BOOK REVIEWS

David Attwell and Derek Attridge (eds.). 2012. *The Cambridge History of South African Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xvii, 877 pp.

The *Cambridge History of South African Literature* is a veritable gold mine. Its organization is intelligent and coherent, and its range and coverage is appropriately encyclopedic. The individual essays that make up the collection are without exception extraordinarily well informed; they are lucid in expression and organization, and they frequently provoke thought well beyond the boundaries of the dense, summative survey-form that the volume's form imposes on them. Editors Attwell and Attridge have marshaled the very best specialists for each of the chapters, scholars who have written the definitive monograph on the topic, built the most comprehensive web-site, edited the definitive journal, or otherwise been a dominant voice in their sub-field. Thus we have, for example, (picking more or less at random from the volume's six sections) Nhlanhle Maake's unparalleled insights into Sesotho *lifela* (songs), Carli Coetzee's delving into the seventeenth-century VOC (Dutch East India Company) archives and their use by contemporary writers, Laura Chrisman's compendious discussion of the imperial romance, Ntongela Masilela's densely illustrated description of the New African movement, Hein Willemse's account of Afrikaans literature between 1948 and 1976, and Peter McDonald's remarkably comprehensive summary of the history of the book in South Africa.

Attwell and Attridge deserve particular credit not just for lining up such an outstanding array of scholars but also for letting their subject-specialists speak for themselves. In their admirably concise general introduction and in the extended head notes introducing each section they resist the temptation to pontificate but instead very ably sum up issues and trends, such as the singularity or plurality of South African literature(s), questions of language, literature and orature, and of translation, translingualism, and transnationalism. They do comment in their headnote to section one on the unevenness of the distribution of research in South African literatures, and it would have been good to have seen a little more self-consciousness about the nature of their encyclopedic project. A little more explicit and extended commentary on the connections between literature and literacy might perhaps have lent a meta-critical edge to the volume by attempting to describe the relationship between the creation of South African "literature" and the more or less continuous disadvantaging of black South Africans in and by the imposition of dominant European forms.

The goal of the volume is, however, to describe the world of South African literature rather than to change it. Accordingly, its organization, beginning with a section on indigenous-language orature and concluding with a section on "Continuities and Contrast," is generally respectful of borders but offers tantalizing hints as to how those borders might be crossed. Hedley Twidle describes how and why the ǂXam narratives of the Bleek and Lloyd Collection at the University of Cape Town have endured into the twenty-first century, while Mbongiseni Buthelezi introduces the concept of "technauriture" exemplified by Jacob Zuma's rendition of "Umshini wami" ("My machine [gun]") being used as a cellphone ringtone. Discussions of orality are, however, limited to work in indigenous languages, while English and

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Afrikaans literatures are defined by that which has appeared in print, courtesy of the technology of the printing press.

The densely historical nature of each chapter results in a generally democratic survey that further favors the inclusively descriptive over the evaluative. Nonetheless, certain individual figures, from Thomas Pringle in the early nineteenth-century to JM Coetzee in the contemporary era, inevitably emerge as key in the development of South African literature. Curiously enough, only two chapters have individual writers' names in their chapter-titles; almost exactly midway through the book, chapters 17 and 18 on "Refracted Modernisms" and "The Metropolitan and the Local" focus on Roy Campbell, Herbert Dhlomo, and N.P. van Wyk Louw, and on Douglas Blackburn, Pauline Smith, Herman Charles Bosman, and William Plomer, respectively. Chronologically, these chapters cover 1900-1950, which is not a particularly exciting period in South African literature in international terms. Also, it is probably fair to say that these authors are generally little known outside the country, and even inside South Africa they're hardly household names. So it's curious that these two chapters are unusual in linking named writers who come from different racial and language backgrounds and whose work sets descriptions of urban and urbane black South African life against markedly unsophisticated white rural existence in the Karoo and the Marico. The linking is perhaps indicative of one of those "what-if" moments in South African history—what if the National Party had not won in 1948; what if Albert Luthuli c. 1960, and not Nelson Mandela in 1994, had become the country's first black president; would a different, more singularly national, yet more multi-ethnic, multi-lingual South African literature have emerged? Dorothy Driver's outstanding essay on the short fiction of the "fabulous fifties" tellingly uses the image of the hinge for this period, concluding that "the literature of the decade hangs heavy with history, carrying like a massive hinge the weight of the half-century past and the one to come" (p. 405).

Sure enough, in the remaining essays covering literature after the Sharpeville Massacre, it is apparent that after 1960 one could not go on acting as if apartheid could be ignored. Indeed, most of the essays in Part V, "Apartheid and Its Aftermath, 1948 to the Present," restore the language and ethnic boundaries of the earlier sections that seemed to be breachable in chapters 17 and 18. Even Daniel Roux's excellent essay on prison literature, for instance, explains how the prison experience varied according to race and gender. (At the same time Roux also makes some provocative suggestions about the valorization of the status of the political in prison writing in the apartheid era at the expense of attention to "ordinary prisoners" both before and after 1994.)

The imposition of ethnic and language boundaries and the resulting restoration of normativity to whiteness show up in the fact that we have separate chapters on Black Consciousness poetry and on the lyric poem during and after apartheid. While Thengani Ngwenya's essay on the former refers to the "more inclusive group of poets of all races" committed to ending apartheid and to the various magazines and publishers who published their work inside and outside South Africa, Dirk Klopper's chapter on the latter focuses exclusively on English-language white poets. As the publication of multiple anthologies of poetry from Stephen Gray's *A World of Their Own* in 1976[1] through Dennis Hirson's *The Lava of This Land* in 1997 indicates, poetry was possibly the most integrated of genres, and poetry

editors and publishers were among the most willing literary professionals to risk linguistic transgressiveness. The career of Wopko Jensma, for instance, complicates the implied narrative of a clash between a self-consciously black radicalism and the un-self-conscious anodyne formalism or outdated liberalism of white writers. Peter Horn's essay on popular forms and the United Democratic Front is appropriately inclusive, but it would have been great to have seen at least one more essay looking at how those popular forms fared in the poetry of the transition and post-transition phase. Few writers have caught the transformation of liberation rhetoric into neo-liberal slogans and the commercialism of the New South Africa better than Lesego Rampolokeng or Seithlamo Motsapi, yet neither poet is even mentioned.

If the volume has arguably underrepresented poetry, the underrepresentation of drama is striking (representative in both cases of the widespread privileging of prose forms in contemporary writing and literary criticism). As the sole essay exclusively devoted to drama, however, Loren Kruger's chapter admirably meets the almost impossible task of describing the "thoroughly hybridized" forms of South African drama in the twentieth century. Her essay is a model of how to combine aesthetic and genre-based criticism with cultural critique and assessment of institutional influence.

The relative outlier status in the post-1948 section of Christiaan Swanepoel's essay on writing and publishing in African languages suggests that the post-apartheid literary scene is indeed one in which the "world-language" of English is and will be dominant. Swanepoel argues, however, and convincingly I think, that the fate of indigenous languages in contemporary South Africa is not "tragic." Along with Buthelezi's reference to "technauriture" Swanepoel is one of the few essayists to mention technologies other than print, referring to the influence of radio and television in preserving and promoting indigenous languages and simultaneously prompting (trans)linguistic change.

The final section of the volume is dedicated to "a series of topics traced across the period divisions" that determine the earlier sections. The writers in this section tackle broad subjects that "constitute some of the most important continuities from the beginnings of South Africa literature to the present day" (p. 695): South Africa's place in the global imaginary (van der Vlies); autobiography (Daymond and Visagie); translation (de Kock); women (Samuelson); experimentalism (Green); and the history of the book (McDonald). As with Kruger's chapter on drama, all of these essays do a wonderful job of narrating the historical articulation of the cultural with the literary, and the theoretical with the material.

The volume closes with a typically fine and thoughtful essay, David Johnson's on literary and cultural criticism, that comes closest to offering a meta-critique of the overall project of seeking to tell the history of South African literature. In the conclusion to his essay, Johnson gives two warnings against a "complacent" reading of the history of South African literature and cultural criticism as "a happy if uneven journey from modest, persecuted, parochial and amateurish beginnings in the nineteenth century to a confident, unfettered, international and professional present" (p. 834). He points out first that the professionalization of literary criticism—in South Africa as elsewhere—has actually diminished the impact of literary critics and tended to contain their work within "their immediate elite constituencies." His second warning is that "contemporary criticism continues to rest upon a contradictory 19th-century cultural residue," indicators of which include "divisions between literary and popular literature

and [between] high and low culture," and the continuing "cultural authority" of "the universities and publishing houses of the (neo)colonial masters." Johnson is in favor of a contrary 19th-century impulse that has also survived and that manifests itself in a tradition eager to engage in "polemic and critical debate, a desire to relate literature to 'the political' (broadly conceived), and a related concern with how South African literatures articulate with South African nationhood" (p. 835).

Johnson's conclusion provides an aptly metacritical way to read the collection as a whole: at $180 a pop, it is unlikely to be found outside academic libraries or the private collections of deeply invested individual "professionals" such as myself (lucky enough to have received a reviewer's copy)—it is unlikely to be very widely read on South Africa's crowded commuter trains or buses or taxis, nor at the high end of the economic scale to get much visible shelf-space in airport bookstores; and with a clear distinction between the literary and the popular (at least in the print tradition—the discussions of oral culture tend to be a little less divided), and its provenance from a press that might be seen as the epitome of university publisher of the "(neo)-colonial masters," *The Cambridge History of South African Literature* emphatically foregrounds its cultural authority. Attwell and Attridge's book brilliantly hits its mark and should indeed, as its dust jacket states, "serve as a definitive reference work for decades to come." As Johnson's conclusion suggests, however, it is not so totally definitive that there isn't still plenty of room for a supplement.

Notes

1 In one of the very few factual or typographical errors in the book, Ngwenya ascribes editorship of *A World of Their Own* to Andre Brink. In fact, Brink provided an introduction to the volume, but its editor was Stephen Gray.

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Maddalena Camrioni and Patrick Noack (eds). 2012. *Rwanda Fast Forward: Social, Economic, Military and Reconciliation Prospects*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 283 pp.

Since the end of the Rwandan Tutsi Genocide of 1994, Rwanda has become an example of how a conflict-ridden state can find peace, reconciliation, and economic development. The great strides by the government of Rwanda under the political leadership of President Paul Kagame have not gone without criticism. In recent years, many human rights organizations have increasingly become more skeptical of the promising future that is championed by former U.S. President Bill Clinton and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair by stating that the economic development has grown in the expense of political freedoms and liberties. In *Rwanda Fast Forward: Social, Economic, Military and Reconciliation Prospect* the possible futures of Rwanda are examined by sixteen authors who are some of the most prominent academics on economic development, human rights, and military operations, and of the Great Lakes Region of Africa. Campioni and Noack organize this text into three sections. Even though it will be read mostly by researchers who are already interested in Rwanda, the qualitative research methods and writing style are welcoming to intellectual newcomers to the country.

The book has three main sections other than the introduction. Each segment focuses on one specific area of Rwandan development. The first section examines the sociology of Rwandan society through primarily focusing on the affects of the attempts of rebuilding the civil society through the Gacaca Courts. These traditional courts have been utilized to promote post-genocide unity and reconciliation. Mainly through using field research as well as some qualitative sources from human rights organizations, the authors present a rather negative opinion of the success of these courts. However, it is important to note that they also state the benefits of the courts in addition to addressing some of the controversial and sensitive topics of its success. The second section focuses on the economic and social development that gives a more optimistic opinion of the future of the country. The last section addresses the role of the Rwandan Patriotic Army in domestic and international affairs. The editors took a rather interesting perspective when dealing with the Rwandan military. Instead of focusing on the already well-published conflict between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the section examines how the military views its role with the general Rwandan populace, the Rwandan government, and its own political future. The editors enhance this section's credibility by having Brigadier-General Frank Rusagara of the Rwandan military to write a chapter on how the military sees its position in preventing the spread of genocide ideology in the surrounding states. It gives the reader an interesting perspective of the Rwandan military operations and ideology that is often not explored enough by other publications on the various conflicts in the region.

In the book's introduction, the editors try to prepare the reader to have an open mind when reading the various subjects. This is an important warning, because academic scholars and others, who are interested in Rwanda's economic, social and political development, seem to place themselves into one of two blocs. The first group consists of the supporters of the current Rwandan Government and of President Paul Kagame who focus frequently on the success of the country. They do note some of the problems such as the lack of progress of the news media and some questionable public policies that appear to restrict political expression. The second group contains those scholars and human rights advocates who see a dictatorship being developed with the attempt to gain full political and economic control to promote "Tutsi" ethnic ideology and not for the reconciliation process that is being stated by the Rwandan government. They do acknowledge the recent economic development and social peace that the country has had over the last eighteen years, but believe that it cannot justify what they claim as human rights abuses. Supporters of either group can utilize this book to sustain their claims. However, even though the editors claim that the book contains the various viewpoints in the exploration to understand the future of Rwanda, the opinions of the various authors seem to be more akin to the second group rather than the first. This is not to disregard some of the valid arguments presented in this book, but supporters of the Rwandan government will find many parts rather troubling. Conversely, the authors properly examine the topics addressed in this book with the emphasis being that these are their opinions with the possibility of that they are correct as well as that they are wrong.

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Jerry Dávilla. 2010. *Hotel Trópico. Brazil and the Challenge of African Decolonization, 1950-1980*. Duke University Press. 312 pp.

The book begins with an introduction giving an overview of the race and ethnicity question in Brazil. The introduction shows how Brazilians looked upon Africa for cultural identity and Portugal for most of their domestic and foreign affairs. This dual attachment is one of the themes that run through the book as Brazil frequently had to choose between the imperialistic policies of Portugal and the decolonization process in Africa. The introduction further shows how the decolonization process in Africa opened some new opportunities for Brazil to act in a superpower capacity though constrained by attachments to Portugal and a weak government incapable of consistent policy because of frequent changes in the country's leadership. The book also outlines the arguments and writings of Gilberto Freyre, which came to influence not only Brazilian but Portuguese foreign policy as well.

The issue of race and racial relations is explored widely in the book. The author shows that racial democracy as defined by wider Brazilian authorities, although it did not go as far as racial discrimination, did not mean racial inclusion as seen by the way the Foreign Ministry was dominated by white Brazilians. It was only portrayed as better when compared to discrimination in the United States in the 1960s. The book also encapsulates the view of blacks towards the whole concept of racial democracy at the time. For example Raymundo Souza Dantas is quoted as saying "I'm not a Brazilian black. I'm a black Brazilian," thus showing the way race was subjugated below national identity. However, a public letter written by Abdias do Nascimento argued that black Brazilians were not given the opportunity to contest this inculcated racial psyche as they would be condemned as racist.

The book's other theme is the various efforts Brazil made to extend diplomatic relations with newly independent African states. Most of these efforts were unsuccessful, however, because of the close ties with Portugal and because of the conservative outlook of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry. For example, in Nigeria the diplomatic efforts were largely unsuccessful because the Brazilian racial democracy came under scrutiny since the entire Brazilian embassy personnel were white. Secondly, the wider Nigerian interests of the national question, relations with other neighboring countries, and the process of decolonization were not in sync with those of Brazil, which was supporting the Portuguese colonial policy.

In addition to diplomatic relations with African states the book traces the relationship between Brazil and Portugal from the early twentieth century up to the 1975 Portuguese revolution, which precipitated the independence of the Portuguese colonies. Almost all momentous events in Portugal had some effect on Brazil. For example, the revolution robbed the Brazilian government of the chance to play a more active role in the decolonization process and getting some political mileage during the process. The chapter also highlights the problem of migrants from both Portugal and the African colonies that faced Brazil in the aftermath of the Portuguese revolution. This was all in a background where a previous bilateral agreement allowed Portuguese nationals to enter Brazil without visas and otherwise with minimal restrictions. Although the book stresses the cultural links between Africa and Brazil, which leaders in both Brazil and Africa expounded, it was the links with Portugal, which sets the tone for most policies. Other than applying the usual diplomatic pressure, the book shows how Portuguese manipulation extended to conferring honors and sponsoring foreign trips to

influential Brazilian politicians in the Congress so that in exchange they would defend the Portuguese colonialist policy.

Something that comes out more often in the book is the contradiction in Brazillian (foreign) policy. On one hand the country called for decolonization and sought closer ties with independent African countries like Angola while at the same time abstaining from voting again the Portuguese occupation of Angola at the United Nations due to pressure from the powerful Portuguese ethnic communities in Brazil. Also, when the military regime took office in 1964 it reversed the Independent foreign policy initiated under the presidency of Joao Quadros but became the first government in the world to recognize Angolan independence under the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola. Besides the contradictions in Brazilian foreign policy the book also highlights some general contradictions within the Brazilian political environment and the individuals involved at the time. For example, the tenure of Foreign Minister Barboza was against a backdrop of excessive political repression on the one hand and unprecedented economic growth averaging 11 percent per annum on the other. The two are not usually compatible but also not mutually exclusive. Second, Barboza himself was a supporter of Freyre but later on went to be the main proponent of African decolonization.

The book concludes by looking at the impact of Mozambican and Angolan independence on Brazil. The cost of tacitly supporting Portugal in the face of the mounting pressure of decolonization became apparent when the newly independent Mozambique government refused to establish diplomatic relations with Brazil because of its earlier support for Portuguese colonialism. Despite being a right-wing regime that had consistently supported Portuguese colonial policy, the Brazilian government was the first to acknowledge the socialist-inclined MPLA led government. This contrast, which runs throughout the book, is explained in part by a pragmatic approach on the part of the Brazilian government. First, they wanted to avoid a scenario as in Mozambique where they were denied a diplomatic presence; secondly, they needed Angolan oil; and, most importantly they wanted to signal a departure from their support of Portuguese colonialism. The book also explains how Brazil managed to find a foothold in Angola because all of the three factions fighting for control of the country were in a precarious position and needed whatever external support they could find. Mozambique was not as receptive because the FRELIMO government did not face as much internal opposition as the MPLA did. The acknowledgment of the MPLA government also shows how for the first time Brazil adopted a policy contrary or even hostile to the United States, which supported the Jonas Savimbi led faction.

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Lynda Day. 2012. *Gender and Power in Sierra Leone: Women Chiefs of the Last Two Centuries*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 229 pp.

