

DB. Review of United Nations Operations in the Congo 1960-1964,
by G. Abi-Saab. Africa 50, no. 1 (1980):101-2.

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entity during the colonial period. Before this time they were part of a congeries of small communities speaking different languages which collectively made up the Biafran hinterland. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this hinterland produced the slaves that were shipped from the Bight of Biafra and these, together with those from the Yoruba Slave Coast, formed the bulk of the negro population of the New World. During the nineteenth century this same hinterland provided the world markets with the greater part of its palm oil and kernels. Until after the first World War, these amounted to more than half the total wealth of the Protectorate (as measured by its exports and imports) and the major part of its revenue (which was derived from customs duties). These exports both of slaves and of palm produce were contributed predominantly by the Ibibio and Igbo, the former proportionately more in relation to their population. It was during and after this colonial period that the various Igbo groups became conscious of their common identity, accepted the name Igbo (the Yoruba term for people of the bush) as applying to themselves and developed into an exceptionally coherent and commercially oriented ethnic group. This development was so rapid that by the 1960s the Igbo were well on the way to dominating the market trade of the Northern region and were challenging the Yoruba monopoly of superior professional employment in Nigeria. These points could have been brought out more clearly in this study. One would also have appreciated more details on the rise and economic expansion of the Igbo and of the factors which enabled them to outdistance their Eastern Nigerian competitors. One cannot however build bricks without straw. The material for such a study remains to be collected and until more is known about the different societies which form the Igbo people and about the qualities that distinguish this able, aggressive and energetic 'nation' from other Nigerian peoples we shall have to rest content with the material which Dr Isichei has so expertly brought together.

G. I. JONES

Historical Dictionary of Tanzania. By LAURA S. KURTZ. Metuchen (N.J.), London: Scarecrow Press, 1978. (African Historical Dictionaries 15.) P. xxxi, 331, maps, Bibl. n.p.

An accurate, well presented historical dictionary of Tanzania would be valuable. Unfortunately this book is neither accurate, nor well presented. It is the first in the series to deal with one of the larger African countries about which much has been written, and therefore may have presented greater problems than some of the earlier volumes. Superficially it appears substantial. It contains lists of rulers and governors, chronologies and also 70 pages of bibliography. The serious defects, however, are numerous. Virtually every page contains obvious errors or misleading half truths, and there are some nonsensical statements. The criteria for inclusion are not stated. Frequently names are misspelt and the bibliography contains many errors. The unreliability of the book will be evident to any scholar with a knowledge of Tanzania. Read by a volunteer teacher, for example, it could be dangerously misleading. Apart from its inaccuracies the presentation is unacceptably slovenly. The maps are execrable. Some peoples (in the author's vocabulary 'tribes') have been invented and others are omitted. Many dates are wrong. Does the author really believe that fire was introduced among the Safwa around 1900 (p. 180) or that among the Ha witchcraft plays a large role in their daily lives (sic) (p. 66)? This type of book could bring African studies into disrepute.

ALISON REDMAYNE

The United Nations Operation in the Congo 1960-1964. By GEORGES ABI-SAAB. Oxford: University Press, 1978. Pp. xvi, 206, map. £2.75 paper.

Shortly after achieving independence (30 June 1960), the new Republic of the Congo was faced with grave internal disorders caused by regional and 'tribal' tensions, uprisings among the military, lack of skilled personnel, and dissensions within the central government itself. The international aspects of the crisis became manifest at once through direct intervention by Belgian troops, governmental appeal to foreign powers, and the secession movement of the then Katanga Province. As a result of this dramatic situation with the consequent international political and legal manoeuvring, UN operations in the Congo started almost immediately after independence, the military aspect of them ending almost four years later.

Mainly with reference to the military operations, this book approaches the subject from the viewpoint of the role of law in the 'shaping and evolution of the UN Congo Operation' (p. 193). The well-circumscribed aim is to demonstrate and analyze how and to what extent 'legal considerations, as understood by the decision-maker at the time of decision' (p. ix) influenced various decisions (to undertake the peace-keeping effort; to cope with 'unexpected developments or particularly persistent obstacles' (p. ix). The systematic enumeration and analysis of events, viewpoints, and decisions is construed on the basis of contemporary UN debates and documents as well as verbatim records of the UN Advisory Committee on the Congo (p. xi). There is also heavy reliance on B. Urquhart's biography (1972) of Dag Hammarskjöld. The author, a professor of international law and organization, is most successful in showing how law affected decision-making in this international conflict. He studies with skill and objectivity the instrumental and constraining role of law in the actions undertaken by the then Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld and to a lesser extent by his successor U Thant. The formal and legalistic concepts of law held by the Secretary-General profoundly affected his decisions and attitudes, and this helps us understand some of the ensuing confusions during the military operations.

Coverage of these operations concentrates on the period between early July 1960 and the end of the Katanga secession (14 January 1963); subsequent developments until June 1964 are only briefly discussed in the epilogue (p. 192). The author is interested neither in the appraisal of the decisions nor in the many non-legal factors that influenced them. For other evidence and viewpoints, one must consult therefore the many publications that directly or indirectly deal with the broader issues of independence and the UN operations, particularly the works by the Brookings Institute (1966), R. Dayal (1976), P. H. Gendebien (1967), J. Gérard-Louis (1966), W. Okumu (1963), and B. Verhaegen (Dossiers CRISP 1960-67). Similarly conceived studies that would examine how the law affected decisions made by the Congo leaders or by the Belgian government would be most useful.

DANIEL P. BIEBUYCK

English-speaking South Africa Today: Proceedings of the National Conference, July 1974. Edited by ANDRÉ DE VILLIERS. Cape Town: Oxford University Press for 1820 Settlers National Monument Foundation, 1976. Pp. vi, 387. £15.

This volume consists of twenty papers presented in 1974 at a conference held in Grahamstown to mark the opening of a monument to the British settlers of 1920. The title notwithstanding, the main theme was an assessment of the present position of WESSA (White English-speaking South Africa). The only contribution by a Black is a group of 'Eleven Poems' by Sepamla at the back of the book. Yet, as Ravenscroft points out in a brief ironic account of ESSA literature, English is as much an African language as Swahili, Yoruba, Zulu or Afrikaans. This is illustrated by Couzens on the traditions of Black South Africans writing in English.

The outstanding contributions, however, are those by Watts on WESSA demography and by Schlemmer on 'Identity and Integration'. The disturbing nature of some of the latter's findings are underlined by Worrall and Welsh in two scholarly accounts of WESSA involvement in politics and racial problems. The background is provided by Garson on the history of the 'British connection'. O'Dowd and Francis Wilson take different views of WESSA contributions to the economy, the former being optimistic about development, the latter profoundly concerned with the structure and quality of growth and, above all, with the need to mobilise WESSA consciences in the economic sphere. That word 'conscience' links his essay with those on Christian churches by Hinchliff and Monica Wilson. English as a second language is dealt with by Lanham, as a spoken language in South Africa by Branford. Other valuable essays cover Education, the Press and the Mass Media.

Attending the conference was what the editor briefly mentions as a 'large multi-racial audience'; but it proved impossible to publish any of the 'sharp and fruitful debate' which followed the presentation of some of the papers. As it is, one is left with the overwhelming impression of representatives of a minority of WESSA intellectuals talking mostly to each other and trying to pretend that, lacking a power base, they still have some sort of mediating role to play in the future of their country; that even now they can rouse the common sense and consciences of fellow WESSAs and act as a leaven in the lump; that all hope has not gone. Guy Butler, in a masterly keynote address, claimed that 'no man in