

Republic (from 1964 until 1972) within the ruling party that led to a breakaway from UNIP by the United Progressive Party (UPP). He argues that the declaration of a one-party state was a response to this split. Chapter Three describes the disunity under the one party state in the 1970s. Any state would have struggled under the particular economic strain the Zambian state suffered after the collapse of the world market price for copper, however Larmer emphasises that the forces of opposition were not new, but could be traced to the First Republic.

The author focuses on two particular events of well-articulated political opposition. Chapter Four tells the story of the relatively unknown armed opposition called the Mushala Rebellion, unfolding between the mid-1970s and the early 1980s. The chapter gives an account of the rebellion, which was unsuccessful and lacked a programme for political change, yet Larmer argues that it should be understood as 'a distinctive and significant element of wider opposition' (p. 155). The rebellion showed that the one-party state was not fully entrenched in the Northern Western Region, revealing that UNIP's claim to be speaking on behalf of all Zambian peoples was evidently not true. It is not clear how this particular rebellion 'paved the way for the pro-democracy movement of 1991' (p. 132). In Chapter Five, Larmer focuses on the unsuccessful coup attempt in 1980, which he says was indicative of the growing discontent among intellectuals. In Chapter Six and Seven the grip of chronology is loosened. Larmer first reviews the stance of the Zambian state towards Apartheid in South Africa, which he argues was more pragmatically than ideologically motivated. An assessment of the importance of civil society is offered in Chapter Seven.

The substantial contribution of this book is its use of the UNIP party archives (available since 2004) which are complemented by interviews and the biographies of central political actors. The book offers a cogent history of opposition in Zambia from the late 1960s to the beginning of the 1990s. It does not quite live up to the full title, however, as the comparative issues raised in the introduction, epilogue, and conclusion would require further expansion throughout the chapters to really offer a full historical reappraisal of African politics, but this is a very stimulating and promising start.

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MORALITY AND MEDIA IN MALAWI

doi:10.1017/S0021853712000606

Human Rights and African Airwaves: Mediating Equality on the Chichewa Radio. By HARRI ENGLUND. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011. Pp. x+294. \$70, hardback (ISBN 978-0-253-35677-2); \$28, paperback (ISBN 978-0-253-22347-0).

KEY WORDS: Malawi, human rights, inequality, media.

Witches flying in aircrafts, women lying on graveyard tombs, giant rats with charms around their necks—these are just some of the stories broadcast by the popular Chichewa-language radio program *Nkhani Zam'mabona* (News from the Districts) in Malawi. Rather than dismiss these accounts as bizarre fantasies concocted to attract gullible listeners, Harri Englund takes them seriously as commentaries on the injustice, corruption, and inequality experienced by poor Malawians. In *Human Rights and African Airwaves*, he analyzes the production,

content, reception, and circulation of these and other stories from the program. Englund argues that these stories – submitted by listeners, revised by editors, heard and debated by thousands of men and women throughout the country in the local language of Chichewa – provide alternative ways of expressing claims and expectations in the context of the liberal but still authoritarian state of Malawi and the continued dominance of human rights approaches to equality. The book draws on 18 months of fieldwork from 2003 to 2008, including interviews and participant observation with listeners and radio-station editors.

Following a brief introduction, the book is divided into three sections. Chapters in the first section provide a brief history of radio broadcasting in Malawi and position the study in terms of its critiques and contributions to anthropological debates about equality, human rights, language, media, and witchcraft. The second section explores the contents and production of the program, examining recurring topics and the editorial process of selecting, shaping, and verifying stories. The final section considers the program's popular reception and impact, as well as its critics – primarily born-again Christians. Englund is an engaging and crisp writer, combining anecdotes, observations, stories, and interview excerpts with critical assessments of anthropological and philosophical discussions of human rights, language, media, alterity, witchcraft, liberalism, and justice, to name just a few. Englund is well-read and the theoretical sections are smart, but their sheer number, length, and density derail the narrative at times.

Nonetheless, Englund has written a provocative and compelling book, which, like his earlier award-winning study, *Prisoners of Freedom: Human Rights and the African Poor* (California, 2006), uses the methodological and theoretical power of ethnography to challenge easy accolades about the inherent value of the ideas and practice of human rights. As Englund demonstrated in *Prisoners of Freedom*, the language of human rights deployed by NGOs and elite activists often has little resonance in the daily lives and experiences of poor Malawians. Instead, the dominance of human rights assumptions about freedom and rights often undermine rather than promote struggles against poverty and injustice because of their failure to address the structural conditions that produce impoverishment.

