

BOOK REVIEWS

Alexandra Cosima Budabin and Lisa Ann Richey. 2021. *Batman Saves the Congo: How Celebrities Disrupt the Politics of Development*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 221 pp.

Batman Saves the Congo narrates and analyzes how a Hollywood star (Ben Affleck, of the movie “Batman”) formed a strategic team of humanitarians, showing in the process “how celebrities disrupt the politics of development.” The authors focus on human rights and conflict resolution and on the universal politics of humanitarianism. Their book analyzes what celebrity strategic partnerships are doing to disrupt the humanitarian space. The authors combine ethnography, political economy, and narrative analysis to push the knowledge of celebrity humanitarianism beyond media space and donor activities.

Chapter One, “Celebrity, Disruption, and Neoliberal Development,” captures how Affleck’s Eastern Congo Initiative (ECI) enabled him to use his public market value to establish strategic partnerships to drive his developmental enterprise. ECI depended on a complex network. Undoubtedly, the intervention is more durable than the previous celebrity engagements. Hence, its effects on the real work of development and humanitarianism were more significant.

Chapter Two, “Narrating the Congo: Dangerous Single Stories and the Organizations That Need Them,” narrates events that showcase how celebrities use their status and influence to engage foreigners to contribute to the development of Congo. The stars developed and deployed a communication strategy that emphasized “save” and “solve” the burdens of Congo. Admittedly, the transnational engagements wooed foreigners, and the effort produced humanitarian relief for Congo’s internal crises. However, such developmental services are not participatory but dominant.

Chapter Three, “How a Celebrity Builds a Development Organization,” narrates how Affleck established a formidable team of interdisciplinary enthusiasts who drove his development vision for Congo. The strategic team comprised Hollywood actors, American political elites, philanthropists, humanitarians, and advocacy experts. Undoubtedly, their celebrity status was a game-changer as it afforded the ability to engage the elites in ways that the traditional advocates lack. No doubt, the approach caused a paradigm shift and fashioned Affleck as a celebrity humanitarian who brought his star power into the world of advocacy and development.

Chapter Four, “Marketing the Congo: Products that Sell Development,” narrates how Affleck used the Eastern Congo Initiative and a few natural resources to attract some US-based companies to build a global market that engendered local development. For instance, as part of a strategic partnership, ECI promoted a chocolate bar from Theo Chocolate that was sold to generate funds for ECI and raise awareness of development problems in the Congo. Likewise, Affleck partnered with TOMS shoes and Starbucks, and he was able to open up the Congo to American business via promotional efforts, humanitarian actions, and advocacy.

Chapter Five, "Saving Congolese Coffee: Celebrities and the Business Model for Development," analyzes the relationship and partnership between a celebrity-led organization (ECI), traditional aid, the Howard Buffett Foundation, its development partners, a multinational corporation (Starbucks), and their relevant stakeholders. The chapter uses the Kahawa Bora ya Kivu specialty coffee project as a case study to outline how business opportunities can open up new kinds of collaborations and cause disruption in the politics of development.

Chapter 6, "Celebrities and the Local Politics of Development: As Seen from Kinshasa," utilizes field interviews and participant observation qualitative research methods. It shows how development and humanitarian actors view development service providers and US government interventions along with those of humanitarian agencies and celebrity humanitarians. Chapter 6 "argues that celebrity engagement in development has both opportunities and costs, involving funding and expenditures, authority, and accountability that are more related to Northern than to Southern spheres" (p. xxvii).

Chapter 7, "Conclusions on Celebrity and Development: Disruption, Advocacy, and Commodification," reflects on Affleck's disruptive activities in the politics of development in Congo. He raised awareness and funding for neglected causes such as peacebuilding in Eastern Congo. But celebrities and their humanitarian services are not what developing nations need for participatory development. The authors posed some questions to Batman. Why not use your wealth and charisma to convene visionary voices? Why not allow the people to speak about their agenda and not yours?

Admittedly, the celebrities' involvement in Congo's developmental activities has disrupted the traditional developmental practices in the country. However, it has not replaced the dominant approach of development donors with a participatory development pattern. Hence, Batman did not save the Congo; he only brought a twist to the dominant developmental paradigm. Overall, the book reflects the background of the study and the gaps to be filled in scholarship and research methodology. Indeed, *Batman Saves the Congo* should appeal to students, practitioners, researchers and scholars in political science, economics, development studies, globalization, media for development and social change, and communication studies.

Olajide Damilare Daniel, *The Redeemed Christian Bible College (Nigeria)*

Sheila D. Collin. 2020. *Ubuntu: George M. Houser and the Struggle for Peace and Freedom on Two Continents*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 361 pp.

When the Rev. George M. Houser, a founder of the Congress of Racial Equality, and perhaps the last survivor of the inaugural Freedom Ride of 1947, died in 2015 he had lived for almost a century. Born in Cleveland in 1916 to parents who were Methodist missionaries, he studied at the Chicago Theological Seminary, during which time he became a pacifist. George followed his father into the Methodist ministry after his university education. Houser joined the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and the War Resisters League during the 1940s and was arrested for resisting the draft. He served a year in jail. In 1942, Houser founded the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), along with James Farmer, Bayard Rustin, and other members of FOR. In 1948, for their efforts to ensure the desegregation of interstate travel, Houser and Rustin received the

Thomas Jefferson Award for the Advancement of Democracy from the Council Against Intolerance in America.

George Houser's focus began to shift from the national to the international in 1952 when he helped found Americans for South African Resistance, which later evolved into the American Committee on Africa (ACOA) when it extended its support to anti-colonial and nationalist efforts throughout the African continent. In 1955 he became executive director of ACOA. In that capacity he strove until his retirement in 1981 to abolish apartheid and to end colonial rule throughout Africa. George Houser's support was acknowledged by many of the people who became leaders of independent Africa, from north to south and from east to west, including Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere. In South Africa, George Houser earned the confidence of Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela, and in 2014 he received the Order of the Grand Companions of Oliver Tambo. Ironically, perhaps, the award was handed over by President Jacob Zuma.

The biography's title is a Xhosa and Zulu word which is "formed on the noun stem *-ntu*, used to form words related to humans" (*Dictionary of South African English*), and Sheila Collins takes her epigraph from the late Bishop Desmond Tutu: "A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, based from a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed." These words seem particularly apt for George Houser, epitomizing as they do his character, his principles and the means he preferred for the achievement of his goals. They are also thought-provoking in that they move us to ask how close his noble aims have come to fulfilment seventy years after that first Freedom Ride into the South, and sixty years after Ghana achieved its independence? The USA has been almost continually at war somewhere for years and is looking for a fight now, its progress is bedeviled by identity politics, proto-fascism, and racial violence, its faltering capitalist economic system manifestly unjust. South Africa is a limping class-riven state, run by a smug kleptocratic elite, with the revolution promised by the ANC stalled and stumbling.

