

farmworkers. He defines modes of belonging as ‘routinized discourses, social practices and institutional arrangements through which people make claims for resources and rights’ (p. 16). He argues that modes of belonging emphasize the relations of dependency through which livelihoods of farmworkers are forged. In particular, the book discusses citizenship and belonging in relation to the stereotype of farmworkers as predominantly people of foreign origin (mostly of Malawian descent) and without rural homes. The narratives of farmworkers’ struggles to acquire identity documents, for example, illustrate how struggles over citizenship and belonging continued to be part of the everyday challenges that faced farmworkers in the post-FTLRP period.

One of the strengths of the book is Rutherford’s expert use of ethnographic data to reveal intimate details of governance, livelihoods and politics on the farms. But perhaps the book’s greatest strength is also its weakness; arguably one of the weaknesses of the book is the author’s close connection with the research participants. As he puts it: ‘I found myself in sympathy with the Upfumi farm workers, their mobilization of political support, and their ambitions for improving the rights of farm workers’ (p. 4). He spent close to fifteen years interacting with the farmworkers at Upfumi and gained their trust, which made him become a key ally in their struggles. Consequently, his illumination of the agency of the farmworkers in their everyday struggles is affected to some extent by his close connections with his research participants. In spite of this caveat, *Farm Labor Struggles in Zimbabwe* is an excellent ethnographic study of farmworkers in Zimbabwe and how they negotiated their belonging and carved out new livelihoods in the context of an agrarian revolution. This book should be on the shelf of anyone with an interest in land reform, farm labour, identity and belonging in Zimbabwe and beyond.

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doi:10.1017/S000197201800027X

Stephen Chan and Julia Gallagher, *Why Mugabe Won: the 2013 elections in Zimbabwe and their aftermath*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (hbk £75 – 978 1 107 11716 7). 2017, 203 pp.

Despite a backdrop of economic, social and political crisis, Robert Mugabe and his ruling ZANU-PF party won the 2013 elections in Zimbabwe. The outcome left the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) battered and in disarray as election post-mortems predictably led to recriminations and another split in the party. How did it happen? Was this another instance of Mugabe and ZANU-PF *stealing* an election through what some in the opposition claimed was a potent combination involving a sketchy voters’ roll with 100,000 centenarians, ‘assisting’ voters, turning away over 300,000 voters, bussing people into key races, and intimidation, though with less overt violence? Or, did the wily politician win the election *fairly*, as ZANU-PF claimed and as was accepted, with misgivings, by observer teams from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union?

In this rich and engaging analysis, Stephen Chan and Julia Gallagher challenge these simple rigging claims, suggesting instead that Mugabe and ZANU-PF won credibly, aided by some ‘judicious rigging’ and a healthy helping of ineptness on the part of Morgan Tsvangirai and the MDC. Chan and Gallagher point to several conditions – the legacies of colonialism; memories of the economic

collapse of 2007–08 and the horrific election violence of 2008; Mugabe's continued towering presence in Zimbabwean politics; Tsvangirai's heroic, if flawed, challenge to Mugabe; and an evolving state–society relationship marked by simultaneously hopeful and ambivalent political attitudes – as critical in shaping the outcome of the 2013 elections.

In addition to all of these conditions and factors, a key claim in this book is that going into the 2013 elections the MDC ran a haphazard campaign. For Chan and Gallagher, the MDC was weakened during the coalition government. To begin with, participation in the coalition undermined the MDC's most potent argument, one 'rooted in the idea of its differences from ZANU-PF, one of which was the idea of probity in government' (p. 57). Second, key members and resources of the MDC were directed towards participation in the coalition government, resulting in fractured and weak party structures. As a consequence, the party lost discipline and capacity, both of which affected its campaign and ability to connect with voters in the 2013 elections.

While the MDC seemed to have been destabilized and decentred by participation in the coalition government, Chan and Gallagher contend that ZANU-PF took advantage of the Government of National Unity (GNU) to reconnect with its supporters. Bound and united by the ideological construct of 'patriotic history', they suggest that ZANU-PF fashioned a campaign that strengthened its grass-roots party structures among the rural populace and offered middle-class voters, long core supporters of the MDC, the possibility of material gains through its indigenization programme. The outcome of this effort was that ZANU-PF ran a 'professional and committed campaign that involved a substantial voter registration drive, effective party mobilisation and a carefully crafted re-education of the Zimbabwean electorate' (p. 71). Little wonder then that Freedom House survey results of voter intentions in 2012 pointed to real gains in support of ZANU, survey results that, curiously, the unfocused MDC discounted.

