with good or controversial results. As Adamson points out, ‘The Executive Director has power to hire and fire, power to promote or pass over, power to include or exclude from inner counsels. These are the crude instruments of internal direction changing in any large organization. And Jim used them.’ As the former UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, put it: ‘Very few men or women ever have the opportunity to do as much good in the world as Jim Grant, and very few have ever grasped that opportunity with such complete and dedicated commitment.’ It also shows the seeming frustration of staff and governing bodies to thwart executives in their pursuit of outlandish schemes. Two other wider lessons may be detected: the need for concerted, cohesive action on the part of the UN system as a whole, in co-operation with bilateral agencies and NGOs, and the need for a comprehensive strategy for sustained and equitable development in which the prime beneficiaries are children, the hope for the future. The paradox of Grant’s legacy is that, although it is estimated that through his vision ‘at least 25 million children were alive who would otherwise have died in early life’, what kind of quality of life have they subsequently had?

This tribute to Jim Grant deserves to be widely read. Proceeds from its sale will go to the James P. Grant Trust for International Social Development. An index would have been useful and might have helped avoid certain inconsistencies, e.g., Grant’s death is given as February 1995 on p. 34 and 28 January 1995 on p. 59.

D. J. Shaw


The call for the expulsion of people from game reserves in Africa resonates with notions of an imagined pristine African wilderness, and raises an important question: How should the African landscape look? It is this question that lies at the heart of this book, challenging both the conventional view of wildlife conservation and the more populist community-based approaches that have emerged over the last decade or so.

The Mkomazi Game Reserve in north-eastern Tanzania, although a particular case of a conservation ‘project’, serves at the same time as a microcosm for conservation in Africa. Brockington qualifies his statement about the received wisdom of conservation as a single outlook, but there is undoubtedly a conservation discourse to be found throughout Africa which allows him to do so. It is a viewpoint that sees Africans as environmental spoilers, precipitating an impending environmental catastrophe whose symptoms can be seen in widespread soil erosion, deforestation and reductions in biodiversity of both fauna and flora.

Brockington questions, certainly in relation to Mkomazi, whether there is empirical evidence to support allegations that cattle numbers have led to overgrazing and environmental degradation, and demonstrates that there is not. Imputed stocking rates are lower than critical levels and, in any event, of questionable relevance under pastoral systems where grazing is both sporadic and opportunistic. Normative statements about vegetation cover based on ‘Clementsian’ notions of climatic climax – that is, of ecosystems tending towards homeostasis – have little relevance in African savannahs where vegetation change is stochastic and predominantly subject to rainfall and physical
UNICEF, the world's leading advocate for children, is a unique organization that operates at the grassroots level. It is dedicated to improving the lives of children around the world through various initiatives and programs. UNICEF's mission is to ensure that every child has a healthy childhood, access to education, and protection from harm. The organization works with governments, local communities, and other stakeholders to implement programs that address the needs of children in crisis situations. UNICEF's work is guided by its four strategic pillars: survival, development, protection, and education. These pillars help UNICEF to address the most pressing issues faced by children, such as access to clean water, nutrition, and health care. UNICEF's partnerships with other organizations and governments are crucial to its success, as they allow for a coordinated approach to addressing the challenges faced by children in different parts of the world.
environmental factors. However, the fact that there is no evidence indicates a lack of research rather than proof that degradation is (or, indeed, is not) occurring. What Brockington does show is that the uniqueness attributed to Mkomazi, as an area of biotic diversity, is untrue, without refuting its beauty or the need for its conservation.

He discusses the myth of an African wilderness that is perpetuated in a conservation discourse which is both ahistorical and depoliticised. Taken out of its historical context, Mkomazi is an area of recent occupation and utilisation. Taken out of its political context, it is deserving of conservation for posterity – a value-laden statement which connotes a hidden value for Tanzanians, many of them on the brink of destitution. But where does that leave us? Fortress conservation deprives people of previous existing rights and denies, in the face of no viable alternatives, their right to a livelihood. Community conservation offers low levels of income per capita relative to existing land usage when the numbers of people occupying areas contiguous with the reserve are too large for the paltry sums derived from tourism to have any significant impact on the levels of poverty.

Brockington asks a number of particularly relevant questions. Why, if cattle are so harmful, can their removal from a disputed area lead to such a miraculous recovery of land purported to be irreversibly degraded? Or, is it rainfall patterns that are the determining factor for vegetation cover, indicating that African ecosystems are particularly resilient? Is there anything at all that can be said in the absence of long-term monitoring of trends of sufficient duration before conclusions can be reached? Also of critical importance is the changing nature of livelihood strategies under regimes of land alienation. Is there any moral justification for increasing poverty for the sake of nature conservation? But that leads us to the need for long-term research which can monitor for changing species composition and pinpoint causal factors, presupposing, of course, that we have the techniques to disaggregate interrelated factors impacting simultaneously.

This is a book well worth reading. It covers a lot of very interesting material, ranging from a consideration of conservation as both ideology and practice (Chapter 1) and of ‘fortress’ and community conservation (Chapter 6) to a detailed study of Mkomazi and its people and the history of the reserve, its land alienation and evictions and their impact on livelihoods. But it ends somewhat abruptly and unsatisfactorily without steering the reader in any conclusive direction. Perhaps the answer lies in an African landscape that meets the aspirations of its local people who – no more nor less than the conservationists who appropriate to themselves custodianship of areas in which they are relative strangers – would wish for an environment abounding in the biodiversity on which they largely depend, but which secures them a decent livelihood. That this is achievable in the face of existing pressures and constraints remains to be seen.

