BOOK REVIEWS

Amadou Hampâté Bâ (trans. Jeanne Garane). 2021. *Amkoullel, the Fula Boy*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 366 pp.

An African proverb says, "When an elder dies, a library burns to the ground." When applied to the life and times of Amadou Hampâté Bâ, this is true yet untrue. True, because the world has lost a figure who held together libraries of various regions spanning Africa; untrue because he uncovered and showed the world the library in *Amkoullel, the Fula Boy*. This *bildungsroman* is a profound source of introspection and a vibrant history spanning decades. It interweaves the existence of Hampâté Bâ's life and the people around him. Beginning with the history of how his mother and father struggled to make an independent existence, the French colonizers' advent, and how all that impacted a boy's life. The book offers a look into the plurality of African thought and living systems. Hampâté Bâ witnesses the coexistence of multiple layers of association—religious, economic, and political—and has been a champion of that self-same tradition.

The book consists of seven sections, each dealing with a part of the family history of Hampâté Bâ. It is annotated with tales and parables from The Quran as well as Fula and Bambara history: the battles that Hampâté, Tidjani, and Kadidja fought as examples of what goes into making a self, the importance of patience, and the will to survive even in the most challenging circumstances. Hampâté Bâ's friendship with his mentors, especially with Tierno Bokar, is another such source of inspiration for him. The entire book is a treatise on self-building and its function in society and family. Perhaps the ability to rely on these social units for a type of ancient knowledge paves the way for his formation as an individual. Still, it is also there in the innocence and independence one feels like a child that Hampâté Bâ stresses. His perception of the French at the first instant is that of hatred for all French people as they had arrested his father Tidjan. On meeting with certain individuals who tried their best to help his father, however, the reader sees the gradual change that occurs in the mind of a child. It is this innocence to which Hampâté Bâ redirects his reader to make it clear that these are impressionable minds that are a part of society. Still, they can also accept people, which forms an essential part of their faith and identity. He focuses on the ability to listen to the other as a manifestation of how the self functions within society and with conviction. The importance of operating in a community which may be animist but is still coexisting with other belief systems is at the heart of this book.

Political formations are something individuals become aware of at a given point in their lives. For Hampâté Bâ, it was very early because the society he was living in had its roots in such formations. His joining the Bambara initiation society for children coincides with his father telling him that it was time for him to give up the garments of early childhood and step into a different set, which was in the light of the Quran. His being guided by both indigenous and French knowledge systems was a means of his accepting that knowledge is not something that limits a person but opens up a horizon. The construction of class in the associations and school was one of the challenges Hampâté Bâ faced in his lifetime, as he realized that both had their

resonances. His introduction and experience to the "white" classroom, where he was assigned a seat ahead of someone from a high class, is the genesis of his understanding of class and caste in the society.

Amkoullel, the Fula Boy is a tale that talks of the age-old wisdom of the griots and the mode of living in African societies. It pushes the boundaries of colonial education to make it coexist with spiritual and religious learning in a child's mind. However, one takes back from this book the education one receives from family and society, for that is where learning begins.

Riti Sharma, *Vedanta College*

Oumar Ba. 2020. *States of Justice: The Politics of the International Criminal Court*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 190 pp.

Oumar Ba's *States of Justice: The Politics of the International Criminal Court* examines the interplay between the interests of weak and powerful states in relation to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the international justice system. Ba exposes the moral and structural dilemmas faced by the ICC's Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) and the need to reform its decision-making processes. *States of Justice* argues that the international justice system is inequitable. He demonstrates that only weak states are subject to the rules and laws strong states create. This state of affairs threatens and delegitimizes the international justice system as weak states are punished for offenses that powerful ones are not. Ba's argument is supported by extensive fieldwork (Mali, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, and Libya), case study observations, case studies, and ICC records.

In the first chapter, Ba outlines four themes to unpack the power dynamics between weak and strong states. The first two themes are the strategic use of self-referrals and the question of compliance with the ICC. The following two are how states perceive the international justice system as infringing upon their sovereignty and the degree to which the ICC and the local judiciary have become entangled in domestic politics. He argues that local forces coopt the international justice system to secure political, legal, and institutional power (p. 7). Chapter two focuses on the post-World War II idea that states remain the single most important political actors in international affairs and that powerful states need to enforce and create an international order (pp. 29-30). By engaging in "political calculations to avoid the costs and maximize the benefits of cooperation with the ICC," the third chapter argues that some African nations have deflected or coopted the ICC "as an instrument for dealing with local adversaries" (p. 40). Consequently, Ba argues that African nations have exercised their agency to create and shape the delivery of international justice through political calculations, power struggles, and security interests.

Ba explains the political character of the international justice system by introducing the Rome Statute and the ICC ability to gain jurisdiction over non-signatory nations through the United Nations Security Council. The UNSC only used this option on Libya, a weak state. While this maneuver could have been explored in the United States' invasion of Iraq, Afghanistan, or other major powers operating in minor nations, it was not (pp. 66-7). While states may be a party to the Rome Statute and be active members of the international justice system, chapter five shows that state cooperation constrains the ICC's ability to accomplish its mission "to put

an end to impunity for the perpetrators of [atrocity] crimes and thus to contribute to the prevention of such crimes" (p. 88).

Chapter six examines how the ICC has become enmeshed in the domestic politics of African states. Consequently, the ICC is a weapon for domestic rivals to deal with internal adversaries through self-referrals. Through this vein, Ba argues in the final chapter that smaller states have taken advantage of the ICC by strategically using them for their benefit. They have become the primary actors in the international justice system. They introduced new legal interpretations and challenged the ICC's original mission (pp. 159-60).

States of Justice is an extraordinary in-depth analysis of the ICC and its relation to African states. It focuses on African agency and African states' ability to shape the modern court system to its benefit. Showing how African states bent the court to their will simultaneously undermines Ba's overarching argument that powerful states and the international legal system control and guide smaller states. Overall, Ba's work is an invaluable source of information and study on the young international legal system and will undoubtedly benefit anyone interested in studying the evolving nature of the international justice system moving forward.

Kraig Puccia, *Fordham University*

William Beinart and Saul Dubow. 2021. *The Scientific Imagination in South Africa: 1700 to the Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 406 pp.

William Beinart and Saul Dubow, the preeminent historians of science and nature in South Africa, provide another landmark study in this sweeping history of the practice of science and the scientific imagination. This work builds on their previous scholarly contributions which have shaped our understanding of both the making of modern South Africa through human and environmental processes as well as the intellectual and epistemological approaches applied to managing these. Dubow deftly showed the complex political and social dimensions of the dominant scientific thinking during the colonial and apartheid periods in his *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa* (1995), *Science and Society in Southern Africa* (2000), and *A Commonwealth of Knowledge* (2006) while Beinart recast our understanding of people and their relationships with the landscape in his *The Rise of Conservation in South Africa* (2003) and, with Karen Brown, *African Local Knowledge and Livestock Health* (2013). The genesis of this present volume began with a series of conversations that included another notable historian of southern Africa, Patrick Harries. Harries, who sadly passed away in 2016 before this volume was started, as the authors acknowledge nevertheless made valuable contributions to the intellectual foundations of this study.

Wide-ranging in scope, the book covers topics in a chronological fashion beginning with the first Portuguese and Dutch scientific observers and collectors at the Cape and proceeding through the colonial period, the advent of mining and industrialization and technologies related to farming and veterinary sciences, and into the apartheid era of military escalation to the post-apartheid period of the African Renaissance. The authors provide keen insights into developments in conventional science and related applications in technology and industry as well as scientific approaches to conservation. Importantly, the authors situate South Africa in a global context of science and the circulation of knowledge through the periods of colonial rule

and into the era of globalization. They make the point that while South Africa was a regional rather than world power in scientific innovations, it was nevertheless a vital site for the confluence of the predominantly European scientific imagination in imperial and colonial worlds. Indeed, they clearly establish how scientists in South Africa not only generated a remarkable corpus of knowledge but also ensured its wide circulation in global networks of academic discourse. Importantly, the authors are careful to distinguish between "colonial" or "science" and scientific endeavors merely undertaken in the colonized world or "under apartheid" (p. 314). They argue that the scientific imagination was not always a political project, yoked by the state to the service of crafting propaganda for white minority rule or in ambitious support of Afrikaner ethnic priorities.

