

1896-7 uprisings is clearly ignorant of modern research which demolishes much of Ranger's *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* on which the author relies absolutely.

In spite of its shortcomings the biography will no doubt appeal to a wide range of people interested in local history. The book is a fitting tribute to a great teacher and martyr, one who laid a strong foundation to what later became the famous Nenguwo Training Institute (Waddilove). That the book should come from a long-serving teacher and pastor at the Institute is a recognition of the rare educational and evangelistic qualities that Moleli possessed.

University of Zimbabwe

P. H. GUNDANI

Ezivusa Usinga Gweru. Mambo Press in association with the Literature Bureau, 1989. 253 pp., ISBN 0-86922-448-4, Z\$16.00.

This anthology contains examples of the work of Ndebele poets who have been represented in previous anthologies, such as J. N. T. Dupute, P. S. Malunjwa, B. L. M. D. Ndlovu, O. L. Mlilo, N. C. G. Mathema, D. E. Ndoda and N. S. Sigogo, to mention a few. New poets have been included, but apart from D. N. Ncube and D. F. Gumpo, the new poets have, on average, only two poems each compared to the nine each of the more established poets.

The new authors might be expected to provide a new trend, a new approach, a freshness of ideas and presentation, a new rhythm and a movement towards a new poetic excellence, but they simply seem to be following an established pattern in respect of an established poetic tradition. Emphasis is still placed on the familiar and now common Ndebele forms of linkages: parallelism, chiasmus, and regular end-rhyme in couplet form with a recurrent spicing of free verse. The poets still resort to disguised repetitions in terms of noun-verb linkages, alliteration and assonance, imagery links and symbolism, open repetition of identical items, and phrase and verse forms. The new poets are respecting an old tradition nurtured in secondary-school education and emphasized in teacher-training colleges and the University. The poetic style of the new poets seems to be tame, uniform and hedged between stable 'acceptable' and known boundaries.

The themes covered in the anthology range from Ndebele traditions and customs through modernism to the Zimbabwe liberation war (pp. 8, 11, 13, 22, 30, 156, 182, 222, 226). Love is explored (pp. 63, 66-73, 154, 159, 202, 211, 221, 247) as are death (pp. 20, 31, 136, 209, 229, 233) and life (pp. 196, 199, 200, 237). At the same time, a miscellany of experiences covering the natural world, money, youth, old age, party politics, jealousy, pain and happiness are explored as well.

In general the poet's private experiences are explored, giving most of the poems a first-hand interpretation. The safe retreat by some poets into private experiences robs the book of a certain degree of concentration. The accountability of poets in socio-economic and political concerns is thereby affected. The poets have placed themselves in a relatively safe position and have apparently ignored social challenges. The book does not look at the war, heroes and socialism with insight. The future vision seems to be ideologically bankrupt and optimistically

ambitious. There is in the poems an underlying escape from a problem or a set of problems into a protective optimism. As a result the anthology *Ezivusa Usinga* does not contain any strong social protest or any criticism of social injustices. It might be referred to as poetry which does not speak for the masses.

Most of the poems in the anthology would seem to have been in 'cold storage' in the Literature Bureau or at Mambo Press waiting to be published, a factor which accounts for their limited relevance in the 1990s. Unfortunately, proof-reading and editing have not been of the highest order and the numerous typographic errors tend to interfere with the smooth conceptualization of the poems, since the reader has to spend time 'rewriting' and subsequently reinterpreting some terms.

Despite the basic weaknesses, the anthology has much to offer to the student of poetry as well as to the researcher interested in the 'hidden' subconscious and conscious working of the Ndebele poetic mind. It is a book well worth reading in terms of the variety and scope of the poems as well as for the potential that it has for providing room for poetic discoveries.

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J. ZONDO

Family Law in Zimbabwe By W. Ncube. Harare, Legal Resources Foundation, 1989, xxviii, 227 pp., ISBN 0-908312-01-6, Z\$25,00.

The author tells us in the preface of this work that his aim is to provide a 'concise and comprehensive overview of family law in Zimbabwe both under general and customary law'. There is no doubt that Ncube has written an adequate reference work that will be useful to various professionals who need to know the law as well as, obviously, the legal practitioner and law student. Its defect is that it is rather more concise than comprehensive. A person seeking an answer from this work is likely to be frustrated in being able to extract only general guidelines to the law, thus requiring further research in order to find a specific solution. This is unfortunate in view of the large number of semi-trained people administering the law who would benefit from a comprehensive text as well as many legal practitioners who are themselves operating without reference to a full library.

However, the book's real strength is in bringing together, for the first time, what the law is in respect of families under the two systems of law in Zimbabwe. By collating this information from previously dispersed and sometimes inaccessible sources, the book is of tremendous value. Its pitch will limit its use to those familiar with the law rather than provide an easily understandable source for the layman. Throughout the book there is a sense that the author was in haste to complete and publish the manuscript. This feeling pervades from the first part — also the weakest — where the inherited legal system is discussed in rhetorical rather than historical terms through to the final chapter which ends so abruptly that the author's relief at having reached the end of his labours is almost tangible.

Having looked at how the two systems of law co-exist, Ncube then examines the different issues that can give rise to actions between parties. Each of these