Professor Sheila Collins in *Ubuntu* has written an admirable account of the life of George Houser, in so many ways a remarkable man, who in a long career was consistent in his courage, commitment to peace and justice, and concern for the poor and disadvantaged. George Houser was an inspiring colleague, a tactful and efficient organiser and an eloquent speaker and writer. In addition, he was clearly a valued and appreciative neighbour and a devoted family man. Sheila Collins brings out these qualities in her subject in sensitive accounts of the challenges and choices which confronted him, especially in his support of African independence movements. As a pacifist, an admirer of Thoreau and Gandhi, he had to face the fact that many organizations he supported, like the ANC, felt compelled to take up arms against the oppressive and violent regimes under which they suffered. Given the man he was, George Houser showed basic and principled physical courage himself in his travels through pre-independence Africa, just as he had in the South in the 1940s. Nor does Professor Collins ignore the complexities which George Houser's commitment brought to his family life. His wife Jean (they were married in 1942) emerges from the story as a heroic figure in her own right.

Any biography as elegantly written, carefully researched, and sympathetically conceived as this will be timely, whenever it appears.

Tony Voss, *Nelson Mandela University*

James Currey. 2021. *From Sharpeville to Rivonia, 1959-1964: A Personal View of Resistance in South Africa from the Letters of Clare & James Currey*. Dagenham: Merlin Press. 199 pp.

Along with Chinua Achebe, James Currey launched the famous African Writers Series at Heinemann in the late 1960s, helping bring African literature to new audiences all over the world. Currey later established his own imprint that published important books on African studies for many years. In 1959, when Currey was in his early twenties, he left the UK to begin working at Oxford University Press in Cape Town and reported to editorial director Leo Marquard. Currey's wife Clare joined him in Cape Town a few years later and contributed to the progressive publications *Contact* and *The New African* along with her husband.

This book contains many of the letters James and Clare Currey wrote between 1959 and 1964, when they worked with "the radical Liberal left" (back cover) in Cape Town, particularly with Patrick Duncan, who founded *Contact*, and Randolph Vigne, one of the driving forces behind *The New African*. This was an historic time in South Africa, as the country witnessed the Sharpeville massacre, a state of emergency, the banning of the ANC and other anti-apartheid organizations, and the beginning of sabotage. The Curreys reacted to all of this in their letters, and include many photos of their friends, associates, and travels in Southern Africa in this period. Being a collection of letters and memories, the book does not have an overarching narrative, but it does shed light on South Africa at a time of seismic change.

Part I features James Currey's letters to his parents in the UK between mid-1959 and mid-1962. Understandably, many of the letters are written in a conversational style and discuss Currey's routine, day-to-day activities, with some casual observations about race relations sprinkled here and there. The letters get more compelling when Currey writes about the atmosphere in Cape Town when 35,000 Africans marched to parliament after the Sharpeville massacre in March 1960. Currey reveals how the security police began pressuring employers to fire employees who were active in the anti-apartheid movement, which would become a common form of government intimidation. In early 1961, Currey first hears rumors that police were using electric shocks to elicit confessions during interrogations, foreshadowing how torture would become widespread in the years to come. He notes how the government put itself on a "war footing to crush potential unrest" on Republic Day in May 1961 and how "the government is arming itself against 4/5ths of the inhabitants of the country" (p. 82).

Currey had close, sustained contact with some of South Africa's leading liberals at the time, particularly Marquard, Duncan, and Vigne. He writes of the dilemma facing the Liberal Party, which its members discussed at their 1960 conference in Cape Town. If they explicitly called for a universal franchise, they risked losing white support; if they did not, they would lose black support. He writes about how the Liberal Party organized sit-ins at some prominent Cape Town department stores in late 1960 to protest segregated service, countering the common assumption that non-violent resistance and civil disobedience ended with Sharpeville. In 1961,

leading Liberal Party activists were put under close surveillance and heavy restrictions, even though the party was not banned outright.

In December 1962, Currey married Clare Wilson, who joined Currey in Cape Town. Part II features the letters that the couple wrote from early 1963 until mid-1964. Their letters reflect the growing darkness descending on anti-apartheid groups and activists at this stage. Clare's letters talk about the omnipresent apartheid laws from the fresh perspective of a newcomer and reveal how the 90-day detention without trial law marked South Africa's evolution into a police state. As both James and Clare discuss the growing repression in the country, they occasionally intersperse their comments with light remarks, capturing humorous or ironic situations. They show the absurdity of apartheid, such as the time when an American academic's wife was arrested by South African police for allegedly "seeing too many Africans" (p. 129).

The last part of the book contains reminiscences detailing how the Curreys helped Randolph Vigne flee South Africa and then fled themselves. Amid a police crackdown in July 1964, Vigne was on the verge of being arrested for his support of the African Resistance Movement, a white-run sabotage group. This section reads like an adventure story and details how James helped Vigne escape on a ship bound for Canada and then fled with Clare to avoid his own possible detention. He had reason to be concerned; years later, he learned that the security police had kept a file on him and were suspicious of his links with white radicals.

Readers are fortunate that the Curreys' letters were saved for posterity. They shed light on one of the driving forces behind the famed African Writers Series and reveal his early commitment to the anti-apartheid cause and to publishing topical works on Africa north and south of the Limpopo. The book will also interest those wanting to know more about the Liberal Party, anti-apartheid journalism, and South Africa in general in this critical period.

Steven Gish, *Auburn University at Montgomery*

Stephanie Diepeveen. 2021. *Searching for a New Kenya: Politics and Social Media on the Streets of Mombasa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 283 pp.

Public conversations shape our daily lives and in Kenya, the study of the dynamics of public conversations is not novel. As never before, the world is fast engaging more in online conversations than in print. Stephanie Diepeveen's *Searching for a New Kenya: Politics and Social Media on the Streets of Mombasa* examines conversations of public, political, and national outcry in various group gatherings. Her work explores how complicated discussions occur in society through several public spaces. Diepeveen argues that the streets and in fact social media were capable of being parliaments and courts for dissecting complex political ideas facing society. Her analysis shows further how people today negotiate spaces and introduce conversations from social media into physical spaces. Such spaces the author argued could be found in bus parks, front yards, and even in *matatus*, refurbished buses for transportation that often were spaces for political conversations. Furthermore, in the evenings, the matatu parks became places for conversations ranging from politics to civil service conditions, to salaries, relationships, social life, and family.

Diepeveen argues that there exist certain differences in the modes of conversations on social media spaces and in physical spaces. On social media, respect is accorded on grounds of

how well one engaged with one's audiences on topics of concern. On the other hand, in physical gatherings like in Mombasa's central business district, charisma and appearance could not be altered as one could on social media. It is upon this criterion of appearance and comportment that respect is issued to a speaker. Diepeveen's ethnographic research of the region lasted for nine months in 2013, 2014, and 2017. The rich collection of data can be attributed to the painstaking time she invested in this research. She made sure to document every conversation and expression of speakers both in physical gatherings and social media spaces. Furthermore, Diepeveen argues that during her research, her "arrival coincided with a visit by the president of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta" (p. 33). What this connotes for Diepeveen was in presenting her with more insight into political conversations at the time. There were rumors circulating about the land question, and the presence of the president at this point further complicated the issue on the ground, including giving the public more to talk about. Conversations in the public concerning this matter revealed the historical dimensions of the political debates as conversations traced events to the heyday of independence.

