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ESSAY REVIEW

SITHOLE, THE POLITICIAN AS AUTHOR

NDABANINGI SITHOLE'S BOOKS have attracted interest more as a result of the political circumstances in which they were published and their author's role in Rhodesian politics than from their intrinsic merits. His *African Nationalism*,¹ which was published in 1959, although not particularly subtle or penetrating, was welcomed within and outside Africa as an expression by an African of what African nationalism meant to Africans at a time when African nationalist leaders were rapidly taking over the governments of their countries from colonial rulers. Sithole's reputation as the author of *African Nationalism* launched his career as an African nationalist leader in Southern Rhodesia, when in 1960 his fame as an author helped him rapidly to attain eminence within the N.D.P. Since then his prominence as a politician has, by contrast, stimulated interest in the books that he has written. Sithole soon established himself as one of the most important African leaders in Rhodesia. After holding senior office in N.D.P. and its successor, ZAPU, Sithole broke with the ZAPU leader, Joshua Nkomo, in 1963 to become President of the rival ZANU. The Rhodesian Government then improved his status as a nationalist leader by detaining and imprisoning him for over ten years between 1964 and 1974. After he was released Sithole quickly gained the reputation in 1975 of being the most militant of the nationalist leaders in Rhodesia, projecting himself as the commander of the by now successful ZANU guerillas in the north-east of the country. When most of these guerillas refused to acknowledge his leadership, he lost much of his political significance, until he became one of the two nationalist leaders to sign the internal agreement with Ian Smith in March 1978, which planned African majority government by the end of the year.

Sithole, who has since the mid-1960s written a remarkable amount for a man at first confined to prison and then involved in politics, has gained some kind of reputation as the intellectual among African leaders. However, the quality of his writing does not match its quantity, and he is less intelligent and less intellectual than some others in the Rhodesian African nationalist movement, notably Robert Mugabe and Willie Musarurwa, although they have not produced books. One of Sithole's recent books, *Roots of a Revolution*,² might not have seemed worth publishing, if *African Nationalism* had not been successful throughout the world in two editions and in several languages and if Sithole had not been a celebrated politician.

Roots of a Revolution is Sithole's latest experiment in quasi-documentary fiction, in which Sithole has explored the predicaments of Africans coping

¹ N. Sithole, *African Nationalism* (Cape Town, Oxford Univ. Press, 1959).

² N. Sithole, *Roots of a Revolution* (London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1977). 142pp., £3.50.

with the impact of European society. His first book, and the only one written in Sindebele, *AmaNdebele KaMzilikase* was published in 1956.³ It was a kind of historical novel about the failure of the Ndebele in the war of 1893 and the rising of 1896 to fight the Europeans with sufficient vigour. Sithole's next work of fiction was *The Polygamist*,⁴ which was published in 1972 and, like the revised version of *African Nationalism*,⁵ *Obed Mutezo*⁶ and *Roots of a Revolution*, was written while he was imprisoned. The central figure of *The Polygamist* is Dube, the headman of a village who has seven wives. Sithole is not an imaginative novelist, but aims to give an accurate account in fictional form of tribal customs and beliefs and to show how Africans previously isolated from European culture may react when European influences enter their lives. Dube's son leaves the village for a long time and, while he is away, goes to school and becomes a teacher. On returning home the son is treated as a stranger and feels alienated from his village. He resents the fact that his family still live in the old style and fears that his fiancée, whom he met away from the village, who is also a teacher, may reject him because his family is primitive. The son successfully persuades his father to buy European clothes for his wives, but Dube argues for the naturalness of polygamy against his son, who has become a Christian during his absence from the village. Unlike *AmaNdebele KaMzilikase*, *The Polygamist* has no implicit message about how to confront the Europeans. Sithole is concerned with the related, but separate theme of how Africans should select and fuse what is of value from traditional African life and from the alien European culture. To Sithole who has a strong emotional attachment to his tribal origins and, at the same time, a clear commitment to Christianity, the problems of how to move between the African and the European worlds is personally important, and he explores it sensitively in some of his other writings, in particular, *Obed Mutezo*, as well as in *The Polygamist*. This novel, however, while it has a certain charm, lacks depth or subtlety. It is almost as if Sithole is trying self-consciously to strip himself of European sophistication, which he distrusts, to write about African simplicity, which he admires.