Dan Taylor


This book examines how the Afar, a multi-clan pastoral people of Northeastern Ethiopia, have coped with the introduction of centrally planned and ill-conceived
irrigation agriculture in their homeland, and its far-reaching effects on their way of life. Among the project’s objectives was to introduce the Afar to arable farming and get them to abandon their wandering ways. The author shows how the pastoralists have adapted to the new situation.

The story of state-imposed change begins in the 1950s when the imperial government introduced irrigation schemes in Ethiopia’s Middle Awash Valley. Under the administration of the Awash Valley Authority (AVA) set up in 1962, the irrigation schemes expanded and swallowed up, without regard to the Afar’s traditional rights, a great deal of their land. Since then, despite changes in government, there has been no respite in the pursuit of the vision of development at the centre of which has been the re-orienting of Afar lifestyle from pastoralism to sedentarism, supposedly to improve their standard of living.

The book is based on fieldwork conducted in bits during the period 1992-5 in the Amibara district of a region known as the Middle Awash, home to the Debine and Weima (not Aussa) sections of the Adohimara Afar. Following an introduction summarising what the book is about, the research methods used, and the reasons for selecting the research site, Chapters 2 and 3 take the reader through the history, ethnography, traditional economy and the complex and once essentially egalitarian social organisation of the Afar, as well as providing a detailed account of the introduction of irrigation agriculture and the rationale underlying it, briefly relating them to similar processes elsewhere. For a reader meeting the Afar for the first time, they provide a useful background to the larger story of ‘imposed change’ and its impact.

Chapters 4-6 constitute the heart of the book and tell the ‘real’ story of the challenges faced by the pastoralists as a result of the introduction and expansion of irrigation schemes. What emerges, backed up by data from a household survey on which Chapter 6 is based, is a detailed picture of unprecedented economic and social differentiation in a world once characterised by egalitarianism sustained by high levels of reciprocal social support. It shows the degree to which projects conceived at the top by elites supposedly for the benefit of the poor and implemented in a top-down manner can be damaging to the interests of the very people they are intended to benefit. In the case of the Afar the majority of the intended beneficiaries have been left to struggle for ever-diminishing resources against a background of rising poverty and inequality that has driven young and middle-aged men into abandoning the countryside for the urban areas. The effects on household structure and economy as well as property relations and the environment have been profound, mitigated in some cases only by the strong rural-urban linkages highlighted in Chapter 5.

Increasing sedentarisation, the growth of trading centres and market towns, the influx of people from other parts of Ethiopia, etc. have transformed the social institutions and lifestyle of the Afar people in many unintended, unforeseen and yet inevitable ways. Nonetheless, as the author shows, aspects of Afar traditions and culture have proved resilient. Pastoralism, though altered in fundamental ways, remains the major economic activity, and the majority of Afar have remained rural dwellers, still continuing their ancient political, social, and cultural traditions. Nonetheless, growing rural-urban linkages have meant that the importance of pastoralism as a source of livelihood or economic activity has to a large extent diminished. Many Afar, rural and urban, combine it with arable farming, commerce, and wage employment, as elsewhere in rural Africa.
Book Review: Fortress Conservation: The Preservation of the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania
Christopher Conte
Journal of Asian and African Studies 2006; 40; 235
DOI: 10.1177/0021968604003036

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://jjas.sagepub.com

Published by:
SAGE Publications
http://www.sagepublications.com

Additional services and information for Journal of Asian and African Studies can be found at:
Email Alerts: http://jjas.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts
Subscriptions: http://jjas.sagepub.com/subscriptions
Reprints: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav
Permissions: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

Reviewed by:
Aslam Fataar
University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa


The cover of Fortress Conservation epitomizes Dan Brockington's cynicism toward conservation policy in Tanzania's Mkomazi Game Reserve. Two well-dressed guests attending a wildlife fund raising party in London hold full champagne glasses. The woman has two zebras embroidered on her sweater. The couple is far removed from East Africa's savannas, yet according to Brockington's careful analysis, their wealth and their distorted understanding of ecology and history have helped to impoverish pastoralist communities who have lost access to the pastures they and their ancestors helped to create. Brockington's study challenges the prevailing paradigms in conservation and development circles which argue that the land use practices of pastoralists destroys savanna environments and that effective conservation policy requires their unequivocal exclusion. The author's iconoclasm succeeds in large part because he brings to the study a geographer's broad vision of ecology, society, and history, as well as the understanding of a keen observer with much field experience in East Africa.

Covering approximately 3200 km², the Mkomazi Game Reserve occupies a large swath of Tanzania's northeast border with Kenya. Although the international border separates Mkomazi from Tsavo National Park, the two places share a regional ecology that includes a semi-arid climate, savanna vegetation suitable for domestic stock grazing, and many of the large charismatic mammals whose images bring contributions into the coffers of conservation organizations. While Fortress Conservation contains discussions of wildlife dynamics at Mkomazi, Brockington's chief concern lies with the herding communities who the Tanzanian government forcibly evicted from the game reserve in 1988. The opening chapters set up the contemporary problem, which is, in part, one of
perception. Brockington argues that conservation organizations in the USA and the UK are driven by a myth: the idea that they must remove the human threats to Mkomazi in order to recreate a preexisting and essentially wild nature. This simple reductionism squelches any potential guilt, because it portrays Mkomazi’s evictees as opportunistic foreigners recently arrived in the area.

