

results in productive approaches for examining the history of the press in East Africa and beyond.

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Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: Firearms, Culture, and Public Order. By Saheed Aderinto. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018. Pp. 300. \$80.00 cloth, \$35.00 paper, \$34.99 E-Book.

With *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria*, Saheed Aderinto once again distinguishes himself as a scholar with a knack for spotting holes in the literature. More so, he doesn't simply try and plug those holes, but rather exploits them to offer new and insightful perspectives on the African past. One can hardly imagine a topic in African history that contemporary academics are more poorly prepared or positioned to embrace and understand than the complex economic, political, and cultural history of firearms in colonial context. And while Aderinto did not grow up immersed in a gun culture, he has done an admirable job of making connections with those who have in order to provide himself with the tools necessary to write this interesting book.

Aderinto seeks to both engage and address the paucity of scholarship on firearms in twentieth-century Africa via a study of the economic, political, and cultural history of firearms in colonial Nigeria. After providing a brief but useful background of firearms in the history of Atlantic Africa, including their role as a core commodity in the Atlantic slave trade, and as a means of resistance to colonial conquest, he moves on to address three key themes across the six remaining of seven total chapters. These themes are the role of firearms and munitions as commodities, the government regulation of firearms, and the development of a complex gun culture in Nigeria despite (or perhaps because of) the complex nature of colonial firearms regulations.

The examination of firearms as commodities identifies the important place of firearms and munitions as components of both colonial and local trade. Much of this analysis is appropriately nuts-and-bolts stuff, but Aderinto successfully complicates the discussion by highlighting the regulation of gunpowder, and even more importantly percussion caps, as components of the colonial economy. His research into both the volume and structure of these trades is very effective. He also identifies how guns were traded, as well as repaired and increasingly manufactured by local smiths in a growing independent firearms economy. This reviewer would like to have seen even more examination and discussion of the development of Nigerian firearms manufacturing technologies in both the past and present.

The second core theme presented by Aderinto is that of how issues of race and class were so overtly deployed in the colonial regulation of firearms. In summary, Europeans, be they colonial officers or private citizens of empire, were allowed to

own rifles, shotguns, and pistols, and were encouraged to hone their skills through membership in sporting clubs. Elite Nigerians could apply for permits allowing access to cartridge firing shotguns (generally single or double-barreled break action firearms). The mass of the Nigerian colonial population was allowed largely unregulated access to “non-precision” muzzle-loading weapons in the form of Dane guns, be they flintlock or percussion cap fired. This discussion is particularly valuable in engaging the degrees of sovereignty accorded to different segments of Nigerian society during colonialism. The deadliest weapons were available only to (white) citizens, while Nigerian elites and commoners were allowed incrementally less deadly firearms (based on effective range and rate of fire).

The last key theme of the text is how despite efforts to regulate and define firearms ownership in colonial Nigeria, especially among the rank and file populace, the wider population of Nigerians nonetheless created and indulged in a complex gun culture which permeated not only rural hunting economies, but also became an important component of spiritual and religious culture as well. This is perhaps the area where Aderinto makes the strongest contribution, which is not to take away from the success of the other core themes.

At a couple of points the text’s research appears in error. For example, the allegation on page 39, that the Bulala of Bornu sought firearms in the “late 12th Century,” simply does not fit the accepted timeline for the global development of firearms technology. Indeed, this date would place firearms in Bornu at almost exactly the time of their first innovation in Song China. This, however, is only a minor distraction from a solidly researched and well-presented study on a most interesting topic. The author is to be commended for this welcome contribution to African historical scholarship.

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The House of Tshatshu: Power, Politics, and Chiefs North-West of the Great Kei River, c. 1818–2018. By Anne Kelk Mager and Phiko Jeffrey Velelo. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2018. Pp. xxiv, 256; 24 b/w photos and illustrations, 2 genealogies, 7 maps. R320 cloth.

This important monograph is a collaboration between two writers with widely different expertise. Anne Mager is Emerita Professor of Historical Studies at the University of Cape Town. She grew up in the Swart Kei valley, on land from which the amaTshatshu were forcibly removed in 1852. Her many publications, including *Gender and the Making of a South African Bantustan: A Social History of the Ciskei* (Heinemann 1999), testify to her deep knowledge and understanding of this region, its people and its history. Jeff Phiko Velelo is an agricultural economist, an ordained Anglican priest, and an amateur historian. He brings a particularly personal insight to

with documented sources instead of citations that refer to personal communication (43n154; 75n16; 83n41; 95n79; 96n81).

The book benefits greatly from the co-editorship of Valentin Vydrine, whose vast knowledge and rigorous standards are unparalleled in the field of West African linguistics. The Brill series ‘African sources for African history’, in which the Bulman and Vydrine volume features as the fifteenth publication, boasts the commendable distinction of requiring that translations of oral texts be accompanied by the original African language transcript. Vydrine contributes a special note on Bamana language and transcription, and the technical detail in his transcript of the original language text is extraordinary. The translators (Vydrine, Bulman, and Amadou Togo) skated through the usual technical difficulties of translation with aplomb, and they have produced easy-flowing English while retaining some sense of the bard’s style. Their abandonment of quotation marks — using colons to introduce spoken phrases — conveys the sense and rapid delivery of *jeli* discourse and might be something to emulate. During Sako’s performance, the bard played no less than six different traditional melodies, and the consistently high editorial standards maintained throughout this book are exemplified by the inclusion of musical transcripts of those six tunes, provided in a special section by Sam Dickey. In a brief Introduction, the series editors (Dmitiri van den Bersselaar, Michel Doortmont, and Jan Jansen) make several evocative observations. They refer to ‘the new stories about Sumanguru’ and suggest that they emerged because of ‘dramatic political changes that occurred during the 1990s in the Republics of Mali and Guinea’ resulting in ‘a conceptual space in the popular imagination [that] had been created for a powerful leader who was not in Sunjata’s clique and whose message was music to the ears’ (x). This is the sort of bold commentary that should stimulate future debate about African oral epic.

This reviewer is pleased to see that the editorial and production values of the book are high and that it includes, very importantly, a proper index.¹⁰ In both substance and presentation, it reflects the high standards one has come to expect of other Brill publications.

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GUNS AND SOCIETY IN COLONIAL NIGERIA

Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: Firearms, Culture, and Public Order.

By Saheed Aderinto.

Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2018. Pp. xvi + 300. \$80.00, hardback (ISBN: 978-0-253-03160-0); \$35.00, paperback (ISBN: 978-0-253-03161-7); \$34.99, e-book (ISBN: 978-0-253-03162-4).

doi:10.1017/S0021853719000616

Key Words: Nigeria, colonial, culture, social.

¹⁰ There are some minor errors and omissions. The editors’ reference to Brett-Smith lacks citation (viii, xi); Sasuma Berete is identified as ‘Sunjata’s mother’ (77n26); McIntosh citation should be 2000: 168 (89n58); Bühnen index entry should be 96n81 (165).

The idea that the power of objects extends beyond their immediate service function has shaped the research of historians of technology and consumption in recent decades. Saheed Aderinto's volume is one of a number of new books that have attempted to bring this insight to bear on the study of firearms in Africa, a subject long dominated by technological determinism. Like William Kelleher Storey's study of guns in South Africa, and my own on Central Africa, *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria* is informed by the view that firearms are much more than weapons of human destruction and tools of material production, and that a culturally sensitive approach must be adopted to explore the signs, values, and skills that infused this 'vital global commodity' (4).¹ Unlike Storey's and my books, Aderinto's work focuses almost exclusively on the twentieth century and the colonial period. This framework is both a strength and a weakness.