Many writers and societies often depict women as the weaker sex and metaphysically inferior to men, but Lynda Day's *Gender and Power in Sierra Leone* presents women chieftains as an indispensable figures in the socio-cultural, political, and religious spheres in Sierra Leone. The first of the six chapters deals with the various cultural associations in Sierra Leone such as: Poro,

Bundu, and medicine societies in which women were also members. These societies, whether for male or female, involved initiation rites. For male, the initiation "claims the right to define what a man is and is not." It also marks their passage into a higher group and confers on them the basic rights and duties of manhood. Also for female,s the initiation rites explain who women are, what their status in society is, and what their responsibilities are.

Chapter two discusses the role of women in authority prior to the colonial era. Unlike some African communities, women in Sierra Leone held positions of authority in various capacities; they had authority over land and people, they served as ritual leaders, founders of towns and villages, and as the leaders of sections of the country. A good example of these women leaders was Queen Yammacouba who, with other two women chiefs, signed a treaty ceding the land for Freetown colony on June 11, 1787 (p. 46). In addition, these women title holders wielded religious and political influences in their respective chiefdom and they were often addressed as "Queens."

Chapter three examines the changing status of women chiefs during the nineteenth century wars of trade, expansion, and the state building. As the Mende were militantly expanding and the war leaders taking up the political leadership, many women chiefs lost their authority to new male leaders. Nevertheless, women such as Madam Yoko, who could control wealth and military strength, still maintained their status till the arrival of the colonial rule in Sierra Leone.

Chapter four deals with women leaders and the mediation of colonial rule in Sierra Leone. Following the failed attempts of the war leaders to defeat the British colonial rule was firmly established. This eventually created new opportunities for women to "step into positions of executive authority." Shortly after the war (*puu-guei*), many women were promoted from their traditional positions as ritual leaders and town chiefs to "paramount chiefs" (p. 97). Their intelligence, good standing in secret societies, and the newly introduced strategies to maintain powers afforded them more chances to rule.

Chapter five discusses the role of women chiefs in building the independent state of Sierra Leone. After independence in 1962, women chiefs, like their male counterparts, were considered natural rulers. They also enjoyed traditional prerogative associated with the office. A typical example of these natural rulers was Madam Mamawa Benya who came to office in 1961. Natural rulers, as enshrined in the constitution, are the guardians of the land and mediators between rival factions of their kingdoms.

The final chapter presents the bitter experience of women chiefs during the civil war in Sierra Leone. Women's prerogatives were overridden and their sense of security shattered. Nevertheless, after the war in 2002, women chiefs regained their lost positional security and once again took an active role in the political, economic, and agricultural development of their country.

Gender and Power in Sierra Leone is a rich and well-researched work on the invaluable feminine role in Sierra Leone. Unlike in some African communities, where women are suppressed, confined to the kitchen, and reduced to producing and rearing children, Day through her historical and phenomenological analyses presents the socio-cultural, political, and religious relevance of women in Sierra Leone. The book is an eye-opener as it can raise the consciousness of other African communities to utilize better the potentials of their women and put aside the old saying that "women are weaker sex."

There is little, if anything, that one might find problematic in this work. The only contention that I have with it is the failure of Day to discuss the negative effect of the power tussle between women chiefs and their husbands. Above all, *Gender and Power* is a timely book that firmly situates women as indispensable. The summary at the end of each chapter and the comprehensive references at the back for further reading make the work a valuable work. I recommend it for students of African history, t feminist scholars, and those who remain skeptical about gender equality.

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Ashwin Desai. 2012. *Reading Revolution: Shakespeare on Robben Island*. Pretoria: UNISA Press. xiv, 129 pp.

Reading Revolution: Shakespeare on Robben Island tells the story of the books, the debates, and the lessons of "the University of Makana" (named after the Xhosa prophet the British imprisoned on the island in 1819 and who drowned in an attempted escape). Professor Desai's book is based on a series of interviews conducted in 2011 with eight graduates of Robben Island who he chose so as to cut across political divides and the prison hierarchy of "single" and "general" sections. The book's title alludes to Sonny Venkatrathnam (African People's Democratic Union of South Africa), who held onto a complete Shakespeare by claiming it was his "Bible" and covering it in Diwali greeting cards. This book was secretly circulated through the cells and signed by thirty-two other prisoners in the margins next to their choice of lines. It was featured in a 2012 British Museum exhibition *Shakespeare Staging the World*. Featured interview are with: Mzwandile Mdingi (ANC); Ahmed Kathrada (Indian Congress/ANC alliance); Marcus Solomon (National Liberation Front, Non-European Unity Movement); Sizakele Thomson Gazo (PAC, Poqo); Monde Colin Mkunqwane (ANC, MK); Sedick Isaacs (NEUM, PAC); Stone Phumulele Sizani (South African Student Movement, a post-1976 prisoner); and Neville Edward Alexander (Teachers' League of SA, NEUM, Yu Chi Chan Club), who, sadly, passed away earlier this year.

Professor Desai's central research approach relies "on open-ended questions focused on developing life-histories" (p. x). The interviewees' answers are woven into a narrative, and though we are not given all the questions each of the central chapters achieves a convincing character portrait and political trajectory, enlivened by personal anecdote, cultural variety, and individual idiom, ingenuity, and inventiveness. Professor Desai's preface gives an account of the prisoners' struggle for books and newspapers, stationery and study time, to organize what Sedick Isaacs called the "mutual teaching community" (p. 86), and to continue their formal studies. The book's centerpiece, as presumably it was of Professor Desai's questions, is Shakespeare, but we encounter a wide range of authors, virtually the whole Western canon, engaged with by powerful imaginations seeking to overthrow one of European colonialism's (last?) outposts: Tolstoy, Dickens, Zola, and Jack London. And there are explicit documents of resistance: Marx, Trotsky, and Fanon. Engels is allowed in by a warder because "Engels" in Afrikaans means "English" (p. 76). There are also gentler and more intimate moments: for example, in the correspondence between Ahmed Kathrada and Zuleika Mayat, author of *Nanima's Chest* (a book on Indian antique costume) and *Indian Delights* (a book of recipes). The

prisoners recall their debates over books, over politics, and over the relationship between the two.

We are reading this book post-Marikana (the 2012 mining strike that led to strikers' deaths at the hands of the police). The last chapter, with Shakespeare's five-act structure in mind, is called "The Sixth Act?" and asks how successful South Africa's transformation under ANC hegemony has been. The prisoners to a man remember their island education with intense emotion, but they are divided in their judgments of their homeland today. Generally, the ANC-, MK- and SASM-aligned (Mdingi, Kathrada, Mkunqwane, and Sizani) are happy, or at least non-committal, whereas the others are deeply critical and disappointed, especially about education. Gazo has withdrawn from politics, and is now active in the Presbyterian Church (p. 69). In effect, the ANC has become the right, and, as Professor Desai points out, for these Robben Islanders of the new left, critique of "the neo-liberal turn" (p. 120) has been easier than contributing to the continuance of revolution.

In a recent essay also eloquently critical of the ANC's South Africa, Professor Desai shows a strain of anarchism: "The government's economic policy, which entrenches private property, entrenches theft… What we need is a movement that illuminates a path to make common and to de-commodify."[1] This strain recurs among the Robben Island non-conformists. Solomon copied Shelley into his *Complete Shakespeare* (pp. viii, 52). Sobukwe read Howard Fast's *Spartacus* (p. viii). Sizani argues that in power you can be "an agent of change…without being an anarchist" (p. 99).[2] And, Neville Alexander recommends John Holloway's *Changing the World without Taking Power* (p. 112).

This is an interesting, lively, and timely book on a worthwhile topic, providing a glimpse at South Africa's recent past with deep implications for the present. Professor Desai seems to me surer-footed on the politics and the history than the literature: his style is sometimes awkward and I do not feel that he has absorbed the literature as his subjects have. The book needed extra work from an editor and a proofreader.

Notes

1 "'Ways of (Sight) Seeing' in Kwazulu-Natal." In *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, Part One, June, 2006: Part Two, September 2006. (Accessible on CNS.Journal.Org).
2 The lines are ascribed to Leon Trotsky, but they come from *Prometheus Unbound.*

Tony Voss, *University of Kwazulu-Natal*

Gail Fincham. 2012. *Dance of Life: The Novels of Zakes Mda in Post-apartheid South Africa*. Athens: Ohio University Press. 182 pp.

Gail Fincham's comprehensive study of Zakes Mda's post-apartheid novels is both readable and intellectually engaging. The project comes at a time when Mda is recognized as one of Africa's most creative artists, working not only in prose but also the plastic arts, theatre, and community initiatives for development in South Africa. The book is divided into nine chapters. An introduction sets out numerous theoretical frames for considering the works, beginning with elements of South African oral tradition, intertextual relationships among western and African

fiction, and Bakhtinian notions of performance, dialogism, carnival, and heteroglossia. In one chapter, Fincham takes the interesting approach of incorporating sections of analytical essays on Mda's *The Heart of Redness* produced by some of her graduate students at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Interwoven throughout the book are quotes from interviews with Mda himself as well as biographical information.

One of Fincham's recurring claims is that Mda employs various perspectives to reveal the social and cultural complexities of throwing off forty some odd years of apartheid rule as well as several hundred years of European hegemony in South Africa. One of the ways he consistently does this is to interrogate and negate longstanding binaries of black/white, African/European, rich/poor, and so forth. He uses multiple narrative voices and registers as well as interweaving elements of oral storytelling and intertextuality. Mda freely mixes not only literary devices and genres but also entirely different art forms in the creation of his novels.

Fincham's reflexively explain her choices of the many theories, methods, and perspectives applied to Mda's eclectic novels. Rather than choose one or two scholarly entrées into all the texts, she argues for using ideas that most illuminate any one work, and shifting to other approaches if they more effectively treat the other novels. Her discussions are rich in the citation of numerous secondary sources, and she generally does a good job of integrating all these voices into her ongoing analyses.

Looking more closely, some chapters worked a bit better than others in evoking Mda's artistry. While one of the book's briefest chapters, Fincham's deployment of Bakhtinian theory works particularly well for Mda's first novel, *Ways of Dying*: "Mda endows Toloki with an agency born of performance. Invoking Bahktin's notions of carnival, grotesque realism and degradation helps the reader to understand this agency that counterpoints the themes of life and death on which the novel turns" (p. 29). She also focuses on Mda's use of narrative voices such as the "communal narrator," the implied author, the omniscient narrator, and, in one novel, "the sciolist." This complex form of narration is linked to the question of identity, both its recovery and its creation, as it is tied to apartheid and post-apartheid lives and history. These elements are then explored in the context of the African diaspora in *Cion* and further considers how *The Madonna of Excelsior* evokes the complexity of history, narrative and textual voices, and issues of gender and power in the period just prior to and after the end of apartheid and white minority rule.

Chapter Five, "Art, Landscape and Identity in *She Plays with the Darkness, The Madonna of Excelsior*, and *Cion*," expands the rich discussion of painting, the art of quilting, and notions of landscape as they evoke their respective environments. This discussion probably seeks to do too much in a few pages and does not seem as well-argued, or convincing as most of the other chapters. Conversely, the lengthy Chapter Three on *The Heart of Redness* applies numerous critical approaches and differing discourses to this complex novel. These include a discussion of the book's intertextual links to Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, teaching the novel in the classroom (containing the commentaries by UCT graduate students), a discussion of the controversial relationship between the novel and Jeff Peires' *The Dead Will Arise*, further discussion of "oral storytelling," and a concluding section titled "Reading *The Heart of Redness* and *The Dead Will Arise* through Attridge's *The Singularity of Literature*." While it is hard to disagree with most of

the assertions made here, the chapter is infused with so much material one can come away from it with a sense of overload, maybe even overkill.

Overall, this is a thought-provoking study and a valuable consideration of Zakes Mda's fiction. Professor Fincham has marshaled an impressive set of diverse scholarly arguments and managed to organize them into a convincing treatment of some of the most complex and evocative literature coming out of Africa today.

Robert Cancel, *UC San Diego*

Marie-Soleil Frère. 2011. *Elections and the Media in Post-Conflict Africa: Votes and Voices for Peace?* London: Zed Books Ltd. xi, 289 pp.

The introductory chapter, which is a scene-setting approach, is scholarly and impressive in that it forays into relevant works outside the collection in order to demonstrate how the current collection fits into, and departs from, the conventional knowledge on the subject. While this approach has its own merits through salient questions on the intended role of the media in conflict situations and the challenges inherent in the role (p. 13), it requires readers to pay special attention to notes in order to distinguish between what ideas belong to the present contributions and what ideas are from earlier studies of the author and/or other commentators.

Frère describes and analyzes how the media participated in recent multiparty elections in six countries in Central Africa. According to him, what distinguishes these six countries is that, in recent years, they have all experienced armed conflict, which either interrupted or prevented democratization processes. As these countries emerged from often fragile transition periods, the media in all six faced the challenge of covering the first post-conflict elections, which ostensibly were free and pluralist. Elections, both in the way they are conceived and in the way they are held, not only test the democratic practices of parties and rulers; they also reveal journalists' professionalism at a time when much is expected of the media at a time when they also face intense political pressure, which can make their work particularly hard. The task is even greater when a country is just recovering from massive violence and instability.

The ideal role of the media during elections in a democratic context will be recalled (p. 2). There are certain guidelines by which the public and the private media should be governed in order to ensure a free and fair political competition. These guidelines have been elaborated and published worldwide by professional organizations, and journalists in Central Africa were repeatedly reminded of those principles during pre-election training sessions and workshops. On the other hand, the peculiarities of the post-conflict electoral processes that occurred in Central Africa in the past ten years were also described, as well as the specific political and media environments surrounding them. Frère sheds light on the way the media in Central Africa have operated in the fragile and dangerous environment of the post-conflict electoral processes in Burundi (2005), the Central African Republic (2005), the Republic of Congo (2002 and 2007), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2006), Rwanda (2003 and 2008), and Chad (2001 and 2006) (pp. 17-74).

Frère's work is not a comparative study; rather, her aim is to juxtapose the six countries' experiences in order to show the media's potential role in a crucial phase of the political

development of each country and the difficulties that journalists encounter in all these Central African countries. The book is divided into four comprehensive parts. Chapter one, "Elections and the media in Central Africa: stakes and challenges," deals with electoral context of each of these countries in Central Africa and gives a list of them. The specific features of each context are sketched and the particular challenges facing the electoral process and the media's daily activities are described. Moving beyond national boundaries, the following three chapters aim to show how the media in the different countries have actually attempted to cover the elections.

While chapter two, "The preparatory phase: the media's pre-election commitments," concentrates on the pre-election period, underlining the efforts of certain media to inform voters, detailing the major challenges journalists had to face, and describing the support they enjoyed from development agencies to better prepare their electoral coverage. Chapter three discusses the crucial period of the election campaign, when the media become both the object and the voice of the political strategies of candidates and parties. Examples drawn from the experience of these six countries show the kind of abuses that are possible but also the mechanisms that are implemented to try to limit their impact. Chapter four examines the media's role on election day and in the weeks following the polls before the provisional and then the final results are announced. Frère concludes that chapter with an epilogue, which underlines the achievements and potential difficulties for the media in the wake of the elections.

In conclusion, Frère tries to wrap up the major issues and concerns that have emerged throughout the electoral process, and this feeds into a reflection about the future of the media and their democratic role in Central Africa. The book adds to the growing literature about elections, media, and post-conflict in Central Africa countries. In my opinion, this book can be strongly recommended. It should be of great theoretical, practical, and inspirational value to all who are interested in the field of journalism and media, and particularly to those already committed to work in this field. It should help to get more people involved in solving the deep-rooted problems of unaccepted identity as well as the persistent problems of media during post-conflict elections.

Oluwaseun Bamidele, *Faith Academy, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria*

Toby Green. 2012. *The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300-1589.* New York: Cambridge University Press. 366 pp.

In recent decades there has been considerable interest in the processes of creolization in the study of the Atlantic Slave Trade. *The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300-1589* explores the origins of Atlantic creolization in Upper Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands, arguing that it was here, rather than in Central Africa, that patterns of Atlantic creolization and slave trading first took shape. Green also shifts his focus away from the absolute number of victims involved (a question that has fueled fierce debate and exhaustive research since the 1960s), instead placing an emphasis on the cultural transformations at work in the earliest era of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. To tell this story, Green has consulted documents located in a geographically disparate set of archives, from Colombia to the Vatican, as well as interviews and published materials, including African oral traditions.

Green begins not with the early Portuguese voyages of exploration but instead with the expansion of Islamized Mandinka trading networks in Western Africa—by which he refers to Senegambia, Upper Guinea, and the Cape Verde Islands. Leaning heavily on secondary sources, Green explains how Mandinka trading connections and cultural power derived from metallurgical prowess encouraged a regional process of "Mandinguisation" (p. 52). This nascent form of creolization was possible because Upper Guinean identity was based primarily on lineage rather than ethnic categories. Long-standing traditions of cultural accommodation and flexible, lineage-based identities created an environment where trade networks based on kinship bonds and shared culture took root with relative ease.

Green points to the Cape Verde Islands as the birthplace of a truly Atlantic creole culture, marked by the emergence of the Kriolu language. He builds on existing scholarship on the importance of mercantile connections among Iberian New Christians in places like Cape Verde by showing how Cape Verdean traders were able to establish a foothold along the Upper Guinean coast. The alliances between New Christians and Upper Guinean lineages proved to be instrumental in creating trade networks that provided a steady source of African slaves for the newly connected Atlantic World. On Cape Verde and in Upper Guinea, New Christians preserved elements of their Jewish identity while at the same time adopting rituals and customs from Western Africa.

While Green argues persuasively that African social and political patterns were crucial in shaping the Atlantic Slave Trade, he is careful to emphasize that this active participation in Atlantic commerce did not somehow protect African societies from its violent consequences. For example, Green shows that Cape Verdean trade connections with the Sereer in Senegambia fueled frequent wars with Jolof to the north, with slaves being exchanged on the coast for military commodities, especially horses. Green's approach to the touchy question of African culpability in the slave trade should satisfy both those pushing for greater recognition of African agency as well as those concerned that responsibility for the horrors of Atlantic slavery may be shifted unfairly away from Europeans.