Fortress Conservation’s portrayal of East Africa’s social and environmental history disproves the mythology. The scholarship that Brockington draws upon demonstrates that pastoralists have been living off and using, East Africa’s plains environments for many centuries. Readers will learn that pastoralists’ social and economic survival has depended not only on livestock, but also on considerable environmental knowledge, mobility, and complex relations with their neighbors on the plains and in the surrounding mountain agricultural zones. Brockington also explains how the complex interrelationships among climate, land-use practices, human and livestock demography, and disease vectors also shape Mkomazi’s environmental history. Rather than a pristine environment under siege from monocultural cattle herders, Fortress Conservation makes a case for a place where human and natural history have coalesced to produce a place infused with culture.

Chapter Four, entitled ‘Environments,’ deepens the analysis with a critique of ecological conceptualizations of rangelands. Ecological studies of East African rangelands have consistently stressed the fragility characteristic of collapse under herding regimes. Brockington considers an alternate view in which range ecology exhibits multiple and shifting alternative states, a situation that indicates a remarkable resilience in the face of human and environmental perturbation. Brockington also considers the ‘biodiversity’ concept, which, like fragility, has become a rallying cry for the conservation lobby. The argument here is that biodiversity is a boundary concept which can be appropriated to fit scientific and political agendas. No matter who invokes it, biodiversity inevitably comes with a conservation value. Brockington argues that species richness and endemism are valuable ecosystem attributes, but he questions the whole notion of biodiversity existing in isolation from the herding ecologies, which may have actually enhanced the number of species on the range. Brockington concludes that we simply do not yet know enough about ecosystem dynamics.

The final three chapters take up the conflicts generated by the game reserve’s formation. Brockington finds, predictably, that regional livestock marketers have declined; that middle and poorer households have suffered from their inability to enter the reserve, and that the benefits from the relatively few tourism dollars do not compensate for the economic losses local people have suffered. Resentment simmers among the evictees and increasingly they seek redress by flouting the restrictions on using the game reserve. Seeing an opportunity to address the conflicts, a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been formed on the premise of developing community-based conservation wherein local communities receive economic benefit from their participation in the reserve’s protection, rather than its exploitation. However, according to Brockington, the NGOs generally fail. As marginally funded local NGOs seek to curry favor with the wealthy and powerful international groups, local needs become subsumed to conservation imperatives of well-endowed international organizations like the Wildlife Preservation Trust, which seeks to reinvent a mythologized wild nature. In the end, NGO agendas win the day because of the relative poverty and powerlessness of the people who live around the reserve. Fortress Conservation’s final chapter examines the livelihoods of the evicted communities. Brockington stresses their resilience in the face of difficult circumstances; they are survivors. However, he concludes that without their animals and their land, Mkomazi’s former residents remain vulnerable to the precariousness of economic life in one of the world’s poorest countries.

Brockington’s book articulates an increasingly prevalent academic perception that activists in Europe and America manage to impose a form of environmental advocacy upon peoples in impoverished tropical regions. In this regard, Fortress Conservation succeeds in making a strong case because of the circumstantial with which Brockington treats the historical, sociological, and ecological studies of Mkomazi. He demonstrates just how little we understand about ecosystem function and how faulty, but nonetheless powerful, readings of landscape history can exclude people from the resources they desperately need. This provocative book will fit well into undergraduate and graduate course on resource management, but it also belongs on the reading lists of members of international conservation organizations.

Reviewed by:
Christopher Conte
Utah State University, Logan, Utah, USA


In this well-written book Imbo correctly affirms that Africans do, indeed, have philosophies worth studying, even if they are grounded in African oral traditions, stories, or myths. This affirmation is, unfortunately, still necessary for some people, since in the past many scholars generally denied that Africa had any civilization, history, philosophy, culture, or religion worth studying, given the absence of written literature. Egypt, Ethiopia, Tunisia (Sudan), and North Africa are the main exceptions to this indictment. Before the arrival of literacy associated with Islam and Christianity, most West and East African kingdoms and empires had trained formal priests, doctors, builders, metal workers, soldiers, historians, teachers or wise men (and wise women) who served as oral custodians of history and culture. These professionals were the living libraries.

In 1983 American physician Bruce Hayse led a rafting adventure down the Central African Republic's Chinko River. His first impression was of "a paradise," a place "as wild as you will ever see."

Unfortunately, all was not well in "paradise." The animals were "missing in action." For days the party saw nothing but "burned out" camps, littered with elephant pelvises and spent ammunition. This "forgotten Eden" had been seriously degraded, but Hayse was confident that it could be restored with ecotourism revenue. His efforts to realize this vision have made him the subject of modest media attention, including a recent article in National Geographic Adventure by Tom Clynes (October 2002), entitled "They Kill Poachers, Don't They?" The article could easily become a script for a feel-good shoot-em-up film, featuring a chimpanzee mascot named Commando, in which the only people killed are faceless "poachers." The reality of the situation is that President Patasse of the Central African Republic (C.A.R.) has granted Hayse's paramilitary forces complete control over the Chinko River Basin. Led by an anonymous South African mercenary, this force has authority to shoot on sight. They have already executed at least three "poachers," and arrested several others.

