

But this study does not limit itself to the level of descriptive analysis. Professor Verstraelen's main concern is to facilitate what he calls 'Global Intercommunication through Intercontinental Communication'.

Christianity in a New Key — or in New Keys? — raises many intriguing questions. One is where the new and more aggressive North American missions, which Paul Gifford studied some years ago, fit into this vision of a global Christianity with many centres. Another is more profound and has to do with hermeneutics. How are these new centres to be identified?

The classical issue of the relation of 'a portion of a text' to 'the text as a whole' returns in any attempt to define what are characteristic features of Christianity — or Islam for that matter — within as well as outside their traditional centres. Handling this issue Professor Verstraelen moves in the direction of defining main themes or core-motifs in different contexts, which can enrich each other in an exchange across continental and contextual boundaries. This is a loaded proposition and the purpose of the author had been better served if he had devoted greater attention to this issue of hermeneutics. Instead he moves fast on to resources and techniques for the kind of intercontinental communication which he pleads for.

The matter of interpretation is not just an internal academic issue. It has profound pedagogical implications. When we know what are representative theological concerns in different religious and social environments — and how to get access to them! — it is easier to convey these concerns in another context. Professor Verstraelen shares, of course, this pedagogical concern, as the book is presented as a handbook for 'anyone interested in the significance of Christianity in our world today and tomorrow'. Hopefully the reader will not go astray in the rich collection of loaded quotes and theological variations.

University of Zimbabwe

CARL F. HALLENCREUTZ

The Mining Sector in Southern Africa Edited by Paul Jordan. Harare, SAPES Trust, 1994, 117 pp, ISBN 1-77905-006-2, Z\$70.

This book comprises a collection of papers presented at a workshop on 'Prospects of the Mining Sector in SADCC' held in Lusaka, Zambia, in 1991. It provides a detailed and analytical assessment of the past and present importance of the mining sector in the region and highlights the factors that have negatively affected its performance.

The book proposes that, in the light of the recent demise of apartheid and the birth of the new democratic South Africa, Southern African countries should devise appropriate strategies to make the region's mining

sector more productive and efficient. Among these are the integration of the region's mining economies and the adoption of a common policy on the production and marketing of minerals. The book also recommends that efforts should be made to promote economic diversification in the region in order to lessen Southern Africa's unhealthy dependence on mineral exports, which are an exhaustible resource whose terms of trade are constantly declining.

Measures should also be taken to increase the region's capacity to process minerals into 'intermediate and finished products' and to establish regional producer organisations whose main role would be to 'maintain terms of trade and to husband resources by limiting supply'. Collective efforts to ensure the future prosperity of the mining sector should, however, guard against the danger of the giant economy of South Africa dominating the rest of the countries in the region.

The book should be of great interest to policy makers in Southern Africa since it highlights both the historical and present characteristics of the mining sector in the region, analyses the problems confronting it and the impediments which have prevented it from realising its full potential and makes recommendations about possible future paths of development. It is evident that, with the changed socio-political and economic climate in Southern Africa, following the democratisation of South Africa, the role and focus of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), now the Southern African Development Community (SADC), needs extensive review in order to make it more relevant to the needs of the region.

The book should also be of value to the students of Southern Africa's political economy, not only because it contains a wealth of detail on the nature, volume and character of mining sectors in each of the Southern African countries, but also because it provides a very useful comparative dimension in which developments in each country are seen within the broader regional and global context over time.

What academic researchers will find somewhat disappointing, however, is the total absence of footnotes throughout the book. Researchers who wish to consult the original sources of the statistics, quotations and other pertinent information used in the book thus have no guidance as to where the material came from. They essentially have to take the authors' statements on trust.

Also disconcerting is the failure by the editor to update those sections of the book which had, by 1995, become outdated. One example of this will suffice. On page 4, it is claimed that the only remnant of apartheid's Constellation of States (CONSAS) scheme is the South African Development Bank (SADB), which 'now funds projects in South Africa's Bantustans'. There are also occasions when the present tense is used to refer to

apartheid South Africa's destabilisation of neighbouring countries even though, by 1995, apartheid was no more. These problems arise, of course, out of the fact that the papers incorporated in the book were written several years before 1995.

These minor errors notwithstanding, *The Mining Sector* is a significant and welcome contribution to Southern African economic discourse and a useful addition to the growing scholarship on the political economy of the region in general and the history of the mining sector in particular.

University of Zimbabwe

A. S. MLAMBO

Traditional Healers and Childhood in Zimbabwe By Pamela Reynolds.
Athens, Ohio University Press, 1996, 183 pp., ISBN 0-8214-1121-7.

The author must be congratulated for tackling a task that badly needed attention. The book deals with traditional healing as it relates to children and childhood in Zimbabwe. We knew very little about the role of children in the practice of traditional medicine in Zimbabwe. The first chapter examines the process of acquiring traditional medical knowledge. Like many of us, Professor Reynolds is impressed with the amount of technical and other kinds of knowledge that traditional healers have. On the possession of technical knowledge, she observed that many traditional healers know an impressive amount about flora and fauna. They have a wide range of information and show fine discrimination in their observation and classification of leaves, stems, roots, fruits, flowers and bark. They are able to distinguish plants on the basis of taste, touch, smell and their appearance across the seasons.

The author sought to discover from whom, at what age, with what leeway for innovation, and in accord with what checks and balances traditional healers learn the use of plants, symbolic systems, and social and psychological analysis. The findings are interesting. The author has shown that much of this knowledge is not acquired in adulthood; some children are provided the opportunity and encouragement to acquire specialised skills and information to do with healing.

There are many traditional healers who claim that much of their knowledge is revealed to them in dreams. Chapter 2 traces Zezuru healers' dreams as part of the repertoire available to them for the constitution of self and for the direction of others. In addition she sees the use of dreams as part of their strategy for coping with contingencies of their upbringing. Dreams are also viewed as a part of the description of self and help to make connections between personal problems and the burden of an epoch between the present and the past.