Chapter One, the only chapter of the book dedicated to the precolonial era, advances the contention that 'firearms did not play a significant role in hunting until the first half of the twentieth century in Nigeria' and that these foreign imports — and their military and symbolic functions — 'were monopolized by the military aristocrats and warriors' (32). The problem is that the evidence adduced to substantiate these broad claims is neither comprehensive nor entirely free from contradictions. Because of these ambiguities, Aderinto's view that pre-twentieth-century Nigeria witnessed the emergence of 'a gun culture' — as opposed to a 'gun society' (defined as 'the highest stage or synergy a society can attain in its use of guns') — should probably be taken with more than a grain of salt (7). The argument appears even more tenuous when it is extended to Africa as whole. To suggest, as Aderinto does in his Introduction, that nowhere in precolonial Africa were there communities who could not 'do without firearms in [their] daily social, political, cultural, and religious life' is, quite simply, incorrect, as even a cursory glance at the workings of, for instance, Central Africa's warlord polities in the second half of the nineteenth century reveals (7).

The book, however, improves dramatically as it goes on, drawing much of its strength from the finely textured analysis made possible by its comparatively limited chronological span. One need not accept the contention undergirding Chapter Two, that it was only in the first half of the twentieth century that Nigerian communities turned into full-blown gun societies, to be impressed by Aderinto's detailed exploration of the effects of colonial gun laws. By enforcing a sharp distinction between 'Dane guns' — the flintlock muskets which every Nigerian was allowed to possess in exchange for an annual license fee (which was eventually scrapped in 1948) — and all other firearms, to which only educated Nigerians and officially-recognized chiefs could aspire, the new regime of gun ownership ushered in by British rule became interwoven with processes of class formation. By around 1940, as Aderinto ably demonstrates, the comparatively more expensive and user-friendly shotgun had become a powerful 'marker of social class', central to the self-fashioning and consumerist strategies of emerging Nigerian elites (87).

Drawing primarily on Nigerian archival material and newspapers, the book's next five substantive chapters chart in great detail the numerous ways in which Nigerian societies

1 W.K. Storey, *Guns, Race and Power in Colonial South Africa* (Cambridge, 2008), and G. Macola, *The Gun in Central Africa: A History of Technology and Politics* (Athens, OH, 2016).

and firearms shaped one another between 1900 and 1960. In this reviewer's opinion, Chapters Four and Six, which speak to some of Aderinto's earlier research concerns, are especially noteworthy. Focusing on Nigeria's European population, the former examines the relationship between race and gun use, arguing that both recreational hunting and rifle-range shooting — a leisure activity from which Africans were barred — worked towards consolidating hierarchies of race and masculinity in the colony. For its part, Chapter Six explores anxieties about the perceived relationship between the proliferation of firearms and armed robbery. The reintroduction of the so-called 'hunter guard system', a form of pre-colonial policing, was one of the countermeasures adopted by many Nigerian communities and their leaders to deal with what was understood to be an unprecedented crime wave (203). The contemporary echoes of these developments (a subject also pursued in the book's Epilogue) will not be lost on readers. Other themes addressed in this rich social history are the politics and economics of the gunpowder trade between the 1920s and 1960 (Chapter Three); the modus operandi of the Nigeria Police Force and the role of firearms in public unrest and, specifically, the political and ethnic violence that accompanied Nigeria's decolonization (Chapter Five); and the tightening of the regulations pertaining to the possession of precision weapons that this violence brought about in the 1950s (Chapter Seven).

Despite its limitations, which are a product of its concentration on colonial circumstances, *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria* remains an important book and a welcome addition to the scholarship on firearms in Africa. Engagingly written and underpinned by meticulous research, it serves as a well-documented demonstration of the benefits that accrue from studying processes of technology transfer from a socio-cultural perspective and of the inventiveness with which, throughout their history, Africans have appropriated externally-introduced commodities for their own purposes.

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AFRICAN MOBILITY AND MOTOR TRANSPORT IN GHANA

Ghana on the Go: African Mobility in the Age of Motor Transportation.

By Jennifer Hart.

Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2016. Pp. xi + 250. \$85.00, hardback (ISBN: 978-0-253-02277-6); \$35.00, paperback (ISBN: 978-0-253-02307-0); \$9.99 e-book (ISBN: 978-0-253-02325-4).

doi:10.1017/S0021853719000628

Key Words: Ghana, transport, social, urban.

Until fairly recently, Igor Kopytoff's call for paying attention to the social life of the motorcar in Africa remained unanswered.¹ Only in the last decade have social scientists

1 I. Kopytoff, 'The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process', in A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge, 1986).

Not everyone in Ghana agreed with this pronouncement and Ahlman provides some of those responses to the Nkrumahist agenda.

Although Ahlman attributes a considerable portion of his text to the international recognition of Nkrumahism as an ideology, he chooses to focus on Ghanaian reactions to the Nkrumahist state and its Pan-African projects. The author sought out CPP loyalists and dissidents in an apparent attempt to present a balanced assessment of the ideology and its proponents' impact on Ghanaian non-elites. He illuminates the challenges that Ghana faced during the birth of the nation-state, and the obstacles to its development from the forces of capitalist imperialism. The text utilizes the class-oriented epistemology of Nkrumahism to explain the particular challenges facing the Gold Coast Colony in the context of the challenges that the bulk of African colonies faced prior to independence. Some of the imperial sources that were used are refreshingly new, even if their Eurocentric biases remain.

This book excels in its utilization of records from special collections in Ghana, in particular the Public Records and Archives Administration Department and the George Padmore Research Library on African Affairs in Accra. In summary, this book would be useful for students studying the early stages of independent Ghana. Although it is primarily a history text, it could also be used in philosophy and African Studies programs.

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Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: Firearms, Culture, and Public Order

SAHEED ADERINTO

Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018; pp. 300, \$35.00 paper.

Saheed Aderinto's *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: Firearms, Culture, and Public Order* offers an original account of the underappreciated place of firearms in colonial administration, commerce, and daily life in twentieth-century Nigeria. As readers have come to expect from his work, Aderinto writes from a position deep in the archival record—here predominantly the branches of the Nigerian National Archives. The book derives social history from administrative archives with precision and breadth, and it relates many small-scale encounters and relationships from across Nigeria over nearly a century. What all of them share is that they were mediated by firearms. His attention to archival detail is consistent and rigorous, and he also makes use of newspapers, oral tradition, and music. Aderinto further considers guns themselves as sources, reflecting on their uses and meanings as objects of material culture. Along the way, he revises many received ideas about the history of colonial rule in Africa.

The central story that Aderinto tells is how a “gun society” emerged in Nigeria under colonialism. In his account, this dynamic emerged not in the deeper past, for example out of the Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans, but under British rule, where twentieth-century transformations of politics, trade, and social life had the effect of liberalizing access to firearms and embedding them in civic and cultural life. Aderinto also argues that guns have a more complicated set of meanings than those that might first come to mind—especially as tools of violence. Firearms in Nigeria are not only, or even predominantly, instruments of destruction. Although guns’ capacity to repress, create havoc, and do physical harm to people is undeniable, these are not their only uses. They are commodities and tools (especially of hunting), as they are in many places, but the Nigerian record shows

that they can also function as spiritual instruments, political symbols, and stores of value both economic and social.

