

Law, Custom and Social Order

The Colonial Experience in Malawi and Zambia

MARTIN CHANOCK

Martin Chanock explores the historical formation of customary law, treating its emergence as part of the history of the social and economic transformation of African societies under colonial rule. The book thus shows how African ideas, aspirations and activities regarding law were shaped by interaction with the legal ideas of the British colonisers, their understanding of African societies, and the judicial institutions of the colonial state.

These thematic considerations are illustrated by studies of how the customary law developed alongside criminal law in colonial society in Malawi and Zambia as part of the moral weaponry of a changing social order, and more specifically by describing the role of the customary law of the family in conflicts between men and women in the new colonial political economy.

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