

Nonconformist background that allowed him to correct his stand, indeed, to change his views regarding the Chinese people (Vol. 2, p. 223).

Finally, in addition to being a splendid tribute to one of the great nineteenth century personalities, Lauren Pfister's study introduces the reader to important dimensions of sinological research. These are contained not only in his extensive notes, the bibliography, even if selected, but especially in the "Bibliographic Essay" (pp. 245-260), in which he describes how he went about his research and the archives and libraries that yielded results. The two volumes, therefore, fill an important gap concerning a number of issues relevant to the understanding of the growth and development of Chinese Protestant Christianity as well as modern Chinese studies.

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¹ Another recent significant biography of over 700 pages with a somewhat different thrust is by Norman J. Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China, James Legge's Oriental Pilgrimage*, Berkeley/London: University of California Press, 2002.

² See Laurence Pfister, "A Transmitter but not a Creator: Ho Tsun-sheen (1817-1871), the First Modern Chinese Protestant Theologian," in I. Eber, S.K. Wan, K. Walf, R. Malek, eds., *Bible in Modern China, The Literary and Intellectual Impact*, St. Augustin: Monumenta Serica Institute, 1999, pp. 165-197.

³ Irene Eber, "Introduction," in Martin Buber, Alex Page, trans., *Chinese Tales*, New Jersey/London: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1991, p. ix.

⁴ For a discussion of the controversy, see I. Eber, "The Interminable Term Question," in Eber, et al., *Bible in Modern China*, pp. 135-161.

⁵ James Legge, *The Notion of the Chinese Concerning God and Spirits: with an Examination of the Defense of an Essay, on the Proper Rendering of the Words Elohim and Theos, into the Chinese Language*, Hongkong: Printed at the "Hongkong Register" Office, 1852.

HANSEN, Holger Bernt – TWADDLE, Michael (eds.): *Christian Missionaries and the State in the Third World*. Oxford and Athens, James Currey Publishers 2002. x + 307 pp.

Two introductory remarks to begin with. First – the book has little to say about "*the State in the Third World*" and it does not focus on the influence of Christian missions on state-building in former colonies either. The 'State' in the title of the book represents principally the colonial state and 'the Story' is about its interactions with the other great historical effort at modernization and influence building in the non-European territories, namely the missionary project. Second – there is actually very little of 'The Story'. The book is a collection of essays by several authors based, it appears, on the proceedings of one international conference and there is disappointingly little attempt at synthesis even in the introductory chapter by one of the editors. However, this shortcoming is partially compensated by valuable insights by some of the contributors, most remarkably by J. Lonsdale in his essay "*Mission Christianity and Settler Colonialism in Eastern Africa*".

On the other hand the book brings plenty of relevant information, quotations and observations on the topic of the Christian missions in the former colonial territories and it offers interesting, sometimes enjoyable reading. As a collection of essays by some of

the most prominent scholars engaged in this field it may become indispensable as a secondary source to those who would come to elaborate further on the subject.

Two themes thread through several of the contributions and stand out as principal to the book. One is the question whether the respective efforts of the Christian missions and the colonial states to conquer new hearts and territories were mutually complementary or rather contradictory. The other deals with the competition among missionaries from different religious denominations and national origins for spheres of influence within the territorial and political limitations defined by the traditional African set-up and the new rules introduced by the colonial powers.

As to the first question, several contributors tackle it with insight based on new, and old, evidence, the answer nevertheless remains open. Or, to put it in different words, the answer is that the colonial and the missionary projects were both complementary and contradictory. As summed up by N. Kastfelt in his case study on relations between the Danish Protestant Mission and the colonial state in the Northern Nigerian region of Adamawa in the first decades of the 20th century "*on the one hand, missions and state went hand in hand and the missionaries contributed actively to the working and legitimation of the colonial state; on the other hand, the two worked against each other, as the missionaries simultaneously contributed to undermining the state, first of all through training of new African elites*" (p. 137). However, before this ambiguity could become generally accepted, there was, on both sides, a lot of genuine effort to bring the other side round. Kastfelt mentions the case of a colonial officer who, obviously convinced that the disrespect towards the policy of the British administration by some missionaries from his district was just a misapprehension and a matter for more education, in his report on the activities of the mission concludes: "*It has been advised (to them) to obtain the publications of the Government on these matters which only cost a small amount annually*" (p. 141). An equally hopeless attempt at bridging the divide between the domain of God and of Caesar came from the missionary J. Booth operating in Malawi, who as early as the end of the 19th century believed that Africa should belong to the Africans and in his petition (published in *Central African Times* in August 1899) to Her Majesty Queen Victoria whose government's declared purpose, he remained, was "*to protect, uplift, and do justly by the weak and defenceless people*", he requested, among other things "*that a period not exceeding twenty-one years be fixed for the ultimate restoration of the whole territory of the British Central Africa Protectorate with its entire revenues to Native ownership and Government*" (p. 214).

