

sketching an in-depth and detailed picture of the complexities surrounding definitions of the 'local' in the Zimbabwean context. Chapter 2 charts the development of film and television in Zimbabwe from independence in 1980 until the 2001 Broadcasting Services Act, and includes developments such as the use of the country as a location for foreign filmmaking, and the problems of donors pushing didactic films and development agendas within the context of post-independence optimism, nation building, and attempts to democratize language and access. Chapter 3 deals with authorship and identities, in attempting to understand what makes a film 'local'. Thompson rightly and convincingly argues that a film's identity cannot be inferred from the identity of its author, but rather that a cinematic work's identity is constructed through the 'authorship' of viewers who produce their own interpretations of the film's story. Chapter 4 deals with the presence and influence of foreign cinematic texts in Zimbabwe. Thompson argues that, notwithstanding cultural imperialism, Zimbabweans are active agents who enjoy imported programming and use it to interpret their own culture and identities in unintended ways. In Chapter 5, Thompson critiques the Broadcasting Services Act of 2001, demonstrating through an against-the-grain reading that liberalization was not, as superficially presented, the goal of the act, but rather that the act created legal mechanisms for the state to consolidate its monopoly over broadcasting, and that its local content requirements oversimplify Zimbabwean identities in its language policy. Expanding on the issue of language, Chapter 6 outlines its potential as a form of social change in Zimbabwean screen media, arguing for the necessity of a democratic multilingualism that moves beyond the use of English as colonial hangover and domain of the highly educated elites.

The concluding chapter presents possibilities for democratic change through a focus on the recent past, revisiting the country's cinematic arts a decade after the author's fieldwork ended in 2001. This decade-long gap in the author's research, which is accounted for only in the final chapter, is one of the drawbacks of the book, but it also paves the way for further studies on contemporary Zimbabwean film and television. Thompson lists a large number of films and television programmes, and interviews with film directors and other cultural practitioners. These references constitute a catalogue of Zimbabwean screen media, which is one of the strengths of the book and will undoubtedly be useful for future researchers.

Thompson's meticulous focus on the complexities of Zimbabwean identities and screen representations, and her attention to audiences from different linguistic groups and classes, presents a highly detailed and multilayered analysis of the history of Zimbabwean cinematic arts. I recommend the book as fully deserving a place among the corpus of studies on postcolonial and indigenous African film and media.

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PETER J. BLOOM, STEPHAN F. MIESCHER and TAKYIWAA MANUH, editors,  
*Modernization as Spectacle in Africa*. Bloomington and Indianapolis IN:  
Indiana University Press (hb \$85–978 0 253 01225 8; pb \$35–978 0 253  
01229 6). 2014, 368 pp.

This is a varied collection of fifteen sole-authored chapters on modernization as spectacle, an area that has attracted little research to date. The first of the

book's five sections, 'Modernization and the origins of the package', explores the epistemology of African 'modernization' theoretically by exploring the writings of earlier African development planners, including Apter, Lewis, Rostow and Wallerstein. Apter's viewpoint is revisited by his son, whose access to his father's memoirs gives a particularly revealing analysis. Hintzen's chapter offers a contemporary analysis of African development, engaging with figures who have defined Africa's place in contemporary development narratives. This part of the collection is very enlightening – theory heavy but well-referenced.

'Media, modernity, and modernization' is the most developed section, but is poorly linked to the others. Its focus is on the broadcasting efforts of the colonial and early postcolonial producers and 'propaganda-ists' of West Africa, with contributions from Southern and East Africa. Disappointingly, several chapters repeat the same analyses of the Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment (BEKE) project and British Colonial Film Unit.

'Infrastructure and effects' produces contrasting analyses of dams and mining projects. However, the diverse focus of the contributing authors means that the chapters read more as a collection of interesting pieces on a general theme. Tischler's and Miescher's essays on the Kariba and Akosombo dams respectively would have benefited from using a similar comparative analytical lens, and using this to examine different modernization narratives of other projects taking place at a similar time. Hecht's essay on Gabonese uranium mining, however, stands out in both its subject matter and its detailed analysis of an aspect of mining rarely covered in research from an 'off-the-radar' country, presenting a welcome analysis of a hitherto unknown project and its local long-term effects.