Aderinto pays much attention to the technical aspects of firearms, but he is cautious to avoid technological determinism, and he never loses sight of their social embeddedness. The difference between a Dane gun and a shotgun, for example, is not only a distinction of type, but a difference of purpose, origin, and symbolic meaning. A gun's technical specifications may tell us about the class position of its owner, the circumstances of its production, and the political order that allows people to possess certain types of guns but not others. He is insistent on treating firearms as commodities, but his attention to guns as objects of culture—ones which may have meandering and unexpected "life histories"—pushes the argument beyond merely tracing guns as objects of trade. "A gun whose history started in a gunsmith's shop in Birmingham," he writes, "might spend years helping to prosecute a war and finish as a spiritual object and part of a cultural patrimony in the shrine dedicated to its owner" (6). In so doing, Aderinto combines a military historian's eye to the details of armaments as objects, with a social historian's attentiveness to what goes on around them.

The focus of the book is putatively narrow, but Aderinto uses guns to discuss many broader topics in colonial Nigeria's historiography. They include the history of technology, colonial violence, policing, economics, leisure, and crime. Subjects that have less obvious connections to the history of colonialism, like the study of sound, are also treated here with great originality. There is hardly a current debate in the historiography of colonial rule in Nigeria to which *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria* does not speak. Aderinto draws fresh insights by looking at these debates from an original angle—through the scope of a gun, so to speak. The book begins with an introductory chapter on the use and circulation of firearms in the precolonial period, including their well-known place in the Atlantic trade. It then moves into the colonial period, tracing how the centrality of firearms in trade and administration made Nigeria into a gun society. Thematic chapters on the international trade in gunpowder and the imbrication of firearms in colonial racial ideology support this argument. They also provide, respectively, an argument about the trade in controlled substances in the British Empire, and a subtle historical ethnography of Europeans in the colonial service—focusing on how ideas about race emerged around leisure activities that involved firearms, especially hunting. Another chapter considers the specter of armed resistance and the use of firearms in colonial repression, with special attention to the Enugu colliery shooting of 1949, in which the colonial police killed twenty-one miners—an episode which Aderinto argues was not only about labor, as it has usually been interpreted, but about the colonial government's fear of subversion. The penultimate chapter considers the use of firearms in armed robbery and the problem

of accidents before concluding with a chapter on how the colonial state regulated who could own and use firearms, and how the right to bear a gun was connected to other, more explicitly political rights. An insightful epilogue turns to the period after Independence, tracing the role of firearms in the twinned problems of underdevelopment and insecurity in postcolonial Nigeria. Many chapters could be individually excerpted for teaching purposes, and the book is written in a clear and accessible style.

Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria will appeal to many readers, including not only historians of West Africa, but scholars of trade, material culture, and colonial violence in many places. Aderinto's thoughtful analysis of what constitutes a "gun society" and how such a thing is born speaks to political questions of our own time—ones which go past the period of colonial rule and beyond the geographical confines of Nigeria.

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Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: firearms, culture and public order

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this decline became a feature in all countries where the IWW managed to establish itself before the First World War. One of its main causes was undoubtedly suppression by the state following the IWW's anti-war crusading (particularly in Australia as Verity Burgmann's chapter reveals) and conspicuous support for industrial militancy across North America and Oceania (as chapters 7 to 12 show). Another, equally important, cause, however, was the IWW's conflicted position in the ideological global order established in the wake of the 1917 Russian Revolution.

As the chapters by Matthew White and Wayne Thorpe respectively reveal, the IWW maintained a rocky relationship with Russian-controlled Communist parties during the interwar years, and only an ambivalent one with natural allies like the Berlin-based anarcho-syndicalist International Workingmen's Association. The effect was that American Wobblies became mired in a doctrinaire ideological neutrality that – in a post-war global landscape shaped by jingoism, red scares and economic protectionism – condemned them to long-term insularity (though as White also shows, this trend was briefly bucked during the 1930s with the onset of the Spanish Civil War).

The third and final section of the book aims to go 'beyond the union' (237) by looking at the wider cultural impact of the IWW in a variety of historical settings. Some chapters certainly fit this bill, particularly those dealing with the impact of Wobbly ideas on left-wing Irish republicanism (chapter 15) and Swedish interwar syndicalism (chapter 17), as well as the final chapter on the cultural afterlife of Joe Hill's musical repertoire. Other chapters, namely those by Lucien van der Walt and Paula de Angelis, appear more aligned with the contributions in the book's second section given their focus on IWW-affiliated unions in turn-of-the-century South Africa and the globetrotting militancy of a card-carrying Wobbly, respectively. This, however, is only a minor quirk that cannot distract from these chapters's – and ultimately the book's – remarkable accomplishment, that of restoring this alternately ignored and mythologized union back to its global dimension while humanizing the enthusiastic, brave and flawed men and women who gave it scope and shape.

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Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: firearms, culture and public order, by Saheed Aderinto, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2018, xvi + 300 pp., \$35.00 (paperback), ISBN 978-0-25303-161-7

In this very well-researched book, Saheed Aderinto provides a detailed account of the omnipresence of guns in colonial Nigeria and argues that both its culture and society were shaped by the ownership of guns.

In chapter one, Aderinto reminds the reader of the intermittent presence of guns in modern-day Nigeria since the fifteenth century. For example, the kingdom of Borno which controlled the central transsaharan trade of slaves managed to obtain guns and

instructors from the Ottoman Empire to dominate the Lake Chad region at the end of the sixteenth century. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Kano was exchanging slaves for guns in order to wage war against its neighbours. The southern regions of modern-day Nigeria have also been in contact with guns since the fifteenth century because of the Portuguese presence on the Atlantic shores of Africa. In these regions in particular, guns progressively became part of local culture and were not only used to fight but also became part of rituals. For example, one could hear gunshots every time a new king was crowned in Oyo. Since the first chapter covers the precolonial period, would it be possible to learn more about other weapon cultures?

Focusing mainly on the colonial period, this book tries to write a social history of Nigeria through the usage of newspapers and colonial sources. Chapter two clearly shows that the British colonial authorities were responsible for the proliferation of guns in colonial Nigeria. During the 1920s, the British estimated that Nigerians owned around 500,000 Dane guns be it for hunting, religious purposes or prestige. Aderinto gives details about the attempts at regulating the proliferation of such guns and shows to what extent they failed, partly, because guns were used by the members of the Nigerian elite who tried to differentiate themselves from the rest of the colonial population. In chapter seven, Aderinto also mentions how the British colonial authorities tried to control arms of precision such as shotguns. The colonial authorities, however, effectively stopped counting the number of Dane guns in circulation in the colony. In both chapters two and seven, the social dimension of gun ownership is particularly well explored by the author who writes a very convincing social history of gun culture in colonial Nigeria. Similarly, chapter four shows how such weapons were used by colonial officers for game hunting and by security forces to maintain order. As a result, guns rapidly became a symbol of both prestige and authority. Rifles and guns became thus another masculine manifestation of social prestige. The author might have written a few more words about this gendered dimension but, arguably, the lack of sources might be responsible for such an omission.

