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### BOOK REVIEWS

**Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War, Volume One** Edited by Ngwabi Bhebe and Terence Ranger. Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1995, xi, 211 pp., ISBN 0-908307-36-5, Z\$60.

Much has been written about the liberation war. Most of the histories and the realities of the war have been mythologised and epic heroes have been created. Where documentaries have been produced, they have given a partisan view of the whole issue. Fiction has also tried but with limited success.

*Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War* is a clear departure from this tradition. It is a bold leap across the abyss of bias, partisanship and prejudices that many texts of this nature have fallen into. I write this review as an academic and ex-combatant who feels strongly about the issues raised here. As an ex-combatant I assess the book through the eyes of thousands of my fellow comrades who never got the opportunity to read and write.

The book is a result of a conference that was held at the University of Zimbabwe in 1991. It brought together former members of ZANLA, ZIPRA, Rhodesian Security Forces, politicians, scholars and theologians. Thus the papers in the book are drawn from scholars in a wide range of academic disciplines. It is an invaluable book for any person interested in Zimbabwe's immediate past and its relation with the present. For the layman it is a vast treasure full of hitherto unknown truths about the liberation war.

The book focuses on specific aspects of the liberation war through the eyes of ZANLA, ZIPRA and the Rhodesian Army. Some of the details are disgusting and repulsive but they are presented objectively as historical facts. This is the historical reality of the war: it has to be recorded accurately and be free of bias.

One outstanding feature about this book is its objectivity. It offers a fresh and original view of a war that has been mythologised and some people have made political capital out of it. The depth of its strength lies in that it is a document based on empirical evidence. It is the result of scientific enquiry using primary and secondary sources. Consider for example the depth of detail in Davis Moore's chapter, 'The Zimbabwe People's Army: Strategic innovation or more of the same?' or Jeremy Brickhill's chapter, 'Making peace with the past: War victims and the work of the Mafela Trust'. In both there is evidence of detailed fieldwork which gives credit to the final document.

The book serves as useful mapping ground for what has been covered so far. It also accepts its own limitations and shortcomings. For example, it argues that the infamous Auxiliary Forces of the Internal Settlement era must be chronicled no matter how unpalatable this may be. Other areas that need further research are gender and generation issues in the war. The editors mention other areas that have been overlooked like the role of the urban society, the Black businessman and woman, and White society in the liberation war.

*Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War* is a remarkable achievement in that it brings together diametrically opposite views and achieves what many books on the subject have failed to achieve; unity in diversity. In the

'Introduction', the editors seek to draw comparisons and contrasts in the liberation armies. While there are sharp differences, there are also striking similarities. For example, the recruitment patterns of ZANU and ZAPU are very similar in their phases. Both admit mistakes in the nascent phases of the armed struggle between 1965 and 1970. Both claim credit for the opening of the north-eastern front with Frelimo. Both experienced serious internal divisions due to 'layers' or 'generations' of guerrillas over the years. Both were preparing for conventional war in 1978 and 1979. Brickhill's reports of ZIPRA's strategies for conventional war are similar to ZANLA's plans in 1978, when sections of about ten men each operating independently were merged into platoons and operated in units of 30 to 40 men. In addition to this in ZANLA, Tanzanian-trained troops of 1977, 1978 and 1979 who were prepared for mobile warfare constantly talked about 'kujenga muzinga' (mounting heavy artillery). In both armies there were key proponents of unity, for example, the late General Tongogara (ZANU) and J. Z. Moyo (ZAPU).

Missing is Professor Roberts's paper which would have completed the triad of the major armies in the liberation war. Being aware of its value as a contribution to the Rhodesian side of the war, the editors give a long summary of this valuable paper. This paper is most important in that the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) was built around the Rhodesian Security Forces. Inclusion of this paper would have given us a better understanding of the ZNA as it is today because so much was inherited from that army and its traditions.

An interesting revelation is how deeply divided the Auxiliary Forces of the Internal Settlement era were. Part of this ambiguous force was under the Selous Scouts, another was supported by Internal Affairs and still another by the Special Branch which itself was deeply divided. The Auxiliary Forces commanded very little respect in the regular army and to ZANLA and ZIPRA they were more of a bother than a threat. Nonetheless they comprised an armed force that has to be examined in some detail.

