Costaguana-born Englishman, corrals money, partners, and technology from abroad to revitalize the mine and, he hopes, the country. "The entire society can 'work' only because its key figures are not Costaguanan at all, but rather Europeans (assisted, to be sure, by a handful of locals with intimate European connections)," writes Falcoff. As San Tomé once more becomes productive, prosperity and peace return to the region.

Enter General Montero, a "backwoods fighter" who rose to minister of war after backing the winning side at just the right moment in a civil war, and his brother Pedrito. They cynically exploit the rhetoric of race, class, and anti-imperialism to incite a rebellion, with the real goal of gaining control of San Tomé's wealth. Their scheme fails only after a long series of adventures, and the book ends with the mining town's secession, ratified by the presence of a U.S. warship.

General Montero "foreshadows a whole host of counterfeit social revolutionaries in uniform," writes Falcoff, including Venezuela's current leader, Hugo Chávez. Other characters, such as Father Corbelán, the left-wing cleric with connections on both sides of the law, and Nostromo, the skilled foreign worker and compromised figure from whom the novel takes its name, also have contemporaries in modern Latin America. "With stunning prescience," Conrad saw that "whatever the sins of colonialism, what was bound to follow could conceivably be worse. *Nostromo* is a supreme work of art which is also a prophecy, one which more often than not has been amply fulfilled."

Other Nations

Africa's Accidental Borders

"The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi" by Daniel N. Posner, in *American Political Science Review* (Nov. 2004), George Washington Univ., Dept. of Political Science, 2201 G St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20052.

In 1891, officials of the British South Africa Company drew a line on a map in order to carve out two new districts in the lands under their control, heedlessly slicing through the traditional boundaries of the Chewa and Tumbuka tribes. It's the kind of story that's been repeated many times in Africa and elsewhere, with arbitrary boundaries tragically setting the stage for future tribal and ethnic conflict. But in this case, there is a difference. On one side of the border, in what is now Malawi, Chewa and Tumbuka today are at war culturally and politically, just as one would predict. In neighboring Zambia, however, the two tribes are allies and "brethren."

Why is this so? It's not that cultural differences are more pronounced in Malawi, according to Posner, a political scientist at the University of California, Los Angeles. In surveys, he found that members of the two tribes on each side of the border point to the same basic divisions: Tumbuka parents, for example, demand a large price of perhaps seven cows when their daughters marry, while Chewa parents are happy with a single chicken. But in Malawi, people are more likely to attach negatives to their descriptions: Tumbukas call the Chewas "lazy," and Chewas return the favor by calling the Tumbukas conceited.

The explanation for the cross-border difference, Posner argues, is that in Zambia both tribes make up too small a part of the national population (less than seven percent each) to form a distinctive group or, more important, a bloc big enough for political leaders to exploit. In Malawi, however, the Chewa are 28 percent of the total, the Tumbuka 12 percent.

The coming of democracy crystallized the national differences. In 1994, when Malawians finally got a chance to vote, in the country's first election, longtime dictator Hastings Kamuzu Banda played the tribal card with a vengeance, warning his fellow Chewas of Tumbuka threats to their interests and exacerbating ethnic tensions in the

process. In Zambia, which held its first multiparty elections in 1991, President Kenneth Kaunda appealed to Chewas and Tumbukas not as separate groups but as "Easterners" who needed to unite in order to defeat their rivals elsewhere in the country. They gave him more than three-quarters of their votes.

Posner suggests that this "natural experiment" in Africa could shed light on supposedly culture-based conflicts in other parts of the world. And while it's too late to redraw national boundaries, some of his research suggests that shrewdly drawn regional boundaries *within* nations might produce some of the results British colonialists accidentally achieved in Zambia.

Tolerance on Trial

"Holland Daze" by Christopher Caldwell, in *The Weekly Standard* (Dec. 27, 2004), 1150 17th St., N.W., Ste. 505, Washington, D.C. 20036, and "Final Cut" by Ian Buruma, in *The New Yorker* (Jan. 3, 2005), 4 Times Sq., New York, N.Y. 10036.

The death of one man—a controversial Dutch filmmaker murdered on an Amsterdam street by a second-generation Moroccan immigrant—has sent the same sort of shock through the Netherlands as the 9/11 attack did in the United States. Theo van Gogh was shot and knifed to death on November 2 by a young Muslim extremist. A letter stuck to the dead man's stomach with a knife promised the same fate to the Somali-born member of parliament who wrote the script for *Submission*, Van Gogh's last film, about the abuse of women in the name of Allah.

In this country of 16 million, which has long prided itself on its multiculturalism, some saw the violent act as a repudiation of Holland's policies of tolerance and acceptance toward its roughly 1.5 million first-generation immigrants, many of whom are Muslims. Now the stock of politicians who preach that "Holland is full" is rising—even as they are forced into hiding for fear of suffering Van Gogh's fate. "When old lefties cry out for law and order you know something has shifted in the political climate; it is now a common perception that the integration of Muslims in Holland has failed," writes Buruma, a writer and scholar born in the Netherlands.

The tensions in Holland emanate in part from an influx of immigrants and their interaction with a heretofore generous welfare state, writes Caldwell, a senior editor at *The Weekly Standard*: "As many as 60 percent of Moroccans and Turks above the age of 40—obviously first-generation immigrants—are unemployed." But more

EXCERPT

Don't Look Back

I went to dinner with a young [German] businessman, born 20 years after the end of [World War II], who told me that the forestry company for which he worked, and which had interests in Britain, had decided that it needed a mission statement. A meeting ensued, and someone suggested Holz mit Stolz *("wood with pride"), whereupon a two-hour discussion erupted among the employees of the company as to whether pride in anything was permitted to the Germans, or whether it was the beginning of the slippery slope that led to, well, everyone knew where. The businessman found this all perfectly normal, part of being a contemporary German.*

Collective pride is denied the Germans because, if pride is taken in the achievements of one's national ancestors, it follows that shame for what they have done must also be accepted.

—Theodore Dalrymple, a British writer and physician, in *City Journal* (Winter 2005)