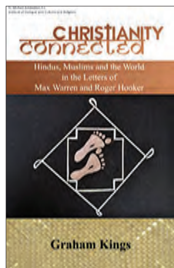
Book Reviews

Christianity Connected: Hindus, Muslims and the World in the Letters of Max Warren and Roger Hooker, by Graham Kings (Delhi: ISPCK, 2017, pp. 432 + x; Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, The Netherlands, 2002)

—Reviewed by H. L. Richard



Fifteen years after this volume first appeared as a typically overpriced European academic text, a very reasonably priced edition has finally appeared in India. The focus of the volume is on Max Warren, who as General Secretary of the CMS (Church Missionary Society of the Evangelical Anglicans) for two decades (1942-1963) was a significant figure on the British missiological scene. This review will make note of some important points related to Warren and British missiology, but will focus on the junior partner in the epistolary dialogue that is the core of the book. Roger Hooker was Warren's son-in-law, and the letters cover the time of his service under the CMS in India from 1965 to 1978. Hooker's never well-known writings on the Christian encounter with Hinduism are ably supplemented by this text, and students of frontier mission, especially among Hindus, need to grapple with Hooker and his perspectives.

Graham Kings provides an extensive (175 pages) and insightful introduction to the letters of Warren and Hooker, giving brief biographical surveys and an introduction to their specialist studies (history for Warren, literature for Hooker), before getting to the heart of matters with sections on "a theology of mission" and "a theology of religions." Kings also annotates the 617 numbered letters of Warren and the significantly fewer unnumbered letters of Hooker (early letters of Hooker have been lost, along with some later ones as well).

The general theological perspective of Warren and Hooker is part of their dialogue in the shifting theological and missiological currents of their time. They were broadly Evangelical and struggled with what that meant, distancing themselves from the narrowness of conservative Evangelicals like John Stott and Michael Green (Warren commenting on his special dislike of J. I. Packer's Knowing God, p. 372; note Kings' analysis of this on p. 61, etc.) Warren was a borderline universalist yet embraced the Evangelical label; Hooker challenged Warren's universalism but distanced himself from an Evangelical label, perhaps due to the narrowness of Indian Evangelicalism (p. 52). Warren lamented the lack of academic missiology in Britain (see his devastating critique quoted in footnote 106 on p. 110).

The uniqueness of Christ and the central importance of presenting (and representing) Christ to others is a key theme of the interaction. Warren interacted widely and shared many reflections on people and issues of his times, including Raymond Panikkar (who became a friend, though Warren admitted to often not understanding him) and John Hick, whose pluralism was deplored and at times mocked. The stimulating material on generic missiological issues discussed in this volume is worthy of an extensive review, but this review will now focus on the India (and particularly Hindu) specific content related to Hooker's engagement and perspective.

To summarize in a phrase, Hooker called for a serious engagement with Hindus and Hindu traditions, and he did not see much of that happening in mission circles. His disdain for dialogue is clear in a letter of 4 November 1972 (p. 302) referencing a group of visiting pastors who wanted a dialogue session arranged for them. Warren fully affirms Hooker, saying "I'm so sure that God has called you to do something tremendous in the field of interpretation that I don't want to see you sidetracked into the imaginary world of 'Dialogue' as that is understood at Geneva" (letter 379, 30 Dec. 1972, p. 309; cf. Hooker, "I find much contemporary inter-religious dialogue phoney," 30 May 1975, p. 354). Hooker sent Warren a letter from the Evangelical Fellowship of India, and there are problems in this direction also:

> You have set yourself to understand Hindus and Muslims through the medium of the best in their tradition, hoping that in and through such understanding you may bring some of them to understand Jesus and want to become his disciples. I doubt very much if the brothers of the EFI are in the least bit interested in understanding Hinduism and Islam. What further worries me about their efforts is that they stir up a few people and then disappear. They aren't rooted in the local situation and don't pretend to know it. Varanasi is for them an abstraction—a CITY to be attacked, not a multitude of individual peoples, caught up in all the complexities of an ancient culture. As I have said I can see that they may well meet the needs of some and will reach some you, in the nature of things, will never touch. But I could not myself identify with them, beyond in friendly fashion wishing them well, and praying for them. Does this come somewhere near where you are? (letter 395, 17 Apr. 1973, p. 317)

It is perhaps misleading to pick and choose some highlights of Hooker's insights, but there are genuine insights that should be shared for those who will not read this rather daunting book. These comments should not be read as part of a formula, and certainly do not amount to a secret to success.

Writing on 4 October 1969 after attending his first Hindu *satsang* in Bareilly, U. P., Hooker commented that

> All present were manifestly deeply satisfied with their religion and profoundly devoted to Ram, one could sense it in

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> the atmosphere and see it on many of their faces. Simply to proclaim the gospel to these people would simply (sic) be an exercise in insensitive futility. (249)

On 9 October 1971 Hooker commented on linguistic challenges in communication:

> My own feeling is that we must go in for dialogue for a long time before we can find the language in which to preach the Gospel to Hindus and Muslims. (278)

Responding to a request from John V. Taylor, Warren's successor as head of the CMS, to answer some questions, Hooker stated his discomfort with the situation:

> …I get more and more uneasy about asking "Christian" questions about other faiths. Such questions always seem to distort the very thing one is trying to understand. Perhaps an analogy will help at this point. When one first arrives in a foreign country one automatically starts comparing it to home. One compares for example marriage customs, attitudes to time, the social structure. But the longer one is in the new country the more superficial and inadequate do such analogies become. When one has been around long enough the country can somehow speak for itself to one. (327, 23 Sept. 1973)

