BOOK REVIEWS

Peter Alegi. *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa, from its Origins to 2010*. Scottville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2010. xi, 230 pp.

A timely update released before the FIFA World Cup in South Africa during the summer of 2010, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa, from its Origins to 2010* brings Peter Alegi's work forward from the original ending in his first edition up to 2010. The work adds to the historiography of South Africa as it examines the political and social context of football during the struggle against apartheid in the twentieth century. The book is divided into nine narratives in chronological order, some examining regions, others specific time periods, and then two devoted to the tradition of sport in South Africa from colonialism onward. Alegi focuses the reader's attention to the way football in South Africa brought relief from apartheid through the creation of sporting bonds that were created through competition, camaraderie, and collective action on the football pitch. A reader of South African history will quickly see the parallels between the characteristics of the struggle against apartheid and that of football: solidarity, teamwork, and cooperative strategy. The book attempts to show how the Africanization of the game came about and how the power struggles of local and national football associations shaped the sport into a primary pillar of Black South African culture during the 20th century. Alegi is a specialist in the field of sports in South Africa, specifically soccer. This is the updated version of his first book, originally published in 2004.

Alegi uses the terms football and soccer interchangeably, just as they do in South Africa. This mixing of terms likely results from the twelve interviews that Alegi conducted personally, as well as the over twenty he used that were conducted by other scholars. Additionally, his use of the archives in South Africa and the newspaper collection at the National Library of South Africa in Cape Town greatly informed his study. Alegi himself notes that this continuation of his work on sport in South Africa was written in the revisionist school of South African historiography that started in the 1970s. The accounts that he incorporates illuminate the world of South African football in a manner that provides a first-hand account from players, managers, and organizers that any country would be lucky to have as part of its history. It allows him to take the reader on a journey of football from the colonial era up until the time just before the first African World Cup. While Alegi does his best to provide a place for sports in the context of politics and society in South Africa during the chronological chapters of the book, readers will do well to have a medium level of knowledge of South African history to get the most out of this work. While it can be an enjoyable read for a football fan with no knowledge of the South African story, those who look to benefit the most from reading this study are academic scholars focusing on sport or South Africa. With a third of the book devoted to the bibliography, notes, and index, the book will certainly serve those looking to continue scholarship in this area. Although the lack of a singular narrative and the plethora of

ISSN: 2152-2448

personalities throughout can make it feel disjointed from a casual reader's point of view, I believe the match highlights and anecdotes of the difficulties facing the nascent football associations will be of interest to the football world as a whole.

While the book focuses on South Africa, it provides information on the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the government in Pretoria, and the use of sport as public diplomacy tool. The way international sporting bodies impact social and political development can be given a South African perspective through Alegi's narrations of the fight by non-white football associations to see South Africa expelled from FIFA and Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF). The politicization of sport in South Africa and the Union Government's response (or in some cases their instigation) should give those looking at the intersection of sport and politics more data to use. How sport can be used to affect policy change or promote ideologies can clearly be seen in the efforts of the South African Soccer Federation's (SASF) campaign for multi-racial sports associations to be recognized by international sporting bodies rather than the white-only associations, which had been accepted into FIFA and the international organizations of cricket and rugby. For a historiography of apartheid *Laduma!* provides a discussion of the origins of the sports boycott against South Africa, beginning with the expulsion of the white-only football association from FIFA in 1961. Football was now fully ingrained in the politics of high apartheid from this time on, and Alegi shows how this struggle led directly to the formation of a professional league, the South African Soccer League. He calls this the most important force in the country until the Soweto Revolt in 1976, due to the connection the league formed with black popular culture and the anti-apartheid movement.

As a prediction, Alegi states in closing that the primary benefit of the FIFA World Cup will be the delivery of emotional benefits to the people of South Africa rather than the economic and branding bonuses professed by the Local Organizing Committee, FIFA, and the South African government. The prediction is nearly identical to the conclusion reached by Kuper and Szymanski in *Soccernomics*. If Alegi constructed this belief through his own significant and wide ranging research in primary sources and sporting background, this overlap gives weight to the finding, and thus is of greater importance to leaders seeking to use sport as a political tool.

Alex Laverty, *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)*

Tim Allen and Koen Vlassenroot (editors). *The Lord's Resistance Army: Myth and Reality*. London: Zed Books, 2010. xxi, 356 pp.

Richard John Neuhaus wrote that the Holocaust is "our only culturally available icon of absolute evil." For those whose knowledge of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is restricted to what's reported in the standard print and television news sources, the LRA might seem to approach the Nazis' level of evil, making up in duration, barbarity, and spiritual bizarreness for what they lack in the quantity of their victims and clarity of their ideological hatred. This important edited volume is not an apology for the LRA, but it is an effort to offer deeper

understanding and greater context to the superficial coverage so often given to central Africa's most famous and most durable guerrilla force.

Allen and Vlassenroot have gathered together fourteen chapters by fourteen different authors who analyze various dimensions of the LRA and the twenty year war it has brought to Uganda, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and now the Central African Republic. They have organized the chapters in three parts. Part One offers various "Interpretations of Uganda's War in the North." Its four chapters examine the causes of the LRA violence, the ways in which the Ugandan government has used the LRA violence to attract foreign aid, the internal spiritual dimensions of the LRA, and the real political grievances that have motivated the LRA over the last fifteen years. Part Two, with five chapters, focuses on various first person experiences with the LRA, and includes the perspectives of a journalist/interviewer, child abductees, and the leader of a Ugandan group terrorized by the LRA. Part Three discusses issues related to "Peace and Justice," especially the Juba peace talks, the ways the internationalization of the war have impacted the efforts to resolve it, the role of NGOs in the peace efforts, the impact of the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation and its indictments against five LRA leaders, and proposals to rely on supposedly more "traditional" mechanisms to achieve justice and reconciliation in northern Uganda. The volume also includes a valuable "Introduction," which provides a basic history of post-colonial Uganda in general, and of the LRA and its war in particular. Right away, the readers are treated to the complexities of the political situation in and around Uganda, Sudan, and the DRC. The book concludes with a short "Postscript" which notes that although the LRA appears to have finally been thrown out of Uganda, the long-awaited peace of northern Uganda has been purchased by exporting the war into the DRC and the Central African Republic, to the detriment of the peoples there who now get to learn firsthand what the LRA is all about. For them, as for the peoples of northern Uganda and southern Sudan, the problem is not the "myths" generated by poor news coverage of the LRA, but the reality of the often horrific violence that travels with the LRA wherever it goes.

This volume is, to my knowledge, the most important book yet published on the LRA. Allen, a professor of developmental anthropology at the London School of Economics, and Vlassenroot, a political science professor at the University of Ghent, have combined the work of scholars (to include political scientists, historians, and anthropologists), journalists, psychologists, NGO advisers, a documentary filmmaker, and a local Madi cultural leader, to produce a work of impressive breadth and wide interest. In Part One, Adam Branch's chapter, "Exploring the Roots of LRA Violence," shows that like all wars, this one had real and complex causes, related both to internal crises within the Acholi community of northern Uganda, but also to the misreading and misplaying of events by Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM). Andrew Mwenda's "Uganda's Politics of Foreign Aid and Violent Conflict" claims that the NRM has done a better job of using the war to secure international aid than it has of fighting the war or protecting civilians in the war zone. Kristof Titeca contributed a chapter on "The Spiritual Order of the NRA" that shows how, despite its strangeness to the Western mind, LRA "beliefs and practices are constructed into a spiritual order which serves rational and functional purposes in the operations of the rebel movement...guaranteeing

internal cohesion and controlling and motivating the combatants" while also "intimidating the outside world" (pp. 60-61).

Part Two begins Sverker Finnstrom's chapter "An African Hell of Colonial Imagination?" that shows that the popular media's focus on the exoticism of the LRA has led to a failure to acknowledge the rebel group's real political platform, complete with published manifestos. Of course, how sincere the LRA leadership is regarding its supposed goals, especially those relating to human rights, is a different question altogether, and it's one Finnstrom does not adequately address. Marieke Schomerus contributes two chapters, both of which deal with the famous 2006 interview of Joseph Kony. The first, "A Terrorist is not a Person Like Me," shows how the BBC and *The Times* of London distorted the event by ignoring basic facts and essential complexities in order to fit it into a Stanley-Livingstone motif, but with a bizarre and barbaric Kony as the mysterious figure lost in the heart of Africa. The second piece, "Closing the Kony Story," is a more straightforward transcript of Schomerus' conversation with Kony in which he denies everything of which he is so often accused--attacking civilians, killing adults, taking the boys as soldiers and the girls as "brides," and stealing whatever his force could use. According to Kony, it is the Ugandan government that is guilty of all those crimes, while also spreading the lie that the LRA commits them. Christopher Blattman and Jeannie Annan provide an essay discussing survey results on former male LRA abductees. They show that the often reported figure of 25,000 abductees is too low (it's probably closer to 66,000), that the extent of psychological trauma among the former soldiers may be overestimated, that the LRA seems to target twelve to sixteen-year-olds since they are more useful than younger children but more easily integrated (and brainwashed) than older youth, and ultimately that the LRA is more strategic and "coldly rational" than conventionally thought (p. 154). Ben Mergelsberg chapter "Between Two Worlds" presents conclusions from months of fieldwork with former abductees, most notably that although labeling the abductees as "innocent helpless children" may be well-intentioned, it often neglects a more complex reality in which the former child soldiers liked soldiering, had real human agency, and are not nearly as traumatized as commonly thought (p. 176). However, the fact that some former child soldiers might have grown to enjoy certain aspects of fighting in the bush, or that they were able to adjust to their difficult lives there, does not change the morality of child soldiering. Ronald Iya, an Opi (i.e., a chief) of the Madi people of northern Uganda, offers a short piece that claims the worst we read about Kony and the LRA are true, and that those crimes are too serious for any traditional methods of reconciliation.

