



ISSN 2336-3274 (Print) ISSN 2570-7558 (Online)

<https://edu.uhk.cz/africa>

Editor ' s Note

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Recommended citation:

Skalník, P. (2017). Editor ' s Note. *Modern Africa: Politics, History and Society*, 5(1), 31–32. Retrieved from <https://edu.uhk.cz/africa/index.php/ModAfr/article/view/169>



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EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue is the ninth in a row and at the same time starting volume 5 of *Modern Africa*. This editor's note is followed by obituaries of two towering figures of African studies. The French anthropologist and sociologist Georges Balandier, and the Belgian-American historian of Africa Jan Vansina have revolutionised African studies. The first by his account of the "colonial situation" on the eve of Africa's independence, the second by proving that oral tradition is history. Both were prolific writers, whose oeuvres will keep students of Africa busy for years to come. We decided to dedicate this issue to their memory.

This issue comprises three major essays. The first elucidates the cooperation for peace in West Africa among internal South-South and regional actors. The authors, Kehinde Olayode and Charles Ukeje, outline the "success story" of peace-building by multilateral cooperation, a process in which the role of Nigeria was crucial. The second article, a historical reconstruction of federal budgets of Nigeria for a period of nearly 50 years, is the subject of Adetunji Ojo Ogunyemi's study. It is quite unusual in the literature on the subject because it is so detailed. Finally, we present a long-term study by Gerard Horta of road crashes in Cape Verde. Road crashes, especially of vans, are a serious matter involving both those who perpetrate them, those who are victim passengers, and those who suffer from them along the roads.

In addition, this issue has three reports. The first is a fascinating account by Maciej Kurcz of the 1976 Polish student expedition to Mali and Cameroon. The ramifications of the communist system made such an initiative into an almost utopian project. Historical photographs accompany the text. Petr Skalník reports on two Africanist events that recently took place in the Czech Republic. The first was a Czech-Slovak conference evaluating the last 50 years of African studies since the publication of the two-volume *History of Africa* in 1966. The second conference was devoted to philosophy and related disciplines as they approach Africa's past, present, and future. A number of reviews of important books published both in English and Central European languages close the issue.

On behalf of the editorial board I wish the readers much pleasure and intellectual satisfaction while discovering the fascinating dimensions of African studies as presented in this issue of *Modern Africa*.

Petr Skalník