collective. Inside such discussions the fraudulence of "race" can be exposed; "the other" can be replaced with "my cousin." To some, this homocentric foundation of education and wisdom may sound naïve, a bit idealistic, but sometimes against seemingly hopeless odds, good can emerge. The life of Nelson Mandela exemplifies this well. How different the world would be had the Afrikaner judge sentenced Madiba to death instead of life. Hope and small victories can change the world.

Kenneth Wilburn has taught African and world history courses at East Carolina University for over thirty years and has served as a web editor for H-Africa and SERSAS for almost twenty. He has published books and articles on Cape Liberalism, imperialism, West African philately, and philosophies of history. He continues to explore the revolutionary implications of our African origins.

<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v16/v16i1a4.pdf>

New editions of Africana texts by Molefi Kete Asante, Robert O. Collins and James M. Burns, and editors Maria Grosz-Ngaté, John H. Hanson, and Patrick O'Meara effectively and eloquently present Africa and its peoples to the world. For me, teaching about Africa through time is best presented within the homocentric context of African origins. The important question in my mind as I engage the authors is this: do the authors use their scholarship about Africa and their empathy toward Africans to call us to the family reunion?

In *The History of Africa*, Molefi Kete Asante strives to present African history and people through African eyes. He knows full well that most Africana was overwhelmingly Eurocentric until the 1950s. Even today, due largely to the mal-distribution of wealth on our planet, much of what is written by Africans continues to be generated by scholars from privileged societies outside the Mother Continent. Nonetheless, we have come a long way since Africanists tossed Edgar Rice Burroughs and Henry Morton Stanley into the dustbin of racism while fighting major battles with Eurocentrists Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Hugh Trevor-Roper. Asante attempts to take us further still in his valiant attempt to write African history for Global Africans from an Afrocentric perspective. Does he succeed?

Asante divides his *History of Africa* into seven helpful parts: "The Time of Awakening," "The Age of Literacy," "The Moment of Realization," "The Age of Construction," "The Time of Chaos," "The Age of Reconstruction," and "The Time for Consolidation." As each section's nomenclature implies, Africa and Africans are at the center. Asante declares in his preface that he uses the lenses of cultures, societies, politics, and economics to convey "the ordinary lives of Africans within the context of their own experiences."

For me, and through me my students, Asante's treatment of human origins and its possible implications is tantalizing, but too brief. His three pages comprising "The Time of Awakening" have neither graphs nor illustrations. Yes, there is a companion web site <<http://www.routledge textbooks.com/textbooks/9780415844550/part1.php>> with some sixteen entries in the form of a semi-active bibliography. I would much prefer Asante summarize and incorporate that data more fully into "The Time of Awakening." My provincial students of all ethnicities need more than a three-page summary to begin to weigh the enormous value of their African heritage, and they need Asante's guidance in doing so. Moving from awakening to literacy, Asante calls on the ideas of John Henrik Clarke for support, but Asante himself needs to give us more than three pages of his own words.

Asante's coverage of the history of Kemet (Egypt) is very well done, whether the topics are about Kemet's pharaohs, religion, or the people. What I found especially frustrating, however, is the book's lack of maps. *History of Africa* has one map and the companion web site has no map section. Even if maps were there, I want hard copy maps in front of me and my students. I want my students not only to feel the persuasive empathy of Asante's words, I want them also to use their eyes to find those words embedded in the Mother Continent. Very few of my students have been out of their regions of the United States, much less to Africa. Alas, some of Asante's noble work and many of my students can easily get lost.

I thoroughly enjoyed Asante's coverage of Cleopatra VII, Axum, Hannibal, Mansa Musa, Great Zimbabwe, the Yoruba, Benin, Dahomey, literature, colonialism and the independence movements, Kwame Nkrumah, and Nelson Mandela's life—just to list some of the book's strengths. Perhaps in a future edition Asante can expand his coverage of Nana Asma'u of the

Sokoto Caliphate, Ibn Battuta, the dhow, the Copts' monotheism, and the critics of Robert Mugabe. Asante's second edition is a wonderful history of the Mother Continent. It can even be more so in its third edition.

