

Overall, *African Market Women* provides a rich supplement to Clark's earlier work on traders in Ghana (most notably the book *Onions are My Husband: Survival and Accumulation by West African Market Women*, University of Chicago Press, 1995) by opening up a view into the experiences of women whose lives are intertwined with local, regional, national, and global economic patterns. Clark's study shows the intersection of issues normally relegated to separate academic disciplines—such as economics, history, anthropology, and women's studies—by allowing Kumasi's market women to speak for themselves.

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***The African Diaspora: A History Through Culture.* By Patrick Manning. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. Pp. 424. \$24.50.**

Patrick Manning's *The African Diaspora* is a thorough and well-documented history of Africans and people of African descent from the fifteenth century to the present. He takes on several themes in the book's six chronologically organized chapters, but his primary focus is culture and the political and social roots of its production and transformation. As the title suggests, his major point is that culture in Africa and the diaspora has reflected the links and shared experiences of its peoples. Culture, as he suggests, "does the most to help depict the voices and outlooks of the black people who are our subject" (p. 20).

Manning wrote this book with undergraduates and other non-specialists in mind, and while he makes the text accessible he does not compromise its integrity as an ambitious and serious scholarly endeavor. Having achieved this is quite a feat. To better enable the reader to absorb and appreciate the complex history of migration, oppression, resistance, and spirituality that lies at the heart of African diaspora history, he engages the reader with insightful examples and illuminating anecdotes, and makes lived experiences a focal point. His construction of the African diaspora, moreover, is not reduced to a collection of disparate and unique communities that possess their own African characteristics, of varying dimension, produced out of the common experience of slavery and global white supremacy. Instead, he puts the freedom struggles together as one history; one of cultures built in response to and often in spite of oppression. He seeks to demonstrate that there is cultural and political unity within Africa and the African diaspora; not necessarily in the ways in which its peoples perceive themselves and each other, but in terms of the ways in which history has unfolded since the fifteenth century and their efforts to shape it. While Manning asserts the cultural and political unity of the African diaspora, he accounts for the regional variations of white supremacy and the ways in which these changed over time. White supremacy did not, as he writes, evolve into uniform rules but provided Europeans and Euro-Americans a shared sense of identity and triumphal advance.

Culture, as Manning explains, provided a viable and effective global black response to this multifaceted white supremacy. He highlights the myriad forms of African and African diasporic cultural practices during the era of plantation slavery in the Americas that

rendered their status as permanently-enslaved far from secure. Culture reflects the fact that black existence was not limited to a black-white duality. Rather, it was shaped by rich and complex interactions between and among African and African diasporic communities that undermined the basis of the racial hierarchy that defined much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Moreover, culture enabled Africans on the continent and in the diaspora to maintain autonomous social spheres, even under slavery, in which they expressed themselves artistically and spiritually—often simultaneously—and defined the nature of African servitude and subordination. This was true throughout the Western hemisphere's plantation complex, but was perhaps most vividly expressed in Brazil's *quilombos*, the maroon settlements of the Caribbean, and the praise of *orishas* (Yoruba gods) in various parts of South America and the Caribbean.

As a text written for undergraduates, Manning's discussion of the interactions among peoples of the African diaspora and their interactions with other diasporas—Asian and European—is particularly valuable. There would have been added value from deeper discussion of the consequences of these diasporic encounters. He argues that the intermingling of African and other diasporas was significant in forming the meaning and shape of the African diaspora. Yet beyond his discussion of interactions between Africans and people of African descent with Europeans, Manning only hints at the vibrant cultural expressions and intense conflict that such relationships bore. For example, he describes reggae during the 1970s as a musical genre that "linked the regional and social elements of the African diaspora and provided inspiration and comfort to people beyond the diaspora" (p. 306). Yet, his brief discussion of both Rastas and reggae failed to expose the rich, complex and often fractious relationship between Africans and East Indians in the Caribbean. The long relationship between these two groups contributed to so much of what we identify as Caribbean, from religion, to food, and accents. A fuller discussion of the history of multi-diaspora interactions within the African diasporic experience would have been fruitful.

Yet, with regard to African diasporic communities, Manning presents a superb discussion of the intersection of culture, power, and social class. For example, he points to the middle of the twentieth century as the beginning of an outburst of creativity and renewal that drew on underlying patterns of African culture (p. 273). From Katherine Dunham, Bob Marley, and Dizzy Gillespie, he presents the nationally and regionally transcendent nature of music and dance. He highlights jazz in particular as truly diasporic cultural expression, in its role in shaping music and dance outside of the United States, and particularly among Afro-Latinos. Interestingly, Manning ties the ingenuity and popularity of black cultural expression to the shared experience of racist-based deprivation that had transformed and weakened African monarchies, and throughout slavery, deprived African societies of their elites. He suggests that a consequence of the fact that artists of the African diaspora did not have an elite for whom to create and perform, Africans throughout the world played to the communities in which they lived (p. 273). However romantic this conclusion may sound, it speaks to the significance of black artistic expression for filling the political, social, and often, emotional void.

Manning has succeeded in writing a comprehensive history of the African diaspora for non-specialists that illuminates the common heritage of people of African descent. He

demonstrates the influence of interactions between Africans and Europeans on the production and expression of culture, and advances popular understanding of the significance of cultural and political interaction within and between African diasporic communities.

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***The Route to Power in Nigeria: A Dynamic Engagement Option for Current and Aspiring Leaders.*** By M.J. Balogun. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Pp. xiv, 264; bibliography, index. \$80.00.

As Nigeria celebrates fifty years of independence, it is a good time to reflect upon the performance of its leaders. Balogun provides both a theoretical and empirical framework to his account of Nigerian leadership through its four civilian republics and multiple military governments. He offers five factors of leadership: foresight and prevision; charisma; capacity to build support; grassroots support; and understanding of the political realm. Though vision is a key element of leadership, he proposes the concept of "dynamic engagement" as the main factor likely to improve leadership. By this, he means that leaders must engage with society around them and ultimately harmonize the diversity of views and perspectives. As he states, "the true test of leadership is the ability to project enough charisma and command sufficient admiration to keep supporters united and to persuade opponents to subscribe to some abiding values" (p. 15).

The core strength of the book is an in-depth and insightful analysis of leadership in Nigeria since independence, showing how most leaders have abjectly failed to engage in successful "governorship." Interestingly, Balogun resists putting all the blame on the leaders, and sees civil society as much at fault for not forcing governments "to promote the paramountcy of values and institutions" (p. 61). His overall thesis depends much upon the concept of civil society, and yet his coverage of this topic could be stronger. He argues that many groups remain under the sway of ethnic divisions, that elections are corrupted by "money, godfathers, and violence," and that political parties have learned little about the nature of democracy. But he is rather quiet on the role of the media, of labor unions, of religious groups, and of gender. He also leaves us pondering exactly how civil society can wrest the political initiative away from the elites who have controlled Nigerian political life for so long.

Balogun argues that there are signs of progress in the country, as the political institutions are no longer completely eclipsed by personalities, but have begun to show signs of maturity and strength. Political parties are less ethnically focused as attempts are now made to promote cross-national coalitions. He hopes that people and politicians will increasingly see the "identity value of citizenship," meaning greater benefits will accrue for taking a national perspective to issues rather than an ethnic bias. An improving bureaucracy, an attack on institutionalized corruption, and a more equitable distribution of