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### BOOK REVIEWS

**Dambudzo Marechera, 4 June 1952 — 18 August 1987: Pictures, Poems, Prose, Tributes** [cover title: **Dambudzo Marechera, 1952-1987**] *Compiled and edited by Flora Veit-Wild and Ernst Schade*. Harare, Baobab Books, 1988, 36 pp., illus., ISBN 0-7974-0838-X, Z\$8.80.

This slim book is an interesting tribute to the controversial Zimbabwean writer, Dambudzo Marechera. It is a collection of poems, extracts from the author's prose, tributes from fellow Zimbabwean writers and European critics. The book is attractively presented, with a number of excellent black and white photographs of Marechera, in different poses and contexts. What emerges from this tribute is a moving picture of a social misfit — a man who was determined to live out a romantic image of the writer in exile from his own people and community.

Marechera's paranoia is clearly evident in his writing. His pungent wit is evident in, for example, the poem 'Identify the Identity Parade'. His mastery of the English language is economically conveyed in the extract from the unpublished work, *The Concentration Camp*, entitled 'What's Wrong with a Cockroach Anyway?' (pp. 4-5).

The most striking section of this book is entitled 'Dambudzo Marechera interviews himself' (pp. 6-8). In it, the principal motivating factors in his life, with regard to his writing, are revealed, in particular, his hatred of his own background: — 'In my own case I have been influenced to a point of desperation by the dogged though brutalized humanity of those among whom I grew up' (p. 6). Indeed, the grossness of urban ghettos pervades *The House of Hunger* and *Black Sunlight*. His description of his early years in Rusape is very moving.

Perhaps the most fascinating comments Marechera makes relate to the whole question of language. The untimely death of his father in a traffic accident and the family's subsequent eviction led to his overwhelming sense of insecurity.

What did it mean that father was dead? What did it mean not to have a home? It was the beginning of my physical and mental insecurity — I began to stammer horribly. It was terrible. Even speech, language, was deserting me. I stammered hideously for three years. Agony (p. 7).

Marechera rejected Shona because it 'was part of the ghetto daemon I was trying to escape'. He continues:

Shona had been placed within the context of a degraded, mind-wrenching experience from which apparently the only escape was into the English language and education. The English language was automatically connected with the plush and seeming splendour of the white side of town. As far as expressing the creative turmoil within my head was concerned, I took to the English language as a duck takes to water. I was therefore a keen accomplice and student of my own mental colonisation (p. 7).

To redress this imbalance, like some of the writers of the *négritude* movement (Césaire in particular), Marechera exacted his revenge on the language of the colonizer, when he speaks of 'brutalizing it into a more malleable shape for my own purposes'. His wry humour emerges when he asserts,

For a black writer the language is very racist; you have to have harrowing fights and hair-raising panga duals [*sic*] with the language before you can make it do all that you want it to do. It is so for the feminists. English is very male. Hence feminist writers also adopt the same tactics. This may mean discarding grammar, throwing syntax out, subverting images from within, beating the drum and cymbals of rhythm, developing torture chambers of irony and sarcasm, gas ovens of limitless black resonance. For me this is the impossible, the exciting, the voluptuous blackening image that commits me totally to writing (pp. 7-8).

Marechera's choice of symbols and imagery reflects his own tortured existence.

*Dambudzo Marechera, 1952-87* provides some fascinating insights into the style and nature of Zimbabwe's most problematic writer, both from within and without. It is, therefore, a welcome addition to the corpus of Zimbabwean literature. What is, however, regrettable is the number of elementary spelling and grammatical mistakes in it — for example 'my hands shoots up' (p. 7); 'T. S. Elliot' (p. 15); 'The heart is a desert place, and the earth of piercing heat' (p. 29); and 'Day-to-day reality is therefore itself any [i.e. an] illusion created by the mass of our needs ...' (p. 36). Nevertheless, Flora Veit-Wild, Ernst Schade and Baobab Books are to be congratulated for the overall quality of the book.

