We conclude that faith is awakened by the message, and the message that awakens it comes through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17 NEB).

“Messenger” is an acceptable translation of apostolos, the New Testament term that best characterizes a missionary. Missionaries have always been people sent to convey the faith-awakening message across various frontiers. The writers for this issue of the Occasional Bulletin discuss the implications of that message as well as its communication in today’s pluralistic world.

Carl E. Braaten probes the missiological significance of a question Jesus asked his earliest messengers: “Who do you say that I am?” How can we reconcile the uniqueness of Christ with his universality? Braaten argues that Christians should not be afraid of dialogue with people of other faiths, and he affirms a conviction that the ultimate Lordship of Christ over the world will include his rule over all its religions.

Our series on “Mission in the 1980s” was launched one year ago, in January 1979, with an article by Bishop Stephen Neill. In this first issue of the 1980s, we are pleased to present two viewpoints—one by Maryknoll Sister Barbara Hendricks, and the other by Bishop Desmond Tutu, general secretary of the South African Council of Churches.

In “Wilhelm Schmidt’s Legacy,” Louis J. Luzbetak portrays a German anthropologist who pioneered for the Roman Catholic Society of the Divine Word in the study of non-Western cultures. Schmidt’s own intention to serve overseas was not realized, but in his long career as a scholar he never lost sight of the fact that he belonged to a mission society and that it was ultimately the missionary cause to which he had dedicated his life.

Wing-hung Lam analyzes five different patterns of theological construction by Chinese intellectuals, beginning in the late 1920s following a temporary exodus of foreign missionaries from China. The indigenization of theology, in that country as elsewhere, is a Christian response to the search for cultural identity: “to render Christianity suitable to the needs of the Chinese and to accommodate it to the customs, environment, history, and thinking of the Chinese culture.”

Richard Friedli, a Swiss Dominican missiologist, takes theological contextualization, and especially the cultural implications of the incarnation, as his starting point in a discussion of interfaith dialogue. Insisting that no Christian can claim to represent Christ in the fullness of his incarnate Person, Friedli cautions us to main-tain “a spirituality, which is at the same time open and in its very essence interreligious.”

In “Leprosy: A Continuing Concern for Mission,” Wendy P. Littman traces the origins of the stigma associated with that age-old disease. She finds that a strictly secular approach to the problem is insufficient, and that leprosy patients still have special needs that can be met only by those motivated by commitment to a spiritual heritage and by the respect for life that is an outgrowth of Christian faith.
Who Do We Say That He Is?
On the Uniqueness and Universality of Jesus Christ

Carl E. Braaten

I. The Heritage of Exclusiveness

The true identity of Jesus Christ has been mediated to us today in texts and traditions which unanimously confess that he is the exclusive medium of eschatological salvation. Acts 4:12 is the classical locus of this Christological exclusiveness: “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Christian exclusiveness has found several ways of manifesting itself. Traditionally, the Catholic type has focused on the church. “Outside the church there is no salvation.” The statement first appeared in one of Cyprian’s letters in the third century. It was reiterated in the papal bull Unam sanctam of Boniface VIII in 1302. “We believe that there is one holy catholic and apostolic church . . . outside of which there is no salvation . . . We declare that it is necessary for salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.” Traditionally, the Protestant type has felt uncomfortable with the ecclesiocentric form of Roman Catholic exclusivism. It has focused instead on faith, quoting passages like John 3:18: “He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” Also Romans 10:17: “So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ.”

The heritage of Christian exclusiveness runs deep into the New Testament and dominates the tradition from earliest times to the present. But from the beginning the very same tradition has created loopholes to provide people outside the Christian circle with the chance of salvation. Catholics of the most exclusive type conceded that people outside the church can be saved through the loopholes of “invincible ignorance” or “baptism by desire.” Protestants in the older line of dogmatics appealed to 1 Peter 3:19, which states that Christ preached to the spirits in prison, as proof that people who did not encounter Christ and believe in this life would be given a “second chance” on the threshold of the future life. Sometimes they also talked about the invisible church whose limits are unknown, and thus presumably might also include some of the “noble pagans.” The judgment that reservations will be taken in heaven only for Christians, that only those who accept Christ by faith in this life or belong to his church, has seemed too harsh to be taken in a strictly literal sense.

Currently, there are voices being raised against every sort of Christian exclusivism, including all the loopholes that continue to reinforce the underlying premise. The focus now takes the form of the question whether there is full and equal salvation through the non-Christian religions. The loopholes only provided an exceptional way of salvation. What is needed now is a full acknowledgment of the other major religions as valid ways of salvation. We are living in one world with a plurality of cultures, religions, and ideologies. Either we acknowledge the legitimacy of this pluralism, or we threaten the possibility of living together in a peaceful world. We expect governments, corporations, and other agencies to do their part to cooperate in establishing conditions which drive toward the unity of the human world without diminishing the plurality of its forms. Why should not the religions of the world do their part? Christianity has begun to open up channels of dialogue with people of other religions. But many feel that the exclusivist premise that it brings to the dialogue clogs the channels and makes a real exchange impossible.

Professor John Hick of Birmingham, England has taken the lead among Protestants in calling for a “Copernican revolution,” which aims to overturn the Christological dogma at the bottom of all Christian exclusivism. It is not enough to broaden the way of Christian salvation by speaking with Tillich of a “latent church” or with Rahner of “anonymous Christianity.” Those are the convenient modern loopholes. He calls them “epicycles.” So Hick goes deeper and lays the ax at the Christological roots of exclusivism. He says, “For understood literally the Son of God, God the Son, God-incarnate language implies that God can be adequately known and responded to only through Jesus; and the whole religious life of mankind, beyond the stream of Judaic-Christian faith is thus by implication excluded as lying outside the sphere of salvation.” Pluralism is compatible with the unity of all humankind if we acknowledge that the various streams of religion in the world carry the same waters of salvation leading to eternal life with God. God is at the center of the universe of faiths; Jesus is only one of the many ways—the Christian way—that leads to God. He is not the one and only Son of God, Lord of the world, and Savior of humankind. Each religion has its own, and they do the job in their own way. In this way John Hick has successfully rooted out the last vestige of exclusivism.

On the Catholic side the left wing of Rahner’s school has also abandoned the Christian claim that Jesus Christ is “different,” “decisive,” “unique,” “normative,” or “final,” topping the pillar on which the traditional claims to exclusiveness lean. For surely it makes no sense to argue that believing in Jesus Christ or belonging to his church are essential for salvation, if he is ultimately only one among many founders pointing the way to God. Paul Knitter has made the clearest case I know among Catholics for a revision of the traditional claim that Jesus Christ is the one and only Savior of humankind, that he is the once-for-all revelation of God’s eschatological salvation in store for the whole world. In “A Critique of Hans Küng’s On Being a Christian,” Knitter like Hick lays his ax at the roots not only of the Christological dogma but of the apostolic kerygma as well. His motive is the same—to pave the way for dialogue with other religions that won’t be “hamstrung” by the exclusivist mindset. He writes, “Intellectually and psychologically it is not possible to give oneself over wholly to the meaning and message of Jesus and at the same time recognize the possibility that other ‘saviors’ have carried out the same function for

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other people?" He answers "yes" and argues "that the claim for Jesus' exclusive uniqueness does not form part of the central assertions of Christian texts." The claim that salvation takes place in Jesus only can be chalked up to "the historically conditioned world view and thought-patterns of the time." Knitter concludes that there is no exclusive claim that belongs to the core of the Christian message. I think he would agree with Harnack that the exclusive element is not part of the kernel, but only the husk of the gospel. Reading Hick and Knitter is an experience of déjà vu.

Far to the right of this antielexclusivist position we find a new affirmation of the heritage of exclusiveness among the neo-evangelicals who are conducting a vigorous campaign against every form of universalism. The idea that there is salvation in the non-Christian religions is denied point-blank. At Lausanne the evangelicals declared dogmatically that "it is impossible to be a biblical Christian and a universalist simultaneously." They now teach as dogmatic truth and as a criterion of being faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ that all those who die or who have died without conscious faith in Jesus Christ are damned to eternal hell. If people have never heard the gospel and have never had a chance to believe, they are lost anyway. The logic of this position is that children who die in infancy are lost. The mentally retarded are lost. All those who have never heard of Christ are lost. Nevertheless, evangelicals cling to this view as the heart of the gospel and the incentive to mission.

I am convinced and I intend to argue that my friends to the left who teach that there are many saviors to accommodate a pluralistic world and my friends to the right who teach that only those who share their faith will be saved in the end are both wrong. They do not have the truth of the gospel on their side.

II. The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ

The texts and traditions that tell us about Jesus of Nazareth represent him as the expected Messiah of Israel, God's only Son, the Lord of creation, and the Savior of all humanity. We have no non-Christological picture of the historical Jesus. Every recollection of his identity is penetrated by an identification that raises his significance to the highest possible power. If one should wish to subtract all the special titles of identification, one is not left with the identity of Jesus who is really Jesus. One is, rather, left with the question whether or not Jesus of Nazareth every existed or with an empty assertion of his naked historicity. But what of his meaning? What about his true identity?

When John the Baptist wondered about the true identity of Jesus, he asked, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" (Mt. 11:3; Lk. 8:19.) The answer of the early church was clear: Jesus is the One who was to come. He is the Messiah. Similarly, when Jesus asked his disciples on the way to Caesarea Philippi, "Who do men say that I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mk. 8:27; Mt. 16:16). The New Testament abounds with titles that serve to identify the uniqueness of Jesus. The historical Jesus most probably did not designate his true identity in terms of such titles of honor as Christ, Son of God, Lord, Savior, Logos, etc., but the early church did without any shadow of doubt. These titles were conferred upon Jesus in the light of faith in the risen presence of Jesus. These are titles which in the same writings are bestowed upon God. Both God and Jesus are spoken of as Savior. Both God and Jesus are spoken of as Lord. Jesus is the Savior because he will save his people from their sins. Jesus is the Lord because God has raised and exalted him above all others. Jesus is the subject of names that are above all other names because they are the names of God. They speak eloquently of the uniqueness of Jesus. New Testament theologians argue, of course, whether these titles of honor go back to the historical Jesus himself, or whether they have been written back into the Gospel texts from the post-Easter situation of faith. In one sense it doesn't matter which side is correct. For both must agree that the Jesus of history is represented to us in texts and traditions that describe his uniqueness. He is depicted not as a son of God, but as the only begotten Son of God, not as a savior, but as the Savior, not as a lord, but as the Lord, etc. These designations of Jesus as Lord and Savior identify him as the foundation of divine salvation. They are not name-tags loosely attached to the personal reality to which they refer. There is no nominalism intended in the transference of high titles of honor to Jesus of Nazareth. If we strip away the names which are above all the names that generally apply to other human beings, we have no way to speak of the meaning of Jesus. We can speak of him in the symbols of the texts and traditions, or we cannot speak of him at all, unless we fabricate our own image of Jesus and arbitrarily call him what we will. Nothing is more clear in the New Testament and the Christian tradition than the uniqueness of Jesus in whose name alone there is salvation, before whom every knee should bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10-11).
One of the earliest symbols of Christianity was the fish. In Greek the letters that spelled fish—ΙΧΘΥΣ—represented an ancient Christological confession: Jesus Christ Son of God Savior. By what other names can Jesus be known? These are symbols that partake in the reality to which they refer, to use Tillich’s definition of a symbol. Christian faith has no knowledge or interest in Jesus as Jesus, minus the names which symbolize his unique meaning. These symbols have a prehistory in the religions of that time, but when transferred to Jesus they crown him with a significance that underscores his uniqueness. They do not mean that Jesus is unique as every individual is unique. Although he is truly human, these titles place him in a class by himself. He is the one and only Christ, or he is not the Christ at all. He is the one and only Son of God, or he is not God's Son at all. He is the one and only Savior or he is no Savior at all. The exclusive claim is not a footnote to the gospel; it is the gospel itself. Not part of the husk, it is the kernel itself. The answer of the gospel to John the Baptist’s question, “Are you the one who is to come?” is “Yes, and we shall not look for another” (Mt. 11:3).

“All the Christological titles of the texts and traditions of historical biblical and catholic Christianity intend to lift up the uniqueness of Jesus as the living Christ, the risen Lord, and the eschatological Savior of the world. They alone can legitimate the role that Jesus came to assume as the cultic center in primitive Christian worship. Without these titles that acclaim the exclusive uniqueness of Jesus, he loses the vehicles of interpretation by which he is no mere dead hero of the past, buried in the ruins of his own time and place, but the living presence of God in the flesh. These titles—and they alone—tell us what the earliest believers in Jesus thought he was all about. They reveal the true identity of Jesus; at the core of this revelation is the exclusive uniqueness of Jesus in relation to God and his coming kingdom, in relation to the church, and in relation to the entire world of history and nature.

If we do not use these Christological titles as our linguistic access to the knowledge of Jesus’ identity and meaning, then we shall have to find some other way of speaking about him, unless we are to remain silent. Who would we then say that he is, if he is not the one whom the earliest tests and traditions identify as the only true embodiment of God’s word in history? Paul Knitter says that even though we strip away the Christological titles that declare the uniqueness of Jesus, he can still be vitally important to us Christians. But so can Buddha, so can many things. When William Hamilton a decade ago was proclaiming the death of God, he was still clinging to Jesus. When asked, “Why Jesus?” he answered, “I have a hang-up on Jesus.” Similarly, when the authors of the Myth of God Incarnate rejected the dogma of the incarnation as an unacceptable myth, they acknowledged that although they would have to abandon the ontological equation of Jesus with God, they would still go on speaking of Jesus Christ “as if he were God for us” and use language that John Hick calls the “hyperbole of the heart.”

What is the essence of the uniqueness of Jesus? It does not lie in the fact that he was a historical individual who lived once upon a time in Palestine. Every one of us is a unique individual in the sense that none of us has a duplicate. I am the only one who lives inside my skin at this time and place. But the uniqueness of Jesus is sui generis. He died as a unique historical individual at one time and place, under Pontius Pilate just outside the gate, but he was raised to be the living presence of God in every new age and every strange place. The issue of Jesus’ uniqueness finally has to do with the resurrection. “God raised him to life again, setting him free from the pangs of death” (Acts 2:24).

When we confess the uniqueness of Jesus, we do not mean merely that he was a concrete individual man, which he was. We mean that he is the concrete embodiment of universal meaning. The true identity of Jesus was revealed to his disciples only after the resurrection, or at least only then could they begin to understand what he had been disclosing step by step along the way. If we could turn back the reel of history to the days before Easter, if we could only find some tapes or pictures of the man Jesus, if we could read the obituaries that appeared in the Galilean Gazette, I don’t believe that we would gain a deeper insight into the true identity of Jesus. The true identity of Jesus is something which in the last analysis “flesh and blood” cannot reveal to us. More historical information will not solve the riddle of Jesus’ personal identity. If a person looks into the abundant texts and traditions of the Christian past and concludes that Jesus is not the one they say he is, that person may invent other names and labels to transfer to Jesus, but in doing so the person is not adding to the fund of our knowledge about the historical Jesus, but only telling the world where he or she personally stands in relation to him. For the Christological titles that the apostles applied to Jesus were not broadcast on an objective screen of history. They were born in the struggles of following Jesus, of preaching the kerygma of his cross and resurrection, and taking the gospel to the Gentiles. A Christological title is a dialectical statement that lives in the polar tension between subject and object. It says something about Jesus but also about the person making the confession. No one can call Jesus “Lord” except he has been grasped by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3). The statement is not a product of objectifying analysis. Peter’s confession, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,” was an ecstatic statement—a miracle of the mind (Tillich).

The true identity of Jesus can be acknowledged only by faith in him as the risen Lord and the living Christ. We do not expect that anyone will confess the uniqueness of Jesus in the special sense implied by the sum of the Christological titles by means of a historiographical reconstruction of the historical Jesus. That Jesus is dead and buried and will always remain sealed in the tomb to people who do not believe that he now lives freely beyond the limits of his own earthly fate.

III. The Universality of Jesus Christ

The uniqueness of Jesus belongs to the core of the Christian gospel. What is unique about Jesus, however, is precisely his universal meaning. This particular and concrete man, Jesus of Nazareth, is unique because of his universal significance. His uniqueness lies in his universality. If Jesus is the Savior, he is the universal Savior. I cannot confine him to being my personal Savior, merely the focus of my own experience of God.

We are back to the beginning. If Jesus is the unique and universal Savior, how can there be a dialogue with other religions? Are not Christians bound to say that theirs is the only way of salvation, that non-Christians will be saved either by being evangelized here and now or by some loophole or other? We seem to be confronted with a dilemma. If Jesus is the unique and universal
There was a development in which new titles were discovered for Jesus in the hermeneutical process of transmitting the traditional unique and universal Savior. Theology is facing this dilemma.

We do not yet fully know how we shall confess Jesus in the future of the dialogue with other religions. We shall continue to confess him in the language of our familiar texts and traditions. But the universality of Jesus means that he will live in the medium of symbols that may still seem strange to us. Churches and theologians are calling us to a new dialogue with the world religions. I do not have the benefit of personal involvement in any high-level, disciplined, and challenging dialogue with representatives of other religions. What we say now is part of our homework for a task that lies before us. Our churches and theologians are generally not prepared for such a dialogue. I do not want the church of which I am a part to be represented by a theology that has already abandoned the heart of the Christian gospel. We cannot accept the rules of a dialogue that require us to remain silent about what lies at the core of our movement. It is therefore very urgent that we know what we mean by the uniqueness and universality of Jesus Christ.

We have spoken about the uniqueness of Jesus, guided by the import of the major Christological titles applied to him after Easter. But how shall we understand the universality of Jesus?

Christians believe in the universality of salvation in Jesus’ name. It is God’s will that all people shall be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (2 Tim. 2:4). Evangelicals generally accept universal salvation in this sense, as valid in principle for everyone. But they restrict salvation in the end to those who actually hear the gospel and put their faith in Christ. Under this restriction the rift that has been opened up in the world through sin will widen to an eternal chasm, splitting the one world of God’s creation into two irreconcilable halves, only God’s half will be much smaller than the devil’s, in fact, only a remnant of the whole. There is not much for the angels to sing about if the evangelicals get what they want—a heaven sparsely filled with only card-carrying Christians.

Biblical universalism transcends the particularist eschatology of the evangelicals. There are stern warnings in the New Testament threatening eternal perdition. There are reservations; there are qualifications of the universal hope. But these are addressed more to those inside with apparently the right credentials than those outside. “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me” (Mt. 15:8; Mk. 7:6). “It is not those who say to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ who will enter the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 7:21). The New Testament warns of the spiritual danger of using the right evangelical words and ecclesiastical doctrines as the basis of trust and hope. There is spiritual danger in reducing the power and future of the universal Christ to the pinhole size of the believer’s faith or the church’s confession here and now.

New Testament universalism, however, is always a predicate of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, not a metaphysical attribute of the world in process (as in the Origensc doctrine of *apokatasisis ton panton*), or of a saving potential inherent in the world religions, or of an existential possibility universally available to every person in a moment of decision. The uniqueness Christians claim for Jesus as World-Savior lies in the revelation of his eschatological identity constituted by his resurrection victory over death as the “last enemy” of humankind. The uniqueness of Jesus is not a function of our Christian *bikh*. It belongs to him by virtue of his enthronement as the Lord of the coming kingdom. A particularist eschatology can be constructed only by picking particular passages, and choosing to ignore others. What about the universalist thrust in the Pauline theology? “Just as all men die in Adam, so will all be brought to life in Christ” (1 Cor. 15:22). “For in him [Christ] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:19-20). “For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things in earth” (Eph. 1:9-10). “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:10-11). “When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to every one” (1 Cor. 15:28). Here we have the core of the kind of eschatological panentheism that has sparked the imagination of Wolfhart Pannenberg and others. “And he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2). We cannot take time for an exegesis of these passages. But I have piled verse upon verse to create a total impression of the universalizing tendencies in these passages.

The evangelicals ignore anything that smacks of a universal eschatology, preferring instead to hold a monopoly for Christians on the salvation which God in Christ has accomplished for the world, converting their believing in Christ or their belonging to the church into a meritorious thing that earns salvation and insures against damnation. For a long time I was taught some version of this self-centered and vindictive eschatology, but I cannot remember ever literally believing the Christ-diminishing implication that in the end all the bad news piling up against the world would win out against the good news that dawned for the world on the morning of Easter.

In the strength of the Christian belief in the uniqueness and universality of Jesus Christ, it is imperative that Christians cheerfully enter into every arena of witness and dialogue with people of other faiths. “For he who is not against us is on our side” (Lk. 9:50). But what shall we expect to find in a dialogue with other religions? We have encountered the view of Knitter and Hick that there is salvation without Christ in the other religions, and therefore not only outside the church, not only apart from faith in Christ, but also apart from Christ altogether. The coming of Christ is not necessary for the salvation of humanity. They do not deny that there is salvation in Christ for Christians, but they do abandon the hope of the world’s salvation in Christ alone as a chauvinistic doctrine, and along with it, of course, the Christological premise of the uniqueness and universality of Jesus which supports the hope.