David Moore's chapter looks at ZIPA from a different dimension altogether. He portrays it as a distinct fighting force, but ZIPA's brilliant successes on the field were not equated by political successes. This is why it finally collapsed in 1976. It lacked the political clout and guile that were characteristic of the older and more experienced politicians. Whatever ZIPA was, credit must be given to it for pushing the frontiers of the war deep into Zimbabwe in the short time that it existed.

Theresa Barnes's chapter, 'The heroes' struggle: Life after the liberation war for four ex-combatants', is a record of the feelings and views of four ex-combatants about the war. This chapter is a voice of the voiceless. So much has been said about the ex-combatants, so much has been speculated. They have been marginalized, yet they themselves have written so little. The few excerpts reveal traumas of the war and how some of them suffered in the hands of the enemy. It is sad to note that for most, the ordeal has continued into the post-war era. Despite their forbidding circumstances at present they are proud to have contributed to the liberation of their country. One of the ex-combatants had this to say, 'I don't regret that I joined the liberation struggle ... If I say I regret having joined the liberation

struggle, then I would be saying that I regret having liberated my country.' This is a poignant statement from a man who gave so much but got so little in return. The feelings expressed by the ex-combatants in Barnes's chapter make me search for my conscience that has been long lost in the ecstasy of liberation.

The work of the Mafela Trust outlined in Brickhill's chapter mentioned earlier, reveals that the traumas of the war are still very much alive for both the perpetrator and the victim. The work of the Mafela Trust is 'an attempt through field research, to list the names, next-of-kin and places of burial and the ZIPRA dead'. The pain and grief over the loss of a loved one can be overcome if there is a burial. The grief is perennial when the loved one is unaccounted for. Some fighters and peasants who fell in the struggle are still to be located. Everyone knows someone close to them who has never been found and this is a painful experience. Thus the effort of the Mafela Trust is commendable and should be the basis of a nationwide documentation of the fallen heroes, be they the fighters or the civilians.

This generation has the duty to record accurately events in the liberation war for the unborn generations. Moreover, as we enjoy the fruits of liberty we can do justice to those who died for us by putting together chronicles of the war. This new book sets us off in that direction and it is a valuable addition to our history of Zimbabwe's bloody road to liberation. The second volume is to be published in the near future. I can hardly wait for it.

University of Zimbabwe

C. PFUKWA

**A Zimbabwean Past** By D. N. Beach. Gweru, Mambo Press, 1994, xviii, 368pp., ISBN 0-6922-52-6, Z\$89,18.

This book is a very pleasant surprise. We have known for some time that David Beach intended to follow up his *The Shona and Zimbabwe, 900-1850* (Mambo, Gweru, 1984) with a collection of dynastic histories. The weaker brethren among us have feared that such a collection would be very difficult reading. And Beach tells us sternly in the introduction to this new book that if '*Shona and Zimbabwe* was complicated for academic and foreign readers, *A Zimbabwean Past* will be even more complex'. That intimidating rather than reassuring comparison — the Hapsburg Empire — appears on the first page of the introduction. It looks as though we are in for a necessary but gruelling time.

And yet the book's effect is quite different. The dynastic histories are there, of course, in three chapters which between them cover over 150 pages. But each history is introduced in bold print with a paragraph setting out the moral of the tale. The first of these — a note on the Marange dynasty of Bocha — gives their flavour:

Newcomers to the world of Shona politics could hardly find a better point at which to start than the Marange dynasty of Bocha; it offers a neat little case history of struggle for political power and land, with the enforced peace of colonial rule only just suppressing the older method of conducting politics in the last century.

The effect is almost of a Shona Machiavelli, concerned with power rather than with principles. Anyone who reads through these stories will not need persuading that, as Beach concludes on page 269, there was 'no such thing as a Shona succession system'. The late colonial attempt to introduce 'traditional rules' into a dynastic politics which was denied force and fraud was an absurdity.

Presented in this way, as case studies of Shona political dynamics, the dynastic histories no longer bewilder with their detail. Moreover, they are set in this book in the context of major historiographical essays in which Beach lays out his methods and his assumptions. The dynastic histories become samples and tests of Beach's historical procedures.

