ment and poor governance; the country's public institutions remain weak, while the state is still failing woefully to deliver public services in areas such as electricity and water. The author herself notes that Nigeria would require $10 billion annually in infrastructure investments—the amount that the country spent on food imports in 2010, even though it could not have the capacity to feed itself. Despite $1 billion annually being channelled into poverty reduction programmes (a condition of Nigeria's debt annulment deal), such programmes have clearly failed to have any appreciable impact on relieving the country spent on food imports in 2010, even though it could not have the capacity to feed itself. Despite $1 billion annually being channelled into poverty reduction programmes (a condition of Nigeria’s debt annulment deal), such programmes have clearly failed to have any appreciable impact on relieving the misery of the country's teeming masses. This is despite widespread youth unemployment, even as 70 per cent of Nigerians are 30 years old or younger. Okenjo-Iweala admits that her team of reformers underestimated how much time it would take to implement and embed their reforms. She also concedes that they had tried to take on too much at the same time, and should have better prioritised and sequenced the reforms. A decade after Nigeria’s historic debt deal, poverty and inequality continue to be unacceptable high in Nigeria, with an estimated 70 per cent of the population of 160 million living below the poverty line. The country’s public health and education sectors have crumbled, as has much of its infrastructure. Corrup- tion remains as rampant and embedded in economic life as it was a decade ago. The economy, it seems, is growing, but the people are clearly growing poorer.

For all the load talk of Nigeria being one of the world’s fastest-growing economies since 2003, Nigerian economist Adebayo Adejeyi’s caution in the 1980s—while serving as the Executive Director of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)—against an approach of ‘growth without development’ that resulted from the two Bretton Woods institutions’ Structural Adjust- ment Programmes, does not seem to have been heeded. Even Okenjo-Iweala concedes at the end of her book that the jury is still out on whether her reforms had launched Nigeria on the path to sustainable growth and development. Particularly since her rampant state at MIT focused on regional economic development and she served as Nigeria’s foreign minister for three months between June and August 2006, it would have been useful to have seen in the book a strategy for harnessing Nige- ria’s domestic development efforts to those of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Despite these shortcomings, Nige- ria’s ‘Iron Lady’ should be credited for her incredible achievements in ammending the country’s $30 billion external debt and for bringing some sanity to the country’s financial management. Ever the optimist having survived the traj- ection of living through a civil war, Okenjo-Iweala’s faith in Nigerians seems undiminished: ‘This is an entrepre- neurial country. Everybody’s bustling’. Moving from the local to the continen- tal level, the author also recognises the potential of Pax Nigeriana in noting: ‘When Nigeria succeeds in transform- ing itself, it will transform Africa’.

The Great Lakes Region and Southern Africa in Historical and Contemporary Perspective
Moses Khisa
Politics, Religion and Power in the Great Lakes Region
By Murindwa-Rutanga


Introduction
The two volumes under review offer rich insights into the checkered histories but also the present and future prospects of the Great Lakes Region (GLR) of east and central Africa and the Southern Africa region. The volumes lay out in greater depth the varied social struggles and political contests that have defined the two regions in quite important ways. These volumes have interesting and contrasting thrusts. While Murindwa-Rutan- ga’s Politics, Religion and Power in the Great Lakes Region (hereafter PRP) is largely steeped in historical inquiry—the precolonial and colonial power struggles and the role of religion, with rather limited glimpse into contempo- rary implications—Region-Building in Southern Africa (hereafter RBSA) starts off with a somewhat truncated histori- cal reference but proceeds to give considerable attention to contemporary at- tempts at ‘region-building’ in Southern Africa. On balance, the former volume has a more scholarly orientation while the latter is more policy-focused. Taken together, however the two volumes complement one another in offering novel historical analyses and contem- porary insights on the two regions.