Although Green's purported emphasis is on social and cultural transformations, one of his key contributions is to demonstrate that current estimates for the volume of the sixteenth century slave trade are far too low. He attributes this to an underestimate of contraband trade, providing evidence to suggest that current Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database figures may only represent around half the true number of enslaved Africans brought to the Americas during this period of time. Following Walter Rodney, Green argues that the political and social changes taking place in Western Africa could not have reflected a small-scale slave trade, further bolstering his upward revision of sixteenth century slave trade numbers.

Overall, *The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa* is a strong contribution to the study of the slave trade and the Atlantic World, and it may serve as a point of departure for future scholars interested in Atlantic creolization. In particular, historians interested in the development of racism in the Atlantic world should find Green's work compelling. The chapters are organized logically and evidence is presented clearly in Green's sturdy prose. While more maps (there are only four) might have benefited readers unfamiliar with the geography of the region in question, it is possible to locate most of the places mentioned with

relative ease on those that are provided. If this study is perhaps too dense for most undergraduate courses, it should find its way into graduate-level seminars.

Andrew Barsom, *Michigan State University*

Iyorwuese Hagher. 2011. *Nigeria: After the Nightmare*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America. 165 pp.

Nigeria, as much as any other country in Africa, has produced a long and impressive lineage of indigenous thinkers. They have been among the most eloquent and incisive commentators on the dysfunctions of the colonial state, the resource curse, corruption, and the other dilemmas of postcolonialism including both domestic and Western sources. Throughout *Nigeria: After the Nightmare* Iyorwuese Hagher praises this proud intellectual history—indeed, allusions to figures like Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, and Ken Saro-Wiwa constitute one of the book's dominant strains. What makes *After the Nightmare* so disappointing is its failure to honor in form the legacy to which it often refers. Hagher's work lacks clarity, consistency, rigor, and creativity. Thus, Hagher never manages to accomplish the audacious task he sets for himself in this book—to apply the lessons of Nigeria's recent history to the challenge of shaping a Nigerian democratic renaissance.

Hagher fails in this attempt due to, for lack of a better word, sloppiness. *Nigeria: After the Nightmare* is divided into three clearly defined parts which suggest an obvious logical progression: "The Brink Scenario," "Nightmare Scenario," and "Revival Scenario." From the start, though, the purpose and thesis of the book are unclear. In the introduction, Hagher states that it is chiefly about the lost decades of military dictatorship between 1966 and 1999. But in the first chapter, Hagher is preoccupied by events *since* 1999, and especially since Christmas 2009 when Umar Farouk Abdulmuttalab smuggled an explosive device onto an American airplane. Hagher spends most of Parts I and II making the case that Western politicians and intellectuals are "false prophets" actively engaged in a "western hope and dream that Nigeria will collapse" (p. 42). In Chapter 1, Hagher broadly outlines the challenges for Nigerian democracy, which he identifies as Western meddling in the country's political and economic affairs, first and foremost, as well as globalization, the resource curse, and corruption. Chapters 2 through 5 expand upon, or merely repeat, these themes with heavy emphasis on the intentionally destructive role of the West and usually without sufficient sourcing.

Hagher's contention that the West is undermining Nigerian progress is not necessarily dubious. But his claims and generalizations throughout the book are often unsubstantiated and logically questionable. For instance, he claims that "President Obama clearly snubbed Nigeria" (p. 13) by choosing to visit Ghana during his first visit to Africa. He also makes the repeated accusation that the West is engaged in a global racist conspiracy directed at Nigeria, but he never goes beyond blanket speculation of the matter. Even so, it is not entirely clear what exactly constitutes "racism" in Hagher's account. He seems to suggest that "racial difference" (p. 40) explains why Canada, and the rest of the West, prefers to engage with Ghana and Somalia rather than Nigeria—again, an unclear and unsubstantiated claim. Nor does he explain why the West overcame cultural and racial differences with East Asia to form the "enduring

partnership based on dialogue and mutual respect" (p. 16) he identifies as a model for Western-African relations.

More alarming is Hagher's tendency to contradict himself and, worse, overlook some of the real social, political, and governance problems facing Nigeria. His treatment of corruption is the supreme case in point. In Chapter 3 ("Affliction") and Chapter 6 ("The Role of Intellectual Leadership in National Revival"), Hagher discusses the severity of corruption in the country and identifies, albeit without any real depth or citations, a number of complex phenomena related to corruption including the issue of fertilizer subsidies and agricultural marketing boards. He writes, "For almost three decades, Nigeria became a corrupt haven, and corruption became a norm rather than the misnomer as people without goods or services became richer and richer" (p. 70). Conversely, Hagher castigates Hillary Clinton and Richard Joseph of the Brookings Institute for leveling the very same kinds of critiques (p. 14) and goes so far as to say that Transparency International's corruption ratings of Nigeria placed that organization as a "Western collaborator" in the global racist conspiracy (p. 61). Additionally, Hagher too often cites the creation of agencies to fight, for instance, corruption and poverty as proxies for actual solutions to Nigeria's problems. He states, accurately, that average Nigerians "hate litigation" and would rather forgive than "[waste] more time at police stations and courts" (p. 18). One wonders how much this sentiment may be the result of enormous inadequacies, corruption, and distrust of these institutions. Hagher does not consider the matter. Lastly, Hagher overstates Nigerian ethnic and regional reconciliation after Biafra, comparing it favorably to the post-Civil War U.S.

Hagher shows some effectiveness in identifying Nigeria's problems, and to be sure, Part III benefits heavily from Hagher's unique insights on Nigerian politics and society. Chapter 6 on the role of public intellectuals is the most convincing in the book. He argues that the military regime era in Nigeria produced a brain drain from which the country has yet to recover. Worse, Nigerian intellectuals at home and in the Diaspora have by and large shown little commitment to the development of democracy. "No nation can grow without ideas," Hagher states. "Nigeria and Africa need to rekindle the intellectual flame that Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora engaged in fighting colonialism" (p. 107).

To be sure, the author is well-served by his background as a politician, diplomat, academic, activist, and artist once he turns the discussion inward. Indeed, the strengths of this book come when Hagher is most reliant upon his depth and diversity of experience, as well as his enviable mastery of language. His literary talents are clearly evident in the opening and closing narratives of the book as well as in the poignant tale of a soldier who Hagher reunited with his Igbo daughter many years after their separation during the Biafran War (pp. 66-67). It is clear that Hagher's immense passion for his country is borne from a lifetime dedication to its improvement. And so, perhaps the best success of this work comes in the author's noble attempt to restate the Nigerian narrative with an indigenous voice. Despite such flickering moments of wisdom, however, Hagher himself is short on ideas in *After the Nightmare*.

Aaron R. King, *University of Florida*

Joseph Hellweg. 2011. *Hunting The Ethical State: The Benkadi Movement of Cote d'lvoire.* Chicago and London: The Chicago Press. 291 pp.

Joseph Hellweg weaves together captivating discussions of a crime wave that took over Cote d'lvoire in 1990s, the failure of the Ivorian police to control the situations, and how these events eventually led to the emergence of a group of poor and politically marginalized individuals to assume the role of the people's defenders as part of the movement called Benkadi. The introductory chapter describes the movement as composed Dozos, that is, hunting societies skillful in ritual sacrifice. The hunters often make sacrifices to their tutelary spirit named Manimory and utilize their initiative logic to rescue people. In chapter two, the author describes the roots of political and socio-economic instability in Cote d'lvoire as background to Benkadi's appearance. As Hellweg describes it the instability gives the hunting societies an opportunity to create a suitable place for themselves in national life. Moreover, there is an increase in the growing wave of ethnocentric nationalism between Islamic and indigenous culture within their home areas, and between the entire region, and the economically dominant Christian in the south. The author affirms that the northern-descended Jula and Syenara-speaking Muslims are regarded as second-class citizens. Chapter three makes a closer contextualization of hunter life in Denguele, describes how hunters assume ethical responsibilities towards non-hunters at their initiations. The work reveals that hunter's rituals have variations on the ritual ties that bound non-hunters life as interrelated parts in a long life time cycle of exchange.

The author unfolds different types of hunter sacrifices. He highlights that hunters often perform seasonal sacrifices to protect themselves while hunting, and that the more the sacrifice, the more a hunter's security related concerns appearing. Chapter four intimates that Manimory, the tutelary spirit, plays a central role in all hunter activities. Chapter five explains "disappearance" to be a unique power that assumes hunter's wellbeing in the forest. The background to the Benkadi movement is discussed in chapter six: transnational origins on how the Ivorian`s hunters embrace Benkadi's goals; how the Benkadi movement spread through permission from one village to another; and the reinvigoration of the entire moral community to combat crime.

Chapter seven details the ways in which Benkadi hunters used and misused *dozoya* (moral expectations). This chapter provides ethnographic vignettes of Benkadi security work from four major Ivorian cities: a case of burglary in Yamoussoukron; a hunter's urban security measure in San-Pedro; trials of suspects in both Odienne and Abidjan. However, dozos also commit atrocities against the same people they are trying to protect. They include cases of rape, murder, and beating. Chapter eight highlights the power in the nightjar's call and explains as well how hunter musicians sang at hunter funerals and at Benkadi meetings. These songs are often composed to evoke problems in order to resolve them; for instance, songs that call to mind the danger of neglecting a dead dozo's spirit, songs that publicize as an antidote to rapture of agreement, and songs to mobilize non-dozos to support Benkadi in its work. The last chapter concludes by arguing that hunters' controversial attempts to confront crime in Cote d'lvoire actually foreshowed greater tensions to come. The author submits that hunters adopt the security prerogative of the Ivorian state as a result of the long history of migration and ongoing tensions with state security agents due to national hunting law. The author concludes that the

hunters have actually transferred their protective responsibility as hunters in more than rural Cote d'Ivoire to southern urban and rural areas.

Hunting the Ethical State efficiently accomplishes its stated task to inform scholars and university undergraduates in the area of African traditional religion and cultural studies, and anyone interested in the real workings of politics and society in Africa. Whether for or against the state, the author deserves commendation for his success as a scholar who validates through in-depth research that ordinary people with extra ordinary vision can reshape a nation by transforming it through the use of African science, that is, hunting power with the potency of ritual sacrifice. These hunting societies sought to reform what they saw as the Ivorian state's immoral abandonment of the poor in the face of crime. The book's only major weakness is the overuse of numerous subtitles that interlace all nine chapters. This shortcoming is excusable when considering Hellweg's goal, which is to offer multiple insights regarding the core of African religious heritage, politics and human security. Readers are therefore invited to enter into, and imaginatively participate in a rich discussion with multiple perspectives.

Sunday Awoniyi, *Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria*

Dorothy L. Hodgson. 2011. *Being Maasai, Becoming Indigenous: Postcolonial Politics in a Neoliberal World.* Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. 265 pp.

Dorothy Hodgson examines how the international indigenous peoples movement shaped political activism in postcolonial Tanzanian Maasai communities. Her fundamental objective is to demonstrate that by embracing the conceptual identity of "indigenous," Maasai activists were able to engage with state officials through the medium of transnational institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Moreover, she illuminates the extent to which this strategy opened space for "political action in [a] world shaped forcefully by the legacies of colonialism and the pressures" of neoliberalism (p. 21). Her analysis attempts to address the reasons why "historically marginalized people in Africa decide to become indigenous." From this perspective, her work underscores "identity politics" as emphasized by Frederick Cooper and others while also challenging those such as Arjun Appadurai who question the relevance of the "state" in "shaping political positionings" (pp. 4, 23). Instead, her research reveals that Maasai claims for recognition and rights ultimately depended upon interaction with and confirmation from the Tanzanian nation state.

The book consists of five chapters, the first two of which chart the beginning and developmental stages of Maasai activism under the indigenous rubric. Becoming "indigenous" was, as Hodgson demonstrates, often a controversial strategy. Moringe ole Parkipuny, a leading Maasai politician, was among the first advocates for employing this principle in Tanzania. Postcolonial neoliberal economic and land policies had encouraged patterns of exploitation and human rights abuses that were especially hard on Maasai pastoralists. In spite of achieving international United Nations recognition, the Maasai as well as other Africans still faced opposition from their own nation states. Governmental elites in Tanzania, for example, remained largely dismissive of these special identity claims and argued, "we are all indigenous in Africa" (p. 26). To overcome this obstacle, Parkipuny and his supporters directed their

activism through transnational networks and NGOs. Nevertheless, as chapter three, "Precarious Alliances," demonstrates, structural problems within these NGOs and their inability to provide immediate assistance fomented mistrust among Maasai pastoralists. They especially resented NGO leaders who they accused of "corruption and greed." While Maasai farmers struggled daily to find the basic necessities of life, these officials were seen driving around in new cars and enjoying greater levels of material prosperity than those they were supposed to help (p. 109). Chapters four and five, perhaps the most important in the book, reveal how Maasai activists pragmatically "repositioned" themselves to negotiate with neoliberal state officials and, more importantly, how their activism affected the everyday lives of Maasai men and women. The 2005 livestock policy, for example, demonstrated both the limiting and leveraging effects of their activism. On the one hand, Hodgson argues, the final policy contained restrictive language consigning pastoralists to the status of "livestock farmers," while on the other hand their "sophisticated" engagement with state officials was an achievement on its own (p. 172). In spite of these modest gains, neoliberal land policy continued to marginalize Maasai pastoralists and many still lived in poverty.

To frame her analysis, Hodgson employed an innovative, and I would argue, comprehensive methodological approach, which she identified as "nodal ethnography." This approach allowed her to examine important Maasai documents, websites, and proposals, but also provided her with exceptional opportunities to attend their regular political meetings and take part in annual United Nations Indigenous Peoples forums. She was present, for example, at a 2005 workshop of Tanzanian pastoralists where the Livestock Policy Task Force presented its findings. Her unique perspectives, therefore, contribute a level of detail and analysis that provides readers a distinct sense of what indigenous political activism meant for the Maasai. While some may question her objectivity and indeed the professional pitfalls of such an approach, Hodgson is careful to point out her position remained that of an "interlocutor" rather than a "collaborator" (p. 15). Her insightful observations, therefore, not only enrich our understandings of the Maasai culture, but also convincingly show the variegated manners by which ordinary Africans continue to confront neoliberal policies in postcolonial states. This is an important and well-written book that deserves serious consideration. Dorothy Hodgson has taken a complex subject and presented it in an engaging and highly readable account. I recommend her book to anthropologists, historians, and anyone interested in how modern Africans deal with the legacies of colonialism. Scholars teaching graduate and postcolonial survey courses will find it especially useful.

David Livingstone, *University of California San Diego*

Paul Hopper. 2012. *Understanding Development: Issues and Debates*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. 332 pp.

From a global standpoint, the complex nature of development poses numerous challenges to scholars, state actors, and the international community concerned with how this relatively new paradigm can be adequately incorporated into local institutional frameworks in the Global

South. As a remedy, Hopper's book takes a comprehensive look at the nature of development in the Global South using specific examples to relay important points missed by some westernized conceptualizations of development. Most importantly, Hopper incorporated non-western contributions to the field of development as an alternative way of understanding this intricate agenda. Hopper's work studiously recognized "other" interpretations of development to underline various approaches to development and convey the distinctions that exist.

The opening chapter, "Theorizing development," served a very important function of setting the foreground for the analyst and non-analyst. For example, notions of the "third world" and the infamous "North-South" divide are challenged to stress a faulty foundational argument based on geographical perspectives. According to Hopper, the "third world" may very well serve as a reminder of the stark inequalities persistent in our global village. However, this skewed impression of the global South should not be a *bona fide* descriptive terminology and justification for the West to portray under-developed regions in very derogatory manners. Moreover, one should be cognizant of who does the labeling and why? In addition, how geographical perception of development impacted economic theories such as modernization, structuralism, and dependency theories were tackled to expose difficulties and familiarities constant within the developmental framework.

Hooper's presentation of the nexus between culture and development cannot be overlooked. Perhaps, the developmental agenda has been difficult to achieve in certain regions of the world because it underestimated the influence of customs and traditions in the implementation phase. For Hopper, global culture informed the kind of development that occurred in certain places. For example, "McDonadlization" provided a vivid illustration of how culture supports the progress of development and the complexity involved. Simply put, McDonaldization represented the ability of certain principles to be popularized and transported across the globe. Critics, though, maintained that global transportation of commodities and services are sensitive to interactions between the local and the global.

To triangulate Hopper's argument, cultural interactions with development penetrate critical debates and future trajectories on gender. After three global conferences on women held in Copenhagen, Nairobi, and Beijing, women's right gained more recognition at international policy circles where state actors made commitments to conventions and treaties upholding the rights of women in their respective countries. Despite this landmark development, most institutions in the Global South remain patriarchal and favor men at the expense of their female counterparts. As a result, developmental agendas geared towards women in the family, economic, political, and social sectors are greatly hindered as a result of inequality between men and women.

Hopper falls short when addressing how negative cultural tendencies have hampered women's effort towards development. To be fair, he maintains the overt role of male bias in the developmental process. But this analysis made no substantial connections to deep rooted factors affecting women as a result of negative culture and traditions. Put in another way, women's role in development cannot be isolated and must therefore be addressed within context. For instance, Hopper should have provided a brief analysis of the Committee on the Elimination and Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to illustrate significant achievements and

challenges in the struggle for equality. In this regard, Hopper's book represented an incomplete discussion of developmental growth within gender relations.

The correlation between "Women in Development (WID) and Women and development (WAD)," with emphasis on the terms "in" and "and," augment the descriptive roles women play in their struggle towards development. A critical difference between the two blocs confirmed that WID focused on the premise that securing the rights of women could be attained without restructuring societies, while WAD attacked the real sources of women's oppression, namely global capitalism and the imperative need to change power structures. Both positions confront different angles of gender discrimination.

When WAD and WID challenge each other's conceptualization of women's concerns, it lends room to be caught up on particular arguments that undermine other perspectives. This kind of approach removes attention from the core origins of the problem when efforts should be geared towards ensuring that women's voices receive equal attention. Nonetheless, critiques put forth by proponents and opponents of gender and development, gender environment and development, postcolonial perspectives, and the empowerment approach were well documented.