In the course of her study, the author traced the historical dimension of the use of various communication media while placing the narrative within the concept of politics and race relations. Diepeveen notes that under British colonial rule, the communication media took the form of print and information media. This step was arguably towards ensuring the proliferation of western education, particularly in situating English at the epicenter of formal communication and politics. However, in the later years of colonialization, the British introduced radio broadcasting, which was intended to diffuse information to serve their communities as radios helped spread information to most remote areas. Information dissemination was particularly successful because the language of communication was Swahili. Thus, the radio formed the crux of the public sphere where conversations were led, and individuals dissected information and provided comments accordingly.

Diepeveen's undiluted imagery of Mombasa resonates with Ato Quayson's description of Accra, Ghana. His *Oxford Street, Accra: City Life and Itineraries of Transnationalism* sought to retell that city's urban history from the perspective of a central street. The street scene depicted industrialization, urbanization, and commercialization, which are major components of urban cities. Diepeveen also mentions that in Mombasa, after the closing of work, physical spaces became courts and parliaments of opinions. People gathered in the early evenings to discuss events shaking the contours of the state or government. In these gatherings, they issue suggestions, criticisms, and even share recommendations.

Searching for a New Kenya is divided into four parts that detail the very niche of public and popular culture, including the representations of social media vis physical conversation ("Rethinking Publics from Kenya," "Characterizing Publics," "Situating Publics in Time and Space," and "The Power of Publics"). Diepeveen traces the historical dimensions of the public by analyzing its continuities and change from 2010 to argue that the public was not static. The forms and manifestations of public conversations ranged from various facets of social and political life, especially as they were tailored around the present mode of life and activities. These topics and activities were therefore presented in the public jury or on Facebook where they continued to be dissected.

In conclusion, the pages of this text are exceptionally filled with sources and a well-compiled analysis of conversations of media. Stephanie Diepeveen uses rich primary sources as she brings conversations and public discussions to life in her book. It is really difficult to highlight any errors in the book in terms of its thematic preoccupation or analysis. However, the length may discourage non-academic readers from engaging with a book that documents public discourse in public spaces in Kenya. Unless the author planned otherwise, a book such as this should be accessible to a wider and non-academic audience. Beyond the length of the book, one gets drawn into the narratives of the author far more than one envisioned which is a great strength that compliments the text.

Odunayo Adejo, West Virginia University

Sebastian Elischer. 2021. *Salafism and Political Order in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 298 pp.

Sebastian Elischer indicates in the introduction to *Salafism and Political Order in Africa* that the expansion of Salafism on the African continent, particularly the jihadi-Salafi praxis, constitutes an emerging security threat to many African nations (p. 1). To ameliorate understanding of this phenomenon, numerous publications have appeared on the relationship between Salafism and the state in Africa. Yet, as Elischer contends, the focus of much of the extant literature is on nation-states where jihadi Salafi groups have become security challenges, which in turn distract scholars from focusing on nation-states that have successfully “prevented or curtailed” jihadi Salafi activity (pp. 2-3). Therefore, in this volume, seeking to expand the paucity of scholarship in this area, Elischer aims to analyze “why some African countries have become home bases for jihadi Salafi activity while others have managed to prevent or curb homegrown forms thereof in their national territories” (p. 4).

The core argument of the text is that “African states that established organizational gatekeepers prior to the rise of and influence of Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations have managed to prevent or curb homegrown jihadi Salafi activities” (pp. 7-8). To build the theory behind this argument in the first chapter Elischer lays out the scope of his research and the multiple variables which will be analyzed in the text including the six main nation-states of Niger, Chad, Uganda, Mali, Mauritania, and Kenya. The subsequent four chapters provide a brief historical overview of Salafism in these countries as well as the creation of state-led Islamic associations and the conditions that made it possible for their emergence and degree of hegemony. Focusing on the organizational level and not on individuals, Elischer also highlights within these chapters the territorial origins of jihadi Salafi organizations, the nationalities of leaders and victims, jihadi Salafi recruitment within particular territories, and organizational access to a country’s Islamic sphere (p. 6). Ultimately, Elischer uncovers that the three nation-states of Mali, Mauritania, and Kenya failed to establish sufficient state-led Islamic relations and resultingly are plagued with greater jihadi Salafi issues of violence in comparison to Niger, Chad, and Uganda.

In chapter six, to correlate his findings and determine if his thesis holds when employed to additional areas of sub-Saharan Africa, Elischer applies his theory to the nation-states of Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Senegal, and Ghana. Here, according to the empirical data presented in

the text, Burkina Faso and Nigeria, in contrast to Senegal and Ghana, are currently witnessing greater amounts of jihadi Salafi-related violence, a consequence Elischer connects to insufficient state-led Islamic relations. Finally, after summarizing his findings in chapter seven, Elischer then discusses the implications of his study on the future of state-religious relations in sub-Saharan Africa, how this will affect future developments on the continent, and what his findings suggest for policymakers. He then closes with the suggestion that “there is no reason why policymakers should not consider religious regulation as a strategy to preempt homegrown jihadi radicalization processes” (p. 236).

Overall, the empirical data presented in Elischer’s text is comprehensive, yet the way this information is translated also gives the appearance that Salafism is a static and monolithic global phenomenon consisting of congruent manifestations in which African Muslims are merely passive recipients influenced by external actors. On the contrary, however, Muslims in Africa were and currently remain actively involved in constructing and shaping ideologies such as Salafism to their local realities. Additionally, Elischer states that the “book’s findings suggest that political and jihadi Salafism are distinct *modi operandi* and that the interactions between the two are extremely limited” (p. 188). Yet this statement also diminishes the ideological diversity and local circumstances that shape expressions of Salafism by ignoring the fact that jihadi Salafis are political actors themselves who, just like other organizations and movements, engage with the politics that surround them and often interact in the political arena.

Nevertheless, *Salafism and Political Order* should be commended for the rigorous amount of empirical research which comprises hundreds of interviews and spans numerous African countries. By analyzing state strategies aimed at preventing or restraining jihadi Salafi organizations, or the lack of strategies that encourage the emergence of such groups, Elischer successfully achieves his goal of contributing to the debate surrounding state-society relations in areas of weak statehood. He does so by demonstrating a correlation in the reduction of jihadi Salafi violence among states that control the Islamic narrative in comparison to those that do not (pp. 10, 21). Furthermore, Elischer’s work enhances the debate on jihadi Salafi mobilization and demobilization making it essential reading for anyone interested in furthering their knowledge on Salafism.

Michael Schuster, *University of Florida*

Laura Evans. 2019. *Survival in the ‘Dumping Grounds’: A Social History of Apartheid Relocation*. Boston: Brill Publishers. 302 pp.

Survival in the ‘Dumping Grounds’ by Laura Evans describes one of the atrocities that came out of the apartheid in South Africa: the bantustans, or as some referred to them as the ‘homelands.’ In the 1940s and 1950s, the burgeoning independence movement across the African continent began to lead to post-colonial nation-states. With the liberation for some, however, came even more restrictions for others. In response, the White South African regime began to focus on suppressing the liberties and advancements of Black South Africans in order to halt their upward socioeconomic trajectory through restricting their access to upward mobility through urbanization as part of their apartheid efforts. Bantustans were areas designed for Black South Africans to relocate under the National Party (NP) claim of promoting ethnic self-governance.

