West African colonies. The final chapter offers a broader account of how the War on Terror has affected the continent. All the chapters are clearly written and provide a good level of detail to introduce undergraduate students to the topic. At the end of each chapter a short annotated 'recommended reading' list is provided, allowing students to investigate themes further.

The publisher's decision to omit footnotes is somewhat frustrating, particularly as this book would have provided a clear indication to undergraduate students that well-written and well-referenced works are not mutually exclusive. It is clear that any book attempting to cover 65 years of foreign interventions across a continent in just over 200 pages will not focus on some aspects sufficiently to satisfy every reader. To this reviewer, however, it was surprising that the Biafran secession did not receive any detailed coverage, beyond a couple of mentions in other case studies. This is all the more surprising as Biafra invariably features prominently on most undergraduate survey courses dealing with Africa in this period. These small criticisms aside, this is a well-written book that will no doubt feature prominently on undergraduate reading lists for the foreseeable future.

University of Kent ANDREW COHEN
a.p.cohen@kent.ac.uk
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Boko Haram: Nigeria's Islamist insurgency, by Virginia Comolli. London: C. Hurst and Co., 2015. viii + 239 pp. £20.00 (hardback). ISBN 978 1 84904 491 2.

Nigerian security crises triggered by Boko Haram have made international headlines since 2009 with a series of kidnapping and terrorist attacks. Virginia Cornolli's book on the contemporary Islamist insurgency presents a critical and comprehensive analysis of Boko Haram (official name *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad,* or Group of the People of Sunnah for Preaching and Jihad). Comolli analyses the transformation of Islamist movements, and the origins and emergence of Boko Haram, founded by Mohammed Yusuf and growing rapidly after his death in 2009. In terms of contents and theme, Comolli's book takes a comprehensive approach that includes the broader historical background, and analyses the changing dynamics and ideological differences between Islamist movements in Nigeria, while focusing on Boko Haram in particular. She draws on field research in 2012–14, conducted with both official and civilian authorities. Her study draws attention to the complexity and difficulty of counter-terrorism initiatives in Nigeria, and offers a distinctive contribution to the existing literature on Nigerian security and Boko Haram in its discussion of the insufficiency and deficiency of counter-measures by the security forces.

In her introduction, Comolli sets out the aims of the book: to survey and highlight not only the increasing danger of Boko Haram's terrorist activities, but also the complexity and adverse effect of the response to the insurgency by the Nigerian security forces. She discusses the historical roots of Islamist movements and their linkages with Boko Haram, arguing that the movement's origins should be sought in Nigeria's north–south divide, which dates back to the 1800s. She stresses that the

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Muslim north perceived (and still perceives) the southern part of the country, which is largely Christian, as 'other', citing the religious and ethnic differences that led to the civil war (also known as the Biafran War) in 1967–70.

The opposition of northerners to Western education (*karatun boko*) and rejection of Western-style schools (*makaratun boko*), which are said to be forbidden or sin (*haram*) in Islamic understanding, facilitated the activities of certain religious groups. Boko Haram aimed to establish an Islamic State in northern Nigeria. Politicization of Islam was central to its strategy, as manifested in preachings, recruiting, and social media campaigns. After providing an historical background and debating the formation of radical groups in Nigeria in chapters 2 and 3, Comolli moves to analyse Boko Haram's establishment, ideology, and transformation in Chapter 4. Comolli defines Yusuf's preachings as 'ultra-Salafist' (p. 48): that is, Yusuf followed the fundamentalist understanding of Islam and objected to its transformation and innovation (*bida'h*), while also promoting the implementation of Islamic *Shari'a* law. The author describes how the year 2009, during which Yusuf was killed while in police custody, marked a turning point for Boko Haram, leading to its more violent 're-emergence' (p. 53). Abubakar Shekau replaced Mohammed Yusuf and under his control Boko Haram began to diversify its activities, terrorist attacks (such as suicide bombings and abductions), funding methods, and recruiting style.