Part Three begins with Sandrine Perrot's chapter, "Northern Uganda: A Forgotten Conflict Again?," on the ways that the media, humanitarian groups, diplomats, and new judicial groups internationalized the efforts to resolve the conflict. Ronald Atkinson's "The Role of the Government of the South Sudan in Peace Talks to End the War in Northern Uganda" gives an excellent description of the Juba peace talks of 2006-2008. It stresses the impact that the ICC indictments had on the process, and how LRA intransigence and, ultimately, Kony's failure to sign, brought the talks to a fruitless end. Simon Simonse, Willemijn Verkoren, and Gerd Junne combined their efforts in "NGO Intervention in the Juba Peace Talks" to describe the role of the Dutch NGO IKV Pax Christi in helping start, then later jump-start, the Juba talks. Matthew Brubacher, who worked on the ICC team investigating the LRA, contributes an essay, "The ICC Investigation of the Lord's Resistance Army," that offers a window into the inner workings of

the ICC attempt to catch and prosecute five LRA leaders between 2002 and the present. As was brought up by many previous contributors, he acknowledges the challenges of trying to bring war criminals to justice while others are trying to bring the war to a negotiated settlement. He also offers some clear statistics on LRA atrocities--with over 850 attacks, 2200 killings, 3200 abductions, and a high number of sexual crimes in just the twenty-four months from 2002 to 2004. Tim Allen adds a chapter on "Bitter Roots" that critiques a different way of securing justice and reconciliation--the use of a supposedly more traditional Acholi ceremony called *mato oput*. He shows that the claims made on behalf of *mato oput* are exaggerated and confused, and may even be dangerous to implement.

For anyone interested in moving beyond the simplified coverage of the LRA so often provided in the main media outlets, this book is essential. In the end, most readers will conclude that Josph Kony and his LRA are as brutal as they are reported to be, perhaps even approaching some reader's standard of "absolute evil," but they will know a lot more than that simple fact.

References:

Richard John Neuhaus. 1996. "Daniel Goldhagen's Holocaust." *First Things* 65 (August/September): 36-41.

Mark E. Grotelueschen, *United States Air Force Academy*

G. Thomas Burgess. *Race, Revolution and the Struggle for Human Rights on Zanzibar: The Memories of Ali Sultan Issa and Seif Sharif Hamad*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009. xii, 333 pp.

This book is comprised of two first person narrative memoirs and an introduction highlighting the broader themes of interest within the memoirs and their relevance in considering the history and contemporary political situation in Zanzibar. The introduction provides both a whistle-stop tour of existing texts and important debates on Zanzibari history and an overview of the lives of Ali Sultan Issa and Seif Sharif Hamad in terms of their respective places in the political history of the isles, and how they fit into the broader themes and debates which the book aims to explore.

The two memoirs are representations of opposing arguments for and against revolution, the legacy and language of which is contested by Zanzibaris. Burgess suggests there are two dominant and opposing narratives that both explain revolution and mirror the political divide that is such a dominant force in contemporary Zanzibari politics. The first of these narratives is African nationalism, embodied by the ruling party, and represented in this volume by Issa's memoir. The second is that of human rights discourse, espoused by Hamad and the main opposition party. These dominant narratives, as it is framed by Burgess, provide a useful framework for understanding the form of the debates within Zanzibari politics and representations of the islands' past. He also introduces the idea of "memory communities," which it is implied follow the lines of this core debate. However, as Burgess demonstrates in his introduction, both memoirs demonstrate the complexities within these broader debates, even to

the level of the individual, particularly clear in Ali Sultan Issa's memoir, which is at times contradictory.

The real joy of this book is the insight gained from having such a large amount of personal testimony on subjects for which there is little historical media coverage, and indeed a shortage of academic texts as well. It provides detail on events which fulfils a severe gap in the existing literature, and also offers a new perspective on the way in which some events played out, contrary to often accepted accounts. For example, Issa discusses the role played by John Okello in the revolution, self-styled "Field Marshal" and generally accepted as the leader of the uprising. Issa staunchly denies this as a possibility and suggests Okello was used as a tool by the real planners of the revolution, who predicted his name would spread fear amongst islanders (p. 87). Similarly Hamad argues Tanganyika played a far greater role in the revolution than is generally suggested. He goes so far as to term it an invasion, rather than a revolution, which was masterminded by Nyerere (p. 190). It is these moments of profound insight into Zanzibari history, nestled amongst fascinating personal stories and a broader context of political trends at the time, that make this a continually surprising and interesting read.

The nature of this book clearly dictates its sources. Through a series of interviews with Ali Sultan Issa and Seif Sharif Hamad, Burgess has constructed the first person narratives which comprise the bulk of the text. These are supplemented by footnotes that add detail or draw attention to related sources at particular points. As outlined above, the memoirs follow an introduction highlighting the themes that can be drawn from the volume and provide something of a theoretical and contextual framework, which is useful before embarking on the biographical detail contained in the main body of the text. The only criticism that could be drawn from this structure is that there may be perceived to be a slight disconnect between the introduction and the memoirs themselves. Due to the brevity of Burgess's opening, it is densely packed with historical and theoretical information relating to the memoirs, whereas the body of the book is more allegoric in construction. That being said, any slightly jarring stylistic contrast is easily forgotten when taking into account the quality of each component.

Burgess has created two fascinatingly detailed biographies of key figures in Zanzibari politics and society. The book is of interest on a number of levels. It provides a compelling introduction to Zanzibari history from the advent of revolution to the recent past. The memoirs are intensely readable and of interest as standalone political biography. Furthermore, the book in its entirety, taking into account Burgess's succinct and illuminating introduction, coupled with explanatory notes, creates a captivating insight into the politics of nationalism and identity, colonialism, and the nature of power in Zanzibar, furthering understanding in a way that other texts on the subject cannot do, due to the unique personal nature of the text.

Charlie Wilson, *University of Central Lancashire*

Gaurav Desai (editor) *Teaching the African Novel*. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009. ix, 429 pp.

What is the African novel and how should it be taught? The twenty-three essays in *Teaching the African Novel*, a volume in the MLA Series "Options for Teaching," set out to address these

questions. Given the quality and quantity of existing works, by Bibalsingh (1982), Gunner (1984), Rogers (1984), Allan and Zandy (1997), O'Brien (1998), Booker (1998), Sullivan (1998), Hay (2000), and Chesaina (2009) among others, the need for yet another volume exploring the teaching of African literature is questionable. However, *Teaching the African Novel* has certain qualities that make it a valuable resource for teachers of African literature at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Although the volume is geographically and linguistically broad in scope, including discussion of literature written in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese, from sub-Saharan Africa and the Maghreb, the introduction provides a useful reminder that what we know as African literature is actually a tradition of African writing in European languages, which results in a hybrid and elite literature that is of little relevance to the vast majority of African people. Although Gaurav Desai acknowledges that the volume does not set out to provide complete surveys of national, regional, or language-specific literatures, or comprehensive treatment of themes or authors, the introduction provides a helpful survey of trends in African literary production and a reminder that oral literature is often excluded from the classroom.

Teaching the African Novel is divided into three main sections. Contributors to Part One explore the various theories and methodologies that have been brought to bear on the study of the African novel. Olakunle George's opening chapter broadly examines the question of theory while the following contributions focus in turn on the importance of historical and political context, Marxist and feminist positions, and the translation of the African novel. Part Two develops these theoretical and conceptual questions into an exploration of regional imperatives and thematic cartographies which, Desai remarks, "attempts to present some of the thematic concerns that have evolved with particular prominence in specific regions of the continent" (p. 11). These include Zahr Said Stauffer's insightful discussion of the thematization of the Arab African novel, Louis Bethlehem's analysis of the political concerns of Apartheid and post-Apartheid South African literature, and Peter Kalliney's encouragement to include discussion of the relation between imperialism and globalisation in the teaching of African fiction. Part Three, "Pedagogical and Institutional Contexts," brings together essays that offer concrete suggestions for course organization and describe best practices. Contributors to this final section engage with the question of how best to engage in a pedagogy of African literature that is intercultural without becoming trapped in simplistic exoticism. Some essays engage closely with this question, but others lose their focus. For example, while Mohamed Kamara's contribution offers a useful survey of the Francophone African novel, it provides only limited discussion of pedagogy. More focused contributions include Harry Garuba's "Between Three African Locations: Teaching Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart at the Universities of Ibadan, Zululand, and Cape Town'"and Cora Agatucci's "Introducing African Novels in a Web-Enhanced Community College Survey Course."

As with any edited volume, the quality of papers varies, but most provide cogent analysis and reach sound conclusions. Interesting links emerge between essays in the different sections, and some could indeed be located with equal effect elsewhere in the volume. *Teaching the African Novel* would have been greatly strengthened by the inclusion of a concluding chapter to draw together more explicitly the arguments of the assembled chapters. However, where the volume is most successful is in balancing discussion of the general and the specific. Overall this

is a carefully edited volume which, due to the range of theoretical overviews and array of topics explored, will be very useful for teachers of African literature and of relevance to postgraduate students and academics interested in the complexities of the African novel.

Charlotte Baker, Lancaster *University*

Kwame Essien and Toyin Falola. *Culture and Customs of the Sudan*. Westport, CT: ABC-CLIO/ Greenwood Press, 2008. xix, 193 pp.

Recent events in Sudan have attracted the attention of the international media and governments of Arab and non-Arab countries. Sudan caught their attention especially in the post 9/11 period because of its' Islamist government unsuccessfully attempted to impose Shari'ah on non-Muslims and scores of other injustices that fuel divisions along ethnic and racial lines. Interestingly, the media and other people inside Sudan circulating information about the crises in Sudan often present a single-dimensional case to the world.

Essien and Falola could not have published *Culture and Customs of the Sudan* at a better time. The authors build a compelling case, which takes into consideration historical and contemporary antecedents that shape the crises. They discuss their work within the context of ongoing debates on Sudanese identity and argue that diversity has weakened government efforts in organizing Sudanese within one state. One recurring theme in the book, which ties the eight chapters into a single whole, is the effect of diverse influences on the society. The long history of these influences does not only make Sudan a fertile ground for conflict but a hub rich in cultural and customary heritage. Beyond ethnic, religious, and racial differences, various lifestyles shaped by geographic conditions lead to uneven distribution of resources and diverse occupational pattern, which tend to fuel tensions and clashes. Essien and Falola point out that a visible determinant of conflict in Sudan is the attempts of the Islamic-dominated north to impose Islamic traditions in the south, populated mainly by Christians and adherents of African traditional religion. Complaints of marginalization of minority groups have come to the fore.

