

These scenes continue to link soundscapes in the digital worlds and nightclubs in contemporary Senegal, which draw from Francophone and Lusophone Africa, to the hemispheric Americas. Shain's careful attention to the often undervalued and misinterpreted Afro-Cuban movement in Senegal humbles the canonized titans of Black Atlantic music geographies. We come to learn that music producer Nick Gold's interest in pre-revolutionary Cuban music began in Senegal, and then led to his wildly celebrated Buena Vista Social Club project.

Shain's book takes a refreshing approach to the construction of national cultural identity, demonstrating how what is 'Senegalese' is an ongoing conversation with the diaspora, West African regional actors and global musical trends, as well as a constant evaluation of 'the indigenous' or 'authentic' both in Senegal and in Cuba. At every step, he details how new cultural moments in what is trendy, revolutionary or stale are dependent on the broader political, economic and social context, yet are always on an unpredictable trajectory.

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Susan Williams, *White Malice: The CIA and the Covert Recolonization of Africa*. New York NY: PublicAffairs (hb US\$35 – 978 1 5417 6829 1). 2021, 651 pp.

*White Malice* by Susan Williams is a sweeping account of the US Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA's) infiltration of Africa's struggle for independence in the 1950s and 1960s. Williams details various CIA activities – from gathering intelligence on, and even funding, American organizations supporting African liberation, to spying on the United Nations (UN), to buying off political elites in newly independent Ghana, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The bulk of Williams' account, however, focuses on the CIA's role in the assassination of Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba. The author's extensive research corrects findings from a 1975 US Senate investigation (the Church Committee) into Lumumba's death, which determined that the CIA's operations in the DRC between 1960 and 1961 were 'limited in scope and run by a small number of officers in the field' (p. 506).

Williams' work reveals the US government's longstanding interest in Lumumba's ouster. The Office of Strategic Services, the precursor to the CIA, had a station in the Belgian Congo whose mission was to protect the export of uranium (p. 30), especially from the Shinkolobwe mine, run by the Belgian multinational Union Minière du Haut Katanga. The first known recommendation from a US official to overthrow the democratically elected government came from the US ambassador to Belgium, William Burden, on 19 July 1960, less than three weeks after the country's independence. *White Malice* is a claustrophobic glimpse into Lumumba's world, caught between

Belgian-backed secessionists in Katanga and hostile US officials determined to portray the prime minister as irrational and pro-Soviet.

Williams deftly shows that the CIA 'played, in this hunt [for Lumumba], a more important role than the Church Committee report' (p. 389) suggests. She effectively counters claims by CIA officer Larry Devlin that he was 'not a major assistance' (p. 390) in tracking down Lumumba, and that once Lumumba was reimprisoned, the CIA was 'off the whole affair'. An expense report for a third-country agent sent to the location of Lumumba's prison shows Devlin's claims to be 'a tissue of lies' (p. 390). Nonetheless, a full account of the events surrounding Lumumba's death remains frustratingly elusive; the author notes that 'a number of requests for the release of files relating to CIA operations and officials in Africa in the late 1950s and early 1960s ... have been largely unsuccessful' (p. 508).

While the liberation struggle in the DRC takes centre stage, *White Malice* also tells the story of the deteriorating relationship between Ghana's first leader, Kwame Nkrumah, and the US government. Nkrumah believed that the decolonization of Congo was inextricable from Africa's independence as a whole; this found him on the opposite side to the West in Leopoldville. But Ghana's founding father faced conspiracies at home as well. Despite Nkrumah's best efforts to disabuse the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations of the notion, the US government became convinced that his country was 'the first Soviet satellite in Africa' (p. 483). A US National Security Council briefing from 27 May 1965 stated: 'we may have a pro-Western coup in Ghana soon. Certain key military and police figures have been planning one for some time ... the plotters are keeping us briefed' (p. 491). Nkrumah was overthrown less than a year later.

The author convincingly lays out the scale of CIA infiltration into American organizations and academic institutions focused on African independence, but she often reserves judgement regarding their effectiveness. Indeed, 'influence' – used so often in geopolitical discussions today – is often in the eyes of the beholder. In the case of Lumumba's assassination and Nkrumah's overthrow, influence is clear; whether CIA funding for certain authors or organizations had any effect, the author often concedes, is difficult to prove.

*White Malice* is written as a fast-paced account of CIA covert operations, clearly intended for both a generalist and a specialist audience. As such, the book covers push factors excellently, but pull factors – how local actors drew in outside powers to enhance their domestic positions – receive less analysis. We catch glimpses of such episodes: Ghana's finance minister trying to win over US officials by telling them that 'the Soviets had established a foothold in Ghana, which he deplored' (p. 439); or Angola's Holden Roberto visiting the USA in 1961 to 'campaign for American support' (p. 456). Where we do get analysis, the author is curiously dismissive of local actors' role in various conspiracies. In his memoir, CIA case officer Devlin writes that the Congolese secessionist in South Kasai, Albert Kalonji, 'was seeking American support to overthrow Lumumba' (p. 221) and 'wasn't the only one'. Williams dismisses this claim: '[G]iven that Devlin and other CIA officials were actively inspiring Kalonji ... this statement was disingenuous at best.'

*White Malice* is an invaluable contribution to our understanding of America's role in the decolonization of Africa. And with the war in Ukraine and 'great power

competition' discourse on the rise, Williams' book is a timely reminder of the dangers inherent in Cold War mentalities. US officials working on Africa would do well to remind themselves of America's not-too-distant past.

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Azmi Bishara, *Egypt: Revolution, Failed Transition and Counter-Revolution*. London: I. B. Tauris (hb £90 – 978 0 7556 4590 9). 2022, 731 pp.

This impressively detailed work of scholarship represents a rich resource for anyone looking to understand the political dynamics of the revolution and counter-revolution in Egypt. Bishara draws on a wide array of sources, including interviews and focus groups with protagonists as well as news reports, books and reports in English and Arabic. The text is clearly and directly written, engaging thoroughly with the academic literature around democratic transitions without drowning in jargon or descending into scholasticism.

Evidently any short review of a work of 700 pages is going to miss out on a great deal, so I will concentrate here on the crux of Bishara's argument and its political implications. His core concern is to assess what went wrong in the 'failed transition' and draw up a balance sheet of the role of key protagonists. The act of revolutionary drama that culminated in the removal of Mubarak by his own generals on 11 February 2011 had a dual nature, Bishara argues:

The first was a broad, popular, civil revolution with a democratic character. The second was a military coup carried out by the army against Mubarak. We might say that the history of the post-revolutionary transitional period is the history of a struggle between the revolution and the covert coup. In the end, it was the coup that triumphed. (p. 360)

The dual character of the transitional period reflected the interaction of two powerful features in the new political landscape: 'the control of the military and the powerful entry of the Egyptian people into the public sphere and spaces' (p. 370). As Bishara notes, the novelty lay in the emergence of 'the people' as a political actor. 'This was a totally new variable. The question now was whether that force in the public sphere called "the people" would support democratization or turn conservative, fearful of stability repelled by the anarchy of change' (p. 370).

So why did things go wrong from the point of view of ensuring a democratic transition? Bishara explores several interrelated factors. The 'revolutionary forces' were not only taken by surprise by the onset of a revolutionary situation and had no plan for the 'day after' (p. 368); they also 'did not possess sufficient knowledge about how the state and its agencies worked, which for the army