It is also encouraging to note the establishment of a publishing house which, in addition to the University, can offer academics an outlet for the publication of their scholarly works.

University of Zimbabwe

M. Z. MALABA

**Patterns of Poetry in Zimbabwe** By Flora [Veit-]Wild. Gweru, Mambo Press, 1988, viii, 152 pp., illus., ISBN 0-86922-432-8, Z\$10.00 (p/b).

Flora Wild's recently published book, *Patterns of Poetry in Zimbabwe*, is a useful addition to the study of Zimbabwean poetry written in English, blending, as it does, some criticism, interviews with some of the younger Black Zimbabwean poets, and a selection of their poetry, some of which has not been published before.

Mrs Wild's introductory essay is conveniently subdivided, with separate sections on each of the seven poets she interviewed, namely, Chenjerai Hove, Musaemura Zimunya, Charles Mungoshi, Hopewell Seyaseya, Kristina Rungano, Albert Chimedza and Dambudzo Marechera. Her evaluation of the poets is neatly summarized in the following quotation:

Their weaknesses which I attempted to point out in detail earlier on, lie in their unsatisfactory craftsmanship, in the lack of poetical elaboration due to a certain lack of artistic competence and experience. They mostly fail to create a piece of writing which goes beyond the writer's personal feelings, intentions or sufferings (p. 28).

The author does point out — and, indeed, this is borne out by the interviews themselves — that part of the problem stems from the lack of a poetic tradition within which, or from which, the poet can define himself or herself. The historical reasons for this are well spelt out in the book.

The graver problem, however, that of artistic incompetence is, sadly, borne out in a large number of the poems given in the text. Charles Mungoshi, a noted

craftsman, points out some of the vigour that *must* go into, and form an integral part of, the creative process:

I have only got this one collection of poetry published (*The milkman doesn't only deliver milk*). When I was writing these poems I was trying to condense meaning in a few lines, it was an exercise for my prose writing. I kept on cutting to get utmost concentration. I wanted to find out in how many (or few) words I could put what I wanted to say. Of course there are differences. There are some poems, as you will have noticed, which are not that well shaped and condensed (p. 79).

The emphasis Mungoshi places on reworking one's material needs to be taken note of by many more Zimbabwean writers, who often leave the impression that they are content merely to spill their thoughts on to the page. Mungoshi's respect for the way in which words should be used is highly significant: 'Important for my writing was Hemingway, his way of writing a short story, of making it very, very short, the correct word at the correct place — and the rest silence . . .' (p. 81). That is why his poems and stories invite rereading, as each reading brings out 'different layers of meaning' (p. 81) — a crucial aspect in 'good' literature, but which is largely missing in Zimbabwean literature, as he himself points out.

Some of the other writers echo Mungoshi's sentiments, notably Zimunya and Marechera. Marechera's critique of the anthology *And Now the Poets Speak* is pertinent:

There you find the struggle with the feeling, if one has suffered, that the statement of one's suffering must necessarily be poetic. Now that is not so. The extent to which one has suffered through political oppression is not necessarily the substance of a poem (p. 135).

The rewards of paying greater attention to how language 'works' are evident in some of the poems found in *Patterns of Poetry*. Kristina Rungano, whose poems are often prosaic, does rise to the occasion in 'This Morning', which pulsates with passion, energy and desire, and brings to mind Senghor's love poems. Her use of imagery, here, is both rich and illuminating.

The finest poems in the book are those of Mungoshi and Zimunya. The latter's poetry is at its most vibrant when he is evoking the world of nature and rural life. 'My Home' reveals the poet's delight in the beauty of the Eastern Highlands, and his conscious identification with rural people. The rhythm of the poem conveys, aptly, his warm sentiments. Zimunya's robust sense of humour, which is evident in 'My Home', comes to the fore in 'Kisimiso (A Version of Christmas)'. The earthy nature of the poet's 'Kisimiso' phase seems to degenerate into gratuitous vulgarity in the *Country Dawns and City Lights* phase,\* and I tend to agree with Flora Wild's comment that these poems 'appear to be too intentional, too moralistic' (p. 64).