This essay takes each volume in turn, starting with PRP, showing what each title promises and delivers, and the extent to which the authors do justice to the stated project. The review essay has three parts. The first part highlights PRP’s central claims, pointing out how it advances our knowledge of the Great Lakes region but also underlining some lapses that inevitably attend every effort. In the second part, I turn to the second volume, highlighting the same set of issues. In the third and final part, I offer concluding reflections and recap the major findings and key messages conveyed by the two vol- umes. At the core of both volumes is the colonial origin of contemporary power dynamics in the two regions. Precolonial antecedents to anticolonial struggles
PRP ‘focuses on the European inva- sion of the GLR. It analyzes the factors that underlay the invasion, the demarcation pro- cess that followed and the indigenous people’s responses to it. The book uncovers the different forms of conflicts—endogenous and ex- ogenous, popular and individualized, legit- imate and anti-establishment, anti-im- perialist, passive and militant, benign and virulent…’ (pp. 6-7). The concept Great Lakes Region, Murindwa-Rutanga writes, was coined by the colonial- ists to refer to the territory in east and central Africa endowed with a heavy concentration of large lakes and rivers (p. 8). A great deal of colonial conquest involved social reengineering, includ- ing renaming natural resources such as water bodies. ‘In effort to export their history as they created their legacy, the British colonial invaders renamed four of these lakes after their English rulers. These were: Lake Nabulale, which be- came Lake Victoria—the largest lake in the world with fresh water; Lake Rwi- tanziegy, renamed Lake Edward; and Lake Katunguru, which became Lake George. Another lake on the border between DRC and Uganda was renamed Lake Albert’ (ibid.).

The GLR was an area of intense and heated colonial rivalry, which on several occasions brought the major Europe- an colonial powers to the brink of war. What unfolded in the colonization of this region was its transformation into a theatre of vicious inter-imperialist struggles which nearly led to a grievous imperialist war and the anti-imperial- ist struggles which thrive in various forms (p. 65). Murindwa-Rutanga ably dissects these two forms of conflict, the inter-colonial rivalry and the anti-co- lonial resistance. As colonial powers jockeyed for territorial control, the in- digenous peoples exploited the mobiliz- ing force of religion to fight the invad- ers. The author finds that in the absence of organized state power to protect and defend the local people militarily, reli- gion was a readily available substitute (p. 22). The conflict was compounded by the role of foreign African agents employed to impose colonial rule. While anticolonial leadership in much of the area that PRP covers came from indigenous religions, colonial adminis- trative manpower was imported in the absence of established centralized po- litical systems. As the author notes, ‘[1] here was no broad, visible, organized political structure in the area, which British colonialism could manipulate to introduce, promote, and protect British interests through its demagogy of pro- tectionism called “indirect rule”’ (p. 93). Administrators and soldiers were thus imported from Britain, Buganda, Ankole, Tanganyika, and India.

The mounting colonial rivalry in the area reached fever-pitch levels by 1910, best captured in a telegraph by the Bel-
gian commander to the Acting Gover-
nor of the Uganda Protectorate: Last warning to commanders of British troops. By numerous let-
ters I have informed you that I consider any forward movement of your troops [as] tantamount to an attack on our position. My force... will open fire from now, and... see myself along and entirely the heavy re-
sponsibility of the armed conflict which you are provoking.

The British on their part reacted to this stern warning by informing the ‘Bel-
gian government immediately that the British forces in Mfumbiro [the con-
tested area] had been ordered not to make any forward movement without instructions directly from London... But the author’s meticulous investiga-
tion finds that the British were issuing this pacific assurance when in fact pre-
faring for war with a standby force of 800 King’s African Rifles. In any event, a major World War between African soil was averted through a series of treaties, in- cluding the Anglo-German Treaty of 1 July 1900 and 26 August 1910, the Boundary Agreement of 19 May 1909, and the Anglo-Belgium Congo-Uganda Boundary Agreement of 14 May 1910.

Contemporaneous with heightened imperial rivalry, there arose a series of religious-inspired anticolon-
ial movements, the most important being the Nyabingi Movement. This Movement is the central focus of PRP. The author traces the Movement’s evolu-
tion from its formative stages to the peak of its activities in parts of Rwan-
da and Burundi, northern Tanzania, eastern Congo-Zaïre, and in parts of central, western and southwestern Uganda. ‘Despite increased state re-
pression, massacres, imprisonment and deportations, Nyabingi resistance con-
tinued building up between 1910 and the mid-1930s’ (p.102). The movement was anchored on Nyabingi indigenous religion, which the British adminis-
trators and other colonial authorities found to be mystic, troubling, and dif-
ficult to comprehend. Thus a colonial official was to lament with a sardonic tone of resignation, ‘Nyabingi is a fe-
nale spirit which is the god and reli-
gion of these people, and therefore the difficulty in eradicating the beliefs is extreme...’ (p. 113). In everyday life, Nyabingi was associated with a female spirit, believed to be living under the earth and appearing with ‘rapid trans-
formative powers into feminine per-
sonalities’ (p.106). The movement pro-
duced a long list of female abogovra (priestesses), including the one time in-
fluential commander Muhumuza. Oth-
ers were Kaigirirwa, Wahire, Chand-
ugusi, Mukegirana, Nyinahabata, and Kanyanya, who were either killed in battle or captured and deported to far-
flung places.

