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The early mission in South Africa/Die vroeë sending in Suid-Afrika, 1799-1819. Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2005, 272 pp., map, chronology, bibl., index. ISBN: 1-9198525-42-8. By Karel Schoeman.

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Between worlds: German missionaries and the transition from mission to Bantu education in South Africa

(Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2017, xxviii & 265 pp., maps, figs., notes on sources, bibl., index. ISBN 978-1-77614-174-6)

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Chisholm begins by situating her work in the latest historiography of missionaries in education and their role in the colonial project. Among others, authors such as John and Jean Comaroff, Patrick Harries, Stephen Volz, Peter Limb, Ingie Hovland, Jonathan Hyslop, Richard Elphick and Meghan Healy-Clancy receive attention.

Building on these foundations, Chisholm argues that the transition from Mission to Bantu Education, implemented from the mid-1950s, was not a seamless process. However, with the Lutheran theological focus on the conception that mission work should focus on the “inner” (spiritual), rather than the “external” (temporal) sphere, and given the fact that they were Germans who had been heavily influenced by the concept of *Volkestum* (ethnic identity or national ethos) and - to varying degrees - other German nationalist, and Nazi ideologies in the development of educational ideas, the Hermannsburgers “largely shared the racist and anti-Semitic attitudes of their Afrikaner neighbours” (xxvi), complied with the new system and sought to secure their position in the secular state. As the work progresses, it becomes clear that there were differences between individual missionaries, within the Lutheran body, between regions like Natal and the Transvaal and between and among black and white Hermannsburgers (in practice, male Hermannsburgers) on their attitude to politics, the role of missions and the nature of the debates about politics and education. Crucially, these views did not always follow predictable lines. For example, in 1949, Heinz Dehnke, the son of Hermannsburg missionary who was a leading figure in its educational work, argued for the Africanization of mission education to counter what he saw as the “destructive power of Europeanisation on Africans” (18). On the other hand, in 1939, Micah Kgasi, an evangelist who had been trained as a teacher at a Hermannsburg school, argued strongly that Western English-medium schooling was a powerful vehicle towards modernity for Africans.

Usefully, she draws attention to the transnational nature of the missionary educational endeavour. While this has been the focus of considerable attention in the literature on the British Empire, it has been largely neglected in the case of Germany and German missionaries. In one of the recurring (and, for this reader, particularly interesting) themes of the book, the ideological positions of both the missionaries and the communities that they operated in and worked with are placed within a global context. Shifting the focus away from the colonised as passive victims, Chisholm explores some of the ways in which ideas and practices brought from Europe and the USA by missionaries and the colonists who accompanied them interacted with those of local African communities, being modified in the process. The Hermannsburgers’ attitude towards cooperation with a wider Lutheran community, both white and black, varied from time to time and from region to region. Faced with the growing threat of African initiated churches (what Chisholm calls separatist churches) and vacillating degrees of resistance and cooperation from local African communities, they were nevertheless forced to cooperate with other Lutherans from Germany, Sweden, Norway and North America, as well as with their African converts, to a greater degree than they may have originally intended or been comfortable with. Influenced by their rural, artisanal and humble European upbringing, the Hermannsburgers did not necessarily hold that Africans were inferior. They nevertheless largely believed that education should be geared towards

the culture and *Volkstum* or the different “races”. In addition, Africans participated in the production of textbooks in local languages as part of the transnational project adopted by the mission societies under the cloak of expunging European control. In effect though, Bantu Education buttressed control to a degree which had frequently not been envisaged by its missionary proponents.

A further recurring theme is a focus on the central role played by gender in educational policies and practices. Lutheran mission practices and strategies were deeply patriarchal and gendered and educational provision for boys and girls was highly differentiated along lines of gender. Chisholm explores gradual and uneven changes in the nature of the gender system by discussing curricula, moral and sexual disciplinary regimes, and the nature of work assigned to men and women in the mission context.

A final crucial theme is that of (often explosive) relations between students, missionaries, communities and governments (including chiefly government, the state and other forms of authority) which ultimately facilitated the takeover by the state. Student resistance, community and traditional authority power struggles, and compliance or ineffectual opposition by the missionaries interacted to facilitate the rapid transfer to Bantu education. Conflicting regimes of belief and practice, turbulent local conditions and internal dynamics within educational institutions led to schools and education becoming central actors in wider conflicts. In the Transvaal, the Bethel Training Institute, a secondary school and teacher training college characterised by a long history of conflict was set on fire by its students in 1953. Chisholm clearly reveals that there were differing interpretations held by the students, the staff, the missionary superintendent and the principal about conditions, the rights of students and the degree of freedom which students should be afforded. The cases of Bethanie, Ramokastad and Saron-Phokeng further illustrate how schools were manipulated in power struggles. As initial cooperation and concord unravelled, and chiefs and communities captured control of some schools away from the missionaries, they unintentionally further consolidated the power of the South African state in their takeover of education during the 1940s and 1950s. However, refining the picture further, in her discussion on the transition to Bantu Education in Natal, Chisholm demonstrates that the ways in which the state’s increasing control over education came to be reflected was as product of negotiation. Unable to face the crippling expense which continuing as private schools would have imposed on them, the Hermannsburgers decided to transfer control of these to the state. They nevertheless sought to retain influence over the moral and Christianising mission of their schools. To some degree, they managed to achieve this right into the 1980s. In addition, there was considerable contestation against the extension of control by Africans too. Unintentional spaces were opened for African principals, teachers and school committees in particular to improve their position and forge new identities

- as “authoritative beings taking their work seriously and intervening to ensure improvement” (74).