Quite interestingly, the author stresses the 'economics of gunpowder' in a short chapter three. The history of gunpowder trade shows how the colonial government tried to benefit financially from this Nigerian gun culture. If they could not regulate the number of Dane Guns, the British colonial authorities could pragmatically make money from the gunpowder trade or gun licences sales as mentioned in chapter seven. Aderinto was right to stress the commercial dimension of the Nigerian colonial gun culture and this topic clearly deserves further investigation.

Aderinto also argues that this gun culture is partly responsible for the scale of mass killings during the colonial period. Thus, during the Women's War of 1929, 39 women of the south-east were killed by the Nigerian Police Force. In 1949, 21 miners from Enugu were also shot by the police. According to the author, it would be impossible to understand the rise of Nigerian nationalism without an analysis of the gun culture and society created by the British colonizers. This last argument developed in chapter five is convincing and the author manages to show the link between gun society and politics. *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria* also argues that post World War Two political tensions were exacerbated by the omnipresence of guns. The 36 victims of the Kano revolt of 1953 can partly be seen as the logical consequence of such a gun culture. In a decade which saw the rise of regional and ethnic tensions in Nigeria, guns became an integral part of the problem of political violence in Nigeria. This last argument might seem a truism but the author who currently works in the United States of America is of course aware of its political dimension.

The strength of Aderinto's book also comes from the fact that it analyses everyday gun violence in 1950s and modern-day Nigeria. Rural and urban violent manifestations of this 1950s gun culture are thus explored in chapter six. The rural dimension of this violence is particularly interesting because it was unchecked and arguably under-reported. Violent crime was not limited to bank robberies but could also be found in border regions. As a result, Aderinto addresses the question of policing. The dilemma is still present in modern-day Nigeria: should the government allow private community policing when the levels of violence are rising? As elsewhere in Africa, guns are proliferating in modern Nigeria and the epilogue recognizes the difficulties faced by the Nigerian State to control the number of lethal arms circulating in the country. For the author, levels of violence were high during the colonial period but they cannot be compared to their postcolonial equivalent. It would be, as a consequence, difficult to compare both situations.

Aderinto has written a very persuasive book: not only did the omnipresence of weapons influence Nigerian colonial culture but it also created a gun society. This convincing argument reminds us that American political debates on firearm regulation and policing deserve to be historicized.

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Survivor Transitional Narratives of Nazi-Era Destruction: the second liberation, by Dennis B. Klein, London and New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2018, x + 278 pp., £85/\$114.00 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-35003-714-4

Dennis Klein's analysis of the emergence of a renewal in Jewish survivor accounts of the Nazi period sits in a temporal frame involving two significant socio-legal events. The first key is the series of legal proceedings against Nazi perpetrators known as the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials. The second, contemporaneous point of departure is the political and legal controversy surrounding the attempt in France and Germany to allow the statute of limitations (*la prescription; Verjährung*) for Nazi crimes to run out. Each socio-legal context, in its own way, brought to the fore debates about a collective willingness to forget Nazi atrocities, and the attempt by prominent Jewish intellectuals in particular, to combat any form of amnesia or amnesty for perpetrators.

The study focuses on the works of three such Jewish writers – Jean Améry, born Hans Meyer; Vladimir Jankélévitch, and Simon Wiesenthal – each of whom intervened in his own way into debates about memory, forgiveness and survival. The significance of these Jewish writers and their works is to be found in the fact that they entered these vital social, political, legal and moral debates through the very public means of writing. By making their thoughts on the issues surrounding Nazi atrocities, memory and forgetting, public and open in this way, they voiced not just their own personal ideas and experiences but granted permission and validation to others to express their stories of Jewish suffering. The underlying focus throughout the book is

cient Benin to the Gold Coast. When the slave trade with Allada and Hueda commenced, the sugar plantation complex had already spread to the islands off the African coast and was now growing on the western margins of the Atlantic Ocean. Readers may also find it troublesome, if not tiring, to go through six chapters of concept definition, methodological description, and historiographical debate before getting to the actual historical analysis. Digressions and personal musings inserted in the middle of the text, though sometimes colorful, can also be distracting. As previously mentioned, the epilogue provides a brief reflection on the place of Africa in the modern world, but it could also have reviewed the book's main findings. Eighteen chapters of dense discussion, after all, do not necessarily facilitate easy memorization. Finally, Fuglestad shows deep knowledge, respect, and appreciation for the works of his fellow historian colleagues, but the "Ms." abbreviation for women historians seems out of date. Edna G. Bay, Suzanne Preston Blier, and Kristin Mann have doctorate degrees. The correct title is doctor (Dr.).

Slave Trade by Invitation provides a broad history of the Slave Coast based on multiple types of sources created in different languages. Readers may not find every point appealing or particularly convincing, but the book is a tour de force of the region's history during the traffic's period. It will no doubt come down in the future as an unavoidable work of reference.

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SAHEED ADERINTO. *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: Firearms, Culture, and Public Order*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018. Pp. xvi, 300. Paper \$35.00.

The tremendous flow of firearms into Africa over the centuries has garnered a fair share of scholarly attention. Many of these studies have focused on either the precolonial period, with the connection of the gun trade with the slave trade, or the more contemporary era since independence. Saheed Aderinto's new book *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: Firearms, Culture, and Public Order* draws attention to the hitherto overlooked colonial period as a critically important time for the development of a gun society in Africa. Specifically, he uses a detailed analysis of Nigeria under British rule to explain how colonialism turned Nigeria into a gun society. The author is less concerned with the military role of firearms than how colonialism substantially changed the politics of access to guns from the late nineteenth century until the 1950s. As Aderinto demonstrates, British colonial authorities helped turn Nigeria into a gun society while pursuing policies of imperial pacification and revenue generation.

In the period from 1890 through the 1910s, the British disarmed the locals and eradicated the arms and ammunition that could have potentially been used for armed resistance to colonialism. However, colonial authorities did not deem the Dane guns (flintlocks) as a military threat, and therefore they allowed practically anyone to own a Dane gun as long as the weapon was properly registered. Obtaining a license for a Dane gun was designed to be easy in order to facilitate revenue flow into colonial coffers as authorities appreciated the means to pay for administration out of domestic resources. Whereas colonial administrators considered Dane guns primarily from a fiscal standpoint, Nigerians saw symbolic and material value in these firearms. In contrast to the militarily obsolete Dane gun, access to weapons of precision (including shotguns) fell only to traditional rulers and "educated" traders. As a result, the British system defined possession of a Dane gun as a "right," but having weapons of precision was a "privilege" dependent on higher social class status. Thus, the Dane gun came to be viewed as a local weapon while the shotgun belonged to the white man. Nevertheless, Aderinto argues that the British construction of right and privilege had less effect on making a gun society than Nigerians' own attitudes about the sociocultural, economic, and political meaning of firearms. For example, the author shows how some Nigerians incorporated firearms into their religious, social, and cultural experience by associating the gun with the god of warfare and iron, Ogun.

Much of the significance of the argument hinges on Aderinto's distinction between a gun culture and a gun society. According to the author, the main difference between a gun culture and a gun society lies in the way a society interacts with guns. Any society that employs guns is a gun culture, but a gun society reflects the peak of gun use such that firearms are essential in daily life socially, politically, and religiously. In Aderinto's view, for an African gun society to take shape, two conditions had to be met: first, possession of guns had to be liberalized, and second, the largest percentage of guns in circulation had to be used for practices relevant beyond a particular social class to the entire community, such as hunting, crop protection, and symbolic ceremonial shooting. As he lays it out, "A gun society is one in which shooting became an indispensable component of symbolic order, of communal rhythms and self-fashioning, and of the shifting conception of success at ceremonies and festivals" (8). By these terms, the use of firearms for state building or slave gathering constitutes a gun culture but not a gun society, and Aderinto argues that no gun society existed in Africa prior to the twentieth century. In the precolonial period, few hunters used firearms. The replacement of traditional hunting weapons, such as the bow and arrow, with Dane guns occurred only in the colonial period, when the Dane gun became the number-one hunting weapon.