These historiographical sections of this book make it required reading not only for Zimbabweanists but for all those who are introduced in the development of African history. We are in an introspective time. That great pre-colonial historian, Jan Vansina, has recently given us an extraordinary frank account of his academic autobiography; Tony Kirk-Green has edited a collection of anecdotal confessions by the founders of African history in British (and anglophone African) universities, which concludes with my own reflections on Southern Rhodesia in the early 1960s as an environment for historical production. Now Beach offers an account of oral historiography in the Rhodesia of the 1970s which if less remarkable than Vansina's book is, still nonetheless, a significant contribution to understanding. Beach argues explicitly that in many ways, Rhodesia in the early 1970s was a surprisingly favourable environment for oral historiography; he also shows implicitly what a very peculiar environment it was, and how easily its peculiarities might distort both collection and interpretation.

The third section of the book is entitled 'The traditions of the Shona states' and the fourth 'Toward an analysis of Shona traditions'. Both are historiographical. The third section contains a reprint of Beach's important account of indigenous historical speculation. 'The Rozvi in search of the past'. It also contains a definitive demolition of Donald Abraham's work on the Mutapa dynasty. A suspicious Shona cultural nationalist might notice that the tendency of all this is to diminish the importance of the 'Shona Empires' and to offer instead a mosaic of small dynasties. But Beach is not, of course, denying the existence of the Mutapa and Rozvi states, which are attested in archival sources. He is denying that either modern Rozvi traditions or the work of oral historians like Abraham can tell us anything about those states.

Indeed, it appears in the fourth section of the book that Beach does not believe that any Shona traditions can take us back before 1700. This makes astringent reading for someone who, like myself, was reared on ideas of the spirit mediums as custodians of ancient truths about medieval empires. Beach comments that mediums are actually worse informants

than most lay people; that the Shona lack creation myths and have no traditions of a common founder; that they are even poor in myth stereotypes. Once again, the Shona cultural nationalist stirs into protest. Yet one gets the sense that Beach would be only too happy if he *could* use traditions for a reliable history from the fifteenth century; if there *were* creation myths and stories of common founders.

All this is challenging and valuable. Beach has lived with this material, as he tell us, for more than 15 years and he knows it more thoroughly than anyone ever has or is ever likely to do. I cannot challenge him on detail, but greatly daring I shall raise a wider challenge. Within African oral history as a whole, there has long raged a debate between the 'literalists' and the 'structuralists' — between Jan Vansina in his earlier incarnations and scholars like Joseph Miller and Roy Willis. An extreme of 'literalism' was attained by Daniel McCall, who seriously advocated throwing away everything in a tradition that could not be believed and focussing merely on real events. Beach is no McCall. He discusses narrative stereotypes; he allows that Shona traditions 'tell us what lay behind the beliefs and actions of the people', even if only 'from the coming of colonial rule to the present'.

Yet he does tend to make a straightforward, unproblematic contrast between 'myth' and 'truth'. Thus on page 245, he remarks that

even very well educated people will tend to resist the notion that what grandfather told them is mythical. They can take comfort in the fact that if quite a lot of grandfather's stories are myths, some are more or less true.

There is certainly no sense here that profound truths may lie in myths. There is equally no sense that a historian may use the mythical and legendary layers of tradition — as Miller and Willis argue — to get at the founding values of a culture or at its repetitive political processes. Beach's is a powerful but limited notion of oral historiography.

This comes back to the Machiavellian parables of the dynastic histories. They are indeed stories of struggles for power and possession. There is not much about ideas or beliefs. Beach has long been properly suspicious of vague invocations of 'religion' or 'ritual' to explain what is otherwise mysterious in Shona political history, rather than in the same way that archaeologists often explain any article whose use they cannot guess as a 'ritual object'. But in sweeping away illegitimate religiosity, Beach tends to sweep away all ideologies and legitimations. This is very much against the tendency of recent work on pre-colonial African polities, of which perhaps the supreme example is Tom McCaskie's work on the hegemonic ideologies of the Asante state. McCaskie uses narrative, myth, ritual to construct his picture. No Shona polity was like the Asante state. Still, I hope that one day another oral historian of the Shona will arise who will ask different questions of the material so painstakingly accumulated by Beach. I am sure that in his sense of loneliness, his lament that everyone now works on the twentieth century, David Beach hopes so too.