In the same letter to Taylor, Hooker commented on the difficult concept of "the Holy Spirit;" (this reviewer is not so sure that speaking in English makes the difference Hooker suggests, as it is odd and difficult terminology in Hindu contexts):

> I could in English explain to a Hindu who knew a little about Christianity, something of what we mean by the Holy Spirit and ask him directly if there was anything like this within Hinduism. In Hindi or Sanskrit however I would be totally at a loss. One simply cannot translate the phrase "Holy Spirit" into either of those languages in a way that is even remotely intelligible. (328, 23 Sept. 1973)

Hooker's engaging with Hindu contexts brought him to a new understanding of the role of sin in evangelism, and stimulated this striking comment:

> The worst heresy the church has taught is that men must be made to realise they are sinners before they can accept Christ. (351, 6 April 1975)

Sharing some concerns about equating Christian devotion and Hindu *bhakti*, Hooker stated some random thoughts:

> I am coming increasingly to feel that to describe bhakti as personal devotion, as opposed to impersonal monism, is a vast over-simplification. I do not think one can make an equation between personal devotion in Christianity and in Hinduism. Even in Christianity the word personal surely needs a lot of explication. Although the word takes us to the heart of what we mean by God, we surely mean that he cannot be less than what we mean by the word person, but if he is God he is surely more. Surely the heart of what we mean by personal consists in will and purpose. This it seems to me is the great difference between the God of the bible and the gods of bhakti. Then too I am coming to see that the two virtues which bhakti commends are loving devotion of a very emotional kind—people are always swooning in Tulsi Das—and obedience e.g. to the king, to one's father, to one's guru or elder brother. None of these is about action, devotion, "stepping out" like Abraham. These are just a few random and disconnected thoughts. (356–7, 20 July 1975)

There is much to reflect on in these statements, and changes of attitude and approach to Hindus should follow from such reflection.

In his writings Hooker fails to address the problem of the Hindu who wants to embrace Christ and his discipleship. Warren raised the issue, speculating about baptism and the possibility of avoiding baptism, and how a follower of Jesus might "revolutionise Hinduism from within," but going on to comment on fear of the "absorptive capacity of Hinduism" (312, letter 388, 23 Feb. 1973). Hooker responded that such questions about baptism and joining the Christian community are "a bit unreal" in Varanasi (314, 10 March 1973), clearly because there were not people interested in following Christ.

Yet a case study appears in a later reference, and the approach is intriguing. Writing on 29 November, 1975, Hooker tells about his self-understanding and a Hindu colleague who was impacted:

> I am quite sure that we must hold to mission, evangelism and conversion, yet these words need re-minting and re-interpreting. I am not in India to convert Hindus. I am here to witness to Christ—a Christ the full range of whose significance I have barely begun to grasp. It is for Hindus to make their own response to Christ. To attempt to manipulate them into making that response would of course be imperialism, but when a Hindu tells me he wants to be baptized and that he has found in Christ a love which he does not find in Hinduism, (and this is a real example), have I any right to forbid him!
>
> …Hinduism is changing and it is part of my duty to help it to change in a Christian direction. For example, that scholar whom I quoted is probable (sic, probably), under God, doing a better job where he is than he would be if he were baptized and therefore rejected by his own community. (366, 367, 29 Nov. 1975)

Why Hooker did not come out more clearly on this approach in his various writings is an interesting question. My presumed answer is that Hooker wanted to model a questioning approach, a wrestling with complex issues, and did not want to be seen as coming up with quick answers or simplistic conclusions. This runs throughout his letters. One

of his longer submissions printed in this volume outlines various Christian approaches to other faith traditions, and he is unhappy with all of them and with his efforts to come up with something better (pp. 319–323).

Hooker rightly lamented the lack of serious Christian engagement with Hindu traditions. Roman Catholic scholars have begun to redress this lacuna (see especially the works of Francis X. Clooney), but academic engagement is only one part of holistic engagement. Roger Hooker presents a Protestant engagement with Hindu contexts that is stimulating and evocative. That is a minor key in this book which focuses on Warren, but all who are serious about issues in the Hindu-Christian engagement need to reflect deeply on the life and work of Roger Hooker.

Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America, by David A. Hollinger (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017, pp. 408)

—Reviewed by Dwight P. Baker

David A. Hollinger's *Protestants Abroad* is an ambitious narrative. It yields insight when viewed from multiple vantage points. But first, three vignettes.

Three Vignettes

Scene 1:

The year is 1900 and the occasion is the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, with its accompanying "Missionary Exhibit," which consisted of an array of religious and cultural artifacts gathered from around the world.[1] The conference, held in New York City, met in Carnegie Hall as well as several local churches and stretched from April 21 through May 1.[2] "President William McKinley presided over the Conference's opening ceremonies, and participants included former president Benjamin Harrison [and] New York Governor [and future president] Theodore Roosevelt." With 2,500 official delegates, "including more than 600 foreign missionaries from fifty countries," and a total attendance "between 160,000 and 200,000," the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions was "the largest sustained formal religious event in the history of the United States." It was also "the largest international missionary conference" to that date.[3]

From the first such conference held in Liverpool, England, in 1860, missionary expositions on both sides of the Atlantic had been growing in size and scope.[4] The grand finale of such displays of missionary pride, the Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions, held in Columbus, Ohio, in 1919, was to far outstrip the New York conference in attendance. It brought over a million people to Columbus, roughly 1 percent of the US population at the time.[5]

Takeaway: Coinciding with Europe's era of high imperialism, the US missionary expositions gave full-throated expression to confident exportation of Americanism conjoined with Christian mission.

