

## BOOK REVIEWS

ZEBIRI, Kate: *Muslims and Christians Face to Face*. Oxford, Oneworld 1997. 258 pp. ISBN 1-85168-133-7.

Mutual perceptions of Christians and Muslims have been the focus of Dr Zebiri's interest for quite a some time now. If her previous book, *Mahmud Shaltut and Islamic Modernism* (1993), approaches new departures in Qur'anic interpretation in modern Egypt, this monograph by the lecturer in Arabic and Islamic Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (London) aims at contributing to the study of comparative religion while looking at Muslim writings on Christianity and Christian writings on Islam in the post-World War II period. The study focuses more specifically on religious issues and theological reflection. The Muslim writings which are analysed in this publication have mostly originated and have been published in the West. It should also be borne in mind that the literature surveyed in the book is of very disparate academic quality, scholarly and popular, different in function and intended audience.

The author divides her book into five parts. The first part looks at factors which play a decisive role in Muslim-Christian relations today. After a brief overview of the historical legacy the account goes on to observe what is new in the field of ecumenical and interfaith movements, especially as far as the Muslim-Christian dialogue is concerned. Muslim-Christian dialogue, it is underlined, is very much influenced by theological presuppositions and existential situation of the actors. As indicated, dialogue has been a Western Christian initiative and Muslims often feel that they are only invited guests. Serious attention is devoted to the characterization of Christianity and Islam as missionary faiths with Muslims increasingly adopting missionary strategies which in the past originated in the Christian world.

Chapter two concentrates on *Muslim Popular Literature on Christianity* and draws on sources written either by Western converts to Islam, such as Maurice Bucaille, Maryam Jameelah, Abdalhaqq Bewley and Ahmad Thomson, or, by authors originating from the Indian subcontinent – Ahmad Azhar, Muhammad Ansari, Kauser Niazi, Muhammad 'Ata ur-Rahim, M. H. Durrani and others. This part deals very little with doctrine and is primarily devoted to the relationship between Christianity and the modern Western world. According to the findings of the book Muslim authors constantly use quotations of Western scholarly works to highlight their attachment to academic discussions, but their constantly negative attitude in presenting these data and their biased interpretation invalidate the claim. Their texts fulfil a primarily apologetic function as is obvious from the work of Ahmed Deedat. Muslim authors generally stand closer to the biblical scholarship of a century ago than to contemporary writings. An important remark should be quoted here: "Muslim anti-Christian polemic goes relatively unnoticed, even in the age of mass media, because it occurs within an almost exclusively Muslim market, and is rarely subjected to critical scrutiny" (p. 89). Recalling this fact it would

be interesting to see how Muslim writers interpret Christianity in their indigenous languages even if English can be seen as an increasingly “Islamic language”.

*Protestant Missionary Literature on Islam* is the title of the third chapter. It concentrates on works written by Phil Parshal, Chawkat Moucarry, Ida Glaser, Abdul Saleeb, Abdiyah Akbar Abdul-Haqq, John Gilchrist or Bill Musk. Broadly speaking, the attempts to interpret Islam by missionaries should not be evaluated only on academic grounds because missionaries are not necessarily academic specialists, moreover, they often do not claim neutrality or academic accuracy. Furthermore, it comes out that these studies cover areas which are increasingly rare in more academic works, such as more controversial aspects of Muhammad’s life or subjective evaluation of the literary style of the Qur’an. But whereas there are many missionaries who refute Islam, others seek to understand it and to be as non-polemical as possible. Some may regret and even not agree with the fact that Kenneth Cragg’s writings have not been included in this chapter (but in part V) with the argument that his works are scholarly creative and original whereas the ideas treated here are rather derivative.

After two chapters with an analysis of mostly “popular” material, the second part of the monograph examines essentially scholarly works. In the fourth section *The Study of Christianity by Muslim Intellectuals* Zebiri’s account focuses mainly on Isma’il al-Faruqi’s treatment of Christianity. His presentation is according to the author the most sophisticated and sustained because Faruqi succeeded in using “epoché” and acknowledged that Christianity does have distinctive qualities. In contrast to part II on Muslim popular literature this chapter deals with Muslim criticism of Christian doctrine. Some of the changes taking place in the Muslim study of Christianity appear to be an increasing diversity in interpretation due to the cross-cultural communication. The most contentious, I would argue, is the presentation of Mohammed Arkoun’s views within the framework of Muslim intellectuals because he reflects much more of a postmodernist than an Islamic response to religions in general and Christianity in particular. To understand more completely the ecumenical movement from the Muslim side one would welcome besides authors who are active mostly in the West or in India also major voices coming from the Arab world (namely M. S. al-Ashmáwi).