No matter how inconclusive such attempts to bridge the differences between the Christian missions and the colonial states (and efforts to analyse them, for that matter) may have been, the contemporary paradigms, if we accept them, seem to offer us a plain and clear answer: all this discussion is false in principle since both endeavours were just different forms of the same project of one expanding civilization.

As to the second main theme of the book, that of the competition among missions of different denominations for spheres of influence within the same territory, it is also tackled by several authors. The contradiction here lay in the inherent infinitude of the spread of the Gospel of each Church and the limitations, imposed on the lay-out where the Word, though often with competing accents, was to be delivered. The attempts at the solution of this predicament were many but practically all of them enmeshed in the colonial administration, thus giving it an additional headache in its ever sensitive relation with the Church and the missions in particular.

Most interesting and instructive in this regard were cases involving "the third party", the native political representation as seen for example in J. Rowe's study *Mutesa and*

the Missionaries: Church and State in Pre-Colonial Baganda (pp. 52-65). Here Rowe shows how the clever manoeuvring of Kabaka Mutesa brought about the situation in which “each group of religious advocates – English Protestant, French Catholic, Zanzibari Muslim and Baganda traditionalist – became convinced in turn that the Kabaka really favoured their doctrines above the rest. For Mutesa,” concludes Rowe, “it was a brilliant performance in the art of diplomacy and equivocation” (p. 60). In him, we may add, long before the world was divided into Blocks during the Cold War, one can see a prototype of one well known brand of future African political leader.

One minor methodological observation to conclude with. Some of the authors apparently did not resist the temptation to bejewel pieces of their narration with amusing anecdotes drawn from primary sources which reveal how exciting, often quaint and funny (especially to a non-African observer) were the first frontier contacts and interactions between the actors from the two diverse civilizations during the times of “the discovery of Africa by the Europeans”. This kind of embellishments can always enliven the story yet, in a historical study, they are at the same time bearers of the risk of eclipsing ‘the prevalent, decisive and conclusive’ and thus altering ‘the true picture’. On the other hand, had all authors shown total restraint in this regard, the readers of this volume would remain deprived of such plums as the story about the missionary who alongside his holy undertakings managed to open a profitable store in the hinterland of the Cape Province and kept nervous the colonial traders and administrators by offering what was perceived by them as unfair competition (Beck, Chapter 7). Or the account about another missionary who in his desperate desire to win the goodwill of the Kabaka of Baganda in a race with competitors from other missions, achieved his goal only by proving to be a handyman capable of repairing and keeping in good shape all the king’s guns (Rowe, Chapter 5).

Here one should recognize that in the field of research such as African history it is often quite difficult to guard a clear dividing line between the scientific and the popular writing. Indeed, it should probably be left to the personality of each writer and reader to make their own choices since what we are talking about touches upon the ancient dilemma between the utility and pleasure of knowledge.

Ján Voderadský

SORBY, Karol: *Suez 1956. Twilight of the Traditional Colonialism in the Middle East*. Bratislava, Veda Publishing House 2003; 347 pp. (in Slovak).

Historical works treating themes of Eastern countries were always rare in Czech and Slovak scientific production and this claim is the more valid for the field of modern history. After nearly fifty years, the Suez Crisis of 1956 is still a fascinating turning point in both British and Middle Eastern history. It marked the end of the British Empire, led to the downfall of a Prime Minister, and threatened to destroy the Anglo-American “alliance”.

In his outstanding work Karol Sorby uncovers the full story of Suez. Using Egyptian, British, American and Israeli sources, he recreates the drama of diplomatic manoeuvring, Middle Eastern intrigues, elaborate conspiracies, and monumental blunders. *Suez 1956* is