Can a Renewal Movement Be Renewed?: Questions for the Future of Ecumenism.


This masterly and impassioned analysis of the current state of the consilient ecumenical movement is the product of many decades of leadership within the movement in North America and globally. Kinnamon writes out of personal experience while drawing on an amazingly rich tapestry of ecumenical relations, at points inviting ecumenical colleagues to contribute directly to the text of his book. He is far from optimistic for the ecumenical future but nevertheless maintains a clear vision of the centrality of ecumenism to biblical ecclesiology, combining this conviction with a lucid strategy for renewal.

As Kinnamon confesses, the book is full of lists (4), which provide helpful summary analysis of each issue addressed, as well as pointers to further research. Originally delivered as speeches, the chapters range widely from peace issues to Christian-Jewish relations and from justice to ecclesiology. After an introductory chapter the book falls into two main sections, the first reviewing the commitment of the ecumenical movement to such issues as peace, justice, and the environment, while the second deals with major challenges such as relationships with Catholic and Orthodox churches and the “add on” approach to ecumenism within some denominations. The concluding chapters present an agenda for ecumenical renewal.

Themes that Kinnamon returns to often are the tension between “cheap unity” (59) and “passionate disagreement—without breaking fellowship” (61), the value of diversity (84), the need to actualize within the churches the substantive agreements already reached (44), the role of the laity and local congregations (154), the failure of evangelicals and postdenominational churches to engage ecumenically (129), the need for ecumenical formation (134), and the severe financial constraints facing ecumenical structures (126).

On the basis of Kinnamon’s analysis, one is tempted to respond to the book’s title, Can [this] Renewal Movement Be Renewed?, with a fairly definite No—but only because Kinnamon presents a narrow view of ecumenism, that of consilient ecumenism focused on North America. In a book subtitled Questions for the Future of Ecumenism, it is surprising, for example, to find no reference at all to the Global Christian Forum, the amazingly ecumenical work of the Bible societies, and denominational mission agencies that increasingly work ecumenically. Although there is a very brief reference...
to ecumenical communities (154), major ecumenical movements such as the Global Day of Prayer, the Alpha Course, and Micah Challenge are ignored, as is the more formal cooperation we see internationally, for example, between Presbyterians, Catholics, and Anglicans heroically working for peace in South Sudan or between evangelical and Orthodox leaders focused on mission through the Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative.

Kinnamon reminds us that “the ecumenical movement began as a lay [youth] enterprise—in the mission fields” (154). What, sadly, he fails to present is the hope, indeed the actuality, that renewed ecumenism will not be led by conciliar structures but by a network (127) of globally minded youth who draw creatively on the multifaceted Christian tradition and a rich pallet of global theologies. This renewal movement can be—is being—renewed.

—Mark Oxbrow

Mark Oxbrow, international director of Faith2Share, a global network of mission agencies of various ecclesial traditions, is also facilitator of the Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative for collaboration in mission, former assistant general secretary of the Church Mission Society (1988–2008), and an Anglican priest based in Oxford, U.K.

Bible in Mission.


There can be little question as to the centrality of the Bible to Christian faith in general and Christian mission in particular. Bible in Mission documents the wide range of ways that the Bible has been a foundation, motivation, and instrument of mission. Appearing as the eighteenth volume in the Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series, celebrating the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, Bible in Mission has a “transversal” focus, seeking to reflect the great confessional, geographic, historical, and hermeneutical diversity of the global church. This volume is not a textbook or systematic treatise, but rather a collection of essays displaying a broad array of perspectives on this important but often overlooked subject.

The text begins with three introductory chapters, of which Tim Carriker’s “The Bible as Text for Mission” provides an especially helpful overview. The remaining twenty-six chapters are divided into two sections. Section 1, “The Bible in Mission in the World and in the Church,” presents various religious contexts and confessional approaches to the topic in broad fashion. Section 2 offers specific case studies divided into four geographic regions. It moves the discussion from theory to the experience of real people in real places, illustrating how the Bible has been read, translated, or communicated in different contexts, with different audiences and with different theological convictions. For example, chapters present environmentalist, feminist, liberationist, and evangelical approaches to the Bible and mission. Readers will discover ways in which the Bible relates to the HIV crisis, poverty, evangelism, children, and youth. Concerns range from personal spiritual growth to social transformation. Contributions also vary stylistically: some are more descriptive or historical in nature, and others advocate for a particular approach; some are research based, while
others are more anecdotal. This section provides both inspiration and information in a fascinating and sometimes surprising exploration of the subject.

