

**The Korsten Basketmakers: A Study of the Masowe Apostles . . .** By C.M. Dillon-Malone, S.J. Manchester, Manchester Univ. Press for The Institute for African Studies, Univ. of Zambia, 1978, xi, 169pp., £7.50.

This brief study, based upon the author's Fordham University doctorate of 1976, is primarily concerned with religious beliefs and structure, but is limited by its reliance on a single grouping for its evidence in a movement that is both geographically widespread through southern and eastern African and rent by internal divisions. However, like Jules-Rosette's study of the Vapostori (*African Apostles*, 1975) it usefully helps fill some of the gaps left by Daneel's concentration on the more southern parts of Shona country. The book is particularly welcome in its use of archival material for the early years of Johane Masowe but the history of the sect's return to Southern Rhodesia in 1962 is patchy; it can, however, be supplemented by reference to D. Munjeri's article (in *NADA* (1978), XI, (v), 497-509).

R.S.R.

**Jack Grant's Story** By G.C. Grant. Guildford, Lutterworth Press, 1980, x, 198pp., £5.95.

This autobiography of 'Jack' Grant was edited by Cecil Northcott, and has a foreword by Alan Paton and an epilogue by Garfield Todd—a distinguished trio of witnesses to Grant's lifelong involvement in missionary work and thereby, because he lived in South Africa and Rhodesia, political activity. As the descendant of a wealthy West Indian family and as a great cricketer he was an unlikely candidate for prohibited-immigrant status in Rhodesia—as indeed was his wife, the daughter of Sir Fraser Russell, a Chief Justice of Southern Rhodesia.

In Zimbabwe today Jack Grant is remembered for his fund-raising activities for Christian Care, which supported detainees and their families, and his help to Cold Comfort Farm and numerous university students.

R.S.R.

**Zimbabwe's Inheritance.** Edited by C. Stoneman. Salisbury, The College Press with Macmillan, 1981, xii, 234 pp., bibl., index, Z\$8.95.

This book has a busy editor who contributes to four of the ten chapters. The aim of the book is to describe key aspects of Zimbabwe's inheritance, these being organized into two areas, socio-political and economic, each taking broadly equal shares. The authors, however, attempt to provide more than a presentation of the state of the State for Independence in 1980; there is also a helpful and detailed analysis of historical development and, although it is the professed aim of the editor to avoid prescriptions or recommendations for the future, few of the authors can resist their own radical solutions to inherent problems. All this is, I think, quite interesting for the reader and places this book as a collection of Independence essays by authors concerned for the future of Zimbabwe.

There is throughout the book a thematic approach which blends together the chapters which might otherwise have been quite disparate. The theme is one of Black poverty and growing inequality as measured against the wealth, income and status of the White settlers. The theme is essentially political and more

convincingly portrayed as such in the socio-political chapters than by the economic portrayals. However, the theme is an effective blending device to provide a consistent and persuasive background for both the student and the policy maker. As the Minister of Education writes in the Preface dated March 1981:

It is the sad truth that African countries are often worse off after independence because of the cruel and ruthless exploitation of neo-colonialism. Corruption and self-enrichment replace the search for freedom and truth; the masses continue to suffer as before.

It is the professed wish of our government to avoid the temptations and pitfalls that await us. One of the most important ways in which we can avoid these changes is through 'conscientisation', through politicisation, and also through accurate knowledge of our inheritance in agriculture, industry, education, health and infrastructure (p.xiii).

It seems correct to suggest that Zimbabwe is a sound, mature and diversified modern economy in the industrial, commercial and financial sectors despite (a) the costs of economic sanctions following U.D.I. and (b) the nationalist war. But Zimbabwe's inheritance is also the community of its peoples, the overwhelming majority of whom have suffered the ravages of war, particularly in the rural sector, and the overwhelming majority of whom are Black and have suffered discrimination by wealth, income and status through measures enacted by successive White governments.

Zimbabwe's problem on independence was how to maintain the modern sector at a growth rate sufficient to finance both the rehabilitation of its peoples and the more radical measures required to correct the 'lop-sided' nature of past policies. Stoneman and most of his authors emphasize the 'lop-sided' inheritance to a degree where the book as a whole fails to grasp the complex nature of the difficulties which will surely arise. There is no foundation for the view that capitalism (of either domestic or foreign origin) is identified mostly by corruption and self-enrichment and socialism with freedom and truth. Popularizing such an approach is in itself engineering a major temptation and pitfall. The Government's own economic statements (*Growth with Equity; An Economic Policy Statement* [Cmd. R.Z. 4, 1981] and the *Annual Economic Review of Zimbabwe* [Cmd. R.Z.11, 1981]) appear to recognize the significance of the dual nature of the nation's background and the need for a bi-partisan approach to ideology.

Nevertheless, in spite of the almost rhythmic pounding of the theme throughout the book, there are many interesting and informative essays with valuable insights provided by the individual authors. In Lionel Cliffe's essay on Zimbabwe's Political Inheritance we see the often assumed homogeneous White colonial population broken down into the colonialists supported by foreign capital living alongside settler farmers and White workers divided across a range of classes. These distinctions may be fine but can be significant when analysing the White liberal movements and attitudes towards U.D.I. Cliffe's perception of tribal rivalry stretches credulity in its claim that the antagonism between the Shona and Ndebele has been introduced by leaders who were opportunistic and divorced from the struggle.

