

There is no doubt that some people connected with the College genuinely thought that it ought to have been more politically motivated while others went further and really wanted to provoke the closure of the College in order to embarrass the Smith Government. But my vote has always been and still is for those who fought to keep the College afloat as long as its academic freedom, in the sense of that term as defined by Sir Robert Birley, and its non-racial character were not impaired. Subsequent events have vindicated their attitude and Rhodesia enters on self-government with a proportionally larger and better qualified cadre of Africans than any other newly independent state in the continent.

At the risk of being accused of bias, I must say that in my opinion the University of London played a more important part in the decision that the College should be non-racial than Professor Gelfand's narrative implies. I was present at the meeting in London when Manfred Hodson and his delegation were told categorically that adherence to the non-racial principle by the College was a condition precedent of Special Relation with the University of London and without Special Relation the College would never have got off the ground. It is no coincidence that the clause in the College Charter enshrining this principle is based almost word for word on Statute 4 of the Statutes of the University of London which traces its lineage back to its first charter in 1836.

Perhaps in conclusion a few more personal comments are permissible. The book contains a striking portrait of Manfred Hodson, the driving force behind the acceptance in Rhodesia of the need for a university institution. Even more vivid is the picture of Walter Adams who shines through the pages of the book like Mr Valiant in *Pilgrim's Progress*. Less successful is the delineation of Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders who played a dominating role in his dual capacity as Chairman of the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas and the University of London's Committee on Higher Education Overseas — but this is not surprising since I know from personal experience what an enigmatic character he was. Perhaps a little more stress should have been placed on the contribution of Professor C. T. Ingold, who succeeded Sir Alexander as Chairman of the Committee on Higher Education Overseas. Without his staunch advocacy in the troubled years following U.D.I., when the extremists in London were demanding the immediate termination of Special Relation in complete disregard of the interest of both students and staff of the College, the proper and orderly phasing out of Special Relation would have been impossible.

For those interested in the early years of the College, Professor Gelfand's book is prescribed reading and, when the definitive history of that period comes to be written, the author will be eternally indebted to Professor Gelfand for the magnificent preparatory work he has done.

University of London

SIR DOUGLAS LOGAN

Umendo By B. C. Makhalisa. Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1977, 136pp., Rh\$0,70.
Umhlaba Lo! By B. C. Makhalisa. Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1977, 80pp., Rh\$0,60.

The author of these works, Mrs Nkala, writes under her maiden name of Barbara C. Makhalisa. When she wrote her first book, *Qilindini* (Longmans

Rhodesia, 1974), she was only the second female writer in Ndebele (now there are three and about the same number in Shona).

Umendo (Married Life) is a novel portraying the story of love and marriage, and the lives of the three main characters in the book. Gugu, the girl, is torn in her choice between two young men, Thulani and Ndaba. She ends up marrying Ndaba, and this choice results in an unhappy marriage. Central to the theme of the book is a Ndebele proverb: 'Ukwenda Akuthunyelwa Gundwane' (lit. No mouse is sent when one is to marry, i.e. troubles which may be in store for one (in married life) cannot be predicted). But there is hope for Gugu in the end, when her drunken and irresponsible husband is stabbed to death by a gang of young people, and a revival of her former relationship with Thulani is possible.

Umhlaba Lo! (What a World!) is a work of drama, a play which looks at the life of a country girl who passes Form VI, but fails to get a place for further education or any form of professional training. In desperation, she goes to the city to look for any type of job. First, she is forced by circumstances to live with a very cruel aunt (her maternal uncle's wife) who vents a family vendetta on the unfortunate girl. In an effort to escape from this, she lands in the company of morally corrupt friends — and her eventual triumph, despite these trying circumstances, makes very interesting reading.

Miss Makhalisa is good at using dialogue to add variety to her style, and to make her narrative vivid. This technique makes her characters come alive. In places, she employs good figurative language: imagery, simile and metaphor, as well as an effective use of ideophones, all of which combine to give a colourful, vivid and picturesque narrative. Her words abound with typical Ndebele aphorisms and telling proverbs.

Her books are interesting and relevant to our times, in that they deal with contemporary problems that people face in their day-to-day lives. She has won a number of Rhodesia Literature Bureau awards (First Prize for *Qilindini* in 1970; Second Prize for the manuscript of *Umendo* in 1972; and First Prize for the manuscript of *Umhlaba Lo!* in 1976) and in 1978 the Kingston's Literary Award, organized by P. E. N. International (First Prize in the Ndebele section).

She is a keen observer of human character, and her main characters are well drawn. But the minor characters suffer from a certain neglect and at times seem to get lost somewhere in the middle of the scene. They fail to play an effective supportive role to the main characters in her works, and this detracts from her otherwise promising work. She also has a rather too simplistic view of life's complexities. Her works invariably have a happy ending. A couple of people die now and then, but the main people always seem to survive to the end; thus, her works have a very predictable ending. At times her plots rise in tension, and they approximate the height of tragedy, but she brings them down to a 'happy ending', creating an anti-climax in the reader's mind.

University of Rhodesia

C. M. SILEYA

Trekking in South Central Africa 1913-1919 By C. M. Doke. [Johannesburg], South Africa Baptist Historical Society, 1975, 188 pp., no price indicated.

This interesting book is infuriating to use — no details of where it is published, how or by whom it is edited, or what or where exactly its sources