journeys and personal accounts of migrants in detail. All the other contributions focus on official policies, political and legal frameworks, and technical procedures. That being said, the chapter by Assopgoum is of particular interest because it stresses the personal challenges migrants face such as family pressure to succeed abroad (p. 92) or the pressure of an education system which puts too much focus on producing academic elites (p. 93).

One would have wished for a more in-depth discussion of the central migrant claim for human rights. The study mentions the human rights dimension of irregular migration only briefly on the sidelines (p. 12, p. 282). There can, for example, be no doubt that despite tighter laws and higher deportation and casualty numbers, the legal position of irregular migrants in the US has seen legal improvements over time. Despite a poor US economy, President Obama has decided to make lives easier for separated family members of irregular migrants by giving them green cards according to a news report[1] . The institutionalization of human rights for undocumented workers in the international UN migration convention is another example for the international efforts to strengthen the rights and position of irregular migrants. Finally, one should also not forget to mention the recent moves to make public school education for irregular migrants mandatory in some European countries and regions.

Crossing and Controlling Borders has some limitations. First, it does not fully live up to what the book title promises: tracing the impact of migration policies on the personal lives and difficult choices of migrants. Only two of the twelve contributions seek to elucidate the real life journeys of migrants. Second, it is questionable from a scientific point of view that some arguments and conclusive remarks made in the book are not supported by proof and empirical data. Third, it seems that regular and irregular migration are treated as overlapping topics in the book, an approach that is rather misleading.

Daniel Branch, Nic Cheeseman, and Leigh Gardner (eds.) Our *Turn to Eat: Politics in Kenya Since 1950* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2010)

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Our turn to Eat is an edited volume of eleven chapters including an introduction and a conclusion. Its central theme is the nation-building project in the post-colonial Kenya and the major assumption is that colonialism was destructive socially, politically as well as economically. Hence, the post-independence governments had

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1   *Time Magazine*, January 2012, vol. 179, no. 3, 12.

a noble responsibility to address the long standing problems left by the outgoing colonial masters. It should be kept in mind that colonialism did not intend to develop Kenya. Instead, its grand objective was to exploit resources. In order to achieve its mission, colonialists devised several strategies among which was the "divide and rule system." This simply meant that colonialism divided Africans using ethnicity for smooth exploitation of resources.

When struggling for independence, the elites promised that after decolonization every problem could be fixed. All Kenyans should enjoy the fruits of *Uhuru* (i.e. independence). Contrary to this expectation, the post-independence leaders failed to address the problems of unity and economy thereby questioning the entire logic of national-building project. The book argues that the post-independence governments inherited the same colonial behavior and coercive apparatuses to effect consolidation of their power. In turn, this exacerbated inequality in terms of resource and power distribution. The effect of this was the politics of exclusion and division "them and us".

As can be noted, the theme of the book is simply that the national building project was by and large a failure. It observes that at the independence celebrations of 1963, most Kenyans cheered the rising of the black, red and green flag of the new Kenya nation. It really gave them hopes of a nation based on equality and peace. This was not to be the case, however, since Kenya has remained for many years a country with high levels of inequality, rampant corruption, as well as ethnic issues which culminated in the 2008 political violence. Hence the authors of this volume stress that Kenya has witnessed continuity rather than change (p. 7).

However, the book slips in a number of ways: First, it places the problems of Kenya solely on the shoulders of the internal leadership failure by the post-independence governments. This is despite the fact that the authors argue for continuity rather than change. To be sure, the book argues that:-

> The reasons for shallowness of Kenyan nationalism can be identified in the final two decades of colonial rule. Then, the need to create a loyal African "middle-class" led the colonial regime to manipulate the distribution of lands, jobs, and political opportunities, to co-opt an African elite that quickly developed a distinctive interest in the preservation of the status quo (p. 6).

While I partly share this view with regards to the problem of leadership in Kenya, it is wrong to fail to question the entire essence of independence. Had the authors of this volume read works such as *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* by Walter Rodney (1972), Third *World Politics: An Introduction* by Christopher Clapham (1985) or *Imperialism and Global Political Economy* by Alex Callinicos (2009) they would have questioned, in the first place, whether Kenya and Africa at large were at some point actually independent. The clear theme in these works is that capitalism

at the phase of imperialism was and remains a driving engine of exploiting the less developed parts of the world. Thus, what actually happened at independence was simply a change in the form of domination while the content of colonialism has persisted. It is for that reason some scholars would argue that it was simply "flag independence." A balanced view is therefore to analyze Kenya from both internal and external perspectives of continuity.

Second, the book links the occurrences of ethnic problems to multiparty politics. It contends "At the same time, the localized development of political parties fostered inter-group competition and increased the salience of ethnic identities (p.6-7)." I find this strange. Tanzania, unlike Kenya, has about 123 tribes. The country practices multiparty democracy and yet it has the least ethnic issues in Africa. The Afro-barometer survey of 2009 indicates that about 88% of Tanzanians identify themselves first as Tanzanians before any other attributes such as tribal affiliation. Based on this case, I find ethnicity is not an outcome of multiparty politics.

Third, throughout this volume, the term "democracy" is treated as given and that every society should abide with its principles. There is an agreement among scholars that this term is elusive. I know that this omission is informed by the Western domination of the understanding of democracy and that some scholars, such as Juan Linz, have gone so far to suggest that "liberal democracy is the only game in town" (Juan Linz 1990). Hence, the use of democracy needs to be specified. It is by doing so that one would be in a position to assess its feasibility in Africa. On the other hand, it raises an important question as to whether democracy is exportable. If yes, then one would like to know the interests of the exporters; how the recipients react; and how it is sustainable. It is interesting to note that the introduction of liberal democracy in Africa by the Western countries and institutions like in any other countries in the so called the Third World, was compounded by double standards; in some cases aid to those countries was attached with conditions to democratize while in others authoritarian regimes were allowed to exist so long they served the interests of the West (p. 237-9). The military invasions and sanctioning of Iraq, Zimbabwe, Libya and the like is grounded on the quest by the Western powers of resources such as oil and land. All these are justified under the name of "democracy."

Fourth, the book lacks a guiding theory. This is also the case with all chapters. Theoretical and conceptual framework for a volume like this is important in order to situate the case into wider knowledge; in this way it makes the book solid and scholarly. As it stands now, the book is so specific to the extent that it is limited to understand other cases in Africa or beyond with the same experiences. Despite the mentioned shortcomings, this volume may be useful to students of politics, corruption, as well as African studies.