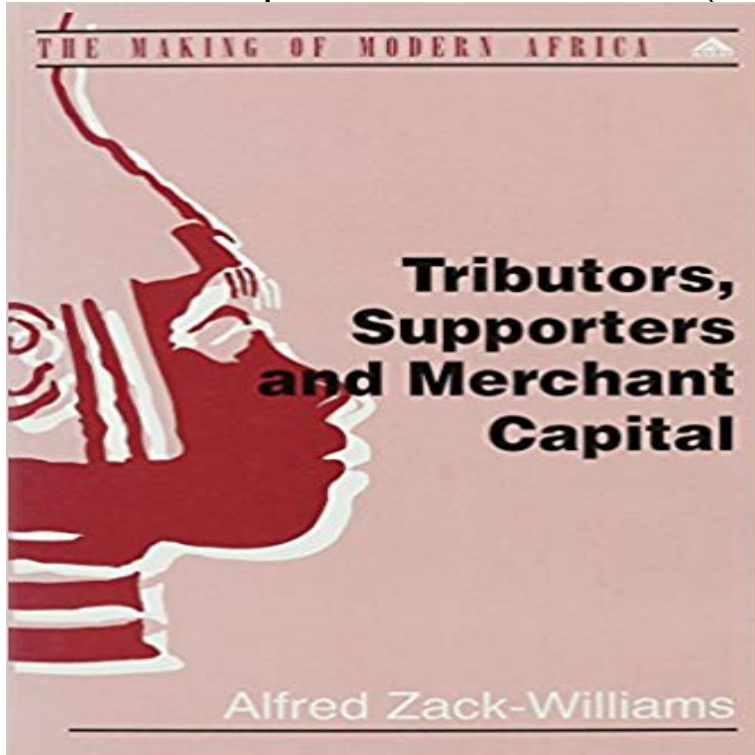


Tributors, Supporters and Merchant Capital: Mining and Underdevelopment in Sierra Leone (Making of Modern Africa)



This study concerns the nature of the Sierra Leone social formation, particularly the structure of the diamond industry. Contributing to the debate on Third World underdevelopment, it specifically analyzes how diamond mining led to the generation of underdevelopment in Sierra Leone. The author concludes that the social formation of the nation epitomizes the articulation of both capitalist and pre-capitalist modes. The first chapter is a critical analysis of some of the theories of underdevelopment in the Third World. Subsequent chapters trace the process whereby Sierra Leone became dominated by merchant capital, identifying modes of production within the non-diamond sectors of the economy and relating these to the role of merchant capital within these sectors. It attempts to locate the specific modes of production within the diamond industry; the role of merchant capital within the industry; and the role that diamond mining has played in generating underdevelopment in Sierra Leone. The analysis illuminates the process of capital drain from Sierra Leone as a result of diamond mining and the effect mining has had on agriculture, in regard to both subsistence and cash crop production.

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