

churches as effective agents of social amelioration. This must have contributed to the gradual decentering of the churches in local communities, one aspect of a modern secular society. Public Christianity is perhaps a victim of its own success. Notwithstanding the value of this chapter, it would have been immensely beneficial to bring the analysis up to date with some reflections on attitudes to Christianity and the churches over the past five years, particularly since the same-sex marriage debate in Australia. The book's subtitle is 'Conflict and Change in Church and State', and the past five years has seen plenty of that as evidenced in the fact that religious liberty has been one of the most contentious public debates in many years. No doubt Kaye would have had some important reflections on the last five tumultuous years in church-society and church-state relations in Australia.

This is primarily a denominational history, but it is a denominational history linking ecclesiastical developments with broader secular change, thus avoiding being an insular denominational study. Kaye's essays are informed by a broad and deep grasp of the theological, political, and ideological forces of the mid-nineteenth century, making this a very readable and important contribution to the history of Anglicanism and culture in Australia.

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***Mission als theologisches Labor: Koloniale Aushandlungen des Religiösen in Ostafrika um 1900.* By Karolin Wetjen.**
Missionsgeschichtliches Archiv 31. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2021. 425 pp. 66.00 € cloth.

Recent years have seen a proliferation of scholarship focused on European missionaries in colonial empires, with a particular emphasis on Africa and Asia. Yet Karolin Wetjen makes it clear that studying missionaries and their work can do more than advance our understanding of European imperialism or its broader social consequences in the metropole. Wetjen instead sets out to show that the mission field acted as a theological laboratory in which African and European participants negotiated the contours of Christianity in ways that informed theological discourse in Germany, which was gripped by a sense of crisis as the church faced the forces of modernity. In this way Wetjen constructs an entangled history of the Leipzig Mission in East Africa that illuminates deeper processes at work in globalization and modernization.

In this densely researched and theoretically sophisticated work, Wetjen follows several threads that tied together conservative Lutherans in Germany with mission work abroad in a complex web that Lutheran churchmen hoped would supply the impetus for a revival of Christian faith in Germany. In order to investigate more precisely how this transfer worked, Wetjen concentrates on the *Landeskirche* in Saxony and its connections to the Leipzig Mission Society's work among the Chagga people around Kilimanjaro. Typically, a mission history would explain the missionary impulse to evangelize the world by first pointing to the Great Commission. Wetjen instead looks to the

pervasive sense among German Protestants that modernization had brought a decline in religious faith across German society and the increasing irrelevance of the Church to German culture. That anxiety is familiar to scholars of modern Germany, as is the story of conservative religious responses to counter the spiritual and social effects of modernization, such as the formation of the “Inner Mission.” Yet according to Wetjen, contemporaries saw internal revival as inseparable from foreign missions; converting “heathens” and “Christians in name only” (*Namenchristen*) were essentially the same endeavor. (46)

The connection between inner and outer mission meant that theologians in Germany saw missionaries as partners in reviving the home church. One of the most important fruits of their collaboration was the creation of missiology (*Missionswissenschaft*), the academic study of missions whose most well-known pioneer was Gustav Warneck. It was through missiology and its periodicals, especially the heavyweight *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift*, that mission fields were treated as “mission laboratories,” a concept Wetjen uses to describe complex processes of transfer and exchange meant to develop innovative approaches to revive German church life. (78) Wetjen shows that in the mission laboratory, missionaries and African converts demarcated boundaries between the “religious” and the “secular,” and shaped the meaning and content of Christianity in ways that influenced theology in Germany. Leipzig missionaries sought to understand and explain the beliefs and practices of the Chagga people so that they could more effectively evangelize. In the process, they had to determine whether the practices they observed were “religious” or merely cultural practices and thus “secular.” Wetjen points to long-running debates about Chagga circumcision rituals as a prominent example of such boundary drawing. Missionaries, their superiors in Germany, and Chagga elders and congregation members all participated in different ways in the debate over what counted as “religious” and thus had to be changed, and what counted as “custom” and thus could be maintained or adapted. Such debates sharpened distinctions between Christianity and “heathenism” or “superstition,” thus shaping German theology as well. At the same time, boundary-drawing also applied to missionaries’ activities, particularly regarding the “civilizing mission.” What sort of mission work counted as “religious,” and what was a more secular form of “cultural work”? Wetjen shows that even in missionary circles, boundaries between the religious and secular in colonial contexts were sometimes ambiguous.

