

French official cultural networks rather than through commercial arrangements. Certainly, given the relatively small number of films produced and the absence of local film industries, it is impossible to talk of anything like a 'national cinema' anywhere in Africa outside of Egypt.

The remainder of the book is largely given over to a generational categorization of African film production, which consists of a very rich country-by-country, director-by-director, film-by-film survey. Film studies scholars will be better equipped than historians to evaluate Armes's taxonomy, but anyone interested in the subject will find these chapters a very useful guide to the most important work that has been done by African filmmakers (a listing of key films and perhaps some information on access to them would have been helpful). The final brief chapters look at the work of five important younger directors, among them Dani Kouyaté from Burkina Faso. Well known for his first feature, *Keïta!* (1994), Kouyaté has most recently produced, on high-definition video, a pulsating account of life in Ouagadougou, *Ouaga Saga* (2004). One of the film's protagonists, Sherif, dreams of the cinema and he attends a showing of Howard Hawks's classic 1959 western, *Rio Bravo*, at the beginning of the movie. With *Ouaga Saga* and with this gesture, Kouyaté raises some critical questions that Armes might have addressed, notably the relationship between African films and the American movies that have long been popular among African audiences, and the implications of the availability of new media technologies like video for shaping the future direction of African film production.

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## THE FATE OF BLACKS IN NAZI GERMANY

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*Des victimes oubliées du nazisme. Les Noirs et l'Allemagne dans la première moitié du XXe siècle.* By CATHERINE COQUERY-VIDROVITCH. Paris: le cherche midi, 2007.

Pp. 196. €15, paperback (ISBN 978-2-7491-0630-4).

KEY WORDS: African diaspora, biography, race/racism, violence.

This book provides a survey of the history of blacks from late Wilhelmine Germany to Nazism. It starts with a brief mention of black intellectual life in pre-1914 Germany and then discusses the various racist aspects of that period, such as the genocide of the Herero and Nama in German Southwest Africa, the development of racialized eugenics and the practice of presenting African village life in zoos. The book gives short shrift to the German encounter with black soldiers in the First World War but dwells extensively on the distorting campaign against the colored soldiers of the French army in the occupied regions of Germany after the war (the so-called 'Black Horror'). Next, the author traces the place of anti-black racism in Nazism, discusses the sterilization of mixed-race children, and examines the difficulties of everyday life for blacks and mixed-race people in Nazi Germany. In this section, the book largely follows the well-known autobiography of Hans Massaquoi. The author points out that the film industry, always in need of blacks for films about colonial adventures, provided a safe haven for some blacks in Nazi Germany. The book also covers the success of black athletes at the Berlin Olympics of 1936, which embarrassed the Nazi regime, and presents various efforts of the regime to repress jazz and other art forms closely associated with blacks. The anti-black policies of Nazi Germany, however, were

mitigated by the regime's effort to depict Germany as a 'good' colonial power worthy of getting back its former African colonies – and maybe more territories. In the chapter on the Second World War, the author mentions the massacres of captured black French soldiers in 1940, abuses suffered by blacks in German POW camps and the presence of blacks in concentration camps and death camps.

Throughout the book, the author commendably distinguishes between the fate suffered by Jews and Gypsies in Nazi Germany and the fate of blacks. Policies against blacks caused much suffering but were not genocidal in nature, and blacks had much better chances of surviving than Jews or Gypsies. The author also makes it clear that those blacks who ended up in concentration camps or in death camps went there because of resistance activities, not because of their skin color. Finally, the book points out that the anti-black racism visible in Germany was common in other countries as well.

The book has important weaknesses, however. It is written by a specialist on Africa, not by a historian of Germany, and it contains an irritating number of errors and distortions. To name only a few: instead of the Rhineland Occupation, which triggered the 'Black Horror' campaign, the author repeatedly speaks of the occupation of the Saar (pp. 7, 42–3); Hindenburg was not chancellor of Germany, but president (p. 18); the massacres by the German army in Southwest Africa did not go unopposed by the German parliament (p. 37); the Nazis did not plan to sterilize the 'entire black race' but only the mixed-race children in Germany (p. 77); Hitler was not *elected* chancellor (p. 101); blacks were not the first victims among the POWs in the Second World War (p. 143) – Polish soldiers had suffered abuses already in the fall of 1939; it is not true that half of all French colonial soldiers were killed or missing in action during the 'Phony War' (p. 153); the allegedly ruthless orders issued regarding black POWs in 1940 came not from the famous General Heinz Guderian but from his chief of staff Walther Nehring, and they merely called for strict guarding of black prisoners (p. 153). In addition, English and German names are frequently misspelled in the main text and in the footnotes.

The author draws extensively on the current literature in French and English but is not familiar with important works on this topic in German.<sup>1</sup> The book provides a fine introduction to the theme of blacks under Nazism to French readers, but it does not reflect any new archival research and offers little to readers already familiar with the broader outlines of the topic.

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## A SOURCE BOOK FOR GAMBIAN ELECTIONS

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*A Political History of the Gambia 1816–1994*. By ARNOLD HUGHES and DAVID PERFECT. Rochester NY: University of Rochester Press, 2006. Pp. xviii + 530. £50/\$90 (ISBN 1-58046-230-8).

KEY WORDS: Gambia, elections, elites, national, politics/political.

This book has been rumoured to be in the offing for many years. The fact that it has finally appeared will be welcome news to the small band of scholars interested

<sup>1</sup> For example: Peter Martin and Christine Alonzo (eds.), *Zwischen Charleston und Stechschritt: Schwarze im Nationalsozialismus* (Hamburg, 2004), and Rheinisches Journalistinnenbüro, *'Unsere Opfer zählen nicht': Die Dritte Welt im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 2005).