The third of Sithole's works of fiction, *Roots of a Revolution*, which was written in 1973, although not published till 1977, is basically a political tract, although presented in a fictional form. In effect, it presents the case that violent African resistance is necessary in Rhodesia to remove unrepentant European oppression. The book has no real plot and the various episodes, which illustrate different aspects of the confrontation between the races, are only loosely linked together by a common general theme and some common characters. What is least satisfactory is the manufacture of events which might have happened, but which in fact did not. For example, Chapter 7 describes how a rally of African militants in Highfield culminated in violence between them and the Government's security forces, with the

³ N. Sithole, *AmaNdebele KaMzilikase* (London, Longmans, Green, 1956).

⁴ N. Sithole, *The Polygamist* (New York, Third Press, 1972; London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1973).

⁵ N. Sithole, *African Nationalism* (London, Oxford Univ. Press, 2nd edit., 1968).

⁶ N. Sithole, *Obed Mutezo: The Mudzimu Christian Nationalist* (Nairobi, Oxford Univ. Press, 1970).

result that 10 White policemen were killed and 1 039 Africans were injured. The exactness of the figures gives the temporary illusion that Sithole is reporting an actual historical event. Stranger still is the account of an African youth prosecuted in Rhodesia in the early 1970s for writing a love letter to a White girl in contravention of the Immorality and Indecency Act, which in fact was repealed in 1961. Fiction here seems to slide into fantasy or falsehood. Such fables would mislead a reader ignorant of Rhodesian history and might for any reader who recognized the historical anomalies undermine the credibility of Sithole's implicit argument. Why does Sithole not quote authentic historical cases or create fictional episodes that are not clearly at variance with known facts? Possibly he believed that he would be less vulnerable to prosecution under the security laws if he expressed his criticism of White supremacy through the mouths of fictional characters in fictional situations, rather than openly acknowledging his own opinions about real events. However, this had not prevented him publishing *Obed Mutezo* in 1970, which contained detailed descriptions of alleged maltreatment of ZANU members by the police in 1964.

Obed Mutezo is one of three books in which Sithole has explored the significance of African nationalism through the particular experiences of one individual man, a literary method that Sithole has handled more successfully than quasi-documentary fiction. He first experimented with this form of political biography in the second edition of *African Nationalism*, where he added information about his own career as a nationalist to the account of his life before becoming a nationalist, which had been in the original edition. In *Obed Mutezo* Sithole examines the commitment to African nationalism of a local branch official of ZANU, describing his involvement in politics against the background of his private life, in particular his belief in the power of his ancestral spirits and his faith in Christianity. By giving this detailed portrait of a particular average African nationalist supporter Sithole provides a new dimension in understanding the African nationalist movement which studies of its aims, ideology and leadership omit.

The third, most recent, political biography that Sithole has produced is *Frelimo Militant*,⁷ which was published in 1977. The subject of this book is Julius Ingwane, an African from Mozambique whom Sithole met in Maputo in 1975. Like Mutezo, Ingwane is an ordinary African whom Sithole reveres as a nationalist, but to whom he is also attracted as a person and with whose personal life he is fascinated for its own sake. In the book Ingwane tells Sithole of his hatred for the Portuguese and his part as a supporter of Frelimo in their overthrow. Like Mutezo, he suffered torture at the hands of the police because of his political sympathies. Although *Frelimo Militant* is like *Obed Mutezo* in looking at a national political movement through the feelings and experiences of a single man, the more recent book is less successful because of its tedious mode of expression. It is written as a verbatim account of a kind of protracted Socratic dialogue between Sithole and Ingwane. Since Sithole includes all his questions to Ingwane as well as Ingwane's answers and reproduces many of the trivialities of casual conversation, such as the often repeated, 'I see', the pace of the

⁷ N. Sithole, *Frelimo Militant: The Story of Ingwane from Mozambique, an Ordinary, yet Extraordinary, Man, Awakened . . .* (Nairobi, Transafrica, 1977), 187pp., 30s.

book drags and the tone in places is almost of ritual incantation. The following passage (p. 2) gives the flavour:

'Where did you learn Zuzulu?' I asked.

