Book Reviews

Come and See: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective on Contextualization.

Edward Rommen has had a distinguished career as a missionary to Germany and subsequently a professor at a number of noted evangelical theological schools. Some years ago he entered the Orthodox Church of America and was ordained priest. Currently he is a pastor and adjunct professor at Duke Divinity School, in Durham, North Carolina. In 1989 Rommen collaborated with David J. Hesselgrave in writing Contextualization: Meanings, Methods, and Models. The present book represents his reflections, not only from the distance of the years since, but also from his newly discovered and very obviously cherished Orthodox faith.

In his previous work with Hesselgrave, Rommen says, he understood the nature of the Christian Gospel in terms of a message that had to be made clear to those who had not accepted it. Now, in the light of Orthodox theology, he conceives the Gospel more as a person, Jesus Christ. Contextualization is the process of developing an “invitational core context” (196) in which a person might experience a personal introduction to Christ. This understanding of context is rather a “reversal” (193) of the usual understanding of context. Instead of emphasizing culture or social location, Rommen’s Orthodox perspective emphasizes the context provided by the church, which includes the Bible, apostolic succession, liturgy, councils, lives of the saints, and iconography. When persons enter this context, they engage the four conditions of the “axis of personhood” (58, also the chart on 59). Then, as they begin to know Christian women and men who are spiritually and humanly mature, they come face to face with the Gospel: Christ himself.

This book is a fine introduction to Orthodox theology, and it stands as a kind of “countercultural model” of contextualization—the church contextualizes by simply being the church, with little or no compromise. Still, as Hesselgrave suggests in his foreword (ix), and as Rommen would not totally deny (e.g., 65–66), new ways of conceiving of the Gospel proper to culture and social location are still important in the evangelization process.

To my mind, the Bible needs to be translated, doctrines need to be explained in ways people can understand, liturgy needs intelligent participation, and saints and their images need to speak to peoples’ lives. To contextualize thus is not to water down the Gospel but to clarify its challenge. Nevertheless, Rommen is right in that a lively, faithful, and faith-filled church community is still the best witness to the Gospel. No amount of contextualization can substitute for authenticity, fidelity, or holiness.

—Stephen B. Bevans

Stephen B. Bevans, S.V.D., a contributing editor, is Louis J. Luzbetak, S.V.D., Professor of Mission and Culture at Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, Illinois.

Putting Names with Faces: Women’s Impact in Mission History.

This “global theological resource book” resulted from a consultation on women and mission held in 2008 at the WCC’s Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland. It contains scholarly case studies and missiological reflections by sixteen women scholars from Asia, Oceania, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. Representing one of the “transversal” themes of the Edinburgh 2010 process, the volume promotes “an inclusive understanding of mission across gender barriers, race relations, and cultural differences” (17). After an introductory overview, the volume breaks into sections on “foundational perspectives,” case studies, and concluding theological reflections on women’s “contextual missiology.” Each of the major essays includes valuable suggestions for further reading, extensive footnotes, and in many cases questions for discussion.

The title Putting Names with Faces symbolizes the hidden histories and the ignored contributions of women to Christian mission. The merits of the book include its geographic and ethnic diversity of case studies and its fine introductory and concluding overviews of the biblical, historical, and missiological aspects of women’s contributions to mission through the ages. One striking feature of the book is its postcolonial approach—a consistently appreciative and yet appropriately critical reading of women’s missionary history.

Essays of note include Christine Lienemann-Perrin’s fresh reading of biblical perspectives, Amélé Adamavi-Aho Ekué’s study of missionary influence on women’s church roles in West Africa, Gulnar Francis-Dehqani’s nuanced treatment of missionary/Muslim relationships in Iran a century ago, Kwok Pui-lan’s valuable survey of feminist Christian perspectives in China, Marilú Rojas Salazar’s feminist analysis of shocking violence against women in Mexico, Karla Ann Koll’s fine overview of Presbyterian women’s work in Guatemala, and Cathy Ross’s constructive missiological reflection. Despite some uneven sections and typos, this readable, diverse, and thoughtful scholarly volume will be useful as a text both in theological seminars and in church-based educational programs.

—Dana L. Robert

Dana L. Robert, a contributing editor, is the Truman Collins Professor of World Christianity and History of Mission at the Boston University School of Theology. She directs the Center for Global Christianity and Mission (www.bu.edu/cgem/).