**Traditional Medicine in Modern Zimbabwe** By Gordon L. Chavunduka. Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1994, ix, 115 pp., ISBN 0-908307-40-3, Z\$36.

In the 'Preface', Professor Gordon Chavunduka says his book on traditional medicine in Zimbabwe was written in 'response to a call by nurses, modern doctors, students, teachers, administrators, traditional or indigenous healers and many members of the general public for an accurate description of the role and work of African traditional healers in modern Zimbabwe' (p. v). The book meets this purpose admirably. It offers a clear and succinct description of traditional healers' current positions. It is well written and will be accessible to a broad readership. The author is well placed for the task: he has been the President of the Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers Association (ZINATHA) since it was formed on 13 July 1980 (soon after independence); he has trained as a traditional healer; and he has, as a Social Anthropologist, conducted four studies of traditional practitioners.

If the 1992 estimate was correct that Zimbabwe has one traditional healer (including traditional midwives) to every 250 persons (p. 54), then Chavunduka is informing us about the activities of a large sector of the population. It is fitting that we should know about the basic tenets of their beliefs, their training, the hierarchy among them, and their specialities. They are of the people and have effects on the people. Chavunduka observes that despite colonial attempts to suppress the traditional medical system, it has continued. Indeed, he is moderate in his account of colonial discouragement of, and Christian disrespect toward, those who work within that system. He could have made much more, for example, of the resignation of the Dean of the Mutare Cathedral in protest over the appointment of the author to the Board of Governors of St Augustine's School (p. 15). The Dean objected to the appointment of 'the Head of the Witch-doctors' Association'. He wrote 'It appeared to me, and still does, that Scripture clearly points out that God's people can have nothing to do with "supporting" things clearly shown to be contrary to the Word of God ...' (p. 15). Given a century of racism, war and oppression by representatives of a purportedly Christian foreign state, that is surely an extraordinary cause for resignation.

The autobiographical sections are fascinating: perhaps Chavunduka will expand these one day. He documents his own involvement in healing, his training, his role in securing (in 1981) legal recognition for traditional healers, and his firm stand in the face of a barrage of criticism. He ties his personal account to the history of ZINATHA and is refreshingly honest about the problems with which he has had to deal (p. 27) and the lack of success within the organization in certain areas (p. 21).

The chapter entitled 'Traditional health practitioners' gives the results of a survey of practitioners showing, for example, that 54.8 per cent are women; that most earn from their healing less than Z\$30 a day; and that many undergo long apprenticeships of an informal nature. Many interesting aspects of healing are touched on in the book including the observation that research is difficult (p. 32); that all healers specialize (p. 37); that

ritual is flexible (p. 82); that spirit possession can be an illness (p. 85); and that ritual can help solve social problems (p. 86). These and other points are worthy of more extended discussions.

The most controversial ideas are those contained in the last chapter on 'Witchcraft and sorcery' in which Chavunduka sets out to solve the conflict between traditional practitioners (who agree that witches exist and cause illness) and modern health practitioners (who see their job as eradicating the belief in witchcraft). It is surely correct to call for a re-definition of witchcraft in the Witchcraft Suppression Act of Zimbabwe (Chapter 73), passed in 1889 as it is quite plainly wrong and offensive to traditional healers. In the Act, witchcraft is defined as, 'the throwing of bones, the use of charms and any other means or devices adopted in the practice of sorcery' (p. 103). Chavunduka comments

As a matter of fact, this definition, which has remained unchanged to this day, says nothing about witches and witchcraft. Throwing of bones is a means of divination, that is to say, a means by which a diviner or health practitioner determines, or attempts to determine, who or what caused an illness or other misfortune complained of by an individual or group of individuals. Another widely employed means of divination is spirit possession. Illnesses or misfortunes are not always attributed to witchcraft. There are other possible causes of illness such as ancestor spirits, angered or aggrieved spirits, bacteria and germs. Many charms have nothing to do with witchcraft. A large part of the traditional healer's practice is concerned with prescribing remedies and preventive charms. Some of these charms confer or are believed to confer immunity against specific type of illness or to protect the individual against misfortune. Other charms confer or are believed to confer positive benefits such as physical strength, attractiveness to the opposite sex and other desirable qualities. There are other charms that are believed to protect an individual or a group of individuals against witchcraft (p. 103).