The authors demonstrate that Sudan has a history of marginalization and resistance to foreign domination since sixth century A.D., when Coptic missionaries converted Nubian Kings and members of the upper class, sidelining a larger portion of the population. The non-Christian populace often complained of discrimination against their culture. The advent and spread of Islam from the fifteenth century also precipitated similar complaints and fierce resistance to Muslim dominance over the entire region. Religious hostilities were further aggravated by Anglo-Egyptian colonial policy of containing the spread of Islam and Christianity in the North and South, which sharpened the religious distinction. The colonial government suppressed the south. Civil wars and the Darfur crisis arose from this long history of discrimination, resistance to foreign domination, and marginalization among a host of factors. Further, conflicts over livestock, grazing land, oil production, inequality and other factors combined to destabilize the region since independence.

According to the book, Sudanese media and literature not only represent voices of various factions but serve as an important source of understanding the crisis and appreciating Sudan's multiple cultural heritage. These modes of communication have propagated deep-seated pride

in the various ethnic and religious groups. Oral traditions preserve elements of African traditional religion and are passed by word of mouth. To ensure continuity in traditions, the older generation disseminated traditional values and customs to the younger ones. Sudanese proverbs, poetry, songs, folktales, literary works, radios, and televisions show the extent of diversity. These ways of communication indicate Sudanese interest for a lasting peace. While Sudanese across the religious divide pray to the Supreme Being to intercede, Sudanese literary writers, newspapers, and magazines appeal for coexistence and attempt to create a national consciousness. Similarly, music and dance in Sudan testify to the long history of multiple cultural influences. Music, musical instruments, and dance indicate Arab, European, and Middle Easternern influences in Sudan. Music and dance serve as purposes of entertainment, present the voices of the oppressed and are a resort for the poor and marginalized Sudanese.

Also, Sudanese architectural designs and art works reflect their diverse cultural heritage and Sudan's contrasting geographical features. While urban dwellers build walls round their houses that provide security and forestall greater interaction, in rural areas houses are designed to facilitate greater interaction. In their works, artists tell the story of Sudanese historical connection and reveal issues of identity, religion, oppression, famine, food, family, and liberation; difficulties that require solutions. A longstanding history of interaction among culturally different groups within and outside Sudan has enriched Sudanese cuisine and dress. Cuisine and dress do not carry only gender implications but communicate both traditional and religious significance. Customs, the Bible, and Shari'ah condition gender roles, marriage and family in Sudan.

Culture and Customs of the Sudan corrects the assertion by non-Sudanese that Sudanese women are passive and helpless. Although women do not have as equal power as men, they play important role in the family, raise political consciousness in the grassroots, and relentlessly struggle for equality with men. The status of woman in the urban areas is better than those in rural settings. African culture largely shapes Sudanese customs and lifestyles, but Arab, Middle Eastern, and European cultural elements are visible in clothing, cuisines literature, music, dance, art, and so forth. However, the concept of family, lineage and traditional values set the customs and lifestyle of people living in rural areas apart from urban dwellers. The city dwellers have been influenced by recent foreign elements such as the media, newspapers, internet, television, and music. Although Sudanese observe stringent gender roles and take age differences into consideration during interactions, communal interest supersede these differences.

The authors adopt a simple style to convey their message. The book has a bibliographic essay that provides readers with further references and chronology, which reveal, at a glance, the dates of major events that significantly conditioned Sudanese history. Indeed, the authors have achieved the task they set themselves to analyze diversity in a holistic manner. However, the interpretation of jihad as a "holy war" rather narrows the meaning of the concept, which misses the point. "Jihad" embraces a wider concept meaning, "to strive for," and waging a holy war is a last resort of the Muslim and should be mainly defensive. Considering the broader view, a Muslim's first focus of a jihad is him or herself. Further, the authors assert that Muslims are permitted to marry at least four wives simultaneously. Although Islam allows polygyny under strict conditions, the maximum number of women a man should have is four. Finally, the

art and architecture chapter would have been more effective and better appreciated if the authors provided pictures to support their descriptions.

In summary, the book discusses the crises in Sudan within a wider historical and contemporary context. The approach offers interesting dimensions of understanding the present state of Sudan. Given the approach the authors adopt, it is indeed a book to be read for a deeper understanding of the crises, the news that floods our televisions and radio every now and then, and the rich Sudanese cultural heritage.

Waseem-Ahmed Bin-Kasim, *University of Ghana Legon*

Paul Wenzel Geissler and Ruth Jane Prince. *The Land is Dying: Contingency, Creativity and Conflict in Western Kenya*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010. xix, 423 pp.

The book's cover declares in yellow capital letters: "The Land is Dying." But don't believe it. The grimness of the title does not at all capture what Paul Wenzel Geissler and Ruth Jane Prince do in this thoughtful and creative book. Although the loss of land is the topic of one chapter, the emphasis is on the "capacity of touch and the nature of growth" in western Kenya's Luo-land (p. 1). The subtitle's reference to "conflict" is not to an armed one between states, but the much more nuanced "conflicts about the making of social relations" (p. 357). The ill-fitting title is a shame since it will likely lead many readers to avoid picking the book up; it will be their loss.

The authors' main goal is to investigate the Luo struggle "to grow in a time of death" by paying attention to everyday practice and "concrete acts of touch between persons' bodies" (pp. 10,11). The authors justify their interest by explaining that touch is really an exploration of what it is to be a complete human being, since humans can only be whole "through material contact with others" (p. 357). As they lay out their argument in the introduction: "all kinds of substance—body and bodily fluids, food or earth—and all substantial ties established through touch and material contact have the potential to bring about growth" (p. 7). While some of these connections are more abstract than others, in general, the focus on touch as something more than just a sense is persuasive and thought provoking.

The book has eleven chapters and begins with three of introduction to the region, the home, and the raising of children. Chapters 4-10 make up the core ethnographic section and describe the importance of the home; raising children; care of the sick and dying; sex and pornography; widow inheritance; funeral practices; and a chapter based on the title of the book exploring concerns about loss of land. There is also a short conclusion and an extensive bibliography, including a list of relevant websites and music recordings.

The studies of the "everyday" begin in chapter 5, "Growing Children," which describes the raising of children as "productive, creative work" (p. 151). The chapter examines the practices of feeding and naming children and the preparing of herbal remedies. Within each of these areas, sharing emerges as a central aspect of child nurturing—an act that connects a child to others in the community, and which relies on a particular type of touch. The "touch" of sharing food involves "the woman who cooked the food," those who consume it, and even the cook's relatives (p. 157). The discussion of herbal medicines further broadens the notion of touch, which becomes a way to "bring living and dead in touch with one another" (p. 171).

"Order and Decomposition," the focus of chapter 6, is about sickness, death, and bodily decomposition. Two contrasting case studies from the same family are presented. In the first, a mother takes care of a sick adult daughter who has returned home. In the second, the same mother—in her role as wife—takes care/neglects (depending on one's perspective) her aged and ill husband. The authors explore the community's response to this woman's behavior. In the first case, questions are raised about whether it is right for a grown woman to return to her mother's home. There is a discussion about whether the daughter's illness is "chira"—a Luo disease caused by the breaking of Luo-specific rules (p. 201). Many of those rules are concerned with prohibitions and prescriptions around all kinds of touch (p. 203). In the second case, women in the village question the wife's indifference to her husband and implore her to "remember her love!" (p. 212). When the old man finally passes away, practical problems arise about what to do with the decaying body. In the end, it is non-kin male community members who take on the physically demanding tasks of handling the body. In both cases, touch, and lack of, sent powerful signals about marital relations, kin obligations, and shifting roles within the community. A community member told the authors that although the touching of a dead body was unpleasant, it was "a work of love" (p. 222).

Geissler and Prince are particularly skilled in weaving their fieldwork experiences into their arguments. The chapters often present formal case studies derived from their time living in Luo-land. They are frank in admitting certain information is only revealed to them after particular events. When their child is born at the local hospital conversations begin about child rearing. Funeral practices become more than theoretical when their home is crowded with mourners for days on end, and the importance of inter-generational sharing is driven home when a small child urinates on Geissler and he is instructed to thank the child for the "gift." Although they are anthropologists, they deftly discuss the history of the region and recognize the dynamic nature of their subjects.

The couple has worked in Western Kenya as both scientists and anthropologists for fifteen years. Geissler was originally trained in zoology, while Prince was trained in the human sciences. They both eventually re-trained as social anthropologists and returned to the region for fieldwork. The authors' broad interests—in the past few years, they've written about medical ethics, inter-generational relations, medicinal plants, religion, popular music, and produced a documentary about new motherhood—make them insightful guides.

The Land is Dying will be useful for anyone conducting research in western Kenya. I imagine many anthropologists will be interested in how the authors investigate change and modernity through the lens of touch. The book is an excellent resource and it is a good read: theoretical without being overwhelming, anthropological without being off-putting, serious but amusing. In sum, it is a rare and valuable contribution.

Melissa Graboyes, *University of Oregon*

Bayo Holsey. *Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008. 272 pp.

Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade explores causes and effects of silences entrenched in Ghanaians' understanding of the transatlantic slave trade. Like Saidiya

Hartman's *Lose Your Mother* (2007), Bayo Holsey also selects the Elmina and Cape Coast Castles as reference points and sacred sites for interrogating missing linkages entrenched with memories of an ancestral past. Indeed, these historical spaces have generated converging and diverging dialogues for probing the transatlantic slave trade—they remain contentious sites and a route of remembrance. In the words of Holsey, "the history of the slave trade is largely ignored [by Ghanaians] in order to maintain the coherence of the story of colonialism and independence" (p. 129). According to Holsey, the older generation "replace[s] narratives of enslavement with stories of their past integration into the Atlantic economy on favorable terms" (p. 22). She posits that there is a need for the contemporary generation to assemble their own views and that through this process they could refashion or establish new paradigms.