Scene 2:

The year is 1932. Missionary daughter Pearl Buck, who spent her childhood in China and herself served as a missionary there, is honored with the Pulitzer Prize for her novel *The Good Earth.*[6] The book had been published the year before to wide acclaim. Six years later, in 1938, she went on to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature "for her rich and truly epic descriptions of peasant life in China and for her biographical masterpieces."[7]

Also making news is *Re-thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years,* published in 1932.[8] Assembled under the hand of Harvard professor William Ernest Hocking, the book's call for a change in the character of Christian missions raises a furor.

Moviegoers in 1932 fill theaters to watch *The Bitter Tea of General Yen,* released that year and starring Barbara Stanwyck as Megan Davis. A missionary bride-to-be, Megan travels to China to wed a handsome young missionary doctor, but arrives in Shanghai just as intrigue, war, and revolt are tearing the country apart and flooding streets and roads with refugees. The scene showing the missionaries gathered in pompous, ostentatious provision, and callous comfort as they await the arrival of the wedding party—even as crowds of refugees stream past their door in terror-driven flight—has to stand as one of Hollywood's most bitterly skewed movie depictions of missionaries.

The same year also saw the release of *Rain,* a refilming of Somerset Maugham's short story "Rain," this time as a "talkie" starring Joan Crawford. (The story had been filmed four years earlier as a silent movie under the title *Sadie Thompson,* starring Gloria Swanson, and was to be made into a movie again in 1953, starring Rita Hayworth and titled *Miss Sadie Thompson.*) The movie depicts an overbearing South Sea missionary who cruelly manipulates the lives of all who fall within his clutches, "native" and Westerner alike.

Takeaway: The mood in 1932 was far removed from presidents presiding over celebratory missionary fairs. Unruffled presumptions of the innocence and rightness or righteousness of missionary Americanism were no longer tenable.

Scene 3:

Much more briefly: the year is 1954 and the scene shifts to Geneva. Players preparing to give performances on the world stage are warming up. The cast consists of three persons. One is the son of an American missionary, Chester

Ronning, who was born in China and lived there until in his early teens but who had become a Canadian citizen and a diplomat. The second is John Foster Dulles, the eminent US Protestant layman who was tapped by President Eisenhower to be his secretary of state. (He was to the manor born: one of his grandfathers and an uncle had earlier been secretary of state; his brother Allen Dulles became director of the Central Intelligence Agency; his son Avery Dulles converted to Roman Catholicism and became both a noted theologian and a cardinal.) The third figure in this scene is Zhou Enlai of China, a close colleague of Mao Zedong.

David Hollinger reports,

> In Geneva in 1954, Ronning, as representative of Canada, happened to be walking a few steps behind Dulles when the two encountered the Chinese representative Zhou Enlai, who put out his hand. Dulles refused to shake it. But Ronning hastily took Zhou's hand and shook it firmly, in a gesture Zhou never forgot.[9]

Takeaway: If the proverbial lack of a nail cost a kingdom, what price did the failure to shake a hand exact? At the very moment of the Protestant Establishment's apotheosis in the person of Dulles, it is rebuked by a scion of the American overseas missionary movement. What is happening?

Shifts in Outlook

If one were to carry the scene forward and extract slices from the 1970s through the 1990s or on to today, several noteworthy shifts would become apparent.

First, though mission endeavor within liberal Protestantism in the United States is far from disappearing, numerical preponderance within the US overseas missionary community and in missionary giving crosses over from mainline, ecumenical, or liberal Protestantism to evangelically aligned mission programs.

Second, the largest missionary convocations of the period—among them Lausanne (1974), Manila (1989), and Cape Town (2010)—come out of a Billy Graham milieu, another indicator of evangelical missionary ascendancy.

Third, and pointedly, neither these missionary convocations nor those held by the World Council of Churches' Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) are able to focus attention or garner public support on a scale comparable to that showered on the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions in 1900, or "The World in Boston" exposition in 1911, or the Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions in 1919.[10] The number of people who follow the conferences' deliberations and reports may be substantial, but as a proportion of the US population it is meager.

Fourth, the segment of society that is tracking missionary conferences and is attending to mission spokespersons' deliberations is not as culturally or socially central as had been true in the first third of the twentieth century. The group is smaller and more peripheral. It does not move as many of society's levers of power. The missionary gatherings at the latter end of the twentieth century are not affairs upon which a significant portion of the US populace rivets its attention or for which masses of ordinary people spend their vacation savings in order for their families to be present.

In the 1930s, controversies surrounding *Re-thinking Missions* and Pearl Buck's pronouncements captured broad attention in popular media in a way no longer to be hoped for or even imagined. If the populace at large thinks at all of controversies about the intent and activities of missionaries and mission organizations, it relegates them to the status of in-house esoterica, possibly of interest to mission specialists, but not to the world at large.

His framing question, the one that shapes the book, is: What impact did foreign missions have on US public life? A second question is: Which group of missionaries primarily exercised that influence?