International Bulletin of Missionary Research, Vol. 38, No. 1
Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion: Two Thousand Years of Christian Missions in the Middle East.


Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion makes an important contribution to the study of missions in and to the Middle East. Eleanor Tejirian, associate research scholar at the Middle East Institute, Columbia University, and Reeva Spector Simon, professor of history at Yeshiva University, both in New York City, have narrated the story of Christian missions in the Middle East in the context of political events—a much-needed and most helpful approach to the topic.

In about 200 pages the authors tell the whole story of Christian missions in the Middle East, from the beginnings of Christianity in the first century until the present day. Nine chapters cover two millennia of the most important political developments and missionary enterprises: the Christianization of the Roman Empire; pilgrimages, crusades and missions; the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks; the reconquest of Spain; Catholic and Protestant missionary movements and their connection with European diplomatic interventions in the Ottoman Empire; and World War I and its aftermath.

The authors assert in more than one place that World War I ended the whole missionary enterprise (xiv, 167). Thus, they devote chapter 7 to assessing the intended and unintended achievements and consequences of missionary endeavor. It is perhaps debatable whether it was World War I or World War II that really “destroyed” the missionary enterprise. In some places in the Middle East—for example, among the Nestorians or the Armenians in Turkey—World War I was crucial, but in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Egypt, World War II was perhaps more decisive. In the aftermath of the establishment of the State of Israel and the gradual but sure political alienation of the nations of the region from the West, everything Western became suspect, and Western missionaries as well as missionary organizations and institutions were adversely affected. In this regard, it is perhaps a weakness of the book that the Syria Mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), later carried on by the Presbyterians, hardly figures in the book as a whole. Whereas ABCFM work in Asia Minor is well-documented and discussed at length, there is very little on the work of American missionaries in Syria and Lebanon.

Although based on secondary literature, the book not only provides a wealth of information about the various missionary activities in the Middle East but also incorporates and presents the most recent literature on the topic. By discussing missions in their interrelations with politics, the book indeed fills a gap in mission studies.

—George F. Sabra

George F. Sabra is Professor of Systematic Theology and President of the Near East School of Theology, Beirut, Lebanon.

Wesley Granberg-Michaelson
Foreword by James H. Billington

FROM TIMES SQUARE TO TIMBUKUTU
The Post-Christian West Meets the Non-Western Church

“A splendid book... What makes this book so valuable is the author’s ability to stand back and offer an astute and wide-ranging analysis of these trends, rooted in his wide experience and his passionate ecumenical commitment.”

— Philip Jenkins

“A timely reminder of the pastoral and theological significance of the wave of the worldwide Christian surge that is breaking on the shores of North America.”

— Lamin Sanneh

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Chiefs, Priests, and Praise-Singers is an important contribution to the discussion of volatile issues related to land ownership, chieftaincy, and politics in northern Ghana. MacGaffey’s thought-provoking reassessment focuses on the particular history of the Dagbamba people, presenting a regional rather than a dynastic perspective. He admits that his early history is “speculative” (178), but it does provide an analysis of the shortcomings of both colonial anthropology and some received histories that tend to define many northern Ghanaian groups in oppositional terms such as aborigine/imigrant and chief/tindana (earth priest). He uses neglected data especially related to the tindanas to contest the claim that the tindanas were eliminated by conquest in Dagbon. Rather, their role has been increasingly restricted through political processes. He thus shows the dynamic progression of a history “that has always been one of constant movement, a play of ambition, opportunity, exogenous influence, and intrusion” (181).

Drum chants are the carriers of Dagbon tradition, but as history they can be critiqued. They may be presented as “unchanging truth” (68), yet political interests hold to competing traditions.

MacGaffey devotes an entire chapter to discussion of the history of present-day Tamale, painting a picture of a chaotic system of land acquisition and ownership strained by the historical relationships between the tindanas and the chiefs. This account is presented against a backdrop of corruption and violence stirred up by the lack of clearly established processes of land acquisition.

Although this book focuses on a specific regional context, land acquisition and ownership are issues of great concern throughout the African continent. Moreover, the author’s research methodology provides a useful paradigm for researchers of African history.  