The teaching that there is salvation in the other religions is spreading in the churches. No doubt, Rahner’s influence is the ma-
Christian theologians are debating the question whether or not there is salvation in other religions, and taking sides on the issue, without first making clear the model of salvation they have in mind. If a prospector says, "There is gold in those hills," he must know the difference between gold and the other metals. What is the salvation that theologians expect to find or not to find in other religions? Most of the debate so far has taken us nowhere, because vastly different things are meant by salvation. If salvation is whatever you call it, there is no reason for a Christian to deny that there is salvation in other religions. We may speak of salvation on two levels, phenomenologically and theologically. On a purely phenomenological level, there are numerous models of salvation and there are ways of delivering each of the models and making them work. When the nomads needed a land for their salvation, they were promised a land by their God, and they got it, and have suffered ever since. When the slaves in Egypt needed deliverance from oppression for their salvation, God called Moses to lead the exodus out of Egypt. When the wandering people of God needed food for their salvation from hunger, God supplied them with daily manna from above. And the history of salvation went on, creating different models for its expression, but always pointing forward to new dimensions generated by the experience of fundamental lack. Land is needed, but it's not enough. Freedom is needed, but it's not enough. Food is needed, but it's not enough.

If we are told that there is salvation in the other religions, there is no a priori reason to deny it. It depends on what is meant by salvation.

On a theological level salvation is not whatever you want to call it, the fulfillment of every need or the compensation for every lack. I do not deny that we may also speak of salvation in this extended phenomenological sense, with the warning that it has generated much of the confusion in which our topic languishes. Salvation in the Bible is a promise that God offers the world on the horizon of our expectation of personal and universal death. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation because it promises to break open the vicious cycle of death. Death is the power that draws every living thing into its circle. Here I cannot enter into the mystery of death. But if anyone denies the reality of death and its power to insinuate itself as the eschaton of all life, threatening the very conditions of the possibility of meaningful existence, I would take a patient "wait and see" attitude. It is just a question of time before death will punctuate everybody's personal story with its own annihilating force. We cannot derive a final meaning for life on this side of death. We can gain the partial salvation we are willing to pay for, but none of these techniques of salvation can succeed in buying off death.

Salvation in the New Testament is what God has done to death in the resurrection of Jesus. Salvation is what happens to you and me and the whole world in spite of death, if the resurrection of Jesus means what the apostolic kerygma and the catholic dogma have interpreted it to mean. The story of salvation is a drama of death and resurrection, whatever other human personal and social problems the word might trade on. The gospel is the announcement that in one man's history death is no longer the eschaton, but was only the second to last thing. It has now become past history. Death lies behind Jesus, qualifying him to lead the procession from death unto new life. Since death is what separates the person from God in the end, only that power which transcends death can liberate the person for eternal life with God. This is the meaning of salvation in the biblical Christian sense. It is eschatological salvation, because the God who raised Jesus from the dead has overcome death as the final eschaton of life. Our final salvation lies in the eschatological future when our own death will be put behind us. This does not mean that there is no salvation in the present, no realized aspect of salvation. It means that the salvation we enjoy now is like borrowing from the future, living now as though our future could already be practiced in the present, because of our union with the risen Christ through faith and hope.

Theologians who speak of salvation in the non-Christian religions should tell us if it is the same salvation that God has promised the world by raising Jesus from the dead. The resurrection gospel is the criterion of the meaning of salvation in the New Testament sense. When Christians enter into dialogue with persons of other religions, they must do their utmost to communicate what they mean by the assertion that Jesus lives and explain how this gospel intersects the hopes and fears of every person whose fate is to anticipate death as the final eschaton. If the dialogue shows that other religions are not much moved by the problem of death, that the problem of death is limited to a particular way of viewing the human predicament, we would have to say that the encounter with Christianity itself becomes the occasion for everyone to see that the problem of death arises out of the structure of existence itself. The gospel falls upon the human situation and illuminates the universal existential problem. This is the hypothesis that Christians bring into an interreligious dialogue. A Christology that is silent about the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is not worthy of the Christian name and should not be called Christology at all.

The new challenge to Christology is to speak of the identity of Jesus Christ in the context of the world religions and secular culture. In the past, theology has dealt with the religions from afar, giving us a Christian interpretation of the non-Christian religions.
from a ready-made theological point of view. In a sense this is all we can do prior to the event of dialogue. But if we really believe that the uniqueness of Jesus lies in his universality, that his identity is always being mediated through the concrete events of history, then we should be open to exploring what the non-Christian religions can contribute to our understanding of the universal identity of Jesus Christ. The history of the religions once contributed all the Christological titles to the interpretation of the Jesus-event. Some of them were rooted in the ancient Hebrew traditions, others not, but all of them were transformed in the process of being assimilated into the traditions about Jesus. That process is still going on in the openness of world history, engendered by the universal missionary witness to Jesus as the Christ, the Lord and Savior of the world.

I asked one of my African graduate students, "If you were to appropriate a religious symbol of highest significance from the framework of traditional African religious experience, what would you call Jesus?"

His answer was "The ancestor."

I responded, "In the past the missionary told you what you should or should not say, repeating the texts and traditions of his own religious context. But now you must decide for yourself whether it is appropriate to call Jesus the ancestor, whether that would be faithful to the biblical text and relevant to the African context. I don't know." Then I muttered something about, "Before Abraham was, I am," not really knowing what it might mean today.

The identity of Jesus cannot be limited to the particular contexts of our past. Christology is not static. New contexts have made it possible for new meanings to blossom on old texts. They relate to the concrete struggles of people for life, health, wholeness, fulfillment, salvation. In India Jesus is pictured by some as the Avatar. To us this means practically nothing, but in India possibly a great deal. In many parts of the Third World, Jesus is the liberator. Liberation has become the focal image of a whole new Christology. To us it may also mean something, but not exactly the same as to people suffering the conditions of poverty, exploitation, and oppression. In the patristic era Jesus was called the Logos, and that carried a metaphysical meaning quite different from the same word in the Gospel of John. In Nazi Germany, Martin Niemöller preached about Jesus as the true Fuhrer. In the context of Western atheism and the trend to depersonalization in technological society, Dorothy Sölle has animated the theme of Jesus as the "representative." Similar titles, such as "advocate," "delegate," and "deputy," have been used to speak of the meaning of Jesus for modern people, and perhaps soon, if not already, someone in the Far East will suggest "chairman." Every culture has to ask of Jesus in its own way, "Are you the One who is to come, or do we look for another?" Every people will have to answer, "Who do you say that I am?" in a language they can understand. The crucifix of Jesus as a tortured Peruvian Indian on the cover of Gustavo Gutiérrez's book Theology of Liberation could not have been sculpted in another part of the world.

The point we have been making is that the exclusive uniqueness of Jesus, mediated by the texts and traditions that announce his resurrection as the living Lord, drives us to discover his universal significance, not in another world after this one, but in the real contexts of ongoing history. His true identity is still being disclosed in the encounter of the gospel with the world religions. It is not a case of the gospel meeting the world religions down a one-way street, laying on them the traditional symbols of Christology and receiving nothing back. The dialogue will be a two-way street, in which the condition of openness to the other religions will be motivated by a knowledge that they also somehow speak of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament is the paradigm case of how one religion of another time and place can speak of Jesus Christ in a pro-

The 1980 annual meeting of the American Society of Missiology will be held August 22-24 in the new Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois. Theme of the meeting is "World Evangelization—Convergence or Divergence?" The annual meeting of the Association of Professors of Mission will be held in the same place, August 21-22. For further information contact: Wilbert R. Shenk, Secretary-Treasurer of the ASM, Box 1092, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.

Theology of Liberation

Gustavo Gutierrez's book

Announcing
Notes


5. Ibid., p. 156.


7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., p. 154.


19. The role of “following Jesus” in Christology has been recently stressed by Jon Sobrino in *Christology at the Crossroads* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1978).


21. Of course, no one holding such a view would acknowledge that granting such a causal role to faith and/or membership in the church could be regarded as “a meritorious thing that earns salvation.”


23. Our point is that evangelical particularity and catholic universality are both inherent in the biblical picture of the historical Jesus of Nazareth as the resurrected Christ of God.


25. The notion of two ways of salvation has been clearly proposed by H. R. Schlette, *Colloquium salutis—Christen und Nichtchristen heute* (Cologne, 1965); also “Einige Thesen zum Selbstverständnis der Theologie angesichts der Religionen,” in *Gott in Welt II*, ed. J. B. Metz (Freiburg: Herder, 1964), pp. 306–16.
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Mission in the 1980s: Two Viewpoints

I. Barbara Hendricks, M.M.

The article by Carl E. Braaten in this issue of the Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research is a paper read at the annual meeting of the American Society of Missiology in Techny, Illinois, June 15-17, 1979. I am impressed by Braaten’s ability to define and describe what seems to me the major issue facing those concerned with world mission today: the clear articulation of a biblical basis for mission. The very theme of the meeting, “For God’s Pluralistic World: An Ultimate Gospel,” suggests that amid many credal confessions and multiple theologies, as well as theories of mission, there is a growing sense that the numerous expressions of Christian mission may in fact have a common basis for communion in the contemporary world.

Braaten’s paper, treating the uniqueness and universality of Jesus Christ, stands out for me as the core concern for world mission in the 1980s. It is a major contribution to theological reflection among missiologists and missionaries who now experience the urgency to explore and construct a solid biblical theology of mission for the new era of mission already upon us.

Professor Braaten’s article masterfully builds a synthesis that weaves together the exclusiveness of salvation in Jesus Christ and the universality of God’s redeeming mission among all peoples. In so doing he rejects both the particularist eschatology of many evangelicals and the universalist claims of theologians such as Knitter and Hick, which argue that Jesus’ exclusive uniqueness does not form part of the central assertions of Christian texts.

There are signs emerging on every continent among missionaries that in the decade of the 1980s there will be an intensification of the concern for the Christo-centrality of the gospel mission. This seems to indicate that we are penetrating the surface concerns of mission, areas such as mission methods, programs, projects, and short-term planning, and beginning to struggle at a deeper level of mission awareness and meaning—the dynamic center of all mission, the person and message of Jesus Christ.

This search to reidentify the core of Christian faith and, thus, cut through the periphery of accumulated past cultural forms, rituals, and dogmas no longer experienced as relevant and meaningful is reflected not only in missionary consultations among academicians but quite emphatically among grassroot missionaries. The mission institutes and renewal programs with which I come into contact attest to the fact that both returned missionaries and those preparing for overseas ministries are experiencing a growing awareness that the spirituality of the missionary is a key factor in the proclamation and sharing of the gospel message in the context of cross-cultural mission. It is becoming clear that we are sent in mission with the primary and essential goal of sharing our faith experience of Jesus Christ rather than that of teaching doctrinal concepts.

One hopes (and I do have this hope) that the decade ahead will show a growth in ecumenical dialogue, worship, and joint action among Christian missionaries, but also among believers of other great religions. Along with a rediscovery of the essentials of the Christian message (perhaps because of this) there should continue to develop a stronger sense among missionaries of our authentic Christian identity, which will enable us to discover the beauty and truth of God’s mission at work in all cultures and systems of belief. Growth in personal and communal identity, if authentically Christian, should increase our capacity for listening, discovering, and affirming that which the Spirit is doing everywhere among all peoples on the earth and which is embodied and spoken in Jesus Christ and in the communities gathered in his name to proclaim gospel faith, hope, and love.

1. The Global Context of Mission

As Christianity comes to the final decades of its second millennium, the earth’s peoples are struggling through the process of planetary globalization. This process is both ecstatic and pain-ridden. Tightly knotted systems of intercommunication are developing instantaneous reply of human events in our increasingly urbanized global world and either foster human solidarity with relationships of trust, respect, care, and concern, or build further barriers of fear, animosity, violence, and massive destruction. We live at a transitional moment of history, which Dr. Ralph Buultjens analyzes as the “intersection of two global revolutions.”

There is a horizontal revolution taking place in which there is a rearrangement and diffusion of global power, making it more and more difficult for one nation or one group of nations to dictate its preferences to others. We recognize the signs of this global revolution in the movement toward a new international order, in natural resource shortages, and in the political crisis of modern Marxism as well as in the economic crisis of modern capitalism. The second global revolution described by Buultjens is a vertical revolution, which involves the new historical perception of the interaction between the present and the future. Now for the first time in the human experience we are beginning to understand the connection between our time and the next. Through contemporary research and study we can look back and see the growth and development of humankind during a period of five thousand years of documented history. Now aware of the interdependence of the present and the future, we can no longer be blind to the consequences of our environmental behavior, as were our ancestors.

Problems such as the potential destruction by humans of vital environmental elements; the need of a global plan for the maintenance of food reserves and for accelerated world agricultural development; the effective and just distribution of raw materials and energy sources; the issues of population growth, utilization of marine resources, human settlements, water provision, desert expansion, space exploration and research; the control of the arms race and the prevention of nuclear holocaust, as well as the regulation and control of conglomerate multinational corporations are some of the major factors in the vertical revolution taking place in our times.

Barbara Hendricks, M.M., President of the Maryknoll Sisters Community from 1970 to 1978, is currently a student in the doctoral program at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. She served as a teacher among the Chinese people in New York City, 1948-1953, and with young Christian worker groups (JOC) in Peru from 1953-1970. She expects to return to Peru in late 1980.
Human societies have never before been faced with revolutions of such magnitude and scope at the same period of history. The Christian community in world mission today, and each individual missioner, not only enters into a particular cultural context, but is simultaneously plunged into a global context that invades and permeates the environment of every local cultural context. This is a unique moment in the history of Christian mission. The decade of the 1980s will demand of us an enlightened analysis of what is happening internationally, nationally, and locally, and recognition of how these global revolutions are affecting each of these spheres of life today. The actualization of God’s kingdom of justice, peace, and love upon the earth must be situated at the heart of political, economic, and social development, not in a reserved section of passive observation. But, in addition to such analysis and action, we are faced with the need for a global spirituality, which enables the Christian missionary community and the missioner to proclaim the deepest meaning of all struggle for the transformation of humankind.

2. What Kind of Person Will Be in World Mission in the 1980s?

The challenge to mission today is this: What kind of missioner is needed for the new global age? Another way of stating the question would be: What are the characteristics of a contemporary spirituality for mission? The authentic missioner for the global age into which we are fast moving must be one whose response to the call of mission is rooted in the inner experience of faith and who has identified that experience as intensely personal as well as communal and historical. This means that he or she must enter into the call of mission as a total way of life, a life that draws its energy not from the exterior structures and resources that accompanied missionary endeavor in the past, but from the creative energy of the Spirit who works from within. The call to conversion and the impelling urge to proclaim the message of Jesus must be highly personal experience of interior faith, yet at the same time it must be lived out securely inserted into the life of the faith community whose history and tradition have been graced and led by the Spirit. The spirituality for mission today must be both personally contemplative and communally discerned and articulated within that faith community. World mission in the 1980s will be characterized by the continued growth and development of small, independent communities of faith, nourished by the Word of God, and energized by the creative power of the Spirit. The strength of the community will depend on the spirituality of each member, just as the dynamism of the missioner will depend on the moral and spiritual support of the missionary community.

The missioner for the 1980s must be in the process of discovery within himself or herself the deep source of creative energy, always aware that this same source of energy is available to the consciousness of all men and women in the world. Such a person becomes increasingly aware that all human beings participate in the same deep and universal forces at work among all peoples of our earth. The Spirit of Jesus penetrates every human heart. No human encounter or event escapes his dynamic presence because he is not confined to the narrow limits of any Christian tradition, although his name is spoken and his presence celebrated only among those who receive his call and are sent with his message.

The global society that is now developing demands that the Christian involved in world mission be open and capable of assuming the global human heritage as his or her own individual heritage. The missioner can no longer live spiritually isolated within a particular religious tradition or even within the medieval and modern Western traditions. An adequate spirituality for mission in the future decades must pass beyond the confines of Western spiritual resources, even though those individual traditions must be strengthened and maintained as the immediate context within which the individual grows and develops. A dynamic dialogical relation with other traditions, both Christian and non-Christian, must be pursued for the continued existence, enrichment, and further growth of the individual traditions themselves.

The spirituality for contemporary world mission will become more clearly prophetic witness, involved in issues of political, economic, and social dimensions of the building of God’s kingdom upon the earth as we move into the 1980s. We will begin to feel less embarrassed in our role of contestation to the evil forces and manipulative powers in our contemporary world, even when this contestation will bring upon us the same kind of treatment that was common in the early church communities. We have every indication that the very places that are selected for mission today, where the gospel is least experienced and celebrated, are those situations and countries that exist in victimized conditions.

Ministries that foster justice and peace will more and more be recognized as essentially constituent of the gospel message. The 1980s will find less polarization among and within churches in regard to a purely “spiritual” gospel and a “social” interpretation of the Christian texts. The greater the attention given by missionaries to the centrality of Jesus Christ in the mission of the church, the broader will become our understanding of the social implications of the gospel, and the deeper our penetration of the spiritual depths of the Christian revelation.

3. What About Women in Mission in the 1980s?

From where I stand as a member of a missionary community of women within the Roman Catholic Church, my perception of the trends and challenges facing women in mission in the 1980s is confined to my own church. However, it does seem obvious that women missionaries of all the Christian traditions are beginning to play stronger roles within the missionary endeavor—at least our voices and hopes are perceptibly louder.

"Ministries that foster justice and peace will more and more be recognized as essentially constituent of the gospel message."

Some of the signs of this are the following:

a. There is a new enthusiasm for overseas mission among women in our church, not only among those who bore the brunt of the critical 1960s and the fragmented 1970s overseas, but also among other religious and laywomen who have been deeply involved in United States mission and who now are volunteering for mission overseas.

b. Younger candidates (although somewhat older than those who began mission service previously) continue to be women with academic and professional background, who have already been involved in some form of mission either here in the United States or overseas as volunteers in secular agencies or as travelers and observers.

c. There will be a greater number of laywomen joining religious missionary sisters for temporary and extended periods overseas. Religious congregations not specifically missionary will continue to join missionary communities for extended mission overseas.
d. Women missionaries in the Catholic Church will increasingly assume roles that have been reserved for priests, those related directly to ministry of the Word, often replacing priests in their pastoral roles in the formation of adults and the direction of new Christian communities. We will be more and more concerned with the human development and leadership training of women in the local churches.

e. Women missionaries will continue to push for greater participation in decision-making in a male-dominated church; we push more gently than our sisters on the home front, but nevertheless we will look for the equal distribution of power and gifts within the Christian church in mission to the world.

f. The greatest and most obvious needs of women missionaries in the 1980s will be:
   i) a growing sense of security in our feminine contribution to the mission of the church;
   ii) theological, scriptural, anthropological, and other such studies, to be better prepared for mission overseas;
   iii) increased financial support, which becomes more difficult to obtain when women are not working directly for priests;
   iv) acquisition of skills needed in pastoral ministries, community development, group dynamics, training for basic health and educational programs, and human development programs for men and women at the grassroots level.

Mission in the decade of the 1980s should be a time of new life and new determination, at least so it seems to this woman missionary preparing to go back to South America in the 1980s.

Notes


II. Desmond Tutu

It depends very much in many ways on who and where you are, just what will be the issues for mission in the 1980s. Because I am who I am and because I am where I am, the aspect of the gospel of Jesus Christ which at this present moment and for some time to come has the greatest relevance in addressing our condition is that which speaks about liberation and freedom, that which delineates Jesus Christ as identifying with the poor and the marginalized ones of society, is that which says they are creatures of infinite value in a situation of oppression and injustice.

Jesus Christ declared that the poor we always have with us, so that this side of the gospel will always have abiding relevance. Perhaps another way of putting the matter would be to say that the 1980s will see the churches and Christians judged by how far they have helped or hindered the final fulfillment of our Lord’s words recorded in Luke 4:17–20, when he read from the scroll of Isaiah 61 and said, “This passage of Scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read”—and these are the words that they heard read in the synagogue in Nazareth:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
because he has chosen me
to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind;
to set free the oppressed
and announce that the time has come
when the Lord will save his people.

There is no question whatsoever that in my part of the world and perhaps in most of the so-called Third World, the poor and exploited ones, the voiceless ones without power and influence, the starving little ones with potbellies in the midst of plenty, that such whom Christ called the least of his brethren will want their pie here and now and not in some post-mortem heaven with streets paved with gold.