In sum, in the early years of estab-
lishing colonial administration in the

GLR, imperial rivalry raged on at the same time that a people’s anticolonial struggle under the Nyabingi Movement intensified. Through careful archival re-
search and life-stories, Murindwa-Ru-
tanga meticulously shows the relentless and protracted resistance put up by the regions of southwestern Uganda, Bu-
rundi, the Congo-Rwanda-Uganda bor-
ders and Tanzania, in the end engulfing and entrapping at least four major colo-
nial powers: Britain, Belgium, France, and Germany. ‘There were serious-
ous, long and bloody resistances emerging under the leadership of various person-
alties, with different historical origins, training, and experience...’ (p. 112). The unrelenting resistance forced the colonial authorities to make concessions in- cluding exempting certain areas like Butare, Bujumbura, and parts of Bu-
bumbira from taxation (p.153).

The movement’s leadership em-
ployed a range of strategic and tactical maneuvers, posing a serious dilemma to the colonial forces. Most important was the planning and timing of their struggle to coincide with imperial rival-
yes’ capacity to incorporate the resist-
ances into the movement, and their ability to sustain the struggle for long spells (p.112). Although the movement was indigenous and steeped in tradition and folklore, it benefitted from exter-
nal developments, especially the First World War, getting new leadership from World War returns and obtaining the enem-
ies’ military hardware, planning, and command (p. 222). However, by 1939, the movement had considerably weakened (p.190). The author identi-
fies several reasons for its defeat, in-
cluding weak organization and lack of broader unity of peasants in the region, the failure to neutralize collaborators, either politically or militarily, and the evasion of pre-capitalist weapons and mili-
tary methods (ibid). Also, successive defeats, massacres, tortures, imprison-
ments, public executions, and deporta-
tions demoralized resisters (ibid).

The Book’s Strengths and Weaknesses

This book’s invaluable contribution to the study of colonial rule and antico-

lial movements in Africa cannot be overemphasized. The author offers a re-

markable analysis of the mobilizing role of religion and the course of resistance in the GLR inspired by the Nyabingi Movement. The author aptly notes in the concluding chapter that ‘The Ny-
abingi Movement is a concrete testi-
ymony to people’s persistent struggles to defend their rights and independence.’ This point is worth beholding because of the claims especially by official col-
nial historians who tended to distort the way colonial rule was received in different African communities. Mu-

rendwa-Rutanga’s study brings out per-

suasively the manner in which indige-

nous Africans reacted with hostility to colonial invasion and waged protracted popular struggle against it. Secondly, PRP brilliantly illuminates the organiz-
ing role of indigenous religions, which brings to the fore a less appreciated role of African religions as distinct from the usual romanticized sorcery and witch-
craft that had fascinated for long West-

ern-Eurocentric scholarship.

Equally important to note is that, using official archival sources, Murind-
wa-Rutanga has written a work of social history that is nothing short of subaltern historiography in its orientation, analyti-
cal rigor and methodological thrust. To brilliantly write subaltern history using official sources is truly admirable. The author is quite impressive in his ability to carefully and patiently read official colonial documents and bring out cru-

tical messages, voices, and even silenc-
es seldom intended by the authors. In the end, he skilfully weaves a narra-
tive that straddles the worlds of social movement literature, social history, and the legacies of colonial rule.

Finally, PRP shows the early forc-
es’ interventions that followed had a significant role of indigenous religions, which have sprung up in post-independence times, contesting precisely the same misrule, oppression, and exploitation that spurred Nyabingi fighters. Since the author makes mention of today’s GLR states in the book’s concluding chapter, it would be expected of him as a citizen-intellectual not to stop at outlining the excesses of colonialism and local resistance but also comment on contemporary political mismanage-
ment including the despotic oligarchies of faction rigging, political repression, and kleptocracy.

