

Die Übersetzung des Swahili-Textes wurde von Dammann sehr sorgfältig ausgeführt, wobei er sich eng am Urtext orientiert hat und trotzdem die Lebendigkeit von Lumwas Darstellung in die deutsche Wiedergabe hat einfließen lassen. Eine besondere Stärke der Publikation sind die reichhaltigen Anmerkungen, die das immense Wissen Dammanns um Geschichte, Sprachen sowie die geistigen und materiellen Kulturen Ostafrikas widerspiegeln.

Die lebendige Schilderung macht die Publikation in Verbindung mit den ergänzenden und erläuternden Anmerkungen zu einer sehr schätzenswerten zeitgeschichtlichen Informationsquelle nicht nur für Missionshistoriker. Es wäre zu wünschen, daß noch mehr solcher von Afrikanern verfaßten Texte publiziert werden, um das Übergewicht europäischer Geschichtsschreibung über Afrika etwas abbauen zu helfen.

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ROGER PFISTER: *INTERNET FOR AFRICANISTS AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN AFRICA: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNET AND A COMPREHENSIVE COMPILATION OF RELEVANT ADDRESSES*; 1996, BASEL, BERN: SWISS SOCIETY OF AFRICAN STUDIES, BASLER AFRIKA BIBLIOGRAPHIEN; 140 pp., DM 28.00

Scientists make use of the Internet for quite some time now. In the humanities it has only recently become accepted more widely. The Swiss Society of African Studies reacted sceptically when Roger Pfister first introduced his project. In his preface, Beat Sottas, the society's president freely admits that their committee was "wondering about such a project", but that finally the "initiative turned out to be highly significant at the time being." (Pfister 1996:1).

Pfister is well aware that many of those interested in Africa and African studies are not very familiar with computers and even less with the Internet. Those who already use the Internet frequently, know how laborious it is to find the exact thing one is looking for. With his publications he has opened the window to this new medium for everybody.

The book is divided into two parts. Part A offers a comprehensive introduction to the Internet and its applications. The author explains how to join the net, what World Wide Web (WWW), Gopher, File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Telnet, and Electronic Mail (e-mail) are, and which services they provide. The structure of addresses and common abbreviations are explained. Pfister introduces the reader to mailing lists, news or discussion groups, and offers some insights into the most frequently used search engines, tools that help the user of the Internet to find information on any topic. Titles found most helpful by the author are marked with an asterisk in the bibliography (28). Most helpful are the lists of abbreviations and country codes.

In Part B Internet addresses are grouped into 24 categories (some of them are: art, associations, commercial, country homepages, education/educational institutions, governmental organizations, journals, languages, libraries, media, music, non-governmental organizations, parties, religion, research). Pfister offers the URL, and/or Telnet, snail-mail and e-mail address, keywords describing the contents of the services and, sometimes, a short abstract. The subject and regional indexes refer to the keywords and offer a quick approach to the more than 700 entries.

Only four of the five entries on African languages are related to Swahili. All of these Swahili-Internet-sites are located in universities in the United States. Probably the most important web sites for Swahilists is the Kamusi Project, hosted by Yale University.

The majority of entries under education/educational institutions are North-American and European universities, and some African universities. Although the most important institutions where Swahili is taught are already included, they are not easily identified. The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), or the Institut für Afrikanistik and Äthiopistik at the University of Hamburg are summarized under the keywords "African Studies" and "University". Some addresses are missing. Pfister cannot be blamed for this lack, because the net changes rapidly and new participants join daily. Especially for African institutions, universities, and institutes the Internet increasingly becomes an important means of access to the scientific community. A problem is that addresses change sometimes. If one tries to contact such a site, one will most probably only get the message that there is an error occurring and the address cannot be located.

Nevertheless, this is without doubt a very useful booklet, which will help anybody interested in any field of African studies to gain easier access to the Internet. Because of the rapid change and growth of the net, we must ask for a continuation of this important work, and we can only hope that someone willing to do it may find the necessary support. Future editions of "Internet for Africanists" should also be offered online: With easy retrieval for the entries; detailed keyword description not only of general homepages, but of linked pages, too; direct links to all the sites included in the catalogue - as for example at "Karen Fung's African Links" (www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/guide.html). The latter, however, is not well structured, and just a long list of Africa related sites. An online address service would offer all the assistance made possible by the medium Internet.

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