

## REVIEWS

### THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF FARMING

*The Growth of Farming Communities in Africa from the Equator Southwards*. Edited by J. E. G. SUTTON. Nairobi: British Institute in Eastern Africa. *Azania*, special volume XXIX–XXX. 1996. Pp. ix + 338. £25 (ISBN 1-872566-10-3).

This collection of papers from a conference held in Cambridge in 1994 focuses on the growth of farming in sub-equatorial Africa. The archaeological evidence is presented region by region, moving from South Africa northwards across the Zambezi to the East African coast and finally to the tropical forests of Central Africa. This south to north arrangement was chosen to underscore the point that cultural chronologies are ‘no longer the prime concern in understanding the growth and processes of [Iron Age] settlement’ (p. 14). While the organization of the volume is geographical, an underlying theme is to highlight new or contradictory interpretive positions that may lead to new avenues of research and investigation.

Several articles discuss the effects of relationships between autochthonous foragers and incoming agro-pastoralists. Vansina, for instance, argues that most of the population increase during the initial stages of farming settlement was due to ‘invisible events’ such as assimilation of foragers, rather than to population growth within agricultural communities. While some argue that the transformation from forager to food producer was impeded by an egalitarian foraging ‘ethos’, Kinahan presents archaeological evidence that suggests the adoption of pastoralism by Namibian foragers was facilitated rather than hindered by their ability to exploit indigenous alliance structures. His conclusion that even recent foragers are ‘an artefact of the pastoral economy rather than a survival of specific hunter-gatherer groups from earlier millennia’ (p. 222) coincides with similar conclusions suggested by others for the neighbouring Kalahari.

While many of the articles try to situate their findings historically in local as well as regional contexts, others use more generalizing social typologies, which often fail to impart a sense of historicity and cultural dynamics. Conflicting positions on the ‘central cattle pattern’ as an explanatory model of settlement structure illustrate this point. Huffman and Herbert argue (pp. 29–30) that the cognitive pattern underlying the ‘central cattle pattern’ was introduced ‘fully formed’ by Iron Age settlers with an ‘Eastern Bantu worldview’ characterized by a ‘patrilineal ideology’. Western Bantu peoples, they suggest, had a different ‘matrilineal ideology’, that generated an alternative settlement layout with a ‘street pattern based on generational organization’. To this reviewer, the postulate of an infallible and unchanging relationship between ideology, language, and settlement layout for almost two thousand years is not only unwarranted, but founded upon an overly positivistic view of social dynamics. Furthermore, Huffman’s position is contradicted by data presented by Schoenbrun, who finds that large-scale cattle-herding did not develop in the interlacustrine region until the last half of the first millennium – too late to have been the cosmological precursor for the central cattle pattern in southern Africa.

Lane’s paper is a useful counterpoint to such static and over-generalized models. Rather than simply assuming that a specific settlement layout was part of the mental template of Eastern Bantu, he argues that ‘a more productive approach might be to trace the genesis of these forms through the archaeological record

(p. 62)'. This position seems to be supported by Maggs, who finds that in Natal 'there is a constellation of cultural attributes within the Early Iron Age which is not explained by the central cattle pattern or by southern Bantu ethnography (p. 177)'.

Another set of papers discusses agricultural developments in 'Bantu Africa', a phrase that equates here with Central Africa. Linguistic evidence to document the spread of lexical terms for sorghum, millet and other cultivars is well presented in articles by Nurse, Blench, Phillipson and Bauchet, and Wigboldus. Particularly interesting are several papers that address the antiquity of banana cultivation in Africa. Rossel argues that the cultivation of ensete may have served as a 'preadaptation' for subsequent banana cultivation, facilitating its spread from the coast. DeLanghe, Swennen and Vuylsteke use genetic evidence for the diversity of African plantains to suggest this process occurred 1,500 to 2,000 years ago and preceded a later spread of AAA-type bananas across the northern tropical forests to the Atlantic coast.

Unfortunately, a short review cannot do justice to the large number of other topics, from the origins of Swahili culture to the impact of climatic changes, that are addressed in this collection. The only shortcoming of the volume is that many of the papers presented at the conference were not completed for the book; and instead of omitting them, the editor has included them as abstracts. Their presence is a distraction and, in some cases, the unsupported assertions they contain could be misleading for casual readers. Nevertheless, the book provides an excellent summary of new research results while identifying promising directions for future investigations. I highly recommend this book to anyone wanting a quick overview of recent research trends, hypotheses and conclusions relating to the later prehistory of sub-equatorial Africa.

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JAMES DENBOW

## RECONSTRUCTING LANDSCAPE HISTORY

*Misreading the African Landscape: Society and Ecology in a Forest-Savanna Mosaic.* By JAMES FAIRHEAD and MELISSA LEACH. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Pp. xviii + 354. £50 (ISBN 0-521-56353-4); £12.95, paperback (ISBN 0-521-56499-9).

In the early 1990s, James Fairhead and Melissa Leach, both social anthropologists, conceived of a project to examine the social and ecological dynamics of 'derived savanna' and deforestation in the Kissidougou prefecture of Guinea. In that transitional zone, islands of forest within a broader landscape of grassy savanna seemed a classic case of a landscape degrading under the expansion of human settlement. It was, after all, seemingly obvious that Kissidougou was merely a local case of the wider process of desertification (defined by the United Nations as human-induced degradation), which had long been the subject of development policy narratives of NGOs, the Guinean government and colonial documentation reaching back to the 1930s. Ironically, revisionist political ecologists also cited such degradation as a product of global economic forces and not local human action. This revisionism nonetheless affirmed the conventional wisdom about the loss of forest as the net result. It therefore seemed only logical for Fairhead and Leach to design a field-project to spell out the local social dynamics of the process.

Early in their research, however, local elders living in the forest islands convinced the authors that the forest cup was not half empty, but half full. Not only

were colonial assumptions about savanna expansion wrong, but evidence indicated that local management was actually generating new forest thickets. *Misreading the African Landscape* is an empirical validation of the Kissidougou elders' claims and a richly documented account of the ecological practices which translated human settlement into forested landscapes. It does what Ester Boserup implicitly championed but never proved: that the expansion of human settlement can, and often does, result in positive changes in environmental resources.

*Misreading the African Landscape* seeks to document two complementary tracks. First, it describes a solid body of field data on ecological history and social practice within the forest-savanna mosaic in Guinea. The authors use participant observation, aerial photographs, ethnobotany and intensive interviews to reconstruct the land management practices and social anthropology of two ethnically distinct villages in Kissidougou. Second, they use archives and policy literature to examine the origins and powers of persuasion of the degradation narrative which, they argue, has turned the actual history of savanna-forest vegetation on its head. To make these two arguments the authors have chosen to develop a number of thematic chapters to lay out their argument and evidence. Chapter 1 documents the origins of the colonial degradation narrative, which saw the patchwork quilt of forest and savanna visible in the early twentieth century as evidence of 'derived savanna' resulting from local mismanagement. In chapter 2, Fairhead and Leach set out their own reconstruction of the Kissidougou's historical landscape to reveal evidence of human-induced forest expansion. Chapters 3 through 7 place ecological evidence in the context of human history and social institutions in the region and in two distinct study sites, one Kuranko-speaking and the other Kissi-speaking. In the book's final three chapters, the authors rejoin their argument about these ubiquitous colonial visions of deforestation, and how they continued to dominate post-independence Guinea's environmental policy and the perspective of multi-lateral donors.

In the book's final section, Fairhead and Leach argue confidently that their observations are valid for virtually the entire forest-savanna zone from the Upper Guinea coast to Nigeria. They make the point that most environmental research in those areas has been ahistorical, but that such evidence as exists supports their forest regeneration thesis. In particular, they reinterpret the influential work of Kojo Amanor in Ghana (p. 289) to rescue his fine data from what they view as an overly deterministic political ecology. They cite, for example, Amanor's description of Krobo regenerative technologies which he offers as evidence of innovative local knowledge overwhelmed by global processes and chide him for describing these methods as innovations rather than historical practice capable of having shaped Ghana's forest landscapes of the past.

The book leaves a few questions unanswered about the interaction of local and global in environmental history. For example, the recent recognition of the historical role of global climate systems in the movement of the Sahara-sahel frontier begs the question of the role of climate in savanna/forest interaction. While the authors successfully debunk older assumptions about rainfall as determining historical forest cover, they do not offer an alternative view of local landscape formation except their general advocacy of a non-equilibrium ecology in which climate fluctuations play a key role (p. 281). Here is where a further application of a historian's scepticism may help; I would argue that landscapes (such as regenerated forests) are the results of local practice under broader historical configurations of climate, soils and human action. Environmental history's role should be to assemble the evidence to help describe and analyze these particular conjunctures to understand broader patterns. Without further empirical evidence from other historical settings in West Africa's rainforest, it may be too soon to conclude that Kissidougou's experience is universal.

*Misreading the African Landscape* is a powerful and ambitious book which offers a compelling new paradigm of research method and management philosophy. At the end, Fairhead and Leach come back full circle to consider the question of environmental policy and assumptions about management of nature and effectively challenge both environmental resource management and the underlying dependency models within political ecology. They conclude that 'the assumption that unregulated use [of natural resources] is destructive and that regulated use is not, may be unwarranted. The Kissidougou case suggests that under particular ecological conditions, use itself can lead to "improvement"' (p. 293). No doubt Fairhead and Leach seek to inspire an audience of social scientists and policy specialists – they doubtlessly will do so. Yet, more than anyone, I hope historians will be the ones responding to this superb example of environmental research.

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### MONTAGNARD HISTORY

*Mountain Farmers: Moral Economies of Land and Agricultural Development in Arusha and Meru.* By THOMAS SPEAR. Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota; Berkeley: University of California Press; Oxford: James Currey, 1997. Pp. x + 262. £40 (ISBN 0-85255-736-X); £14.95 paperback (ISBN 0-85225-737-1).

