

Minister Slovo, it will not go away. There is no easy path for government in dealing with the issue. Popular pressure will always push standards, and hence the cost associated with delivering subsidised housing, as high as possible. There are few signs that government has the stamina (or will) to resist these demands, and Lombard is right to be concerned that ever-increasing standards will undermine the current housing policy and move it further and further from its focus on the poor.

In sum, Lombard has provided an interesting perspective on housing policy and practice in South Africa, but one which remains limited by the lack of primary research - something which research students may hopefully begin to overcome in the near future. ¶

Carole Rakodi, *Harare: Inheriting a Settler-Colonial City: Change or Continuity?*

Chichester and New York: John Wiley (World City Series), 1995  
xvi + 298 pp.; 16 photographs, 12 maps, 16 graphs, 27 tables, index. £35.

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Carole Rakodi has wide experience of planning and urban research in many parts of the world, particularly southern and eastern Africa. Her book on Harare provides enormous amounts of information on that city, but also supplies fascinating insights into the complexities of urban change with the advent of democracy in formerly minority-ruled southern Africa. The book constitutes an enquiry into the 'balance between continuity and change' (p. 8) under these circumstances.

The text is primarily a detailed description of the development of urban form, paying attention to political, institutional, economic and social factors in the shaping of the urban environment. The beautifully produced book consists of seven chapters, all readable if somewhat unexciting.

The first chapter provides an analysis of the political and economic context. It contains among other things an excellent section on 'urban administration' (pp. 32-43). A central aspect of Harare's history has been the genesis of an urban form with considerable disparity between formerly white (now 'low density') and formerly black (now 'high density') areas of the city, with the latter being rooted in segregated public housing

estates placed in often less favourable locations. The extreme case of the latter in Harare is that of Chitungwiza, physically separated by miles of open country from the city proper, and now a dependent centre of several hundred thousand people with its own administration. So while Harare as a whole has grown rapidly to a population over one and a half million people, and while its administration has been significantly restructured and unified since independence in 1980, it remains a city divided.

The second chapter describes this 'urban structure', essentially a historical geography exploring several themes. Unlike so many other African cities (but like Namibia and South Africa), a fairly strict system of land use management continues to work, at least in large sections of the city. The author provides an excellent account of planning practice in this respect (pp. 84-101). Her critique of the combination master plan of 1991 follows the now-familiar 'urban management' concern over the lack of relationships between physical planning and resource allocation processes. Given the strength of the land use management system in Harare, though, the master plan would appear to have been influential in shaping more recent development. Some of its

results stand in great contrast to South African cities: in Harare, prevention of suburban sprawl to the predominantly white north east and fostering of redevelopment in the central business district provide examples.

The next four thematic chapters investigate the economy, social characteristics, land development and housing. The author's speciality is studies of housing and land, and the two chapters which are devoted to these subjects are particularly strong. Unusually for a book of this type, these chapters report a great deal of original research. Harare is characterised by mostly 'formal' types of residential areas (including public housing and 'sites and services' schemes) - unlike so many other 'third world' cities. Rakodi's account advances understanding both of the sources and the consequences of this set of circumstances. The author's central argument - that the pace of change and the consequent strains on traditional urban management in Harare are both beginning to accelerate - is well supported by these chapters.

In the seventh and last chapter, Rakodi concludes that continuities have outweighed changes in Harare's development. These continuities with the colonial past can be demonstrated not only in urban form and planning, but also in new elite acceptance of those facets of urbanism (p. 255). Looking to the future, however, the author notes that the signs are for less continuity and more change. In order to cope with emerging pressures, she calls for new 'realistic and innovative policies' (p. 275). Rakodi believes that change in planning

systems 'to emphasise development promotion, relaxation of unrealistic and inappropriate standards, and facilitation of informal sector activities' (p. 267) are required.

Certainly the book holds lessons for other parts of Africa. Harare is a much better researched urban environment than any South African city, due in no small measure to the efforts of the author herself, as well as a few British and French geographers (such as Potts and Gervais-Lambony), as well as a remarkable constellation of Zimbabwean planners and researchers including Mutizwa-Mangiza, Wekwete, Mutambirwa, and Zinyama.<sup>1</sup> Rakodi's book does an excellent job of making some of this research accessible to a less specialist audience.¶

1 For some of this research, see LM Zinyama, DS Tevera and SD Cummings (eds), *Harare: the Growth and Problems of the City* (University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1993); D Potts and C Mutambirwa, Rural-urban linkages in contemporary Harare: why migrants need their land, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 16 (4) 1990, pp. 677-697; KH Wekwete, New directions for urban development in rapidly urbanising countries: the case of Zimbabwe, *Habitat International* 16 (2) 1992, pp. 53-63; N D Mutizwa-Mangiza, Urban informal transport policy: the case of emergency taxis in Harare, in Zinyama *et. al.* (eds), pp. 97-108; and P Gervais-Lambony, *De Lomé à Harare: le fait citoyen* (Paris: Karthala, 1994).