Dambudzo Marechera's keen intelligence is evident in his interesting interview, but the selection of his poetry that the reader is offered is rather disappointing. His most successful poems, like the sonnet 'Primal Vision', for example, seem to be the ones in which he, as it were, mocks himself, from without. Although the critic clearly thinks highly of Marechera's poetry, she does

\* M. B. Zimunya, *Country Dawns and City Lights* (Harare, Longman, 1985).

concede that 'at the end, his self-indulgence and exorbitant subjectivism prevent him from creating the kind of pure and immortal art he is aiming at' (p. 22).

The question of the writer's relationship with society as a whole is boldly enunciated by Hopewell Seyaseya, Albert Chimedza and Charles Mungoshi. Seyaseya also provides an apt retort to Ngugi's clamour for vernacular literature:

Another point: Ngugi wa Thiongo can say, you must write in your own language. For him it is alright. For no matter what he is going to write now, it will be translated into English. Whereas for people like me, if I want my voice to be heard, it is best to write in English (p. 94).

Writers must be free to choose how they write and what they write about. Some of the poets cited write both in English and Shona and use the medium which best conveys their thoughts and feelings at that particular point in time.

Mrs Wild, by and large, manages to convey her sentiments clearly, although the odd expression here and there reveals that English is not her mother tongue. Careful editing could, however, have ironed out clauses like: These statements are mainly based on J. Haasbroek's *English commentary of Shona love poetry* in collection mentioned in footnote 1 on page 18, in which he ends with the following perspective . . . (p. 19). More trying are inconsistencies and typographical errors made when referring to anthologies or individual poems, as in: 'A storm is brewing' (p. 15) and 'A Storm is Brewing' (p. 16); 'Up-in-arms' (p. 29) and 'Up in arms' (p. 35); '*Arrow of God and Things fall apart*' (p. 31), for example. Names have occasionally been misspelt — as in 'Ezekiel Mphalele' (p. 26), 'T. O. Mcloughlin' and 'S. Mutsvairo' (p. 31).

Nevertheless, as Professor Lewis Nkosi's Preface makes clear, 'for anyone wishing to achieve a certain measure of intimacy with the men and women who produce [the new Zimbabwean poetry], this book will undoubtedly prove to be a compulsive reading' (p. viii).

Mrs Wild is to be congratulated for editing these interviews with some of Zimbabwe's younger poets, and for providing a selection of their poems, which should serve as a good introduction to those who are unfamiliar with their work and to those who wish to discover what compelled these poets to write. Her publisher, Mambo Press, deserves credit for producing a well-bound volume with good quality paper.

*University of Zimbabwe*

M. Z. MALABA

**Better English: A Handbook on Common Errors** By M. Lewis and W. Masters. Harare, Longman Zimbabwe, 1987, 114 pp., illus., Z\$7.25.

The teacher of English in a second language situation is always faced with the temptation to collect errors. Many teachers have dauntingly large, some might even say impressive, collections of errors painstakingly amassed almost as a by-product of the language classroom process. Once the collection begins to run to thousands of examples rather than mere hundreds, the collector makes an assumption common to all collectors: that these errors must have some value.

The search for the value of the collection proceeds along predictable lines. As

is the case with matchbox labels, postage stamps, coins and the like, classification, often crude, seems the best way forward. Stamps, for example, have dates, gauges of perforation, gum type, paper, ink colour, block-faults, etc., as their taxonomic determiners. However, in the case of language errors, the question why they happen is of greater interest than their prevalence. The question why would seldom be posed of stamps, coins and matchbox labels, and, when it is asked (except in the case of oblique propaganda in ancient Greek and Roman coins), the answer is usually immediately apparent in the coin, stamp or label itself.

