

to hide his disdain for pro-Nazi Afrikaner intellectuals. Neither Malan nor Geyer was prepared to exchange South Africa's place in the British imperial framework for Nazi control.

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HERMANN GILIOMEER

Wagons of Smoke: An Informal History of the East African Railways and Harbours Administration 1948-1961. By ARTHUR F. BECKENHAM. London: Cadogan Publications, 1987. Pp. xvi + 405. £17, paperback.

This book belongs to a genre that is now rarely seen and not often lamented, the memoir of colonial service. Written by a veteran of railway work in the period 1950-62, it recounts the 'achievements' of the 'multi-racially staffed' (p. viii) EAR&H, although the achievements of its non-white members turn out to be anonymous and to consist mainly of loyalty. The book is a combination of personal reminiscence, anecdote, and description, including a great deal of information on the daily running of a complex railway and on the technical projects of the post-war era. Beckenham has compiled considerable data from annual reports and other official publications, and his book could save the researcher interested in, say, the growth of freight traffic from 1948-61 considerable slogging. His book, however, is no substitute for the careful analysis which the capital projects of the colonial era deserve, as does the developmentalist ideology in which such projects were shaped. As a late exemplar of a literary genre, this book has a difficult task to accomplish: the adventures of rationalizing the railway don't quite equal taming the man-eating lions of Tsavo.

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FREDERICK COOPER

Dialoguer avec le léopard? Pratiques, savoirs et actes du peuple face au politique en Afrique noire contemporaine. Sous la direction de B. JEWSIEWICKI et H. MONIOT. Paris: L'Harmattan; Québec: Editions SAFI, 1988. Pp. 439. No price given.

The leopard is a traditional symbol of power in central Africa. A dangerous animal, it nevertheless cannot overpower every other beast in the forest, and can be frustrated by the humble porcupine. The parable of the leopard and the porcupine inspires this collection of essays which, as the sub-title suggests, is devoted to a study of African politics 'from the bottom'. Its sixteen essays describe and analyse some popular responses to institutional power, and show the connexions between power and cultural and linguistic patterns.

Following an introduction (by Bogumil Jewsiewicki) and a short essay setting the volume in scholarly perspective (by Henri Moniot), the book is divided into five sections. The first deals with language, especially the impact of the definition and categorization of African languages and dialects by colonial scholars, and the effects of literacy on relations of power. The high point, for this reviewer, is a characteristically thoughtful essay by Françoise Raison-Jourde on the relation between language, power and writing over a period of a century and a half in Madagascar.

Part two concerns songs, considered as a dialogue between power and society. Particularly entertaining is a piece by Tshonga-Onyumba on songs by some of Zaïre's popular stars, renowned throughout Africa, and what they reveal to the scholar about Zaïrean society and public opinion. Other essays concern a song about the first African priest in the region of Kisangani (by Tshijuke Kabongo) and collections of popular songs which Mabilia Mantuba-Ngoma refers to as 'ethnic hymns', songs in praise of a particular ethnic identity. Students of popular culture

in other parts of Africa will be grateful to these scholars for recording in these pages songs which would otherwise have passed unknown.

Part three concerns the past and how it is remembered in present times. All three essays in this section deal with Zaïre, including an interesting piece on *radio-trottoir* (by Sabakinu Kivilu). Part four deals with modes of popular resistance to state power, through such techniques as sorcery (Peter Geschiere on Cameroon), and an analysis of developments in one region of Zaïre at the time when President Mobutu was enacting his policy of *authenticité* (Allen F. Roberts). Also worthy of note is an essay on popular artistic responses to the demand for tourist art, by Bennete Jules-Rosette. Part five is on masculine and feminine strategies, via case-studies of the life of a slave in early twentieth-century central Africa and a women's revolt in eastern Zaïre. It seems that women often play a special role in popular strategies, in the construction of collective identities and also, for example, in composing songs, at least in some of the Zaïrean cases studied. Women frequently lack access to institutionalized power and are obliged more than men to create their own domains of contestation.

Jewsiewicki says in his introduction that the purpose of this volume is not to advance any general theory, but to stimulate further research by the provision of examples. Seven of the contributions were originally papers presented to the 13th annual conference of the Canadian Association of African Studies in 1987. Five of the sixteen have previously been published elsewhere. Three were written specifically for this volume.

Africa Confidential, London

STEPHEN ELLIS

American and Canadian Doctoral Dissertations and Master's Theses on Africa, 1974-1987. Compiled by JOSEPH J. LAUER, GREGORY V. LARKIN and ALFRED KAGAN. Atlanta, Georgia: Crossroads Press (for the African Studies Association), 1989. Pp. xix + 377. \$75.

This compilation is, as one would expect, a sound and reliable source for postgraduate research undertaken in the field of African studies during the period specified in North American universities. It is designed to continue the earlier *American and Canadian Doctoral Dissertations and Master's Theses on Africa, 1886-1974*, compiled by Michael Sims and Alfred Kagan (Waltham, Mass.: African Studies Association, 1976), and replace interim lists such as the quarterly 'Recent doctoral dissertations' in *ASA News*.

The compilers are well-organized in their approach, thorough in their research, frank about perceived shortcomings and helpful in recommending supplementary sources. Attention is drawn to the huge growth in research on Africa and tables are provided which break down theses and dissertations by year, discipline and region/country. The 'Introduction' sets out clearly the chronological, geographical and subject scope of the bibliography as well as its arrangement. The format of each entry is briefly explained and sources of information are listed with annotations. Entries are arranged primarily by country, with works on the continent as a whole or a region of it listed separately at the front, and within this framework into broad disciplines with further subdivisions by year of submission.

The three indexes are by author, by academic institution and by subject. This last, inevitably, poses the most problems and is therefore scattered with cross-references to preferred forms of name, e.g. Gold Coast *See* Ghana. Equally inevitably, slips occur. For example, the index gives only 'Abdille Hasan (Sayyid Mahammad) and Hassan (Mohammad Abdulle)', without any cross-references, for two separate items on Mahammad 'Abdille Hasan - a name that not only has variant forms of spelling in the Roman alphabet but should also be read straight