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Book Reviews

A History of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, 1450–1990: A Documentary Sourcebook. Edited by Klaus Koschorke, Frieder Ludwig, and Mariano Delgado. (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 2007, Pp. xxxiii, 426. \$35.00.)

Mission history and global Christianity are areas of study that have captured an increasing number of scholars in recent years. Linked—as they inevitably are—to European expansion and the constituent “age of empire,” such studies have done much to show the myriad ways in which Christianity both imposed itself on the imperial periphery and was taken up by local populations. Most of these studies are either biographies or histories of individual missionary societies. In the volume under review here, however, a different tack is taken. Koschorke and his fellow editors have endeavoured to strip down to the written word the entire modern Christian missionary enterprise; that is, they take over half-a-millennium’s worth of missionary documents and writings and place them one after another in an edited compendium.

The editors begin with the Iberian expansion—the Portuguese move into India in the mid-fifteenth century—and their initial contact with the already resident Nestorian Christians. They then proceed to offer a documentary history of Christianity in Asia followed by the same in Africa and Latin America terminating in 1990.

One of the shortcomings of documentary studies is that almost invariably they tend to lack narrative coherence. This book is no exception, although its editors go a good distance in lessening this problem by providing brief descriptors for each group of documents. In this way the problem of context is partially addressed, although it goes without saying that a reasonable knowledge of each geographical region and historical era under examination makes the entries that much more understandable.

The inclusiveness and range of documents found in the volume is impressive, and one of the sheer delights of the book is opening it to any page and being pulled immediately into the historical present tense. Whether it be Roberto de Nobili reporting to Pope Paul V on the founding of the first Jesuit mission in South India in 1606 (36), William

Wilberforce declaiming in Parliament on the manifest iniquities of the slave trade in 1789 (180), or a report on the beginnings of the Brazilian Pentecostal movement in 1911 (371), this book places before its readers the lineaments of world Christianity in a clear and immediate fashion.

As in any large (edited) book occasional errors of fact are virtually inescapable. So, for example, Wilberforce's date of death is given as 1813, twenty years before he actually died (180). But such an instance is a mere quibble. A substantive criticism might be one which asks for the inclusion of explanatory essays on each region, thus putting into sharp relief the prevailing European imperial history really only hinted at in the short pieces used to set up each section. These points aside, however, this collection is an excellent sourcebook of documents that gives scholars, students, and interested laypeople alike five hundred years of Christian history at their fingertips. There is no other comparative collection of historical documents like it.

C. Brad Faught

Tyndale University College

The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church.

By G. W. Bernard. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005, Pp. xii, 736 \$40.00.)

G. W. Bernard's revisionist study of his monumental and, at times, monstrous royal subject is worth taking into account due to the radical role Bernard assigns to the king in remaking the English Church. With painstaking research in familiar primary sources, Bernard describes Henry VIII as the "dominant force" (595) in shaping religious policy during the English Reformation. The period covered is 1527–1540, from the beginning of the king's efforts to attain a divorce from Catherine of Aragon to the fall of Thomas Cromwell. The author challenges historians who he believes have previously underestimated Henry's decisive command of "religious" policy.

What Bernard asserts is Henry's direct role in forming the theological dimensions and shape of the English Church. The roles of those who have previously been detailed by recent Tudor historians as central and influential players are recast. This list includes Thomas Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell, Edward Howard (duke of Norfolk), Steven Gardiner, Reginald Pole, and, to a lesser extent, Thomas Cranmer. In repeated and direct challenges to Sir Geoffrey Elton, Thomas Cromwell's influence is significantly deflated. Bernard oddly underplays and at times dismisses the significance of factional politics, parties, and key players during