The montane environments of eastern central Africa offer a treasure house of special evidence which has so far been little exploited by historians. Generally, these areas enjoy the advantage of fertile, volcanic soil, perennial rainfall and freedom from malaria. Once given the iron tools needed to clear the natural forest cover, this was where agricultural populations could multiply faster than elsewhere. Agricultural settlement in montane areas normally expanded upwards from the lower levels to the higher, and can be roughly dated both by archaeological means and by the evidence from oral tradition. Clan histories tend to be longer at the lower levels and shorter at the higher ones. Nevertheless, agro-pastoral kin groups generally operated at more than one level, making their headquarters in the best conditions for subsistence crops and stall-feeding their milking cattle at that altitude, while sending their young men down to the surrounding plains to pasture the animals kept for breeding and capital accumulation. When agricultural settlement reached the climatic limit of the staple foodcrops, the further growth of population could be relieved only by migration, and it was the pastoralists, already acclimatised to life on the plains, who were the most likely to move. The diaspora of the Oromo from a montane agricultural heartland across vast stretches of southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya offers the most obvious example.

In *Mountain Farmers* Thomas Spear studies the case of the Meru and Arusha peoples living on and around Mount Meru. From his own observations and interview material gathered in two year-long field trips, and using the written evidence created by colonial administrators and Lutheran missionaries during the past century, he has reconstructed an outline history of the mountain since its first colonization by montane farmers from Kilimanjaro some four or five centuries ago. The two massifs are clearly visible from one another, and it was the opportunity for the cultivation of bananas, already long established on Kilimanjaro, which attracted the Chaga progenitors of the Bantu-speaking Meru to the south-eastern slopes of Meru mountain. The upward colonization of its westerly ridges by the Maa-speaking Arusha from the Maasai plain began much later, perhaps only during the early nineteenth century, when the losers in inter-Maasai conflicts

withdrew to the foothills and took to mountain farming. By the 1860s the two communities, though still in the course of upward expansion by forest clearance, were already in fairly lethal competition for the remaining land, with the better armed Arusha raiding the Meru for cattle and slaves and the Meru stockading their settlements for defence.

In the 1890s, the situation on Mount Meru was revolutionized by the imposition of German rule, bringing in its wake both white farmers and Lutheran missionaries. The farmers were settled on a ring of alienated land around the southern foothills of the mountain, thus increasing the congestion among both Meru and Arusha and closing the access routes between their highland plantations and their ranching dependencies in the plains. Both lots of African farmers spurned wage labour on the European estates, preferring to earn the cash to pay taxes by growing coffee on their own land. Some, however, identified with the Lutheran missionaries, so well in fact that when these were removed from them by the First World War, there were Meru clergy and school teachers able to carry on without European help and to train up a generation of literate and prosperous traders and coffee planters who became the articulate leaders of resistance to the continued alienation of their land by the British mandatory administration. Following the Second World War and the establishment of the United Nations Trusteeship Council, it was the Meru who organised the first appeal to international opinion against the alienation of further land on the northern side of the mountain, and so sounded, in Spear's words, 'a rallying cry for the nationalist movement throughout Tanganyika'.

*Mountain Farmers* is a distinguished contribution to the historiography of eastern Africa. Concise and lucid, it places the pre-colonial history of this small but significant region in perspective with the wider issues introduced by the colonial period. If any part of the subject has been short-changed, it is the brief period of effective German rule, when so many of the longest lasting innovations took place. It is noticeable, for example, that while the German records in the Tanzania National Archives appear in the bibliography, there is no footnote indication of where they have been used. Likewise, the Lutheran missionary sources consulted seem to have been limited to those available in Tanzania. But with a canvas of this size no one can be expected to have done everything.

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### EAST AFRICAN HISTORY?

*A History of East Africa, 1592-1902.* By R. W. BEACHEY. London and New York: I. B. Tauris. 1996. Pp. xxxi + 463. £45 (ISBN 1-85043-994-X).

According to the author, this book 'treats a number of topics in more detail than is accorded them in recent works on African history'. These topics are Lugard's land settlement in Buganda, the demarcation of boundaries and frontiers in East Africa, the Imperial British East African Company, German East Africa, the development of transportation and communications, the transfer of Uganda's eastern province to Kenya and the Uganda railway (p. xi). In order to carry his project, the author has made extensive use of Foreign Office archives, parliamentary papers and Zanzibar archives. The result is an admirable book that clearly indicates his mastery of the sources as well as his broad knowledge of East African history.

The book traces the major historical developments in East Africa in the period under study. The author points out that this region increasingly came into contact with the outside world, particularly Europe, from the sixteenth century. He then

traces the interaction between Europeans, Arabs and Asians with the coastal peoples of East Africa. Save for the Arabs, Asians and, for a brief period, the Portuguese, the intruders were not interested in settling in the area but rather in trade. Over the centuries, East Africa exported natural products such as ivory and timber, but in the end the slave trade developed into a major enterprise. For example, in the 1800s between 6,000 and 10,000 slaves were acquired annually by the Arabs and shipped to the Middle East from Zanzibar (p. 16). Omani Arabs also supplied slaves to British India until the 1840s (p. 17). At various times European merchants also took part in this human trade.

Beachey demonstrates that the Napoleonic wars and the slave trade compelled Britain to turn its attention to East Africa more determinedly than hitherto (p. 41). For example, she supported the Omani Arabs, and in the process Zanzibar virtually became her informal empire. However, in the nineteenth century the need to end the slave trade and European rivalry ultimately led to the colonisation of the region by Britain and Germany and the creation of Tanganyika, Uganda and Kenya, with the neighbouring areas falling into the hands of either the Italians or the Belgians.

At the dawn of the colonial period, the author focuses on those developments that were to shape the destiny of these territories in the twentieth century. For Uganda, he ably shows the pivotal role assumed by Buganda and the adoption of the policy safeguarding 'native interests'. In contrast, he shows how the building of the Uganda railway and the hospitable climate of the Kenyan highlands conspired to transform colonial Kenya into a white man's country.

The story is well told. The author demonstrates his wide and unrivalled knowledge of East African history and mastery of the archival sources: this is not surprising since he was, for a long time, a lecturer in history at Makerere University College in Uganda. There is a lot that is new in this book, including vignettes that one is unlikely to find in other publications. For example, the English are shown to have engaged in piracy in East Africa in the seventeenth century, particularly looting pilgrim ships on their way to Mecca (pp. 7–8). And Speke, during his explorations, did more than admire the scenery – he sired a child with the Kabaka's granddaughter (p. 191).

However, a number of issues deserve attention. Firstly, the book has very little to say about native East Africans. The emphasis is clearly on what foreigners did in this region. For this reason, students of African history will be hard put to find anything that tells them what the ancestors of modern East Africans were doing between 1592 and 1902.

Secondly, the author is apparently sceptical about the pretensions of those who study African history (pp. 110–11). For example, he complains that: 'Certainly Africans south of the Sahara could pose nothing like the wonderful art of Islam in which are seen high influences of the aesthetic force derived from above. *One marvels at the zealous attempts and relish with which many scholars try to play safe by overeulogizing African art and culture.*' (Italics added; p. 110). Consequently, he has little to say about the interior of East Africa.

This attitude is also reflected in his sources. Recent studies on East Africa are virtually ignored. Hence the book is replete with misspelling of African words or use of dated ones. A few examples will suffice: Hamites (pp. xxiii–iv); *Uniamwezi* (Unyamwezi, pp. 107, 108); *Mtesa* (Mutesa, p. 109); *Wyaki*, *Eiyeki* (Waiyaki, pp. 203, 401), and so on.

Furthermore, not all East African countries are fully covered. There is more emphasis on British East Africa at the expense of German East Africa. For instance, there is no discussion of Tanganyika in the early colonial period. Indeed the epilogue has nothing to say about this subject. (pp. 440–1). The same applies to Zanzibar, which is hardly mentioned after the partition of East Africa.

The author has accomplished what he set out to do – that is, to describe foreign intrusion into East Africa. For those interested in diplomatic and imperial history, this book has a lot to offer. However, it is unlikely to appeal to those who wish to know what was happening in East Africa – that is, to the ‘natives’ in the whole of East Africa and not just the coastal region.

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GODFREY MURIUKI

### PARTITIONING AFRICA

*Divide and Rule: The Partition of Africa, 1880–1914.* By H. L. WESSELING, translated by ARNOLD J. POMERANS. Westport and London: Praeger, 1996. Pp. xvi + 446. (ISBN 0-275-95137-5; 0-275-95138-3, paperback).

Since J. S. Keltie's *The Partition of Africa*, first published in 1893, while the process was not yet complete, that subject has inspired a continuous stream of writing – polemical and romantic as well as academic. Keltie's careful narrative of dealings between European governments has been supplemented by monographs describing how particular African peoples passed under the control of particular European governments; regional surveys of interactions between European and African diplomacy; sophisticated attempts to relate the detail of historical record to theoretical models of imperialism. In 1991, two historians made independent attempts to update Keltie's synoptic narrative. Thomas Pakenham presented *The Scramble for Africa* as drama, enacted simultaneously on many stages, in a work of genuine historical imagination which drew on some original archival research as well as a good knowledge of academic studies. However, that author's vision required him to concentrate on the behaviour of what this journal's reviewer called 'top people', most of them Europeans.<sup>1</sup> Pakenham made little attempt to contribute to a historical understanding of African experience, nor indeed to the theoretical debates.

African leaders received a little more attention in the more orthodox academic study by H. L. Wesseling, the leading Dutch historian of European expansion, also published in 1991. This now becomes available in an English translation which, like Pakenham's book, reads remarkably well. Wesseling has no new archival evidence, but his knowledge of the European diplomatic context is both broad and penetrating. Having read the Africanist literature with care and understanding, Wesseling approaches his subject through seven substantial regional narratives, which offer lucid and perceptive summaries of currently accepted scholarship rather than new information. His account of the creation of the Congo Free State is particularly useful. This approach carries some danger that inter-regional connections may be missed, but Wesseling never loses sight of the broad context of European politics. As a Dutch scholar he is well placed to assess the record of different empires; however, I do not think it is mere subliminal jingoism to question the judgement on p. 218 that 'West Africa became a predominantly French sphere of influence'. His perspective here is that of post-colonial politics; in terms of population or resources, Nigeria and the Gold Coast were surely the main prizes during the original partition.

As far as African experience is concerned, readers of this journal will find Wesseling's approach better focused than Pakenham's, though not very much more informative. He more clearly recognizes that African statecraft also merits study, citing, for example, Person on Samori; but he allows himself less

<sup>1</sup> A. G. Hopkins, 'Blundering and plundering; the scramble for Africa relived', *J. Afr. Hist.* xxxiv (1993), 489–92.

chronological depth than Keltie, who devoted a quarter of his book to Africa's external relationships before 1876. Wesseling provides an authoritative interpretation of the partition as an exceptional, and in many ways incoherent, series of events within the *longue durée* of European expansion, but he can only formally acknowledge historical continuities which remain to be studied on the African side.