—Allison M. Howell

Allison M. Howell is Associate Professor and Dean of Accredited Studies at the Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Culture, and Mission, Akropong-Akuapem, Ghana.


Derek Peterson’s Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival is an important and highly original contribution to the growing scholarship on the East African Revival. While avoiding the reductionism that sees religious movements as thinly veiled political protests, Peterson argues that it was precisely the religious commitments, theological vision, and spiritual passions of the revival that had the most profound social and political impact.

For Peterson, Christian conversion in Africa is a political act. It is a pledge of ultimate allegiance and the launch of a new kind of journey. For many revivalists this allegiance and journey were defined in vernacular versions of Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress, pervasive throughout eastern Africa in the early part of the twentieth century. This kind of literature (along with post offices, bicycles, conventions, and the introduction of bookkeeping) created a new “cosmopolitanism” that transcended the tribalist politics of the region, what Peterson (following John Lonsdale) calls “ethnic patriotism.” The ethnic politician, whose respectability depended on silence about one’s private life, saw the revival’s insistence on public confession as treasonous. In contrast, “converts thought of themselves as pilgrims on the road toward another home” (4). As new pilgrims, “converts offered a contentious reading of their political world . . . . On this political field converts acted as subversives, willfully upsetting the order of tradition” (5).

Peterson weaves his theme of revival cosmopolitanism versus ethnic patriotism through twelve well-crafted chapters. Chapter 3 looks at how southern Ugandan royalist cults established a pattern of political subversion that the revivalists inherited. Chapter 5 explores Tanzanian revivalists who bureaucratised revivalism by applying the new tools of bookkeeping to their souls, thereby charismaticising bureaucracy (contra Weber). Chapter 6 focuses on ethnic patriotism among the Luo, while chapter 10 explores the same among the Maasai of Kenya. Chapter 12 provides a final recap of this dialectical tale of pilgrim dissent and ethnic worldliness.

Those looking for specifics about the East Africa Revival’s heroes, spirituality, and theology may want to consult the works of Joe Church, Kevin Ward, and Emma Wildwood. But for those seeking to understand the cultural, eschatological, and political power of revivalism, Peterson’s book is the place to look and will be for a long time to come.

—Mark Shaw

Mark Shaw is Director of the Centre for World Christianity, Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya, and author of Global Awakening: How Twentieth-Century Revivals Triggered a Christian Revolution (IVP, 2010).

Network Church: A Pentecostal Ecclesiology Shaped by Mission.


The growing importance of Pentecostalism as a global movement is evident in the significant amount of literature that it has generated, particularly within the last decade. A number of the early studies were historical and anthropological. Andy Lord’s Network Church: A Pentecostal Ecclesiology Shaped by Mission stands in continuity with the writings on the movement that are paying attention to core theological issues. This book considers the interface between Pentecostal ecclesiology and missions and very ably dialogues with several leading authors in the area: Amos Yong, Steven Land, Yel-Matti Kärkkäinen, and Frank Macchia. Their Pentecostal concept of the church serves as a takeoff point for the present work.

Andy Lord’s thesis is that “networks contribute a new structure to Pentecostal ecclesiology enabling a fresh approach to contextualization” (4). Allan Anderson, arguably the leading Pentecostal historian of our time, has pointed out that given the diversities within the movement, it is better to speak of Pentecostalisms. This argument would suggest that there probably cannot be a single Pentecostal ecclesiology. Lord’s book does recognize the diversities but at the same time serves us well by using the shared theological features of the movement as a whole to construct a network ecclesiology with which most mainstream Pentecostal movements can identify (9). Major strengths of this work
are its recognition of the inseparable relationship between ecclesiology and mission and its Trinitarian approach to the subject from biblical, historical, theological, and mission perspectives.

Mission, Lord notes, “can be seen in terms of the movements of the Spirit that find their origin in the Father and their character shaped by Christ” (29). The Spirit-Word-Community methodology deployed for the study is itself a reflection of the book’s Trinitarian focus. In drawing on the importance of biblical material to demonstrate the significance of networks for contemporary Pentecostal ecclesiology, Lord has given us a new paradigm that will serve the interest of scholars and students of revivalist Christianity. The book’s case could have been strengthened with more attention to how the developing network between Pentecostals of the Global North and those of the Global South also reflects the new ecclesiology discussed in the volume. Despite this lacuna, this is a work well done that deserves attention.

