

problems of national identity and identification among the religiously and ethnically diverse population of the country. But that his policies were always controversial in many ways is evident from various episodes, e.g., his forbidding the public mourning for emperor Menilek in December 1913, his incessant traveling around and his seeking support among lowland Muslim (Afar, Somali), and his ignoring and insulting important sections of the leading nobles, mainly from Shewa. All this is not new, but told in great detail in the chronicle. Interesting is the recorded reaction of Iyasu to the invitation of an Italian envoy to come to Italian-held Eritrea and be supported by the authorities there in his quest to regain the throne: he resolutely rejected the offer (412), so that he was a staunch nationalist is no longer in doubt.

The plot to (successfully) overthrow Iyasu and replace him with Zewditu as queen is given due attention, with many names and details, as are the ensuing battles at Segale and Meqdala, which were won by Ras Teferi's party (who of course became the crown prince and regent in 1916). The crucial role of War Minister Habte-Giorgis is duly acknowledged here. After this power change, the chronicle is mainly devoted to the evolving policy of Ras Teferi, to his appointments, his modernization efforts, and his foreign relations and travels, all before his coronation in 1930 of course. Also details of domestic and foreign (Italian, British, and French) intrigues are described. The 89th chapter contains the description of the coronation ceremony (in 1928) of Ras Teferi/Haile Sillasié as king (not as emperor).

As the Postscript says (557), the chronicle has no fully negative judgement on Iyasu. Neither does the author state that there were very good reasons to depose him at the time. The rest of this Postscript has some further information on the history of Iyasu during and after his deposition: on the old question of whether he was considering conversion to Islam during his long stay in Harar, on his flight to the Afar and Somali lowlands, his imprisonment at Fiche and later at Gara Mulleta, and the mysteries around his (and Zewditu's) death. Many questions still have not been clarified beyond the usual level of Ethiopian political gossip and hearsay. The editor feels, however, that the historical role, his character, and the nature of Iyasu's rule have not been properly assessed, and pleads for a reconsideration, even a "rehabilitation" (569).
J. Abbink

Hall, John S.: Religion, Myth, and Magic in Tangale. Ed. by H. Jungraithmayr and J. Adelberger. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 1994. 215 pp. ISBN 3-927620-46-7. (Westafrikanische Studien, 5) Preis: DM 54,-

This book is published 70 years after its composition on the field by a protestant missionary, John S. Hall, a scottish, very respectful of the indigenous culture and traditions and also well cultivated, mainly in the field of languages. He studied Hebrew, Arabic, French, and later on Hausa, the lingua franca of the area, the Bauchi Province in north-eastern Nigeria, where the Rev. worked among the Tangale, a tribe of some 70,000 individuals

who, up to the moment of his arrival, were rather isolate, with some slight islamic influence but not yet touched by Christian missions.

The German editors have done a quite important service both to ethnologists and to the Tangale people because the materials Father Hall collected long ago are firsthand ones, relating the religious beliefs and attitudes of an African people living in the traditional way.

The volume is centered on religion but the diligent reader will note very useful even if brief expositions on social and economic organization, on the Tangale's *Weltanschauung* – i.e., on nature, man, and supernatural –, on village's life, traditional medicine and its practitioners, and chiefly on witchcraft, a dominant belief and fear of the single as well as the community.

The Supreme being, Yamba, living in the sky, is too far away for receiving a cult, even if respected; the world and human life are dominated by a crowd of spirits, benevolent or malignant: in the midst are very important tutelary spirits (*shoro*) of the individual, house, waters, farms, and so on. The same importance have the spirits of the dead, who necessitate being objects of the cult and the memory of the living: otherwise they will punish the survivor. Life after death is conceived as the same as on earth and for that reason the soul needs prayers, sacrifices, and offerings, mainly of food. Every individual, animal, and even unanimated things have a soul (*shirum*): only witches with the second sight can see spirits, demons, and souls.

Religion, i.e., respect and fear, are present in human behaviour, from farming and collecting the crops to the birth of a son, from marriage to war, from pregnancy to head-hunting, from sickness to death. The village is literally enclosed in a number of sacred places, from the village's tree to the sacred grove, and even the hut where people live has its sacred spots; most important is the central place of the compound, where men meet.

I find the editors and the author's daughters decided for the best in leaving the manuscript as near to the original as it was possible: in this way we have in front of us a very important chapter of a native African culture before the big changes of the following half-century. A world where man respected his gods and gods were interested in man and his conduct. Ernesta Cerulli

Harring, Sidney, L.: Crow Dog's Case. American Indian Sovereignty, Tribal Law, and United States Law in the Nineteenth Century. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 301 pp. ISBN 0-521-46716-0. Price: £ 14.95

Obwohl sich die Vereinigten Staaten ein Rechtssystem geschaffen haben, das sich in nicht wenigen Fällen der "Indianerproblematik" annimmt und – wenngleich auch eine ambivalente Beurteilung durchaus möglich ist – die besondere Stellung der Indianer darin hervorhebt, wurden diese Besonderheiten doch in den Forschungen zur US-amerikanischen Rechtsgeschichte bislang weitgehend ausgespart. Vor allem trifft dies auf bestimmte lokale oder zeitlich begrenzte Untersuchungsfelder zu;