*Banchory*

JOHN D. HARGREAVES

### GERMAN RULE IN USAMBARA

'*Die Ostafrikanische Schweiz*'. *Plantages, Planters en Plattelandsontwikkeling in West-Usambara, Oost-Afrika, c. 1870-1930*. By FRANS HUIJZENDVELD. Amsterdam, Hilversum: N. W. Posthumusreeks, 1997. Pp. xv + 523. (ISBN 90-6550-556-3).

The image of a hegemonic colonial state has been challenged in a number of recent studies which take the fragmented nature of the colonial process to be a sign of the relatively powerless position of colonial agents vis-à-vis local African political and social structures. In Huijzendveld's study, the chaotic decision-making of the German colonial government is presented as a factor in the failure of German intentions to create a settler colony in Usambara in German East Africa. It is also viewed as the underlying cause of colonial violence towards the local population, with disastrous consequences for African social, economic, political and ecological relations. The author argues that the region's problems, which became apparent in the 1930s, bear only a limited relationship to the demographic developments and the growth of a peasant mode of production from the 1920s onwards. The root cause of these problems should be seen in the violent nature of German colonial intervention at the turn of the century: a factor not given adequate attention hitherto.

The author's aim to relate the early colonial history of German East Africa to events occurring during the time in which Tanganyika was a British protectorate can only be lauded. The study provides a wealth of information on the various colonial actors – missionaries, settlers and administrators – and their conflicting interests and strategies. However, the interaction between the colonial state and these different groups within colonial society is not always clear in the book. At times the reader gets the impression that, if only the colonial state had functioned more coherently and not given so much sway to planters' interests, Africans could have benefited from colonialism. In other instances, the violence exerted on colonial subjects is inextricably linked to the colonial state itself (compare pp. 332, 517).

The author takes violence to be a complex process, which always evokes its own impotence and counter-violence. In the final analysis, however, very little is said about the forms of counter-violence and protest which colonial violence produced. There is brief mention of African initiatives (pp. 295–6, 379–81), but strategies of compliance, resistance and political organization on the part of colonial subjects remain largely undiscussed. Oral sources, such as work songs, could have complemented the missionary and government sources used for this work. Although tensions between various Sambia groups prior to colonialism are described, as soon as German rule is established the African population is presented as an undifferentiated whole. The abuses by local *akida* and *jumbe* belie the strong opposition between disruptive colonial forces and powerless Africans. The author's 'solution', to maintain that the local élite was no longer part of African society, can hardly be regarded as valid (p. 448). The limited usage of the



concept 'articulation' could have been extended here: not an articulation of modes of production, but of violent political practice.

The dichotomy between colonial violence and African victims at times results in contradictory statements. Thus, on p. 291, the author maintains that: 'Pacification and economic opening up had... led to major social disruption', whereas on p. 193 the same 'pacification' led to 'relative calm' and 'increased mobility'. It is furthermore difficult to see how a decade of forced labour, expulsion, land expropriation, brutal tax collection procedures, destruction and flight could have resulted in a period of 'social stability, population growth and new economic possibilities' (p. 391). Although Huijzendveld makes clear that these developments after 1906 did not relieve the work load of women and children, the factors underlying this new economic and cultural dynamism are insufficiently explained. The interaction between the German and the British period in the area also could have been treated more fully: the present project includes the period after 1914 only as an epilogue.

Huijzendveld's main thesis that the diminishing importance of irrigated banana fields and growing usage of rain-dependent cultivation ought to be related to the German period remains valid. The consequent erosion and soil degeneration are problems that cannot be solely accounted for by studying the period after the First World War. Yet, it seems that the factors leading to these developments are not only situated in colonial violence, but can also be sought in the famine and rinderpest of 1897-1899, the newly evolving economic structures after 1906, the First World War and perhaps factors relating to processes after the war as well.

Despite its theoretical and methodological flaws, the book certainly contains much information on German missionaries, settlers and administrators. Their hopes, problems, perspectives and practices relating to labour, land and production are well-described with the use of a large number of sources from different archives and a wide range of published material. In this respect Huijzendveld's book contributes to our understanding of the colonial process in general and of the under-researched German period in East Africa specifically.

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INGE BRINKMAN

## PROTESTS, IN MODERATION

*Protest Movements in Lagos, 1908-1930.* (African Studies Volume 37). By RINA OKONKWO. Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1995. Pp. iii + 118. (ISBN 0-88946-175-9).

Eschewing controversies in the historiography surrounding 'resistance' and 'collaboration' in colonial Africa, Rina Okonkwo examines protest movements in colonial Lagos, most of which drew their inspiration from common causes of discontent in British West Africa. Far from seeking to dislodge the entire fabric of colonialism, the protesters hoped to redress immediate grievances.

With the full paraphernalia of colonialism firmly entrenched in Lagos by the early twentieth century, the resulting taxation system soon conflicted with African interests. What was regarded as an unfair and oppressive 'water rate', introduced in 1907, galvanized traditional chiefs, women, the educated élite and the press into concerted action. The crisis reached its climax when, in September 1916, protesters marched on Government House. But these efforts by the grass roots soon foundered in the wake of government's draconian measures.

Okonkwo also explores the monumentally controversial land question in colonial West Africa. Although not as disruptive as British and German policies of land alienation in Kikuyuland and Tanganyika respectively, the West African Lands

Committee's decision to empower the colonial government to act as 'trustees' for African lands in Lagos provoked a land protest in 1912–13. The Peoples' Union and the Lagos Auxiliary of the Anti-slavery and Aborigines Protection Society led this protest against a measure which they perceived as oppressive and paternalistic, although élite disunity and endless bickering undermined their efforts. The decision of the Privy Council in 1919 to uphold the provisions of the Treaty of Cession of 1861 (allowing the White Cap chiefs to retain their rights to property) was, however, a welcome departure from colonial practices elsewhere.

Discontent in the Lagos civil service was fuelled by the prevalent practice of white preference in the colonies, which ensured discriminatory rates of pay and stifled promotion prospects for Africans. For Lugard, there was no 'native' qualified to hold a responsible post. Muted during the First World War, trade-union activity resumed with greater vigour in 1919 but the woes of African civil servants were not relieved by the depression which followed the war. In keeping with the nature of élite politics at this time, forbearance was counselled, strike action was prevented and many African union leaders were promoted after 1921–22 to posts hitherto reserved for Europeans. But at a time when Governor Wilkinson in Sierra Leone was bringing down the colour bar, Governor Hugh Clifford in Nigeria was determined to uphold it. Consequently, in conjunction with a vociferous press the élites engaged the administration in a bitter and acrimonious dispute over the plight of Africans in the civil service.

It was in this atmosphere of contestation that the Garvey movement with its philosophy of self-help, was introduced to Nigeria in 1921. Under the formidable leadership of Akinbami Agbègbi, Lagos became the hub of Garveyism in West Africa. But the Black Star Line which Agbègbi pioneered was encumbered by controversial charges of fraud against Garvey. Garveyism found expression in the establishment of the Lagos branch of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, which sought unsuccessfully to establish a technical and industrial institute for boys and girls and to conduct business on cooperative lines. If Garveyism sought to stimulate a concept of self-sufficiency among Africans, it achieved very little in terms of concrete results for racial advancement.

Okonkwo also examines the role of women in this context of protest. Three women's clubs (chief of which was the British West African Educated Women's Club) sought to revolutionize the concept of women as wives and mothers in a dominantly patriarchal society. Their efforts received a great fillip from the recommendations of the Phelps Stokes Commission and the *Nigerian Pioneer*, both of which preached the message of female emancipation. One result was the establishment of Queen's College for girls in 1927. Eschewing vocational training, which the activist Constance Cummings-John was advocating in Sierra Leone, Queen's was merely designed to train women to be practical housewives and wise mothers.

The storm of protest generated by Governor Thompson's poll tax was in many ways predictable. Its successor, the new income tax of 1927, evoked similar protests even from officials in the Colonial Office. Allowing for no deductions for wives and children (as in English tax law), the tax was judged by them to be 'superfluous' at a time when the government's treasury was booming with a large surplus. It was, however, the brutality of tax collectors which mostly incensed the champions of protest – the Nigerian National Democratic party. Paradoxically however, by the 1930s the age of violent protest was waning and because the NNDD counselled moderation, the tax remained in force.

Okonkwo concludes her book on a bleak note concerning the fate of protest in contemporary Nigeria. She argues that trade union activity has been severely curtailed by successive military governments since the New Labour Policy of 1975, albeit with varying results. As a study of the twin factors of *colonial* paternalism

and disregard for public opinion, this book clearly has a message for the present military junta in Nigeria.

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FESTUS COLE

### SOCIALIST POLEMICS

*South Africa's Radical Tradition: A Documentary History. Volume 1, 1907-1950.*

Edited by ALLISON DREW. Cape Town: Buchu Books/Mayibuye Books/University of Cape Town Press, 1996. Pp. 404. R135.95, paperback (ISBN 0-7992-1613-5).

This book is mistitled. It is not a documentary history of South Africa's radical tradition between 1907 and 1950, but a collection of 141 documents relating to minority socialist traditions in South Africa. 'Minority' should be emphasized: over twenty of these documents, for example, relate to a Trotskyist splinter group whose membership had, in 1938, 'increased to 11, 9 European and 2 Bantu' (p. 180).

Drew, however, argues that minority socialist organizations had a political significance transcending their small numbers, and that they have been marginalized in both histories and in documentary collections. She draws on sources emanating from bodies and individuals ranging from the Communist Party to Leon Trotsky, the Fourth International Organisation of South Africa, the National Liberation League and the Non-European United Front. She groups these in six thematic chapters, intended to illustrate various political dilemmas and debates among socialists: the problems in organizing a racially-divided working class, the relationship between socialism and the national question, the development of Trotskyism and the construction of political alliances.

