

incorporating judicious reforms of the Berg Report, such as rationalization of its domestic policies and management.

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Gunilla Bjerén, Migration to Shashemene: Ethnicity Gender and Occupation in Urban Ethiopia. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1985. 291 pages. Paperback.

Gunilla Bjerén's book, Migration to Shashemene, confronts and explodes some common assumptions about rural-urban migration. The book explores the relationship between urban migration patterns and other social factors such as gender, ethnicity and occupation which influence these patterns. While Bjerén's analysis leans heavily on theoretical constructs drawn from disciplines like sociology and social anthropology, it does not lack historical dimension.

Gunilla Bjerén chose Shashemene, a small town in south central Ethiopia, as a model for illuminating the economic and political factors which shaped the history of that region and determined the structure of the urban economy in which different ethnic groups have participated since the late nineteenth century when much of the western, southern and eastern regions were brought into the Ethiopian state.

The southern towns were founded as military and administrative outposts of the Ethiopian state and were poorly integrated into the socio-economic life of the different peoples of the region. Thus, the inhabitants of the towns were predominantly Amhara, the language of the towns was Amharic and the towns were economically and politically dependent on the capital. Not unlike other writers, Bjerén contends that the political position of these towns was analogous to any colonial system where the administrative centre was small.

Within this historical context urban areas became ethnically differentiated in the south central region. In Shashemene as in similar towns Amharas and often Tigray stood at the apex of the new social order. Gurage assumed a position just below the dominant Amhara. Gurage were among the first of indigenous groups to enter the capital and subsequently other towns where they were able to exploit economic niches not appealing to Amhara. Welayita were relegated to the bottom of the social and economic totem pole and made up the majority of casual labour in Bjerén's study of Shashemene. Arsi (Oromo), whenever they were encountered, seemed to be in

town simply because of their ties to the surrounding countryside. The migration patterns of these respective groups seemed to be linked to their access to certain occupational niches in the economic sector.

Bjeren's study showed that in 1970 70% of the Welayita were made up of all day labourers, Amhara made up 46% of the most prestigious occupations, and Gurage were the largest single group engaged in trading with 37% (p.144). The ethnic stratification of the occupational structure was such that occupations became synonymous with particular ethnic categories. Therefore, "Dorze" were equated with weaver, small shops and kiosks were called "Gurage shops," etc. For historical and political reasons already mentioned, Amharas were associated with the most prestigious urban occupations such as administrative, education, and technical positions.

According to Bjeren, the ascription of ethnic categories was not coincidental. She explains it in terms of ethnic specialization. That is, people migrating into the towns and filling certain occupational niches were linguistically and culturally homogenous and usually had originated in the same geographical region. Migrants entered "home" communities within the towns. The ethnic groups having little urban prestige (usually rural migrants) were locked into "ethnic boxes." In other words, they experienced almost no chances for social mobility within the town structure. As Bjeren points out, "their only possibility of translating economic success into social esteem was to return home and invest their earnings in rural prestige [items] such as land, cattle, large households and paid farm hands" (p. 230). Unlike the Welayita, the Dorze were able to use their situation in the urban areas to advance their socio-economic position at home (rural area).

As far as the gender system is concerned it seems as though the migration histories of women was different from that of men. There were relatively few opportunities for women in the occupational structure and ethnicity had little to do with occupational differentiation among women. In Bjeren's 1973 sample, the most apparent social distinction was between Amhara women and other women. Amhara women were more numerous, more mobile, more often divorced, and more often involved in prostitution or trade in alcoholic beverages.

Overall Bjeren's work, Migration to Shashemene, is a useful contribution to our understanding of the complexity of the internal dynamics of African urban societies. Her study of migration patterns and their relationship to ethnicity, gender, and occupation offers us insights into the historical and economic realities of contemporary Ethiopian society. That Amhara seem to dominate the socio-economic and political

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. Pheffer. 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. Pheffer argues that the parameters of French railroad