

Finalist for the 2019 Albert J. Raboteau Prize for Best Book in Africana Religions

A genuinely significant contribution to the historiography of French Cameroon and adds to the research on Christianity, family, masculinity and intimacy, power and the state, as well as colonialism.

*Natalia Zawiejska, Jagiellonian University,
Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*

A very useful book for a social history of Africa course ... and because the exposition is so lucid and the comparative case so interesting, for historians of gender, religion, and law in colonial contexts.

Barbara Cooper, Rutgers University

Between the two World Wars, African Catholic and Protestant evangelists repurposed Christianity to challenge local and foreign governments in the French-administered League of Nations Mandate of Cameroon. In this book, Walker-Said shows how African catechists, pastors, priests, nuns, and other Christian leaders transformed foreign missionary societies into profoundly local religious institutions with indigenous ecclesiastical hierarchies and devotional social and charitable networks, devising novel authority structures to control resources and govern cultural and social life. Contesting forced labour and authoritarian governance as threats to family stability and community integrity, these men and women renovated doctrines on conjugal complementarity, social equilibrium, and family stability to forge local spiritual and charismatic movements to renew family and community structures. Casting new light on the ways in which family intimacies and kinship ties constituted the force of community resistance to the devastating changes colonialism wrought in the private sphere, this history also demonstrates the relevance of faith in the midst of a tumultuous series of forces arising out of the colonial situation.

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