

BOOK REVIEWS

Socialism and Education: An Introduction By T. C. Gwarinda. Harare, College Press, New Directions in Education Series, 1985, 128 pp., Z\$7.95 (p/b), ISBN 0-86925-547-9.

Socialism, Education and Development: A Challenge to Zimbabwe By F. Chung and E. A. Ngara. Harare, Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1985, 148 pp., Z\$6.50 (p/b), ISBN 0-949225-25-8.

As Senator Culverwell, the Deputy Minister of Education, points out in his Foreword to *Socialism and Education*, for Zimbabwe to succeed in its task of socialist transformation, there needs to be widespread understanding of 'the socialist thinkers and system with a view to resolving the dilemmas and the contradictions that at present prevail amongst Third World nations like our own' (p. 6). It is indeed heartening that the desired debate is being brought out for discussion by Zimbabwean scholars from such a range of educational homes as the University of Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Education and Gweru Teachers' College.

Chung and Ngara divide their book into two parts; Part One, 'Aspects of Socialism', contains six chapters. Chapter 1 offers broad answers to the question 'What is Socialism?' and the next five explore such key aspects of socialist theory as historical materialism and class, ideology, imperialism and colonialism, neo-colonialism and the relationship of culture to the task of socialist transformation. In all cases the purpose of the Chung and Ngara presentation is not to focus on theory as theory but to create images of what Zimbabwe looks like when viewed from socialist perspectives. For example, the notion of class is exemplified in Zimbabwean terms. Having been given Marx's analysis of how societies evolved from feudalism to capitalism we are reminded that the rule of traditional chiefs in pre-colonial Zimbabwe was analogous to the stage of feudalism (pp. 17-18). The bourgeois class in Zimbabwe is seen as being composed of a small powerful group of international capitalists together with local capitalists. The petty bourgeoisie are very vividly portrayed: 'This class includes the political and bureaucratic elite; the professional groups including managers, intellectuals, nurses, teachers and other educated personnel; small businessmen and traders; and elements of the police and army. The petty bourgeoisie is distinct from the bourgeoisie because its members do not own or control the major means of production' (p. 21).

We are reminded that the petty bourgeoisie 'may co-operate [*sic*] and support the capitalists', that, alternatively, others among them were 'the greatest supporters of the struggle for independence and for liberation', and that they 'can become a parasitic class' and 'may develop the taste for capitalist consumerism by wasting money on prestige projects rather than on productive projects in the way that capitalists would do' (*ibid.*). Through such sharply focused images we are invited to see the complexities of the Zimbabwean situation. At best, the petty bourgeoisie can provide insight and energetic leadership for our transformation; at worst, they can lack even the capitalist virtues of initiative and productivity.

To complete the picture of Zimbabwean social structure we are reminded of the comparatively small number of the workers, some 800,000 including over 300,000 agricultural and domestic workers, and of the huge majority, some 80 per cent of the population, who are rural peasants. References to Marx, Lenin and

Mao invite the careful reader to consider how their theories might have an impact on the particular circumstances of Zimbabwean class structure which has been described.

In their treatment of ideology the authors carefully develop the notion that 'every action is the expression of an ideology; there is no action which is ideologically neutral' (p. 32) and they give clear workings as to how the transformation of society can be derailed by such counter-forces as neo-colonialism, nationalism, racism, regionalism, the empty use of slogans and the shallow building-up of leaders into demi-gods. This chapter ends with the words: 'The mere adoption of socialism as an ideology does not mean automatic success, for socialism is not a declaration of faith. Socialism is a programme of action resulting from a sound theoretical basis. If it is to work it must be implemented correctly and by people who are committed to its success' (pp. 37-8). I am able to commend Chung and Ngara's book to teachers and students in Zimbabwe, precisely because the book successfully images their own view of socialism as a 'programme of action'.

This programme of action emerges in Part Two, entitled 'Education and Development', comprising Chapters 7-11. Chapter 7 poses and seeks to answer the question 'What is socialist education?' and is followed by three chapters dealing with curriculum planning, education with production, and the role of science, the arts, research and higher education. Social transformation is the constant theme and the values and actions to promote it are vividly imaged. The book is strong on the need for increased scientific and technological skills. As Marx revealed through his analysis of praxis, only by such means can man take material control of his environment; and the short chapter on education with production gives a vision of the dimensions of achievement which should be modelled in our ZIMFEP schools and eventually spread to all other schools. Six dimensions are identified: the emphasis on science and technology; the integration of theory with practice; the adoption of practical work as a potent methodology; the application of learning to reality; the importance of research at all levels; and, perhaps above all, the constant realization that the purpose of all this manipulation of material things is not because the material things in themselves have intrinsic value, rather that 'education with production is about developing people through interaction between thought and work' (p. 108). For me it is the way the book builds up this vision of people and their growing skills, this vision of people and their awareness of their own powers and liberties, this vision that it is growth in these people-focused dimensions which actually constitutes a nation's development, that is the book's most remarkable and valued achievement.