It is unfortunate that Lewis and Masters and Longman Zimbabwe fall into the trap of the zealous collector: the belief that the error can be explained by reference to itself. The authors split their copious collection in two: the first part is entitled 'Rules for Good Writing' and the second part is called a 'Dictionary of Common Errors'. It is not their collecting *per se* that is faulty but their analysis that is naive. Lewis and Masters have an extremely rudimentary understanding of linguistics, and no familiarity at all with the development of contrastive analysis, error analysis and interlanguage studies in ESL. The result is that teachers will be misled by this book. For example, we witness widespread confusion of the levels of language: on page 9 the reader is informed that pit and pity represent a noun-noun confusion. This is what it will look like to the L1 speaker of English (Longman neither involve an L2 author nor acknowledge any L2 or linguistic consultancy). But, contrary to the blurb on the back cover, such a classification does not 'explain why the errors are wrong'. The reason for the error in this example is, in fact, phonotactic and syllabic and is further from grammar than the authors may suppose: while English allows words to end with closed syllables, the CVCVCV (consonant-vowel) structure of Shona does not.

Furthermore, the examples are offered as citation forms (single uncontextualized forms) and this further reduces any sense that the volume is based on authentic, human-language exchanges. I can cite an actual example drawn from my own experience of the pit/pity type. A senior Shona-speaking colleague of mine had just delivered a superb lecture in English in which he broke new ground in the discipline in which he is an expert. As part of my congratulatory remarks afterwards, I said 'We all have our pet subjects'. He heard and understood that I had said 'petty'. The whole incident required some elaborate repair on my part.

It is significant that where Lewis and Masters come closer to an accurate analysis, the work improves. The lexical component (Part II) is valuable but the authenticity of some of the examples is questionable: were they really observed in real life or were they demanded from the intuitions of the authors, the students, colleagues or passers-by? I expect we shall never know.

This brings me to the whole subject of sampling. All language, spoken or written, takes place in a context. In this book we shall never know who was talking or writing to whom when these errors were perpetrated. In fact, no mention is made of the point at which 'errors' become acceptable as Zimbabwean English. If the work of Platt, Weber and Ho in Singapore can be regarded as a pointer,<sup>1</sup> a stage will have to be reached where phrases like 'cope up' or 'pick you at six' are accepted as legitimate Zimbabwean English in some measure. Lewis

<sup>1</sup> J. Platt, H. Weber, and M. L. Ho, *The New Englishes* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984).

and Masters seem locked into the right and wrong of prescriptivism in language and ignore any descriptive view of change in Zimbabwean English. The very title *Better English* invokes many assumptions.

In many ways the meandering nature of this book could not have been avoided: a book on errors should follow the completion of a survey of contemporary Zimbabwean English. At present, no one can state objectively the degree of prevalence of these errors in the English of Zimbabweans. We don't know the age of the perpetrators of the errors, nor, which is much more serious, have we any idea of the level of their language development when the collection was made. If the readers find some of the examples eccentric or like none they have ever encountered, this could be to do with the fact that the authors have taken them from speakers whose English is too poor to offer any systematic pattern of error. Singularity of this kind is not confined to a preference for grandiloquent terms — a frequent manifestation of pre-systematic errors.

A further problem is that the competence of the same error-makers varies from situation to situation. Indeed, even the time they have in which to produce a particular form has some bearing on their performance.<sup>2</sup> Generally, speakers have less time for the retrieval of forms than writers, and spoken/written would be a further valuable parameter for inclusion in collections of errors.

Some form of salvage might, in later editions, be undertaken by the publishers to compensate for flaws in the conception and unevenness in the presentation of this volume. A first step might be to discourage collectors of errors from publishing until their skills of taxonomy have been plumbed. A collection of errors looks temptingly like a manuscript. In the case of the present work a teachers' resource book written by a linguist could plaster over the cracks. That linguist will be hard pressed to account for the mixture of language levels and the absence of contrastive analysis and a level of discourse, to say nothing of the presence of (if one dares to use the word) errors.