—J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu

J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu is the Baëta-Grau Professor of African Christianity and Pentecostal Theology, Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon, Accra, Ghana.

A New History of Christianity in China.


In this comprehensive, concise, and compelling volume, Daniel Bays presents the results of the significant research of the past three decades. He provides both the broad sweep of the history of Chinese Christianity and sufficient detail to make the story interesting. We find a balance, too, between (1) admirably objective discussions of controversial topics and people and (2) the author’s candid comments, all of which must be taken seriously, regardless of one’s point of view.

The narrative traces two major realities: “the basic tension between ‘foreign’ mission and (Chinese) church” and “the always-present instinct of the Chinese state . . . to monitor and control religious movements.” As a result, “Christianity was usually not seen only, indeed not even primarily, as a ‘religion’ or belief system, but as a behavioral phenomenon which could cause endless trouble.” Two major themes arise from this story. One is “the notion that Christianity, when it is separated from its bonding with Western culture in a package we may call ‘Christendom,’ is perfectly capable of adapting to function in different cultural settings.” The other is “the remarkable flexibility and creativity in the Chinese relationship with Christianity (or perhaps ‘Christianities’)” (2).

In every chapter, the development (or demise) of institutional Christianity is woven into the fabric of China’s political and social history, with special attention to the ways in which the foreign flavor of the religion helped or hurt its reception among the people and their leaders. Both Protestants and Roman Catholics receive attention, though Bays mirrors Jean-Pierre Charbonnier’s Christians in China: A.D. 600 to 2000 (Ignatius Press, 2007) in focusing more on the Protestant story after the arrival of Robert Morrison in 1807. An appendix on the Russian Orthodox mission in China concludes the book.

The description of Christianity in China today in the final chapter should be required reading for all who want to understand both wings of Chinese Roman Catholicism, as well as the complex...
The Poor in Liberation Theology: Pathway to God or Ideological Construct?


Tim Noble studied in Brazil from 1991 to 1994, and today he teaches liberation theology in Prague. The Poor in Liberation Theology is an abridgment of a thesis arising from “a practical frustration which has led to a theoretical questioning” (p. 1):

frustration he experienced with pastoral agents who idolized the poor, leading him to question how the poor might be allowed to be iconic without their being idolized. He examines definitions of the poor in the Bible and in liberation theology as the downtrodden, the victims of unjust structures, and those treated as nonpersons. God’s preferential, not exclusive, love for them is his free choice.

Liberation theologians use the concept of idolatry to describe capitalism. Here Noble draws on the work of Pablo Richard, who finds two understandings of idolatry in the Old Testament: reducing God to the material so as to control his power, and worshiping of false gods (43). The latter appears when we absolutize money, the market, or progress, each of which promises false utopias. Liberation, a utopia, is necessary as the driving force for change, but it must be linked with eschatological hope to avoid becoming an ideology (54).

Noble introduces Emmanuel Levinas’s emphasis on the other, as well as Jean-Luc Marion’s analysis of how concepts can be idolatrous. Levinas critiques ontology where “the other person . . . is not allowed to retain his alterity but is reduced to a version of the ‘I’” (75). Marion warns that we cannot think of God in the sense of comprehending him (89). Finally, Noble argues that Clodovis Boff offers a method that allows the poor to remain other and iconic (150). In each of the three moments of the method—the socioanalytic, the hermeneutical, and the dialectical—he finds safeguards to avoid idolizing the poor. The book is challenging, difficult, and rewarding.

Neil Collins is a Columban Missionary. After many years with Basic Christian Communities in Mindanao, Philippines, he is writing the history of the Columbans.

Came Men on Horses: The Conquistador Expeditions of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado and Don Juan de Oñate.


Stan Hoig (1924–2009), a practicing journalist who earned a Ph.D. and taught for many years at the University of Colo-
rado, published more than twenty books on the American West. In *Came Men on Horses* Hoig writes with a journalist’s flair about two of the earliest and most prominent Spanish explorations and attempted settlements of the American Southwest. Hoig establishes a strong narrative as he explores the illusory and often ridiculous dreams that fueled the expeditions; the incredible hardships endured by the soldiers, settlers, and priests; and the almost incomprehensible cruelties inflicted on native populations by all involved. The book is especially valuable in its chronicle of the less well known Oñate attempt to colonize New Mexico. The book, or at least selected chapters, might be used to interest students in all manner of issues surrounding early Spanish explorations and interactions with native peoples.

