

understanding of both the nature of politics and political economy in the Great Lakes, and of the responses of people, states and elites to external pressures for democratisation.

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African Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecostalism and the rise of a Zimbabwean transnational religious movement by DAVID MAXWELL

Oxford: James Currey, 2006. Pp. xii + 250, £50.00; £18.95 (pbk.).

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Do not be misled by the title. This is no narrow micro-history, but a wide-ranging study of Pentecostalism on a global scale. David Maxwell deploys his formidable erudition, gained over twenty years of studying religion in Africa, to correct many misconceptions about modern Pentecostal churches. He traces the origins of Pentecostalism to late nineteenth-century North American and European religious movements, and charts its explosive expansion following the 1906 Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles. Within a year it had generated a missionary movement, and by 1908 had begun to pitch its tents in South Africa.

This single fact supplies the leitmotif of the volume, which is that Pentecostalism in Southern Africa should not be treated as a North American transplant. It grew up alongside other branches of the movement, and over the subsequent century sank its roots deep into African society. Maxwell is fascinated by the way that Pentecostalism has always transgressed racial boundaries. In its first American manifestation, it brought poor whites, blacks and Mexicans together in a single church. In South Africa, its first adherents were poor white Afrikaners, but it found fertile soil among urban Africans and migrant workers. Why this should be, Maxwell is unable to say. Perhaps movements focused on the 'End Times' preceding Christ's return to Earth made racial boundaries seem less important. On the other hand, race consciousness was never absent from African Pentecostals, who treated their subjugation by whites as one more facet of their physical and spiritual impoverishment.

The case study featured here – the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) – confounds every conventional expectation bar one: it was born of poverty, dispossession and uprooting. Its founding prophetic voice was Ezekiel Guti, a shy, unlettered carpenter whose life and personality were transformed by the 'gifts of the spirit' – direct illumination through the divine presence – that distinguish Pentecostalism from other varieties of Born Again Christianity. Guti's subsequent trajectory eerily parallels the transformation of Ian Smith's Rhodesia into Robert Mugabe's beleaguered Zimbabwe. In the beginning, he and his fellow worshippers truly ranked among the poor in spirit as well as in material goods. During the death throes of white supremacy, they eked out a precarious subsistence on the margins of the urban centres. In the first heady days of independence, they struggled against revolutionary distrust of religiosity. Later Guti initiated a purge of possible rivals, some of whom had been his closest supporters. Family members and sycophants were promoted. Gradually Guti's own displays of material wealth and ecclesiastical power were accompanied by a shift in the Pentecostal message. Gifts of the spirit would in time manifest themselves in

personal achievement and prosperity. When international emissaries of Pentecostal evangelism made dramatic appearances, they were welcomed as testimonies of Guti's success on the world stage. Far from manipulating ZAOGA, they were themselves seen to be dancing to Guti's tune. For a time, Mugabe himself appeared anxious to bask in the reflected glory of Pentecostal achievement, until the faltering state became an obvious incubus. While the Zimbabwean state found itself increasingly isolated, ZAOGA internationalised itself, launching missions to other lands.

Maxwell's achievement is to relate this familiar tale of power corrupted, without ever losing sight of the material and spiritual needs that sustained the humble following. He steers relentlessly clear of easy generalisations, recognising that while Zimbabwean Pentecostalism assimilated itself to global politics, communications and technologies, it never ceased to connect to its African roots.

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Towards a New Map of Africa edited by BEN WISNER, CAMILLA TOULMIN and RUTENDO CHITIGA

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Some within the donor community tagged 2005 as The Year of Africa, with the publication of the report by Blair's Commission for Africa, the focus on Africa at the G-8 summit in Gleneagles, the Live8 concert and the Make Poverty History campaigns raising public awareness. The year 2005 also represented the twentieth anniversary of Timberlake's classic *Africa in Crisis*, a book that for many years framed debates around environmental degradation and famine. *Towards a New Map of Africa* presents itself as a successor to the Timberlake volume, and uses 2005 as a vantage point to assess developments within the continent.

The resulting edited volume includes a number of essays that appraise different aspects of economic, political and social life in Africa, with an emphasis on developments at the grassroots. These surveys generally show a sharp eye for detail, and a commitment to avoid both overly romantic views of resilient Africans solving problems in their communities, and overly pessimistic and cynical accounts that cannot see beyond the tragic levels of violence, poverty and injustice. Most of the authors seek to present balance sheets on key issues, noting areas of promise along with the enormous problems. The editor's introductory overview, for example, argues that there is 'much that is positive', but there are also 'terrifying challenges' (p. 29).

The collection opens with a number of chapters on African livelihoods that highlight local level resourcefulness and innovation. Contributors discuss how micro-credit, small-scale manufacturing and artisanal fishing contribute to diverse strategies by Africans to cope in the face of multiple pressures. Along with these stories of small victories and hints of local capacities to build a better future are accounts of the terrible price of HIV/AIDS, the failed promise of economic growth, and the ways that the legacies of colonialism continue to distort processes of statebuilding, concepts of citizenship and institutions of government. De Waal's essay on HIV/AIDS is unambiguous on the scale of devastation, arguing