Yet controversial debates, declared Edwin Mofutsanyana in a published letter reproduced here, should be reserved for oral encounters between Communist Party members; the aim of the Party press was to give rank and filers 'a line' (p. 224). In the main, this collection allows the various socialist bodies and leaders to do precisely that. The voices of African male workers or women are very largely conspicuous by their absence; this book is instead filled with conference agendas, programmes of action, resolutions, letters to and from executive committees, letters between comrades concerning organisational matters, draft theses (Majority, Minority and No Division on this question) and press articles ('Forward through the class struggle to international socialism and freedom!' (p. 332)).

A strong enthusiasm for the history of conflict among socialist intellectuals in South Africa is probably a prerequisite for sustained interest in these 404 pages. The collection might also appeal to those with an interest in scholastic Marxism, in propaganda or in vicious polemic. There are certainly occasional gems in between the diatribes against Stalinists or imperialist flunkies: 'If you can convince me that you are not a right-winger according to my definition, I am prepared to write to the *Labour Monthly* withdrawing my statement to that effect' (p. 66).

A documentary history, as Drew notes in her preface, represents its editor's historical interpretations. In this case, the central message of this book is that South Africa's 'radical tradition' between 1907 and 1950 was overwhelmingly created by male intellectuals, who wrote in English, were neither African nor working class, engaged in internecine struggles, sharply differentiated themselves from organisations with a mass base, and complained constantly of the primitive natives ('the Native is not only pre-capitalistic but even pre-feudal in his

backwardness' (p. 141)). There are, however, alternative readings of radical traditions in South Africa in this period; I find it unfortunate that these are poorly represented in a book with this title.

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HELEN BRADFORD

### NONVIOLENT MAU MAU

*Mau Mau from Below*. By GREET KERSHAW. London: James Currey; Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers; Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1997. Pp. 354. £14.95 (ISBN 0-85255-731-0).

Greet Kershaw's *Mau Mau from Below* is the latest of a number of books that have both advanced our understanding of Mau Mau and revealed its complexity and contradictions. Unlike the authors of other recent works, however, Kershaw did her fieldwork on Mau Mau in the middle of the emergency of 1955-7 and just before independence in 1962. In the mid-1960s she wrote with John Middleton *The Kikuyu and Kamba of Kenya* (1965), and in 1972 completed an outstanding dissertation at the University of Chicago, 'The Land is the People', still essential reading for scholars interested in pre-colonial and early colonial Kiambu district.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Kershaw taught anthropology but published little more on Central Kenya or on Mau Mau. It became known, however, that she had a fine collection of notes and documents, a keen understanding of the social circumstances leading up to Mau Mau and a generous willingness to share, and various scholars made pilgrimages to California to consult her materials and draw on her insights. She became, in John Lonsdale's description, an 'oracular presence in Mau Mau historiography, speaking to us in ways she could not fully control, through the mediumship of other people's footnotes' (p. xxvii). Rob Buijtenhuijs drew on her sources to write *Essays on Mau Mau* (1982), and her influence helped Lonsdale to shape the concept of 'moral ethnicity' which he expounded so persuasively in his two essays on 'The moral economy of Mau Mau' in Berman and Lonsdale's *Unhappy Valley* (1992).

Now Kershaw is speaking impressively in her own voice. She delayed publication for years, wishing to protect the anonymity of informants and believing that a microcosmic study of four villages and two sub-clans in the Githunguri division of Kiambu would have little value if she 'could not place the local population and its attitudes to Mau Mau within a larger context, and compare the findings to those of other areas' (p. 3). She now holds that this book can provide insight into Mau Mau as long as she does not make claims that it is representative 'without further evidence'. *Mau Mau from Below*, based largely on interviews, is intended 'to investigate why Mau Mau had occurred and what had motivated those who did or did not join' (p. 6). Because her informants made it clear that concerns about land were the real keys to Mau Mau in their area, she begins her narrative by examining land-acquisition in Githunguri in the nineteenth century and gradually brings the reader up to the time of the Kenya emergency, ending in 1953.

In one of her very valuable chapters on the nineteenth century, Kershaw explains that because pre-colonial people attributed land ownership not to individual merit but to the favour of gods and ancestors, the wealthy lay under an obligation to give *tha* (mercy) in the form of access to land to the less-blessed. Conquest and land alienation shook, but did not destroy, these spiritual and moral assumptions. During the colonial period inequality in wealth came to be 'deeply felt and resented; it was not the result of decisions of the spiritual forces but of men, who, by taking the land, opposed what the ancestors had intended' (p. 90). As Kershaw convincingly explains in her chapters on the mid-colonial period,

elders tried fruitlessly to pressure the government to respond to local grievances, but by the late 1940s, the landless and land poor, 78 per cent of the total, felt increasingly desperate. Though they blamed the British primarily, they also resented African chiefs who enforced land terracing and envied the wealthy, who were advancing while they kept falling behind.

Kershaw's discussion of 1950–3 in Githunguri, a detailed consideration of political manoeuvring and oathing in a local area during this critical period, reflects on not only the work of scholars like Mordechai Tamarkin, Tabitha Kanogo, Frank Furedi, and John Spencer, but also on the Mau Mau memoir of Bildad Kaggia, for Kershaw believes on the basis of her interview evidence that there were different oaths with different origins which were endorsed by different leaders, and thus there were different Mau Maus. She argues that a fighting commitment to Mau Mau and an anti-Mau Mau 'loyalism' were both out of place in the Githunguri area; after the killings and reprisals of the 'Marige massacre' of April 5, 1953 (a kind of miniature Lari) violence died down and the area remained largely quiet for the rest of Emergency. In spite of intense land-hunger, considerable anti-British feeling, and much suspicion and rancor between wealthy and poor, the elder's held firm and Githunguri did not explode.

That very quiet highlights a key contrast between the results of Kershaw's research and the results of the research of Tamarkin, Kanogo, and Furedi. The British allowed her to do fieldwork in this area in the first place because 'they were among the few Kiambu villages considered safe from Mau Mau attack at the time' (p. 1). Indeed, it is well known that the people of Kiambu as a whole were less involved in the rebellion than those of the Rift Valley, Nyeri, or Murang'a, and there have been a number of explanations advanced, from Karari wa Njama's suggestion that the better-educated Kiambu people wanted to sit it out to Rob Buijtenhuijs's comment that district activists were deterred by Kiambu's history of constitutionalism. Kershaw takes the position that Kiambu people 'regarded their Mau Mau as the standard' and thought of 'the forest fighters as a Rift Valley phenomenon' (p. 330). Her implication is that there was a non-violent Mau Mau centred in the Kiambu reserve area and a violent Mau Mau of the forests, apparently dominated by Rift Valley people. Since she clearly distinguishes this non-violent Mau Mau from loyalism and 'collaboration' (a term and concept she suspects is an outside importation into Kenya), her conclusions have implications for future Mau Mau research, some of which John Lonsdale has already begun to explore. However, Kershaw knows that her account of strong elders, weak youth, and a nonviolent Mau Mau only reflects the situation in Githunguri itself; the next task is for scholars to publish detailed monographs on Mau Mau in rural Nyeri and Murang'a to lay alongside Kanogo and Furedi on the Rift Valley and Kershaw on Kiambu. Mau Mau historiography has come a long way from the conspiracy theory of F. D. Corfield and the nationalist interpretation of Carl Rosberg and John Nottingham; the present direction seems to be toward fragmentation – many kinds of Mau Mau, many local Mau Maus – though some scholars will continue to investigate connections and to explore comparisons.

## NKRUMAH AS 'SMALL BOY'

*Kwame Nkrumah: The Years Abroad, 1935-1947.* By MARIKA SHERWOOD. Accra/Legon: Freedom Publications, 1996. Pp. 202. \$17.00/£9.50 (ISBN 9988 7716 0 6).

Kwame Nkrumah was a very private man for all the hero-worship that he engendered during his nineteen years at the heart of African nationalist politics. After his death the veil of privacy was partially lifted by June Milne's publication of his personal letters from Guinea, but his formative years in the United States and Britain have never been comprehensively researched. Marika Sherwood, by dint of tireless effort, extensive travelling and telephoning, persistent searches for small documentary traces, and interviews with scores of people who met Nkrumah fifty and sixty years ago, has created a complex, contradictory and compelling portrait of a youngish man who was jovial but studious, shy but ambitious, disorganized but persistent, reticent and introspective but 'friendly in a distant sort of way'.

When Nkrumah failed to pass British matriculation, he applied for a place at Lincoln University, a class-conscious college of 300 élitist black American students and a dozen foreign students from Africa. In his application he quoted the then hero of British imperialism, Cecil Rhodes, saying that he wanted a degree because in Africa there was 'so much to do and so little done'. In ten years he gained four degrees, one in sociology, one in sacred theology, one in education, and one in philosophy, and he apparently wrote two draft theses, one in philosophy and one in political science, though neither of them gained him the doctorate he craved. The university was tolerant in rescheduling his debts during the depression and the war as he sought casual work as a tutor, a preacher, a fishmonger, a waiter and a temporary seaman. His most lucrative vacation job was as a 'native informant' teaching the Fanti language to American intelligence operatives under the command of Ralph Bunche, the man who subsequently moved to the United Nations, won the Nobel Peace Prize, and dealt with Nkrumah again over the Congo crisis of 1960. Before leaving America, Nkrumah was photographed with Lincoln's African football team, but the aloof, bespectacled, mature student was safely distanced from the hurly burly of body contact by adopting the role of referee.

In May 1945, Nkrumah arrived in England still intent on gaining paper qualifications and professional recognition either as an academic or as a barrister, though neither option proved viable. Instead he gravitated into a world of West Indian political activists, semi-wealthy white communists, socialist campaigners opposed to Labour's colonial policies, students and ex-students from the empire, and black *émigrés* from such diverse fields as journalism and seafaring. Marika Sherwood is an historian who knows this world of post-war austerity and segregation intimately and her analysis of the factions and personalities that swirled around Nkrumah represents gripping detective work. Each page provides a fresh corrective to Nkrumah's own 'autobiographical' memory of his motives and activities. Did he work as a waiter in the Grosvenor House Hotel? Did the British Communist Party refuse to enrol him so as not to jeopardise his subsequent usefulness back home? Did he trade in diamonds on behalf of his cousin and financial sponsor, Ackah Watson of the Bank of British West Africa? George Padmore considered religion to be Nkrumah's major 'weakness' and in America he had apparently considered becoming the Revd. Nkrumah when he failed to become Dr Nkrumah. But the complex and impecunious 'student' was most convincingly encapsulated in the words of his landlady, Florence Manley, who said he was 'so much a small boy in his ways'.

