

struggles. Many of the participants seem to have accepted the conventional view that a central characteristic of African societies is the absence or uneven development of civil society. However, what many of the contributions portray is not so much the growth of civil society in Africa, but rather the emergence and consolidation of a new professional middle class which is playing a central role in the politicisation of parts of an existing civil society. The ability of this social group to play such a role appears to depend on a particular historical conjuncture characterised by the uneven development of the market and the severe structural changes imposed on a fragile post-colonial state. Thus, the book raises, but does not answer, fundamental questions about the class nature of political and civil society in Africa and the extent to which the civil associations represented at the conference are likely to form the basis for more broadly based social movements.

Reviewed by Ian Clegg, Lecturer, Centre for Development Studies, University of Swansea, Wales, UK.

The People of the Great River: The Tonga Hoped the Water Would Follow Them, Michael Tremmel and the River Tonga People. Artwork by Loes Roos, Publisher: Mambo Press in association with Silveira House (Price: approx Zim \$10 from Silveira House, Mambo Bookshops, and Grassroots Bookshops).

This short, accessible, and honest book should be read by people interested in the Zambezi valley's social and natural history. It tells the tale, directly, and in the words of a selected group of elderly local people, of the consequences experienced by the River Tonga People since they were translocated to make way for the rising waters of Kariba dam.

Fr. Michael Tremmel, a Catholic priest, has spent the last eight years in Binga District. He states his belief that the old missionary approach of bringing 'enlightenment' was wrong, and he sees himself as a "missioner", or someone who recognises that God has been, and is present, in the Tonga culture and tradition.

The motive for the book emanates from the author's empathy with the forced sacrifice, made by the River Tonga, for the sake of a nation they did not identify with. In the history of land re-classification of Zimbabwe, the Tonga were not alone in paying the cost for the benefit of others. Nevertheless, the book testifies to the fact that a social and economic price was paid for a 'greater commonwealth'. Those who benefited most, with hindsight, are all users of hydro-electric power from Kariba, and the wildlife and fishery based industries of the region.

The book is not a deep historical account, nor a academic book, more an authentic tribute to the local people. It recognises an event, occurring in the late 1950s, which changed the environment they had co-existed with for centuries. What brings the book to life is that the author analyses several themes – life before the flooding, displacement, life today, and future prospects – with a group of Tonga men and women who have lived through the entire experience.

It provides many direct quotes which will remain as windows into the people's perception of their world. For example Kapu Muchimba, talking about ritual and family life, says:

"We still perform our ancestral ceremonies this side of the lake even though we are separated from our relatives. We should be together with our relatives on the other side of the lake so we could do these ceremonies together with our ancestors".

We are reminded that neither culture nor nature fits neatly into national boundaries, and that this is tiresome for many people.

As someone who has related to rural development activities in the area since national independence, it is hard for me to accept that outcome of the development effort pales in comparison to the spiritual and material experience of resettlement. Being directly involved in the CAMPFIRE Programme, which aims to link wildlife to rural development, it is disappointing to read mainly negative personal impressions of wildlife from the Tonga contributors. Hopefully, this situation is still changing and younger people will, in their lifetimes, realise a greater share of the natural resource wealth in their region.

Tears and tribulations may be the inheritance of the recent past, but salvation can surely only come through the local organisation of the Tonga themselves around the natural resource base in their district. The revenues presently captured by CAMPFIRE are only a part of the wildlife, aquatic, and tourist revenue resource flows. The Tonga need their own leaders, and they need to pull together, for in the words of a Tonga proverb quoted in the book, *"the one who walks alone by the stream, gets eaten"*.

Perhaps many adults will be too cynical to get much from this book, but I would urge parents to buy it for their children. We all have our own ideas about the Zambezi valley, especially the wildlife and fishing fraternity, why not learn how the potential stewards of the valley, the resident people, feel about it? While the author's recommendation that visitors should befriend a Tonga family may be going too far for most 'strangers in paradise', the point should be well taken.

Michael Tremmel's book comes from the heart and faithfully puts across the people's perspective. It is beautifully illustrated by Loes Roos, and has a fold-out map showing settlement, by chiefdom, before and after the valley floor was inundated by the Zambezi's waters. It is quite readable and I would especially recommend it to all secondary school children who should be informed of the nation's origin.

Silveria House, which has supported the book, have made it the centerpiece of a number of activities aimed at promoting awareness of the life of the River Tonga, past and present. They will publish the book in Tonga as well as English, and they launched the book in Binga first. A set of cards taken from Ms Roos' illustrations is also being made available to the public.

Review by Simon Metcalfe, Advisor to Zimbabwe Trust CAMPFIRE support project. Research fellow with the Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.