His definition of “gun society” overlaps somewhat with the contemporary scholarly usage of “gun culture.” For example, some scholars who study the Balkans describe the gun culture there as a man carrying a gun because it is culturally interpreted as acceptable behavior to demonstrate masculinity and status.

Aderinto’s history of firearms in Nigeria broadens the conventional narrative beyond guns as tools of violence. His approach considers firearms as material culture and places firearms in the Nigerian social context. In individual chapters he takes up topics such as the political economy of gunpowder, connections between race and leisure shooting, firearms and public disorder, and violent crime and gun accidents. By weaving the story of firearms into the social and political fabric of colonial Nigerian history, this study overturns much of the conventional understanding of when and how firearms came to occupy a central place in African history. The readership for this book extends beyond the confines of the history of firearms. Those interested in British colonialism generally and colonialism in West Africa specifically will find much to chew on in this imaginative treatment of the subject.

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SHOKO YAMADA. *“Dignity of Labour” for African Leaders: The Formation of Education Policy in the British Colonial Office and Achimota School on the Gold Coast*. Bamenda, Cameroon: Langaa Research and Publishing Common Initiative Group, 2018. Pp. xviii, 314. Paper \$35.00.

How and why do ideas travel? What kinds of changes are made to those ideas as they are picked up and implemented in a new context? These are the broad questions with which *“Dignity of Labour” for African Leaders: The Formation of Education Policy in the British Colonial Office and Achimota School on the Gold Coast* is engaged. Shoko Yamada is an expert in comparative education who has written a historical examination of colonial educational policy in the Gold Coast from the 1910s to the 1930s, including its practical expression in the government secondary school of Achimota College, founded in 1927. The field of comparative education has developed substantial theories concerning educational transfer, given its focus on the borrowing and lending of educational theories and programs between countries. Through this book, Yamada provides an opportunity for the cross-fertilization of ideas, the object of her study, allowing historians to witness how comparative education approaches these questions.

What makes educational policy during this period special is that it was a time when the British invested heavily in education in their African colonies, and their colonies were prosperous enough in the 1910s and

1920s to support investment in infrastructure and social services. The British used this expansion of state services to blunt the demands of African nationalists. In their educational initiatives, they notably drew on the American experiments in industrial and technical education for African Americans at the Tuskegee and Hampton Institutes. Thus, as a case study of the processes by which ideas travel, this period is particularly interesting.

It is Yamada’s contention that the major educational discourses of the era—namely, adaptation and “learning by doing”—were ambiguous enough to mean different things to different people, and thus became terms that were floated extensively to justify numerous different educational projects. In the language of traveling models, developed by anthropologists, such terms became tokens, which seems to indicate continuity; however, these terms in fact have different meanings across settings (see Andrea Behrends, Sung-Joon Park, and Richard Rottenberg, eds., *Travelling Models in African Conflict Management: Translating Technologies of Social Ordering* [2014]). This ambiguity has several consequences, according to Yamada. One, the agreement between parties can be overstated. In fact, these terms meant different things to different people. For example, “adaptation,” in the case of Tuskegee and Hampton, meant acceptance of a segregated labor market in which African Americans would do manual labor. In the case of the Gold Coast, “adaptation” meant the incorporation of “traditional culture” into a colonial school. In the words of Yamada, “terms were like revolving doors through which one can move across different educational thoughts freely” (138).

Second, on the basis of this continuity of discourse, scholars have tended to overrate the influence of educational philosophy on policymaking. For instance, colonial policymakers often used the phrase “learning by doing,” attributed to John Dewey, who promoted experiential education, driven by the learner’s interest, to encourage democratic citizenship. In the context of colonial Africa, “learning by doing” meant not self-realization, anathema to many colonial officials, but vocational or agricultural education. Yamada argues that policymakers’ references to educational theories and philosophers are “patchworks of ideas from different sources but presented as if they are a single coherent set of ideas” (119). As a result of this confusion, she argues, scholars have overstated the influence of American ideas on British colonial policy. Instead, the American experts were used to legitimate policymakers’ existing ideas. Thus, it is hard to figure out the direction of educational transfer. Instead, “educational models and ideas were all floating around and cross-fertilising each other” (142). Ideas did not just flow simply from the metropole to the colony but instead were transformed there, which then fed back into global discourses.

REVIEW ESSAY

Guns in African History: The Examples of Central Africa and Nigeria

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Giacomo Macola. 2016. *The Gun in Central Africa: A History of Technology and Politics*, Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press. 249 pp.

Saheed Aderinto. 2018. *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: Firearms, Culture and Public Order*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press. 300 pp.

Guns have played an important and deadly role in African History. Relevant themes include the gun-slave cycle of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, the superiority of European firepower produced by new weapons such as the Maxim Gun during the “Scramble for Africa,” and the proliferation of small arms such as the ubiquitous AK-47 assault rifle in parts of post-colonial Africa. Moving beyond these well-known examples, historians Giacomo Macola and Saheed Aderinto have written books that seek to use the gun as a vehicle to explore broader aspects of the history of different parts of Africa.

Macola’s book looks at the development of a “gun society” in the interior of Central Africa, particularly the savannah region that now comprises Zambia, Malawi, and the southern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), during the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. According to the author, “a gun society is one in which firearms are put to momentous productive, military and/or other symbolic uses, over a sustained period of time and by a politically or numerically significant portion of the population” (p. 19). Macola criticizes previous works on the history of technology in Africa, particularly the few related to imported firearms, for engaging in technological determinism in that African societies are seen as passively receiving and being moulded by technological innovation. The recent work of William Storey, which looks at the relation of gun ownership and trade to the rise of a racial hierarchy in Southern Africa, is criticized for relying on colonial sources and therefore failing to explore the adoption of guns within African societies.¹ The central theme of Macola’s “culturally sensitive” (p. 163) study is that the different meanings and functions of guns adopted by people in Central Africa “were shaped by pre-existing sociocultural relations and political interests” (p. 30). The author intends to use the gun as an example of technology through which to observe important factors in the history of Central Africa. A secondary aim is to revive interest in pre-colonial African history which engendered a great deal of scholarship from the 1960s to 1980s, the decades immediately following decolonization, but which has faded in recent years.

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v18/v18i1a5.pdf>

Macola's book begins with an "unashamedly encyclopedic" (p. 30) survey to introduce non-specialists to the pre-colonial history of the interior and southern portion of Central Africa. The subsequent chapters focus on the history of the gun in specific areas. Chapter Two looks at the upper Zambezi River in what is now western Zambia where, during the 1800s, the Lozi Kingdom did not initially adopt imported firearms because of the late arrival of the Atlantic trade and the fact that the Lozi did not export slaves but utilized them internally. After several decades of rule by the invading Kololo who also did not use guns extensively, the re-established Lozi kings of the late nineteenth century sought to centralize control of firearms, which became symbols of royalty and modernity. Nearby, the decentralized Kaonde and Luvale people, during the late nineteenth century, began to use guns as tools for hunting, symbols of manhood, and a form of currency. Looking at why such communities prized apparently obsolete muzzle-loaders, Macola explains that these represented an "accessible technology" (p. 59) as they were made with soft iron that could be mended locally.

