

African Ngangas Herbalists Association of Africa. These associations issue their own medical certificates and diplomas and badges. All this is designed to protect themselves against extinction and to retain public confidence. Chavunduka also shows how through the cash economy, traditional healing is being transformed from a healing service into a profit-making enterprise.

Chavunduka's book is generally interesting and represents, in a very schematic way, a modest beginning in an important and fascinating field of study. It goes beyond the typical descriptive method of some anthropologists. We can conclude from this study that the traditional healer is still holding sway and that his services often meet felt needs, and that he has a big role to play in the treatment of millions of patients in Rhodesia or perhaps throughout Black Africa.

It is, however, necessary to enter a word of caution. The analysis presented in the book is mainly based upon research in one township, Highfield, which is in no sense representative of the whole of Rhodesia. How far it is possible to draw generalized conclusions from this analysis is, therefore, a moot point. Also, the book is, unfortunately, padded out with numerous and long quotations from text books which could have been reduced to a minimum and only referred to in a paraphrased manner.

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A Shona Urban Court By G. Chavunduka. Gwelo, Mambo Press, Occasional Paper, Socio-Economic Series No. 14, 1979, 70pp., ZR\$2,25.

In this brief survey Professor Chavunduka sets out to trace the history, function, the proceedings and the type of cases brought before the Makoni Court in St Mary's Township near Salisbury. The Court is the traditional *dare*, though modified, in an urban setting. It was instituted at the request of Mr Makoni and the residents of St Mary's Township. It was initially established on a local basis in 1962 but soon attracted litigants from all over Salisbury's townships.

The court primarily solves social problems that, the residents consider, the District Commissioners cannot satisfactorily arbitrate; such cases include disputes between husbands and wives, disputes between neighbours, between boys and their girl friends, and adultery. Difficult cases are referred to the D.C.; these include divorce, and disputes over custody of children. Some other cases are referred to the chief as they demand a ritual settlement; incest is one of such cases.

The author observed a number of innovations at this court such as the taking of the oath to God, and the keeping of records of court proceedings. A most peculiar innovation is that a man who gives any woman ~~some~~ money in return for sexual favours is guilty of promoting prostitution.

If the reader is looking for a systematic analysis of this research, he will be disappointed. There is an absence of a coherent thematic development. The case material itself is hastily treated and the book is reduced to a superficial description of a variety of themes not directly related to the court or the research. Digressions occupy almost 70 per cent of the text. For example, in Chapter 2 the author deals at great length with witchcraft and social functions, bringing in irrelevant quotations that have nothing to do

with his topic. In Chapter 4 the author wanders off from the *mapoto* (illegal) marriage to the function and advantages of polygamy, advantages of monogamy over polygamy and forms of polygamy among Christians — none of which directly relate to the topic at issue.

The author overstresses that children are regarded as an important source of labour, social and political support. This may be true but he forgets that the overwhelming desire for children is that when parents die it is only through their children and grandchildren that they are believed to express their ego. They cannot come back to demand anything unless there is someone to demand it from. They cannot be honoured unless there is someone to honour them. To leave no issue means complete oblivion.

Although the book, in my opinion, has a limited appeal, it will be useful to researchers working on similar themes and to Europeans wanting to know something about Shona customs and the changes that are taking place in an urban setting, but outside these groups few, in my opinion, will find it of much value.

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