The variety of perspectives and themes is at once the strength and the weakness of this volume. The wide range of theological orientations, contexts, and styles exposes the reader to a colorful and horizon-expanding sampling of how the relationship of Bible and mission can be understood. But this diversity also makes for rather bumpy reading as the reader moves from chapter to chapter. The editors have clearly chosen diversity over thematic continuity. Overall, Bible in Mission offers a valuable collection of essays that will enlighten, and potentially challenge, any reader who is passionate about God’s mission and the Word of God.

—Craig Ott

Craig Ott, professor of mission and intercultural studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, is director of its Ph.D. program in intercultural studies.


Author Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen here offers the second in his planned five-volume series on constructive theology. Overall, he aims to offer practical reasons for eliminating conflicts between religions, provide a globally acceptable theory of the existence of one true God for all religions, and establish a theological framework for a coherent account of this truth (420–21). The book is cast as an “act of hospitality, giving and receiving gifts” (5). The author clarifies, explains, and reflects on the Christian doctrines of revelation and the Trinity, subjecting them to rigorous and thorough interfaith engagement. He argues that any theologian in search of God’s wisdom and love must be willing to “exchange gifts of inclusivity, belonging, mutual learning, and enrichment” (5).

The nature of the Trinity, the articulation of truths that Christians believe, the quest for a fuller knowledge of the relation between God and world, and the methodology that structures the whole project pivot on the “spirit of hospitality” (364). Kärkkäinen carefully argues that the complex task of dialogue and religious conversation in our pluralistic world demands “respectful honoring of the otherness of other traditions and their representatives, as well as bold but humble arguing for one’s own deepest convictions, in the hope of being both enriched and enabled to share a convincing testimony” (365).

The author’s view of the Trinity is based on a broad and rich understanding of revelation, which derives from the Bible, natural theology, and insights from other religions. At the same time, his notion of revelation is cast in a Trinitarian framework and conditioned by a spirit of hospitality. Kärkkäinen views understanding the Trinity as entwined with the task of “discernment of the unfolding of the economy of salvation,” that is, the creating, providing, saving, and conserving work of the triune God on the way to the eschatological communion of all God’s people (180). Kärkkäinen’s construal of God is firmly rooted in the monotheistic Christian tradition, but in dialogue it displays the relationality and mutuality that characterize the triune God. For the author, the triune God is the God of all people and the whole of creation. This pluralistic and dialogical and yet confessed approach to understanding the divine is not a cheap tactic to nudge all other religions to relinquish their positions and embrace Christianity. His is a border-crossing invitation to dialogue, engagement, and peaceful coexistence. Kärkkäinen is seeking honest and mutual encounter with the ideas of the divine and practices in other religions.

Kärkkäinen interacts with a vast number of interlocutors, always critiquing and reshaping their logic and arguments. The problem is that it is not always clear whether the prodigious efforts he expends in the dialogue are supporting an explicit thesis or clarifying his own distinct voice. In many places, the pluralistic clamor drowns out the small still voice of his constructive project. His style demands very close reading. Once his voice is heard, however, it pays off handsomely.

—Nimi Wariboko

Nimi Wariboko is Katherine B. Stuart Professor of Christian Ethics, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Massachusetts.

Reformed Means Missional: Following Jesus into the World.


The book Reformed Means Missional well defines and shows in practice the missional nature of the Reformed churches. The three chapters of section 1 cover the what, why, and how, giving a picture of what a missional church looks like, why the church should be missional, and how to be missional. Martin Allan clearly identifies the marks of a missional church. Through studies of Jonathan Edwards’s work, Samuel Logan shows how the Reformed faith produces moral behavior: “What that person seeks first, Edwards calls that person’s affections” (29); “gracious affections arise from the mind being enlightened right and spiritually to apprehend divine things” (35). In the same chapter we find reasons why we should exercise our Reformed faith in Jesus: “The fundamental reason why I, and you, should exercise faith in Jesus Christ is because He deserves it” (36). Thomas Schirrmacher brings to our attention convincing arguments from Paul’s letter to the Romans for establishing a close relationship between local churches and world missions.

Section 2 discusses various areas in which the church can be missional. By giving practical applications for missional vision, this section complements the first section well. P. J. Buys’s chapter on missional response to poverty and social injustice, based on his experience in South Africa, is insightful. As a pastor in a megalopolis, I found the chapter by Tim Keller, “What Is God’s Global Urban Mission?” exceptionally helpful. Keller reflects on urban mission in the Bible, as well as on the growing importance of the urban mission of our days. Other chapters on missions in the context of healthcare, violence against women, child sexual abuse, migrant churches, secularity, Islam, hidden believers, and homosexual groups help us to see numerous practical ways to be involved in mission.

