

on legal interpretation(s) (pp. 192–215). Highly topical is S. L. Harring's contribution on land reform under the rule of law (pp. 268–284). And a necessary addition is D. Hubbard's summary on gender and law reform (pp. 349–375) and M. Figueira's intervention on HIV/AIDS and human rights (pp. 382–393).

Ten years after Independence, however, this reader could have provided a lot more evidence not only of the achievements (which do exist in contrast to the ugly apartheid days left behind), but also of the increasing flaws in the legal culture of post-colonial Namibia. It is far from true that everything is in favour of the track record of the previous liberation movement, now in full and almost absolute control over the political system, bureaucracy and government (if not state). Unfortunately, some of the chapters evade the challenge and present embarrassingly uncritical reflections. They are to some extent documentary evidence for a lack of civil courage in parts of the local academia. General statements of a descriptive and declamatory nature characterise some of the overviews compiled for this occasion. Other presentations come from those too close to the centre(s) of state.

It might be conceded that the official speeches ought to be more polite than intellectual honesty and analytical clarity would find desirable. It is somehow disturbing, however, and maybe indicative of the eroding political–legal culture of the Republic that the Chief Justice of Namibia in his keynote address expressed 'respect and admiration for Minister Ekandjo who came to us and unreservedly assured us of his personal commitment to uphold the Constitution and to assist the courts'. This is the same Minister of Home Affairs who is notorious for his public gay-bashing outbursts, his insulting remarks on 'foreign judges' and his tendency to ignore the rule of law if applied against the government. He is politically responsible for a treason trial, during which the accused have been under arrest for more than four years before facing charges in court. He is in charge of a portfolio under which employees in the police force are accused of torture, and part of a government for which the appointment of judges is an obvious means to expand control over the administration of justice.

Hence, in the light of the increasingly sobering reality, the readings evoke mixed feelings. The book reflects the differences of quality so often lumped together in conference proceedings which were not edited into a slimmer but more consistently thematic volume. The publication offers too wide a range of contributions, many of which would have required more careful revisions before being published (if at all). It is nonetheless a useful source with regard to the state of the art (and the mindset) within Namibian society and its legal culture. It contains several precious stones but even more rubble: less would have been more.

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GÖRAN HYDÉN, MICHAEL LESLIE and FOLU F. OGUNDIMU (eds), *Media and Democracy in Africa*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet (paperback 240 kr, €24.00, £16.95, ISBN 91 7106 495 8); New Brunswick NJ: Transaction Publishers (paperback US\$24.95, ISBN 0 76 580980 X; hard covers US\$39.95, ISBN 0 76 580148 5). 2002, 260 pp.

The role of the media in both democratisation and the (eventual) consolidation of democracy in all transitional democracies is a controversial one. In relation to sub-Saharan Africa, relatively little has been published in this regard.

Consequently, if for no other reason, this book is to be welcomed—in that it focuses upon a relatively neglected topic and seeks to utilise recent research findings to build up an overall picture. The book's genesis was in an international conference organised in March 1997 in honour of the late Gwendolen Carter who was associated with the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida during the last years of her active professional life. The editors note in their preface that 'the best papers from that conference constitute the substance of this volume' (p. vii). However, one of the drawbacks of the book is that many of the chapters do not feature data that appears to go much beyond 1996. In other words, it is not always clear to what extent there was actually much updating of the contributions after the conference for the purposes of the book published five years later. Consequently, from the vantage point of 2003, some of the analyses have a somewhat dated look—as they focus upon the transitional period of Africa's democratisation, with relatively little focus upon the current stage. This is seen by some observers as highlighting a gradual—or even a swift—reversion to pre-democratisation ways of doing things politically. It is not clear from the book what role, if any, African media have in this process.

Aside from the editors' preface, the substance of the book comprises nine chapters, including a substantial concluding chapter of more than twenty pages. Regarding the remaining eight chapters, the editors have decided not to divide them into themes or sections. Consequently it is hard to discern just what is the organising principle of the book. Individual chapters focus upon a variety of topics, including: 'Communications and democratization in Africa' (Hydén and Leslie); 'The media and the two waves of democracy' (Hydén); 'Media laws in political transition' (Chris W. Ogbondah); 'Broadcasting and political reform' (Paul R. van der Veur); 'The internet and democratization' (Leslie); 'Media ownership and democratization' (Keyan Tomaselli); 'African politics and American reporting' (Beverly G. Hawk); and 'Alternative small media and communicative spaces' (Debra Spitulnik).

Taken as a whole, it is clear that the chapters focus upon a range of interesting topics. But the book's analysis is not aided by the fact that this is an edited collection. Almost inevitably, a selection of conference papers gathered together in book form will lack some or much coherence in relation to the task the book's editors set for it. This book is no exception. Things might have been better in this regard if the editors—all three of them!—had taken a 'hands-on' approach to the task of editing and encouraged contributors to focus upon similar questions in each chapter. Unfortunately, however, there is scant sign that this was the editors' strategy. This is somewhat unfortunate as several of the chapters not only feature extensive fieldwork but are also well written and informative.