In the last chapter the author gives a survey of approaches to Islam by Christian Islamicists and theologians. Among them are Kenneth Cragg, Giulio Basetti-Sani, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, William Montgomery Watt, Youakim Moubarac, Willem Bijlefeld, Robert Caspar, Hans Küng, Robert Zaehner and many others. Most of the reflection on Islam combines in varying degrees the standpoint of the study of religion with the theological point of view. After a brief overview of Christian (both Catholic and Protestant) individuals and institutions engaged in reflections on Islam the author points out that all reviewed Christian scholars were tempted by evaluating the Qur’an in the light of the Bible which is usually seen as a combination of divine and human elements. Since revelation and scripture in Muslim understanding does not correspond with such an approach, Muslims often regard it as subversive. The section includes interesting information on the shared Abrahamic legacy of both Islam and Christianity. As the author stresses, recent Christian and Western writings denied any strong discontinuity between Muhammad as preacher in Mecca and Muhammad as soldier, diplomat and politician in Medina. Next she compares and contrasts some Christian interpretations of the Qur’an, especially those of Basetti-Sani and Cragg. While Basetti-Sani believes that the real meaning of the Qur’an has been hidden from Muslims and only Christians are able to perceive it, Cragg by reading Christian meanings into the Qur’an is more sympathetic and sometimes neglects differences between Christianity and Islam.

In conclusion Zebiri summarizes that because of fundamentally different categories, criticism across religious boundaries often misses the mark. An example of this is the Muslim doctrine of *tahrif*, usually understood to mean that the Jewish and Christian scriptures have been “altered” and “corrupted” by Christians or Jews themselves (p. 232). On the other side, for Christians, Islam appears as a retrogression to the Jewish model of law and prophecy (p. 7). Even given a sincere desire to be fair, one is likely to give greater weight to elements which are most prominent in one’s own tradition, such as law or social institution in Islam, or God’s redemptive love in Christianity, and find the other wanting in comparison (p. 230).

Although the book requires a careful reader it can be recommended to all who are in need of a valuable “encyclopedia” of Muslim-Christian relations in the modern age, moreover, the author provides us with very comprehensive bibliography and abundant notes. The substantial general introduction and conclusion as well as conclusions of all chapters temper the complexity of the problems discussed. By its nature it is a remarkable synthetic work. Given the fact that the book provides an overview of authors increasingly available in Slovakia (such as M. Bucaille or A. Deedat) the work has to be considered also as a welcome contribution for those in our country who struggle with their religious and cultural identity.

*Gabriel Pirický*

SAKKOUT, Hamdi, Ph.D.: *The Modern Arabic Novel. Bibliography and Critical Introduction (Ar-Riwāya al-‘arabiyya al-ḥadītha. Bibliyūgrāfiyā wamadḥal naqdī)*. (1865-1995). Department of Arabic Studies. American University in Cairo. Cairo, Supreme Council for Culture (National Library Press - A Limited Review Edition) 1998. Vol. I. 1 - 688 pp.; II. 689 - 1267; III. 1268 - 1841; IV. 1842 - 2412; V. 2413 - 2965,

The international conference on the modern Arabic novel (Cairo, 22 - 26 February 1998), initiated and organized by the Supreme Council of Culture, was accompanied by another important event: the appearance of the first comprehensive bibliography of the Arabic novel. As it comprises the interval between 1865 and 1995, it mirrors the whole lifespan of the Arabic novel as an autonomous literary genre. This giant Bibliography lists nearly 4600 Arabic novels easily retrievable in various types of bibliographical arrangement. Besides novels, the bibliographical units recorded include a spectacular amount of relevant studies and critical essays related to them.