One over-riding question among many is why did Nkrumah almost never write? His politics thesis was never finished though a fragment of it was published by the Communist Party's Farleigh Press at Watford in 1947 under the title of *Towards Colonial Freedom* and a genuine copy has finally been tracked down in Australia. Nkrumah's first foray into journalism foundered when *The New African*, an eight-page monthly on colonial affairs, ceased trading after five issues. Nkrumah attempted unsuccessfully to write an autobiography in America, then tried equally abortively to get the executive secretary of the West African National Secretariat to write one for him in 1948, and finally presented his own self-image in 1957 largely in the words of the secretary who managed his office as Gold Coast prime minister. Perhaps it was an infelicity of literary style that handicapped Nkrumah in the written culture of the west. In the oral culture of Africa, his magic touch blossomed for a few brief years in the 1950s before he was crushed by a modern world whose demands overwhelmed his conflicting ideals and his financial innocence. No scholar wishing to explore those ideals and that innocence will henceforth be able to neglect the treasure trove of Marika Sherwood's footnotes.

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### PORTUGUESE DECOLONIZATION

*The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa: Metropolitan Revolution and the Dissolution of Empire.* By NORRIE MACQUEEN. London: Longman, 1997. Pp. xvii + 266. £14.99, paperback (ISBN 0 582 25993 2).

There are usually two ways of looking at the violent and traumatic decolonization of Portuguese Africa. The first is to see it as a messy muddle largely explained by the Portuguese failure to adapt to the 'winds of change' in Africa – meaning the failure to recognize the need to relinquish its colonies. The second is to view it as the logical outcome of a form of colonization unlike any other – an extension of the argument that the Portuguese empire was inherently 'different'.

The merit of MacQueen's book is to show that Portuguese decolonization is not best explained by either one of these two (artificially) dichotomized interpretations. Instead, *The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa* explains that the modalities of the end of the Portuguese African empire are to be understood as the outcome of the highly equivocal interaction between very strongly politicized armed forces and the inertia of a deeply 'depoliticized' regime nearing the end of its natural life. Portuguese decolonization was singular, then, not because Portuguese colonization was different, but because the circumstances of Portugal's political life in the second half of the twentieth century were atypical by European standards.

The originality of MacQueen's book is that it throws light on the very specific ways in which Portugal's politics impinged on the dissolution of empire in Africa; its strength is in the details furnished about the genesis of the 25 April 1974 coup – which ended forty-eight years of dictatorship and ushered in both democratization in Portugal and decolonization in Africa – and the complex diplomacy of negotiations, which resulted in the 'granting' of independence of the five Portuguese African colonies within twenty months.

Chapters 4–6, which chronicle the intricacies of the colonial end-game within the context of a constantly shifting political situation in Portugal, are drawn from research in a large number of sources, including interviews with some of the key participants. They give a good account of the confusion, contradictions and mistakes made in the frenzied activity which sought to reconcile the demands of the anti-colonial movements in Africa and the various political actors in Lisbon.

Among the factors which made decolonization in Portuguese Africa particularly difficult, the author rightly highlights: (1) the contradictions within the Portuguese government(s) between the Spínolists, whose plan for self-government was both unrealistic in the circumstances and unacceptable to the African nationalists, and the more radical members of the armed forces who favoured immediate independence; (2) the lack of Portuguese options in a context where the armed forces simply refused to continue fighting in Africa; (3) the impossibility of reconciling settler interests in Angola and Mozambique with the demands of the African nationalists; and (4) the nightmare of the Angolan situation in which Portugal had neither the means nor the clout to enforce a satisfactory solution.

The author argues, correctly in my view, that however messy the decolonization of Portuguese Africa, the outcome of the negotiations could not realistically have been different given the historical circumstances. Nor is it clear that, in the circumstances, the decolonization of Angola and Mozambique could have been less traumatic than it turned out to be. It is, of course, the case that a different Portuguese regime might well have avoided the anti-colonial wars which broke out in Angola, Guiné and Mozambique in the early sixties. But, given that these wars did take place and given the effects which they had both on the politics of the nationalist movements and on the Portuguese armed forces, there is little doubt that the end-game could not have been very different.

Where the book is less satisfactory is in the historical introduction to Portuguese Africa and in the account of the colonial wars, where the reader will find a number of misleading interpretations and errors of fact – not to mention a surfeit of spelling mistakes. On p. 11, for example, the author writes, inaccurately, that the largest proportion of Portuguese emigrants to Africa were from central and southern Portugal. He refers to '*um estado une e indivisível*' which is inaccurate Portuguese. He refers to Algeria and Indochina as the models for the Portuguese notion of province, but the legal status of the two was quite different: Algeria was a French '*département*'. On p. 18, the author refers to the 1960 Pidjiguiti incident in Guiné although, as he notes elsewhere, the event occurred in 1959. He states that Neto, De Andrade, Cabral and Dos Santos served their apprenticeship together in Lisbon's Centre for African Studies when, in fact, De Andrade and Dos Santos were in Paris. There are many other examples.

Such errors and carelessness are regrettable because, taken as a whole, the book is a useful addition to the literature on Portuguese decolonization. The chapters on the actual negotiations between the Portuguese government(s) and the African anti-colonial parties can be recommended unhesitatingly to all those who want better to understand the extraordinary events of 1974–75 when Portugal was catapulted onto its long delayed democratic and post-colonial path.

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## SWAZI SOCIAL CHANGE

*Social Transformation: The Swaziland Case.* Edited by NOMTHETO SIMELANE.  
Dakar: CODESRIA, 1995. Pp. ix + 146. \$18.00/£9.95 (ISBN 2-869-780-443).

This book comprises six chapters contributed by six different authors, all of whom were working at the University of Swaziland at the time of writing. It aims to provide a 'coherent analysis' of social change in Swaziland by analysing the 'new social forces' that transformation has 'unleashed' in Swazi society. It is also interdisciplinary: three of the authors are political scientists, two are historians and



one is a geographer. Although the introduction is short, businesslike and generally to the point, it is confusing at times, moving forward and backwards as it summarises each chapter. This was probably inevitable, given that the contributors do not conform to a common perception of 'social transformation'. There seems to have been no attempt to provide any working definition of the phenomenon.

The 'alienation of the Swazi from the land by colonialism' is the theme of Bongani Nsibandze's chapter. This discussion of the proletarianisation process argues that 'a direct link' existed between 'the colonization of Swaziland and the crisis of peasant reproduction' that followed the Land Partition of 1907. The changes occasioned by colonialism eroded the 'pre-conquest' Swazi rulers' political power, while also creating opportunities for the same aristocracy to adapt. The appearance of 'changelessness' created by the system of indirect rule allowed the Swazi royalty to entrench their 'long-term interests' during the colonial years. In her chapter on migrant labour, Nomthetho Simelane argues that the country 'was deliberately and systematically created as a labour reserve for the benefit of capital' in southern Africa. Clearly, this is not an altogether novel or unfamiliar formulation. She further examines the effects of labour migration on agricultural development, a theme which is also tackled in the next two chapters. Indeed, there is a degree of overlap between her contribution and Hamilton Simelane's piece on 'Capitalism and the development of the Swazi working class, 1947-62', which is undoubtedly the most fascinating in the entire book. The author moves away from a 'traditional' approach to the study of Swazi labour history as 'an appendage of the labour history of South Africa'. Instead, he emphasizes a 'local' rather than a 'regional' approach, concentrating on the activities of the internal industries within Swaziland – such as Peak Timbers and Usuthu Forests – rather than those of the recruiting agents of the South African gold and coal mines. Simelane shows that the 'penetration of capital into the Swazi economy' after the Second World War resulted in major social transformation that drove labour from the peasant sector into the arms of 'capitalist enterprises'.

This fine essay provides many important insights into Swazi labour history. It also exposes the 'growing collaboration between capital interests and the Swazi traditional ruling class', which was always quite adept at using the amorphous notion of 'national interests' to capture the support of the ordinary Swazi. Interesting as it is, however, the 'local approach' contradicts the thrust of the previous chapter, which seemed to stress the regional interpretation of migrant labour. B. A. B. Sikhondze, who has written extensively elsewhere on cotton cultivation in Swaziland, discusses social differentiation among the peasant farmers in the period 1955-85. There seems little here that he has not already covered in his other essays. P. Q. Magagula's 'Politics of contract farming in Swaziland' begins with an impressive theoretical discussion of agribusiness. He provides case studies of the Vuvulane Irrigated Farms (VIF) and the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC), raising important issues about the relations between these two and the Swazi state. The chapter calls into question the Swazi monarchy's role, by stating bluntly that 'the idea that the monarchy embodies the aspirations of the nation is nothing else than political fetishism' (p. 112). Finally, Hezekiel Mushala's examination of small-scale irrigation in Swaziland focuses on rural development, which should move 'towards the transformation of both the economy and the socio-cultural sectors'. It is an important contribution that is really more a policy-paper than a historical discussion of social change, and therefore belongs to a different category from the other chapters.

The book as a whole is to be welcomed despite the uneven quality of its chapters, not least because it continues the trend of moving away from royal-centred studies of modern Swaziland. Many editorial lapses of a very basic nature mar the work,

such as misspellings and incomplete references. Overall, however, putting together their research findings about the country in which their own institution is located was worthwhile for a group of locally-based scholars, which is more than many African universities can claim today.

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BALAM NYEKO

### THE AME IN AMERICA AND SOUTH AFRICA

*Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa.* By JAMES T. CAMPBELL. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Pp. xv + 418. (ISBN 0-19-507892-6).

The appearance of a fat book on South African church history from a major publisher is a rare treat. James Campbell attempts the difficult task of situating the story of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in both its American and South African contexts. This is no mean feat, considering that a century of American experience preceded the spectacular advent of the AME church on South African soil. Ex-Methodist preacher Mangena Makone's decision to affiliate his fledgling Ethiopian movement to the American organization in the 1890s marked the beginning of a troubled but enduring trans-Atlantic relationship. A steady stream of aspirant black South African leaders, including Charlotte Maxeke and John Dube's brother Charles, were educated at the AME's Wilberforce College in Ohio under such professors as the young W. E. B. Du Bois.