'Me?'

Yes, Comrade, you'

'In Johannesburg,' he said.

'Do you come from there?'

'No, I worked there.'

'I see. When?'

'Long time ago.'

'Do you live in Lourenço Marques?'

'Yes.'

'Are you a Shangana?'

'No. I am Mutswa.'

'Are you married?'

'Yes.'

'Where is your wife?'

'Here.'

'In this house?'

'No, in Lourenço Marques.'

Although *Frelimo Militant* has many such laborious passages, Sithole's other works are also marred by an inability or unwillingness to exclude inessentials. In *Obed Mutezo*, for example, he gives a long verbatim account (pp. 199-210) of a cross-examination by the defence lawyer in a political court case where a summary of the questioning would have sufficed. Similarly, in *Roots of a Revolution* Sithole chooses to spell out this ritual exchange between a nationalist speaker and his audience (p. 100):

'In everything in this our God-given country, we are given only a third of the normal values of things. Citizenship?' he asked.

'Third-rate!' they roared.

'Housing?'

'Third-rate!'

'Wages and salaries?'

'Third-rate!'

'Jobs?'

'Third-rate!'

'Education?'

'Third-rate!'

'Land?'

'Third-rate!'

'Water supply?'

'Third-rate!'

'All services?'

'Third-rate!'

The same obsession with comprehensiveness leads Sithole also in *Roots of a Revolution* (pp. 95-6) to list the twenty-nine occupations of the Africans at a nationalist rally. In the biographies Sithole seems to feel an over-scrupulous obligation to document trivial details of his subjects' lives. In *Frelimo Militant*, for example, Sithole is concerned to elicit from Ingwane the days of the week on which he and his brother at one period arrived in their mother's village (p.78), and the precise physical characteristics Ingwane

required in his wife (not 'too much buttock', p.63). Similarly, in *Obed Mutezo* he records (pp. 61-2) Mutezo's excessive desire for meat when he was a boy. Sithole has the instincts of an archivist, carefully storing information, rather than the skill of an historian, choosing only those facts that contribute to the explanation of the events he is specifically concerned with. The result of Sithole's appetite for trivial detail is sometimes an air of naivety or banality which is far removed from the intellectual sophistication that some people associate with him.

Sithole's books have, in fact, been characterized more by moral passion than intellectual toughness. Some of his published writings interestingly document the development in his political attitudes as this moral passion reacted to changing circumstances. When he wrote *African Nationalism* Sithole was not an active politician, although he was emotionally committed to African self-government. Consequently he had little to say about the practical problems of African nationalists in concrete situations. The second edition of *African Nationalism* he prepared in detention as a seasoned nationalist leader. In this he included new material on his own political experiences and on the methods available to nationalists. He did not explicitly advocate violent overthrow of the White Rhodesian regime, which would have invited prosecution, but he came close to endorsing the use of violence when peaceful methods had failed.