In their introduction, the editors note that there is a 'rapidly growing literature on democratization in Africa but very little of it deals with the role that communications, or the media, play' (p. 1). The problem with this as a potential theme is that it is simply too wide to elicit useful conclusions relating to the regional role of the media in democratisation. In addition, neither the editors nor the contributors seem very clear about whether the focus should be upon national or international media, the specific aspects of democratisation within which the media might play a role and what that role might be from country to country, or whether chapter conclusions should be country-specific or more generally applicable.

In conclusion, there is some useful material in this book but if the reader is looking for a thematic and coherent account of how aspects of the media in Africa played a role in democratisation in the region, it is a disappointment.

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BIRGITTE BRUUN, *Service of the Engine: pharmaceuticals, moralities, and sex in a Malawian fishing village*. Amsterdam: Aksant Academic Publishers (paperback €13.00, ISBN 90 5260 083 X). 2002, 96 pp.

This book, in Aksant's Community Drug Use Study series, takes the simple idea of illicitly self-prescribing and taking (without the regular partner's knowledge) 'CIBA' (various antibiotics to which this old pharmaceutical name has been attached) to 'prevent' or 'cure' sexually transmitted diseases and creates a grand theory—involving purity, gender relations and sex-related diseases—out of it. The case is often overstated, especially when the 'servicing of the engine' also refers to the 'cleaning of the genitals' both to make them more effective and, in females, also to effect abortions. The book paints a picture of rampant sexual infidelity and promiscuity in a Lake Malawi fishing village, with men and women attempting to thwart STDs and abort pregnancies using 'CIBA' medicines (antibiotics like rifampicin, tetracyclines and others). 'It is generally a stereotype in Malawi that morals are "loose",' she writes (p. 17).

Bruun, although aware of the existing *ntayo* and *kanyela* sexual taboos, seems unaware of the *mdulo* literature. The gross abuse of rifampicin and other antibiotics is imbued with 'symbolic meaning'. She argues that as a commodity CIBA is a 'vehicle of individualization', removing therapy from 'social relations' associated with consulting family members and herbalists. Only at the end (p. 74) is it admitted that the context is 'all embedded in yet wider social, economic, and political processes, which I have only peripherally touched upon in my analysis. These processes include the uncontrolled and very creative informal trade with pharmaceuticals at all levels; the all too common shortcomings of the formal health care system; the gendered ways of making a living in fishing villages with scarce and irregular resources; and the myriad of distressing effects of HIV/AIDS on social relations for many years to come.' If these 'processes' had been explored in more detail earlier with emphasis and context—as well as the motives and social role of drug vendors, grocery owners and other purveyors and agents of CIBA—it would have made for a much better book.

The book, which would have also benefited from a referee more familiar with Malawi, ignores much local work and literature. Inevitably it has a number of translation and spelling mistakes: 'moon disease' is given as the translation of *matenda akumwezi* (p. 29) rather than the correct 'monthly disease [periods]'; and 'potency in the house' is translated as *mphamvu nyumba* rather than *mphamvu ya munyumba* (p. 37).

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Discussions of new media often disregard the unusual African terrain, which defies many of the technological innovations said to be reconfiguring the structures and processes of communication globally. This includes poor telecommunication networks in most parts of Africa, resulting in low levels of Internet usage. Nevertheless, online communities are emerging across Africa. The experience of democracy and communication in Africa can be analysed in terms of three models: (1) diffusion/modernisation (viewing the media as agents of modernity); (2) dependency/dissociation (viewing new media technology as a continuation of "Third World" dependence on the West); and (3) participatory-communication (emphasising participation, cultural identity, empowerment and dialogue). Michael Leslie (Editor), Folu F. Ogundimu (Editor). really liked it 4.00 Rating details. 1 rating 0 reviews. This book provides a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of the role of the media in political change in sub-Saharan Africa. The central argument of the volume is that while the media may still be relatively weak compared to their positions in liberal democracies, they have come to play a much more important role than ever before since independence. The book is organized This book provides a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of the role of the media in political change in ... | Sort order. Start your review of Media and Democracy in Africa. Write a review. CierÅjn Jimmy rated it really liked it Jan 24, 2012. Edited By Goran Hyden, Michael Leslie, Folu F. Ogundimu. Edition 1st Edition. First Published 2002. This volume shows that the media scene in Africa is diverse. It stretches from the well-developed and technologically advanced situation in South Africa to the still fledgling media operations that are typical in sub-Saharan Africa. In these countries, print media as well as television and radio are just beginning to take their place in society and do so using simple and often outdated technology. The volume also examines how these growing outlets are supplemented by informal media, the so-called radio trottoir, or rumor mill whereby the autocratic and bureaucratic direction of public affairs - Peer-reviewed. - Rapid publication. - Lifetime hosting. In G. Hyden, M. Leslie, & F. F. Ogundimu (Eds.), *Media and Democracy in Africa* (pp. 107-128). Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute. has been cited by the following article: TITLE: E-Democracy in Africa: Assessing Internet Use by Major Political Parties during Elections in Cameroon. AUTHORS: Kingsley L. Ngange, Martin E-M. Elonge. KEYWORDS: New Media, Internet, E-Democracy, Political Communication. JOURNAL NAME: *Advances in Journalism and Communication*, Vol.7 No.3, August 12, 2019. ABSTRACT: The Internet provides important opportunities for interactions between candidates and voters as well as