Editorial Foreword

"BIG MEN" PASTS How to capture and depict the histories of figures larger than life, whose very excess—of power, violence, influence, reputation, legacy—overwhelms any screen onto which they are projected? Idi Amin of Uganda and Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria are, to be sure, hardly parallel figures: the former a dictator responsible for the murder of thousands, the latter a legendary anti-colonial journalist, publisher, and politician. Yet they shared similar ambition, and each left a crater with his death, one gradually filled by rumor, anecdote, myth, and prismatic, often jarring images. Precising the histories of such figures seems an impossible task. As these two articles show, it requires taking risks, and trying unusual methods.

Derek R. Peterson, Richard Vokes, Nelson Abiti, and Edgar C. Taylor lead off this issue with "The Unseen Archive of Idi Amin: Making History in a Tight Corner." The article is a sustained reflection on a special exhibition on Idi Amin in photographs, mounted at the Uganda Museum. How to present atrocity in unsensationalized ways? How to manage a fraught and contested political history within strict constraints, and against the grain of the exhibits of the past and their stifling ethnographic present? This exhibition made history, but not always in predictable or controllable ways. In a haunting last phrase, the authors describe the event as "an enclosure, a cage, where terrible and dangerous things can be made safe for public viewing." Read it and weep.

Wale Adebanwi's contribution, "Burying 'Zik of Africa': The Politics of Death and Cultural Crisis," approaches the past of Zik through the post-mortem display of his body and its negotiations. Methodologically, Adebanwi applies ethnography to his own past work as a journalist selected to travel the country with Zik's corpse, as an opportunity to reflect on the death and burial of Zik as an event, an occasion for the management of cultural crisis and even its transformation. And yet the presence of the body also announces the absence of the person, leaving room for invention, distortion, and new and dangerous forms of political mythmaking.

MAKING HUMAN KINDS IN AFRICA AND CHINA The making, stratification, and enforcement of human kinds in systems of slavery, bondage, and other versions of hierarchy and coerced labor are not uniquely a product of Europe and its colonization of the world. They seem, rather, to be universal. To be sure, the effects of distinct constructions of human kinds vary, depending on the ways, and the degree to which, they are attached to

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military, legal, and political apparatuses. The two articles joined in conversation here address the making of human kinds in settings mostly beyond the reach of European categories, in Africa and in China.

Jonathon Glassman's "Toward a Comparative History of Racial Thought in Africa: Historicism, Barbarism, Autochthony" asks how local ways of thinking in Africa became invested with explicit meanings of descent or of "blood," to then become racialized. Glassman navigates a narrow ledge between the historical missteps of, on one side, primordialism that supposes racialization as born of primitive ethnocentrism, and on the other an equally naïve modernism that depicts ethnicity as nothing but an invention of twentieth-century colonial states. Instead, and against these dueling straw men, Glassman demonstrates that colonial categories were built from locally made notions of barbarism and civilization. In this way, Glassman shows the power of indigenous African ideas in the creation of European knowledge about Africa, including in relation to modern notions of race.

In "Rewriting Bondage: Literacy and Slavery in a Qing Native Domain," **Erik Mueggler** considers a fascinating case from eighteenth-century China of enslaved people's plaints formulated in an indigenous script, Nasu, and then entered in Chinese into the legal record. Mueggler shows how Nasu slaves' and bondsmen's notions of ritual and other ideas about scripts informed their quest, carried out with the help of a hired scribe, to formulate their case in the terms of Chinese legal writing. This kind of *scripturation*, Mueggler shows, remade the world in the terms of text, and the power of scripturation was used even by those without the ability to write. It changed their fates in a field of social relations laid out between the kinship of bondage and the bondage of kinship. Through this remarkable tale, Mueggler demonstrates how distinct forms of textuality are translated one into the other, with consequential outcomes.

MAPPING SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY "The map is not the territory," wrote Alfred Korzybski back in 1931, coining a phrase much repeated ever since. Maps' uses lay in depicting structures similar to the real landscape, allowing for inferences to be made, based on analogy. The problem, as Gregory Bateson pointed out in a Kantian kvetch some four decades later, is that we do not have access to territory at all, only to maps: a retinal map made into a measurement, made into sketch, made into a printed map, made into…. It's maps all the way down. The two essays juxtaposed here share a concern with how maps are made, their uses, and their effects. If we cannot avoid living through maps, the authors show, we can live with more transparency about the maps we're using—about what they reveal, and what they conceal. We can even draw new ones.

