

But I have no wish to join the long list of reviewers who are critical on the grounds that the book the author wrote was not the one *they* wanted written, and perhaps Dr Bourdillon was right in restricting his goal to a volume which seeks to promote White understanding of Shona culture in a non-polemic way. Aware of past White intransigence Peter Fry, in another review of this book (*Africa* (1978), XLVIII, 92-3) is sceptical of this approach: 'Dr Bourdillon's desire to enlighten the white population through the writing of an honest and straightforward ethnography is, I fear, unduly optimistic, and his deliberate avoidance of political issues unnecessarily cautious.' This is, however, a statement written from the static perspective of one whose first-hand experience of the power structure of this country is now somewhat dated. Whites here are now faced with the requirement of adjusting to a new status of political subordinancy and the necessity of 'a greater understanding of their black compatriots' carries a new urgency and importance. For them, this book is a valuable tool and should be read by all. And, for the benefit of Blacks themselves, this book should be on the shelves of every secondary and tertiary institution of learning in the land, as the standard contemporary ethnography of the Shona.

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Historical Dictionary of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe By R. K. Rasmussen Metuchen, N. Y., Scarecrow Press, 1979, 445pp., US\$20.00.

From Avondale to Zimbabwe By R. Smith. Salisbury, privately, [1978], 314pp., ZR\$6.00 (s/c).

These two reference books will be useful to anyone pursuing research in Rhodesia.

Rasmussen's volume is the more ambitious and follows the established format of the African Historical Dictionaries Series in which this is the eighteenth to be published. It contains some 1,199 entries and the author has made valiant efforts to keep abreast of recent historical research. Inevitably there are numerous points that will not meet general agreement and every reader will find what he regards as serious omissions; for example, Keigwin and N. H. Wilson are not included, although Wilson's Two Pyramid policy is entered but ascribed to Huggins. Similarly the criteria of selection sometimes seem strange — entries for rhinoceros and elephant, but none for the Cold Storage Commission, the Maize Control Board or the Agricultural Marketing Authority. Generally the book is weak on institutions, somewhat erratic on places (cf Goromanzi [sic]), stronger on the Ndebele than the Shona.

Smith's volume is a modest gazetteer of some 130 places in Zimbabwe Rhodesia, and on his chosen places is generally stronger than Rasmussen; see for example, Rasmussen's failure to explain the origin of the Tuli Circle compared with Smith's neat and historically accurate description.

Whatever their failings, these two books, in conjunction with the bibliographies reviewed above (p.105ff), mark a significant and welcome addition to the reference aids on Zimbabwe Rhodesia.

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