Hayse's entrepreneurial approach to nature preservation epitomizes Dan Brockington's concept of "fortress conservation" in the context of post-liberalization sub-Saharan Africa. Fortress conservation is an approach that seeks to preserve wildlife and their habitat through the forceful exclusion of local people who have traditionally relied on the environment in question for their livelihoods. Brockington demonstrates that this approach is part of a powerful narrative that informs conservation throughout the continent. The narrative begins with the assumption that local people have harmed the environment, making it a "degraded Eden," but that Western science has the knowledge and the means to restore it. Recently, it has incorporated conservationist notions of "biodiversity" and a postliberalization imperative that local people should benefit from the conservation of natural resources in their midst. Even Bruce Hayse's program has a community development component. This "powerful, persistent, and popular vision" has become the basis for Africa's tourist economy, in which "millions of tourists spend billions of dollars visiting the parks and reserves set up to preserve it." (p. 3). It is also supported by millions of dollars in development aid and support for scientific research. Finally, it is extensively propagated through the popular media, recent coverage of Hayse's activities in the C.A.R. being a perfect example.

The brilliance of Brockington's book is not that it demonstrates the falseness of this vision, although this it certainly does. Rather, it is his conclusion that current struggles over Mkomazi revolve around "social constructions of nature that are not really in reach of Popperian refutation. They exist and persist for reasons in which 'hard evidence' or 'data' will not necessarily figure" (p. 81). The dynamics of human ecology in Mkomazi may one day be better understood. However, they will need to be understood in a sociohistorical context: the processes by which this area was integrated into a global system of institutions, ideas, and money, and the ways in which Western notions of nature and Africa have fundamentally influenced these processes.

Brockington's strongest point is that the narratives of "fortress conservation" continue to be hugely successful in spite of being demonstrably false. Here he takes issue with positivist assumptions that "fortress conservation" will inevitably wither because it doesn't benefit local people and is undemocratic. This assumption has been at the center of community conservation initiatives that have swept Africa since the middle 1980s. Brockington argues that community conservation is less successful than "fortress conservation," because: (1) it is nearly impossible for its benefits to offset the costs of being displaced from a protected area; (2) it may not matter if the costs outweigh the benefits, if those who pay the costs are politically weak (as they often are); and (3) community agendas, which are likely to be diverse, may not coincide with conservation agendas.

Brockington speculates, therefore, that community conservation is in danger of becoming an "anti-politics machine," concealing political conflict and historical inequities. Unfortunately, these continue to be a central feature of African conservation. Interestingly, this is also the position of Bruce Hayse, who states: "You can't just declare a national park and assume the animals will be safe. There will be some confrontations, and you have to assume that there will be gunfire." This cynical position is consistent with Ferguson's observations that ideals of development and modernization no longer resonate with the African experience. In the current Neoliberal climate, promises of progress and a better life ring hollow for the majority. Inequities and economic segregation loom much larger. In this world, big game figures like Bruce Hayse and Tony Fitzjohn, who currently oversees the "restoration" of Mkomazi, are more in step with on-the-ground realities than larger conservation organizations who promise democracy while continuing to reinforce the inequalities of "fortress conserva-

---

3 James Ferguson, Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meaning of Urban Life in the Zambian Copperbelt (Buckley, 1999).
tion.” This situation helps account for the decline of once-vaulted community conservation programs, such as CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe and Good Neighborliness in Tanzania.

From this perspective, Brockington’s work is about more than conservation. He shows us that Western ideals of conservation, democracy, and economic progress cannot improve people’s lives in Africa just because people want them to. They can, however, mask the processes by which inequalities are created and people’s aspirations are quashed. Moving beyond “fortress conservation” will require commitment to new approaches based on negotiation, as well as better empirical understandings of the impacts of human activities on specific environments, the kinds of knowledge and/or perspectives that inform these activities, and exactly to whom the benefits of these activities accrue. This is the challenge that Brockington presents to conservationists, policy makers, and scholars of social and economic change in Africa. His conclusion also begs a more empirically robust analysis of the inner workings of community conservation’s “anti-politics machine.” This, I imagine, will be the focus of a future project.

JIM IGOE
University of Colorado at Denver


There are local histories and there are microhistories. Knutson’s memoirs covering his overland voyages, largely in the shadow of Mount Cameroon, fall in the latter category. These carefully assembled and annotated materials about a distant time and place are valuable, especially for students of late-nineteenth-century Cameroon. But such scattered writings, mostly drawn from 1882–1896 daybooks, but written as a memoir between 1912 and 1917, are not easy to deal with. Knutson was neither a felicitous writer nor a significant player in colonial history. Like a faded photo album, it is a book of innumerable verbal snapshots, the death of an elephant, a scientific experiment, an encounter with a local leader, some comments on customs, religion, and migratory history as the Swedish explorer heard them from local sources. Such an impressionistic account has the value of spontaneity—Knutson was an enthusiastic, engaging person—but neither completeness of detail nor accuracy were of special interest to him. He was first of all a busy trader, not an academic. His analytical comments are essentially cafe chat, but even then he foresaw an independent Cameroon one day, run by its own people.