This is a helpful book. It would be even more relevant across the world, however, if it included a chapter on how to do mission in the context of civil unrest and political instability. Many countries—particularly now Ukraine—face unrest and instability and would benefit from having Reformed missions in their midst.

—Ivan Bespalov

Ivan Bespalov is the pastor of Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, Kiev, Ukraine.
To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity.


Pentecostalism has changed the face of world Christianity, most visibly in the non-Western world. The attention given in recent scholarship to Pentecostal Christianity and its various versions of charismatic renewal is testimony to the growth and influence of a movement that, until half a century ago, was on the margins of world Christianity. To the Ends of the Earth, part of the Oxford Series on World Christianity (edited by Lamin Sanneh), is a welcome addition to Allan Anderson’s already impressive collection of writings on Pentecostalism.

Pentecostalism is distinguished from Roman Catholicism and historic Protestantism by its emphasis on the experience of the Holy Spirit as normative in church life and worship. “The experience of the Spirit and belief in world evangelization are hallmarks of Pentecostalism,” Anderson writes, along with the belief of Pentecostals that they are “called to be witnesses for Jesus Christ in the farthest reaches of the globe in obedience to Christ’s commission” (1). This thought informs the title of the book as Anderson presents stories from across the world showing how—even within Western contexts, where Christianity is on the decline—Pentecostal forms are keeping the hope of the faith alive. In nine chapters the book covers history, as well as missiological and theological issues of Pentecostal/charismatic Christianity into a world religious force. Various chapters deal with missions and migration, women and family, the Bible and community, and preachers and entrepreneurs. The final chapter addresses contemporary prosperity-preaching Pentecostalism, using as a case study Korean pastor David Yonggi Cho, for many years head of the world’s largest congregation. This approach helps readers bridge the gap between this new form of Pentecostalism and its classic forebears.

Pentecostalism is basically a revival movement that can exist both as separate churches and denominations and as a stream of renewal within historic mission denominations. The movement’s unencumbered ecclesiology allows it to become a grassroots phenomenon that appeals very much to non-Western believers in particular. It is helpful that Anderson, besides discussing African Pentecostalism, gives attention to Asian versions of the movement, with insightful information particularly on India. Chapter 7, on transformation and independence, is important for the bird’s-eye view it provides of the most significant regions of Pentecostal activity—Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

Anderson has dealt with his chosen themes quite fairly, although in chapter 5, on the use of the Bible, he could have gone a little beyond the older African Independent Churches. Prosperity preaching, which has become important in contemporary Pentecostalism, could also have been analyzed more extensively. Nevertheless, this is a useful volume that will serve seminaries and university departments looking for a broad study of the history, nature, and mission of Pentecostalism as a form of world Christianity.

—J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu
Owning the Earth: The Transforming History of Land Ownership.


Owning the Earth, while not a book about missions, reveals an underappreciated link between colonial history and mission history: the desire to own land. In twenty-three chapters divided into six sections, Andro Linklater surveys the growth of the idea of private property in England and America, compares this view with the alternatives being pursued elsewhere in Europe and China, and strives to account for how Western civilization took shape. It is a tale well told.

Linklater begins in 1583 with the first British attempts to conceive of how land in the New World would be owned. First, the British had to ignore the fact that the land was already held by First Nations/Native American peoples. Second, the models they worked with reflected the struggle for land ownership in the British Isles between the kings, the nobles, and individuals on the land. Linklater claims that, in the recent English past, “the liberties enshrined in the common law and in statutes from Magna Carta onwards—freedom from taxation without representation, recourse to the supreme authority of the legal system, the necessity of trial by jury, the existence of habeas corpus—had all emerged from the landowners’ basic need for security of tenure” (43). Thus, rather than taking politics or economics as basic to society, Linklater argues that all rests on land tenure.

The type of capitalism that developed in Britain was thus different from Continental (e.g., Dutch or French) capitalism, and certainly different from other forms of feudalism and serfdom (e.g., Polish or Russian). This difference was critical, Linklater argues, because “the history of the next two centuries would make it universally obvious that a private property society could harness resources that were not available to societies organized in other ways” (108).

Linklater ranges widely in his consideration of the opportunities and the dangers arising from a clear concept of private property. When inventions or even ideas are protected by patents (i.e., turned into private property), then the relationship between private good and public good teeters off-balance. When private property slips over into monopoly, then society suffers because the means of progress are taken off the table for most people.