One of the major strengths of the work lies in Chisholm’s discussion of the changing nature of what was taught in the Hermannsburg schools, how it was taught and how teachers and students experienced it and interacted with it. Building on this, the chapters dealing with Umpumulo Theological Seminary (Chapters 6 and 7) offer deep new insights into how theological education and Black Consciousness were intimately linked to mission responses to the imposition of apartheid and the takeover of mission educational institutions. Umpumulo was one of the key centres in the development and rise of Black Theology and the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s. More surprisingly, I had previously been unaware of the role played by Hermannsburgers in the implementation of a progressive child-centred Primary Education Programme in the unlikely context of the collaborationist Bophuthatswana Bantustan in the 1980s (Chapter 8). Chisholm has echoed Gunther Hermann’s assertion that “Lutherans – black as well as white – took the situation in the Bantustans for granted, accepting the status quo on the basis that the mission should not involve itself with politics” (169-170). It is thus unsurprising that they tacitly supported Mangosuthu Buthelezi and the ethnic nationalism of his Inkatha Party. However, as she points out, they played no significant role in the introduction of the *Ubuntu-botho* (good citizenship) syllabus and the introduction of youth brigades in the schools in the KwaZulu Bantustan (Chapter 9).

Unfortunately, for me the final chapter (Chapter 10) proved to be a slight let-down. I had been looking forward to it throughout my reading as it promised a novel approach reflective of, and hopefully adding to, aspects of my own work on missionaries in Vendaland. Noting that the mission record does not provide sufficient “access to African voices, and also the response of Africans to the Hermannsburgers”, Chisholm ends with a discussion of two autobiographies which cast light on “the experiences of Africans with regard to education by the Hermannsburg Mission” (171). These are Naboth Mokgatle’s *Autobiography of an Unknown South African* (1971) and a book of reminiscences compiled by Heinrich Filter entitled *Paula Dlamini: Servant of Two Kings* (1986). These are contrasted with Micah Kgasi’s *Thutô ke eng? (What is education?)* - (1949 [1939]), a partly autobiographical work discussed in the first chapter. Kgasi was born in the Western Transvaal in the 1870s or early 1880s. Dlamini was probably born in about 1858 and Mokgatle was born in the Western Transvaal in 1911. Chapter 11 “traces the respective routes taken by these three people into and through the mission, and examines their contrasting narratives in terms of race, gender and class” (173). Chisholm is right that these accounts “provide evidence of the complex networks involving missionaries and Africans that were developed over time, and the social fabric that they jointly wove” (180-181). Kgasi was completely opposed to the settler/European strand of their identity,

Dlamini wholeheartedly adopted it and Mokgatle rejected it. In the remainder of the work, her style of writing is nuanced and thought-provoking. Here at the end, I was searching for more – a deeper level of engagement with the texts and the issues raised, and possible inclusion of a wider range of autobiographies (if they are available). Despite this final criticism, this book represents a useful contribution to the mission and educational history scholarship in South Africa and is well worth reading and responding to.

Herlewing: Transvaal en die grensgebiede in die naoorlogsjare, 1902-1910 (Review in Afrikaans and in English available)

(Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2022, 306 pp. ISBN: 9781485313342)

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Herlewing is die vierde boek in die reeks *Imperiale Somer* waarin Karel Schoeman die kolossale projek aanpak om die tydperk tussen 1902 en 1910 in Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis te beskryf. Die eerste boek genaamd *Imperiale Somer* dui as 'n oorliggende beeld op die werke wat volg, maar daar word in diepte gefokus op die verskeie temas van Britse Imperialisme en die heropbou van die Transvaal en die omliggende omgewing onder verskillende gemeenskappe na die Suid-Afrikaanse oorlog. Schoeman fokus veral op die sogenaamde 'Era van Welwillendheid' waar Boere generaals Louis Botha en Jan Smuts die politiese leiding geneem het in die Boer-Britse na-oorlogstryd. Die boek begin veral deur die leser in die tydsges te plaas deur die stemme van die verlede na vorentoe te bring deur die gebruik van briewe, dagboek inskrywings en koerant berigte. Die deeglike beskrywings van die alledaagse ervarings van politikus, toeriste en selfs werknemers maak dit moontlik om met genoegsame inhoud die *Imperiale* tydperk en sy belangrikheid te verstaan, beide vir die algemene leser asook vir navorsers.

Karel Schoeman bly eg aan sy metode om vanuit 'n veelsydige standpunt geskiedenis te skryf. Die eerste hoofstuk bied die bekendstelling van die Transvaalse hoofstad, Pretoria, maar deur die beskrywing van die swart woonbuurt, Marabastad, wys Schoeman hoe daar talle verkillende verhare vanuit dieselfde tydperk te vind is. Die tydperk van Britse imperiale bewind was beskou as 'n tydperk van teepartytjies maar die leser word vinnig herinner dat daar ook talle diskriminasie en armoede geseëvier het. Reg deur beskryf