Collectors will be collectors and one can expect with some confidence and trepidation that errors will soon be collected and managed or mis-managed using computers. One positive pointer is that computer software will, of its nature, invite the statement of some of classificatory parameters missing from this work.

*University of Zimbabwe*

W. E. LOUW

**Lost Chance: Southern Rhodesia 1945-58** By *H. Holderness* Harare, Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1985, 235 pp., ISBN 0-949932-88-4, Z\$6.95.

**Caught in the Crossfire** By *Patricia Chater* Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1985, 206 pp., 16 plates, ISBN 0-949932-82-5, Z\$6.50.

Although they are consecutive, not contemporaneous, accounts, to read together *Hardwicke Holderness's Lost Chance* and *Patricia Chater's Caught in the Crossfire* is to have most clearly illuminated the reasons for the failure of the White liberal movements in the then Rhodesia and the inevitability of a war to break the deadlock.

<sup>2</sup> S. Makoni, D. Phil. thesis in progress on Zimbabwean Interlanguage Grammars, to be submitted at Edinburgh University.

People like Hardwicke Holderness were the products of an education and a background that still aimed at the classical ideal of a 'good man'. As he himself says, they held to a 'kind of ethic which placed a high value on fair play, good manners, integrity, and deplored boasting, doing people down, questioning the umpire' (p. 17). Reading *Lost Chance* today one might be inclined to feel that some of the characters were too good to be true. But one would be wrong. They were, indeed, for the most part conditioned to what Aristotle calls 'a disposition to virtue and the performance of virtuous actions'. But they were equally conditioned to the Aristotelian ideal of 'the mean', of avoidance at all costs of extravagant emotions, ideas or actions. And that is why, ultimately, they failed to influence the turn of events in Rhodesia. Their commitment to what they saw as the right thing to do was sincere and deeply felt. They laid on the line their careers and their place in their own society. But to lay their lives on the line as well was to them inconceivable. Inconceivable because in a country ostensibly at peace one does not make that kind of sacrifice, and inconceivable because it would have meant openly crossing the colour line to fight against one's own kind. And as a result they lost out to those White Rhodesians who were prepared to lay their lives on the line to preserve a status quo which they saw as eminently desirable.

Although only briefly a member of Parliament, Holderness's position in the community and his personal qualities kept him in touch with the thinking on both sides. He writes from within, as a member of the governing élite. His record of the politics is lucid, and his account of the mutual interaction of the history, personality and environments of the period is fascinating. His book is immensely alive, immensely readable, and it presents a view all too easily forgotten, that of the White Rhodesian who did not agree with the Rhodesia Front. He knows it all, because he was there, and he has succeeded in recreating both the events and the moods of a crucial period in African history.

Patricia Chater, on the other hand, writes from without, from a unique position as a White who has been absorbed into the Black community and who writes out of a sympathetic perception of what it meant to be on the receiving end of government policies formulated without regard to those affected.

Originally attracted by a British newspaper account of partnership in action, Chater found herself ultimately at St Francis Mission, a small African religious community. After two years of living at the mission, she was sufficiently impressed by what she describes as 'a community living the Gospel fully, truly and joyfully' to join it as a member (p. 10). It is this background of a Christian, caring and spiritual community that gives extra weight to her account of the passionate conviction of the Africans whom she knew that their lives were a small price to pay for the right to be no longer second-class citizens in their own land. Like the White Rhodesians, they too laid their lives on the line, but theirs was an offensive, not a defensive, action and they were ultimately to succeed.

In the earlier background section one is made aware of the increasing polarization of the two sides, a polarization which causes Chater to present her account straightforwardly in terms of 'goodies' — the freedom fighters — and 'baddies' — the establishment. She allows the former no faults, the latter no virtues. The book is understated and carefully factual. Although, because of the role played by the members of the mission and their friends in the struggle, Chater was in touch with many of the 'big names' of the liberation war, she has chosen to



present her story from the personal angle, as it affected the lives of individuals. The wider events are seen in terms of their repercussions on members of the community and their relatives. But she does not dwell on what is past, and, unlike Holderness, she is able to end on a note of hope and encouragement, looking forward to the building of a new Zimbabwe.