On his American home ground Campbell writes with assurance and authority. He skilfully delineates the tension between the universalist egalitarianism and practical racism in the thought of Jefferson and Madison, which pushed the founders of the AME Church into seeking a segregated arena for the espousal of typically American aspirations. Vainly hoping to demonstrate by upright living their fitness for mainstream society, they clung tenaciously to bourgeois respectability and doctrinal orthodoxy. The result was a concept of a mission to Africa which virtually replicated the characteristic attitudes of white missionary societies. AME bishop Henry Turner praised Britain's role in ending slavery and opening up Africa to possibilities previously unknown to its 'slumbering' people. Charles Spencer embarked on his work in West Africa kitted out with pith helmet and the complete works of Henry Morton Stanley.

It was grimly ironic that South African black Methodists fleeing ecclesiastical snubs of ethnocentric white missionaries should voluntarily subject themselves to African American bishops horrified by the polygamous 'naked heathen' and disparaging in their appraisal of recent converts to Christianity. White officials, who had at first been alarmed by the political implications of religious Ethiopianism directed by uppity black Americans, relaxed when the AME leadership spoke the language of Booker T. Washington and preached the need for 'practical industrial education'. In the 1920s the Johannesburg *Star* reported with satisfaction AME bishop W. T. Vernon's comment that 'the native must measure up to the American standards before he can expect to obtain the privileges he desires' (p. 315).

While Campbell does an admirable job of following the changing fortunes of individual African American evangelists and South African black church members, he falls well short of achieving his proclaimed goal of writing a comparative history. This is because he provides nothing like a South African equivalent to the deep background he supplies on church and state in America. Like many who

preceded him, he treats South Africa as an independent entity in some way equivalent to the United States. Ignoring the British well-springs of religious, political and intellectual life is equivalent to writing about the nineteenth-century American South without reference to the North, Henry Clay, Harriet Beecher Stowe or Thaddeus Stevens. Campbell is bemused by African Christians' misplaced faith in British justice because he takes Milnerism as a template of imperial policy instead of seeing it as a sea change as profound as the advent of Woodrow Wilson's segregation of the American civil service after 1912.

The lacunae in church history are more serious. Campbell does not seem to have used any missionary archives, nor to have read very far into the secondary literature (the book has no bibliography). Had he dug just a little he would not have written that aside from John Dube, 'it is impossible to identify any black South African students in American colleges prior to 1894' (p. 252) or that no US-educated medical doctors other than Hastings Banda 'appears ever to have practised in South Africa' (p. 273); because he would have found John Nembula studying medicine in Chicago in 1886 and going on to serve as district surgeon at Umsinga in Zululand. Campbell's view of the early evangelization of South Africa is decades out of date. Mistaking the closed environment of the mission station for 'the heart of evangelical enterprise', he is driven to conclude that resistance to that system was the root cause of Makone's Ethiopian secession. Despite missionary claims for the merits of their stations, most scholars now agree that it was African enterprise in the bush, at the mines and in the cities which generated the vast majority of conversions to Christianity. If missionary tyranny and failure to ordain black clergy had been the root cause of Ethiopian secessions, then they would have broken out first in the authoritarian Roman Catholic, Lutheran and DRC missions. Whereas it was organizations with strong doctrinal traditions of congregational control such as the Presbyterian, American Board and Methodist missions which had the most early troubles.

The Methodists, with by far the largest contingent of ordained African ministers and a huge network of unsupervised lay preachers and preaching places, were particularly vulnerable. Viewed from the perspective of most modern church historians, black Methodist secessions represent a continuation rather than a rupture of Wesleyanism. As Mokone complained in his manifesto, which Campbell sets out at length (p. 118), 'the white ministers don't even know the members of their circuits. They always build their homes one or two miles away from the congregation'. It was not the failure to ordain black clergy but the failure of the missions to pay those ordinands at equal rates and to admit them to full membership with whites in church synods and councils which provoked early secessions. James Dwane's defection from the AME church to the Church of England mystifies Campbell – 'why truck with Anglicanism?' (p. 220). The reason is that through the brilliant stroke of creating the semi-independent Order of Ethiopia under Dwane's control, the Anglicans provided all that the majority of leading black secessionists had aspired to – recognition of their full clerical dignity and leading role in the Christianization of the sub-continent.

## ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

*Industrialization and the British Colonial State: West Africa, 1939-1951.* By L. J. BUTLER. London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1997. Pp. vi + 310. \$49.50 (ISBN 0-7146-4703-0).

This book, written by a specialist in British foreign and colonial policy, attempts to refute the claim by dependency theorists that Great Britain deliberately saddled its colonies with unbalanced economies that failed after independence. Instead, the author asserts that while this was true at first, by the end of the Depression, colonial governors in West Africa and officials of the Colonial Office supported economic diversification, and even colonial industrialization, as a way to increase the political stability of the empire by eliminating economic crises that caused social unrest.

According to Professor Butler, the Colonial Office engaged in a debate with opponents of diversification that included the Lancashire textile interests and the British Board of Trade. Later, when Britain's post-war debt weakened the pound, the Treasury joined the opposition by arguing against all projects that diverted resources from trade with the USA. At first, diversification's opponents rejected the Colonial Office's proposals because they hesitated to disrupt what they believed was a mutually beneficial exchange of colonial and metropolitan products. When the Second World War interrupted metropolitan production, the opponents of diversification began to recognize the value of colonial production, and after the war, they accepted the need for increased investment in the colonies. Yet they continued to oppose diversification in favour of increased investment in export agriculture and mining, the strongest sectors of the pre-war African economy.

Consensus on the need for increased colonial investment led to a new debate on the extent to which the British state should become involved in financing new projects. Using several textile manufacturing projects as examples, Butler argues that the colonial administration lacked sufficient technical expertise to plan and oversee the new programs, while expatriate firms, which possessed the necessary expertise and infrastructure, were politically unacceptable because of their reputation for exploiting Africans. As a compromise, the Colonial Office supported the formation of the Colonial Development Corporation to employ private capital while maintaining public control.

Despite clear writing and thorough documentation, Butler's argument is less than convincing. This 'case study of the general position of officials' succeeds as an introduction to the relevant government documents, but Butler's dependence on ministerial papers reveals little about what took place in Africa, or even in Great Britain outside Whitehall. For instance, post-war economic conditions in Britain contributed to the rise and fall of the Labour government, with its exceptional ideas about state intervention in the economy, yet Butler gives no indication that this influenced the debate. By the same token, Africans seem to have played no part in the debate, although their existence is implied by references to disturbances in the Gold Coast and the problem of demobilized veterans. Less critical, but still frustrating, is the author's complete omission of Sierra Leone and the Gambia, which renders the title of his book somewhat misleading.

Butler claims that the creation of the Colonial Development Corporation represented a compromise that encompassed the views of the Colonial Office. Yet Butler describes conflict between the Colonial Office and the CDC's director, Lord Trefgarne, that suggests the Colonial Office exercised little influence over the CDC's operations. The creation of the CDC, which supplied most of its investment capital for agriculture and mining during the period under study, was in fact a victory for the opponents of diversification.

Ultimately, the problem with Butler's thesis is not in its construction, but in its

narrow focus. By limiting his study to government documents, he overstates the influence of the Colonial Office on government policy. These debates took place at a time when the traditional hierarchy of the empire – metropole, dominions and colonies – was reinforced by the disaster of the Second World War. The needs of the colonies had the lowest priority, so no matter what kind of plans the Colonial Office advanced, its ability to influence policy was limited. In the end, despite Butler's claims to the contrary, this book shows that British interest in colonial economic diversification was limited, tardy, and based solely on metropolitan needs.

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JAMES A. JONES

## BUSINESS HISTORY

*Trade Winds on the Niger: The Saga of the Royal Niger Company, 1830–1971.* By GEOFFREY L. BAKER. London: Radcliffe Press, 1996. Pp. xvii + 333. £24.50 (ISBN 1-86064-014-1).

The history of business has come to be accepted as vital to an understanding of African economic history, particularly of the colonial and post-colonial periods, but also of the pre-colonial era. Businesses, whether European or African, played critical roles in the development of African economies; their role in understanding the economic situation in Africa today can hardly be ignored. The Royal Niger Company, which was formed in 1886, lost its Royal prefix in 1900, and was sold to Lever Bros. in 1920, before eventually disappearing into the United Africa Company, is one such firm whose importance in Nigerian history cannot be doubted. Despite Flint's classic study of George Goldie, the Company's founder, and Newbury's excellent study of it between 1900–20, there has long been a need for a full history of the firm.

Geoffrey Baker worked for the United Africa Company in Nigeria from 1948 until 1992. His book covers the period from the early British presence on the Niger after 1830, through the establishment of the Royal Niger Company's predecessors in the 1870–80s, to the conquest of Northern Nigeria in the 1890s. It surveys the rivalries of the firm with its French and German counterparts, its operations in the early twentieth century in developing tin mining around Jos, its role in the Benue trade, its function in providing transport facilities along the Niger and its tributaries, and its place in the amalgamations between firms in Nigeria in the first half of this century. The story ends with the United Africa Company's sale of its Niger fleet in 1971.

The wider reading public will find this book of interest, for the story is a compelling one readably told, but academic historians and particularly readers of this journal, are likely to be disappointed. Although based on extensive research, both in Britain and in Nigeria, there is a lack of scholarly footnotes. More critically, the book is unclear as to whether it is a history of the Niger Company or a broader history of Britain in Nigeria. Parts of the book are taken up with wider issues such as the consular presence in the Niger Delta, the British conquest, and Lugard's establishment of colonial administration and imperial borders; these are important developments for the Niger Company but their significance is long established and Baker has nothing new to say about them. Occasionally the book moves into discussion of wider historical events in Britain, Europe and the world, which offer academic historians interested in the Niger Company very little which is new. A narrower focus on the Company itself and its business operations would have been more welcome.

Nor is there much here on the sort of issues which interest historians of business in Africa: the impact of the firm on African productivity, its role in technology transfer, its pricing policy or its hold on the import–export market, to name but four. Moreover, the book’s impact is too often spoilt by the use of stereotypes; French officials are ‘unscrupulous’ and involved in ‘devious colonizing tactics’, Africans are ‘marauding slave traders’; Baker too readily accepts at face value the Niger Company’s judgements, most notably on the Akassa Raid; Alagoa’s counter version is missing from this account. There is too much uncritical acceptance of the existence of African cannibalism, the evidence for which is highly contentious.