Holsey's central goal is to show how people in coastal locales are beginning to negotiate and create their own pathways in their definition of slavery. She does so by challenging the local people to excavate deeper into their past. This ambitious work seeks to unearth silences created by contemporary oral traditions that are manufactured by individuals, family histories, and other groups and institutions' traditions that purposely obscure the history of Ghanaians and establish their innocence in the middle passage. She notes that the government and tourism industry have both endorsed the comodification of sites of memories to accumulate revenue as they simultaneously erase historical facts (pp. 151-173). Here, Holsey grapples with a historical development that, in her opinion, is veiled by secret codes and covers up the sins and shame of the past.

Holsey's thesis is that, in general, Ghanaians' perception of slavery and the involvements of their ancestors are colored by Western narratives (pp. 3, 12), and that during the process of "construction of an urban coastal identity, early coastal elites eschewed discussion of the Atlantic slave trade" (p. 22). In the journey to refashion the slave trade in Ghana, Holsey is convinced that there is an awakening along the coastlines—one that has influenced people like Felix, her favorite tour guide, to use non-traditional approaches (incorporating Walter Rodney's thesis in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*) to dig deeper below the surface so that slavery could be discussed beyond the African diaspora (pp. 194-95). This kind of protest narrative is echoed in Holsey's book (pp. 137, 143, 221).

Holsey's anthropological approach heavily depends on interviews, her observations of junior secondary school (JSS) students in classroom setting, teachers, tourists to the slave castles, tour guides, and others. Through her interactions with the people of the twin cities of Elmina and the Cape Coast, Holsey takes the risk of tackling complex issues at the local level in addition to her controversial analysis of the Ghanaian school curriculum. The issues addressed in *Routes of Remembrance* are plentiful. They include, but are not limited to, the attempts of families with evidence of slavery to erase any unpleasant memories associated with slavery. The chapters cover broad themes including the role of elites in the construction of urban coastal identities. The work is divided into seven engaging chapters. The strength of the book lies in chapters where Holsey provides ample narratives and evidence to support her assertions. Chapter 5, "E-Race-ing History: Schooling and National Identity" is the most problematic and controversial part because of Holsey's excessive generalizations and her efforts to lump together the Ghanaian school system and curriculum since independence.

Chapter 5 suffers from an approach that adopts strategic nuances for coloring her views about how Ghanaians perceive slavery and the slave castles. Holsey conflates these complex historiographic debates with aspects of JSS/SSS (senior secondary school) textbooks. However, Holsey does not clearly tell her readers why the ongoing debates and epistemological matters in academia are significant to pre-college education in Ghana (pp. 130-141). Holsey fixates on one area, and in doing so she forcefully asserts that "postcolonial Ghanaian textbook writers have marginalized the history of the slave trade making it subsidiary to the story of colonialism and independence" (pp. 23, 123).

Holsey complicates matters when she proclaims that "fifty years later, in school textbooks, independence continues to be the end of the story" (p. 124). Probing the history of the educational curriculum without going back to what existed immediately after independence in 1957 or before the introduction of the JSS/SSS system in the early 1990s is misleading. What about the late 1950s through the 1980s? If Holsey is discussing the curriculum of the education system since its inception in the early 1990s, she must say so clearly and draw her conclusions within that time frame rather than generalize.

Certainly, postcolonial Ghanaian textbook writers provided adequate facts about the slave trade and wrote more broadly about this subject in postcolonial school curriculum than she admits. Holsey continues, "children learn to view Nkrumah as national icon and the embodiment of national struggle…the celebration of Nkrumah and independence extends outside of schools; it forms part of government's agenda…the history of the slave trade cannot find footing…thus, the history of the slave trade is largely ignored in order to maintain the coherence of the story of colonialism and independence" (pp. 128-129). Holsey tries to show the binary between the visibility of national history and the invisibility of slavery in Ghanaian historical discourse; yet she erases other key elements in her analysis. The background of how lessons about slavery evolved in classrooms over time is crucial to this discourse. Nonetheless, these facts are absent in Holsey's book. In fact, the nature/contents of textbooks for students preparing for Middle School Leaving Certificate Exams, General Certificate Exams (GCE), West African Examination Council Exams and other exams, all of which provide a wide spectrum of information, are neglected by Holsey.

Ghanaians who attended form five and six in Ghanaian public schools and those who wrote "sito" and GCE exams from 1960s-1990 would not find *Routes of Remembrance* very useful because it discredits the Ministry of Education of any meaningful contributions made to the educational system. Ghanaian scholars including historian F.K. Buah and others, did not distance themselves from this subject as Holsey suggests (pp. 123-24). Their works enhanced Ghanaians' knowledge of slavery, but they did not see slavery as a number of diasporan blacks do. Indeed, some of the themes that F.K. Buah and others underscore are absent from the JSS/SSS systems which were created by Jerry John Rawlings's government for various economic and political reasons in the early 1990s. It is imperative to add that the Ghanaian school curriculum has been crafted in different ways to provide different insights to suit the needs of different generations. Without a doubt, some positive aspects of JSS textbooks still remain.

It is clear that Ghanaians bring varying experiences to the forefront, but Holsey is often quick to conclude that they intentionally erase any memory of slavery, either in their family history or in oral traditions, in order to underscore their patriotic and nationalistic agenda.

Some sections read as if Holsey is hammering Ghanaians into submission or forcing them to surrender their unique cultural positions, generational differences, experiences, and worldviews. Also, it sends the message that the local people (especially the older generation) are living in denial.

Overall, *Routes of Remembrance*, as the name implies, provides another route for remembering the horrors of the past. Holsey forcefully concludes that "minimizing the slave trade within national history protects the narrative flow of colonial oppression and nationalist victory that allows Ghana to be viewed as member of a community of nations rather than a 'race of slaves'" (p. 235). Since the past is often in conversation with the future, refashioning the slave trade from the local to the national level would require a great deal of academic tolerance and objectiveness—one that would incorporate multiple historical accounts running next to one other—and "embracing" or sustaining oral traditions embedded in the history of Ghana at the same time. This "academic marriage" between the past and the present is possible as scholars continue to reconstruct these important historical events.

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Lise Morjé Howard. *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 416 pp.

Peacekeeping is a technique which has been developed, mainly by the United Nations, to help control and resolve armed conflicts. There is no agreed definition of it nor even agreement on when the first peacekeeping operation was set up. Professor Alan James, in a carefully researched work published in 1990, traces its origins back to the delimitation commissions which were established in the early 1920s to redraw a number of European frontiers after the First World War.[1] The official view in the UN is that the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) was the first UN peacekeeping operation. It consisted of unarmed military observers who were sent to Palestine in June 1948 to supervise a truce negotiated by Count Bernadotte in the first war between Israel and its Arab neighbors. It stayed on when, a month later, the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, "ordered" a ceasefire. A similar group was deployed a few months later in Kashmir. A major step forward was taken when the first armed United Nations force- the UN Emergency Force (UNEF)-was deployed in Egypt following the Anglo-French-Israeli attack on that country in October I956.

UN activities in support of maintaining international peace and security were designed to fall under either Chapter VI of the UN Charter—encouraging the peaceful settlement of disputes—or Chapter VII—calling for a range of coercive enforcement measures against errant member states. The system of collective security never came into being as envisaged. Instead, the UN embarked on the innovative practice of "peacekeeping," a word that famously does not appear in the charter yet has been the characteristic UN military operation. Since the UN's establishment in 1945, the nature of war and armed conflict has changed substantially, with interstate warfare steadily waning. With the end of the Cold War, the cover of superpower protection for local client regimes often disappeared at the same time that the major powers

began to discover common interests in inserting international troops and other peace-supporting personnel into conflict and postconflict situations.

Peacekeeping operations can succeed or fail but we are less sure of the conditions under which these outcomes occur. Improved understandings in this respect would enhance the potential for more successful outcomes. Lise Morjé Howard has written an important and stimulating text on the UN and peacekeeping, which leaves a lasting impression and which requires several readings to appreciate the depth of the analysis. This impressive work of scholarship subjects UN peacekeeping in civil wars to critical and rigorous scrutiny, concluding that accounts of their failures have been much exaggerated. Having been led to expect failure by the dominant narrative in popular, political, and academic circles, Howard instead ends up having to explain successes. The case studies selection which includes Namibia, El Salvador, Cambodia, Mozambique, eastern Slavonia, and East Timor—that centers on first level learning, Security Council interests and situational difficulty appear to be determing the outcomes, and learning or lack thereof remains an important and decisive factor.

Howard mentions that considering the civil war context of the interventions, the question is not why the UN fails but why it succeeds. Failure can be caused by a variety of factors including the warring factions, the lack of adequate UN funds or staff, or, finally, the internal UN failure due to bureaucratic rivalries. Thus, she does not neglect the failures, and indeed devotes a chapter to peacekeeping failures in Somalia, Rwanda, Angola, and Bosnia. But she focuses on the successes, devoting a chapter to each case. However, Howard's central point is that successful peacekeeping requires the kind of careful attention to local postwar situations that is best assured by according a high degree of autonomy to peacekeeping missions in the field.

The strengths and merits of the book easily and far outweigh relatively minor quibbles and a few more serious reservations. The cases are studied methodically using a common structure. The literature coverage is extensive, even while this book marks a self-conscious departure in the sophistication of its conceptual and theoretical analysis. The care with which Howard treats so seemingly simple a statistic as the number of people killed in Cambodia (between 1 and 1.7 million), citing several reputable sources for the lower and higher ends, is a good example of her scrupulous scholarship (pp. 131–32). She was able to interview an extensive range of relevant actors. Being a UN insider, she is able to draw on some important documents held inside the Secretariat. At the same time, she never allowed the mass of material to overwhelm her, cloud the big picture, or distract her from her main analytical story line. The writing is crisp, clear and succinct. And there are some gems: One is the description of Yasushi Akashi as too restrained and excessively tactful as a counter to his often self-effacing but (in the Cambodian context) effective style of leadership (pp. 148–49). Another is Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his UN memoir, *Unvanquished* (1999), writing thus: "I felt I had no choice but to rely on my political intuition, which told me I was right" (quoted on p. 170). That probably sums up his tenure as secretary-general about as well as anything can. Howard's wry comment that "the demise of the Khmer Rouge" has "not necessarily given rise to freedom and democracy in Cambodia" (p. 174) is reminiscent of the Japanese emperor's famous broadcast to his people—"the war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage"—announcing surrender at the end of World War II.

