

the grand sweep of the two volumes lends itself to repetition, and a lack of definition of what, precisely, is being examined. A sharper conceptual focus and more robust editorial guidance and/or intervention would have improved the collection greatly, because in the end we are presented with lots of conflicts and not much sense of what it all means. 'Conflict' is defined in the broadest possible sense: this has the advantage of allowing the inclusion of a wider range of socio-political violence than might otherwise be the case, but has the drawback of effectively removing the possibility of making any larger point. Certainly, the two volumes might have been arranged differently, perhaps into 'types' of conflict: as it is, the first volume provides some examples of how certain wars start, and the second volume offers instances of how other types of conflict have been – or might be – resolved. In the study of African conflict, moreover, there is a trend toward tedious jargon: not only is African conflict and its resolution 'complex' – and we are told this so often that this reviewer wished someone would argue, just for once, that the causes of such-and-such a conflict are actually quite simple – but so too are the means by which some analysts lay out their theses.

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BENNO J. NDULU, STEPHEN A. O'CONNELL, ROBERT H. BATES, PAUL COLLIER and CHUKWUMA C. SOLUDO, *The Political Economy of Economic Growth in Africa 1960–2000*, Volume 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (hb £60 – 978 0 52187 848 7). 2008, xix+452 pp.

BENNO J. NDULO, STEPHEN A. O'CONNELL, JEAN-PAUL AZAM, ROBERT H. BATES, AUGUSTIN K. FOSU, JAN W. GUNNING and DOMINIQUE NIJINKEU, *The Political Economy of Economic Growth in Africa 1960–2000*, Volume 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (hb £95 – 978 0 52187 849 4). 2008, xl+1028 pp.

This monumental two-volume book on Africa's economic growth is an incredible resource both for social science and development economics. Very rarely does a publication achieve the balance of presenting hard econometric data and empirically rich case study. This publication undertakes this task, and its central conceptual structure is based on bridging a long-standing dichotomy in research on Africa between the social science and economics literature. Part one of Volume 1 rationalizes, justifies and focuses on the theoretical approach used in the analysis in the rest of the volume, and is written retrospectively based on extensive case studies of 26 African countries. The extensive research, based on work done by the African Economic Research Consortium, focuses on African economic growth, the syndromes resulting in economic decline, and the impacts of political-economy shifts in various contexts over a 40-year post-independence period. The rationale of the book is to draw out the patterns of growth or decline in African economies in this period, based on the countries' geopolitics and a classification of the syndromes that have caused decline. The diagnostic evaluation need not deter Africanist social scientists

who may initially suspect that here is another imagined Africa in need of a prognosis. Instead, the keen blend of a longitudinal base of growth data and historically rich political economy adds to a tempered, accurate picture of African economic growth.

Volume 1 begins by establishing the approach and then presents a classification of anti-growth syndromes that have had and continue to have a negative impact on the economic performance of African countries. The syndromes are state control (regulation), redistribution, inter-temporal strategies (political or policy decisions that have had adverse effects over time) and state breakdown. The four syndromes, together with 'syndrome free status' are mapped onto a timeline of African economic growth post-independence. In general, most countries were syndrome free, followed by a period of intense state control, and a protracted period of state breakdown. While the political economy case studies could relay this narrative convincingly enough, it seems that finding methodologically sound growth econometric indexes for the syndromes is the overarching aim of the first part of Volume 1. The second part matches the syndromes with the geographical status of countries (resource rich or poor, coastal and landlocked) relating these countries' economic growth to their propensity to overcome decline through their geopolitics. Nonetheless, the unanswered, though highlighted questions relate to the topic of state elites, patronage and endemic corruption, which surprisingly is not dealt with despite its prominence in the African political economy literature. One particularly interesting solution relates to the need for African economies to follow the common development path of Asia through labour-intensive manufacturing, an opportunity that many African countries missed out on.

