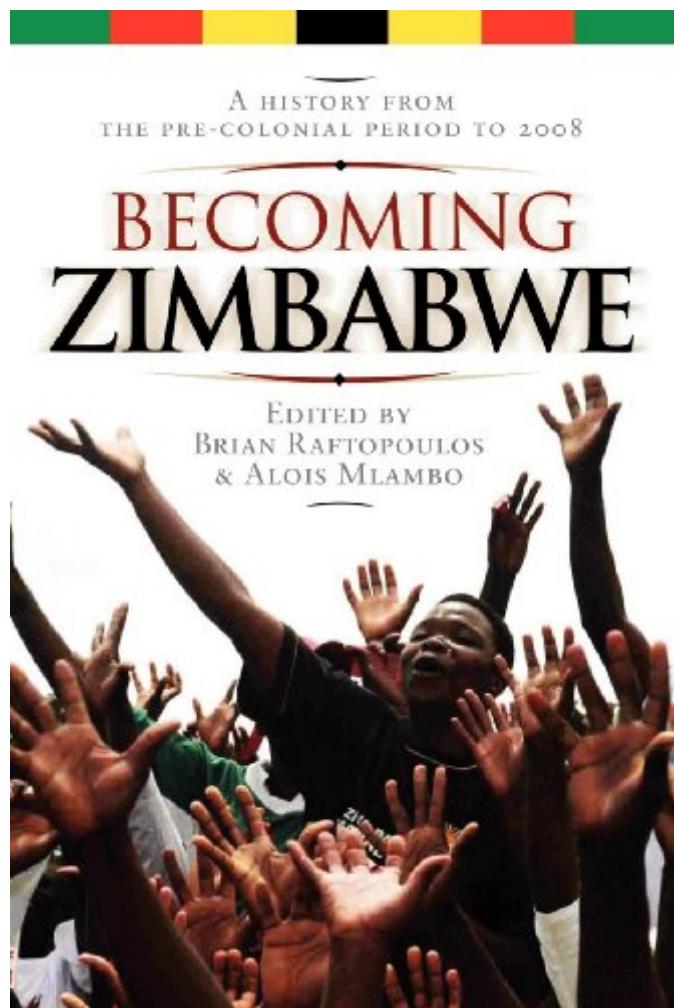


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Becoming Zimbabwe. A History From The Pre-colonial Period To 2008



Synopsis

Becoming Zimbabwe is the first comprehensive history of Zimbabwe, spanning the years from 850 to 2008. In 1997, the then Secretary General of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, Morgan Tsvangirai, expressed the need for a 'more open and critical process of writing history in Zimbabwe. ...The history of a nation-in-the-making should not be reduced to a selective heroic tradition, but should be a tolerant and continuing process of questioning and re-examination.' Becoming Zimbabwe tracks the idea of national belonging and citizenship and explores the nature of state rule, the changing contours of the political economy, and the regional and international dimensions of the country's history. In their Introduction, Brian Raftopoulos and Alois Mlambo enlarge on these themes, and Gerald Mazarire's opening chapter sets the pre-colonial background. Sabelo Ndlovu tracks the history up to WW11, and Alois Mlambo reviews developments in the settler economy and the emergence of nationalism leading to UDI in 1965. The politics and economics of the UDI period, and the subsequent war of liberation, are covered by Joesph Mtisi, Munyaradzi Nyakudya and Teresa Barnes. After independence in 1980, Zimbabwe enjoyed a period of buoyancy and hope. James Muzondidya's chapter details the transition 'from buoyancy to crisis', and Brian Raftopoulos concludes the book with an analysis of the decade-long crisis and the global political agreement which followed.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Serious scholar of Zimbabwe needs to read this one. Distinguished Zimbabwean scholars have taken a fresh look at history using an incredible array of new and old sources that reveal the causes of the most complex and long-standing humanitarian and human rights crises on the continent. This is essential reading to for the political scientist and diplomats who seek a deeper understanding of how national identity has been shaped and distorted to the detriment of its citizens.

This distortion of facts does not truly relate to the tragedy that has befallen a country that was once well run and fairly governed, and is now a true "animal farm". Mugabe and his cronies have raped the country and ruined the economy, and enriched themselves. The British, the USA and South Africa saw fit to bow to the OAU and put the thugs in charge. The result is chaos and tragedy from peace and order. This book tries to put academic reason to the tragedy - it fails. It is not worth reading.

I read about Africa frequently for my work and have visited there several times, but not Zimbabwe. I find the country's history fascinating based on other things I read prior. Things that interest me the most which made me pick up the book: Pre-colonial "Great Zimbabwe", the legendary and infamous Rhodesian military, the Lemba people, Ian Smith, and Robert Mugabe. My goal was not achieved and I'll probably look elsewhere. I was hoping for more of a narrative type story that was more focused. I did learn things but I found the authors to be dry. It could have used more (and better) maps. The section on pre-colonial Zimbabwe was pretty poor. There is an audience for this book but I am not that person.

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