While there is significant recognition of African insights into their environment and its flora and fauna, as expressed through vernacular and local knowledge, it is lamentable that the volume does not delve deeper into this local knowledge or any associated scientific imagination *per se*. The authors do note that there are no "hard or fast boundaries'" (p. 4) between science and local knowledge and that indeed the field is open to synthesis and hybridity. In Chapters 1 and 7 they highlight important individual Africans, such as Stoffel Speelman, who shared local knowledge, and throughout they reference the many contributions of Africans to the texts and recording of science by literate authors. These mostly unknown informants, however, are described as "carriers of knowledge" whose insights informed their "medical, veterinary, botanical, and environmental…practices" (p. 4) as opposed to "scientists" who may have had their own methods and imaginations. Instead, a major theme of the book is to emphasis the "hybridity of science" (p. 28) to bridge the underlying differences of approach and understanding inherent in the unequal experiences and opportunities of Africans and whites. Of necessity, the written sources dictate that local knowledge is almost always filtered through the lens of a European scientist. The authors then address the thorny question of interpreting equivalencies between 'science' and local knowledge in Chapter 7 and argue for the "distinctive basis of scientific knowledge" (p. 336).

As Beinart and Dubow show, South Africans are perhaps disproportionately well-represented in the annals of scientific achievement in part because of their connections to the wider networks of science and education, especially in Europe, and in part because of later political isolation which may have provoked a greater drive for self-sufficiency and experimentation. Among the highlights are fascinating anecdotes related to such achievements as Christiaan Barnard's first-ever heart transplant and the dubious politics of Thabo Mbeki's response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Overall, the writing is engaging, lively, and everywhere provides fresh insights to a complex history of science and politics in a country so deeply divided by race and class.

Aran MacKinnon, *Georgia College & State University*

Stephan Chan. 2021. *African Political Thought: An Intellectual History of the Quest for Freedom*. London: Hurst & Company. 262 pp.

In *African Political Thought*, Stephen Chan challenges the philosophical canon that denies Africans philosophical thought. Instead, Chan discusses African political figures, freedom

fighters, and writers who engaged in thought about the global capitalist system, nation-building, Blackness, pan-Africanism, authenticity, morality, and equality. In addition to consulting written sources, such as party platforms and written pieces, Chan refers to his personal experience advising governments and liberation movements across the continent. Recognizing and emphasizing the role of thought in African politics brings these philosophies into common understanding and encourages professors and academics to re-evaluate their curricula to include these thinkers.

Each chapter focuses on specific thinkers, thematically linked. Chapter 1 demonstrates the nascent thought of Black intellectuals in the U.S.—such as Edward Wilmot Blyden, Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Booker T. Washington—who debated Blackness, romanticized Africa, education, freedom, and decolonization. Chan recognizes the limitation created by beginning this history in Anglophonic thought (p. viii), but still explores Paris's role in fostering new conceptions of freedom and as a passageway for African thought into the United States.

The second chapter focuses on Kenneth Kaunda, the first leader of independent Zambia, and Amílcar Cabral, a liberation leader of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. Chan places these liberation fighters—Kaunda reconciling pacifism with struggle and Cabral synthesizing Marxism and humanism within Guinean class structure—within the broader international context. Notably, Chan emphasizes the active role liberation philosophy played in Western politics, noting Cabral's integral role in the 1974 Portuguese coup and demonstrating how Cabral's intellectual acuity spoke to the Guinean local condition and global politics (p. 29).

"The New African Man," chapter 3, examines how Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, and Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda shaped independence through philosophies emphasizing morality and African communal personality, resulting in a consolidation of a one-party state and economic mismanagement. However, these thinkers successfully introduced aspirational ideas of African socialism and African personality. Chapter 4 examines "Big Men"—Mobutu Sese Seko (Zaire) and Hastings Banda (Malawi). Chan guides his analysis through Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe's "necropolitics"—a "carnivalesque" of "authenticity" meant to legitimize authoritarian rule (pp. 68-9). Military rule is the topic of chapter 5—specifically that of Jerry Rawlings in Ghana and Thomas Sankara in Burkina Faso. Here, Chan hopes to qualify standard views of military governments by disentangling Africa from perceptions of meaningless instability to explore military leaders' political thought.

Chapters 6 through 8 each focus on a single thinker. Chapter 6 explores Franz Fanon and his psychoanalytic interpretations of emancipatory violence. Particularly, Chan rebuffs tendencies to reduce Fanon's work to anger and highlights Fanon's influence on the Black Panther Movement, South Africa's Steve Biko, and Achille Mbembe. Similarly, in Chapter 7, Chan provides a historical assessment and anecdotal evidence from his involvement in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. The author challenges a reduction of Mugabe to his authoritarianism to articulate his political vision of Black liberation and land redistribution. Finally, Chapter 8 analyzes the legacy of South Africa's Thabo Mbeki. Chan highlights three policy orientations: economy, ubuntu or a moral and community-based ethos, and the African Renaissance (p. 147). Through these orientations, Mbeki sought to empower Black South Africans and mediate political tensions in Zimbabwe.

Chapters 9 and 10 transition into current conversations. Chapter 9 ties pan-Africanism to the African Union and the place of peacemaking operations in Africa. Specifically, Chan argues that "insurgent strategic thought [is] more advanced than official African military strategic thought," (p. 174) creating challenges for unity and security but also opportunities for African thought to pioneer female leadership and pan-African jurisprudence. Similarly, Chapter 10 continues to look for opportunities for novel African thought on feminism, gay rights, and through language and new thinkers.

Overall, Chan provides a comprehensive look into African thought, delving into inspiration, circumstance, and intelligentsia across a diverse continent deliberating liberatory ideals and authenticities. Still, Chan writes clearly to lay audiences by constantly clarifying locations, figures, and movements. Although Chan discusses women earlier in the book, most such discussion occurs in the final chapter in a section on feminism, with women like Zambia's Sara Longwe advancing international frameworks for women's liberation (pp. 179-192). These examples raise questions about how women participated in earlier thought, despite gender inequality. For example, Chan discusses Nkrumah's influences from the 1945 Pan-African Congress but does not mention Nkrumah's girlfriend, Florence Manley, an English revolutionary Marxist. Additionally, he does not discuss Nkrumah's marriage to Fathia Ritzk, which Carina Ray explores as "love through revolution"—a unique manifestation of Pan-Africanism, anti-colonialism, and revolutionary thought. By no means does Chan ignore women in this work, but emphasizing women's influence during this period of state-building and liberatory thinking provides opportunities for historians continuing this project of African intellectual history.

Lindsey Sullivan, *Fordham University*

Jacob Doherty. 2022. *Waste Worlds: Inhabiting Kampala's Infrastructures of Disposability*. Oakland: University of California Press. 267 pp.

Refuse is a socially produced concept and the material byproduct of sociopolitical relations. Jacob Doherty's ethnography of waste, labor, and neoliberal urbanism in Kampala, Uganda, is an inquiry into how trash produces—or, to use the argot of affect theory, worlds—diverse spaces of interaction and negotiation as multiple groups create and navigate the urban waste stream. Waste is a matter of worlding, as the detritus and debris of Global North consumerism and values leaves their marks on Global South labor and lifeworlds. *Waste Worlds* is the result of participant observation and fieldwork conducted between 2010 and 2018, as well as research using documentary photography, media analysis, planning archives, and gray literature. The text is divided into three parts, with the first section focusing on the moral authority of the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), the office directly responsible for waste management in the city and its peri-urban fringe. Part two looks at the real and imagined geography of Away, near-invisible and rarely discussed places like landfills at one end of the waste stream far beyond the sight and smell of consumers. A third section considers how narratives of race and civilizational modernity inflect the language and objectives of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community based organizations (CBOs) in Uganda.

The KCCA grounds its authority vis-à-vis the problems posed by *kavyo*, a Luganda term for the infrastructural chaos posed by "uncontrolled development" (p. 31). Protests in Kampala against the KCCA and President Yoweri Museveni, including the 2013 walk-to-work demonstrations the author observed, are directed against what Doherty terms a form of "developmental authoritarianism" that includes the visibility and manufactured urgency of waste management initiatives that displace street vendors and hawkers. Sweeps and cleanups in Kampala's neighborhoods like Ndeeba and Mbuya instantiate the kinds of "destructive creation" the KCCA strategizes to discipline the city's residents and remake Kampala in the homogeneous aesthetic of the global city. KCCA attempts to use social media platforms like Instagram that constitute another means by which the government advertises its infrastructural authority.

Building on the theoretical work of Michel Serres in *The Parasite* (2007), Doherty characterizes spaces like the Kiteezi Landfill where waste pickers and salvagers mine the dump for plastics and other recyclables as para-sites, or the real, yet concealed, spaces of the waste stream rather than the imagined geography of Away that undergirds fantasies of limitless growth and infinite consumption. Privatized waste collection firms like Bin It worsen splintering urbanism in Kampala as wealthier areas like Nansana and those atop the city's seven hills benefit from their expedited service that leaves poorer neighborhoods piled in trash. Landfills like the one in Kiteezi are sinks, ecological deposits for storing and processing toxic waste and pollutants at one end of the waste stream. Sinks, in general, are the unseen reservoirs of dumped and used-up things kept out of the vision or consciousness of consumers to protect the capitalist mandate to consume without pause. Toxic body-burdens, such as a frequent and high degree of exposure to *Helicobacter pylori* bacteria—a carcinogen which can cause stomach cancer—are the embodied costs of waste work shouldered by Kampala's underclass. Daily exposures to dust, debris, and exhaust fumes accumulate in the lungs and respiratory tracts of landfill pickers, the health effects of which include lung cancers that develop over decades before symptoms appear.

NGOs reproduce the civilizing mission narrative of nineteenth-century colonialism by framing "local" communities in Kampala as the needy recipients of developmental modernity. Here Doherty frames the work of NGO study tours and programs as part of a larger "coloniality of the neoliberal development industry" that reproduces the racial hierarchies and power structures of the colonial era into the contemporary moment (p. 140). Cleanups in neighborhoods like Kasubi reinforce "infrastructures of feeling" by mobilizing emotions like shame, disgust, and pride to admonish residents to action (p. 151). Feelings engendered by ideas about "African lack" reinforce norms around what the author terms developmental respectability, or the ways in which NGOs and CBOs nudge Kampalans to internalize White and Western racial capitalism as defined in opposition to African "backwardness" (pp. 150, 170). Drawing on the work of Lauren Berlant, Doherty sees respectability politics as a form of cruel optimism (p. 170). The fiftieth anniversary of Ugandan independence in 2012 "provoked a national existential crisis" around waste and infrastructure (p. 173) that again pinned blame on the city's residents for delaying a hoped-for brighter future. A final chapter on Kampala City Yonge's volunteer cleaning campaign prompts the author to call into question how the

voluntourism industry and volunteering in general reproduce notions of good citizenship and civic responsibility as being divorced from remunerative labors.

Concluding the book, Doherty sums up the analysis via four keywords: surplus, embodiment, displacement, and contestation. The focus on the surplus and displaced bodies of Kampalans builds on the work of sociologists like Zygmunt Bauman, whose analysis of the "wasted lives" of modernization supports Doherty's investigation. Theorists of slow violence and bodily exposure under capitalism are also vital for Doherty's text, namely Rob Nixon, Julie Livingston, and Stacey Alaimo. Moreover, the book is a fruitful addition to the ongoing infrastructure turn in anthropology and science and technology studies ushered in by Susan Leigh Star, and furthered by Nikhil Anand, Akhil Gupta, Sophia Stamatopoulou-Robbin, and Rahul Mukherjee. *Waste Worlds* furthers our understanding of ideas about pollution, risk, and dirt, and expands on classic research by Mary Douglas as well as new work by Max Liboiron. As such, the book will be first and foremost valuable for scholars interested in science and technology studies in the Great Lakes region, as well as urban geography and anthropology with a focus on neoliberalism and development politics.

Christopher M. Blakley, *Occidental College*

Samuel Sami Everett and Rebekah Vince. 2020. *Jewish-Muslim Interactions: Performing Cultures between North Africa and France*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. 328 pp.

Far from the common and now almost universal view, which sees Jewish-Muslim relations solely in terms of conflict, trauma, and nostalgia, this transnational, multilingual, and interdisciplinary collection of essays views them differently through artistic performance. *Jewish-Muslim Interactions* shows how Jewish and Muslim artists and performers from North Africa have been engaging, collaborating, and interacting with one another through art, film, and music from the colonial period until today. A dynamic, creative, and close collaboration started between the two groups in all domains of the performing arts in the Maghreb and in France from the 1920s to the post-independence period, which clearly suggests that Jews and Muslims have a shared history.

The concept of a shared history is the way North Africa should be perceived as existing within multilingual and transcultural spheres encompassing interreligious feelings, evoking contact, influence, and interaction. It is plural and diverse, a diversity that French colonialism did everything to conceal. Jews, Arabs, Amazigh, and Muslims were subject to French assimilationist colonial rule wherein the Jews were known as Israelites and the other communities as indigenous. The French considered all of them uncivilized, though they perceived the Jews as more amenable to assimilation. This lack of space and diversity for North Africans in colonial France persisted in the multiple institutions which represent French culture in the post-independence period. North Africa is still considered as a periphery.

This volume shifts away from the French colonial hangover and focuses on popular and state representations of plurality in North African history and their ongoing and complex relationship to the geopolitically constructed discursive common belief that has changed over the last two decades. The book has two sections: the first explores the concepts of affinity and familiarity, relation, cultural entrepreneurship, and changing social roles, noting points of

emphasis and connection between Jews and Muslims navigating the commercial landscape of film, theatre, and music across the Maghreb and France. From early Tunisian filmmaker Albert Samama to contemporary comedy duo Younes and Bambi, the reader is taken on an unexpected journey across North Africa and France, seen through the lens of artistic performance and dynamic interaction between Muslims and Jews. Readers discover how Jews and Muslims united around nationalistic music during the interwar years in North Africa and consider the potential of intercommunal solidarity in the art world of the 1940s to 1960s.

The second section shifts to consider departure and lingering presence through specters and taboos, in its exploration of absence, influence, and elision. By analyzing cultural production ranging from patriotic Moroccan rap to contemporary street artist 'Combo,' the authors question the concept of coexistence between Jews and Muslims in this section and take issue with both sentimental and conflictual narratives in collective memory and contemporary politics. The volume concludes with an autobiographical afterword, which provides a personal reflection on memories and legacies of Jewish-Muslim interactions across the Mediterranean.

By going across and beyond disciplinary thinking, by combining field and archival work together with a cultural analysis, and by offering an alternative chronology and narrative to a conflict-based perspective *Jewish-Muslim Interactions* shows the extent to which postcolonial studies and Jewish studies are close.

Adel Manai, *Qatar University*

Marsilius Flumo. 2021. *A Son's Promise: A Memoir of Perseverance from Liberia to America*. Coeur d'Alene: Bitterroot Mountain Publishing. 550 pp.

When scholars write the story of Liberia, too often the people themselves are obscured behind a thick wall of theory and analysis. That is not the case for *A Son's Promise* which recounts four key periods in Marsilius Flumo's life. The first describes his early childhood in, as he recalls, an idyllic Garden of Eden village setting. The second focuses on the years of his elementary and secondary education in the northern Liberian town of Saniquellie and his time as a university student in Monrovia. The third chronicles his time as a graduate student in Korea and the US, years coinciding with the beginning of the Liberian Civil War. The fourth reviews his life as a refugee struggling to earn a living and provide for his family in North Carolina and Spokane, Washington.

Three general themes run throughout the book. The first is perseverance. The perseverance of non-literate village parents to ensure that their son received an education, the perseverance of others to sacrifice for the future of a young man they hardly knew, and Flumo's own perseverance. The second is trust in education. This trust is evident in the large sums of money African families and governments devote to education and in the faith that a certificate or diploma is the most certain path to a better future. The third is the power of African religion. Flumo weaves his trust in the God of his ancestors into his own Catholic faith in a way that makes the two indistinguishable.

What sets this book apart is Flumo's amazing recollection of events and individuals, and his remarkable honesty. The reader has a sense of living alongside an African child who reveled in the close nurturing environment of his parents' village. As Flumo is sent away to lodge with

distance acquaintances while in elementary and secondary school, one feels the loneliness of being separated from parents at age six, the pangs of chronic hunger, and the fear of corporal punishment administered publicly by teachers who believed submission was the key to learning. One also rejoices with Flumo's pride at wearing a school uniform and one smiles at the revelation that he made sure the elastic band of his Fruit of the Loom underwear was visible so that everyone could see what a sophisticated young man he had become. Through the eyes of Flumo, we see Monrovia's university and government facilities as unbelievably beautiful temples of modernity. We also experience life in the adjacent slum area. There Marsilius lived with a Mahn couple from his home area who offered him a hallway space for his sleeping mat, shared their meager meals, and treated him and several other students as family

Flumo writes with a subtlety that avoids self-righteousness or simplistic moralizing. This is true when he describes the divide between country people and the Americo-Liberians, the treatment of women and wrongs of gender discrimination, the quest by college graduates for a prestigious but not-taxing job, the importance of status and conspicuous consumption, and the pursuit of short-term gratification (enjoying the gravy) rather than accepting the burden of hard work to achieve long-term rewards.

Although Flumo confronts the shortcomings of Liberian society, in the end the reader is struck by its compassion and strengths. The deep love of mothers who sacrifice for the future of their children is by far the most obvious. While for Flumo, this was the love and care of his own mother, he also recounts how his landlady, distant female relatives, and a kindly university cafeteria worker assisted him. In America, where he was a struggling student, a near penniless refugee, and a single parent, church women, many of them Liberian, made it possible for him to complete his education, raise a family, and embark on a successful career as an educator. Initially, I was distracted by the many references to individuals Flumo mentioned, some after only brief encounters, but I soon recognized this as a typical Liberian habit both of showing respect and of keeping alive the personal connections so essential for survival in a society where the group is more important than the individual.

As I completed the book, I was stuck by the power of individual resiliency and the strength of the African community. I was also left with a feeling of sadness. While the author has made a good life for himself and his children in the US, it is regrettable that he was never able to make a sustained contribution to the people of his own country. Because of coups and a civil war that threatened his life, he had to flee the country he loves. How much better would Liberia be today if it had embraced talented and dedicated individuals such as Marsilius Flumo instead of forcing them to escape for their lives. Flumo's story is not alone.

John C. Yoder, *Whitworth University*

Barry Hallen. 2021. *Reading Wiredu*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 125 pp.

Barry Hallen's *Reading Wiredu* is a terse and concise philosophical text that explores Kwasi Wiredu's methodology and critical pedagogical approaches through the lens of a genetic and foundational philosophy. Hallen offers what he thinks is "the best way to proceed" with Wiredu's philosophy by establishing a "genetic" approach by reading through Wiredu's universal and foundational ideas (p. 37). Hinging on Wiredu's criticisms and reflections on the

works of the American philosopher V.W.O. Quine, Hallen, in the first three chapters, investigates the genetic links in the works of Wiredu as an outgrowth from, and departs from, Quine's logic, and from corresponding views on language, and on translation.

With reference to logic and ontology, Hallen is concerned with Quine's refusal to acknowledge the role of particulars in language to explain the question of existence. According to Quine, the philosophical problem of universals "involves determining the existential status, the nature of the existence, of [these] abstractions (p. 4)." Quine is concerned that ordinary language does not appropriately answer the philosophical "problem" of universals, and its association with the question of existence. Quine therefore chooses a strategy that departs from ordinary language and proposes for a "simple and therefore clear form of expression that can be used to assert that something exists (p. 6)." Quine calls for a "more precise medium than ordinary language to express theoretical existence" and proposes formal logic as an accurate strategy to define the abstract and the symbolic, which are outside ordinary language (p. 8). Hallen argues that Wiredu challenges Quine's perspective. For Wiredu, linguistic relationships, and not formal logic, best serve to answer "ontological claims (p. 12)." Hallen then turns to establish how language is genetically interwoven in Wiredu's intellectual thought and philosophical orientation. Focusing on Wiredu's multilingual experience in English and Akan (Twi), Hallen contends that Wiredu moves beyond the analytic approach (in the analysis of the structure of language) into "a genetic approach [that] aims to identify the origins of foundational components of human understanding, (p. 21)…[is] one that seeks to show that they are founded on the empirical constitution and natural antecedents of the human mind (p. 23)." The "genetic" and the "foundational" disposition in Wiredu's philosophy of language is reflected in the abstractions founded on syntax and meaning making in the African language.

In the third chapter, Hallen investigates Wiredu's position on translation by pointing out the universality and commonality in the structural organisation of language which makes translation possible. Wiredu recognises "reflective perception, abstraction and inference" (p. 35) as the particular universals of language that are determined during translation. Hallen locates the challenges of translation in Wiredu's philosophy to the demands of experience and the uniqueness of individual languages under translation. Hallen advances the genetic appropriation of the African systems of thought in Wiredu's response to translation that pays demands to particular cultural universals.

The next three chapters are pedagogical in nature. Hallen negotiates notions of truth, sympathetic impartiality, and consensus as genetic and foundational in Wiredu's thought. Reflecting on truth, Hallen argues that Wiredu's conception of truth results from a "genetic, academic, philosophical, and African sources (p. 49)." Focusing on Wiredu's reading of Akan thought through linguistic systems, Hallen underlies Wiredu's distinctions between subjective and objective truths, and negotiates how the rules of language, in their foundational respects, are reflected in Wiredu's readings of the correspondence, coherence and pragmatic theories of truth. Situating sympathetic impartiality as genetically disposed in the collective and the personal, Hallen reflects on Wiredu's exposition of the genetic links between morality and community in the construction of personhood in Akan thought. Wiredu's work considers the nexus between an individual and his community as providing complementary forms of obligation that produces sympathetic impartiality, which is considered as a

"universal…foundational moral principle" that recognises mutual co-existence between individuals and their communities (p. 75). In situating consensus in African political thought, Hallen shows how Wiredu's works writes against the old assumption about the lack of democracy in African societies. Privileging Wiredu's political thought which emphasizes on the contributions of the individual in African democracy, Hallen locates consensus in the philosophical precept of "communitarianism" in which "consensual governance" and "consensual democracy" are products of "consultation and compromise" among individuals, and which finds extensive reflection in the democratic orientation of most African communities (p. 86).

In *Reading Wiredu,* Hallen establishes Wiredu's consistency and coherence in thought. He employs an empathic narrative strategy that pays close attention to meaning and intention in language. The book has an extensive bibliography and a list of secondary sources that supports the author's conclusion that it is time a compendium of Wiredu's works is developed. This book provides critical insights to researchers in philosophy of language from a multilingual and bilingual perspectives. In the area of African political thought, his re/reading of consensus is timely and insightful, especially in the era when political systems in Africa are questioning majoritarian and ethnicized systems of governance. Hallen insightfully figures out the role of other languages, other than the dominating experience of the English language, in negotiating the genetic links between language and philosophy. It is not, however, clear, what Hallen implicates by the use of the word "alien" to refer to specific languages. The book rewrites dominant misunderstandings regarding some aspects of Wiredu's philosophy by offering counter-intuitive arguments, although one gets a feeling that Hallen is overly defensive of Wiredu's thought pattern. The book's title is also slightly deceptive, as it does not mention Quine, in spite of the view that Quine's philosophy is central to the book's overall subject matter. Because of the book's deep theoretical inflections, as well as a subject matter that is largely reflective, this book is suitable for secondary readers of Wiredu and of African philosophy.

Robert Rotich, *Egerton University*

Jeremiah M. Kitunda. 2021. *Kamba Proverbs from Eastern Kenya: Sources, Origins & History*. Woodbridge: James Currey. 446 pp.

Jeremiah Kitunda makes it clear that proverbs are important to the Kamba people in his *Kamba Proverbs from Eastern Kenya*. In the introduction he states, "To the Kamba, proverbs are terse expressions with something withheld" (p. 5). He explains the purpose of proverbs as "warning, encouragement, and amusement" that also "teach historical lessons, highlight good morals, and instil [sic] social values" (p. 5). He generously provides many proverbs about proverbs. For example, #1846 states: "A person who does not know proverbs is tested by an arrow," which means that not understanding what people are saying with a saying can be dangerous (p. 404). The author's commentary explains #1622: "In-born traits are not undone," as meaning that proverbs relay the truth as known when coined, but that they may need to be revised as time passes (p. 353). Finally, one must be judicious in using the cultural wisdom contained therein

only with those capable of understanding as #1159 advocates, "Do not tell a boy a proverb lest a beast gore him" (p. 251).

The book has many strong attributes. First, the broad range of topics encompassing bed making (# 1148), brain drain (#628), and zonkeys (#941) keeps the reader engaged. Second, the time span as noted by references to antiquity, historical events, the Vascon era (the era of digitization), and current days. #1630 is an example of a modern proverb; it notes "Do not erase the midwife's phone number [from your cell phone] before you cease to bear children" (p. 356). Most proverbs were attached to a timeline which was provided in the Chronology (pp. xiii-xv); however, readers dipping into the book might not be aware of this resource. Third, proverbs for all ages as well as men and women are amply cited. # 975, "Elderliness is not grey hair, as old age is not pulling out stumps," is used when reminding elders that they must still model the best of the culture (p. 211). Fourth, Kitunda taps various sources including song lyrics, speeches, and general knowledge for the adages. Fifth, the provision of origins for the proverbs such as Kamba antiquity, coastal trading partners, the West, and other ethnic groups in Kenya illuminate the truth that proverbs can come from anywhere or any interaction. A handful of the proverbs echo those found in other areas of Africa such as #447: "One finger alone cannot kill a louse" (p. 101). A basic map provided on page xvi would be more helpful if it included Nairobi and Mombasa as reference points even though they are not part of the Kamba area. Sixth, two thousand proverbs are included.

Despite the many positives, the book is not perfect; it does have some negatives as well. The negatives are in three main areas. First is the mechanical area. A few spelling errors were noted, for example "sheep" spelled as "shep" in #845 (p. 189) as well as an often-repeated issue with line breaks. These spelling and formatting issues were not overly distracting. Next, the book has an insider bias as exemplified by the statement "for obvious reasons" in the commentary for #466 (p. 105). This reader did not know those reasons. They may not be obvious to readers not as familiar with the Kamba. Also, in the "Note on Translation and Orthography," the author notes the difference in sounds between /u/ and /ũ/, but even though it apparently makes a difference, he never explains it. He does explain the difference between /i/ and /ĩ/ very clearly. Finally, for those who use proverbs as illustrative material, the index is inadequate. An index more useful for reader including the common topics of leadership, parenting, teamwork, grief, respect, work/life balance, and friendship would be appreciated. These topics are all addressed but would be difficult for the casual reader to locate. The introduction states that the book has proverbs useful for conflict management, but even this is not one of the topics in the index.

Because of the breadth of the material, many derivatives could be compiled. A children's book of short stories akin to Aesop's fables could be produced. A book of leadership and management insights from the Kamba would be another possibility. If the proverbs were arranged chronologically, they could serve as a scaffold for a history of the Kamba people. This reader hopes that Kitunda will continue his work with these proverbs. Kitunda's book is recommended for lovers of proverbs and those interested in East African history and Kamba culture.

Amy Crofford, *Independent Scholar*

Michelle Liebst. 2021. *Labour and Christianity in the Mission: African Workers in Tanganyika and Zanzibar, 1864-1926*. Woodbridge: James Currey. 224 pp.

In *Labour and Christianity in the Mission*, Michelle Liebst aims to reimagine Christian missions in Africa as sites of work. She focuses on two mission stations of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA), one in Zanzibar and the other in Magila—the latter being an area whose center is approximately forty kilometers inland from Tanga on the current Tanzanian mainland. The book is split into five substantive chapters, each analyzing a particular aspect of the mission's history from 1864 to 1926, in addition to an introduction and a conclusion.

There are several commendable features of *Labour and Christianity in the Mission*. The book contributes significantly to historical knowledge of mission activities in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century eastern Africa. Liebst ably analyses cultural encounters between and among the UMCA mission, its missionaries, and Africans, both inside and outside of the mission. She examines several important factors in this context, including gender, colonialism, and cultural exchanges, paying particularly close attention to the ostensible divide between urban, Islamic Zanzibar, and 'pagan,' rural inland regions of the mainland. The book contains a wealth of information that builds on and adds to a growing historiography on mission stations in Africa. The subject matter is deftly analyzed and eloquently communicated.

There are areas, however, in which the reader may be left wanting more. It is striking, given the book's title, that some of the chapters have very little to say about labor. Chapter 1, which opens with a description about a controversy relating to lime burning near Magila, revolves around European missionary relations with local powerholders, spiritual beliefs, and environments—with only cursory mention of labor. Additionally, Chapter 2 claims to focus on Zanzibar's infamous 'Slave Market Church,' which has received scholarly attention elsewhere, but the bulk of the analysis is on the Zanzibar mission's *shamba* (farm). It then focuses more on mission morality vis-à-vis slavery than on 'work,' despite some notable passages on the wider social connotations of agricultural labor. Similarly, Chapter 3 focuses on the different ways in which Africans in the mission boys' school in Zanzibar attempted to navigate 'ex-slave' status in the context of the mission and the nearby urban environment.

It is then only in Chapters 4 and 5 that labor in the mission comes to the fore as a primary theme. These are certainly the most engaging of the book, given its aims. In Chapter 4, Liebst analyses the lives of girls educated in the Zanzibar mission, their limited prospects for work outside of domestic service inside the mission, and the ways in which they navigated these restrictions. Meanwhile, in Chapter 5, the focus turns to 'boy-work' and the changing perceptions of 'boyness' or 'boyship' (*uboi* in Swahili) over time and space, and between different populations. Here, labor, especially domestic labor, in the mission is shown to intersect with race, social status, and locals' perceptions of the mission and its occupants. In this context, the UMCA mission is not simply reimagined as a place of work, but a place in which livelihoods were navigated and negotiated in wider society through the work being done on the mission.

If there is a criticism of these latter two chapters, it is that Liebst may have been able to take the analysis further, at least conceptually. In the introduction, she claims to want to contribute to labor histories in Africa that focus on a "greyer area" "between the extremes of chattel slavery and 'free' wage labour," which have received more scholarly attention (p. 3). But there

is an argument to be made that her analysis could deconstruct these paradigms. Liebst shows that, in certain contexts, there was little difference between 'slave' and 'ex-slave' status, at least socially. Additionally, ostensibly 'free' laborers at the mission struggled to shake the stigma of a past in 'slavery,' which gave them ex-slave/slave social status. If this is the case (and Liebst's argument is convincing), then one might question the extent to which the terms 'slave' and 'free' still have meaning. While they are the terms that crop up most frequently in the mission archive, Liebst's analysis highlights that social and labor historians of eastern Africa may need to go beyond them to truly "[read] the other side of the conversation" (p. 25), elucidating historical African perspectives therein.

Philip Gooding, *McGill University*

Vanessa Oliveira. 2021. ***Slave Trade and Abolition: Gender, Commerce, and Economic Transition in Luanda*****. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. 173 pp.**

Vanessa Oliveira's *Slave Trade and Abolition* explores the shifting world of the nineteenth century Atlantic through the lens of the Angolan port city of Luanda. In considering how Luanda's elite women and merchant community adapted to enslavement, abolition, and legitimate trade, she notes that Luanda was economically and culturally complex. Investment in the slave trade and legitimate trade were not mutually exclusive, and economic ties went westward to the Atlantic and eastward into the hinterland. Elite Luso-African women, *Donas*, occupied a position often less than their male counterparts though privileged in relation to Luanda's enslaved and free working populations. Frequently entering common law marriage with immigrant men, the social and economic patterns of Oliveira's *Donas* echoed those of much of coastal West Africa. But the true strength of this work lies in the way Oliveira reveals the strategies, successes, challenges, and weaknesses of those who navigated Luanda's socio-economic systems. After contracting beneficial marriages with immigrant men, they invested in local markets–both Mbundu and Portuguese—and in some cases then proceeded to invest in international enterprises. Much of their international investment activity, however, remained invisible as it was recorded under the name of their husbands. The remains of Luandan "palaces" and other less tangible items still give testament to the unequal benefit that sometimes accrued to these women and their children. In contrast, such opportunities were not available to the large number of enslaved women who worked on the farms and in workshops in and around Luanda.

At its core, this work considers the economic role of relationships and the implications of these relationships in a shifting global context. Poised at the intersection of culture and class, these *Donas* were fluent in Portuguese and Kimbundu, and identified as white and Catholic. For foreign men, however, who were often unsuccessful at enduring Luanda's disease environment, they provided local knowledge, continuity, and resources. By acting as cultural and economic brokers for their husbands and lovers, *Donas* and their children gained access to economic and social resources. According to Oliveira, the members of the Luandan elite, and their offspring, traversed the Atlantic in search of business opportunities, education, and medical care. Oliveira argues that many of the Luso-African merchants of Luanda were particularly well placed to respond to the shifting demands of the Atlantic World, including abolition. As the British and

French withdrew from the slave trade in the southern Atlantic and curtailed the slave trade north of the equator, Brazilian and Angolan merchants met the demand for enslaved labor for both the Portuguese court in Rio de Janeiro and Brazil's agrarian sector. Many merchants also successfully invested in commodities and redirected enslaved labor into the production of these commodities. During the period of legitimate trade and colonialism more women also entered commerce and traveled between Luanda and the hinterland. A succinct and detailed description of Luanda's patterns of consumption, food production, and supply chain further reflected gendered global exchange and hierarchy. Wealthy *Donas* became suppliers in large part because of their access to immigrant men and their resources. However, while women composed the majority of farmworkers, most lacked the means to invest. The majority of the suppliers remained men. Oliveira also cautions that, although successful in navigating the nineteenth-century world of commodities and legitimate trade, abolition and colonialism brought changing notions of race that would challenge the *Donas*' identity and undermine their position of relative power.

Well researched, clear, and concise, *Slave Trade and Abolition* makes an important contribution to the literature on slavery, abolition, creole culture, and port cities of the south Atlantic. Oliveira carefully considers questions of labor, investment, gender, and supply chain. A quick glance at her footnotes testifies to the breadth and depth of her scholarship. In approaching questions of urban labor, she also touches upon both the Atlantic and the hinterland that created Luanda. Moreover, in addition to highlighting a small yet significant element of Luanda's more privileged population, she incorporates the role of workers and the enslaved. While documenting that elite woman were no less inclined to inflict violent punishment on the enslaved, she considers the ways in which enslavement in Luanda differed from similar institutions in North America. Most specifically, she considers the ways in which the enslaved attempted to use the law to protect themselves against their enslavers. This work offers students and scholars a better understanding of the ways in which Luandans navigated fluctuations in local and global conditions.

Cathy Skidmore-Hess, *Georgia Southern University*

Gerard Prunier. 2021. *The Country That Does Not Exist: A History of Somaliland.* London: Hurst & Company. 279 pp.

Gerard Prunier helps the reader to understand the larger sweep and turns of East African history, especially that of the north-western part of Somalia known as Somaliland. It is the region that broke away from Somalia in 1991 and is now a self-governing and autonomous entity. Shaped and traumatized by a violent history and being the home of people who saw bloody civil war in their recent history, the interesting thing is that it is the most peaceful region in the entire horn of Africa despite being unrecognized for such a long time and desperately in search of recognition as a state. Prunier's slim volume comprises eleven crisp chapters. The crux or the central argument that he wants to make is that of the strange yet unexplored aspect of nationalism. He maintains that sometimes even pan-nationalism is not sufficient for existence and that the disintegration of states is quite possible despite tremendous ethno-nationalistic sprit and a common colonial legacy. This is true about Somalia and Somaliland in the African

context and also in the south Asian context for countries like India-Pakistan (1947) and Bangladesh (1971) where partition happened despite common ethnicities and where colonialism played its shrewd role in the tragic division. The book also discusses how in 1991 after considerable bloodshed in Hargesia, Somaliland unilaterally declared itself independent and now exists fully as a nation with its own currency, constitution, military, and other important institutions.

Prunier's work of historical social ethnography is interesting for the following reasons. The apt title, The Country That Does Not Exist, in a way directly tells the reader what has gone wrong post-freedom in Somaliland and where perhaps the only thing that is right in this situation is the actualization of peace in Somaliland. Prunier loves clarity and continuity in his writing approach and therefore does not leave any theme untouched. He keeps telling a coherent narrative right from the regional and local to global ramifications of the Somaliland situation, holistic coverage of local and global aspects, conflicts within, and issues and challenges. The work reflects Prunier's effectiveness at covering the social history of a conflict zone and discussing its colonial past, pan-nationalism, cultural homogeneity, and political discontents along with its merger into Somalia and then breaking away, all without using academic jargon. The reader gets a clear idea in Chapter 2 ("United We Fall") of how in 1960 the two newly independent states of Italian and British Somaliland merged to become a super state based on common ethnicity, that of a greater Somalia or a pan-Somali state. This merger later proved to be a half-baked dream far from actual unity and in reality, hardly a foundation for a single state. Prunier then fully delves into the Somali National Movement (SNM) and more generally peoples' resistance against the tyrannical and violent Barre regime over a decade. This led to the re-emergence of the concept of Somaliland as a separate nation, an event aptly encapsulated in the title of Chapter 6: "And Suddenly All Hell Broke Loose, 1988."

Prunier is a master at writing historical accounts from first-hand experiences/eyewitnesses, thereby recording the lived history. This is why his analysis can be significant in understanding the broader issues and challenges faced by Somalilanders. The historical contours that Prunier produces lucidly provide a strong theoretical and empirical framework to understand and explain present-day Somaliland, its political economy, and the persistence of structural, especially social and cultural, inequalities (clan hegemonies) that lead to the large poverty ratio. One more prime feature of this historical masterpiece is its reflection of contemporaneity with the myriad developments, disintegrations, and bloody conflicts of secession that have taken place. Therefore, this work cannot be read in isolation from such global developments and violent conflicts or civil wars in the African or other contexts such as the current warfare in Ethiopia's Tigray Province, Al-Shabaab's bloodshed in Somalia, the collapse of Yemen, and monstrous and unmanageable refugee crises among other such situations.

Prunier seems unimpressed with the idea of nationalism and therefore shows its nuisance value to the reader. Perhaps that is why he becomes a devil's advocate in exposing this historical drug that politicians and vested interests so often inject into the masses. The reader understands that sometimes even pan-nationalism can actually aggravate the problems it seeks to address rather than solving them and therefore lingering as mere ideas of nationalism that cannot be a way to liberty and dignified existence. However, amid this he records the pervasiveness and persistence of Somalilanders to exist even when they do not exist for the

larger world and continue live in abject poverty due to political and social gridlock. He discusses their global exclusion and segregation on the economic and diplomatic fronts, but the fact remains that this unrecognized country is trying its best to develop relations and trade and is gradually making a mark and trying to develop its economy further.

This book lures the reader into engaging with the relevant and broader literature related to the havoc created by nationalism and the concept of the nation-state that has emerged in response to Somaliland especially in the African scholarship. Also, one wants to know the actual presence of sovereignty and autonomy and security concerns of Somaliland amid the weakest position of the nation-state while bordering some failed states like Yemen and Somalia. Prunier's work also gives readers a sense of departure from the Somali nationalism and the contemporary new nationalism in the Somaliland and its obsession for being independent while making its existence known to the world through peace, cooperation, and harmonious relations with rich Arab nations (Saudi Arabia and the UAE) and now China.

Prunier's work on Somaliland seems a labor of love and therefore needs not be restricted to narrow specializations. It must be read across the disciplines of history, sociology, peace and conflict studies, ethno and cultural studies, political science, and international relations and foreign policy experts. The work also reflects novelty in its approach and is an intriguing interrogation of nationalism, integration, separation, and sustenance stemming from direct observation and active fieldwork with first-hand accounts. It thus brings insider perspectives and the lived realities of an internationally unrecognised nation to the fore. Despite being a work of history, Prunier beautifully captures the new economic, political, and social realities which make it an essential read for all who are interested in East Africa's political economy and development.

Adfer Rashid Shah, Jamia Millia Islamia University

Joanna R. Quinn. 2021. *Thin Sympathy: A Strategy to Thicken Transitional Justice*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 222 pp.

In the last two decades, many books have arrived focusing on the emerging field of transitional justice. While these books may no doubt have illuminated the field of peace and conflict studies, they have not really explored how cognitive understanding of the history of abuses and atrocities could lay the foundation for transitional justice processes. This gap in scholarship is what *Thin Sympathy: A Strategy to Thicken Transitional Justice* would seem to fill.

Authored by Joanna R. Quinn and organized into nine chapters, *Thin Sympathy* attempts to unearth why transitional justice processes have tended to fail in badly divided societies. Methodologically drawing data from field studies undertaken in Uganda, the core issue that the author appears to address is how cognitive re-engineering of people and communities could engender peace in post-conflict societies. As the author notes, "the development of even a rudimentary understanding among individuals from each of the different factions and groups of what has happened, of basic fact of the other's suffering, could be the necessary conditions for promoting not just peaceful co-existence but a society's ability to move forward together" (p. ix). Indeed, a clear reading of the book suggests that Quinn does not just formulate the thin

sympathy hypothesis but with empirical evidence from Uganda also attempts to lay bare the challenges that could be encountered in cultivating thin sympathetic culture.

Again, not only does the author highlight these challenges but also proffers solutions on how they could be surmounted. Among the problems identified by the author, three are worthy of mentioning for the purpose of this review. One, information about the history of past abuses must be gathered by official and unofficial means. Two, the population must be sensitized about the information gathered. Three, an explicit connection of the dots surrounding the motivations that propelled the actions in the first place.

It is noteworthy to stress that while the book seeks to construct a theory that might strengthen social cords in badly divided societies, in the aftermaths of conflicts or right abuses the author does not discount the import of transitional justice processes (e.g. TRC, trials, etc.). Rather, she contends that thin sympathetic engagements must be an antecedent to formal processes. In the author's words, "in fact, thin sympathy must be sequenced before any transitional justice processes are formally established…Thin sympathy must be deliberately pursued or it will not occur. We must think about the very conditions that make transitional justice resonate among communities that are not directly affected by the violence and adversity in question" (p. 138).

Overall, Quinn has attempted to introduce a new hypothesis that if further tested with more comparative cases could offer a middle range theory for explaining characters of post-conflict societies. Another beauty of the book is the lucid and simplistic manner in which the author presents her arguments. Indeed, from the preface to the last chapter, the author would appear not to have left readers in doubt about her mastery of concepts deployed. Notwithstanding, a book such as this that seeks to package a novel theory could have been more comparative methodologically. Uganda is, no doubt, a classic case of a "no transition" society as the author notes. Other cases, however, cutting across the world's geo-political zones could have been included in the analysis and discussion. More so, the title of the book does not seem to capture Uganda. Again, since the book was a product of field studies, maps and other pictorial evidence could have been deployed throughout the book. These would not only have added to its impact on readers but would have also enhanced the understanding of issues raised in the book.

In the final analysis, the 222-page book is a worthy contribution to the bourgeoning literature on transitional justice. It has sought to re-theorize transitional justice through the lens of understanding what has taken place in the past. It would therefore be a handy and worthy text to policy makers, diplomats, and scholars, especially those in the field of peace and conflict studies.

Adeniyi S. Basiru, *Crescent University (Abeokuta)*

Benjamin Rubbers (editor). 2021. *Inside Mining Capitalism: The Micropolitics of Work on the Congolese and Zambian Copperbelts*. Suffolk: James Currey. 167 pp.

Inside Mining Capitalism is a rejoinder that centers the effects of modern capitalism and state economics on labor relationships in the Congolese and Zambian Copperbelts. The edited collection is a history of paternalism, the "micropolitics of work," neoliberalism and its

tentacles, and the rise of new international forces affecting Zambia and Congo during recent decades. The volume includes a telling of diverse "power constellations" within a web of complex interrelations that make up the complicated "labour regime" of the Zambian and Congolese Copperbelts. As such, rather than centering on the working class, *Inside Mining Capitalism* aims to expose the networks of the labor regime and how all individuals effect laboring in these regions. Even with this analysis of constellations of power, this volume remains a history from below, with a directional activism that arises out of the interview-based methodology of most of the chapters in the brief edited collection.

Chapter one, from Benjamin Rubbers and Emma Lochery, explores a longer history of labor regimes in the history of the Zambian and Congolese Copperbelts since the 1920s. For the authors, a labor regime is a relatively stable set of relations in a market or geographic space that survives over a long period due to adaptive interplay of different sectors. Rubbers and Lochery's history of the region defines changes within the "union field" and diverse "political arenas" during three important periods: the industrial paternalism of 1925 to 1965, the state paternalism of 1965 to 2000, and the neoliberal regime of multiple players since 2000. Chapter two, by James Musanda and Francesca Pugliese, looks at a history of safety and discourses about protection in the copper mines. Applying Michel Foucault though a reading of discipline, the authors offer that highly venerated dialogues on safety provided by mine owners often exist to displace all blame for injury and accidents onto the workers. Chapter three, also from Musanda and Pugliese, looks at gender dynamics of female laborers in the mining industry through interviews with women at different levels of employment. Many of these women are consistently worried about sexual assault and concerns with the nature of their domestic lives with husbands, especially when working women have relationships with men at work, whether they be sexual or plutonic.

Kristien Geenen and Thomas McNamara offer the next chapter, which searches out changes within union elections due to the alterations of international and internal players in the copper mines and global copper markets. This reading compares Zambian and Congolese union histories, while offering that even with differences in organizing history, and the relation of organizing to the different states, the discourses on labor and unionizing are quite similar in each area. The fifth chapter, also from McNamara and Geenen, expands that analysis to look at wildcat strikes and resistance to union organizing through the dominant lens of the edition that focuses on the "micropolitics of work." This exposure reads wage negotiations with new Chinese influences in the region through thinking about power relations and the politics of organizing. Lochery and Rubbers in in the sixth chapter focus on middlemen through the figures of human resource managers on the Copperbelts. These figures represent neoliberalism for the authors, as figures who manage the relations of the labor regime while also protecting their own novel space within adaptive systems. The conclusion from Rubbers outlines a broader reading of the changes that neoliberalism has wrought on the Copperbelts with a focus on how Chinese State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) are altering markets previously dominated by diverse African SOEs.

The edited collection, in general, exposes a new history for thinking about labor in highly contested resource regions of the neoliberal order and what is soon to become a more fascistic and protective order of international economics after neoliberalism. The co-production of

capitalism, as something involving broad power constellations of the state, middlemen, labor, and the dominant corporate powers of transnational capital, also centers novel ways of thinking directly about that arriving fascistic emergence of greater state and capital links that abuse labor and are increasingly allowed to misuse labor through diverse manipulated discourses on safety, gender, and diversity. This short work should be read by anyone working on mining in modern Africa, as it offers a broader history than the southern African focus of most work on African mining. As well, the work would be a welcome addition for broader readers looking to understand labor relations and the history of organizing in postcolonial spaces.

Andrew Kettler, *University of South Carolina*

Bénédicte Savoy. 2021. *Africa's Struggle for Its Art: History of a Postcolonial Defeat*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 214 pp.

In the wake of postcolonial African independence, African intellectuals and politicians spearheaded a movement to pursue repatriation of artworks stolen during the colonial era and placed in the depots of Western museums. And, when faced with legitimate demands for restitution from African countries, the collecting institutions developed "dazzling dialectics" of excuses, denials and deceptions that border on denigrating Africans arguing that they plundered in order to save the African arts from worms, termites and smoke, and instead these "Africans owe them interminable gratitude" and "the survival of their traditional art" (p. 7).

Launching the book with the claim that "Forty years ago, a discussion was started in Europe about the restitution of European Museums' colonial holdings back to Africa" (p. 1), Bénédicte Savoy's *Africa's Struggle for Its Art: History of a Postcolonial Defeat* brings to light this historical account of Africa's struggle and the accompanying defeat that still reverberates in today's restitution discourse. The casual reading of the text sends the impression that the book is a mere rehash of historical reportage (devoid of author's input) on the failed struggle, but Savoy's keen readers find a tightly maintained dialectic (between Europeans' claims of legitimate ownership and Africa's legitimate demand for restitution) that reaches a homestretch with a forceful directive to Europe to bring restitution process into its fruitful conclusion. Preceded by a preface and an introduction, the book chronicles the troubling repatriation discourse from the sensation carried by the local *Bingo* pan-African magazine in 1960s through politically and intellectually explosive global engagements of 1970s to the exhibitions and world conferences held in early 1980s. And, after an elaborate account of compulsive instances of demands and institutional defenses between 1965 and 1985, Savoy closes the book with a powerful epilogue that shapes the much-needed conversation to end a *longue durée* restitution struggle.

What Savoy accomplishes in all the sixteen accounts (i.e. the book's chapters) that meticulously scrutinized material sources like works by intellectuals, letters to the editor, political speeches, conference proceedings and exhibition discussions, is how the unmasking of conspiracies that smothered the failed campaign to decolonize Europeans' museums potentially ignites Africans to reconsider the struggle. And although these materials at some point disposed Savoy to acquiesce to cultural administrators' success in "thwarting Africa's struggle for its art" (p. 138), the book, in its own ingenuity, anticipates another opportunity for

repatriation, for as the author hopes, the actors are now "compelled to enter a new era in this history" (p. viii). The first account reflects on stirring polemics by Beninese writer Paulin Joachim that appeared in *Bingo*, and just like in the successive accounts, Savoy presents Joachim writing with unsympathetic anger as he makes a general appeal for the recovery of African artworks. Although the petition had already been anticipated as early as 1960s, and in fact the collecting institutions had agreed to lend art works, the book exposes the callous authorities that obliged the claimants to stop the debate, insisting that "no claims for property rights will be tolerated" (p. 8).

While all the historical accounts presented in the book highlight every aspect of postcolonial struggle, remarkable though in *Africa's Struggle for Its Art* is how it foregrounds, in two short Nigerian films, the movement of a black man and woman into the basement of British Museum, particularly the unwrapping of the African objects hidden away in dark places. For Savoy, these cinematic works dispense with the rhetoric of mere claims of repatriation, and they instead chose to be overt by passionately focusing on taking back of African cultural property in the form of documentary and action films (p. 12). The movement, particularly in the account "You Hide Me," underlines the extent to which Africans should go in the physical struggle for their art. Joining the protagonist in the spirited fight, Savoy laughs off the representatives from the British museum who, unable to contain sarcasm anymore at the first screening of the film, "very quickly sidled out of the room" (p. 14), indicating, perhaps, a reluctance to engage in the ensuing discussion. This unwillingness is played out throughout the book, and in the very section that the author lays bare Africa's attack and subsequent Europeans' defense, avoidance of publicity in discussions that can drift the restitution issue "onto an international stage" (p. 76) were favored as a deferral strategy. But all is not lost. The "defeat" appended in the book's title is a shared defeat between Africa and Europe in the sense that the aborted restitution that left Africa defeated resurfaced in Europe years later as a specter and has now "become primarily European" (p. 89).

Savoy's expertise and knowledge of history and cultural heritage shines through in *Africa's Struggle for Its Art*. He has offered an intellectually stimulating reconstruction of decades' resistance to legitimate demands, and as an outcome, Germany commits itself (four days after its German publication) to return to Nigeria the famous Benin bronzes looted by the British army in 1897. Though I would have liked to see more examples of how African countries other than Nigeria engaged the repatriation project, I presuppose that the transnational restitution debates would have been destined to common cultural administrators, and so the Germans' move can dispose other institutions to return treasures not just to Nigeria but also to other African nations.