Linklater takes the reader through the American Revolution, the Russian Revolution, the Cold War, the mortgage collapse of 2008, and the Arab Spring, using his measure of whether a concept of private property is operative and how this factor is balanced with social justice (i.e., the needs of society) as a way of evaluating various movements and governments. Yet the central theme of the book is the future: “The task of feeding nine billion people in the middle of the twenty-first century will create such a mass of urgent and seemingly insoluble problems, it might seem perverse to suggest that the most important is how the land is owned. But that will be the key to solving all the others” (393)

Where is the concern here for missionaries and mission agencies? First, the study reveals the complicity of missionaries in support of and participation in the land grabs of the past. Second, the study wrestles with the issue of how to balance individual needs with social justice, which is surely a missionary concern. Finally, mission agencies might examine their own conceptions of ownership and their practices in securing land, even for “sacred” purposes.

—Michael A. Rynkiewich

Michael A. Rynkiewich is retired as professor of anthropology from the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky.

Grassroots Asian Theology: Thinking the Faith from the Ground Up.


Grassroots Asian Theology presents a vibrant picture of the people of God in the Global South, especially among the grassroots branches of Christianity. Simon Chan, professor of systematic theology at Trinity Theological College in Singapore, brings Asian grassroots Pentecostalism as an authentic “flavor” into global ecumenical Christianity, challenging the issue of “how theology ought to be done” in an Asian context (8).

With theological articulation seriously and creatively derived from several historic Christian theological traditions, including Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism, Chan lays out a number of very interesting theological premises. Carefully grounding his premises in Scripture, in tradition, and in ecclesial experience, he contrasts Eastern and Western ways of thinking, ending with the Asian family perspective as an appropriate and distinctive approach for Asian theology (43–46). He also draws extensively from a broad and diverse Asian religious cultural context, including a “middle zone” (discussed by Paul Hiebert, Daniel Shaw, and Tite Tiémou) in Asian folk religions to provide rationale for the grassroots Pentecostal-charismatic movements in Asia (30–35). In the chapter “God in Asian Contexts,” he favors the triune family as an analogy for the relationship of the persons within the Trinity (47–68). In the next chapter, Chan discusses humans as relational beings, not individuals, with sins seen in light of shame (useful in Asia’s culture of honor and shame, in contrast with the Western culture of guilt), which fractures the harmony of the community (69–90). Christ is seen as both high priest and ancestor; he is our “greatest ancestor” in this household of faith. Salvation is therefore the restoration to a right position in the family of God, where people are called the “holy brothers” (91–127). The Holy Spirit is the bond of love between the Father and the Son, and between the church and Christ (129–56). Finally, church life is a family life, or the communion of saints (both the living and the deceased), who are joined in communion with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (157–202).

In places, readers may not agree with Chan or may need further discussion and exploration—for example, regarding the controversial practice of ancestral veneration (113–17, 188–97). Nevertheless, Grassroots Asian Theology draws our attention to Asian Christianity, where grassroots charismatic-Pentecostalism has significantly contributed to the efforts of the global church toward theological contextualization.

—KimSon Nguyen

KimSon Nguyen is a Ph.D. student in the School of Intercultural Studies, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California.
Two Women: Anyentyuwe and Ekâkise.


Publication of Two Women: Anyentyuwe and Ekâkise brings out of obscurity this controversial and until now unpublished 1911 manuscript, written by missionary doctor Robert Hamill Nassau, who served in the late nineteenth century in what is now Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and coastal Cameroon. At the time it was written, the editor at the American Tract Society begged Nassau to suppress the account, fearing that it “would injure the cause of mission” (xix). A century later, editor Henry Bucher presents the work in its original form, while enriching it with a wealth of research notes, helpful maps, photos, three indexes, and suggestions for further reading in historical and contemporary scholarship.

Two Women, a biographical work, details the lives of two young African women, Anyentyuwe and Ekâkise, who were educated by the mission and members of the local church community. Both eventually fell into moral error, resulting in church discipline and excommunication.

Anyentyuwe, born into a wealthy family in what is now Libreville, Gabon, was educated and raised at the mission. Later orphaned, she became a default “servant” to the mission. In her twenties she was raped by another mission worker, resulting in pregnancy. A refined and educated young woman with an illegitimate child, Anyentyuwe was turned out of the mission and entered into a series of long-term liaisons with wealthy foreign men, which further damaged her reputation, though the liaisons provided some financial and domestic stability. The widowed Robert Nassau eventually hired Anyentyuwe as a governess to his young daughter, moving her to their remote interior mission station and touching off scandalous rumors regarding their relationship.

Ekâkise was similarly educated at the Cameroon mission but was sold by her extended family to a man with multiple wives. A child-bride at ten and a mother at fifteen, Ekâkise protested the unhappy and abusive marriage but received no sympathy from church leaders. As with Anyentyuwe, her extramarital liaisons resulted in excommunication. Nassau’s intervention and financial assistance (paying her bride-price to free her from her marital contract) only exacerbated the tensions in the community.