Despite the successful overall achievement of the book, there are a few crucial oversights. South Africa, as the exceptional case in Africa because of its three-decade lag in independence, is not included in the case study section, despite examples of economic growth and development in South Africa used on various occasions throughout the book to justify particular claims about institutional governance and policy changes in other countries. Related to this is the glaring oversight regarding regional (economic) communities and the role of regional growth. Only cursory mention is made of the role of South Africa in Botswana (the golden example in African economic growth). The out-migration of Malawi's economic labour base is seen to be related to the lack of natural resources and its landlocked status rather than to South Africa's attraction of mine workers from surrounding countries. Little mention is made in Volume 2 of regional communities, particularly of the more successful Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the role of partnership arrangements that fundamentally shape economic growth in Africa, albeit inconsistently.

Volume 2, in particular, given the accessible alternative dissemination of the text through paperback and electronic versions, will prove to be a crucial text in African studies, and the study of political economies, development economics and development studies. The 40-year longitudinal study makes it an excellent repository for Africanist academics, and is an indispensable collection of African political economy case studies from a wide number of competent contributors (some of whom are policy advisers and economic development consultants). Many of the projected solutions to Africa's poor economic growth thus read as economic development consultancy, vague, yet challenging, but often obvious. For instance: the legacy of the anti-growth syndromes is seen to be the trap of corruption; there is the continuing

conundrum about whether the initial failures of states to secure growth are best met with accelerating success or are monuments of lost opportunities in the 1980s in need of salvage; merely avoiding syndromes, we learn, is not enough, and state provision of infrastructure and education are needed; greater growth opportunities, it is suggested, lie in exploiting a class of service exports and untapped natural resource wealth; autonomous governance will always be a wild card; and 'achieving growth in Africa is thus unlikely to be an easy matter for its societies' (p. 128). Surprisingly, the issue of ethnicities, power and state control is included in the general analysis in Volume 1 only so far as to highlight it as a crucial factor in African political economic growth, and to propose governance solutions through institutions such as NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism (however problematic these both are).

Volume 1 goes on to provide evidence from the case studies (Volume 2) of how the four anti-growth syndromes and geography have affected economic growth, both positively and negatively, dependent on political choice and (in)experienced political leadership. Benno Ndulu's chapter on the 'evolution of global development paradigms and their influence on African economic growth' is a particularly noteworthy chapter that links the ideological experience of the leaders of independent Africa with the first phases of economic growth policy, as is Paul Collier and Jan Willem Gunning's chapter on 'inter-temporal strategies and their implications for growth' that looks at public and private sector looting in autocratic and democratic regimes. A not-so-revolutionary finding, but new in terms of statistical modelling, is the direct link between policy and economic growth or decline. As such, the solutions, from a social science or political economy perspective, are not particularly groundbreaking, but nonetheless remain a timely re-intervention into current and topical African economic debates. The ultimate strength of the book, however, lies in the perceived authority of the developmental economist's approach in shaping economic growth policy in a neo-liberal context. Volume 1 is the econometric veneer on a richer, incredibly useful political economy literature in Volume 2 that, despite the unfortunate geographic classification of countries, contains a wealth of information for policy makers and advisers, government consultants, institutions concerned with economic growth in Africa, social scientists and Africanists.

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SITA ZOUGOURI, *Derrière la vitrine du développement: aménagement forestier et pouvoir local au Burkina Faso*. Uppsala Studies in Cultural Anthropology 44. Uppsala: Universitetsbiblioteket (pb-978 9 15547 261 0). 2008, xx+274 pp.

This book grapples with what is known to be a successful development project implemented in a number of villages in the south of Burkina Faso. The 'development window' dressed for outsiders displays a forestry scheme combining long-term conservation with wood production for urban areas and income generation for local actors. Sita Zougouri takes the reader along a fascinating journey to uncover the struggles hidden by, yet producing this window and the processes of inclusion and exclusion by which they are