The overall attitude towards gender mainstreaming is lethargic though Hopper gives it much accolade. For example, Hopper records endeavors made by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and some state actors to redefine policies to be inclusive of women. In addition, the roles of intermediaries such as NGOs are discussed to emphasize some exponential contributions towards participation and representation. Hopper grants that NGOs play a very significant role in the creation of new treaties or in their ratification. More than serving the purpose of grass root experts that have firsthand knowledge of the issues as they unfold, they also serve as an oversight function in their native countries. Yet, NGOs consistently combat challenges, which usually cause them to tread cautiously as opposed to aggressively in dealing with gender sensitive cases.

In subsequent chapters, the reader is exposed to provocative debates on trade and the role of international financial institutions such as the World Bank Group and World Trade Organizations and their frantic interests aimed at keeping the economic status quo. On the contrary, scholars like Claude Ake (see, for instance, his 1996 *Development and Democracy in Africa*) championed the need for a new developmental paradigm for Africa which originates from within not without. Hopper supported Ake's logic which challenged an economic arrangement where Africa and other regions in the Global South are designated as primary producers. Ake contends that this relationship must be severed and the Global South especially Africa must be self-reliant.

For the most part, Hopper provided a proper articulation, summary, and analysis of the debates on conflict and security, gender, health, trade, and education as they affect the developmental efforts. Hopper's work is recommended for a highly intelligent appropriation of important debates within developmental circles both at the local and international level. His writing style will definitely attract young scholars in the field of development beginning to get acquainted with the debates. In addition, Hopper's work is accessible to both intellectuals and the general public because his tone solicits the attention of every global citizen. In a very

systematic and thoughtful manner, Hopper deals with developmental concerns intrinsic to the Global South while giving regards to positive and negative influences from the West.

Ifunanya Nwokedi, *Howard University*

Andrew Ivaska. 2011. *Cultured States: Youth, Gender, and Modern Style in 1960s Dar es Salaam*. Durham: Duke University Press. 276 pp.

Tanzania has a complex colonial history, having been variously colonized by the Portuguese, Arabs, Germans and the British. This compounded the country's cultural heritage in terms of adding multiple external aspects to its socio-economic, political, and cultural life. Andrew Ivaska focuses on the city of Dar es Salaam right after independence and points out the influential externally derived cultural practices that were in place. Upon gaining independence in 1961, the country's new government attempted to eliminate cultural practices such as music, ways of dressing, and some of the laws associated with the former colonial power.

Chapter one begins with European and African cultural controversies that occurred after independence when the nation's leaders sought to return to its pre-colonial culture by obstructing all colonial practices. The establishment of the *Operation Vijana movement* was aimed at banning in Dar es Salaam what was considered as a modern manner of dressing. The most highly targeted group were women who wore wigs, trousers, and miniskirts. In opposing such dress, the nation was acting against modernity, which was viewed as an imitation of colonial culture. To illustrate how difficult it is to define a topic as complex as "modernity" the author brings up the dress of the Maasai, one of the Tanzania's most prominent ethnic groups. Their manner of dressing leaves some parts of the body uncovered. Although this is not an imitation of colonial culture, national authorities perceived Maasai dressing as "shameful" and degrading for the nation.

Chapter two introduces the decency struggle between men and women in Dar es Salaam. Women came under physical and psychological attack for wearing supposedly indecent miniskirts, tight dresses, and wigs. These forms of dress were associated with prostitution. In order to eradicate prostitution, reduce urban population, and maintain the nation's culture, the authorities in Dar es Salaam initiated a decentralization process whereby men and women were forced to return to the villages. The following chapter discusses of university students in trying to bring about changes in the society. The book demonstrates how the country placed its faith to the youth, as they were the source of change for the future generations. University students struggled for a better administrative system, but they were barred by the ruling system due to the fact that challenging the system was supposedly against the nation's political culture as it was in most African countries. Apart from presenting socio-political conflicts between the educated youth and the ruling system, Ivaska also examines university gender relationships. Male university students felt that their women colleagues ignored them where social relationships were concerned. Female students preferred dating wealthy men, known as "sugar daddies," to male students who were not wealthy enough to support their needs.

As with other African countries Tanzania reformed its laws upon gaining independence, since many of the existing laws were the product of the colonial administration. The book's

fourth chapter presents the debate over marriage laws between men and women based on polygamy, polyandry, and monogamy. The discussion focuses on whether the law should remain based on the monogamous system as established by the colonial power or the system of polygamy that existed in the pre-colonial period. The polygamy system also favored the Islamic cultural practice of marrying more than one wife as opposed to Christianity, which allowed for only one wife. The goal of reforming the law was to maintain women rights and equality in the society. The book discusses an interesting women's movement that demanded the right of polyandry as opposed to the polygamy system that most men voted for.

The author examines gender issues, youth, and modernity in the early post colonial period in Dar es Salaam and different movements aimed at refining the nation's culture after independence. Even though the book is set in the 1960s, the reader would find it helpful if the author could have included a panoramic view of the current state of affairs in the twenty-first century. This would have made a distinction between what occurred in the 1960s and what pertains currently in Tanzania, particularly in the big cities. In spite of this shortcoming, the book remains a potential benefit for college students in African studies, post colonial African history, political science, and cultural studies in East Africa and Tanzania in particular. It provides information on how the newly independent government took charge after colonial rule in terms of maintaining the nation's culture.

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Messay Kebede. 2011. *Ideology and Elite Conflicts: Autopsy of the Ethiopian Revolution.* Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books. 388 pp.

This book provides a cutting-edge approach to understanding revolutions that center on elite conflict. It explains the complex causes and consequences of the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution that overthrew a monarchy and brought major transformations through the adoption of radical ideology by political elites.

Messay Kebede, an Ethiopian professor and political commentator who teaches philosophy at the University of Dayton, critically examines the literatures on revolution and presents the main theories distinguishing between political and social revolutions. He claims that the Ethiopian revolution, though less studied, is one of the great social revolutions in the twentieth century along with those of China and Russia. He then refutes the conventional wisdom that the role of students and intellectuals in the revolution was decisive and argues that elites and their conflicts over power explain the outcome of the revolution.

Using a narrative approach, the author covers a wide range of topics. In reviewing the ideological and sociopolitical origins of Emperor Haile Selassie's regime, he focuses on issues of political cooptation, social blockage, and the creation of discontent. In all these areas, Haile Selassie was reluctant to make reforms, and the author depicts him as traditional and autocratic with an overriding tendency to control power using modern institutions like the bureaucracy and the army. These tendencies led to a loss of legitimacy that facilitated the regime's downfall by the very institutions it created to protect its power. In explaining this outcome, Kebede

shows how the educated and reform-minded members of the ruling elite erred in their assumption that they would lead the social protests that preceded the revolution. He also explains how the social blockage marginalized a major part of the educated elite that was consequently attracted to the then dominant ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

In 1974, following popular demands for economic reforms, social unrest spread rapidly, and the government failed to respond effectively to the demands. With the absence of political or civic organizations to lead the social movement, the military formed a representative committee, the Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces, Police, and Territorial Army (the Derg). With a brief but bitter internal struggle, the Derg led by Mengistu ascended to power. It then adopted the radical ideology of the marginalized elite, thereby setting the course of the country along socialist lines. As Kebede observes, the Derg hijacked the political revolution and used the radical ideology to justify its exclusive control of power and its use of violent repression in its campaign to eliminate rival groups. Thus, the author resolves the conundrum of why elites may embrace a radical ideology that seems to go against their interests and social position.

One of Kebede's innovative contributions is his use of psychobiography to explain the role of individual traits in shaping revolutions. Thus, he closely analyses the two sides of Mengistu's narcissism: on the one hand, his determination, authoritarianism, and devious traits suited his seizure of power. On the other hand, his negative "paranoia, quick temper, and sense of invincibility" hindered efficient handling of the war with the insurgents and brought his downfall (p. 317). By raising this less explored issue of the psychological pathology of leaders and its influence on events, Kebede has made a valuable contribution to the study of social revolutions.

Another important contribution is Kebede's focus on elite competition to analyze ethno-nationalism as a byproduct of the revolution. He shows how elites vying for power use ethnicity as an instrument for mass mobilization and how this became a legitimatizing force to claim power in contemporary Ethiopia. This analysis along with the philosophical reflections on the relationship between ideology and elite interests presented in the final chapter, gives a fresh perspective to understanding Ethiopian politics.

This is a very informative book as it offers much needed help for comprehending a critical period in Ethiopian history. In well-researched and organized chapters, it presents a synthesis of both classical and contemporary works on revolutions in general and the Ethiopian revolution in particular. This makes it useful for readers who already know a lot about Ethiopian politics as well as for those who are novices to the subject. Moreover, the book has a multidisciplinary character and uses innovative and sophisticated analysis that makes it appealing to political scientists, philosophers, and historians and can serve as a guide to understanding revolutions in the Third World.

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Paul S. Landau. 2010. *Popular Politics in the History of South Africa, 1400-1948*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xvi, 300 pp.

It is rare to read a book that is both exhilarating and frustrating. It is rarer still to read a book that you can judge by its cover since the title warns you that you are in over your head. With an ambitious and grand vision, Landau magnifies the southern African frontier, or better still frontiers, to expose the fraudulent and fictitious history of the "tribe." It is important that his purview is southern Africa because one of the historical myths being upended is that the "tribes" of South Africa and its erstwhile neighboring protectorates have nothing in common with each other. What Landau offers in his magisterial consideration of both the minutiae and grand designs of colonialism in southern Africa is a critique of officially-sanctioned tribalization as well as an alternative vision of what African politics actually looked life before the "coming of the European."

The choice of *longue durée* periodization and the scaled-up and expansive geography within which Landau's characters play their parts is not new to southern African history. In an attempt to retire the myth of "South African exceptionalism" as well as offer a better term than "precolonial" African history and politics, historians of southern African have been making bold statements about re-imagining the world that existed before colonial intrusion as well as African reactions to being intruded upon. From this perspective Landau's *Popular Politics in the History of South Africa, 1400-1948* sits comfortably next to Norman Etherington's *The Great Treks: The Transformation of Southern Africa, 1815-1854* (2001). In the latter book, Etherington took one of the sacred stories of Afrikaner nationalism, namely the Great Trek, and turned it into a common story of southern Africa. Similarly, Landau punctures and deflates the grand narratives of southern African identities by showing how identify formation was not only a common practice but also a common prerogative which many marginal groups fought hard to preserve in the face of a bureaucratic apparatus bent on recognizing only those groups who could claim a tribal moniker and maybe also a hereditary chief. In his attempt to move beyond the precolonial / colonial/postcolonial quandary, Landau uses language, especially political speech, to trace the structural and conceptual patterns that endured despite Christian missionization, colonial expansion, and the creation of the nation states that today border South Africa even while they provide for its labor needs. In this task, Landau shares the same ambitions as the editors of *The Cambridge History of South Africa: From Early Times to 1885*, who chose to use the open-ended "early times" rather than commit to an inception date of southern African history. Landau's choice of 1400 is not as open-ended, but it leaves plenty of room for indeterminacy.

In a neat conclusion, Landau enumerates the six main points of his book. It's a compelling synthesis that functions effectively as a prompt for a book review. The very first summation captures the book's most articulate argument: "At first South Africa was not a place of tribes, nor of counterintuitive tribal beliefs. *Then* it became so" (p. 246). As an alternative to "tribe", Landau conflates topography and populations by writing about "highveld" peoples and political traditions. Throughout the book, the people who would later be called "Tswana" are depicted as shape-shifting pragmatists who were reluctant to be wedded to a single defining characteristic and were therefore open to mixing and borrowing, or what Landau prefers to define as *métissage*. This tendency towards flexible political practices is depicted as both a

strategy for survival and a sagacious grasp of the vicissitudes of power and the powerful. If chiefly power was itself a shifting sand dune, then it follows that Landau would make his second proposition that, "The desire for self-rule in spite of declining access to land was made, more and more, into a religious matter, subject to regulation and policing" (p. 247). Moreover, this scarcity and competition over land led to gendered violence that, as Landau, concludes meant that "Men's identities were portable and durable; women's were not" (p. 41). When missionaries, and their sometimes *métis* accomplices, enter the highveld scene they are confronted by this violent succession of crisis and opportunity and the fact that women were often the first victims was noted but not acted upon. In other words, this was a world dominated by men's ambitions, in Landau's terms "hypermasculinized conduct" (p. 40), and it therefore follows that conversion to Christianity and the deployment of Christian idioms would also be the province of masculine action. This confluence between the land and religious questions, leads to the third proposition that, "The destruction of highveld people's access to land necessarily preceded the development of mass Christianity" (p. 248). This explanation of the popularity of Christianity and its apocalyptic predictions is one of Landau's most inspired contributions to the history of conversion in southern Africa. In laying out the evidence for the attractiveness of the biblical word, Landau depicts highveld people speaking and writing with prophetic fervor about succession disputes, the loss of land, the loss of youth, and ultimately the loss of time itself. Thus, it is that he finds in this language that mixes indigenous and mission vocabularies a desire for the restoration of a world that once was: "Twentieth-century highveld millenarianism was the reoccupation of Christian thought by the desire for actual restorations" (p. 250). He summarizes the meaning of this hybrid speech thus: "Once we stop thinking in terms of 'peoples,' who had 'beliefs,' the highveld's political tradition, in its real situation in history, comes better into focus" (p. 248). From this identification of an enduring political tradition whose domain is the whole of southern Africa, Landau then demolishes the assumption that such traditions were inevitably swept away by colonialism. In his fifth summation of the book, he states: "The division of the past into pre- and post-phases has been only too convenient to Western imperialism's mode of accumulation. The concept of the coming of 'modernity' similarly is presentist and unhelpful" (p. 249).

There is no doubt that Landau's *Popular Politics* is destined to be a classic text for southern African history, and many generations hence will pore over its erudite interpretations and probing enquiries. However, the admirable qualities of the book may also be its most challenging qualities. Although he clearly explains why terms such as highveld and métis are preferable and more descriptive than "Griqua" and "Coloured," Landau presumes that his terms do not carry baggage of their own. Métis, for example, creates the impression that "mixed" people were all mixed in the same way with the same consequences. They were not. Whether one was "mixed" because your father was a missionary who married an indigenous woman (James Read), or whether you were "mixed" because your father was a Xhosa missionary who married a Scottish woman (Tiyo Soga), it didn't all add up to métis culture. The reason why "Coloured" is an odious term and a misnomer is not that it particularizes "miscegenation" but exactly that it makes it seem that "race mixing" was always aimed in the same direction – the dilution of "pure white" blood. The term métis is loaded with a similar

history of the fear of "miscegenation" and in the case of southern Africa, a better term will always be wanting because "Colouredness" is still constantly changing.

Hlonipha Mokoena, *Columbia University*

Julie Livingston. 2012. *Improvising Medicine: An African Oncology Ward in an Emerging Cancer Epidemic*. Durham: Duke University Press. 228 pp.

Julie Livingston's work, *Improvising Medicine: An African Oncology Ward in an Emerging Cancer Epidemic*, paints the daunting, yet innovative, picture of cancer control services in an oncology ward in Botswana's capital city of Gaborone. Through a combination of an extensive literature review, archival research, and ethnographic methods, Livingston offers a superb, detailed and meticulous analysis of cancer in Botswana—and in many ways, sub-Saharan Africa at large. Moreover, Livingston brings the reader with her, commenting not only as an anthropologist, but also as a human being, and she even admits that as a reader, one must "rely on [my] words and your imagination to grasp the humanity in the pages that follow" (p. xi). Such a positionality affords the reader the opportunity to see her as a researcher, an inquirer, and a healthcare provider—by doing research and in many parts of the book, playing counselor, as well as a friend or family member, like many of us, who have been affected by cancer in some way.

Improvising Medicine indeed illuminates key issues facing cancer control globally. Livingston begins her work by describing oncological treatment facilities, chief among them being her research site—the oncology ward of Princess Marina Hospital (PMH)—offering the reader insights into a normal day at the oncology ward. More specifically, though, the author sets the stage for three points that she successfully and gracefully argues in the subsequent chapters: (1) cancer care in Africa is marked by improvisation at various levels, (2) cancer and cancer care is a deeply social experience and phenomenon, and (3) cancer and the way it is approached in Africa will immensely shape the future of global health practically, theoretically, scientifically, and morally. More than that, though, Livingston not only situates the idea of cancer control in sub-Saharan Africa geographically, but she also contextualizes cancer control within medical anthropology, political economy, bioethics, and the practice of medicine. For example, in a field and context marked by economic challenges in the age of post-colonialism and post-independence, how does a physician with limited arsenals of chemotherapy treat five patients over a period of weeks? Shall all of the medicines be given to just one patient because the process must occur over a scheduled set of therapies every so often? Or, should all patients be given a dose with the hopes that future doses will be available in the coming weeks? Livingston highlights these dilemmas as well as those ranging from patient autonomy and market economy.

After tracing the rise of cancer as an epidemic in Botswana, Livingston devotes her second chapter to the political economy of cancer and cancer control in the region. Juxtaposing market economy and development with the stories of Batswana miners and patients, she "map[s] circuits of toxicity and knowledge" to discuss cancer's prevalence on the global agenda of health and the ways in which cancer was ignored in Africa until it was illuminated as a sexually

transmitted disease (pp. 29-51). She follows this chapter with an embodiment of cancer—by this I mean how is cancer experienced and understood from the patient—partially through an effective comparison of cancer and cancer treatment as it is experienced in the global North versus the global South. Livingston poses salient questions: how is breast cancer—its diagnosis, prognosis, chemotherapy, amputation and sociality—in the United States the same or different from breast cancer in Gaborone? To what extent does exposure to a breast cancer prevention advertisement lead women to seek preventive treatment in the resource-poor setting that is Gaborone? Yet, Livingston still dives deeper into the "moral intimacies of care"—the sociality of cancer control, the role of the family and extended relatives, and the bittersweet connection between pain and laughter for all parties involved when dealing with unknown prognoses, emotions, and realities. Distinctly, Livingston touches on the salient nature of community and social relations among Batswana. She briefly mentions the existence of Tswana medicine and spiritual healers as a source of medical help (p. 70). Nevertheless, Livingston could have expanded her ethnographic account of cancer by presenting additional conversations with Tswana healers, spiritual healers, and patients who seek these modes of healing. Given, as E.C. Green has noted, that up to 80 percent of people in sub-Saharan Africa still seek traditional healing as a primary form of healthcare, Livingston's inclusion of these discussions would further our understanding of the relationship—and the phenomenology—between cancer and Tswana medicine.[1]

Improvising Medicine constantly challenges the reader to consider the intrinsic and intimate relations between the isolating nature of cancer and disease and the role of sociality in cancer care. In doing so, she reminds us that not only is oncology a field with immense questions, but it is also one where answers to these questions are often blurred, unknown, improvised and situated within larger conversations on bioethics, politics, and global health agendas. Cancer remains a global issue, and it is expected that annual cancer deaths will reach thirteen million by 2030.[2] With 90 percent of the world's cancer control infrastructure located in developed nations, Livingston's book adds to the growing wealth of knowledge on cancer and cancer control in sub-Saharan Africa. Cancer control will continue to necessitate multi-faceted approaches and perspectives from various disciplines, and Livingston's work is a superb contribution in further understanding cancer control in Africa.

