wards a history of African art.” Working from what are expectedly uneven sources, Willet attempts a trans-Africa review of early rock paintings and ancient sculpture in bronze, rock, and wood. The evidence of chronological controls and style analysis is apparent in this reconstruction of a dimension of African art that has all too often been simply ignored or done sloppily.

Chapter four examines architecture in the same way. Mud, grass, stone, and wood materials have been developed into a profusely rich body of architecture-sculpture of dwellings, granaries, temples, palaces and the like.

In two further companion chapters (V, VI) Willet writes on “looking at” and “understanding” African sculpture, the medium within African art he selects for special attention. Often, he notes, the supreme values employed by museum collectors and curators of African art have been the rarity or the uniqueness of an object. By this process a serious bias enters our perception of African art that ignores how important our tacit knowledge is in our evaluation of a piece of Western art. In African sculpture the full complement of background ideas must be understood too if one is to make a serious and correct evaluation. Lengthy reviews of careful investigations into indigenous aesthetics follow, including work like Thompson’s analysis of Yoruba art values. The distinction of religious and ordinary art; the importance of scale, proportion, and other formal determinants of mood and expression are reviewed in careful detail. Lastly, to debunk the myth of the anonymous artist in African art, Willet is especially insistent that the artist himself brings a force into a stylistic tradition, interpreting it for his generation.

A final chapter (VII) extends these valuable perspectives into contemporary African art. In reading this richly, yet appropriately illustrated work (with 261 closely documented reproductions) this reviewer at least gets the impression that the study of African art has matured alongside serious work in other traditions. A highly-recommended work.

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One of the difficulties of discussing a book such as this lies in deciding for whom it is produced. If it is intended to be an introduction to Cameroon for the general reader, it provides the kind of up to date information which is unavailable in print elsewhere in an accessible form which makes it extremely useful. If however it is intended to be more than a guide book to Cameroon its usefulness is more problematic.

If one turns to Professor LeVine’s earlier work on Cameroon “From Mandate to Independence”, one is impressed by the process by which he provides a causal analysis of crucial aspects of Cameroonian reality by way of an historical explanation; the nature of German and French colonialism, the particular nature of the relationship of the Southern Cameroons to Nigeria and the United Kingdom, and the close relationship between President Ahidjo and the French Government following their suppression of the U.P.C.

This analysis forms the starting point of the present work; the difficulty lies in finding any analysis of the post-independence period. There is valuable information on Trade Union and Co-operative Groups, the recent political changes in West Cameroon, and the execution of Ernest Ouandie and the imprisonment of Archbishop Ndongmo last year. Is this sufficient? No, because the explanation of these events does not emerge out of an historical account of colonialism in Cameroon, it requires, as well, a structural analysis of Cameroonian society today.

If I may take two instances which I think illustrate the point: the replacement of John Ngu Foncha by Solomon Muna as Vice-President is dealt with very briefly by Professor LeVine as though it were a game of political musical chairs. It may have been that as well but in spite of Foncha's dispute with the K.N.D.P. it does have to be explained in the light of his position, even if only in popular rhetoric, as one of the "architects of Reunification", and the fact that the U.C. had supposed that he had at least potentially the ability to attract U.P.C. support, a supposition that was certainly mistaken after 1966. If it is regarded as an isolated example of the exercise of President Ahidjo's power, the removal of Dr. Fonlon, another prominent West Cameroonian, from the Federal Ministry of Health this year, is also another isolated example of the same phenomenon. In order to make sense of these events, so that one does more than engage in political gossip, one does need at least the beginning of an explanation of President Ahidjo's position in terms of his relationship to France and the East Cameroonian elite, not so much in terms of textual analysis of the Federal Constitution.

The other example I would like to deal with, shows even more clearly the necessity for providing an explanation of Cameroon today in terms other than those of a series of isolated events. In Professor LeVine's account of the changes that are taking place in the Cameroonian educational system as a result of Reunification he says in conclusion "Nevertheless Cameroon's educational system is being adapted, however slowly, to the realities of unification and the developmental needs of the country" (p. 77). There is a tendency in writing about Cameroon to substitute judgements of how far Reunification is or is not proceeding as planned for an analysis of the reality which this extract exemplifies. More important is the fact that summed up in a bromide is a situation of great strain, periodic crises and interesting experiments.

Professor LeVine's study shows that, however competent, political analysis of this kind has limits as an explanatory method. Perhaps Cameroonian circumstances illustrate these limitations more clearly than would other situations. In a one party state where any opposition tendencies have neither the desire nor the opportunity to declare themselves in public this kind of analysis becomes even more than usual the frantic collecting of fragments of political gossip. The trouble is that in this kind of political situation the availability of gossip is decreasing. The alternative approach is to wait for a visible crisis, a Minister being dismissed for example, and accumulate these instances until a pattern emerges. But patterns do not emerge from examples like that and there is a tendency, as Professor LeVine's book shows, to concentrate on having a description of the most recent events as though being up to date had a special significance. Of course it is important to be aware of what is happening now but one assumes that the significance of the current event is different for the