

Spreading Protestant Modernity: Global Perspectives on the Social Work of the YMCA and YWCA, 1889–1970. Edited by Harald Fischer-Tiné, Stefan Huebner, and Ian Tyrrell. Perspectives on the Global Past. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2021. vii + 272 pp. \$68.00 hardcover.

Three scholars working in Switzerland, Singapore, and Australia have collaborated to produce this first-rate volume on the global outreach of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). Historians Harald Fischer-Tiné, Stefan Huebner, and Ian Tyrrell have edited ten chapters written by specialists in history and other fields. The book focuses on developments from 1889 to 1970 but also comments on earlier and later events. Chapters gather into four sections which reflect on social work projects in Asia, eastern Europe, the United States, and Ethiopia. The authors discuss a wide range of YMCA and YWCA activities, including physical education, women's programs, language instruction, and support for family relationships. The contributors have utilized a wide range of primary sources, including documents from the Kautz Family YMCA Archives at the University of Minnesota, the World Alliance of YMCAs collection in Geneva, and a variety of local sources.

The editors open this conversation with an introduction which explains the roots and guiding principles of the project: they "argue for understanding the Y as one of the first international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) that was effectively pushing a modernization agenda all over the world" (3). They present the book's focus on the links of the YMCA and YWCA to the social gospel movement, the organizations' contributions to the development of a global civil society, and their promotion of modern theories and technologies of humanitarian education and social work. This introduction effectively documents how the book's chapters add to the rich and growing collection of recent monographs and articles on the worldwide outreach of these associations and other humanitarian organizations.

Three chapters illustrate the scope and approach of the book. Margaret Mih Tillman focuses on the attempts of YWCA staff members from multiple countries to serve the diverse female population of Shanghai in the early twentieth century. Programs provided education for children, tuberculosis treatment, and attempts at labor reforms. The author argues that the association "responded to local, ground-level needs, even while promoting international trends in modern, scientific childcare" (133). Ondřej Matějka examines theological shifts in Czechoslovakia which contrasted the liberal theological assumptions that dominated the directions of many (but not all) YMCA programs in Europe. Josef Hromádka (who later gained attention for his leadership of the Christian Peace Conference) provided direction for an influential student Y ministry during the interwar period which followed the theological lead of scholar Karl Barth and influential YMCA leader Willem Visser 't Hooft. At this time Hromádka and others rejected the practical, ethics-centered approach of the social gospel movement and adopted a Christian path which emphasized a new approach to doctrine. Paul Hillmer and Ryan Bean explore the Y-Indian Guide program in the United States, which attempted to build stronger bonds between fathers and boys from the 1920s into the 1990s. The authors reflect on the use of Native American traditions

as themes for crafts, games, and activities: “Even though the Indian Guides image of Native Americans was naive, conflated, and inaccurate, it also encouraged in many a curiosity about and receptivity and a sense of compassion toward real Native Americans” (230).

The overall quality of this volume is very high, but a few statements in the book appear to exceed the documented evidence. For example, Lou Antolihao’s insightful essay on the use of communication technologies in China, Japan, and the Philippines concludes: “Despite its early advances, the organization eventually declined just as Protestantism failed to advance in these three countries” (76). This claim may have been true to a degree in the short term, but it appears to be an overstatement, especially considering the later number of Protestants in China. Also, Lance Cummings’s fascinating chapter on the methodology of YMCA language instructors states that: “Documents written or produced outside of YMCA leadership were generally considered unarchivable” (207). His chapter does not provide evidence or explanation to support this categorical assertion.

The scope and quality of this book is similar to the recent collection *The YMCA at War: Collaboration and Conflict during the World Wars*, edited by Jeffrey C. Copeland and Yan Xu (Lexington Books, 2018). Both volumes vividly illustrate the diversity of YMCA and YWCA efforts, along with the shared values of humanitarian service which link the outreach programs. These books mark a new wave of creative scholarship which explores the global significance of these organizations’ outreach. Readers will value the multifaceted discussions of multiple debates created as Y movements reached out in many locations. The volumes are the product of cooperation by a network of scholars who share an interest in the organizations’ work around the globe and who build on solid foundations of research expertise, cultural awareness, and scholarly insight. All libraries with a focus on global history should acquire this new volume, which will be useful for scholars and students seeking to understand the dynamics of modern society and culture.

Matthew Lee Miller
University of Northwestern
doi:10.1017/S0009640721002663

***The History of the Congregation of Holy Cross.* By James T. Connelly, C.S.C. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020. xxiii + 390 pp. \$49.00 hardcover.**

Indelibly linked in the American mind with the “Fighting Irish” of Notre Dame, the Congregation of Holy Cross was in fact of French origin. Founded by a priest of the Diocese of LeMans in 1820 as a society of pious laymen, the nascent congregation—known initially as the Brothers of St. Joseph—devoted itself to Catholic primary education, then in a parlous state in the wake of the French Revolution. In 1835, the brothers came under the leadership of Father Basile Moreau, honored today as the Holy Cross founder, and joined by Moreau to a band of priests who were then preaching parish missions under Moreau’s direction. A women’s community was added in 1841, fulfilling Moreau’s then-radical vision of a tripartite religious family of priests, sisters, and lay