Region-Building in Southern Africa

The authors and editors of RBFA com-
mandedly assembled an impressive set of articles that offer incisive insights into the colonial antecedents to region-

alism in Southern Africa: from the false starts to the promises and prospects as well as the continuing push for a bloc that remains under the shadow and towering influence of the region’s eco-
nomic and military hegemon – South Africa. Although some contributors to RBFA allude to the rising power of An-
gola, post-apartheid South Africa nev-
evertheless remains the foremost bene-
factor in a region where the majority of states are materially impoverished. The anti-colonial and anti-apartheid provenance of southern African region-

alism is unmistakable. The struggle against white minority rule in South Africa and Rhodesia, coupled with the protracted resistance against the lin-
gering Portuguese colonial presence in Angola and Mozambique, provided the initial impetus for southern Afri-

can unity. The regionalism started with the lose association of the Mulungushi Club, later transformed into the Front Line States (FLS) in 1975. This initial endeavor was primarily a political and military collaboration against late colo-

nialism and white minority rule. Taking off from this early formative stage, the authors and editors of RBFA trace the traipeled evolution of arguably Africa’s largest regional grouping, encompass-

ing ‘the entire southern half of the Af-

rican continent as well as island-states of the East African coast’ (p.6).

Outline of the Book

RBFA is a comprehensive volume, cov-

ering a wide range of themes in regional-

al integration under the Southern Afri-

can Development Community (SADC).
The book has five major parts. Part one, ‘Historical Legacy,’ has chapters by the distinguished Kenyan scholar Gilbert Khadiagala, a former Executive Secretary of SADC. Khadiagala offers a broad but remarkably incisive introduction to the origins and processes leading to the formation of SADC in 1992. Muenda on his part gives an ‘insider’s view’ of the workings and failings of SADC. Part two (with four chapters) on ‘Governance and Military Security’ covers a wide range of topics: SADC’s decision-making architecture (by Chris Landsberg), elections and conflict management (by Khabele Matlosa), peacekeeping (by Chris Saunders), and gender and peacebuilding (by Elizabeth Otitodun and Antonia Porter). The third part of the book shifts to addressing economic integration issues proper. Its three chapters include Dawn Nagar’s assessment of three initiatives under SADC: the Southern African Power Pool, the SADC Free Trade Area, and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan. The other two chapters, one by Richard Gibb and the other by David Monyae, examine SADC’s Customs Union and its development finance institutions, respectively.

In part four (with four chapters), Scott Drimie and Sibhasibo Gandure discuss the problem of food insecurity, noting that although SADC’s Heads of State and Government adopted the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in May 2004, progress is hindered by weak institutional policy frameworks. The second chapter on HIV/AIDS and human security by Gwinyai Dzinesa argues that ‘in Southern Africa, HIV/AIDS has deepened and prolonged household poverty’ (p. 200). As such, the region ‘remains the global epicenter of the HIV/AIDS pandemic’ (p. 210). In the other two chapters, migration and xenophobia by the eminent Cameroonian scholar Francis Nyamnjoh and Patience Mususa and the second on climate change by David Simon (two subjects that animate global debate), the subjects are analyzed in the context of a region that has had a fair share of migration and climate change problems. Nyamnjoh and Mususa address the ‘hard questions about the politics of citizenship in the region [and] the impact of neoliberal economic policies on livelihoods’ (p. 216). Simon on his part analyzes SADC’s policy on climate change, noting that ‘the first substantive and clear attempt by SADC to integrate climate change into its programs and policies was not made until 2008...’ (p. 238).

In the final part of the book, three authors — Muzuki Qobo, Nomfun- do Xenza Ngwenya and Kairhe le Pere — respectively assess the contrasting influences on SADC’s three major external players: the European Union, the United States, and China. Qobo argues that SADC’s mission-driven over-dependence on the EU has created a client relationship and ‘effectively locked SADC into Brussels’ sphere of influence’ and that the rise of emerging powers such as China, India, and Brazil has prompted the EU to consolidate its hold and increase its global market share relative to the rising powers (p. 251). As regards US-SADC relations, Ngwenya highlights the nuances in shifting US foreign policy in the region from the Cold War era through the Clinton, Bush, and Obama years. She notes the rising strategic place of Angola that is likely to disturb South Africa’s special relationship with Washington. Finally, on Sino-African relations, le Pere argues that the historical dependence on the EU and US has recently been mitigated by China’s entry into Africa, providing different menu options and an alternative to the ‘Washington Consensus.’ But while Beijing spoke of engaging with African institutions on a multilateral basis, its Africa policy has been largely bilateral, ‘a divide and rule tactic’ (p. 289).