Scholars of the period and readers of the *IBMR* will probably find the book less useful. The story is familiar to students of the period, and Hoig appears to pitch his argument, insofar as there is a historical argument, at those who might be tempted to see his principals in a “purified, heroic sense,” hardly a temptation for most academics today. Readers of the *IBMR* will be disappointed to find only a few pages devoted to the work of the priests who accompanied both expeditions and to the religious traditions of the natives. This is, of course, not a criticism of the author, as such was not his intention—just a note to professional readers, who otherwise will enjoy a very well-told story.

—William Svelmoe

William Svelmoe is Associate Professor of American History at Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame, Indiana.

Conflict in Colonial Sonora: Indians, Priests, and Settlers.


The two works under review continue the valuable borderlands scholarship begun in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Herbert Eugene Bolton. In *Conflict in Colonial Sonora*, David Yetman describes the “conflicts among three distinct social groups—Indians, religious orders of priests . . . and settlers” (1) in northwestern colonial Mexico, ca. 1640–1770. He offers seven distinct perspectives derived from seven different instances of the ongoing three-sided conflicts, thus moving beyond the usual simple narrative and generalizations or romanticizations that portray settlers as always against Indians, priests consistently for indigenous peoples, and natives perpetually on the side of natives. Instead, he presents a well-argued account of the complex dynamics of Sonoran history in which, for example, some settlers supported Indian rights in opposition to some clerical activities, and missionaries experienced conflicts within and between their orders (Jesuit and Franciscan), as well as difficulties with secular clergy. His argument is based on a large and focused body of primary documents, including letters between priests, legal documents (such as the Tuape Indian suit, which is in the book’s appendix), and written accounts sent back to Spain of town hall meetings.

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The seven themes of the seven chapters, which for the most part are chronologically organized, provide an informative trajectory of the processes that ended with victory for the settlers, expulsion of the Jesuits, and consignment of the indigenous peoples to the hinterlands.

In *Twilight of the Mission Frontier*, Torre Curiel reassesses the long trajectory of general mission decline faced by the northern Franciscan missions in colonial New Spain and later in fledgling Mexico, namely, Sonora, and particularly in the districts of Pimeria Alta and Pimeria Baja. His well-documented study contradicts the general opinion that the increasingly limited resources of the missions prevented the missionaries from continuing to actively engage in the market economy. He contends that the crisis for the missions occurred in the 1820s, when political and local elites struggled over the economic resources. He argues that this decline was exacerbated by the establishment of companies and institutions run by laypeople, as well as by the consolidation of haciendas and villages, which “modified the social function of the missions” (xxviii) and further challenged the central role the missions had played in social and economic organization. Yet, in his reassessment, he discovers that the crisis was “neither pervasive nor irreversible,” nor was it uniform and monolithic during this period of general decline. Indeed, evidence shows, for example, that “the Franciscan missions . . . experienced a conspicuous, though brief, material rebirth and new flourishing” (xviii), and that some missions even became independent, self-sustaining agricultural communities. He demonstrates that the frontier region and localized areas acted differently, as also did the missionaries and local laypeople, to meet the local needs and problems of the time, thus furthering scholarship about the region’s diversity in economic and missionary activities, as well as in demographic, cultural, and institutional factors. This densely footnoted study is supported by a solid bibliography, significant employment of primary and secondary works, and copious presentation of tables and figures of hard data in the closing chapters.

These two studies are well-written, sequential social histories of the northern mission territories of late colonial New Spain and early post-Independence Mexico. In their discussions of the relationships among indigenous peoples, missionaries, and settlers, *Conflict* is narrative and juridical in its approach, while *Twilight* is quantitative and economic—although the data occasionally break the narrative. These publications are appropriate for graduate-level seminars and beneficial for specialists and others interested in the period and subject. Together, they offer a nuanced and thoughtful temporal sweep of the Sonoran region from 1640 to 1855.

—David Orique

David Orique, O.P., is Assistant Professor of Latin American, Early Modern Iberian, and Atlantic World History at Providence College, Providence, Rhode Island.