In 1969, the year after the publication of the revised edition of *African Nationalism*, Sithole was convicted of smuggling a letter from prison which urged his supporters to have Ian Smith assassinated. Sithole maintained during the trial that the letter was a forgery and claimed also that he knew nothing about the organization by Herbert Chitepo, his colleague in ZANU, of a guerilla army in Zambia. However, in the introduction to a collection of letters, Sithole later related how he smuggled out of Sikombela detention camp some time in 1965 or 1966 a letter delegating power to Chitepo 'to prosecute the revolutionary armed struggle'.⁸ In December 1972 he wrote elatedly to Chitepo congratulating him on the bridgehead that the guerillas had established in the north-east and in November 1974, as Commander-in-Chief of the ZANU guerillas, sent an inspirational message from Que Que Prison to the Zimbabwe National Liberation Army.⁹ *Roots of a Revolution*, written in 1973, portrayed and virtually praised fiercely militant Blacks preparing to fight brutal, arrogant Whites, who were determined to hold on to their power. After Sithole was released from prison in December 1974 to negotiate a settlement with Smith, he hoped to use ZANU's military success as a bargaining counter. In a letter to his brother in February 1975 he wrote: "We are not in a hurry for a settlement. It is Ian Smith who is in a hurry for it They are dying for a cease-fire order, but we are not."¹⁰ The Government rightly regarded him as more bellicose than Nkomo or Bishop Muzorewa, and re-arrested him in March 1975.¹¹ Eventually Sithole

⁸ N. Sithole, *Letters from Salisbury Prison* (Nairobi, Transafrica, 1976), 5.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 129-30, 149-52.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 156.

¹¹ See Sithole's defence against the charges brought against him in, N. Sithole, *In Defence of a Birthright* (Sweden, ZANU Office, 1975). This is reprinted in a booklet containing other pieces by Sithole and some by other ZANU writers: N. Sithole, *In Defence of a Birthright* (Toronto, Norman Bethune Institute, 1975).

found that the ZANU guerillas did not accept him as their leader, although he continued to support their fight.

When in 1978 Sithole signed the internal settlement and became a member of the Transitional Government Executive Council, it may have appeared that he had made a *volte face*, abandoning his earlier militancy. In his pamphlet, *In Defence of the Rhodesian Constitutional Agreement*,¹² he shows that what changed dramatically at the end of 1977 was not his own attitude, but the policy of Ian Smith, who for the first time was prepared to concede one man, one vote. Sithole states that, 'the internal African nationalist leaders felt that the acceptance of majority rule in itself constituted sufficient reason to begin negotiations The principle was not negotiable; everything else was.' However, if the guerilla war continues, Sithole's cogent argument is an irrelevancy.

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¹² N. Sithole, *In Defence of the Rhodesian Constitutional Agreement: A Power Promise* (Salisbury, Graham Publishing, 1978), 71 pp., \$1.60.

ESSAY REVIEW

IS OUR WILDLIFE LITERATURE COMING OF AGE?

WILDLIFE IS AN all-embracing term to many people, yet to others it conjures up a very special image. Can we accept it as a subject which is all things to all men? It has been said that wildlife management, of all natural history disciplines, is the most subject to opinion by the layman. Nearly everyone thinks he knows a lot about it. In America there are hunter groups who pass influential resolutions which inhibit freedom of action by wildlife professionals. Many game departments are afraid to make management decisions which have been shown to be biological necessities for fear of publicity and criticism. In many countries there is direct control of departmental purse-strings by the public, and public relations becomes an exercise in survival.

Yet even in other places without such direct control, the public always has a finger in the pie. Everyone seems to hold opinions, even without having first-hand experience, and in almost every walk of life there are people who feel their experience gives them a right to enter the arena. A farmer can always claim intimate knowledge of the ways of nature and he frequently suffers some indignity at the hands of wayward wildlife. Bears or lions eat his livestock, deer or quelea invade his crops, and even little beaver or mighty elephant work to destroy his water supply. Hunters and fishermen form a vast army that periodically invades the wild countryside or peaceful waterways. Their experiences range from concentrated slaughter of specific creatures to countless hours of patient waiting and contemplating their environment. Others who stalk wildlife go armed only with binoculars and camera and often express great abhorrence of killing, even when it is a natural event. Meanwhile some of their bedfellows, jaded by the excitement of television, are disappointed in any visit to a game park where they are not witness to the dying struggles of the buffalo, his throat gripped in the jaws of a black-maned lion.