Further he says that the legislators failed to distinguish between witchcraft and sorcery. Chavunduka wants the law to countenance witchcraft accusations. There are, he says, three types of witches: those who inherit the spirit of witchcraft from a kin member; those who are possessed by the spirit of a stranger or alien; and those who are made witches by other witches through apprenticeship. It is the last type that most concerns him as he hypothesises that their type of witchcraft may be objectively valid (p. 99). He says that, 'Cases of witchcraft obsession that I have studied indicate that sponsored witches practise their art using methods of sorcery' (p. 99). Chavunduka says that there should be a law against witchcraft and sorcery; that it is the duty of the courts to protect individuals from violent or non-violent reactions to accusations of witchcraft or sorcery; and that the courts should help to control witches and sorcerers because their activities can make people sick or can kill them. The book ends with his assertion that traditional healers attend to illness caused or believed to have been caused by witchcraft and many people are cured.



**Where are the Ancestors? Changing Culture in Zimbabwe** *M. F. C. Bourdillon*. Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1993, 129 pp, ISBN 0-908307-35-7, \$33.

This is a short but provocative book, clearly written by an experienced anthropologist who is not new to the study of Black Zimbabwean culture. Bourdillon looks at the tensions and contradictions that arise for individuals experiencing a culture in transition. Although, as he points out, he raises points within the context of Shona culture, what he says generally applies to 'the Ndebele, the Tonga and other groups in Zimbabwe as well' (p. 3). It is not clear whether it also applies to the culture of White Zimbabweans.

### **Changing culture**

Bourdillon's analysis focuses on the fact that culture is dynamic and it demonstrates some of the implications of this fact. He argues that cultural practices persist as long as they serve useful functions and are dropped as soon as they stop doing so. He identifies a number of factors that influence the way people behave. These include habit, material interests, the need for power and control, as well as the respect for certain ideas and values. Bourdillon does not rank these factors according to significance. However, the attempt to maintain that 'No one factor is independent of the others' (p. 16) leaves us confused. On the one hand, Bourdillon argues that 'people are ready to drop the traditions that become useless', (p. 28) and on the other, he maintains that people '... think in terms of the values they were brought up to accept' (p. 29). His attempt to balance these factors is not convincing in light of his own wonderful illustrations of how people, mostly interested in money, power and authority, are selective in their interpretations of what culture prescribes in specific contexts.

Bourdillon's book is most interesting when demonstrating how the pursuit of money, power and control influences individuals making decisions about their personal lives, in the context of marriage, family life and inheritance, as well as in the wider social, economic and political realm. Bourdillon must be congratulated for making a contribution in the process of demystifying hegemonic struggles in family and kinship relationships as well as in religious, political and bureaucratic structures.

### **The traditional and the modern**

Bourdillon understands culture within the context of what he sees as the social movement, both in space and in time, from the traditional to the modern, 'from a life-style based on subsistence agriculture supplemented by trade to one based on cash incomes through labour or trade or cash crops, often supplemented by growing for subsistence' (p. 3). Thus cultural changes are understood in relation to 'material factors'. Hence, '... culture is not independent of the material factors in our lives' (p. 4). This movement from the traditional to the modern way of life causes tensions 'in all branches of Zimbabwean society' (p. 2). The major theme of the book is to identify the tensions and the areas of life in which those tensions occur. This is done by identifying the major traditional institutions for the purposes of comparing and contrasting them with those of modern

Zimbabwe. Accompanied with this is a comparison and contrast of the world views and values that inform the human relations between people in those respective societies. Bourdillon's analysis is guided by the principle that '... we should expect even beliefs to change as society experiences material changes' (p. 6). He then makes a leap in his argument to identify the traditional/modern distinction with the rural/urban distinction. What he attributes to the traditional he also attributes to the rural society and what he attributes to the modern he attributes to the urban. He then concludes from this that, 'A person who was born and brought up in an urban area has a different set of institutional responses from a person brought up in a more traditional rural area' (p. 81).