Like Asante's *History of Africa*, a second edition of Robert O. Collins and James M. Burns' *A History of Sub-Saharan Africa* has recently been published. James Burns carried out this edition's revisions, as Robert Collins passed away in 2008. Collins and Burns created a fine text on the Mother Continent and its peoples, but it contains virtually no treatment of human origins. Unfortunately, instructors must look elsewhere.

In contrast to Asante's book, Collins and Burns have some of the best maps ever produced in a text about Africa and its peoples. They clearly convey to provincial students Africa's complex geographic personality. Some of the effectiveness of this rich resource, however, is diminished by the absence of a map list in the front matter. The same can be said for the illustrations, helpful primary sources, and debates in African history that Collins and Burns share with students. *History of Sub-Saharan Africa* is divided up into four sections:

"Foundations," "Africa in World History," "Imperial Africa," and "Independent Africa." The authors chose to omit significant coverage of North Africa in order to devote more attention to "the internal integrity of Africa south of the Sahara," as explained in their introduction. Some Africanists will take issue with any book that portrays the Sahara as a barrier dividing North Africa from the rest of the continent. They would argue that such a challenge to the inherent unity of Africa is unnecessary and that inclusion of North Africa is more important than the forced exclusion of data about other parts of Africa necessary to publish the book within page limits.

Collins and Burns excel when raising controversies in African history. One fine example presents competing ideas on the origins of Egyptian civilization of Cheikh Anta Diop, Martin Bernal, Mary Lefkowitz, and Guy Rogers. Another discusses African art and coincidentally mentions the art of the Kuba, whose art is held extensively by my university and often viewed by my students. Another still discusses the origins of Great Zimbabwe. Walter Rodney's important economic analysis of the relationship between Europe and Africa is also considered. The authors provide splendid treatment of manifestations of slavery in Africa and well as the Atlantic slave trade. All the while, the authors encourage students to think for themselves.

The last work considered here, *Africa*, is a collection of essays about the Mother Continent and its peoples that focus more on contemporary than historical Africa, edited by Maria Grosz-Ngaté, John H. Hanson, and Patrick O'Meara. Unfortunately, there is even less treatment on foundational human origins and its application today than that of Collins and Burns. Twenty-two contributors combined to produce fifteen essays on a large variety of African topics, including historiography, family and community, religion, health, urban life, visual arts, music, literature, film, politics, and human rights.

As is often the case with edited works, some chapters are stronger than others. One of the strongest, which sets the foundation for contemporary Africa, but which says nothing in detail of human origins, is John Akare Aden and John H. Hanson's "Legacies of the Past: Themes in African History." I especially enjoyed Patrick McNaughton and Diane Pelrine's "Visual Arts in Africa" with its stunning representations of African art in color. Daniel B. Reed and Ruth M. Stone's "African Music Flows" is also an engaging chapter that will connect well with students.

The authors could have supplemented the important treatment of indigenous African music with a discussion of the fascinating story of Sixto Rodriguez and South Africa. Thinking of the book's undergraduate audience and linkages again, the authors could also have mentioned Youssou N'Dour's appearance in 1994 at Woodstock, where he and Super Étoile de Dakar stirringly performed their anti-apartheid tribute song to southern Africa and Nelson Mandela.

Preliminary bibliographies conclude each chapter. Especially helpful, Marion Frank-Wilson's "Print and Electronic Resources" chapter serves as the book's general bibliography. In the "General Resources" where H-Africa is mentioned, students would be further assisted by knowing that H-Africa is only one of H-Net's family of Africana listservs and web sites.

All three books have their strengths and complement each other. Undergraduate and graduate students alike will be richly rewarded by immersing themselves in these volumes. They will be rewarded further still by keeping homocentricity—the African origins of humanity—in mind.

REVIEW ESSAY

Where Do We Go from Here?: Writing Children into African History

D. DMITRI HURLBUT

Saheed Aderinto, ed. 2015. *Children and Childhood in Colonial Nigerian Histories*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 235 pp.

Abosede A. George. 2014. *Making Modern Girls: A History of Girlhood, Labor, and Social Development in Colonial Lagos*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 301 pp.