Along the way, Chan and Gallagher assert that they augment structuralist accounts of ZANU-PF success in elections, which emphasize Mugabe's control of patronage and the security apparatus. While recognizing the ways in which offering patronage has helped to tie people to ZANU-PF and violence has petrified others into voting for ZANU-PF or not voting at all, in this book Chan and Gallagher seem to rely much more on what they call a 'culturalist' approach. This approach, they contend, takes seriously 'the ways in which power is produced through [the] imagination' of the governed (p. 11). According to Chan and Gallagher, what we learn by considering how Zimbabweans imagined state power leading up to the 2013 elections that we would not otherwise see is that a significant proportion of citizens voted for Mugabe in part because they: (1) interpreted some of his actions as the 'disciplining' role of the father-president; and (2) 'Tsvangirai ... had ceased to be a thinkable president in 2013' (p. 14).

Despite the book's very important corrections regarding the 2013 elections, it is likely that as many scholars will be frustrated by *Why Mugabe Won* as will find it compelling. Firstly, one problem with the book is that it points to too many conditions (arguments) as central to the outcome. While each is plausible, few are fully developed, fleshed out or supported robustly. Specifically, the direct link between all of the conditions they point to, including their argument about how Zimbabweans understood power, and individual voting behaviour is never really made persuasively enough.

Furthermore, when we consider for a moment the 'imagining a president' culturalist argument summarized above, the reason for Mugabe's victory is not obvious as both he and Tsvangirai were highly flawed candidates. In my reading

of the book, it looks more likely that they relied on the patronage argument summarized above. Chan and Gallagher actually concede its importance in noting that ‘the incentive for an aspirational voter was to join ZANU-PF and benefit from an indigenisation brought from the countryside to the cities’ (p. 36). If Zimbabweans were motivated to vote for ZANU-PF and Mugabe because of the ‘goodies’ they stood to gain, we might not need a complex narrative about which figure seemed more presidential.

These quibbles notwithstanding, *Why Mugabe Won* is a worthy read. It rightly questions simple ‘rigging’ explanations and offers a broad range of factors behind Mugabe’s 2013 electoral success. Chan and Gallagher have produced a thought-provoking addition to the growing scholarship on the 2013 elections. *Why Mugabe Won* will also be of particular interest after Mugabe’s removal. In fact, the book seems to anticipate this fate in suggesting that ‘the 2013 elections were won by Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF, but they were also elections that led to everything he and his party once stood for facing a total eclipse by the time of the next elections in 2018’ (p. 178).

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doi:10.1017/S0001972018000281

Michaela Pelican, *Masks and Staffs: identity politics in the Cameroon Grassfields*.

New York NY and Oxford: Berghahn Books (hb US\$120/£85 – 978 1 78238 728 2; pb US\$34.95/£24 – 978 1 78533 514 3). 2015, 260 pp.

Pelican’s book is a fascinating descent into the dazzling complexities that ethnicity can take on even within a small area, and provides original and helpful tools for making sense of these complexities. It opens and closes with threatening events. In Chapter 1, Grassfielders stage a furious protest against Mbororo immigrants when they refuse to respect certain rituals at the investiture of the local chief. It closes (in Chapter 7) with the murder of Mr X, a local who would have been beheaded by the henchmen of a rich Mbororo notable. Yet the main theme of the book is reconciliation. And, indeed, in both episodes the violent potential does not explode. Rather, conflicts are effectively contained, at least to a certain degree.

The book focuses on Misaje, a small town on the northern fringes of the Cameroon Grassfields, an area that became famous for enchanting British colonialists. Situated close to the border of Nigeria, it was in this district that Mbororo pastoralists first entered the Grassfields (probably just after 1900), and they are still strongly present today (about 25 per cent of the district’s population as against 5 to 10 per cent for the Grassfields as a whole). In addition to the Grassfielders/Mbororo distinction (on which much has already been published since Phyllis Kaberry’s 1952 book), Pelican introduces another ethnic group, the Hausa, who over time developed a very different version of affirming its identity as an ethnic group.

Chapters 2 and 3 offer a compelling sketch of the different ethnicities of the Nchaney (Grassfielders) and the Mbororo by examining the historicity of each identification. Not only is the historical consciousness of both groups marked by different ‘modalities’ – Nchaney history focusing on the settlement around the *fon* (chief) while Mbororo history is about movement and cohabitation with other groups – but the modalities of each group have also shifted over time. Thus, the usual distinction between Grassfielders as agriculturalists and Mbororo as pastoralists no longer holds, since most Mbororo have become