First, the structure and contents of this masterwork:

I / 1 - 7 : Introduction to the Modern Arabic Novel (*Madḥal ‘ilā r-riwāya al-‘arabiyya al-ḥadītha*);

13 - 21 : Beginnings of the Arabic Novel (*Bidāyāt ar-riwāya al-‘arabiyya*);

25 - 286 : The Novel - Fiction (*ar-Riwāya al-fanniyya*);

25 - 98 : The Novel in Egypt (*ar-Riwāya fī Miṣr*);

99 - 202 : The Novel in the Arab East (*ar-Riwāya fī al-mašriq al-‘arabī*);

203 - 286 : The Novel in North Africa (*ar-Riwāya fī šamāl ‘Afrīqiyyā*);

II / 289 - 1550 : Bibliography of the Novel. The Novel Alphabetically Arranged and the Critique Written About Each Novel (*Bibliyūgrāfiyā ar-riwāya wamā kutiba ḥawla kull ar-riwāya min naqd*);

1269 - 1550 : General Critique (*an-Naqd al-‘āmm*);

1271 - 1515 : General Critique of the Novelists (*Naqd ‘āmm ḥawla r-riwā’iyyīn*);

1517 - 1550 : General Critique of the Novel (*Naqd ʿāmm ḥawla r-riwāya*);  
 III / 1553 - 2964 : Indexes (*al-Fahārīs*);  
 1553 - 1841 : The Novel Alphabetically Arranged (*ar-Riwāya murattaba ʿabjadiyyan*);  
 IV - V / 1843 - 2169 : The Novel Chronologically Arranged (*ar-Riwāya murattaba zamanīyyan*);  
 2171 - 2625 : The Novel Geographically Arranged (*ar-Riwāya murattaba juġrāfiyyan*);  
 2173 - 2412 : The Novel in Egypt (*ar-Riwāya fī Miṣr*);  
 2413 - 2621 : The Novel Outside Egypt (*ar-Riwāya fī ḥārij Miṣr*);  
 2624 - 2625 : Unidentified (*Majhūlūn*);  
 2627 - 2964 : The Novelists (*ar-Riwāʿiyyūn*).

From a methodological point of view, the introductory chapter, dealing with the intricate problem of what the modern Arabic novel really is and what date has to be recognized as its starting point (viz., *Bidāyāt ar-riwāya al-ʿarabiyya*, pp. 13-21), is of the utmost importance and has a decisive impact on the main classificatory issues of the whole work.

The three indexes included, based on an alphabetical, chronological and geographical arrangement of entries, enable the investigator to readily obtain precise answers to relatively specialized questions. What is the total production of novels in the Arab world? What in a given Arab country? And what in a given period of time. They further make it possible to approach the identification of any given unit from any of the three starting points: name of the novel or that of its author, time and/or place of its origin.

The Bibliography, for all its merits and reliability of presenting relevant data, leaves some important sources unexplored. The priority given to the native and Western sources is quite understandable. It is to a considerable extent justified by the amount of scholarly work done in these cultural areas, as well by the relatively easy availability of the necessary sources. Nevertheless, the investigations carried on in the former *ostblock* countries (Central and Eastern Europe) should perhaps have been more systematically evaluated. The well-known Prague journal *Archív orientální* (ArOr), for instance, established in 1929 as an international academic periodical for Oriental and African studies, as well as some other Central Europe periodicals and annuals, published in the last decades a number of important theoretical studies of immediate relevance to the Arabic novel. At least some of them:

Jaroslav Oliverius: *Die Kritische Reaktion auf die Zeit Gamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir in manchen Werken der ägyptischen Literatur*. In: ArOr 61, 1993, 161-172;

ҚҚҚ : *Trilogie de Nağīb Maḥfūz*. In: *Acta Universitatis Carolinae (AUC), Philologica* 2. Prague 1965, 35 - 46;

ҚҚҚ : *Zur Auffassung von Literaturgeschichte und -Kritik bei Ṭāhā Ḥusain*. In: *AUC, Philologica* 4. Prague 1985, 45 - 70; etc.

The quotation of foreign references is extraordinarily good and, by its qualities and precision, it markedly surpasses that currently observable in many recent scholarly works of Arab provenance. (This cannot be said, for instance, about the foreign language quotations in another valuable document, published by the Supreme Council of Culture: *Liqāʿ ar-riwāya al-miṣriyya al-maġribiyya. Qirāʿāt (Encounter of the Egyptian and Maghribi Novel. Readings)*, Cairo 1998, where the amount of very various errors and misprints, especially in French quotations, is frustratingly high).