The study precedes by way of answers to three questions consisting of first certain favorable "situational factors of the country emerging from the civil war; consensual but moderately intense interests of the powerful members of the Security Council and finally first level organizational learning on the ground on the part of the UN peacekeeping mission. For Howard, the last, whereby individual learning by key actors in their official roles is manifested as organizational change, is the most critically important of the three. It includes information gathering, coordination of international efforts, integration of the mission with the local postconflict environment, and the exercise of leadership and judgment. She also identifies preconditions ("permissive situational factors," p. 10) for organizational learning in the field: information-gathering mechanisms, centralized field coordination, experienced staff distributed over the field, and capable leaders. Additional preconditions include the supply of well-trained and well-equipped troops in adequate numbers and requisite funding.

At the second level of organizational learning—the Secretariat applying the right lessons from one mission to the next (as opposed to learning in the field within any given mission)—the typical behavior is incremental adaptation. One important lesson that has been learned is the division of labor in the use of force, whereby the UN leaves this to powerful states or regional organizations while concentrating its own efforts on state building. Likewise, the UN has been markedly reluctant to take on the burden of administration since the Kosovo and East Timor missions.

This is a very impressive book. However, there some points and aspects in the analysis that one might quibble. One such quibble relates to Howard's use of the peacekeeping measure of success and failure. It seems a rather binary analysis partly due to the fact that Howard relates the outcome of the operation to the mandate of the UN, thus, in Bosnia, for example, the safe-area resolutions were adopted against the professional advice of UN military ground reports (p. 46). Therefore, the book strengthens the impression that the Secretariat has been ahead of its political masters. Second, in terms of the concept of "civil war" or "intrastate conflict," in most cases what we face are transnational and regional conflicts. The role of leadership—especially by the head of mission, force commander, and the UN secretary-general—is also underemphasized. It would have helped to bring in the principal-agent literature in discussing the role of the Secretariat as an independent actor in relation to member states (pp. 339–42). The Somali case is very relevant to the last point.

In sum, this is a first-rate book that deserves wide readership in policy, university, and informed public circles.

Reference

Alan James. *Peacekeeping in International Politics*. London: Macmillan for International Institute for Strategic Studies, I990.

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David McDermott Hughes. *Whiteness in Zimbabwe: Race, Landscape, and the Problem of Belonging*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. xx, 204 pp.

Whiteness without mastery?

Whites have been under close scrutiny recently; from Richard Dyer's *White* (1997) to Nell Irvin Painter's *The History of White People* (2010). Science has long demolished the argument for white superiority: David McDermott Hughes reports that "cultural anthropologists now concur [that] race is an imagined, constructed category" (p. xvi): somatic "whiteness" may not signify biologically, but, being socially constructed (and historically managed), it has existential meaning. In South Africa across the Limpopo from Zimbabwe where David McDermott Hughes' research was conducted, some whites in the community have been examining their commitment and their conscience and this book quotes from a number, including Melissa Steyn (*Whiteness Just isn't What it Used to Be: White Identity in a Changing South Africa*, 2001) and J.M.Coetzee (*White Writing*, 1988).

Hughes undertakes to focus "on the moral lives and imaginations of white Zimbabweans" seeking in various ways to answer the question "How have European settler societies established a sense of belonging and entitlement outside Europe?" The story begins with the Mugabe government's (if that's the right word) "project of social destruction" (xi), the farm invasions of 2000, but of necessity the dominion, colonial, and pre-colonial contexts are recalled.

Professor Hughes's drama is played out in two different scenes. Part One of the book, "The Zambezi," is concerned with literature and photography of the Kariba Dam (or Lake Kariba, a distinction important to the argument): Part Two shifts to the "practices of commercial agriculture" (p. xiii) in the district of Virginia, east and south of Harare.

Kariba was undertaken as a project of modernization and exploitation and in the process changed both the country's demography (a whole community of Tonga people had to be relocated) and its ecology (flora and fauna were threatened and had to adapt). Construction began in the 1950s, and the achievement was seen by the whites as a white triumph, among other things creating a land- (and water-) scape amenable to northern, temperate aesthetics. (There is no African word for "fjord": p. 60) As whites' political power dwindled, Lake Kariba became a place to be conserved, to which whites (and tourists and recluses) could retreat from independent Zimbabwe.[1] Using an impressive range of sources, Hughes paints a picture of a distinctive but still varied remnant, perhaps tolerated by those in power but still in their own way vital to the national economy.[2]

Water is also the central element of Part Two. In about 1990, the "hydrological revolution" (p. 86) was launched by the commercial farmers of Virginia, increasing the district's storage capacity seven-fold within a few years, and creating a "middle landscape…compromising between nature and civilization" (p. 97), which those responsible saw as both beautiful and productive.[3] Hughes gives a nuanced and vivid account of the responses of the commercial farmers to the farm invasions of 2000. Some defied the onslaught, some challenged (morally, legally, and politically), and some sought to compromise. The launch of the Movement for Democratic Change seemed to promise the chance of a return to the political bosom. Many made radical adaptations of their farming practices and in effect came to terms with the invaders, turning to more intensive farming of more concentrated spaces, and leaving peripheral areas for exploitation by their new neighbors, even managing what had become black-owned farms. Hughes reports that one white farmer in the district was killed (perhaps there were others). Many left the country: that option as much as their white skin had set them

apart. Some whites felt "more racist" in the new dispensation, some were able to move beyond racism to what Melissa Steyn calls "hybridity." As one white woman activist put it: "It's time for us to re-write that phrase [commercial farmer] as 'people of agriculture'" (p. 110). Hughes' last chapter is called "Belonging Awkwardly," and he writes movingly of one Greek-born farmer who built his dam "so that we, too, can leave something to the blacks. All these years while we have been living in Africa, these people have been taking care of us" (p. 129) .

Hughes's sympathetic account suggests hope for post-mastery whiteness, for "a more candid form of pluralism" (p. xv) in Zimbabwe. There is clearly a long way to go, though property and citizenship and class, but perhaps if a white commercial farmer can be an African, President Mugabe can be an African again too.

1 The process repeats that of some English country estates from enclosure and emparkment (commercial/aesthetic) to English Heritage and National Trust.
2 The South African poet Douglas Livingstone lived and worked in Rhodesia for some years, leaving in 1960 to return to South Africa. In late 1957, he worked as a diver on the coffer dam at Kariba, an experience recalled in his poem "The Skull in the Mud."
3 The phrase is from Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964).

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Curtis Keim. *Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind*. Boulder: Westview Press, 2009. xiii 234 pp.

The (so-called) Dark Continent of Africa conjures up in the American mind images that are distorted and not based on factual information. Moreover, according to the author, in his years of teaching African survey courses he found"…that students ability to approach the continent is deeply influenced American stereotypes about Africa" (p. 3). Accordingly, stereotyped images portrayed that are disseminated through media show Africa in terms of culturally loaded words like: jungles, tribal mud hut villages, cannibalism, witch doctors, wild life refuges, travel shows, safaris, etc., projected through,"…advertising, movies, amusement parks, cartoons and many other corners of our society" (p. 3). Also, Americans only hear about Africa when famine, disease, and governmental coups/internal civil wars are reported through global news sources.

Concomitantly, the author seeks to debunk these ethnocentric images by showing how Americans have acquired these stereotypes and "…where they appear in our culture and why they persist"(p. xi). Also, by tracing historical roots, he illustrates how stereotypes evolved and developed "into various words and ideas . . . [in order to] suggest alternative ways . . . to correct such negative outcomes" (p. 5).

Overall, the text is formatted and designed as an educational resource for teaching and learning about Africa. The audience for this second edition is for any interested individuals, not just teachers, students, travelers, and others, to learn"about what Africa is not" (p. xii). The book is divided into four major sections containing twelve chapters, along with an extensive

appendix, which includes a works cited bibliography and insightful notes plus information that is accessible from numerous websites and educational sources for reference purposes.

In Part One, Introduction, the author introduces the way Americans have stereotyped and filtered through the "popular culture" sieve, images of Africa portrayed in the media, videos, popular magazines, movies, and advertising. Such sources of information creates a mental image when pictures and words such as safaris, savage tribesman, sod hut villages, cannibalism, etc. appear for public consumption regarding Africa, thus promoting generalized stereotypes which generates spurious ideas not based on facts about the complex continent of diverse peoples and nations.

Part Two, Evolutionism, traces the historical impacts of evolutionary theory that began with Darwinism. These nineteenth century theories "showed how societies advanced from the simple to the advanced, from the simple to the more complex, and how the degree of advancement in one's society reflects the degree of advancement of one's race"(p. 5). Eventually over time such evolutionary ideas promoted European colonialism to spread their much heralded supposedly advanced societies to those purportedly backward primitive continents such as Africa (in this case) to help them to "catch up." To this Keim observed: "For example I frequently hear people say…'"How far behind us are Africans?' Such statements and questions imply a kind of cultural evolutionism, the idea that African culture will one day evolve to look like our culture"(p. 62). Consequently, such ideas translate into American foreign and military aid programs to "help" Africa toward modernization and upgrading their social and economic infrastructures.

Part Three, Further Misperceptions, explores in depth negative, positive, and "exotic" images that are shown in movies, television, magazines, and advertising. Also, the section describes in humorous anecdotes American beliefs about African cannibalism practices. Part Four, New Directions, challenges Americans to move from our isolationism and learn about Africa and to affirm that we "share the same time and place, that we are equal and different, and that our individual and collective well-being are inter-dependent" (p. 187).

This book is fully recommended. First, the research is thoroughly documented and clearly defines historical, sociological, and anthropological perspectives surrounding the problem of African stereotyping. Second, the book fulfills its sole purpose to be utilized as a teaching/educational resource to teach Americans about the real Africa.

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Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo. *Japan-Africa Relations*. New york: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. xv, 277 pp.

Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo deal with a really significant, newsworthy, and under-researched subject, that is the economic relationship between Japan and Africa in general. It also discusses foreign economic support to Africa by Japan.

Japan-Africa Relations seeks to study the complex nature of the dynamics of power relations between Japan and Africa since the Bandung Conference in 1955, with an emphasis on the period starting from the 1970s up to the present. The author examines specificities of the claims

of the Japanese state in pursuing these relations and those of the African states' demands as reflected in African conditions. The focus on Japanese economic assistance includes: technical assistance, grants, and loans. Additionally, the book seeks to identify and examine the dominant observable trends of these relations within the world system with comparative illustrations and to analyze the policy implications of these trends in both Japan and Africa in relationship to the issue of the search for new paradigms for social progress and democracy in Africa and a new power location in Japan.

Japan's relations with sub-Saharan Africa are, as Tukumbi observes early on, a virtually new area of inquiry. Previous treatments of the subject have tended to be somewhat journalistic or overly statistical, with Japan's diplomatic relations in the region being viewed as rather incoherent, and the statistics serving to underline the generally low level of economic interaction. Against this background, Tukumbi offers a laudably serious and yet readable inquiry into Japan's economic and diplomatic relations with the region as a whole, focusing on the period 1974-91, and reveals a consistency and dynamism on Japan's part which has typically been missed.

Following a useful overview of the state of research on Japan-Africa relations, the introduction outlines Japan's central dichotomy in its relations with SSA, which lay in its professed solidarity with the Afro-Asian group at the United Nations (and consequent 'obligation' to oppose South Africa's apartheid regime), on the one hand, and its desire to access the valuable natural resources located in South Africa (especially after the 1973 oil crisis had underlined Japan's general resource vulnerability), on the other. He then proceeds to explain how economic considerations guided Japan's external relations with SSA, and how this pragmatic orientation gradually took on a greater formality in the period 1977-84, under the sponsorship of successive prime ministers, as the Comprehensive National Security Strategy. It is his well-argued contention that Japan's relations with SSA can only properly be understood in the context of this strategy.

This book also highlights the significance of the G-8 Summit held in Alberta, Canada, where leaders of the G-8 countries adopted an Africa Action Plan (AAP). The plan was devised to enable G-8 nations to provide support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a newly launched program initiated by leaders of five African nations (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa). The AAP establishes how each of the G-8 partners, together or individually, will enhance its engagement with African countries in support of NEPAD's fundamental objectives. The G-8 Plan includes over one hundred specific commitments, which mirror the priority areas identified by NEPAD as the means to attain sustainable growth and eliminate poverty in Africa.

In the AAP the G-8 partners reaffirm the need for broad partnerships with countries throughout Africa to address core issues of human dignity and development. The fundamental premise is to enter into enhanced partnerships with African countries whose performance reflects the NEPAD commitments, including a political and financial commitment to good governance and the rule of law, investing in people to help build human capacity, and pursuing policies that spur economic growth and alleviate poverty.

The body of the work deals with a different dimension of Japan's interaction with the region. All are nevertheless crucial to the central argument which is carefully and

concisely synthesized in the conclusion. It offers an historical account of Japan's interaction with SSA in which the origins of the dichotomy above are traced back to the inter-war period. It also focuses on the evolution of Japan's trading relations with South Africa and how they changed with the institution of apartheid, as well as on the issue of resource dependency. Furthermore, it investigates Japanese foreign direct investment (FDI) in Nigeria, which is found to have contracted from a low level and to have been market- rather than resource-oriented, leading Tukumbi to observe that "the popular idea that Japan was interested primarily in the raw materials in Africa was grossly exaggerated" (p. 133). The central concern is to analyse the degree to which Japan's votes on the apartheid issue in the United Nations General Assembly were influenced by questions pertaining to its economic interests. The author finds Japan sitting on the fence, with a refusal to countenance either outright sanctions against South Africa or violent means to bring down apartheid, permitting trade between the two countries to continue, albeit on a lesser scale. The book analyses the pattern of Japan's aid disbursements to SSA and why, especially during the period 1975-89, Tanzania received such a large share of them. In this context it is argued that Tanzania's favoured status was not directly related to Japan's economic interests in the country. Rather, in view of Japan's weak stance on apartheid, the consequent low popularity among the Afro-Asian group of states and desire to maintain economic ties with South Africa, "it became diplomatically essential, if not strategically crucial, for Japan to cultivate good relations with the most politically significant OAU [Organization of African Unity] member state," namely Tanzania under Julius Nyerere.

All in all, Tukumbi's central argument, that the various dimensions of Japan's diplomatic and economic relations with SSA were driven by economic security considerations, is convincing. Measured against this pragmatic yardstick, Japan's SSA strategy is viewed as successful as well as indicative of an often ignored dynamism in the country's foreign policy. At the same time, the hypocritical dimension of Japan's relationship with the region is properly exposed. Having read Tukumbi's book, the reader will feel satisfyingly enlightened about Japan's relations with sub-Saharan Africa.

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Kimani Njogu and John Middleton (editors). *Media and Identity in Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. xvii, 333 pp.

Since the last quarter of the twentieth century studies on media in Africa have proliferated, furnishing the reading public with books and journal articles on the subject. But the media-scape in Africa, as elsewhere in the world, is almost always undergoing rapid change. Oftentimes the changes that do occur are little anticipated. The mobile phone craze that has changed the entire globe has changed Africa, and on a more profound scale than any prescient theorist or business mogul would have imagined or conceived at the turn of the century. The use of mobile phones in Africa has significantly dwarfed that of landlines. But questions such as

how and why mobile phones were used as incitement tools in the 2007 post election violence in Kenya are begging for answers. It is therefore heart-warming to encounter any new studies that shed light on the fluid media situation in Africa.

Kimani Njogu and John Middleton's *Media and Identity in Africa* arouses tremendous interest because of its apparent novelty. And yet the lesson we draw is that no text will be new enough for media. The rapidity of change makes that impossible. It is therefore not surprising that the volume does not and could not keep abreast with the impact new-look telephony in Africa, for example.

Media and Identity in Africa is a constellation of diverse contributions on the mutually dependant relationship between media and identity in the Africa. The twenty-four chapters on media and the construction of identity in Africa emanated from papers presented at a conference held at Nairobi in 2004. The essays are divided into three main parts, with Part I dealing with theorizing media, community, and identity in broad terms; Part II, focusing on Africa's encounter with global media such as the internet, books, audiovisual media such as videos and video films, etc; and Part III tending to be more country specific in its treatment of global media. The divisions of the essays into parts seem to be somewhat inexplicable given the general overlap between the parts, although the fact that all contributions address the major theme of media and identity exonerates the editors from charges of arbitrariness and sloppiness.

The essays articulate insights into how media influences democratization and how democratization in term impinges on the media and the profound significance of this interplay between media and democracy on post-independence Africa. In a larger sense, the volume seems to suggest, and rightly so, that media forms are an integral part of the whole vexed and vexing question of Africa's being and becoming. The contributors highlight the use of media, mass and small scale, for information dissemination, propaganda, entertainment, social networking, and any number of at once multiple and contradictory purposes. Paul Tiyambe Zeleza's contribution, "The Media in Social Development in Contemporary Africa," is particularly telling in this regard. Zeleza draws attention to both the constructive and destructive impact of media, and like several other contributors in the volume, cites the incitement role that radio played in the 1994 Rwandan genocide as a classic example of destructiveness of media.

The contributions are remarkable in their depth and breadth as they attempt to explain the media situation in Africa and what it means for the concept of identity and identity formation. But what is also remarkable is the broad range of audiences that the text aims to address given the varying degrees of readability and accessibility of the various chapters in the book. On the one hand, for example, there are pieces that are highly rigorous in their analyses and sophisticated in their theorizations while maintaining considerable readability such as Alamin Mazrui's "Language and Media in Africa: Between the Old Empire and the New" and John Kiarie Wa' Njogu's "Representation of Africa in the Western Media: Challenges and Opportunities." On the other hand, there are pieces poised to be beyond the grasp of the non-academic reader, notably V.Y. Mudimbe's "Epilogue: in the Name of Similitude," which is characteristically obscurantist in style and thrust. This is in fact not a critique of *Media and Identity in Africa* as such, but a commendation in that the volume has almost everything for

everyone because of the range of variety in the contributors' disciplinary approach and density of style and language. For a book aimed at meeting the needs of academic and general audiences, *Media in Africa* is an invaluable acquisition.

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Victor Oguejiofor Okafor (editor). *Nigeria's Stumbling Democracy and its Implications for Africa's Democratic Movement*. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008. xvi, 190 pp.

In light of the 2011 elections in Nigeria, this is a timely publication. The book examines the flawed Nigerian 2007 elections, the country's recent democratic environment and consolidation, and the progress of democratization on the continent. From this work, students of Nigerian politics will acquire a nuanced understanding of the endemic challenges that Nigeria faces in preparing for the upcoming presidential elections.

The edited volume was compiled, edited, and introduced by Victor Oguejiofor Okafor, a professor of African American Studies at Eastern Michigan University. Contributors include expert analysts and scholars of Nigerian politics based in Nigeria and the United States from the fields of political science, history, and international relations. The authors rely on various sources including online news articles, entries in scholarly journals, interviews, and independent and working papers. Few books are referenced. Since the majority of sources are by Nigerian authors, the book does not reflect the wide range of scholarship on this topic; perhaps this exclusivity limits the publication's scope.

Although the chapters in this work are not grouped into sections, the introduction briefly outlines the topics covered. The contributions can be divided into three thematic categories: Nigeria's 2007 elections, the democratic space/process in the country, and Nigeria's democracy in relation to democratization in Africa. According to Okafor, most authors in this compendium of essays argue that the real dilemma in Nigeria is the lack of commitment to democratic values and institutionalized rule of law by the political elite and not the feasibility of representative democracy. The chapters on the 2007 elections and the country's democratic space best validate his stated goal.

Chapters three, five, and six focus on the 2007 elections. In "Nigeria's Disputed Elections…," Okafor appropriately cites news articles to bring a detailed account of the 2007 elections. He offers an in-depth rundown of the political actors and institutions that contributed to the presidential and gubernatorial electoral debacle. In particular, he criticizes Olusegun Obasanjo, the incumbent president, for his unabashed manipulation of the electoral process.

