

sought to come to terms with their catastrophic experiences and to begin the necessary post-conflict process of healing.

Society in Zimbabwe's Liberation War is a significant book because it tells the story of what occurred in those nightmarish years of the war and the post-war Matabeleland conflict and thus makes public what has hitherto remained closed to Zimbabwean society as a whole. By addressing these sensitive but important issues and attempting to understand the forces that helped shape Zimbabwe's current social and political reality, it provides the necessary foundation for that national healing process which cannot begin unless Zimbabwean society as a whole confronts the past, the 'heroic' and the 'terrible things', squarely in the face. The book will be useful to both professional researchers and academics because it points to new directions for academic enquiry. It will also be useful to the general public, who need to know what happened then in order to come to terms with the present reality as well as to contribute towards the construction of a Zimbabwean society in which such traumatic experiences are never repeated.

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Are We Not Also Men? The Samkange Family and African Politics in Zimbabwe 1920 to 1964 By Terence Ranger. London, James Currey Ltd.; Cape Town, David Phillip (Pty) Ltd.; Portsmouth, Heinemann, 1995, iv, 211 pp., ISBN 0-435-03977-3, Z\$135.

Professor Terence Ranger, whose earlier works, especially *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* and its sequel, *The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia 1898-1930*, established him as a household name among Zimbabwean historians and freedom fighters, has once again produced in *Are We Not Also Men?* an outstanding study of the rise of the African élite and mass African politics in Zimbabwe. Before reading his latest book, it might have been difficult to imagine that Ranger had anything new to tell us on these topics. Admittedly readers will tread on familiar ground in this book, but they will also find familiar things presented in a different and refreshingly new light together with some new discoveries, some of which substantially revise our current views of certain important events and social developments. In particular, Ranger throws new light on gender relations among the emergent African élite, argues for a very radical and relevant African National Congress in the mid and late 1940s, and disputes Edison Zvobgo's assertion that the National Democratic Party leadership planned and orchestrated the violent demonstrations and riots in Bulawayo in 1960.

Such new insights resulted from a wide range of sources, some of which have not been tapped before. In the National Archives, Ranger consulted Methodist records especially the papers of Herbert Carter, who was close to Thompson Samkange and Chairman of the Rhodesian Methodist District for many years, and the Rhodesian press devoted to African affairs. Ranger was the first to consult the Samkange family archive, containing rich deposits of Thompson's and his son Stanlake's papers, and he complemented all this with oral interviews as well as his own personal recollections and those of his wife Shelagh, both of whom actively participated in the transition of African politics from élitist protests to mass nationalism in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The book is primarily a biography of Thompson Samkange, one of the early African Methodist pastors in this country, and his two sons, Stanlake and Sketchley. All the three were deeply involved in the politics of this country. Ranger's study of them offers a unique opportunity to look at colonialism, and African opposition to it, through the experience and motivation of an African family. Ranger covers other important sub-themes, including the emergence of an African middle class, 'the rise — and also the fall — of the ideal of Christian civilization' and 'the role of women in the making of the Zimbabwean middle class and some of the costs of their involvement'.

Ranger draws our attention to three features of Thompson's christianity which deeply influenced his ecclesiastical and political careers, namely the political implications he drew from the concept of 'Christian Civilization', his attachment to ecumenism and his fervent Wesleyan Methodist evangelism. On ecumenism, the book pays little attention to other churches in the movement and so misses something of his contribution to Christianity in this country.

Ranger exposes the rise of the Samkanges as a middle class family. Thompson was a 'progressive' Christian leader, who set out consciously to build a middle class family. In this he was assisted by his wife Grace, also an early convert to Methodism. Their task involved transforming gender relations between themselves and among their children; investing heavily in family education; and providing a secure base for the family.

Both Grace and Thompson insisted on the equal education of both male and female children and training all the children without gender distinction in domestic and other activities of the family. Contrary to the recent assertions¹ that wives of emergent African élites in the colonial period had their importance diminished, Ranger shows that Grace became 'famous and honoured' through her leadership roles in the large Samkange

¹See for example Elizabeth Schmidt, *Peasants, Traders and Wives* (London, James Currey; Portsmouth N. H., Heinemann, 1992).