The number of misprints and errors in the recent review edition of Bibliography is rather modest and it does not exceed the acceptable level of errors which cannot safely be avoided in a work of the present size. Some of them are due to the failure of the computer-based typing, like *ṣibyānṣiġār*, instead of *ṣibyān ṣiġār* (3:1405), or they are simply current human errors, such as *Revev* instead of *Review* in *A Limited Review Edition*, on the back

cover of all five volumes; or the wrong page indications in the Contents, Vol. I, page *mīm* : 1271 - 1625, instead of the correct 2171 - 2625 pp.: *ar-Riwāya murattaba juġrāfiyyan*; etc.

The recent Bibliography is an epoch-marking achievement in the history of modern Arabic literature. It opens quite new possibilities to the Arab and foreign investigators working in the domain of the Arabic novel, practically through the whole lifespan of this literary genre up to very recent times. It will, no doubt, become a valuable source of information in both native and international centers of Oriental and Arabic studies.

Ladislav Drozdík

ENDERWITZ, Suzanne: *Liebe als Beruf. Al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf und das Ġazal*. Beirut, In Kommission bei Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart 1995. X+250 pp.

Al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf (d. 807 in Baṣra or Baghdad) is an important milestone in the evolution of the Arabic love poetry. Unjustly overshadowed by his renowned predecessors, like Baššār ibn Burd (d. 783) or ʿUmar ibn Rabīʿa (d. 712), as well as his highly celebrated contemporaries, like Abū Nuwās (d. 813), Ibn al Aḥnaf did not find the place in the literary history he deserves. In contrast to the Syrian and Mesopotamian cultural centers of the Umayyād period, cultivating poetry in the tradition of the pre-Islamic desert poets, Ḥiġāz became the birthplace of a new type of love poetry, closely related to more general patterns of social and cultural behavior. On the subsequent historical scene of the ʿAbbāsīd Empire, the love poetry of the courteous Ḥiġāzi inspiration, together with music and songs, had a decisive impact on the formation of what could perhaps be characterized as a way of life, known as *ẓarf*, typical of the urban upper classes of that epoch. Al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf, for a time a reputed court poet of Hārūn ar-Rašīd, was one of the top representatives of this new poetic and cultural development.

Apart from an Introduction: *Zur Entwicklung von Ġazal (towards the evolution of ġazal)*, the book contains three main sections: A. *Fatā und Ẓarīf (fatā and ẓarīf)*; B. *Leben und Werk (life and work)*; C. *Dichtung und Denken (poetry and thought)*. The book further offers a rich bibliography, two indices (index of names and index of subjects), and two comprehensive summaries (English and Arabic). The book is closed by a short final chapter: *Zum Schicksal des Ġazal (the destiny of ġazal)*.

Ibn al-Aḥnaf's poetry is presented in close interaction with the prevailing behavioral patterns (*futuwwa, ẓarf*) that determine the general social and cultural atmosphere of the poet's times. Enderwitz's monograph is a highly valuable methodological and factographical contribution to the literary and cultural history of the ʿAbbāsīd epoch.

Ladislav Drozdík

HASTINGS, A.: *Oxford History of the Christian Church. The Church in Africa 1450-1950*. Oxford, Clarendon Press 1996. XVI+706 pp.

The book is about the Churches within black Africa. It is a result of more than one and half decades of intensive study of the historical development and character of the whole Christian Church in Africa within the limit of five centuries. It links together Ethiopian Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism and other 'Independent' churches of modern times. The shaping of church life, its relationship to traditional values and the impact of political power are the focus of the monograph. A space is also

devoted in the book, to compare the relation of Christian history to the comparable development in Africa of Islam.

The book comprises an introductory part (v-xiv) and three main parts as follows: Part I. 1450-1780: A Medieval Environment (1-169); Part II. 1780-1890: From the Anti-Slavery to Total Subjugation (171-392); Part III. 1890-1960: The Christianizing of Half a Continent (395-610). Further, two Appendices are added: (1) Kings of Ethiopia and Kongo Referred to in the Text; and, (2) Maps. The book is concluded by a useful Bibliography (621-685) and an Index (687-706).

