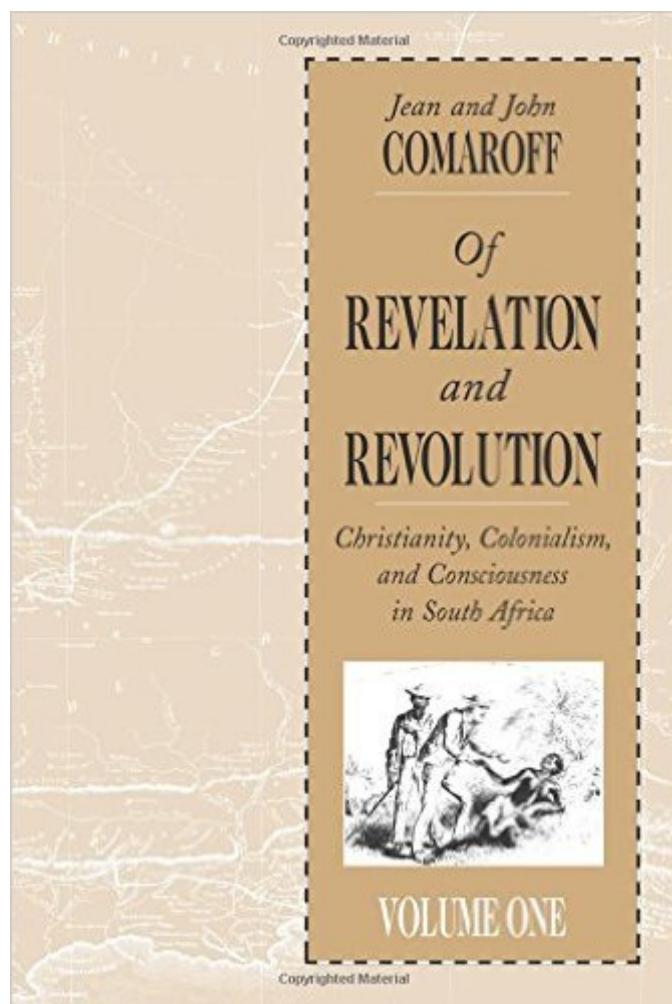


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# Of Revelation And Revolution, Volume 1: Christianity, Colonialism, And Consciousness In South Africa



## Synopsis

"Defining their enterprise as more in the direction of poetics than of prosaics, the Comaroffs free themselves to analyze a vivid series of images and events as objects of analysis. These they mine for clues to the 19th-century contents of the British imagination and of Tswana minds. They are themselves imagining the imagination of others, and they do the job with characteristic aplomb....The first volume creates an appetite for the second."â "Sally Falk Moore, American Anthropologist

## Book Information

Series: Of Revelation and Revolution (Book 1)

Paperback: 434 pages

Publisher: University of Chicago Press; 1 edition (July 9, 1991)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0226114422

ISBN-13: 978-0226114422

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (1 customer review)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,003,279 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #438 inÂ Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Colonialism & Post-Colonialism #454 inÂ Books > History > Africa > South Africa #551 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Africa

## Customer Reviews

Jean and John Comaroffâ™s Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa is a self-described âœhistorical anthropology of cultural confrontationâ• (1991:xi) that examines the interaction between Nonconformist Protestant missionaries and the Southern Tswana during the early nineteenth century. A simplified version of the Comaroffsâ™ thesis might run as follows: part and parcel of the European missionary endeavor among the Tswana was an attempt to transform the Tswana people on a most basic level. The changes introduced by the missionaries penetrated all aspects of Tswana life, from the way they practiced agriculture, to marriage and rainmaking rituals. Although these changes helped to cultivate dispositions favorable to the political economy of colonization, they were also fundamental components in the way that the Tswana enacted resistance against their colonizers. Implicit in the

Comaroffsâ™ thesis is a version of the Hegelian dialectic: as the missionaries engaged in their program of transformation, colonizing the consciousness of the Tswana, they unwittingly planted the seeds of a self-reflexive perspective through which the Tswana began to see themselves as distinct from their colonizers, and would eventually attempt to overcome this alienation through resistance. Despite an underlying current of Hegelian dialectic, the overt philosophical concern of the Comaroffs lies in the concept of hegemony. As understood by the Comaroffâ™s, hegemony is âœthat order of signs and practices . . . that come to be taken-for-granted as the natural and received shape of the world and everything that inhabits itâ• (1991:23). Hegemony, although part of ideology, is distinct from it.

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