*University of Zimbabwe*

ANNE GIBSON

**Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe** *By M. Lapsley*. Gweru, Mambo Press, Mambo Occasional Papers — Missio-Pastoral Series 16, 1986, 106 pp., ISBN 0-86922-407-7, Z\$7.31.

This is an important book on an important subject. The subject is the use of religion to legitimize a political system. The particular instance the author examines is the Anglican Church's support of the Smith regime between 1964 and 1980.

The first chapter focuses on UDI and its immediate aftermath, and the churchmen whose pronouncements are analysed are Bishop Skelton of Matabeleland, Bishop Alderson of Mashonaland, Dean Wood and Fr. Hugh Bishop. The second chapter deals with the pronouncements of Bishop Burrough of Mashonaland and Bishop Wood of Matabeleland on the Land Tenure Act, the new Constitution of 1969, and the World Council of Churches' Programme to Combat Racism. Chapter Three deals with the years 1972-80, as the independence struggle intensified, and the main churchmen considered are Bishop Burrough, Dean John Da Costa, and Fr. Arthur Lewis.

Of the churchmen treated in detail, nearly all are found wanting to some degree, and are considered to have supported (at least unwittingly) the Rhodesian government. Thus, in terms of the book's title, most are judged to have been co-opted into supporting Smith. The shining exception is Bishop Skelton, whose 'erudition, intellect and breadth' (p. 22) are frequently praised. His perception and courage were remarkable: 'Not since the days of Arthur Shearly Cripps, had an Anglican voice been raised so loudly in defence of the rights of the African majority' (p. 32). At the other end of the spectrum Lapsley places Fr. Lewis, Bishop Burrough and Dean Da Costa. They, and others to a lesser degree, are found deficient on various counts. They were too concerned with institutional interests. They deferred to the attitudes of White members of the Church because they provided the bulk of the Church's finances. They saw only individual acts of injustice and had no perception of the unjust system underlying everything. They succumbed to the official government propaganda about 'the communist threat'. They were too concerned with appearing neutral, too worried about the law and order issue, too obsessed with avoiding dissension within Church ranks. They identified too closely with the White community to be able to understand the Africans' concerns. All these issues are summarized in the conclusion, where Lapsley also makes an interesting comparison with the Roman Catholic Church which, in his opinion, fared rather better in this area.

The book is written from the standpoint of liberation theology about church

spokesmen who had no understanding of it. Indeed, Bishop Burrough's London sermon of 14 March 1976 (Appendix 6, pp. 95-8) seems a perfect instance of complete failure to understand the structural thinking or sociological analysis that underlies liberation theology. There is new material here, e.g. Appendix 5 (pp. 90-4), the notes of a confidential meeting on 13 May 1970 between Smith and representatives of the Anglican Church. The nine appendices (important sermons, letters or pronouncements of the churchmen discussed) provide an important resource. The book is a significant contribution to the history of the liberation struggle and also to Zimbabwean liberation theology which is surprisingly underdeveloped.

The book's major flaw is its title, for the book's focus is clearly not (as the author readily admits, p. 76) the Anglican Church as a whole. It is a study of the pronouncements of some prominent churchmen. Also on the debit side is the degree to which the author intrudes his own comments. Often the quotations are damaging enough in themselves and need no gloss. In addition, the book could have benefited from some discussion of the rise of liberation theology within Christianity generally. The acceptance of the structural analysis that underlies liberation theology has been gradual, grudging, and recent — cf. the sea change within Catholicism between Leo XIII (1891) and Medellín (1968), and the development within the World Council of Churches evident from its assemblies at Amsterdam (1948), Geneva (1966), Uppsala (1968) and Nairobi (1975). Rhodesia's isolation from this ferment does not excuse someone like Bishop Burrough, but it does make him comprehensible. Surprisingly, for something which began life as an MA thesis at the University of Zimbabwe, the technical apparatus is somewhat slipshod. Crucial quotes are unacknowledged; where, for instance, can one find Da Costa's letter to Bishop Burrough in which he confesses 'to not trusting [Fr. Lewis] one half inch' (p. 47)? There is no footnote 26 on page 69, which affects the following footnotes as well, and a fuller and more particular reference than just 'Harare Cathedral Archives' would have made material more easily recoverable.