'extended' family and in the Ruwadzano. This was possible in Thompson's environment that accepted the Christian ideal of equality between husband and wife in marriage and in which educated women were to be given free reign to exercise their skills and talents not only in the rural but also in the urban areas.

Together with the rest of the emergent African middle class, the Samkanges believed in providing their children with a sound education. They sent all their children through primary and teachers' training at Waddilove, and two received secondary schooling and university education in South Africa. All this entailed enormous investment in effort and money. Therefore Thompson and Grace established a secure home on a private property in the Msengezi African Purchase Area, which Grace managed while Thompson continued his educational and pastoral work. The two were also particular about their children's marriages, insisting on partners of equal educational status. Unfortunately children who for one reason or another did not perform or live up to expectations became what Ranger calls 'casualties of progress'.

Although Ranger stresses too much the peculiarity of this family, his rewarding use of a family archive and family biography has blazed a trail for all of us in our striving to understand the creation of the élite in this country.

A trip to India and Ceylon in 1938 brought Thompson into contact with famous nationalists of the third world, and with the indigenous Methodist church of Ceylon. On being appointed on his return superintendent of Pakame circuit, Thompson tried to implement his Tambaram vision of the church. Although he was successful in laying a foundation for a future indigenous Methodist church in Zimbabwe by producing many African ministers, his full vision remained a mere mirage. Neither African Methodists, who had apparently put off the prospects of an indigenous church by the financial implications of self-reliance, nor the young White missionaries, who felt their dominance threatened, supported him. His superintendency of Pakame, which he had so much wanted as part of the advancement of Africans in church leadership, in fact proved to be his undoing. A poor bookkeeper and record keeper, he found himself exposed to severe criticisms by White education officers and young missionaries. Finally, he clashed with young African progressives who wanted to improve their schools but found his ecclesiastical controls on education stifling.

Such opposition to progressive church leaders from local communities and White missionaries is not peculiar to Thompson and the Methodist church. This opposition stands out more clearly in the biographical approach of this book than in general studies of missionaries and churches.

In the political arena Ranger sheds new light on Samkange and his leadership of Congress. The current picture is that of a weak Congress in the mid-1940s and of an ineffectual leader. Ranger shows that Samkange was elected to the leadership of Congress in July 1943 specifically to rejuvenate and radicalise the organisation. Samkange focused attention on two key political issues of the time — opposition to the proposed amalgamation of Southern Rhodesia with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland and to the threatened limitations of the already limited African franchise. His growing disillusionment with the failed promises of Christian civilisation in the church and with the emptiness of British justice and freedom, served to radicalise Thompson's leadership. He urged the building of a mass organisation through the mobilisation of the rural people so that the colonial government could not dismiss Congress as a mere clique of malcontents. While Ranger brings out the expressed radicalism of Thompson, there is little evidence of translation into concrete action on the ground. Moreover the key issues which he concentrated on were more the concern of the élite than of the masses. Ranger is aware of this criticism: 'It was not in Thompson to place himself unequivocally at the head of rural or urban protest' (p. 121). Yet the urban and rural protests offered the surest road to successful and popular leadership and a way out of being a mere élitist leader.

The use of the Samkange family archive has also enabled Ranger to correct substantially our views of the role of Congress and Samkange in the 1948 strike. Where previously some of us saw no role for Samkange and Congress in this strike, Ranger demonstrates that they were very much involved.

Thompson's last years were years of disillusionment, disappointment and bitterness. His clashes with Native Education Department officials at Pakame got worse and his superintendency and ecclesiastical authority came under heavy criticism in some of his village schools. There were slanders concerning church money and examinations. All this seemed to be directed by White missionaries and education officers towards undermining his leadership and role in education and the church and therefore towards discrediting African leadership in general.

Further disappointment came with the dismal failure of the young educated generation to provide selfless leadership and service to their people. Thompson and other older leaders had been delighted when Stanlake, Tennyson Hlabangana and Enoch Dumbutshena came back armed with university degrees and took over the leadership of Congress. But by 1953 these had led Congress into oblivion. The educated youth quarrelled among themselves. Attracted by a promise of partnership, Stanlake got sucked into the politics of multi-racialism, which already had become irrelevant for the people. The disillusioned Thompson saw all these

flirtations with White politics by the educated as mere self-seeking and roundly declared, 'the so-called educated African . . . (is) a danger to the community and to himself'.