It is fascinating to see how even today we still have debates about the sociopolitical implications of the incarnational gospel of a Jesus Christ who was God made very flesh of our flesh. We still have to fight the old battles about an etherealized religion being blasphemous and a travesty of the gospel of the Man for others from Galilee who fed the hungry, healed the sick, raised the dead to life again, made the blind to see and the deaf to hear, as well as preaching the gospel to the poor—the Good News of God’s love for his whole creation. It could very well be the tragedy of our times that the renewal or charismatic movement might be seen by many as a respectable cop-out. The church of God needs constant renewal. We all need renewing and to appropriate the gifts of the Holy Spirit made available to us through the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. But we need to pray fervently that something good is not put to a sad misuse. Christians cannot afford to be merely activist if this means that they do not place first things first—the priority of the spiritual should not be a matter of debate. But out of our relationship with God should flow our engagement with the recalcitrant problems of our existential situation. He who loves God must needs love his neighbor also. How can you say you love God whom you have not seen if you hate the neighbor whom you have seen?

Mission will have to continue the task of integrating these concerns and avoid a debilitating dichotomy. We should not put asunder what God has joined together—and for us secular and sacred form one total reality. The separation brings about a distortion that appears to sanctify the status quo of an unjust and oppressive system. Jesus Christ said he came so that people might have life and have it abundantly. Christian mission will be involved more and more in helping God’s children to become ever more fully human.

The Christian mission will always be concerned to proclaim the presence of the kingdom of God. The church is a harbinger and a sacrament of that kingdom. We are called to proclaim that God’s kingship is total and absolute, brooking no rivals, for God is a jealous God and will have no other gods before him. And this kingdom is a kingdom of justice, peace, and love, and we in the church are dedicated to be the agents of this kingdom. God’s kingdom still speaks about a rejection of false dichotomies, as between the secular and the sacred, the holy and the profane. Is it only the poor who think that when they are hungry God cares and wants them
to be fed? Why does it appear as if on the whole the affluent and the powerful deplore mixing religion with politics and economics? Which point of view is more consistent with the teaching of the Lord and the King of kings whose writ runs everywhere; otherwise he that a God who is indifferent to their suffering is irrelevant and the powerful deplore mixing religion with politics and economics? to be fed? Why does it appear as if on the whole the affluent and the poor, into the haves and the have-nots, into the developed and the developing or underdeveloped, and so forth. God's purpose is to bring all nations to his honor and glory. That is how, in a very real sense, human beings would exercise their priesthood vis-à-vis the rest of God's creation.

Justice, equity, sharing—these themes keep recurring and will undoubtedly be prominent in the agenda of the churches in the 1980s. And all will be done to the praise and honor of God's holy name.

We live in a world that is increasingly becoming the global village. The death in detention of a Steve Biko in a South African prison sparks off protests round the world. A drought or a flood in Bangladesh moves people in other parts to compassionate acts responding to appeals for aid and relief. Equally, we are more and more aware of the plurality that is such an outstanding attribute of our times. We who are Christians know that we have in our Lord the full and final revelation of God, and in the Christ-event God has acted decisively to resolve the human predicament. But we live among others who are our neighbors, who believe that their faiths and ideologies provide alternative schemes of salvation. It just will not do to treat them as merely infidels whom we will convert come rain or shine. We are going to have to grow in a new sensitivity to the scruples and beliefs of others and avoid a cocky arrogance that knows all the answers to the mysteries of God's ways with his human creatures. Dialogue will be an inescapable element in our efforts at mission in the 1980s; it will be an unpopular and ambivalent element for many. But if we try to avoid dialogue with people of other faiths and ideologies, we might just as well shut up shop, for we would be willfully blind to reality as we experience it. We would do well to pray for greater humility and a proper assurance, never fearful that our God needs us to protect him. He is surely no less glorified because Mahatma Gandhi was a Hindu and not a Christian. His spirit blows where it listeth and cannot be tied to labels that want to be inhibiting and proprietary.

"Today's world is a splintered world. There is nothing to make us believe, humanly speaking, that tomorrow's world will be any better."

Today's world is a splintered world. There is nothing to make us believe, humanly speaking, that tomorrow's world will be any better. We are divided into the affluent and the poor, into the haves and the have-nots, into the developed and the developing or underdeveloped, and so forth. God's purpose is to bring all things into unity in Jesus Christ. Therefore the zeal for unity of the church and of all God's creation so that it can indeed be cosmos and not chaos—this quest is not merely for the ecumenical enthusiasts. It has to do with the quest for justice, equity, sharing, compassion and caring, regarding the concern for others as of greater moment than self-concern. And this seems to have a great deal to do with reconciliation and unity (including the unity of the church), the personhood of women (including their ministry as fully ordained persons). It has everything to do with authenticity and contextuality—contextual and authentic Christianity and Christian theology.

An exciting decade lies ahead of us. Humanity, come-of-age as it is said, will grapple with daunting problems (such as those of medical ethics about transplants and genetics and death). As Christians we know that the issue is not in doubt—it is the humanizing of all God's creation so that the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our God and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.
Wilhelm Schmidt's Legacy

Louis J. Luzbetak, S.V.D.

The Society of the Divine Word is an international Roman Catholic missionary order founded in Steyl, Holland, in 1875, by Arnold Janssen, a German diocesan priest known for his extraordinary vision, persistence, and ability to recognize and utilize the enthusiasm, talent, and dedication of others. Today the society numbers approximately 5000 professed members and is established in thirty-five countries around the world. As one might expect, this new missionary society was not spared from the ethnocentrism, paternalism, and triumphalism that characterized European Christianity of the times. It was quite generally felt that "primitives," "savages," and "pagans" of mission lands had first to be "civilized," that is, Europeanized, before one could expect them to be genuinely Christianized. However, Arnold Janssen's missionaries, early in their history, began to react against this common attitude in a rather novel manner: they introduced a somewhat revolutionary dimension into the meaning of mission—the scientific study of human kind as an integral part of the missionary task itself.

Before long, serious study of non-Western cultures, especially linguistics, ethnoLOGY, and the study of religions (Religionswissenschaft), became a tradition with the Divine Word missionaries, a tradition that was expressly incorporated into their constitutions, seminary curriculum, budget, and personnel policies. As the Observatorium Romano on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the society put it: "From the Middle Ages to our present day, missionaries have constantly enriched our knowledge of unknown languages and cultures; but never has any missionary group so systematically—both theoretically as well as practically—devoted itself to this particular effort with such dedication as the Society of the Divine Word." It is of this legacy that the present article speaks.

The prime mover behind this new and broadened understanding of missionary work was a young talented seminary professor, Father Wilhelm Schmidt, S.V.D., a linguist turned ethnologist. The author of the present article knew Schmidt personally, having done graduate work in anthropology under his tutelage. The author had, in fact, the privilege of living with Schmidt in a small community of anthropologists for some three years (1947-50), thus, being able to observe this great scholar and "missionary" at close range and to share, with him, in the spirit that underlies "the Wilhelm Schmidt Legacy."

Biographical Sketch

Wilhelm Schmidt was born in the industrial area of the Ruhr in Westfalen, Germany, on February 16, 1868. His father, Heinrich Schmidt, a factory worker, was forty-seven when he married the twenty-four-year-old Anna Maria Mörs. Not long after their marriage, tragedy struck the Schmidt family: Heinrich Schmidt died when his first child, Wilhelm, was only four. With this family background in mind, it is easy to understand the closeness Wilhelm felt toward his mother and the deep respect he had for her throughout his life, attributing to her not only his physical features but many of his personality traits, religious values, and his extraordinary energy and stamina.

Wilhelm's boyhood dream of someday becoming a missionary led him at the early age of fifteen to Arnold Janssen's first mission training center in Holland, located across the German border to avoid the antireligious restrictions of the Kulturkampf. Here Wilhelm the seminarian was to spend nine years preparing himself for a missionary career that was never to be realized. He completed his secondary schooling in 1886, his philosophy course in 1888, and his four-year theology training in 1892, the year of his ordination to the priesthood.

After a brief initial assignment of less than a year as teacher at a preparatory seminary for missionary candidates in eastern Germany, Schmidt spent two years (1893-95) studying Middle Eastern languages at the Oriental Institute of the University of Berlin. Behind this assignment was Arnold Janssen's plan—totally unknown to Schmidt at the time—to have his society assume activities in Palestine, a plan, however, that never materialized. Instead, Schmidt found himself teaching at St. Gabriel's Mission Seminary in Mödling near Vienna, teaching at first a variety of subjects, then chiefly linguistics, ethnology, and the study of religions. For the next forty years, St. Gabriel's was to be Schmidt's home and Austria his adopted country. (It should be noted that for thirty years Schmidt taught also on the university level: at the University of Vienna, 1921-38; at Fribourg, 1939-51.)

His university training as such had relatively little to do with the fields in which he was later to distinguish himself. Schmidt, it must be emphasized, was largely a self-taught scholar—a pioneer in many ways—rather than the product of formal and systematic university training in a well-defined discipline. It was especially during his first decade at St. Gabriel's (1896-1906) that this self-education took place. Perceptive and easily stimulated intellectually by others, the young seminary professor learned much through his involvement in the activities of various academic circles of Vienna, especially the Anthropological Society. Another asset was his natural enthusiasm as teacher, which greatly accelerated his personal professional growth as he taught others. With data provided him by missionaries, especially his former students, he began to publish the results of his studies, first on the language of New Guinea and then on all of Oceania and Southeast Asia. In a matter of eight years (1899-1907) he had about forty publications to his credit, not counting his many book reviews. The titles of these publications clearly reveal a steadily widening interest from purely linguistic issues to cultural and religio-historical problems. His ability came to public notice in his study of the Mon-Khmer peoples, in which he established the relationship between the languages of Southeast Asia and those of Oceania, a major accomplishment that won for him an award from the prestigious French Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres and membership in the Austrian Imperial Academy of Sciences, two distinctions that were to be for him only the beginning of a long succession of honors.

Schmidt's research was, as a rule, culture-historical with a predilection for "primitive societies," that is, the simple peoples...
whom ethnologists of the Schmidt persuasion regarded as most closely reflecting the life of early humankind. The origin of religions and beliefs regarding the Supreme Being were his very special interest.

He was also a methodologist. The ethnological approach that seemed most promising to him was that of the best-known German anthropologist at the turn of the century, Fritz Graebner, whose comparative method for reconstructing relationships between cultures and for establishing their relative age was not only applied by Schmidt but critically reexamined, refined, and further developed. But Schmidt was even more than a scholar, prolific writer, critic, systematizer: he was also a stimulator and organizer. His enthusiasm was contagious. He promoted research and writing as much as he himself was engaged in study and publishing. Fearing that invaluable observations of missionaries would be lost for lack of a suitable journal to publish their studies, he founded in 1906, with the full financial support of his missionary society, the Anthropos International Review of Ethnology and Linguistics. He also promoted field research by encouraging and guiding missionaries in their study of local languages and cultures and by assisting and organizing expeditions for his associates and collaborators. As the number of associates and collaborators grew and their activities multiplied, Schmidt felt the need for organization, and in response to this felt need he founded the Anthropos Institute in Mödling in 1932, where it was located until 1938 when, owing especially to Schmidt’s opposition to Nazi racist theories, he and the institute had to seek refuge in neighboring Switzerland. Here in Switzerland, a few miles outside the city of Fribourg, Schmidt was to continue his research, writing, and teaching well into his eighties. It was not until he had reached his eightieth birthday that he voiced his dream that someday a Catholic university would be established postwar economic development of Europe, and he never gave up his way and irked when people disagreed with him, he would not lose his temper or hold a grudge against such persons or impose his views on them. His many honorary degrees and state and church honors were humbly accepted without fanfare on his part or desire for publicity. Above all, Schmidt’s scholarly involvement never made him lose sight of the fact that he was a member of a missionary society and that it was ultimately the mission cause to which he had dedicated his life.

Schmidt as Scholar and “Missionary”

Schmidt was a man of wide interests. As a young priest he was actively engaged in social work, at times leaving some of his own clothing behind for the needy he would visit. He was a popular marriage counselor and was fond of giving religious instructions to teenagers. He was involved in church unity efforts, first with the Orthodox and then with the Protestants. His immersion in anthropology never became so total as to keep him from such interests as the writing of a comprehensive popular life of Christ and what turned out to be a widely accepted work on Christian marriage and family life. He was also a musician: he regularly played the reed organ for services in the small chapel of the Anthropos Institute (and sometimes he played merely to relax); he was choir director and gave violin lessons at one time; on occasion he attended concerts, and he composed church music even in his declining years. He was always interested in politics and the postwar economic development of Europe, and he never gave up his dream that someday a Catholic university would be established in Salzburg, a dream that over the years cost him considerable time and energy.

Merciless in dealing with his critics, he nevertheless was a fatherly and very sympathetic person. Although insisting on having his way and irked when people disagreed with him, he would not lose his temper or hold a grudge against such persons or impose his views on them. His many honorary degrees and state and church honors were humbly accepted without fanfare on his part or desire for publicity. Above all, Schmidt’s scholarly involvement never made him lose sight of the fact that he was a member of a missionary society and that it was ultimately the mission cause to which he had dedicated his life.

Schmidt’s Personality

Schmidt was endowed with what seemed to be limitless energy. As Monsignor John Montgomery Cooper of the Catholic University of America so aptly expressed it, “The days of Mödling-bei-Wien must be more than twenty-four hours long.” Schmidt, the prolific writer, was a genius who somehow never cared to learn to use the typewriter because he was convinced that the fountain pen (a pen with a built-in inkwell) was the greatest of all modern inventions. His more than 600 publications, including his encyclopedic Der Ursprung der Gottesidee, and the revision of Völker und Kulturen, was all written by him in longhand. Despite this almost superhuman activity, he always had time for a friendly conversation, especially at his regular coffee breaks with his associates. He particularly enjoyed routine strolls through the garden or woods and occasional outings. Schmidt was a man of wide interests. As a young priest he was actively engaged in social work, at times leaving some of his own clothing behind for the needy he would visit.
cal people; they usually spoke the local language; and, as a rule, they remained in the field over longer periods of time, rather than just a year or two as was the case with professional anthropologists on occasional field trips. Missionaries might, in fact, be able to provide important data that otherwise would be unattainable.

The third reason for missionary involvement in ethnology, according to Schmidt’s thinking, was the very practical consideration now generally unquestioned but at the turn of the century considered novel, if not revolutionary: ethnological training could be a great asset to any church worker called upon to spread the gospel just a year or two as was the case with professional anthropologists. Missionaries were even better equipped to gather useful ethnographic information than many professional anthropologists. Outside his or her own cultural milieu. Early Divine Word missionaries, confronted with difficult language or culturological problems in the field, spontaneously turned to the most logical person for help—their former professor of linguistics and ethnology. Schmidt, as an “armchair missionary,” thousands of miles removed from the scene, would try as best he could through correspondence to provide the professional guidance sought. It was especially with missionaries in mind that he initiated, with the assistance of F. Bouvier, S.J., the workshops known as Semaine d’Ethnologie religieuse in Louvain in 1912 and 1913, in Tilburg (Holland) in 1922, in Milan in 1925, and in Luxembourg in 1929. He welcomed the opportunity offered him by the pope to organize the international Vatican Mission Exhibit (1925) and to build the Missio-Ethnological Museum at the Lateran in Rome (1925–27), and then ten years to be its director, seeing as he did the educational value such projects would have for all Catholics, but especially the missionaries.

The Legacy

Schmidt’s writings and influence are generally recognized in Europe, especially in the German-speaking countries. Unfortunately, such does not seem to be the case in America. Anthropologists, even some who are otherwise well versed in the history of their field, sometimes show only a limited knowledge of the nature and scope of Schmidt’s contribution to anthropology and his rightful place in anthropological history. Two basic reasons might be attributed to this limited appreciation. Some American anthropologists seem to think that it is impossible for a committed Catholic, especially a priest, to be objective when dealing with religio-cultural matters. Moreover, Schmidt and his early collaborators usually published their studies in non-English languages, especially German. Consequently, some of Schmidt’s critics seem not to have read Schmidt at all, only about Schmidt, seeing him primarily, if not exclusively, in the somewhat limited light of a diehard Kulturkreisler, who championed the “Culture Circle Theory” even after his own collaborators had abandoned the theory or at least seriously questioned its premises and conclusions. Like most anthropological theories, the Kulturkreislehre had its merits and its many deficiencies, and after it had made its contribution, it too was destined to be superseded by still other theories. What is being stressed here is the fact that Schmidt’s significance goes far beyond any short-lived “culture circles.” Besides his very notable personal accomplishments, which the historian of linguistics, ethnology, the study of religions, and missiology must recognize, there is that priceless and vast legacy which Schmidt left behind—the stimulus, which Raymond Firth, one of today’s best-known British anthropologists, described as “difficult to measure because of its pervasiveness.” One might even say that Schmidt’s primary significance lies in the stimulus he gave to others—scholars, field workers, and missionaries.

But first, an overview of his outstanding personal achievements.

1. Schmidt’s Personal Accomplishments

a) It was Schmidt who disentangled the languages of Southeast Asia and Oceania and brought linguistic order to what had been sheer chaos. He showed that the Mon-Khmer were a bridge between the people of Central Asia and Austronesia and that certain languages of Southeast Asia and Oceania were related. This discovery was not only important in itself but of importance for further research in comparative anthropology and comparative religion.

b) Schmidt refined and further developed the Kulturkreislehre, the so-called “Culture Circle Theory” or “Culture-Historical Method of Ethnology,” a theory and methodology that in its day had a major impact on much of European ethnological thought.

c) Schmidt was able to synthesize in a way unequalled by anyone the available research data regarding the religious beliefs and practices of primitive peoples, especially their views regarding the Supreme Being. Whether one accepts Schmidt’s conclusions or not, his masterful sifting and ordering of the vast amounts of data was in itself an important contribution to the study of religions.

d) His high regard for non-Christian cultures, clearly reflected in his teaching and writings, in his Semaine d’Ethnologie religieuse workshops, the Lateran mission museum, the Vatican Mission Exhibit, and the Anthropos Institute and its journal, served as important groundwork for the further development of the missiological concept of “accommodation” and “contextualization.”

e) As missiologist J. Beckman, S.M.B., rightly observed, Schmidt paved the way for the acceptance of Catholic missiology as a reputable discipline worthy of serious scholars.

f) Schmidt founded, or was instrumental in founding, such milestones in anthropological history as the Anthropos Institute and the Missio-Ethnological Museum in Rome, and a number of professional journals, especially Anthropos.

g) It is also to Schmidt’s credit that well ahead of his time he encouraged missionaries to undertake seriously and professionally the study of linguistics, ethnology, religions, and other related fields.

2. Schmidt the Stimulator

Today there are three distinct activities of the Divine Word missionaries that have been greatly influenced by Schmidt and might rightly be labeled “the Schmidt legacy.”

a) There is, first of all, a contingent of Divine Word missionaries whose full-time task is not so much to preach and baptize as it is to continue and further develop the vision of Schmidt in such modern disciplines as ethnology, social anthropology, archeology, physical anthropology, Sinology, ethnomusicology, folklore, linguistics, sociology, and the study of religions. This contingent of trained social scientists, scattered around the globe, works either as individuals or as groups studying, doing field work, writing, instructing, or simply striving to help human beings better understand themselves. The main Divine Word center for anthropology is, of course, Schmidt’s Anthropos Institute now located at St. Augustin near Bonn, Germany, with its research and publication

“In many ways, Schmidt argued, missionaries were even better equipped to gather useful ethnographic information than many professional anthropologists.”
facilities and one of the best anthropological libraries to be found anywhere on the Continent.46 Adjoining the institute is a separate unit for Sinological research, the headquarters of the Monumenta Serica, Journal of Oriental Studies, with its excellent library of Chinese culture and its publication offices. Independent offshoots of the Anthropos Institute have been established in Switzerland, Japan, the Philippines, India, and Zaire.

b) A second contingent of experts is engaged in theoretical missionology, with their institute, the Steyler Missionswissenschaftliches Institut, located adjacent to the Anthropos center. Although missionology in the Society of the Divine Word developed independently of Wilhelm Schmidt, his influence on missionological thought, within as well as without the society, was considerable.36 Schmidt’s high regard for primitive religion and his respect for native social practices, art, philosophy, myth, ritual, and other aspects of primitive lifeways all entered into the very process of giving birth to what is known today as “Catholic missionology.” A few decades ago, when the Divine Word missionological center was being established, it was the Anthropos Institute that served as model.

c) There is also a third group of mission specialists, whose activities might best be placed in a practically oriented category of missionology. For instance, there is the Melanesian Institute, in which the Divine Word missionaries play a major role. This institute focuses its attention on translating theoretical linguistic, ethnographic, psychological, and theological concepts and principles into the concrete mission situation of Papua New Guinea. The purpose of the Melanesian Institute is to develop culturally sensitive pastoral strategies for that part of the world. Another good example of this third category is Father George Proksch, who by means of music, dance, drama, and poetry has successfully combined the esthetics, folklore, and religious feeling of India with the Christian message. Although himself not an Indian, he is looked upon as a guru and is highly respected as a teacher of Indian choreography.37 The Society of the Divine Word, to offer another example, maintains an architectural center at Nemi outside Rome, the purpose of which is to encourage the development of mission architecture in accord with the modern times and local esthetic values.38 In this third, practically oriented category of missionology one might also include the author’s own humble efforts toward the development of an “Applied Missiological Anthropology.”39 But the most notable example is perhaps the Center for Religion and Culture of Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan. In a spirit of genuine openness and scholarship, the center, through joint research and dialogue with non-Christian scholars, seeks to bring together Christian and oriental philosophy and theology with such divergent disciplines as psychology, folklore, sociology, ethnology, archeology, pedagogy, linguistics, esthetics, history of art, and history of religion—all in the hope of creating a better understanding between Eastern and Western minds.