It is true that in Zimbabwe, there is a growing number of Black Zimbabweans who are becoming totally urbanized. It is also true that these Zimbabweans are beginning to have an impact on the nature of culture in Zimbabwe. However, the majority of Zimbabweans are not totally urbanized. Even if it were true that the majority of Zimbabweans were totally urbanized, in the sense that they no longer had contacts with the rural areas, it would not be true that those people's world views and values would be completely modern. In fact, it would not be difficult to demonstrate, as Bourdillon himself illustrates in his section on 'Authority and power', that some of the problems of performance and efficiency that contemporary Zimbabwean institutions are facing are a result of attempts by Black Zimbabweans to work in modern institutions according to traditional world views and values.

Thus, Bourdillon has somewhat overplayed the contrast between 'the traditional rural area' and 'the modern urban area'. By implication, he has oversimplified the nature of cultural changes in Zimbabwe by collapsing them into a single process which some writers call 'modernization'. The movement to modernity should be understood in terms of the interaction of a number of separate processes of change. The processes are political, economic, social and cultural. Each process proceeds at its own pace so that when it interacts with the other processes, the outcome is contingent and unpredictable.

Bourdillon recognizes, but does not bring out clearly, the implications of the fact that most Black Zimbabweans shuttle between rural and urban areas. The Zimbabwean rural life is not as traditional and the urban not as modern as he suggests. This point can be appreciated by looking at the political, economic, social and cultural processes of modernization within the African context. For instance, the contemporary Zimbabwean rural space and life-form has largely been created by the forces of modernity. It is true that the majority of Black Zimbabweans have pride in their rural homes and many often identify these rural homes as representative of their traditional life and culture. Yet it is not long ago since their own forefathers and foremothers were crying foul for having been forced into those very rural areas and rural life. Although most Black Zimbabweans would like to consider life in the rural areas as the foundation to their authentic identities, they also should recognize that it is a result of the disruptive political, economic, social and cultural forces of modernity. There is no 'traditional farming community', not in some way created and

recreated by modernizing processes. The migrant labour system alluded to on page 48 shows how we cannot unproblematically identify the rural with the traditional.

### **Privatization of the traditional**

The self-validation of modern institutions within the colonial and post-colonial context leads to the marginalization of traditional value systems and societies. Bourdillon clearly identifies some of these processes of marginalization. For example, he describes how churches, schools and modern medicine undermine, not necessarily on the basis of evidence, the status and knowledge of traditional wisdom. Thus, 'In the traditional system, rituals were nearly always public affairs' (p. 75), but they have been marginalized to the private sphere where they have been turned into 'attempts to overcome private problems and worries, or to fulfil secret or private desires and ambitions' (p. 76).

### **Conclusion**

Bourdillon has clearly and competently demonstrated that 'Today, we must make sure that Zimbabwean culture is able to adapt to the needs of all its people: the young as well as the old; the poor as well as the wealthy; and the minority as well as the majority' (p. 24). However, although he is sometimes tantalizingly suggestive, he is hesitant to say anything that might begin to give direction as to how we can do this. He relies on the liberal principle that 'rather than criticizing those who behave differently from ourselves, we should try to understand why they behave as they do' (p. 123). Although he wants to talk about 'Zimbabwean culture', he says very little about where White Zimbabweans, for example, might come into play in this culture.

I have selected the above points for discussion to demonstrate how provocative Bourdillon's book is. It should be read by all Zimbabweans and anyone interested in the cultural landscape of Zimbabwe.

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D. KAULEMU

**Grassroots Leadership: The Process of Rural Development in Zimbabwe**  
By C. G. Mararike. Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1995, xiv, 114pp., ISBN 0-908307-39-X, Z\$40.

The book *Grassroots Leadership: The Process of Rural Development in Zimbabwe* is based on the author's applied research experience in the Buhera District of Manicaland province. The book, inappropriately titled, revolves on the interaction between grassroots communities and development agents rather than on leadership at the grassroots level.