“The relocation of black South Africans to townships in the rural bantustans was one of the defining and most brutal projects of the racist apartheid regime” (p. 1). The racist policies led to devastating results and poor conditions such as displacements, disrupted societal structures, and scarcity of food and employment. To illustrate this social history, the author uses sources such as archives for historical analysis, along with interviews of those who experienced living within the ‘dumping grounds’ of the early Ciskei Bantustan townships of Sada and Ilinge. This enables Evans to shed more insight into the devastations of apartheid relocation and the testimonies of survivor’s perseverance despite their circumstances. After a comprehensive introduction, the book divides into three parts.

Part One, “Regimes of Relocation,” examines the apartheid relocation practices of the White supremacist regimes with a uniquely global perspective, in that racist settlement practices were not original to South Africa but forged from historical imperial actors. The author explains that apartheid itself did not entirely originate with the Nationalist Party (NP) after 1948, but that “the ‘roots’ of apartheid’s bantustan system were to be found in the interwar years, these South African policies were also cultivated by the global circulation of ideas among imperial elites and politicians” (p. 51). Evans further references settlements and self-determination efforts by the League of Nations Mandates Commission after World War I as an example. Evans also describes the formation of the bantustans, the delayed imperial tendencies, or characteristics that eventually appeared within South Africa under an apartheid state, the effects of the Cold War within the nation-state, and villagization. The author explains that apartheid is not a monolith to be easily explained away by either “liberalism and Afrikaner nationalism” and cautions against that generalized assessment (p. 47).

Part Two, “Repertoires of Relocation,” gives more insight into the experiences of Black South Africans who were relocated. Interestingly, through the interviews and narratives of these individuals, the author discovers quite a paradox about the relocations. “If relocation cemented the status of some younger men as breadwinners, while presenting opportunities to access housing and education, for others the experience of relocation was rather more paradoxical: greater autonomy and access to schooling was accompanied by increased economic insecurity” (pp. 181-82). What is even more perplexing is that the adjustment was more severe for those coming from paternalistic farming communities, particularly women and non-migrant men. They suddenly were thrust into a different environmental structure within the resettlement townships. In this section, Evans very clearly demonstrates, through the accounts of the interviewees, that bantustans were not just racist entities that had physical effects on individuals as they relocated, but that they also levied psychological and socio-economic effects as well. Suddenly in a new environment, where for some it meant harsher conditions than others, as “survival in these spaces of economic marginality demanded the maintenance of strong associational and reciprocal networks, forging new social spaces and identities in Sada and Ilinge” (p. 182)

Therefore, Part Three, aptly entitled “Place, Space and Power,” discusses the narratives of the traumatic dislocation for many of whom came from vastly different places across the country, with no immediate sense of their place. These individuals had to quickly cope with their traumatizing experiences and learn how to navigate their new routine to make a place for themselves in this inorganically manufactured society. “Many people who came to Sada and

llinge during the 1960s and 1970s experienced traumatic dislocation, arriving in an unknown place where they confronted unemployment and destitution” (p. 185).

Evans wrestles with the complexities of racism, displacement, population, urbanization, gender, poverty, and post-trauma survival in the ‘dumping grounds.’ The author concludes that although the bantustan policy for a time severely hindered African urbanization, the National Party inevitably failed in its efforts over the long run. They maintained their agenda of preventing Black South Africans from seeking better livelihoods in urban areas by pushing them out into the rural areas and enforcing restrictions that made it extremely difficult for upward urbanization mobility. Furthermore, despite forced state relocation, communities rose above the obstacles in the bantustans, with some families voluntarily following those displaced to reunite. Others willingly moved out to the rural townships as community builders to help strengthen the foundations of the settlements. However, Evans cautiously concludes that despite the end of apartheid in 1990, re-established civilian liberties such as the right to vote, and reinstating the bantustans as part of the country, lingering legacies remain, including continued poverty within the former bantustans. This book reminds us that there is more work to be done to overcome the detrimental effects of the decades long banustan policy.

Survival in the ‘Dumping Grounds’ is a brilliant work of social history. Evans effortlessly provides a clear and concise account of the tragedy of apartheid in South Africa, expertly executes a nuanced historical analysis with insight into the imperial foundation in which apartheid anchored its segregationist policies, and meticulously presents the stories of Black South Africans who experienced relocation to the bantustans. It is well-researched and masterfully written. Therefore, this book would be ideal for both novice students and expert scholars of Africa. Moreover, it accomplishes the duality of capturing the complexities of segregationist policies while remaining comprehensible.

Constance Pruitt, *Howard University*

Laurent Fourchard. 2021. *Classify, Exclude, Police: Urban Lives in South Africa and Nigeria*. West Sussex: John Wiley and Sons. 288 pp.

Scholarly studies on African urbanism are substantial but not much has been done on comparative colonial urbanism involving two countries in two different regions of Africa. The uniqueness of this book, however, lies in the fact that Laurent Fourchard’s methodology bestrides comparative urban studies, history, political science, and ethnography to illuminate the neglected aspects of urban colonialism and contemporary urbanism in South Africa and Nigeria. The book explores the pathways to understanding both colonial and contemporary urbanism in South Africa and Nigeria within the context of classification, exclusion, and policing. Most importantly, it studies the trajectories of migrants in the selected cities in Nigeria and South Africa from below, and by illuminating on their status and experience within the bureaucratic invented apparatuses. Its six chapters draws on Fourchard’s years of research experience in Nigeria and South Africa to articulate and offer a brilliant interpretation of urban lives in South Africa and Nigeria.

The book traces the root of discrimination against urban migrants and attributes this to the interaction of policies of exclusion in Nigeria and South Africa. By adopting subalternism as a

tool of analysis, the author brings a fresh interpretation from below of the consequences of government policies for the migrants from the colonial to the contemporary periods in the selected cities. He argues that exclusion started with classification of migrants as: Blacks, Whites, Coloureds, and Indians, urban or permanent residents in South Africa, while the rural dwellers were classified as migrants or temporary sojourners deprived of residential rights. In Nigeria, urban residents were classified as: Europeans and Natives, non-natives or foreign natives, liberated slaves, indigenes, and non-indigenes. The author uses case studies of Sharpeville, Langa, Cape Town, and Johannesburg in South Africa and Lagos, Kano, and Ibadan in Nigeria for studying differentiated management policies.

The author posits that the 1960 Sharpeville massacre helps us to understand the substantial divisions created by differentiated management of migrants and urban residents in South Africa. In a similar way, the 1953 Kano riot stemmed neither from nationalist demands nor from ethnic or class-based conflicts, but first and foremost from differentiated management of the autochthonous and outsider populations. Fourchard has been able to establish that the massacres in Sharpeville, Langa, and Kano illuminate the struggle of subaltern groups such as women migrants and *tsotsis* in Sharpeville, migrants in Langa, and migrant residents and political activists in Sabon Gari in Kano who opposed new government measures (mandatory passes in South Africa, supervision by the Northern Native Authorities in Nigeria and their regionalist policy).

Fourchard leaves no doubt as to the post-independence effects of the different rights provided to different categories of people which have been appropriated by the populations and in the case of Nigeria by new state institutions at independence. In South Africa, the distinction between migrants and urban dwellers having township rights has enduring effects even after the end of apartheid. Though chapter one traces the root of exclusion in the selected cities in South Africa and Nigeria, why were cities in south-eastern Nigeria like Aba, Owerri, and Onitsha not discussed in the same manner as Ibadan, Kano, and Lagos as cities where practices of power and the genealogy of forms of exclusion reign?