These two controversies, decades apart, injured Nassau’s reputation and resulted in his recall from the mission field. The manuscript is Nassau’s “apologia” (xxii), defending his own actions and those of the two women, while openly critiquing the local culture, church leadership, and the foreign missionary community for their failure to support such women in crisis.

Bucher offers the reader rich historical and cultural context without taking sides in the issue. He also gives due credit to Robert Nassau’s sister Isabella, who was influential in the lives of both women (xii). This work has great value for the student of African mission history, particularly those interested in women’s roles and status, gender issues, and sexuality.

—Mary Cloutier

Mary Cloutier served seven years in Gabon as a Christian and Missionary Alliance missionary, teaching at Bethel Bible Institute, Libreville. She recently completed a Ph.D. in intercultural studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

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Beyond Literate Western Models: Contextualizing Theological Education in Oral Contexts.


Beyond Literate Western Models is a fascinating attempt to contextualize theological education in oral contexts for effective world evangelization. Samuel Chiang and Grant Lovejoy have assembled fifteen papers, along with some of the more insightful responses from a 2012 consultation on orality held at the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton, Illinois. The four sections of the volume address pertinent issues, including local culture, methodology, and forms and methods of theological education among oral preference learners.

The book begins by discussing the importance of preparing students from formal theological institutions to train local people to tell Bible stories effectively. It makes the crucial suggestion that an interdisciplinary approach be used in oral contexts. Also important is the role of context in informal settings of theological education. The book discusses the differences between Western approaches to adult learning and those of West Africa, where under the influence of local culture learning takes place communally. Some helpful grassroots experiences are used as examples. The book gives some creative suggestions for effective theological education among oral-preference learners, including the use of context-based questions, such as, “Why are the people not interested in reading?” and “How might one collaborate with oral leaders and co-opt their in-put?” (153).

Reading Sloterdijk is a provocative experience, for he challenges common-sense presumptions and philosophical orthodoxies, offering striking analyses of how our world has come to appear to us as an enclosed crystal palace. This is an extremely vital and valuable book that is highly recommended for philosophically inclined readers. It combines astute theoretical assessment with important practical application to demonstrate how our world actually operates.

—Jangkholam Haokip

Jangkholam Haokip is assistant professor of theology, Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India.

In the World Interior of Capital:
For a Philosophical Theory of Globalization.


Peter Sloterdijk, an important contemporary philosopher, published In the World Interior of Capital (original German ed., 2005) as a summary and reflection on his lengthy trilogy Sphären (Spheres). In this book, in forty-two short chapters, Sloterdijk offers his iconoclastic reflections on globalization.

The image Sloterdijk uses to illustrate our globalized world is the Crystal Palace, the famous large-scale enclosure for the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London. Today we live in an elaborate “crystal palace,” which also functions as a hothouse, rather than under the open sky. The palace is the invisible construction of global capital itself, which works unseen to shape our world and our understanding of ourselves in it. This palace, which has floors to designate the unequal status of humans who live within it, stands as “a planetary palace of consumption” (12).

Most of the book consists of Sloterdijk’s analysis of how this global crystal palace came about, based on the European expansion and conquest of the globe. He connects political and economic events to philosophical ideas and develops a general logic for understanding what is going on; he avoids the celebration of multiculturalism, differences, and local narratives by postmodern scholars. Sloterdijk pays particular attention to the role of cartography, because it provides an image of the world as a sphere; this “roundness of theory shaped Western consciousness from the Greeks until the end of modernity. He also focuses on the crucial role of Christian mission in the constitution of the modern world.

Today, Sloterdijk claims, we are passing into a new way of thinking. Rather than being a round sphere, today’s crystal palace absorbs the outside world into its complex crystalline structure. It is an enclosure, but it is not a sphere. Sloterdijk uses a somewhat cynical tone to describe what is happening with thought and life today, but he does not simply celebrate or lament it. He gives us tools to understand the world, and at the end of the book he cautiously suggests that “being extended in one’s own place is a good habit of being” (263), in contrast with the modernist pretensions to universality. At the same time, this being in one’s own place should not become an excuse for ignoring what is happening elsewhere.

The Spiritual Expansion of Medieval Latin Christendom: The Asian Missions.