It is perhaps unfair to criticize this book for not being something it never sets out to be, but a business history of the Royal Niger Company is needed and still remains to be written. Nonetheless this study has interesting things to say about the different firms that came to be absorbed into the Niger Company and its successors; one of the contributions of the book is its provision of potted histories of these firms. The book has useful material on the Niger Company’s river fleet, backed up by excellent photographs. Its value particularly lies in the local flavour it gives to trading and commercial techniques on the Niger and Benue in the second half of this century. It is valuable too in its descriptions of the business personalities involved, many of whom the author worked with. Indeed, it is when the author shares his trading memoirs, from about 1950, that its real significance emerges, and its final pages are a valuable contribution to our understanding of how such expatriate firms operated. More extensive business memoirs of Baker’s career after 1948 would be an historical source of considerable significance. It is to be hoped that these will be forthcoming, as he clearly has important things to say about this period.

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MARTIN LYNN

## VISUAL HISTORY IN PHOTOGRAPHS

*The Face of the Country: A South African Family Album, 1860–1910.* By KAREL SCHOEMAN. Cape Town/Pretoria/Johannesburg: Human and Rousseau, 1996.

Karel Schoeman has done southern African history and its teaching a great service. His compilation of over two hundred photographs from the holdings of the South African Library in Cape Town now make these visual archives highly accessible and usable. The project begins before the so-called mineral revolution and concludes in the year of the Union of South Africa, the first manifestation of a unitary ‘nation’. It shows huge unevenness and diversity, but also the beginnings of homogenizing historical processes. An insistent theme of the book is how different communities – be they Boer, frontier English, Coloured, African or San – get caught on film between what Schoeman terms tradition and westernization or modern-ness. Afrikaners introducing farm machinery in the *platteland* [photograph no. 168] a fragile English presence on the Sotho border [88], indigenes in half-European dress: these representations offer fresh sources on old questions and encourage new methodological insights.

Schoeman emphasises that the camera was an instrument at the service of white men. The book *is* very much about the white eye as narrator, and about the private and public historical scenes that photographers deemed worthy of recording, documenting and marketing. The book thus encompasses the milieu of commercial photography and signals its prime market: urban and rural white folk aspiring to incorporation (with varying degrees of success) into a recognisably bourgeois frame of representation. Indeed one might ask how the manufacture of *cartes de visite*, cabinet portrait photographs and albums might have contributed towards

the 'making' of indigenous southern African bourgeois cultures – questions usually reserved for the historian working with primary documents, or for the literary scholar working with written texts, but now open to wider interdisciplinary visual studies thanks to this book.

Yet the images in the book offer more complexity than Schoeman suggests. Schoeman argues, for example, that if black people were photographed this was because of the typologising projects of the time; or by accident as they happened to be in the domestic service of white families and their presence impinged on the lens. They are thus apparently restricted to two genres: ethnographic or servile. Taking the first of these, what strikes the observer is how and where most of these photographs were taken. The Cape and Robben Island were destinations of defeated leaders of the nineteenth century, such as Dilima [27], Nongqawuse [49] and Cetshwayo [53] (not to mention Khoisan men pictured in the Breakwater prison [20–22]), encountering the colonial camera as they pass into exile and/or prison. Their photographs come to stand for their 'nation' and in this way an ethnographic collection of Xhosa, Pondo, Zulu or 'Bushmen' is compiled and these categories assume coherence, salience and (not least) reality. Thus we have a sense of how certain 'races' or 'tribes' became objectified for the elite publics of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century South Africa.

The second genre, in which Schoeman argues that African photographic subjects are marginal domestic workers (both socially and in the visual compositions), is not that straightforward either. Several photographs here, showing for example self-consciously attired coloured couples in studios in small towns of the Western Cape [232], or African literacy and respectability [105 and 131], suggest blacks were not entirely on the fringes of this visual economy. Moreover, beyond this book there exist many photographs taken of Africans which do not fit into Schoeman's classificatory system of the defeated and domesticated. Santu Mofokeag's project to recover old studio photographs from township families in Gauteng has demonstrated this abundantly. Schoeman seems to gloss over the possibility of such alternative archives which, as Mofokeng suggests, hint at emergent black bourgeois cultures from the late nineteenth century.

True, the photographs which have ended up in the South African Library and this book represent photographic practices which have been absorbed into the dynamics of official archiving. In this sense they tend to be predominantly about certain social groups, mediated through individuals who were state-friendly. Schoeman is careful to explain these parameters in his introductory remarks and in his own captions. But the trouble with photographs is their power to imprint powerful messages, and the reader/observer needs constant reminders that those images are not the only photographic archives in existence.

Schoeman's framing of his project as a 'family album' risks reducing what is potentially a rich and provocative archival source to a mere coffee-table book. The family album framework suggests a desire to paste together the post-apartheid nation by giving it historical roots that can be visualized. These roots are not sufficiently problematized. Strange, too, is the inclusion of Botswana and Namibia. Schoeman seems to assume it was natural not only for those who later came to be called South Africans to travel into the interior of Africa to take photographs, as Chapman and Hodgson did in nineteenth-century Namibia, but also for these visual records to end up in the 'national' repository in Cape Town.

Ironically, these examples of what archivists take for granted point towards the deeper measures of colonial practice in southern Africa and make this book potentially a remarkable resource. The archiving of visual materials cannot be separated from processes of representation, and these in turn cannot be separated from the entire project of colonization, African dispossession and the making of a white, largely anglophone bourgeoisie in South Africa. In the carving out of a state

with modernist pretensions, dominated by this bourgeoisie, we can trace how visual knowledge was produced, which in turn influenced how the dominant groups thought about others. The tracks of visual framing, recording and archiving are very apparent at many stages in this book and this is Schoeman's most outstanding historiographic contribution.

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PATRICIA HAYES

## VISUAL HISTORY IN PAINTINGS

*Remembering the Present: Painting and Popular History in Zaire.* By JOHANNES FABIAN. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1996, Pp. xv + 385. 32 colour and 131 black and white illustrations, 3 tables, 1 map. \$60.00 (ISBN 0-520-20375-5); \$24.95, paperback (ISBN 0-520-20376-3).

Between 1973 and 1974 the self-taught painter Tshibumba Kanda Matutu of southeastern Congo's Shaba created 101 works on canvas which he conceived as a comprehensive history of his country. The realization of this large body of work – which combines image and text (in French) – was made possible by the encouragement and patronage of anthropologist Johannes Fabian. Tshibumba, born in 1947, full-time genre painter since 1966 and lost without trace since 1982, stated as the purpose and effect of his painting 'to make us think'. He saw himself as historian and educator of his people.

In the first part of this volume, Fabian presents each painting of Tshibumba's history of Zaire in chronological order of historical events. The three first images represent ancestral times in prehistory, followed by key moments of discovery and exploration, such as 'Diogo Cao and the King of Kongo', and 'Stanley reports to Leopold II'. Some 27 works deal with pivotal moments of colonial times and the ending of colonial rule, and 37 paintings show the internal struggles of independence. Mobutu's regime is represented in 11 works. In the light of Mobutu's fall from power and the change of government that occurred shortly after the publication of this book, the last six works of Tshibumba's history of Zaire are particularly fascinating, as they constitute the artist's response to the ethnographer's request literally to imagine the future. Clearly these nightmarish dream-works are a barometer of Mobutu's tremendous power. But here the reader wonders just how authentic an ethnography can be when it is sponsored by the ethnologist. Does the investigation of sponsored culture not lead to some measure of distortion?

Each painting is accompanied by the artist's explanatory narrative and excerpts from Fabian's conversations with him, as well as by historical notes that interpret the event shown in the painting. In this way the author gives Tshibumba his own voice so that it is in essence this Zairian artist/historian who is the author of the first part of the book. Fabian's historical notes make visible, but are not intended to resolve, the contradictions that exist frequently between Tshibumba's account and written histories.

In the second part of the book Fabian balances this idiosyncratic rendering of one person's view of Zaire's history with a series of essays. Through probing ethnographic analysis, Fabian establishes the context of Tshibumba's historical paintings and his dialectical approach to historical truth in the light of popular art and genre painting in Shaba, and in the various factors involved in the making of history in Zaire, including orality and performance in addition to painting, talking and writing. Thus, in Part Two Fabian places popular history at the same level as 'academic' historiography. The first essay entitled 'Genre and popular painting in Shaba' includes twenty reproductions of representative genre subjects by at least



ten different Shaba region artists and thereby illuminates both Tshibumba's indebtedness to, as well as his departure from, genre painting.

The seemingly contradictory – and therefore provocative – title of the book 'Remembering the Present' encapsulates the way Tshibumba conceived of thinking about history: to know, understand and to be in the present is inextricably linked to the confrontational act of remembering. He described his work as 'remembering' and 'thinking' the history of Zaire, not just as collecting what was known. Creating history made him confront, according to Fabian, 'what he perceived as demands of historical truth and accuracy that he felt compelled to acknowledge without being able to meet them' (p. 306). Tshibumba's acts of 'remembering the present' in his images and spoken narrative also involved his confrontation with dangerous truths. Fabian's analysis of the artist's strategies for depicting such dangerous truths is illuminating for any student of political art and should have applicability for parallel cases in African political arts of the 1970s, for example in South Africa.

This truly extraordinary book 'exhibits', in its author's words, a highly original primary document on the history of Zaire from the colonial to the postcolonial absolutist regime of Mobutu; it also makes transparent and analyses the author's role as 'curator', and it presents an investigation on the philosophy and the meaning of history.

*Remembering the Past* is not only illuminating reading for any student of culture, for anthropologists, historians, art historians of folk, popular and genre art, of twentieth century African art, for artists, for all who are endeavouring to understand the fabric of history and culture in Central Africa, but it also offers a lucid experience-oriented model for understanding history.

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REINHILD KAUEHOVEN JANZEN

## SHORTER NOTICES

*Kingdom on Mount Cameroon: Studies in the History of the Cameroon Coast, 1500–1970.* By EDWIN ARDENER, edited by SHIRLEY ARDENER. Providence/Oxford; Berghahn Books, 1996. Pp. xx + 380. £40. (ISBN 1-57181-929-0).