The best developed and organized of these three groups is the first. As mentioned earlier, the founding of the Anthropos journal resulted from Schmidt’s genuine fear that valuable scientific observations of missionaries would be lost. What was needed, he felt, was an “archives” in which the linguistic and culturological studies of missionaries might be published and preserved. The journal became one of the main interests of Schmidt and his early associates, and to this day it remains one of the chief concerns of the Anthropos Institute. Seventy-three large volumes have thus far appeared, each volume averaging more than a thousand pages. As a point of editorial policy, Anthropos has been publishing articles in most of the important European languages.40 Consistent with an old practice begun by Schmidt, a large portion of each issue comes from missionary authors.41 It is interesting to note that the first twenty-six volumes of Anthropos expressly mention on the cover page after the name of the editor the fact that the journal is being published “with the collaboration of numerous missionaries.” By “missionaries” was meant not only members of the Society of the Divine Word (although their articles may predominate) but also of many other Catholic, and some non-Catholic, missionary groups.

The amount of ethnographic and linguistic information for which Schmidt and his associates have been responsible is formidable indeed.42 Besides the seventy-three volumes of Anthropos there have been two early monograph series, one ethnological and the other linguistic, which served as supplements to the journal.43 Since then, several new series have been inaugurated. Thirty-six volumes have so far appeared as Studia Instituti Anthropos, dealing with such varied subjects as the religion of East Flores, the tonality of North Chinese dialects, marriage and the family in the Caucasus, the Supreme Being among the Manggarai, Nuer society and religion, the Negritos of Asia, the agricultural practices of Turkistan, the cross as a non-Christian symbol, and the structural analysis in anthropology. Another twenty-two volumes have appeared in Collectanea Instituti Anthropos, dealing with such topics as the Aharaibu Indians of Northwest Brazil, the passing scene of Northeast New Guinea, Ethiopian myths and rites, North Cameroon marriage customs, Taiwan headhunting, and Shamanism in Northwest China. A large microfilm series, mostly linguistic studies of missionaries which by their very nature cannot be expected to have more than a limited circulation, is published as Micro-Bibliotheca Anthropos. Many books and articles of the Divine Word missionaries have, of course, been published by outside publishers, including Schmidt’s own Der Ursprung der Gottesidee. Schmidt and his early collaborators have been among the most productive researchers in anthropological history: Schmidt, as already indicated, authored more than 400 books and articles and about 200 book reviews; Wilhelm Koppers has 200 titles to his credit; Martin Gusinde, 150; Paul Schebesta, 130.44

When speaking of anthropological publications one must not overlook the important linguistic and culturological journals and series of publications which at least indirectly owe their existence to Schmidt and which are, or have been, edited by Divine Word missionaries, especially Monumenta Serica Journal of Oriental Studies (32 volumes), Asian Folklore Studies (37 volumes), and such journals as Annali Lateranensi and Wiener Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte und Linguistik. As the Australian anthropologist A. P. Elkin expressed it: “The establishment of an international anthropological journal, Anthropos, by a missionary order, the Society of the Divine Word, and its maintenance for the past forty-five [now seventy-three] years has itself been a remarkable contribution to anthropology, and the foundation more recently (in 1937) of a similar journal, the Annali Lateranensi, by the Pontificio Museo is also very welcome. Through these media, the anthropological and linguistic studies of Roman Catholic missionaries are made available to the scientific community everywhere on the Continent.”

Announcing

The International Association for Mission Studies (IAMS) will sponsor a Working Party on “Mission Studies and Information Management” at the Urban University, Rome, July 24–30, 1980. The meeting is for those engaged in missiological documentation, bibliography, archive management, and related concerns. For further information contact: IAMS Secretariat, c/o Department of Missiology IIME, Boerhaavelaan 43, 2334 ED Leiden, Netherlands.
world." Or as Robert H. Lowie in his History of Ethnological Theory put it: "Ethnology owes much to Schmidt for the establishment of Anthropos, a journal second to none in the field. With unsurpassed energy Schmidt enlisted the services of missionaries scattered over the globe and thereby secured priceless descriptive reports." Or in the words of Raymond Firth, partially cited earlier: "His [Schmidt's] foundation of the journal Anthropos was one of the milestones in the development of more systematic anthropological records from exotic cultures, and the stimulus that he gave the field-workers in cultural anthropology and linguistics is difficult to measure because of its pervasiveness."

The intensity and volume of work of the Divine Word missionologists, although considerable and significant, has perhaps not been so great as that of the anthropologists. Not only were the missionologists organized much later than their colleagues in anthropology but, unlike the latter, they have more often than not been assigned to full-time teaching or to important administrative positions rather than allowed the freedom for research that the anthropologists have enjoyed. The most important missionological publications today are their journal Verbum SVD and the series Verbum Supplementum, the Studia Instituti Missiologia Societatis Verbi Divini, and the Veröffentlichungen des Missionarierseminars St. Augustin.

Divine Word missionaries were closely connected with the very birth of modern Catholic missionology, especially Friedrich Schwager, Anton Freitag, Theodor Grentrup, Karl Streit, and Johannes Thauren, all students or collaborators of Joseph Schmidlin, the "Father of Modern Catholic Missiology." It was especially Schwager who convinced young Schmidlin, the church historian at Münster, to shift his scholarly focus from general church history to missionology. It is indeed regrettable and very unfortunate for Catholic missionology, however, that as early as 1912 a misunderstanding arose between the two great giants, Schmidt and Schmidlin, a misunderstanding that never was resolved.

What the laboratory is to the chemist and the physicist, field work is to the anthropologist. Field work, therefore, has always been a major concern of the Divine Word anthropologists. Although Schmidt personally never went on an expedition, nor has he ever served on a mission, he nevertheless was a firm believer in the importance of field research, relying heavily on the field data of others, especially those of missionaries and his collaborators. He helped to plan and organize the expeditions of such expert ethnographers as Gusinde, Koppers, Schebesta, Schumacher, Vanoverbergh, and Lebzelter. Gusinde's field work among the Fuegians and Schebesta's expeditions to the African and Asian pygmies unquestionably rank among the most significant ethnographic achievements in anthropological history.

Divine Word mission specialists have always placed a high value also on teaching their disciplines to others, especially to future missionaries and to veteran missioners interested in graduate training. Divine Word anthropologists and missionologists teach, or have taught, not only in their own seminaries and mission universities but also at such universities as Vienna, Fribourg, Bonn, Basel, Nijmegen, Catholic University of America, and Georgetown—to mention a few examples.

Conclusion

The impact of all this activity on modern mission thought has not been easy to describe and is even more difficult to measure. Nor was it the intention to belittle the contributions of other individuals and missionary groups in their role in the development of the mission sciences. The present article has focused on a particular legacy, a precious heritage, which is perhaps not so well known to the English-speaking missionologists as it rightly deserves.

This article was completed on February 10, 1979, the twenty-fifth anniversary of Wilhelm Schmidt's death, and is now being offered as a token of appreciation to this great scholar and "missionary" who has influenced mission thought as only a few scholars have been able to do.

Notes

1. “Professed” members are those who have taken their religious vows in the society. Associated with this all-male missionary group, but independently structured, are the two congregations of women religious founded also by Arnold Janssen, numbering about 4500 Sisters: the Servants of the Holy Spirit, whose primary task is active missionary work, and the Servants of the Holy Spirit of Perpetual Adoration, a congregation of cloistered nuns committed to a life of prayer and sacrifice for the missions.


3. General linguistics and phonetics became required courses for the society as early as 1900, ethnology and the study of religions in 1912. Missiology in an embryonic stage was taught as early as 1896.


5. The best biography of Schmidt is that by Joseph Henninger, “P. Wilhelm Schmidt, S.V.D., 1868-1954,” Anthropos 49 (1954): 385-432, is the most complete list of Schmidt's writings.


13. He gave up his post as religious superior of the Anthropos community in 1949, the editorship of Anthropos some months later in 1949, the directorship of the Anthropos Institute in 1950, and his teaching at the University of Fribourg in 1951.


15. Coauthored with Wilhelm Koppers in 1924 (Regensburg, 1924), 740 pp. This is a large compendium of the culture history of the world as inter-

20. In 1936 he became president of the Episcopal Commission for the Establishment of the University of Salzburg.

21. Despite F. Bornemann’s strong criticism of Schmidt’s methodology in *Die Urkultur in der kulturhistorischen Ethnologie: Eine grundsätzliche Studie* (Mödling bei Wien, 1938), Schmidt chose Bornemann to be his successor as editor of *Anthropos* and director of the Anthropos Institute.


34. The membership of the institute is limited to Divine Word missionaries. It should be noted, however, that not all Divine Word ethnologists, linguists, and other specialists in related fields are members. Today there are about twenty-five voting members in all. A Ph.D. degree and election are required for membership.

35. Originally the *Monumenta Serica* was a publication of Fu Jen, the Divine Word university in Peking.
Patterns of Chinese Theology

Wing-hung Lam

The problem of indigenization is intrinsic to the task of evangelism. When the missionary attempts to communicate the gospel to his audience, a process of indigenization begins, which involves the psychology, the language, and the culture of both parties. Western missionaries are brought up in a culture that has been for many years closely associated with Christianity, and whose content and expression are alien to the non-Christian country. Their very presence in the mission field, their lifestyle and values are often identified, rightly or wrongly, with the religion they advocate. This inevitably imparts to the Christian message a foreignness that easily becomes a source of irritation to the local people. If dislike for foreignness is to be regarded as constitutive of human nature, such dislike is easily recognizable among the Chinese.

The necessity of indigenization was long ago felt by the Jesuit missionaries to China. In their preaching of Christianity, they were culturally conciliatory in their approach. They put a Chinese appearance in their activities and mingled with the Confucian intelligentsia. Using Western scientific knowledge to establish Chinese confidence in their message, they sought to accommodate their religion to the local civilization. Over the delicate issue that later provoked the Rites Controversy, the Jesuits took a moderate position, respecting the traditional practice of the Chinese. How successful the Jesuit mission was is a question outside our discussion, but it is undeniable that they had won the hearing and admiration of the Chinese literati.

The 1920s were a unique period in the history of Chinese Christianity when there was a host of experiments to indigenize the Christian faith. Before this time, there had been little, if any, theological reflection among Chinese Christians in confessing Christ in the context of traditional Chinese experience. Foreign missionaries were largely the spokespersons for the local Christian communities. And the gospel consisted primarily in a Western Christ presented to the humanistic and pragmatic Chinese mind. It is the purpose of this essay to analyze the various emerging patterns of theological construction by Chinese Christian intellectuals.

Theological contextualization in the twenties was the ideological side of the broader indigenous movement of the Chinese Church, which was an effort to establish independence from Western churches through self-support, self-government, and self-propagation. Impetus was given to this movement as a reaction to the nationwide anti-Christian campaigns that ran through the decade. The outbreak of anti-Christian activities occurred in 1922 when the World Student Christian Federation decided to hold its conference at Tsing Hua University near Peking in April. It sparked a chain reaction of emotion-filled campaigns against Christianity over the country. Demonstrations, speeches, telegrams, and pamphlets were employed to oppose it as the tool of imperialism and the agent of denationalization. Numerous student strikes occurred in Christian schools, supported by political parties, that crippled the function of the institutions. The government’s reclaiming of educational prerogatives from mission schools challenged the place of Christian education, both as a mediator of Western culture and as a means of religious proselytism. The anti-Christian force was of such a magnitude as seemed to threaten the existence of the Christian movement. Evidence of such possibility was seen in the massive exodus of foreign missionaries after the Nanking Incident in March 1927. The Chinese Church was caught in turmoil, puzzled about the viability of its message and preoccupied with the uncertainty of its future. For the first time in the history of Chinese Christianity, indigenous leaders significantly stood to defend the Christian faith.

The efforts of theological reflection during these critical years must be seen in the wider context of cultural relationship between China and the West. Various contemporary trends were perceivable among Chinese intellectuals who were struggling to establish the cultural identity of the nation. Some regarded Confucianism as a product of traditional feudalism incompatible with the new age. The only hope to modernize China was to follow the path of "total westernization." Mr. Science and Mr. Democracy must be introduced. On the other hand, there were conservatives who held a relatively low view of the Western way. The recent World War I was interpreted as the result of cultural bankruptcy of the West. They believed that the salvation of China depended on the renaissance of traditional Confucianism. A middle position was held by the advocates for a cultural synthesis of both East and West. They regarded culture as a dynamic, flexible force ready to undergo interaction with its environment. Intellectual openness had to be exercised to assimilate Western ideology and technology and to evaluate Chinese tradition. The debate on cultural identity continued into the thirties and influenced the program of theological indigenization undertaken by the Chinese Christians.

Toward the Making of an Indigenous Theology

The formation of Chinese theology is a task that involves two kinds of loyalty in the mind of the Chinese Christian. As Chinese, he wants to be faithful to his cultural tradition; as Christian, he has to present his religious message without diminution. Indigenization of the Christian faith can be regarded as an intellectual movement between the two loyalties. Some contemporary Christian scholars felt the conflict between traditional Chinese values and the Christian ethos. Their indigenous effort became a competition of commitments. Others were at home with both, confessing that Christianity and Confucianism are different names of the same truth. Most Chinese Christians stayed between these two views, sympathetic with the ethnic culture and critical in relating Christianity to it. A persistent question occurs when the patterns of indigenization are examined: Is the effort meant to render Christianity more acceptable to the Chinese or to preserve the Chinese cultural values?

Contemporary Chinese Christians took Confucianism as the
mainstream of Chinese culture. The schools of Lao Tzu and of Mo Tzu were considered side currents. Buddhism and Taoism, though they may have been popular in the religious experience among the mass, did not gain as much intellectual attention among the students as Confucianism. In the current debate on cultural relations between East and West, most Chinese Christians took the middle position. They did not favor traditionalism, because Christianity came from the West and claimed their allegiance. They could not go for "total westernization," because the upsurge of nationalism in the era of anti-Christian movement stigmatized Christianity as foreign. A main line of apologetics was to assert that Christianity was not denationalized. Yet, to them, nationalism posed an ideological dilemma. On the one hand, nationalism was "somehow linked with the disintegration of Chinese civilization." 2 On the other hand, the Chinese Christians had to witness to the hostile world that Christianity did not betray the national culture. The attempts at indigenization were influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the dilemma. A viable solution seemed to be a sympathetic criticism of the Chinese culture with a calculated accommodation of the Christian faith. Many Christian intellectuals adopted this approach toward indigeneity, although their stations on the journey were different.

What, then, is indigenization? Amid the vast Christian literature of the decade, we can construct a general consensus of opinions offered by the representative figures in the indigenous church movement. Indigenization is not a retreat to the ancient culture, imitating traditional customs and practices. Nor is it reluctance to cooperate with the West, following a form of antiforeignism. Also it is wrong to conceive of indigeneity as the abandonment of the rich Christian experience of the past and the establishment of a new Christianity by merely fusing it with the local civilization, which would become, as one contemporary Christian scholar said, "neither a horse nor a donkey."

Positively speaking, indigenization, in Ch'eng Ching-yi's view, is to "render Christianity suitable to the needs of the Chinese and to accommodate it to the customs, environment, history, and thinking of the Chinese culture." 4 Chao Tzu-ch'en, professor at Yenching University, defined the indigenous church as "one which conserves and unifies all truths contained in the Christian religion and in China's ancient civilization and which thus manifests and expresses the religious life and experiences of the Chinese Christians in a fashion that is native and natural to them." 5 Indigenous Christianity must be local growth, subsequent to the transplanting of the Western religion, that absorbs the nourishment of Chinese culture and is suited to the spirit and psychology of the Chinese. 6 From these definitions it is easy to see the urgency and importance of the indigenous task. Few would doubt the necessity of the indigenous movement. The question is not why but how.

Five patterns of indigenous thought are recognizable. Not every one is by itself unique and distinct, but their different emphases reflect their presuppositions and approaches to the problem.

1. Presence of Classical Precedents

Proponents of this pattern of indigenous theology had intimate knowledge of the Confucian tradition. Their love for and confidence in it did not flag although Confucianism was under attack during this time. Even their professed allegiance to Christianity did not weaken their emotional and intellectual tie to the ancient tradition. Instead, Christianity offered them opportunity to defend its value in the hour of adversity. They sought to maintain the double loyalties, though sometimes found it hard to tell which was higher, without betraying any conflict between them. If there were areas of tension, they either ignored their existence or explained them away. Their conviction was that the Chinese heritage was good and deserved our continual respect in the modern age. Its values had to be preserved not because they were Chinese but because they were universally true. They saw Christianity not as the ultimate, absolute religion to substitute the time-honored deposit of cultural excellences but as a colleague for mutual service. Christianity and Chinese culture would enrich each other. And Christianity was interpreted from the standpoint of Chinese culture, as they sought elements from the Christian doctrines that would agree with certain classical precepts.

A key representative of this pattern was Wu Lei-ch'uan of Yenching University. Wu came from a strong Confucian background and was well versed in the knowledge of the Four Books and the Five Classics. The basic premise in his thought lies in the identity of the sources of truth. Truth is one and its expressions are many. Christianity and Confucianism are different expressions, owing to their backgrounds and traditions, of the same truth, Tao. 7 Whether it is Christianity absorbing Confucianism or Confucianism accommodating Christianity, the true Tao will bear its fruit in China. With this conviction, the uniqueness and finality of Christianity had no place in Wu's system. And his indigenous effort was governed by the intention of building up continuity between the two. He went back to the early Chinese sages and examined their original doctrines. Wu was not surprised at all to find that many basic Christian concepts already had their classical counterparts in the teaching of Chinese classics. And the Chinese should welcome Christianity as a like-minded friend, instead of as an ideological foreigner, who would vindicate the worth of its culture.

In Wu's view, the idea of a personal deity is present in Shih Ching (The Book of Odes) and Shu Ching (The Book of History), signified by the term Shang-ti. But at a later time Chinese intellectuals sought to accommodate it to the understanding of the people and altered their concept of deity. The personified Shang-ti ceased to be used. 8

Isaiah's prophecy of the Messiah was identified by Wu with the expectation of the coming saint as seen in Chung Yung (The Doctrine of the Mean), chapter 31. The Holy One was to arise and rule the nations in peace and to manifest the example of perfect virtues. According to Wu Lei-ch'uan, both accounts were written in the hour of crisis when political unrest provoked the people to look for a savior to rectify the situation. Thus Tzu Ssu, author of this chapter in Chung Yung, and Isaiah shared the same thought. To the Israelites, Isaiah was a prophetic voice; to the Chinese, Tzu Ssu was an optimistic theoretician. 9

Jen (humanity), the central doctrine in Confucianism, was, in Wu's argument, equivalent to the Holy Spirit. When the Confucian scholars referred to Jen, a dimension of spirituality was present. We should pray for Jen to dwell in us, and when Jen is applied, it will prevail over the nation. 10

Wu's primary concern was not conformity to the Chinese past but transformation of the present. Social reform was a universal
principle for human life, a goal which Jesus followed in his ministry. This was the way to bring in the kingdom of God. The same ideal rule of the nation, until the great harmony was achieved.

2. Harmonization of Cultures

A second approach to indigenize the Christian faith emphasized the possibility of harmonizing it with Chinese culture. Harmonization did not mean a passive attitude to acknowledge weakness in traditional China. Nor was it compromise, surrendering cultural characteristics in order to come to terms with another ideology.

In the understanding of Wang Chih-hsin, professor at Nan-king Theological Seminary, culture is a world property which is not to be monopolized by any one nation. Culture itself is subject to constant changes and exchanges. History is full of examples of cultural absorption and assimilation. Western civilization emerged from the contacts between the Greco-Roman and the Hebrew cultures. Neo-Confucianism in Sung and Ming dynasties was the integrated product of Confucianism and Buddhism. In Wang’s view, Christianity is a universal culture into which Western and Eastern cultures can be synthesized. The possibility of such harmonization has the scriptural warrant in Jesus’ words: “I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd.” (John 10:16). Wang considered China as a sheep outside the fold to be gathered to the Good Shepherd in the future. His indigenous effort was directed by the vision of a universal Christian culture—a vision tempered by nationalistic flavor.