Even the townsman is a wildlife expert. Schoolchildren, raised on the glory and farce of Disney nature films, are quick to post their views alongside those of the collector of butterflies and the breeder of tropical fish. Everyone who contacts living things seems to establish some bond of emotion that influences his thoughts on wildlife. The vast majority of people have pets of some kind, usually personable family members which are much loved. The dog has surely reached the pinnacle of human - animal relationship by pervading the cultures of men throughout the world. Working relationships with hunters and herdsman have strengthened the bond far beyond the reaches of the family or city and brought the dog to be the most universal symbol of love and faithfulness between man and animals.

Strange, in view of this, that it is so difficult for man to accept that the wolf could be endowed with these same psychic qualities. This animal, so closely related that it interbreeds with dogs, is burdened with traditional hostility, superstition and fear that has caused its widespread extinction. So preconditioned has man been that he has been unable to see these natural relationships and only recently has the wolf been presented in the literature

as the highly social, co-operative and fascinating creature he really is.¹ It is not surprising that man has traditionally shrouded the beasts, particularly fierce ones, in myth and legend, in almost all societies. But scientific and living observation of animals has been with us now for hundreds of years. Even in the most civilized and advanced parts of the world the truth has been long in its revelation, and still has a long way to go before it lifts the shrouds of pre-conceived ideas and feelings.

Perhaps we have not really wanted to know. Perhaps the demand of the public for books which touch on the familiar, which play with the instinctive fears and loves of wilderness and life have influenced authors and limited the scope of what has been published. Early wildlife books were mainly impressions of pleasant countryside, as exemplified by Walton,² and later Thoreau³ on the other side of the Atlantic. There were, of course, more specialized books on the arts of hunting or falconry but they rarely said much of the natural life of the animal. Much of the remaining early wildlife literature is anthropomorphic or artistic. Sometimes the latter works were blended with the study of the species present in an area to produce illustrated guidebooks. Audubon,⁴ for example, shows the early glimmerings of scientific study of birds and concern for their conversation which was to take nearly another century to mature.

Against this background is placed the evolution of conservation, wildlife management, and ecology as legitimate fields of study. These are recent developments, starting from scattered threads less than a century ago. Their more scientific and unbiased influence seems to have only crept into the general wildlife literature within the last twenty years and as yet their influence on the African literature is minimal.

The early steps in wildlife management were almost invariably the protection of certain species from hunting or poaching, whether the locality was Europe, America or Africa. The best reserves in Asia and Europe today arose from a much earlier trend: the privileges of royalty. The private hunting estates of kings and rajahs in India and Nepal, for example, provided refuges for tiger and Indian rhino until their declaration as game reserves in the international sense within the last twenty years.

In America, and South Africa for that matter, laws restricting hunting, setting limits on kill, and establishing public reserves were all on the books by the turn of the century. The National Park concept was born and the first preservation of whole wild environments, not merely incidental to the preservation of certain wildlife, was begun. To the south of us, the Kruger National Park set an early example to the whole continent in the face of strong traditional use of wildlife for sport hunting and commercial sale.

More elaborate management, for protection of declining species as well as for developing a hunting resource, was soon being practised in America and slowly spreading elsewhere. The reduction of any deaths not desired by the manager was a primary object. In the wild situation, not only was hunting prohibited and poachers pursued, but any natural predator was persecuted

¹L. Crister, *Arctic Wild* (New York, Harper, 1958); D. Mech, *The Wolf: Ecology and Behaviour of an Endangered Species* (New York, Natural History Press, 1970).

²I. Walton, *The Compleat Angler* (London, R. Marriott, 1653 and numerous reprints).

³H. D. Thoreau, *Walden, or Life in the Woods* (Boston, Ticknor & Fields, 1854).

⁴J. J. Audubon, *Birds of America* (London, privately, 4 vols, 1827-38).

sometimes to extinction. Food was sometimes provided, but it was mainly a later development along with other practices of improving the habitat for the managed species. These more ecological aspects first occur in the text by Aldo Leopold⁵ who first put wildlife management on a scientific basis and suggested that predators did not necessarily do harm, especially if their prey had adequate cover. It took another thirty years for these ideas to become generally accepted and evolved into modern ecological notions of a balanced ecosystem and protection or management for the optimum habitat for a wildlife species, as opposed to managing that species itself.

This slow percolation of modern management ideas into wild places like Rhodesia was partly complicated by the lack of literature suggesting this approach and partly by the political power of the pioneer farmer. One important influence on African wildlife management had its origins in the rinderpest epidemics just before the turn of the century which wiped out vast amounts of both domestic livestock and wildlife. On the one hand, it made wildlife relatively scarce and encouraged the development of the protective phase of game conservation. On the other hand it emphasized the relationship of domestic and wild animals with respect to diseases. For the next seventy years there was a major force in Africa dedicated to wiping out the chance of disease spreading to domestic animals from wildlife. The easiest and most persistent of methods used was to wipe out the wildlife in an area which would then result in the dying out of insect transmitters of disease such as tsetse fly.

Obviously the hunter and the lover of wildlife were both bound to feel opposed to this. Their rarely-combined thrust resulted in the designation of certain areas for game and others for agriculture, often with a fence and game-free area in between. It was this situation that put Rhodesia's first game reserve on the map fifty years ago, an event that is followed through in one of the books under review here.⁶ In many ways this book illustrates the evolution of thinking about wildlife and thus it forms a major prop for this essay. Ted Davison himself was a tsetse fly ranger before becoming the first Warden of Wankie Game Reserve. His book, though to a large extent a chronicle of the establishment of the Park and its early management problems, provides a clear picture of the change in attitude he made. Although he loved the bush and being with big game, there is obvious reluctance to join in the wholesale killing that the tsetse people desired. Yet where killing was necessary he accomplishes it with professional efficiency, having exhausted the options of driving the animals or capturing them by the methods of the period.

Throughout the early chapters we see the dominant themes of early wildlife management which persisted relatively late in Africa: the protection of animals from poaching and the slaughter of predators for daring to reduce the stocks of herbivorous game. Very soon these themes are joined by the dominant theme of Wankie, the provision of water supplies: a process of dambuilding, borehole drilling and pumping that continued for forty years.

Just as in the history of wildlife management itself, more and more we see that Davison is using his time with the game to objectively gather information. In the book we find whole sections of measurements and other factual

⁵A. Leopold, *Game Management* (New York, Scribners, 1932).

⁶T. Davison, *Wankie : The Story of a Great Game Reserve* (Salisbury, Regal, 1977), 211 pp., Rhs4.50.

data on animals he observed, despite his lack of research training. In from the sidelines come the tourists and the scientists, the roads and facilities, and the complexities of modern management. The evolution and modernization of approach is clearly given, though it lies unobtrusively within the unembellished prose. This book is more than one man's story, or even one game reserve's story. It is the background for the coming of age of that most universal of scientific fields, wildlife management.

A remarkably similar pattern is unfolded in the picture Viv Wilson gives of his early years⁷ despite the fact that he had not even been born when Davison began work in Wankie. Early years in the Zambian Tsetse Department resulted in love of the wild bush and a revulsion, not really against the killing itself, but against the loss of information on unknown species and against drastic management based on so little understanding. Before long he was raising orphaned animals and becoming a self-made researcher, lines that were to guide his later life.

Thus he transfers to the Rhodesian Game Department and further develops his love of the bush and then later he joins the National Museum and furthers his scientific interests in wild mammals. Meanwhile he is still looking after orphaned animals, a vocation that he eventually undertakes full-time in the development of the Chipangali Wildlife Orphanage. The stories read well and the well illustrated hardbound book proved so popular that it has now been reprinted. Rayner has also written a small paperbound book⁸ on Chipangali which contrasts in its small print and few illustrations. Nevertheless it is a charming narration of the main characters of the orphanage, and it will appeal to the many people who identify with the animal pet side of literature on wildlife.

What might be called a classical wildlife pet story is told by Wilson MacArthur⁹ who raises a duiker. Many people must have tried to raise baby duikers, as they are such a widespread antelope and often the main species remaining on farmlands. Thus many readers will identify with the narrative in this well-written little book whose only fault is its excessively small print.

A much less typical pet is Cousin, and Alan Weaving's story¹⁰ has a different flavour. It is the story of a photographer and bird watcher who finds himself unable to countenance the killing of a young Augur Buzzard by its nest-mate and takes it home. The natural behaviour of the species and the efforts of the Weaving family to raise the chick and return it to the wild are the two main themes.

The lengths that the Weavings went to in returning their buzzard to the wild pale into insignificance next to the extraordinary tale of returning Tommy the lion to wild Africa from life as a home pet in Germany.¹¹ The long journey of the Forster family with their unusual pet through wars of officialdom and real guerillas to eventually reach Rhodesia is entertainingly written by Peter Stiff. This true story with its evidence of the modern political chaos of Africa is packed with real people, places and adventure.

⁷V. J. Wilson, *Orphans of the Wild : The Story behind Chipangali* (Bulawayo, Books of Rhodesia, 1977), 254 pp., Rh\$1,57.

⁸R. Rayner, *Who Cares? Chipangali Wildlife Orphanage* (Salisbury, Regal, 1977), 88 pp., Rh\$2,40.

⁹W. MacArthur, *We Knew a Duiker* (Salisbury, Regal, 1977), 52 pp., Rh\$2,25.

¹⁰A. Weaving, *A Bird Called Cousin* (Salisbury, Regal, 1977), 72 pp., Rh\$2,25.

¹¹P. Stiff, *Tommy Goes Home* (Salisbury, Jacaranda Press, 1977), 230pp., Rh\$7,98.

For a modern adventure with wildlife in Africa one must surely turn to the live capture of dangerous animals. To stalk close enough to fire a tranquilizing dart and then to wait for more than five minutes with the angry beast before the drug takes effect is clearly a more heroic act than to kill it with a modern firearm. Such is the tale of a black rhinoceros told by Bryan O'Donoghue.¹² This adventure story also involves real people and events in Rhodesia, but is thickly embellished with popular dialogue and mishaps surrounding a boy hero which will certainly appeal to the younger reader.

Also purporting to be true stories, but at times seeming rather hard to believe, are the short stories of bushlore collected under the title of *Zambezi Trails*.¹³ They contain numerous nuggets of wildlife information and hunters' skills, and a good deal of nostalgia for the safari man in the wilderness of Rhodesia's earlier years. Most, however, are too brief and choppy to provide good images, written as they were as a series of newspaper articles.

Another hunter's tale, this time fully blown into a smoothly readable piece of fiction set in the Zambezi wilderness, is *The Old Man's Lion*.¹⁴ Anyone who has pioneered in the bush, farmed in game country or had to deal with stock-raiding animals will identify with this story.

Stock-raiding animals, the control of predators, the elimination of disease-bearing game, the ranching of game, the pursuit of poachers and the pure joy of observing a great population of free wildlife all pervade the complex little book by Alan Wright.¹⁵ All short little stories, this collection sweeps the whole field from historical game elimination, to control and protection and eventually to modern management and use. This is accomplished through eyes sometimes in conflict with nature, sometimes scientific, sometimes emotional and loving, and yet sometimes administrative and political. This rather mixed up collection puts in a nutshell much of the evolution of thinking and complexity of approach to the world of wildlife.

So we have come full circle and verified in part that this subject can almost be all things to all men. Yet there is this great picture of evolving attitudes and values both in the scientific and in the emotional approach. The great blending of these two things that can be seen in a few books, starting in Africa perhaps with Eugene Marais,¹⁶ is still not fully matured in this country, although the trend is visible in the wildlife literature as a whole.

