

So is the two-part discussion of ethnicity (interestingly, Green and Kohl disagree over the reality of the Guinea/Cape-Verdean divide around the 1980 coup). Taken together, these texts give an interesting picture, which Green does a good job of bringing forth in his introduction where he describes the country's bizarre mix of permanent crisis and relative peacefulness and rightly notes the state is an irrelevance to most Guinean citizens. And Green is certainly right to analyse the state's low-legitimacy neopatrimonial functioning as inscribed in 'structural economic inequalities on the global stage' (p. 8).

Unfortunately, the chapters are unequally grounded in recent fieldwork. Some are summaries of previously published work, sometimes dated. This is particularly problematic where the discussion tackles the more controversial, hard to approach, immediate topics – the army, international relations, party politics, political economy and drug trafficking. On these aspects, analyses can be confused and confusing (and occasionally mistaken), often falling back on the dominant narrative. Ceesay, for instance, while noting (correctly) that drugs trafficking is a regional issue, seems to lay the blame squarely on Guinea-Bissau. His description of the Gambia as a virtuous player in regional politics fails to convince – it was in the Gambia, after all, that Guinean Admiral-cum-drugs-trafficker Bubo na Tchuto took refuge after his 2008 coup attempt. Given the paucity of solid information, can one say, as Green does, that the drugs trade is the country's 'major resource' (p. 231)? On drugs, no chapter in the book comes near the careful and informed thoughtfulness of Shaw's article published in this journal last year. Several chapters tend to make the military the *deus ex machina* while what is remarkable is in fact how shy the Guinean military have long been at exerting power. In a way, the book stops at the study of Bissau's real powerhouses: the shifting coalitions of officials, politicians, businessmen and officers (and their occasional foreign backers, states or companies) whose moves have made the game in the city of Bissau for decades, threatening to stifle the whole country.

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Histoire de l'Agence française de développement en Côte d'Ivoire, by FRANÇOIS PACQUEMENT

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This is a rich and original historical account of the operational activities of the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD), now France's main aid agency, in the former French colony of Côte d'Ivoire. The introduction sets out the book's main aim, namely to 'bring together the elements required for a better understanding' of AFD work overseas (p. 19). It then explains how this objective is to be achieved, specifically through archival research in Côte d'Ivoire and Paris, as well as extended interviews with expatriate and local AFD staff.

The main text itself is chronological and broken down into two parts. The first focuses on the emergence of a modern Ivoirian state and a formal French aid programme. Chapter 2 shows how the first colonial bank arose out of the

need to compensate slave owners following the 1848 Abolition Decree and how the *Banque de l'Afrique Occidentale* subsequently helped France to enhance the 'productive value' of its African colonies. Chapter 3 traces the origins of the AFD back to London where the *Caisse Centrale de la France Libre* was born in 1941. It also identifies the April 1946 Law as the legislative basis on which post-war French economic assistance to Africa was subsequently built. The next chapter looks at the early post-colonial period (1960–78) during which the AFD funded investment projects and was associated with the 'Ivorian miracle', which saw annual economic growth of 7%, fuelled by strong commodity prices.

The second part focuses on the normalisation of the AFD's role alongside other donors. Chapters 5 and 6 home in on the introduction of World Bank-led structural adjustment and political conditionality in the 1980s and 1990s. They reveal how these approaches swept aside the AFD's earlier practices and placed the agency at odds with the Bank on market liberalisation. Chapter 7 explains the post-2002 crisis facing this war-torn West African country, while Chapter 8 looks at the resumption of development work and the re-emergence of France as the lead donor thanks to its huge debt-refinancing programme, the C2D. It ends by labelling the AFD the 'doyen' of development banks (p. 208) and attributing its longevity to its adaptability and its refusal to engage in clientelistic relations with African leaders, as per the so-called *Françafrique*.

This study has many strengths. First, it provides a long-run field-based analysis, which brings out the real-life challenges of working for an overseas development agency. In so doing, it reminds us that aid policy is 'about interactions between people' engaged in 'a common adventure' (p. 153). These individuals include unsung heroes such as the AFD's Joseph Flom, who devoted his career to the provision of affordable housing, and Yves Roland-Billecart, who acted behind-the-scenes to save *Air Afrique* from bankruptcy. Second, this study sheds new light on little-known AFD subsidiaries, such as CREDICODI, EECI and CAISTAB, which were active, respectively, in urban housing, electricity provision and commodity price stabilisation. A third highlight is the wide-ranging use of authentic materials such as photographs, oral testimonies, legislative extracts and explanatory text boxes, many of which offer potentially valuable teaching and training tools.

Written by the head of the AFD's history department, this study is inevitably practice-oriented and dispenses with the kind of detailed literature review and conceptual framework that are now de rigueur in academic monographs. While these omissions make sense, it is harder to justify the absence of a more systematic evaluation of French aid effectiveness. The book would no doubt have benefited from a more critical approach towards the failures of French aid policy, not least the misguided CIMA regional concrete project of the mid-1970s, and the excessive use of debt-generating structural adjustment loans in the 1990s. These quibbles aside, this is an important study, which shows the value of retaining in-house expertise rather than relying, as the British government often does, on retiring senior officials to fill the historical gaps (see, for example Barrie Ireton's *A History of DFID and Overseas Aid*, 2013). It will be of value to Africanists, aid practitioners, historians and anyone looking to carve out a career in international development.

REFERENCE

Ireton, B. 2013. *Britain's International Development Policies: a history of DFID and overseas aid*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

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The Petro-Developmental State in Africa: Making Oil Work in Angola, Nigeria and the Gulf of Guinea by JESSE SALAH OVADIA

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In *The Petro-Developmental State* Jesse Salah Ovadia offers a fascinating account of how oil-rich countries in the Gulf of Guinea are making strategic attempts at creating state-centred capitalist development. Based on extensive fieldwork in the Gulf of Guinea, particularly in Nigeria and Angola – the two top oil producers in Africa – Ovadia argues compellingly that there exists a new moment of opportunities for the establishment and institutionalisation of state-led development and capitalist transformation through local content policies. This new moment has the capacity to restructure how states in Sub-Saharan Africa create state-led development that works and functions within the global capitalist system. Such a developmental state would produce a new set of elite whose interest might be tied to creating a real capitalist state that functions properly within the international capitalist system. This is a fascinating and refreshing argument that shifts our attention away from the resource curse argument that has dominated much of academic literature for years. Seeking an alternative in policies that would lead to ‘real capitalist economic development instead of the further underdevelopment brought about by peripheral capitalism’ (p. 11), *The Petro-Developmental State* ‘is intended to capture the possibilities and historical specificity of the current moment for oil extraction in the Gulf of Guinea’ (p. 14). The current moment is defined by the local and national content policies recently put in place by the governments of Angola and Nigeria. These policies – local content and national content – are aimed at creating a new class of elite that moves away from primitive accumulation to creating a new form of capitalist development that can kick-start an industrialisation process that dramatically transforms the economies of these countries. If the local and national content policies are well managed by the governments of Angola and Nigeria, Ovadia argues, oil and gas can be at the centre of this new form of industrialisation.

Local and national content represents a policy shift towards a new form of elite accumulation that is aimed at moulding capitalist development. Local and national content is envisaged as a form of deliberative development that is shaped by elite accumulation with a duality of purpose. First, it may have the mechanism for elite accumulation with a wider and more transformative political and economic strategy such that it can replace the rentier economy with a functional real capitalist economy (p. 95). Second, the rentier economy can be replaced because local content would aid the formation of