'Institutional training in Nkrumah's Ghana' focuses on a number of Ghana-specific incidents in the 'modernization' narrative. The foundation of the Ghana Institute of African Studies and the life and activities of Accra Gliding Club's founder are both self-referential narratives about Ghanaian institutions that could have benefited from contextual comparison with other British West African institutions, such as the African Studies Centres inaugurated in Nigeria within the same period, and even CODESRIA's later formation. Similarly, the Gliding Club's 'white elephant' history could have had more contextual and situational significance had it been contrasted with the '*ballon*' house project on the book's cover.

In 'The African personality dances highlife', Plageman focuses on the Ghanaian music industry's push towards an 'indigenization' of music and display that was not dissimilar to 'Africanization' movements in Nigeria, the Congo and elsewhere at the same time. What was the general experience of this ideological 'turn' in the West African region in particular, and what legacy is left to us today? Arguably, Fela's Nigeria-originated Afrobeat 'movement' had its roots in its radical response to this first wave of state-mediated musical media reform.

'Modernization and the literary imagination', the final section of the book, had the most potential. Mbowa's and Wilson-Tagoe's textual-historical analyses of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and contemporary African literature are informative but do not challenge existing texts. McMahon's 'Theater and the politics of display', however, offers a brilliant analysis of a play little known outside francophone Africa, and an insight into the 1966 First World Festival of Negro Arts in Senegal. Unfortunately, McMahon does not compare Senegal 1966 with the later Nigerian FESTAC 77, as arguably the spectacle of the latter was a hyper-attenuation of the earlier event in Senegal.

Most disappointing is the lack of an editorial conclusion to the volume, which might have attempted to draw out the connected narratives and also the volume's

gaps and lapses. This made the book feel more like a loose collection of readings on a broad, occasionally literally interpreted theme. Part of the issue seems to be the linguistic and regional ghettoization of Africa. The book relies heavily on Ghanaian researchers associated with the Centre of African Studies. Their work dominates the debate on modernization, with other contributors' chapters being loosely fitted into the collection.

Given the book's focus on modernity, it is also curious to see little reference to the everyday buildings that heralded modernization. In Ghana, these included the school buildings project, which signalled the upgrading of hundreds of primary and secondary schools, and the building of new educational institutions across Ghana. Indeed, the University of Science and Technology at Kumasi's foundation and campus architecture were symbolic contributions to this new-built modernity. The Akosombo and Kariba dam infrastructure projects make up for this partially, although technical infrastructure played a different role in the spectacle of modernization.

The isolation of many contributions to this volume is unfortunate, as there are several instances – such as the dam projects, radio broadcasting, and indeed music – where more comparisons and interweaving of narratives would have greatly strengthened the book and probably widened its appeal. This is particularly true with regard to francophone Africa and its encounter with modernity, which could have been better explored, as the two sole francophone research contributions, as discussed, demonstrate this wider relevance.

*Modernization as Spectacle in Africa* holds much potential in its ambition to explore themes that have had little research coverage in African studies. Unfortunately, it ultimately falls short of fulfilling this potential because of its lack of editorial control, leading to a failure to thread a consistent thematic narrative through its contributions or to deliver a conclusion. However, as a collection of essays on modernization-inspired themes in Africa, with a focus on Ghana, this is nonetheless a good read.

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AGNIESZKA KEDZIERSKA-MANZON, *Chasseurs Mandingues: violence, pouvoir et religion en Afrique de l'Ouest*. Paris: Editions Karthala (pb €28 – 978 2 8111 1150 2). 2014, DVD + 256 pp.

The book begins with a reflexive section that places Kedzierska-Manzon in the field, commenting on ethics, aesthetics and human relationships, and introducing the topic of the book: the habitus and imaginaries of Mandé hunting practices. She examines hunters' political and ritual power as well as their physical and symbolic violence as actors on a micro and macro social level.

Kedzierska-Manzon's methodology is outlined in the introduction. The book is based on the author's doctoral thesis from 2006 and follows its structure. She conducted fieldwork for a total of fifteen months from 1995 to 2007 in northern Côte d'Ivoire, rural Guinea (Niagasola) and Mali (Narena and Bamako), where she was initiated into the hunters' brotherhood. She firmly places herself in the Mandé mindset as a researcher, which will potentially increase the hosts' power in local politics. Theoretically, the research is well grounded in Bourdieu's concept of habitus, Geertz and Turner's perspectives on ritual, and Taussig's understanding of mimesis. The author complements these anthropological