Since Philippe Ariès' groundbreaking *Centuries of Childhood*, few historians of Africa have ventured into the study of the history of childhood. The publication of the two volumes reviewed here addresses this deficit. *Children and Childhood in Colonial Nigerian Histories* brings together eight essays exploring juvenile delinquents, child abduction, children's masquerade, child labor, girl hawkers, and even the Boy Scouts. For Saheed Aderinto, assistant professor of history at Western Carolina University, this collection highlights many of the factors that converged to make childhood in colonial Africa a unique experience. Although location and socioeconomic class significantly shaped identity formation in colonial Nigeria, geographic mobility and multiculturalism added to these processes among children. In addition, race and color affected colonial notions of childhood, as foreign children also grew up in the colony. Lastly, childhood was gendered, because adults perceived both the upbringing and future of boys and girls differently.

In *Making Modern Girls*, Abosede George, associate professor of history and Africana studies at Barnard College, investigates the relationship between girls who worked as street hawkers and ideas of both girlhood and juvenile welfare in colonial Lagos. Over seven chapters, George argues that children were central to discussions about what it meant to be modern and urban in Lagos between the 1920s and 1950s, because adults projected their fears, desires, and visions of an ideal society onto the children they raised. At the heart of this monograph is the issue of urban citizenship. The debates surrounding girl hawkers and girlhood were essentially expressions of what it meant to be a modern urban person. In the eyes of elite local women, girlhood was a period of preparation for the domestic life of Christian womanhood. Their "schoolgirl" vision of girlhood, however, conflicted with the Yoruba vision of girlhood. In Yoruba society, hawking functioned as an extension of household chores, giving it an important place in girls' social development. Girl hawkers, then, were either immoral girls who stood in opposition to innocence, modesty, and chastity, or they embodied important Yoruba values—a

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v16/v16i1a5.pdf>

strong work ethic, respect for elders, and an appreciation for economic independence. Both of these positions reflect specific, opposing notions about being and becoming modern in colonial Lagos.

While the two books under consideration raise valuable questions about how childhood has been defined in colonial Nigeria, the issue of sources demands attention. Primary sources remain the greatest barrier to examining childhood in the narrative of African history—and herein lies both the greatest strength and weakness of Aderinto's edited volume and George's monograph. The two works locate children in the archives, providing direction and suggesting realms of inquiry to historians who do not want to mine vast archival collections for references to children. Nigerian children are not absent from the written archives. They can be found in newspapers, autobiographical writings, government publications, and colonial records, including the Colony Welfare Office and the Boy Scouts Association. Aderinto's essays on representations of childhood in the Nigerian press (Chapter 1) and on the memory of childhood in autobiographical writings (Chapter 7) further explicate the limitations of such written materials. By laying the groundwork for future research, George and Aderinto and his contributors assist the next generation of Africanists to undertake the history of childhood.

These texts demonstrate the limits of current research methods for writing the history of childhood in Africa, but their authors do not explicitly address this problem. While children are the topic of some documents found in the archives, children composed few written materials suited to historical research. More often than not, primary sources reveal adults discussing children as passive objects, found in relation to organizing ideas such as labor, crime, and education. The nature of archival references to children shaped how the authors and contributors of both books write about children. Rather than placing children's experience at the center of their narratives, they prioritize the relationship of childhood to modernity. George investigates the place of girl hawkers in the salvationist agenda of educated elite women reformers and the developmental agenda of the colonial state. Adam Paddock looks at Igbo Boy Scouts in Nigeria between 1934 and 1951 in relation to ideas about education and the imperial civilizing mission (Aderinto, Chapter 5). Simon Heap uses the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents at the Salvation Army's Boys' Industrial Home to determine whether or not colonialists processed children as a uniform entity, at least within the context of juvenile crime (Aderinto, Chapter 2). In other cases, children are missing from the narrative entirely—despite finding their way into the chapter title. Tokunbo Ayoola's essay on child laborers in Nigerian tin mines in the 1950s is not even about children in tin mines, but rather about why colonial officials never banned child labor (Aderinto, Chapter 6).

Despite focusing on defining childhood's relationship to broader themes, some of these historians find space to explore the experiences of the child. The primacy of the experience of the child is, to be sure, contingent on which sources the authors marshaled in their research. Children are absent from Ayoola's narrative, because he bases his essay on a traditional reading of sources written by colonial officials. Thus, children are only important to this essay as the object of the debate between colonial officials and their critics. George, on the other hand, supplements her archival research with interviews she conducted in 2005 and 2006 with elderly women who had been street hawkers in Lagos between the 1930s and 1950s. Similarly, Aderinto makes the most of childhood memories in his essay on autobiographical writings (Chapter 7).