The third chapter looks at the Yeke state, located in what is now Katanga in southern DRC, which was founded by the upstart invader Msiri in the 1850s and 1860s and used imported firearms to engage in the slave and ivory trades. Macola explains that the Yeke use of guns for military and economic purposes gave them short-term success but that their failure to develop gunpowder manufacturing made them dependent on importation. While Yeke power was undermined by a rebellion of the hitherto victimized Sanga people who blocked the delivery of gunpowder, Yeke fortunes were revived by the arrival of the Belgian colonizers of the Congo Free State who employed them as military auxiliaries and provided guns and ammunition. For Macola, the example of the warlord Yeke state undermines the technologically deterministic approach as possession of guns did not guarantee success. This is a strong and well-researched chapter but the cultural approach falls away as it focuses on a "war and society" or "new military history" interpretation.

The next chapter examines the impact of colonial rule on gun domestication in what is now western Zambia and Katanga. Coming under British rule by treaty, the Lozi Kingdom retained its guns and procured new ones from Angolan gunrunners until the 1920s when the colonial state of Northern Rhodesia imposed laws that limited gun ownership and hunting. The possibility that this delay was caused by the First World War, which was fought in two nearby territories with the last German force surrendering in eastern Northern Rhodesia, is not discussed. For Belgian ruled Katanga, the Yeke continued as gun-armed colonial military allies until the 1910s when they entered wage labor in the area's mines which meant that guns became individual hunting tools and symbols of manhood. By the 1930s, difficulty in obtaining guns stimulated local manufacturing of old-style muskets from gun scraps, industrial products and local materials, and gunpowder was made from charcoal and imported saltpeter.

The last two chapters shift the focus to the Ngoni who originated from Southern Africa and moved into what is now eastern Zambia and Malawi in the middle 1800s. Macola sees the Ngoni rejection of firearms not as a result of isolation from trade or of a failure to militarily adapt but as a deliberate choice informed by sociocultural factors. For the Ngoni, Macola claims, guns represented a threat to masculinity and social advancement, which were related to demonstrating prowess in hand-to-hand combat with edged weapons. After a bloody conquest by the British, which Macola recounts in traditional military history style,

the Ngoni sense of honor was reinvented as a desire to join the colonial military where their symbol of manhood changed from the spear to the gun. In this view, the Ngoni attraction to the colonial military led to them being defined as a “martial race” by British officers.

Macola’s interesting book suffers from major problems. Although the author warns that he is not writing a “technical compendium,” some explanation of types of guns such as flintlocks, percussion muskets, muzzle-loaders, breach-loaders, and rifles would have been useful as these terms appear repeatedly throughout the text. More seriously, some of the most important contentions are based on very limited or no evidence. This is particularly apparent with the claims that the Lozi kings used guns as symbols of modernity, and that Ngoni concepts of honor and manhood were the primary factors prompting their initial rejection of firearms and their subsequent alleged flocking to the colonial army. The possibility that the late nineteenth century Lozi kings adopted guns to prevent another Kololo-like conquest is not taken seriously enough. While honor may have been a factor in the Ngoni reluctance to use guns, tactical and environmental adaptations were also likely very important. In the same period, in East Africa, the decentralized Maasai and the Kingdom of Rwanda developed effective tactics against musket-armed raiders but these methods proved disastrous against much better armed colonial invaders who arrived suddenly.² The claim that the Ngoni dominated the ranks of British military units in the region is in some cases speculative (p. 151), exaggerated or not contextualized. With reference to Ngoni reasons for joining the colonial army, the entire cultural argument is based on a passage in a single colonial memoir (p. 154, note 78), and no Ngoni sources were used and no fieldwork was conducted in contemporary Ngoni (or for that matter Lozi) communities, which would have been accessible. After describing how colonial conquest left Ngoni communities shattered, the author unconvincingly dismisses poverty and hunger as instigators for military enlistment. Historians who conducted extensive oral and documentary research on African motivations for joining later colonial militaries, Timothy Parsons on Kenya and I on Zimbabwe, are set up as strawmen and criticized for ignoring “profound historical processes” (p. 154) and presenting a “lopsided perspective” (p. 156).³ Macola would have benefited from reading Timothy Lovering’s well researched PhD thesis on African soldiers in colonial Malawi which discusses the Ngoni and other ethnic groups such as the Yao who used guns in the nineteenth century, enlisted in the colonial army and were characterized as a martial race.⁴

Macola engages in considerable speculation. Jumping about thirty or forty years of history, he guesses that the Yeke’s historical association with firearms informed their enlistment in Katanga separatist forces during the 1960s Congo Crisis (p. 114). There is nothing about possible Yeke military enlistment from 1910s to 1950s. While the book’s conclusion recommends that modern policymakers apply a deeper historical and cultural approach to the problems of militia violence in eastern DRC, an area slightly outside the scope of the book, not much is mentioned besides the well-known nineteenth century warlord Tippu Tip.

While Macola hopes to inspire new interest in pre-colonial history, the book deals mostly with the conquest and early colonial eras and employs just three oral interviews all of which are related to the Yeke case. In fact, the book represents a clear illustration of why Africanist historians have unfortunately shied away from pre-colonial history as the evidence is limited, it is difficult to address the period before 1800, and oral traditions are eroding and probably never focused much on social and cultural issues that currently

interest academic historians. If not for the detailed and well documented sections on military and colonial history, the book's pretentious, speculative, and thinly supported cultural approach would be fragmentary.

Using guns as a "window" into the history of colonial Nigeria from around 1900 to 1960, Aderinto differentiates between a gun society and a gun culture. For him, a gun society is one that "cannot do without firearms in its daily social, political, cultural and religious life" (p. 7) and a gun culture exists within a society in which guns are used for any purpose. Given his definitions, and in contradiction with Macola's view that a gun society existed in Central Africa and Storey's cautionary approach to the term, Aderinto maintains that no gun society existed in Africa before the twentieth century as firearms were restricted to certain groups and used for "empire building and slave-gathering" (p. 7). Aderinto's main point is that Nigeria became a gun society during British colonial rule when the liberalization of gun ownership became transformative. During this period more Nigerians possessed firearms than ever before and, more importantly for the author, guns influenced Nigerian society at different levels.

The book's first chapter discusses the arrival of guns in Nigeria through trade with Europeans and Arabs and looks at how the firearms trade evolved from a regular feature of the Trans-Atlantic system of the 1600s and 1700s importing single-shot muzzle-loaders to a restricted trade in the late nineteenth century when machine guns were used in colonial conquest. From the 1890s to 1920s, as the next chapter shows, the early colonial state regulated gun ownership to reflect social status with common people permitted to own old-fashioned muzzle-loaders popularly called Dane Guns, educated Africans possessing slightly more advanced shotguns, and Europeans and eventually some African elites monopolizing control of the most lethal firearms including revolvers and breach-loading rifles. In this growing Nigerian gun society, by the 1920s, firearms were not only used for hunting a dwindling amount of wildlife and defending against thieves but increasingly for firing salutes during important public events.