The book also illustrates that delinquent and unruly youths were products of marginalization, which stemmed from differentiated population management, and that these youths are always ready to participate in violence. The author posits that the detribalization thesis, which traces delinquency to unchecked urbanization, should not continue as the dominant discourse. Instead, attention should be paid to the neglected aspect of the introduction of penal reform policies, which brought about the emergence of social services and ministries in South Africa and Nigeria. The author argues that urbanization brought with it the dislocation of African families, which culminated in juvenile delinquency. His analysis of the classification of South Africa's Children's Act of 1937 (children in need of care and delinquents) and the social services in Lagos has enriched our stock of knowledge of the rise of urban poverty and delinquency issues. He posits that the effect of policies on youth and children were the opposite of the ones reformers sought: governments transformed young people who were neither wage-earners nor in school to subaltern groups as well as sources of violence. The policies did so by "criminalizing everyday practices, exposing the poorest individuals to violent socialization in state institutions, institutionalizing corporal punishment as a method of reforming individual behavior, and relying on the support of social groups bent on moralizing

and disciplining youths.” He concludes that “colonial metropolises offered a space for experimenting dispositifs of exclusion to the city: those devices were not only a means of racial classification, they also generated categories (juvenile delinquents, isolated women, youth coming from the countryside, children in need of care, juvenile street traders) which the actors appropriated because they coincided with particular interests linked to their class, age group, gender, place of residence or origin” (p. 90).

Subsequent chapters of the book draw attention not only to policing the neighborhood in South Africa and Nigeria but traces the genealogy of vigilantism under colonialism and politicization of contemporary vigilantism. Furthermore, his analysis of politics of the street and politics in the office confirms his wealth of experience as a researcher in Nigeria for many years. In fact, the author’s in-depth narrative of the activities of the Nigerian Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) in Lagos and Ibadan is very rich and to the delight of readers yearning for information on the political economy of urban spaces, especially of motor parks and the transportation business in Lagos and Ibadan. This is because Fourchard situates politicization and violence in motor parks within the context of patronage and bureaucracy to reflect urban realities in twenty-first century Lagos and Ibadan.

Particularly fascinating is the author’s lavish use of first-hand sources rooted in extensive ethnographical interviews of state actors and non-state actors in the multiple historicities of urban spaces of Lagos and Ibadan. Classification, exclusion, and policing are the threads that run through the book from the first chapter to the last chapter. Given the book’s structure and its content, however, there could not have been a better title than “Classify, Exclude, Police: Urban Lives in South Africa and Nigeria.” The book is a reader’s companion from the beginning to the end, most especially with the myriads of illuminating facts and narratives used by the author derived from firsthand sources and extensive ethnography in reconstructing urban lives in South Africa and Nigeria.

Monsuru Olalekan Muritala, *University of Ibadan*

Omar Shahabudin McDoom. 2021. *The Path to Genocide in Rwanda: Security, Opportunity, and Authority in an Ethnocratic State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 412 pp.

The Path to Genocide in Rwanda is an emotive, tragic, well-researched book covering over three hundred interviews including those who participated in the genocide in 1994 and those who did not. The book is structurally organized in eight chapters with three key themes reinforced: security, opportunity, and authority at a macro-, meso-, and micro-level analysis. Chapter one offers a critical review of existing literature about the genocide in Rwanda while simultaneously positioning the research design, evidence, research methods, and organisation of the book. Chapter two traces the story of Rwanda from the colonial epoch (1897-1962) to Rwanda’s revolution and then to the postcolonial era (1959-1990). Key variables in accounting for Rwanda’s ‘unusual’ society, demography and geography are accounted for.

In Chapter three, McDoom argues that far from the conventional view in genocide studies that wartime experience psychologically prepares people for violence, it was extremism from the periphery as a catalyst for the genocide to occur the way it did in April to July of 1994. This is well explained with critical insights in Chapters four and five where the darker side of

modernity, that is, political liberalization contributes to extreme violence. While political liberalization is interpreted as both a threat and opportunity for peace after the civil war, the unanswered controversial questions posed include when exactly the plan to eliminate the Tutsi emerged or was conceived. Chapter five is interpreted within macro-analysis of the political factors leading to the genocide, that is, the death of President Habyarimana, along with civil war and political liberalization. Although the immediate action in Rwanda was avenging the assassination of Habyarimana, it remains unclear as to when the 'signal' for nationwide genocide began. Again, the assassination of the president was also compounded by dynamics at the international level as it was belated to recognize the genocide which served the interests of the extremists. More importantly, McDoom challenges the general consensus among genocide scholars on Rwanda that it was a state-centric, top-down experience. Rather, it was the role of the Rwandan society at meso- and micro-levels which McDoom ascertains through using oral interviews from the participants that evinces this narrative.

Chapter six is philosophical in that McDoom offers critical reflections on the modern state and its pitfalls focusing on Rwanda. As such, it is titled "Authority: Rwanda's Privatized and Powerful State." As an element of elite instrumentalism, political entrepreneurs played their part in leading to the genocide while at the same time some Rwandans used their agency by not participating in the genocide. More notable however is how the Rwandan state was able to coordinate the violence, which McDoom terms "remarkable." Chapter seven instead delves into micro-situational opportunities and relational forces in conjunction with macro-political context of the genocide in 1994. Through micro-situational analysis, efforts to estimate and count the killers and victims are made using data from Rwanda's truth, justice, and reconciliation program known as *gacaca* and the last census before the genocide in 1991, which hitherto was missing.

Finally, Chapter eight synthesizes the key findings indicating with caution how complex the subject is, and hence welcoming and/or anticipating 'strong reactions,' as the author concludes. More notable points in this concluding chapter include how democratization together with the civil war brought ethnic radicalization in Rwanda and that individual radicalization was a product and consequence of the act of killing. Among other variables dealt with in this well-researched scholarly work was that killers tended to live in close clusters to each other and had larger social networks than the non-killers.

Overall, the book offers critical nuances on the Rwandan genocide grounded in empirical and theoretical interventions from a well experienced professor of political science. As such, *The Path to Genocide in Rwanda: Security, Opportunity, and Authority in an Ethnocratic State* is scholarly, engaging, and a significant contribution to comparative political science on conflicts, genocides, security studies, and more importantly adding knowledge beneficial to policy-makers, journalists, human rights advocates, historians, and the like-minded.

Brian Maregedze, *Leaders for Africa Network*

Ronald P. Schaefer and Francis O. Egbokhare. 2020. *Class Marking in Emai: Retention, Reduction and Transformation of Inflectional Resources*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group. 281 pp.

The ten-chapter book describes and assesses the noun class and agreement systems of Emai, a North Central Edoid language spoken by approximately 30,000 members of the Emai clan in Nigeria's Edo State. It examines the grammatical structure and lexicon of Emai to determine the extent of retention, reduction, and transformation of the resources of its Proto Bantu (PB) heritage of elaborate class and agreement systems, as it evolved through Proto Benue Congo (PBC) and Proto Edoid. These themes resonate throughout the book. The discourse is set against the backdrop of a structural tension within Niger Congo between Bantu-type and Kwa-type languages, and an "internal 'drift' toward simplification ... from Bantu-like to Kwa-like" (p. 3). The authors suggest that external pressures from language contact and cyclic migrations may have contributed to diachronic change within Niger Congo.

