

thorough discussion on the scope and methods for future documentation work is urgently needed. Those librarians and documentalists who are concerned with Namibiana should therefore establish communication between themselves and convene a meeting in a not-too-distant future in order to uplift the standard of forthcoming editions of the NNB.

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**Hoyt Alverson . Mind in the Heart of Darkness: Value
and Self - Identity among the Tswana
of Southern Africa . MacMillan
South Africa . 1978 . 299 pp . £6.50**

Hoyt Alverson has addressed here one of the deepest and most complex questions of any trans-cultural study: how do people from another culture think? This inquiry brings a whole train of associated questions, no less difficult. What is the relationship between the physical environment and the possibilities of human perception and endeavor? In what ways do particular groups of people give symbolic meaning to the perceived universe? Most importantly, how do these people react to the existence of colonial economic and political oppression, what Alverson calls the "heart of darkness"? A large task, without doubt, and one with which the author grapples without claiming complete success. He calls his work a "philosophical meditation"

rather than a mere report of observations, suggesting less than a complete synthesis. Yet the outcome of this meditation is a rich and valuable book, perhaps the most profound to appear on Botswana in the last ten years.

On the basis of extensive interviews among both Bakwena and Bakgalagadi in two regions of the Kweneng, among town dwellers of Gaborone and among mine workers on the Rand, Alverson explores the values which shape Tswana life-goals. He systematically reviews attitudes toward work and achievement, good and evil, heroic effort and day to day behavior. His own analysis alternates with long excerpts from the interviews, adding precision and variety to the text. He often makes observations which seem both subtle and profoundly important. His distinction between desire and Tswana desire as process (wanting versus "wanting-to-do") or the concept of evil as shame ("to cause a person to hide his eyes like the badger for fear that he will be caught") are good examples. He concludes that interaction between the institutions of colonization and the subject peoples, at least those still firmly embraced in the framework of traditional society, results in creative adaptation rather than confrontation - an unsurprising but judicious conclusion.

Yet these obvious merits should not conceal some important problems with the book. The most crucial concerns the book's central theme. If one were truly interested in exploring the impact of colonial domination on a people's view of the world, why would one select a group like the Bakwena for study? As Alverson himself admits, they have been sheltered by the advantageous isolation of the Bechuanaland Protectorate (later the Republic of Botswana) from the worst effects of colonial domination. While they have suffered economically and felt the psychological impact of racism in their mine labour experiences, they have been able to retreat into a reserve where they could maintain the all important appearance of independence. Botswana simply does not form the best case study for examining the impact of colonialism. Even if political realities precluded the study of a South African group, Swaziland or Lesotho would have made a better focus.

One other problem stands out clearly, this one of omission rather than commission. How could so acute an observer as Alverson have neglected the crucial importance of bongaka

(medical magic) in maintaining the stability and self-assurance of the Tswana world-view "in the heart of darkness"? The omission is all the more glaring since Alverson's Tswana father, Rre Segatlhe, is a traditional doctor himself and used his medicines to good effect in maintaining the illusion of control. Surely Alverson's own story of Segatlhe's self-praise, and Segatlhe's own words - "medicine smoothed the road, filled the holes, and brushed aside thorny branches" (198) - states the situation too clearly to be ignored. It would seem that Tswana medicines do indeed smooth the road. They provide an illusion of control and security which for oppressed peoples is one of the most vital means of coping. Could it be that this secret weapon remained secret even from Alverson? Or did he repress its importance in an attempt to make the Tswana more heroic in rationalist-oriented western eyes?

Neither of these problems, nor yet the author's unnecessarily difficult and metaphorical language, should seriously vitiate the book's impact. Mind in the Heart of Darkness stands out as a real tribute to inter-cultural understanding and the west's continually improving effort to understand the impact of colonialism in Africa. Everywhere, but especially in Botswana, the book deserves many readers.

(Dr. John Spears - John Hopkins University. Baltimore - U.S.A.)

**Abel Muzorewa . Rise up and walk . An
Autobiography . Evans Brothers.
London. 1978. 289 pp . £6.95**

This is Bishop Muzorewa's autobiography edited by Norman E. Thomas. But as Isaac H. Bivens, Assistant General Secretary, Africa Affairs, Board of Global Ministries, United