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T. Jack Thompson was a historian of Christianity in Africa and of Presbyterian missions in Africa, subjects which were informed by his years as a missionary in Malawi and by a lifelong commitment to the country.

Jack arrived in Malawi in 1970 as a missionary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland having studied History at Queen’s University Belfast. His first posting was to the Secondary School at the historic Livingstonia Mission where he proved to be an inspiring teacher and one who formed long-lasting friendships with many of his students. He was also the prime mover in the establishment of the Livingstonia Museum, preserving and displaying artefacts and documents to show the development of the Mission and its influence within the Malawi nation and beyond. Jack was particularly engaged with the Ngoni – their language, culture and history. It was a great source of pride to Jack that he was given the clan name “Jere” and adopted into the Ngoni royal family. A lecture from Jack became a regular fixture at anniversary events of Livingstonia Mission, particularly in the Ngoni areas. He completed his service in Malawi in 1983, having served for his last few years as Director of Theological Education by Extension (TEEM) in Blantyre.

Jack taught African Christianity and the history of missions from 1983 in the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, where he inspired and challenged mission-partners in training with an historical view of their vocation. His lessons took a thorny issue of cross-cultural engagement, an historical example or two of the way in which it had been addressed before, and provoked the class to examine the historical evidence and think about how they might approach the issue. Those who had been sceptical about the need for history lessons saw the relevance of a proper understanding of the past to be able to act well in the present. From 1994 he taught in the School of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh. Following Andrew Walls and David Kerr, Jack was Director of the Centre for the study of non-western Christianity (now the Centre for the study of World Christianity) from 2004 until his retirement in 2008. After retirement
he remained an active honorary fellow. In Edinburgh he supervised a generation of doctoral students with perspicacity, wit and care. Insightful comments about African history, an important scholarly work or grammatical constructions were interspersed with anecdotes from Malawi. He also supported the Yale-Edinburgh conferences on the history of the missionary movement and World Christianity, which had been established from 1991 by Walls and Lamin Sanneh. Jack and Phyllis opened their Edinburgh home to students, too, and were generous in their hospitality.

Jack's research bore fruit in substantial publications. Chief among them are *Christianity in Northern Malawi: Donald Fraser’s Missionary Methods and Ngoni Culture* (1995), which had been the subject of his doctoral thesis awarded by Edinburgh University in 1980. *Touching the Heart: Xhosa Missionaries to Malawi* (2000), *Ngoni, Xhosa and Scot: Religious and Cultural Interaction in Malawi* (2007); *Light on Darkness; Missionary Photography in Africa in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (2012). He also wrote a history of the Irish Presbyterian Foreign Mission, *Into All the World: A history of 150 years of the overseas work of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland* (1990). Jack was committed to making his scholarship accessible and affordable outside the western world. Two of his volumes, *Touching the Heart* and *Ngoni, Xhosa and Scot*, are published in southern Africa. He kept writing and organising his archival material until the last weeks of his life. One final publication was, “Religion and Mythology in the Chilembwe Rising of 1915 in Nyasaland and the Easter Rising of 1916 in Ireland: Preparing for the End Times?” which is published in *Studies in World Christianity*, 23:1 (2017).

During his years in Edinburgh, Jack's interest in Africa prompted him to facilitate contemporary partnerships between Scotland and Malawi that built on the best of the missionary work he had researched. He chaired the Scotland-Malawi Network, formed in 1992 to support the new democratic era in Malawi. He was a member of the group convened in 2002 to lay plans for the formation of the Scotland-Malawi Partnership, a civil society network to encourage links between the two nations. When it was formally constituted in 2005 he became Vice-Chair of the Board. He also worked for a counterpart organisation in Malawi, which resulted in the Malawi-Scotland Partnership. He took a leading role in the Higher Education dimension of the Partnership and, in retirement, he spent a year as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Livingstonia, Malawi.

Jack was an accomplished historian, a lively teacher and a conscientious and successful doctoral supervisor. He was a Christian internationalist, committed to cross-cultural engagement with contacts across the globe but his