LANDMARK ESSAYS

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A while ago, I decided that I'd like to get to know more about the Celtic folk group Capercaille, so I bought the CD An Introduction to Capercaillie - Heart of the Highland. This was a big mistake. It's not that the CD is not a good one; far from that. It is wonderful. The problem is that this CD has tracks from all of Capercaille's other albums. Now, whichever CD of theirs I buy, I'll always have one or two the tracks already, which is a bit of a disappointment.

The reason I mention this, is that I have just been reading Landmark Essays in Mission and World Christianity (American Society of Missiology). This is a truly excellent book, which contains some of the best essays about the spread of the Church that you can find anywhere.

The flaw of the excluded middle by Paul Hiebert is a paper which should be compulsary reading for every missionary trained in the West. You cannot overestimate the importance of what Hiebert has to say in this essay - one day I'll get round to reviewing it properly - but for now, take my word for it.

The same could be said about Andrew Walls' phenomenal, *The Gospel as prisoner and liberator of culture.* I would go so far as to say that you cannot claim to have studied church history or the spread of the Christian faith if you are not familiar with the concepts in Wall's paper. It is of vital importance.

This book is full of amazing, good stuff. If you have even a passing interest in missiology or the history of the Christian faith, then you must read these essays. The problem is, that anyone who does have such an interest, will probably already have read a few of the essays and probably owns some of the books in which the papers were orignally published. If it wasn't for the fact that I could get a borrow a library copy (working for a mission organisation, has some real advanatages), I would not have got to read it. I would be very unlikely to buy a book like this when I already own chunks of it in different formats.

However, if you are new to the study of missiology and you want a very good introduction to breadth of the subject, you could do much worse than reading Landmark Essays in Mission and World Christianity. But don't blame me if a few years later you find yourself buying books which contain essays that you already own.