According to Wang, Chinese culture is ethical in orientation, established on filial piety. Hsiao (filial piety) fills all aspects of life and, from a religious perspective, it is the Chinese religion with the parents playing the role of God. Christianity, if properly understood, is not against the doctrine of hsiao. He urged: “We have to understand the differences in cultural backgrounds. In Jewish culture, religion is the center; so God is the first premise. In Chinese culture, ethics is the center; so parents come first. The Jews look upon God as Father; the Chinese regard parents as God. The meaning is the same.” In this way harmony is achieved by showing our love for God through loving our parents. Even Jesus did not allow people to usurp the portion due to their parents by pretending that it was to be offered to God (Mk. 7:11). Therefore, there should be no conflict between Jesus’ ethics and the Confucian hsiao.

In discussing the doctrine of jen and i (righteousness), Wang was not hesitant in searching for Christian analogy. He took jen as love-for-others and i as love-for-oneself, which is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13. Mencius rejected Mo Tzu’s all-embracing love as the extreme of jen and Yang Chu’s self-centered interest as the extreme of i. The harmony between jen and i is clearly seen in Mencius’ synthesis in teaching a love of gradation and discernment. In Christianity, the balance of love and truth is embodied in Jesus’ words: “Give to those who ask of you” and “Cast no pearl before the swine.”

Advocates of cultural harmonization, like Wang Chih-hsin, cannot entirely conceal their cultural predilection. In their program they are eager to show that Chinese concepts really have something positive to be synthesized. They hold on to the best of orthodox Confucianism as a protection for the survival of the tradition. Their effort seems to look for Christian sanction for the selected portion of Confucian thought. Thus Christianity and Confucianism are not equal partners in the program. Such inequality indicates their concern for the preservation of Chinese culture with the aid of Christianity. Their indigenization is the attempt to maintain the double loyalties—to Christianity and to China. In this way they can profess themselves as Chinese Christians.

3. To Fulfill, Not to Destroy

Advocates of this third position believed that Christianity would improve on traditional culture and thereby enrich it. They were willing to admit similarity, but not identity as Wu Lei-ch’uan did, between Christian doctrines and Chinese classical thought. It did not mean that their love for the ethnic culture was less or that they favored complete westernization. They were interested in preserving Chinese values, but they went beyond seeking points of cultural contacts. They saw the inadequacy of Chinese culture, not so much because of the current anti-Confucian iconoclasm as because of having a higher, theological conviction.

Several premises were shared in this pattern of theological thought. First, they believed that God has not left himself without witness to his activities in Chinese society. Chinese culture is simultaneously the work of God and of humankind. Glimpses of divine revelation are perceivable in the teaching of the Chinese sages. The attitude of superiority among former missionaries was now replaced by that of humility. Second, they were optimistic about the future of the ethnic culture. Modern China was still in the making, and had to undergo an inevitable process of cultural assimilation. Third, they accepted the finality of Christianity in one way or another. The centrality of Christ was the focus of their message. As Chao Tzu-ch’en said, “The greatest contribution that Christianity can make to Confucian culture is its experience of God as revealed in the Word Incarnate, Jesus, the Christ.”

According to these convictions, proponents of this theological pattern sympathetically and critically examined their cultural inheritance. Very often their sympathy outweighed their criticism. They looked for areas where the Chinese sages and the Christian faith could meet, and pointed them to the way of greater truth. They felt that the humanistic basis of Chinese thought lacks adequate perspective to give a sound philosophy of life. The finiteness and sinfulness of human beings obscure their metaphysical glasses.

In Chao’s analysis, Chinese thinkers value the harmony between humans and nature. When nature maintains internal and external equilibrium, life will prosper. The Confucian theory does not teach the conquest of nature, but seeks to understand its ways. The Chinese mind seldom goes beyond nature itself, yet stays constantly within the sphere of human affairs. Such practical emphasis partially accounts for the weakness of its metaphysics and the vagueness of its religious dimension.

Confucian ethics mainly deals with human relationships. In Chao’s view, the teaching of hsiao, however, is for people, not for God; in the world, not beyond the world. Human beings require no other god than themselves in the realization of the true, the good, and the beautiful. But the overconfidence in human ability defeats its own moral structure. Christianity will enable the Chinese doctrine to establish its foundation, beyond the maintenance of the human-nature harmony, upon the religious experience of a God-human relationship. From this, the Christian doctrine of the Fatherhood of God will enrich the Chinese view of family, which includes the living and the dead bound together through hsiao, by the extended idea of a universal family. The Chinese individual is now liberated from the bondage of the traditional family to a heavenly fatherhood and a world brotherhood, which is also the Confucian aspiration. As Chao put it: “the depth and height of brotherhood will not be reached without the religious homogeneity of a world God-consciousness that Christianity alone can give.”

4. Cultural Dualism

Standing apart from the intellectual main current of indigenous theology was a most popular preacher at Peking, Wang Ming-tao,
In a time of social disorder and political instability, members of Wang's church found psychological comfort and spiritual renewal in the aftermath of World War II. The church was the bride of Christ, purged with his blood and lived in the world, but not of it. 

Wang's solution was founded in his hope for the Church Triumphant. The church is the bride of Christ purged with his blood of sacrifice, saved by his substitutionary death, and united to him without blemish. To Wang, only the redemptive history of the people of God matters. His ecclesiology is strongly eschatological in outlook and otherworldly in emphasis. His theological dualism is extended to the status of individuals before God. Sonship to God is exclusively given to believers; nonbelievers in the world are enemies of God. 

In Wang's theology, we see a constant dichotomy between faith and reason, the church and the world, individual gospel and social gospel. This bias has naturally led to a form of monastic retreat from the world in turmoil and to a breeding of self-righteousness in social relationship. The shortcoming of his position is that Wang had an incomplete theology of culture and was still living in the mentality of the majority of missionaries of the previous century. 

5. Christianity Judges Culture 

Although theologically conservative like Wang Ming-tao, Chang I-ching, a prolific writer in the south, was more positive in his view of Chinese culture and more comprehensive in his apologetic effort. Unlike the liberal Chinese Christians, he was more critical than sympathetic in his examination of Chinese tradition. Instead of showing areas of similarity between Christianity and Chinese culture, Chang was ready to point out the differences and weaknesses of Confucian thought. He entered into a cultural debate with Confucian scholars from a theological standpoint. 

Chang acknowledged the presence of divine activity in Chinese civilization. The Lordship of Christ prevails over both the creative and the redemptive dimensions. Equal attention should be given to both in the formulation of an indigenous theology. However, the gravity of human sin has deeply and widely affected the cultural function. Even the best of Chinese culture is not exempted from it. The sages of the past had only glimmers of light that were to be gathered to the True Light in Jesus Christ. 

Chang adopted a sun-moon analogy to compare Jesus with Confucius. Jesus is the sun whose light is intrinsic and intense. Confucius is the moon whose light is a reflection of sunlight, having no illumination of its own. Wu Lei-ch'uan looked upon Jesus and Confucius in the same human category. Chao Tzu-ch'en regarded Jesus as a supreme man. But Chang argued that the difference between Jesus and the Chinese sage is that between God and human. Jesus' stupendous claims, his miraculous deeds, and his fulfillment of prophecy are unique evidence of his divinity, incarnate in human form. Like other sages of China's past desirous of knowing the Tao of heaven, Confucius sought after it without the aid of special revelation from God. This explains his agnostic reserve in commenting on the religious and supernatural realm of reality. And this Tao is none other than Jesus Christ. 

Chang encouraged the Confucianists to consider the credibility of Christianity without abandoning their Confucian interest and respect. However, unlike Wu Lei-ch'uan, he was reluctant to admit the existence of precedents of Christian teaching among the ancient classics. Similarity cannot be taken as equivalence, for they are qualitatively different in their metaphysical structures. This is also due to the difference in epistemology. The Confucian way of knowing begins in human being and nature, whereas Christianity has its starting point in the self-revelation of God. Humanity's blind search gives rise to religious polytheism in Chinese experience, which has to be corrected with the monotheistic faith in Christianity. 

Regarding the national crisis, Chang's hope was dependent upon his theology of divine grace and judgment. It is improper to argue that China should adopt Christianity for political modernization. Chang felt that the core of the issue of national reconstruction lies in the transformation of individuals and the community together. For human effort alone is not sufficient to turn selfishness to altruism, selfishness to sacrifice, and exploitation to service. The kingdom of God is both a task of people and a gift of God.

Theological Common Ground 

The problem of indigenization is ambiguous as well as complex. Its nature defies a final solution, for an indigenous theology is a task that involves at least three aspects of intellectual effort: the definition of the Christian faith, the identification of culture, and the expression of the former in the latter. Each of these presupposes a context that is conditioned by both time and space. 

In the missionary activities during the nineteenth century, the problem was largely tackled by preaching a "Western Christ against Chinese culture." Since the late nineteenth century, owing to the ineffectiveness of the missionary approach and the growing appreciation of the Chinese tradition, the emphasis of the Christian message consisted in a "Western Christ of Chinese culture." The emergence of the Christocentric apologetics in the Chinese Church in the 1920s, occasioned by the anti-Christian movement, sought to present a "Chinese Christ of Chinese culture." They longed to see the Chinese Christ save the nation in crisis. These five patterns of indigenous experiments represent almost the entire spectrum of theological reflection. 

Among these patterns of indigenous thought, we can establish three premises of durable value regarding the problem of contextual theology. First, no culture is beyond the redemptive activity of God, which is the common basis of Christian hope of all five
patterns. The current situation of the nation intensified this theological expectation among the Chinese Christians. Though pessimistic about the world, Wang Ming-tao’s enthusiasm for evangelism expressed certain belief in cultural redeemability. And Wu Lei-ch’uan’s national reconstruction was more explicit of this conviction. Second, no definition of Christianity is absolute, for culture itself is relative. There exists a mutual necessity between culture and Christianity. Culture needs Christianity for enlightenment; and the Christian faith requires culture for a better interpretation. Any claim to a full expression of the Christian religion is simply blind dogmatism. If such claim is not possible within a culture, the possibility is even less in cross-cultural missions. No pattern above is completely sufficient to give an indigenous theology, for indigenization is an ongoing process as the Christian church fulfills its missio Dei in God’s world. Therefore, a full identification of traditional concepts with Christian doctrines will usurp the unique value of revelation in Jesus Christ. Here, Chang I-ching’s distinction between common and special revelation would help Wu Lei-ch’uan to avoid the danger of cultural idolatry. And Wu had a hard time to answer the question: Why choose Christianity if the Chinese sages already have the truth? To some extent, Wang Chih-hsin had to face the same question in his program of cultural harmonization.

Third, no culture is exempted from divine judgment, although every culture has traces of God’s work. Chang was right to urge cultural repentance for all nations. And Chao Tzu-ch’en’s argument that the Confucian sages were agents of truth is also well taken. Any recognition of truth, good, and beauty assumes the existence of an absolute, which may not be visible in the ambiguity of life. And it is this absolute reality that judges all cultural decisions made in existential contexts.

Notes

3. Ch’eng Ching-yi, “Pen-se chiao-hui chih shang-ch’ueh” (Discussion of Indigenous Church), Wen-she yiieh-k’an 1.6 (May 1926):8. Ch’eng was elected general secretary of the National Christian Council of China and served in that position until 1933.
4. Ibid., pp. 9-10.
6. See Wang Chih-hsin, “Pen-se chiao-hui yü pen-se chu-cho” (Indigenous Church and Indigenous Literature), Wen-she yiieh-k’an 1.6 (May 1926): 1-17.
8. See Wu Lei-ch’uan, “Chi-tu-chiao yü Ju-chiao” (Christianity and Confucianism), Chen-li chou-k’an 1.43 (Jan. 12, 1923).
9. See Wu Lei-ch’uan, “Chi-tu-chiao ching yü Ju-chiao ching” (The Christian Scripture and the Confucian Documents), Sheng-ming yiieh-k’an III.6 (March 1923).
10. See Wu Lei-ch’uan, Chi-tu-chiao yü Chung-kuo wo-n-hua (Christianity and Chinese Culture) (Shanghai: Ch’ing-nien hsieh-hui shu-chü, 1936), pp. 57-58.
13. Ibid., p. 3.
20. Chang I-ching, “Yeh Ja pien” (Debate between Christianity and Confucianism), Chen-kuang is’ung-k’an (Shanghai: China Baptist Publication Society, 1928), II, 32-33.
21. Chang I-ching, “Tu Ch’en Kuan-chang po-shih Kung-chiao tsan-i pien-mu’” (A Critique of Dr. Ch’en Kuan-chang’s Lecture on Confucian Religion) in Chen-kuang is’ung-k’an, II, 118.
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Christ within Cultures: Dialogue in Context

Richard Friedli, O.P.

In theological discussions about the mission of the church, various themes feature prominently according to circumstances. In recent years attention has focused on such concerns as adaptation, building up the local church, indigenization, dialogue, and missionary presence. Today “contextualization” is a major concern. Such terms and emphases are not academic fads, but rather, they express aspects of a timely new consciousness. Taking the current interest in contextualization as point of departure, this article will offer, with the help of related themes, some comments on dialogue with people of other faiths.

1. Contextualization

In your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence (1 Pet. 3:15–16).

For some time now the trend in missiological literature is to use the key word “contextualization” to describe all possible ways in which the Christian message and the non-Christian environment have an impact on each other. The International Colloquium on Contextual Theology, held in Manila from June 20 to 23, 1978, was not the first to point out that contextualization means “presenting fully the gospel of Jesus Christ here and now, incarnating it into every community, so as to make it the sign of God’s kingdom-to-come.” Already at an earlier stage the ecumenical meetings of theologians from the Third World had given attention to this correlation. In the closing statement of their first meeting, at Dar-es-Salaam in August 1976, the Third World theologians affirmed: “The Christian churches, though taking their origin from Jesus Christ, the Word of God, and the Scriptures, are institutions comprised of human beings; hence they are subject to human weakness and conditioned by their sociocultural environment.” In an undeniably negative and ethnocentric manner missionary activity has therefore implied that “thus the Christian churches established on these (non-European) continents were more or less carbon copies of those of European Christianity.”

Third World theologians of the postcolonial era consider a theology, which geographically and socially has broken away from Europe, but which still considers Europe as normative beyond its own social and cultural context, misleading and absurd. To them theology that is neutral has little reason to exist. Rather, in a sense, all theology is committed; it is “conditioned notably by the sociocultural context in which it is developed.” The participants at this 1976 meeting in Tanzania were thus able to discern among themselves “a considerable measure of agreement concerning the need to do theology within the context described above.”

The second meeting of Third World theologians, from December 17 to 23, 1977, at Accra, Ghana, elaborated upon these perspectives within the African context. In their Communique they write: “We believe that African theology must be understood in the context of African life and culture and the creative attempt of African peoples to shape a new future that is different from the colonial past and the neo-colonial present.”

In the beginning of 1979 the very same theme, but now within the Asian context, was taken up at the third intercontinental meeting of Third World theologians, this time at Wennappuwa, Sri Lanka.

2. Inculturation

To the Jews I became a Jew, . . . to those under the law I became as one under the law, . . . To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (1 Cor. 9:20–21).

Ever since the discussions at the Third Synod of Catholic Bishops in 1974 at Rome, the wish to transpose the gospel message, theological formulations, and ecclesiastical lifestyles and to assimilate them with various cultures has also found its way into the vocabulary of the Catholic Church. The Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii nuntiandi (Dec. 8, 1975) on “Evangelization in the Modern World” very distinctly referred to this desire to translate the gospel message “without the slightest betrayal of its essential truth into the language that these particular people understand,” and suggested that (no. 63, 2) “The transposition has to be done with the discernment, seriousness, respect and competence which the matter calls for in the field of liturgical expression, and in the areas of catechesis, theological formulation, secondary ecclesial structures, and ministries.” And very pointedly the text continues: “The word ‘language’ should be understood here less in the semantic or literary sense than in the sense which one may call anthropological and cultural.”

3. Cultural Anthropology

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations (Mt. 28:19).

An important shift in emphasis has taken place in theological methodology as a result of this new consciousness. It is no longer enough to point merely toward the human sciences as the disciplines which help to find theological answers; rather, it is necessary to take account of the complex process which structures a person’s interior inculturation and makes him or her part of a particular human community. Indeed, the fact that people are subject to “language,” in the sense we have described, fashions them in the way they think and live, both as individuals and as members of a particular society. As a result, the human person is not just a “natural” being and a quality natura humana, which by itself is neutral in value, but rather is marked by and can only be understood in view of a lifestyle that was inherited, and a worldview, to which

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4. Incarnation

Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men (Phil. 2:5-7).

If it is necessary to integrate all cultural structures, then God’s incarnation in Jesus Christ is no exception to this rule—the more so if we consider that in this fact man’s value has been greatly enhanced.11 In this light one wonders what to make of the objection, so often brought against theological contextualization, that Christ does not contradict the cultural limitation of the human nature of the human nature of Christ in Jesus of Nazareth. On the contrary, it presupposes this if it is not itself to be spiritually disincarnated. Seen in a cultural-anthropological context, God became not “merely man” in Christ, but a man conditioned by Hebrew-Aramaic-Semitic culture.

Our belief that the Christ-event implies universal redemption does not contradict the cultural limitation of the human nature of Christ in Jesus of Nazareth. On the contrary, it presupposes this if it is not itself to be spiritually disincarnated. Seen in a cultural-anthropological context, God became not “merely man” in Christ, but a man conditioned by Hebrew-Aramaic-Semitic culture.

5. A Christological Basis for Dialogue

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew... barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all (Col. 3:9-10).

If we can understand dialogue between religions as an intensive and common search for God, then understanding Jesus Christ correctly within his cultural-anthropological context becomes very important to the Christian partner in the discussion.12 For, as we have pointed out, on the one hand the particular understanding of human nature is already implied in the universally significant event of the incarnation, and on the other hand no Christian can claim—as Christians too are conditioned by their culture—to have been so intensely and so completely stirred by Christ, that he or she represents Christ in the dialogue in the fullness of his incarnate Person. In their act of faith Christians have to continue the very same dialogue with Christ in which they are involved with people of other cultures and religions.13

The different forms of dialogue are thus aspects of the personal and ecclesial search for and conformity with Christ. Dialogue then becomes the guiding principle of the Christian lifestyle; that is, imitating Christ beyond his culturally limited and restricted human nature in Jesus of Nazareth. And this dialogue of the Christian with Christ in the world cultures will have to continue till the end of human history—till that very end, when all modalities of human nature will have been grasped and consequently all dimensions of God’s incarnation will have been made fully manifest.

As long as all cultural diversity of human history and of human destiny have not yet been revealed, our understanding of Christ is still incomplete. Therefore, as Christians in dialogue with people from other religions, we cannot yet claim to know Christ fully. The Christ, with whom we want to acquaint them, appears incomplete and frequently distorted. To a degree this is because the incarnation took place in a Jewish context and its witnesses used Semitic and Indo-European speech patterns, but to some extent our personal human limitations and the divisions among Christians also account for it. However, in a dialogue we may come across human appearances of Christ, which appear unexpectedly and for which there exist so far no precedents. Contextualization then takes on the meaning of this ever-evolving complexity of Christ.

Accordingly, dialogue between religions must excite the interest of the Christian, not primarily while cultural-anthropology presents itself as a motivating force to transfer a cultural particularity into the totality of humanity and of salvation history, but more while dialogue adds a qualitative enrichment and a new Christlike intensity to this transfer. Dialogue between people of different religions and cultures becomes an attempt to shed new light upon this ever-unfolding revelation of the mystery of God in Christ.

6. Acculturation

Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me (Mt. 25:40).

Inevitably contextualization, which may be described as the vital feature of missionary presence and missionary work, has received a new and intense perspective. It is no longer only a matter of pedagogical-pastoral adaptation of liturgy, homiletics, or catechetics, but more a step forward in Christology and a summons to systematic theology. It is no longer possible to think about the principle of adaptation as a question of missionary strategy. Rather, adaptation must be understood as an interpretation and an exploration—which are important and ever and again necessarily new—of the whole tradition regarding the Christ-event, as it exists now, in its contacts with nonbiblical cultures and patterns of humanity.