Overarching Concerns

These shifts in public temper within the United States suggest a trajectory, one that can be seen as playing itself out across the middle decades of the twentieth century and beyond. How are these shifts to be accounted for? David A. Hollinger believes that he has some clues, which he unfolds in *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America.* His framing question, the one that gives identity to and shapes the book, is: What impact did foreign missions have on US public life?[11] A second question, entailed by the first, is: Which missionaries, as a group, primarily exercised that influence? The volume is not a record of what missionaries accomplished, or failed to accomplish, in other lands. It is not a mission history in that sense. It is a work about the so-called missions boomerang, the changes in outlook, attitude, and policy that missionaries, by going abroad, brought about within their home country.[12] A work dealing with US intellectual history, *Protestants Abroad* seeks to render intelligible several major intellectual and social currents present in the United States.

As background, at the opening of the twentieth century, US Protestants stood as beneficiaries of a long tradition that held the United States to be a Protestant country. To

be a US citizen gave a Protestant cast to your identity; to be a Protestant made you at one with the character of the country. Roman Catholics, Jews, and others were present by sufferance, and often far from gracious sufferance at that. Within Protestantism there were multiple denominations, but also a definite, if informal, pecking order. As one ascended in social esteem, or desired to do so, one might ascend the religious elevator, shifting church membership from, say, Baptist to Methodist or from Methodist to Presbyterian or Episcopalian, etc. Boarding the denominational elevator could serve as an aspirational signal or as a means to solidify social gains in the making. Ascent through the Protestant ranks brought enhanced access to positions of prestige and power.

As the early decades of the twentieth century unfolded, US Protestantism divided itself more and more sharply into two wings, or camps, sufficient for present purposes to identify as the fundamentalist or evangelical wing and the mainline or liberal wing.[13] By the 1940s the mainline Protestants had triumphed: not only did they control the denominational structures and seminaries, but also from their ranks came the nation's university presidents and professors, political leaders, financiers, industrial and corporate leaders. Together they formed what Hollinger calls the Protestant Establishment. The sons and daughters of this group who went abroad as missionaries and their children—sent by the mainline Protestant denominations—are the focus of Hollinger's study.

Why not attend equally to missionaries sent by the fundamentalist/evangelical/"faith mission" wing of the US church? Quite simply, they did not fit the social profile. Missionaries recruited and sent by ecumenical or mainline Protestant mission boards tended to be equipped by education, expectations, entitlement, social connections, and cultural potency in ways that "faith missionaries" ordinarily were not. Of missionaries within the evangelical wing Hollinger writes,

> Rarely before the end of the twentieth century did missionary-connected Americans from [that wing] become leaders in any institutional or discursive domain beyond evangelical Protestantism itself. They simply did not become outspoken Foreign Service officers, civil rights activists, Ivy League professors, or critically acclaimed writers.[14]

The self-exclusionary stance adopted by the fundamentalist wing "took" soundly and solidly, not to be overcome for at least half a century.

Missionary Influence on the United States

So, how did missionaries change America? By embodying an international and cosmopolitan outlook, they helped to open the eyes of an insular, inward-looking, and even ignorant nation. They became early and outspoken leaders in the cause of racial justice within the United States and decried lynching. They advocated for civil rights, including speaking out against internment of Americans of Japanese descent during World War II. They opened ministries to succor internees. They placed their linguistic and cultural expertise at the service of the government and US military at a crucial juncture in the period surrounding the Second World War. Children of missionaries and former missionaries played an outsize role in, for example, the US Foreign Service. They were markedly overrepresented, to borrow words from Dean Acheson's title, "at the creation" of the new world order that World War II brought into being.[15] Hollinger examines the contribution made by a number of missionaries and missionary children in each of these categories. Sherwood Moran, for example, a longtime missionary to Japan, overhauled the US Marine Corps's approach to interrogating Japanese prisoners of war, refusing to use torture and insisting that the prisoners be treated as brothers. He achieved marked success and wrote what was to become the regnant military interrogation manual.[16]

Still Hollinger's identification is to be viewed expansively. In writing of "missionary" impact, he has in mind missionaries who had themselves served abroad, children of those missionaries, and the wider circle of those "closely associated with missionaries, typically through missionary support organizations."[17] This wider circle not only encompasses women's missionary circles and similar groups, but also parishioners and members of the public who might not be deeply involved in mission projects themselves, but who are generally supportive of missionary endeavors—and responsive to missionary appeals to act on conscience.

What the missionaries themselves, and later their children, brought was, first of all, firsthand knowledge gained through long-term, direct experience with peoples and lands overseas. Hollinger draws especially on the Far East and Middle East. The missionaries communicated what they had learned and experienced to a US populace for whom lands and peoples overseas were largely terra—and genus—incognito. They did so through articles, books, missionary itineration among churches, magic lantern and later slide shows, displays of exotic clothes and cultural artifacts,

Missionaries sent by the evangelical "faith mission" wing of the church did not fit the social profile. Those sent by ecumenical Protestant mission boards tended to be equipped by education, entitlement, and cultural potency.

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Bible camps, conferences, and speeches—and by public advocacy for a new internationalism and a more cosmopolitan outlook within the churches, among church members, in denominational policies, and in US foreign relations and programs. Negatively, they combatted ignorance and ingrown attitudes of xenophobia and insularity (the United States has a long and inglorious history of spasms of "nativism"). Positively, they conveyed an enlarged vision of the world and a broader, more encompassing, and more fraternal outlook.

