

The People of the Great River: The Tonga Hoped the Water Would Follow Them *By Fr Michael Tremmel and The River Tonga People.* Silveira House Social Series No. 9. Gweru, Mambo Press in association with Silveira House, 1994, 76 pp., ISBN 0-86922-600-2.

Michael Tremmel worked as a priest among the Tonga in the Binga District of Zimbabwe for eight years, from 1986–1994. This book is his farewell gift to the people. The book gathers memories and reflections, and a few songs, from 17 elderly Tonga men and women. The author provides background information and some commentary, together with some concluding reflections about the plight of the Tonga people.

One would expect memories of life before the Kariba dam was built to be somewhat romanticised. There are no surprises on this score. Nevertheless, the memories point to good things that were taken away from the people. The pain of the move is well depicted. The people talk about their losses, and also about some gains in their life today. They talk about their problems, from wildlife (which they are no longer allowed to hunt but which destroy their crops) to government officials who look down on them and do not listen. They talk also about their beliefs and culture.

The book is attractively presented, well illustrated by Loes Roos. It has both charm and information.

University of Zimbabwe

M. F. C. BOURDILLON

Small Town Africa: Studies in Rural-urban Interaction *Edited by Jonathan Baker.* Uppsala, The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1990, 268 pp., ISBN 91-7106-305-6.

The book consists of 14 papers organized thematically into four sections: planning for small urban centres in the national context; economic networks, small enterprises and entrepreneurship; urban-rural linkages, opportunities and survival strategies; and the constraints and distortions imposed by state policies. The purposes of the volume are, firstly, to stimulate debate and further research interests on the topic 'urban development in rural context in Africa' and, secondly, to illustrate some of the complexity, range and intensity of the small towns and their relationships with the rural hinterland.

The first section on planning includes papers on Botswana (Silitshena), Kenya (Obudho and Aduwo) and Nigeria (Egunjobi). These illustrate the need for planners to look at the particular local circumstances, which can involve different kinds of rural-urban linkages.

On economic networks, Pedersen argues from the historical development of small towns in Denmark that it is important to tap the entrepreneurial spirit of small enterprises. In contrast, Rasmussen fails to understand the rationale of entrepreneurs in Gutu, Zimbabwe. Wekwete, writing on Zimbabwe, locates the growth of towns in the context of post-colonial policies of rural development.