The ecological and aesthetic pioneering in the American literature has invaded Africa in recent years, and the wildlife scientists are producing eminently readable material about the real life of beasts like elephant¹⁷ or the widely despised wild dog.¹⁸ Even the whole Serengeti ecosystem has been beautifully given to the public.¹⁹ Yet neither this ecological-scientific aspect

¹²B. O'Donoghue, *Black Rhino Rescue* (Johannesburg, Perskor, 1976), 115 pp., Rh\$4.50.

¹³U. G. de Woronin, *Zambezi Trails* (Salisbury, Regal, 1977), 96 pp., Rh\$1.95.

¹⁴A. S. Coetsee, *The Old Man's Lion* (Salisbury, Mimosa Publishers, 1976), 120 pp., Rh\$1.50.

¹⁵A. Wright, *Grey Ghosts at Buffalo Bend* (Salisbury, Galaxie Press, 1976), 136 pp., Rh\$13.90.

¹⁶E. Marais, *My Friends the Baboons* (London, Methuen, 1939).

¹⁷I. and O. Douglas-Hamilton, *Among the Elephants* (London, Collins, 1975).

¹⁸J. van Lawick-Goodall, *Innocent Killers* (London, Collins, 1970).

¹⁹G. Schaller, *Golden Shadows, Flying Hooves* (London, Collins, 1974).

nor the aesthetic-philosophical aspect of the wildlife literature has really reached any heights in this country yet. Admittedly there is something of the ecological-scientific approach in the *Wankie handbook* by Child and Reese,²⁰ but the different parts of the book do not form a literary unity. Instead they fill the genuine need for more complete understanding by the visitor to our great wildlife reserves. Their book also joins the already excellent collection of identification books available to the nature lover, as it contains a major section of the mammals of the Park. The identification drawings are in pen and ink, unlike the lavish colour photos in the earlier bird manual for the Park by Peter Steyn.²¹

Also lavishly illustrated, but this time with both black and white and colour photos, and line drawings as well, is the substantial guide to insects of Rhodesia by Alan Weaving.²² Since insects form over half of all living animal species, a book about them must be at once intimidating and yet incomplete. This book remains remarkably readable and useful, while covering most of the orders and families of this huge group.

Another valuable contribution to the Rhodesian literature by the wildlife scientists, but this time with a great deal of help from the practical managers, is the booklet edited by Pat Macartney.²³ It covers the spectrum of desirable wildlife from fish through gamebirds and waterfowl to the large antelope, and specifies the techniques for encouraging, capturing, breeding and feeding these animals. The final chapter is a brief analysis of the economics of game farming in Rhodesia. Thus we see a further broadening of the wildlife literature on the practical management side, partially compensating for the lack of depth in the two areas mentioned earlier.

So in concluding our final examination of the question, 'Is our wildlife literature coming of age?', we find that there are certain important aspects which are still immature, but there is no doubt we have progressed along the path. It is now up to a new generation of writers to add those important pieces which, like the science of wildlife itself, have reached new horizons in recent years. Perhaps it is inevitable that the science should remain ahead of the public, and by the time the public demand its present offerings there will have been further evolution. Who is prepared to look in the crystal ball and begin writing a book that will not only broaden our outlook on wildlife, but which will appeal to the all-important new audience of a new kind of Rhodesia?

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²⁰G. Child and B. Reese, *Wankie National Park* (Salisbury, Department of National Parks, 1977), 88 pp., Rh\$3.00.

²¹P. Steyn, *Wankie Birds* (Salisbury, Longman Rhodesia, 1974), 57 pp., Rh\$2.50.

²²A. Weaving, *Insects: A Review of Insect Life in Rhodesia* (Salisbury, Regal, 1977), 179 pp., Rh\$11.25.

²³P. Macartney (ed.), *Wildlife on Your Farm* (Salisbury, Longman Rhodesia for Rhodesia Game Association, 1975), 60 pp., Rh\$1.40.