nature and place of cities in West African countries. Chapter one deals with an important issue, which very often (as said earlier) is neglected in such works. The authors argue that one should not forget the place of cities in West African historical empires. City dwelling is nothing new, what is new is the rapid growth which has taken place since the Second World War, through mainly rural-urban migration. Chapter three draws the reader's attention to the colonial legacy and how this legacy has structured a parasitic situational relationship between city life and rural life. The city depends on the rural sector but in sharing the national cake the rural sector is grossly exploited.

It is therefore not surprising that most young people move to the "exploding cities". At once one realises the problem, its logic, and implications. These topics are discussed in Chapters three: rural-urban migration, four: townsman and absentee villager, and five: social relationships in the urban setting.

Chapter six discusses three types of changes, a useful analytical chapter, but more work needs to be done in this area to determine more distinctively conceptual tools. The final three chapters deal with specific changing situations in the family (chapter seven), changes in the position of women (chapter eight), and stratification and social mobility (chapter nine).

In the concluding section, the authors' comment is of great interest to policy makers and urban planners. In here we note the statement based on contemporary data that three options are opened to the rural "peasantry": to vote with their feet and move to the city, to withdraw into subsistence agriculture or to rebel. I share the view that West African governments must act now to improve rural conditions.

It is a good book for research students who are interested in urbanization and social change in the Third World Countries. It is also a useful book for urban theorists who may wish to do more work or to re-examine these concepts: historical, situational and biographic changes. The authors did not succeed in explaining the distinction among them quite well because empirically it is difficult to separate them. But at least they have attempted to bring these concepts again to the foreground for a closer examination. The references work and additional notes are well documented. It is not a book for the ordinary person who has no background in social sciences. But certain sections must be recommended to the undergraduate, first year students. It is highly recommended for the graduate student and other research workers in institutes and departments of African studies, urban geography, international relations, anthropology and urban sociology.

The book contains 235 pages, was first published in 1978 by the Cambridge University Press. It is still in hardback cover. I wish we have them in paperback edition so that there will be broad base distribution among young students and research scholars.

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With the publication of volume two of the Cambridge History of Africa the original plan conceived by the syndics of the Cambridge Press and the editors of the Journal of African History fourteen years ago draws to a close. Each of the five volumes now
available contains a wealth of information, excellent bibliographic references and complete indices. Individual chapters are well organized and thorough as each is the product of a senior specialist, ably capable of surveying the extensive literature and of providing the most accurate historical interpretation.

The Cambridge History of Africa: from 500 B.C. to A.D. 1050 shares all the positive qualities of each of the previously published volumes. The eleven chapters cover such diverse topics as Desmond Clark's excellent "The Legacy of Prehistory", R.C.C. Law's "North Africa in Hellenistic and Roman Periods", Raymond Mauny's "Trans-Saharan Contacts and the Iron Age in West Africa" and P. L. Shinnie's "Christian Nubia". There are numerous plates and, continuing this series tradition, a number of well made illustrative maps. The thirty page bibliographic essay and the fifty page bibliography, both arranged to parallel the chapters, extends the praiseworthy reference value of the Cambridge project.

Yet for all the positive things that can be said about the series as a whole and about this particular part of it, this reviewer is not happy with the end result. Unlike earlier volumes there is no thematic unity offered here. The only apparent commonality to the chapters is that the events described all took place on the African continent within a specific time frame. If a theme were imposed by the reader it would have to be based on the concentrated effort of the authors which consists largely of a history of Christian and Muslim sectarianism and the political results thereof. Of the eleven chapters, five are specifically devoted to Mediterranean North Africa and four more are primarily related to that region. Of the two remaining, Desmond Clark's chapter is a summary of the pre-historical material in volume one of the series, which leaves only Roland Oliver's strangely titled "The Emergence of Bantu Africa" to cover the entire continent south of the sahel. This means that only sixty pages of some seven hundred are devoted to two-thirds of the continent.

The editor recognizes that this book, more than any other in the series, is skewed geographically. His explanation that "the more temperate lands north of the Sahara...were in much closer touch with developments in other parts of the world", with a resulting "inbalance of historical source materials" is inadequate. (p. 1) While it is quite true that the greater existence of documentary materials in the Greco-Roman, Muslim north makes the historian more comfortable, it is in the very nature of the struggle to establish the discipline of African History these past thirty years to find other ways of solving historical problems in a world with few paper archives. The very content and form of this book suggests a return to a much older form of historical investigation and writing. It also suggests that little is known about the rest of the continent which the editors are willing to accept as history.

If one wishes to learn a great deal about the politically and religiously fissiparous struggles among North African Muslims and Christians, then volume two will be a joy, though the reader must endure dissertation style pedantry. Michael Brett's two chapters, as an example, are enthusiastically erudite.

"Outside the castle they made a camp which became a mīṣr (pl. ansār), a 'garrison city', called Fuṣṭāt (Latin fossa, Greek phossaton, 'trenches'; Arabic 'tent') or, simply, Miṣr, an old name for Egypt which happened to be the same as the common noun, or Syriac origin, for a foundation of this kind". (p. 501).

But if one wishes to find concise summary of the state of the knowledge, piercing analysis or clear directions for further research, then one will have to search carefully. If one wants any history of Eastern, Southern or Western Africa one would be advised to look elsewhere.