To understand the careers of Stanlake and Sketchley, Ranger tells us we need to know the ideas held by their father Thompson, which after his death became increasingly incompatible and could not be successfully espoused by one person. Thompson advocated a national political movement which concentrated on common interests and left intact autonomous institutions, organisations and practices of civil society. He could not have tolerated the totalitarian behaviour of mass nationalism at its height, when for instance people were directed not to attend Sunday services in order to be at political rallies. He held education to be compatible with service and not merely a stepping stone to higher and more lucrative professional and other economic rewards as became later common practice. He was opposed to the secularisation of the school system. He would have applauded any African initiatives directed towards self-reliance; this would have been in line with his call for indigenisation in the church. He condemned White racism as much as he abhorred 'Black racist repudiation of Whites'.

After Thompson's death the growing divergence of his ideas seemed to be epitomised by the divergent careers of Stanlake and Sketchley. Stanlake became an ally of Garfield Todd and a champion of multi-racialism, while Sketchley became intimately associated with, and involved in, mass nationalism. But both of them had the streak of their father's idealism and shunning of authoritarian violence. Thus Stanlake successfully pursued the Nyatsime project, promoting self-help in education. Even when he broke up with Todd in 1961 and was attracted to mass nationalism, Stanlake hesitated from joining either NDP or ZAPU, being put off by their apparent intolerance of dissent and of the autonomy of civil society institutions.

In the meantime, Sketchley combined his father's nationalism and conviction in non-violence. When Congress was banned in 1959, many leaders were involved in the politics of Federation and were reluctant to take on leadership of a new organisation. Sketchley was able to fill this vacuum. Brought up on his father's stories and admiration of Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence, Sketchley urged NDP to use non-violence as a weapon against the colonial system and authorities. On this Ranger differs from Edison Zvobgo. In 1983, Zvobgo claimed that Sketchley's public statements of non-violence camouflaged his preparations with Michael Mawema for the violence which later erupted in the Bulawayo riots and demonstrations in 1960. Ranger writes:

In my view Zvobgo's account is influenced partly by a desire to praise Mawema's leadership at the expense of Joshua Nkomo and Ndabaningi Sithole, and partly by a desire to establish as early a date as possible for the origins of the liberation war (p. 181).

One of the outcomes of the violent disturbances was the decision of the two brothers — Stanlake and Sketchley — to pull out of political leadership.

One thing that students and other researchers will find irritating about the book is its omission of a section on sources and bibliography. Frankly the otherwise excellent discussion in the introduction of the main archives used is not a substitute for the traditional bibliography.

The omission, however, is minor compared to the importance of the book. Written by one of the few accomplished and devoted scholars of modern Zimbabwean history, who has the further advantage of having been an active participant in some of the events that are dealt with in *Are We Not Also Men?*, this book will for a long time remain important reading for both the general reader and history students in the study of the rise of the African middle class and of mass nationalism in Zimbabwe.

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Labour Export Policy in the Development of Southern Africa By Bill Paton. Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications; London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1995, xii, 397 pp., ISBN 0-908-307-41-1, Z\$100.

In this book, Paton seeks to contribute to an understanding of the origins and functions of cross-border migration, and of states in the labour exporting countries of Southern Africa. The study is motivated by the need to explicate two major propositions. The first one is that 'the evolution of the power to control labour flows among the jurisdictions of different territorial administrations in Southern Africa was of major importance in the formation of a regional system of states' (p. 3). The second one is that 'the overall importance of the policies of labour-exporting administrations has been seriously downplayed' (p. 15) in past studies of the phenomenon of labour migration in Southern Africa, hence the need for an elaboration of the various policies undertaken by the different states in managing and controlling labour flows in the sub-region.

That the countries of Southern Africa have historically been intertwined in a web of cheap labour circulation centred around the sub-centre of the South African economy (which itself is a periphery in the global economy) is a well-known fact to lay-persons and academics alike. On the political plane the emergence of groups such as the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Frontline States, and the Southern Africa Labour Commission (SALC) is either directly or indirectly motivated by the need to reduce the dependency of labour exporting countries on South Africa.

The belief that Southern Africa represents a unique configuration of states is one of the reasons there is the current paralysis in the attempt to