*University of Zimbabwe*

P. GIFFORD

**Religious Development in African Identity** Edited by K. H. Petersen. Västervik, Ekblad, Scandinavian Institute for African Studies Seminar Proceedings 17, 1987, no price indicated.

This is a bad book but one still worth reading since it highlights the stagnancy of African religious studies. The papers given at this conference redig the same leached African soil, trying to extract one last crop of articles from it. Thus we find 'conversion' — the same old Morton/Fisher debate begun in Africa fifteen years ago — is continued here. We find African culture — the 'identity' of Africa used yet again as an apologia for all things African. For the rest, the papers focus in too fine detail on particular events, so that general implications cannot be drawn. They all appear to be too like chapters drawn from Ph.D. theses.

The exception to this is Terence Ranger, whose greatest gift is probably the ability to break moulds (including ones he has set himself). He provided the concluding paper to this conference. In it he highlights, with some courage, the

issues which lie behind the failure of this conference to produce anything new or exciting. In particular, he attacks 'African identity' as a fixed given in an authoritative discourse. He points to instances which show that such an 'identity' in pre-colonial times was fluid, and was pluralist. 'African identity' in contemporary Africa has become, however, a source of ideological oppression legitimizing the restrictiveness of the rural discourse and also the manner in which dictats are handed down from on high by the Party to the rural poor. He points out that a narrow, restricted view of 'African identity' is precisely what is used as an ideology in South Africa to legitimize the *bantustan* policy of separate development. If 'development' in Africa is not to be prescriptive, defined by government and imposed upon the rural poor, those poor have to be given the opportunities to create their own discourses so that they in turn can respond articulately to government.

Though he stops short of saying so, the implication of Ranger's paper is that conferences like this one are complicit with the dominant African bourgeoisie in creating a rigid, restricted African 'identity' which, being beyond question, masks the realities of what is happening in Africa. Thus, African religious studies has no means of doing something new, since its conclusions are prescribed by this ideology. It can only become creative again by becoming disrespectful.

*University of Zimbabwe*

D. MACKAY

**Development in Zimbabwe: The Role of The University**, Univ. of Oslo, Centre for International Development Studies, 1985, iii, 125 pp., no price indicated.

This publication consists of ten lectures delivered at the University of Oslo in June 1983 by members of the teaching staff of the nine Faculties of the University of Zimbabwe, together with a lecture by the late Professor W. Kekulawela, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kelaniya, on Universities and Development in Sri Lanka.

Publication was unfortunately and inevitably delayed, and many of the developments envisaged have happily taken place in the interval. But the document is a valuable indication of both basic principles and their implementation in the work of the University as it seeks increasingly and successfully to serve Zimbabwe. As such it will be very warmly welcomed by all those who have made it their chief aim to make the University an integral and effective force in the life of the nation ever since the founding of the University in 1955.

A few factual errors were noted. For example, it is stated that 'the total student population of the University was about 1 000 at the time of Independence in 1980' (p. 5). However, the *Principal's Annual Report* for 1980 indicates that there were 2 239 students. Also, the ninth and most recent Faculty of the University (Veterinary Science) was established as early as 1979, although, as stated on page 2, the first intake of students was in 1982.

The reviewer had the privilege of twice visiting the University, in 1981 and in 1986, and saw substantial evidence of its expansion along the lines envisaged by the contributors to the lectures here reviewed.

*General Assembly, Church of Scotland*

R. CRAIG