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Brian Stanley, ed. *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire.* Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003. x + 313 pp. $45.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8028-2116-4.

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Testing Adrian Hastings's Theory of Religion and the Construction of Nationhood

Adrian Hastings emerged as a major scholar of African Christianity in the 1970s, following a career path pioneered by other scholar-priests such as Kenneth Scott Latourette, Henri Junod, Edwin Smith and Bengt Sundkler, whose early practical work in the church and mission fields laid the basis for their later research. By the last decade of his working life Hastings had moved beyond specifically African concerns towards the formulation of his own totalizing historical thesis on the foundations of nationhood. *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) argued against the commonly held notion that modern nationalism was born of eighteenth-century modernity. In his opinion, the foundations of nationalism were laid long before by the "national" churches that emerged in the late Middle Ages, underpinned by literacy in local vernaculars, and the compelling biblical narratives of the Hebrews as a chosen people.

For those familiar with his earlier work, Hastings's heavy concentration on medieval and early modern Europe belied a more pressing concern with religion and politics in the newly formed nations of the Third World. If he was right about the origins of nationalism in Europe, then it stood to reason that new African states were not mere imitators of a model forged in the European Enlightenment. Their experience of building local Christianity on the indigenous foundations of ethnicity and language paralleled, rather than imitated, the processes of earlier nation builders. Because missions were so central to the spread of literacy and the development of written languages from vernacular speech, it was no surprise that historians of modern Christian missions took a special interest in Hastings's thesis. That explains why the disparate subjects of missions, nationalism and the end of empire are paired in the title of the collection of essays under review.

A conference at Queen's College, Cambridge, in September 2000 attracted one hundred fifteen delegates from around the world and thirty-eight papers, from which thirteen were selected by the editor, Brian Stanley, for inclusion in this volume, which forms part of the important series, Studies in the History of Christian Missions. It is broken into three sections: Part 1 on Missionary Traditions, National Loyalties and the Universal Gospel; part 2 on Emergent Christian and National Identities in Asia and Africa; and part 3 on Christian Responses to Crises at the End of Empire.

Hastings's untimely death in 2001 could not have been predicted by anyone who heard his energetic opening address, which forms the book's first chapter: "The Clash of Nationalism and Universalism within Twentieth-Century Missionary Christianity." Striking a valedictory note that recurs throughout many contributions to the volume, Hastings recapitulates his own involvement in debates about nationality and universalism within the Catholic Church in the era of decolonization and Vatican II. With the benefit of hindsight, Hastings is at least as aware of the pitfalls of national conscious-

ness as of its benefits. Reflecting on many pernicious alliances between the nationalist state and missionary enthusiasm in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, he finds it quite understandable that the new nations that emerged from the process of decolonization should wish to harness the church to their national aspirations. At the same time he stresses the ever-present danger of subordinating Christianity's transcendent mission to the vagaries of quotidian politics. However, Hastings identifies the pressing menace to the church universal as the U.S. militant:

"What none of us anticipated was that the gravest nationalist threat to Christianity by the late twentieth century might come from the United States, essentially a rehash of the traditional Christian imperialism of western European countries. It is just the latest example of a self-appointed 'chosen people' carrying forth a gospel message reshaped by its own values and bonded to its own political expansion" (p. 32).

The remaining three essays in part 1 review other cautionary tales from the early twentieth century. Hartmut Lehmann's subject is German missionary efforts in the interwar period, including some surprising and embarrassing instances of missions who flirted with National Socialism as an instrument for restoring Germany's glory days of overseas evangelizing. For instance, in 1935 Julius Richter published an article on "missions and races," which explained that, while "all races were part of God's creation" they should not be mingled.

The related case of Afrikaner missions in South Africa is examined by Richard Elphick in chapter 3. That the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) achieved any success at all in missions is largely due to its attraction for Afrikaans-speaking Coloreds. By the 1950s, about 31 percent of the population officially classified as Colored belonged to the DRC, while a negligible 3 percent of those classified as Bantu had been attracted to that church (p. 57). Elphick's most important finding is the role played by the DRC in promoting race-based segregation as a solution to South African problems in the 1920s, well before Afrikaner intellectuals and politicians began articulating the notion of apartheid. G. B. A. Gerdener, the influential professor of missions at the University of Stellenbosch from 1937 to 1955, began explicitly promoting the objective of "separate development" years before it entered the lexicon of the apartheid regime. While he and other DRC leaders opposed the harsher aspects of apartheid, "enthralled by their utopian vision, they would persist in explaining the inexplicable, and justifying the unjustifiable, to a skeptical and increasingly hostile world" (p. 78).

