

Eric Allina, *Slavery by Any Other Name: African Life under Company Rule in Colonial Mozambique* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012). xiii + 255 pp. \$49.50 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8139-3272-9; ISBN 978-0-8139-3275-0.

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In 1881, the Portuguese national assembly received and honoured prominent Brazilian abolitionist Joaquim Nabuco, the first president of the recently created Brazilian society against slavery. Nabuco was a cosmopolitan who had already been to Europe several times, yet his latest trip to the continent was particularly symbolic because it heightened his public role as an anti-slavery warrior in Brazil. After Lisbon, Nabuco visited London where he engaged in active anti-slavery diplomacy with members of the Anti-Slavery Society, the most important British force behind the struggle to end slavery worldwide. It is significant, thus, that Portuguese lawmakers chose Nabuco's visit to the Portuguese assembly to approve a law meant to formally eradicate the physical punishment of African workers in Portuguese Africa.

This law, as Eric Allina's painstaking research on forced labour in Mozambique richly demonstrates, was solemnly ignored in Mozambique, where daily life under Portuguese colonialism was marked by brutal violence and forced labour. Allina equates this with chattel slavery in the Americas, borrowing from the language of abolitionism in the early twentieth century, but missing the opportunity to offer much elaboration. At first look, it seems that forced labour under Portuguese colonialism might have held more obvious similarities to the mechanisms of production of slaves in Africa, not to chattel slavery in the Americas.

Allina's primary goal is to analyze forced labour under the Mozambican company created in 1892, just two years after the British ultimatum that prevented the Portuguese from creating a corridor connecting the former Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique. Against this backdrop the stakes could not have been higher for Portuguese policymakers than seeking to strengthen their foothold in a part of Africa where there was growing and visible British territorial ambition. The Portuguese had arrived in East Africa in the sixteenth century, but their presence was rarefied at best, leaving plenty of room for British challenges. In a way, by outsourcing the development of large sections of what would become Mozambique to a private company, the Portuguese government demonstrated their weakness as a colonial power.

Allina's book is the first published outcome of a number of PhD dissertations produced in the 2000s on labour practices under colonialism in Portuguese Africa. The book draws extensively on records of the Mozambique company that for years had been unavailable to scholars. The author shows masterful command of these sources, unearthing many insights on Portuguese administrators and their violent policies of extracting labour from Africans. Despite the fact that Allina conducted hundreds of interviews with Africans, relatively few of these are used in the book. This missed opportunity means that we sometimes learn more about Portuguese administrators and their policies than about Africans.

Allina's book is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter provides the background to Portuguese plans to develop Mozambique in the wake of the transatlantic slave trade. This is perhaps the most broadly framed chapter in a book that would be

richer if focused more on the big picture and on comparisons between forced labour in Portuguese Africa and other parts of Africa. The author effectively demonstrates that several ideas that would come to frame Portuguese policies to Africans in the early twentieth century came about during the phase that immediately succeeded the slave trade. Particularly important is his analysis of the genesis of the chartered company and the early implementation of forced labour in the colony.

Chapter two provides fascinating insights into the minds of colonial administrators who expressed reservations about the practices of the company. These officials, it is worth pointing out, were stationed on the ground, not in Lisbon, and thus their reservations bore little if any impact on policies conducted by the company. Chapter three charts international debates and criticism of labour practices in Mozambique, as well Portuguese responses and African protests. Chapter four shows how Africans sought relief from the brutality of Portuguese colonialism and labour practices by relocating to regions outside the control of the chartered company – as far as away South Africa and Rhodesia. Chapter five investigates African rulers' engagement with the company, and Allina considers the mechanisms through which African rulers ceded members of their communities and sometimes openly cooperated with the Portuguese. This relationship bears a striking similarity to the relationship between Portuguese and African authorities in Angola, another Portuguese colony in southern Africa.

In chapter six, Allina provides detailed analysis of how Portuguese labour practices and colonial control disrupted African societies, particularly in relation to gender and generational relations. Particularly deleterious was the social impact of labour on women's role in society. Chapter seven traces African strategies of relocating to South Africa to escape the brutality of forced labour in territories under the control of the chartered company. Here Allina engages with literature on labour history on South Africa and the ties between Mozambique and South Africa through the migration of workers. This international dimension is further highlighted by his consideration of how the global depression in the 1930s led to a glut of workers in Mozambique. Chapter eight analyzes social mobility by African farmers, the creation of an African elite and the obstacles these groups faced through institutional racism that became heightened in the twentieth century.

Allina's book provides a poignant and detailed description of the horrors of colonial labour practices in Mozambique. Even though the book lacks specific information about individual Africans, the author succeeds in revealing mechanisms through which subaltern Africans resisted the tentacles of the chartered company through open and negotiated means.

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