Domestically, missionaries, former missionaries, and missionary offspring—such as Edmund Davidson Soper, mission educator who was born in Japan to missionary parents—combatted racism in the United States, both within US churches and denominational structures and within US society at large. They held up the plumb line of Scripture and decried US tolerance of Jim Crow laws and lynching. They advanced the pragmatic argument that the appalling state of race relations within the United States worked against their missionary witness abroad. (Remember the assumption enshrined in the missionary fairs that missionaries had a twin mandate to represent America as well as the gospel.) They charged that racial injustice which the US populace and US churches seemingly found tolerable undercut the gospel message they were carrying overseas. The missionaries joined in championing the cause of civil rights and they worked to enlist the wider missionary-influenced community in that effort.

The second carrier of missionary influence was missionary children. Born and raised on the mission field and often attending school there, missionary children formed friendships, learned the local customs, and felt at home. They had the language and culture down cold. China and other countries in which they were raised were part of who they were and of what they carried with them when they "returned" to the United States. In the years leading up to the Second World War when the United States turned its eyes to the East, missionary children played a key role. Extremely few US citizens knew the languages, cultures, and geography of the Orient. Missionary children were versed in all three, and sometimes knew the current or rising leaders personally, having attended school with them. Along with returned and former missionaries, they were vital to US military, Foreign Service, and intelligence operations of the period. One example is William Eddy, born and raised in Lebanon, who impressed Arabia's King Ibd Saud by his ability to "recite long passages from the Koran in three Arabic dialects." He served as translator for President Roosevelt and King Ibd Saud at their meeting in 1945.[18] In the Far East, Office of Strategic Services (OSS) operative Rosamond Frame, a missionary daughter, "was held in awe by her co-workers for her fluency in nine Mandarin dialects."[19]

A third strand of missionary influence on the mind of America came through missionary children and others with strong missionary ties who played a prominent role in fostering a more deeply informed internationalism within academia and who became assiduous advocates for the same outlook within the US State Department and related governmental agencies. Missionary sons and a wider circle of scholars with close missionary associations were prominent in founding area studies programs at a number of leading US universities. Edwin O. Reischauer, who was born in Japan and taught at Harvard University, is perhaps the best known. Some missionary children were appointed to diplomatic posts; in the 1960s Reischauer himself served for a period as ambassador to Japan. Missionary sons were prominent members of the State Department's circle of "China Hands." Several were purged during the "Red Scare" drummed up by Joseph McCarthy. John Paton Davies and John S. Service were among them.

Fourth, within the group that was later to be labeled Third Culture Kids, missionary children formed a distinct subset. Numerous missionary children became casualties; ill-equipped for life, they did not fare well. Hollinger cites several cases. But, he writes, "missionary children who escaped becoming 'casualties' were often high achievers."[20] Like missionary son Henry Luce—publisher of the magazines *Time, Life, Fortune, and Sports Illustrated*—when they succeeded, which many did, they carried the international and cosmopolitan perspectives they had acquired as children of missionary parents with them into their, putatively, more worldly careers. John Hersey is but one example of an MK (missionary kid) whose work as a journalist and novelist stands out. His novel *The Call* draws heavily on his missionary father's life in China.[21]

The Author and the Book's Genesis

David Hollinger is the Preston Hotchkis Professor of History Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley.[22] Expressing clearly that he is not writing as a missionary "insider"—he is not a missionary himself, members of his immediate family have not served as missionaries, nor does he have a place within the wider missionary circle referred to above—he states candidly that he writes "from a secular perspective" and that he is "no longer a Protestant."[23] In various places he refers to himself as being

post-Protestant. Not, one might think at first blush, a likely socioreligious position for the author of what obviously has been a lengthy and deeply felt engagement with a topic that to many might seem hopelessly recondite. His treatment of those with whose life project he differs fundamentally can only be called sympathetic and fair. Though he accepts the judgment that "what the missionaries did [while abroad] in the company of those foreign peoples has since been a matter of widespread embarrassment. Missionaries from the United States and Europe often did exactly what their harshest critics claimed. They supported imperialist projects, accepted the white supremacist ideology of the West, imposed narrow moral codes, and infantilized the peoples they imagined they were serving," he concludes that "yet a substantial measure of what these people said and did resists condescension." Along the way they became "proto-multiculturalists and proto-world-citizens" and moved their home country in those directions.[24]

Hollinger's reach is broad. The extent and depth of his research into the lives and literature germane to this topic is evident both in the main text of the book and in the volume's eighty pages of endnotes, which are meaty and often contain insightful commentary.

So how did Hollinger come to take up the topic he did? He approached it through at least two doors. Liberal Protestantism in the mid-twentieth-century United States has been a professional focus for Hollinger as an intellectual historian. That provided the front door. His wider studies into the fortunes of liberal Protestantism supplied context and enriched his research for *Protestants Abroad.* The fit was superb. But why study missionaries and their influence at all? The impetus for that came through a side door. The travails and triumphs of the US Jewish minority has been another focus of Hollinger's scholarship.[25] He was struck by the "Jewish demographic overrepresentation in the American worlds of finance, film, science, philanthropy, political radicalism, and other domains of modernity."[26] But a particular contribution made by Jews, who had largely immigrated from Eastern Europe, was the way that they opened American provincialism to Europe. Was there another group, Hollinger wondered, that had made a similar distinctive contribution to internationalizing the American outlook? His answer, found in the Protestant missionary movement, particularly the mainline Protestant missionaries who had served in China, Japan, the Far East more broadly, and the Middle East, became the subject of *Protestants Abroad.*