The book’s value will be for the corroborating evidence it provides, or for the illustrations it creates of more mainstream events, as in the chapters on the “German Invasion 1894–1895” and the “Slave Trade.” The shelling of an African coastal town by a German man-of-war is one such vivid example. Another is the chapter on the expanding German presence. Knutson was invited on board the Bismark, treated to a copious meal, and the Swedish national anthem was played. He was thanked for his collaboration with the Germans (his entreaties to Stockholm to make Sweden a colonial power were rebuffed). But soon the Germans seized his extensive land holdings and denied him compensation. Knutson sulked for decades.

Knut V. Knutson was born in 1857 and while in his twenties he set out with a Swedish companion, George Waldau, as adventurers-explorers to Cameroon. At first they hunted for food and collected specimens on Mount Cameroon, but as their resources dwindled, they became inland traders and rubber exporters. By 1899 Waldau had sold his rights to Knutson and gone to work for the Germans, managing large inland properties for several years. Knutson went bankrupt and returned to Sweden, where he started a tropical goods importing company and lived comfortably, managing the company until his death in 1930.

Shirley Ardener, one of the general editors in this commendable series, is a skilled anthropologist who has written extensively on Cameroon. She has done a meticulous job of preparing the narrative for publication, commenting in valuable footnotes on personalities, issues, and dates that would otherwise not be available to the reader. The book itself is a carefully crafted addition to the colonial history of one of West Africa’s most complex countries.

FREDERICK QUINN
Oxford, England


A series of recent works have highlighted the interplay of anticolonialism, American foreign policy, the Cold War, and American civil rights with transnational
The volume contains a considerable if somewhat predictable range of content on the theme of politics and the theatre in Africa, but repeated interviews with playwrights or autobiographical meditations on their work became rather repetitive even though every effort is made to discuss the staging of the plays as well as text and politics in this rather densely packed book. However, any lack-lustre sections are brightly illuminated by the presence of the English text of Dev Virahsawmy’s gem of a play and the editors must be congratulated for affording the reader this pleasure.

ALAN SHELLEY
The Nottingham Trent University

Fortress Conservation: the preservation of the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania by DAN BROCKINGTON
DOI: 10.1017/S0022263X02645153

There are numerous excellent academic books on preservation and the problems associated with protected areas in Africa. It is certainly an area that is already extensively covered in the literature, and a potential reader might be forgiven for wondering if the topic was worth a revisit at all. However, Dan Brockington’s book provides an exceptionally rich and dense case study of a single reserve in Tanzania, Mkomazi, and the case itself illuminates much broader debates about the politics of protected area management across Africa. Furthermore, this book provides an excellent deconstruction of the whole notion of ‘fortress conservation’, and skilfully demonstrates its continuing power in the face of more recent works (and apparent commitment from conservation organisations) to community based conservation.

It is clear from Mkomazi that the power of the vision of African wilderness, with people carefully (forcibly) removed remains as strong as ever. One reason it has endured is that local agencies link up with international NGOs that continue to use the vision of a people-free wilderness to ‘sell’ African conservation to wealthy philanthropic individuals in Europe and North America. The preservation narrative invokes images of a primeval landscape where the only role people have is as savers (funders) or destroyers (local communities). Brockington points out that this vision is not contradicted or overturned by environmental science, which also retains an image of local people as fundamentally destructive to African wildlife and landscapes. The ‘reinvention of wilderness’ from areas that were once inhabited by people is created for funders and tourists alike; but it is a ‘desert strange’ to local communities whose home it once was (p. 132). Brockington argues that this myth is not a deception but a partially ‘true’ myth which is used to galvanise international action. The real power of this narrative is that once it is accepted by external funders, it then legitimates exclusion and requires an enforcement of the separation of wildlife and people. The alternative histories of pastoralism in the area are effectively denied by the fortress conservation narrative. Such alternative narratives of landscape are instead the preserve of local communities who use them to make continuing land claims on protected areas.
In sum, *Fortress Conservation* provides a clear analysis of the debate on landscape as a cultural product, through a carefully researched case study of Mkomazi game reserve in Tanzania. It is an excellent and thoroughly readable book that powerfully demonstrates the continuing, if no: resurgent, importance of the preservation narrative in the environmental politics of Africa.

**Rosaleen Duffy**  
*Lancaster University*

---

**The European Union and Africa: the restructuring of North–South relations** by William Brown  
DOI: 10.107/s0022578/x02736X

This book charts the relationship between the European Union (EU) and the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries from a historical, political and institutional point of view, through the examination of the evolution of the Lomé Conventions (I–IV) until the new ACP–EC Partnership Agreement signed in June 2000. Brown examines a relationship spanning 25 years between the ‘South’ and the ‘North’ which culminated with a Partnership Agreement which will likely shape the relationship between more than 80 countries of the world in the near future. Economic and financial concerns also take centre stage in this work, which is remarkably complete in giving a clear picture of the complexities of the North–South relationship.

The author is skillful in putting the various relevant conventions into context by making the reader aware of their meaning and their impact from a Southern critical point of view. It goes without saying that the book is about ‘development’ – i.e. the core issue addressed is the need to investigate the effects of this North–South relationship on the development of African Caribbean and Pacific countries. In addition to providing the contextual framework in which these agreements were signed, the author offers valuable insights on various ‘classical’ issues in development studies, namely problems concerning equality, technical cooperation, dependence (economic and political), North–South exchange and confrontation. This work also touches on questions relating to international relations/politics – in particular, the author portrays the end of the Lomé Convention era and the start of a new one with the Partnership Agreement as the result of a change in the North–South relationship due to a variety of political reasons, such as the increasing neo-liberal stance of the European Commission and many European national governments which followed suit.