An acculturative process of this nature14 affects not simply a few aspects of the cultural encounter between Christians and non-Christians, so that doctrine, ethical and symbolical expressions, liturgical usage, and socioreligious institutions change. Nor does a dialogue based on these elements aim at a cross-fertilization of different cultural and religious elements. Least of all does the reference to the cultural-anthropological relativity of all human reality serve as a mere observation of incidental change, in which two religious groups, one’s own and an alien one, are involved through a dialogical process. Under discussion is what might be referred to as “qualitative catholicity,”15 that is, to abandon oneself in faith and trust to a yet unknown presence of God and Christ in alien persons and to accept such a communication in contemplation and thanksgiving.16 In this way the individual as well as the entire church set out on pilgrimage toward the final advent of God’s reign.
7. The Missionary

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me (Gal. 2:20).

The principles of the human sciences to which we appeal here, and the Christological consequences for the motivation of dialogue, may well appear rather sketchy within the framework of this article. They may prove to be obscure points of reference both for adherents of the theology of fulfillment and for evangelical communities, because these believe firmly and exclusively that the Christ-event took place once for all and that it is central in understanding the mission of the church (a fact which is obviously not questioned here). In addition, for them, the concise but controversial formula of the “anonymous Christian,” proposed by Karl Rahner, with all the “imperialistic” interpretive distortions is bound to rear its head. In a similar way those actively engaged in missionary contacts may also be left with a feeling of apprehension due to this sketchy Christological and ecclesiological comment on the mission of the church.

But, having analyzed my own personal experiences in Central Africa and Southeast Asia, which were corroborated by various missionaries at renewal courses, we are more than ever convinced that it is necessary to identify with the help of cultural anthropology the forces through which missionaries partake in their own culture, the phenomena which enable them to become open to new cultural expressions and values, the processes of communicative dialogue through which their transculturation takes place, and the consequences which result from this new inculturation in a Christ-event which they had not foreseen. Biblical exegesis and cultural anthropology do become then the main disciplines on which the missionary activity of the church must depend in order to be effective in this realm.

8. Perspectives

To share in God’s works of salvation and to proclaim them with admiration are essential requisites if one wants to search in dialogue for the human nature of God and the human nature of persons. But this, in its turn, implies that one maintains a spirituality, which is at the same time open and in its very essence interreligious, and in which meditation and discussion, prayer and the practice of peace are supplementary. Such a spirituality creates the sphere in which dialogue between religions finds its beginnings and reaches its highest peak in silence for the mystery of Christ within human cultures.
Leprosy: A Continuing Concern for Mission

Wendy P. Litman

Leprosy is not a thing of the past. And nowhere in the field of missionary endeavor is the importance of ministering to both the physical and the spiritual needs of people greater than in leprosy work. Leprosy is a disease caused by a mycobacterium, as are many other illnesses, but through the ages the leprosy patient has been singled out and tormented by a burden of stigma. There are those who believe the stigma associated with leprosy arises from references to leprosy in the Bible, and there may be some truth to this. However, it is certainly not the exclusive reason, for leprosy is equally stigmatizing in cultures where the Bible is unknown or little known at best.

The term “lepra” first appeared in the Bible with the Septuagint in about 200 B.C. This was the first translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew to Greek by the seventy-two wise scholars gathered at Alexandria. These scholars were Jews, well versed in Jewish concepts and practices. Faced with the untranslatable term “tsara’ath,” these scholars did what translators in a similar quandary are wont to do; they sought the nearest equivalent available in the language into which they were translating. They chose the word “lepra.”

The Hebrew word tsara’ath did not denote a specific disease, but apparently covered a variety of ills. The word referred primarily to “ritual uncleanness,” closely associated with prohibitions of spots and blemishes. For example, an animal to be sacrificed had to be perfect; if it was not, it was tsara’ath. If a person had any sort of skin blemish or eruption, that person was tsara’ath.

Indeed the symbolism had been extended to rot or blemish appearing on leather (Leviticus 13:47-59) and on houses (Leviticus 14:33-53) as well as on woven cloth. All these symbols and concepts the translators of the Septuagint designated as “lepra.” In essence, leprosy became “tsara’ath.” Subsequent translators into most languages and many dialects including the Gutenberg Bible, and the major English translations . . . followed the lead of the Septuagint translators and sought out their needed equivalent of the word “lepra.” Thus the disease leprosy became embedded in the Bible.

As mentioned earlier, this has undoubtedly been one of the causes of the stigma associated with leprosy. However, it is likely that far more significant factors were: (1) the long-unknown source of infection, (2) the belief that leprosy is a punishment for sin, (3) the fact that the disease is set apart because it produces insensitivity rather than pain and can lead ultimately to sometimes hideous disfigurement, and (4) the belief that leprosy is incurable.

Many Christians hold the belief that a mandate to minister to leprosy patients derives from Jesus’ commandment to “Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons” (Mt. 10:8). The Reverend A. M. Derham of the Leprosy Mission (London) points out, however, that “after all, we do not have missions to dead widows’ sons or paralytics or much-married Samaritan women.” For positive scriptural support for a mission to leprosy patients, we can refer to the biblical emphasis on compassionate care for the needy, rejected, and victimized . . . and especially Christ’s own definition of His role . . . “good news to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, liberty for the oppressed . . .”: most leprosy victims in past days qualified on three if not four of those counts for special attention from Christ’s servants . . . Further, if it is a Christ-like thing to minister to the marred bodies of leprosy victims, it must surely be even more right and proper to prevent the marring from taking place.

In fact, the real mandate for Christian leprosy work lies in the need of all human beings for the redemptive wholeness that Christ offers. The victim of the disease we know today as leprosy stands presently prevalent, religion offers little comfort. Leprosy is viewed by Buddhists and Hindus, for example, as a punishment for sins committed either in this life or a previous incarnation. “The punishment is inexorable—it cannot be avoided or atoned for, or expi-ated. The disease is thus hideous and awful, progressive and incurable—and there is nothing to be done about it, once it is established; in fact, it would be wrong to try to mitigate its consequences.” In the context of cultures that espouse these notions, the Christian doctrine of redemption is tremendously important.

Jesus was concerned not only about the spiritual lives of people, but also about their physical well-being. He dealt with people, not in a compartmentalized way, but as whole people. He knew that leprosy and other ailments were not caused by sin or by God’s disfavor. Jesus saw illness as an opportunity whereby God’s love and mercy, and thus his glory, could be shown through the compassion of fellow human beings for people less fortunate. Jesus revealed God’s glory by healing the sick, and we can do likewise by helping other people. The greatest commandment of all is to love God and the second is to love one’s fellow human beings by acts of kindness and mercy. Because the leprosy patient suffers cruel discrimination and because he or she is still the victim of fear and ignorance, our call to healing is urgent.

While evangelicals struggle to demonstrate the impact of the gospel on everyday life, and liberal theologians strive to relate their concerns for social welfare to the “eternal” issues, Christians engaged in leprosy work can derive a certain satisfaction from the fact that they long ago had to come to grips with both these per-

Wendy P. Litman has been on the staff of American Leprosy Missions, Bloomfield, New Jersey, since 1976. She was formerly assistant director of the Alumnae Association of Douglass College, Rutgers—The State University of New Jersey.
perspectives. They realized that they must be wholeheartedly engaged in both. Biblical principles have been woven into the fabric of their daily lives, and thus love, compassion, service, healing, and reconciliation have formed the texture and pattern of their motivation.

John Stott in *Christian Mission and the Modern World* points out that the Christian is responsible to obey both the great commandments to love the Lord God with all one's heart and mind and strength, and one's neighbor as oneself; and the great commission to go and make disciples of all nations. Therefore,

> if we truly love our neighbor we shall without doubt share with him the good news of Jesus. How can we possibly claim to love Him if we know the Gospel but keep it from him? Equally, however, if we truly love our neighbor we shall not stop with evangelism. Our neighbor is neither a bodiless soul that we shall love only his soul, nor a soulless body that we shall care for its welfare alone. . . . Therefore, if we love our neighbor as God made him, we must inevitably be concerned for his total welfare, the good of his soul, his body, and his community.

American Leprosy Missions, a North American agency, has had almost seventy-five years of experience with the leprosy problem throughout the world. During the earlier decades of the organization's service, medical science had progressed only to the point of being able to provide compassionate custodial care for victims of leprosy. The great majority, therefore, eventually suffered total social, physical, psychological, and vocational disability. Early missionaries offered the comfort of the gospel, human fellowship, shelter from a hostile society, and good food and proper nutrition. They also cared for wounds and did whatever else they could to alleviate the physical suffering of patients.

The search for an effective treatment for leprosy and its complications has a long and agonizing history. Over one hundred years ago, Dr. Gerhard Armauer Hansen identified the germ that causes leprosy. But for sixty-eight years, medical science failed to find a cure, a medicine that would destroy the germ. In desperation, workers tried every drug that offered the slightest grounds for hope.

In 1941 the United States Public Health Service Hospital at Carville, Louisiana became the first institution to try the use of sulphone drugs in the treatment of leprosy. The results were dramatically encouraging and the sulphone era had begun. Waves of hope for the victims of leprosy spread around the world. For the first time, it was possible to "chemically isolate" the leprosy bacillus, thus making isolation of the patients in special institutions unnecessary. Most patients could be treated while continuing to live at home and following normal vocational pursuits. A genuinely public health approach to the disease, now recognized as only mildly communicable, became possible. This change, away from a residential approach, in turn changed attitudes about the mission to leprosy patients. Christian workers in the field of leprosy became, in many ways, missionary pioneers, pacesetters. They began to place major emphasis on health service development, community health, and research. They paid attention to patients' "felt needs."

Although most people seem to have a natural resistance to leprosy and only a small percentage of any population is susceptible, leprosy is found to some degree in nearly every country of the world. Of the approximately 15 million victims in 1980, the majority are in the countries of equatorial Africa, South America, India, and Southeast Asia. Roughly 2000 new cases have been reported in the United States in the past twenty years.

Unfortunately, only a small proportion of all known victims outside the United States are under treatment. This is terrible because without treatment leprosy can maim, blind, and torture people with pain and disfigurement. Untreated patients may die of respiratory obstruction, of sheer physical and mental exhaustion, or of starvation as they become too weak and too sick to feed themselves any longer. Death can also result from the long-term effects of chronic wounds and multiple infections.

Patients with leprosy often lose the sense of feeling in their hands and feet. Without treatment, the loss of feeling may become so extensive as to involve practically the whole body including the eyes. Pain is protective. Without it, burns and blisters go unnoticed; small and large wounds are ignored. It is easy enough to imagine that with no feeling in their feet, patients walking long distances with bare feet, or worse still, in unsuitable shoes, can sustain severe wounds. Similarly, patients with loss of feeling in their hands can easily burn their hands when cooking, or tending a fire, or lighting a candle. Without pain, infection can literally destroy a finger, a toe, a foot, or even an eye in a few days. This, for the most part, is why leprosy patients become disfigured and crippled. But these tragedies need no longer occur. Leprosy can almost always be controlled and often cured, provided the patient is placed under treatment soon enough and his treatment continued long enough. In most cases, the worst effects of the disease can be prevented and patients can live normal or near-normal lives.

Of course, for patients already disfigured or crippled, treatment can be a complex matter. Effect of the disease may include a claw hand, drop foot, or the collapse of nose or loss of eyebrows. For individuals who experience these, reconstructive surgery may be the only means of restoring the use of hands or feet or improving physical appearance.

Sometimes facial paralysis develops, thus preventing the patient from closing his eyes. This is particularly serious because the eyes may become infected, ultimately resulting in blindness. In this case, surgery may involve dividing the muscle to the jaw and running it under the skin to the upper and lower eyelids. The patient is then taught to blink his eyes by clenching his teeth!

Despite these miracles of modern surgery, patients who have lost the sense of touch cannot regain it. Damaged nerves cannot be repaired. So farmers are taught the importance of wearing protective gloves, and women who do their cooking over open fires are taught to use long wooden handles on pots and pans. They learn to use their eyes to protect themselves, since they cannot feel.

American Leprosy Missions (ALM) supplies drugs, supports medical and social rehabilitation, trains leprosy workers, finances research, contributes to public health and education programs, and gives leadership to the staff of an international journal. As a member of the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations consisting of twenty-four members representing nineteen countries, ALM participates in a worldwide effort, supplying technical advice and assistance. Doors continue to open in the emerging nations and, increasingly, ALM's most vital role becomes that of helping people to help themselves. Training additional leprosy workers gains in importance with each passing week. American Leprosy Missions responds to requests from governments and national associations for assistance in organizing leprosy control programs, comprehensive community health programs, and training programs for leprosy workers. Working with governments, mis-

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"The search for an effective treatment for leprosy and its complications has a long and agonizing history."
sion boards, and national churches in various relationships country by country, ALM seeks to serve in the most effective ways possible.

However, as long as leprosy can cost patients the loss of social status, job, and even family and home because of prejudice and unreasonable fear—the stigma—associated with the disease, a strictly secular approach to the problem is insufficient. Leprosy patients still have special needs which can be met only by organizations such as ALM, motivated by commitment to a spiritual heritage and by a respect for life that grows out of faith. "Where honest, efficient, compassionate, and loving medical work inspired by unselfish motives is carried out, it is witness of God's unselfish love. Where such work is motivated by loyalty to Christ and His Spirit, it is Christian witness." ALM is committed to the holistic development of people in the context of faith, constrained by Jesus' love to respond in loving concern to human needs for healing and wholeness.

Notes

Twelve Theses on Contemporary Mission

Charles W. Forman

1. The pluralist world in which we live challenges the Christian mission to a greater openness to what God is doing among all peoples and to a greater respect for all peoples in their own integrity. The Christian faith challenges the mission in the same way.
2. Mission arises from thanksgiving and rejoicing over good news more than from a sense of duty. It is something to engage in graciously and joyfully.
3. The good news gives meaning and hope to our lives. We are released from the despair of Sisyphus and the rebellion of Prometheus. Moral structure and humanizing purpose are given by God, not punished by the gods.
4. The good news removes our guilt and condemnation. Moral structure is not in itself good news if it implies our condemnation. But forgiveness has come to us. This forgiveness does not destroy the importance of our acts in history because it came in the form of an act in history, in Jesus Christ.
5. The good news gives us freedom, not the freedom of anomie where nothing is right so we do what we please, but the freedom of forgiveness and love extended to us within a structure of morality and meaning.
6. Our mission is to share all this in thankfulness, with full respect for others who may not have it. They, not we, are the ones to decide what of the good news they already have and what they lack.
7. We have doubtless much to receive from others as we listen to them and share with them. We do not know the dimensions of our own faith till we have received as well as given.
8. Word and action belong together in our sharing. They are both weakened when separated. There may be situations where governments or good sense require their separation, but this is not our preference.
9. The action which goes with the word is primarily a matter of helping the meek and oppressed ones and living in solidarity with them. This solidarity is not to be uncritical.
10. Solidarity between Christians of different churches and cultures is also important for the mission. Mission structures in which all member churches are both givers and receivers and all decisions are made together can best show forth the truth about mission today.
11. Growth in size of the church is a by-product of mission, which is important but which should not be dominant.
12. Growth in faith—by the church and by those outside the church—is of the very essence of the mission and should be kept central.

Charles W. Forman, Professor of Missions at Yale University Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut, served as a missionary in India from 1945 to 1950.
The Navajos Are Coming to Jesus.

By Thomas Dolaghan and David Scates.

This small volume is an exercise in missiology applied to a specific field, in which both authors have vast experience, having integrated missionary work and cultural work with sophisticated academic study. Aided by extensive reading in their field, the authors begin where, in my opinion, all missiology must begin—with the people as they now are, in their social and religious setting. There follows a brief history of the Navajo people, from the sad and scandalous times of the conquistadores, through the period of Pueblo influence, followed by that of American contact and, finally, American aculturation.

The book, a study of Protestant missions, proceeds to a history of the growth of Navajo churches and missions, beginning in 1869. This chapter is a carefully written history of church efforts and growth, but the authors emphasize the fact that only following "the unbelievable years" after 1950 did the church of the indigenous Navajo ministry develop. The authors quite rightly place profound value on this native ministry, and in so doing leave a pained feeling in the Roman Catholic reviewer's heart. The "high church" Christian, while one can say much about the value of ritual and discipline, especially for Native Americans, must also feel envy for the ability of the more evangelical churches to approach Indian people with unencumbered simplicity and without the complications of clerical regulations and a foreign ecclesiasticism. The same simplicity emerges in the authors' insistence, with the help of statistics, that evangelization does not depend on "development," whatever the state of this knotty dilemma may be today, and that direct proclamation is the best approach. The authors point out the strong contrast between evangelization of the more paternalistic "mission compound" type and the "camp-church" method, which is situated out among the people and within their culture. There is then a description of conversion process, with several case studies and a development of the theory favoring camp churches. Nearly half the book is devoted to charts, maps, and tables showing the results of painstaking field work, and finally a lengthy bibliography.

This reviewer welcomes the volume, and recommends it to potential missionaries and students of culture. It might also help overcome church divisions and competition, which have been so offensive on reservations. One might look more critically at what the authors call the "power encounter" with tribal religion. I speak out of a much different environment, but might it not be more conducive to an incarnational Christianity, to seek to further a "power dialogue" between Christians and traditional religion? While we cannot be bedfellows with sorcery or black magic, we might be open to a more phenomenological study of possible "seeds of the Word" within tribal ceremonies themselves. Joachim Wach once pointed out how great conversions always leave a severe gap in cultural life and lead to disintegration. It is a matter that calls for much discerning study.

Finally, since the book is of value as a reference, it is unfortunate that it was so poorly bound as to fall apart in the reader's hands. Messrs. Dolaghan and Scates deserve far better for their efforts!

—Carl F. Starkloff, S.J.

The Great Economic Debate: An Ethical Analysis.


"This book is based on the belief that humankind is engaged now in a great debate of worldwide and historic magnitude on the question of how economic life should be organized" (p. vii).

J. Philip Wogaman, dean and professor of Christian Social Ethics at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., believes that this debate has assumed new urgency with the continuing crisis of Third World impoverishment and gross inequities, stagflation in industrialized market economies, bureaucratization, centralization and relative stagnation in major centrally planned economies, and increasingly visible limits to growth.

Wogaman's subtitle is important—"an ethical analysis." It demonstrates his commitment not only to describe economic theories, but to assess them from a Christian perspective. He rejects the view that economics should be autonomous, and challenges the fiction that economics is pure science without ideological content; every economic system is a "complex weaving together of values and beliefs."

A Christian should ask five questions of any economic system: (1) Does it take material well-being seriously? (2) Does it promote unity and human community? (3) Does it believe in the inherent worth of each individual and provide freedom for each person's cre-
It is too reformist to challenge adequately the entrenched power of the status quo. Economic conservatism ("small is beautiful") has raised important moral and economic questions, but is not a fully articulated economic-political philosophy. Finally, Wogaman endorses democratic socialism, but with reservations.

This is a good book on an extremely complex and volatile issue. This reviewer questioned several small points, for example, the attribution of high productivity to capitalism per se, when a significant share of capitalist productivity was the result of exceptional natural resources, lack of significant competition, etc. Similar productivity probably could not be achieved by Third World countries adopting capitalism today. On a larger scale, I had reservations about the typology. Economic conservatism is a movement but not (yet) a type. The crucial distinctions between a mixed economy and democratic socialism could have been more explicit.

This is certainly a very useful description, analysis and critique—and eminently readable.

—Richard Dickinson


John Hemming has made a major contribution to our knowledge of Brazilian history, 1500 to 1760. He has produced a vivid account of the colonial conquest of Brazil in terms of its native peoples. The author is the director of the Royal Geographic Society in London. Extensive expeditions have enabled him to visit tribes in all parts of Brazil. Aware of the terrible impact of European society on them, he found that to understand the tragedy one must go to its history.

Hemming begins with the discovery of the Indians and the romantic reports about them. In subsequent chapters we read of the impact in the sixteenth century of the European diseases, demand for slaves, and mission efforts. Hemming occasionally reveals annoyance at the implied arrogance of Christian evangelization. Nevertheless, the missionary orders, especially the Jesuits, are pervasive in the story, and their influence for good and for ill gets fair treatment. As we proceed, we follow the first colonists, the arrival of the Jesuits, the French colony in Rio, and the resistance of the Potiguar tribe in the Pernambuco area. From there Hemming takes us to the Amazon and Maranhao through the years 1542 to 1638, and then to the Bandeirantes of the seventeenth century and their search for slaves against the opposition of the Jesuits. He describes the Indian policies of the Dutch in Pernambuco, of Antonio Vieira, and of the cattle ranchers in the backlands. In the final chapters we read of the gold rush, the plantations and missions in the Amazon, and of Pombal and the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1760. By this time the accessible Indians had either been eliminated or had fled, so the account ends. Hemming calculates that there were about 2,431,000 Indians in Brazil in 1500; now there are about 100,000. An "appalling demographic tragedy of great magnitude has occurred" (p. 492).

