

the redistribution e.g. targeting and how to identify the poor. The potential costs of the suggested policy are not discussed. This could have been more helpful to policy makers in Zimbabwe. For policy purposes, the study has achieved little success, and is already out of date. As Economists, we should be trying to look at the possible solutions to our problems rather than spend our resources on analysing the "by-gones". What is the way forward?

Dr. Mlambo's book is especially suitable for the upcoming scholars who are really keen on knowing the origins of ESAP in Zimbabwe.

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The Practice of Smallholder Irrigation: Case Studies from Zimbabwe E. Manzungu and P. van der Zaag (eds.). Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1996, 235 pp, ISBN 0-908307-51-9, Z\$60.

This edited volume is a multi-disciplinary study of smallholder irrigation in Zimbabwe. Eight case studies make up the book. The case studies focus on interaction between technical and social aspects of smallholder irrigation, standardisation in schemes managed by government,

management under water scarcity, social and political relations among irrigators from diverse physical and ideological backgrounds, strategies adopted by resource deficient irrigators, interface issues at catchment level and irrigation schemes initiated by farmers.

There is a dearth of post-independence literature on smallholder irrigation in Zimbabwe: this book is therefore very welcome. A jewel of the book is that it is a positive attempt to go beyond the 'disciplinary fragmentation . . . which inhibits the ability to integrate knowledge in an all encompassing totality which spans the entire spectrum of experience' (Murphree, 1977, 3).¹ This has been achieved without compromising on detailed presentation of evidence to support conclusions.

Furthermore, one does not see a romanticised view of the farmers, a refreshing departure from some of the accounts that uncritically see a panacea in indigenous technical knowledge systems. Also a welcome feature of the book is that farmers are not viewed as a homogeneous group. The cases presented in this book show that within the 'community' of farmers, are several groups with different and sometimes competing interests.

A glaring omission in the literature review is A. K. H. Weinrich's *African Farmers in Rhodesia*.² Weinrich's account of smallholder irrigation in the colonial era is valuable in that she does not take a dualistic approach to state peasant relationships. May be because of this omission, Manzungu and van der Zaag's book falls into what Moyo observes as a weakness in institutional studies that are based on 'the vision of a monolithic state, identified in Zimbabwe around such institutions as Agritex and District Administration . . . For such a perspective may miss the heterogeneous character of the state's role including its negotiated involvement in local administration, local power issues and in critical matters surrounding land (or water)' (Moyo, 1995, 69).³

A topic not adequately addressed in any of the case studies is that of produce marketing. Fortunately, the authors are aware of this. As they point out in the book, there is a need for 'more in-depth inquiries into household strategies, the obstacles faced and the alternatives sought' regarding the issue of marketing (p.223).

The Practice of Smallholder Irrigation is a welcome contribution to the study of communal area irrigation. It is valuable to students of applied science regardless of orientation.

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¹ Murphree, M. W., "Strategic considerations for enhancing scholarship at the University of Zimbabwe", *Zambezia*, XXIV, (i), 1-112, 1997.

² Weinrich, A. K. H., *African Farmers in Rhodesia, Old and New Peasant Communities in Karangaland* (Oxford, OUP, 1975).

³ Moyo, S., *The Land Question in Zimbabwe* (Harare, SAPES Books), 1995. Addition in brackets not in original.