The Company It Keeps

In the past number of decades, scholarly investigation into mission history has fallen on good times. Today substantive explorations of mission history from a variety of disciplinary perspectives stream from the presses. Ranging from single focus studies to numerous variations on "missions and . . ." symposia, themes include such topics as "missions and imperialism," "missions and colonialism," "missions and gender/missions and women," "missions and the Enlightenment," and go right on. I think of the multivolume 200-year-anniversary retrospective, edited by Wilbert Shenk (Mercer Univ. Press); the series Studies in the History of Christian Missions, edited by Robert Frykenberg and Brian Stanley (Eerdmans); the work of Andrew Walls and Lamin Sanneh and the wider outflow from the North Atlantic Missiology Project; works by Dana Robert; *The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home,* edited by Daniel Bays and Grant Wacker (Alabama Univ. Press); among many others. *Protestants Abroad* now occupies an eminent place within this burgeoning array.

The Person as an Instrument

Historian Grant Wacker reminds us that historians do not "simply report what they observe. They see what they are prepared to see."[27] So who is David Hollinger and what equipped him as an instrument for this task?

Hollinger spent his early years in Idaho, growing up within a small Anabaptist sect. The Dunker (German Baptist Brethren) church on the ground around which the battle of Antietam raged in 1862 is one in which his grandfather, a lay minister (as was common among the group at that time), may have preached. Hollinger's own father finished high school at age thirty-three by taking evening classes in Chicago while working at Sears forty hours weekly as a shoe salesman to support his family. His father went on to college and then seminary to obtain more substantial grounding for pastoral ministry. During his seminary years, David's father supported the family by painting houses. Some years after moving to Idaho and then to southern California, his father left pastoral ministry and returned to painting houses, but he never left the church and continued to do pulpit supply on occasion.

By example and words Hollinger's parents implanted an outlook that valued education and the life of the mind. Missionaries on itineration stayed in the family home. Their visits and reports carried intimations of wider horizons.

The particular contribution made by Jews was the way they opened American provincialism to Europe. Was there another group, Hollinger wondered, who had helped internationalize the American outlook?

So did the Christian gospel as preached and practiced and sung among the Brethren: "In Christ there is no East or West, In Him no South or North; But one great fellowship of love, throughout the whole wide earth." During the Second World War, his parents made sure that their young son was aware of their distress over the unjust internment of US citizens of Japanese descent. After the war the family sent aid packages to relatives in Germany.

Hollinger himself moved further than his father, both academically and religiously. As a youth he fixed his mind's eye on becoming a college professor and teaching history. Earning a PhD in history at the University of California, Berkeley, prepared him to teach history at SUNY/Buffalo (1969–77) and the University of Michigan (1977–92), before returning to UC Berkeley in 1992.

Though *Protestants Abroad* acknowledges Hollinger's childhood in a small Protestant denomination and the presence of missionaries in that milieu, readers of the book will gain a fuller picture of the person he is if they read his essay "Church People and Others," in *After Cloven Tongues of Fire.*[28] The essays in *After Cloven Tongues of Fire* as a whole serve well as a complement to *Protestants Abroad.* For one thing they provide insight into the type and range of topics and themes that have occupied his scholarly career. Second, they illuminate his methodological approach. Third, they offer personal and biographical glimpses into his motivation. Life often gives a clue to motivation and perspective, and further motivation often supplies the impetus to examine a topic or issue or facet that, once examined, leads to insight or fields of scholarly endeavor not previously apparent.

Becoming a Historian

Beyond the "intensely Protestant atmosphere" in which he grew up and his parents' esteem for learning, as a youth Hollinger was shaped by reading a library copy of *War Chief Joseph,* later buying at age 14 a copy of his own with money he earned mowing lawns. More lawn mowing enabled him to "buy Bruce Catton's three-volume history of the Army of the Potomac."[29] History as "engagement with the ways in which contemporary life [has] been shaped by previous events" drew him to the field.[30] As a teenager Hollinger also felt attracted to theology and philosophy. The point is worth noting, for it bears on the type of intellectual historian and writer he was to become. He narrates well, but the type of historical inquiry to which he committed himself was something quite different from Bruce Catton's narratives of past events.

Intellectual history, as Hollinger writes it, is abundantly anchored to facts on the ground. At the same time, the multiplicity of those facts is placed in intimate linkage with sweeping master generalizations about the forward

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march of certain trends, movements, and causes, and tied to assumptions and conceptions of personal and social evolution or advancement. These overarching trends, in their onward course, carry the facts and realities on the ground into the embrace of new constellations, into new configurations and paradigms, and into the formation of new gestalts, if you will. As they enter new contexts, meanings shift, grow, or diminish. Rationales for behavior that once seemed essential, including possibly religious fervor, fade. Structures of plausibility shift. Watching the interactions and overall argument play out makes for engrossing reading.

Items We Could Talk About

One value of a good book is questions it raises that extend beyond itself and generate further discussion. Following is a sampling of several such questions. I limit myself to four.