Edwin Ardener, who died in 1987, was one of those Africanist scholars who very decisively integrated the disciplines of history and anthropology. His main area of fieldwork (seven years plus numerous additional visits) was the present-day Southwest Province of Cameroon. Ardener was also responsible for preserving and organizing the colonial archives of this region which, between 1919 and 1960, had been administered by Britain in separation from the main territory of Cameroon.

The present volume brings together much of Ardener's work on Cameroon, most of it previously published but significant portions in print for the first time. The published works include a classic essay on 'Witchcraft, economics and the continuity of belief' as well as an equally valuable (for both empirical and methodological reasons) piece, 'Documentary and linguistic evidence for the rise of trading polities between Rio del Rey and Cameroon'. Other re-publications, somewhat dated but still valuable, deal with the plantation economy of former West Cameroon and reunification with the former East Cameroon.

The chapter which gives the book its title and occupies over a third of its pages is a previously unpublished history of the Bakweri, the indigenous inhabitants of the Mount Cameroon slopes and the eventual victims of European land acquisition as well as immigration by the far more numerous populations of neighbouring regions. Ardener's essay is subtitled 'the Bakweri and the Europeans' and it focuses on contacts with missionaries from the 1840's and the very dramatic (if

small-scale) struggles which accompanied the establishment of German rule on the mountain in the 1880s and 1890s. As a good historian, Ardener uses a variety of printed, manuscript and oral sources to document his story. He also milks this material for evidence on the earlier history and precolonial culture of the Bakweri. Here the results are not very dramatic – there was evidently less of a ‘kingdom’ on Mount Cameroon than a series of small chieftaincies which were not even much involved in the trading circuits of the local river system. Nonetheless, the Bakweri past deserves to be documented and Ardener’s essay remains the definitive work on this topic; its long-delayed publication – along with the reappearance of other chapters in this volume – is thus most welcome.

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RALPH A. AUSTEN

*Captain Paul Cuffe’s Logs and Letters, 1808–1817: A Black Quaker’s ‘Voice from within the Veil’*. Edited by ROSALIND COBB WIGGINS. Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1996. Pp. xxi + 529. (ISBN 0-88258-183-X).

Paul Cuffe, born in 1758, was the son of Kofi, an enslaved Akan freed by his Quaker owner, who prospered in the local New England coastal trade, and Ruth Moses, a Native American Wampanoag. A local entrepreneur like his father, he built his own boats and manned them with black crews, branching out more widely into whaling and merchanting with the help of fellow Quaker businessmen who also accepted him as an equal into their meetings. His ‘concern’ extended to Africa. In 1811 he sailed with one of his black-manned ships to Freetown, in the hope of initiating regular transatlantic trade with the Sierra Leone settler population, and the settlement of freed African-Americans there. He then visited England and established contact with the philanthropic Quaker William Allen who gave him enthusiastic support. But his plans were delayed by the Anglo-American War of 1812, and it was 1816 before he could return to Sierra Leone, carrying 34 settlers. His voyage made a financial loss, and he died in 1817 without undertaking another. But his settlement plan was taken up by his associate Samuel Mills, a white American pastor, who took a group of settlers across to Sierra Leone in 1820 to found what, after some early vicissitudes, was eventually to become Liberia.

Lamont Thomas published a comprehensive biography of Cuffe, *Rise to be a People*, in 1986. It was based on Cuffe’s extensive correspondence and business papers, covering hundreds of pages, preserved in the New Bedford Free Public Library and in other deposits. Those covering the years 1808–17 have been lovingly collected and copied by Rosalind Wiggins, a writer-artist, and are presented with annotations. She has wisely retained his own idiosyncratic grammar and orthography which brings to life his lucidly written, incisive letters and give a vivid picture of this extraordinary man. Professor Rhett Jones, of Brown University, introduces the volume with a substantial essay which puts the letters into a wide-ranging historical context.

*London*

CHRISTOPHER FYFE

*Bibliographie Historique du Zaïre à l’Époque Coloniale (1880–1960)*. By JEAN-LUC VELLUT, FLORENCE LORIAUX, FRANÇOISE MORIMONT. Louvain-la-Neuve/Tervuren, 1996. Pp. v + 325 (ISBN 90-75894-07-4).

*Bibliographie historique du Zaïre à l’époque coloniale (1880–1960)*, is an important contribution to the knowledge of Zairian history, society and ideas. It contains 4,000 titles covering the period between 1880 and 1960, which are grouped thematically into eleven chapters, each focusing on different kinds of sources.

After a brief introduction, Chapter 1, presents research guides and archives available in Europe, the United States and Zaire, while Chapter 2 deals with titles concerning methodology and intellectual debates. Chapter 3 is composed of memoirs, travel accounts, conversations, souvenirs, oral testimonies and source publications, and Chapter 4 lists unpublished theses and dissertations. Chapter 5 lists documents concerning economic and social affairs, including women's history. Chapter 6 concerns institutional issues, while Chapter 7 focuses on religion and education. Chapter 8 focuses on hygiene, epidemiology and medicine, and Chapter 9 on culture and communications, including arts, literature, and the media. Chapter 10 includes a variety of themes ranging from general history to independence movements in Zaire, and chapter 11 contains biographies.

As one can see, the work is extensive and complements previously published, more selective bibliographies. The compilers have achieved their ambition of providing specialists of Zairian studies with an accessible and useful tool of research.

This work is an example of scholarship which should be repeated for every African country, focusing on different chronological time frames. Every specialist in Zairian studies, as well as other Africanist scholars, are encouraged to make full use of this excellent research instrument.

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*Historical Dictionary of Mauritania.* By ANTHONY G. PAZZANITA. 2nd edition. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996. Pp. xxx + 315. £66.05. (ISBN 0-8108-3095-7).

Anthony Pazzanita has undertaken the revision of Alfred Gerteiny's *Historical Dictionary of Mauritania* (Vol. 31, 1981). A lawyer and political scientist by training, Pazzanita is the author of several articles on the Western Sahara conflict and Mauritanian foreign relations (he also co-wrote, with Tony Hodges, the revised edition of the Western Sahara dictionary in the same series, Vol. 55, 1994).

The new edition owes little to its predecessor. Pazzanita has chosen to begin anew and had clearly avoided some of the more obvious defects of the original, including its excessive brevity and its arbitrary omission of important topics. The second edition is more than twice the length of the first. It contains scores of new entries along with a vastly more thorough treatment of topics covered in the original. One area in which the new edition is particularly strong concerns Mauritanian foreign relations. Pazzanita's expertise on the Western Sahara conflict is evident in a series of well-researched entries that treat various facets of Mauritanian involvement. Likewise, his entries on the Senegal-Mauritania conflict of 1989 present a careful summary of the events and a balanced appraisal of the competing claims advanced by the parties. Entries on Mauritania's relations with France and its African neighbours are likewise well done.

Pazzanita has remedied a serious defect of the original edition – its cursory treatment of the contemporary Mauritanian social order. His entries detailing the complex categories of Mauritanian social identity are generally nuanced and perceptive. A substantial entry on slavery explores Mauritania's ongoing struggles over that institution, both before and since its official abolition in 1980. An entry on women charts the variable status of Mauritanian women against a backdrop of class, ethnicity and contemporary social change.

A weakness that Pazzanita's dictionary shares with its predecessor is its scant attention to pre-colonial history. As Pazzanita acknowledges in his preface, his focus is overwhelmingly upon the colonial and post-colonial period. That's a

shame. The fluid picture of pre-colonial social history that has emerged in Mauritanian historiography since the 1970s can contribute much to the understanding of processes of change at work in Mauritanian society today. Greater attention to that history would have made Pazzanita's edition even stronger. Nevertheless, the new volume is a welcome addition to the literature on Mauritania. Specialists will find it a useful and intelligent reference work. Non-specialists will find it a systematic and user-friendly introduction to contemporary Mauritania and its recent history.

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*Western Sahara*. By ANTHONY G. PAZZANITA. Oxford, Santa Barbara, Denver: Clio Press, 1996. Pp. xl + 261. (ISBN 1-85109-256-0).

The peace that must come to the Western Sahara, sooner or later, will be one of exhaustion rather than reconciliation. A referendum on the future of the territory agreed in principle by all parties to the conflict has been postponed repeatedly for want of agreement on who will be allowed to participate. For more than two decades the disputed region was hostage to Cold War geopolitics, inter-Arab rivalries and rival alignments of African states, appearing (depending upon perspective) as a sideshow or a *cause célèbre*. Fallout from the conflict contributed to the fall of a government in neighbouring Mauritania and jeopardized the stability of the Organization of African Unity. Yet despite its occasional notoriety, the territory remains largely as obscure now as it was in 1975.

Anthony Pazzanita's annotated bibliography aims to provide a gateway for those who wish to explore the culture and recent history of the Western Sahara. The newest volume in Clio Press's excellent World Bibliographic Series, Pazzanita's work provides an introduction to scholarly as well as general-readership publications. The volume begins with an historical essay on the territory that emphasizes the period from 1975 onward. The bibliography itself consists of some six-hundred-plus entries, each generously annotated, followed by three excellent indices which list references by author, title and subject matter.

In keeping with Pazzanita's own area of expertise (law and political science) the volume focuses upon recent history and particularly upon the current conflict. Bibliographic entries are weighted toward journalistic sources, official publications and scholarly pieces appearing in legal and policy journals. This will satisfy most users, and in any case constitutes the bulk of easily-available resources in European languages. Still, specialists and others who require a more exhaustive bibliography or who wish to explore more deeply the historical and cultural context of the struggle may be disappointed. Historical and ethnographic work is under-represented, especially works published prior to 1975. A telling omission is Julio Caro Baroja's *Estudios Saharianos*, a classic ethnography from the 1950s (recently reissued by Ediciones Jucar, Madrid, 1990). Such works provide a unique perspective on issues that, for the combatants, lie at the heart of the conflict: Who are the Sahrawi? Who inhabited the Saharan West prior to colonization? How did they understand their historical links to Morocco, Mauritania?

Of course, an annotated bibliography must make choices, and most users will be content with the ones Pazzanita has made (the introduction contains references to more specialized bibliographies). And all will appreciate his well-informed annotations, intelligently-organized categories and superb indices.

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