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The Quicksand War

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Bodard, Lucien. *The Quicksand War*.

Boston: Little, Brown, 1967. 372 p.

Patrick O'Brian, the translator and introducer, has telescoped Lucien Bodard's two works, *L'Enlèvement (The Bogging Down)* and *L'Humiliation*, into one excessively detailed volume concerning Vietnam during the crucial period 1946-1950. The translator has no doubt illustrated the attitudes of mind, the goodwill and idealism, the incompetence, the muddle, and plain graft that were characteristic of Indochina during those years. He deals with the efforts of the French, and particularly of the French Army, to grapple with the situation, to attempt to recover, in spite of American opposition, what the French regarded as their property. There follow the detailed accounts of military successes and defeats, the rise of the centrifugal forces that are still tearing the country to pieces, and the action in 1950 when the highly organized invaders flooded into North Vietnam from bases in Communist China. Although the author's local knowledge and extremely long experience "on the scene" are fully documented, this reviewer feels that the excessive amount of detail accorded the battles, marches, routes, etc., tends to fog the general picture. Having plodded through, however, the reader will have a better insight into the what and why of Vietnam.

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Carey Jones, N.S. *The Anatomy of Uhuru*. New York: Praeger, 1967. 231 p.

During this day and age, when so many axe-grinding authors are turning out so many books, one approaches a work with a title such as *The Anatomy of Uhuru* with some trepidation, concerned with who the good and bad guys are going to be. Mr. N.S. Carey

Jones provides a pleasant surprise by treating a complex and controversial chain of historical events in such an objective and unbiased manner that it soon becomes obvious to the reader that there doesn't always have to be someone or some group today to blame for a situation; instead there can be shared responsibilities. The subtitle indicates the scope which the author covers in a direct manner: *Dynamics and Problems of African Independence in an Age of Conflict*. Using Kenya as the backdrop for the examination of ethnological tribal influences and of the contributions and the complications produced by European and Asian minorities, Mr. Carey Jones interprets the amorphous Mau Mau movement, land reform programs, the difficulties of a growing population, tribal conflicts during independence struggles, and many other economic, political, and social facets with erudite skill. Although written about a contemporary situation, this is a book which should weather well the trials of historical perspective. It is filled with provocative philosophical insights into the African scene and is must reading for those who are concerned with African affairs. The author suggests that emerging African independence bears a resemblance to a Greek tragedy. In summation, he analyzes the alternatives open to African political leaders: alignment with the West, communism, or nonalignment.

To quote:

Independence may be unfortunate for the "ordinary" African but, if his leaders are wise and have any regard for his interest, they will take shelter under the wings of the West. If they are more concerned with "African personality" than the African they will have the worst of all worlds.

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