The book deals with two types of “African diasporas”, the first of which originated in the migration histories of the Indian Ocean and brought new groups into Africa. This is illustrated by case studies of Hadrami communities in Sudan and Zanzibar, and the Malay community in Cape Town, that produced trade links as well as processes of Islamization. The second type originated with the failing African states and cases discussed are an Eritrean diaspora in Germany, alongside Sudanese diasporas in Norway and the USA, and a Somali diaspora in Norway.

The papers deal with processes of homemaking, political mobilization in the diaspora through local organisations, religious networks and cyberspace nationalism. The central conceptual argument is that “diaspora” is not only a post-modern reaction to the xenophobia of Western nation states but must be seen as part of a broader history of human migration and intercultural experience. This calls for a perspective which takes into consideration historically-produced variation and dynamism.

The book is valuable for researchers interested in African studies, from various disciplines such as anthropology, history and religious science as well as migration and diaspora studies and the broader field of cultural studies. It is also of use for practitioners in UN agencies and NGOs working with global migration, and also national immigration departments.

Munzoul A.M. Assal teaches anthropology at the University of Khartoum, Sudan.
Leif Manger is professor of social anthropology at the University of Bergen.