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Double Impact: France and Africa in the Age of Imperialism

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strata of Shashemene is not surprising given the social history of the southern area. We see here the survival of historical trends from the nineteenth century into the present. This study has far reaching implications for the study of current African urban societies.

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Johnson, Wesley G., ed. Double Impact: France and Africa in the Age of Imperialism, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985. pp. 407. Bibliography, Index, About the contributors, cloth, \$55.00.

This book is a collection of twenty-two original historical essays that sheds new light on the French colonial experience and the African reaction to it. The study breaks new ground by looking at both sides of the colonial equation. It challenges the colonial era historians who for reasons best known to themselves hardly admitted that the colonized peoples and their culture might have had an impact upon the colonized whether in the colony itself or in the home country.

Edited by Professor G. Wesley Johnson, the book is an important contribution to the literature on 'impact theory.' Dr. Johnson himself is of the opinion that a "double impact" no doubt characterized French colonial rule in Africa during the first sixty years of this century.

The contributors, selected for their long experience with France and "French-speaking Africa," examine nine thematic fields-economy, military, elites, education, art, architecture, literature, politics, race relations and prejudice to try to ascertain reciprocal impact. Most of the papers in this volume were originally presented at a University of California, Los Angeles colloquia series on "French-speaking Africa" under the direction of Dr. Johnson when he was a visiting professor at UCLA.

The first theme titled "The Economics of Imperialism" comprises two essays by Professor Robert Griffeth and Dr. Paul E. Pfeiffer. Griffeth's essay examines the fundamentals of economic change in colonial French West Africa between 1900-1940 to measure the African impact on French economic policy. He contends that to compete in the West African market, the French imperialists were forced to adapt and indeed borrow from African merchandising and trading models. Similarly, Dr. Pfeiffer argues that the parameters of French railroad

operations were framed by African factors, African needs, African personnel and of course the African landscape.

The second theme "The role of the Military" is by Dr. Leland Barrows and Dr. Charles Balesi. Barrows analyzes the impact of the imperial experience abroad on the French armed forces from 1830 to the immediate post-World War I period. He maintains that French army leadership styles were influenced by the way French commanders had to relate personally to their African military men, to make a personal appeal and develop an esprit de corps to implement battles. Balesi makes the point even more strongly - he dismisses the racist charge that African troops were ineffective and had a high attrition rate. He contends that to the contrary, France was dependent on African troops since the time of the Roman legions - that this historical fact is unparalleled in the annals of European history; that the role of African troops in defending the French colonial oppressor during World War I is also unparalleled in the history of European colonial imperialism in Africa (pp. 93-101).

In the third theme "Politics in the Metropole and the Colonies," Professors Charles H. Cutter and Janet G. Vaillant argue that the very fact that Africans enacted laws in Paris was suggestive of the double impact. Cutter demonstrates how the political activity of the French Left was translated into activity in the colonies for the first time in the 1930s, while Vaillant discusses Leopold Senghor and the participation of African leaders in the politics of the metropole.

Professor Johnson and Dr. Peggy Sabatier in the fourth theme "France and the African Elites," discuss how Senegalese elites made an impact both on the French in Senegal and West Africa as a whole, and in France itself. They are of the view that France succeeded in creating a compliant elite molded in its own image for purposes of making this elite cooperate with French foreign economic aims in Africa.

"The Architectural Dilemma" is the fifth theme of the book. Written by Professors Raymond F. Betts and Labelle Prussin, they see the double impact in architecture. Betts suggests that a "disharmony" characterized several cities in North and Saharan Africa, as French planners struggled to cope with the realities of urban African populations. Prussin argues that French architects conveyed their own interpretation of traditional African models -which in turn became prototypes for some of the colonial buildings in West Africa. The result was "an elan coming out of a long French cultural tradition and an ethos derived from the indigenous African milieu" (p.228).

