

should be read by anyone who wants to learn how to write well about politics and history, especially scholars and students relying on documentary evidence. *From the Pit to the Market* is the culmination of a quality endeavour, but with sharper writing and analysis, guided by cold-eyed editing, it could have been better. Students and scholars interested in the politics of Sierra Leone or the politics of the diamond industry should read the book, but it could have had, and should have had, a bigger audience. While *From the Pit to the Market* is flawed in a way that *South Africa's Gold Mines* is not, these very flaws create opportunities to discuss key social science issues such as why some forms of evidence are created and endure, and how inherent limitations in conceptual frameworks (such as the notion that African politics is still largely about Africans and Westerners) can hinder recognition of change.

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JUBILEE IN QUESTION

50 Jahre Unabhängigkeit in Afrika: Kontinuitäten, Brüche, Perspektiven.

Edited by Thomas Bierschenk and Eva Spies.

Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe, 2012. Pp. 572. €58, paperback (ISBN 978-3-89645-829-2).

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Key Words: Colonialism, decolonization, nation-states.

The fiftieth anniversary of independence celebrated in many countries in 2010 led to a spate of publications that attempted to draw up a balance sheet on the significance of the transition that operated in or around 'Africa's Year'—1960. This is a tall order by any standards, as a thorough understanding would, in principle, require a longitudinal analysis of broad historical developments stretching over several decades—both before and after the year that was purported to constitute that 'rupture'. This book, published under the auspices of the Institute for Ethnology and African Studies in Mainz, one of Germany's principal centers in the field, pursues this question by looking at trends and developments since that 'constitutive' date in the entire range of human endeavor. Four parts treat broad societal developments; issues of nation and nation building; aspects of political economy; and various cultural dimensions (media, literature, film, music). A fifth and more explorative part looks at current and possible future trends. Written in German, each chapter is followed by an English summary and extensive bibliography.

Treatment of the significance of the onset of the independence era is rather uneven, depending, amongst other things, on the field of human activity through which the several authors were asked to pursue this meta question. For example, a chapter on media is squarely focused on issues that arose after 1990, cramming historical developments of the three preceding decades (and the entire colonial period) into a mere three pages. Is there not more to be said about media and the press during the era of one-party rule?

More broadly, the volume suffers somewhat from the lack of historical analysis of the era preceding independence. While it does not contain an overall concluding chapter, nor an index, the editors' introductory chapter draws together the many threads that are woven into this volume. It argues, on the line of Frederick Cooper's 2008 article, that 1960 was, in retrospect, not such a milestone as many thought – or hoped – it would be; that many of the changes, which at this juncture culminated into formal independent statehood, had their roots in a broad transition process that began to manifest itself very clearly at the end of the Second World War; and that, by contrast, it is the late 1940s and 1990 that constitute the true turning points in the recent history of Africa. If 1960 owed its significance to an external perspective and one that focused unduly on the role played by elites, this volume nevertheless could be a good textbook for undergraduates studying Africa's political and socioeconomic developments since 1960. In that sense it is regrettable that it was conceived in German. The best chapters are by Thomas Bierschenk, who presents a very subtle analysis of the complexities of African bureaucracies, based on years of anthropological research; Paul Nugent, who interestingly ponders the idea of national identity through food and drink culture; and Carola Lentz, who analyses the different ways that African states celebrated their fiftieth anniversary of independence, an original contribution based on the work of doctoral students.

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MISSIONARY AS PLAGIARIST

David Griffiths and the Missionary 'History of Madagascar'.

By Gwyn Campbell.

Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2012. Pp. xxii + 1177. \$318,00/€232,00, hardback (ISBN 9789004209800).

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Key Words: Madagascar, missions, text editions.

In his ambitious and meticulously documented *David Griffiths and the Missionary 'History of Madagascar'*, Gwyn Campbell, the noted religious and economic historian of Madagascar, connects the micro-politics of nineteenth-century European missionaries working with the London Missionary Society (LMS) in Madagascar with the larger dynamics of shifting global power struggles including European imperialism and religious persecution. The result is a sweeping narrative that will be of interest to scholars across the fields of history, anthropology, Malagasy studies, and religious studies.

This 1000-page volume may be considered three books in one. In the first section, Campbell presents his main analytical argument, asking the seemingly straightforward question: How did the famed English missionary figure, the Rev. Stephen Ellis, come to claim credit for a seminal work on Madagascar missionary history published in 1938, when he was involved only as an editor, drew exclusively from the accounts of other