Michelle U. Campos' essay, "Mapping Urban 'Mixing' and Intercommunal Relations in Late Ottoman Jerusalem: A Neighborhood

Study," examines patterns of residential sorting in the "mixed quarter" of *fin de siècle* Jerusalem, the neighborhood of Ottoman al-Wad. Using GIS-mapping read together with historical census data and memoirs, Campos shows how al-Wad was at once highly integrated and quite segregated, with clear clusters and concentrations in certain quadrants, crisscrossed by zones of contact and intersection. Neighborhood spaces were highly porous, but also highly structured, especially in terms of residency. Among other forms of segmentation, religious law and religious institutions feature prominently as a factor that pushed religious boundaries from the spiritual to the spatial, even without much overt planning toward that end, and transformed Jerusalem. Understanding the social geography of Ottoman Jerusalem opens new interpretations of social life. Even more, it offers a social-spatial baseline against which to evaluate the emergence of twentieth-century ethnic nationalisms that further split Jerusalem and many other cities.

Social geographies are also moral and affective geographies that divide the world in ways that move and stir us, argues **Marieke Bloembergen**. In "The Politics of 'Greater India,' A Moral Geography: Moveable Antiquities and Charmed Knowledge Networks between Indonesia, India, and the West," Bloembergen explores the dangerous love affair between the West and so-called Greater India, with its seductive "Hindu-Buddhist" arts, temples, texts, and traditions. Bloembergen approaches the problem from an unlikely place, Indonesia. How, she asks, is Indonesia pulled into "Greater India," and thereby deformed? The Islamic history of Indonesia was pushed aside by the twentieth-century Java-ization of Indonesia that pulled it toward Greater India and the celebration of its Hindu-Buddhist spiritual heritage by museums, collectors, and colonial officials of the West, to the detriment of its Islamic past and present. As a new version of Greater India, "Indian Ocean studies," has now become a useful frame for historians of South and Southeast Asia trying to include diasporic and indigenous perspectives beyond the edges of states, not unlike Atlantic history and Mediterranean history. But there are risks to the current fashion of "oceanic" approaches to history. Indian Ocean histories not only make new connections visible, they also draw new maps of exclusion. They may overlook the violence of a heritage formation focused on ancient Hindu-Buddhist unity, a mirage still reproduced in textbooks and museum exhibitions all over the world.

RELIGIOUS CONVERSION AT THE FRONTIER Frontier zones afford special prospects for conversion, both for its successful enactment and its analysis. The reasons are complex, a tangled bank of disruption and aspiration that roots in the imagination to weave a web of affective sensibilities. Danger and hope are equally near. **Mathijs Pelkmans**' contribution, "Frontier Dynamics: Reflections on Evangelical and Tablighi Missions in Central Asia," offers a comparative examination of competing

Muslim and Evangelical Christian missionary efforts, by the Tablighi Jamaat and the Church of Jesus Christ, respectively, along the same frontier. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, religious movements dramatically expanded their activities in the Kyrgyz Republic during the 1990s. They found fertile ground with the dissolution of the welfare state and known sources of authority, but this was especially true in zones characterized by what Pelkmans calls "frontier dynamics." These spaces held special promise for missionaries, not only due to the vulnerability of their populations, offering useful asymmetries of power for missionaries to make use of, but also by generating powerful affective fields of danger, possibility, and adventure. Both Muslim and Christian missionaries are attracted to these frontier dynamics, Pelkmans reveals, but they identify the thrill and danger in different phenomena and affective registers. Frontier situations present irresistible missionary attractions not only due to the harvest of potential conversions that their instability presents, but also for their unique affective force on missionaries themselves.

In "Becoming Armenian: Religious Conversions in the Late Imperial South Caucasus," **Vladimir Hamed-Troyansky** explores conversion petitions of Muslim and Jewish peasants to the Russian government between the mid-nineteenth century and the outbreak of World War I. The petitions requested approval and recognition of their true conversion to Armenian Christianity. For Muslim petitioners, a government-sanctioned act of conversion offered a new legal identity that promised social and economic benefits. Russia's Jews also petitioned to convert to the Armenian Apostolic Church in the twentieth century, to gain protection against discrimination and the right to live outside of designated territories. Crucially, Hamed-Troyansky shows that the arbiter of religious conversion was the Russian government. As judge of the sincerity of faith claims, and referee of the degree of Armenianness deemed necessary for conversion to count as valid, the Tsar (or at least his bureaucrats) played the part of detectives of the soul.

IN MEMORIAM Finally, and with heavy hearts, we pay homage to the longest-serving editor of *CSSH*, Ray Grew, 1930–2020, who brilliantly captained the ship for twenty-four years. It is fitting that **Tom Trautmann** offers the remembrance, since Tom was his able first mate and then successor and knew Ray—at work and in his work—better than almost anyone else. We will miss Ray, in person, at work, and in his work, and Tom expresses the many reasons why.

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