The Protestant Establishment's Costly Action on Principle

In the 1940s and 1950s mainline leaders lent authoritative support to the struggle of Jews and Roman Catholics to see quotas removed that restricted their enrollment in the United States' most prestigious universities and that served to impede their entry into positions of power and influence within the country. Liberal Protestants did so, though it was obvious that opening the doors to Jews and Roman Catholics would dilute their own grip on power. In the run-up to the 1960 US election, liberal Protestant leaders are to be commended for embracing equality of opportunity and arguing against a religious test for political office—even as the National Association of Evangelicals played a rear-guard role, protesting that the election of a Roman Catholic as president would undermine the United States' identity as a Protestant nation.[31]

Hollinger sees liberal Protestantism as having achieved some of its cherished goals—growth in cosmopolitanism, internationalism, and humanitarianism—by handing those ideals off to other parties or bequeathing them through the gift of their progeny even as their offspring quietly or noisily left the mainline churches and either moved beyond Protestantism and into post-Protestantism or gravitated to full-blown secularism. On that score, the picture he paints is one, after a fashion, of gaining one's life by losing it or of falling into the ground and dying so as not to abide alone.

By the 1960s the collapse of the hegemony of the Protestant Establishment was well underway and the long decline in membership of the mainline denominations had begun. Is it a case of the liberal Protestants having unwittingly sold the farm, or did they achieve a triumph by handing off the values they treasured to others who carried them forward under other (religious and non-religious) flags? Hollinger's discussion in *Cloven Tongues of Fire* of religious communalists versus religious dispersionists is relevant in attempting to answer this question.[32]

The Elevator versus the Escalator

Hollinger is far from being alone in assuming the reality of a hierarchical ranking of Protestant denominations, a sort of religious elevator that matches social rank and privilege with denominational affiliation. But he goes further and superimposes on the image a presumptive natural flow in Protestantism from deep religious conviction and devotion to more moderate Protestant positioning to mainline and liberal Protestant affiliation—each with its appropriate reduction in religious intensity, doctrinal content, and moral strictures—to post-Protestantism to full-blown secularism and possibly on to humanistic or agnostic or atheistic stances. Rise in social status is one lubricant in this shift; education is a propellant for it. His conception connotes not just a vertical rise, an elevator, but directionality while rising, an escalator. As one rises, one moves inexorably in a single direction. The escalator ride seems to be conceived as acting not just individually but across generations. The expectable landing spot, if one gets with the program, is post-Protestantism or beyond.

Is that actually the case? Much research in the United States and the rise of the Nones provide considerable support for Hollinger's assumed picture. Is it true elsewhere than the United States? The research in Latin America reported on by Edward Cleary and Timothy Steigenga indicates that it has wider applicability.[33] What about in other countries or areas of the world?

If the escalator offers a true picture, what is to be made of that fact? Are missionaries themselves a force for secularization? If so, in what ways and to what extent? Do education and enlightenment (small "e") inevitably equal secularization? If so, to what extent is that to be embraced or eschewed?

The Conversion of the Missionary

At times Hollinger's account appears to report a bit out of breath that missionaries went abroad and—lo and behold, surprise—after five, ten, twenty, or more years, those missionaries' view of the people they lived among and sought to

Hollinger superimposes on Protestantism an escalator-like flow from deep religious conviction, to more moderate mainline affiliation, to full blown secularism. Is that true in other countries of the world?

The missionary offspring among the US Foreign Service's China Hands spoke up sharply in favor of talking with Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party—were they stooges of the Communists?

serve had changed. They no longer expressed themselves as they had upon first setting forth. Their view of the people had grown, their self-assurance and presumption had diminished, they had sloughed off some rigid certainties, and they had become more flexible, better informed, and more empathetic.

Well, indeed; one would hope so. People, even missionaries, can grow. They mature. They acquire new information that stretches old conceptions and formulations. They come to a deeper understanding of their faith. They see God's hand at work more widely and in ways they had not imagined when they first set forth. The story of the conversion of the missionary is not a new one. It is not one to be feared; it is an outcome to be hoped for. Not for nothing did missionaries in the day of lifelong or career mission commitments say that a new missionary's first term was for orientation, learning the language, and becoming familiar with the local outlook, customs, and culture. The real contribution of a missionary would begin with the second term.

Counterfactual History

The missionary offspring among the US Foreign Service's China Hands during and following World War II spoke up sharply in favor of talking with Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party—and not putting all the stock of US foreign policy unquestioningly in the basket of Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang. Were they stooges of the Communists or duped fellow travelers? Had their counsel been heeded rather than they themselves being denounced and purged during Joseph McCarthy's witch hunt, to what extent might the course of events in China have taken a different path?

At least two missionary sons among the China Hands acknowledged in their autobiographies that they may not have given enough weight to the possibility that Mao also was playing them, maybe even as much as Chiang Kai-shek was. Such questions, of course, cannot be answered. Had the China Hands been listened to instead of being cast out, in Hollinger's words, "Things might have been different, but might not."[34] Still from a vantage point seven decades on, it is difficult for me not to think that an opportunity worth exploring was lost. The Communists would still have taken over, but might the Chinese people have been spared some of the horrors they went through under Mao?

In Sum

Put quite simply, David Hollinger's *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* is a monumental achievement. It fills a lacuna. Broadly and deeply informed, sweeping in scope, and filled with detail, the book remains approachable and a delight to read.