To those who have a background in development studies, these historical processes that signalled an end to the Lomé Convention era are probably already well known. However, Brown’s keen critical eye engages the reader in a real way and offers new lessons about the relationship between rich and poor countries, in the era of de-ideologisation or mono-ideology, i.e. American-driven neo-liberalism. The author starts from the commonly held assumption that the shift in policy away from the Lomé Conventions came largely as a result of the decline of the European powers but also and above all the ‘clash of protectionism … with US driven global liberalism’ (p. 48). What is new, however, is his analysis of
lacks (like many such collections) a single bibliography (although specialized bibliographies are appropriate for certain chapters in the first section) and an index (both are also true, but less important, for La construction de l’État). Though writing before Senghor’s death, a number of contributors inadvertently revise some of his more naïve obituaries by highlighting his political and cultural authoritarianism, but Gellar reminds us that he was the first president in independent Africa to stand down voluntarily. Despite frequent mentions of overcentralization and rising regional identities, Le Sénégal contemporain still falls (apart from the Casamance studies) into Senegal’s pernicious Dakar-centrism, but Diop indicates that a forthcoming companion volume (with a third apparently planned) will encompass other cities and regions.

For those who know Senegal well or are seeking case studies on particular issues, there is much useful material in Le Sénégal contemporain. Those focusing on Senegal’s political development or general political science readers will find Le construction de l’État more useful (and at one-third the length, more manageable) and providing context with which the former book could be tackled. Overall, both are commendable works.

King’s College, University of London

MARTIN EVANS

DOI: 10.1093/afrrev/adg042


This is a timely and useful contribution to the literature and the political debate around conservation ideology. Clare Short, British Secretary of State for International Development (whose department sponsored Brockington’s research) said, on the eve of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, that one of her key areas of concern was “handling the potential clash between conservation and the interest of local people. Experience tells us that a narrow “preservationist” approach will not work” (Guardian Society, 21 August 2002). She is, at least, well briefed.

Fortress Conservation is essentially an analysis of the clash between Western-driven agendas for conservation in Africa and human rights to land and resources, using Mkomazi Game Reserve as a case study. It investigates the eviction of local people from the reserve, a process which ended in 1988 and led to long-term distress, and explores the specific impacts of this loss of land. At Mkomazi, which has effectively been turned into a private zoo, a hoax appears to have been played upon supporters of the reserve in the West, who have funded efforts to preserve it. The perpetrators (principally the UK-based George Adamson Wildlife Preservation Trust and the US-based Tony Fitzjohn/George Adamson African Wildlife Preservation Trust) have long claimed that Mkomazi deserves to be ‘saved’ because it is a unique and valuable species-rich habitat, threatened and damaged by human encroachment. In fact, as Brockington demonstrates, it is not so special, after all — and certainly not worthy of the tag ‘potentially one of the most beautiful and important game reserves’ in Africa. It did not need saving because its environment is highly resilient, not fragile at all, otherwise it would not have ‘revived’ so spectacularly since the intervention of Fitzjohn and friends. This is a man so partial to saving wild things that he flew a lion to Cannes to publicize a film about saving Mkomazi — To Walk
with Lions (a titbit Brockington leaves out). Brockington claims that no deception was involved, because such self-appointed saviours sincerely hold these beliefs. He is being too kind. The gang-lo actions that thrill Hollywood stars and other well-connected fans of Mkomazi are in fact killing African communities by removing their resources.

Though the Tanzanian government was behind the operation to evict people from Mkomazi, it is not clear whether it was among the hoaxers or their victims. Wildlife officials told it that Mkomazi was being ‘ravaged by human habitation’. Zoologists confirmed the doomsday picture of destruction. A journalist might have gone further than Brockington and asked whether individual government ministers have benefited financially (as they have in Kenya) from the establishment of a reserve that attracts limited numbers of tourists, and hopes to attract more. It would also be interesting to know how much the whole preservation effort has cost monetarily.

Brockington shows how Mkomazi’s present state, so valued by these particular conservationists (others are becoming much more uneasy about the whole ‘fortress’ concept), has been shaped as much by its former human inhabitants and their stock as other ‘natural’ forces. He gives a welcome space to African voices. He links the claims of fortress conservation’s advocates to a broader vision of Africa’s environment, history and people that drives conservation across the continent, central to which is the belief that humans harm the environment. This vision is dangerous, partly because ‘threatened wildernesses will be continually saved, recreated and restored’ to satisfy the whims of powerful interest groups, and the degradation argument does not hold water. Fortress conservation works because the myths its supporters promote are powerful, but it fails to protect many big game populations and cannot survive long-term without the support of local peoples. However, Brockington does not let the ‘other side’ off lightly either. He shows how Maasai groups have monopolized claims to Mkomazi when other pastoralists (and non-pastoralists, who were excluded from the claims) have as much or more historical right to it. He rightly warns of the dangers of indigenous elites in multi-ethnic societies dominating the development agenda at the expense of other poor communities, and questions the viability of the alternative model — community-managed conservation.

