

KINLOCH, G. C. 1970 *Flame or Lily: Rhodesian Values as Defined by the Press*. Durban, Alpha Graphic, 134 pp. no price stated.

This work sets forth for the reader the exciting prospect of a description and analysis of the attitudes and culture of Rhodesia's Europeans through the combined tools of sociology and history. New contributions to our substantive knowledge of Rhodesian attitudes and culture are certainly needed; new methodological endeavours and interdisciplinary approaches are always welcomed. Unfortunately the gap between the author's intentions and what he actually accomplishes is disappointing, even depressing.

The sociological technique used involves the application of what he calls a content analysis approach to the leaders appearing in Rhodesia's three main newspapers: *The Rhodesia Herald*, *The Bulawayo Chronicle* and *The Umtali Post*. It appears that his historical technique involves the use of a sample of these leaders starting from their respective inceptions, in the 1890s, up to the end of 1968.

One might expect that a sociologist who analyses a sample of 2 639 editorials and who claims that 'newspapers, as part of the mass media, play a crucial role in any society—they mould as well as reflect that society's culture' (p. 2) would try to present some empirical evidence for determining the amount of influence and the representativeness of newspapers. However, no data are supplied on newspaper circulation, patterns of readership (what kind of people read the newspapers), or the reading habits of the public (what parts of the newspaper are read by what types of people), all important factors which delimit the significance of newspaper leaders and thus indicate what limits of generalization could be made. Supplying such data is particularly crucial in light of data from communication studies in the U.S.A. on reading habits which indicate that editorials are perhaps one of the least read sections of the newspaper, rating far behind the sections on sport, humour, gardening and the home. Furthermore, crucial questions such as the independence of the press in Rhodesia and the ideological compatibility between the government and the press are neither raised nor discussed.

The fundamental problem of Dr. Kinloch's study is methodological. The nature of the published product is that of a grouping together of a number of clippings under typical headings. Headings are generalized as 'government', 'eco-

nomy', or 'labour' in place of analytic concepts and classifications are useless, since they tell us nothing about Rhodesian culture or attitudes. The result is both trivial and dismaying, for the study is neither sociological nor historical; it is no more than a compilation of quotations with simplistic commentaries appended.

It seems, indeed, that a real content analysis was never attempted in the course of the research. For there are neither general nor operational definitions of such basic concepts as culture, attitudes, authoritarianism, puritanism and fair play, despite the necessity of such definitions for conducting content analysis research. Of course, if there are no indices for these concepts, there cannot be any statistical evidence presented for how operative the phenomena described by the concepts are. Take for example the statement: 'emphasis on fair-play is also evident in 1968' (p. 31). What does 'fair-play' mean and how is it related to terms and themes in the leaders? How much 'emphasis' is there on it and how 'evident' is it in 1968? And, how evident is it in 1968 as compared to say 1895, 1923 and 1963? The last question indicates why the study is neither sociological nor historical.

Given these methodological failures it is perhaps unrealistic to expect the author to link his research to any theoretical framework or to related empirical research. But when voluminous empirical and theoretical studies on culture, attitudes and communications exist, it is certainly not asking too much of a sociologist to make use of this extensive literature.

This work also suffers from Dr. Kinloch's apparent value bias towards political stability, which overlooks that conflict of attitudes inherent in the rise of African nationalism, the break-up of Federation, and the divisive legislation of the Rhodesian Front. What historical evidence is there, one wonders, to corroborate the author's belief in the operational effectiveness of 'the values of fair-play and constitutional flexibility in order to adjust to the rising values of the country's non-whites' (p.18). What indeed is the explanation in the author's use of the term 'minority' to describe the non-white 95 per cent of Rhodesia's population?

The overall effect, whether intentional or not, of this sort of approach is to offer the European Rhodesian a vague but bland sense of re-

assurance; but this is very different from the proclaimed purpose to 'provide sociological insight into a scene already over-charged with emotional stereotypes, as well as stimulating a

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closer relationship between sociology and history' (p. xvi). In fact, this work contributes little to either discipline.

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HARRIS, P. B. 1970 *Studies in African Politics*. London, Hutchinson, 181 pp. 13s.

Political change in Africa during the twentieth century has often been as rapid as it has been varied. Keeping abreast of developments is therefore a difficult task for any scholar or author. By his *Studies in African Politics* Professor Harris has demonstrated his scholarship and his skill as an author. The field he has tackled is an enormous one, ranging from pocket histories of the processes of decolonisation to a study of democracy in independent Africa, from detailed analyses of East and Central African attempts at closer union, politics in South Africa and Rhodesia to the luxury of 'pointers to the future'; and all this in little more than 150 pages. The product is a work of value to students and scholars for the knowledge it demonstrates and the insight it contains.

A brief introductory chapter considers 'The Process of Decolonisation in Africa'. Despite its brevity, this contains much interesting comment. For example, Professor Harris explains the withdrawal of the major European powers from Africa as not a retreat but 'a process of political disengagement' (p. 9). Thus he warns 'colonialism does not end merely because we have very obvious external signs removed. Decolonisation has simply meant that the ex-colony now takes its own sovereign decisions . . . In fact it may be wrong to see a simple dichotomy between pre-colonial and post-colonial phases in recent African politics' (p. 30). A reminder to search for continuity as much as change in African history must always be valuable.

Yet it is because of the complexity of the African situation, the unique features of every exercise in decolonisation, and the need for extreme caution in generalisation, that the reader may be unhappy about another of Professor Harris' comments: 'The French appear to have been generally the most successful decolonisers . . . the Belgians had least success and the British have had mixed fortunes' (p. 31). The basis for this judgement is not explained, whether that of bloodshed spared or goodwill preserved, of

economic interest maintained or institutions continued, or a score of other factors that merit consideration. Perhaps Professor Harris' rating may even run counter to his own 'theme' that 'Africa's problems can best be understood . . . in African terms without reference to norms and concepts derived from other sources' (p. 7).

Similarly a more detailed analytical study of the internal Congo crisis would be more useful than the comment of one observer that 'when externally imposed authority, the only element of order and cohesion in the vast expanse of a territory as large as Western Europe, was abruptly withdrawn, the endemic centrifugal forces of tribalism, regionalism, and conflicting political ambitions asserted themselves. Chaos and violence followed' (p. 26). So too Professor Harris leaves the reader to assess for himself the comment: 'One of the most remarkable conferences of recent times was the so-called Round Table Conference of January and February 1960' (p. 27). With the difficulties of the Paris Peace Talks only recent history this reader is fascinated by the possible shape of the table, but on the other hand does not find remarkable the removal from prison of a future prime minister to attend a constitutional conference.

By his analysis of democracy in Africa, Professor Harris has again a valuable contribution to make, especially with regard to the study of politics. For example, he comments: 'African politics is oligarchical, i.e., political power tends to be concentrated in the hands of a few persons' (p. 37). And, according to Professor Harris, 'the notion opposite to democracy is not dictatorship but oligarchy' (p. 37). Moreover African politics is party politics for 'the party is the supreme, political organisation in modern Africa and the legislative body appears in many cases to be no more than an unnecessary intermediary' (p. 37).

Yet when Professor Harris introduces 'tribe' to his analysis the picture becomes at once confused. For example, the suggestion that 'the