In addition to its necessary technological and ideological dimensions, education must include experience of co-operation and community participation. It must be democratizing, not only through its availability to all, but through the experiences it offers and the decision-making and problem-solving procedures it promotes. Knowledge, we are reminded, has its own potent psychology:

The advance of natural science does more than transform people's environment and productive capacity. It also has far-reaching effects on their ideology and world outlook. Knowledge of physics, chemistry, mathematics, human physiology and the plants liberates people from erroneous views about the universe and humanity. Such knowledge helps people realize they are not hopeless victims of the forces of nature and are in fact capable of

overcoming or alleviating the effects of these forces. . . . people become more and more confident of their capacity to cope with disease, poverty and other concomitants of underdevelopment (p. 111).

Curriculum planning should be democratized to include the active participation of teachers; research should be planned and co-ordinated and its findings widely publicized; the arts must be promoted and given freedom so that they can fulfil their proper function 'because art shapes and sharpens our consciousness and our perception of the world around us' (p. 115).

The final chapter, on 'Socialism and Development', epitomizes what I find most educationally attractive about the book. Socialism itself is treated as problematic; it contains within it many dilemmas and contradictions, each of which has to be weighed up and considered in the particular circumstances of Zimbabwe. The fundamental dilemma is that socialism perceives that it is through control of his material world that man evolves both his consciousness and the quality of his life. How, then, does a new socialist nation deal with such realities as the efficiency of local infrastructural development both in the past and at present being dependent in no small measure on local capital initiative? Or that multinationals, anathemas in themselves, through the greater efficiency they may have at their command, may be more productive and may, therefore, in some cases, have greater transformational potential than state enterprises? And what of our use of aid, which we need to develop our human skills and productivity, but which so often is managed in ways that increase the debt of Third World countries and thus prolong their dependent relations with developed economies? Political dilemmas are also explored: What is the proper balance between central direction and decentralized initiatives? What are the characteristics and dangers of a mass party, of a vanguard party and of a one-party system? What also are the dangers of bureaucratic and even of totalitarian control? No simplistic answers to these dilemmas are offered by the writers. Rather they imply faith in the human capacity to develop skills in judgement and rationality and they remind us that 'scientific socialism is very much based on the analysis of social forces within a society, combined with a pragmatic strategy for the implementation of socialist goals as was done by Lenin' (p. 131).

What I perceive as the strengths of Chung and Ngara's book I see as the weaknesses of Gwarinda's. Whereas Chung and Ngara are open and two-sided in their presentation of problematic issues, Gwarinda tends to be doctrinaire. For, example, Chung and Ngara present us with examples of the differences between vanguard parties such as the Chinese Communist Party and Frelimo and mass parties such as Chama Cha Mapinduzi and ZANU(PF) (pp. 146-7). The implication is that for these writers there is no single, best solution. The flavour of Gwarinda's approach is away from pragmatism; rather, all action must be dictated by ideology. There are more imperatives to follow: we are told that a socialist curriculum 'cannot accommodate religion' (p. 19); that existentialism is inimical to socialism (p. 22); that the colonial education system 'must . . . be entirely changed not merely transformed' (p. 104); that 'unless the Party is properly re-constituted in accordance with its stated Marxist-Leninist ideology, the likelihood of socialist revolution remains nebulous' (p. 106); that 'African socialism' is a sham; it is based on wrong analysis of society and romantic notions of the future' (p. 112); and that the success of the revolution in Cuba was because

of 'the correct conception of socialist revolution' (p. 92). All this will no doubt appeal to some readers as a truer diagnosis of what is needed, but to me it looks like the vision of the better world which is the source of the powerful appeal of Marx's ideas. In the place of faith in man's capacity to improve himself, there is the imperative of conformity with prescriptions of higher authority, and the oppressive threat of coercion (which, we recall, it was the business of the revolution to remove) lurks as an ominous presence.