This extraordinarily wide-ranging volume contains twelve chapters, they are: 1. The Ethiopian Church in the Age of Zara Ya'iqob; 2. Africa in 1500 and its Christian Past; 3. The Kongo, Warri, Mutapa, and the Portuguese; 4. Riches to Rags: Ethiopia 1500 – 1800; 5. Equiano to Ntsikana: From the 1780s to 1820s; 6. The Lion revived: Ethiopia in the Nineteenth Century; 7. The Victorian Missionary; 8. Kings, Marriage, Ancestors, and God; 9. Christian Life in the Age of Bishop Crowther; 10. A variety of Scrambles: 1890 – 1920; 11. From Agbebi to Diangierda: Independency and Prophetism; 12. Church, School, and State in the Age of Bishop Kiwanuka.

The first four chapters which embrace twenty-eight sub-topics belong to Part I. of the book. Chapters 5-9 with their thirty-three sub-topics form Part II. Part III. contains the remaining three chapters with their thirty-five mini-topics.

Part I assesses the medieval environment and significant events of Christianity in Africa from 1450-1780. The first chapter discusses the state of the Ethiopian Church during the reign of Emperor Zara Ya'iqob (1434-69), with an enormous emphasis on his effort in 1449 at Däbra Mitmaq, a monastery situated in Shoa province, where he resolved the problem of the status of the Jewish Sabath which had formed a divisive issue within the Church for centuries. The other three following chapters focus upon, respectively, Africa's societies, states, statelessness, and religion including African Islam; Portugal overseas and mission, churches in Kongo, Benin, and Mutapa, the Jesuits, the Capuchins, the Antonian movement, the evangelization of Angola, Sierra Leone, Warri, and Mutapa, the slave trade; the state of the Ethiopian church from the reign of Emperor Lebna Dengel (1504-40) to that of Emperor Fasilads (1632-65).

In this part, the year 1500 is fixed to be conventional between scholars about the beginning date of a common continental history of Africa, from which it explores, very roughly, the state of the continent as a whole. The development of Khami and Mutapa, after the abandonment of Great Zimbabwe, that Ife, Ijebu, Benin, Kongo and Ethiopia were recognizable states of considerable power, size, wealth culture, religion and reputation, Africa of that time is well discussed. The fusion of small kingdoms into more consolidated ones that marked a new sort of history in central and west Africa, the arrival in increasing numbers of Arab and Berber merchants, crossing the Sahara in search of gold and slaves, who brought with them a new religion Islam, which, in this period, became already the official religion of the kings of most of these parts as far south as Hausaland is carefully observed.

It also investigates how, by that time, European Christians carried a war of expansion across the sea to Africa, to conquer non-Christian societies through colonization and Christianization. The leading role of the Portuguese in finding the way of coming into contact with, the legendary Prester John of the Indies attached to the mysterious call from Ethiopia, and thereafter with, the two strong kings – Mani of Kongo and Mwene of Mutapa in today's Zimbabwe and Mozambique are emphasized.

Narrating about Ethiopia of 1500-1800, it evidently revises the talk between Emperor Lebna Dengel and the Portuguese Ambassador, Dom Rodrigo de Lema in 1520,

which summarized the need for commercial and military alliance of both Christian states. As was indicated by Francisco Alvares, this connection was known as True Relation of the lands of Prester John, the sole description by an outsider of Ethiopia in the age of its glory. King Galawdewos (1540-59), a gifted, scholarly and deeply religious monarch, who had been supported by the Portuguese and defeated the Muslim Gragn in 1541, was proved to be worthy of the title Prester John. He was also encountered, later on, with the Jesuit mission, where he expounded the Alexandrian Christology and defended the peculiar Ethiopian rites as was also confirmed by John Baur in his book, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa* [I compared it].

Finally, the attempt of the Portuguese to rebaptize the Ethiopian Christians, which evoked a rebellion that caused the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1632 by Fasilads, and the halt of Ethiopian official contacts with western Christendom, until 1830, when a new era of relations began, with the arrival of the Protestant mission, is made plain.

Part II presents a picture of Africa of 1780-1890. It narrates about the anti-slavery agitation, the beginning and flourishing of Protestantism, the advance of Islam, the case of Kongo, South Africa, Khoi; the age of the Ethiopian Princes, Tewodros to Menelik; the Catholic revival, Verona Fathers and White Fathers, missionary characteristics and life-style, Christianity, civilization, and commerce; Crowther and the Niger diocese, Yoruba Christianity, Buganda, revival in the Kongo and the Niger purge.