The book begins with a discussion on research and its place in development. Mararike urges that African countries cannot afford research that has no applied value. All research must contribute to a change in people's lives.

The research theme is followed by a summary of the theoretical approaches that have so far informed development. Most of these theoretical approaches are not related to the textual data and it is difficult to see why the separate theoretical chapter is necessary.

Central to the book is the issue of co-operatives and political control. The author argues throughout the text that national level politicians who claim to support co-operatives are in fact wanting to create patronage relationships. Mararike's analysis of the politics of development provides an important contribution to our understanding of development processes in Zimbabwe.

A subsidiary theme in the book is that people and communities at grassroots levels use symbols to control each other's behaviour. These symbols, which include proverbs, slogans and prayers, are often used by local leaders to control followers.

Another point made in the book is that local communities shun development efforts in which they do not benefit. When they find that they do not benefit from a development project such as a co-operative, local people tend to withdraw from it.

The book refers to development practitioners and their institutions as exploiting the local people. This leaves readers with a misleading picture of passive peasants. The shortcoming of this book lies in the fact that it does not explore the ways and means peasants may devise in order to exploit 'patrons'.

The book can also be faulted on points of data. Its data are incomplete and in many cases do not support the bold conclusions made. There is, for example, the unsupported conclusion that rural people withdraw their membership in cases where they are dissatisfied with development initiative. Similarly there is the frequent claim that people tactically use slogans and prayers to control behaviour even though the textual data do not illustrate the point.

Notwithstanding this, *Grassroots Leadership* remains an important book that among other things seriously questions the motives of those who come in the name of development. The book makes useful reading to students of rural development and development anthropology.

*University of Zimbabwe*

V. DZINGIRAI

**Harare: The Growth and Problems of the City** Edited by L. Zinyama, D. Tevera and S. Cumming. Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1993, xii, 186 pp., ISBN 0-908307-30-6, Z\$45.

**Planning Suburban Service Centres in Harare, Zimbabwe** By N. D. Mutizwa-Mangiza. Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1991, viii, 169 pp., ISBN 0-908307-21-7, Z\$45.

The first of these books comprises the proceedings of a conference held at the University of Zimbabwe in September 1989, to coincide with the centenary of the founding of Harare in 1890. The conference examined the

evolution of the city over the last 100 years with particular reference to some of the major problems confronting its residents, planners, administrators and political leaders.

Contributors range from Enos Chikowore, the then Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development, to city councillors, city council officials and university lecturers. This wide range of contributors was deliberately chosen in order to provide a 'sufficiently comprehensive view of the multi-faceted and complex processes and problems of urban growth and urbanization in a third world country such as Zimbabwe' (p. ix).

The topics covered by this book include the early history and evolution of the city, city administration, low cost housing problems, municipal services and urban conservation. The book is well presented with photographs and illustrations, making for pleasurable browsing; but it also contains serious and informative discussions by experts in their fields. Most chapters have extensive references and there is a consolidated bibliography at the end of the book.

Many of the chapters deal with urgent and pressing problems and issues faced by the citizens of Harare today such as the changing demands placed on the City Council, how it should be best organized to tackle these problems and its relationship with central government; the housing backlog; extending health care to all sectors of the community; and how people travel to work.

Other chapters, however, are concerned with quite obscure aspects of important issues. For example, the detailed study of the plight of the scavengers at refuse dumps does highlight a particular problem. But there are much greater concerns related to both refuse disposal and the informal employment sector. The disposal of Harare's refuse is in itself a considerable problem. The growth of the city has resulted in the closure of refuse dumps, one by court order, and the cost of disposal is constantly rising in real terms. Recycling of refuse is one option often used to reduce the costs of disposal, and this could be organized in a formal way, employing the scavengers in a much safer work environment. The role that informal employment has to play in the city's economy is a sufficiently important subject to have deserved a paper at the conference, in preference to the rather minor aspect of scavengers.

There is no reference to discussions at the conference, and some critical comment from the editors would have been helpful. For example the chapters on housing seem to accept and are written within the officially approved framework for the provision of housing: minimum stand sizes and minimum standards of infrastructure provision. Is it not appropriate now to reconsider housing provision in terms of what people can afford, so that the funds available determine the standards of the development?

