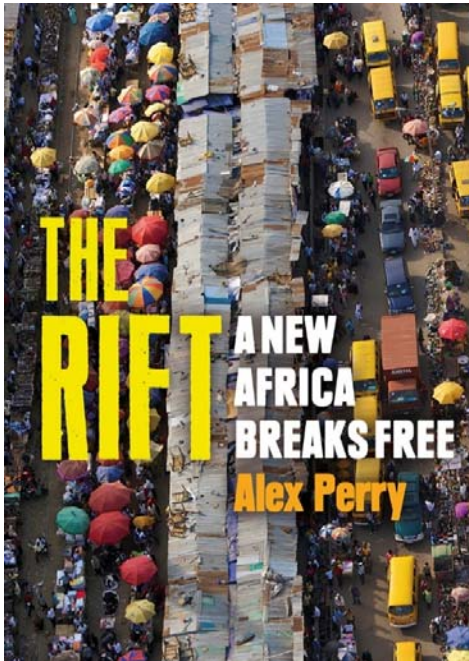


The Literacy Lowdown: The Rift



A level geography students, remember, you should:

- undertake wider reading
- use factual texts, discursive / creative material

Summary

This book challenges your preconceptions about Africa starting with the point “even when foreigners alight on truth, too often speaking up for Africa has become speaking *for* it and defending Africa’s interests has become *deciding* them.”

The Virungas mountains in the Great Rift Valley are “fiery peepholes into tectonic fissure”, which will one day “rend Africa in two from Eritrea down to Mozambique”.

A metaphor for socio-economic change and a growing divergence in understanding between Europe and Africa.

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Specification links

AQA 3.2.1.2 Unequal flows of people, money, ideas, and technology within global systems.

Edexcel 3.7 Globalisation has led to increases in development but widening development extremities.

OCR 5.a. Food is a geopolitical commodity.

WJEC 3.2.1 Globalisation, migration, and a shrinking world.

Key quotes

“The question of whether aid can harm is rarely raised. As little thought is given to the paradox that haunts even the best aid: that by doing good, by finding a noble purpose in the lives of others, you can end up subtracting that purpose from those lives; that by trying to liberate others, you may diminish them.” (p25)

“News began filtering through to Christendom of a Muslim king [the Mali empire] in Africa of almost impossible wealth. Europe’s reaction would set the tone for centuries.” (p54)

“The [1884] conference participants took a continent of more than 150 nations with porous boundaries and redrew it – literally, applying rulers and pencils to a map.” (p65)

“The bases seemed to symbolise the dilemma confronting all assistance. By designating one people as able to help and another as in need of that help, empowerment programmes could disempower.” (p103)

“Over time, lower levels of the Nigerian state learned to take their lead from their political masters...perhaps the greatest damage done was to public trust. Politicians lied, banks stole, heads of industry bribed, even football players fixed – and the infection spread.” (p263)