In the book, Hemming makes extensive use of reports, letters, and journals of soldiers, government officials, missionaries, and others. He lets the Europeans tell their own story. So numerous are these quotations that the "Notes and References" at the end of the book run for 121 pages. Maps, woodcuts, glossary, bibliography, and index add usefulness to this formidable book. Missiologists will be long indebted to John Hemming and Harvard University Press.

—H. McKennie Good pasture


This study of twelve religious movements probes the reasons for their unusual growth. The editor is professor of mission in the School of World Mission and Evangelism, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

The authors have lived in the countries in which the movements they examine flourish.

The African Zionist Movement is an example of highly indigenous Christianity, with African values and beliefs infused with Christian meanings. Its strong Old Testament orientation sees Moses as expressing the African concept of leadership.

A Zaire movement, the "Church of Jesus Christ on Earth through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu," a full member of the World Council of Churches, may have grown rapidly because of persecution.

The New Apostolic Church (Europe) has grown because of the sense of security, eliteness, and belonging which has accrued to its authoritarian
leadership and structure, dogmatic teaching and close-knit fellowship. Iglesia ni Kristo of the Philippines, a highly dynamic independent indigenous church, has used rationalism in its doctrines and appeal.

Aggressive outreach characterizes Korea's Tong-il (Unification Church) and Japan's Soka Gakkai (Value-creating Society).

The chapter entitled "The Ahmadiya Movement: Islamic Renewal" hardly does justice to today's massive renewal in Islam. The Ahmadiya sect is doubtfully Islamic. A chapter, say, on the upsurge of Islam, offering specific examples of rapid spread today, would have been more helpful.

Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons are so familiar that this reviewer would have preferred an analysis of other less known but mushrooming cults of the charismatic variety or the recently labeled "suicide" types. Brazil's Umbanda religion and Vietnam's Caodaism are examples of culturally relevant movements.

Editor Hesselgrave warns against simplistic analyses of rapid growth. The reasons for growth are numerous and subtle. The church should take note of some points, for example: dialogue that is concerned with the development of strategies on how to cope when religious freedoms are swept away or severely curtailed is needed. The studies would seem to indicate that religious growth is in part contingent upon threatening, unsettling, and less than ideal conditions within the particular movement or within the society in which the movement exists. Settled conditions within our "repected Zions" are no stimulus. A movement must be meaningful in terms of indigenous views, values, and established ways.

Although its conclusions are tentative, this study surely offers a challenge to the church to self-examination, thought, and action.

—Donald V. Wade

Religion in American History: Interpretive Essays.


The past three decades have been a fertile period in American church historical studies, but the study of the church's missionary enterprise has been largely ignored. Since the pioneering studies of W. W. Sweet, American church historians have been preoccupied with the "American-ness" of their churches. Historians have sought to define the uniqueness of American religious life that arose out of the experience of churches in America and shaped the distinctive faith that missionaries carried overseas.

John Mulder and John Wilson have compiled twenty-seven essays dealing with religion in American history. Each essay deals with aspects of American religious life, ranging from "Understanding the Puritans" by David Hall to "The Radical Turn in Theology and Ethics: Why It Occurred in the 1960's" by Sydney Ahlstrom. Essays on black religion, Judaism, Roman Catholicism, and evangelical Christianity are among the studies included which explore the broad range of American religious life. The lack of a general introduction or a common theme for the collection of essays limits its usefulness for the historical novice. It can be useful, however, for one knowledgeable about the history of American missions.

The inadequacies of recent historiography are also reflected by this anthology. Implicit in these studies of religion in America is the assumption that the churches were shaped essentially by circumstances and forces operative within American national life which tend to exaggerate the cultural captivity of the churches and to minimize the importance of missions on American religious life. The history of missions needs to be rewritten with recent historical advances in mind, but it should also be written as a corrective to the limited perspective of these studies.

—Frank E. Sugeno

New Move Forward in Europe. Growth Patterns of German Speaking Baptists in Europe.


William L. Wagner is an American missionary of the Southern Baptist Convention and for many years has worked in Austria. It is very interesting for Baptists in Europe to look at their missionary work through the eyes of an American Baptist who knows our country and our people very well. The most important question of the book is why the phenomenally fast growth of the Baptist movement, which began in 1834, suddenly started to decline in 1950. In Part I, Wagner gives a summary of the Baptist movement in Europe and its development until 1975, which started independently from the older Anglo-American Baptists. He observes that during the Nazi time the German Baptists gave priority to missionary work rather than to political resistance. He also makes clear that the effects of World War II (high death rate, even among ministers and church leaders; high emigration rate; destroyed buildings; etc.) had a very great influence on the change in development. In Part II he points out that from the very beginning the Hamburg church helped to establish Baptist churches in many European countries. Part III contains interesting statistical details and graph-
formalism in Eastern Europe. But liberalism in northern Germany, liturgical churches were not alive at all (e.g., liturgical formalism in Eastern Europe). But it becomes clear that the strong growth of the Baptist movement until World War II depended on the fact that large parts of the state churches were not alive at all (e.g., liberal theology was taught at the Hamburg Baptist seminary is not correct. This never happened, although there were some liberal-minded students who were influenced by the theology of the state universities.

Parts IV and V give evaluations and analyses for methods and spiritual guidance for the future, because Wagner believes that the Baptists in Europe will still have an important role in missionary work there. He is convinced that the situation in Germany, with regard to churches as well as to the population, has changed. Especially the younger generation is more open to the Christian message. But Wagner has also the impression that a new generation will take up leadership in church life. He thinks that the former generation was too much burdened with their experiences during the Nazi period and World War II. But those who know the time of 1920 and 1930 personally and also know Baptist churches after 1945 will, no doubt, be surprised about his views on Baptist churches during the period from 1950 to 1970. Certainly the older generation knows quite well that the spiritual and missionary strength now is nothing like that of the period 1830-1930. Therefore, we are very grateful for spiritual revivals. However, the danger of resignation from 1950-70 was not greater than it is today. On the contrary, there were several remarkable and dynamic movements; for example, the camping mission with charismatic personalities and the “Rufere” movement (Callers), an inspiring youth movement of laymen. As the budget enabled the Baptist Union some years ago to establish a Home Mission Board with three qualified full-time workers, it is easier now to promote the missionary work more systematically.

Wagner is quite right in seeing some of the big problems of missionary work in Germany: (1) the Baptists tend to remain too isolated from the “world”; (2) they do not adequately realize that the world today is completely different from the world of the nineteenth century. This, indeed, becomes an enormous hindrance to church growth, because Baptist church life in 1978 is still not much different from that of 1900. Although new life is coming into all denominations, new missionary efforts will not necessarily result in growth for the Baptist churches to the same extent as it did until 1930.

I agree with Wagner when he states that God lays a responsibility on us, but I do not share his optimistic view regarding the younger generation, although the confrontation with the gospel is easier today than it was before. In Europe and especially in Germany we appreciate this very helpful book.

—Rudolf Thaut

Rudolf Thaut is Director of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Hamburg, Germany.
Higher Ground: Biography of Wiley B. Glass, Missionary to China.


In Higher Ground, Eloise Glass Cauthen presents the story of her missionary father, Wiley B. Glass, who served the Southern Baptist Mission in China for over forty years, ending his work there with the Japanese occupation of Hwanghsien in Shantung. Because of these circumstances his extensive diaries and all records were lost. When Mrs. Cauthen set out to write her father’s life story she was dependent on her notes of conversations with her father, who lived into his nineties, clear of mind and always willing to recall details of past events and experiences.

Mrs. Cauthen chose to use an autobiographical style to present her tribute to her great missionary father. This reviewer would have preferred a more straightforward narrative treatment instead of the use of the first person for the parental tale. Her own life and that of all the family have been so closely interwoven with the China experience that this could have been a very authentic and interpretive record. But in this volume a daughter’s affection, an old man’s nostalgia, and fragmentary contemporary records result in a regrettable artificiality and a good deal of what seems quite superficial, especially at points of crisis and loss.

It is a very personal story, a tribute to a family linked together not only by natural affection and loyalty of a very deep quality, but also completely devoted to sharing the good news in Christ in deeply personal terms. Eloise portrays her father most vividly as a passionate evangelist who delights especially in the occasions when he has been part of a movement of the Spirit bringing others, be they in his own country or in China, to the feet of the Savior, a conversion attested to by the celebration of full baptism, often joyously at his own hands. Missionary Glass was blessed with two congenial marriages, each of them productive of children who themselves were won to Christ, and with two daughters in missionary service. Both wives, Eunice Taylor and Jessie Pettigrew, are presented as women who were always supportive of a husband who must have been a fairly strenuous as well as affectionate partner. People and events are described, but deeper interpretation that would enlighten mission policy is missing.

A reflective reader who has thought about mission history ends with a good many questions: How did Wiley Glass come equipped for the cultural problems in mission: Anthropology Where It Matters. Does this help the reflective American Christian to understand what is unfolding in modern China or to appraise the degree of positive accomplishment that is attested by the best observers and scholars of our day? Does this mean that God is not active in the life and events of this great land? Are we ready for the surprises that the very innovative Spirit of the living God can provide, such as the reports of ordinary peasant folk who as Christians meet, pray together, and read their Bibles in home gatherings, yet remain loyal to the Chinese nation?

Surely any missionary biography published in 1978 for a church or general leadership should touch on some of these concerns. The period of history of which Wiley B. Glass was a part is a very significant one, beginning with the response of American youth to proclaim the gospel in the last era of the nineteenth century, then into the first decade of the twentieth century when China was still under imperial rule, moving toward the republican revolution of 1912, and running right through to the end of World War II, and beyond, after Wiley’s formal retirement, into the 1960s. But there is no attempt to interpret the political aspects of the Chinese situation.

At the end of the book is a brief and very simplistic assessment of the testing and persecution expected under the communist rule of the People’s Republic of China. We are assured that God remains and will be with his loyal people. But how does this help the reflective American Christian to understand what is unfolding in modern China or to appraise the degree of positive accomplishment that is attested by the best observers and scholars of our day? Does this mean that God is not active in the life and events of this great land? Are we ready for the surprises that the very innovative Spirit of the living God can provide, such as the reports of ordinary peasant folk who as Christians meet, pray together, and read their Bibles in home gatherings, yet remain loyal to the Chinese nation?

—Katharine B. Hockin

Katharine B. Hockin, Lecturer at the Ecumenical Forum of Canada in Toronto, is a retired China missionary.
Frontier Peoples of Central Nigeria, and a Strategy for Outreach.


For those EuroAmericans and Africans doing evangelistic work in Nigeria’s “Middle Belt,” this is a very useful book. As a model for the kind of basic research that needs to be produced and published throughout the world, this book is just as useful to those working outside Nigeria. The purpose of the book is “to present the kind of information that will enable the churches to understand the needs of these peoples and to lay the foundation for a strategy to complete their evangelization” (p. xi).

It briefly describes more than thirty tribal groupings that have so far remained largely unevangelized. Part I consists of a summary of cultural features, present Christian activity, and an assessment of their readiness to change. These are followed by a suggested strategy for reaching each group. Part II provides a brief introduction to culture in general and to selected cultural commonalities shared by the groups in focus. Part III zeroes in on several concepts and procedures of importance to those involved in developing strategies to reach the peoples described. Several appendices usefully summarize the data on which the study is based and give certain strategy concepts.

The book is brief but presented in both a length and a style appropriate to the Nigerian church leaders to which it is directed. It is far from complete either in coverage (for an area inhabited by more than a hundred language groups) or in detail. But the stimulus value of even such a brief treatment and the grid that is provided for further research of this nature make the book well worth publishing in this form. The author and publisher are to be commended for getting it out. I sincerely hope that the study will be expanded for the area in focus and widely imitated for other areas.

—Charles H. Kraft

Charles H. Kraft, Professor of Anthropology and African Studies at School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, served as a missionary in northern Nigeria.

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Fifteen Outstanding Books of 1979 for Mission Studies

The Editors of the Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research have selected the following books for special recognition of their outstanding contribution to mission studies in 1979. We have limited our selection to books in English since it would be impossible to consider fairly the books in many other languages that are not readily available to us. We commend the authors, editors, and publishers represented here for their continuing commitment to advance the cause of the Christian world mission with scholarly literature.

Anderson, Gerald H. and Thomas F. Stranksy, eds.
Mission Trends No. 4. Liberation Theologies in North America and Europe.

Appiah-Kubi, Kofi and Sergio Torres, eds.
African Theology En Route.

Bosch, David J.
A Spirituality of the Road.

Costas, Orlando E.
The Integrity of Mission.

Dayton, Edward R.
That Everyone May Hear. Reaching the Unreached.

DuBose, Francis M., ed.
Classics of Christian Missions.

Eagleson, John and Philip Sharper, eds.
Puebla and Beyond.

Fricen, E.L., Jr. and Wade T. Coggins, eds.
Christ and Caesar in Christian Missions.
Pasadena, Calif.: Wm. Carey Library. Paperback $5.95.

Gunson, Nile
Messengers of Grace. Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas, 1797-1860.
Melbourne: Oxford University Press. $39.50.

Hastings, Adrian.
London and New York: Cambridge University Press. $34.50; paperback $9.95.

Kraft, Charles H.

McCurry, Don M., ed.
The Gospel and Islam.

Pobee, John S.
Toward an African Theology.
Nashville: Abingdon. Paperback $5.95.

Stott, John and Robert T. Coote, eds.
Gospel & Culture.

Wagner, C. Peter.
Our Kind of People. The Ethical Dimensions of Church Growth in America.
Christianity Rediscovered: An Epistle from the Masai.


This is a thought-provoking book by a Roman Catholic missionary. It will fascinate missiologists because of its sharp focus on missionary method. It will surprise ecumenists because of the common ground it exposes between Roman Catholics and conservative evangelical Protestants. It will also interest nonspecialists because of its popular style and its profound reflections on the meaning of the Christian vocation.

The author's experience among the Masai people of Tanzania forced him to a fresh reading of the New Testament, a reexamination of his suppositions, a reshaping of his missionary method, and an alteration of his expectations. He was helped considerably in this by the writings of Roland Allen and Hans Hoekendijk. This whole exercise might even be described as Allen's theory, updated and applied.

All of the issues raised are current and disturbing. Roman Catholic missionary work in East Africa, according to Donovan's analysis, "has never had the chance to be true to itself." From the very beginning, so much attention has been given to socioeconomic development (e.g., settling freed slaves, building school systems, etc.) that the primary work of evangelization, and incarnating the faith in the local cultures, never really enjoyed general priority. Instead, schools became factories for the mass production of new Christians, drilled in abstract catechism formalities, irrelevant laws, and foreign forms of prayer and song.

So the church is seen today mainly as a development agency which also propagates a Western historico-cultural experience of the Christian faith; it has, unmistakably, the aspect of a European spiritual colony, with even the normal pastoral services still dependent largely upon foreign (but celibate) clergy. The faith of Christians here has hardly begun to find expression in authentically African cultural terms; it may never find such expression, because so many of the African Christians and church leaders themselves have internalized the Western perceptions and practices which were, from the beginning, confused with the message of Christ and presented as integral to the Christian way.

Donovan's witness is valuable and inspiring, as far as it goes. But it shows us no way out of the present situation, except somehow "to start all over again." It also leaves us wondering—even in pristine situations like the one experienced by the author among the Masai—what happens after the first groups have been evangelized and baptized. While we cannot reproach Donovan for not answering all the questions he raises, we could fault him for some of his uncritical historical and anthropological judgments, as well as some of his terminology and syntax. But these faults are really peripheral to his main thesis. So this book stands firmly as a challenging theological reflection on the possibility and the meaning of Christian faith in the real world of historical change and cultural diversity.

Eugene Hillman, a missionary in Tanzania for seventeen years and in Kenya for two years, is currently a Walsh-Price Fellow doing research on missionary work among nomadic peoples in Kenya.
Theologies in North America and
Edited by Gerald H. Anderson and
Europe.
Mission Trends No. 4: Liberation
Since 1974 in their jointly published
and preserving it, this inexpensive but
creatively packed series continues a
ity in common endeavor. In furthering
and preserving it, this inexpensive but
creatively packed series continues a
unique contribution. It benefits the en­
tire church—congregations and pastors,
teachological education, missiology, and
theology. Its impact is remarkable.
As readers of the Occasional Bull­
tin know, Anderson is its editor. Once
a missionary in the Philippines and
then president of Scarritt College, he is
now director of the OMSC in Ventnor,
New Jersey. President of the Paulist
Fathers from 1970 to 1978 and since its
inception related to the Vatican’s Sec­
retariat for Promoting Christian Unity,
Stransky has traveled the globe and is
now on research leave.
The first three books in this series are:
No. 1: Crucial Issues, 1974; No. 2: Evan­
gelism, 1975; and No. 3: Third World
Theologies, 1976. Among other con­
tributions, they demonstrate the creat­
ive challenge in life and thought that the
churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin
America are making to world Chris­
tianity.
They also provide the background for
this book. With its focus on North
America, it captures the challenge/res­
ponse impact here of liberation theol­
ogy. In the familiar series format, it
consists of twenty-six entries, each
with an introduction. The bibliogra­
phies are especially helpful. All but
three of the chapters have North
American writers, and all but one ap­
The first section, “Liberation and
Mission” (108 pp.), begins with Robert
McAfee Brown’s interpretation of lib­
eration theology. It ends with Peter
Berger’s dissection and rejection of
conscientización (“consciousness rais­
ing”) as elitist and paternalistic. In be­
tween, and among others, appear
Moltmann’s incisive “Open Letter to
José Miguez Bonino” and the assertion
by Pope Paul VI of the profound link
between evangelization and develop­
ment and liberation.
Gayraud Wilmore opens the
“When Experience” section (60 pp.) by
explaining black theology’s second
stage, with its concerns now set in a
universal context. James Cone also un­
derscores the need for a global outlook.
The Black Catholics’ “Black Perspec­
tives on Evangelism” and the “Message
to the Black Church and Community”
(Atlanta, 1977) evoke comparisons and
contrasts.
In the transition to the “Feminist
Experience” (69 pp.), Rosemary
Ruether explores the “undeclared war”
mirrored in her “Black Theology vs.
Feminist Theology.” Elizabeth
Schüssler Fiorenza’s superb apologia
for feminist theology follows. The
effect is cumulative, and on reading
Wahlberg’s “The Woman’s Creed,”
one’s spirit soars. The five chapters
here provide a first-rate introduction to
the dynamics of feminist theology.

W. Richey Hogg with the International Mis­
sonary Council before he went in 1952 as a
Methodist missionary to India, has been since
1955 at Perkins School of Theology, Southern
Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, where he
is Professor of World Christianity.

30th Anniversary of Occasional Bulletin of
Missionary Research
The first issue of the Occasional Bulletin from the Missionary Research Library in
New York City appeared on March 13, 1950. It was an up-to-date analysis of
Protestant missions in China, directed primarily to the member boards of the For­
eign Missions Conference of North America, and it signaled the need to rethink
mission strategy in the light of what was then happening in the land that had
been the pride of the modern missionary enterprise. That thirteen-page mimeo­
graphed report inaugurated a periodical publication on which the English-speak­
ing world of missiology came to depend increasingly for reliable, scholarly in­
formation and documentation about a great variety of mission topics. The name
of the Occasional Bulletin became a household word among professors of mission,
librarians, mission agency administrators, graduate students, and missionaries
throughout the world. Its scholarly articles, book notes, thesis and dissertation
notices, directories, reports of mission conferences, and statistical surveys have
ever since been a standard of excellence in the field of mission studies.

In the spring of 1976 the trustees of the Missionary Research Library autho­
rized the Overseas Ministries Study Center in Ventnor, New Jersey to assume
publication of the journal. Beginning with the January issue of 1977 it was rede­
signed as a quarterly, the Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research. In this new
format the high standards set by the Missionary Research Library have been main­tained. Subscriptions have dramatically increased by nearly 7000 in three
years, including 2000 overseas. We approach our thirtieth anniversary this March
with pride in a distinguished heritage, with the satisfaction of having now
reached a larger circulation than any other scholarly mission journal in the world,
and with a renewed pledge to keep our readers abreast of the most important de­
velopments in mission thought and activity on all six continents.

Noteworthy

Three minorities—Asian (Roy
Sano), Native American (Vine Deloria,
Jr.), and Hispanic American (Cesar
Chavez and Leo Nieto)—share the re­
main page (32). In reflecting on
Hispanic space allocation, one recalls
that Hispanics represent 9 percent of
the American population (blacks, 12
percent) and by 1989 will probably
outnumber blacks. Yet undoubtedly
the chief reason for their underrepre­
sentation here is that few Hispanic
American theological statements exist.
But they are coming!

In sum, this volume continues the
high quality of the series and excites
anticipation for No. 5, soon to appear,
on Christian encounter with people of
other faiths.

—W. Richey Hogg
The Native American Christian Community: A Directory of Indian, Aleut, and Eskimo Churches.


