The Fruits of Freedom in British Togoland

The end of the First World War saw the former German protectorate of Togoland split into British- and French-administered territories, and by the late 1940s, a political movement known as Ablɔɖe (meaning ‘freedom’ in the Ewe language) called for the reunification of British and French Togoland into an independent multi-ethnic state. Despite its efforts, the United Nations trust territory of British Togoland was ultimately merged with the Gold Coast to become part of independent Ghana; three years later French Togoland achieved a separate independence as Togo.

Based on interviews with former political activists and their families, access to private papers and a collection of oral and written propaganda, this book examines the history behind the failed project of Togoland reunification. Kate Skinner challenges the marginalisation of the Togoland question from popular and academic analyses of post-colonial politics and explores present-day ramifications of the contingencies of decolonisation.

Kate Skinner is a lecturer in the History of Africa and Its Diasporas at the University of Birmingham.
For Simon, Nina and Tommy
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The Fruits of Freedom in British Togoland

Literacy, Politics and Nationalism, 1914–2014

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Cambridge University Press
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A Note on Orthography

Ewe (Eʋe) is a tonal language with many dialectical variations. In the later nineteenth century, it was transcribed by missionaries and underwent a process of standardisation. In this book, key Ewe terms have been rendered in standard Ewe, using characters from the International Phonetic Alphabet. Place names and personal names have been rendered in their present-day English and French forms, although I have added comments in the footnotes where I think that further details are particularly important to readers’ understanding. The language itself should properly be written ‘Eee’ but in this book I have used ‘Ewe’ because this is now normal practice in Ghana.