Andrew Porter's chapter in part 1 reminds us, as so much of Porter's previous work has done, of the importance of doctrine and theology in missions. Arguing against William Sachs, who perceived Anglicans as a progressive force in many of the debates over the pace of decolonization, Porter shows that the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) continued to subordinate all secular concerns to its overriding objective of defending its own peculiar notions of proper episcopal government. The Mission's "predilection for building from the clerical pinnacle downward imbued the mission with an episcopal authoritarianis" that made it particularly resistant to developing an African ministry even when political power had already passed to African hands. (p. 93)

Most of part 2 is concerned with China and India, where the indigenization of Christianity was hindered by the ideologies associated with national self-assertion. In India, the Christian minority proved sufficiently strong to challenge the assertion that being Indian meant being Hindu. Ironically, as Judith Brown demonstrates in a chapter on "Who is an Indian," the reality of religious diversity compelled Nehru's India toward a secular constitution, and an acceptance of a civil society composed of many faiths. Derek Peterson tells a more familiar story in his chapter on Kenya, which shows how Gikuyu translations of the Bible and hymns were first used to criticize elders and later marshaled in support of revolutionary action during the Mau Mau Emergency. While Peterson regards this as positive support for Hastings's thesis it seems quite possible that he might have reached the same conclusions without Hastings's assistance.

Part 4 consists of a number of illuminating case studies from the era of decolonization. John Stuart's chapter deals with the Church Missionary Society's attempts to come to terms with African nationalism in the 1950s. Decolonization surprised the churches at least as much as the Scramble for Africa sixty years earlier. Fortunately the CMS had the benefit of advice from Roland Oliver, who had become a member of its Africa Committee and whose special report of 1958 pointed out the impossibility of reconciling the divergent demands of African nationalists and recalcitrant settlers in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia (p. 189). One can hardly avoid sympathizing with the CMS as it frantically jettisoned decades-old policies designed to conciliate a suspicious colonial state so it could avoid being closed down by equally suspicious independent African regimes. Catherine Howell's chap-

ter further elucidates the precarious position of the CMS during a single crisis of decolonization–the short-lived deposition of the Kabaka of Buganda from 1953-1955. On one side, the Colonial Office insisted that the deposition was inevitable and irreversible. On the other side, pro-Kabaka nationalists threatened the church with mass defections from Anglicanism if the CMS failed to act. Howell does not believe the available evidence supports the view that the CMS played a vital role in the return of the Kabaka, and for that reason cannot agree that the "church was the handmaiden of decolonization" (p. 210). And even if the CMS had played an instrumental role in bringing back the king, it could hardly have been said that this paved the way for a smooth road to independence, since the emergence of the "Kabaka Yeka" (Kabaka only) movement in the early 1960 very nearly prevented the emergence of Uganda as a unitary state.

Deborah Gaitskell also writes about Uganda in a recapitulation of the personal and valedictory motives struck by Adrian Hastings at the outset of the volume. Just as Hastings was one of a number of priests who were transformed into scholars by their encounters with Africa, Gaitskell writes of women who made a similar transition from the mission field to academia. Her subject, Hannah Stanton, had run a female mission center in Pretoria before running into trouble with apartheid authorities at the time of the Sharpeville massacre. Stanton subsequently moved to Makerere University in Uganda as warden of the women's residence, Mary Stuart Hall, where her academic colleagues included Louise Pirouet, who would go on to write important works on Ugandan history. This provokes Gaitskell to wonder "how large was the cohort of former women missionaries, such as Drs. Louise Pirouet and Jocelyn Murray, who turned academics and activists on their relocation to Britain?" (p. 239). What most interests Gaitskell about Stanton, however, was the close personal interest her subject took in African women as individuals both in South Africa and Uganda. This, Gaitskell believes, was not an isolated case. "Women, so often marginalized in ecclesiastical and organizational decision making, appear to have invested even more than men in the 'politics of the personal' " (p. 249).

One of the two remaining chapters is a historiographical treatment of African resistance to ecclesiastical subordination by Ogbu Kalu–an essay that is in many respects a drastically condensed version of his earlier edited book, *African Church Historiography: An Ecumenical Perspective* (Bern: Evangelische Arbeitsstelle Oekumene Schweiz, 1988). More remarkable, indeed the most original contribution to Stanley's volume, is a long chapter by Philip Boobbyer on "Moral Re-Armament in Africa in the Era of Decolonization." For those of us who had more or less consigned Frank Buchman's Moral Re-Armament movement (MRA) to history's dustbin, Boobbyer's essay provides a timely reminder of how much attention that peculiar manifestation of muscular Christianity commanded in its time. MRA succeeded in getting its message heard by a surprising array of European and African leaders during most of the crises of decolonization: Tunisia in the 1950s, the onset of apartheid in South Africa, UDI in Southern Rhodesia, the Congo in the early 1960s, and a host of other defining moments. The overwhelming aim of MRA was not quite the American objective of making Africa a bastion of anti-communism; it was to ensure that independent Africa should not fall under the communist spell. The principal shortcoming of Boobyer's investigation is that he relied mainly on MRA's own publications and archives. These sources clearly demonstrate that Moral Re-Armament leaders had amazing financial resources and believed they were making a tremendous impact on people who mattered in Europe and Africa. Historians are likely to ask whether other sources confirm a decisive role for MRA in any part of the dramas of decolonization.

Although few readers will consider that the contributors to this volume have added any weight to Adrian Hastings's bold thesis on religion and modern nationalism, they owe a great debt of gratitude to Brian Stanley for producing a timely book on an important subject. The investigation of the role of mission churches in decolonization is likely to attract increasing attention from scholars. Those interested in further noteworthy reflections on the subject should read David Maxwell's concluding essay in *Missions and Empire*, due to be published by Oxford University Press later this year.

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