Building on Okafor's solid foundation, Godwin Onu and Makodi Biereenu-Nnabugwu examine the electoral mishap on the sub-national level in "Dialectics of Patronage Politics…" Their essay provides a fascinating depiction of godfatherism, the patron politics that paralyze Nigeria's political institutions and subvert the democratic process. The coauthors convincingly argue that godfatherism has become institutionalized in Anambra state governance. However, in their eye-opening account of godfatherism and its tumultuous effects on state politics, the authors failed to elucidate a few key points. Nevertheless, readers will appreciate their analysis

of the underlying causes for godfatherism and the policy recommendations to mitigate its hold on Nigeria's political apparatus. Finally, in chapter six Onu reaffirms Okafor's introductory thesis. Yet perhaps he asserts the obvious: Nigeria's electoral irregularities will not be overcome with the introduction of electronic voting alone.

The second proposed category comprised of chapters two, four, seven, and ten, address the nature and consolidation of the democratic progress in Nigeria. "An Overview…" by Gloria Emeagwali falls short of a much needed, substantive examination of Nigeria's political history. Emeagwali does provide an informative biography of the presidential victor, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, as well as an optimistic analysis of his political record. In "Democracy for Sale…," Nkolika Ebele Obianyo offers a persuasive argument: Nigeria's market-oriented economic ideologies and policies have progressively shrunken the country's democratic space. Privatization policies decrease the size of the Nigerian state by selling state resources to elites in the private sector, who in turn finance or "buy" elections for select candidates. As witnessed in the 2007 elections, the democratic preferences of the public take the backseat to this market exchange. Obianyo's essay complements the chapter on godfatherism very nicely, unifying the two categories. Without financial assistance from godfathers, poor candidates could not finance their campaigns or secure party nominations in the last election.
Abayomi Ferreira's "The Role of Geographical Zoning…" provides a historical analysis of the federal character principle, which is the distribution of federal, state, and local level resources on the basis of geographic origins in Nigeria. Ferreira reviews the constitutional provisions for the federal character principle and outlines eight consequences of geographic zoning policies on the quality of Nigeria's democracy. However, a few of his observations are not convincing. One could contest that factors other than zoning are the true cause of these observed problems.

Rita Kiki Edozie in chapter ten argues that the 2007 elections reflect the economic and political problems caused by Nigeria's recent development agenda. She compares Nigeria with South Africa and Kenya. Despite, the comparative element of Edozie's piece, Edozie's and Obianyo's essays both discuss the failings of market-orientated democracy. Although, Edozie poses compelling questions about the democratic future of each country, it's a pity that her work does not include more scholarly sources.

Chapters eight, nine, and eleven focus on the democratization process in Africa. However, the pieces are underdeveloped and lead to the book's overall uneven quality. Sylvester Odion-Akhaine and Adeyinka O. Banwo both provide appealing but truncated essays; their works leave the reader wanting a more substantive analysis. The concluding chapter by Sule Bello possesses similar shortcomings.

This compendium of essays will be of interest to both the novice and keen follower of Nigerian politics. The publication is noteworthy for its detailed account and analysis of the 2007 elections. However, it falls short of a rigorous examination of Nigeria's elections on the democratization process in Africa. Perhaps, scholars seeking an in-depth portrayal of Nigeria's faulty general elections will appreciate the book's contribution to the topic as well.

Cynthia C. Ugwuibe, *University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)*

Augustine S. O. Okwu. *Igbo Culture and the Christian Missions 1857-1957: Conversion in Theory and Practice*. Lanham: University Press of America, 2010. xi, 329 pp.

Augustine Okwu's *Igbo Culture and the Christian Missions* discusses the role of Christian missions in the southern region of Nigeria, also known as the Igboland from 1857 until the end of the colonial period. Focusing on two main missionary bodies, the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) and the Christian Missionary Society (CMS), the book explores the different missionary methods and strategies and Igbo response. The book's underlying goal is to explain that Christian missionaries sought to completely wipe out the traditions of the Igbo people, resulting in the unsuccessful conversion of the Igbo to Christianity. In discussing the overall Christianization efforts, Okwu explains that the missionaries had a non-transformative influence and that this could be the result of a variety of factors such as the abiding relevance of the indigenous culture, ineffective evangelistic strategies, poor missionary personnel, absence of true missionary spirit, and the lack of understanding of the indigenous culture (p. 306).

Chapters one through three discuss the history of the Igbo, their role in the transatlantic economy, and the early Europeans reaching Igboland, of which the Christian missionaries are the main focus. The fourth through tenth chapters examine in detail the role of missionaries among the Igbo. From the arrival of the first Christian missionaries in 1857 to the end of the foreign Christian missionary domination in 1957, Okwu explains that the sole purpose and the testament of the Igbo political independent existence was the preservation of the people's way of living, customs, and culture; and these were the sole targets of the missionaries and their agents. The Igbos believed that the missionaries tried to eradicate all their beliefs without giving thought to traditional practices that were innocuous to Christianity. For example, the social and religious system that made each head of the family the keeper of the family idols (p. 198) was one of the practices obnoxious to the Roman Catholic faith. Nonetheless, Okwu shows the similarity between the symbol and sculptures of the Virgin Mary and a misunderstanding of Igbo culture on the missionaries' part.

Both the CMS and the RCM saw schools as the means for evangelization, and the Igbo used this resource for their benefit as they were passionate about schooling (including the author himself) for beneficial reasons. The local communities thought that if they sent their children to school it would prepare them for the emerging colonial economy (p. 157). The increase of pupils in the schools was misconstrued by the missionaries as a sign of a departure from the primitive to the civilized way of life. In conclusion, he explains that instead of the Christian missionaries trying to completely eradicate the Igbo traditions, they should have tried to Christianize the African culture.

Okwu used a large number of primary sources including archival materials in Europe, church mission journals, memoirs and biographies of church workers, missionary records, papal encyclicals, and government records in the United Kingdom. He also includes oral traditions, secondary sources, and his own life experience as both a Christian convert and a missionary co-partner in the evangelization enterprise. However, Okwu does not show the type of oral traditions or interviews conducted by him personally. The map (p. xi) does not give a clear picture the Igbo country as fonts are tiny and illegible. For generalized audiences not familiar with the Nigeria, it is difficult to envision the map of Igboland without the bigger

picture of Nigeria as a whole. The author does not give a reason for the time period he chooses to focus on. Since it covers a century, it would have been easier to follow coherently if the chapters were broken into time periods.

In conclusion, *Igbo Culture and the Christian Mission* is a valuable contribution not only to Nigerian history and African history at large, but also to the popular discourse on history of the role of Christianity in Africa. The book is dense and contains all information pertaining to the author's main theme. He also does not fail to show the gender relations at play during the period. It is appropriate for both specific and generalized audiences interested in understanding the role of culture and the overall Christianization efforts in Africa. The book is a required reading for understanding the different traditional practices of the Igbos, the struggle to preserve their culture and customs, and the role and effect of colonialism on the Igbo.

Adaeze Nnamani, *University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)*

David Peimer (editor). *Armed Response: Plays from South Africa*. New York: Seagull Books, 2009. xviii, 216 pp.

Editor and playwright David Peimer's selections in *Armed Response: Plays from South Africa* offer an insightful look at theatre in post-apartheid South Africa. Peimer's introduction situates apartheid in his discussion of the different styles and techniques used in resistance and reconciliation theatre. This approach provides new readers of South African drama with valuable examples of both apartheid and post-apartheid theatre productions. Specifically, Peimer focuses on *Woza Albert!* and *The Island*, canonical apartheid-era works, to explain the relationship between older anti-apartheid productions and the anthology's newer selections. Peimer's introduction immerses his readership in township culture, identifying the fundamental styles and approaches that define township theatre.

Relativity: Township Stories (premiered 2005) by Mpumelelo Paul Grootboom and Presley Chweneyagae explores physical violence, both police and domestic, in a township. Set in a community terrorized by a serial killer, dubbed the G-string Strangler, it revolves around a police investigation into the latest victim's life prior to her death. The inquest reveals a complex history of domestic violence that outlines problems of police corruption and sexual abuse in South Africa. The play also looks at the way destitution creates an economy of theft in the townships, showing the relationship between violence and poverty.

Bush Tale (premiered 2006) by Martin Koboekae develops from the accidental meeting between a black laborer, Jan, and a white madam, Marietta, in a remote forest. Marietta comes across Jan fortuitously as she escapes from a family friend on his way to vacation with her at the Beau Brummel Nudist Colony. Because of the small cast and single setting, the play has an easy, playful flow that uses humor to subtly address the political and social problems faced by the characters. Racial division is the prominent issue throughout the performance, but it also highlights the differences between male and female identities in South Africa, and the divides between rural/urban and private/public spaces. This play has a fun and witty style, relying on jokes and racial tension to drive the performance. Koboekae's work does an excellent job

underscoring the social divides in South Africa, suggesting education can help resolve present-day racism.

Xoli Norman's *Hallelujah!* (premiered 2002) depicts one poet's attempt to end violence among the black population in South Africa. The play mixes theatre, poetry, and township jazz to showcase the vibrant township culture for its audiences. Consistent with most of the anthology's other plays, murder and violent theft are at the heart of the performance. Bonga, a poet who has just risen to popularity, uses his fame to condemn the violent rape and murder of his highly religious Seventh Day Adventist neighbors, leading to an explosive and shocking climax.

Reach (premiered 2007) by Lara Foot Newton examines the connection between an elderly English woman and a former servant's black grandson. Set in the rural countryside around Port Alfred, this play looks at South African expectations surrounding the 2010 World Cup. Marion, living alone in a cottage, is frequently and mysteriously visited by Solomon. At first Marion is suspicious of Solomon, but once it becomes clear he is unemployed and lonely Marion accepts him into her quiet life. The play explores race, identity politics, loss, grief, and the divide between rural and urban spaces. The play foregrounds the divergent views between generations in South Africa, positing the World Cup as a potential solution to problems with racism, poverty, and violence for young and old.

The final play, *Armed Response* (premiered 2006) by David Peimer and Martina Griller, contrasts a German tourist's view of violence in South Africa with the public sentiment of her neighbors and friends. The play focuses on organized crime and private security in South Africa, highlighting the problems Anna faces when she decides not to employ private security to protect her house. Vusi, a spokesman from Armed Response, does everything he can to coerce her into signing with the security firm. When Anna's refusal to sign angers Vusi's colleagues and boss, the tension escalates as her life is placed in danger. Anna is not sure who to trust, the management from Armed Response, the police, or Vusi.

This anthology provides a strong foundation for the study of contemporary South African theatre. The selection of plays encapsulates many examples of township culture, such as jazz and poetry, central to the plays in performance. In doing so, the anthology presents an array of different perspectives on violence, identity politics, and theft—exploring each in relation to post-apartheid politics. This is an excellent collection for someone teaching political theatre or introducing new audiences to contemporary South African theatre; its manageable size and concise translations make the anthology accessible to a wide ranging audience. I would highly recommend this text to anyone looking for the newest works of township theatre or anyone studying political or African drama.

J. Coplen Rose, *Wilfrid Laurier University*

Jan Vansina, *Being Colonized: The Kuba Experience in Rural Congo, 1880-1960*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010. xiii, 342 pp.

One knows the Kuba well from Professor Vansina's numerous previous historical and anthropological studies of this "kingdom" in the southwestern part of what is now the

Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as from its celebrated standing among the paragons of African art exhibited in museums the world over. Or so one thought. But now we learn about the colonial experience leading up to the situation in which Professor Vansina found himself during his research there in the last years of the Belgian Congo. It is a revealing reconstruction of the realities of the times, from the contacts of the Kuba with Angolan traders in the late nineteenth century, documented in Portuguese records, through the turn-of-the century reports of self-styled "explorers," the administrative records and humanitarian exposés of the Leopoldian Congo Independent State, missionary, administrative, and company records of the Belgian period, down to Vansina's personal research notes, including the contributions of the assistants he employed. To set one's research in its own historical context, as this book implicitly does, is a courageous—and, one suspects, culminating—statement of intellectual honesty.

The format of the book is straightforward: it is for teaching as much as for scholarly audiences, and so the language is not technical, the apparatus is limited, and the narrative is filled out with what textbook publishers call "sidebars": short, often very personal, vignettes and documents bringing the arguments to life and offering instructors opportunities to grill historical innocents on the logic that links primary sources to integrated historical arguments.

The book's title conveys the concept: rather than the often-theoretically driven discussions of abstractions like "colonialism," or sensationalist condemnations of the well-known cruelties that overwhelmed parts of this region during the colonial period, it is a record of the Kuba experiences (*sic*—my extension of the title's misleadingly singular "experience") of encountering and handling Angolan traders, military columns, missionaries of Protestant and Catholic persuasions, their schools, road and railway construction companies, administrative officers, immigrant Luba from the east, tourists and collectors of famed Kuba art, and—finally—a skilled ethnographer and historian. The first half of the book lays out the arrivals of all of these outsiders, the shocks of the diseases and violence they brought, particularly early on, and the pressures of forced cultivation and construction labor that followed, though without melodrama. The Kuba kings, almost uniquely in the Belgian Congo, were accorded a degree of local authority (Vansina calls this relative autonomy "indirect rule"), and they took advantage of it to keep most of the outsiders on the fringes of their domains and to preserve a legitimating presence among the villagers. But the resulting cultural coherence and continuity, for which the Kuba became famed, came at the price of supporting two rulers, the local regime and the Belgians. This sense of the ironies of all history pervades Vansina's balanced account of "being colonized."

With the colonial presence thus established, the latter half of the book develops the Kuba experiences of it. "Village Life" in the Kuba kingdom suffered impoverishment similar to that of most of rural Congo, detailed in the concrete terms promised by the title's emphasis on day-to-day experiences. Administrative demands for the construction of infrastructure, plantation labor (palm oil in this region), a particularly hated system of "expert"-directed cultivation of food crops that had the effect of reducing the nutritional value of what people ate, relocations of residences, all eroded Kuba ways of working together in age-sets and left the generation of the 1950s in circumstances markedly less comfortable than those of their grandparents. Kuba life became more contentious under the relentless pressures. "In Pursuit of Harmony" highlights

the principal Kuba responses to the growing dissolution of their communities and their sense of lost abilities to preserve the proud heritages of their past. But the irony was that the Kuba did not blame the outsiders, who seem to have been tolerated as a bothersome sideshow. They might have hated intrusive agronomists, but they did not abstract "the problem" as a system. Rather they took responsibility for their own sufferings and sought to draw together through restorative cults of a sort that had brought the Kuba through hard times since long before the twentieth century. Over time, local charms blended gradually into local versions of missionary Christianity, in which the Kuba had no difficulty separating numerous elements of spirit familiar from their own cosmology from the irrelevancies of dress or other modern behavior of the European Christians. A thoughtful conclusion emphasizes the multiplicity of differing experiences of Kuba, behind the singularity of the book's title, emphasizing the costs of preserving the illusion of "tradition" in an isolated royal court to the many villagers in the region defined as a "kingdom," as well as the more familiar burdens of "being colonized." The book is as much about the Kuba managing to be themselves as it is about being colonized.

For this reviewer, the most far-reaching implication of Vansina's emphasis on "experiences," in all their multiplicity and contradictions, is its demonstration of the autonomy and dignity with which the Kuba peoples bore up under the intrusions of the traders, companies, scientists and technicians, police, and educators, all intent on trying to fix lives that the Kuba did not regard as broken. In epistemological terms, this alternative experience of "being colonized" begins to free African studies from its suffocating subjugation to social-science theorizing that inherently highlights the projects of the colonizers and limits the African actors depicted in terms so selective that they appear to have no opportunity other than to "resist." Somehow, the politics of nationalism notwithstanding, local communities throughout the continent got on with their lives, as did the Kuba. If African historiography continues to develop toward understanding modernity as people in Africa experience it, rather than as it is often theorized, this careful reconstruction of the diversity and ironies of "being colonized" will join Professor Vansina's shelf of previous contributions as a paradigm in the field.

Joseph C. Miller, *University of Virginia*

Kerry Ward. *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 340pp.

In the early modern period, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) developed into an "empire" of its own and enjoyed tremendous exclusive prerogatives such as imposing laws, establishing forts, factories, and settlements, exercising trade monopolies, signing treaties, waging conflicts with foreign nations, and inflicting capital punishment under its own jurisdiction in the Indian Ocean region. In the years between 1620 and 1799, the company empire, a colossal enterprise by all standards, established a web of territorial, transport, military, legal, cultural and exchange networks between South Africa and Java (Indonesia).

On the basis of extensive VOC archives and using postcolonial critiques, Kerry Ward shows how these imperial networks mixed, overlapped and intersected geographically and chronologically into a large and complex web; examines the diverse facets, peculiarities,

strengths and instabilities of imperial power; and argues that the networks' sovereignty was indeed effective and enduring, but also fragile and partial. Imperial networks are formed, empowered, broken, reconnected, and ultimately disintegrated.

Networks of Empire is about one of these VOC networks: that of free and forced migration, which places people into categories of slaves, convicts, and political prisoners and intersects with categories of bondage and with other networks made of the slave trade, penal transportation, and political exile. The VOC network of forced migration is based on the extension of Dutch sovereignty, which made up an imperial domain in which the company could impose its laws, run its businesses and make profits. Forced migration was legitimate, and it was the United Provinces that granted that legitimacy to the Dutch East India Company. The VOC put forward its proper legal system to run its imperial networks and impose an imperial order, but in the process of encountering other peoples and subjecting them to that system and order, Company officials had to negotiate cross-cultural concepts of legality and the rule of law to justify their claim to colonial rule.

Ward's book is interesting insofar as it examines the complexities of historical reality and the experiences lived by individuals within these networks and more generally empires. It is full of the lives of ordinary people and is fundamentally concerned with what these people did, thought in relation to, and as part of, the VOC Empire. The book is concerned above all with the peopling of the empire, which did not only involve the one million people who were transported from the United Provinces, but more significantly, the many more free and enslaved indigenous peoples, who were crucial for the Company's maintenance of its imperial networks and nodes.

The ever-growing scale of the Dutch East India Company over the two centuries of its existence was such that different internal layers of sovereignty appeared and were strongly characterised by tensions between the Company's concern with strict discipline to ensure the running of its business and the people (traders, sailors, etc) keen on promoting their own interests. This was one of the many challenges that VOC faced. Desertion, illness, crime, prostitution, piracy, and the diverse forms of illegal behavior, which were responses to the Company's building its empire on the blood, sweat, and tears of these people, were further challenges to the Company. Over time, they destabilized it.

Out of the network of free and forced migration, an Islamic network, according to Ward, grew. It was a network of pivotal importance since it was central to the Company's policy of exile, which was used whenever the political interests of the Company were at stake. People were exiled if they threatened the Company's ideology of social and political hierarchy. This Islamic node reveals both the strengths and limitations of the Company. If people could be physically removed from one colony or settlement to another, their ideas, beliefs, authority and charisma remained, and therefore challenged the Company's strict social hierarchies in its empire. Exile as a tool was not always successful indeed. The sites of sale, exile, and banishment shifted into grounds for conversion and the learning of Islamic laws and culture. The influence of religious scholar-exiles in the spread of Islam at the Cape of Good Hope extended to Java in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Sheik Yussef was one of the Islamic scholar-exiles whose religious influence shook up the Company's authority and its imperial networks. Sheik Yussef and many like him transmitted and transformed Islam practices all over the

region. Today, Sheik Yussef is still revered as a national hero in both South Africa and Indonesia.

Networks of Empire offers a different perspective on the Dutch colonial past. By focusing on the history of forced migration, it does justice to imperial networks that the historiography of Dutch East India Company overlooked. This socio-cultural history provides a new interpretation of the historical narrative of the nations of South Africa and Indonesia by focusing on their shared colonial past, and therefore their common history, a history of mutual encounter.

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