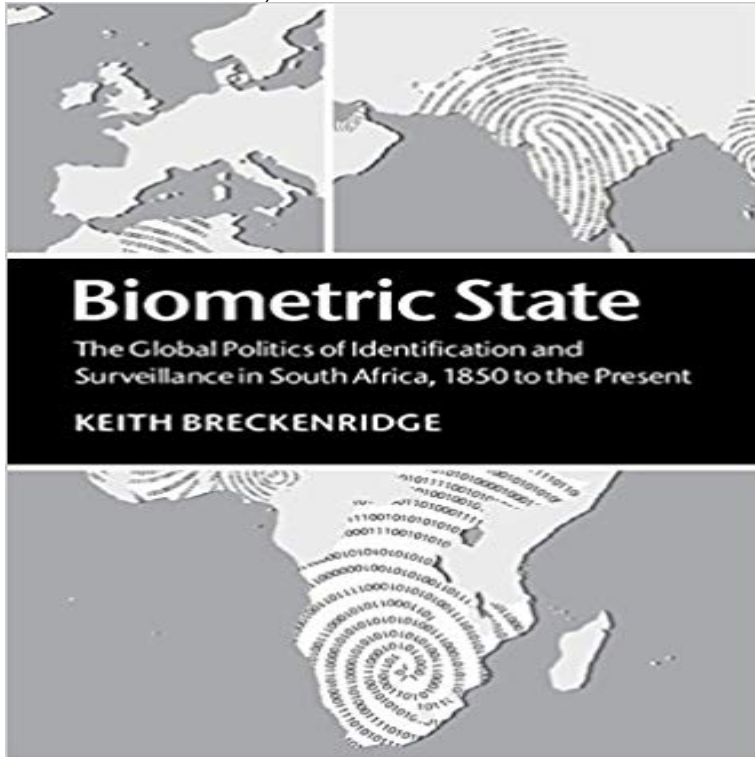


# Biometric State: The Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance in South Africa, 1850 to the Present



Biometric identification and registration systems are being proposed by governments and businesses across the world. Surprisingly they are under most rapid, and systematic, development in countries in Africa and Asia. In this groundbreaking book Keith Breckenridge traces how the origins of the systems being developed in places like India, Mexico, Nigeria and Ghana can be found in a century-long history of biometric government in South Africa, with the South African experience of centralized fingerprint identification unparalleled in its chronological depth and demographic scope. He shows how empire, and particularly the triangular relationship between India, the Witwatersrand and Britain, established the special South African obsession with biometric government, and shaped the international politics that developed around it for the length of the twentieth century. He also examines the political effects of biometric registration systems, revealing their consequences for the basic workings of the institutions of democracy and authoritarianism.

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**Keith Breckenridge Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research** The Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance in South Africa, 1850 to the Present Keith Breckenridge. University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS,  
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**Identification and Surveillance** Reviewed by: Zachary Levenson In Biometric State, Keith Breckenridge provides an intellectual history of biometrics in South Africa since 1850, simultaneously delivering a Biometrics, which he defines as the identification of people by machines rendering it appealing to political theorists, anthropologists of the state, **Biometric State: the global politics of identification and surveillance** Biometric State: The Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance in South Africa, 1850 to the Present . Keith. Breckenridge . Biometric State: **Biometric State: The Global Politics of Identification and - Google Books Result** Biometric State: The Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance in South Africa, 1850 to the Present (English, Hardcover, Breckenridge Associate Professor **Biometric State: The Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance** Biometric State. 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