The sixth theme "French and Africans in Art," is by Professor Gerard G. Le Coat and Dr. Marian A. Johnson. Le Coat analyzes the impact of African culture in France, and the resulting influence on the works of Picasso, Braque, Modigliani and others. Marian Johnson on the other hand demonstrates that a tradition of fine craftsmen who had artistic and esthetic ideals dating from pre-European contact was refined and influenced by French patronage - both in buying objects in Senegal and in recognizing and giving a place of honor to goldsmiths at a number of colonial expositions.

"Literary Currents" constitute theme seven. Here, Professor Hassan el Nouty examines the influence of French literature on the emerging African writers during the colonial encounter. And in assessing the other side of cultural impact, Professor Gerard Pigeon asserts that it is still rather early to see the full impact the African side made on the French.

In the eighth theme "Images and Racism," Dr. William B. Cohen and Professor Edmund Burke III tackle perceptions and reactions to Africans on the part of the French. Cohen argues that like other European countries, racism dominated the French perception of the African, until much later and that France's leading anthropologist, Maurice Delafosse through research in West Africa, assembled an independent culture in Africa that had produced earlier civilizations worthy of inclusion in world history. This theme however, does not tackle African perceptions of the French, with the excuse that they can be found in novels of Cheikh Amadou, Ousmane Sembene, etc.

"The Impact of Education" is the ninth theme of the book. Here, Professor David Gardinier discusses the traditional education of African societies, the Islamic schools characteristic of many West African areas, and how French schools - both Roman Catholic and secular, were implanted. He also analyzes how the Africans sought equality with the Europeans by obtaining equality of educational opportunities and institutions.

On the other hand, Dr. Aguibou Yan Yansane, himself a Guinean scholar, argues that a strong motivating factor for the French in spending freely on colonial education was not for humanitarian reasons, but for national prestige and cultural imperialism. He also contends that France kept instruction out of the reach of the people because education did not fit the economic desiderata of the imperialists. Africans, Dr. Yansane maintains, were to be producers and the French needed only a small elite to help with local administration. He emphasizes that the educational policy of

France paid off in producing assimilated civil servants and auxiliaries prepared to conform to French imperial policies. In conclusion, Dr. Yansane raises several important questions about Western social science and its norms in approaching the study of African society, and the results that have accompanied them (pp. 356-359).

Overall, the book is a well organized and well-researched presentation that clearly illustrates the nature of the double impact. It is true that colonialism made an impact on the colonizers both in the colonies and in the metropole itself. The book therefore is an important contribution that must pave the way for further historical research on the impact made by the Africans on France during the colonial and post-colonial periods.

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Bender, Gerald J. Coleman, James S. Sklar, Richard L. (eds.)
African Crisis Areas and U.S. Foreign Policy. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985. pp. xiv-373. Index, paperback, \$9.95.

The central theme of this book is the so-called major "African crisis area" (Southern Africa, the Horn of Africa, Zaire, Chad and Western Sahara), how U.S. policy in these areas has been formulated, and the options for the U.S. in the same areas. The book presents the so-called "Africanist" case that claims to narrow the gap between scholarship and policy pertaining to contemporary U.S.-Africa relations.

Divided into four parts, the first part of the book discusses American diplomacy in southern Africa amidst the forces of destabilization generated by the racist white minority regime in South Africa against its independent neighbors. Part two deals with American policy in the Horn of Africa (Ethiopia and Somalia), while part three examines U.S. policy toward Zaire and the subordinate role Motubu's Zaire has played in Chad and Western Sahara on the behalf of the U.S. Part four discusses elements of regionalism versus globalism in U.S. policy toward "African crisis areas."

Comprising eighteen chapters by different authors, a number of them are the result of a conference sponsored by the African Studies Center and the Center for International and Strategic Affairs at UCLA. The eighteen chapters are supposed to represent the official American perceptions and/or mis-perceptions of the intentions and capabilities of the Soviet