In this work Francis Nolan, a member of the Society of the Missionaries of Africa, or the White Fathers, narrates the story of the missionary order founded in 1868 by Charles Cardinal Lavigerie. The focus of the book is the period between the
The White Fathers in Colonial Africa is at once a historical and a biographical study. The White Fathers attracted a good many men with a desire to lead and to evangelize. There were too many for Nolan to characterize in any comprehensive fashion, so he organizes his account first by geographic region and then through brief biographies of the men chosen to lead the order’s evangelical initiatives. Initially, the White Fathers’ mission stations were heavily concentrated among Muslim peoples conquered by the French in Mediterranean Africa and along Africa’s West Coast. In those areas the White Fathers tried various strategies aimed at growing Christian communities, but without much success. Perhaps the greatest import of the mission’s presence in these regions was its emergence as a buffer between indigenous peoples and the representatives of the French colonial state.

The order eventually turned to missionizing in the Congo River basin in Central Africa and in the lake regions of East Africa. In these areas their fortunes prospered. Their first mission stations were established only in the 1890s, yet by the 1920s the missionaries were ordaining African priests to serve African Catholic communities. As Nolan discusses in his last chapters, the rapid conversion of Africans to Christianity was a major factor in the development of African political and social life.

The book offers a collection of essays by twenty-seven missionaries, pastors, and scholars dedicated to world evangelization. Each of them offers missiological and theological insights on the involvement of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements in global mission. Coming from various continents and backgrounds, they reveal the commitment of Pentecostals to mission as exemplified in their deeds, sacrifices, struggles, and words. Not only are Pentecostals committed to mission, but also they are committed in collaboration and partnerships with one another.

A sense of urgency and compassion permeates most of the chapters. Yes, today Pentecostals are involved in development projects in mission fields; they are not as
otherworldly as in the past, but they are still passionately committed to winning souls before the second coming of Christ. This commitment is behind their sense of urgency and fuels their compassion to take as many people to heaven as possible. For them, time is running out. At least, this much one gets from reading this compilation of honest reflections of persons engaged in mission and mission studies. The reflections are crafted in ways that will inspire others and that can serve as blueprints for those interested in going into mission fields.

All these good qualities notwithstanding, this book is not the right place to look for intellectually rigorous discussion of mission. It is a book of testimonies—therein lies both its strength and its weakness.

—Nimi Wariboko

Nimi Wariboko is the Katherine B. Stuart Professor of Christian Ethics, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Massachusetts.
The Mission of the Portuguese Augustinians to Persia and Beyond (1602–1747).


Studies abound of various Catholic orders involved in mission, but this volume addresses an important and under-researched area. The Mission of the Portuguese Augustinians to Persia and Beyond opens space for reflection on a little-known group and its mission ventures in Asia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The book’s ten chapters are packed with information on the Augustinian order and its mission to Persia. The only criticism may be that the studies sometimes suffer from too much detail individually and too little cohesion with one another. The first five chapters explore the Augustinian presence in the Persian capital of Isfahan, a topic worthy of a book in itself. John Flannery locates this mission within the larger history of the Portuguese Padroado, which placed “ecclesiastical patronage in the hands of the Portuguese monarchs” (9), lasting in one form or another until 1999, when Macao shifted from Portuguese to Chinese rule.

Chapters 6–10 include a focus on Augustinian contacts with Armenian Christianity, Catholic missions to the Mandeans of Iraq, Augustinian jurisdiction issues in Basra, the Augustinian mission to Georgia, and a valuable final chapter of reflections on the mission’s relationship with political power and methods. Each of chapters 6–9 could be expanded to become a monograph on its own.

In the final chapter, the author mentions that a key purpose of the book is to show “the complex interaction of religion and politics” (241). This complexity deeply affected the mission results achieved by the Augustinians, which among Muslims were few and far between. Their frustration may have lent an “added impetus to their founding of missions in Georgia, and among the Mandeans of Basra” (245).

Flannery offers important reflections on a little-known mission. His work, spanning almost 150 years, creates an appetite for more volumes expanding on the themes he treats.

—Steve Cochrane

Steve Cochrane has served with YWAM for the past thirty-four years, with twenty-six years based in India. He is presently finishing a Ph.D. in Christian-Muslim relations through the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies.

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—Jonathan J. Bonk, editor, from the Preface

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