The Spiritual Expansion of Medieval Latin Christendom, the eleventh volume in the series “The Expansion of Latin Europe, 1000–1500,” adds significantly to the history of missions in Asia. Divided into three parts, the volume comprises essays covering the “long and complex history of the Asian mission of the High
Middle Ages” (xvii). The essays focus on the development of the Latin-speaking missionary movement outside its immediate European context, providing a comprehensive discussion of the multifaceted context in which the Asian mission came into existence, developed, and withered. The contributors use a diverse body of primary sources, both written and material.

The essays in part 1, “Crusades and the Mission,” discuss the evolution of missions in the context of the Crusade movement. Major themes are conversion and the Crusaders as agents of conversion. Joan Flori discusses the motivations and the idealized perceptions of the Crusaders and questions whether conversion was their primary goal. Along similar lines, Elizabeth Siberry demonstrates that there were indeed two distinct camps: Crusaders (warriors) and missionaries (nonmilitary promoters of Christianity).

Whereas part 1 discusses the interaction of Christians and Muslims in the Middle East, part 2, “Discovering Asia,” introduces the development of Latin-speaking missions further east through the themes of exploration, travel, and trade. Part 3, “The Missions with the Mongol Empire,” treats the missionary movement during the “established” period of the Mongol Empire. In particular, the appraisal of relationships between the Mongols and Christianity, including the role of diplomacy and trade in chapters 13–16, is most instructive.

This volume will be a great resource for scholars interested in missionary movements, as it brings together the product of research that is otherwise found only in scattered monographs and periodicals.

—Barakatullo Ashurov

Barakatullo Ashurov is an independent researcher in Central Asia. He received his doctoral degree from SOAS, University of London; his research focuses on medieval Christianity in Central Asia and Iran.

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Nuestra Fe: A Latin American Church History Sourcebook.


In their introduction, the Gonzáleses note that, from the famous 1511 homily of Fray Antonio de Montesinos, in which he condemned the colonists of Hispaniola for their mistreatment of the Indians, a pattern was set in Latin America that has continued until our own time. One group of Christians would invoke their Christian faith to justify abuse and exploitation, while another group would cite the same faith to insist, in the name of justice, on a radical transformation of society.

The book’s nine chapters contain primary sources covering the five centuries of Latin American church history. The first four deal with the colonial period and illustrate how Christianity was used both to support and to condemn the exploitation of Native Americans and African slaves. A few of the documents also show how Indians viewed Christianity. Others treat the suppression of the Jesuits, while still others are concerned with the Inquisition’s persecution of Jews who had converted to Christianity but then supposedly reverted secretly to their old religion.

Chapter 5 covers the new order of church-state relations that emerged following independence. Included here is the Roman Catholic Church’s response to the new liberal forces that came to dominate Latin America in the last half of the nineteenth century. Chapters 6 and 7 treat the animosity between Catholics...
and Protestants that developed in the postcolonial period and lasted until the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s. These chapters were for me the most interesting section of the book. Here the documents expose a Catholic hierarchy clinging to the conservative past and fearing the so-called modernism that Pope Pius IX condemned in 1864 in his Syllabus of Errors. They likewise reveal a Protestantism imported by Europeans and North Americans who saw Latin American culture as backward and who seemed oblivious to the oppressive policies of the liberal politicians who supported them.

Chapter 8 focuses on the Catholic Church after Vatican II, with its intercine battles over liberation theology and the “preferential option for the poor” of the Medellín bishops’ conference. Chapter 9 treats the new challenges Pentecostalism and Afro-Caribbean religion pose for both Catholicism and liberal Protestantism.

The González are to be commended for their excellent choice of document selection. Their book should prove especially valuable to undergraduate and graduate students of Latin American history. A bonus feature is the questions the authors include for readers of the texts to ponder. The only disappointing feature of the book is the absence of an index and a bibliography, which would have proven valuable for guiding readers who want to delve deeper into the study of Latin American religious history.

—Edward T. Brett

Edward T. Brett is professor emeritus of history, La Roche College, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

True and Holy: Christian Scripture and Other Religions.


In True and Holy, Leo Lefebure discusses interreligious dialogue, hermeneutics, and interfaith relations. Christianity’s interactions with Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism are prefaced by analysis of the interplay of interreligious and intrareligious dialogue, as well as a review of hermeneutics from the early church fathers to the present. The reader is thus prepared to consider in the light of Scripture the wide variety of encounters, both positive and negative, that Christians have had with the four religious traditions under review.

Judaism’s extensive scriptural overlap with Christianity and a commonality of themes and figures of both faiths with Islam have invited direct scriptural juxtapositions through the centuries. Christian commentators unabashedly used Jewish Scriptures to make sense of Islam, even as Jewish theologians challenged Christian thinkers on the validity of their understanding of the First Testament. The relationship of Christianity to Hinduism is more subtle, given the few early Christian records documenting how St. Thomas’s congregations viewed the majority culture scripturally. Gandhi’s use of Christian Scripture, however, to oppose British hegemony shows how the Christian Bible is not reserved for Christians alone to interpret. As a result, the church’s understanding of Jesus owes much to Hindu perspectives.

