

Independent Churches are not (overtly at least) identified with the African cause for more land to a greater extent or on a more organized basis than any of the other religious groupings' (p.48).

The growth and attraction of the Independent Churches are accountable by their 'typically African guise', a process of continual adaptation, not static conformity to traditions; 'This is a dynamic process with numerous variations, even within the same Church' (p.309). It also raises problems of syncretism and the messianic content of these church movements, with which it is hoped that Daneel will deal in succeeding volumes.

This is a scholarly work of anthropology, sociology and theology which will interest experts in these fields. The treatment of different churches through time will also be of importance to historians. But above all, thinking men and especially Christians will find in this volume, and in Daneel's other writings, a source of understanding of the faiths, beliefs and religious needs of the African peoples of Southern Rhodesia. The book is superbly produced and splendidly illustrated.

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What do the Coloureds Think? An Attitude Study of the Coloured Community of Johannesburg By M. L. Edelstein. Johannesburg, Labour and Community Consultants, 1974, 153pp., no price indicated.

With a view to proposing an alternative mode of analysis for the study of Race in Southern Africa, one would have liked to detail the theoretical shortcomings of Edelstein's work on the 'Coloureds' (of South Africa), particularly its failure to explain systematically the historical and ideological basis of the concept of 'Coloured' and the consequent absence of a definition of a 'Coloured Community' except in terms of that common tendency — originating and inherent in popular racist theories based on crude stereotypes — to treat the distinguishing physical and biological characteristics (i.e. the mere genetic and racial constituents, complexion of skin, hair type, etc.) which set apart persons of mixed race as, in themselves, constituting, *a priori*, a social category. Nevertheless the limited academic content of the work might become evident in this discussion — to which we are restricted by the exigencies of space — on its ideological outlook, which will already be evident from the paternalism implicit in its title, *What Do The Coloureds Think?* (Edelstein published another book, *What Do Young Africans Think* in 1974?) He states quite explicitly that the major objective of his study is to provide a means of predicting the attitudes of the 'Coloureds' towards the Government and of how best to ensure their allegiance to the Whites. 'What is the future of the Coloured people of South Africa? What steps can they, the authorities and those sympathetic to Coloured progress take to ensure and assist their advancement within the broad framework of South Africa?' 'To some extent the answers to these questions will be suggested by the results of this survey?' (p. 94). This is a position not surprising from a man who was once a Chief Welfare Officer of the Department of Non-European Affairs (1960-2) where he became 'intimately associated with some of the problems of the Coloured people' (Preface) and an officer of the Bantu Administration Authority until his unfortunate death this year at the hands of angry Soweto students when they attacked the Administration buildings in that township.

But this book, which is based on a D.Phil. thesis of the University of

Pretoria, is more than just a personal view; for it is written at the height of the debate, in South African white circles, about what to do about the 'Coloureds'. It might well be considered obsolete after the decision earlier this year that the 'Coloureds' could not be integrated politically with the Whites, and in view of the recent disturbances at the Cape which many of the 'Coloured' leaders have been wont to interpret as destroying the 'myth' that 'Coloureds' want to be integrated with the Whites. Yet the book's importance lies precisely in that it reflects Pretoria's dilemma over the 'problem' of the 'Coloureds'. In fact, the work is well in the tradition of the Pretoria schools of thought, 'whose views are respected because they have studied the problem scientifically and come in direct contact with Coloured people and their leaders' (p.94): of *Verkrampies* like Dr Schalk van de Merwe and Professor W. B. Vosloo and of *Verligtes* like Professors S. P. Cilliers, H. W. van der Merwe, N. J. Rhoodie, Simon Brand and J. B. du Toit. (We also get the views of white opposition political parties (United and Progressive), of 'Coloured' political parties (Federal and Labour) and of various South African academics ('Coloured' and white)). But lest the reader wonder at the end why a work which purports to be 'scientific' should make (political) recommendations (*inter alia* that there be 'joint sittings of Parliament and the Coloured Persons Representative Council on common problems' (pp.127-8)) to the government, my advice is that one should keep in mind what has already been stated about Edelstein's ideological position and about the object of the study. To that extent it matters little whether one accepts or rejects his method of inquiry — a somewhat impressionistic observation (personal interviews, questionnaires, etc.), over a period of five months (29 February to 31 July, 1972) of a sample of 500 'better class adult Coloureds' (p.3) living within the Municipal boundaries of Johannesburg — and the conclusion thereof; and we are told in Chapter One that the survey 'does not in any way pretend to represent the attitudes of all Coloured people of South Africa' (p.4), though both the cover title as well as the nature of the discourse throughout can only indicate the converse.