Chapter one, a brief introduction, provides a robust background to reduced inflectional systems. It is followed by two chapters of descriptive surveys of representative literature on class and agreement systems in Benue Congo and Edoid. The chapters present the full range of (reconstructed) form class prefixes of the proto-languages, and of actual languages, their declension and agreement sets, and an assessment of how these resources have retained, reduced or transformed the canonical structures of PB. They provide a baseline for the assessment of Emai. Chapter three identifies the major morphological process in the evolution of Edoid from PB through PBC as simplification of form and function. Edoid has retained the pairing of prefixes for nominal class marking but its range, relative to PB, is greatly diminished, especially for grammatical agreement. Of significance in Edoid is an asymmetry in vowel quantity and quality across the singular and plural domains.

From Edoid, focus shifts to Emai in the next six chapters. Chapter four navigates two major issues in describing the reduced noun class system of Emai—to determine the morphological forms of nouns and the semantic classification of declension sets. Emai has retained eleven declension sets in a small subset of noun stems with alternating vowel prefixes, although only one PB prefix syllabic shape—V- – has survived. The majority of Emai nouns have non-alternating initial vowels and have evolved from erstwhile fused prefixes and stems. As for the non-alignment of Emai declension sets with established ontological categories, a combination of language-specific semantic and cultural association principles revealed how kinship terms, through a process of divergence from a Bantu-type system, form the basis for the declension of Emai nouns into sets.

Grammatical agreement in Emai, described in chapter five, reveals the reduction of the resources of an erstwhile robust agreement system, just like pronouns, described in chapter six. Elimination of inflectional resources is evidenced by the absence of gender as an active grammatical category. Transformation of the resources of an earlier Bantu-type system is demonstrated by tonosyntactic alternation between lexical and construction melody, rather than morphological marking of agreement, in adnominal relations, and a reversal of the controller-target direction of agreement in Bantu. Chapters seven and eight describe two lexical processes of word formation that exhibit erosion of class marks—nominalization and synthetic

compounds. Both employ non-alternating prefixes, the range of which is diminished by increase in morphological complexity of stem or format.

Two sociolinguistically distinct clusters of Emai lexemes examined in chapter nine—transfer lexemes and ideophones—also manifest diminished class marking. Only consonant-initial transfer lexemes exhibit a prefix vowel—*ì*—and ideophones exhibit alternation between a zero prefix and *ì* only in positions of topic or focus. The final chapter recaps the objectives and landmarks of the book.

The significance of the book as a descriptive study of one language with a reduced noun class system lies in its wider context of the historical evolution of Benue Congo. Its perspectives and generalizations also hold significance for the study of West Benue Congo languages, long neglected in comparative studies of noun class systems, and for enquiry into the historical evolution of the families and groups in Niger Congo. Scholars and those with interests in the effects of sociolinguistic circumstances on diachronic change will find the book a great resource. The book also opens new avenues for research, and the authors have graciously indicated issues that require further study.

A number of irregularities were noted in the book. Typos (such as *it's* for *its*, *principle* for *principal*, **sheeps*), incorrect expressions (such as *Nupe* for *Nupoid*), and omission of short expressions, punctuation marks (commas, full stop, inverted commas and brackets) occur in the text. For hyphens, there is inconsistency in their inclusion in two-lexeme adjectives. Furthermore, some tables that provide support for generalizations do not correctly reflect the facts in the text, or vice versa. Examples are tables 3.13, 7.4, 8.4, 8.5 and 8.8. For tables 8.24 and 8.25, reference to them in the text is incorrect. There are also in-text citations that are omitted in the references (Amayo 1975, Harrison 2007, Heine and Nurse 2000, Mufwene 2010), and others with incorrect dates (de Blois 1970, Diamond 1998, Reader 1997). A more careful proofreading of the book would have caught such errors. In spite of these, *Class marking in Emai* is, and will remain, an invaluable resource on the components and processes of structural reduction in noun class systems for a long time.

Ihuoma I. Akinremi, *University of Jos*

Gregory Smith. 2021. *Where Credit is Due: How Africa's Debt Can Be a Benefit, Not a Burden*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 268 pp.

Africa's development agenda has not only continued to attract scholarly attention in recent years, but at the center of this discourse is the paradox regarding the continent that is so rich in natural resources, but still poor and struggling to develop. Mismanagement, conflicts, and corruption are key factors that have been used to explain Africa's underdevelopment. While these factors provide useful explanations for the challenges, one central element of the continent's problems is the rising debt burdens. The current debt of \$702 billion (2020), as reported by the World Bank, is the highest in a decade. This is where Gregory Smith's book becomes important and timely. The book is not only well-written with persuasive analyses of Africa's debt crises, but the author provides useful ideas on how Africa's debt can be a benefit and not a burden. Smith's argument is not a new thinking, given the value of global capital in the development of countries. Countries need access to capital for development, but the

problem arises when borrowed capital are not properly used for long-term gains. As Smith argues, “debt gets a negative press, but it is an important economic tool and source of investment financing for governments all over the world” (p. 1).

The book consists of three parts covering ten chapters. The three chapters in Part I discuss Africa’s debt landscape. With respect to Africa’s borrowing trends, the literature is clear about the continent’s borrowing landscape, which dates to the early years of the post-independence era. Smith, however, identified two main periods that stood out on Africa’s debt terrain. The first occurred in the 1980s, which led many countries into huge debt crisis with the period lasting for about two decades. This was followed by a global campaign (Jubilee 2000) for the cancellation of Africa’s debt. The book underscores other relief initiatives (HIPC) in the 2000s. The second period occurred from the year 2010 onwards when many African governments got access to trillion-dollar global markets for the first time, with China leading the way in lending to these countries.

To understand Africa’s debt landscape, Smith categorized countries into three borrowing groups. The first group consists of the emerging or largest economies with countries such as Egypt, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, and South Africa. They constitute about 52% of the continent’s economic output and 44% of Africa’s external debt (\$248 billion in 2020). These countries have regular access to global markets with each having a well-developed domestic capital market where they borrow in their own currency (p. 12). The second group consists of Africa’s frontier economies. Seventeen countries such as Ghana, Senegal, Ethiopia, and Rwanda among others, are in this group. They represent about 28% of the continent’s economic output and 42% of its external public debt (\$238 billion in 2020). Each country has access to the global markets, but only a few have a well-developed local bond market. Each has also issued Eurobonds (pp. 12-13). China is a major lender to many of the frontier economies. The third group consists of thirty-two African countries with much less external debt due either to being poor or prudent. Countries such as Burkina Faso, Uganda, Mali, and Sierra Leone are in this group. They have a limited access to the global financial markets and borrow mostly from small commercial banks. None issued Eurobonds but rather depend on foreign aid for development. They represent 20% of Africa’s economic output and 14% of the external debt (\$78 billion in 2020). Botswana is the prudent country in this group due to its decision not to borrow much from the global debt markets (p. 13). The book continues the discourse by integrating the three groups or categories to examine Africa’s debt landscape in details with relevant examples from various countries. China’s lending to Africa is also discussed. Other issues ranging from the debates on China’s lending practices and the long-term implications for Africa are also examined in part I.

