

A New People, A New Church?—Zimbabwe. By G. Cuppen, B. Dijkstra and P. Linhoud. 's-Hertogenbosch, Dutch Catholic Missionary Council, mimeo, 1980, 199 pp., Dfl 17.50

This book is one of a series, of the same title, for other countries in Africa such as Angola and Mozambique. The title, however, is a poor guide to the contents, which are almost entirely historical. Approximately half of the book is a general survey of Zimbabwean history, and the other half a survey of the role of the Catholic Church, mainly over the last 22 years. The latter part of the book is largely based on I. Linden's recent *Church and State in Rhodesia, 1959–1979* (reviewed *ante* (1980), VIII, 195–212) and consequently presents a similarly distorted view of a Catholic Church allegedly weakened in its resolve to combat racism by 'establishment' Jesuits (pp. 90, 92–4, 123). Underlying this conspiracy theory of history is the bland assumption that the Catholic Church somehow has a natural leadership role in nationalism (p. 91), whereas in fact the activism permitted to Protestant ministers, like Sithole, Dodge, Muzorewa, or Banana, is surely much more significant than Bishop Lamont's pastoral letters. For a more balanced view of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe and its recent attempts to meet the needs of the people, readers would be better advised to read the later chapters of *The Catholic Church in Zimbabwe* by A.J. Dachs and W.F. Rea (also reviewed *ante*, *ibid.*).

R.S.R.

Ukama: Reflections on Shona and Western Culture in Zimbabwe. By M. Gelfand. Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1981, 129, [iv] pp., illus., index, Z\$6.95.

Professor Gelfand has written many books and articles on various aspects of Shona culture. The present book deals mainly with human relationships, particularly family spiritual relationships. There has been a need for a book on this aspect of Shona culture, and he must, therefore, be congratulated for trying to fill this gap. In discussing relationships and behaviour he examines marriage and family, religion and community, and political organization with particular reference to traditional society. Wherever possible these aspects of Shona culture are compared with those of Europeans.

Although the book was written primarily for a lay audience, it will be a useful addition to our bookshelves, serving a dual purpose. For students and scholars it provides a reference base for more specific studies, and for a lay readership it provides a greater understanding of the Shona people. Gelfand has worked with Shona people for over thirty years as a medical doctor and a student of Shona culture. It is this experience which has made him succeed in the difficult task of writing a scholarly and accurate book which is readable; it is analytic without being obscure, and generalizes with appropriate consideration for regional particularities. Many will be impressed by his sympathy towards and deep understanding of the men, women and children who are the subject of this book.