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Nota di contenuto

Preliminary material / D. Van Den Bersselaar -- Chapter One. Introduction: Foreign imports, local meanings / D. Van Den Bersselaar -- Chapter Two. The rise of Gin / D. Van Den Bersselaar -- Chapter Three. Becoming the king of drinks / D. Van Den Bersselaar -- Chapter Four. 'Bird Gin' AND 'Money Gin': Brands and marketing / D. Van Den Bersselaar -- Chapter Five. Poison or medicine? Changing perceptions of dutch gin / D. Van Den Bersselaar -- Chapter Six. 'Your very good health!' Gin for an independent west Africa / D. Van Den Bersselaar -- Chapter Seven. Schnapps gin from modernity to tradition / D. Van Den Bersselaar -- Bibliography / D. Van Den Bersselaar -- Index / D. Van Den Bersselaar.

Sommario/riassunto

Imported schnapps gin has a remarkable history in West Africa. Gin was imported in great quantities between 1880 and World War I, when its consumption showed access to the modern, international world. Subsequently schnapps was transformed into a good that signified traditional, local culture. Today, imported schnapps has high status because of its importance for African ritual and as symbol of the status of chiefs and elders, but actual consumption is limited. This book explores this unexpected trajectory of commoditisation to investigate how imported goods acquire specific local meanings. This analysis of consumption and marketing of gin contributes to our understanding of patterns of consumption, rejection and appropriation within processes of identity formation, elite formation, and the redefinition of community in colonial and postcolonial West Africa.