The second book, *Planning Suburban Service Centres in Harare*, could easily have been the basis for a contribution to the first, dealing as it does with one particular aspect of the development of Harare, namely shops. The book achieves its stated purposes, which are, to update the work of M. A. H. Smout on suburban shopping centres in the low density residential areas and extend it to the high density residential areas (HDRAs), thus covering the whole city; to examine the shopping behaviour of the people

living in the HDRAs; and to determine the perceptions related to shopping activities held by residents of HDRAs. Most of the book is concerned with HDRAs on which there is little previous writing.

The book presents a detailed study, conclusions and recommendations, with each point carefully analysed and thorough referencing. It is not light reading, but well worth the required effort.

The book begins with an evaluation of possible theoretical frameworks and a description of Harare, the area of study. All 108 shopping centres are ranked, using an index based on commercial facilities they provide. Surprisingly, Machipisa, in a high density residential area, ranks the highest in Harare.

Patterns of shopping trips in the HDRAs are investigated. People travel longer distances for higher order goods. The poorer HDRAs depend more on the Central Business District than do the more affluent HDRAs.

Mangiza investigated the perceived needs of the residents of the HDRAs, in particular factors considered to influence shopping patterns. This work found that: the range of goods available is unsatisfactory; there are insufficient convenience shops; and the cost of travel to the central business district of Harare is too high. HDRA residents are more sensitive to the cost of goods than to the distance to be travelled and Mangiza concludes therefore that there is an urgent need for small and large supermarkets in the HDRAs.

A hierarchy of shopping centres is proposed based on the frequency of trips for different types of goods and services.

The overall tone of the proposals made in the book is planned intervention. Planners and local authorities should make better provision for shopping in the HDRAs. Mangiza suggests that planners have traditionally dwelt on 'negative/reactive' planning through policy-making and regulatory functions. He proposes that planning authorities should become more involved in the development of shops. Although this type of public intervention was in favour at the time of the study, economic initiatives are now expected to be led more by market forces and the reasons why the HDRAs lack shopping facilities need to be examined from this angle.

There has been some large and significant commercial development in the HDRAs, such as the Chitungwiza Town Centre, financed by Old Mutual. The construction of new shopping facilities or improvements to existing shopping facilities, is very much dependent on private initiative. Banks and building societies are beginning to open branches in HDRAs. Some national supermarket chains are also looking to expand in these areas. For the most part, however, there has not been much improvement in the HDRAs, and this must be seen as a reflection of the spending power of the residents of these areas. Even though Machipisa ranks the highest shopping centre in this study, one wonders whether its total turnover is greater than that of some centres in the low density residential areas such as Avondale (second highest), Newlands, or even Chisipite.

The study is intended to provide information for use in the planning of suburban shopping centres and also to help retail entrepreneurs decide where to establish retail outlets. The advice given to local planning

authorities in the last chapter is sound and logical and is certainly useful. However, the book seems to place little importance on the 'real world' of developers and entrepreneurs, who tend to view shopping as a development opportunity, with the profit motive being fairly important.

Shopping can be a subjective, fashionable activity and opportunities for shopping developments may defy the logical approach. Avondale and the new Borrowdale shops are instances of successful commerce-led shopping developments, which if left solely to planners, would not have been allowed to develop when they did. Despite the prediction that little growth in service centres in low density residential areas can be expected (p. 122), there has been quite a lot of development in these areas. This has to be explained in terms of the higher spending power of residents in the low density areas and in terms of the creation of a demand for shopping in these areas by the development of fashionable shopping environments. These factors are jokers in the pack which do not go along with the theories set out in the book.

The new shopping developments that have occurred in the HDRAs (Chitungwiza Town Centre excluded) tend to be fairly small shops which perpetuate the existing pattern of shopping provision in these areas. If Mangiza's recommendations in this regard are to be followed, then the City Council will have to rethink its approach and allow larger shop chains to establish shops in the HDRAs at the expense of the smaller businessman, in order to provide the local residents with a greater choice in the variety, quality and cost of goods.

*Mount Pleasant*

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