The book is weaker, as the author admits, on proving how exactly pastoralists use their environment, and proving how much damage, if any, has been done. The early hard data are not available and oral testimony is unreliable. Statements such as ‘it may be impossible ever to understand the Reserve’s environment’ (p. 81) admit defeat. Also, it is not absolutely clear what the overall aims are. Brockington says (p. 3) he will argue that this vision of conservation is flawed and that the reality it imposes is harmful, and he proceeds to do so. But he then claims (p. 11) that ‘the goal of this book is to lock at the nature of these strengths’ (i.e., of fortress conservation). He surely means claims, not strengths, since he demolishes the myths around it. Stranger still is his final admission that the book is not based on ‘proper historical research’ at all (p. 152), which plays into the hands of his critics and displays a lack of confidence with his material. The photographs are reproduced so poorly they should have been left out. Otherwise, one hopes this little exposé will make certain people in LA, London and Tanzania pause for thought.

University of Oxford

LOTTE HUGHES

DOI: 10.1093/afr/62g043
Reference


Correspondence: L. Luselli, Demetu Institute, via Ofona 7, I-00198 Rome, Italy

A Field Guide to the Reptiles of East Africa

S. Spawls, K. Howell, R. Drewes and I. Ashe. 
*Academic Press* £29.95. ISBN 0-12-656470-1

For the first time we have snakes, crocodiles, lizards, turtles and tortoises of East Africa appearing together in one Field Guide. A Field Guide to the Reptiles of East Africa has transcended the colonial divisions and rightly includes Rwanda and Burundi with other East African countries.

I remember in the 1960s one secretive lizard dominated the printed and electronic media in Uganda as the whole nation discussed the cause of death of a couple of people under unclear circumstances. The culprit was supposedly the red-franked skink *Lagosoma fernandi* (Embalasa). By providing information on this and other scaled creatures of the wild, A Field Guide to the Reptiles of East Africa has at least reduced the myths associated with reptiles.

Most people have unreasonable fear of snakes, chameleons, other lizards and sometimes chelonians. It is unreasonable fear because the monthly road carnage in an African city like Kampala is much higher than the annual national mortality from snake bites. It is therefore important that notes on snake bites and how to guard against snake attacks are included.

Although most of us will acquire the book for reference on snakes, the discussion of other reptiles is a big advantage to tourists, naturalists and scholars alike. The sections on reptiles in the East African environment, their zoogeography, observing and collecting reptiles, reptile conservation, identification, photographing and husbandry of East African reptiles are particularly useful to a wide audience.

I therefore recommend this book to scholars of reptiles in tropical Africa, conservationists as well as visitors to the region. It is well organized in such a way that it can be referenced easily and information on identification, names, distribution and biology obtained almost at a glance. This book fills an important niche in our wildlife studies.

Jonathan Baranga

Fortress Conservation. The Preservation of the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania

Dan Brockington.

Despite its absurd title this book is well argued and a considerable improvement upon the amateurish student report (to DFID) upon which it is based (Homewood et al., 1997). Absurd because the game reserve in question boasts only 24 rangers armed with semiautomatic guns, old hunting rifles, and one AK47; to cover 3234 km² of unfenced territory. Where the concept of ‘fortress’ comes in is mystifying. It is descriptist in calling legal policy enforcement ‘fortress’ conservation and typical of a lobby which depends upon emotion and misrepresentation to promote its message. As such this is a book about politics rather than ecology although its underlying thrust is an indictment of ecologists.

It is based upon the eviction from the Mkomazi Game Reserve in Tanzania of the residents, legal and illegal, and their stock in 1988, after long and protracted procrastination and fractious arguments. The evictions were not sudden as is implied. Its conservation has imposed decisions with little or no consultation and with violent enforcement. There was consultation and even money raised from ivory sales to reimburse those moved out. That the funds disappeared is not the fault of conservation, and the only statements about violence quoted are of violence by the pastoralists, not the authorities. The reason given for the evictions was the ecological assessment that the reserve was on the brink of disaster from overgrazing and other activities, which Brockington argues was demonstrably unfounded as within three years after the evictions it was claimed the area had been brought back from the brink of collapse and restored to its former glory, making it one of the richest savannas in Africa and possibly the world. So the ecologists and conservationists either did not know what they were talking about or knowingly made false claims. I find this reasoning hard to argue with, but there is much else that

one can dispute. Brockington accuses conservationists of inventing history by maintaining the area was originally uninhabited. Of course ecologists do not conceive that man never set foot in almost every possible corner of Africa. The policy of exclusion from protected areas is to attempt to retain them in the state they were before man’s unbridled technological development. The ‘new conservationists’ obdurately refuse to acknowledge this point. As to the presence of cattle, in moderation of course they will not adversely affect the ecology of an area, but who other than Georgi, to use Virgil’s term, wishes to see cattle in place of wild animals in a wilderness area? Why shouldn’t there be areas without men or cattle? But I do not think anyone would disagree that limited numbers of people have always inhabited a part of the Reserve (surprisingly no one seems to have looked at the archaeology of the caves in the Reserve, where there were skulls in the 1970s. Traditional interments, victims of robbers, or wounded people who had fled attack?). What we do know is that it was not occupied historically by the Maasai. I would agree that Mkomazi is not ‘one of the richest savannas in Africa and possibly the world’, but this does not justify the statement that it is not reasonable to assume that pastoralists and their families cause the loss of plant, bird and insect species for which Mkomazi is currently celebrated, as left to continue their activities they may well have done so. ‘Pasture management by grazing and burning, and moderate use of dry forest species… could arguably (my italics) have a role in creating and maintaining biodiversity’. Yes, arguably ‘cattle’ of degradation by overstocking was not based on events in Kenya or the US dust bowl, but on extensive and advanced gully erosion in Central Province in the 1930s which influenced subsequent policy in Tanganyika. I would agree that it would be unjustifiable to compare vegetation cover with that of American rangeland, but stocking rates are based upon energy calculations which can be applied to the US or anywhere else. Arguing that livestock do not necessarily exclude wildlife is stating the obvious. Excessive numbers do. I question the truth of the statement ‘the greatest concentrations of wildlife in East Africa depend on pastures grazed with livestock’. But does he mean the wildlife has no alternative, or that livestock grazing facilitates concentrations of wildlife? While trying to criticize ecological studies, Brockington clearly has little grasp of the subject. We are told for instance that Mkomazi has 3007 vascular plant species.