Boko Haram kidnapped 276 schoolgirls in Chibok in Borno State in April 2014. The Chibok abduction indicated the growing ferocity of the movement, as well as the increasing local, regional, and global threat it posed, and led to the launch of an international campaign called #BringBackOurGirls. In Chapter 5 Comolli elucidates the international dimension of Boko Haram. She contends that the uncontrolled borders of neighbouring countries (Cameroon, Chad, and Niger), linkages with other terrorist organizations (such as Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab), and illegal weapons trafficking from Libya moved the Boko Haram problem beyond the Nigerian border, until it became a global security issue on a par with the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). In Chapter 6 Comolli analyses the Nigerian state response to Boko Haram, pointing to its failure and lack of counter-terrorism experience. She discusses the government security forces' human rights abuses and brutal repression of civilians, regardless of whether they were real members of the organization or not. One of the central arguments of the book is that this excessive use of force led to increased insecurity, causing civilian deaths and injuries on the one hand, and also driving more recruits to Boko Haram on the other. Comolli emphasizes the need for 'a full-spectrum counter-insurgency approach, including counter-terrorism and regular law enforcement elements' (p. 142).

The book has some weaknesses. It begins by describing the historical background of Islam, then moves to the formation of radical groups in Nigeria, and Boko Haram barely appears before Chapter 4. This reviewer would have preferred the volume to have started with the emergence of Boko Haram, with an early focus on its fundamental structure, goals, strategies, and networks. The sectarian policies and ideals of the organization are also left unclear, as are the similarities or differences between it and other extremist movements. Among other typos, the last name of Boko Haram's leader is given variously as Shekau and (erroneously) Shakau throughout the text.

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Despite these minor weaknesses, Comolli's book provides a valuable empirical field analysis of Boko Haram. It reveals not only the movement's formation, ideology, recruitment, and strategy, but also discusses the adverse effects of the excessive use of force by the security forces, and their lack of counter-insurgency training. As she rightly argues, improving education and people's living conditions, and ensuring job opportunities, are the best means of solving this problem, rather than external interventions.

Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Turkey

RAMAZAN ERDAĞ
ramazanerdag@yahoo.com
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Conflict in the Horn of Africa: The Kenya–Somalia border problem 1941–2014, by Vincent Bakpetu Thompson. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2015. xvi + 405 pp. $46.99 (paperback). ISBN 978 0 76186 525 4. $100.00 (hardback). ISBN 978 0 76186 527 8. $46.99 (e-book). ISBN 978 0 76186 526 1.

The flag of the Federal Republic of Somalia displays a white five-pointed star, referring to the five territories believed to separate the Somali people. They consist of Italian Somaliland (now part of Somalia), British Somaliland (now Somaliland), the Ethiopian Ogaden, French Somaliland (now Djibouti), and north-eastern Kenya. It is Somalia's historical claim to the last of these that forms Thompson's history of the to-and-fro of Somali–Kenyan relations from 1941 to 2014. Thompson provides 'the first full-length case study of the Kenya–Somalia conflict rather than one intended to generalize a theory of border conflicts' (p. 1). Though this resistance to grand theory is humble, his tackling of a confrontation that lasts from the 1941 liberation from Italian rule up to the most recent political developments is ambitious.

Thompson breaks down the period by splitting discussion into four parts. First, he considers forces of Somali nationalism in the run-up to unification of the former British and Italian Somaliland territories in 1960. Second, he describes the early fractured relations between Somalia and Kenya as the latter moved towards independence in 1963. Various British commissions considered boundary options to help adjudicate between the competing claims to Kenya's north-east region. When Kenya retained all, retaliatory violence organized by Shifta militants of Somali ethnicity led the Kenyan government to declare a state of emergency just two weeks after achieving independence. The book's third part discusses diplomatic manoeuvrings and confrontations between Somalia and Kenya, focusing on the period of the Ogaden War between 1977 and 1978, when Somali forces attempted to wrest control of the Ethiopian Ogaden. The author wisely explains that the Kenya–Somalia problem 'cannot be fully visualized outside the Ethio-Somalia problem' (p. 47), and yet judiciously avoids a full-blown history of the Horn. Part four attempts to capture developments from the Ogaden War to the present.

The book is timely because of the urgent need in both academic and policy circles to better diagnose trends in the region's political history. Somalia imploded

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