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Michael R. Mahoney. 2012. *The Other Zulus: The Spread of Zulu Ethnicity in Colonial South Africa*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 292 pp.

In *The Other Zulus*, Michael R. Mahoney considers the evolution of ethnic identity among the African people of the British colony of Natal. Chronologically, he occupies a space between studies of the precolonial Zulu kingdom, which show that peripheral subjects like the future

Natal Africans were not considered Zulus, and those focusing on the early twentieth century when Zulu identity was well established. *The Other Zulus* explores how and why Natal Africans began this transition.

Mahoney fixes the turning point in the quarter-century between 1880 and 1905. At the beginning of this period, Natal Africans overwhelmingly supported the British in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879; at its end, the Poll Tax Rebellions (also known as the Bambatha Rebellion and the War of the Heads) of 1905-06 saw rebels and their supporters opposing the government in the name of the Zulu king. In the intervening years a convergence of economic, environmental, and political pressures had undermined traditional sources of authority, changing the balances of power between chiefs and subjects, patriarchs and family members, men and women, and creating multiple "axes of conflict" within African society (p. 89). *The Other Zulus* argues that the development of Zulu identity in Natal began with ordinary people—not African elites or colonial officials, but young men—seeking to resolve this tension by remaking traditional institutions in a way that acknowledged changing circumstances while preserving structures.

In order to explain how Zuluness contributed to this goal, Mahoney begins by explaining, in the first two chapters, that encounters between Natal Africans-to-be and the precolonial Zulu state left a legacy of violence and distrust, precluding Zuluness before 1879. Instead, Natal Africans lived within a system defined by the basic building-block of the patriarchal household and the stable political unit of the chiefdom, with an overlay of colonial authority that was forced by its weakness to accommodate itself to those institutions. Chapter 3 describes the undermining of African social structures after 1880 and its outcomes, including increased economic independence for junior members of households like the young men who traveled to South African cities as migrant laborers. Chapters 4 and 5 contain his central argument: in the diverse context of Johannesburg, migrants from Natal chiefdoms began to see themselves collectively as Zulus. Back in Natal, they applied Zuluness to the task of repairing their communities, using it as "a blank canvas upon which different Africans could paint their very different visions of the future, and yet still believe that they were all united" (p. 157).

Mahoney presents his position as a way to rebalance a literature which, he argues, tends to focus on conflict within African society and on the actions of African and colonial elites. In order to trace countervailing trends in the primarily oral culture of ordinary Africans, chapters 5 and 6 examine the protests and rumors that swirled around the rebellion. He mines the rumors collected by the colonial state from a network of African informants; their stories of the Zulu king Dinuzulu's leadership of an anticolonial movement, though not grounded in fact, illustrate the spirit of the times. He further argues that young men's deployment of these rumors articulated "a vision for the future that was neither traditionalist nor anti-traditionalist, but rather a melding of the two" (p. 178). Zuluness was central to that vision, with Dinuzulu serving as a symbol behind which Natal Africans who had rejected Zulu identity in the days of Zulu power could gather, and as a rebuke to colonial attempts to legitimate their rule.

At the same time, Mahoney makes clear that Zuluness was never the only identity occupied by Natal Africans or a panacea for them. This acknowledgment of ambiguity is both a strength and a contribution to the weak point in the study. *The Other Zulus* is designed as a history from below and as a local history, and to that end it concentrates on a chiefdom from northern Natal, the Qwabe. Yet given that even within the Qwabe, who were politically divided for part of the

period, he describes differing outcomes based on local circumstances, a broader approach to Natal African society could have added weight to the study's conclusions and provided a stronger frame for its use of rumors. One wonders how representative the patterns he describes were for other parts of the colony where people also became Zulus. That being said, this is a rich and thought-provoking study. *The Other Zulus* is an important contribution, not only to the social history of Natal and South Africa but to our understanding of the development of ethnic identities in colonial Africa and globally.

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Johnson W. Makoba. 2011. *Rethinking Development Strategies in Africa: The Triple Partnership as an Alternative Approach: The Case of Uganda*. Vol. 5. Africa in Development Series. Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Wien: Peter Lang. 269 pp.

Throughout the last decades non-governmental agents have tried to make up for the shortcomings of state and market in development efforts, but not always with success. Makoba therefore calls upon these non-governmental organizations to put a stronger focus on "achieving long-term economic development in less developed countries" (pp. 87-95). He introduces the concept of triple partnership, which "focuses on three major actors, namely the state, the non-governmental sector and donor agencies" (p. 2) and would see the aforementioned actors working together rather then one filling the gap left by another.

Chapter one gives a broad overview of development strategies in Africa. The introduction to the topic shows the author's in-depth knowledge of the history and the current situation of this sector and draws on a wide range of sources. Makoba outlines his main argument for the triple partnership model, which according to him may bring about the success many other strategies failed to accomplish. The reader may occasionally miss contextualization of the richness of figures and statistics cited. Despite the well researched facts, which provide a valuable source not least for experts in the field, it is unfortunate that the author allows the odd generalization about the African continent, thus resulting in a somewhat blurred picture. Statements such as "African states are corrupt, inept and mismanaged" fail to conceptualize corruption or clearly define "mismanagement of states" (p. 9).

While the first chapter brings forward a general perspective on development, the second chapter focuses on the case Uganda (p. 47). It gives insight into how various development strategies in Uganda have failed or at least hindered the reduction of poverty. Such, it is argued, was the case when neo-liberal strategies were imposed upon the country by international agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Furthermore, the author highlights that similar to other African countries the possession of natural resources has led Uganda to a paradoxical situation known as "resource-curse hypothesis" (p. 79). The third chapter takes a closer look at microfinance institutions (MFIs), an economic development aid strategy brought to rhw fore by Muhammad Yunus and his Grameen Bank in Bangladesh (pp. 87-95). The chapter starts out by giving an excellent insight into the discussion of the strategy and effectiveness of MFIs through comparison of different developing countries. Makoba then

turns back to Uganda in order to show the history of MFIs and different forms and funding since the early 1980s (pp. 95-114). This is followed, in chapter four, by a discussion of the downside of MFIs and their various critical aspects. These include the possible creation of dependency, the lack of transparency, and the capitalist modes by which some MFIs operate. The author claims that MFI impact studies are widely missing, which "can be attributed to methodological problems and lack of data" (p. 137). Thus the "reliability of the impact assessment is still open to debate" (p. 138).

Chapter five draws attention to the attempt of commercialization of MFIs, which according to the author is "a rare opportunity to combine socially responsible investment with profitability" (p. 170). However, drawing from a *New York Times* book review of S.A. Strom's *A Marriage of Differing Missions*, Makoba asserts that the challenges are manifold up to the point that in some cases "the need to generate returns for investors overwhelms the social mission" and thus may make it evermore difficult to distinguish "between microfinance and money lending" (pp. 171, 174). Chapter six, "The Triple Partnership for Development in Africa," is dedicated to the requirements of this development model to be fruitful. Makoba identifies the "failure of African political leadership" as being the "core of Africa's economic and political crises" (p. 182). However, successful strategies and improvement in important aspects such as the way donor money is being handled or are identified (p. 214). A concluding chapter provides a useful summation of the arguments outlined in the book.

The book's strength lies with the author's critical assessment not only of the work of NGOs and MFIs as such but also of the triple partnership he proposes. It provides the reader with a balanced, well researched, and highly informative discussion. However, the author's aim is not to give a concrete agenda on the tier of implementation of the triple partnership approach. It's strength is to highlight the notion that despite all failures and difficulties of various development strategies, there are possible alternative strategies worth thinking about. Drawing from lessons learned by various institutions would add value to the project of sustainable development and could lead to success. Therefore, the book is a must read not only for academics and students working in the field but also for policy makers, aid workers, and business leaders who seek to bring about a positive impact not just for their organizations but for the people affected by their actions.

Julia Büchele, *University of Basel*

Jenny S. Martinez. 2012. *The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 254 pp.

The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law explores the ways in which efforts to suppress the trans-Atlantic slave trade led to the creation of international human rights law. Much of the work is focused upon the "forgotten" story of anti-slavery courts, which she argues operated as the first international human rights courts. Called the Mixed Commissions because the judges that comprised these tribunals represented different countries, these courts were charged with enforcing diplomatic agreements outlawing the slave trade. Martinez demonstrates that an evaluation of the suppression of the slave trade and the role

these courts played can usefully inform current debates and the struggle to formulate and enforce international human rights law.

The monograph provides a useful overview of the efforts to abolish the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Although much of this story may be familiar to historians, the emphasis on the Mixed Commissions offers a fresh and useful narrative. While her focus is often on the actions of Britain and the United States and their complicated and strained relations during this period, her work does cover a wide array of nations and their role in abolition. Mixed Commission courts operated throughout the Atlantic World, including: Freetown, Havana, Loanda, Suriname, Rio de Janeiro, Boa Vista, Spanish Town, Cape Town, and New York. While the British Royal Navy was by far the most active in patrolling and stopping illegal slavers, other nations, including France and the United States, at different times and with varying affects also participated. Although Martinez's synopsis of abolition offers little that is original, those new to its study, academics interested in the legal mechanisms of abolition, human rights scholars without a background in anti-slavery, and students can gain much from this overview.

The "forgotten" story of the Mixed Commission makes for interesting reading. One reason a history of the Mixed Commission is so valuable is it provides the opportunity to examine biases as judges from a variety of countries administered international law. While some judges may have been lenient on fellow nationals, Martinez asserts that much impartiality did exist. A significant problem was getting other officials to enforce regulations. For instance, some port officials in Havana allowed ships to disembark even when it was obvious that they were equipped for slave trading (p. 95). Judges did not operate independently as they received instructions from their governments. This dialogue allowed judges to influence slave trade policies as they made recommendations on how to better enforce the law. The Mixed Commissions played an important role in stopping the trans-Atlantic slave trade and, according to the author, helped to free some eight thousand people (p. 6). The achievements of these courts are all the more incredible considering the great difficulties they encountered. Mixed Commissions were often hamstrung by poor, weak, or vague treaties, and the high mortality and morbidity rates meant that judges were often absent and colonial officials with little or no training were relied upon to administer justice.

The British strove to make slave trading analogous with piracy. This would mean that slave traders would be regarded as *hostis humani generis* (enemies of mankind) and that slavers could no longer hide behind national flags as anyone, regardless of nationality, suspected of slave trading could be searched and, if found guilty, punished for their participation. The idea that slave traders were *hostis humani generis* had the potential to serve as the basis of an international agreement that would privilege the protection of humanity over national sovereignty. While Martinez is quick to highlight the role of state sovereignty and national ambition in blocking a truly international response to slave trading it is clear that the concept of *hostis humani generis* as applied to the slave trade had an important impact on the development of international human rights law. Martinez argues that the legal mechanisms (of which *hostis humani generis* played an important part) developed to stop trans-Atlantic slavery laid the basis for two central aspects of modern international human rights law, "the concept of universal jurisdiction over human right abusers, and the concept of crimes against humanity" (p. 114). These two ideas are central to our current understanding of human rights and international law.

British efforts failed to create binding international law that would allow nations to stop those suspected of transporting slaves regardless of nationality. Instead by employing its military might, economic pressure, and bribery, the British created a series of bilateral treaties. While the treaties themselves could be rather weak, Martinez argues that the spirit of the treaties, especially the acknowledgement of the immorality of slave trading, made it difficult for nations to oppose future efforts aimed at its abolition. This demonstrates that national sovereignty is not an absolute barrier to the practice and protection of international human rights. It also suggests that a powerful nation (and here Martinez draws parallels with the United States) can do much to influence the formulation and enforcement of international human rights. The British employed the excuse of the spirit of the treaties (even those that had expired) to continue enforcement even when strictly speaking they had no legal basis to do so.

Martinez convincingly argues that by including anti-slavery in the narrative of international human rights law, scholars and practitioners of international law can gain useful perspectives. The traditional narrative of the development of human rights during the Enlightenment and its flowering after the Second World War and especially at Nuremberg leaves much out. She argues that inserting abolition and the Mixed Commissions into the narrative of the evolution of human rights law allows scholars to move beyond the narrow scope of rights laid out in documents like the United States Constitution and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, which are largely concerned with the relationship between state and citizen. Abolitionists argued that slavery should be the concern of all and should not be exclusively expressed, protected, and defended through the relationship of citizen and state. They argued that certain basic fundamental 'rights' must be global and should be applied to all and in doing so made an important contribution to modern understandings of international human rights.

On the whole, this is a thought provoking book that will be of interest to many audiences including, but not limited to, those interested in international human rights law, historians of abolition, and students. The monograph would serve as an excellent addition to those teaching abolition or international human rights by offering an important counterweight to the state and citizens understanding of human rights.

John Rankin, *East Tennessee State University*

Volker Matthies. 2012. *The Siege of Magdala: The British Empire against the Emperor of Ethiopia*. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers. 207 pp.

In 1868, some 30,000 British troops (mostly Indian to be precise), marched over 400 miles into the Ethiopian highlands under the command of General Robert Napier. Their twin objective—the liberation of a number of Europeans who had been held hostage since the early 1860s by Emperor Tewodros of Ethiopia and chastising the emperor for daring to defy the mighty British Empire. In the end, they succeeded in the former objective. The latter eluded them as the mercurial emperor denied them the satisfaction of dragging him in chains to London by committing suicide when he saw all was lost, thereby attaining the status of a national hero.

The story, full of drama fit for a Hollywood movie, has been told and retold. The official record of the expedition (T.J. Holland and H.M. Hozier, *Record of the Expedition to Abyssinia*, 2 vols.), richly illustrated and amply documented, came out only two years after the event. Other participants of the dramatic encounter, including the famous Henry Morton Stanley of David Livingstone fame, gave their own version of events soon after. In more recent times, scholarly interpretations of the episode (Richard Pankhurst and Sven Rubenson) have been accompanied by more popular accounts, focusing on either *The Abyssinian Difficulty* (Darrell Bates) or *The Barefoot Emperor* (Phil Marsden).

It is a measure of the enduring fascination of Maqdala (the Ethiopian rendering of the mountain stronghold where the final battle took place) that Volker Matthies has deemed it fit to come out with yet another book on the subject. Originally written in German, it has been translated by Steven Rendall for the benefit of the English-speaking audience. It is rather misleadingly entitled *The Siege of Magdala*, as it deals with a lot more than the final battle. At any rate, the British did not lay siege to Maqdala; they stormed their way into it. The book begins with a rather sketchy background into the country that the author prefers to call "Mysterious Ethiopia." It then recounts and analyzes in detail the circumstances that led to the expedition, the organization of the expeditionary force, its "long march" from the town of Zula on the Red Sea coast to the Ethiopian interior, the "Aroge Massacre" (as the only battle Tewodros's forces were able to give is aptly described), the storming of the Maqdala fortress, and the withdrawal of the expeditionary force after the sacking and looting of Maqdala.

Richard Pankhurst, in his foreword, rather charitably compliments the author for his "extensive use of Ethiopian sources." It is rather the extensive use of German sources that lends the book added value. These include the accounts and reminiscences of many of the German officers and other observers who had been invited to witness the expedition first hand. Otherwise, although he frequently cites Sven Rubenson's standard diplomatic history (*The Survival of Ethiopian Independence*), the author has chosen to rely on the official report (Holland and Hozier) for the sometimes faulty English translations of Tewodros's many interesting letters rather than the more carefully translated documents in Rubenson's *Acta Aethiopica*. Some familiarity with Ethiopian names would also have averted the irritating use of the term "Amharan" for "Amharic" and the misnaming of Gafat as Gafar (p. 19).

The book has a contemporary ring with its evocations of "humanitarian intervention" and "embedded journalists." Its account of the port town of Zula that sprouted overnight on the coast and served as the base for the operations of the expedition—complete with a bazaar and a tavern curiously enough named after Tewodros (the very target of the entire expedition)—is detailed and fascinating. The book is also richly illustrated with a large number of engravings and a few useful maps. A novelty of the book is the use of boxes to highlight important events and personalities, even if they occasionally tend to be too long (cf. pp. 31-33) or the choice of topic perhaps too capricious (e.g., Gerard Rohlfs, pp. 83-84).

On finishing the book, the reader is left with the distinct impression that the expedition was launched more as a matter of honor than out of overriding concern for the hostages, many of whom were not British subjects. The author persuasively argues that the British were out to erase the far from sterling performance of British arms in the Crimean War and during the suppression of the Indian Sepoy Rebellion. At any rate, the costly expedition could have been

avoided had the British authorities had the elementary decency of acknowledging the letter of the intensely proud emperor to Queen Victoria. As it turned out, the hostages were generally well-treated and many of them were not particularly keen to return to their country. Even more incomprehensible is the senseless—almost vindictive—sacking of the Maqdala fortress and the looting of so many precious historical treasures.

Bahru Zewde, *Addis Ababa University*

Philip Muehlenbeck. 2012. *Betting on the Africans: John F. Kennedy's Courting of African Nationalist Leaders*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 333 pp.

Betting on the Africans is a remarkable addition to a growing body of works that explore Africa's complex and diverse interactions with external powers during the Cold War. Muehlenbeck brilliantly captures how the intense post-war nationalism and decolonization in Africa coincided with the Cold War politics to cause a significant shift from Dwight Eisenhower's indifferent attitude toward Africa to John F. Kennedy's commitment to the continent "both in rhetoric and substance" (p. xiii). Taking a top down approach in analyzing the ideas that shaped Kennedy's engagement with African leaders, the author argues that Kennedy's Kennedy's choice of "personal diplomacy over modernization theory . . . proved to be a more effective strategy for improving US-African relations" (p. xv).