In the concluding chapter, the editors draw from the foregoing sixteen chapters of the book to end with a prescriptive message for more regional-building to tackle the region’s practical problems. In sum, the book undertakes a sweeping assessment of a complex set of issues in southern Africa with SADC as the pivotal player. Since its formation in Windhoek, Namibia in 1992, underscored by the editors in the introduction, ‘SADC has been the most important regional organization in southern Africa. It has constructed an elaborate structure to deal with economic, political and security issues...’ (p. 16).

What the Book Accomplishes

This volume has many accomplishments; I will focus on only a few. First, part one of the book, especially the chapter by Khadiagala, brilliantly trac- es southern African regionalism back to the1960s and the informal Mulungusha Club (later FLS) of Presidents Kenneth Kaunda and Julius Nyere. Khadiagala’s chapter is complemented by the ‘insider-view’ chapter by SADC’s former Executive Secretary, Kaire Mhunga. But as an anticolonial alliance, the collapse of Portuguese rule in Ango- laland Mozambique, and the end of Ian Smith’s white minority rule in southern Rhodesia meant that the FLS had somewhat run its course. Thus, it was transformed into the Southern Af- rican Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980 and later the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The transformation of FLS into SADCC and finally SADC, and ‘[the] reemergence of South Africa within SADC marked a decisive trans- formation from a decolonization-driv- en regionalism to functional integra- tion...’ (p. 33).

A key message in Khadiagala’s chapter, and indeed the entire volume, is that Southern African regionalism has parallels with the European Economic Community/Union (EECU). The latter, which started as the European Coal and Steel Community, was based as a lasting solution to a security com- plex involving Franco-German rivalry, especially over the Rhine industrial frontier. Since the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, control over the Rhine area had remained a source of potential and actual armed hostility. Indeed, it was a major contributory factor to the out- break of the Second World War. There- fore, the solution to the high-politics of securing geopolitical strategic interests was sought within the realm of low politics – in functionalist economic integration. RBSA too suggests that economic integra- tion, perhaps inadvertently, was born out of the high politics of fighting colonialism, apartheid, and white mi- nority rule. But whereas the EU project was seen as a bulwark against armed conflict, SADCC and later SADC was intended to foster collective develop- ment based on historical political soli- darity and security cooperation. Basing economic integration on security coop- eration was a point of strength but also a problem. This leads me to the second key element of RBSA: quite apart from the EU integration process, the SADC gradualist integration has an inverted logic; it is a case of putting the cart be- fore the horse.

While the EEC, and closer home the East African Community, started as an economic cooperation to cure political and security problems, SADC start- ed as a security/political cooperation, which later gravitated towards econom- ization. By Way of Conclusion

The two books offer contrasting and rich insights into two important regions of Africa. While Murindwa-Rutanga’s historically grounded works shed light on European colonial rivalry over what became the GLR and the resultant in- digenous resistances, especially the Nyabingi Movement, RBSA is a more contemporary analysis and policy-orien- tated study of previous as well as ongo- ing attempts at forging a regional bloc against the backdrop of a shared polit- ical and historical experience. Thus, if the first volume gives the reader impor- tant lessons in scholarship, such as the author’s meticulous use of official sources to weave a subaltern histori- cal narrative, the second volume offers practical and invaluable policy lessons on the progress and prospects of re- gional integration. Regrettably though, both volumes fall short on the account of making a direct and persuasive link between the past and the present, be- tween historical insights and contem- porary realities. PRP dwells on how the Nyabingi Movement became a defining development in the making of the GLR but says little about its contemporary legacies. By contrast, RBSA starts off by acknowledging the historical bases of region-building in Southern Africa but grants little attention to how it is precisely that same history that explains not only the prospects for the region but also the impediments to its progress.