Part II consists of four chapters. Chapter four examines the debt crises that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. The chapter’s analysis of the debt crises, failed adjustment programs, and inadequate debt relief initiatives with supporting examples from various countries make this chapter insightful. Chapter five examines the central question of how much debt is too much for a country. The author addressed this question by looking at debt measurement and ratios in explaining sovereign debt and its calculation using debt-to-GDP ratios. Chapters six and seven extended the debates on topics such as risks of financial market debt, credit ratings, Eurobonds,

and foreign ownership of Africa's debt. The discussion on the rising debt of African countries during the Covid-19 pandemic is another important topic that the author addresses.

The last three chapters (8, 9, 10), which constitute part III of the book, explored solutions for better borrowing. Advancing the central idea of 'debt is fine if invested well,' the author provides policy prescriptions to Africa's debt problems. Solutions such as the need to borrow with a purpose is an important point to underscore. Smith has also suggested the need for public debt management agencies to be supported on the continent to watch for signs of overborrowing. He offers further ideas such as the development of local bond markets and smart investment in human capital and technological infrastructure to help maximize long term gains.

One major limitation of the book is its inability to examine the impact of global financial/economic institutions on African countries. Most of these global financial/economic institutions do not always serve the best interest of African countries. Exploitation and capital flight are also affecting Africa's development. A separate chapter devoted to these complex issues would have been ideal. Nevertheless, the book is still an outstanding work on Africa's debt landscape.

Felix Kumah-Abiwu, *Kent State University*

Andre van Dokkum. (2020). *Nationalism and Territoriality in Barue and Mozambique: Independence, Belonging, Contradiction*. Leiden: Brill. 272 pp.

Nationalism and Territoriality in Barue and Mozambique by Andre van Dokkum succinctly captures the historical journey of the pre-colonial kingdom of Barue from the independent nation-state to the present day state of Mozambique. The book offers a thoughtful disquisition on the irreducible ambiguity of understanding the past, as well as a work of rigorous logical empiricism, in which the credibility of specific historical voices is questioned. Furthermore, it explains how Mozambican nationalism became indeterminate over time and also examines the ramification for political stability in Mozambique. The author opts for a comparative method of analysis to explain the context of the theme. The book comprises seven informative chapters that compare post-colonial Mozambique with one of its pre-colonial predecessors, Barue.

Dokkum begins his study with an introduction that lays out his theoretical framework and central argument of the study. The author examines the composite view of Gellner, Hobsbawn, Grosby, Smith, Malesevic, Amoah, Hansen and Stepputat, and Vail on nationalism, nation, and the state. The second chapter presents a comprehensive historical account of the kingdom of Barue from its inception in the 15th century to 1902 and then up to the 1917-1918 Barue insurrection against the Portuguese colonial state. It provides chronological details of eleven periods of Barue's history, spanning more than four centuries under many kings and kingdoms. Further, it explains how Barue showed incredible resilience for about three centuries to maintain its own autonomous identity. Chapter three presents a detailed history of how the anti-colonial revolutionary movement Frelimo evolved over time and overcame several crises before it achieved Mozambique's independence from Portugal. The author also discusses the non-Frelimo anti-colonial groups that demonstrated the multifaceted nature of Mozambican politics before independence—a multifaceted nature that Frelimo intended to eliminate in 1975

by applying its vision of nationalism when Mozambique gained independence. Furthermore, a brief assessment of western nations' responses to Mozambican independence is offered, suggesting that the west lacks a consistent approach to nationalism.

The major focus of the fourth chapter is Frelimo's rise to prominence from anti-colonial activities to a dominant one-party system as well as a political competitor, Renamo's subsequent emergence as a political competitor to Frelimo's monopoly. The primary event that occurred during this time was the end of a disastrous conflict between Frelimo and Renamo, which resulted in a peace deal and the establishment of a multiparty system, but it failed to resolve Frelimo's monopolistic takeover of political power in Mozambique. The chapter also looks at the general and presidential elections in 1994 and 1999, as well as local election of 1998. Chapter five examines the political history of the Barue chiefdoms following the 1917-18 insurrection. It demonstrates how the legacy of the ancient kingdom still prevails despite any attempt to revive them. The author's goal is to show how historical argument, political competition, and public debate may impact the spatial restructuring of political entities in an African context. The next chapter is all about an intersection of party dynamics of Barue and Mozambique. It particularly brings to notice Frelimo's ability to virtually completely monopolize power relations with the public in Barue. Moreover, the structural formation and organizational behavior of the Frelimo party is discussed in detail in this chapter. In the final concluding chapter, the author intends to tie loose ends together and present the readers with a possible future direction to Frelimo-Barue relations. In this Dokkum agrees with Machel's view that "the birth of the nation entails the death of tribal pluriformity" (p. 200). The author sum ups by stating that pre-colonial Barue had more stable nationalism in terms of national unity, and that establishing nationalism in post-colonial Mozambique is significantly more difficult than in pre-colonial Barue.

The intermezzos and appendices add more value to the book. The intermezzos establish a link between pre-colonial and post-colonial Mozambique and another on "Barue District's Political Predicaments." The appendices contain additional details on culture, nation, pre-colonial kingdoms, and Mozambique's 1999 presidential election. Dokkum is innovative in his approach and narrative style. Though the book clearly holds special interests for nationalism, many of its insights will appeal to a broader interdisciplinary audience interested in the study of Mozambique's history and political circumstances. The book's sole flaw is the lack of comprehensive maps interspersed throughout the chapters rather than only at its end.

The book displays a timeline of Barue and Mozambique's historical interactions in a very innovative manner. The author is successful in accomplishing his goal of providing a thorough framework for comprehending Mozambique's nationalism and state creation. The book will be invaluable to Mozambicans, and indeed to anyone who has an interest in Mozambique politics and history. More significantly, it is a historical record that Mozambicans concerned in the future of their homeland should study and examine. Overall, the book is well written, extremely well organized, and clearly meets the author's stated purpose. Very few studies have undertaken such an exercise which is engaging and interesting.

Prem Kumar Bharti, *University of Delhi*

Adriaan van Klinken et al. 2021. *Sacred Queer Stories: Uganda LGBTQ+ Refugees Lives and the Bible*. New York: Boydell & Brewer. 255 pp.

Sacred Queer Stories is a unique compilation of personal life experiences of LGBTQ+-identifying Ugandan refugees in Kenya. The stories featured in this book intriguingly interlace the narrators' experiences as refugees with alternative interpretations of some religious stories that debunk the cultural belief that queer sexuality is immoral. Although religion was a key premise for their political persecution, it is worth noting that these persons see religion as the bedrock for building a meaningful lifestyle. More accurately, the stories aim at reappropriating the compromising religious and cultural conditions surrounding the queer discourse in their societies.