The social and economic aspects of the African community are painted in by Coenraad Brand who considers racial, religious, ethnic and regional perspectives in

an absorbing 'Anatomy of an Unequal Society'. The interdependence of the rural and urban sectors is carefully described and Brand notes the paradox of a continuing legacy of inequality yet a close organic interdependence between the two sectors. The message might be that dualism should be seen as a more complex phenomenon than some commentators and policy-makers allow.

In the 'Reproduction of Inequality: Taxation and the Social order', Laurence Harris shows the tax system in Rhodesia as similar in structure to those in the more advanced Western nations and goes on to conclude that as the new Zimbabwe has completely different economic aims and its government has a different understanding of what the underlying economic and social structure is, the tax system constructed by the old regime has to be radically altered (p. 94). Harris uses the 'principle of self-financing' to explain 'apartheid in public finance' (p. 77) and argues that there was a lack of distributional equity in Rhodesia. However valid this conclusion might be, the analysis would be more complete if accompanied by a more complete picture of public finance which might show the enormous difficulty of providing 'satisfactory' benefits out of a low and limited tax base.

The chapters written specifically on the economy are really less than convincing to anyone seeking direction as well as information. This section, which is heavily 'Stonemanned' is obsessed by the pre-eminence of capital through its foreign ownership, its profitability and its exploitation of labour. The tone is arrogantly socialist and totally polemical. Without private capital, foreign and domestic, there would now be no diversified modern sector and without private capital G.D.P. per head would not be half its existing level, the tax-take would be minimal and the problems of poverty would be so much more acute that only the multilateral-aid institutions would be able to afford publications and economic planning.

The essay on Foreign Trade by Rob Davies, however, deserves salvage, if only because the overseas sector is more distanced from central government. The analysis here is objectively related to the inherited structure of external relations. During U.D.I. the direction of trade diversified away from dependence upon the United Kingdom but at the same time dependence upon South Africa was intensified for both trade and transport. The pattern of trade had been distorted by import substitution, by the reduction of tobacco exports and by the import controls imposed by the government to ration and direct scarce foreign exchange. Davies, although recognizing the linkages between trade and domestic production and employment and noting that there might be some effective protection for manufacturing, argues that the fundamental causes of inequality and the focus for redistributional policies must lie elsewhere. Davies does not regard the foreign trade sector as central to the economy and asserts this view quite controversially when suggesting that the importance which is attached to the balance of payments in developed as well as underdeveloped countries is misplaced.

All in all the book is of considerable value as a broad background to Zimbabwe's political economy and society. In addition there is an extensive bibliography and index provided at the end. Some readers may find that too many of the contributions suffer from quite simple, explicit and identical assumptions about the causes and cures of poverty and inequality in Zimbabwe. For example, the editor writing in the introduction (p. 6) says that Zimbabwe's problems 'can be tackled more directly, attacking exploitation at source by beginning to build a

society based on co-operative rather than competitive principles'. However, to paraphrase George Bernard Shaw, 'if you have a dirty face better to wash it clean than cut off its head!'

*Birmingham Polytechnic*

D.I. RAMSAY

**Old Age: A Study of Aging in Zimbabwe.** By J. Hampson. Gweru, Mambo Press, Occasional Paper Socio-Economic Series 6, 1982, 96 pp., Z\$2.25.

**The Economics of Old Age Subsistence in Rhodesia.** By D.G. Clarke. Gwelo, Mambo Press, Occasional Paper Socio-Economic Series 10, 1977, 71 pp., Z\$1.30.

**African Aged in Town.** By O. Muchena. Salisbury, School of Social Work, 1978, 23 pp., Z\$1.00.

Clarke's book deals with the effects of colonial economics on the social structures of the Shona and Ndebele peoples and the breakdown of much of the functional 'social security' measures for the old which were built into a society based on the extended family. He outlines measures which were considered or implemented during the colonial era for social security and rightly points to their inadequacy. He indicates various measures for the improvement in the quality of life for the aged and identifies specially vulnerable groups as being women, foreign workers who have made their homes in Zimbabwe, and the landless unemployed. These last two groups, of course, overlap to a large extent. It is useful to read Clarke's book together with Fr Hampson's and with Muchena's work. These two are vivid impressionist studies using case histories as illustrations of the problems encountered by the old in the city, and also by their relatives, as often the aged must share a home which provides inadequate space, with two succeeding generations. This obviously gives rise to tensions within the household as the elders are conscious of their loss of independence and all members of the household are painfully aware that the resources which must be shared are extremely limited.

The plight of the rural aged poor has not as yet been ascertained but one suspects that it has deteriorated and is a problem which needs attention particularly in the resettlement areas. One suspects, too, that Hampson's quotation (p. 15) of the idyllic picture of an honoured old age holding 'promise of a generous supply of food, drink and clothing; of a warm house to sleep in; of time to sun oneself, with the strain of decision and labour left to others; of the company of visitors; of the satisfaction of watching one's herd and offspring multiply' if kinship and other obligations had been well fulfilled, is—and was always—a Garden of Eden myth; and that the reality usually fell very short of the dream.

The universality and timelessness of the problems of old age do not make them any less urgent at any particular time and place, and Fr Hampson's timely and excellent small book is a reminder to us that we must not lose sight of the problem of the aged poor in the social and economic demands of a rapidly growing population where resources for social security measures are limited.