The missionaries’ ultimate goal was “national conversion” or *Volkschristianisierung*, a concept that implied a deep transformation of the whole culture into one marked as fundamentally Christian. Missionaries had this goal in mind when they worked on Bible translation and models for church order and discipline. Bible translation especially demonstrates the extent to which negotiation was at the heart of the missionary endeavor, with profound implications. Wetjen notes that “a Bible translation is always at the same time an exegesis,” and thus contributors ranging from theologians and academics in Germany to missionaries and recent converts in the mission field negotiated not only word choices but the very content of Christianity. (180) Likewise, the implementation of important rites and the rules of church discipline reflected the participation of Africans as they brought their own understandings of what it meant to be Christian to the process of negotiating the form and content of congregational life. Wetjen thus reveals negotiation in everything from baptism to the spatial order of church buildings to show how Christianity was defined in ways that were “always dependent on local contexts and actors.” (34) Moreover, that negotiated

congregational life was in turn transmitted to German audiences in order to demonstrate forms of devotion and community that could inspire revival.

Wetjen's study does more than complicate our understanding of the mission field's relationship to the metropole. Particularly through the concept of "Christianity Making," she shows how deeply intertwined the practices of the mission field were with the formation of theology in Germany during a period of acute crisis. Moreover, given the international dimensions of Protestant mission work, Wetjen's portrayal of religious entanglement between Germany and East Africa around 1900 brings attention to an emerging global Protestantism. At the same time, Wetjen is not always totally clear in how the Leipzig Mission balanced a robust participation in the decidedly international and thus interdenominational endeavor of the turn-of-the-century Protestant missions movement with the narrower confessional concern to reinforce a specifically Lutheran form of revitalized piety. However, this is a minor criticism. Making entanglement clear is a challenging task for the historian, and Karolin Wetjen ably teases out the subtleties of the multifaceted religious entanglement connecting Germany and the East African mission field at the turn of the century.

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***The Making of American Catholicism: Regional Culture and the Catholic Experience.* By Michael J. Pfeifer. New York: New York University Press, 2021. 236 pp. \$89 cloth; \$30 paper.**

As the first quarter of the century ends, multidisciplinary practitioners of American Catholic Studies realize that their field needs a new narrative. The old story of an immigrant church, a Catholic *e pluribus unum*, melded from various assimilated European-descended ethnic groups, badly needs reimagining. Not only did the immigrant church story, like the larger American narrative it mirrored, fail to include significant groups of non-white Europeans in its imagined *unum*, but its consensus-normed vision of pluralism tended to ignore or minimize abiding racial, ethnic, and regional complexities.

The immigrant church narrative's painful inadequacies lead some to doubt that a single story of something called American Catholicism could even be told. During his 2015 visit to the United States, Pope Francis, following Pope John Paul II's lead in 1999's *Ecclesia in America*, reimagined American Catholicism as a single hemispheric story. His Address to Congress concluded with the familiar "God bless América," but América had an accent on the second *a*.

Social historian Michael J. Pfeifer takes another approach. The considerable importance of *The Making of American Catholicism* lies in its thoroughly documented intervention into this ongoing discussion of how to tell the story of American Catholics in a new century. Pfeifer narrates American Catholicism regionally and ethnically. Not that regional and ethnic studies have been lacking. This book's innovation, however, lies in framing its analysis with them. Pfeifer still has an American Catholicism, but he enriches it with considerably more difference and complexity than the received