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***A Global Mennonite History: Volume One: Africa.* By Alemu Checoles and others. General editors John A. Lapp and Snyder Arnold. Ontario: Pandora, 2003. 320 pp. \ \$32.00 paper.**

Edwin A. Gimode

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By the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Catholic-affiliated organizations increasingly provided funding for mission initiatives. In the early twentieth century, the discourse about “ethical” rules also opened new opportunities for Catholic orphanages, schools, and hospitals to receive government funding. The schools especially, including schools for girls run by orders of nuns such as the Ursulines and Franciscan Sisters, were significant in establishing a Catholic presence.

After three opening chapters that examine the religious climate at the level of the archipelago, each of the following chapters focuses on a specific island or region. Six of these set out the church history in Eastern Indonesia including the Moluccas and Kendari; one examines Central Java; and one chapter combines Bangka, Borneo, and Sumatra. Against this broad sweep of geography and time, Steenbrink sometimes writes about colorful personalities and local relationships. His closing chapter steps back from such particulars to question how conversion to the world religions occurs, and to assess the interplay of government and mission in a colonial setting. The mission was a “complementary reinforcement” of the Administration, Steenbrink concludes (225), although it is also easy to qualify that generalization with the rich materials he presents to the reader. Local representatives of the Administration sometimes thwarted the Catholic presence, suggesting a less-than-complementary relationship.

The narrative history takes up only half of the book. The second half consists of a selection of primary documents that complement the story. By far the majority of these are in Dutch (some are in Latin and Malay), but each has an English summary at its beginning. These documents—many from clergy and civil servants who filled various posts within their respective organizations—will be a great boon to scholars who want to mine them for their own purposes.

Together the narrative portion and the primary documents represent an important contribution to the history of Christianity in Indonesia. Steenbrink’s previous scholarship on Indonesian Islam, his friendships with Indonesians from both Muslim and Christian backgrounds, and his deep ecumenical bent contribute to the balanced tone of this history. We can look forward to the second volume when the story of Catholics in Indonesia continues.

Rita Smith Kipp

Sewanee: the University of the South

A Global Mennonite History: Volume One: Africa. By **Alemu Checoles** and others. General editors **John A. Lapp** and **Arnold Snyder**. Ontario: Pandora, 2003. 320 pp. \$32.00 paper.

This is the first of a projected five-volume global history of Mennonite Christianity, written by practicing African Mennonites across the continent. The essay on Central Africa characterizes the evolution of the church in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Angola. In the first half of the twentieth century missionaries are portrayed as being dominating, paternalistic, and not eager to help found a vibrant self-supporting church. The second half of the century belongs to the Africans who seem to start from scratch in leadership training and financing of the church. By the close of the twentieth century, however, the Congolese Mennonites are self-supporting and active in practicing Anabaptist ideals of peace and nonviolence in a

strife-torn lake region of east-central Africa. The lengthy essay on Southern Africa (119–218) details the evolution of the Brethren in Christ (BIC) Church first in Zimbabwe and Zambia and then in the rest of the region. Zimbabwe is depicted as the powerhouse of BIC activities throughout the twentieth century. By the close of the century the scions of the Zimbabwe Church include the Malawi, Mozambique, Botswana, and South Africa BIC congregations.

The Mennonite faith is portrayed as a latecomer in the Eastern African region, starting in Tanzania in 1935 and in Ethiopia after the Second World War. From these two areas, it spreads to Kenya, Djibouti, and Eritrea late in the century. The history of the Ethiopian church makes exciting reading, demonstrating the hostile contexts of the Orthodox Church and the socialist revolution in which it was born and grew. It also brings to the fore the question of cultural identity, where the Anabaptist ideals are imbibed but the Western nametag eschewed in preference for the *Meserete* Kristus Church (MKC). The essay demonstrates the truism that one can be a good Christian while practicing African culture. This is indicative of the ongoing transformation of Anabaptist identity. It brings out the supracultural nature of Christianity. The Mennonite experience in western Africa is essentially a story of the second half of the century, characterized more by cooperation with other evangelical Christian organizations than emphasis on Anabaptist particularisms.

