

like project proposals than final analysis. They present a helpful overview of approaches and conclusions, but it remains at a general level and rarely gives a thorough examination of the issues. For example, how in specific terms is health collaboration enabled and where specifically is the faith-based perspective beneficial? The research claims as 'revelatory' some elements that are already well-documented, like the fact that Boko Haram is a complex socio-political entity with a deep history.

Future volumes of research are anticipated. It is to be hoped that the contributors and editors will be able to articulate the significant elements of their work with greater confidence and precision. Their projects are surely worthy of such examination.

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Harald Fischer-Tiné, Stefan Huebner and Ian Tyrrell (eds). 2021. *Spreading Protestant Modernity: Global Perspectives on the Social Work of the YMCA and YWCA, 1889–1970*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, pp. vii + 270, Hb \$68.00. ISBN-13: 9780824884611.

This volume provides a helpful worldwide overview of and several good case studies on the social work of the YMCA and YWCA. Seeking to blur the categories of 'religious' and 'secular' work, the volume focuses on the social, rather than the evangelistic, efforts of the two institutions. The book includes chapters on several Asian and Eastern European countries, as well as the United States and Ethiopia. With only one chapter on the YWCA, the YMCA is the primary focus.

The editors' excellent introductory chapter surveys the geographical spread of the Ys from the late 1800s to the Cold War period, describing the attitudes of Y staff toward different cultures and the different programme emphases. The case study chapters are grouped into regional and chronological segments. The first set describes how the Y promoted modernisation and interacted with nationalisms in various Asian countries in the early 1900s; the second part describes the Y's work in post-WWI Eastern Europe; the third group shows the connections between the Y, middle-class values, and immigration in

the USA; the final chapter describes the leadership development programmes of the Ethiopian YMCA in the mid 1900s.

Overall, the volume argues that the Y 'contributed to the emergence of a global civil society' and was extensively involved in national and reform movements around the world. Several chapters show how it promoted modern and Western ways of life and thought. The Ys brought English-language education, physical-education programmes, nurseries for working mothers, regional sport competitions, and leadership and character training – all of which served, at different times, to promote Western hegemony and/or support various countries' nationalist goals. The movement of practices was not unidirectional, as Ian Tyrrell shows, noting that the rural reconstruction work of Indian YMCA leaders influenced the thinking of Social Gospellers in the USA. Neither were the Y institutions always successful in achieving their aims. Katrin Bromber documents the slowness in training local Ethiopian YMCA leaders, and Doina Anca Cretu shows that while the Romanian YMCA made some progress at ameliorating ethnic tensions between Romanians and Hungarians, it made little headway against rising anti-Semitism.

Several chapters reveal fascinating surprises. While many chapters argue that the Y increasingly soft-pedaled its religious aspects, Ondřej Matějka's chapter on Czechoslovakia explained how the Academic YMCA promoted Barthian neo-orthodoxy as a way of countering vague and fading religiosity that troubled local Y leaders. While most of the volume shows how the Y paved the way for modernisation, the chapter by Paul Hillmer and Ryan Bean illustrates the way one Y programme, the US 'Y-Indian Guides', sought to alleviate one ill of modernity – the alienation of fathers and sons – through a nostalgic return to an imagined indigenous American family lifestyle. Dolf-Alexander Neuhaus uncovers how the Japanese YMCA, bolstered by a strong sense of mission derived from the merging of bushidō and Christianity, clashed with the Korean YMCA during the Japanese occupation. Because of insights like these, this volume makes a good contribution to historians' understanding of variations in these international institutions' histories.

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