Human habitation is not necessarily prohibited in game reserves, contrary to Brockington’s assertion. Neither are values of western origin necessarily more inappropriate than selling western goods and technology, and we all know that the destruction of elephant and rhino populations was not due to antipathy of people in the poached areas. Community conservation would not have stemmed it. Independent African governments have strongly supported the continued existence of protected areas. ‘Alien’ values and policies have taken root. But the concept of protected areas was not an alien concept, that is why it has been embraced, and as development advances so is it inevitable that, it will be perceived necessary to protect more and more areas from loss. It is therefore no surprise to learn that Tanzania has gazetted more areas since independence than before.

Brockington argues the evicted persons’ lifestyles have declined, perhaps so, but they had become wealthy largely by illegal means. Why should the former inhabitants of Mkomazi be entitled to a better lifestyle than that of thousands of other rural Tanzanians who earn their livings within the law? Until the evictions the Reserve’s resources had been used by a large number of people for a long time. That part of this was a ‘black economy’ in that it was illegal is ignored, but it is for that reason the evictions do not ‘fly in the face of proclaimed trends’, i.e. ‘Community conservation’.

In the end he does not seek abolition of the Reserve, but weakly requests the boundaries be changed and compromises made because ‘fortress conservation’ is not fair. He attempts to present an image of extreme reasonableness in his arguments, but therein lies the danger for those who are not conversant with the facts, and as such I would not recommend the book to those likely to take it all literally. Using emotive language such as ‘fortress conservation’ suggests the proponents of ‘new conservation’ do not have a case based upon facts, and it certainly does nothing to add to a debate over whether there should be different approaches to conservation.

C. A. Spinae

References


ten" oder "außergewöhnliche Biodiversität" tatsächlich Vorrang haben vor den Bedürfnissen menschlicher Gesellschaft? Und: Ist die Illusion eines exotischen Paradieses, eingebettet in die Freizeitindustrie des reichen Nordens, mit der Verleumdung fälschlicherweise aus ihrem Lebensraum vertriebener Menschen nicht doch zu tief erkannt?


Mit Recht kritisiert Merten die verbreitete Tendenz europäischer Wissenschaftler/innen, Gesellschaften der Dritten Welt im Interesse der „Wissenschaft“ (sprich: der eigenen akademischen Karriere) ihres sog. traditionellen Wissens zu berauen (und nennt ein konkretes Beispiel auf S. 4).

Auf der anderen Seite ist die Grenze zwischen Respekt vor einheimischer Kultur und historischer Romanlisierung einer lokalen (auch nach Ansicht des Autors keineswegs fehlerlosen, aber doch) idylen schmal, und Merten scheint sie nicht selten zugunsten letzterer zu überschreiten. Daß der moderne tanzanische Nationalstaat „kein alternatives Netz sozialer Sicherheit [hat] schaffen können“ (S. 259), ist sicher richtig - aber müßte in diesem Zusammenhang nicht darauf hingewiesen werden, daß dieser Staat trotz seiner Rohstoffarmut und niedrigen wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungsstand diesem Ziel in den 70er Jahren sehr nahe kam und erst die internationale erzwungene Durchführung einer neoliberalen Wirtschaftspolitik diese Errungenschaften nachhaltig zunichte machte (so nachhaltig, daß sie offenbar schon dem Gedächtnis einheimischer Lehrer und deutscher Entwicklungshelfer entschwunden sind)?

Mit Recht kritisiert Merten den eurozentrischen Hintergrund derzeit gängiger Entwicklungshilfekonzepte wie civil society and good governance (S. 261). Ob demgegenüber freilich eine Revitalisierung „des traditionellen Solldarsystems der Sigua-Gesellschaft“ (S. 259) mehr als eine kurzfristige Überlebensstrategie darstellen würde, sei dahingestellt. Das Buch endet mit der Darstellung einer unter Mitwirkung von Athumani (wieder-?) gegründeten Vereinigung traditioneller Heiler, bei deren Jahrstreffen ein aus dem Klindi-Mythos bekanntes heiliges Feuer entzündet wird. Liegt hier die Zukunft für Tanzania?


...sadocc news...

Tanzanie


Réflexion critique sur les politiques de protection de la nature en Afrique. L'auteur montre, à travers l'exemple de la réserve de Mkomazi en Tanzanie, que les déplacements de population pour protéger l'environnement ne sont pas toujours justifiés et qu'ils sont même néfastes pour l'économie locale.