A number of themes run through the text. First is the censure of the missionaries who created a dependency syndrome among the Africans. The fighting of this syndrome became the agenda for the African-led church in the second half of the century. Secondly is the contradiction that attended the patriarchal character of traditional Anabaptist hierarchy viz-a-viz the large percentage of women in the church in comparison with men. Thirdly is the trend of Anabaptists becoming exceedingly exposed to pentecostalism and the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, causing tension between the youth and the elderly. Fourthly is the portrayal of the African culture as being under attack from the missionaries, though the maturing of the African church brings this to question and dismisses the attempted *ethnocide* as non-Christian.

A most obvious weakness in the text is the absence of a succinct characterization of who are the Mennonites, how they are related to the Anabaptists and Brethren in Christ, and why they differ in designation. Such a statement should indicate how these differ from the rest of the evangelicals. It should also state clearly the basic tenets of the Mennonite faith.

The structure and formation of the book is rather unconventional. The essays are not laid out in clearly numbered chapters, making reference and analysis rather problematic. It should be noted that we do not talk of authors and *assistant* authors. Consequently the work on eastern Africa is the work of Checole *and* Asefa. In the last essay, it is enough to have the authors listed at the start, instead of repeating names of authors on the specific countries inside the body of the essay.

The afterword, or elements of it, should have been combined with the foreword because it is perhaps the only essay that comes closest to addressing the core question of who the Anabaptists and/or Mennonites are. The essay

entitled "The African Context" should perhaps have been drastically summarized and combined with the introduction and titled: "Introduction: The African Context of the Mennonites and Brethren in Christ."

Reading the text leaves one with the feeling that, for proper historical sequencing, the first volume should have covered Europe rather than Africa. This ordering would have provided a natural grounding of the series by addressing key questions of origins in the sixteenth century and the spread thereafter and that of the core doctrine and code of ethics of the faith.

Then there is the question of tension in the statistics. At the global level the Mennonites are portrayed as being a minority member of the Christian family, less than a million. Of this number, the majority are in Africa. There is a need to juxtapose these figures alongside those from elsewhere on the planet. The same applies for the statistics for Burkina Faso. Kumedisa states that 40 percent of the Burkinabe are Muslim, 10 percent Christian, and the rest practitioners of indigenous beliefs (297). Traore, on the other, had said they are 50 percent Muslim, 35 percent believers of indigenous traditions, and 15 percent Christian (303). The assertion about the Lobengula congregation being the largest of the BIC certainly calls for caution in the absence of any statistics for purposes of comparison. Page 286 should be edited. The first sentence of the second paragraph is hanging. Perhaps it should be the last sentence of the preceding paragraph. In the same paragraph the word "focus" should be properly spelled. In footnote 1 on page 287, the name is Kwame and not Kawami.

These weaknesses notwithstanding, the volume is a most authoritative statement on the Anabaptist heritage in Africa. It is informative and definitely makes a significant contribution to church historiography, not just in Africa but at the global level.

Edwin A. Gimode
Kenyatta University

***Foucault and Augustine: Reconsidering Power and Love.* By J. Joyce Schuld.**

Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003. x + 299 pp. \$55.00 cloth; \$25 paper.

Two decades after his death, Michel Foucault's resurrection as a Christian theologian *malgré tout* seems all but certified. Foucault's testamentary embargo on the drafts for volume 4 of his *History of Sexuality* makes the field of early Christianity, including Augustine, especially inviting territory for those following in his wake, but that is not the primary concern of the present study, which strives to synthesize the social theories of these two authors across their full extent. Its method, pursued through five big and impressively abstract chapters of conceptual summary and analysis, is to stage a "dialogue" between the premodern Augustine and the postmodern Foucault, in which each by "extending the reach of the other" (79) will contribute to demonstrating "what has been theologically lost, subjugated, or colonized to serve nontheological aims in modern culture" (6). J. Joyce Schuld has read more Augustine and (especially Anglophone Roman Catholic) Augustinian scholarship than Foucault had time for and at least as much Foucault as can be had in English. Her exegeses are unfailingly lucid, and she rarely coerces her subjects beyond reason. Theologians in search of yet another "Augustine"