

the expression of vernacular resistance to colonial power. These sharp historiographical dissections also lead the author to question naturalized representations of spiritual culture in the more recent post-colonial context, in which arrogance has replaced resistance as a strategic device to further political ends. The discussion on the contested meanings of Ayodhya, the rise of Hindutva, and the question of positionality seem well placed to illuminate some of the pitfalls of countering colonial modernity and Eurocentrism with notions of Hindu cultural authenticity.

In the end, this book does not flatter a heroic subaltern subject whose culture remains autonomous from the complex workings of colonial power. Rather, it seeks to show how the context of subaltern reclamation is tangled up in what Dube calls the “tattered texture of empire” (p. 34). By exploring the relationship between colonial modernity and post-colonial interpretation, Dube unpicks these epistemological tangles and interrogates these deeply woven cultural knots with a very sharp needle. As a result, the book is an engaging and refreshing unravelling of these threads in ways that will ignite interest for those new to post-colonial studies, as well as provide new sign-posts for those already familiar with the field but wanting to stretch the paradigm beyond orthodox interpretations of colonial dominance.

Adrian Carton
Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

ETHERINGTON, Norman (ed.) — *Missions and Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. Pp. 332.

The meaning of the “British Empire history” has expanded considerably in the last 60 years. The traditional (whigish) narrative, captured in the *Cambridge History of the British Empire* (1929–1959), stressed the political evolution of the Empire from a centrally administered territory to a series of self-governing dominions. Subsequently, the five-volume *Oxford History of the British Empire* (1998–1999), emphasizing informal areas of the Empire (Asia and South America, for instance) and free trade economics, outlined a history of Empire that was broader, both geographically and thematically, than the Cambridge series. The volume under review here, part of the *Companion Series* to the *Oxford History*, expands the meaning of Empire still further. Moving beyond politics and economics, Norman Etherington’s edition argues that religion, specifically mission Christianity, shaped the politics of Empire and the everyday lives of people throughout the Empire. At its weakest, this edition offers outdated analyses of important themes and falls short of answering a key question of the volume, how the relationship between Empire and missions played a part “in a larger drama — the spread of modernization, globalization, and Western cultural hegemony” (p. 4). At its best, *Missions and Empire* brings the diverse history and scholarship about missions to a general audience and offers a strong case for adding religion to politics and economics in examinations of major shifts in the history of the British Empire.

The 14 chapters that follow Etherington’s introduction can be broken into two

groups. The first six chapters establish the historical background, emphasizing chronological phases of mission history and key strategies and theologies of mission societies between the 1700s and 1914. The last eight chapters tackle themes common to mission history regardless of time period or region. Often using a comparative approach, these later chapters examine the influence of mission Christianity in such things as education, medicine, anthropology, and decolonization. These two sets of chapters are generally successful at covering a broad range of material in a reasonable amount of space. However, there are notable omissions in the volume. Given recent work on the topic, a chapter on missions and imperial British culture/society is needed. More significantly, in light of the breadth of scholars contributing to the volume (anthropologists, historians, and literary scholars) and the limited number of regions discussed (mainly southern Africa), a chapter on historiography is required to examine particular trends (like the focus on southern Africa) and to outline the various methodological approaches used by scholars of missions.

Four contentions connect the various chapters in this book. First, all authors argue that the relationship between missions and Empire is complex. Andrew Porter's chapter on mission policy and Robert Frykenberg's argument that the Indian Raj actually opposed mission activity capture these complexities particularly well. Secondly, theology, not simply racial theory or economic motivations, is specified in several chapters as an important factor shaping this history. Porter's chapter explains, for example, how a shift to pre-millennial theology in the late nineteenth century made spiritual conversion, not education and cultural or economic practices, the main requirement for church membership. Thirdly, almost every chapter contends that the indigenous context is a key feature in this history. Peggy Brock's study of "native evangelists", Frykenberg's arguments that Indians (not Anglo-Indian imperialism) enabled the growth of Christianity, and Landau's discussion of translation make significant contributions to the literature here; together, these chapters show that, besides considering the forces of British imperialism and British missionaries, historians must take seriously the role of indigenous converts and their communities in the globalization of Christianity. Fourthly, the way networks (of people and information) connected the mission movement is raised in several chapters. In his study of humanitarian-mission alliances, Alan Lester explains how "trans-imperial networks of communication" connected missionaries with their supporters in Britain and other colonies (p. 64). Lester argues that these "trans-imperial networks" enabled the flow of information between metropole and colony and in doing so shaped the way debates about colonialism and Aboriginal rights were conducted. Similarly, Gould's chapter explains how transatlantic networks enabled the flow of theological ideas between Britain and the North American colonies.

These four arguments reflect the most recent work in the field, but the contributors do not agree on all issues. For example, while the dismissal of Nigerian Bishop Samuel Crowther is discussed by Porter in terms of a theological conflict, Robert Edgar's chapter states that Crowther's discharge from the Church Missionary Society "had nothing to do with doctrine" but was instead the result of a "racist and domineering leadership of many European missionaries" (pp. 216–217). Also, there is some

imbalance in the volume in that selected chapters (particularly those of Landau and Harries) present “new” research, while other chapters offer summaries of existing monographs.

The main weakness of the book is the absence of sustained discussion of how the Empire and missions were part of the same “drama”, the spread of Western cultural hegemony (p. 4). The argument that missions were agents of cultural imperialism is articulated in a number of articles and books published since the 1970s. *Missions and Empire* rarely addresses this literature or the theoretical insights it puts forth. Because of the volume’s emphasis on indigenous contexts and the ambiguous relationship between Empire and missions, discussion of cultural imperialism is pushed out of view. The limited engagement with arguments about cultural imperialism is particularly evident in Etherington’s own chapter on education and medicine, in which he seems reluctant to deal with language training and education as forms of Western cultural hegemony. Likewise, Brock’s discussion of “native evangelists” underplays the role of metropolitan culture in the lives of indigenous missionaries and teachers. In the final chapter, David Maxwell mentions that the Empire was the “framework of transmission” enabling Christianity to reach Africa (p. 286). This volume on the whole needed to do more to investigate this “framework” and its significance for Africans, and other indigenous populations, taking up Christianity.

In spite of these shortcomings, the volume offers a useful summary of most of the current historical interpretations, and readers new to this history will be impressed by the diverse topics included under the heading of “missions and Empire”. The *Companion Series* of the *Oxford History* is meant to look closely at aspects of the Empire not covered sufficiently in the initial five-volume series. On this account, Etherington’s edition succeeds; it offers a taste of the diverse ways missions shaped the Empire and in doing so broadens the meaning of “British Empire History” to include the spread of protestant Christianity.

Tolly Bradford
University of Alberta

FAUQUE, Claude, et Marie-Josée THIEL — *Les routes de l’esclavage. Histoire d’un très grand « dérangement »*, Paris, Hermé, 2004, 206 p.

Les routes de l’esclavage de Claude Fauque et Marie-Josée Thiel offre un panorama de l’histoire de l’esclavage et de la traite transatlantique. Le livre est préfacé par Olabiyi B. J. Yäi, ambassadeur délégué permanent de la République du Bénin à l’UNESCO, et Christiane Taubira-Delannon, députée de la Guyane française et auteure de la loi française 1297, qui a défini la traite transatlantique comme un crime contre l’humanité. Publié en 2004, « Année internationale de commémoration de la lutte contre l’esclavage et de son abolition », l’ouvrage couvre presque un demi-siècle d’histoire tout en étant écrit dans un langage très accessible au grand public. Le livre comprend le texte de quelques documents importants de l’époque, des repro-