Modern civil wars in Africa have revived old stereotypes: the continent is again portrayed as being steeped in superstition and tribal warfare whose nature escapes the kind of rationality usually applied in analysing warfare and social conflict. To avoid this line of interpretation, African civil wars and conflicts need to be discussed in their proper historical and conceptual context. Wars are often extreme social situations in which religious phenomena occur in more radical forms than in times of peace, and where the breakdown of social relations is often accompanied by religious change on a scale unseen under more peaceful circumstances. Following an introductory chapter by Niels Kastfelt, this collective volume opens with two essays on the civil war in Sudan by Sharon Elaine Hutchinson and Andrew C. Wheeler, both discussing the dramatic religious changes taking place in the context of the civil war. This is followed by two studies of the Great Lakes region, one by Timothy Longman on the role of Christian churches in the ethnic violence in Rwanda and Burundi, the other by René Devisch discussing Christian healing churches and the domestication of violence in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo). Two contributions on West Africa focus on the civil wars in the region comprising Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, Paul Richards discussing the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone within the perspective of the anthropology of religion, and Christian Kordt Højbjerg analysing the problems involved in understanding the connections between cultural traditions, ethnic violence and politics. The book ends with a chapter by David Maxwell on the relationship between religion and war in a longer time perspective, including both the liberation war and the postwar period in Zimbabwe. [ASC Leiden abstract]