The book is divided into two parts. Part one contains seven chapters that focus on Kenndey's relationships with selected Africans leaders, revealing how Kennedy used "personal diplomacy" to win "over the sympathies" of African peoples (p. xxi). The author shows in chapter one that the US had limited engagement with Africa under Eisenhower because he had "little personal involvement in the relations between the United States and Africa" (p. 33). The second chapter contends that Kennedy's relationship with Africa was guided by four broad principles such as opposition to "European colonialism," acceptance of "African nonalignment," increased aid to promote "Africa's development," and a resort to "personal diplomacy" to create pro-American governments in the continent (p. 44). Muehlenbeck discusses in chapter three how Kennedy's personal diplomatic engagement with Ahmed Sekou Toure of Guinea, who his predecessor Eisenhower perceived and dismissed as a committed communist ally, helped "move Guinea toward the West" (p. 71).

Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, a radical African nationalist, dominated the discussion in chapter four. Despite his frustrating and less successful attempts to court Nkrumah, Kennedy, as the author insists, remained unwavering in his dedication to African nationalism, believing that "winning the hearts and minds of the Third World was essential to competing in the Cold War" (p. 86). In chapter five, the author explores Kennedy's tricky relationship with Julius Nyerere, revealing how Kennedy's "rhetorical support for the idea of African self-determination without the use of sanctions or other direct pressure against Portugal or South Africa" disappointed nationalists in the region (p. 120). Muehlenbeck makes the case in chapter six that although Kennedy courted Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and Ben Bella of Algeria less successfully, he "forestalled the potential for anti-Americanisms in the region (p. 140). As he

demonstrates in chapter seven, Kennedy's obsession with more radical African nationalists reflected his belief that they were "waves of the future" while perceiving conservative, pro-American African leaders such as William Tubman of Liberia and Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Ivory Coast as "relics of the past" (p. 141).

Part two of the book is a thematic treatment of how Kennedy's approach to African nationalism affected other elements of US foreign policy toward Africa. The four chapters in this part focus on the intense conflict between Kennedy and Charles de Gaulle of France over Africa and Kennedy's "half-hearted" attempt to strengthen relations with blacks in apartheid South Africa. The author also shows in part two that while Kennedy's commitment to civil rights in the US enhanced his reputation in Africa his cordial relationship with African leaders paid off during the Cuban Missiles Crisis when African leaders denied the Soviet landing rights in Africa.

For the most part, *Betting on the Africans* is probingly analytical, but the author minimizes Kennedy's half-hearted support for freedom movements in southern Africa by describing it as "certainly not his finest hour" (p. 120). Kennedy's failure in southern Africa undermines the author's argument that Kennedy was fully committed to African nationalism. It is difficult to accept the author's argument that Kennedy's choice of personal diplomacy "demonstrates that his feelings . . . were genuine and deep" (p. xiv). Given its protracted racial tension and bloody conflict, the southern African region in the 1960s was an area where Kennedy missed the opportunity to demonstrate his "genuine" "feelings" toward African nationalism. The author's inability to interrogate this gap in Kennedy's foreign policy underscores the regrettable bias that typifies Eurocentric writings about Africa.

Muehlenbeck correctly describes Kennedy as a pragmatist whose desire to win the Cold War made "other considerations . . . to take precedence over his desire to aid African nationalism" (p. 120). The author, however, ignores to fully link those "considerations" to the US policy of creating, nurturing, and collaborating with African leaders adjudged to protect its economic interests notwithstanding the harm those regimes inflicted on their countries. It is questionable and unconvincing for the author to assert that "pragmatic, strategic considerations" convinced Kennedy of Africa's importance "not economic interests" (225). Kennedy was unquestionably a good person; his inability, however, to carry through most of his well-intentioned programs in Africa during his short-lived tenure reflects—not his failure as a person—but the limitations of the US presidency. More importantly, it highlights the decisive and enduring influence of multinational corporations in shaping US foreign policy. These gaps notwithstanding, this book is approachable and accessibly written, and it is a refreshing and well-documented insight into Kennedy's intricate and captivating encounter with Africa. It is strongly recommended for scholars, students, and general readers seeking to understand the hype, hypocrisy, and hysteria surrounding the US and the Soviet Union's engagement with Africa during the Cold War.

Ogechi Anyanwu, *Eastern Kentucky University*

Garth Myers. 2011. *African Cities: Alternative Visions of Urban Theory and Prac*tice. London: Zed Books. 242 pp.

The urbanization of African societies is taking place in ways that challenge theories and models taken as dominant in the field of urban studies. Based on this central idea, Garth Myers explores the non correspondence between the African urban context and current urban theories in a form that should not be seen as just one more addition to the already vast library on urban Africa, since it is likely to contribute to important changes in the way cities in Africa are perceived and researched, even by the most progressive urban scholars based in developed countries.

Myers offers, in this well written book, a strong argument in favor of a revision of how cities in Africa are discussed, questions the use of models and metrics of Western developed countries in the study of cities in Africa, and proposes the use of "African urban concepts and experiences to speak back to theoretical and practical concerns in urban studies and disciplines that study cities more generally, while at the same time contributing to African studies as a field" (p. 1). He suggests a look at the complexity of African cities from new perspectives, comparing African cities with one another, instead of accepting them as examples of all that went wrong with urbanism. For Myers, African cities should not be seen as a category of non-city when compared to the western urban paradigm. He recommends an alternative to this predominant view, that African cities being viewed and researched as multifaceted, different from one another, and sharing a number of common challenges. These are: overcoming colonial inheritances of poverty; overcoming underdevelopment and social spatial inequality; forging non-violent environments; and coping with globalization. He does this in the six main chapters that make up the book.

The first chapter ("What if the Postmetropolis is Lusaka?") lays out what Myers considers to be the five themes of African urban scholarship in relation to Lusaka and have been influenced by the discourse of Edward Soja on the post-metropolis. He poses the question in this manner: "What happens, I ask, if we start the discussion about 'what has been happening to cities over the past thirty years' from Lusaka, or any other African city, rather than LA?" (p. 18). In answering this question, Myers identifies five main issues in Lusaka (postcolonialism, informality, governance, violence, and cosmopolitanism) that may be an example of trends and themes in other cities in Africa and which can then be the basis for new visions of urban theory and practice in the continent and for the creation of an agenda for African urban studies. Each of these five issues is then examined and dissected in detail in one of the remaining five chapters.

The first issue—postcolonialism—is dealt in chapter two ("Postcolonial Cities"). The author surveys the postcolonial facets of African cities, more than a half century past independence for many African countries, referring, among other legacies, to the fact that urban hierarchies in most of these former colonies remain imbalanced, the internal urban form continues segmented, and even the new capital cities built after independence reveal some traits of the colonial urban tradition. In the following chapter ("(I)n(f)ormal Cities"), Myers discusses the terms, origins, and scope of informal settlements in African cities. The author focuses on the daily struggles of residents in the informal settlements, so common in Africa cities, and in particular the struggles over land and housing in the center and on the periphery of the city. His main goal is to shed light on informality in city life in Africa and how it relates to the informal sector and informal

settlements, and the clashes of rationality between informal and formal areas and processes within cities.

Chapter four ("Governing Africa's Cities") addresses the third issue, that of governance, and examines the governance challenges of African cities and the responses of local governments and citizens to them, in particular with a focus on governance and service delivery. Myers discusses governance, service delivery and justice in African cities, interrogates the efforts to devolve in new ways agency to urban residents, what he terms hybrid governance, and discusses paths towards more just cities in Africa. This is followed in chapter five ("Wounded Cities") by the fourth issue—violence—in which the author dissects the case of Mogadishu. Although usually considered as an example of cities wounded by violence, it can still be seen, in Myers' opinion, as an ideal setting for alternative ideas about cities. Based on postcolonial literary criticism (e.g., the writings of the Somali novelist Nuruddin Farah), Myers highlights the importance of African cultures and urban visions in the process of linking the African city to the rest of the world, showing that even in the most wounded cities of Africa there are alternative visions that challenge mainstream perspectives of African urbanism.

The fifth and final issue that Myers identifies is the subject of chapter six ("Cosmopolitan Cities"). The author discusses the influence of globalization on the city in Africa and shows how globalization and cosmopolitanism have had a major impact on them, contrary to what is widely proposed in urban studies, and that not all these influences have been negative, suggesting that cosmopolitanism can be part of the better futures he seeks for African cities.

Garth Myers summarizes his main arguments and suggests a research agenda for African cities in the "Conclusion," explaining how a comparative approach to African cities might contribute to changing urban theory and practice in the continent and urban studies more broadly. In sum, considering the innovative perspective that Myers adopts and the evidence provided, the book will certainly be an important addition to the literature on alternative visions of urban theory and practice in African cities. For that reason it is a book valuable to graduate and post-graduate students and researchers in the broad field of urban studies in Africa and for urban planners as well.

Carlos Nunes Silva, *University of Lisbon*

Beatrice Nicolini. 2012. *The First Sultan of Zanzibar: Scrambling for Trade in the Nineteenth-Century Indian Ocean*. Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Press. xxvii, 179 pp.

For Africanists, the innovation in *The First Sultan of Zanzibar* is that it is an "Oman-centric" account of the political relationships established in Zanzibar at that time. This is different than more traditional accounts, which place the European colonial powers, be they Britain, Portugal, or France, at the center of the colonial story. When Nicolini puts Oman at the center of her narrative hub, the relationships between Zanzibar, Oman, and Makran in Baluchistan are highlighted, rather than the European capitals. Ironically, Nicolini does this by using the familiar sources of the British English language colonial archives. Thus, although, the story is indeed, as she intended about the Oman-centric trade-based "thallasocracy," it is still told through the eyes of the British colonial servants who directed The Great Colonial Game.

As is well-known, when the Europeans arrived in East Africa in the nineteenth century, they encountered merchant-based trading networks based in Zanzibar that reached deep into the Tanzanian interior. Merchants had by that time established interior trading posts in Tabora, Ujiji, and eventually on into what is now the eastern Congo using the trade organizations of Oman-based Arabs. These Arabs operated from fortresses staffed by their Baluchi soldiers, African allies, and slaves. From these stations the merchants not only received British explorers like Burton and Livingstone, they also exported slaves and ivory to their plantations on the Indian Ocean islands. Indeed, this trade proved so lucrative that Sultan Saiyid Sai'di (1797-1856), the Sultan of Oman, in 1840 moved his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar from whence he continued to rule enterprises extending into central Africa, Zanzibar, the Persian Gulf, and into Baluchistan.

The strength of Nicolini's book is in the first half, where she emphasizes the Oman-Zanzibar-Mekara relationship and its role in the Indian Ocean world of the nineteenth century. Her use of the obscure term "thallasocracy" highlights that these were trade-based relationships, rather than Westfalian-style sovereignty. Particularly intriguing is Nicolini's argument that European concepts of sovereignty, with its emphasis on formal boundaries, citizenship-based loyalties, and non-interference are a poor fit for the Oman-centric world relationship she describes. Sultan Saiyid Sa'id, she points out, was the master of a web of far-flung relationships, not a sovereign maintaining a monopoly over the use of military force in a particular territory. She explores this thesis well in the first half of the book.

The book's second half focuses on the British and French struggles for influence in the Indian Ocean world with each other and in the context of later British opposition to the slave trade. This half will be of interest to historians studying more traditional colonial relationships, and it is quite different from the first half, which is about relationships between Makran, Oman, and the east African coast.

After reading Nicolini's book, I found myself wanting to know more, which is a sign of an intriguing book. In particular, I want to know more about the role of the Baluchi military who supported the Arab Sultans of Oman and Zanzibar. As Nicolini describes, they made their way into the Tanzanian interior, probably in the 1830s and 1840s, extending Omani thallosocratic-style sovereignty into unexpected places. I also was curious about what Arab sources, including those in Omani archives, have to say about these events. Indeed, Nicolini cites interviews with the descendants of the Arab trader Tippu Tib, who lived in Muscat as recently as 1993. What else might be available in Oman for linguistically sophisticated historians interested in nineteenth century east African exploration? Finally, I wanted to know more about the relationships within the Zanzibar court; despite the title of the book, this is not a biography of Sultan Saiyid Sa'idi. But, there is enough here to indicate that a full-scale biography of a man who ruled over such an intriguing socio-political arrangement is needed.

Tony Waters, *California State University, Chico*

Gloria Nne Onyeoziri. 2011. *Shaken Wisdom: Irony and Meaning in Postcolonial African Fiction*. Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press. 178 pp.

While it goes without saying that postcolonial African fiction inscribes human experience through the manipulation of verbal and rhetorical resources, the mode of discourse (language) in the depiction of both identity and ideology have been relegated to the background. Herein lies the relevance, necessity and aptness of Gloria Onyeoziri's *Shaken Wisdom*, a book that illuminates African fiction, linguistic theories (irony related), and gender studies. Written in a laconic and lucid language, the author's mastery of African culture and mores, orature, and linguistic theories were brought to the fore. *Shaken Wisdom* is structured into five chapters and gives an analysis of the cultural, linguistic, and historical problems of unearthing irony in postcolonial African fiction. Despite the fact that the author makes passing reference to various African writers, her tool of primary analysis consist of six literary works by Chinua Achebe (Nigeria), Ahmadou Kourouma (Cote d'Ivoire), and Calixthe Beyala (Cameroon). These authors stand as a representation of postcolonial African writers, and their works help the readers in understanding the place of irony in African communities. Since theorists of irony such as D.C Mueke, Wayne Booth, Philippe Hamon, and Linda Hutcheon have analyzed the ironic contents in European literary works, *Shaken Wisdom* is a writer's quota to fill such a lacuna in postcolonial African fiction. In the author's own words, "the goal of the study is to consider the relationship, within the context of African literary discourse, between irony and meaning. What is the purpose of irony, and how does it work in its various forms as part of the process of communication" (p. 2). A pedestrian definition of irony signifies a case in which the opposite of what is meant is said. But in this context, the power of language which suggests more than what the hearer/reader first seemed to have heard/read is referred to as irony. Alongside the fact that Onyeoziri delineates the form of irony in traditional forms of African discourse, the book also expatiates on the role of irony in postcolonial African fiction. In the current postcolonial milieu, irony has been used by writers as a weapon of resistance against tyrannies in African societies. In the same vein, it is a two edged sword that can be used to interrogate both the repressed and the oppressor.

The colonial invasion of the continent and the need for local authors to hide their critique of their mode of governance necessitated the use of irony. Also, this is in order to escape censure and get European publishers, readers, and critics and to show that various (though spurious) claims lacked depth. In the same vein, this approach also gained momentum during the present postcolonial era in which dictatorship (civilian, military, or monarchical) holds sway. The first chapter traces how the historical condition of contemporary African literature mutated into ironic function(s). The traditional potentialities and language in Achebe's *Anthill of the Savannah* (1987) stand as the canvas for analysing irony by which political oppression is depicted. Achebe uses irony both at the lexical and utterance level to teach and correct those in power. In the second chapter, the author gives a caveat that an irony can't be understood purely by its poetic figure alone but within the pragmatic framework of the way in which the language is used. Thus, the problem of irony is connected with interpretation and rhetorical competence of the receiver or hearer. She explores the difference between semantics (conceptual meaning) and pragmatics (meaning assumed or produced by the speaker). Achebe's *Anthill of the Savannah*

(1987) and Kourouma's *Monne, outrages et defies* (1990), *Monnew* (1993), and *En attendant le vote des bêtes sauvages* (1998) serve as textual materials.

The next chapter discusses the importance of proverbs in Kourouma's works and their role in the production of irony. Discussing Kourouma's texts, the author uses Edgar Lapp's pragmatic approach to unearth many ironic utterances. Kourouma uses characters like Koyega and Djigui to subtly infuse ironic statements. In the fourth chapter, Achebe's *Arrow of God* is used to investigate proverbial expression as a significant aspect of African literary writing. Thus, it provides hints on how proverbs (Igbo, in this case) serve as a linkage between orature and literary texts. The proverbs were subjected to Neal Norrick's analysis of irony (1985).

The last chapter deals with the new conception of ironic voice – a voice in the face of sexual and racial oppression. It is an (ironic) intention of a woman struggling to be heard above traditional strictures. Eve Marie and Edene of *savage passions* (1999) and *Les arbes en parlent* (2002) are the ironical women in the analysis of Calixthe Beyala's works. These two characters are in a potential struggle with the colonial and patriarchal structures. Eve Marie's writing is seen as a defiant act that later gives birth to her "words of survival, resistance and revolt" (p. 126).

Shaken wisdom is a rich mine of information and one of those rare books that broaden one's knowledge of postcolonial African fiction (language and literature). It is hereby recommended to all lovers of knowledge especially African literature students.

Oguntoyinbo Deji, *Faith Academy, Ota, Nigeria*

Philip M. Peek (ed.). 2011. *Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures: Double Trouble, Twice Blessed*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. 376 pp.

Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures: Double Trouble, Twice Blessed examines what it means to have twins, how twins identify, and how twins are treated as well as their significance or insignificance in African and Diasporan cultures. It explores various cultural and religious practices, artistic performances, and representations in what Peek characterize as doubling and twinning to provide readers with a broader understanding of this subject. Peek and his contributors who come from wide range of disciplines and backgrounds rely on visual representations, photographs and narratives about twins from various regions, gender, age brackets, ethnicity, and socio-cultural background for their analysis. The work provides insightful details and relies mostly on secondary materials, chanting, photographs, and stories about fertility. They seek to illuminate past perceptions about twins and shed new light on what twins symbolize in recent times. The thrust of the book is that those who give birth to twins and African societies in general no longer see twins as a problem or a curse. Rather, they see twins as a blessing and a value to society. In the words of Peek, "twinness seems far more related to symmetry, reconciliation, harmony, and synthesis than to oppositions and conflicts…demonstrate unification rather than bifurcation…consonance instead of dissonance, positive not negative" (pp. 26-27).

The book is divided in four sections with each addressing overlapping, converging and diverging themes. The first half covers the African continent, mostly the Western part, whereas

the end includes selected Diaspora regions. Indeed, the definition of twins varys from one location to the other: for the Nyoro twins are invisible beings and for the Nuer they are seen as birds (pp. 5, 7). These kinds of perceptions are juxtaposed with other forms of meaning. The analysis shifts from early literature especially by anthropologists who largely generalized twin birth. *Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures* therefore captures the exceptional nature of twins and the ways in which their stories, beings, spirituality, identity and varying personalities are celebrated both in their personal interactions with one another and with the larger societies they reside. In doing this, the book shows that although twins are mortal beings, they live in other forms after death. Specifically, some African societies use sculptures to symbolize the spirit of dead twins (p. 56). The personification or ritual reminds us of their two-ness and oneness in tandem (p. 74). Babatunde Lawal's chapter in particular shows how Yoruba cultures and cosmology "reinvent" a dead twin. According to Lawal, the living twin wears the cloth of the deceased sibling in a way to explain how the spirit of the dead still lives (pp. 93-94).

The latter part of the book provides aspects of Diaspora coverage. Ysamur Flores-Pena's chapter on the Lucumí Yoruba culture in Cuba explores how Yoruba experiences in the New World explains how Diasporic folklores and narratives contributes to the perception of twins elsewhere. Part of the chapter brings attention to the representation of twins in Catholic rituals and performances (p. 108). Pena concludes by highlighting the strength of Lucumí cultures, particularly the ways in which its physical and spiritual motifs are deeply wired to the cultures of Africa, the Caribbean, and others. Marilyn Houlberg's chapter focuses on twins (*marasa*) in Haiti and shows their duality in public space including restaurants, shops, on billboards and vehicles as well as nightclubs and churches (p. 273). Stefania Caponia on the hand provides a new insight into the meaning of Diaspora twins in Brazilian cultures and religions.

Twins in African and Diaspora Cultures accomplishes its task of providing an overview and an update on doubling and twinning in selected areas in Africa and the Diaspora. The work, however, has a few weaknesses. The scope for redefining views about twins is narrow. In general the application of "Africa" and the "Diaspora" are somewhat overstretched in the analysis. For instance, the use of the word "Africa" tends to extend the definition or perception about twins although very few countries on the continent are discussed in the book. When searching for a book that provides a broader coverage on twins in the Diaspora in particular this book will not provide all the answers. Yoruba representation, performance, and celebration of twins permeate most parts of the book. Despite such shortcoming, this book will prove useful to general readers and academics alike, especially those who are interested in religion, cosmology, cultural transfers, sociology, history, and anthropology. Indeed, this is a good introduction to the topic, but other works will be needed to provide a comprehensive analysis of other ethnic and language groups omitted from this book. They include, for example, Akan, Wollof, Mandingo, and other major groups on the African continent and those who crossed the Atlantic to Jamaica, Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other Atlantic dispersed communities.

Kwame Essien, *Lehigh University*

Marleen Renders. 2012. *Consider Somaliland: State-Building with Traditional Elders and Institutions*. Leiden: Brill. 281 pp.

Renders begins her monograph with a story that quite wonderfully captures the complete contrast between Somalia and Somaliland. During the summer of 2005, BBC TV journalist Simon Reeve shot a series called "Holidays in the Danger Zone: Places that Don't Exist." He distinguished southern Somalia (recognized by the international community as a state) from Somaliland in the north (unrecognized by any state as a state). In the former, he merely represented the degree of anarchy by buying a Somali diplomatic passport from an independent passport-maker in the Bakara market in Mogadishu, as everything was on sale. In the latter case, the state of affairs was contrastingly distinct, with Reeve coming across people stopping for red lights.

Out of the ruins of the Somali Republic, a methodical democratic polity with institutional *bricolage* has emerged. For the better part of the last two decades, Somaliland has been limned as an African miracle or even as the "Switzerland of Africa" and the "best kept secret." Several Somali observers, who seemed to admire personalist—if not Siadist-style—regimes, attributed such state-(re)building success to Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, an old hand in Somali politics and the deceased former president of Somaliland. I should add that what is beyond dispute is that Egal, a career politician, masterfully did an incrementally outstanding chore as Somaliland president (1993-2002) that he had not had the chance in doing as prime minister (1967-69) in Somalia. In the eyes of this reviewer, Somaliland's search for recognition seems similar to the situation of a nomadic Somali camelman, who, after finding himself in a point of no-return, lamented a bit ruefully of the fate of his beast thus:

> One of my she-camels falls on the road
> And I protect its meat,
> At night I cannot sleep,
> And in the daytime I can find no shade

To identify Somaliland's recipe for success, Renders examines political and state (re)construction in the secessionist entity. Somaliland, argues Renders, "manifested attributes that theoreticians of state-building love: a modern, instead of a clan-based system of political representation, government institutions that have expanded to the regions, increased government oversight over social service delivery and increased government oversight over revenue collection and spending" (p. 153). Yet she scarcely defines what she meant by state within the local context, apart from her classification a la Max Webber. Citing the 1996 World Bank report, which highlighted a deep "crisis of institutional capacity" in Africa, anchored in the dichotomy between "original and transplanted institutions" (p. 23), Renders sets out to explore "institutional reconciliation" by employing those two conceptions. In the Somali context, constructing a modern, viable state entails a balance to neutralize the impact of the clan and state's monopoly of violence, primarily owing to the pastoralist clan system that endures no state institutions, let alone authoritarian structures. Thus, civil society groups (and other concerned citizens) have to undertake great efforts to preclude clan politics from penetrating into the state edifice.

The clan elders lacked the political attributes and technocratic expertize necessary to take Somaliland on the path of peace and sustainable development. Historically, the traditional clan

elders were representatives rather than leaders of the clans. In the absence of viable state institutions, clan elders and clan institutions, nonetheless, became the most important medium of power and politics in Somaliland (and some parts of Somalia). As such, the realms of the clan system and state are inseparable, so it is important to trace them, particularly the role of the traditional leadership in establishing Somaliland, which now enjoys democracy and stability that other regional states are unable to garner.

Such an indigenous state formation derives from the leverage of the traditional clan leaders who, albeit regarded as an anachronism by some local Somali critics, were instrumental—and played the most significant role—in state institution-building of Somaliland. From the outset, the task of creating a "clanless state institutions" was thorny. The maturity of Somaliland state arrangements was reflected by the fact that the clan elders were included, some of whom in the past had sided with the erstwhile dictator Siad Barre, whose army had done much mayhem in the territory and to Somalia in general. The result, states Renders, was a "negotiated" state, when many states in the global South suffer from lack of legitimacy in disregarding the indigenous traditional institutions.

Successive post-independence Somali politicians considered traditional elders as a primordial inappropriate for community representation, though they at times used them for their own political ascent, but the clan elders were suppressed under the military regime; only those favored due to clan affiliation and sycophantic elders were left out. Siad Barre's regime not only oppressed Somaliland communities socio-politically but also suffocated them economically by suspending the *franco-valuta*, which was a credit system allowing local traders to have import commerce licenses with their foreign currency. Renders observes that the elders then formed the basis upon which the clan rebel groups relied. Subsequently Siad Barre's army, inflicted a ferocious reign of terror on the local residents during the 1980s. This was to lay the basis for Somaliland's secession proclamation in May 1991. During the dictatorial rule, the clan elders became politicians and, following the fall of the regime, they had reaffirmed their role and emerged as brokers of clan politics, as fierce contestation over state machinery led up to a bloody conflict, with each sub-clan vying for a lion's share in the spoils of the government. This time the clan elders returned to the political scene to mediate warring groups, for they intermingled with politicians in ways never seen before so that they moved with them at every turn and everywhere. While on that way, their number multiplied, so much so that it witnessed two half-brothers claiming the same title of a clan chieftainship.

Though the traditional leaders reasserted their symbolic rule over their communities after the collapse of the military dictatorship in January 1991, Renders points out how citizenship and nationality are very fluid concepts in the Somali context, for the clanship is the only one domineering that is more or less cloudless. She explains that the tradition in which the clan elders performed their authority was completely shattered in the eastern Somaliland regions, in part due to chronic corruption and heavily politicized culture that accepted several former military officers and politicians assuming the title of clan chief. The price of becoming a *garaad*, as chiefs are locally known, was very high and seen as a sign of survival to escape from a destitute life. Here the words of one local resident who stated that the clan leaders "are the new warlords here" (p. 194) encapsulated the role of the politicians-cum-traditional leaders.

Consisting of a cluster of clan families, of sub-clans, of sub-sub-clans, and so on and so forth, Somaliland's earlier approach to state-building, it could be contended, built on grievances from unrivalled atrocities committed by the military dictatorship. During this autocratic regime, the Somali state became characterized by clan-based hegemony guided by oppression and intimidation. When Siad Barre adopted clannism as a means to mobilize adherents and obtain ground support, rebel groups, including the Somali National Movement (SNM) that liberated Somaliland from his rule, utilized the same tactic in appealing to their fellow clanspeople to rally behind their cause. It was here that the inconsequential traditional clan feuding among clans was revived, only this time the contestation was not for pasture, water, and land grabbing (as it was historically) but rather for state resources through an armed conflict. Then the clan elders became involved in political process during the formation of such a rebel movement.

The Siadist military dictatorship organized a counter-insurgency militia known as the "auxiliary forces" comprising of northern clans allied with the regime, altering the course of fighting into one between (and within) local clans. Siad Barre's devotees, in this case Somaliland's *bête noire*, recently convened a conference in Sool, eastern Somaliland, where they proclaimed a clan-centered administration only in name and on paper with the assistance of neighboring Ethiopia. It is worth noting that the claim to the Sool region (as well as Sanaag) is disputed by both Somaliland and Puntland, an autonomous breakaway clan-based administration in the former *Somalia Italiana*. Hence the area districts now have both Somaliland mayors and Puntland mayors. This gives a clear indication of how the notion of nation-state is an anathema to the Somali clan structure, which seeks to stand as a state for (and in) itself. Another prominent case in point is Gaalkacyo, a town in northeast central Somalia, which has two different police forces from Puntland and Galmudug, another clan-centered administration. Clan mini-state adventures can be labelled as an "organised crime" since they seek to foster a new way of clannism that fostered hatred among the disparate Somali communities instead of constructing cohesive communities.

With the development of a strong "Somaliland consciousness"—the identity that reached beyond clannism—it appears now that under no circumstance would Somaliland be prepared to return to a (re)union with Somalia. For instance, the local residents still associate rule from Mogadishu with the oppression and dictatorship that traumatized them in the 1980s. Though Renders does not seem to be aware of this, the paradox of Somaliland secession lies in the positions of the three highly-educated and prominent Omaar brothers: one is a unionist who recently became a Foreign Minister in Somalia; another, a long-time human rights activist, is a secessionist; the youngest is an Al Jazeera television journalist who falls halfway between his brother or at times is a combination of both.

The author has had her own Simon Reeves' experience. Her first visit to the territory propelled her into "a search for the roots and the nature of statehood and state-making outside the Western worl" (p. 263). Her frank conclusion is that Somaliland is a successful case of a classical Weberian state of hybrid polity but cannot be imported to fix problems in the other Somali territories insofar as a state is makeable, primarily because of too many "parameters and variables." Rebuilding the state is not a technical fixation but rather a political pursuit. It is a pity that Renders does not refer here to Joel Migdal's (1998) study (which is featured in her

bibliography) that the traditional leaders, a crucial part of Somaliland's hybrid state, weaken state structures in the way they question the latter's monopoly of violence.

A few flaws are worthy of mention prior to concluding the review. Render's treatment of Abdirahman Tuur, the first Somaliland president, as opposed to Egal, the second president, seems unbiased. When assessing administrations led by the two leaders, the author does not take into account the idiosyncratic circumstances in which they had operated at the peak of the political bedlam in the early 1990s. True with real terms, Egal is remembered to have bought peace by bribing war-weary opponents. Moreover, the author's assessment of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) was also altogether negative. And affiliating Jama Ali Jama, a contender for Puntland regional presidency in 2001, with al Itihaad, an extremist Islamist group, is both misleading and baffling. Jama's administration was annihilated by Ethiopia by using such allegations of linking it with al Qaeda in order to groom its favorite warlord Abdullahi Yusuf for the Somali presidency. In a nutshell, though this reviewer would have liked to have seen more references on primary Somali sources where appropriate, the study is somewhat overshadowed by some avoidable inaccuracies. First, the Transitional National Government of Somalia was formed in Djibouti in August 2000, not in 2001 (p. 187). Second, the Puntland authority was declared in August 1998, not in July (p. 184). Overall, however, this is an excellent contribution to the scanty scholarship on Somali state-formation.

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Lorelle D. Semley. 2011. *Mother is Gold, Father is Glass: Gender and Colonialism in a Yoruba Town*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 235 pp.

The Yoruba saying, "mother is gold, father is glass," is Semley's point of departure for her study on gender and colonialism in Ketu, Benin. She employs oral traditions, archival sources, and interviews to demonstrate that gender relations in Yoruba history and culture are contradictory. At the symbolic level, comparing mother to gold implies that women are more valuable than men, yet women, as wives, are often considered subordinate to men. Also, in a society where men are more dominant, fathers are compared to glass, signifying that they are less valuable and their presence more illusory (p. 3).

Using the concepts of "public motherhood" and "public fatherhood," Semley illustrates the possibility of rethinking gender in West Africa. She suggests that it is important to interrogate the symbolic power of husbands and fathers and the presumptive disempowerment of mothers and wives by examining the relationships between mothers and fathers and between wives and husbands. As such, Semley posits that examining these relationships illuminates the "multiple and changing relationships between women, men, power, and vulnerability" (p. 161).

Chapter one elucidates the important relationship between "public mother" and "public father" figures in establishing the kingdom of Ketu. Chapter two focuses on Ketu's neighboring kingdoms, Oyo and Dahomey. In Oyo, women's power was inextricably linked to the King, and exercised through the office of "public motherhood". "Public motherhood" had nothing to do with biological mothering but with the execution of "key roles in the ritual, religious, political and economic-well being of the community" (p. 33). Although Semley is detailed about

women's ritual and religious activities, she does not adequately expound the ways in which women played key leadership roles in political and economic aspects of the community.

Semley cogently demonstrates that the slave trade contributed to the displacement of "public mothers" in Dahomey. Women were needed instead as wives for reproduction, labor and prestige (p. 47). The king used women to demonstrate his power by offering them as presents to solidify relationships. However, one downfall of accumulating many women was that their loyalty was not always to the king, which thus left the king vulnerable.

Chapters three to five highlight the multiple positions of Ketu women as vulnerable and powerful. Women were vulnerable because of the subordinate roles as wives and slaves and through their exploitation by French colonial administrative policies. The French administration briefly recognized elderly women's leadership by appointing two women as colonial intermediaries for six years, but colonial policy quickly focused more on domesticating women as biological mothers who could reproduce and maintain a healthy labor force. Semley also notes that women exercised power as "mothers" despite their inferior status as wives and slaves and reveals that some women did not conform to French expectations of womanhood. Chapter six examines the ways in which access to 'modern goods' and trading gave men economic independence to control how they became husbands and fathers as well as challenged the "distinctions the French wanted to make between the 'evolved' Africans who would lead and the 'masses' who would follow" (p. 116). In these four chapters, Semley impressively presents in-depth information with clarity and surprising readability ease. However, the seeming contradiction between the discussion on the declining status of titled elderly women as "public mothers" during the Atlantic slave trade and the French colonial administration's observation of the importance of "public mothers" is not clearly reconciled.

Chapter seven centers on the women priests of Candomble, a Brazilian African-based religion, founded in the nineteenth century by three enslaved "mothers" from Ketu. The Candomble women priests are called "mother-in-saint," and they lead alongside their male counterparts, "father-in-saint." Semley explains that while mothers and symbols of their power have been preserved on both sides of the Atlantic (p. 151), the "mother-in-saint" is vulnerable to the power dynamics of race and gender and has to negotiate her identity around racialized and sexualized images of "Black motherhood." Semley concludes by describing Ketu's first woman mayor, Lucie Tidjani. The author uses Tidjani's experience as mayor to envision a "public motherhood" that embraces the identities of mother and wife but also extends women's power beyond these two identities to challenge the hierarchy that propagates women's vulnerabilities in society.

While *Mother is Gold, Father is Glass* is an innovative approach to gender in the African context, it does not convincingly demonstrate, as insinuated in the prologue and the title, the ways in which men were truly vulnerable. Nevertheless, this is an engaging and informative book for scholars interested in African history and gender.

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Jean-Michel Severino and Olivier Ray. 2012. *Africa's Moment*. David Fernbach (transl.). Malden, MA: Polity Press. 317 pp.

According to popular publications such as *The Economist* and *Time Magazine*, Africa is rising. We are certainly living in Africa's moment. Yet for Jean-Michel Severino and Olivier Ray, this moment comes at a time when literature on the continent is outdated and lacking in clarity. In *Africa's Moment*, Severino and Ray set out to update our way of thinking about the continent. They do so without embracing either the Afro-pessimist or Afro-optimist camps. Instead, their book provides a general overview of Africa "at the time of its metamorphosis" and predicts how this metamorphosis will shape Africa's future. By metamorphosis, Severino and Ray refer to the demographic and development shifts on the continent in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Thus the focus of the book is primarily on population growth and economics.

Severino and Ray's biggest fear for African development is its rapid population growth and urbanization. They argue that African states will face a crisis of instability if they are unable to address the social needs of these new populations. On the flipside, they contend that urbanization is having a positive effect on African stability by making traditional, ethnic and tribal ties obsolete. The urbanities that they describe are more nationalist than their ethnicity-driven, rural dwelling compatriots. This is especially true for those who are born in Africa's growing cities. These urbanites do nott speak their ethnic language or practice their ethnic traditions. They are truly Kenyan and Congolese or perhaps more specifically, Nairobian and *Kinois*. The authors see the future of Africa resting on the shoulders of the new, growing urban middle class. They don't seem to have a problem with the loss of language and culture that occurs in the wake of this transition. Nor does their analysis provide convincing evidence that these urbanites are truly beyond ethnicity. For example, see the Kenyan election violence in 2007, which was largely related to ethnic tensions in urban centers manipulated by political elites.