While the British did not want Nigerians to access the most deadly firearms with which they could resist colonial rule, the proliferation of the Dane Gun presented an opportunity for the colonial government and businesses to profit, as Nigerians were dependent upon huge quantities of imported gunpowder. During the Second World War, as Aderinto's third chapter discusses, the British supplied gunpowder to Nigerians in exchange for critical wartime materials such as rubber and palm oil. The next chapter looks at the importance of firearms in maintaining colonial rule. For Europeans in Nigeria, and elsewhere in colonial Africa, using rifles in hunting and sport shooting, and belonging to racially exclusive Rifle Associations symbolized imperial domination over Africans and the African environment. In a chapter on the role of firearms in public disorder, Aderinto re-interprets the shooting to death of twenty-one miners by the police during the 1949 Enugu Colliery strike as resulting not from a labor dispute but from the police trying to secure a store of explosives that they feared could be seized by the radical Zikist movement. Furthermore, he discusses how, in the decolonization era of the 1950s, guns were not just employed by the colonizers but that they began to feature within Nigerian political violence. Guns became institutionalized in everyday Nigerian life, which meant that armed robbery rose in tandem with the cash economy, and widespread hunting and celebratory shooting caused more firearm accidents that were often interpreted in a local context.

Gun ownership was not uniform thorough colonial Nigeria and the last chapter reveals that firearms were proliferated in the conservative Muslim north by Christian southerners who, from the early twentieth century, moved there to work or conduct business. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, with the rise of the nationalist movement, the colonial regime completely deregulated the ownership of Dane Guns, which were seen as unthreatening but tightened up rules around possession of shotguns and precision firearms among educated Nigerians who were at the forefront of calls for independence. In his epilogue, Aderinto discusses the demise of a gun society in post-colonial Nigeria where a succession of military governments strictly limited legal gun ownership and publically executed armed robbers by firing squad, and where hunting declined with the extermination of wildlife and celebratory gun salutes became less fashionable. Ironically, at the same time the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70) and conflicts in neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone led to a spread of illegal and highly lethal military weapons across Nigeria which, in the context of state and economic failure, were (and are) commonly used by criminals and insurgents.

Aderinto has written a solid history. His statements are supported by ample evidence collected from the three branches of the Nigerian National Archives (Ibadan, Kaduna, and Enugu), colonial newspapers, memoirs and some oral interviews conducted in western Nigeria. The richness of Aderinto's research shows why historians of Africa have gravitated to colonial and post-colonial topics. It would be difficult to write such a detailed and insightful history on the same theme focusing entirely on pre-colonial Nigeria. In addition, the book is clearly written and contextualized while addressing sophisticated ideas and an array of specific examples. Usefully, the author gives concise explanations of the relevant types of firearms at the start of the text. It is a relief that Aderinto recognizes but does not belabor the idea that the gun (like other weapons) became a symbol of masculinity in Nigeria as guns have taken on this role in almost every part of the world. My main criticism of the book is that it might be too sweeping to claim with absolute certainty that a gun society, the definition of which varies, did not exist anywhere in Africa before the twentieth century, as research on this theme is relatively new and the evidence is limited. Historiographically, it is tempting to ask if the different definitions of a gun society put forth by these books originate, to some extent, from the authors' personal experience; did Macola's location in gun-shy Britain influence his narrower definition and did Aderinto's position in the gun-loving southern United States widen his view?

Notes

1 Storey 2008.

2 "Mr. J.M. Hildebrandt" 1877-78, p. 448; Kagame 1963, p. 174.

3 Parsons 1999; Stapleton 2011.

4 Lovering 2002. For the military enlistment of Malawians in Southern Rhodesia see Stapleton 2006, p. 36.

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Guns feature prominently among the commodities that have been constantly imported into Africa since early modern times. Historical research on this subject saw a first wave in the 1960s and 70s, when the vast precolonial importation of firearms was discussed in the context of slave trade, warfare, and state-building. Recently, firearms have returned to the research agenda, but today, the focus lies more on the social and cultural history of firearms, and on arms control. Saheed Aderinto's new book follows this recent research strand; it explores the social, cultural, economic, and political role of firearms in colonial Nigeria, focusing on the period between 1900 and 1960.

The most astonishing finding of Aderinto's study is that it was only in the 1920s, under British colonial rule, that Nigeria became a gun society. Much depends on definition here, but Aderinto shows convincingly that despite a much longer history of firearms importation, it was only in consequence of a relatively liberal British gun policy that certain types of firearms became so widespread and so interwoven with every-day life that one can justifiably speak of a gun society.

Guns were instruments of destruction, used in warfare, armed resistance, hunting and robbery, but their usage went well beyond this; they were also objects of value (and could be pawned), fashionable sporting equipment, markers of status, and signifiers of ceremony, announcing for example the birth of a child. The history of firearms in colonial Nigeria was closely connected with ideas of citizenship, safety, class, gender, race, and the human interaction with the environment. The possession and usage of firearms strongly shaped colonial society, structuring state as well as inter- and intra-ethnic violence. To demonstrate all this, Aderinto draws on a vast array of sources: district and provincial records, firearms registries, colonial laws, court cases,

anthropological surveys, records of the Nigerian Rifle Association, memoirs, travel writings, newspapers and oral narratives.

Aderinto's study starts by outlining the history of precolonial arms importation. Although weapons never overtook textiles, from the 1630s flintlock muskets (locally called Dane guns) became a significant trading item, with great purchasing power and inextricably linked with the slavery business. In precolonial times, firearms possession was monopolized by military aristocrats and warriors, but these firearms were rarely used for hunting in this region. After the colonial conquest, in which superior weaponry played a decisive role, a new regime of gun ownership was established in the British colony under Frederick Lugard. This regime strikingly reflects colonial hierarchies: all Nigerians were eligible for a license for a Dane gun, the simplest, oldest and for its users most dangerous of available guns (which however required the highest skills for effective usage); „educated“ Nigerians could apply for the technically more advanced shotguns; pistols, revolvers and rifles were strictly reserved for Europeans. This hierarchical but relatively liberal gun policy secured tax revenues for the colonial government, but, as already stated, it was only through this policy that Dane guns and shotguns penetrated deeply into everyday life. Aderinto gives numerous examples – one very interesting observation here is the various forms of noise consumption when firearms were as much an element of imperial spectacle as of communal festivity. Double-barreled shotguns became particularly fashionable among the educated middle classes and served as a social marker. Paradoxically, although they were actually hunting weapons, shotguns were most widespread among city dwellers. Aderinto also looks in detail at the everyday misuse of guns, and, using newspaper accounts and oral narratives, shows that tragic gun accidents were common; and he describes how the criminal use of guns ushered in debates over stricter regulation.

Local blacksmiths soon adopted gunsmithing skills, and by the 1930s Yoruba gunsmiths had mastered the production of Dane guns. However, import rates remained

high and consumption relied heavily on the import of gunpowder, which could be produced locally only in small quantities. Dependence on gunpowder importation was particularly exploited during the Second World War, when the British adopted a „palm kernel and rubber for gunpowder“-policy, with the aim of squeezing out more of these strategically important resources. Against all odds, this policy helped some Nigerian farmers to get a foot in the door of palm kernel production. Colonial authorities even generated artificial scarcity by hoarding gunpowder in store-houses; however, this plan proved to be an error of judgment, as the gunpowder became damp and unusable. Meanwhile, the unfair trade conditions were increasingly criticised by Nigerian nationalists.