Utilizing memory brings George and Aderinto closer to the immediacy of experience than Ayoola, but their children nonetheless remain voiceless. Instead, the elderly women whom these hawkers became speak on behalf of their younger selves through the interviews George conducted with them more than fifty years after childhood's end. Aderinto's memoirs suffer from a similar problem—the authors speak for the children they once were. The perils of memory are well known to historians, but how time or an autobiographer's political agenda might have warped these memories must be left to speculation. In short, memory is no substitute for primary sources composed by children—rare as these might be.

The history of children cannot be told apart from the history of adults, but if childhood is going to become indispensable to the narrative of African history the emphasis must be placed on children themselves. How can historians make up for the shortcomings of written records when (adult or child) informants or documents written by children themselves are not available? For Simon Heap, the answer is to apply sociological principles. In his essay on the Salvation Army's boys' home in Lagos, Heap uses labeling theory and social control theory to help explain the behavior of problem youths (Aderinto, Chapter 2).¹ While sociology presents one option for historians of childhood who seek to supplement the limitations of current archival materials, another option may be to explore the senses of children in African history, to borrow Moses Ochonu's concept.² Ochonu proposed sensing as a way to rethink the writing of postcolonial African history, but historians could similarly feel, hear, smell, and taste their way into colonial childhood by looking at the often ignored forces that animated the lives of children. If we cannot learn specifically about children from children, as Uyilawa Usuanlele did in his essay on children's masquerade in Benin City (Aderinto, Chapter 3), historians may be able to learn about their diet, or to speculate about the enriched sensory impact of being raised in a place like Lagos—crowded, unsanitary, noisy, extravagantly stimulating. By sensing the forces that animate the lives of children beyond organizing principles such as labor, education, and crime, scholars may be able to place more emphasis on children's experience in their research.

Historians could also engage with archival materials in a more fruitful and creative manner if they thought consciously about when colonial childhood began and ended. While Aderinto briefly addresses the issue of chronology and childhood in the introduction and his chapter on the Nigerian press (pp. 4, 22), the majority of his contributors do not attempt to define a specific period of life as childhood, or distinguish children from youth in any of their essays. George notes various definitions of childhood throughout her monograph (pp. 110, 139), but readers nonetheless miss what it means to be a girl child hawker versus a girl youth hawker because these nuances are lost in her discussion of girlhood. The distinction between child, youth, and adult is worth stating clearly in future research, as it will allow for a more effective analysis of primary sources.

Aderinto's edited volume and George's monograph make valuable contributions to our knowledge of childhood in Africa, especially in their examination of the relationship between Nigerian children and modernity. Future historians seeking to reconstruct the history of childhood in Africa, however, must emphasize children in their own right, and move beyond the well tread frameworks used to discuss adults. Retrieving children from the annals of African history will require great ingenuity and methodological innovation. In the absence of

primary sources written by children, historians will need to use a little imagination to capture their unique world. There is still a long way to go, but *Children and Childhood in Colonial Nigerian Histories* and *Making Modern Girls* mark two steps in the right direction.

Notes

- 1 Labeling theory claims “if a juvenile is said to be delinquent he or she will think of himself or herself in that way and act accordingly” (Aderinto, p. 53). Social control theory declares “delinquency is more pronounced for youths who have lost their desire for achievement and recognition” (Aderinto, p. 54).
- 2 Moses E. Ochonu. 2015. “Elusive History: Fractured Archives, Politicized Orality, and Sensing the Postcolonial Past.” *History in Africa* 42: 287-98.

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.

Ogunleye Adetunbi Richard, *Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria*

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.

Tom Udo Tom Ekpote, *School of Biblical Studies-Jos, Nigeria*

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 Wealth 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.

Percyslage Chigora, *Midlands State University- Zimbabwe*

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.

Amitabh Vikram Dwivedi, *Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University*

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. Egya'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 through 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 disagreement. 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 Nwokeafor. (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 Nwokeafor’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, Nwokeafor’s book is very welcome, as an ICT driven social and economic development in Africa is urgently needed. Indeed, Nwokeafor’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—by 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 counterotypes, 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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