Buddhism is the main focus of Lefebure’s personal scholarly interests. The relationship of Buddhism to Christianity as viewed through the lens of biblical

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—Dr. Miriam Adeney, anthropologist, missiologist, and author of Kingdom Without Borders: The Untold Story of Global Christianity (2009)

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interpretation is not readily obvious to more casual observers or practitioners of Buddhist-Christian interreligious dialogue. Yet Jesus, who spoke of camels passing through the eye of a needle, would not have been a stranger to modes of expression found in Zen.

Lefebure cautions Christians not to reject how Scripture may speak to us through the eyes of the other. His examples are thought-provoking.

—Steven Blackburn

Steven Blackburn, an ordained Congregational-Christian pastor, serves as library director and faculty associate in Semitic Scriptures, Hartford Seminary, Hartford, Connecticut.

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Introduction to Global Missions.


The three authors of this introduction to global missions and global mission studies are professionally engaged in the Southern Baptist Convention. They have produced an evangelical outline, founded on conservative theological principles. They are to be commended for presenting their study as an integrated text; consequently, it is difficult to trace who wrote which chapter (though sometimes the footnotes give an indication).

After the preface, this well-written and well-ordered book offers thirteen chapters in four sections: biblical and theological foundations, historical foundations, culture (with chapters on applied anthropology and world religions), and practice (e.g., strategies for disciple making). Many chapters have a short conclusion, and each chapter ends with resources for further study. The book includes indexes of names, of subjects, and of Scripture.

The biblical and theological survey focuses on mission in both the New Testament and the Old Testament (with special references to Isaiah and Psalms) and in the intertestamental period. The survey of mission history discusses developments from the early church to martyrs in the twentieth century. It does not mention Nicolaus von Zinzendorf as the founding father of Protestant missions on six continents, but instead presents William Carey as “the Father of the Modern Missions Movement” (116). The authors’ survey of culture focuses upon applied missiology, continuing work done by scholars such as Eugene Nida, Paul Hiebert, and David Hesselgrave. In this context it deals with issues such as contextualization and intercultural communication—topics that are discussed again in the fourth section of the book. This section explores making disciples, church planting, and the role of individuals and the local church in mission, with global missions as the comprehensive perspective. Here Donald McGavran and Ralph Winter are taken as guides. I wholeheartedly agree with the authors’ message on the book’s final page of text: “The global context of Christian mission is constantly changing, [but] the imperative nature of the missionary mandate does not change” (272).

The chapter on religions (in the third section on culture) gives only little attention to Taoism in China, Shinto in Japan, and shamanism in Korea. Unfortunately, it uses the outmoded term “animism” to describe the many religions that are now commonly known as primal or traditional
The authors’ view that the World Council of Churches as a whole embraces “theological liberalism” and “pluralism” (128) is patently incorrect. The authors here pass over missionary statesmen such as Hendrik Kraemer and Lesslie Newbigin, who were an integral part of the ecumenical movement and at the same time vehemently opposed relativism inside its ranks. The authors of the Introduction to Global Missions refer to John Stott but fail to mention that this evangelical leader and drafter of the Lausanne Covenant (1974) was a devoted member of the Anglican Church, one of the founding churches of the World Council of Churches.

The book’s one-sidedness also comes to the fore in the bibliography. The authors pay no attention to publications of Majority World theologians. Moreover, from Gustav Warneck onward, they fail to include even a single source published in continental Europe. The largest missiological series in the world, Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity (Bern: Peter Lang), certainly deserves a place in such a volume. Also lacking are mention of contemporary mission handbooks and mission encyclopedias (e.g., by David B. Barrett, 1982, 2001; Jan A. B. Jongeneel, 1995–97; Gerald H. Anderson, 1998; Jonathan Bonk, 2007) and, in particular, David Bosch’s Transforming Mission (1991), the most translated and most widely used missiological textbook.

As a mission scholar in a state university, I am disappointed; as a mission theologian, however, I sincerely recommend this book. After all, it will help its readers to engage in God’s global mission.

—Jan A. B. Jongeneel

Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity.