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Christopher Tounsel. 2021. *Chosen Peoples: Christianity and Political Imagination in South Sudan*. Durham: Duke University Press. 149 pp.

Religion plays a significant role in the history of many African nations and the same can be said of South Sudan. In this book, Tounsel gives a comprehensive account of how religion, mainly Christianity and Islam, has shaped the history of South Sudan. The introduction describes how

the people of South Sudan used the Bible as a guide to resist oppression from their oppressors (North Sudan), intertwine theology with nationalism, and place Christianity above their ethnic differences to create a unified front while maintaining their culture, language, and ethnic diversity.

Chapter one begins with the Nugent School. Christianity was encouraged only in the south as a way of appeasing the Muslims who were dominant in northern Sudan. Mission schools saw evangelism as the unifying element and gave people the right to do unify. Christianity, however, did not replace their cultural heritage, as the people of South Sudan still believed that the different ethnicities were created by God. The Nugent School was established to confront Islam as the southern Sudanese realized government officials were mostly from the north/Muslims due to most southern Sudanese being uneducated and thus not able to qualify for upper level government positions. The Nugent School operated through the Boys Brigade, the Crusaders, and the Scouts. The Scouts, a very important element in the Nugent School, was key in preparing and raising Christian soldiers against Islam. Despite fights among the teachers at the Nugent School, there was a strong unity among groups as they resorted to their Christian faith to resolve their differences.

Chapter two focuses on the Torit Mutiny. The military was permeated with Islamic structures and principles as it was being ruled by the Anglo Egyptian government, consequently forming an army of Muslim soldiers. As proposed by Wingate (Governor General of Sudan 1899-1915), the Muslim based army was replaced by locally recruited soldiers where the English language was the official language and Christianity was encouraged. Remarkably, through the efforts and initiative of the Graduates General Congress (Graduates of Gordon College), both the north and southern peoples agreed to unite as a nation to form the legislative assembly which consequently led to Sudan's independence on January 1, 1956. This was despite the southerners being attacked, enslaved, and their interest being excluded from the self-government and self-determination.

Chapter three sheds light on how the south fought to be liberated from racial and religious oppression from the north. The first civil war in Sudan occurred between 1955 and 1972. It sparked tension between the Muslim government and Christians in the south. After the government's unsuccessful attempt to make Islam the state religion and Arabic the national language, missionaries were expelled, the educational system Arabized, and Sunday as the legal holiday for Christians was replaced by the Friday as the official holiday. This brought resistance by the south despite divisions and disunity among them. In spite of this, the church in South Sudan experienced a tremendous growth (both leadership and laymen) during this time and found encouragement from the Bible. It was a relief to the south to finally have autonomy under the Addis Ababa agreement in 1972.

The role of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the Update (print media), and the independence of South Sudan are highlighted in chapter four. The Update, though not a Christian forum, portrayed and recounted the war through a biblical lens and changed the political history into a spiritual chronicle drawing global attention to itself. The second civil war, which was a result of the Addis Ababa peace agreement being breached and repealed, caused the southern Christians to have a different view of the church. The loss of support for the SPLM/SPLA from Ethiopia

resulting from the collapse of Ethiopia's Mengistu regime, however, had a positive impact on the church as it caused an increase of Christianity in the military, consequently heightening the respect for the church. The SPLM rejected the government's imposition of Islamic law and the transformation of Sudan into an Arab-Islamic country. A Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with the Sudanese government was eventually signed on January 9, 2005, ending the second civil war, bringing peace, and consequently leading to the independence of South Sudan on July 9, 2011, with John Garang being sworn in as first vice president of Sudan, and president of South Sudan, a great victory for the South.

Chapter five concludes with the events after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. South Sudanese enjoyed a time of peace for less than three years. There was much division and enmity among the different ethnic groups. Violence among soldiers of the presidential guard triggered a series of conflicts, violence, and war in 2013. The people of South Sudan lost confidence in the Government of South Sudan (GOSS), as they accused the leaders of nepotism and corruption. Violence and several conflicts followed, but after much negotiation, a ceasefire and power sharing agreement were reached, which ultimately led to the end of the war in 2018.

This book provides a vivid history of South Sudan. It gives a very clear and concise account of events from the beginning of the civil wars to the aftermath of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and the efforts by the people of South Sudan to liberate itself from the North. It would have been useful, however, if it had shed some light on other religious practices apart from Christianity and Islam in Sudan and how that influenced people in the south or north. It is also not clear about the status of South Sudan now. Do the people of the South permanently enjoy the peace they fought several years for? Nonetheless, this is an excellent book about the history of Sudan.

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Sarah J. Zimmerman. 2020. *Military Marriage: West African Soldiers' Conjugal Traditions in Modern French Empire*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 301 pp.

Sarah J. Zimmerman's book is quite different from the numerous other works on the French military tradition in West Africa as represented by the *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* because it shifts the focus to less on the men and more on the women who were their spouses. The book's leitmotiv is, therefore, that the much-hyped martial tradition of the *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* would have been less splendid where it not for the strong presence of the female spouses. Moreover, the mere presence of the female spouses itself was a double burden for the French colonial administration throughout West Africa. The soldiers had their own urgencies of health care, sanitation, feeding, and accommodation, and so did their female spouses. And, since the French understood quite well that an army does not march on its stomach, they were not oblivious of the fact that women of the *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise*, who the author aptly call *Mesdames Tiraillieurs* (p. 25) were the trigger without which the soldier could not win battles! The *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* was the metonymy for all the non-European men serving in the French colonial forces.

Zimmerman's book stands out because it shifts women from the edge into the center of colonial militarism in West Africa. This is significant because the French colonial presence in

West Africa was militaristic; the French had to win wars of colonial conquest first and then subsequently maintain an iron fisted rule over their West African empire through a strong military presence. So, in a way then, this book highlights the little noticed role of women in the success of the French colonial project in West Africa. The author expounds on these and other points related to the female agency in the success of the *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* in six chapters.

In Chapter 1, the author concedes that "the earliest manifestations of the French colonial state and military depended on West African women and the households they created with *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise*" (p. 29). Here the author discusses how women's role in French militarism was as significant as technologies, battle plans, and battlefield leadership. However, in this chapter we see that the role of the *Mesdames Tiraillieurs* created a deep sense of anxiety for the French colonial bureaucracy because some of the conjugal relationships between the *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* and the *Mesdames Tiraillieurs* may have been because of slavery. For example, French colonial administrators were eager to give former female slaves in marriage to *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* men "in order to protect them from further enslavement" (p. 37).

Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the expanse of the conjugal relations across the French empire. Wherever the French military presence of conquest or repression went, the *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* and the *Mesdames Tiraillieurs* were in tow: not only in West Africa but in North Africa, Madagascar, and faraway Indochina. This spread brought about the presence of "African military households" in these diverse colonial settings. Social—read racial—tensions caused by the presence of such households were common in Algeria and Morocco. The Great War of 1914-1918 also caused social upheavals among the military households. The *Mesdames Tiraillieurs* were left at home while 170,000 *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* fought the Axis Powers in various theatres of war in Europe, East Africa, and Far East. This "long distance spousal separation" (p. 114) caused social tensions which were exacerbated by the panoply of new legislation sculpted by the French colonial hierarchy to mediate, control, or scupper marriages, citizenship, and military service (pp. 117-19). What these proclamations or laws had in common was how they failed to cater for women's rights including rights to serve in the military (p. 120). But the author contends in Chapter 4 that the legal quagmire aside, the *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* "managed long-distance relationships with female conjugal partners at home and/or in Morocco, Madagascar, Syria and Lebanon during the Great War deployment" (p. 162).

The author traces in Chapter 5 how the French evolved new ways to respond to the wartime needs of the *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise,* including the reintroduction of wartime benefits to their families during World War II. She also discusses how the cross-cultural conjugal relationships of the *Tiraillieurs Senegalaise* went against the grain of French colonial thought about the separation of races and sexual relations across racial lines. When the French were unable to prevent this cross-cultural conjugality, they tried to control the movement of non-African spouses to Africa so that they did not send a wrong picture back to the colonies that African men can share the same bed with 'White' women (p. 148).

Zimmerman rightly states in her conclusion that the French colonial armies depended on the "colonized women in the expansion, maintenance and defense of French Empire" (p. 220). This sounds like an accolade; but it connotes collaboration in colonial rule. Sarah J.

Zimmerman's book is indeed a scholarly masterpiece, sometimes racy but always engaging.

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