R. Pierce Beaver, professor emeritus of missions at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, and former director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center, is the finest scholar on the history of Native American missions. He combines the knowledge he has gained from a long and productive scholarly career with extensive data he collected in an intensive effort, taking more than two years to produce this directory. It is the first directory ever to cover all branches of the Christian mission to Native Americans and because of that it marks an important moment in the history of Native American Christianity.

In chapter 2, Dr. Beaver presents a short but extremely informative statement on the Native American community in the 1970s in which the wisdom of his knowledge of history gives him an insightful perspective on the events of the last decade. This essay should be required reading for all persons associated with Native American Christianity, for it offers the opportunity to gain something of an overview and historical perspective on the state of things at present, so that general trends, accomplishments, and problems may be identified. Most notable in his report is the statement, “The most important fact brought forth by the survey is that the beginning of the end of the long colonial, subject status of the Native American churches appears to be in sight” (p. 48). The innovation and creativity that such a period of transition invites will be considerably enhanced by the existence of this directory.

The directory provides extensive information, carefully organized and clearly presented, on denominational agencies (denomination by denomination), nondenominational societies, independent churches, Native American urban churches, councils, service agencies, and educational ministries. Names, addresses, descriptions, and statistics are included for most entries. The directory will permit a stronger picture of “national treasure” in a totalitarian state. This period of transition invites the opportunity to communicate among Christian groups. It should also, as it is the expressed wish of Dr. Beaver, assist Native American Christians to get acquainted with one another.

—Sam D. Gill

The Stones Will Cry Out. Grassroots Pastoral.


Bishop Claver is the gadfly bishop of the Philippine Catholic hierarchy who persistently buzzes in the ears of President Ferdinand Marcos and all his toadies. The bishop’s book is a collection of fighting pastoral letters to his Bukidnon (Mindanao, Philippines) congregation after martial law closed the diocesan radio station and newspaper.

Here are my main impressions:

1). I am a Presbyterian and so by definition a little suspicious of the office and power of bishops. This book makes me think, “A bishop may not be such a bad idea after all.” A bishop like this one has a visibility, mobility, and even an almost superstitious invulnerability which make such a person into a kind of “national treasure” in a totalitarian state.

2). The application in these pastoral letters of the Sunday Gospel to the weekly difficulties, arrests, and indignities in a Third World province makes a model of exegesis and pastoral. One comes away proud of the Gospel for its rich skein of themes from Advent to Resurrection, and proud, too, of a lively pastor of souls in a faraway place comforting his people from the evangelical resources.

3). The Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines, with its elite, upper-class school system in the larger cities of the republic and particularly in the Greater Manila area, will have its conservatism pricked by this provincial shepherd with his affinities for “the little people.” With a few notable exceptions, both the Roman and the Reformation traditions in the Philippines have been far too “prudent,” timid, not to say cowardly, in their acquiescence to martial-law indignities. Why should Bishop Claver be such a notable minority voice in the church? Where is there a respectable ecclesiastical literature of protest?

4). There is untapped power in excommunication and the bishop bravely moves toward its just use. “People flagrantly and publicly guilty of [physical torture] . . . will henceforth be excluded from the sacraments, from acting as sponsors in baptisms, confirmations, and weddings. This is the least we can do to acknowledge their wilful dissociation of themselves from the community that is the church.” What to do? Like a voice in the wilderness, Bishop Claver calls out from the pages of his book to “timid” Christians (not only in the Philippines): “It is as impossible for stones to cry out as for real believers to be silent about the truth.” What is there to do? Bishop Claver’s definition of “prophesy” is simply: “Speak up!”

—Frederick Dale Bruner
Missionary Numbers vs. Missionary Attitudes

Is it right to say that the world needs 120,000 North American missionaries by the year 2000?

No, if you’re thinking North Americans are the sole answer. No, if you’re thinking North American styles of evangelism and church development are the way to do it. No, if you think North American missionaries are the saviors of the world in the same way American GI’s went out and rescued captive nations in World War II.

Saying the world needs 120,000 North American missionaries smacks too much of missionary imperialism. It downplays the significance of our brethren in other countries. It makes them bystanders at a parade peopled by expatriates. It reduces them to children at an adult party. It presumes that North American quantification of the problem and the solution is divinely inspired.

Missionary triumphalism and superiority mentality must give way to partnership and servanthood. If some churches overseas appear not to be reaching the unreached, the solution may not be a wave of new missionaries but confession that North Americans failed the first time around. They are the father of the child.

Shall we then stop recruiting missionaries? Shall we stop tapping resources in North American churches? Shall we not aim for world-wide equality in spiritual opportunity? It would be ridiculous to stop. But it would be equally foolish to resort to unqualified sloganeering in order to get 120,000 missionaries overseas. The sending agencies, denominational and independent, are required to make careful studies not only of needs, but of attitudes promulgated, lest they cast themselves in the role of unwanted, unlived saviors overseas.


I Believe in Justice and Hope.

By Pedro Casaldaligais most certainly a "marginal" bishop. The entire book is one long, somewhat frightening cascade of words, angrily rolling down the mountains, upsetting established paths and coming at long last to rest in the wide ocean, which, as the palm of God’s merciful hand, gatherers all the anger and frustration into tranquility of hope, born of faith in ultimate justice.

Pedro Casaldaligais most certainly


This collection of thirty-seven essays is dedicated to two eminent German Catholic missiologists. In his foreword, the editor explains why the title—Mt. 28:20—was chosen: missionary service may be understood more readily if reflection proceeds from its basis instead of focusing on the well-known controversy over its goal. There are essays on "fundamental reflections," historical reminiscences, pastoral practice in three continents, and "Christianity between religions and ideologies."

The volume's varied content shall here be highlighted rather than itemized: J. J. Spaë surveys and comments on a 1976 study project at the Catholic Theological Union of Chicago on indigenous theology. It impressed him as an important contribution to a renewal of missiology, and he particularly applauds its boldness in tracing categories of a legitimate Christian syncretism. Rudolf Schnackenburg investigates the idea of mission in the Gospel of John. More strongly than in the synoptics, the disciples' mission is rooted in that of Jesus, which they carry on in both word and work (John 14:12), the latter being their fruitful missionary labor. God is not himself seen as the immediate "missionary" for the whole world. The Johannine communities, concerned with consolidation after a first period of expansion, give yet evidence of a twofold missionary conduct: witness and evangelization. Drawing a line to the present, Schnackenburg concludes that the life witness of the believing community may at times take precedence over direct preaching for conversion, but that "mission" in the latter sense must never be given up.

Domenico Grasso reviews the genesis of the Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii nuntiandi. Lacking the time to elaborate a final document, the 1974 Synod of Bishops left the fruits of their discussions in Pope Paul’s hands; the result was a novel and welcome form of collegial magisterium. H.-W. Gensichen, one of several Protestant contributors, illustrates quests of today from past history. For Martin Luther, for example, the integration of mission and church is basic: the spread of the gospel is emphatically God’s own work, and precisely therefore the concern of all Christians. Another example: Pioneer Ziegenbalg with his "pagan" schools and his challenging of caste divisions had social change within his scope, whereas later leaders concentrated on the "ecclesiastica."

"Nonexpert" Adolf Exeler is provocative in view of the crisis in traditional "North-Atlantic missiology." He suggests developing instead a "comparative theology" among the churches of different continents and cultures. On his part, Walbert Bühlmann, reporting on efforts to reorientate his own missionary order, considers today’s missionary crisis "a typical phenomenon of the western church."

—Manfred Müller, S.V.D.
not a rank-and-file bishop, but a typical marginal bishop. Sociologists call them “nuisance-people” because of their irresistible urge to upset the existing power of the establishment. The author has clearly been a “nuisance” to all his superiors. His own Claretian Superior General had to make a special trip to Madrid to calm him down (p. 23), and in their General Chapter of 1967 in Rome, he was the leader of the group demanding radical reform (p. 24). It was likely with a sigh of relief that in 1968, after sixteen years of various Claretian assignments in Spain and for a short period in Africa, he accepted the challenge “to take care of the unattended northern stretches of the Mato Grosso” (p. 24) in Brazil. What he finds there and his reactions to the callousness of the capitalistic system where people do not count is soon to become for him literally a struggle of life and death.

Half the book (pp. 25–145) describes the years 1968 till 1975, from his arrival via his episcopal ordination to the day that he turns forty-seven and obviously is in need of a breathing spell. The other half of the book opens up for us his own inner life of faith and prayer—as priest within the church which he loves and which pains him deeply.

Bishop Casaldaliga is the exceptional bishop who has the freedom to be enfant terrible to his fellow bishops, nuncios, and government officials. With his triple vocation to be a martyr (p. 16), a poet (p. 13), and a priest (p. 13), what else can we expect but a man with strong passions, a mighty pen, and flaming dedication? He undoubtedly stings the triumphalistic tradition of the church by his novel attire as bishop (straw hat for mitre and walking stick for crosier), but he obviously hurts most when he puts his feelings on paper. All the conflicts, court cases, imprisonments, and threats he and his companions have to endure are like the clawing of a ferocious animal whose hunting ground was challenged by the bishop’s exposés.

I Believe in Justice and Hope is a frustrating book to read. It is as if the author parachuted into no-man’s land, giving the impression of a fire-fighter who arrives late on the scene. He is forty years old, and sixteen years a priest, when he jumps into the fray and gets badly scalded.

The church in the Third World has many Pedro Casaldaligas who see much more clearly than the old crew where the church is off course and who recognize how to set it straight.

Bishop Casaldaliga is not just the voice of his own oppressed people but the enfleshed articulation of that deep urge of so many in the Third World to relive the passion of Christ so that “the ends of earth” (Acts 1:8) at last “may have life in all its fulness” (John 10:10).

—Cornelio de Wit, M.H.M.

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The Way to Peace. Liberation through the Bible.


John Topel, a Jesuit and associate professor of theology at Seattle University, presents a new approach to the subject of liberation theology. Instead of seeking a few scattered proof-texts, he traces the roots of liberation theology throughout the whole Bible.

In the Old Testament, God’s liberation was not simply a physical one in which he took the initiative, but one in which he encouraged the people of Israel’s own attempts to produce justice through human government and law. The prophets made clear that a person’s relationship to God is determined not so much by worship as by adherence to precepts of a law that establishes justice and peace on this earth. Wisdom literature confirmed that men and women must commit themselves to such action even if they died in the process.

In the New Testament, we see God’s intervention inside human history, through the incarnation of his Son. By now Israel’s own autonomy as a nation-state had vanished, so Jesus came into the world on the outside of political power, influencing it mainly by teaching and example. He taught that our responsibility to God and our fellows in liberation was not exercised by strict observance of laws, but on being so seized by love of the Father that we love the neighbor even more than ourselves, even to the extent of laying down our life.

From his survey, Topel finds himself in agreement with certain of the major ideas of liberation theology, namely, the stress on the historicity of God’s salvation and the “option for the poor.” However, he contends that the church does not have to control the political power or destroy the state, but only help to purify the state’s autonomous search for God if the church is to bring in the justice and peace that can be mediated politically in our world. The way to liberation is not through force and violence but “through the persuasion of a love that genuinely conceives of the enemy as a person with a logos for justice and self-transcending love deep within.”

Topel’s approach is biblical and Christocentric. He presents his case both logically and persuasively. In a day when liberation theologians have a tendency to go to extremes, Topel’s balanced position is certainly refreshing. His book deserves serious attention.

—John T. Seemands


Sojourn in Mosaic.


Friendship Press provides a variety of study books on the mission themes and geographical areas selected for emphasis each year by denominations related to the National Council of Churches (NCCUSA) and its Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM). The emphasis in 1979–80 is on the Middle East, an area where social, political, and religious problems are as complex and baffling as anywhere else on earth. Along with a reissue of John B. Taylor’s The World of Islam (first published in 1971 under the title Thinking about Islam), the major Friendship Press titles directed to an adult audience are a scholarly analysis of the Arab-Israeli conflict and a short novel in which the burning social issues of the Middle East are introduced in more popular format.
The Arab-Israeli Conflict is a symposium, written by seven Canadian scholars at the invitation of the Ecumenical Forum of Canada: Cranford Pratt (chairman), Gregory Baum, John Burbridge, William Dunphy, Thomas Langan, Willard G. Oxtoby, and Cyril Powles. A brief introduction as well as the concluding discussion questions are by Alan Geyer, executive director of the Churches' Center for Theology and Public Policy in Washington, D.C.

The origins of the conflict, the salient features of the "thirty years' war: 1948–1978," a summary of statements by the churches concerning the Middle East imbroglio, and a Christian search for a moral perspective on it are all discussed. Reasonable objectivity characterizes this discussion but, as with all previous efforts of Christian scholars to deal with these increasingly sensitive issues, some of the conclusions reached in this book will doubtless be faulted by readers representing both sides of the political conflict. Zionists and their sympathizers will think them too "pro-Palestinian." Those, including this reviewer, whose attitudes have been formed through close association with the Arab world will feel that Israeli "rights" are overstated at certain points. The booklet is nevertheless a provocative and well-organized basis for serious study in the churches.

Sojourn in Mosaic interweaves a remarkable variety of problems in the Middle East today—poverty, ethnicity, religious plurality, political conflict, language, inter-Churchian relationships, the Lebanese civil war, the Arab-Israeli issues, the situation of refugees, and so forth—all within the eighty-eight pages of a fictional story. The story moves rapidly from the American Midwest to Istanbul, Amman, Cairo, Beirut, and Jerusalem. It holds its readers' attention and, at the same time, introduces them to the complexity of life in the Middle East. And it includes sympathetic and informative insights into the milieu of the historic Eastern churches as well as that of the Muslim majorities.

This reviewer appreciates efforts to deal with mission issues in a form most likely to be read by Mr. and Mrs. Average Churchperson. One way to go about it is to work them into a human-interest story. The risk one takes in doing so is that literary artistry may be blunted by what is a bit too obviously didactic. This happened to Sojourn in Mosaic but, after all, it is intended to be a mission study book and not primarily art for the sake of art.

—Norman A. Horner

Norman A. Horner, Associate Editor of the Occasional Bulletin, served as consultant on ecumenical relationships in the Middle East under the United Presbyterian Program Agency from 1968 to 1976, with residence in Beirut, Lebanon.

Buddhism, the First Millennium.


The author of this book is the president of Sōka Gakkai, the Japanese Buddhist lay organization originating in the Nichiren tradition and said to have a membership of 10 million in Japan and half a million in other countries. In the 1950s and 1960s this movement gained considerable notoriety for its militant methods in seeking converts. A Japanese Buddhist priest also standing in the Nichiren tradition once made by the leadership to improve both the methodology and the image of the organization, with the result of fewer "incidents" and a somewhat more respectable position in the spectrum of Japanese religious activities.

The book does not pretend to be an academic treatise as such, but it deals with some of its major religious and philosophical issues of the first millennium of the history of Buddhism with bold authority. Ikeda writes, of

Richard H. Drummond, a former United Presbyterian missionary in Japan, is Professor of Mission and History of Religions at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.

The Contribution of Dr. D. T. Niles to the Church Universal and Local.


Daniel Thambryrajah Niles (1908–70), a Methodist minister from Sri Lanka, was one of the giants of the ecumenical movement. He was a shaper of the East Asia Christian Conference, an ecumenist of global significance, an informed biblical theologian, a prolific writer, and above all a churchman who retained the authentic pastoral focus of a person deeply rooted in his faith, his church, and his times. Stephen Neill in his Men of Unity has given us a brief, personal portrait of D. T. Niles. Dr. Furtado helps us to appreciate the range of Niles's contributions to the theology and mission of the church throughout those decisive decades of the 1940s through the 1960s.

The book has three parts. The first (29 pp.) is biographical, sketching Niles's career against his family, ecclesiastical, religious, and political backgrounds in Sri Lanka and South Asia.

The second and longest section (174 pp.) deals with the themes of church and evangelism in Niles's thought, always against the setting of his concrete work. A final section (18 pp.) addresses the question of ecclesiology for Asia in terms of the tension between the ecumenical and the local in Niles's thought.

Furtado's documentation is excellent. A bibliography of primary sources written between 1934 and 1969 (mainly English, excluding sources written in Asian languages) underscores the enormous gifts of Dr. Niles. Twenty-two books are cited, along with fourteen books and pamphlets, sixty-two articles and sermons, eight book reviews, thirty-eight hymns, and thirty unpublished papers. A helpful bibliography of secondary literature is also included.

Christopher L. Furtado is a professor at Karnataka Theological College in Mangalore, South India. The study was written originally as a doctoral dissertation for the University of Hamburg. The organization of the book might have been strengthened had it been recast in nonacademic format for the general public.

—James A. Bergquist

James A. Bergquist, Academic Dean at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, was formerly professor of New Testament at Gurukul Theological College, Madras, India, and associate director of the Theological Education Fund of the World Council of Churches.
course, from within the Buddhist tradition of faith, as a personal believer, and he does not hesitate to offer his own opinions—thoughtfully and with some serious attempts to substantiate them—even when they are at variance with the current academic consensus.

Ikeda, in keeping with current Sōka Gakkai practice, writes in a relatively nonpolemical manner. Since he stands, however, in a particular tradition within the larger Mahāyāna movement, it is interesting to observe how, differently from most contemporary scholars in the West, he defends forthrightly the religious raison d'être of the Mahāyāna. This posture at times includes sharp critiques of the Theravāda position, which tradition is regularly denoted in the book by the Sanskrit term Hinayāna, or Lesser Vehicle. This pejorative term, coined of course by those of the Mahāyāna (Greater Vehicle), is now generally avoided by scholars. There is also a more respectful term in Japanese (jōza Bukkyō) that corresponds to Theravāda and is beginning to be used. From the English translation, however, there is no evidence that Ikeda used it in this book.

Ikeda’s own position, which the whole book is intended to set forth and defend, is the teaching of the Lotus Sutra, which stresses the historical Siddhartha Gautama as the eternal Buddha who had manifested his self in many times and places in the past and continues to do so. He is therefore eternally present and available to mankind. Ikeda teaches also the doctrine of the Single Dharma, or the essential unity of the truth revealed by the eternal Buddha in all times and places.

Ikeda’s special love, however, is for the role of the laity in the whole history of Buddhism, as may be expected from the fact that Sōka Gakkai is predominantly a lay organization and its top leadership from the beginning has been lay. He sees the Buddha—properly, I believe—as having from a very early period aimed at the salvation of all persons in all levels of society. He believes—a much more debatable point—that the teaching of the Buddha that later emerged as the Mahāyāna was preserved and transmitted in lay circles from the lifetime of the Master. Ikeda’s consistent thrust is for Buddhist faith to be held and practiced in every area of life.

At this point, however, a word of caution is in order, one that relates with especial force to historic developments of Buddhism within Japan. This is the ethical dimension, especially with reference to sexual morality and related issues of lifestyles. On page 148 Ikeda writes of the spirit of mercy and compassion, which he rightly asserts as typical of Mahāyāna Buddhism. He describes this as “a kind of compassion that is capable of embracing and encouraging all forms of life, all types of being.” He differentiates this spirit and lifestyle from the Hinayāna (Theravāda), which he sees as “rather stern and uncompromising in its approach, insisting that evil and delusion be mercilessly cut off.”

Ikeda here is fairly representative of the vague weakness in ethical teaching of historic Japanese Buddhism, which actually approaches a kind of antinomianism. Japanese society itself is by no means antinomian and has often dealt with its deviant members with great severity, but it derives its ethical norms largely from other sources than Buddhism, especially from Confucianism, its own corporate experience and, more recently, from Christianity. The kind of compassion which Ikeda recommends is not only accepting of all persons, it tends to allow or even to encourage them to remain as they are without ethical change.

—Richard H. Drummond

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Richard H. Drummond

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The Indigenous Church and the Missionary.


The author, Melvin L. Hodges, is a former missionary and now an Assemblies of God educator and mission administrator. He is well known for his previous work, *The Indigenous Church.*

This book is a statement on the changing role of the missionary in light of the emerging national churches. Before seeking to reinterpret this role accordingly, the author reaffirms his theology of the church in terms of mission. He defines the nature of the church's mission in terms of evangelism, taking issue with the view which interprets that mission in terms of social and political action. He does not seem to allow for a more moderating position conceived in terms of ministry as well as evangelism—the kind of both/and pattern of mission many feel is reflected in Jesus and the early church (Luke 4, Acts 3, etc.).

Hodges proceeds to develop the functional relationship of the missionary to the indigenous church in light of that evangelistic purpose, accenting the partnership role. He sees the missionary as neither "over" nor "under" the national church, but as an equal partner in a common task. In this partnership, the missionary must be prepared to deal with tensions that arise both from cultural differences and from organizational conflict. A harmonious spirit is fundamental to all relational dimensions; and in this regard, attitudes are extremely important.

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