Yet the book has its own strengths: classes in Zimbabwe are concretely presented; the analogy of the Rozvi dynasty using the Mwari movement in much the same way as feudal dynasties used the notion of divine right for purposes of legitimation (p. 33) struck this reviewer as being the kind of applied Marxist analysis which will convey potent meanings in Zimbabwean classrooms. Of equal potency is the story told of the 'embourgeoisement' of African perceptions through such educational institutions as Domboshava and Tsholotsho in the 1920s, Luveve, Chibero and Gweru Teachers' College in 1960s, and such élite mission schools as St Ignatius, St Francis Xavier (Kutama) and Bernard Mzeki (p. 102). The presentation of this history is lucid and economical and Gwarinda's interpretation that the small scale of institutional provision for Blacks was contrived to perpetuate subordination within a White system scrupulously fits the facts. Gwarinda clearly thinks that Zimbabwe would do well to follow Cuba's example of revolutionary mass education much more closely and his chapter on the Cuban example gives the kind of detailed information on which much fruitful discussion can be based. The twelve-page glossary of socialist and Marxist terms and the direct treatment of such Marxist concepts as base, superstructure, the evolution of society, and praxis are handled with the kind of clarity which teachers and students will find accessible and useful.

In one important sense Gwarinda seems to me to have done education a disservice. To expose the closed nature of such professions as medicine, the law and accountancy and to further develop the insight that the effect of the rules of exclusion which these professions are able to adopt in fact operates to the financial and material advantage of the members themselves seems entirely appropriate; a transformed society will have to find ways to eliminate or at least to mitigate such blatant exercise of privilege. But to apply the same analysis to the teaching profession is surely inappropriate. Firstly, teachers in practically all counties are not organized as a profession; they do not make their own rules of exclusion; entry is determined by the state and is organized on a mass scale. Teachers do not determine their own conditions, and their bargaining power is weak. Throughout the world they are thought of as a service — frequently they are part of the civil service — and, like other groups of employees, they have trade unions. They do not seem to fit in with the other groups of whom membership of the profession is seen as a means 'to secure freedom from extraneous social duties' and as 'a strategy for advancing and defending a relatively privileged position' (p. 72).

Moreover, Gwarinda seems to have missed an opportunity to give teachers-in-training some badly needed insights into qualitative dimensions of their social role. If the word 'professionalism' carries negative connotations, then a writer does not have to go too far to seek an alternative term. Hoyle and McCormick developed the notion of teacher 'professionalism'.¹ The notion covers such aspects

¹E. Hoyle and R. McCormick, *Innovation, the School and the Teacher* (Milton Keynes, Open Univ. Press, 1976).

as the need for the teacher to be in touch with theoretical developments and the findings of research, his need for ongoing training and the further development of professional skills, the assumption that the teacher will be deeply and imaginatively committed to the well-being and intellectual development of his pupils, and that in his work he will display a capacity to take decisions and to generate innovation. Professionalism perceived in such ways is of great relevance to teachers in Zimbabwe where so much is expected of their capacity to be active agents in the process of social transformation.

The different orientations and emphasis of these two books, by Chung and Ngara and by Gwarinda, bode well for the debate to which Senator Culverwell looks forward. Moreover, Gwarinda's book is one title in a new series 'New Directions in Education' put out by College Press. If the series is to achieve international recognition, standards of printing and proof-reading will need to be improved, but, for the moment, this new initiative is to be applauded. Additional titles in the series are already available and will no doubt be reviewed in future issues of *Zambezia*.

University of Zimbabwe

T. J. E. BOURDILLON

Historic Buildings of Harare (1890-1940) By Peter Jackson. Harare, Quest Publishing, 1986, x, 134 pp., Z\$25.50 (h/b), Z\$16.96 (p/b), ISBN 0-908306-02-4 (h/b) 0-908306-03-2 (p/b).

The Hon. Enos Chikowore, Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development, sums up the achievements of this book in the foreword when he states that it is 'a significant venture in exposing, explaining and assessing the unique architectural heritage of Harare' (p. ix). One hopes that he is expressing an official view in recognizing that old buildings can and should be integrated into future urban plans. Ivan Fielden, a former City Architect, echoes these sentiments by stating that 'positive change is so much more than just indiscriminate replacement' (*ibid.*). Peter Jackson provides here a practical and sensitive approach to the conservation and appreciation of Harare's old buildings.

Three main objectives can be identified. Firstly, through the use of copious photographs and sketches, Peter Jackson tries to instruct the reader on 'how to see what is there'. This is very closely tied to the second objective which concerns the understanding of 'how it came to be as it is', and in order to do this he goes beyond simple illustration and comments on the historical background, architectural styles of the time and the personal idiosyncrasies of the architects. The third objective relates to the development of a coherent strategy for conservation.

The book can be divided into two main sections: the background, historical and architectural, and the detailed descriptions of selected buildings. The first section begins with a historical summary of the period 1890-1940, which, although brief, is sufficient to provide the framework for the outline of the architectural development. The old photographs of the settlement from the kopje are fascinating, especially given the clear labelling of identifiable buildings and features relevant to the settlement's development. Unfortunately, the same cannot