Structurally, the book has two main parts. Part I interlaces twelve LGBTQ+ refugees' life stories with the corresponding Bible stories, which the narrators singled out as communicating their experiences. Hence, it is perhaps not by chance that the first story here is titled "It is my nature, this is who I am" (p. 29). This story chronicles some experiences of Mother Nature after whom The Nature Network is named. Mother Nature mostly lives as a gay person but identifies as transgender and hence prefers the generic gender-neutral pronoun "they/them/their." Mother Nature derived this name from their mother when she told them "that's their nature." This name, which is rather an acquainted way of referring to the natural world is, in this extract, assigned gender neutrality. This draws in the 'born this way' argument which all the other stories presented in the book subscribe to. Thus, parking the etiology of their queer orientations to the genetics suggests that queer sexuality may be equally immutable and intractable. Arguably, these refugees mostly rely on this argument to establish the theme of queer sexuality as something beyond human choice. This trend of their stories is cited on the basis for both legal equality and cultural and religious acceptance. That notwithstanding, the idea of linking their sexuality to nature is a tacit acceptance of their mutual exploitation and marginalization by the larger heteronormative community.

The twelfth story and its position as the concluding story of Part I is creatively titled "God doesn't make mistakes" (p. 113), perhaps to accentuate the singular religious thematic concern of the other eleven stories. The title directly refers to God while drawing readers' attention to the understanding that the narrator's (Keeya) identity was purposely designed by God. One observation made here is the allusion to the destruction of "Sodom and Gomorrah" (p. 113) in the Bible. Keeya does not hesitate to question the traditional heteronormative understanding of the Sodom and Gomorrah story. Notably, this story remains one of the passages used in support of, or to contest queer sexualities. Keeya's comment here points out the pigeon-holed interpretation usually given to this story. All the stories in this part point out that God has his reasons for creating them the way they are. Otherwise, he would have already destroyed them or better still, not created them at all.

What makes this book interesting is the fact that all the life stories are recounted in the narrative voices of the informants. The first-person narrative allows them the discourse with which they may be able to comprehend their own sexual identity and submerge their audience further into this new world of theirs. Their use of the self-referents "I," "me," and "my" help realize if an action is away from the narrator or towards them. It further enables them to expose how some people around them manipulate the social, religious, and political structures for their

own good. The LGBTQ+ refugees at this point reappropriate religious gatherings to symbolize a place of comfort responsible for keeping their hope and faith intact.

Part II of the book inter-reads the significance of two selected Bible stories and the LGBTQ+ refugees' life stories. This captures how the Bible is misappropriated by heteronormative Africans to justify the abuse of marginalized sexualities. The first story, "Daniel in the Homophobic Lion's Den," is reimagined as a queer person in a homophobic African context (p. 152). The King's decree becomes symbolic of the passing of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, while the lion's den is a metaphor for the unsafe spaces in both Uganda and Kenya. The lions are also reminiscent of the police and other realities they encounter. The second story ("Jesus and the Guys Charged with Indecency") considers throwing stones at the woman caught in adultery as a "cliché" to their stigmatization (p. 182). The book concludes by advocating for an end to unfair religious injustices.

Ultimately, *Sacred Queer Stories* is a daring exposition of the relationship between LGBTQ+ experiences and religious stories that need to be further explored. Aside from recounting personal stories, the text has become an indispensable landmark for alternative interpretations of religious texts in Africa that position such texts as friendly and corrective rather than horrific and repelling.

Josephine Delali Ofei, *University of Cape Coast*

Luise White. 2021. *Fighting and Writing: The Rhodesian Army at War and Post-War*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 304 pp.

Luise White is Professor Emerita of History at the University of Florida whose previous research has examined prostitution in colonial Nairobi, rumors in Central Africa, and the assassination of a prominent Zimbabwean nationalist. In *Fighting and Writing: The Rhodesian Army at War and Post-War* White shifts her attention to the experience of white soldiers fighting against African nationalism in the 1970s in what is called both the Zimbabwe liberation struggle and the Rhodesian Bush War.

Readers can find a helpful list of place-names in the book's front matter. White relied mostly on the memoirs of white soldiers fighting to defend and protect white minority rule in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). White makes it clear that the book is not concerned with why white men fought the war. It is rather about "soldiers' understanding of the war and their experiences therein, how they described the war, how and what they debated about it, and the extent of their frequent and often litigious disagreements" (p. 223).

Over the course of nine chapters the reader finds interesting insights into the experience of white soldiers fighting against African nationalism. At the outset, the author offers an illuminating historical account of the war. White importantly notes that "neither Southern Rhodesia nor Rhodesia ever had a sizable or a stable white population" (p. 10) to wage a prolonged war against guerrilla armies. Thus, Rhodesian forces relied on white conscripts, augmented by black auxiliaries.

A large proportion of the evidence in the various chapters comes from the memoirs of former Rhodesian soldiers. Authors such as Chris Cocks, Ron Reid-Daly, and others published memoirs after the end of the war and after the end of the country of Rhodesia, which they

fought to defend. Thus, the memoirs are “postwar and postnational.” Interestingly, these memoirs tell a story of decolonization and insurgency and counterinsurgency. “Taken together they do not tell an operational history of the war, or its politics and resistances, but they do tell me something about its conduct... [they] reveal soldiers’ ideas about and analyses of wartime practices” (p. 31).

Chapter three (“Your Shona is Better than Mine!”: Blacking Up, and the Pleasures of Counterinsurgency) considers Rhodesian pseudo gangs – mainly the Selous Scouts who “were the only regiment in the Rhodesian Army whose soldiers not only were trained in Rhodesia but who’d undergone training courses in Russia, Cuba, China, and Bulgaria as well” (p. 71). As the country had a small white population to have a large military, the Rhodesian Army “saw in special forces and pseudo gangs a kind of warfare that was neither too white nor too violent: the favored term was ‘minimum force’” (p. 59). Chapter four (“Each Footprint Tells a Story”: Tracking and Poaching in the Rhodesian Army) examines the skills of bushcraft such as tracking and hunting and how white men needed African friends or at least African trackers and guides to learn these skills. Chapter five (“There Is No Copyright on Facts”: Ron Reid-Daly, Authorship, and the Transkei Defence Force) examines the regiment of the Selous Scouts. White argues that it “was a fabled counter-gang in large part because it wrote its own fables” (p. 109). The memoirs of its founder, Ron Reid-Daly, are an interesting case in point. They are celebratory accounts of Rhodesian forces.

Chapter six (“Every Self-Respecting Terrorist Has an AK-47”: Guerrilla Weapons and Rhodesian Imaginations) deals with automatic weapons such as AKs and FNs and less sophisticated ones such as wooden guns. Chapter seven (“A Plastic Bag full of Cholera”: Rhodesia and Chemical and Biological Weapons) sheds light on guerrillas’ common belief that Rhodesian security forces were poisoning them. Chapter eight (“Will Travel Worldwide. You Pay Expenses”: Foreign Soldiers in the Rhodesian Army) moves into the experience of foreign soldiers who joined the Rhodesian Army. Chapter nine (“What Interests Do You Have?”: Security Force Auxiliaries and the Limits of Counterinsurgency”) focuses on the security force auxiliaries. Due to the shortage of white and black soldiers, Rhodesia relied on SFAs after 1977, at a time when “Rhodesian security forces required more and more soldiers, even if they were guerrillas” (p. 197). The author makes it clear that she is “less interested in what SFAs did than in what was written about them” (p. 199).

Fighting and Writing offers a new angle on the complexity of the Rhodesian/Zimbabwean war through the memoirs of white soldiers. The book is a great resource for those interested in Rhodesian and Zimbabwean history and for military historians.

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