

The book has indeed made an impressive contribution to research on media analysis and literature in the context of development democracy in Africa, and giving the general dearth of literature in Africa on the nation-media interface, it makes a significant contribution to literature in this field. Although not particularly easy to read due to its language complexity and also because of the author's philosophical tones and numerous theoretical quotations, it is a brilliant combination of the analysis of political history and the mass media in pre- and post-colonial Nigeria. The book will be suitable as resource material for students, scholars and practitioners of political science, history, mass media and discourse analysis.

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**Naija Marxisms: Revolutionary Thought in Nigeria** by ADAM MAYER

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It is generally assumed that Marxist-inspired ideas and movements experienced significant decline in Nigeria by the early 1990s as a result of the debilitating political, social and economic effects of the neoliberal policies that were introduced in 1986 and the repressive military regimes of Presidents Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha. In this book, Adam Mayer conducts a history of socialist and leftist thought in Nigeria and argues that thinkers and activists influenced by Marxist ideas have provided radical critiques and analyses of Nigeria's politics, economy and society, while consistently championing opposition to conservative policies enacted by the ruling class. Mayer notes that although the labour movement right from the colonial period constituted the most important arena for espousing Marxist-inspired ideas, Nigerian Marxisms 'as coherent schools of thought' went beyond the labour movement and flourished in intellectual circles in the universities, in newspapers, NGO sectors, and among various clandestine organisations (p. 16). Mayer concentrates on works that examine political, economic, feminist and historical theory while stating that the analysis of Marxist-inspired literary works is a task that can be better conducted by a literary critic.

Although there are works that have examined aspects of the leftist movement in Nigeria, especially the labour movement, this book is the first to conduct an elaborate study of Marxist-inspired works by Nigerian authors. This is therefore a significant study that contributes to filling an important lacuna especially in view of the influential but understudied roles that leftist and Marxist-inspired ideas have played in the analyses of Nigeria's political economy and in fostering activism against repressive and oppressive policies. Mayer undertook a challenging task given the fact that many Marxist-inspired works were not published by mainstream publishers and therefore not readily available in libraries and other repositories. The diligent research that Mayer conducted to access these works is commendable and helps to enrich the analyses by focusing on specific themes and the thoughts of selected individuals such as radical, militant and leftist leaning trade unions, progressive feminists, grassroots revolutionary organisations, socialist leaning

political parties, student radicalists and the robust Marxian currents in Nigerian universities, as well as case studies of some of the country's most influential Marxist thinkers. This approach enables Mayer to comprehensively examine revolutionary thought in Nigeria.

The strength of this book notwithstanding, it has a number of shortcomings. Although the author states that he intentionally made his definition of Marxism to be broad and inclusive (p. 18), a clear conceptualisation of his broad notion of Marxism and its various strands such as Trotskyism and Maoism would have made comprehending some of the arguments easier for readers not familiar with Marxian theories. The discussion of 'The Nigerian Condition' in Chapter 2 (pp. 19–24), is the weakest aspect of the book and rather perplexing for a book devoted to revolutionary Marxist thought in Nigeria. Relying on the dominant conservative and neo-Weberian-inspired Afropessimistic analysis of Africa's political economy, the author makes unsubstantiated and exaggerated claims. For instance he states that '(R)ich Nigerians most often have to take their property's title deeds to their London lawyers because they cannot trust a Nigerian law firm ... [and that this] is also true for the title deeds of a run-down 40-year-old Peugeot' (p. 20). He equally wrongly claims that many of the medical doctors practicing in Nigeria 'bought their diplomas in the diploma mills of the country' (p. 21). It should also be pointed out that Kunle Adepeju was shot dead by Gowon's men and not Obasanjo's men as claimed by the author (pp. 69–70). Although the book fairly comprehensively examines the ideas of Yusufu Bala Usman, a glaring omission of the study is the failure to comprehensively examine the radical and Marxist-inspired Zaria School of History, which was nurtured by Usman, and two Tanzanian scholars, Arnold Temu and Bonaventure Swai, and which was in the forefront of Marxist discourse and the production of Marxist-inspired works as embodied by Master's theses, Doctoral dissertations and various published works from the 1970s to the early 1990s. In spite of these limitations, this book is a significant contribution to the study of Marxist-inspired thought and activism in Nigeria and provides a road-map for future studies of Nigerian Marxisms.

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**Living by the Gun in Chad** by MARIELLE DEBOS (translated by ANDREW BROWN)  
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Marielle Debos has written something rare: an academic page-turner about Chad. She intrigues us with basic questions and suggests theoretical answers by telling a down-to-earth story about daily life of Chad's 'men in arms'. *Living by the Gun in Chad* is an indispensable book for all African scholars, with or without a special interest in Chad.

*Living by the Gun in Chad* is an updated translation of her 2013 book *Le métier des armes au Tchad* (Paris: Karthala). How Chad's small men in arms managed and reflected upon their lives in the first decade of the millennium is the empirical focus in the book. However, material both prior to 2000 and after 2010 has