Looking into the European possession and usage of firearms in Nigeria, their role for the construction of racial superiority becomes all the more evident. European men (and very few women) monopolised rifle shooting, particularly for leisure hunting, and this also reflected the idea of imperial control over nature. The gun was a symbol of imperialism, and for Europeans, gun possession was not a privilege, but a right. The claim to racial superiority was produced and reproduced through superior guns on a daily basis, and under the „pretext of self-defence“, „Europeans were known to commit serious gun-related violence“ (p. 147).

Through legal and illegal proliferation, firearms also played an important part in armed resistance against colonial rule in Nigeria, but proved to be much more destructive in inter- and intra-ethnic conflicts. Transition to independence in Nigeria, Aderinto underlines, may not have witnessed the same level of violence as in Algeria or Kenya, but it was by no means peaceful – and the violence of the transitional period was structured by the gun. Aderinto demonstrates that the Enugu Colliery shooting of 1949, in the course of which 21 striking coal miners were shot and killed by the Nigeria Police Force, had an even broader connection to firearms through a security report that informed the colonial authorities of the miners' access to explosives. The event also marked a turn-

ing point in the British policy on gun control in Nigeria, which only now became more restrictive with regard to shotguns. Nonetheless, guns became the dominant symbol of political power among Nigerian leaders during and after independence, and they were also violently used by „party loyalists and hooligans to intimidate opponents“ (p. 181), e. g. during the Kano riot of 1953. The postcolonial state, Aderinto makes clear in the epilogue, lost complete control over the regulation of firearms. Among other factors, such as the strong increase in arms sales through the former imperial powers, permeable borders and corruption on all levels, it was the colonial gun usage that had laid a foundation for the widespread postcolonial gun violence in postcolonial Nigeria.

The only thing the reviewer missed in this well-researched and insightful monograph was a more elaborate study of the importance of firearms for gender identities and gender relations, which is touched occasionally and obvious throughout, but not assessed systematically. And the claim that gun societies did not exist at all in Africa in earlier times (p. 7) will require more research to be either confirmed or challenged. Notwithstanding these points, Aderinto's book makes an important contribution to the history of firearms in the twentieth century. Its findings underline the major importance of guns and gun policies for the construction of colonial and postcolonial societies, and the meticulous study of the way in which guns gradually permeated everyday life is exemplary, pointing far beyond the Nigerian case.

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[Westwood on Aderinto, 'Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: Firearms, Culture, and Public Order'](#)

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\$35.00 (paper), [ISBN 978-0-253-03161-7](#).



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The rich narratives within Saheed Aderinto's *Guns and Society in Colonial Nigeria: Firearms, Culture, and Public Order* immerse the reader into an in-depth account of the introduction and proliferation of guns in Nigerian society during the twentieth century. Weaving together oral history, newspaper reports, and archival data, Aderinto provides several sketches of daily life in Nigeria seen through the lens of gun use and gun ownership in the development of a gun society. By way of explanation, Aderinto defines a "gun society" as one that "cannot do without firearms in its daily social, political, cultural, and religious life" (p. 7). The book's overarching argument is to recenter the narrative about firearms in Africa away from their military use, instead stressing their ceremonial importance and employment as status symbols and hunting tools (here, the flintlock muskets commonly known as Dane guns, in wide circulation throughout the twentieth century, play a significant role). However, Aderinto separates his approach from the recent work of Giacomo Macola, *The Gun in Central Africa: A History of Technology and Politics* (2016), arguing that there was no gun society in Africa prior to the colonial period.

As is shown through the course of the narrative, guns began to play a part in the region eventually known as Nigeria from at least the fifteenth century. Aderinto delivers a welcome overview of the introduction of various gun technologies throughout the precolonial period. Though it is not a focus of the book, the author also presents a nuanced approach to the gun-slave cycle debate, which may be of note to historians of Africa and the Atlantic world. Over time, guns and gun noise became an integral part of events and ceremonies throughout the region, as well as a signifier of wealth or status, as Aderinto details in the second chapter. For those interested in political economy and material culture, the third chapter reviews a wealth of information about the gunpowder trade and the way access to gunpowder shaped local economies. There are even a few details about international trade and cross-border smuggling, though it is unfortunate that there is no reference to Sokhna Sané's *Le contrôle des armes à feu en Afrique occidentale française 1834-1958* (2008), which deals in depth with the gunpowder trade in French West Africa.

Chapters 4-7 illustrate the multitude of colonial interactions involving guns, whether legal, social, economic, political, or a combination of factors. It may surprise some readers that the gun society Aderinto describes includes numerous British colonial officials. There is a great deal of information

on colonial life in Nigeria, as the British officer class and political figures feature in the majority of chapters, particularly in terms of their hunting exploits and their view of gun ownership among subject peoples. These chapters focus on the relationship between British and Nigerian men, and a few women, in a variety of occupations. One narrative throughout is a story of access: who could possess which firearms at what point in time. Aderinto details the shifting criteria instated by colonial officials and, later, the Nigerian state. With data from legal cases as well as newspaper reports, the author paints a clear picture of the ways Nigerians attempted to assert access to guns and to maintain ownership for generations. The dangerous aspects of gun use are present throughout these chapters, which include accounts of shootings as well as gun accidents, and the ways these events were handled differently for colonists and subjects of the Crown.

One of many noteworthy takeaways for military historians regards the lethality of Dane guns, which were the most antiquated yet most accessible firearms for Nigerians. Local hunters were praised and feared by colonial agents for their skills with these weapons. Despite British attempts to regulate gun access, hunters and other men with training in the use of Dane guns could prove more lethal than inexperienced shots wielding rifles. In lieu of a conclusion, Aderinto adds a brief but fascinating epilogue about the continued attempt of the postcolonial Nigerian government to appropriate and, in some cases, redistribute firearms for its own ends, and the accompanying rise in criminality. The effects of population growth and urbanization are particularly notable, with the decline in the need for guns for ceremonial purposes as villages depopulate and hunters take on work as guards in urban areas.

The book focuses on two particular objects: Dane guns and gunpowder, an interesting lens through which to examine colonial society in Nigeria in the twentieth century. Explosives are used as a new way to interpret the Enugu colliery shooting in 1949, where Aderinto shows convincingly that the massacre was caused by fears that the explosives used for mining purposes would be turned against the colonial state. Considering the focus on the multifaceted significance of access and use of firearms and explosives, however, it is curious that there is little information on the local production of Dane guns. In the epilogue, Aderinto includes some details on blacksmiths and the manufacture of guns during the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70) and the Agbekoya War (1968-69), but we miss a fuller picture of the development of local manufacturing in the text as a whole.

As noted above, it would be advantageous to place this gun society within the wider West African context, particularly concerning the work of Sané, but also in terms of other neighboring states. The inclusion of a map would also allow readers to situate better the events taking place in both North and South as well as the cross-border implications of the arms trade. Further, a more thorough copyedit would have caught a number of small errors that distract from the author's arguments. Finally, though this is not a work about soldiers, it is surprising how infrequently veterans of colonial forces enter the text. Individuals from the Royal West African Frontier Force, the West African Frontier Force, and the Nigeria Police Force do appear, and there is a wealth of detail on the trials and complexities of policing during the colonial period.

Overall, this is a welcome addition to the fields of colonial history, African history, studies of political economy and material culture, and what has come to be known as "new military" history.

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