Human Rights and African Airwaves provides an important complement to that work, exploring how 'storytelling that addressed moral and existential quandaries in everyday experience presented a popular alternative to the human rights talk that had become ubiquitous after the democratic transition' (p. 47). Despite often bizarre details or unique circumstances, these radio stories do resonate with poor Malawians, providing a platform for them to express their frustrations, grievances, and reflections about corruption, abuse, and injustice. Englund argues that the language, idioms, metaphors, and assumptions of the accounts as broadcast on the radio, and then interpreted and debated by listeners (who often share stories of their own), convey an idea of equality premised on relationality, accountability, and mutual obligation between people, especially people in differential positions of power and authority. The powerful, in other words, have an obligation to protect and support the less powerful rather than just use their positions to abuse, exploit, and undermine the poor. The claims of the poor on the powerful because of these relationships produce a more potent and efficacious sense of justice than the limp promises of rights.

Human Rights and African Airwaves is a must read for students and scholars of Africa, human rights, and media studies. While some might challenge Englund's arguments about equality and his critiques of human rights, everyone will learn from the evocative ethnographic accounts of the moral lives and dilemmas of poor Malawians. At its best, the book is a fierce, grounded commentary – through the lens of a radio program – of the rich imaginations, powerful insights, and wry

critiques of everyday Malawians as they try to live their lives as moral beings in the face of poverty, corruption, and injustice.

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BIOGRAPHY AS HISTORY IN THE NORTHERN CAPE

doi:10.1017/S0021853712000618

Luka Jantjie: Resistance Hero of the South African Frontier. By KEVIN SHILLINGTON. London: Aldridge Press, 2011. Pp. xiv + 306. \$85, hardback (ISBN 978-0230338531).

KEY WORDS: South Africa, land tenure, resistance.

Kevin Shillington has long labored in the dry lands of the Northern Cape, producing, alongside other more scholarly works, texts accessible to broad audiences. In *Luka Jantjie* he returns to research begun more than two decades ago to explore the life history of a man who came of age in the tumultuous years of South Africa's mineral revolution. Born to a chiefly family in the 1830s when the Northern Cape was just coming within the orbit of missionaries and an expanding British empire, Jantjie became an early example of what Shillington describes as a modern man: a literate pioneer convert with a keen business acumen and an astute understanding of South Africa's rapidly changing economic and political world.

That world ultimately defeated Jantjie and his people. By hook or by crook, colonists acquired large amounts of land. The Kimberly diamond mines offered as many dangers as opportunities. Aggressive British and Boer expansion set new, narrower parameters within which leaders like Jantjie could maneuver. Violent conflict soon seemed inevitable. In the closing years of the nineteenth century, Jantjie took up his Winchester rifle. Within months Jantjie was dead, shot to the chest; he was then decapitated and his head boiled in a vat of water to become a war trophy.

This, then, is Shillington's narrative arc: the rise and demise of an African man in an industrializing South Africa. It is also the story of a closing frontier. The early chapters covering Jantjie's birth and coming of age describe a world fraught with danger, but also one of change and possibility as new people moved into the northern Cape and as the region entered the orbit of expanding colonial societies: British, Boer, and Griqua. Missionaries such as Robert Moffat played an important role in introducing not just Christianity but also ideas about clothing and personhood and technologies such as printing and irrigation. Shillington demonstrates how the world the missionaries and their converts made led to new sensibilities and possibilities just as the age of liberal empire was about to be eclipsed by one of jingoistic nationalism and racial intolerance.

The bulk of *Luka Jantjie* concentrates on the three decades from the opening of the diamond fields to Jantjie's death. Many of the issues discussed are well known to specialists: industrial demands on labor and resources such as wood and food, the fractious relationships among British, Boer, and Griqua, and the steady expansion of empire from the Cape Colony. More interesting is Shillington's exploration of the complex reworking of Batlhaping politics as Jantjie made claims to authority, land, and resources and emerged as a powerful chief (*kgosi*). Here Shillington's research shines as he offers the reader a sense of Jantjie grappling with the challenges facing him and his people.

Shifting alliances and rising conflict marked the years following the 1881 Pretoria Convention that ended British-Transvaal conflict and recognized (again) the