

My more general observations concern the limitations of what the volume has to say about the study of Christianity in Africa. Different authors express a necessary criticism of claims to interpret African traditional religions from Christian starting points in an attempt to develop an African Christian Theology. In his contribution, Verstraelen advances a healthy but very general argument in favour of the study of Church History from an African perspective. In his survey of "The Religions of Africa in their Historical Order" (pp 46-102), Platvoet limits himself to subscribe to the distinction between "Ethiopian Christianity" (sic!), "Modern Missionary Christianity" and "Indigenous Christianity" (pp 58-64). This classification may serve some purpose at a very general level. It is limited, however, as it does not take very far the study from within of Christianity in its variety in different African contexts.

In his keynote address (pp 37-45), the Secretary-General of the International Association for the History of Religions, Dr Michael Pye, challenged the conference to consider "what is the deep-seated frame of reference . . . which informs cultural insider's reflection on African religion"; we may add in its plurality (cf. p 45). It seems to me that Olupona's comprehensive contribution on the study of religions in Nigeria is closest to an answer to that question.

Institute of Development Studies

CARL F. HALLENCREUTZ

Empowerment or Repression? ESAP and Children in Zimbabwe By Rodreck Mupedziswa. Silveira House Social Series No. 13, Gweru, Mambo Press, 57pp.

This welcome book brings together many of the issues concerning children in Zimbabwe today that give rise to grave concern. These include: deteriorating educational opportunities and attendance at school, deteriorating nutritional levels, deteriorating health and health facilities, increasing shortage of housing, child labour and child sexual abuse. It is useful to have this data brought together in an accessible form.

One problem I have with the book is the precise relationship between the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) and the problems described. Some of the problems are directly related to the policies of ESAP, such as the introduction of fees for education and health services. However, the social development fund was introduced with ESAP to alleviate these problems, and poor administration of the fund is not the fault of the programme. Other causes of problems, such as the decline in employment opportunities, the lack of funds in government and the decline of the value of the Zimbabwean currency, are assumed in this book to

result from the Programme, without consideration of prior trends and the general economic administration of the country. The author cites popular derogatory perceptions of ESAP and appears to accept them uncritically. Sometimes the blame placed on ESAP seems extreme: "Rape within marriage has reportedly increased largely because men can no longer afford prostitutes" (p. 42).

The author does not always make clear the origin and status of the data he cites. "It is thought that the number of working children has escalated to over 50 000 . . ." (p. 39). "There are estimated to be between 10 000 and 12 000 children living on the streets of Zimbabwe today" (p. 41). Who has these thoughts and estimates, and on what basis? My information is that the number of children living on the streets is perhaps a tenth of the figure given. Even when I have no reason to doubt the author's statements, I should like more information. I should like, for example, to know more about the information from which the author concludes that various forms of child abuse are increasing. Statements about family disintegration need more careful analysis than the author gives them, both on its nature and on its causes.

Some of the tables could be more helpful. What are we to conclude from Table 1, which shows that in 1976, 11.5% of Whites and 13.1% of Blacks were in primary school? Table 2 gives absolute figures for patterns of disease between Whites and Blacks, and no percentages.

It is useful to have the issues concerning children expressed concisely in one short booklet. But it provides little in the way of new insight or new information.

University of Zimbabwe

M. F. C. BOURDILLON

The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme: The Case of Zimbabwe, 1991-1995 By A. S. Mlambo. Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1997, 105 pp, ISBN 0-908307-72-1, \$75.

Dr. Mlambo's book has explored factors leading to the inception, and impact of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in Zimbabwe. The study contains an immense amount of material obviously based on months of earnest investigation.

An analysis of a typical International Monetary Fund/World Bank (IMF/WB) reform package is presented in the opening chapter. The chapter evaluates the effectiveness of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). Indeed all the evidence points to the fact that SAPs are to blame for the situations in which developing countries find themselves. The chapter contains an interesting debate on whom to blame for the failure of SAPs [pg. 19]. IMF and WB officials argue that "... they are merely advisors ...