This “Pentecostal volume” in the Edinburgh Centenary Series fills a lacuna in mission studies. Whereas the Pentecostal movement as a whole receives full attention in discussions of the current global topography of Christianity, Pentecostal mission itself has been less studied. This comprehensive compilation of global Pentecostal mission portrays the dynamics of Pentecostal mission from diverse geographical and denominational backgrounds. The majority of the authors represent views from the Global South. Yet, with only two female theologians, the range of contributors lacks a gender balance. All of them share Pentecostal convictions, thus giving the volume an insider perspective on global Pentecostal mission.

A historical overview of the century of Pentecostal expansion in diverse sociocultural contexts is followed by organizational surveys of Pentecostal mission practice. In systematic theological terms, the volume describes Pentecostal mission in the pneumatological categories of power, healing, and restoration. The thematic spectrum includes self-reflexive perceptions and outlines themes arising in Pentecostal mission, including ecology, Pentecostal social responsibility, and ecumenism.

The volume does not deny tensions
that exist between Pentecostal mission and the broader Christian community. It considers emphases on church growth and church planting as a strong Pentecostal asset vis-à-vis the ecumenical focus on mis-
io Dei. Several chapters, however, reveal an ecumenical consciousness within the Pentecostal movement. For example, the book devotes considerable attention to the theme of church and society, addressing questions of social justice and inter-
religious dialogue and considering the development of Pentecostal theologies of religion. By exploring such areas in global Pentecostal mission, the volume suggests a Pentecostal rapprochement toward the wider ecumenical movement. As the volume delineates hitherto marginalized areas of Pentecostal mission, it opens up fresh directions in Pentecostal studies; its insider perspective, which highlights variations in Pentecostal mission theology, will contribute to discussion of ecumenical praxis. Students as well as practitioners of mission will find much of value here.

—Andreas Heuser

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During the past thirty years, expanding scholarship on the history of Christian-
ity in southern Africa has moved the focus of discussion away from African-
European confrontations, which preoc-
cupied scholars during the anticolonial and antiapartheid struggles, toward more complex and nuanced views of the social changes that accompanied those conflicts. In doing so, scholars have often attempted a multidisci-
plinary approach, combining the histo-
rian’s concern for temporal specificity, individual agency, and political change with the anthropologist’s examination of broader cultural influences and different ways that people have conceptual-
ized their experiences and surroundings. Though perhaps sometimes discordant in their multiple disciplinary emphases, the resulting studies have nevertheless greatly enriched our understanding of the important role that Christianity played in the evolution of African-Euro-
pean relations during the nineteenth cen-
tury.

Ingie Hovland’s Mission Station Chris-
tianity is a valuable contribution to that growing body of scholarship. Building on the work of anthropologists Jean and

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Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS) during the mid-nineteenth century in the borderlands between the British colony of Natal and the Zulu kingdom. Though her interest is apparently inspired in part by her own upbringing as a child of missionaries at one of those communities, Hovland’s study of the “social and material microcosm of the mission station” (20) is guided primarily by the fact that, rather than promoting the development of African-led congregations in African communities, as envisioned by many missionaries elsewhere in southern Africa, the NMS missionaries instead adopted a strategy of building European-run outposts of “Christian civilization” in the midst of “heathen darkness.”

In explaining how and why the NMS mission stations assumed that position, Hovland divides her book into chapters that consider in greater detail various aspects of the communities. After first describing the historical setting of the NMS missions, she examines the physical needs of the missionaries and the influence these needs had on the use of mission spaces. Next is a detailed analysis of “conversion” and the contradiction between Christian egalitarianism and colonial racism. Another chapter describes Zulu perceptions of the mission stations. The section ends with an overview of the main ways that Norwegian missionaries viewed their stations as European-run enterprises located between the British and the Zulu. The book concludes with a chapter describing how the Anglo-Zulu wars brought the NMS into closer association with British colonial rule, and a final chapter summarizes how the mission stations shaped—and were shaped by—the missionaries’ “way of working out how to live Christianity in the world and to create an inhabitable Christian space” (233).

While very well-written and well-reasoned, and adding Norwegians to a field of study generally dominated by British missionaries, Mission Station Christianity also treads a somewhat uneven path between anthropology and history. More comprehensive archival research including government records, newspapers, diaries, personal correspondence, and documents from other mission societies is arguably beyond the scope of an anthropological work, but the book’s recurring “Note on Method” interludes suggest that the author’s use of historical primary sources could have been incorporated more effectively. This historian found Hovland’s arguments to be most original and compelling when she moved beyond her dependence on published missionary reports to include other materials (e.g., 60–71, 87–91, 210–16, 220). Overall, however, Mission Station Christianity provides a valuable contribution to the study of mission history and the impact of European colonial conquest on Christianity in Africa.

—Stephen Volz

Stephen Volz is associate professor of history, Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio.