

**Todd Cleveland.** *Diamonds in the Rough: Corporate Paternalism and African Professionalism on the Mines of Colonial Angola, 1917–1975.* Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2015. 280 S. ISBN 978-0-8214-4521-1.

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**Published on** H-Soz-u-Kult (February, 2016)

The timing of Todd Cleveland's work on diamond mining in Angola could not be more fortuitous. This year, not only did Angola achieve a record production of 9 million carats of diamonds, but Rafael Marques de Morais, one of Angola's premier investigative journalists, stood trial for allegedly soiling the reputation of generals in his report *Blood Diamonds, Corruption and Torture in Angola*. Macauhub/AO/CN, Angola Sees Record Diamond Production in 2015, 23.12.2015, <<http://www.macauhub.com.mo/en/2015/12/18/angola-sees-record-diamond-production-in-2015/>> (01.02.2016); Lusa, Produção de diamantes em Angola poderá atingir valor recorde este ano – ministro, 17.12.2015, <[http://www.sapo.pt/noticias/producao-de-diamantes-em-angola-podera\\_56727f271182bc0851aed7e2](http://www.sapo.pt/noticias/producao-de-diamantes-em-angola-podera_56727f271182bc0851aed7e2)> (01.02.2016); Rafael Marques de Morais, *Diamantes De Sangue: Corrupção e Tortura em Angola*, Lisboa 2011; in English: Rafael Marques de Morais, *Blood Diamonds, Corruption and Torture in Angola*, translated by International Senior Lawyers Project, 2015, <<http://www.tintadachina.pt/pdfs/626c1154352f7b4f96324bf928831b86-insideENG.pdf>> (01.02.2016). In his campaign to expose the horrific human rights abuses, Marques de Morais paints a bleak picture of the grueling conditions and violence in Angola's diamond production. He argues for the continuity of systemic violence from the sourcing of the first diamonds in 1912 to the present, highlighting the exploitative

collusion between a profit-seeking state and private commercial enterprises. Marques de Morais, *Blood Diamonds*, p. 16. Cleveland's thorough and inspiring study provides a historical framework with which to read Marques' disheartening report.

Cleveland is the first to reconstruct the history of the Companhia de Diamantes de Angola (Diamang), or the Diamond Company of Angola, from its foundation in 1917 to Angolan independence in 1975, focusing in great detail on the rich tapestry of worker experience. He recognizes the violence and power imbalances, but goes further in his analysis to understand how it was that Diamang was able to effortlessly secure the state's quiescence and acquire a monopoly over diamond production in Angola. Based on research in the company archives, representing the colonizers' perspective, alongside the countless interviews conducted with former employees, Cleveland argues that pragmatism, paternalism and profits were Diamang's guiding principles, while workers respond with social and occupational professionalism. These four P's present the framework that guides Cleveland's analysis, and set this work apart.

Cleveland's work begins with the apparent divergence between the historiography of mining in Africa – in which historians have unearthed the labor strikes, trade unionism, and ethnic conflict that marked mining operations across the region

– and the case of Angola, where Diamang company records recount the stability and compliance of labor relations in diamond production. Even the War for Independence, which erupted in 1961, did not interfere with diamond output. This led Cleveland to ask: “Why, in the light of the demanding labor regime in Lunda, did African miners not adopt a more militant posture?” (p. 3) He argues that this is due to the interrelation between the company and the workers in a geographically isolated space. From the 1930s, the company exercised a pragmatic paternalism because they needed to recycle their workers and thus sought to guarantee a stabilized labor force. Workers, in turn, co-cultivated their relationship with the company through displays of occupational and social professionalism. These labor relations, according to Cleveland, calcified quickly and endured political turbulence because of Lunda’s isolation and scarce population, which facilitated Diamang’s expansive and comprehensive control over its workforce, but also made it imperative not to alienate workers.

The book’s structure follows the lives of the laborers from recruitment to reintegration at home. Chapters one and two provide the historical and historiographical context for the diamond business in Angola. The bulk of the book explores formative periods of the workers’ work lives and how these themes evolved over the sixty-year period of Diamang’s operations: the recruitment process (chapter three); the workspace and labor conditions (chapter four); laborers’ work-site strategies (chapter five); after work activities (chapter six); and, to conclude, the workers’ decision to stay or to leave at the end of their labor contracts. The epilogue brings the story up to the present with a comment on Lunda’s crucial position during Angola’s Civil War and the workers’ nostalgia for the relative calm and predictability of their lives while at Diamang. The book features illustrative photographs and tables, which illumi-

nate both the human dimension of diamond mining as well as its gruesome economics.

While others, like Gervase Clarence-Smith, have written about Diamang’s special relationship to the Portuguese state, whereby Lunda practically became a ‘state within the state,’ Cleveland’s contribution lies in his focus on workers and labor. W.G. Clarence-Smith, *Business Empires in Angola under Salazar, 1930–1961*, in: *African Economic History* 14 (1985), pp. 1–13, here p. 5. He expands notions of the labor process to include the recruits’ journey to the mines and the labor of the accompanying family members. He examines workers’ after-shift lives and the colonial system of forced labor (shilablo) from workers’ perspectives and labels their behavior within the system innovatively as professionalism, thereby overcoming the resistance-collaboration binary prevalent in much of the literature.

The laborers were the foundation upon which the company generated its handsome profits. Due to the cheap costs of labor, Diamang decided to prioritize the expansion of its labor force (from 500 workers in 1917 to over 27,000 in 1975) rather than to focus on mechanization (p. 82). This labor force mostly consisted of forced laborers (contratados) but also of volunteers (voluntários) and their accompanying families. Women never made up more than 5% of the remunerated labor force but carried the double burden of domestic tasks (childcare, water retrieval, cooking) and company tasks (cleaning, working plantations, mine kitchen jobs, health care jobs), only some of which was considered wage labor (p. 112). Diamang sought to attract families of miners in order to stabilize the work force and enhance worker productivity.

Discussing the company-worker relationship in terms of inter-dependency, paternalism and workers occupational and social professionalism opens up new questions about how workers existed in forced labor regimes and related to the state, the company, and each other. While this ap-

proach could downplay the stark power imbalances and violent experiences of workers, Cleveland succeeds in walking this fine line to reveal a bitter irony: both the workers' professionalism and Diamang's paternalism helped strengthen Portuguese colonial rule.

At times, Cleveland's analysis mirrors his sources in how colonial categories are employed and substantiated. His interviews with African workers demonstrate that they already accepted many categories of thought introduced by Diamang such as notions of 'good work,' 'male' and 'female' work, and 'stealing.' Earlier generations of workers must have experienced more friction when navigating the transition from their traditional work and gender value systems to life on company grounds. Cleveland contends that by the 1930s, the peoples' minds in Lunda had been colonized prior to serving their contracts (p. 13). However, reading about the multiple light and heavy workplace avoidance strategies, ranging from task sharing to absenteeism, we come to understand some of the internal frictions hidden beneath workers social and occupational professionalism (pp. 121–147).

This meticulous study is a must read for scholars and graduate students interested in African labor history and Portuguese colonialism. Those with an interest in (diamond) mining will take away as much as those reading for information on forced labor or on the interplay between the Portuguese colonial state and concessional companies. However, those keen to learn about the rich texture of workers' experiences, both on and off the mine, stand to gain the most.

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**Citation:** Marcia C. Schenck. Review of Cleveland, Todd. *Diamonds in the Rough: Corporate Paternalism and African Professionalism on the Mines of Colonial Angola, 1917–1975*. H-Soz-u-Kult, H-Net Reviews. February, 2016.

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