Since both authors are economists by trade not surprisingly chapters focusing on economic issues provide the most thorough analyses of the book. At points, their work reads like a justification of World Bank structural adjustment policies (SAPs). Their prescriptions for good governance, economic diversification, and privatization ring loudly throughout the work. However, they also acknowledge that these structures take time to develop and must be done through local demand rather than international pressures. For example, Severino and Ray write, "The rock of local circumstances is far more solidly anchored than the fragile bark of international decrees—led on by the sirens of ideology and the hit-and-miss steering of its captains" (p. 170).

It would be impossible to summarize the present challenges and potential future for a continent as diverse and complex as Africa in a little over 300 pages without sacrificing depth of analysis. The result is a book that reads like a lengthy literature review and/or a collection of briefing papers, with examples from various (mostly Francophone) countries and anecdotes from the authors' personal experiences sprinkled throughout. Even though the book's analysis is surface-level and relies on overgeneralizations, *Africa's Moment* is a useful primer on African development and recent history that is easily accessible for mass consumption. The greatest contribution of this work is that it attempts to tackle the present and potential future for African

countries by addressing a complex set of demographic and economic factors. The writers provide a Francophone perspective that is rarely available in English. Their views on structural adjustment policies are controversial, but novel in an era of anti-SAP consensus. Some readers will likely find the book's disorganization and lack of thesis confusing or even frustrating. Others will find the authors' generalizations unwieldy and crave a more systematic, deep analysis than the book provides. However, if the goal of *Africa's Moment* is to stimulate discussion and serious thought about the current and future state of the continent, then the book is fairly successful.

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Matthew Stanard. 2012. *Selling the Congo: A History of European Pro-Empire Propaganda and the Making of Belgian Imperialism*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 387 pp.

Belgium ruled the Congo from 1908 until 1960. Stanard's chief goal in *Selling the Congo* is to explore the ways in which the production of imperial and colonialist propaganda affected the Belgian nation and its self-conception during the era of direct Belgian rule of the Congo. In order to achieve this aim, he sets about a thorough examination of Belgian propaganda relating to the Congo while under direct rule.

Prior to 1908, the Congo was not a colony of Belgium but rather the private possession of its king, Leopold II. During this period, Leopold set about plundering the natural wealth of the Congo for his own ends. Stanard attempts to demonstrate that the colonial period under Leopold II laid the foundations for much of the imperial propaganda that was later prevalent in Belgium. Traditional scholarship has often portrayed the Belgians as "reluctant colonists" who inherited the Congo rather than actively having sought to obtain it. Stanard does a convincing job of thoroughly shattering this myth through his examination of propaganda and the attitudes of Belgian from this period.

The falsity of the "reluctant colonist" picture is nowhere made clearer than with the author's examination of the attitudes of the Belgian people towards Leopold II after his death. For the most part, they Leopold viewed as a founder and a hero who undertook the task of civilizing the Congo. Belgians expressed gratitude for his ability to obtain the Congo as a colony through his personal efforts and to then bequeath it to the Belgian nation. Even as late as ten years ago, the people of Belgium celebrated the rule of Leopold II by erecting a statue in his honor that emphasized his role in the acquisition of the Congo.

At the same time, however, Stanard is emphatic in showing that we do ourselves a great disservice if we fail to make an important separation between the period of Leopold's rule and

the time of direct Belgian rule because there exist a number of salient and interesting differences between the two periods. Whereas the government disseminated most of the propaganda during Leopold's rule the period of direct Belgian rule occasioned propaganda measures from several institutions. These included missionaries and private enterprises that profited from the exploitation of the Congo.

Most of Stanard's conclusions rely upon the five forms of media through which pro-empire propaganda was disseminated in Belgium. These include expositions, museums, pro-empire education, monuments, and colonial cinema. He shows how Belgian world fairs and museum displays worked hand in hand with pro-empire education to reinforce a positive reaction to the notion of empire. The picture that emerges is that though Belgian rule of the Congo was exploitative, it was not so to the same extent as during Leopold's time, a period marked by wanton cruelty and the stripping of resources from the Congo. Instead, Belgian pro-empire propaganda sought to portray its rule of the Congo as a civilizing mission undertaken by the Belgian nation and aimed at the benefit the people of the Congo.

Perhaps the strongest part of Stanard's work is the way in which he draws conclusions about Belgian self-identity on the basis of pro-empire propaganda. Prior to its possession of the Congo, Belgium played no role on the world stage. Through its possession of such a vast and rich colony, Belgians came to view themselves with more pride and as a player in world affairs. More importantly, the possession of the Congo served to lessen the ethnic tensions that had long existed between the Flemish and the Walloons. Given the stark difference between the European inhabitants of Belgium and the dark-skinned inhabitants of the Congo, the differences between the Flemish and the Walloons came to pale in comparison. In that sense, the colonial occupation of the Congo had the beneficial effect on creating a sense of unity among the people of Belgium that had hitherto not existed.

In order to support his claims, Stanard draws utilizes several kinds of sources. Much of his supporting evidence comes from libraries, archive collections in Brussels, and government records. On the whole, Stanard does an adequate job of achieving his stated intentions in *Selling the Congo*. Given that the study of imperialistic sentiment and propaganda in European nations during the first half of the last century has received relatively little attention, his book serves as an illuminating introduction to the topic. It has the added virtue of directing its attention not so much to Leopold's ruthless rule of the Congo as his personal colony but rather to the period of direct rule, a topic that has been neglected for far too long in the study of modern European history. Though its focus is on the small nation of Belgium, it is nevertheless able to reveal a great deal about the attitude of Europeans towards colonialism and the importance of pro-empire propaganda in the shaping of national identity.

One of the central virtues of *Selling the Congo* is its appeal both to serious scholars who focus on European colonialism and to amateur enthusiasts who have an interest in modern European history. Stanard's style is formal though not to the point of being pedantic. Though Stanard's claims and arguments are not as concise as one might have hoped, it must be admitted that he does a good job of closing of historical possibilities that might serve as objections to his claims. Stanard seems extremely well-informed regarding his subject matter though he seems to have less appreciation and understanding for the situation in the Congo region during this period than for Belgium. In short, this book is recommended not only

because of its intrinsic merits but also because it addresses in a serious way a particular aspect of European history that has for the most part been entirely overlooked by historians.

Stanard's study, however, is not without flaws. Many readers are likely to be disappointed by the fact that he does little to connect up the imperialistic attitudes of the Belgians with those of larger colonial powers such as France and Great Britain. He does not seek to tell us whether the Belgian occupation of the Congo was in any important sense different from the occupation of other lands. In addition, he does not focus much on the shift in the perceptions of the Belgian people regarding the possession of the Congo that eventually led them to grant the Congo its independence in 1960.

Ilunga Tchoma Kitenge, *Universite du Quebec*

Timothy Stapleton. 2011. *African Police and Soldiers in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1923-80*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press. xiv, 313 pp.

Timothy Stapleton has written a searching and detailed study of African police and soldiers in white minority-ruled Rhodesia from the attainment of colonial self-government in 1923 to the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980. Stapleton captures the contradictory implications of the white regime's dependence on black Rhodesian security forces to maintain law and order in the segregated territory. He also explores how African security forces both contributed to the maintenance of white social control by using violence in defense of the state, and undermined it by becoming part of a socially mobile and educated middle class and by demanding equality of promotion, housing, benefits, and security of tenure on par with white soldiers and policemen.

Divided into eight chapters, Stapleton's book provides a deep perspective into every aspect of the lives and vocations of African security forces from recruitment and motivations for enlistment to demobilization and veterans' pensions and benefits. Other chapters explore education and social mobility; perceptions of security forces; daily camp life; the objections of enlisted personnel, particularly as regarded limited opportunities for advancement; and travel and danger on duty. He exhaustively researched documentary sources in the National Archives of Zimbabwe and synthesized secondary sources into a coherent narrative. The magazine *Mapolisa*, a newsletter by the British South Africa Police (as the Rhodesian police force was called until 1980), was a gold mine of information recording African voices from and views on the profession. While *Mapolisa* is an incomplete record as it had a white editor, it nonetheless provided Stapleton with a worthwhile and largely unexplored body of material.

Perhaps the most helpful contributions of Stapleton's study involve his observations about aspects of daily life that are rarely explored in traditional academic histories. He unearths fascinating testimonials from minority voices such as disabled veterans and immigrants from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and he reaches topics that are under-researched, such as leisure, sport, and recreation. The most original chapter was the shortest and likely most difficult to write: the experience of women as police and soldiers and as wives and mothers of security service members. Like men, women faced opportunity and danger on duty as well as the cross-cutting implications of racial discrimination in the colony, but additionally suffered from lower salaries, reduced promotion potential, and restrictions on marriage. In researching

an archival-based history as detailed as Stapleton's, the underemphasized and undermemorialized voices of women are unusually difficult to discern. His meticulous approach pays off as he strings together tiny nuggets of detail into a complex narrative that found women's motivations in joining service and challenges during and after to be just as complex as those of their more numerous male counterparts.

Because Stapleton's conclusions are often not ambitious and are limited to the sources he has, he occasionally provides too much detail, with some repetition in the earlier chapters. In addition, the sharply contrasting experiences of African police forces in the townships and African regiments fighting overseas in Burma and colonial Malaya are not fully compatible with the book's conceptual organization. The experiences of African police and soldiers at times seemed only superficially comparable, and it is not obvious that they should have been treated together. But Stapleton would acknowledge the limitations of necessity inherent in the book. We cannot know from a study so reliant on documentary evidence, for instance, whether African soldiers and police were accomplices to torture, prison abuse, or extrajudicial executions involving African nationalists, and whether they had conflicted feelings in doing so. We cannot know from Stapleton's study the private moments of grief for the loss of comrades and friends in battle, the torment of post-traumatic stress disorder, or the guilt of survival or of complicity. The answers to these difficult questions fly under the radar and would be better explored in subsequent research based on oral histories of military and police veterans.

This is not to undermine the most important benefit of Stapleton's study: the digestion and organization of an extraordinary amount of primary and contemporaneous material. Although his conclusions are not necessarily expansive, the completed work is a strong and broad-ranging foundational text for later researchers. Stapleton's development of how African police and soldiers forced reforms in the service, for instance, down to the details of their uniforms, job duties, and accommodations, is a case study in how Rhodesians of African descent used their agency to undermine or reinforce racial segregation and alter relations with the white state. Despite their ambiguous social position, many conducted themselves with valor: African soldiers were among the first to master parachuting from aircraft, for instance, and undercover police played a critical role in security operations during the Rhodesian War. Stapleton's study also provides strong supporting material for studying the role played by African war veterans of World Wars One and Two, especially the disabled and wounded, in contributing to African nationalist protest politics either as symbols or as participants. These are undoubtedly worthwhile points of departure for future research, and Stapleton's text will be the foundational source for later scholars.

Andrew Novak, *American University Washington College of Law*

Guy Vanthemsche. 2012. *Belgium and the Congo, 1885-1980.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 289 pp.

Belgian historian Guy Vanthemsche examines three major themes in this remarkable investigation of historical linkages between Belgium and the Congo: the burden of empire; the colonial power's economic gains from the colony; and the reciprocal influences between colony

and the metropolis before and after decolonization. Based on a rich array of data, meticulous research, and an exhaustive documentation of useful sources on these themes, this book succeeds in providing clarity on the history of the Congo and how it resembles or differs from that of other colonial territories.

With respect to the "burden of empire" thesis, or the notion that colonial territories were a financial drain on the metropolitan power, Vanthemsche follows in the footsteps of Jean Stengers, the father of Belgian colonial historiography, who had invalidated this thesis in the Congo case by showing in his 1957 book, *Combien le Congo a-t-il coûté à la Belgique,* that the Belgian taxpayer paid hardly anything for the colonial enterprise in Central Africa. Vanthemsche points out that even before the Congo became a Belgian colony in 1908 the first colonial regime under King Leopold II was not a financial drain on the Belgian treasury. For while the king borrowed heavily from the government to finance his colonial adventure, the Belgian state spent approximately forty million gold francs in the Congo Free State (CFS) but earned sixty-six million gold francs from the real estate property that Leopold II relinquished and the public works that he had financed with CFS revenues. Thus, as the author concludes, "the Congo Free State was ultimately profitable to Belgium" (pp. 160-61).

Likewise, since Belgium refused to support the colony financially, Congo state finances remained separate from Belgian state finances throughout the entire colonial period, from 1908 to 1960. On the other hand, it was the Congo that provided financial support to Belgium, including lending money to the Belgian government in exile in London during World War II and providing military assistance to the Allies. As for the much-touted Ten-Year Plan of economic and social development (1949-1959), it turns out that it was not financed by Belgium, as the colony was required to borrow the funds.

Did the colony benefit the metropolis economically? According to Vanthemsche, the total share of the Congo in Belgium's total trade was modest, but imports of raw materials from the Congo and exports of metal construction and metallurgical products were very important for specific sectors of Belgian industry. He also agrees with the conclusion of Belgian scholars Frans Buelens and Stefaan Marysse that colonial corporations, and the mining firms in particular, performed much better with respect to total return for stocks than their Belgian counterparts. Thus, while the economic and social ties between Belgium and the Congo were of little concern to Belgian society as a whole, they were very important for large financial groups and an exclusive Belgian elite.

The third and most innovative theme of the book concerns Belgian linkages with the Congo, both colonial and postcolonial, together with their relative weight in contemporary political, economic, and cultural life in the two countries. If seventy-five years of Belgian imperial presence did undoubtedly leave a significant impact in the Congo, the most interesting question today is relative to the impact, if any, of the Congo on Belgium from the colonial experience of former Belgian administrators, missionaries and company personnel, as well as the presence of a growing number of Congolese residents in Belgium. Vanthemsche offers an interesting but limited glimpse of this vast area of inquiry. Much of his analysis deals with the declining role and influence of Belgium in the Congo, a decline that is in part due to lack of sufficient preparation for independence, support for the Katanga secession, the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, and the Mobutu dictatorship.

Placing this decline in Belgian political, economic, and social ties with the Congo in a comparative perspective, Vanthemsche shows how Belgium as a colonial latecomer had too little time in which to cultivate the kinds of relations that the British, the Dutch, the French and the Portuguese established with their respective colonies. Consequently, the number of Belgians who returned home following decolonization and the number of Congolese who moved to Belgium since independence pale in comparison to what happened with the major colonial empires. While it is true, as the author points out, that the Congolese community in Belgium is the eleventh largest foreign group in Belgium, its political weight and cultural presence do rank much higher.

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Nina Wilen. 2012. *Justifying Interventions in Africa: (De)stabilizing Sovereignty in Liberia, Burundi and the Congo*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. xi, 225 pp.

In a well-written and tightly organized book Nina Wilen examines the crucial puzzle in humanitarian intervention: how does "one stabilize a state through external intervention without destabilizing its sovereignty" (p. 179)? To answer this question she employs a novel constructivist study of the discourses in sovereignty in the regional and international interventions for Liberia, Burundi, and the Congo (Kinshasa). She argues that sovereignty is defined by three components: the international and regional interpretive communities, the people within the state, and what she calls the logic of representation—the loop between those in power and the people. Interventions can possibly be seen as legitimate or destabilizing depending on the community involved.

Wilen also analyzes sovereignty in relation to UN nation building and developmental missions that followed these interventions. She privileges the concepts of capacity building and local ownership. Through interviews and primary documents she argues that the UN often works for the local population, and not with it—which is a subtle but important difference. The UN might have meant well in these post conflict nations, but it suffered from unrealistic demands and impossible timetables, combined with pressure from donor nations to get something done. The UN also inadvertently created a brain drain by hiring the best and the brightest and away from local governments. Wilen argues that in end: "local ownership and capacity building . . . function more as 'rhetorical legitimizers' [of the UN] than as channels to increase local participation" (p. 182). These missions have challenged the concept of sovereignty and created a culture of dependency.

Her overall conclusion is that intervention in Africa is indeed a paradox. In two of her cases (Liberia and Burundi) national sovereignty was destabilized by the actions of regional organizations. In the Congo, the Angolan and Zimbabwean led intervention strengthened President Kabila's sovereignty, but possibly at the expense of future state building. For Wilen, intervention is like an inversion of the saying, "good fences make good neighbors" (p. 189). External intervention (the violation of sovereignty) becomes a process to maintain international order (external sovereignty), not actually strengthening the internal sovereignty (and thus protection of the people) within a state. By the 1990's, the global solution seems to have

developed along the lines of creating "weak fences for troubling neighbors." This is a thought on which Wilen ends, on a troubling note: "If the aim is *controlling* our 'troublesome neighbors' rather than building strong sovereign states, then the idea of stabilizing through intervention might not be as paradoxical after all" (italics added; p. 189).

While reading this book two thoughts came to mind. First, to paraphrase Kwame Nkrumah *control* of economics is sovereignty. In all three cases, UN missions created dependent nations that rely on international aid to survive. However, 'international aid' can be a powerful weapon. All one has to do is look at the foreign aid discrepancies between Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Laurent Kabila's Congo in relation to who supports them. What economic flexibility the Congo now has comes from its ability to forge bilateral treaties for its vast mineral resources. This is exactly what Mobutu did—traded his external legitimacy as the sovereign ruler for private access to public resources. In this light, what does stabilization really mean? Does it not lead us back to the discourses of neo-liberalism and neo-colonialism that undercut sovereignty? A second theme that emerges from this book is the role of regional African organizations. The post-Cold War era was marked by African institutional experimentation of how far one can push the traditional understanding of non-intervention. The African wide sanctions regime in Burundi is a prime example. These interventions, as interest driven and flawed as they were, became one of negotiation between neighbors and institution building. It also empowered nations like Nigeria, Tanzania, and South Africa. While it does not justify their actions or the corruption, one has to wonder if these cases provide a regional learning curve in dealing with future conflicts on the continent.

Overall, the strength of *Justifying Interventions in Africa* is its theoretical contributions to the paradox of sovereignty and humanitarian intervention. This was one of the most exhaustive well written literature reviews on the subject of sovereignty I have ever read. Wilen's work is original, creative, and presents a compelling methodology of how to measure discourses and apply them to empirical case studies. Overall this book is more about sovereignty than it is about Africa. But, if you are interested in the theoretical and practical applications of sovereignty then this book comes highly recommended if not essential.

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