The penetration of Protestant missions into Sierra Leone and Kongo in West Africa and thereafter to South Africa, and the lower response of the inhabitants as compared with the onward marching of Islam is nicely explained. It thoroughly outlines the development of African clergy in remarkable number, of which Crowther was the first bishop to be ordained in 1843, where as by 1899 at least 100 West African 'native clergy' had followed him. The destruction of the Niger diocese and Crowther's keeping hold of the Delta Church, the handing over of the whole country to the White Fathers and the development of an African Church with a mind of its own are issues well elaborated in this part.

Part III treats aspects related to the context of Christian conversion from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. It also deals with the partition of Africa which had taken place at large in 1890s, whose consequences led to the colonial revolution. A room is devoted to explain, how Islam had, for the first time, established indigenous communities as far inland as around Tabora and Ujiji or among the Yao and the Baganda, followed by the steadily advancing Islamization of much of West and East Africa which had marked African religious history of the scramble period. The changing shape of missionary endeavour, the ownership of land by missionaries whose positive motives of converting, educating, or protecting the natives from injustice had turned away into large commercial benefit, in many parts is satisfactorily digested. Moreover, the idea of Ethiopianism with its varieties as a religious nationalistic movement, that attempts to escape the most glaring aspect of white culture domination, through the establishment of an African black variant, often assuming the organizational forms of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which spread among African Churches is given attention.

The last two chapters tell us the recent state of African Churches and their leadership with a highlight to the waves of secessions, the dissimilarities between Independency, Prophetism and Zionism, how a significant number of black Christians belonged, particularly, to Independency Church by the 1950s.

The spreading everywhere of Black National Organizations which, grounded upon far more than 90 per cent of the population, in this period, is clearly described. The massacre of the entire Ethiopian monastic community of Dabra Libanos in 1937 that fol-

lowed the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, and the emerging of the fundamentalist neo-Calvinist theology which described apartheid as an issue of faith, in South Africa, within the spiritual context of Afrikaner nationalism, in one way or another contributed, to reinforcing black nationalism elsewhere in Africa. Black nationalism assumed an anti-Christian and still more an anti-missionary face. Christianity was damned as the fourth wheel of the white man's chariot in the heat of the 1950s. The Churches of the moment became contestants for political rather than ecclesiastical control. Politically, the Churches north of the Zimbazi were clearly turning to the "left" while the south remained equally emphatically "right". Many missionaries could see such prospects only with foreboding, expressions of the advance of 'communism'. A number of African nationalists were still unsure whether the missionary Churches should be seen as friend or foe. It was a period of transition in which Churches of a highly colonial type subsisted side by side with signs of rapid change. Basically the African Churches represented a moderately independent way for the new Christian élite to shape itself, a path which in every country led by the 1940s and 1950s to the formation of political parties. The obvious relationship between the Church institutions and political parties is adequately painted. The mention of men like Levi Mumba or Dr Banda or Kenneth Kaunda, in central Africa, and Luthuli, Z.K. Matthews, and Oliver Tambo in English-speaking Africa, who belonged at one and the same time to a Church world, and a political world, makes the relationship very clear.

Finally, an account is made, about the diminishing growth of the leading Protestant adaptationist theory in the East and the revival of Catholicism after the emergence of a book of essays entitled *Des Prêtres noirs s'interrogent*. Its authors were a dozen young black priests from Dahomey, Togo, Cameroon, the Belgian Congo, and Rwanda, who had studied in Rome, Louvain or Paris and had been influenced not by missionaries but by the new wave of West European progressive theory of Congar, Danielou, and De Lubac. How these African priests were able to earth the themes of the book within the African Church, and how they were, far from being suppressed, soon being made leaders, bishops or professors in the newly developed universities, and that in the end the 1950s was a decade less of achievement than of promise are deeply surveyed.

All the parts of the book attempt to chart different aspects of the Church in Africa over the course of five hundred years. They discuss how Christianity provided the constitutive identity of historic Ethiopia from long before the fifteenth century, and from the nineteenth how it entered decisively into the life and culture of an increasing number of other African peoples. Furthermore, they elaborate how African Christians have become a major part of the world Church, in the course of the twentieth century, and the powerful Christian element, without which the whole modern African history would have been hardly intelligible.

Hastings's monograph, backed by deep scholarly experiences and the tradition of the Oxford University Press, is a major volume of great importance in which there is something new for a reader of advanced standard.

*Getnet Tamene*