

students and scholars of Christian history and theology in Africa, in particular Malawi.

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Street Sellers of Zimbabwe Stone Sculpture — Artists and Entrepreneurs
By C. & M. C. Kileff. Gweru, Mambo Press, 1996, 68 pp., Illustr., ISBN 0-86922-637-1, Z\$96.

This short work is unusual among the growing literature on Shona stone sculpture in two ways. It is written by an anthropologist rather than an art critic; and it deals with artists selling on the streets and generally unknown, even despised, by the professional critics.

The first half of the book comprises an introduction to ways in which the works of unknown artists may be sold, principally to tourists, around Zimbabwe. Many of the themes are covered through vignettes of particular artists. The substance of the book is the brief autobiographical profiles given by 14 artists in and around Harare, together with those of three sellers and one White South African artist, who also sells Shona sculpture, in Cape Town. There is a final chapter that questions the distinction between the high art to be found in galleries and the sculptures found on city streets.

In a book of this size the narratives and the analysis are necessarily brief. References are limited, and do not always tally with the bibliography. Nevertheless, the book is welcome for the points it raises. The Kileffs show the importance of the entrepreneurial skills of the artists, and the economic significance of their work in their lives. On the other hand, the narratives of several of the sculptors also show an artistic dedication to their craft. Although stone sculpture is relatively new in Shona history, it can provide an authentic expression of the perceptions of Shona artists. Art is essentially creative. Although carvers presented in this work do borrow ideas and designs from others, they are also innovative at times.

A key issue, which the book opens up rather than resolves, is the relationship between the art of the galleries, and the items sold by street vendors and curio shops. About five percent of sculptors achieve the elite circles of galleries; others are left on the periphery, not necessarily due to lack of talent. The Kileffs present Tago, a sculptor and street seller who commented on the exclusiveness of the elitist galleries. He only managed to get his works into a gallery when they were given to a promoter by a renowned artist.

The book is easy to read and well illustrated, and I recommend it as a refreshing balance to works that emphasize the elite in Shona sculpture.

We need a fuller and more thorough investigation into the sociology of Shona sculpture. If this book provokes such a study, it will have served a further useful purpose.

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The Gender Dimensions of Urban Poverty: The Case of Dzivarasekwa By *Neddy R. Matshalaga*, Harare, Institute of Development Studies, University of Zimbabwe, 1997, 50 pp.

The Gender Dimensions of Urban Poverty: The Case of Tafara By *Neddy R. Matshalaga*, Harare, Institute of Development Studies, University of Zimbabwe, 1997, 51 pp.

These two short pieces provide basic data on household economies in two of Harare's high-density suburbs. Each is based largely on a survey of 320 households. Although there was an attempt to randomise the samples, it is not clear how the population, including those living in rented shacks, was established. The survey comprised a questionnaire that included such topics as household size, income, education, use of health facilities, food and accommodation. There were also questions on perceptions of poverty and its causes. The survey data were supported by informal interviews and discussions, from which some short extracts appear. But there is no mention of whether or how verbal answers to questions were verified in any of the cases.

The reports largely present descriptive statistics of the results of the surveys, paying particular attention to differences according to the gender of the household heads but with little attention to further analysis. The sample in Tafara is on average much poorer and less educated than that in Dzivarasekwa. As an indication of poverty in Tafara we find over half the children of school-going age are out of school, which is disturbing for the long-term future of the community. Around 60 per cent of men claim not to be getting enough food in both samples (slightly fewer in Tafara); 65 per cent of women in Dzivarasekwa make the same claim as do 75 per cent in Tafara. The author does not offer a systematic comparison of the communities nor an analysis of the differences.

Although the reports are limited in both data and analysis, it is useful to have such descriptive data on the quality of life in high-density suburbs of Harare. It is right that we should be disturbed by such data.

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