Though the author's election to migrate from religious insider to religious outsider was not his motivation for undertaking to write *Protestants Abroad*—the book is not a polemic—still his migration is germane to the book's themes and its overall thrust. That is to say that where the author came from and the formative experiences of his life aid in understanding how, as an apparent and self-proclaimed outsider, he so often manifests an insider's touch and orientation toward relevant sources. Though his religious migration does not dominate the presentation, its fruit is everywhere present. His insight is intimate; he knows the terrain, where the signposts are, and what they point to in ways that an investigator unversed in the nooks and byways of the religious territory would not. As Hollinger expresses the significance of his upbringing: "My Protestant childhood [has] much to do with my secular adulthood."[35]

The author presents himself as standing, by personal choice, outside the religious and theological standpoint occupied by those whose lives and careers he is discussing, but he is consistently generous in recounting and interpreting their efforts and motives. I am far from having read all that Hollinger has written, but the spirit the book conveys seems to reflect well the sense I have gained of the spirit of the author. Would that we all could have the same said for our treatment of those with whom we differ on life's most fundamental issues.

So, will reading *Protestants Abroad* make you a better missionary? The volume is not a how-to manual on missionary practice. It does not aspire or pretend to be such. What it will do is exercise your mind, widen your vision of missionary practices and their consequences, inform you more deeply, and give you a broader outlook and frame of reference. It bids fair to make you a better informed and, therefore, I dare say, a better person. In that way it may also make you a more fit instrument for missional service. **IJFM**

Endnotes

[1] For the character and later fate of the "Missionary Exhibit" portion of the conference, see Erin Hasinoff, "Franz Boaz and the Missionary Exhibit," *History of Anthropology Newsletter* 37, no. 2 (December 2010): Art. 3, https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1813&context=han. See, also, Erin L. Hasinoff, *Faith in Objects: American Missionary Expositions in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[2] The proceedings of the 1900 conference, including its 500 addresses, were published by the American Tract Society in two large volumes, available at https://archive.org/details/ecumenicalmiss01unknuoft and https://archive.org/details/ecumenicalmissio02ecum.

[3] This information comes from the archival Finding Aid for the conference records. See http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/archival/collections/ldpd_4492656/.

[4] For the published record of the Conference on Missions held in Liverpool, see https://archive.org/details/conferenceonmiss00conf.

[5] Christopher J. Anderson, "The World Is Our Parish: Remembering the 1919 Protestant Missionary Fair," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 30, no. 4 (October 2006): 196–200, and Anderson's volume, *The Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions: The 1919 World's Fair of Evangelical Americanism* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 2012).

[6] On the life and career of Pearl Buck, see the exemplary account by Grant Wacker, "The Waning of the Missionary Impulse: The Case of Pearl S. Buck," in *The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home: Explorations in North American Cultural History,* ed. Daniel H. Bays and Grant Wacker (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2003), 191–205.

[7] "Biographical masterpieces" refers to *The Exile* (the story of Pearl Buck's mother Carrie) and *Fighting Angel* (her father Absalom). Both books were published in 1936.

[8] William Ernest Hocking, *Re-thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1932).

[9] David A. Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2017), 178–79, 347n47.

[10] A 128-page guidebook to the displays at "The World in Boston" missionary fair can be downloaded at https://archive.org/details/handbookguideofw00bost.

[11] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 12.

[12] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 1–2.

[13] Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997).

[14] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 11.

[15] Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: Norton, 1960).

[16] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 148–54.

[17] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 7.

[18] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 124–25.

[19] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 181.

[20] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 18.

[21] John Hersey, *The Call* (New York: Knopf, 1985).

[22] His impressive roster of honors and publications can be downloaded from http://history.berkeley.edu/people/david-hollinger.

[23] David A. Hollinger, *After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Protestant Liberalism in Modern American History* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2013), 171.

[24] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 5, 23.

[25] David A. Hollinger, *Science, Jews, and Secular Culture: Studies in Mid-Twentieth Century American Intellectual History* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1996), and *Morris R. Cohen and the Scientific Ideal* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1975), as well as David A. Hollinger, "Communalist and Dispersionist Approaches to American Jewish History in an Increasingly Post-Jewish Era," in *After Cloven Tongues of Fire,* 138–69.

[26] Hollinger, *After Cloven Tongues of Fire,* 142.

[27] Grant Wacker, *America's Pastor: Billy Graham and the Shaping of a Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2014), 2.

[28] Hollinger, "Church People and Others," in *After Cloven Tongues of Fire,* 170–89.

[29] Hollinger, "Church People and Others," 171–72. Helen Addison Howard and Dan McGrath, *War Chief Joseph* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1952), and Bruce Catton, *Mr. Lincoln's Army, Glory Road,* and *A Stillness at Appomattox* (New York: Doubleday, 1951–53).

[30] Hollinger, "Church People and Others," 172.

[31] David A. Hollinger, "After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Ecumenical Protestantism and the Modern American Encounter with Diversity," in *After Cloven Tongues of Fire,* 24. See this complete essay, pp. 18–55, as well as "The Realist-Pacifist Summit Meeting of March 1942 and the Political Reorientation of Ecumenical Protestantism in the United States," in *After Cloven Tongues of Fire,* 56–81.

[32] See David A. Hollinger, "Communalist and Dispersionist Approaches to American Jewish History in an Increasingly Post-Jewish Era," in *After Cloven Tongues of Fire,* 138–69.

[33] Edward L. Cleary, "Shopping Around: Questions about Latin American Conversions," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 28, no. 2 (April 2004): 50–54, and Edward L. Cleary and Timothy J. Steigenga, *Conversion of a Continent: Contemporary Religious Change in Latin America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 2007).

[34] Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad,* 174.

[35] Hollinger, "Church People and Others," 170.