Witness, for example, the inherent subjectivity of the questionnaire method. Thus once it has been ascertained, on the basis of the responses of the sample members, that most (88 per cent) 'Coloureds' would still claim 'one man one vote' even if they had free and equal access to all public facilities, services and amenities (p.73) and that most prefer to be called South African rather than either 'Black' or 'Coloured' (p.77), another of the many questionnaires seeks to determine which of the already selected 14 'Grievances of Coloureds' were the 'greatest' (p.81). There were five of these in declining order of greatness: unequal pay for equal work; inadequate opportunities for employment (job reservation); inadequate educational opportunities; inadequate accommodation; White domination. Edelstein's implied conclusion from this is not only that 'Coloureds' do not so much mind white rule, if only their material condition could be improved, but also that once the latter has been accomplished then the idea of *separate but equal* racial groups would be a reality in South Africa. But need we comment on his blindness to the dialectical connection between white domination and the concept of 'Coloured' in Southern Africa nor, therefore, of his vain expectation that there can be equality in a system based on inequality? But, then, this is our point. It is not so much the question of what the 'Coloureds' — whether by this term is meant the leaders, the sample or all persons of mixed race — think of, as whether the white rulers of Southern Africa can ever resolve a 'problem' which is so closely tied to the overall contradictions that have arisen out of their system of exploitation and domination. The decision not to implement

the Theron Report and its recommendations should not be interpreted as an exercise in options on the part of the South African Government; on the contrary, it demonstrated an inability to adapt. The 'problem' of the 'Coloureds' is certainly the Achilles' heel of the ideology of white supremacy in South Africa and the extent to which it has become a source of discomfort for Pretoria may be an indication of the course of change which the oppressed, *and not the oppressors*, of Southern Africa have begun and whose outcome only they can determine.

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African Law and Custom in Rhodesia By B. Goldin and M. Gelfand. Cape Town, Juta, 1975, xvi, 325pp., Rh\$11.90.

A Bibliography of African Law, with Special Reference to Rhodesia. By T. W. Bennett and S. Phillips. Salisbury, Univ. of Rhodesia, 1975, xxxiv, 291pp., Rh\$5.00.

The authors of the first of these two books essayed a very difficult task. The main difficulty arises from the fact that the African law and custom that has grown up naturally and spontaneously over the years has been engrafted, in a somewhat clumsy way and with severe limitations, into the ordinary statute law of the land. This has meant that there were at least three possible lines of approach: To treat the subject as a purely ethnological study, disregarding the legislation; to produce a practical legal text book for the use of practitioners and others concerned with the administration of the law; or to attempt a combination of the two. The authors have adopted the third approach, which is that most beset with pitfalls. It is greatly to their credit that they have avoided these and achieved so large a measure of success.

There were lesser difficulties in their way. As the authors themselves recognise, the basic material of their study varied from tribe to tribe and even from locality to locality within the tribe. They have dealt with this on broad lines and have, wisely, resisted the temptation to extend their investigations to the divergent customs of such subordinate peoples as the Venda, fascinating to the ethnologist but distracting to those concerned with the practical application of the law.

In the result the book should prove of great value. For the first time, so far as I am aware, the true customary law is considered in juxtaposition with those sections that have been modified by statute or by judicial decisions.

The judicial decisions are considered critically. Apart from comment on individual cases certain tendencies are revealed which, unless they are checked, could lead to unfortunate consequences. For example, if the authors are correct in their belief that there is a tendency for decisions in District Courts to diverge from those in Tribal Courts, then action must be taken to see that this is avoided. It may prove to be nigh impossible, but something on the lines of the circulars of the Justice Department could help. Certainly something should be attempted, for legal history is full of examples of the sad results where different lines are taken in courts of more or less co-ordinate jurisdiction.

Directly or by implication the authors raise a number of other questions of the first importance. Some are inherent in the system itself. For example, how long will Africans in a modern technological state continue to wish that